
HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE INQUIRY

being heard before:

SIR ANTHONY HART (Chairman)

MR DAVID LANE

MS GERALDINE DOHERTY

held at
Banbridge Court House
Banbridge

on Tuesday, 16th June 2015
commencing at 10.00 am
(Day 127)

MS CHRISTINE SMITH, QC and MR JOSEPH AIKEN appeared as
Counsel to the Inquiry.

1 Tuesday, 16th June 2015

2 (10.00 am)

3 MR GABRIEL CAREY (called)

4 CHAIRMAN: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Can I remind
5 everyone to ensure that their mobile phone has been
6 turned off or at least placed on "Silent"/"Vibrate" and
7 may I also remind everyone that no photography or
8 recording is permitted either in the chamber or anywhere
9 on the Inquiry premises.

10 Yes, Ms Smith?

11 MS SMITH: Good morning, Chairman, Panel Members, ladies and
12 gentlemen. Our first witness today is Mr Gabriel Carey.
13 He wishes to take a religious oath, Chairman.

14 MR GABRIEL CAREY (sworn)

15 CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. Please sit down, Gabriel.

16 Questions from COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY

17 MS SMITH: Gabriel's statement can be found at 40000. It
18 goes through to 40180, including the exhibits attached
19 to it. If we can just look at the first page of the
20 statement, please, at 40000. Now, Gabriel, can I ask
21 you just to take a look at the document that's on the
22 screen in front of you? Can you confirm this is the
23 statement of evidence you have provide to the Inquiry?

24 A. That's correct, yes.

25 Q. You signed that statement on 4th June of this year?

1 A. That's correct.

2 Q. This is the statement of evidence that you wish the
3 Inquiry to take into account together with anything else
4 that we say this morning?

5 A. Yes, indeed.

6 Q. In paragraph 1 of your statement, Gabriel, you say your
7 memory isn't what it was. I know we were talking
8 earlier. You have some difficulties with memory, but
9 you have refreshed your memory from the papers.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. If there is anything that you simply don't remember,
12 please just say.

13 A. Thank you.

14 Q. Your qualifications are set out in paragraphs 2 to 6 of
15 the statement and for the work of the Inquiry the
16 relevant period will be from 1980 to 1985. During --
17 sorry -- to 1995. During that period you first of all
18 were Acting Principal Social Worker and then Principal
19 Social Worker responsible for fieldwork --

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. -- in the Londonderry, Limavady & Strabane District. Is
22 that correct?

23 A. That's correct, yes.

24 Q. Then in 1988 you became Programme Manager of Childcare
25 Services, which included responsibility for the

1 residential children's homes.

2 A. Correct, yes.

3 Q. From the early '90s through to 1995 you were Acting
4 Assistant Unit General Manager. You think you got the
5 job permanently about 1992.

6 A. Roughly. I mean, I said I don't remember the dates and
7 I don't.

8 Q. But it's some time in the early '90s?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Then you retired from work entirely in 2007?

11 A. That's correct.

12 Q. Well, I was asking in your role as Principal Social
13 Worker with responsibility for fieldwork were you aware
14 of the issue of sexual activity among children? Were
15 matters -- we know from the papers we have seen that
16 certain matters were being reported to the police around
17 that time, but can you recall being made aware by the
18 social workers on the ground, as it were?

19 A. We were aware of sexual abuse, though I think, as I have
20 stated in my witness statement, the degree of knowledge
21 we had about the whole matter was incomplete. You know,
22 it was quite a new and emerging phenomenon at the time
23 and there was research going into it, but we didn't know
24 everything that we now know.

25 Q. When we were discussing it earlier, you were saying that

1 while you knew children were being subject to sexual
2 abuse, you weren't aware that they themselves could
3 become abusers certainly in the early '80s.

4 A. Yes. We weren't aware that abused children could then
5 become abusers. We were aware that children who had
6 engaged in sexual activity didn't stop -- continued to
7 engage in sexual activity, but certainly not that abused
8 children could become abusers.

9 Q. Well, I wanted just to ask you about another matter the
10 Inquiry has been looking at and that is the case of FJ5.
11 Were you yourself aware of the case?

12 A. I was aware of it, but I had very peripheral involvement
13 in the sense that I didn't have responsibility for
14 residential childcare at the time. The incident was
15 raised by one of my field social workers in an interview
16 she had had with the young person in question and
17 I passed that on to my line manager --

18 Q. And that was --

19 A. -- but I wasn't involved in subsequent court proceedings
20 and so on.

21 Q. You passed the matter up to Tom Haverty?

22 A. That's correct.

23 Q. And I was asking you as much as -- you were saying that
24 the height of your knowledge of what was alleged was
25 what you had been told by TL 9 , the child's

1 social worker.

2 A. I see that in some of the papers I was involved in at
3 least one case conference or discussion about the
4 accusation and that's as much as I know about it.

5 Q. After the matter came to court you had a discussion with
6 Tom Haverty. Isn't that correct?

7 A. I had an informal discussion with him. It wasn't part
8 of regular supervision, and I can recall he was very
9 angry about the whole -- the fact that the court case
10 had collapsed.

11 Q. Did you get the impression that certainly the view of
12 those people on the Social Services side was that there
13 was more to it, that there was some substance to the
14 allegations?

15 A. Yes. I think that very definitely the impression I got
16 was that FJ5 had got away with it.

17 Q. Well, if I can just move on to look at Fort James
18 generally, as Principal Social Worker with
19 responsibility for residential childcare you carried out
20 some inspections of that home. I am not going to look
21 at these. We have seen them in various guises, but
22 there's an inspection of 10th October of 1989 at 6752 to
23 6754. I was just asking you you believe you carried out
24 these inspections at least twice a year of the home?

25 A. I think it was twice a year, though my memory is not

1 complete on that matter.

2 Q. But certainly we seen -- the documents we have seen
3 suggest that you were inspecting twice yearly?

4 A. Yes, yes.

5 Q. At 6754 in your conclusion to that inspection in
6 October 1989 you said that the layout of Fort James
7 didn't lend itself to the supervision of residents.
8 I just wondered in what way?

9 A. Fort James was an old building and it was full of nooks
10 and crannies. We were concerned that it didn't lend
11 itself to the sort of situation we would have liked,
12 given the nature of the children and young people who
13 were admitted there. We devoted a lot of money to try
14 and refurbish and change the layout internally a little
15 bit to facilitate supervision.

16 Q. You also -- you talked about in a management audit.
17 I just want to be clear that these were the same things.
18 The management audit and the inspection was the same
19 thing but by another name?

20 A. Yes, yes. Uh-huh.

21 Q. And in August 1990 -- sorry. I think it might have been
22 another date in 1989 at 6797 you in that inspection were
23 recognising the need for a worker dedicated to the needs
24 of those who were preparing to leave care.

25 A. That's right. Uh-huh.

1 Q. I was asking you was that simply because the staff
2 complement couldn't cope with addressing those needs or
3 what exactly the position was?

4 A. My feeling was that staff had been under pressure for so
5 long that they needed somebody dedicated to young people
6 leaving care to help ease the burden. Not that they
7 were not capable of doing it; it just helped to ease
8 their burden significantly.

9 Q. It allowed them to concentrate on the younger children?

10 A. Absolutely and to be -- you know, engage in therapeutic
11 and other types of work, you know, in-depth sort of work
12 with the complement of children in the home. I say
13 children. Mostly -- they were mostly adolescents
14 actually.

15 Q. Well, in August 1990 you carry out a further inspection
16 and that can be found at 6846 to 6852, but at 6847 again
17 you reiterate the difficulties with inspection --
18 sorry -- with supervision. I beg your pardon.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. In your conclusion, if I could just look at that,
21 please, at 6851. I'll just come to it in a moment, but
22 you introduced this level, this tier of inspection into
23 the homes that you had responsibility for, Gabriel. Is
24 that correct?

25 A. Yes. The rationale -- and I think I have alluded to

1 this in my witness statement -- was, I mean, I had great
2 confidence in TL 4 , who had to do a statutory
3 monthly inspection and report, which formed the basis of
4 our supervision, but I felt that I was removed from the
5 home and not involved in day-to-day running. So
6 therefore could do a more independent audit of things
7 that were happened -- happening just to complement
8 whatever TL 4 was doing.

9 Q. You could look at it with a degree of fresh eyes, as it
10 were.

11 A. Exactly, and if there were issues that I thought that
12 TL 4 had missed, I would be able to point that out to
13 him.

14 Q. Well, just -- this is the management audit, as you
15 describe it, from 1990, August 1990. In your conclusion
16 you say:

17 "In the months leading up to [your] inspection the
18 staff in the unit had experienced a difficult time in
19 relation to the numbers of emergency admissions, the
20 difficulties presented by young people in the unit and
21 also problems presented by youths from the Tullyally
22 area coming on to Fort James property, being abusive to
23 staff, drinking and committing acts of vandalism.

24 A combination of these factors has very much taxed the
25 ability of staff to provide the sort of environment

1 required to do therapeutic work in addition to providing
2 the primary care that is necessary."

3 If I can just scroll on down through that, please,
4 that's -- these are issues that -- you are highlighting
5 various issues. It is quite a lengthy conclusion --

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. -- because you were recognising that in August 1990 this
8 home, Fort James, is experiencing difficulties that you
9 are -- I mean, another issue is the provision of cover
10 for annual leave, which was raised by staff, and so
11 forth.

12 Now the reason I am highlighting that conclusion of
13 that report is because we know that a lot of the matters
14 that you are talking about here are subsequently raised
15 in the 1991 SSI inspection by Mr Denis O'Brien.

16 A. That's correct, yes.

17 Q. We looked at a number of documents yesterday, which I am
18 not going to open, because they are fresh in the
19 Inquiry's mind, but you wrote a letter to Denis O'Brien
20 -- sorry. Let me just step back a moment.

21 What happens is you are aware of these difficulties
22 and taking some steps to address them.

23 A. Right.

24 Q. Denis O'Brien comes along and carries out an inspection
25 I think in early 1991.

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. So some months after this report. He then presents you
3 with the draft report, which you're unhappy with. You
4 feel that it hasn't put certain matters in context and
5 hasn't given sufficient weight to the steps that you and
6 your staff have been taking to address the issues.

7 Please stop me if I'm being unfair --

8 A. Yes, yes.

9 Q. -- in the summary. He then has a meeting with you and
10 is reassured by some of the things that you say, but
11 nonetheless the report as it originally was drafted is
12 then published.

13 A. Uh-huh.

14 Q. Now you then write -- and the letter can be found at
15 7804 -- to him on 6th September 1991 expressing your
16 disappointment with the report that has been written.
17 I see it has been pulled up on the screen here.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. You say that you are:

20 "... disappointed about the negative tone of the
21 report and although [you] did not seek to dispute some
22 of the matters of fact, I indicated to you that the
23 report was unbalanced in that it did not take account of
24 the action which management had initiated to address
25 some of the very points that you had highlighted."

1 Now when we were talking earlier, you explained to
2 me, Gabriel, that this was a most unusual step for you
3 to take to write this letter.

4 A. Yes, I was grieved by what he'd said for two reasons.
5 First of all, after the draft report was issued I had
6 had the meeting with him and told him what steps I was
7 taking in relation to certain things. Secondly, I was
8 concerned that the report would go to higher management.
9 It would appear -- it might appear to them that, though
10 things been flagged up, I didn't do anything about them
11 whereas the contrary was the case, and that's why I felt
12 I had to write to him on this -- these factors, because
13 normally when inspectors did reports, I welcomed that.
14 It was another pair of independent eyes looking at the
15 situation and I might well learn something from it, but
16 this situation was quite blatant.

17 Q. He has indicated that he was reassured by dealing with
18 you that steps were being taken, but that nonetheless
19 the view of the Department was that the report should be
20 published indicating what he found on the inspection
21 date.

22 A. Uh-huh.

23 Q. Clearly from this letter you felt that that was
24 an unfair course to take. By writing had you hoped that
25 he might amend the report in some way?

1 A. I had hoped that maybe he would -- the report go as he
2 intended, but maybe for him to add an addendum that he
3 had had some conversation with me and I had reassured
4 him on a number of points, and indeed following my
5 letter to him I also wrote to my Unit General Manager
6 giving all the -- outlining all the recommendations and
7 saying what I had done in respect of each of them.

8 Q. Yes. We have seen that letter. It can be found --
9 I don't need to call it up, but it is at 7047 to 7054,
10 where you tell her what you have been doing, because you
11 are aware this might be raised at Board level and you
12 want her to be assured that you have taken the matter
13 seriously.

14 A. That was the basis of my concern: first of all, that she
15 should know that I did something about it and, secondly,
16 if she was having conversations with higher management,
17 that I would have informed her about what I did do.

18 Q. It seems that she may have herself raised it with the
19 Department. We have no documentary evidence to suggest
20 that, but we do know that there was a draft follow-up
21 inspection then carried out. Would that have been
22 an unusual step, that the Inspector would have come back
23 after the report or not?

24 A. Well, I don't remember it happening any other time.

25 Q. And that follow-up information can be seen at 6928 to

1 6936. That was after a meeting in December 1991. So
2 while it is clear from these documents, Gabriel, you
3 were very annoyed by this inspection report, but
4 relations between the SSI and the Unit of Management
5 were generally good. Is that fair?

6 A. Well, first of all, I'd say I had very little day-to-day
7 contact with the Department. Most of the communication
8 with them went from Board level to the Department. My
9 only contact was through the inspection reports and
10 generally, you know, I had no problem with that.

11 Q. Well, coming on to look at Harberton House and the
12 incidents of peer abuse there, if we can look at your
13 statement again -- it is 40001 -- you address this at
14 paragraphs 7 through to 10 of the statement, and you say
15 that there was historical context to the matter, which
16 you talk about here, and you talk about resource
17 experience which impacted on management performance and
18 so forth. In this -- this is where you say in your
19 statement that you were unaware that sexualised children
20 could themselves become abusers at paragraph 9.

21 A. Uh-huh.

22 Q. You also talk about the knowledge that was gained from
23 this whole episode being used to inform practice and
24 I wondered in what way you would use the knowledge that
25 was gained from it all?

1 A. Well, first and foremost, it meant that the supervision
2 of children who had been abused was stepped up.
3 Secondly, the information that abusers could become
4 abused was fed into the assessments that were carried
5 out and we tried to address that through the care plans
6 that we developed about them, which were more realistic,
7 knowing what they had been subjected to.

8 Q. Now we know that one of the immediate steps that was
9 taken to -- in reaction to the discovery of what
10 happened included the introduction of waking night staff
11 in the home.

12 A. Uh-huh.

13 Q. There's a memo we can just look at, please, at 10040.
14 This is a memo to Tom Haverty from yourself, and you are
15 talking about a particular child, but you will see there
16 in the second paragraph it says:

17 "You will recall that on 11th September 1990 we
18 introduced a waking night worker in response to staff
19 concerns about the fact that some of the adolescents had
20 been up during the night. This was achieved by
21 reallocating the additional member of staff who was
22 employed ...", to look after this particular boy, "...
23 to waking night duty and reducing the number of
24 sleeping-in staff to two on the basis that with the
25 waking night worker there would be three staff overall

1 in the home during the night."

2 Now I am going to come back to the waking night
3 staff, because it would appear that that continued
4 certainly until I think it was October 1991. So for
5 a year the waking night staff were in the home.

6 A. Uh-huh.

7 Q. Paragraph 10 of your statement you -- in fact, on
8 a number of occasions you talk about the issue of
9 resources, and I just wanted to be clear about when you
10 are talking about resources, are you talking about the
11 allocation of money to the Unit of Management from the
12 Board or the overall picture?

13 A. I was talking about the allocation of resources from the
14 Board to the unit, because I didn't have any involvement
15 in the bigger picture.

16 Q. It's the view of the Department that they have expressed
17 that the Western Health & Social Services Board had
18 resources, but they weren't clear about how those
19 resources were allocated within the Board.

20 I wondered had you any knowledge of -- I mean, the
21 residential childcare section was described as the
22 Cinderella service. Is that your impression or how did
23 you perceive the issue of resources for your needs to
24 be?

25 A. No, it wasn't my impression that the childcare programme

1 was a Cinderella service. I was concerned about
2 resources generally, because, I mean, certainly Bunting
3 had highlighted a comparison between North & West
4 Belfast, which had a similar population to ours, and
5 LLS. They had at least nine or ten more Senior Social
6 Workers than we had and at least 23 field social workers
7 more than we had. So, I mean, I felt that the whole
8 resourcing issue was very pertinent and very relevant to
9 the job we were trying to do.

10 Q. Paragraphs 11 to 13 of your statement, Gabriel, you talk
11 about the Bunting report and the steps that you took to
12 address the recommendations in it. If -- we have just
13 gone back to it there. You said you introduced a number
14 of measures and many of them are highlighted in your
15 memo to HH22, who was then Acting Officer In Charge in
16 Harberton House.

17 A. Uh-huh.

18 Q. You say that some of the measures involved additional
19 resources that were not then within your existing
20 budget. If we could just have a look briefly at the
21 memo, please, at 10081. You say that you indicated in
22 the course of a meeting on 8th November that you
23 welcomed staff drawing to your attention concerns about
24 their work situation. You talk about the level of
25 admissions to care is equally -- the concern about that

1 is shared by all levels of management.

2 Specific difficulties experienced in Harberton
3 House. Management have adopted a number of measures in
4 which you have been involved. An additional member of
5 staff was appointed to Harberton in November '89 and in
6 February '90 a further member of staff was recruited
7 specifically to specialise one of the children who was
8 most disruptive.

9 I think we saw that.

10 A. Uh-huh.

11 Q. That person then became the night -- waking night duty
12 person.

13 A. Yes, I think so, yes.

14 Q. "At one stage we had employed six additional staff and
15 the bungalow at Harberton House was opened to
16 accommodate additional children who were admitted to
17 care. Indeed, as a direct result of concerns raised
18 with me by staff we employed two additional people as
19 waking night staff and that continues to present.

20 In conjunction there was close monitoring review of
21 all the children in the unit, especially those
22 presenting particular difficulties with the intention of
23 responding appropriately to the problems they presented
24 and also to consider alternative placements.

25 Throughout this period I am aware that TL 4

1 maintained close and regular contact with you to provide
2 support and ongoing advice."

3 You advised HH22 that **SND 502** flagged up to the
4 Department the resource implications associated with the
5 current problem.

6 "The Board made available six additional social
7 workers, two of whom were allocated to the fostering
8 unit.

9 In the same way admissions to care have either been
10 delayed or avoided through the provision of daycare
11 services ...

12 Measures were taken not only to obtain suitable
13 places for children requiring care but also to alleviate
14 the pressures on staff in Harberton.

15 Key concern for management and they discussed the
16 possibility of devising a team building strategy within
17 the unit."

18 That was -- it had been initiated. If we can just
19 scroll on down.

20 Decision to open the bungalow in view of the
21 increasing demand for residential places.

22 Given the high level of management involvement, you
23 said that you were taken aback by the tone of her memo
24 from her and staff, and I will come to look at that
25 shortly and the context of that.

1 A. Uh-huh.

2 Q. But essentially what you are saying is that you as
3 Principal Social Worker at that level of management were
4 taking the steps that you could to alleviate the
5 position of Harberton House as far as you could and you
6 were elevating it to more senior management where there
7 were resource implications?

8 A. That's correct, yes.

9 Q. Talking about the Bob Bunting review, the view expressed
10 by Kevin McCoy to the Inquiry was that that review did
11 not adequately address the nub of the issue in that it
12 didn't get to the crux of what happened in Harberton
13 House and why staff did not detect these activities for
14 so long or how they were able to continue so long
15 undetected and it was only discovered by chance.

16 I wondered if you had any view about that, Gabriel.

17 A. Well, I mean, I think the resourcing issue that you
18 flagged up was one of the things that, you know,
19 hampered detection, you know. We didn't have enough
20 staff. Also the --

21 Q. Can I just pause there, because Mr McCoy's point was
22 that this home was adequately staffed in accordance with
23 Castle Priory recommendations?

24 A. It was staffed according to Castle Priory, but, I mean,
25 that was the minimum requirement, and by the stage that

1 this incident happened Castle Priory was well out of
2 date. Indeed, you know, there was a whole lot of
3 increases along at different levels of childcare
4 activity which reflected the pressure that were on
5 staff. I mean, in one of my audit reports -- sorry --
6 in the memo that Mr Doherty wrote to me about staff
7 rotas it outlines some of the things that staff had to
8 do and, you know, you can see from reading that the
9 amount of pressure that was on them.

10 Q. Sorry. I interrupted you just in respect of that
11 matter, but one of the things he said was, for example,
12 that staff weren't interviewed by Bob Bunting. Is that
13 your recollection?

14 A. No, it's not, no. I don't -- I don't know how many
15 staff were interviewed, but I certainly do remember
16 speaking to some members of staff, maybe two, prior to
17 interview, because they were very anxious about the
18 whole thing and I was just saying to them, "Tell the
19 truth. Tell things exactly as they appear to you", and
20 so that would lead me to believe that some members of
21 staff were spoken to, but I can't recall the number.

22 Q. I think just for the benefit of the Inquiry 1.6 of the
23 Bunting review report deals with who they did speak to.
24 He describes speaking to nine members of senior staff.

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. You were one of those people who were interviewed by
2 him.

3 A. Yes, I was most certainly interviewed, yes.

4 Q. When we were talking earlier, you were also making the
5 point that the lack of detection was partly because of
6 the type of activity, that it was a very secretive
7 activity. It was happening at night-time or outside --
8 beyond this mound outside the view of staff.

9 A. There was -- there was the resourcing issue, the
10 secrecy, the power and control that some children
11 exercised over others, dominated them, that was added to
12 the secrecy. There was a lack of knowledge about sexual
13 abuse generally. There was the lack of knowledge about
14 what some children had been subjected to before
15 admission, and, you know, maybe -- maybe too a disbelief
16 that children so young -- and some of them were very
17 young -- could engage in this sort of activity. You
18 know, the imagination boggles when you think about what
19 they might have been subjected to or experienced before
20 admission. Well, we didn't know that, and, of course,
21 the size of the home and the mound and so on just added
22 to the whole thing.

23 Q. Well, can I just ask how staff felt at the time that
24 this came to light?

25 A. Staff were devastated and very traumatised by the whole

1 thing.

2 Q. You felt that they were angry and defensive to a degree
3 also?

4 A. They were angry with themselves, because they thought
5 that maybe they should have detected this earlier.

6 I think they were unrealistic in that respect, because
7 the fact that it did come to light reflected that some
8 therapeutic work was going on with children. If that
9 hadn't happened, you know, maybe these situations
10 wouldn't have been detected until much later.

11 Q. Now I wondered if -- I mean, there was a memo that we
12 looked at yesterday which said that the Bunting review
13 team or whoever the review team was going to be was not
14 going to engage in a witch-hunt. I wondered if you felt
15 that if there had been a type of investigation as
16 envisaged by Mr McCoy, which was drilling down into who
17 did what and where they were at any given time over this
18 period of time, where the staff members were over any
19 given period of time -- how you would that have impacted
20 on staff in your view?

21 A. I think it would have impacted very deeply on staff
22 morale. I mean, they were devastated and traumatised,
23 as I said. That carried over to the review that Bunting
24 did carry out. I mean, in spite of the fact that staff
25 were given many reassurances, they thought that some of

1 them were going to be scapegoated or somebody was going
2 to be scapegoated. They felt that, you know, they could
3 have performed better, unrealistically in my view, and
4 that Bunting would say A was at fault or B was at fault.
5 You know, that feeling was very much around at the time.

6 Q. I will explore this a little bit more this afternoon
7 with HH22, but whenever the Bunting report was
8 delivered, how did that -- I mean, was that a positive
9 effect on staff then, that that had not happened, that
10 there was no-one being scapegoated?

11 A. I don't recall the exact -- exactly how they responded,
12 but I think they were happy to see that some of the
13 recommendations were positive recommendations in that
14 they looked at -- some were -- had implications for the
15 unit of management, some of them had implications for
16 the Board, and there was a lot of things about the lack
17 of resources in it, and they were happy about that.

18 Q. Do you think that a different tactic by the review team
19 might have resulted in a different conclusion?

20 A. I think, you know -- I don't -- I don't quite understand
21 Mr McCoy's rationale. I think, you know, having the
22 resource implications looked at as -- and in practice --
23 the two things to me are inextricably linked and can't
24 be divorced, and all I can think is if the report was
25 done along the lines Mr McCoy was talking about

1 yesterday, as I understand it, we would have just got
2 more detail and, you know, I sort of wonder what would
3 happen to the report dealing with resources. You know,
4 would that be acted upon? I don't know.

5 Q. Paragraphs 17 to 19 of your statement, Gabriel, you
6 described the issues that staff had with management
7 not -- and the perception that they had that perhaps
8 staff weren't acting quickly enough to deal with their
9 concerns.

10 At 10084 HH22, as she then was, writes to you. She
11 copied that letter into -- we see here it is 1st
12 November 1990.

13 A. Uh-huh.

14 Q. She is saying:

15 "Following recent team meetings, concerns are again
16 being expressed over the continued lack of change in the
17 situation at Harberton House."

18 She copies this letter into both Bob Bunting and to
19 her NIPSA representative, which is perhaps
20 understandable, given that it is talking about staff.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. But I wondered if -- she again can answer this -- as to
23 why Bob Bunting might have been copied into it at the
24 time.

25 A. The simple answer is I don't know. I can only think

1 that perhaps Bob Bunting was -- the review had been set
2 up at that stage and maybe she was trying to inform him
3 about the situation as she seen it.

4 Q. Well, in her statement -- and I am not going to go to
5 this -- we will be dealing with it with her this
6 afternoon -- at 40184 she talks about writing this
7 letter of concern and she said that it was triggered by
8 a request to open the bungalow on the Harberton House
9 site. Do you remember that that might have been
10 a trigger for the staff?

11 A. No, no, I don't think so. I mean, I think some -- that
12 particular thing is highlighted in my memo to her and
13 she was involved in that whole process.

14 Q. Well, in any event she said that the letter allowed the
15 staff a voice and that your early response was helpful
16 and a reassurance for staff. She used it as a tool to
17 inform staff and confirm your commitment to best
18 practice, and I was asking you were -- when we were
19 talking earlier, you said you understood where she was
20 coming from --

21 A. Absolutely.

22 Q. -- when she wrote to you, but because of the tone of
23 this memo to you, you felt you had to reply in robust
24 terms.

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. As you described to me, that was just part of the cut
2 and thrust of management.

3 A. Yes, and I think staff were feeling very vulnerable at
4 the time. She was probably just reflecting some of the
5 views that had been expressed to her.

6 Q. Well, I am going to look -- move on, Gabriel, to the
7 fact that from the papers we know there was another
8 incident in Harberton House in 1992--

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. -- involving sexual activity among children, which led
11 to you writing a memo to Stella Burnside on 15th
12 May 1992, but the -- if I can just -- to describe the
13 incident, please, if we could just look, first of all,
14 at 15536, this is a Harberton House Strategy Meeting
15 memo that was prepared by TL 4

16 A. Right.

17 Q. It was:

18 "A strategy meeting convened to discuss, collate
19 information and plan for further investigation of a
20 recent incident involving the three-above children."

21 I am just going to read the summary of the incident
22 report here, which was that:

23 "After being approached by a teenage female
24 resident, the resident social worker spoke to the
25 above-named children. At first all three boys were

1 reluctant to say anything. Then said that
2 was going to kick his head in if he didn't ride him or
3 had told he had to ride and
4 he would watch. became upset, saying he hated
5 having to do it. The resident social worker spoke to
6 on his own afterwards as he was still upset. He
7 said it has only happened over the past few weeks,
8 either outside or in their rooms. He went on to say he
9 didn't like doing these things. It made him sad and
10 think about home."

11 If we can scroll on down, please, social work staff
12 were informed of the incident on 6th May '92. Then
13 there is a follow-up incident report.

14 Then there is the strategy meeting about how to deal
15 with these children and what should be done in respect
16 of them, but obviously TL 4 has brought this to
17 your attention.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. You write to Stella Burnside telling her about this and
20 the fact that there have been other incidents in
21 Harberton House around this time, but I am going to look
22 at a memo at 20085, which is of the same day --

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. -- when you write to her telling her about this
25 incident. It is 15th May. This is a memo dealing with

1 the waking night duty in Harberton House.

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. You said that:

4 "You will recall that at the end of October '91 we
5 terminated waking night duty in view of the fact that
6 there had been no night-time incidents for some
7 considerable time at that stage. However, I indicated
8 to you that I would like to keep this matter under
9 review because staff had considerable reservations about
10 the withdrawal of waking night duty and were of the
11 opinion that incidents had ceased precisely because
12 children were aware that there was waking night cover."

13 Now I am not going to go through this in detail, but
14 clearly the incident that was happening in 1992 was
15 happening in the early hours of the morning --

16 A. Uh-huh.

17 Q. -- when there was no waking night cover.

18 A. Right.

19 Q. So children had learned that they could do these things
20 undetected at that time.

21 A. Yes. That was another thing that we were learning, that
22 very often in relation to child abuse or child sexual
23 abuse that the perpetrators were opportunistic.

24 Q. Going through this memo, you talk about the discussions
25 you have had. If I can just scroll on down through it,

1 please, you eventually talk about proposals that HH5 --
2 you make the point, "Look, there are resource
3 implications here. To employ waking night staff is
4 going to cost us money".

5 A. Uh-huh.

6 Q. "It's an additional expense. We're looking at the most
7 cost effective way. The most cost effective way is to
8 employ a care assistant grade rather than a residential
9 social worker". You calculate that the two whole time
10 equivalents --

11 A. That's right.

12 Q. -- of care assistant grade, the approximate yearly costs
13 would be £20,000, plus employer's costs.

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. You are saying that's higher than the normal salary
16 because of the unsocial hours that would have to be
17 worked.

18 Now when we were discussing this earlier, you were
19 explaining to me that you had a budget for things that
20 were within your control --

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. -- that were your responsibilities. If you wanted to go
23 over budget for anything, then you had to elevate that
24 to your line manager --

25 A. That's correct.

1 Q. -- and say, "Look, I need additional money". That's
2 what this was all about.

3 A. Right.

4 Q. In seeking to protect the children, in seeking to
5 provide the best environment and protect them from the
6 type of incident that was occurring and had previously,
7 you had identified the need for waking night duty.

8 A. Yes, and detail was very much to support the argument
9 I was trying to make for additional resources.

10 Q. Gabriel, you will be glad to know that that's all that
11 I want to cover, but I just wondered was there anything
12 else that you felt you hadn't covered.

13 One point that you did raise was that Kevin McCoy,
14 when he talked about there being very little
15 over-occupancy of Harberton House, you said he had
16 underestimated the problem.

17 A. I think so, because we were under sustained pressure for
18 a long time and, I mean, if I wasn't -- hadn't been
19 concerned about the over-occupancy, I wouldn't have
20 opened the bungalow, because I knew that would put
21 additional pressure on staff, even though we had
22 employed additional staff, most of whom were
23 inexperienced and unqualified, but I felt that, you
24 know, staff had to be given something to help ease their
25 burden, because I couldn't see the increased admissions

1 going away in the immediate future.

2 Q. One further document that I am just going to call up,
3 which is at 10655. These were statistics that I believe
4 you compiled in May 1990 to try to show the overall
5 situation. The Inquiry has looked at this before, but
6 this Figure 1 compares figures across England, Northern
7 Ireland and then across the four Boards with regard to
8 the number of social workers per £1000 -- 1000 people in
9 the population --

10 A. Yes, yes.

11 Q. -- and the trained social workers and so forth. You
12 felt that that highlighted starkly the difference
13 between your position and, in fact, others'.

14 A. Yes, yes. I was trying to highlight and give detail of
15 increase in demand along a number of different aspects
16 of residential care -- sorry -- of childcare. Obviously
17 the argument was about more resources, but not just to
18 ask for more resources, but to give facts and figures to
19 indicate that, I mean, there had been a significant
20 increase in the workload.

21 Q. Gabriel, thank you very much. I am sure the Panel
22 Members will have some questions for you.

23 Questions from THE PANEL

24 CHAIRMAN: Could we leave that last one on the screen,
25 please?

1 Gabriel, if I can just pursue in a little bit more
2 detail this issue of comparative staffing levels and the
3 implications of that for resources -- in terms of
4 resources for the work that you were doing. Now
5 I appreciate this may well be suggested to be
6 over-simplifying the position, but in the ultimate
7 analysis, as I understand it, the case you were making
8 at the time was if you do not have the resources to
9 employ sufficient staff and sufficient staff who are
10 appropriately experienced, you simply cannot do the
11 necessary level of work with children --

12 A. What I was -- sorry.

13 Q. -- that was necessary in the Harberton context.

14 A. Yes. The case I was trying to make was that unless we
15 had sufficient resources, we could not do the job to the
16 level that we wanted it to be done.

17 Q. Yes, and the level that you felt was necessary --

18 A. Absolutely, yes.

19 Q. -- given the particular problems --

20 A. Yes, yes.

21 Q. -- that these children displayed, particularly in the
22 context of these sexual episodes --

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. -- that were clearly of considerable concern, very
25 considerable concern at the time.

1 A. Very significant indeed, yes.

2 Q. The chart which we have on the screen at the moment is
3 very interesting. I will come back to it in just one
4 moment, but can I, first of all, clarify one matter of
5 terminology? In the Bunting report it refers to "the
6 Foyle Unit". Was that simply a new name for the
7 Limavady, Londonderry & Strabane Unit of Management?

8 A. Yes. About 1990 the Londonderry, Limavady & Strabane
9 Unit of Management became the Foyle Trust. So just
10 there was a change of name.

11 Q. Yes, but the --

12 A. It's the same entity.

13 Q. The same entity but with a different top structure
14 perhaps and so on. Thank you.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Now the figures which you mentioned just a few minutes
17 ago in relation to the number of Senior Social Workers
18 and social workers which North & West Belfast Trust had
19 compared to yours were mentioned in the Bunting report.
20 Isn't that right?

21 A. That's right.

22 Q. Roughly speaking, if one puts it in round figures, the
23 number of senior and the number of social workers added
24 together in your Unit of Management, now the Foyle
25 Trust, was about four compared to seven for North & West

1 Belfast. So not quite half the number, but certainly
2 very significantly less.

3 A. Uh-huh.

4 Q. This to a degree is replicated in the figures which we
5 see on the screen at present. For example, the Eastern
6 Board had 2.41 social -- trained social workers per 1000
7 of population between the ages of 1 to 15 --

8 A. Uh-huh.

9 Q. -- whereas the Western Board had 1.12 --

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. -- less than half.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. This concern was one which you were raising with your
14 superiors when you wrote this memorandum in order to
15 make the case presumably, say, "This is not just", to be
16 very blunt about it, "people in Derry whinging about not
17 having enough, because when you look at the resources
18 that are being allocated for comparable areas, the
19 figures show that we don't have enough". Is that right?

20 A. That's what I was doing. You have to remember that when
21 I came into post in 1988, my intention was to create the
22 best childcare service that I could. To do that I knew
23 I needed more resources, but I didn't realise until
24 I was in post a while just how badly off we were for
25 resources.

1 Q. It is perhaps unfair to ask you this so many years
2 later, but can you remember where you got those figures
3 from?

4 A. The figures at that time?

5 Q. Yes.

6 A. No, I don't, no. I'm sure a lot of them came from
7 documents from the Department and so on, but I can't
8 remember precisely. 25 years is a long time ago.

9 Q. Yes. Just to underline the point, for example, if one
10 looks at social workers per 1000 of population, in
11 England it's 0.81, the Northern Ireland average is
12 exactly the same, but if you look at the Eastern Board,
13 they have 0.98, the Northern Board 0.71, the Southern
14 Board 0.66 and yourselves 0.66. So although the
15 Northern Ireland average is the same as England, which
16 presumably is England and Wales, it is skewed by the
17 fact that the Eastern Board is considerably above the
18 average and the others are all below it.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Yourselves and Southern Board are significantly below
21 the England average.

22 A. Yes. Uh-huh.

23 Q. Did you get any benefit ultimately in terms of increased
24 resources to match this case that you were making?

25 A. Not that I recall. I remember that Bunting did make

1 some recommendations about increasing staff and I think
2 we got those. Whether it was six or eight I can't
3 remember, but the overall picture -- I knew that or
4 I suspected that, you know, if there had been any
5 increase in the allocation of resources, it would come
6 incrementally, but I don't remember whether that
7 happened.

8 Q. Yes. Although I appreciate the point you make about
9 ultimately matters of resources were dealt with at
10 a higher level --

11 A. Uh-huh.

12 Q. -- in the management structure than yourself, no doubt
13 there were occasions when you met colleagues at
14 a similar level throughout the Board and so on in
15 different areas of responsibility, perhaps primary care
16 --

17 A. Uh-huh.

18 Q. -- or acute care or mental health or something of that
19 nature. We have heard from Mr O'Brien that over the
20 years the Western Board were making the case that there
21 were insufficient resources. Was that something that
22 you believed to be the case from just your general
23 knowledge --

24 A. Yes, yes.

25 Q. -- or was it not something you were aware of?

1 A. I certainly did. You know, I mean, this report comes
2 out of the recommendation that I felt that we were
3 under-resourced, and I was saying to counsel earlier
4 that, you know, I had to fight for resources, because
5 there were four programmes of care in Foyle. Family and
6 childcare was one of them. My colleagues also wanted
7 resources so that they could develop their service. So,
8 I mean, I was trying to make the point that we need
9 resources and the cake was a certain size and I had to
10 try to make the case that we needed a bigger share of
11 the cake.

12 Q. But, of course, the corollary is within that cake if you
13 get a bigger share, the other three units might get
14 less.

15 A. Absolutely, yes.

16 Q. So it is a problem that's replicated all the way up the
17 chain.

18 A. Yes, but I would be very selfish about that and say it
19 wasn't my problem.

20 Q. Can I ask you just to look -- and if we could have it on
21 the screen -- at 40005, please? This is the last
22 sentence of paragraph 18 of your statement, Gabriel --

23 A. Uh-huh.

24 Q. -- if you just happen to have it there. You say:

25 "Both of these measures had additional resource

1 implications and were not within my allocated budget."

2 Now that to me could mean perhaps one of two things.

3 First of all, you simply didn't have the money or

4 alternatively that extra money was allocated.

5 A. In some cases I asked for forgiveness rather than
6 permission. In other cases I asked for permission to do
7 things. I mean, counsel referred to a memo I wrote to
8 my unitary manager about waking night staff, but there
9 were other cases where I said, "Yes, it will require
10 additional resources, but I think it should be done" and
11 then I notified my line managers that I had done it.

12 Q. Yes, which I am sure wasn't always welcome.

13 A. It wasn't a very popular thing to be doing.

14 Q. In that paragraph and the previous paragraph,
15 paragraph 17, you are making the case which I am sure
16 all managers at some stage of their career have to make
17 to their staff, which is that the people on the ground
18 may think the people above them don't understand their
19 problems, but you are making the case you did, and this
20 was the way you had addressed them.

21 A. Yes. I think, you know, I had said that the staff were
22 angry with themselves. I think they had unrealistic
23 expectations of management. They thought, "If we say
24 something and they don't act on it, it means they are
25 not listening to us" whereas I was trying to make the

1 point that where there are resource implications it
2 takes time to do certain things, and because we didn't
3 do it immediately doesn't mean that we didn't listen to
4 what was said. In fact, I was very informed by what
5 they said.

6 Q. Yes. You are making the case that, in fact, a number of
7 changes had been made as a result of listening to what
8 they were saying?

9 A. Absolutely, yes.

10 Q. Thank you.

11 MS DOHERTY: Thanks very much. Can I just ask -- you talked
12 about doing some -- I know this is a long time ago, so
13 you mightn't remember -- but some renovations being done
14 to Fort James to make supervision better.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Can you remember what they were, what type of ...?

17 A. No, I don't.

18 Q. That's fine.

19 A. I remember at one stage talking about something along --
20 resources about £60,000. It was a lot of money then --
21 a lot of money now, much more money then, but the actual
22 renovations that were carried out, no, I don't remember.

23 Q. That's fine. Can I just ask, I mean, some of the
24 witnesses that we have talked to, including the officers
25 in charge, HH5 and FJ³³, suggested that in relation to

1 the integrated agenda with health and social care that
2 one of the problems facing social care was that acute
3 services -- health services, but particularly acute
4 services, took more of the cake. Would that be
5 something that you would agree with?

6 A. Medical services are not cheap and, yes, I think --
7 I mean, if you look at the public, they are more
8 concerned about their local hospital than they will be
9 about social care until issues in relation to social
10 care visit their door and then they become very
11 exercised about it.

12 Q. Yes. I know that one.

13 Just the last question is in relation to -- I mean,
14 clearly there was an increase in the number of children
15 (a) coming into care, but (b) the complexity of the
16 problem they were bringing, and in particular that some
17 of them had had sexual experiences and quite extensive
18 by the looks of it experience.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Was there any time within the -- you know, the
21 Department people got -- within the Board people got
22 together to look strategically at what was happening,
23 the number of children coming in, the issues that were
24 entailed?

25 A. I don't -- I don't actually recall. I remember at one

1 stage we developed -- and I think it's referred to in
2 one of the placement meetings -- we developed
3 a strategic childcare group involving a number of
4 different disciplines to try and do some strategic
5 planning for childcare, but if you're referring to the
6 actual incidents, I don't recall anything of that
7 nature. I am not saying it didn't happen, but I don't
8 recall.

9 Q. Just a final question. Do you think that there was --
10 if Harberton had had the chance to be an assessment
11 centre as opposed to becoming quite quickly
12 a medium-term care centre, do you think that might have
13 assisted in relation to the issues to do with assessment
14 of children and --

15 A. I think generally if both Harberton and Fort James had
16 been able to operate according to their -- the way they
17 should have operated, it certainly would have helped,
18 yes.

19 Q. Yes, because that's one of the things that has come
20 through is that it wasn't just about Harberton not being
21 able to be an assessment centre. Fort James had to take
22 emergency admissions as well. So ...

23 A. I mean, Harberton was never set up to look after
24 children on a long-term basis. That was not our
25 intention. You know, the idea was that children be

1 assessed, and then if they needed long-term care, to go
2 on to Fort James. Because of the situation with which
3 we were confronted, that didn't happen at all, you know.

4 Q. Do you feel that the fostering -- the additional
5 resources going into fostering, did that make
6 a difference in terms of alternatives to ...?

7 A. Well, I think it did, because, you know, part of the
8 strategy was to move towards community care type
9 provision, more fostering, fee-paying foster parents,
10 specialist foster parents, childcare, childminding,
11 daycare, all that sort of thing to try and keep children
12 in -- at home and to support their parents at home.

13 Q. So that shift did have an impact?

14 A. It did happen eventually, some of it during my time and
15 some of it after I'd left.

16 Q. Okay. Thanks very much. That has been very helpful.

17 A. Okay. Thank you.

18 MR LANE: Clearly there was quite a number of the children
19 at Harberton had suffered sexual abuse at home --

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. -- before they came in. Do you know of any reason why
22 there would have been such large numbers or was it just
23 chance that that's the way it worked out at that time?

24 A. I have asked myself that question many times and I just
25 don't know. I think -- I think, you know, it's maybe

1 serendipity that there seemed to be a lot of very
2 damaged children who had experienced very significant
3 problems and had complex problems who all came along at
4 the same time and I could see no other explanation for
5 it than that.

6 Q. And --

7 A. Oh, could I just say --

8 Q. Sorry.

9 A. -- I think maybe too we were becoming more aware of the
10 problems that children were having and that maybe
11 helped -- not -- I mean assisted the fact that all those
12 children were coming along. They mightn't have been
13 spotted in previous years.

14 Q. Yes. Was it only apparent after the abuse had been --
15 the peer abuse had been identified?

16 A. What?

17 Q. That there was such a bulk of children who had had this
18 experience?

19 A. No, because we -- the admissions crisis had been ongoing
20 --

21 Q. Right.

22 A. -- before the abuse -- peer abuse incidents happened.
23 So we were concerned about the number of children being
24 admitted, yes.

25 Q. The number of children in total or the number of

1 children with experience of abuse?

2 A. The number of children in total.

3 Q. Yes, because if you are aware of the number of children
4 who had experienced abuse, were any plans made to
5 provide -- whatever you call it -- treatment or work
6 with them to cope with their experiences?

7 A. My recollection of the situation is that of the children
8 involved in the peer abuse we had only identified one
9 who had had -- who had been sexually abused at the time.
10 I think there was one girl who may have been I think
11 engaging in sexual activity with boys in her community,
12 but we had insufficient knowledge of what we were
13 dealing with on admission. Most of them were
14 admitted -- I think Bunting makes the point -- admitted
15 because of their behavioural problems, not because of
16 sexual abuse.

17 Q. Yes. I know that there's recommendation for psychiatric
18 help and so on in the Bunting report, but once the abuse
19 had come to light, was anything specific done to help
20 that group of children cope with their experiences?

21 A. I know that there were referrals to various specialist
22 services in Belfast.

23 Q. Right.

24 A. Just how many I can't remember --

25 Q. Right.

1 A. -- but I know that we -- after -- after the abuse had
2 been identified I carried out a review on each of the
3 children and we tried to identify what was needed in the
4 circumstances.

5 Q. Obviously HH5 was away at the time and having somebody
6 acting up is always a bit of a difficult, stressful
7 period anyway. Did you feel that his absence made
8 a difference?

9 A. I'm not sure. I had a lot of confidence and respect in
10 HH5 and HH5's ability and integrity and, you know, he
11 was a tremendous support to me during the time, but HH22
12 is a very experienced officer too, and, you know, the
13 fact that HH5 was away, I can't say, you know, whether
14 it made a difference.

15 Q. Right. The Chairman was asking about other Boards and
16 so on. Was there any sense in which the Boards which
17 were underfunded ganged up on the Eastern Board to try
18 and get more resources? Was anything -- any work done
19 across the Boards in that way?

20 A. I don't know. There certainly was -- I mean, I just
21 can't recall whether -- you know, as far as I'm
22 concerned there was no ganging up. You know, we made
23 the case.

24 Q. Yes.

25 A. We weren't trying to take resources away from the

1 Eastern Board.

2 Q. Sure.

3 A. We were trying to increase the resources we had.

4 Q. Was there any discussion of this sort of issue within
5 trade unions or professional associations?

6 A. There was quite a bit of discussion with my colleagues,
7 because I -- throughout the province I would have been
8 meeting with them from time to time --

9 Q. Yes.

10 A. -- for various things. So we had discussion about that.

11 Q. So this sort of problem was generally known?

12 A. Oh, it was generally known, yes, yes.

13 Q. I think that's everything I was wanting to ask. Thank
14 you very much.

15 A. Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN: Well, thank you very much indeed for coming to
17 speak to us today, Gabriel. It's been most helpful to
18 us and we are very grateful to you for doing so. I hope
19 we won't need to ask you to come back, but one never
20 knows, but I think that probably is the only occasion or
21 this is the only occasion we may need to speak to you,
22 but thank you very much.

23 A. Okay. Thank you very much.

24 MS SMITH: Thank you, Gabriel.

25 (Witness withdrew)

1 MS SMITH: There is one other witness today. I am not sure
2 if she is in attendance yet or not, but if we could take
3 a short break, and then perhaps if she isn't here, then
4 an early lunch.

5 CHAIRMAN: Well, we'll rise and see what the position is.

6 (11.35 am)

7 (Lunch break)

8 (2.00 pm)

9 WITNESS HH22 (called)

10 MS SMITH: Good afternoon, Chairman, Panel Members. Our
11 next witness is HH22. She is "HH22". HH22 wishes to
12 take a religious oath and she also wishes to maintain
13 her anonymity, Chairman.

14 WITNESS HH22 (sworn)

15 CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, HH22. Please sit down.

16 Questions from COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY

17 MS SMITH: Now, HH22, you've given a statement to the
18 Inquiry, which can be found at 40181 to 40187, and it
19 includes exhibits. If we can just look at that, please.

20 A. I just need my glasses.

21 Q. There seems to have been double numbering. The number
22 I have got is 40181. I normally can get wrong numbers,
23 but certainly that's a different -- 40181.

24 CHAIRMAN: Yes.

25 MS SMITH: I am not quite sure what has gone wrong with our

1 system, but we seem to have Bates numbered something
2 with the same number. Is there another document -- is
3 that the only document that can be called up with that
4 Bates number?

5 EPE OPERATOR: You can only have one.

6 MS SMITH: You can only have one. Okay. Well, I know the
7 Panel Members have your statement. It is not possible
8 by the sounds of things for me to call it up here. We
9 can take that down.

10 CHAIRMAN: Do she have your copy of her statement?

11 MS SMITH: Do you have a copy of your own statement there,
12 HH22?

13 A. Yes. It is down at the back.

14 CHAIRMAN: A paper copy?

15 MS SMITH: A paper copy?

16 A. Aye. It's in the back.

17 CHAIRMAN: Well, as it is not very long, perhaps we can work
18 from the hard copy.

19 MS SMITH: Yes, I think we can work from the hard copy,
20 HH22. We will do that rather than call it up on the
21 screen, because we can't seem to be able to call it up,
22 I am afraid. We will have to check the Bates numbering
23 situation with regard to it, I am afraid.

24 A. You don't want me to have a paper copy?

25 Q. Oh, no. I do want you to have a paper copy. Yes, I do

1 indeed. Do you have it there? If not, we will print
2 one off for you.

3 A. Yes. I have it here.

4 Q. Well, HH22, in the first paragraph of your statement you
5 set out your career path --

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. -- and your qualifications, and I know, because I was
8 being nosy, that in 1978 you went to do the two-year
9 CQSW course in

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. But at that stage you were -- you got the job as deputy
12 officer in charge at the end of that period --

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. -- for Harberton House. You came back and you never
15 actually completed the course at that point. Isn't that
16 right?

17 A. Yes. I wasn't successful, yes.

18 Q. You subsequently went on to get a different
19 qualification at Queen's, though. Is that right?

20 A. Yes. Uh-huh, in 1987.

21 Q. You were describing the circumstances around that, that
22 at the time you weren't pushing yourself and you weren't
23 really being pushed by anyone else --

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. -- to conclude that qualification.

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. But you had certainly done a lot of the learning towards
3 it.

4 A. Yes, absolutely.

5 Q. It is correct that between 1975 and 1978 you were
6 actually working in Fort James, which is one of the
7 homes that the Inquiry has been looking at --

8 A. Yes, that's right, yes.

9 Q. -- in this module of evidence. We don't have any
10 documentation -- I think we have got another Bates
11 number. We can maybe pull this up. If we look at
12 40876.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. It's on the screen now, HH22. So we have got both
15 a hard copy and we will have to correct the numbering of
16 the other document.

17 CHAIRMAN: That is 4...?

18 MS SMITH: 40876, and it goes through to -- well, the
19 exhibits are attached, yes -- to 40882.

20 Can I just ask you to confirm, HH22, that this is,
21 in fact, the statement that you provided --

22 A. Yes, it is.

23 Q. -- for the Inquiry? I think you signed it on 5th June
24 this year?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Now just talking about Fort James, you worked in Fort
2 James between '75 and '78 before you went to
3 Now the Inquiry has really only got documents that start
4 in or around 1980 in respect of the homes that we are
5 looking at it.

6 So in paragraph 2 and 4 of your statement you have
7 helpfully set out an overview of your time in Fort
8 James. It is clear that a difficulty that the actual
9 home presented for the supervision of children -- it
10 presented itself with a difficulty because of the manner
11 of home that it was, the building itself.

12 A. Yes, that's right.

13 Q. You say in that -- those paragraphs that essentially you
14 were dealing with the primary care of children. You
15 were receiving little information from fieldwork about
16 the children who were coming into the home.

17 A. That's right.

18 Q. You weren't giving them little individual attention at
19 that stage.

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. That was just the nature of the work as it was in the
22 early to mid '70s.

23 A. That's right, yes.

24 Q. Whenever you were there, you were telling me that babies
25 were still being taken in in 1978 when you left.

1 A. Yes, that's right, yes.

2 Q. Although you did say that HH5 was the officer
3 in charge at this point in time.

4 A. He was, yes.

5 Q. You said that he was trying to get a record-keeping
6 system that allowed you to follow a paper trail --

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. -- trying to get fieldworkers and social workers more
9 involved in working together --

10 A. Yes, that's right, yes.

11 Q. -- rather than just the fieldworkers handing the child
12 over to you. Is that correct?

13 A. That's right, yes.

14 Q. I asked you did you recall any particular difficulties
15 or any untoward incidents at that time period in Fort
16 James at all?

17 A. I don't remember very much about serious incidents as
18 such. All I know is it was a very busy house, and it
19 was complicated by the age range from babies right up to
20 17, and it was a large, rambling house. So it was hard
21 to supervise, and then the grounds as well were big.
22 I think it was also difficult for the young people who
23 were coming from clearly estates and small houses and
24 that, you know, to get used to the building as it was.
25 So I have no recollections of serious incidents.

1 Q. One person has described it as chaotic. It was crazy
2 and that she felt outside her comfort zone. Would that
3 tally --

4 A. That was one of the residents?

5 Q. One of the residents --

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. -- when she arrived in 1980, but that would have been --
8 that would have been a fair impression?

9 A. Yes, I think that would have been what it would have
10 felt like for a young person coming in.

11 Q. I was asking you generally in general terms before we
12 come on to look at your time in Harberton House, but in
13 general terms how aware were you about the sexual
14 activity between children? Were you aware at all or
15 what was the level of your knowledge about the sexual
16 abuse of children?

17 A. I think what we would have understood was sexual abuse
18 more between adults and children and we had met that
19 clearly before. I think as well we would have seen
20 maybe thinking around sexual interest becoming real at
21 puberty rather than younger, and I think that was
22 something that we didn't maybe have a sense or a real
23 understanding about. Obviously the peer abuse showed
24 children as young as 9, and a 9-year-old in particular,
25 very actively involved in creating, you know, situations

1 to allow it to happen. So that was fairly new for us.

2 Q. I am going to come on to look at that shortly, HH22.

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. But just while we are still on the issue of your time in
5 Fort James --

6 A. All right. Okay. Sorry. I thought you were asking me
7 --

8 Q. No, no. That's in general terms, HH22.

9 A. Oh, right. Okay.

10 Q. But I just wanted to ask you about another incident that
11 the Inquiry is looking at and that's the case of FJ5.
12 He came along after you'd left Fort James-- isn't that
13 right --

14 A. That's right.

15 Q. -- as officer in charge? You seem to remember that you
16 may have actually been sent to the train station to pick
17 him up from the train when he came to interview for the
18 job?

19 A. Yes, I think -- that's a memory I have, yes. I think
20 that was possibly when he was being interviewed.
21 I don't have any memory of anything to do with his own
22 situation other than hearing through HH5 about the
23 outcome of the court case, which was that he had been
24 acquitted, and I remember just asking clearly for some
25 help in understanding what acquittal meant, you know,

1 but not -- I really didn't have any understanding of
2 what he had done. I'm not really clear on that still.

3 Q. There was no conversation between you and your former
4 colleagues from Fort James about the matter that you can
5 recall?

6 A. No, no.

7 Q. Well, whenever you were in , the decision was
8 taken to set up Harberton House.

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. That was seen as an exciting innovation.

11 A. Yes, yes, and very clearly I knew something of it before
12 I left for . So I knew it was something that
13 I really wanted to be part of, and I knew that HH5 was
14 already involving himself in the setting up of this new
15 sort of assessment unit, and I clearly felt that that
16 was where I wanted to be. So I actually had applied and
17 was successful in getting the deputy officer in charge
18 post, and I knew of that before I -- obviously I had
19 done that before I had returned from . So
20 I was very pleased to be part of the start of it, very
21 much so.

22 Q. Paragraph 5 to 8 of your statement here you give
23 an overview of Harberton House.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. You describe the split that came about --

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- where -- I mean, it was intended to be an assessment
3 unit where children would only stay for a short period
4 of time --

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. -- and the plan was then to move them on to presumably
7 Fort James --

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. -- or back home --

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. -- or wherever, but that never actually really was how
12 the home operated. Isn't that correct?

13 A. Well, it did in the early days from the point of view of
14 we had children admitted from as far away as
15 Enniskillen, you know, and we had some sort of success
16 with that, but it came quite quickly that kids were
17 maybe having to stay much longer and maybe assessments
18 taking a wee bit longer, or children not having anywhere
19 to go from having an assessment completed. So ...

20 Q. There were only so many beds in Fort James, for example
21 --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. -- or I know the Board --

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. -- was using Nazareth House in Derry as well at this

1 time.

2 A. Yes, yes, and returning to family wasn't necessarily
3 what was right for the child, or I know that fostering
4 was difficult. So finding an appropriate foster home
5 was difficult.

6 Q. So in effect then Harberton became a residential child
7 unit as well.

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. You talk about the split between the --

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. -- assessment unit and the medium-stay unit --

12 A. That's right, yes.

13 Q. -- as it became known, but that didn't take place until
14 five years after Harberton opened. Isn't that right?

15 A. Yes, uh-huh, and I think in thinking about it it was
16 nearly like -- it began as an internal thing. We knew
17 -- we knew that we could not work with a group of 25
18 children. We knew that there was a need to have
19 children moving at least through the building. So --
20 and that freed up some of the assessment space, but it
21 then meant that by '85/'86 we put systems in place and
22 it was an agreed thing through the Board and that we
23 would be seen as two separate units, and on paper it was
24 grand, but in practice we still had the same big
25 building and we still had the same big grounds, and we

1 did some modifications on the building, but we did try
2 and separate as much as we could.

3 Positives was that we had two -- we had extra staff.
4 We had two staff teams, and I became team leader of the
5 medium-stay unit and HH5 remained team leader of the
6 assessment unit.

7 Q. You were explaining to me that the children from both
8 the assessment unit and the medium-stay effectively
9 mixed together.

10 A. They could do. They could do.

11 Q. Now moving on to the discussion of what we are calling
12 the peer abuse episodes --

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. -- at the end of 1989/1990, you refer to these in
15 paragraphs 9 to 11, and you say there that it was
16 a devastating period for staff.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. I was asking you to describe to me just how staff felt
19 when this came to light.

20 A. I think it was the very -- you know, the very nature of
21 it and the fact that we had been charged to care,
22 protect and control, and we felt that the extent of it
23 and the size of the abuse just -- you know, it really,
24 really concerned us greatly, and the teams -- both sets
25 of teams were very, very upset and concerned about the

1 fact that it had happened.

2 Q. When we were talking about it earlier, you said that
3 there was a feeling of guilt, because you hadn't
4 recognised that this was going on.

5 A. I was just trying to say to you there that we have --
6 you know, we were professional staff. We were trying
7 very hard to care for a large group of children, and the
8 very nature of the job, which is to protect, to care,
9 seemed to be compromised by the very nature of the --
10 you know, the abuse.

11 Q. The word you used to me was "crushed".

12 A. Yes, yes.

13 Q. Now one thing that the Inquiry has learnt is about the
14 circumstances that led up to this happening.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. I mean, when I was talking to you earlier, we were
17 saying that we have learnt that there were a number of
18 children coming into --

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. -- the homes in excess of what was the norm.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Those children were presenting with challenging
23 behaviours.

24 A. Yes, very much so.

25 Q. There was nowhere in the community for them to go.

1 A. That's right.

2 Q. There weren't sufficient foster placements. You felt
3 pressure -- staff were pressured.

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. It's been -- the point has been made that the staff
6 complement in the home was meeting the Castle Priory
7 standards.

8 A. Yes, that's right.

9 Q. But these children were difficult to deal with. Is that
10 correct?

11 A. Well, we were at full capacity. We had twelve and
12 thirteen in the main house -- in the main unit, the two
13 houses, and then we had a bungalow that had opened, and
14 we had four more there. We had really we still believed
15 minimum cover, minimum staff team, and it -- that was
16 what we were dealing with at the time, and we were
17 seriously under pressure to deal with trying to continue
18 to do the work that we believed was necessary, which is
19 individual work, which was making sure that kids were
20 getting the best appropriate care and that care planning
21 was being maintained and that assessment -- any
22 assessments being carried out that we were trying to do.
23 So, you know, it was difficult. It felt as if we were
24 just managing large groups, you know.

25 Q. It has been described that the therapeutic work you

1 would have liked to be doing --

2 A. Yes, yes.

3 Q. -- was taking a second place to the primary care of
4 these children.

5 A. Yes. I mean -- yes, yes.

6 Q. Dominic Burke has said that he sought to reassure you by
7 saying, "Look, it was a staff member who brought this
8 matter to light".

9 A. Absolutely, yes, yes.

10 Q. Do you recall that conversation?

11 A. With Dominic?

12 Q. Yes.

13 A. I don't recall it, but it was definitely a staff member
14 who brought it to light, and it was through just
15 a casual comment that she heard and recognised and
16 understood, and just to say that **HH 32** incident
17 report was in great detail and did show that, you know,
18 there was a connection between our thinking about
19 children who have been sexually abused and then the fact
20 that they can, you know, have sexualised behaviours. We
21 knew that. We understood that.

22 The issue for us was that we did not have -- I think
23 out of all of the children that was reviewed I think we
24 had one child who had a previous history of abuse,
25 sexual abuse in their file, in their information coming

1 into Harberton, and the rest of them we would be
2 picking up on that as we lived alongside of them. So
3 ...

4 Q. I mean, we know that there was -- when we were talking
5 earlier, you were saying there was a whole internal
6 investigation --

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. -- about what had happened --

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. -- and how this had come about.

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. One of the things, as you said, was looking at the fact
13 that you didn't know that these children had been
14 sexualised.

15 A. Yes, yes.

16 Q. Then there was the external investigation --

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. -- by Bob Bunting and his review team.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. You say in your statement that that review was seen as
21 helpful.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. It was fully accepted by the staff, management and
24 Board.

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Now we were talking a little bit about this. You were
2 saying that you were spoken to by the Bunting review.
3 Is that right?

4 A. I don't have a clear memory of it, but I believe I was,
5 you know. It was -- just everything was available and
6 made, you know -- and that meant staff as well as us as
7 managers, you know. So I do believe that I would have
8 been spoken -- I don't have a clear memory of that, but
9 yes, I would have been.

10 Q. But certainly, I mean, we know from the Bunting report
11 itself that nine senior staff were spoken to.

12 A. Yes, yes.

13 Q. I take it you would have fallen into that category?

14 A. Yes, I would have, yes.

15 Q. There were obviously statements taken from some other
16 members of staff.

17 A. Absolutely, yes.

18 Q. The Inquiry has learned that the Department certainly
19 felt that the report -- the Bunting report didn't
20 actually get to the nub of the issue.

21 A. Uh-huh.

22 Q. For them that was how had the matter gone undetected for
23 so long.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. They felt that staff hadn't been interviewed by the

1 review team, but the suggestion this morning from
2 Gabriel Carey was that they had been, at least certainly
3 some of them had been, and you think that's correct?

4 A. I do. I do believe that's correct, yes.

5 Q. We were -- I was trying to describe to you that what the
6 Department were interested in knowing was they wanted
7 a report that focused on Harberton House and the events
8 in Harberton House such as, "Where were you at a certain
9 time" --

10 A. Uh-huh.

11 Q. -- "when this abuse was happening and what was your role
12 at that time?" and so forth.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. I wondered would staff have seen such an approach as
15 helpful or might it have been seen as in some way being
16 critical of them, drilling down into that level of
17 detail?

18 A. I think my response to that would be I think every
19 single member of staff within that unit questioned
20 themselves exactly like that. I think in the bigger
21 picture I think it was helpful that we weren't sitting
22 alone with it, that we weren't sitting isolated as
23 a children's home trying to deal with some very, very
24 serious incident and there was no bigger -- you know, it
25 wasn't seen in the bigger light, because I believe that

1 it was the overcrowding -- you know, there was a lot of
2 external factors that influenced what had happened at
3 that point in time in Harberton House.

4 Q. I also asked you if the report had been delivered that
5 -- Gabriel Carey felt the staff might -- felt fear they
6 might be scapegoated in some way. If there had been
7 a report that in some way apportioned blame to members
8 of staff, how might that have affected things?

9 A. I think -- I think staff were feeling so sort of
10 devastated anyway, I think it would have just crushed
11 them further as well, and I think what was more
12 important was to learn from, you know, and to create the
13 wider picture that we could move forward and move on
14 without, you know -- I don't believe it was helpful.
15 That's why I believe Bunting was so helpful to us as
16 a team of staff who had been just devastated by the
17 whole incident, you know.

18 Q. You felt that that report helped you to boost morale?

19 A. Oh, absolutely, and to build on it again and to learn
20 and to -- you know, part of my role as a manager was to
21 continue -- we still were caring for children. We still
22 had a full house of children that needed to be cared for
23 and we needed to believe in ourselves that we were
24 a professional team of people who could care, protect
25 and control, you know, and that was what I felt that the

1 Bunting review did for us.

2 Q. Can you remember -- we have been told that there was
3 a visit by Dr McCoy to both Harberton and Fort James in
4 around June of -- late June 1990. Do you remember that,
5 HH22?

6 A. You had asked -- I don't have a memory of that visit.
7 I don't doubt that it happened and I'm sure it did, but
8 I don't today have any memory of that.

9 Q. Well, in paragraphs 12 and 13 --

10 A. Right.

11 Q. -- of your statement, HH22, you talk about the letter of
12 concern --

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. -- that you wrote to Gabriel Carey, and I think we
15 looked at that letter this morning, and I am not sure we
16 need to call it up again.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. But you copied that letter both to NIPSA and to Bob
19 Bunting. Isn't that right?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. I just wonder if you could explain a little bit about
22 why you wrote that letter. I mean, I know you do talk
23 about it here in paragraph 13, but if you could maybe
24 expand a little bit about it.

25 A. We had just been through a terrible year, meaning that

1 we had obviously the peer abuse incident in March. We
2 had had an internal investigation. We had an external
3 investigation. Every single -- we were so transparent
4 about everything. We had the Bunting review report came
5 out in November, and I had been informed by Gabriel that
6 we were opening the bungalow again.

7 I had gone back in to talk to the senior staff on
8 the Harberton site and we were just -- we thought, "My
9 goodness! What is this? You know, we're going ..." --
10 we could see exactly the same situation as was back in
11 February/March time, even January time, which was a full
12 house of children, plus the bungalow being opened again,
13 and I think that was -- that was why it was -- we felt
14 it was necessary to write such a letter, and also to cc
15 it to NIPSA, who is our trade union, and also to Bob
16 Bunting, who we had seen as sort of a support to us, you
17 know.

18 Gabriel obviously responded and responded in length
19 and clearly pointed out the bigger picture, which was
20 important, and which I used then from the point of view
21 of informing the staff and that, because clearly there
22 was a bigger picture. For us on the ground on that day
23 we felt that we were creating another unsafe environment
24 for the residents and for ourselves as a social work --
25 as two social work teams.

1 Q. And fear was setting in that history might repeat
2 itself. Would that be your position?

3 A. Yes, yes.

4 Q. Well, you certainly found Gabriel's response to be
5 positive and reassuring and you were able to reassure
6 staff --

7 A. Well, yes, yes.

8 Q. -- with his letter, knowing that they effectively had
9 your back --

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. -- and they understood the situation --

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. -- and allowed -- sorry.

14 A. I just wanted to say that, you know, we were -- we were
15 still doing a lot of team building. We were still --
16 when I say "we", I mean me -- myself as a manager and
17 the other managers acting up -- in trying to get the
18 team to believe in themselves again and to see that they
19 were able to offer a very good professional --

20 Q. Service?

21 A. -- service to -- to the residents, and we felt we were
22 possibly going to be compromised again.

23 Q. Certainly this -- by expressing your concerns --

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. -- you felt able to draw breath?

1 A. Yes, and the bungalow did open. It opened on
2 12th November.

3 Q. I think one point you made about his letter was his
4 offer to come and see --

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. -- and meet with staff --

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. -- was seen as particularly positive.

9 A. Well, I think yes, because we were dealing directly with
10 TL 4 , who would have been our manager, our
11 line manager, and sometimes Gabriel would have been
12 slightly distant to that, and he would have been in
13 a position to know the bigger picture. I obviously was
14 on the ground. I was sitting very close to the team --
15 the two teams of staff and very close to the resident
16 group. So I thought it was important that he offered to
17 do that, to come and talk to us and talk to the teams.

18 Q. I am just going to move on, because we were talking
19 about the fact that in 1992 there was a further incident
20 involving three boys. I was asking you if you
21 remembered that, and even looking at the --

22 A. No.

23 Q. -- meetings of -- the minutes of the strategy meeting
24 that you were at --

25 A. No.

1 Q. -- you didn't actually have a recall of it.

2 A. No.

3 Q. But it is clear that it was a similar incident in some
4 ways in that what was happening between these three boys
5 was happening in the early morning.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. By this stage we know that waking night staff had been
8 introduced as an immediate measure --

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. -- not quite immediate, but in the summer or September
11 of 1990, and then removed again in October '91.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. I just wondered what your view was of having waking
14 staff in the home.

15 A. Well, we believed waking night staff was important. In
16 the early days we would have used waking night staff out
17 of the social work team, which meant that it would have
18 been part of their 24-hour shift, you know. They would
19 have done waking night.

20 In the end we felt that was really too -- we needed
21 the full complement of professional staff, not having
22 them out sort of on waking nights. So it was agreed
23 that we would employ care assistant grade staff and that
24 allowed the social work staff, the professional staff,
25 to be on the floor, you know, doing daytime shifts. So

1 that's what we did, but I would believe that waking
2 night staff are very important.

3 Q. And it had to be an additional resource to the resource
4 that was already in the home?

5 A. It had to be additional. Yes, it had to be. It
6 couldn't be -- we couldn't dilute the -- continue to
7 dilute the team as we were doing and we could not do
8 without them. We could not do without them either.

9 Q. So they were reintroduced --

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. -- at some point in 1992.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. I think it was certainly May '92 that Gabriel Carey was
14 writing further up the line seeking the additional
15 resource.

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. The additional money for the resource, I should say.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. You certainly saw waking night staff as very much
20 a benefit to the home.

21 A. Oh, very much so, yes.

22 Q. There's a number -- another issue. We have seen a lot
23 of police material coming through which suggests that
24 there was -- that sexual activity between children was
25 something of an ongoing problem. I just wondered about

1 what you recall about what incidents -- when a decision
2 was taken to report to police and who did report those
3 matters?

4 A. I think if a young person made any type of complaint
5 about another young person of a sexual nature and it was
6 a complaint, meaning that they wanted something done
7 about it, then that would have been -- they would have
8 been asked immediately what they believed they wanted
9 done, you know, and then we would have also said to
10 them, "We believe this is the best way to do it" and we
11 would have informed police.

12 Q. You were saying to me that would have been your job. If
13 a staff member came to you and said --

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. -- " wants to complain about " --

16 A. It was able to be done at the lowest level from my point
17 of view. Now that might be a memory from more recently,
18 but certainly we had no difficulties in reporting
19 directly to police.

20 Q. If I have understood you correctly, and I think what we
21 were talking about earlier, the position was that if you
22 -- a member of staff --

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. -- witnessed some inappropriate behaviour between
25 children --

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- then you would have addressed that on the spot.

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. But if a child later came --

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. -- or in a completely different context came and said,

7 "You know, I have been touched by John".

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. "I want you to do something about it", that's the type
10 of incident that would then have resulted in reporting?

11 A. Yes, absolutely. Absolutely.

12 Q. I am going to come on to a girl called HIA233 --

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. -- who was a resident in your care in the 1990s --

15 A. Uh-huh.

16 Q. -- in Harberton House. She is "HIA233". I am not going

17 to go through what's in the police papers, but they can

18 be found at 30614 to 30638. It is clear that at 6... --

19 sorry -- 30628 there was a strategy meeting in respect

20 of this child in Harberton House in October 1992.

21 Now I just was asking you about another incident
22 involving the boy she complained about in March '95, but
23 you weren't in the house at that stage.

24 A. No. I was on maternity leave. Yes.

25 Q. You were on pregnancy leave. If we can just look --

1 HIA233's statement can be found at 00... -- the part of
2 the statement I want to look at is 007 to 008.

3 Now if we look at paragraph 21 here, she is talking
4 about her time in Harberton, and she talks about -- the
5 names are blocked out here and the people have been
6 given reference numbers, just as you have been, HH22,
7 but she complains about a member of staff in the unit,
8 who she talks about there at the end of that paragraph,
9 "HH15". I am just going use his first name, HH15 --

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. -- because I know you know who we are talking about.

12 She describes him as:

13 "A big brute of a man. He would grab me by the neck
14 and batter me."

15 She said:

16 "HH5 knew HH15 beat me, but he didn't do anything
17 about that."

18 Now when she gave evidence back in -- last year,
19 I spoke to her and I spoke to HH5 about that, but I just
20 wondered about your memories of this employee, HH15.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. You worked with him.

23 A. He -- he would have been a member of the assessment unit
24 team. I would have been responsible for the medium-stay
25 unit team, but HH15 would have been somebody that

1 I wouldn't have had direct professional responsibility
2 for, but he would have been around and he would have
3 been about and he would have supported both units when
4 need be.

5 Q. HH5 has told us that his memory was that female staff
6 would have called on HH15 to help out --

7 A. Yes, at times.

8 Q. -- with a difficult situation.

9 A. At times, yes, at times.

10 Q. I just wondered did you have any memory of him being
11 overly physical with children in any way or --

12 A. I don't have any memory of him being over-physical, no.

13 Q. I think you made a point to me also that for some reason
14 the children that you were looking after didn't like
15 males.

16 A. Well, that was true as well. We had a number of
17 children who would have been -- would have had concerns
18 about men, you know, about males, and that -- we needed
19 to be aware of that and we needed to keep that in the
20 back of our minds as well.

21 Q. Well, in your statement -- you are aware that HIA233 in
22 her statement here, if we can just scroll on down, she
23 talks about the incident involving the other child in
24 the house, about where she alleged that he had raped
25 her. Again we talked about that in her evidence, but in

1 this she said, if I can just find it, if we can scroll
2 down, she said -- yes. Yes. She said --

3 A. Just on down.

4 Q. Yes. Just there.

5 A. Oh, yes.

6 Q. "HH22" -- she told a young girl, "HH21" -- I think it
7 was HH21 -- HH21 about it and she told HH 20, who was
8 a member of staff:

9 " HH 20 then told HH22, who was the head of the long
10 stay unit in Harberton. HH22 said, 'Are we back with
11 these lies again, HIA233?' She said I was going to end
12 up in training school. She asked why I hadn't told her
13 and I said, 'I learned years ago not to tell staff', to
14 which she replied, 'Are you implying we wouldn't believe
15 you?'"

16 Then she goes on to talk about it. This is the only
17 mention of you --

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. -- in her statement to the Inquiry. She is suggesting
20 that you were accusing her of telling lies about the
21 incident --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. -- and also telling her she was going end up in Training
24 School. Now, first of all, we know from paperwork that
25 HIA233 was actually going to --

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- very shortly after this.

3 A. It was part of her care plan anyway.

4 Q. I just want to be clear. In her evidence to the
5 Inquiry, which was Day 16, at page 115 of that I put to
6 her that:

7 "You were told -- you told your sister to say to
8 your mother that you were going to be sent to training
9 school the next day. Now there is no particular reason
10 for you to go to training school, only your own wish to
11 go there. Is that correct?"

12 She said:

13 "I was told that I was trying basically, 'These lies
14 again', by this person I name there" -- that's you --
15 "who was over our unit at that end. She says, 'You're
16 going to end up in a training school'. I said, 'So be
17 it'. I said, 'Send me there'. I actually -- at that
18 stage I didn't care."

19 A. Uh-huh.

20 Q. I know that you comment upon this matter in your witness
21 statement at paragraphs 14 and 15. If we can just go to
22 that, please. The page reference is actually going to
23 be 40880. It's 40880. Yes. You say that as manager of
24 the home you wouldn't speak directly with the young
25 person after they made a statement of complaint to

1 another person. Your role -- there was a reason for
2 doing that. Isn't that correct, HH22?

3 A. Yes, only -- yes, that once it becomes a complaint and
4 once police become involved, my role would be to make
5 sure that procedures, you know, are followed, and
6 I wouldn't be particularly asking -- I wouldn't be
7 asking HIA233 to talk to me about any part of that.
8 I certainly wouldn't have been saying that she was
9 telling lies.

10 I also talked about the fact that the young fella
11 that she had named was also a resident in my unit. So
12 just to say that, you know, we would have been very,
13 very clear on the rights of both of the young people at
14 that point in time.

15 Q. I mean, it is difficult with your duty towards both
16 children --

17 A. Yes, yes.

18 Q. -- to protect each of them --

19 A. Yes, yes.

20 Q. -- in a way that was required.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. This is an allegation made by one child against another
23 --

24 A. Yes, yes.

25 Q. -- but it's a difficult path to manoeuvre.

1 A. Yes, it is. I also was clear that I would have been
2 part of the decision-making about her care plan to go to
3 Training School. So I would have been most likely
4 involved in the meetings and the reviews and the --
5 leading up to the decision being made, which was already
6 in place, and she was going to Training School. So
7 I may have said to her, "You are going to Training
8 School", but it would have been to do with her care
9 plan, not to do as a result of what she had said.

10 Q. Well, HH22, thank you for that. You will be glad to
11 know that there's nothing else that I want to ask you.

12 A. Thank you.

13 Q. But I just wondered if there was anything further that
14 you feel would be of assistance to the Inquiry that you
15 haven't covered in your evidence today that you wish to
16 say.

17 A. No, I don't think so. I think I'm okay. Thank you.

18 Q. Well, the Panel Members may have some questions for you.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. So if you just stay there for a moment, please.

21 A. Uh-huh.

22 Questions from THE PANEL

23 CHAIRMAN: HH22, may I just follow on something you said
24 about the very comprehensive report and analysis
25 prepared by **HH 32** in the aftermath of the

1 discoveries of what was happening --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. -- in the early part of 1990? You said that the files
4 which Harberton House had, in other words, containing
5 information that had come in with the child --

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. -- only showed that one out of I think it is seven
8 children had had previous sexual abuse --

9 A. Uh-huh.

10 Q. -- but the -- we don't have it on the screen, but from
11 recollection this report shows --

12 A. Yes. Some --

13 Q. -- information against each of the children --

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. -- relating to some form of, if I can put it in a very
16 neutral way, sexual experience.

17 A. Yes. That information would have been gained after
18 their entry into our care.

19 Q. This is just what I wanted to clarify.

20 A. Yes. So that would have been through individual work.
21 It would have been through talking and listening
22 and observing, and it would have been building on the
23 relationship that the key worker would have had with
24 each of those children. That's how we would have learnt
25 about that afterwards.

1 Q. Does that mean that in and around the time that this
2 series of behaviours --

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. -- came to light that there was already an emerging
5 picture --

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. -- of a significant number of --

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. -- children in the home -- I mean, seven out of 25 --

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. -- it's a very high proportion --

12 A. And then --

13 Q. -- had in some way been exposed to sexual behaviour?

14 A. Yes, and I think the Bunting review was starker again.

15 I think when it looked overall at it, you know, there
16 was a large number of children who had some sort of
17 sexual abuse within their history, you know.

18 Q. Had there been other occasions before this episode came
19 to light or this situation came to light whereby that
20 sort of information had been drawn out by the staff in
21 the home from individual children?

22 A. Yes. Uh-huh. It would have been part of what we would
23 have been expected to do, which is to engage on
24 an individual basis with each child coming into care and
25 helping them to tell their story.

1 Q. But the difference in numerical terms here --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. -- was that at this particular time frame --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- there were seven, which was a significantly higher
6 level than normal.

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Is that right?

9 A. And I think also the age range, the 9-year-old. The
10 idea that at 9 years old there could be -- it was new
11 learning for us.

12 Q. Yes.

13 A. We really didn't -- we expected to see it with, as
14 I said earlier, children about to come into adolescence
15 or older and younger, but we didn't really -- we didn't
16 really have an idea about this younger age, you know.
17 I think that was the -- that took us by surprise.

18 Q. And there appears to have been a very considerable
19 degree of -- I'm trying to think of some not too
20 opprobrious term used by the children, but they were
21 able to spot periods of time --

22 A. Yes, yes.

23 Q. --- during the day within which some of them took the
24 initiative to bring these things --

25 A. Yes. Uh-huh.

1 Q. -- to happen.

2 A. Yes. I think it needs to be understood what times of
3 the day to do with residential is about, you know. You
4 are dealing with groups of up to ten --

5 Q. No, I understand that. The point I was making was that
6 these children were able to work out --

7 A. Oh, yes.

8 Q. -- where the times were --

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. -- that they could do this and then introduce or
11 persuade --

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. -- or pressure other children --

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. -- in those time frames to go along with what was
16 happening.

17 A. Uh-huh. Yes, absolutely.

18 Q. I mean, some of these children -- most of them, in fact
19 -- were under the age of ten, weren't they?

20 A. Uh-huh.

21 Q. I see. Thank you.

22 A. So I think just to say it was a new learning for us all,
23 and I think in some ways the bigger picture, it was
24 important to include everybody else in it too, because
25 it was new learning for them as well, you know, in the

1 sense of we did the symposium in 1992, which was led by
2 Dominic Burke, and that covered the whole of Northern
3 Ireland and it covered all aspects of care, social care.

4 Q. Thank you.

5 A. So that was -- that was important.

6 MS DOHERTY: Thanks very much. Can I just ask just related
7 to that question at the symposium was there other
8 workers from other parts of the province talking about
9 children as young or as organised an activity? Was
10 there ...?

11 A. I think it was -- I think they were able to talk about
12 it, yes, but I think it was new learning for an awful
13 lot of people in the -- in social services, individuals
14 in social work.

15 Q. Did they have examples? Did they have examples of that
16 happening within their --

17 A. I can't remember outright, but I know that it was
18 an important gathering of people from all over Northern
19 Ireland, and different aspects of care, meaning
20 fostering, meaning all -- NSPCC, all -- you know, it
21 covered all that, and it was really a very big learning
22 tool.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Thank you.

25 Q. Could I just ask, HH22, the children that were involved

1 in the abuse, were they from one unit rather than
2 another? Were they from the assessment unit rather than
3 the medium term?

4 A. No, I think it was mixed.

5 Q. It was mixed?

6 A. Uh-huh.

7 Q. So --

8 A. There was time taken -- there was periods when it was
9 outside as well as inside the building. It was very
10 easy to mix. You know, although we believed we had two
11 separate units, it was still very easy to mix with each
12 other.

13 Q. So the fact that in a sense the units were organised for
14 the staff resource --

15 A. Yes, and everything: eating, sleeping, sitting around,
16 all that end. We had our own front door. We had our
17 own back door. We had all of that, but there was still
18 access -- the children had access to each other, you
19 know --

20 Q. They needed to have.

21 A. -- at certain times when they needed.

22 Q. So the bit about the own front door and the own -- was
23 that the renovations that were done at the time?

24 A. Yes, yes.

25 Q. So that was the kind of renovations was to make it more

1 two separate units --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. -- at that stage? Okay. Can I ask did staff receive
4 any training, you know, as a staff group about working
5 with sexual abuse as a result of that?

6 A. Oh, yes. There was training put in place. Yes, there
7 was.

8 Q. Can you remember what --

9 A. I can't remember exactly the detail of it, but I know
10 that one -- you know, part even of the Bunting review
11 was to talk about training and about supervision of
12 staff. So we were very, very clearly -- we knew what we
13 needed and we believed that the review was supporting
14 that, you know. So we were asking and looking for
15 support from external -- we had Dr We had people
16 with child psychiatry, child psychology involved. We
17 were looking for training ourselves as well.

18 Q. So you felt that there was a good focus on your needs as
19 a staff group at that time to come to terms with what
20 happened and to learn from it?

21 A. Well, yes, yes, but there was a whole -- I think there
22 was -- it was important to boost and important to draw
23 people together again and to build again. We were
24 looking for quite a bit of team building as well and
25 I think just to bring us up, to bring us back to what

1 we -- to the good service we believed we were capable of
2 giving.

3 Q. And did you feel that in terms of management you got
4 ongoing support in the days and weeks and months after
5 it happened?

6 A. Well, yes and no. We were still going through -- after
7 the incident happened?

8 Q. Yes.

9 A. We had our internal investigation. We had our external
10 investigation. We had the Bunting report. We had the
11 bungalow opening again at the end of the year and we had
12 another inspection in February of 1991 with Denis
13 O'Brien. So we were very public, you know. We --
14 I think we wanted -- in some ways just we wanted to care
15 for kids again. We wanted to be able to do what we were
16 expected to do and, you know -- so ...

17 Q. Concentrate on that. In relation to that inspection
18 with Denis O'Brien was there any emphasis during that
19 inspection in relation to what happened? Was there any
20 discussion with you at that stage?

21 A. He used the Bunting review --

22 Q. Right.

23 A. -- to inform himself in that inspection. So yes. He --
24 that was something that he was looking at and shared and
25 looked at all the usual information that he should have,

1 and was interested in the Bunting report, and interested
2 in any changes that might have happened, although he
3 came in February and this was only November time. So
4 interested in supervision, interested in training,
5 interested -- you know. So that's clear in his report
6 from February '91.

7 Q. Okay. Last question you will be glad to hear. One of
8 the issues that comes up is about when the bungalow
9 opens, then you are having to have kind of temporary
10 staff or unqualified staff. One of the issues was the
11 demands that placed on full-time staff in terms of
12 trying to support these new staff. Was that your
13 experience?

14 A. Yes. It was almost like a diluting of established teams
15 again to create the new team and it was a bungalow of
16 four children, but it still needed exactly the same
17 cover as our team -- as our unit of ten and twelve, you
18 know. They still needed the same number of staff
19 available to them. So I can't emphasise enough the idea
20 of overcrowding. It really was, you know. We felt
21 overcrowded in units of ten and twelve without the
22 bungalow being open.

23 Q. The bungalow as well, yes. Where was the bungalow in
24 relation to the ...?

25 A. Harberton House is an H-shape and the bungalow literally

1 is at the one end or -- no. Well, there is a cottage.
2 There is a separate bungalow, but there is also
3 a bungalow at one end -- at each end of those -- at the
4 wings. So that's how close. It was still in the
5 grounds. Still had its own front door, back door and
6 all of that, but it still had strong links to the site.

7 Q. And you would have to oversee it?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. I said it was my final question. This I promise you
10 will be. Did you ever feel as the officer in charge,
11 you know, in terms of the team leader -- was there ever
12 an opportunity to say, "I don't think this child should
13 be admitted" or "We're overcrowded at the minute" or
14 "We've got lots of children with this difficulty. If
15 you bring another child in, it will affect the balance"?
16 Was that ever an option?

17 A. I don't know. Maybe that was what we were trying to do
18 with the letter to Gabriel --

19 Q. The letter?

20 A. -- to be truthful at the end of that year, and I think
21 it was more the kids needed to be cared for, and I think
22 it was felt that if the -- if a team of people could
23 come together and there was a premise that could be
24 opened, then that was what was needed to be done. You
25 know, they had to go somewhere.

1 Q. Okay. Thanks very much.

2 A. Okay. Thank you.

3 MR LANE: Just to follow up with that, who actually decided
4 on admissions? Was it for a social worker to ring you
5 up and say, "Can I have a place?" or was it one of the
6 Principal Social Workers or whatever?

7 A. It usually was through the Principal -- it wasn't just
8 ringing up, unless it was out of hours, unless there was
9 something going on out of hours, but no, it was usually
10 through Principal -- you know, Senior Social Workers.
11 It wasn't directly to us. We would have told by our own
12 either Assistant Principal or Principal that kids needed
13 to come into care.

14 Q. So they actually controlled the admissions in effect
15 really?

16 A. Well, yes, up to a point. We had no real say, you know.
17 We would -- we would have liked to and we clearly on
18 paper wanted to, and we wanted to be very clear on who
19 we believed we could care for and who we couldn't, and
20 also the numbers were important as well, but if a child
21 needed to be cared for and there was nowhere else for
22 that child to go, then it was possible to create ...

23 Q. To go back to the building, the central part of the H
24 was administration and things like this, wasn't it?

25 A. Well, yes, kitchen -- a kitchen, and in the early days

1 a playroom, and dining rooms and that would have been,
2 and there was laundry and that. So what we ended up
3 doing was we had doors, but they were lockable doors.
4 So the central area became sort of a no man's land
5 nearly, you know, the very central area, and then each
6 end looked after themselves.

7 Q. So the two units were on the uprights of the H you might
8 say?

9 A. Yes, yes.

10 Q. So would you have the bedrooms at one end --

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. -- and sitting rooms at the other?

13 A. No, no, no. Each unit had their -- the two ends, this
14 was bedroom space, bathrooms.

15 Q. At either end?

16 A. Yes, but for the one -- you didn't have to walk right
17 through the whole house to get to bedrooms or anything.
18 None of that.

19 Q. So in terms of supervising --

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. -- where would you site yourself to know what was going
22 on?

23 A. I know.

24 Q. What, in the middle of that?

25 A. Well, you -- no, you couldn't, you know, because these

1 kids -- these kids, we were all trying for them to lead
2 normal lives.

3 Q. Yes.

4 A. So at any one time you could have been, you know, all
5 over the place. You know, you might have somebody away
6 to school with a couple of them. You might have had
7 somebody in a meeting. You might have had somebody --
8 you know, most of our kids were hopefully going to
9 school. So there was only certain times of the day they
10 were -- so there was group living -- okay -- but there
11 was also opportunity for, you know, smaller -- like
12 staff to maybe have one or two children just to
13 themselves.

14 Q. I am just trying to think of what the effect of the
15 building was.

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. If you were on duty in an evening, would you have known
18 what everybody was doing --

19 A. Well, you should --

20 Q. -- or would they just have been all over the place?

21 A. Well, you should have known what everybody was doing.
22 There was a sitting room and there was bedrooms and
23 that. You were most of the times trying to be aware,
24 making sure you were aware of where each child was, but
25 there was opportunity. There definitely was.

1 Q. Well, it was difficult with that building.

2 A. It was difficult.

3 Q. Yes.

4 A. The unit was a purpose-built unit and it lasted
5 25 years. It's not -- it's not a children's home
6 anymore.

7 Q. No.

8 A. We got 25 years' use out of it and it was
9 a purpose-built building. So -- and within five years
10 it wasn't doing -- it wasn't meeting its purpose within
11 five years of its structure, of it being built.

12 Q. Yes. Well, I was wanting to go back to the beginning,
13 because you said that at the start you managed to run
14 the assessment system properly before it sort of silted
15 up when people were staying too long.

16 A. I think what we believed was going to happen was it was
17 all going to be supported very well from outside as well
18 --

19 Q. Yes.

20 A. -- and that there was going to be throughput.
21 Enniskillen children would go back to Enniskillen and
22 they would return home or they would be fostered in
23 Enniskillen or -- you know, but that ended up that those
24 Enniskillen children, for example, stayed longer.

25 Q. Yes.

1 A. Maybe they came down to me at my -- in the medium-stay
2 unit. Maybe they did return. Maybe as a family group
3 some of them could have been home. Some of them could
4 have -- you know, it very quickly --

5 Q. How long was it before that system broke down?

6 A. Well, we knew we had to do something by '85.

7 Q. Right.

8 A. 1985, five years.

9 Q. Five years. Right. In terms --

10 A. But then other things happened. We had Fort James
11 closing and we had Nazareth House closing, and we had
12 things that we didn't know were going to happen happen.
13 We had the change in training schools and, you know, we
14 had a lot of -- we had changes as well. So ...

15 Q. In terms of the assessment system, if a child was coming
16 to you to be assessed, what actually happened?

17 A. They went through a process of -- an assessment process
18 and it usually lasted six to eight weeks. At the end of
19 that we would have had something in writing to tell
20 a panel of people what we believed the child needed.
21 That would have been gleaned through looking -- working
22 with the child, that child's family hopefully, the
23 child's social worker, school, and we would have
24 hopefully been able to put a sort of a care plan in
25 place at the end of that six to eight weeks. That might

1 have mean -- meant coming down to my unit, which was --
2 and then we would have looked at the care plan and we
3 would have said, "Right. This is what we are going to
4 do for you now".

5 Q. That would be based on observations of the staff --

6 A. Yes --

7 Q. -- including the child?

8 A. -- and talking to other people, involving services that
9 that child might have needed, psychology, psychiatry,
10 education support, whatever.

11 Q. Did you have psychological tests and educational tests
12 and things like that?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Right.

15 A. Uh-huh.

16 Q. When you were the team leader of the longer stay unit --

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. -- were you still accountable to HH5?

19 A. No. I was -- TL 4 would have been my
20 line manager.

21 Q. Right. Okay. Thank you. My last question is when you
22 looked back on it, could you understand why the abuse
23 had taken place, the peer abuse, at certain times of
24 day? Did it make sense to you, looking back?

25 A. From today or looking back at that point in time?

1 Q. Looking back now on what happened then, does it make
2 sense?

3 A. It just scares the living daylights out of me, I have to
4 say. I am very frightened by what I look back at, to be
5 truthful.

6 Q. I mean, it was during the night-time when obviously --

7 A. Oh, yes, yes, yes.

8 Q. -- there wouldn't have been staff around, so you can
9 understand that, but why at the end of school, because
10 there must have been staff around ---

11 A. I think there is periods of time of a day to do with
12 staff trial structure. We might have had staff leaving
13 to collect kids from school.

14 Q. Yes.

15 A. We would have had a natural handover of staff usually at
16 2 o'clock or at 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

17 Q. Right.

18 A. They -- kids very quickly know the routines of the
19 house, you know, and if they don't know them, someone
20 else will know them within that group.

21 Q. Yes.

22 A. So the opportunity, you know ...

23 Q. There was more opportunity at that time, was there?

24 A. Yes, yes.

25 Q. Okay. Thank you very much.

1 A. But it was pre-determined --

2 Q. Yes.

3 A. -- is what, you know -- it wasn't just, "Och, come on!
4 We'll do ..." I believe it was pre-determined.

5 Q. They planned it in that way?

6 A. Yes, I think so.

7 Q. Thank you very much.

8 A. Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN: HH22, can I just pick up on something that
10 perhaps I should have asked you earlier? You have
11 touched on it when you made a reference to a child from
12 Enniskillen. Was Harberton House meant to be a regional
13 unit throughout the entire Western Board area --

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. -- or just for what was originally Londonderry, Limavady
16 & Strabane and then became Foyle?

17 A. No, no, we were a catchment area for the whole -- the
18 whole of the Western Trust to begin with, the Western
19 Board to begin with.

20 Q. Right from the beginning? That's the way it was
21 planned?

22 A. At the beginning, yes. We were only an assessment unit.

23 Q. Yes. As an assessment unit --

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. -- that's what it was meant to be?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Did that always remain the position --

3 A. No.

4 Q. -- until it ceased to be an assessment unit?

5 A. No.

6 Q. In what way did -- did they stop coming from further
7 away?

8 A. Well, it ended up I think that -- yes, there was more
9 use needed -- there was more demand from our own
10 locality, and also it became harder I think for the
11 likes of Enniskillen and Omagh and that to get
12 placements. There was still Coneywarren available in
13 Omagh anyway and there was also Coleshill, which was in
14 Enniskillen. So ...

15 Q. Yes. I am focusing at the moment on the pure assessment
16 unit --

17 A. Yes, yes.

18 Q. -- rationale for Harberton. It was, to start with,
19 meant to be right the way across the Western Board area
20 --

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. -- as an assessment unit?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Did that assessment unit function for the whole Board
25 tail off then because of pressure to accommodate

1 children which led to the medium term unit that you ran?

2 A. Yes, that would have been right, yes.

3 Q. They effect... -- that effectively squeezed out the
4 assessment unit aspect --

5 A. Yes. Throughput --

6 Q. -- for people further away?

7 A. Yes, and also the throughput wasn't happening to do with
8 the assessment, and also I think because Enniskillen had
9 Coleshill and Omagh had Coneywarren --

10 Q. Coneywarren.

11 A. -- I think they -- it was -- I think they were finding
12 it harder to secure a place in Derry for one of their
13 youngsters. So they started to look after their own, if
14 you know what I mean, you know.

15 Q. Well, that's exactly what I wanted to ask. Were they
16 really driven back to assessing their own children --

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. -- locally whereas Harberton by force of circumstances
19 in the way you've described --

20 A. Uh-huh.

21 Q. -- was transformed into something of a much more local
22 resource --

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. -- for the Derry area itself --

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. -- and in turn becoming more of a medium-term
2 residential home --

3 A. Yes, absolutely.

4 Q. -- than an assessment unit?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. I see. Just to finish off that point, before it became
7 more in the way that you've described it, were there
8 many children coming from Enniskillen and Omagh or was
9 it always a small proportion --

10 A. Smaller proportion.

11 Q. -- even before you had those other problems?

12 A. A smaller proportion. We also would have been in the
13 early days having families, which was unusual. We would
14 have had families of three and four coming in in one go,
15 you know.

16 Q. Yes, and, of course, if you had three or four children
17 let's say --

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. -- from Enniskillen --

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. -- and you wanted their family to come up --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. -- it was and still is quite a trek up from -- you know,
24 particularly if you are from a rural area in Fermanagh
25 to get to -- if you are from, say, towards Clones

1 direction --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. -- to get up to Derry is quite a journey. Isn't that
4 right?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. I see. Thank you very much, HH22.

7 A. Thank you.

8 Q. It's been very helpful to us.

9 A. Thank you.

10 Q. We are very grateful to you for taking the time to come
11 and speak to us, particularly since in your particular
12 circumstances you have had to come some way to get to us
13 today, but thank you very much for doing so.

14 A. Thank you.

15 (Witness withdrew)

16 MS SMITH: Chairman, that concludes today's evidence.

17 CHAIRMAN: Yes. Usual time tomorrow.

18 (3.05 pm)

19 (Inquiry adjourned until 10 o'clock tomorrow morning)

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MR GABRIEL CAREY (called)2
 Questions from COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY2
 Questions from THE PANEL32

WITNESS HH22 (called)48
 Questions from COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY48
 Questions from THE PANEL80