

# I'm sorry for abuse, care boss tells 140 'victims'

• Scottish Daily Mail 15 Nov 2018 by Sam Walker



## **Bill Dunbar: Denied knowledge**

THE man in charge of child welfare at a care home apologised yesterday after it was disclosed that 140 young people under his watch said they were abused.

Bill Dunbar told the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry that serious crimes against youngsters in his care 'should not have happened'.

The abuse took place during the time Mr Dunbar held various highranking roles at Quarriers Village, Renfrewshire, the inquiry heard.

In the three decades Mr Dunbar, 87, worked at the charity, a number of employees, including paedophiles John Porteous and Sandy Wilson, preyed on young victims. All were later convicted of crimes carried out at the home.

Mr Dunbar's apology came at a hearing in Edinburgh in which he initially denied that any abuse had taken place.

But when asked if he had a message for the 'many' victims.

Mr Dunbar said: 'I could have prevented it if I had known. It shouldn't have been allowed to happen but unfortunately it did and I'm sorry about that.'

The inquiry head that Mr Dunbar joined Quarriers in 1962 and rose to become deputy director.

He became 'friends' with employees including Porteous. He took semi-retirement in 1996 but remained the charity's honorary archivist until 2006.

Mr Dunbar, the most senior Quarriers manager to give evidence so far, told the inquiry that he had never received a complaint about physical or sexual abuse.

But inquiry senior counsel James Peoples, QC, then reminded Mr Dunbar that 'a number of staff have been convicted'.

He added: 'The number may come to something like 140 who made complaints to the police about abuse in the 1960s and 1970s.'

Mr Dunbar continued to deny knowledge of abuse.

The inquiry heard that Porteous, a fire officer and former resident, was jailed for the abuse of David Whelan. Sandy Wilson, a former Quarrier's houseparent, was sentenced to seven-and-a-half years in 2004 for abusing eight girls.

A second witness at the inquiry said young epilepsy sufferers living at the care home were drugged.

Former social worker Stuart McKay, 69, said youngsters as young as eight had trouble speaking after being given pills to stop seizures.

Mr McKay, who worked at Quarriers between 1973 and 2004, said: 'You could see by the way they were talking that they were drugged, to the extent that they couldn't act properly.'

The doctor used the term that they were 'zombied.' 'You could see they were drugged'

The inquiry in front of Judge Lady Smith continues