

Former Quarriers resident says social workers ‘ignored’ abuse claims Quarriers Village in Renfrewshire.

The Scotsman Chris Marshall Email Published: Thursday 08 November 2018

A former children’s home resident has said he was subjected to a catalogue of physical and sexual abuse – despite repeatedly raising concerns with social workers. “Ken” told the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry he was routinely “leathered” by his house parents at Quarrier’s Village in Bridge of Weir, Renfrewshire during his time there in the 1980s.

He said children were locked in a shed in their pyjamas for misbehaving and made to hold books with arms outstretched as a form of group punishment, with the first to lower their hands subjected to a beating. Led by Lady Smith, the inquiry is currently hearing evidence relating to institutions run by Quarriers, Aberlour and Barnardo’s.

Ken, whose identity is protected for legal reasons, said he was taken to the children’s home after being left at a closed social work office by his father’s partner, who had told him they were “going on holiday”. He said he spoke to a social worker after receiving a beating from his “house mother” at Quarriers, who he said would lash out with her feet and fists.

“There was at least once when they came to visit me when the beatings were so bad I was in bed until the following day,” he told the inquiry. “They told me it was discipline – don’t worry about it; just get on with it.” On another occasion when he was nine or ten years old, Ken said an older girl, possibly a member of staff, took him into a shower and made him perform a sex act. After reporting the incident to a social worker, he said: “I remember her saying, ‘Did you enjoy it?’. I said no, it made me feel sick and she said, ‘Well, if you didn’t enjoy it, it didn’t happen.

” He said the social worker reported back to his house parents and he later received a beating as a result.

Despite enduring the conditions in the “cottage” in which he lived with his house parents and a number of other children, Ken said he was aware that the abuse was even worse at other cottages. He said his carers would threaten to send him to another cottage where the beatings were so bad children would be hospitalised, and he said “they used the rape word” to describe the sexual abuse happening elsewhere.

The inquiry was also read a statement from “William”, a resident at Quarrier’s Village between 1950 and 1964. William said he was made to take a cold bath and then stand naked in a corridor as punishment for wetting the bed. As a result of his experiences at the home, he said he continued wetting the bed until he was a married man in his late 20s. And he said he was “hammered to a pulp” and locked in a cupboard for attempting to run away. He never spoke of the abuse he suffered until a “chance meeting” with another former resident two years ago. He said he believed his mother had tried to see him while he was in care but had been refused access by Quarriers. He said: “Quarriers not only robbed me of my childhood, they robbed me of my family. I can never forgive that.

Read more at: <https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/former-quarriers-resident-says-social-workers-ignored-abuse-claims-1-4826116>