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SOCIAL BACKGROUND REPORT CHILDREN'S HEARING

The following child:-

Surname	<u>TARBETT</u>	Date of Birth	<u>09.07.91</u>
Christian or Forenames	<u>WILLIAM</u>	Religion	
School	<u>LONGHAUGH PRIMARY</u>		
Placement Address	<u>c/o [REDACTED]</u>		
Home Address	<u>7d BONNETHILL COURT, DUNDEE</u>	Occupation	
is to appear at	<u>AN ANNUAL REVIEW HEARING at DUNDEE</u> <u>Children's Hearing on THURSDAY 25TH FEBRUARY 1999 at 12 NOON</u>		
in connection with	<u>SECTION 73 (2) CHILDREN (SCOTLAND) ACT 1995</u> <u>Ref No EN/10515</u>		

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Introduction to William's Circumstances

William was placed in the care of the Social Work Department on a Place of safety Order at a Childrens Hearing in September 1994, the panel of that time having serious concerns about the behaviour of William and his siblings and the lack of adequate parental control. William was three years old at that time.

William lived with his older brother [REDACTED] in successive foster placements, from September 1994 to December 1995 with Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] from December 1995 to January 1996 with Mrs [REDACTED] from January 1996 until March 1997 with Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] and with Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] (his current carers) from March 1997 to date. (The placement with Mrs [REDACTED] was seemingly an unhappy one for the boys - they made allegations suggesting an incident of physical abuse, which were investigated but not substantiated).

Micheal left his placement with Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] and went to Strathmore Cottages before being placed at Thornbrae School in Northumberland in August 1998. Also in 1998 William's sister [REDACTED] was placed with permanent foster carers in Crieff.

William has a regular monthly weekend respite arrangement with Mr & Mrs [REDACTED] foster carers. William enjoys these visits and gets on well with their son [REDACTED] (8 years). A serious incident of sexualised behaviour involving their son in April 1998 halted respite, but it was resumed in November 1998.

William has settled well into his current foster home, where he lives alongside other foster children (2 Boys) and the [REDACTED] 2 teenage daughters. William really enjoys being part of this busy household, particularly the opportunities to play with the boys whom he considers to be his best friends.

William has separate individual monthly contacts with his mother and father, for one hour each, supervised by Maureen Petrie, who he has known for a long time. William has bi-monthly contact with [REDACTED] individually.

William is now in P3 at school. He has consistently struggled academically and he currently receives learning support. In his early years at school his behaviour was fairly aggressive and he found difficulty making friends. His social skills have improved and he is now beginning to make friends.

William's mother believes that he should remain in the care of the Social Work Department. She attends regularly for their contact meetings, and uses these meetings to encourage the children to make progress at home and at school. She maintains a useful relationship with the social work department. She is now in a new relationship and is expecting a baby this month, February 1999.

William's father has never accepted that William needed to come into the care of the Social Work Department, nor that he was ever other than a good parent to William. His insistence upon these points has been a constant feature of his relationship with the Social Work Department. He attends regularly for contact meetings but has very limited ability to engage with the children. His personal circumstances do not appear to have changed.

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The Social Work Department decided, in 1996, that William (and his siblings) were needing to be looked after in the long term, and that appropriate placements should be identified for each child, where they might stay without further disruption. Since the making of this plan the Social Work Department has sought a placement for William but been unsuccessful. It is unfortunately the case that presently there is a serious shortage of long-term placements for primary-age children, particularly boys, across Scotland.

The Social Work Department referred to Children 1st organisation, in 1997 and early 1998, for independent assessments regarding:-

- 1 The contact arrangements between William, [REDACTED] and their parents
- 2 The potential likelihood of either parent being able to have the children returned to their care

The first assessment concluded that (a) parental and sibling contact should be separate in order for each child to gain the most out of each contact (b) Parental ability to manage contact was limited, therefore contact should be carefully planned, managed, and supervised by the Social Work Department and limited to 45 minute sessions once per month (c) Contact should involve enjoyable activities. This has been considered and acted upon and was agreed at the Children's Hearing on 1st April 1998.

The second assessment (14.4.98) concluded that rehabilitation was not feasible with either Ms Robertson or Mr Tarbett. A copy of the report is attached.

William's father has made an application to the Sheriff Court for a Section 11 (Children (Scotland) Act 1995) Residence Order in relation to William, [REDACTED]. This application was lodged in November 1997. Mr Tarbett has recently changed his application, applying for certain as yet unclear Specific Issues Orders. The case has been continued for Social Work report updates and will be heard on 9th March. The Social Work Department submitted an initial report in December 1997 which concluded that the application should not be granted as it is not in the best interests of any of the children.

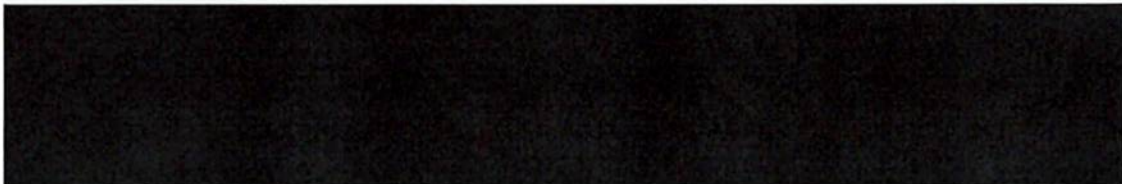
There have been no changes in the last year, either in William's circumstances or in either parent's circumstances, which would indicate that it is appropriate for William to return to their care. The social work department therefore recommends that William's current supervision requirement is continued unvaried as:-

- 1 Placement with Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] with provision for respite with approved local authority carers under Section 70 Children (Scotland) Act
- 2 Monthly supervised contact with each parent for a minimum of 45 minutes each, and supervised contact with his siblings, [REDACTED] at the discretion of the social work department

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William's Family Background

Mother: Linda Archer k/a Robertson (29 years)) not married;
Father: David Tarbett (51 years)) separated in 1995



Since coming into care in 1994 William has had some regular contacts with his elder sister [REDACTED] and very occasional contact with his elder brother [REDACTED]

Ms Robertson was brought up in the care of the Social Work Department, latterly in Carolina House Children's Home. Ms Robertson and Mr Tarbett began to cohabit shortly after she left Carolina House.

Ms Robertson and Mr Tarbett's cohabiting relationship appears to have been characterised by violence and hostility with frequent separations and reconciliations. The children were, to a greater or lesser extent, brought up against this background, and received poor, sometimes neglectful, parental care.

Since their latest separation in 1995 Ms Robertson maintains that she does not intend to renew her relationship with Mr Tarbett. Ms Robertson does not talk about this with the children unless they raise it.

Mr Tarbett has seemed to the Social Work Department to remain quite preoccupied by the ending of his relationship with Ms Robertson. Mr Tarbett has frequently raised concerns and allegations regarding Ms Robertson's behaviour with social workers. It is Mr Tarbett's view, as expressed to social workers, that the children's mother cannot love them, because she is not fighting to have them returned to her care as he is. Mr Tarbett does not accept that Ms Robertson may be considering the circumstances and choosing to put her children's needs before her own. Previous social worker Phillip McGill witnessed at least one occasion when Mr Tarbett expressly told the children that their mother did not love them. On this occasion Mr

Tarbett upset William by showing him a photograph which Mr Tarbett said had been torn up by his mother. Mr Tarbett also sought to tell William that his mother was pregnant, before she had the opportunity to do so. William was upset by this disclosure, reading into it a further rejection by his mother.

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William

I have had approximately three-weekly contact with William since becoming his social worker in September 1998. Our meetings alternate between William choosing an activity (football, pool and McDonald's being three of his favourites) and focussed work on identity and family issues, including the reasons for his continued placement in care and permanent placement.

Relationships

William is increasingly understanding the reasons for being in the care of the social work department and able to express his own views verbally and through drawings.

He is extremely settled in placement and although he is beginning to understand better that he will eventually be placed with a forever family he states that he is very happy in his current placement and certainly does not present with any insecurity regarding the uncertainty of his future. He trusts Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] as his carers and has come to feel part of their family. He regards the two foster boys as his best friends. Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] are very skilled at helping foster children to come to understand their place within the family, and this is an area which they continue to sensitively explore with William.

William has stated in the past that he does not want to go and live with his family and he has not indicated any change in this respect when given the opportunity to discuss the issue. Nevertheless, his parents and siblings are important to him and William looks forward to contact with them. The most important relationship in his life is with [REDACTED] whom he misses, and he has expressed a desire to see him more frequently. [REDACTED] social worker and myself are attempting to arrange this for [REDACTED] and William.

However, William is particularly impressionable in relation to [REDACTED] he worries about [REDACTED] he emulates [REDACTED] repeating and trying to exaggerate [REDACTED] behaviour, and this remains a feature of contact. [REDACTED] and William's relationship when they were together in foster care was characterised by almost continuous aggression and by sexual play. Both boys were filled with strong feelings including anger, loss and worry when they were separated in March 1997. These issues need to be considered when planning the level of contact.

Contact

Contact was amended at the Childrens' Hearing of 1st April 1998 to take account of the conclusion of the report prepared by Ms Jamieson of Children 1st, as described above. Contact with all family members does appear to have improved as a result.

Mr Tarbett has become more consistent in contact with William since the social work department proposed a six-month schedule at various venues chosen by William and Mr Tarbett in September 1998, although he continues never to confirm whether or not he will attend. William enjoys contact, which tends to focus on shopping for presents for him. The level of engagement between them remains rudimentary. William also enjoys contact with his mother, which is consistent and takes place at a

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child and family centre. Linda Robertson engages in play and discussion with William, and has, for instance, discussed her pregnancy with him.

It is the view of the social work department that supervision remains essential to ensure the safety and appropriateness of contact. Mr Tarbett has, for instance, suggested to William without prior consultation, that contact could take place at his home, although this would be entirely inappropriate for William at the present time. Furthermore, Mr Tarbett continues to communicate minimally and unproductively with the social work department, a situation which is not conducive to safe unsupervised contact.

Contact between William, [REDACTED] was unproductive, with the children overexcited and unable to engage with each other. Contact is now on an individual basis with each sibling and is enjoyed by William.

It is my belief that family contact remains important to William and should be maintained at the present level.

Mrs Petrie, Social Work Assistant who supervises contact, will be able to provide the Panel with a fuller picture of William's family contact.

Developmental Progress

William has made considerable progress since he has settled into placement with Mr and Mrs [REDACTED]. Nevertheless, both Mrs [REDACTED] and myself share concerns about the limitations to progress that he is demonstrating.

Following a very poor start in school, William appeared to make some progress during 1998. However, he is now in P3 and is still at least one year behind in literacy and numeracy skills. He receives learning support three times weekly. William himself is aware that he is struggling, and does not enjoy the academic side of school. Mrs [REDACTED] also became increasingly aware that William was experiencing coordination problems and requested an OT assessment.

The decision was taken to incorporate this into a full assessment of his needs. The conclusion of the OT assessment and an assessment by the Senior Community Medical Officer both indicate that William has significant visual/spatial deficits which are probably impeding his educational development. William is receiving OT assistance and a recommendation has been made by all parties that William should be assessed by an Educational Psychologist. Arrangements are currently being made with the school. William is nevertheless lively and inquisitive, becoming less aggressive and developing well in his social skills and presentation.

Physically William is an extremely healthy and active boy with a healthy appetite.

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William's sexualised behaviour with his brother Michael, and demonstrated by an incident with his respite carers' son last year, has always been a cause for concern. Mrs [REDACTED] and the previous social worker Phillip McGill consulted with Dr Duke, Child and Family Psychiatry, during 1998. Dr Duke advised that therapy was inappropriate given William's age, but that William should be closely monitored and supervised to prevent such behaviour and that Mrs [REDACTED] should use relevant opportunities to discuss appropriate touching with William. Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] have implemented this approach with great diligence and the incidence of such behaviour has reduced. The school does not report any problems in this respect.

Social Work Department Plans

It remains the plan of the Department to place William with a permanent foster family where he can have security into adulthood but maintain contact with his family should he so wish. As William grows older it is likely that he will wish to do so.

William's age, gender, sexualised behaviour and complex family relationships and contact make him extremely difficult to place in a situation where placements for primary school age boys are very scarce. The department is currently making further specific efforts on his behalf and considering alternative approaches to this problem.

Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] have indicated that they will continue to provide William with a secure family placement during this process.

Conclusions and Recommendations

While William is making progress and becoming more settled, he remains a child with clear needs for close attention from a variety of agencies.

William's mother believes that it is in William's best interests that he remains in foster care where he will receive specific attention to his needs. Ms Robertson feels frustrated on William's behalf about the lack of suitable long-term resources for him.

William's father believes that William does not require foster care, and that he could be a competent parent of William. He has made an application to the Sheriff Court to that affect. The Social Work Department believes that Mr Tarbett has very limited parenting skills, and that he either cannot or will not consider his children's needs separate from his own wishes. This view of Mr Tarbett's abilities is based upon the history known to us and upon Mr Tarbett's attitude to and behaviour towards the children as demonstrated in his contact meetings with them.

An independent view regarding William's parents potential to be carers for him being prepared by Mrs Jamieson of Children 1st in 1998 and corroborated this assessment.

I would recommend that William's present supervision requirement, naming Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] as his foster carers, is continued without variation.

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Appendix

Circumstances Leading to Compulsory Measures of Care for William and his siblings

(Compiled by Mr Robin Duncan, Senior Social Worker, from the children's social work files)

Introduction

There has been regular and more or less continuous Social Work department contact with [REDACTED] and William throughout their lives. The principal reasons for the department's involvement and the concerns raised, have been;

1. Parents acrimonious relationship and their willingness to involve the children in this conflict.
2. Frequent disruption to the children's lives caused by the many separations and reconciliations of their parents.
3. Lack of appropriate supervision of the children
4. Parents inability to provide appropriate boundaries to the children's behaviour. The children's sexualised language and behaviour
6. The children's aggressiveness towards one and other.
7. A series of child protection investigations involving both parents and focusing on inappropriate chastisement of the children
8. Mr Tarbett's refusal, or inability, to work with the department or other agencies for the children's benefit.

The children were received into care for the first time on 21.1.94 ([REDACTED] and William 2 years 4 months.) Ms Robertson had left the family home and Mr Tarbett felt unable to care for the children

They came into care for the second time on 22.9.94 after the children's hearing made a Place of Safety order They have remained in care ever since.

Further details of these difficulties and examples of the parenting the children received are outlined below.

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Previous Social Work Department involvement with Mr Tarbett and Ms Robertson



Mr Tarbett and Ms Robertson met and began their relationship when he was 39 and she was 17.

Parent's relationship

Ms Robertson and Mr Tarbett set up home in Whitfield shortly after they met Ms Robertson became pregnant but her first child was stillborn in 1987.

After [REDACTED] birth in 1988, it would appear that their relationship deteriorated quickly. It has continued to be problematic ever since with numerous separations and reconciliations. When together, the relationship was reported as acrimonious, with many arguments, fights and incidents of physical violence. Both parties were described as strong willed and unwilling to back down.

The children were present during many of their parents' arguments and witnessed physical violence between them.

Both Ms Robertson and Mr Tarbett have made numerous allegations to the Social Work department about each other and about each other's care of the children. These have included:-

- That Ms Robertson is working as a prostitute.
- That Mr Tarbett has assaulted her.
- Allegations from both parents against the other of physical abuse of the children/ inappropriate care of the children/ being drunk while in charge of the children.

Again these allegations have been made in front of the children.

Workers noted that neither parent makes any attempt to keep the children separate from their relationship difficulties. The children's needs were placed below the parents' need to pursue their own disputes.

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- On one occasion, when they were living separately, Mr Tarbett took [REDACTED] to sit outside Ms Robertson's flat in the car even though [REDACTED] had had nine teeth extracted under general anaesthetic only two hours previously.

Mr Tarbett frequently directly involved the children in his disputes with Ms Robertson, for example:-

- Telling the children that their mum's "away with a Paki" or that she doesn't love them.
- On another occasion he left the three children at the Social work department in Whitfield saying it was Ms Robertson's turn to care for them

Uncertainty caused by parents relationship difficulties

Following their more serious disputes Mr Tarbett and Ms Robertson frequently separated. In the early years of [REDACTED] life, this normally meant that Ms Robertson would leave and [REDACTED] would stay with Mr Tarbett. From the time [REDACTED] was three years old, the separations more often involved him and his brother and sister, leaving with Ms Robertson.

The Social Work department may not have known about all the separations that took place, but there are 26 such changes in living situation recorded for [REDACTED] prior to the first reception into care.

Again these changes frequently happened in a way that was highly unsettling for the children.

- On one occasion when [REDACTED] was living with Ms Robertson, Mr Tarbett removed him from the Social Work assistant who was taking him to the child and family centre
- On another occasion when Ms Robertson had been granted interim custody of [REDACTED] and William, Mr Tarbett forced entry into Ms Robertson's flat and removed the children. On this occasion the interim custody had not been properly served so they could not be returned to their mother.
- On a further occasion Ms Robertson and the three children were required to leave the Women's aid shelter where they were staying, after Ms Robertson had assaulted another resident.

Although Mr Tarbett and Ms Robertson have a very destructive relationship, they also both find it hard to live apart. Mr Tarbett has often said he wants Ms Robertson back, but doesn't acknowledge that their separations have anything to do with his behaviour. Ms Robertson frequently says she wants to finish the relationship once and for all, but finds it hard to manage as a parent by herself. Mr Tarbett has also constantly sought to undermine her ability to cope on her own. As a result there is a long-standing pattern that even after bitter separations, they reconcile.

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Concerns over lack of appropriate supervision.

While the children have been in the care of Mr Tarbett or Ms Robertson, whether jointly or separately, there have been periodic concerns about the level of supervision they receive.

- While living with Mr Tarbett, [REDACTED] was seen a number of times unsupervised in the Hilltown.
- On one occasion [REDACTED] were picked up by the police in the Wellgate having stolen pot plants they were then aged 5 and 3.
- On another occasion [REDACTED] arrived at Lilybank Family centre nearly two miles from home, alone, on his scooter. Mr Tarbett's response, was that if he could make it to the centre alone he could get himself back.
- While living with Ms Robertson there were reports from neighbours that the three children were playing outside completely unsupervised. On one occasion they were found outside at night having opened the unlocked front door of the fiat themselves.

Ms Robertson acknowledged that she had sometimes not felt able to provide close enough supervision for the children, but argued that when living with Mr Tarbett, he undermined her attempts to impose appropriate controls. Mr Tarbett took the view that since he was catering adequately for their physical needs, there was nothing wrong with the way he was caring for the children.

Concerns over lack of appropriate boundaries to the children's behaviour

Linking to the concerns about inadequate supervision were worries about the children's behaviour and the fact that Mr Tarbett and Ms Robertson appeared unable or unwilling to impose appropriate controls. The children were observed to be aggressive towards one and other and to behave in an inappropriately sexualised manner (see below).

Both Mr Tarbett and Ms Robertson had difficulty controlling the children.

In addition to finding it hard to manage the children's behaviour, they also presented, through their own actions some very unhelpful examples.

- The children frequently witnessed violence between their parents, between adults and children and with people outwith the household.
- On one occasion the children watched from the car as Mr Tarbett got out and assaulted [REDACTED] father of Ms Robertson's youngest child.

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Both parents use of alcohol affected their ability to relate appropriately to the children at different times.

- On one occasion Mr Tarbett returned after drinking to find that [REDACTED] had wet the bed and hit him in the face (see child protection investigations below).
- On another, Linda Robertson was found to be drunk while the children played unsupervised outside.

While Ms Robertson was caring for the children, she was noted on a number of occasions to be very down, emotionally flat and unresponsive to the children's needs.

The children's understanding of what was acceptable behaviour was moulded to a significant extent by the example they were being set.

Children's sexualised behaviour and language

When [REDACTED] was four, concerns were expressed about his sexualised language and behaviour by staff at the child and family centre. There were related concerns about [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

These were the first of persisting concerns in relation to the fact that all three children clearly have knowledge of sex and sexual language quite inappropriate for their age.

The concerns persisted when the children were in foster care and were noted when [REDACTED] started school.

- [REDACTED] was found, for example, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
- The children would speak about specific sexual acts.

A referral to Polepark family counselling centre was made in May 1993 and again in December 1994. On the second occasion work was done with [REDACTED] and William. In relation to the sexualised behaviour, the workers concluded that it was unlikely that [REDACTED] had been sexually abused, but likely that he had witnessed sexual acts between adults.

The allegations in relation to [REDACTED] were considered by a child protection case conference which, at that stage, could find no evidence to support them. Mr Tarbett continued to talk about the details of the allegations with the children present, despite being told that it was not appropriate for them to be involved in these discussions

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Children's aggressive behaviour

The social workers, health visitors and family centre workers involved with the children have all commented? from the earliest involvement with the family, on the aggressive relationship between the children.

- The children were observed to hit, bite and kick each other while their parents were present.
- The fought and jumped over the furniture while their baby brother [REDACTED] was in the room.

This behaviour appeared to be accepted by the parents. Ms Robertson maintains that she tried to impose tighter controls, but that this was undermined by Mr Tarbett who allowed the children more leeway.

The aggressiveness between the siblings continued after they moved into foster care and was one of the main reasons why it proved so hard for them to stay together with the same carer.

Child Protection Investigations

In addition to the general and long-standing concerns about the parenting that the children were receiving, there were a number of specific incidents that were investigated more formally. Between December 1991 and September 1994 there were 15 observed incidents or allegations which led to enquiries, and 9 of these were followed up with a formal child protection investigation.

Very briefly the focus of these investigations was;

- Dec 91 Mr Tarbett hit [REDACTED] in the face while he was asleep for wetting the bed. (Charges dropped by procurator fiscal but grounds found to be established by sheriff in relation to Children's Hearing).
- Jan 93 Ms Robertson hit [REDACTED] with wellington boot. Found to be accidental.
- Feb 93 Ms Robertson alleges Mr Tarbett hit [REDACTED] with a yardstick and hose from vacuum cleaner. Not pursued through lack of evidence.
- Mar 93 Investigation into [REDACTED] sexualised behaviour and language and concerns [REDACTED]
- May 93 Allegation by Mr Tarbett that [REDACTED]
- June 93 [REDACTED] hurt nose when pulled off table by Mr Tarbett. Accepted as accidental.

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- Aug 93 [REDACTED] alleged that Mr Tarbett threw him across the room - parents refused to give consent for medical. All children placed on 'at risk register'; [REDACTED] on grounds physical abuse (proven) and physical neglect (suspicious).
- Feb 94 [REDACTED] alleges Mr Tarbett assaulted him. No further action.
- May 95 [REDACTED] and his sister found playing in the Wellgate centre.

Mr Tarbetts unwillingness to work with agencies for benefit of the children.

Throughout the time of his involvement with the department Mr Tarbett has maintained that there has been nothing wrong with his parenting of the children. He is adamant that his children should be returned to his care and is completely opposed to the Social Work department's plans.

Mr Tarbett's refusal to acknowledge any shortcomings has made it virtually impossible to work with him to reduce the level of concerns or make a rehabilitation feasible. This has been a continuing problem in relation to planning for the children.

- When Mr Tarbett was granted interim custody of [REDACTED] in 1989 one of the conditions was that [REDACTED] care should be subject to the supervision of the Local Authority. The Social Work department had to take this back to the court because Mr Tarbett refused to meet with the supervising worker.
- The Children's hearing in September 1994 that took a Place of Safety order on all the children, gave as one of their reasons, 'Mr Tarbett's point blank refusal to adhere to the conditions of the care order, to work with the Social Work department or other support agencies.'

As well as refusing to work constructively with the Social Work department, Mr Tarbett has consistently undermined attempts by Ms Robertson to care effectively for the children. He always sought to find out where she was staying, even where this meant tracking down the address and phone numbers of Women's Aid refuges. He would then harass her or try to influence her to return.

- Mr Tarbett phoned a Women's aid hostel where Ms Robertson was staying with her youngest child, at 2 am, sounding under the influence of alcohol and put one of the other children on the phone.
- Workers at another Women's Aid hostel told Mr Tarbett that Ms Robertson was no longer there after receiving as many as 20 abusive phone calls in a day.

There was no evidence over this period that Mr Tarbett developed any insight into the children's emotional needs or the way his own behaviour could have a seriously detrimental affect on them.

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Reception into care

On 26/6/92 [REDACTED] and William were received into care for a few hours while Ms Robertson was interviewed by the police. This followed an incident where Ms Robertson had assaulted another resident at the Women's Aid hostel where they were staying.

They were received into care for the second time on 21.1.94. This followed a particularly acrimonious period in the relationship between Mr Tarbett and Ms Robertson.

The events that led up to this reception into care were, briefly:-

November 27th 1993, Ms Robertson leaves the house at 3 am after an argument with Mr Tarbett and under the influence of alcohol. The following day she lodged a court action requesting the return of [REDACTED] to her care.

- December 14th: Ms Robertson returns to the home.
- December 17th: Mr Tarbett alleges that Ms Robertson kicked [REDACTED]. Social workers who visit to investigate find no evidence. They are concerned that neither parent is present and the children are 'running amok'. Mr Tarbett's son, who was ostensibly in charge was in the bath.
- December 26th: Ms Robertson leaves the house at 4 am with [REDACTED]. Claims Mr Tarbett assaulted her two nights previously. Police return children. Ms Robertson returns the next day.
- January 20th 1994: Ms Robertson leaves with [REDACTED]
- January 21st: [REDACTED] and William received into care on Mr Tarbett's request. Mr Tarbett saying he was troubled with gout and unable to care for the three children on his own. Ms Robertson believes he only did it to get at her.

[REDACTED] returned to the care of Mr Tarbett 10 days later, [REDACTED] and William returned a week later.

The third reception into care, was 8 months later on 22/9/94. The events that led to this decision were, briefly:-

- September 2nd 1994: Children move from Ms Robertson's care (in a Women's Aid hostel) to Mr Tarbett, when Ms Robertson says she is unable to care for them. Staff at the hostel were also concerned that Michael's behaviour was a danger to other children.

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- Mr Tarbett made it clear that he was not willing to co-operate with the requirements of the previous Children's Hearing order which specified
 - That [REDACTED] were to attend at St Matthew's for an assessment of their behaviour.
 - That the children should be allowed access with Ms Robertson.
- September 2 1st: Mr Tarbett threatens that he will bring the children to the hearing and leave them there.
- September 22nd: Place of Safety order taken by the Children's Hearing on [REDACTED] and William. The Hearing's reasons for this decision were:
 - Mr Tarbett's point blank refusal to work with the Social Work department or other support agencies.
 - Mr Tarbett's clear inability to exercise control over the children, places them at risk. Continuing problems with access to Ms Robertson.

Mr Tarbett appealed the decision of the hearing, but the sheriff subsequently dismissed the appeal.

When the Place of Safety order expired, the Children's Hearing made a supervision order requiring the children to remain in foster care. The reasons the Hearing gave for this decision included:-

- The children's behaviour has improved since they have been in care.
- Mr Tarbett refuses to co-operate with the supervision order and work with Social work department and other agencies.
- Ms Robertson unable at this time to offer the children a home.
- Mr Tarbett totally selfish in his attitude to the care of the children and was not meeting their physical and emotional needs.

Rehabilitation

It was agreed that work needed to be done with both the parents and the children to consider whether rehabilitation was a feasible option. The rehabilitation assessment was organised in several parts and addressed; the parents relationship, previous difficulties with the children and the parenting skills needed to meet the needs of the children. Mr Callum Strathie from St Matthew's Family Centre was contracted to work individually with Mr Tarbett and Marion Selfridge, Social Worker, to work with Ms Robertson. Joint sessions with both parents were then planned involving both Mr Strathie and Ms Selfridge.

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██████████ and William were referred to Polepsrk Family counselling centre, for work in relation to their difficult and sexualised behaviour.

The assessment continued until 24th February 1995 and included both individual and joint sessions, as planned. At that stage, however, a decision was taken that there was no point in continuing. The reasons for terminating the assessment were;

- Refusal by both parents to accept any responsibility for the children being received into care.
- Mr Tarbett's refusal to acknowledge that there had ever been a problem with the way he cared for the children or that he needed to change this in any way.
- No commitment from either Mr Tarbett or Ms Robertson to maintain their relationship in a way which would allow them to care jointly for the children.

The workers concluded that there was no merit in continuing to meet with Mr Tarbett and Ms Robertson as they remained completely unwilling to address the issues that had given rise to the children being received into care.

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Ingrid von Arnim
Social Worker
Permanence Team
11 February 1999

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