

Tuesday, 17 September 2024

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(10.00 am)

MR GRIFFIN: Chair, today we continue to hear commemorative and impact evidence. Again we will be hearing about some difficult and distressing matters and I refer again to the emotional support service that is available, overseen by the Inquiry's chief psychologist. Counsellors are present here, and they can put their hands up for all to see, just sitting at the back there with black lanyards, and further services are available through the Inquiry's website, which is lampardinquiry.org.uk, or by asking a member of the Inquiry team. We're wearing purple lanyards. As I've said before, we want all of those engaging with the Inquiry to feel safe and supported.

We'll hear first this morning from Sofia Dimoglou, and I invite her to sit at the table. Sofia is giving a commemorative account about her mother, Valery Dimoglou, and may I ask that the photograph be put up on the screen?

MS DIMOGLOU: Shall I just start?

MR GRIFFIN: Yes, please.

Statement by SOFIA DIMOGLOU

MS DIMOGLOU: Hello, everybody. I just want to thank everybody for this massive moment. As I was driving

1 here, I realised how huge it is that it's actually
2 happening. I thank the chair for being here and the
3 amazing legal team, but all the brave people who got us
4 here. There are a lot of people who are really brave,
5 especially Melanie and Lisa, who were incredible.

6 So I want to talk about my mum, who was Val -- we
7 called her "Val" -- and she was a phenomenal person,
8 full of vivacity and fun, and to write about her
9 properly would take a whole book. A film would be what
10 would really be good for her. But this is a snapshot of
11 who she was and who we and the world lost -- I'll get
12 stronger in a minute -- when she took her own life
13 in October 2015.

14 So her life was hard when she was young but she was
15 really resilient and she knew how to deal with adversity
16 from a young age. So she was born at the very start of
17 World War Two on August 15, 1939 and her dad,
18 William Greenwood, had survived World War One and the
19 Somme but had shellshock and ongoing PTSD. He was
20 a knocker-upper for the railways, making sure people got
21 to work on time, and Val was always very punctual. He
22 liked gardening, which Val inherited from him, though
23 they were never really close. Her mum, Helen, worked
24 hard to bring up the three girls -- Val was the
25 youngest -- as well as doing housekeeping for others for

1 a little extra money. Val absolutely adored her, as we
2 all did.

3 Our grandma and the three girls were evacuated from
4 rural Kilham to Hull for the first few years of Val's
5 life and this embedded in her a love for the countryside
6 and separated her from her dad. She passed this deep
7 connection to nature to all of her children and our best
8 times were out walking with Val and our dogs. She later
9 witnessed serious incidents of violence and this had
10 a long-term effect on her. She also stopped her mother
11 from committing suicide and she knew the importance of
12 staying alive, believing that things could get better.

13 Val was cheeky and very bright as a child and she
14 passed the test to go to grammar school but she wasn't
15 allowed to go because of the cost of the uniform. She
16 always wore hand-me-downs and the family was really poor
17 but very proud and very independent. There was also
18 a belief from her Victorian dad that she should not rise
19 out of her class through education, something that had
20 a profound effect on her life as she had a deep desire
21 to improve her mind by reading, learning new words and
22 learning about the world.

23 She did this all her life, but the course of her
24 future would have been so different, so much more
25 nourishing, stimulating and financially rewarding had

1 she been allowed to take up the education she was
2 offered. She knew this and always said she was glad to
3 have had her four children, but we knew that her
4 life-long struggles with money and the drudge of working
5 in hospitality then as well as raising four children and
6 a dog single-handedly had a big impact on her mental and
7 physical health. It also made her fight hard for us to
8 go to the best local schools, even when she had to
9 battle the authorities to achieve this.

10 Val's mind was always abuzz with the possibility of
11 adventure and she left home at 15 to be independent and
12 to begin exploring the world. She got a job as a nanny
13 from an advert in The Lady magazine and went to
14 Stratford-upon-Avon, where she was treated like
15 a housemaid or servant, so she ran away one night. She
16 had already secured a waitressing job at Falmouth Hotel
17 and loved it there in Cornwall. My dad fell instantly
18 in love with her when he saw her dancing at a rock and
19 roll venue in Falmouth when his merchant ship docked
20 there. A couple of years before Val first attempted to
21 take her own life, my sister arranged a holiday with our
22 divorced parents and we took them back to that place
23 where they met, and that was really sweet.

24 Falling in love and pregnancy meant that Val could
25 not continue her adventures. She had planned to go to

1 France next, and as Dad had to go back to sea -- he was
2 a Greek merchant seaman with a British company -- Val
3 went to Hull so her mum and sisters could help her with
4 my brother. She lived there in dire poverty in
5 a vermin-infested flat, but did a great job and would
6 work as a waitress to earn enough to live when Grandma
7 looked after us. Dad sent some money to her and some to
8 his mother in Greece.

9 My brother and I have such happy memories of growing
10 up in Hull in spite of the hardship. Dad gave up
11 working at sea when I was about two, so my brother and
12 I had built a strong connection with Val and her mum,
13 which we kept forever.

14 So the Hull version of Val was a really vibrant,
15 modern woman. She loved fashion, pop songs and popular
16 culture. We had so much love and days out, to Hull
17 Fair, Beverly Westwood, Hull's lovely parks and cafes.
18 Val threw children's parties in our garden, made
19 Christmas magical and the summers long and full of
20 picnics and adventures. She made us believe in fairies
21 and magic by making magic happen right in front of our
22 eyes. When I asked her, when I was older, if she
23 regretted having children so young, she was adamant that
24 she was so glad she had us when she was young, with the
25 energy to work hard to give us things and to make every

1 day fun.

2 Things did change in about 1965, and that's when
3 I was nearly five and we moved to Colchester in Essex
4 because my dad, being Greek, hated the cold and the rain
5 of Hull and the north of England. I think this really
6 isolated Val and made her depend on him, which wasn't
7 good. The pain of leaving her mam at this time was deep
8 and we were distraught that Grandma was so far away, though
9 we saw her every school holiday.

10 There had been signs of mental health issues
11 already. Val suffered bad post-natal depression after
12 I was born -- Dad was back at sea -- and she always had
13 really bad PMS. Neither of these conditions were
14 recognised or treated in those days in any way --
15 not sure that they are now actually fully, the PMS
16 bit -- and they created really strong mood swings in
17 Val, from elation to deep frustration, sometimes
18 bordering on depression, but she always pulled herself
19 out of it to do something nice with us and for us.

20 One of the ways that Val showed love was by buying
21 us lovely special gifts. She travelled once over
22 100 miles just to buy me a book that I wanted and she
23 made every Whitsun, Easter, Bonfire Night and Christmas
24 magical beyond words, with thoughtful gifts, new
25 clothes, decorations, special food. We know that she

1 made so many sacrifices for us, rarely treating herself
2 and always encouraging our hobbies, art, reading,
3 nature, with gifts or trips, anything.

4 So one of the things she bought, she bought me the
5 Cicely Mary Barker Flower Fairy books because when I was
6 in Cornwall I was obsessed with wild flowers and they
7 taught me so much. And my brother always had the best
8 Hornby train sets and Matchbox and Dinky cars. She read
9 to us every night and used to ask us questions about
10 what we had read, not in a teacherly way, but helping us
11 to embed knowledge and recall. It was like a really big
12 thing for her that we understood what we'd read. We
13 used to say our prayers with her until she suddenly
14 stopped believing in God and I never knew really why she
15 did that. And as we grew up, we felt that she was really
16 fiercely protective of us, really looking after the
17 family so strongly.

18 Life in Colchester was brilliant -- sorry. It's
19 okay. I have cried actually being a teacher before when
20 I've been reading sad books, so it's okay. Just pull
21 yourself together. Life in Colchester was brilliant in
22 many ways, especially when our little brother and sister
23 arrived seven and nine years after me, but it was not
24 always easy and Dad and Val argued a lot. She had taken
25 a job in a nightclub as well as in a Wimpy burger bar as

1 my dad was really strict with money and did not earn
2 a lot. He would tell her to stop buying any luxuries
3 and once I remember he cut the plug off the record
4 player to save electricity. Obviously my mum loved
5 music.

6 Her job at the Andromeda Night Club gave her a bit
7 of a laugh and she enjoyed the buzz of it. We used to
8 go with her when we were young to King's Road and Biba
9 to buy her nice things to wear. She loved fashion and
10 it was a fabulous part of our lives, hearing about how
11 the place was run. She became friends with the owner
12 and worked really hard. He was kind to us, but my dad
13 started to resent her working there and told her to give
14 it up.

15 She was really beautiful, my mum, when she was young
16 and she got lots of compliments. Neither my mum or dad
17 drank and my mum was really strong morally and had
18 a really strong sense of loyalty. My dad was Greek and
19 a bit jealous, I think, and her frustration and
20 loneliness really grew at this point and I could see
21 that she was getting really frustrated. I and my older
22 brother did encourage my mum to leave my dad for lots of
23 reasons that I don't really need to go into, but the
24 two -- the other two children kind of kept the family
25 together and our house was tied to the job -- my dad did

1 engineering -- so he was an engineer and the job he had
2 came with a tied house, so we did feel sort of like we
3 had to stay there. But eventually she did divorce my
4 dad and the mood did lighten when that process
5 happened -- sorry, I've lost my place a bit -- though it
6 was hard on my younger brother and sister at the time,
7 who were really close to him. I'm really close to him
8 now funnily enough.

9 I remember being so proud of her when she came back
10 from court in her suit and said the judge had actually
11 granted the divorce. There were struggles about
12 housing, there was a big danger that we were going to be
13 evicted, and it became a motif of Val's life -- this is
14 one of the things that went on and on through her life,
15 where she was going to live, where she felt safe --
16 right to the end.

17 So she fought really hard for us to stay in that
18 house, and we did stay in it and it was tragic. One of
19 the big tragedies was that she felt that she was being
20 evicted from the hospital at the end of her life after
21 she'd protected us all in our housing for so long.

22 When I was asked to write this, it kind of came
23 suddenly and my brother, my older brother, agreed that
24 he would write something for it, so I'd really like to
25 share that now, and the next bit is his words that he

1 wrote. He actually wrote it on Val's birthday this
2 year, 2024, and he said it was such a beautiful thing to
3 do on her birthday. So this is my brother:

4 "Our mum was brave, hard-working, loving,
5 intelligent, kind and gave herself to raise us kids and
6 provide the best of everything to give us the best start
7 in life.

8 "She was our mum, our friend, our big sister, having
9 given birth to me when she was a girl herself. That's
10 why we grew up calling her 'Val' rather than 'mum'. She
11 played with us and was a part of so many of our games.
12 She did all she could to give us the best education,
13 from reading to us at bedtime to choosing a brilliant
14 primary school which taught French when most others
15 didn't. She pressed the local grammar school to take me
16 and then my sister as our secondary modern had few
17 A-level students, and this was an amazing thing to do
18 for us, and a real battle.

19 "People loved her, especially when she ran the
20 restaurant at Williams and Griffin [in] Colchester. She
21 was a lively Yorkshire lass and could be blunt -- she
22 was never afraid to disagree -- but everyone admired
23 that she was so down to earth.

24 "I don't know how she managed to work so hard. For
25 many years she had two jobs combined with looking after

1 four children and a dog single-handedly; she carried
2 bags of shopping home from town before we had a car, and
3 cooked the most delicious meals. When dad was around he
4 obstructed her modern view on what women could do --
5 even though she paid for his driving lessons from her
6 work and bought the first family car. She paid for all
7 four children to learn to drive when we were 17 and told
8 us how important independence would be in life, and that
9 driving was part of that.

10 "Her determination wasn't to be thwarted, no matter
11 what. In fact we quoted her on the funeral order of
12 service, 'Don't tell me what to do!'. We loved this
13 spirit in Val.

14 "Every penny she earned was for us, and she
15 nourished us with the best food and provided us with the
16 best holidays -- we have never met anyone from our era
17 who has seen so much of the British Isles -- we had the
18 loveliest times: even when our old Triumph Herald broke
19 down, Val would turn [even that] into an adventure and
20 a learning experience, teaching us resilience and
21 optimism.

22 "If it was pelting with rain, she would ask if we
23 wanted to go out in the car and find some puddles to
24 splash in [or to drive the car through]. She would get
25 the giggles at stuff as easily as we would. She would

1 love singing and dancing to the Top 30 with us on the
2 radio. She loved singing, till someone told her that
3 she couldn't sing. She was really sensitive to
4 criticism, and it was sad when the music stopped for
5 her. Sundays were family walks, black and white films
6 and her amazing Sunday roast. She was super-organised
7 to fit so much into a day -- she wouldn't let us wash
8 the dishes, even."

9 This is my brother speaking, not me, for the next
10 bit.

11 "She helped me financially all through her life,
12 even though I could be so lazy, and I feel guilty about
13 that now."

14 This is still my brother, my older brother.

15 "Val was an avid reader and a life-long learner --
16 from newspapers, books, anything. She was immersed in
17 Dostoyevsky's 'Crime and Punishment' one summer in
18 Cornwall [possibly even that one] and would have made
19 a brilliant criminologist or lawyer, had she had the
20 opportunity, but further education was not an
21 [opportunity] when she was working all hours and raising
22 us all. She never blamed anyone (maybe her dad
23 [a little]) for her lack of formal education but she
24 always knew she had not reached her full potential.
25 I think this was a factor in her depression, though we

1 never had that conversation sadly.

2 "Val was close to people and would help anyone,
3 especially if they were in trouble. She didn't have
4 friends to the house but encouraged us to have friends
5 round and would feed them and have a laugh with them.
6 So many people still talk about her sense of fun and her
7 generosity. One time though, in my 20s [this is my
8 brother], I had some disagreeable biker friends round
9 and Val chucked them out as they refused to take off
10 their studded biker jackets and she thought they might
11 damage the leather sofa that she had worked so hard to buy;
12 she was only little but tough as nails and I will always
13 remember her manhandling a couple of them out of the
14 house! The others left with their tails between their
15 legs!

16 "We had such special times with Val, from Cornwall
17 to the Lake District to Scotland. She was an amazing
18 driver and took us to so many fancy and historic places,
19 though she had to scrimp and save: dinner at the
20 Post Office Tower; the Headland Hotel in Newquay; the
21 Imperial at Blackpool; the Beatles' houses in Liverpool
22 when the youngest sister was obsessed with them;
23 afternoon tea at Harrods and the Ritz.

24 "Val was super-fit, striding up Beachy Head cliffs
25 and leaving us behind, though she was in her 50s then.

1 Her love of animals and nature was deep and beautiful
2 and our first dog, Monty, the Golden Labrador was so
3 special, trained and walked by Val, mainly, and adored
4 by us all. Bellina [she's on the photo], an Italian dog
5 adopted by my sister and then Val, gorgeous Plum and
6 Tommy were all dogs Val had such a bond with, and who
7 would do anything for her. She felt happier with dogs,
8 as they were so steady and loyal.

9 "My last happy memory close to when she ended her
10 life was sat on the promenade in Clacton. We sat at
11 a cafe all afternoon and left as the sun faded. We
12 laughed a lot all her life, and that was a hilarious
13 day. It was good to see her being her old self.
14 A jogger passed and she exclaimed: "Get those knees up!"
15 and she interacted with anyone who cared to chat, just
16 like the old days.

17 "I miss her love and her special personality -- she
18 was always funny and [always] ready to laugh, like her
19 mam, our Grandma. Not many mums played April Fool's
20 jokes on their kids -- she once sewed up the cuffs of my
21 school shirt! We had a big laugh every day about
22 something or other!

23 "I am so sad she did not receive the care she
24 needed -- I am sure she would have had a long and mostly
25 happy older life."

1 So that was all from my older brother, and my
2 younger sister and younger brother would also have
3 similar things to say. Lots of brilliant stories about
4 Val and how unconventional she was and how thoughtful
5 and her generosity and love.

6 Her five grandchildren adored her and loved her
7 stories, her sense of fun and her incredible generosity
8 and her interest in them as people. I think we always
9 knew that Val suffered from mental health issues, but
10 she managed these well and without drugs most of her
11 life. She almost never drank alcohol, a little bit at
12 Christmas -- a Snowball, that's what she liked -- never
13 smoked and was really anti-drug. She sought counselling
14 when her mum died, when she suffered the loss of her
15 mum, and our first dog, that really hit her hard, and
16 also when she felt she made an error moving to a flat in
17 Holland-on-Sea, when where she lived seemed to consume
18 who she was as a person, though her houses were always
19 beautifully decorated and with an amazing garden.

20 Getting older was hard for her, and although
21 cognitive behavioural therapy did work to some extent,
22 she eventually agreed to take anti-depressants when her
23 psychiatrist went down that route. She had never been
24 diagnosed properly, but we thought she may be bipolar or
25 something similar as she had big mood swings. These

1 could be scary, but we always loved her and we worried
2 when she was low.

3 There's a little bit that's been redacted. I'm just
4 trying to put the best bit together.

5 So there was a spell that she had that was quite
6 uncharacteristic anxiety, it lasted longer than usual,
7 and there was an unsuccessful session with
8 a psychologist where Val was really -- she didn't like
9 talking really to lots of people in the room, which of
10 course was part of what happened next, and she felt she
11 couldn't talk openly. There was a trainee observer in
12 the room and she was too nervous to say she didn't want
13 them there. And quite soon after that she crashed her
14 car into a moving lorry and was seriously injured when
15 the car caught fire. No one else was injured, though
16 a passer-by did stop and pulled her from the wreckage of
17 the car. Her beloved dog, Plum, was killed in this
18 crash and Tommy, the other dog, escaped and she now
19 lives with my sister and comes to stay with me on
20 holiday. This was December 7, 2013. The aftermath of
21 the actual crash was filmed -- it just happened to be
22 a media outlet behind her -- and is still available on
23 the internet -- it's still there -- and it's
24 a disturbing but real piece of footage.

25 So this was sort of the beginning of the end, and it

1 involved years of medical attention because Val had
2 really severe burns. She had a broken hip, she couldn't
3 walk properly after this, not fully, and she had such
4 deep anguish. Sorry.

5 THE CHAIR: Take your time.

6 MS DIMOGLU: So Val at this point was beyond devastated and
7 really guilty about the death of her beautiful Plum, her
8 dog. She could not see living in the house where she
9 lived with her dogs, and Plum was buried in the garden.
10 And she talked about suicide a lot at this point and we
11 begged her psychiatrist to help her to stay alive.

12 She had some brilliant treatment and some awful
13 treatment. There were brief flashes of the old fun Val,
14 mainly like when she was playing scrabble with the
15 people, the inpatients, but very few. We spent hours
16 looking at properties because she couldn't go back to
17 her house, but she knew she needed a place of asylum, of
18 being looked after and cared for so she did not kill
19 herself. None of her children were in a position to
20 offer this. We all had young children ourselves at this
21 point as well -- sort of young-ish.

22 She had a real sense of justice to the very end and
23 it was Val who stopped the unit she was in from writing
24 up in public in their office what the residents had done
25 to try to take their own lives. She befriended many

1 people there and made them feel loved again.

2 The impact of Val's death continues to this day --
3 as you can see with all of us -- with all of us it's the
4 same. Hearing about suicide is a trigger, but we have
5 learned to accept that that is part of life, though it
6 could be minimised with better mental healthcare. The
7 loss of Val from our lives is enormous, inexpressible
8 really. To go there is to admit the loss of so much
9 love and fun and potential memories with grandchildren
10 and with us all.

11 My daughter has been severely affected by the trauma
12 and often speaks about how Val would be so proud of her
13 achievements and how she would have been there for her.
14 I know my siblings keep their sadness to themselves
15 often or shut it out to survive. We are all trying to
16 live our lives for Val and for Dad, who is still alive
17 and who often speaks of Val's amazing personality, when
18 he met and fell in love with her.

19 The loss feels worse because we feel that, with the
20 right treatment, more fitting drugs, if they were
21 necessary, more talking therapy and a safe space to
22 live, Val would not have crashed her car and would have
23 lived a much longer and happier life. It was agony
24 seeing her desperate for help but denied that. It took
25 me five years to feel I could even breathe again.

1 I almost lost my job as an English teacher because I was
2 being made at that time to teach -- I was being made, as
3 my job, to teach books about suicide and death --
4 there's a lot of books about suicide and death that young
5 people read -- and an unsympathetic management at that
6 point. I got a skin condition from stress and
7 depression and lost weight and all interest in anything,
8 to be honest, though I did what I could to support my
9 daughter through her own grief. I also tried to be
10 there for my lovely sister, who found my mum dead after
11 the hospital let her out for 12 hours -- and we didn't
12 know this -- who also became unwell.

13 To be honest, the shambolic and disingenuous
14 investigations -- a number of them -- after my mum's
15 death by the health authorities were probably one of the
16 most traumatic parts of the whole story that we've had
17 to live. Nonetheless we have the best memories of Val
18 and this statutory Inquiry is something she would have
19 believed in as she was passionate about the need to
20 improve mental health services, to offer suffering
21 people a safe place to live and to really talk to them
22 and to try understanding what is wrong.

23 We hope that all the effort put into the Inquiry
24 does not end in a hollow "Lessons learned" statement and
25 that real policy changes can be implemented. We hope

1 that people will tell the truth and that the Inquiry can
2 compel people to be honest and to be part of a permanent
3 and positive shift in mental healthcare in the UK to
4 something kind and caring, offering true asylum without
5 limit and safeguarding individuals and society from
6 a health issue which should have solutions, as any other
7 physical ailment.

8 Thank you very much.

9 MR GRIFFIN: Would you put up the remaining photographs,
10 please?

11 (Images shown)

12 MS DIMOGLU: That's her laughing.

13 MR GRIFFIN: Thank you very much.

14 THE CHAIR: Mrs Dimoglou, thank you so much. It's wonderful
15 to hear about your inspiring mother.

16 MR GRIFFIN: Chair, there will be just a very brief pause
17 while we change the table around. (Pause)

18 We will next be hearing from Paul Guille and
19 I invite him to go to the table. He will be
20 accompanied, I understand, by his brother, Alex. And Paul
21 will be reading a commemorative account about his
22 sister, Bethany Lilley, Beth. There's a photo that's
23 gone up on the screen, just so that you're aware.

24 Statement by PAUL GUILLE

25 MR GUILLE: I would start by just echoing what Sofia said in

1 terms of thanks for the amazing staff of the Inquiry,
2 first of all for doing the work you're doing and second
3 of all for supporting us so well throughout. All of our
4 family have felt incredibly supported by the way you've
5 approached it, so thank you for that.

6 I would also just quickly say, before I start, that
7 this was written mostly by my sister, Sarah, who did
8 a huge amount of just asking the right questions, asking
9 the right people and, as a result, sort of got the
10 inquest going initially and things like that, and got us
involved in this

11 process as well. She kind of decided it was time for
12 her to step away, so I just want to kind of start by
13 paying tribute to her and all the work she did to try
14 and get some answers on behalf of Bethany.

15 So this account is mostly written from Sarah's
16 perspective but, as I'm one of six, lots of us all had
17 different memories and different pieces we wanted to add
18 in, so I'll kind of make that clear as we go through.
19 So she said:

20 "Thank you for the opportunity to provide
21 a commemorative account for the Lampard Inquiry
22 regarding my sister, Bethany Lilley ... who died in
23 January 2019, aged 28, whilst an inpatient on Essex
24 Partnership University ... Trust's Thorpe Ward [in]
25 Basildon.

1 "In order to write this account, I have referred to
2 and included information that was submitted to the Essex
3 Coroner following my sister's death, with the input of
4 my siblings and mum, together with our recollections of
5 our experience. We are very happy to provide any
6 additional information or evidence or greater detail of
7 our experience at any point.

8 "Beth was born on 12 September 1990. The youngest
9 of a set of twins, and the youngest of six siblings from
10 Dr John Guille and Mrs Julia Guille. Beth was born in
11 the breech position and had one arm over her head. As
12 a consequence she got 'stuck' until the consultant
13 manually moved her arm, causing it to break, to allow
14 her to be born. It is not clear whether there was any
15 impact of this period of oxygen starvation on Beth.
16 Although it did not affect her physical development, the
17 family have always felt it may have impacted her
18 emotional development.

19 "Beth lived in the family home, with the exception
20 of a short period when she lived on her own, until she
21 married her childhood sweetheart in 2015. They lived in
22 one bedroom in the family home, sharing kitchen and
23 bathroom facilities, until they could rent their own
24 place in Colchester which they did for approximately one
25 year until they separated during an intense period of

1 Beth's mental illness.

2 "As a child, Beth was impulsive. Due to her
3 behaviour, she was [unfortunately] asked to leave the
4 secondary school she attended with her brothers, and was
5 moved to an alternative school in Clacton, from which
6 she was frequently truant. Her Dad then paid for Beth
7 to attend a private school in Colchester. Aged 16, Beth
8 was diagnosed with and treated for ADHD. She dropped
9 down an academic year and left the private school with
10 five GCSEs.

11 "There were few things Beth enjoyed more than
12 spending time with her cat [appropriately] named
13 Smirnoff, usually in front of an episode of EastEnders
14 or some kind of comedy series (anything from Miranda to
15 the Gilmore Girls was always good with her!). She was
also an
16 enormous fan of music, especially the rapper Eminem,
17 even getting to see him perform live on one occasion."

18 And we even had some of his lyrics quoted at her
19 funeral as well, appropriate ones I should add.

20 "Beth experienced several severely traumatic events
21 during her teenage years and into her early 20s, the
22 details of which another family member has asked [us]
23 not to include. We now understand that these events
24 impacted Beth's mental health severely and began the
25 start of her involvement with the services provided by

1 Essex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust.

2 "[During] these experiences, Beth worked first as
3 a care assistant as a care home. She really enjoyed her
4 job and loved looking after people. She spent a short
5 time as a domiciliary care assistant and then managed to
6 secure a job at her dad's GP surgery as a Health Care
7 Assistant and phlebotomist from 2012. She was widely
8 regarded as brilliant at her job, loved by all of her
9 patients and the staff. Due to her struggles with her
10 mental health, she [did have] to leave the role. At one
11 point she spoke to the surgery about returning to her
12 job, which she [really] really wanted to do. She
13 returned for a period of a week on admin duties, but her
14 mental health was such that she [just] wasn't able to
15 continue.

16 "In 2014 she studied for a short time at Anglia
17 Ruskin University to become a qualified nurse, with the
18 intention to specialise in Mental Health, but
19 unfortunately did not pass the academic assignments.
20 Beth was diagnosed with dyslexia around this time.
21 [She] continued to want to train as a nurse and applied
22 for information about a nursing qualification with the
23 Open University in 2018.

24 "During 2014/15 Beth's mental health declined quite
25 suddenly. She spent blocks of time as an inpatient on

1 the mental health wards, at one stage she was resident
2 for over eight months."

3 I've lost myself for a second.

4 "After this admission, she had great difficulty
5 readjusting to the world outside the ward and ended up
6 yo-yoing backwards and forwards in and out of the
7 inpatient wards.

8 "Beth's dad was a local GP and worked
9 extraordinarily long hours. When Julia was unwell,
10 Beth's Granny on her Dad's side would often visit from
11 Guernsey to stay and support the family.

12 "And Beth's parents divorced in 2003, when [Bethany]
was

13 12, and Julia was moved out of the ... home into a flat
14 a few miles away.

15 "Beth's dad died in October 2018, after which her
16 destructive behaviour reached new heights as her
17 struggles to cope with [the] death went unrecognised by
18 the teams supposed to be supporting her. Beth
19 eventually succeeded in taking her own life whilst an
20 inpatient in January 2019, when she ligatured.

21 "Beth did not have children, although she wanted
22 nothing more than to be a mum. She was incredibly close
23 to all of her nieces and nephews as well as the children
24 of her close friends, who all knew her as 'Aunty Beth'.
25 Beth was fiercely loyal to her friends and would be

1 there no matter what time of day or night to provide
2 emotional or practical support. Beth's six nieces and
3 nephews were aged between 10 and 2 when she died. She
4 absolutely adored them and requested photographs of them
5 while she was an inpatient, as she recognised that
6 thinking about them helped her through her days. Beth
7 saw them almost daily when [she was] at home, and never
8 missed a family gathering.

9 " My personal recollections of Beth [this is from
10 Sarah's perspective] are limited as I went away to
11 university during Beth's teenage years, and then moved
12 away from the area for a period of ten years.
13 I remember hearing about her struggles from my Dad and
14 even considered whether I could support her if she moved
15 in with me, giving her a change of scene and people.
16 I still wonder whether this could have made
17 a difference.

18 " Beth supported me during a particularly difficult
19 period of my life, when other people told me to 'just
20 get on with it'. She could see how much I was hurting
21 and tried to help. I will never forget that kindness
22 when I needed it [the] most.

23 " She was such a kind and loving aunty to my
24 daughter, who regularly told me that Aunty Beth was the
25 only one who understood her. My daughter was 10 when

1 Beth died. She was devastated and asked how it
2 happened. I asked if she knew that Aunty Beth used to
3 hurt herself. My daughter replied that, yes, she knew
4 that. I sadly explained that Aunty Beth had hurt
5 herself too much this time. My daughter looked at me
6 and said simply 'I thought so'. She wrote this poem
7 after [Bethany] died:

8 'Amazing
9 'Unique
10 'Nice
11 'Terrific
12 'Intelligent
13 'Exciting
14
15 'Beautiful
16 'Excellent
17 'Totally brilliant
18 'Helpful
19
20 'I love you.'

21 "Beth's inquest took three years to reach the
22 Coroner's court. It was three weeks long and held under
23 Article 2 of the Human Rights Act with a jury. During
24 those three years, we attended every single meeting and
25 I worked extremely closely with our solicitor and

1 barrister preparing for the case, spending many hours
2 reading disclosure, making notes and asking questions,
3 on top of my full-time job. My own family did their
4 best to support me while I poured my heart and soul into
5 working out where things had gone so terribly wrong
6 while they constantly worried about the impact on my
7 mental and physical health as barely a day went past
8 when I did not suffer from anxiety-induced migraine, for
9 which I required prescription medication and drank
10 alcohol to excess with worrying frequency.

11 We would say we are a close family, but there are
12 many things we do not know about each other's lives, and
13 we would say this is appropriate. However, during the
14 course of preparing for the inquest all the details of
15 Beth's life were laid bare. To begin with, this was in
16 some ways positive, as it helped us to piece together
17 just why she became so unwell. But details such as her
18 post-mortem report detailing the weight of each of her
19 organs was too much to bear.

20 "I read every single page of her 10,000-page medical
21 records, including the sentence that a member of staff
22 thought necessary to record in perpetuity that, 'Beth
23 gets on well with all of her siblings, apart from
24 Sarah'. I cannot unread those words and can never fix
25 that relationship that I did not even realise Beth felt

1 was so broken.

2 "We were six siblings, now we are five. And no
3 mother should have to bury her child. Losing Beth
4 continues to affect us all in different ways,
5 particularly for Julia, who lived with Beth during her
6 most difficult times and constantly towards the end of
7 her life, and Matt, Beth's twin, feels her loss most
8 acutely. We have individually suffered in different
9 ways. Panic attacks, depression, relationship
10 struggles, and physical health problems that can be
11 directly attributed to our grief. Several of us have
12 sought counselling and some are continuing with it, five
13 years later.

14 "Every time I think of Beth, see a photo of her, or
15 visit her grave, I feel an overwhelming wave of sadness
16 because I just always believed she would 'make it' and
17 I still can't believe that she didn't."

18 The next words are from Julia Guille, who is
19 Bethany's and our mum. She asked to include these
20 words:

21 "Beth's death has meant that when in conversation
22 the subject of families come up, I feel very
23 uncomfortable when talking about my children. I can
24 never decide whether to say I have six or five children.
25 I feel as if I'm lying when I say six, but feel disloyal

1 to Beth when I say five. I'm never sure if or even how
2 I can explain that Beth has died and the reason that she
3 has died.

4 "I am constantly reliving the evening I was told
5 that [Bethany] had died. I received a phone call from
6 her doctor describing all the events surrounding her
7 death, how she was found with a ligature, attempts to
8 resuscitate, but not actually telling me she was gone.
9 It took a direct question from me before I was told the
10 truth, that [Bethany] had died. Even after all this
11 time, it doesn't seem real."

12 And these words are from Matthew, who was Bethany's
twin
13 brother:

14 "Looking back, I am so privileged to be Beth's twin.
15 She proudly took immense pleasure in sharing she was
16 a twin with everyone she met and would often refer to me
17 as her 'Twinny', which I wasn't too fond of at the time
18 but now, I really miss it.

19 "Growing up with Beth as my twin is all I've known
20 but I would describe our relationship as unique. She
21 had such a vibrant personality, and she was just so
22 funny. We would squabble as all siblings do but we were
23 always together. We went to a small village primary
24 school and were in the same class, so we literally spent
25 all our time together. We shared a bedroom growing up

1 as we were the same age, attended most things
2 together (Sunday school, swimming lessons etc). We
3 really were a pair, right down to matching outfits our
4 mum would dress us in as babies.

5 "When we went to secondary school, we didn't have
6 any lessons together and we hung around with different
7 friendship groups. This is around the time when we
8 started to unfortunately grow apart. However, the close
9 bond remained. After secondary school we began to grow
10 closer again before I moved away to Yorkshire to attend
11 university and raise my children with my fiancé. We
12 still did communicate and visit each other from time to
13 time but not enough.

14 "I have two young children who were 6 and 4 at the
15 time of Beth's passing. We try to talk openly about
16 Beth and when my son asked what I was doing while
17 writing this, he asked if he could add something too.
18 I asked what he wanted to add and he said, 'she was
19 really sweet and always lovely'.

20 "My son is the oldest of my two children and Beth's
21 death has had a lasting impact on him. He was 6 at the
22 time of her passing and started to show a disconnect
23 with the world around him. The issues he faced impacted
24 his education and his mental health. Luckily for us my
25 partner managed to arrange counselling for him; the

1 school were very understanding and set time aside for
2 these sessions as well as supplying additional support
3 with his schoolwork.

4 "My daughter often expresses how much she misses
5 her. She is often distraught about how she does not
6 have much memory of her, it is very upsetting to hear
7 that she wishes she was still here. She used to ask
8 when Aunty Beth was going to come back. It took a
9 few years for her to finally understand, this was
10 extremely hard for her, myself, and my partner.

11 "So, to summarise, years on we feel her loss greatly
12 and regularly. Be that through the children's emotions
13 or our own memories, the death of my twin has impacted
14 myself and my family massively. Since Beth's passing,
15 I have received one set of counselling, and I have
16 recently had an assessment while I await further
17 counselling. I struggle with her loss greatly and I am
18 acutely aware these feelings will no doubt be a part of
19 me forever."

20 The next part is from Jo Stevens, who is Bethany's
21 sister, our sister:

22 "As a family we have come to the agreement of
23 writing separate statements if we so desire, as to the
24 impact of Bethany's loss on us as individuals. We have
25 been through this process for nearly 5 years as a family

1 which has been tough on us all. We are all individuals
2 and have different memories, different feelings and
3 sometimes different opinions on things, so we thought it
4 only fair we got to have our say as different family
5 members.

6 "I've never had the opportunity to really put down
7 in words the effect it has had on just me before.
8 I have attempted bereavement counselling but wouldn't
9 open up and was told that I seemed to be doing ok so
10 I didn't really need it. I was told that the images
11 I was seeing in my head of my sister's body in the
12 chapel of rest weren't flashbacks, they were just
13 memories. So, I continue to live my life because we all
14 know life goes on! I think about her often but rarely
15 visit her grave. I don't know whether it is just down
16 to having a busy life or otherwise.

17 "Beth was my little sister, I loved her dearly!
18 I remember her for being a lively, fun-loving young
19 girl. We missed our flight to Guernsey one year and at
20 the time we were devastated, however we soon laughed
21 about it once our dad came to the rescue. I fell over
22 in the mud just before our flight coming home too, she
23 really did laugh at me! The person that she turned into
24 wasn't Beth, and I do not want to remember her as this
25 shadow of herself.

1 "She turned to me initially at the very beginning of
2 her real mental health struggles. However, she soon
3 drifted away as her mental health deteriorated. There
4 will always be the questions in my mind, 'Could I have
5 done more? Should I have done more?'.
6

7 "Losing Beth really took its toll on my family too.
8 I struggled for months following our dad's and then her
9 death. I wandered around in a trance, and it wasn't
10 until my Husband finally confronted me about feeling
11 sorry for myself, but not doing anything about it, that
12 I actually started to take note and realise I needed to
13 snap out of it. My daughter doesn't remember my sister
14 but knows who she is in photographs, my two sons do
15 remember her but their memories fade as they were still
16 so young when it happened.

17 "So, in conclusion, it really affected me and still
18 does in many ways. I'm not sure I can actually put
19 everything in words. It obviously had a massive effect
20 on my personal life, but it also affects my work life
21 too sometimes. Having to stay professional with people
22 at the lowest points of their life, knowing deep down
23 they probably won't actually get the help they require
24 from mental health services, it makes me sad!"

25 And this last bit is from me.

 The impact on Bethany's death on me personally is

1 difficult to quantify. When you are told that your
2 sister is going into hospital because of her
3 deteriorating mental health, the immediate response
4 should be one of relief and gratitude. It should be
5 assumed that this is the place where she will get the
6 support and care that she needs. In our situation
7 Bethany's hospital admissions served as a signal that
8 her situation was getting worse and that it would likely
9 worsen during her stay, whichever ward she would end up
10 staying on.

11 Bethany's death felt so inevitable. When I would
12 visit her on the ward, when I was still living in the
13 UK, and when I would video-call her from my apartment in
14 Raleigh, she would talk about taking her own life
15 flippantly. "I tried to kill myself today, but the
16 nurses stopped me. So that's good" was something
17 I heard more times than anyone ever should from someone
18 they love. This carefree attitude and the obvious signs
19 that Bethany was not okay has often led me to question
20 whether I did enough to help her. Did I ignore those
21 signs and become almost desensitised to her pain? Could
22 I have raised those concerns earlier? Should I have
23 just taken them more seriously and, if I had, might she
24 still be alive today?

25 These painful and lingering questions are still

1 difficult to manage, but immediately after her death
2 they were absolutely deafening. I took to drinking alcohol
3 nightly. Without doing so I was fearful of not sleeping
4 at all or being woken up by nightmares. It took until
5 lent of 2020 until I was able to relearn how to manage
6 my relationship with alcohol again.

7 I also took a huge financial impact after Bethany's
8 death, paying hundreds of dollars in flights home, lost
9 earnings and therapy sessions. When my father died
10 months before Bethany, I was offered the chance to see
11 him in the hospital mortuary. I turned this down and
12 regretted it. When Bethany passed, I could only get
13 back to England days before her funeral and never had
14 the chance to see her. To not have had the chance of
15 this closure is an especially painful outcome from the
16 darkest period of my life and it's something that's
17 never going to be fixed.

18 Up until I moved back to the UK, I actually had one
19 last message from her on our WhatsApp chat. I told her
20 that I thought she was strong. She replied to say
21 "thank you" and that she hoped to believe it herself one
22 day. It seems unlikely that she felt strong in the days
23 before she passed, but that's how I think of her. To
24 live how she did, to achieve what she did, to touch the
25 lives that she did and to keep going in the face of

1 everything in the way that she did took a kind of
2 resilience that most people could not have even imagined
3 having to show. She's not just missed, she's remembered
4 and she is an inspiration.

5 I'll just finish with the last bits, which was
6 Sarah's words again:

7 "Beth had such a way of connecting people on their
8 level -- meeting them where they were at and engaging
9 with their interests and values even if they did not
10 match her own. Everyone who had the privilege of
11 spending time with her has different memories of her and
12 different ways of understanding what a truly special
13 soul she was.

14 "Beth's immediate family numbers 15 people.
15 However, the loss of her life extends far beyond her
16 family to include her greatest friends, those who she
17 would drop everything for when they needed help, and all
18 of the patients that she looked after. Even those she
19 came into contact with over the course of her illness,
20 both staff and patients, valued her friendship, her
21 personality and her passion. We were told over and
22 over, whenever we met people from the Trust, 'we all
23 loved Beth'.

24 "Thank you again for this opportunity to provide
25 this Commemorative Account and for the [amazing] work

1 that you are doing."

2 MR GRIFFIN: Thank you. If you just wait there, we'll play
3 a few more photographs.

4 (Images shown)

5 That's the last photograph, thank you.

6 THE CHAIR: Thank you both very much indeed and will you
7 also convey my thanks to the rest of your family. Thank
8 you.

9 MR GRIFFIN: Chair, we'll now hear the commemorative account
10 of Jane Stanford and it will be read by her legal
11 representative.

12 This is an account about Jane's mother, Dorothy --
13 or Dot -- Redditt and it is being read by
14 Adefolaju Sanda.

15 MR SANDA: Good morning, Chair. Today I'll be reading the
16 commemorative account of Jane Stanford, sat next to me,
17 daughter of Dorothy Redditt, also known to her friends
18 and loved ones as "Dot".

19 Statement by JANE STANFORD (read)

20 MR SANDA: "Dot as she was known to all, my mum, was born in
21 1936, she was given a long life but cut short shockingly
22 and tragically at age 85 in 2021, when she died alone,
23 locked in her bathroom, the room in terrible disarray,
24 surrounded by the paraphernalia of self-harm, the door
25 smashed down by the police. Many may think that someone

1 else cleans up after this type of death, but they don't.
2 The family are left with a horrific scene that can never
3 be erased from their memories. One must identify the
4 body and this must be done by someone that knew them.
5 We never got to see mum treated and well. Her right to
6 a normal old age free of mental torment [was] denied to
7 her. There was to be no normal decline which is
8 expected in old age, no family at her bedside at her
9 end, to say our goodbyes and hold her hand.

10 "Mum came from a family scarred by World War 1 PTSD.
11 Her great grandfather sadly took his own life. This was
12 along with Mum's own issues of dealing with the upheaval
13 of being evacuated during World War 2 at the tender age
14 of 4, being separated from her brother and her parents.

15 "Mum married dad after a short courtship in 1956,
16 having met at their place of work. They had been
17 married for 64 years when mum died. Dad passed away
18 recently, after a gradual decline in his physical and
19 cognitive capacity, nearly 3 years after mum. He was
20 a mild mannered, gentle man not given to confrontation
21 and was always supportive of mum through her long mental
22 health difficulties. Even if he did not always fully
23 understand her difficulties, no matter how they impacted
24 him he remained loyal and supportive, her 'rock',
25 knowing and believing Mum's cyclical ups and downs in

1 her mental health would somehow always ease with
2 a little time and patience.

3 "When my sister and I were born in the 1960s, mum
4 had the family she so wanted, but the pressures that
5 come with motherhood were totally overwhelming for her
6 and she did not cope with the demands, which affected
7 her already fragile mental health. Mum, looking back at
8 that time, believed she had suffered with post-natal
9 depression, but in the 1960s there appeared to be little
10 awareness or help for this or any mental health
11 difficulties.

12 "The cyclical nature of Mum's mental health
13 difficulties thankfully did mean we saw times when mum
14 shone past her difficulties. Mum was a very creative
15 and a talented artist, many friends and family still
16 have her beautifully painted stones. Mum's love of
17 nature, flowers, animals and birds, meant these were her
18 favourite subjects. Mum could recognise bird song
19 easily and identify birds in a flash. She also loved
20 her garden and when she was able, there would be a small
21 veggie patch, fruit trees and bushes. She would nurture
22 her plant cuttings until they were healthy and thriving
23 and these plants still live on in our gardens today.

24 "Mum was also a very good seamstress, she made
25 clothes, toys and dolls, was always knitting when there

1 was to be a new baby in the family or neighbourhood.
2 There were also many very intricate embroideries framed
3 on the walls of mum and dad's home. Mum would make
4 amazing fancy dress for me and my sister and often we
5 would do well in competitions and win a prize.

6 "Mum learned to play the piano, the memories of
7 Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata 1st Movement resounding
8 through the house is very poignant for me. Mum was
9 involved with amateur dramatics, where she would enjoy
10 singing and acting and I remember her performance in the
11 panto Cinderella very well.

12 "Mum was also a very good baker of bread and cakes.
13 The smell of a newly baked cake or bread was one I love
14 and her old-fashioned deserts, a gooey jam roly poly
15 always went down a treat.

16 "Like many older couples, as they moved towards
17 retirement, mum and dad enjoyed caravanning and visited
18 many places in Britain and France, in later years
19 travelling further afield to Canada and the USA. Dad
20 recalled very fond memories of their wonderful trip to
21 Bryce Canyon National Park Utah, sitting with mum after
22 a meal, just admiring the stars, which with so little
23 light pollution was magical. Later as they aged
24 travelling abroad became more difficult so mum and dad
25 would often go to Southwold or Orford Ness for a short

1 break, always with one of their rescue dogs in tow.
2 They would hire a beach hut for the day and me and my
3 sister and our four boys would come for a day by the
4 beach. Mum's four grandsons gave her great pleasure and
5 she was always interested in their achievements and how
6 they were making it in the world.

7 "Mum was confused and frustrated when it came to her
8 mental health difficulties, full of contradictions in
9 her search for answers. She always seemed to be
10 searching for answers to her difficult thoughts and
11 feelings that so clearly caused her pain and sadness.
12 She could articulate well what she felt were the causes,
13 events which occurred deep in her past, but she found
14 confronting these thoughts and feelings extremely
15 difficult. She sought solace in her faith at times in
16 her life. She sought answers from her GPs over many
17 years, but became increasingly frustrated by the fact
18 that medical treatment for her mental illness did not
19 seem to work. Mum felt no one understood her or seemed
20 to be able to alleviate her depressed state. She sadly
21 took a lot of her frustrations out on family, friends
22 and neighbours, seeking to blame those around her for
23 not making her happy, understanding her or being able to
24 relieve her clear pain. This caused immense
25 difficulties with her relationships.

1 "The final five years of Mum's life, dad recalled,
2 were a period where Mum's frustrations gradually
3 increased. We all gradually noticed this trend. The
4 cyclical nature of Mum's mental health difficulties
5 seemed to change to a more stable constant low mood with
6 very challenging bouts of aggression. She lost interest
7 in her creative interests, music, her garden, the little
8 holidays she so enjoyed. She was clearly in distress
9 and would wander off, having to be brought back by the
10 police. But once persuaded by the police to seek help
11 in A&E, she would convince the staff that she was fine,
12 even though it was clear to us that she was not.

13 "The months that led up to mum's death were the most
14 terrifyingly anxious times of our lives as a family.
15 The impact on our lives will never go away. Both my
16 sister and I have had to seek professional counselling
17 and our dad suffered dreadfully and needed lots of
18 support. The wider family, namely our partners and
19 grown-up children, should not be forgotten [as] they
20 have been invaluable in supporting us and saw us suffer
21 so much.

22 "Writing this and recalling the terrible memories of
23 my utter feeling of helplessness, failing at every point
24 to get anyone to listen to our concerns and get [help
25 that mum] needed and deserved, brings on overwhelming

1 physical symptoms of anxiety. I cannot breathe, my
2 heart is thumping, there is a knot in my stomach, my
3 head is light, I panic, I am crying. My thoughts are
4 'I must help mum', but no one is listening to my pleas,
5 and no one wants to help us, mum will hurt herself and
6 dad too [and] I need to prevent this catastrophic
7 scenario [from happening]. I hear my dad crying, he is
8 93 and not in the best of health, he has been hit by
9 mum, she has threatened to kill him, pushed him into the
10 wall, locked him outside in the cold, the phone wires
11 ripped out so he cannot call for help, he is afraid mum
12 will burn the house down as she has threatened, she is
13 verbally abusing him, he cannot leave her as she is
14 threatening to harm herself and he wants to keep her
15 safe, dad wants to take his own life because he cannot
16 cope anymore, he just needs peace he says. Mum is in
17 severe mental health crisis but there is no one to
18 help her get well, or see and accept the risk to dad
19 physically and psychologically.

20 "We as a family also went through several
21 distressing police incidents.

22 "In the weeks prior to mum's death, we as a family
23 foolishly felt some relief once mum agreed to
24 a voluntary admission to Ruby Ward. Mum's experiences,
25 according to her journal notes and our experiences of

1 Ruby Ward over the weeks are to be recalled and will be
2 dealt with later in the inquiry. However, it is safe to
3 say the majority of our interactions with Ruby Ward were
4 not good ones.

5 "The failings left mum's mental health issues
6 effectively untreated. Discharge occurred without
7 adequate support and into an environment that was not
8 appropriate, within 5 days mum had attempted suicide
9 again and six days [later] mum was dead.

10 "My sister and I spent hundreds of hours writing
11 emails, letters, making phone calls, video call
12 meetings.

13 "I am sure there is more I cannot recall. Much of
14 our efforts whilst mum was still on Ruby Ward trying to
15 get our concerns listened to and acted on were ignored.
16 None of our efforts prevented mum's tragic loss or
17 provided explanation for what we believe were the events
18 that contributed to mum's death. All our efforts have
19 been in vain. This is the unending impact of what we
20 have been through as a family.

21 "Mum, you lost your battle against a cruel and
22 unkind illness, let down by those that should have cared
23 for you and helped you get well, your struggles were
24 immense and life long, but it was a full, valuable life.
25 Your family all did the very best they could to support

1 and care for you, especially dad, by your side for
2 64 years. Even when it was impossible to reach you,
3 locked in your pain and anguish, we were still fighting
4 for you, to try and make things better for you and get
5 you well. It is so sad it was all in vain.

6 "We know you believed that you would someday go
7 somewhere better with the angels and where there will be
8 peace forever, I hope you are there now, because if
9 anyone needed and deserved somewhere better and peace
10 forever, it was you Mum."

11 MR GRIFFIN: Would you play the remaining photographs,
12 please?

13 (Images shown)

14 Thank you very much.

15 THE CHAIR: Mrs Stanford, thank you very much indeed for
16 that incredibly illuminating account.

17 MR GRIFFIN: Chair, that is time for our mid-morning break.

18 May I suggest that we return at 11.40?

19 THE CHAIR: 11.40, good.

20 (11.07 am)

21 (A short break)

22 (11.43 am)

23 MR GRIFFIN: We are hearing now from Karon Pimm, who will be
24 speaking about her son, TJ. And could we put up the
25 photograph, please?

Statement by KARON PIMM

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MS PIMM: Yes, okay, so TJ was conceived with the help of a fertility drug. After six weeks of pregnancy I was admitted to hospital for major surgery. I had undiagnosed endometriosis and the drug that I took made it worse, so I had a tube, ovary and massive blood-filled cyst removed while I was six weeks pregnant.

The doctors were aware of my pregnancy and therefore did not perform a D&C. But said there was little hope I would carry the pregnancy. I also had an incompetent cervix, so therefore, at 16 weeks, I had a stitch put in to keep the pregnancy, but I put here that TJ kept trying to escape and I had to go to theatre twice more to have another stitch put in -- two more stitches put in.

I went into hospital again bleeding and they found I had a placenta previa, so I was bleeding. I was admitted in September and never came out again until TJ was born by emergency C-section. I kept going into labour and they kept taking me to the labour ward, put me on medication via a drip to stop the contractions. So I had many scares, many transfusions and bedrest for three months.

I got to seven months and was allowed to go down to

1 breakfast, but as I finished my breakfast I went into
2 labour. There was nothing they could do to stop it. TJ
3 was born at 2 pounds and luckily he had very few
4 problems and they let him out of hospital when he was
5 4 pounds, just six weeks later.

6 He was very precious -- this is an understatement.
7 He was meant to be here. He was a funny, caring, happy
8 child. That's how best to describe him. He was tiny
9 for such a long time but a character. One of his
10 teachers came to the funeral and gave us a class photo
11 she had kept. She was distraught, saying he was the
12 loveliest child she had ever taught.

13 He was also a child model and very successful to the
14 age of 7, but he was playing football when they found
15 out. They ribbed him so much that we went to an
16 audition at Marks -- oh, I'm not allowed to say that.

17 MR GRIFFIN: Yes, you can.

18 MS PIMM: -- M&S for a job and he refused to comply with the
19 models' work ethic, to say the least, and that was the
20 last of his modelling career. Football was his main
21 passion but he was small for a long time. He was really
22 talented. People would comment at every game how good
23 he was. His vision was apparent at an early age, but
24 the other kids couldn't follow his vision and he got
25 very frustrated. Even the managers couldn't coach him.

1 He was more aware than them.

2 We moved from Dagenham to Dovercourt in 2000 for
3 a better life, but TJ struggled -- it was probably
4 a wrong time to move, but it was the best thing, we
5 thought -- and rarely went to school. He was 14 at the
6 time. But the school sent him to a programme which
7 involved Colchester Football Club and he managed to do
8 two years there and got coaching badges. By the age of
9 18 we thought and he thought he would go away with the
10 company to teach football -- coach in the USA, and he
11 did this for two summers -- for two years, sorry. He
12 was based in Florida and loved it and the kids loved him
13 too.

14 He did get signed on at 12 for West Ham and did
15 a little while there, but they did not extend his stay
16 as he was so small. This really upset him. He ended up
17 being five 9. The football world is quite cruel. After
18 this he actually worked for West Ham as a coach in the
19 community, (inaudible) for a year, and then he went on
20 a -- he got a job with First Choice Holidays and spent
21 three years, one in Majorca, one in Cape Verde and the
22 next year in Egypt, doing the children's football
23 sessions.

24 There he met a girl from Manchester, and when he
25 finished the work with First Choice Holidays he moved up

1 there with her and they had a child, but he found it
2 difficult to stay away from us, being so far away. He
3 used to go -- he came home, sorry, and he got a very
4 good job in sales in London. He used to go by train to
5 see his son and sometimes I would go and drive
6 sometimes.

7 This eventually led to TJ not being able to see him
8 because he once turned up late, Saturday morning, drunk
9 from the night before, after work. He then rekindled
10 a relationship with the first girl he met when we moved
11 to Dovercourt. He moved in with her in London and it
12 seemed okay for a while, but this job in London wasn't
13 very good with the culture of drinking and drugs. This
14 is where his mental health I think started to
15 deteriorate. I'm not sure if he did have ADHD, but he
16 had OCD as a child, lining his cars up and all in rows
17 even at an early age.

18 I had to go and pick TJ up from his girlfriend's
19 flat in London as he was getting into debt, gambling,
20 and again to drugs in London and getting payday loans.
21 I think he was bipolar but that was never diagnosed. He
22 had some medication from a GP -- but took all the
23 tablets -- once in 2015. He was okay, but he didn't
24 take no more after that and the doctor wouldn't
25 prescribe him any and he wasn't really well looked after

1 by the GP.

2 He was arrested for criminal damage when I went to
3 pick him up because he smashed his girlfriend's phone,
4 but I was there and I witnessed it, but he did get
5 arrested for it.

6 We go on to -- he didn't go to court for this.
7 A warrant was issued for his arrest. Sorry. The money
8 he was given to go to court he spent on drink, and he
9 actually went to Romford Railway Station and either the
10 transport police or staff noticed him preparing to jump
11 under the train. He'd been staying with my eldest
12 daughter to give us a break.

13 From there, the staff took him to my daughter's
14 house, which was just around the corner, and they called
15 an ambulance. He went to Goodmayes Hospital, where he
16 was sectioned, and me and my husband put our hands
17 together as he would finally get the help he needed, but
18 sadly not to be.

19 He was sent from Goodmayes at midnight -- and I'm
20 sure it was in a taxi -- to The Lakes at Colchester
21 because he was out of area. There's no -- hardly any
22 paperwork I believe from Goodmayes. So he was taken to
23 The Lakes -- sorry, I've lost myself.

24 MR GRIFFIN: Do you see the paragraph starting "The worst
25 thing ..."?

1 MS PIMM: Okay, so that was that. Sorry.

2 From The Lakes he was deemed to be fine. He was
3 seen by a psychiatrist and a nurse -- again there was
4 hardly any paperwork -- and he was let out that day.
5 But going on, the next day -- oh, no, I've lost myself.
6 So sorry. Yes, so he was let out The Lakes and he told
7 me that he was going to get some community help and
8 they'd arranged that, but he didn't.

9 On Thursday the 25th he was taken to A&E by his
10 probation officer in Colchester. I went there to pick
11 him up, but they couldn't -- TJ had been -- sorry.
12 I found out after that TJ had been up a car park in
13 Colchester and had told the probation officer and the
14 crisis nurse in A&E that he'd been up there to view it;
15 a reconnaissance sort of thing. That was on the
16 Thursday, the 25th. He was not admitted because the
17 nurse said he was drunk and they couldn't arrest anyone
18 if they had a warrant out for his arrest. She told me
19 to take him to Clacton Police Station to hand himself in
20 and he would be assessed by the duty doctor.

21 This I didn't do. I thought that was wrong. I came
22 home. I was working the next day at Colchester on
23 26 August, on the Friday. TJ said, "I'll come with you
24 and I'll hand myself in at Colchester". This is all
25 because of a smashed phone. I dropped him off near the

1 station and went to work. I remember the last thing he
2 said to me was -- in the car I said, "Why do you want to
3 go Colchester and not Clacton?", and the last thing he
4 said to me, "Because it's bigger". I didn't realise
5 what he meant. Little did I understand -- he was
6 dressed in a black tracksuit, baseball cap and trainers,
7 a very hot day. I tried ringing the probation to see if
8 he got through and I couldn't get through. I left
9 messages. Eventually somebody rung me back and said
10 he'd been in -- TJ had been in three times and they were
11 busy. He'd asked if he could borrow £5 because he was
12 so hot, he wanted a T-shirt.

13 She said she would ring me when he came back. He
14 never went back. I went home. The police were
15 called -- the police called me and said that basically
16 TJ's life was over. He'd jumped from the seventh or
17 fifth -- seventh floor of a car park. He left his
18 baseball cap on top of the car park and the trainers on
19 top of it, which we've still got to this day.

20 I know he suffered. A helicopter was called and
21 landed near him, trying to save him. He suffered
22 horrendous injuries. I thought a few times of
23 contacting the ambulance service for a report, but
24 I keep stopping myself. Also there was a lady first at
25 the scene. She was an ex-nurse and I have her details

1 too, but I still haven't contacted her. I wonder to
2 myself if he was conscious, if he said anything.

3 He was always dressed well. As I said, he left his
4 baseball and trainers at the top of the car park. I was
5 told he'd jumped backwards. He was frightened of
6 heights and when he worked in London he used to take --
7 he wouldn't go -- he would go on the lifts, so I don't
8 understand how he managed to get up there. I just
9 imagine him being on his own in Colchester, walking up
10 that car park and I was just a mile away.

11 My husband hasn't worked since, and the impact it's
12 had has been great. Money-wise, we had to sell our
13 house and moved a few times to cheaper properties, and
14 it hasn't brought us closer, my two daughters and my
15 grandchildren. It's drawn us apart. They both suffer,
16 they're both depressed.

17 I don't know, it's just -- I mean, as I said, my
18 husband hasn't worked, he's -- he hardly goes out now.
19 He don't like talking to people. He won't even go
20 shopping with me. So he spends like two/three weeks at
21 a time ... I do think I'm suffering from PTSD and
22 I think he is too. Yeah, that's all I can say.

23 MR GRIFFIN: You said at the end of your statement that:

24 "We miss him more everyday and ... it's not getting
25 [any] easier."

1 MS PIMM: No, I have dreams and I wake up in the morning and
2 I remember he's not there.

3 MR GRIFFIN: We've got some more photographs to show. Could
4 you put those up please?

5 MS PIMM: Can I just add that he managed to get himself
6 a job -- he took himself to Cluttons -- sorry -- in
7 Mayfair and he managed to get a job all by himself. He
8 used to sell -- the job he was doing in London was
9 business rates -- getting the business rates down for
10 people, and this company didn't know, and they set him
11 up and said he had an office and everything -- that was
12 in the August -- so he was still trying to get through
13 things. He was offered £40,000 plus commission and he
14 never got to start that job.

15 MR GRIFFIN: Thank you.

16 MS PIMM: That's all right.

17 MR GRIFFIN: Can we show the remaining photographs, please?
18 (Images shown)

19 MS PIMM: They're not that brilliant because I couldn't go
20 through the albums.
21 That's in America.
22 That's in our conservatory when we had the house,
23 doing karaoke.

24 MR GRIFFIN: That's the last photograph, thank you.

25 THE CHAIR: Mrs Pimm, thank you very much indeed for telling

1 us about TJ. I appreciate it.

2 MS PIMM: I didn't think I'd cry that much. Sorry.

3 THE CHAIR: You've done very well. Thank you.

4 MR GRIFFIN: Chair, the next commemorative account that we
5 will hear will be read by a legal representative. This
6 is the account of Jodie Harwood about her father,
7 Clive Harwood or Skip, and Adefolaju Sanda will be
8 reading it.

9 MR SANDA: Good morning, Chair. I will now read the
10 commemorative account of Jodie Harwood, daughter of
11 Clive Harwood, known to those who loved him as "Skip".
12 She is not present today but is viewing the account from
13 her home.

14 Statement by JODIE HARWOOD (read)

15 MR SANDA: "Dad was a true adventurer. He was born in
16 Hackney on the 2nd of November 1957. At three months
17 old he left the UK on his first adventure with his
18 parents Edith and George and his older brothers. They
19 travelled across the seas to Australia where they
20 emigrated on the 10-pound pom boat. They settled in
21 Mount Evelyn, Melbourne. Dad had a wonderful childhood
22 including learning to ride horses bareback, helping to
23 look after the cattle and swimming in local water holes.
24 Dad got hit by a boomerang on his left eye which left
25 a scar. He always spoke so fondly of his time in

1 Australia and realised how privileged his childhood in
2 Australia had been.

3 "Dad was eleven when they returned to the UK, it
4 would have been quite a culture shock for Dad not being
5 used to UK life. On their return, they lived on Mersea
6 where Dad attended the local school, they eventually
7 settled in. Dad settled into the Monwick secondary
8 modern school. By the time he reached his teenage years
9 he was working on market stalls. From school he started
10 his apprenticeship with the council as a bricklayer.
11 Despite being expelled from college for poor attendance
12 the council kept him on as he was such a good and hard
13 worker. Dad went on ... to being self-employed,
14 eventually having his own brick laying gang.

15 "Mum and Dad first met in a night club, they went on
16 to marry and have three children, myself (Jodie) and my
17 other siblings. Dad loved being a parent and we went on
18 many holidays abroad. Dad always worked really hard and
19 did well for himself and was determined to give his
20 family a good quality of life. In 1988 we emigrated to
21 Australia as Dad wanted us to experience this way of
22 life. We lived in Townsville and spent many weekends
23 visiting Magnetic Island and The Great Barrier Reef. We
24 used to frequently return to the UK due to our family
25 ties. After 5 years we returned to the UK.

1 Dad loved to scuba dive which led him to travel all
2 over the world, he dived the North Sea, Great Barrier
3 Reef, Red Sea, Truk Lagoon and Micronesia. Dad became
4 a member of a dive club which he loved and was lucky
5 enough to go on sailing trips from New Zealand to Asia
6 and from Hong Kong to Madagascar.

7 "Dad was also interested in motor cycling, cycling,
8 kayaking, patang, swimming, badminton and the gym. Dad
9 loved to socialise and had a huge group of friends. He
10 loved live music and loved a party! Dad loved to meet
11 his good friends for a steak night. Dad's final work
12 project enabled his retirement, building a block of
13 flats in Alresford where he also lived. Dad volunteered
14 for the Autumn Centre, who helped to support elderly and
15 frail people who are vulnerable and lonely, by driving
16 the bus, which he loved to do.

17 "Dad was always active, loved holidays, his family
18 and was the biggest joker. Dad was a one off, he would
19 light up a room with his infectious laugh and smile and
20 once met he was never forgotten. Over the years he
21 would go on ski holidays and weekends away to motor
22 cross with his son. He loved to take his granddaughters
23 for weekends away in his campervan and shows in London.
24 Grandad was fun to be around, and they were so proud of
25 one another. His love for his family was always

1 evident, he was a loving Dad and best friend to all
2 three of us and the proudest Grandad to his three
3 granddaughters. We all loved spending time together,
4 having a meal, bowling, family BBQs and listening to all
5 of his stories.

6 "The day we found out that Dad had passed will be
7 a day that haunts and stays with us forever. We had
8 returned from a trip to Paris with myself, my two
9 daughters, my sister and her daughter, and my mum which
10 was the start of celebrating my eldest daughter turning
11 18 on the 14th of April. The taxi pulled up at my
12 sister's and once we had started to load the cars with
13 our cases, we realised my brother and my partner were
14 there. My brother [then] told us that Dad had died and
15 had been found hanging. I will never forget the
16 ear-piercing scream that came from my mum as she fell to
17 the floor. We all went into my sister's where my
18 brother told us that we would need to identify Dad the
19 following day. As we were away, my brother sadly dealt
20 with realising Dad was missing as he had not shown up
21 for a project [he] was working on. After calling round,
22 my brother was made aware that Dad had been suffering
23 with his mental health and the police were called. My
24 brother was at his home alone when the police knocked on
25 the door to inform him they had found a body which they

1 believed to be Dad.

2 The next day after a very sleepless night we made
3 our way to Ipswich hospital to identify Dad. Once there
4 we were informed that due to miscommunication between
5 the police and staff that we would be unable to identify
6 Dad today and it would have to be [on] the 14th. After
7 several hours of going back and forth we were able to
8 see Dad and sadly confirm his identity. We were able to
9 stay with Dad for some time, they covered his
10 lacerations. Dad just looked like Dad and very
11 peaceful. We then had to wait for a post mortem and
12 toxicology before Dad's body was released. We had to
13 wait until the 25th of May before we could say our final
14 goodbyes. It was evident how popular Dad had been as
15 the crematorium was overflowing.

16 "Since Dad passed, we have struggled in our
17 communication with the Trust in trying to get clear,
18 concise answers to our questions. As a result, as
19 a family we have still had no closure.

20 "Eventually, an inquest was held and the conclusion
21 of the Coroner as to the death states that 'Clive David
22 Harwood known as Skip committed suicide. On the balance
23 of probability his suicide was more than minimally
24 contributed to at that time by Skip not receiving an
25 appointment with a Psychiatrist shortly before passing'.

1 "Dad will be missed forever, and his passing has
2 left a huge void within our family. We are so proud of
3 everything Dad achieved in his lifetime. He really
4 lived life to the full and cherished every moment.
5 Sadly, we feel that we have been robbed of spending more
6 time and creating more memories with him. The pain and
7 [the] loss we go through on a daily basis is
8 unmeasurable. This is why the inquiry is so ...
9 important to us.

10 "Since Dad's death, we have struggled with intrusive
11 thoughts. Did Dad struggle? Did he change his mind and
12 it was too late? Did he feel any pain, as to our
13 understanding [of] all of Dad's toxicology reports
14 [they] were clear. Was he scared? We have struggled to
15 maintain working as normal due to Dad's death and had
16 a loss of income. 16 months on, some days are easier
17 than others. The pain and heartache that Dad's loss has
18 caused our family, can simply not be put into words. We
19 will always wonder what if? What if Dad received the
20 help he so desperately sought and needed? Would the
21 outcome have been different if the Trust's processes had
22 been followed correctly?

23 "People from all backgrounds suffer with their
24 mental health and the help and support that should be
25 there quite simply is not. The system must change so

1 that families like ours, do not have lives ruined and
2 their time with their loved ones cut short."

3 MR GRIFFIN: May I ask that the remaining photographs are
4 put up?

5 (Image shown)

6 That's it, thank you.

7 THE CHAIR: Thanks very much to Jodie Harwood for that.

8 Thank you.

9 MR GRIFFIN: That is it for this morning, so if we rise now
10 and come back again for 2 o'clock.

11 THE CHAIR: 2 o'clock. Thank you.

12 (12.06 pm)

13 (The short adjournment)

14 (2.00 pm)

15 MR GRIFFIN: Chair, we have Melanie Leahy here and I invite
16 her to go and stand at the table. She will be speaking
17 about her son, Matthew Leahy.

18 MS LEAHY: Good afternoon.

19 THE CHAIR: Good afternoon.

20 MS LEAHY: Can you all hear me?

21 Before I start, I'd just like to say this is a place
22 I fought a long time to get to, for all the wrong
23 reasons. I've listened the last couple of days to some
24 amazing testimonies, testimonies of truth and love, and
25 I really -- well, yeah, it's heartbreaking.

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Statement by MELANIE LEAHY

MS LEAHY: So this is my impact statement, Chair, regarding the death of my only child, Matthew James Leahy. 20 years, who died on 15 November 2012 whilst an inpatient at the Linden Centre in Chelmsford.

MR GRIFFIN: Melanie, may I ask that you move just so the microphones pick you up?

MS LEAHY: Sorry.

"Matthew", his name chosen due to its meaning in Hebrew, "Gift of God", that he truly was. His loss has been felt by many people all around the world. Not only have I been robbed of my son, I have also been robbed of my dreams. My world has become a much darker place without the light of Matthew. How can it be possible I won't see my son again? I am Matthew's mum and I bear witness for him. He cannot speak for himself or explain what happened. My son was dead within eight days of entering a so-called place of safety, the Linden Centre in Chelmsford.

Matthew was a beautiful soul. He understood compassion and he cared for others. He was generous, he was kind, he excelled at school and he was smart. He was funny and in his younger years he actually wanted to become a comedian. He was quite shy in large groups and was a loyal friend, never wanting to encourage a fight,

1 but would stand up for himself and the ones he loved.
2 He would put himself in harm's way before someone he
3 loved.

4 He loved the outdoors. He loved the water. He had
5 a natural talent for swimming and was a fantastic skier.
6 In his late teens, Matthew saved two ladies from
7 drowning. He didn't think twice. It was a pitch-dark
8 winter's evening and Matthew was walking home. He heard
9 their screams and he jumped into the water and he saved
10 them both. Yet he himself wasn't afforded the luxury of
11 rescue when he so desperately needed it. This makes me
12 very angry and sad.

13 When Matthew became poorly, we turned to so-called
14 professionals for help, to help us understand what was
15 happening and to help us find a way to help our son.
16 I was the parent. It was my duty to protect my child.
17 I worked hard throughout my life to give him a solid
18 upbringing and teach him morals. I loved him, supported
19 him, encouraged him and guided him and nurtured him into
20 his adulthood. Yet eight days in the care of the state
21 and my son died. I will never come to terms with that.

22 The last eight days of his life in a place he called
23 "hell" and now I truly believe it was hell on earth.
24 Alone, malnourished, over-medicated, scared, bleeding,
25 bruised, raped, injected multiple times, ignored and

1 frightened. No records of any staff in those last days
2 of his life offering him any comfort. I had been
3 advised not to visit the ward to give him time to
4 settle. I will live with the guilt for the rest of my
5 life that I listened to so-called professionals and
6 I was not there when my son needed me the most.

7 An inquest into my son's death was held in
8 January 2015. The jury concluded, on 15 November 2012,
9 at 12.52 pm, Matthew James Leahy was pronounced dead at
10 Broomfield Hospital in Chelmsford, having been found
11 hanging in his room at the Linden Centre on the
12 Galleywood ward.

13 The coroner could not call suicide so gave an open
14 narrative verdict, which concluded that my son,
15 Matthew James Leahy, was subject to a series of multiple
16 failings and missed opportunities over a prolonged
17 period of time by those entrusted with his care. The
18 jury found that relevant policies and procedures were
19 not adhered to, impacting on Matthew's overall care and
20 well-being leading up to his death.

21 I sat in that inquest courtroom amongst directors
22 and managerial staff from the North Essex Partnership
23 University Trust for five brutal days. Not one of those
24 directors or managerial staff present offered apologies
25 or even spoke to me and, after the verdict was

1 delivered, they all left from the rear of the building.

2 Writing this statement has been difficult. Memories
3 I had laid to rest have been flooding back. My
4 understanding of events repeatedly having to be
5 explained to each organisation that has failed not only
6 Matthew but my entire family and circle of friends.
7 Life will never be the same for any of us.

8 Matthew taught me so much in life and continues to
9 teach me so much in death. I stand here today not just
10 representing my son but representing the multitude of
11 lives that have been affected by the inadequate care
12 offered by mental health services. Although I cannot
13 address every person's life that has been affected due
14 to the failings made, I want to express the effects that
15 I have personally witnessed and felt in my own life.

16 There is no way I was prepared for my son's death.
17 I stand before you a broken person who has lost every
18 sense of normality, a person who needs to grieve the
19 loss of Matthew not only for myself but for his unborn
20 children, my unborn grandchildren and for the world that
21 has no idea what a wonderful person they are missing.

22 Since I first held my son in my arms as a baby,
23 I always expected to live my entire life with Matthew.
24 Now every day and every night I cannot escape the
25 reality and accompanying sadness that my beautiful

1 handsome boy is gone. The fact he never lived long
2 enough to enjoy and celebrate his 21st birthday has
3 added to my emotional stress and devastation; the pain
4 that comes each time his birthday arrives; the pain at
5 watching his friends celebrate their birthdays,
6 celebrate the birth of their children; his past
7 girlfriends having babies with new boyfriends; each
8 birth reminding me that the little girl or boy born
9 might have been my grandchild, had Matthew survived;
10 never seeing him married or helping decorate his new
11 house.

12 I have a book of photos now to look at, to remember
13 all our happy memories, a book I never expected or
14 wanted on my bookshelf. I cannot find the words, if
15 there are any, to explain the devastation and mixture of
16 feelings that I felt when the doctor called to say,
17 "Matthew's been found hanging, it doesn't look good", or
18 the feelings I felt when I found that was a lie. My son
19 had been dead for over an hour when that call was made.
20 The impact of this, a doctor lying and at such a crucial
21 time, has absolutely devastated my trust in the
22 profession. I have only been to a doctor once since
23 Matthew died and I dread the day I get so ill I may have
24 to visit one again.

25 The trauma of Matthew's death was made even worse by

1 the suddenness of his loss and the knowledge of the
2 circumstances in which it occurred. The immediate
3 aftermath of his death was only the beginning. When the
4 doctor called to deliver his lie, I fell to my knees,
5 unable to breathe. My late partner took over the call.
6 He then helped me up off the floor. Panic now ensued.
7 I needed to get to the hospital and fast. I wanted to
8 see my son. I needed to do whatever I could to save
9 him. "It didn't look good", that's what the doctor
10 said. "Quick, we need to get to the hospital", the only
11 and automatic response. I was in no fit state to drive,
12 neither was my poorly late partner.

13 As luck would have it, my parents were nearby.
14 I remember calling my dad. I was in total panic. "Dad,
15 drop what you're doing. Matt's been found hanging.
16 I need you to drive us to the hospital". The ten or so
17 minutes it took my dad to get round to pick us up seemed
18 like hours. He drove so carefully and during the drive
19 my head repeatedly saying, "Dad, put your foot down",
20 willing him to drive faster. How he must have felt
21 during that drive, I really don't know, but knowledge
22 his grandson could die before we arrived and it could be
23 because he was stuck in traffic must have been going
24 through his mind. A realisation came over me. Matthew
25 was dead. I sat back in that car in silence. It turned

1 out I was right.

2 On arrival I overheard who I now know to be a senior
3 director of the Trust say to the other officials at the
4 Linden Centre, "Oh, she's here". The lack of compassion
5 or empathy whatsoever that I experienced that day will
6 stay with me for the rest of my life. I wanted to see
7 my son, to go immediately to him. They wanted to talk
8 about what happened, what I knew. Then it turned out he
9 wasn't even at the Linden Centre, where I'd been told to
10 go. He was at Broomfield Hospital. I was made to wait
11 a good half-hour before I was even allowed to go see him
12 at the hospital. I was told he was a crime scene.
13 I was only allowed to see him for a few minutes and told
14 not to touch him in any way. I wasn't even given
15 a chance to say a proper goodbye.

16 When I walked into that room and saw him laying flat
17 out on the trolley, wearing only socks, boxer shorts and
18 a hospital gown, his eyes open and not breathing, I just
19 wanted to gather him up in my arms, make him breathe,
20 hold him and hug him. The police officer stood right
21 beside me said, "You must not touch. He's a crime
22 scene". I retaliated, "He's my son". I lent over and
23 I kissed him gently on his forehead, just sobbing, "My
24 baby, my baby". The police officer shouted, "You touch
25 him again, you will be arrested", then directed an

1 orderly to stand in the corner of the room to watch me,
2 to report if I touched my son again. I was silent.
3 What was happening? The shock was overwhelming. That
4 memory, like many others, still haunts me.

5 I spent about ten minutes, if that, talking to my
6 motionless, dead, beautiful boy and was called by said
7 police officer into a side room to fill in some forms.
8 These were name, date of death forms, et cetera. One
9 question I was asked will always be in my mind, "Which
10 undertaker do you have planned?". I couldn't believe my
11 ears. My response was, "I have his 21st birthday party
12 planned, not an undertaker".

13 At this point I apologised. God only knows why
14 I apologised. I had to leave the room. Not only had
15 this man refused me any contact with my son, had offered
16 no chance of his last rites being read but also
17 completely ignored my request for donation of organs or
18 even skin for burns. I recall offering Matthew's eyes.
19 I know how my son would want to help others. All the
20 police officer wanted to do was complete his paperwork.
21 At the time I was in a completely confused state.
22 I couldn't think clearly. Everything was happening so
23 fast, shunted from one place to the next.

24 Now I stand and think about it, I went into almost
25 remote control mode. I operated like that for days,

1 being visited by police, social workers, questions as to
2 what I knew or understood, having to go through
3 organising an undertaker, sorting a coffin, sorting
4 Matt's belongings from the hospital, which had literally
5 just been thrown into his bags. Matthew's mobile phone
6 and computer were missing. To this day, his computer
7 has never been seen again. How can items go missing on
8 a secure ward? I not only lost my son, I lost all his
9 friends' contact details and access to any of his online
10 accounts all in one go. All his photographs,
11 communications, gone. So much taken from me in one fell
12 swoop. "Heartbreaking" is not the word.

13 My thought process smashed, then minimal sleep,
14 realisation and boom. It hit like a tonne of bricks.
15 On my knees I fell and a scream emanated from somewhere
16 deep within and out it came; a moment in life no person
17 in this world should ever have to experience.

18 At a time of trauma and deep emotion, just as I was
19 taking in the loss of my son, the justice system started
20 its move into action. I lost all control of my son. He
21 was deemed a crime scene. The Crown took his body and
22 made me wait before returning him. Not all the body
23 parts had been returned as requested and I then had to
24 fight for them. Seven months of fighting only to be
25 informed that Matthew's body parts had been found in

1 three separate filing cabinets and in three different
2 police stations. Did I want his boxer shorts and socks?
3 Oh, my God, the insensitivity was breathtaking.

4 The next weeks, months and years, Matthew's death
5 and who was responsible for it became and still is the
6 focus of my life, yet I have not been able to determine
7 or control any of this. Investigations, reviews,
8 reports, et cetera, all processes that have all happened
9 around me, with me being entitled to some information
10 and some explanation, but little voice, little influence
11 and little power.

12 I organised an independent pathologist to come with
13 me to view photographs Essex Police held of Matthew.
14 The memory of seeing my son's body cut to pieces and
15 seeing the skin pulled back over his skull is still
16 haunting. I beg any of you here to imagine the sight of
17 your loved one in that state and it not haunt you for
18 evermore.

19 My life has been totally destroyed. I miss my son
20 so much it hurts every second of the day. I may appear
21 normal enough for the most part, but I will never be
22 normal again. My life will forever exist in a dual
23 reality, before Matthew died and after Matthew died.
24 I have suppressed strong emotions like anger, hurt and
25 anxiety and these in turn manifest into physical

1 symptoms of angina, panic attacks, sleeplessness,
2 headaches, food issues and irritability, extreme
3 feelings that get triggered in unexpected situations.
4 Every day that I wish I had told him more often how much
5 I loved him, how I wished I'd spent more time chatting,
6 how I wish I hadn't arrived too late that day, how
7 I wish I hadn't entrusted others with his life.

8 Why aren't I just waiting now for my son to come
9 home for dinner? Why aren't I moaning at him for
10 walking his muddy trainers on the recently cleaned
11 carpet? In order to move on at all, I must have the
12 truth. I need to understand the specifics of Matthew's
13 death. I need a clear picture of exactly what happened
14 and to this day I do not have that.

15 I have to live now without my son, with my anger,
16 unable to get the release that forgiving brings as that
17 only comes after the feeling justice has been done and
18 some remorse has been shown. I ask this Inquiry to do
19 the most thorough investigation possible and set an
20 example to the rest of the mental health providers
21 across our nation to get their establishments up to
22 standard or I fear many, many families will suffer the
23 same losses.

24 My journey thus far has been a long and arduous one.
25 Each stage along this path has taken many months and

1 over the 12 years to date I've gradually lost all faith,
2 trust and respect as I've faced such intense pain from
3 callous incompetence, systemic failure, antagonism,
4 hypocrisy and prejudice. I have faced death threats.
5 I have been ridiculed.

6 Only recently it came to light that a top Government
7 official tried to silence my pursuit to justice.
8 WhatsApp messages sent in 2020 between the then Junior
9 Minister for Mental Health, Nadine Dorries, and the then
10 Health Secretary, Matthew Hancock, were leaked to the
11 Daily Telegraph, showing a deliberate effort to
12 undermine my campaign for a statutory public inquiry and
13 isolate me from other bereaved families. It sickens me
14 to think an elected politician would turn grieving
15 families against each other. This has only served to
16 raise even more serious concerns, but this time about my
17 own Government's transparency. This felt like nothing
18 less than a full frontal stab in my heart.

19 It devastates me every time I think of the
20 additional lives which have been lost, my late partner
21 being one of them -- you will hear about him at
22 tomorrow's hearings -- and the other patients who have been
23 harmed in the three years of delay which her decision to
24 grant only an independent inquiry will have caused.
25 This delay was foreseeable and something I and ministers

1 in the Government raised at the time. This revelation
2 has shaken me to the core once again because it impacts
3 not just me but all the families failed in the last
4 three years. I hope my determination serves as
5 a powerful reminder that truth will find its way no
6 matter what the obstacles.

7 On a more positive note, my journey has been shared
8 by individuals who have helped enormously in giving of
9 their time, support, above and beyond the call of duty.
10 I am truly thankful for all their help and hope that
11 I can return it by using this horrendous experience to
12 speak out for change and to help those families faced
13 with starting down this same terrible road. In this way
14 I will feel at least my son's death was not pointless.

15 A journey I would never had needed to be taking had
16 I been given the truth at the outset. So far not once
17 has Matthew's death or my family been given the respect
18 deserved. All the investigations to date have been
19 piecemeal or flawed. I pray this investigation will be
20 different and will be thorough and will give answers
21 leading to meaningful change and accountability.

22 Matthew didn't deserve to die. He had so many plans
23 for his future. In time I hope his death will have
24 a positive impact on the world and that I will be
25 afforded the truth as to how and why he died whilst he

1 was meant to be safe. Through that knowledge I hope
2 justice and accountability are afforded and necessary
3 change is made for others who, like I did, look to
4 services when they need safe compassionate care for
5 their loved ones. I hope then that I can start to
6 grieve the loss of my son and Matthew will be able to
7 then rest in peace.

8 Mrs Melanie Leahy, #matthewscampaign. Thank you.

9 MR GRIFFIN: Can we play the video, please?

10 (Video played)

11 THE CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed for that incredibly
12 powerful statement. It was very, very moving. Thank
13 you.

14 MR GRIFFIN: The next commemorative account is that of
15 Keith Borien, and it's about his father, Peter Borien,
16 and I will be reading it.

17 Could we put up the photograph?

18 Statement by KEITH BORIEN (read)

19 MR GRIFFIN: "Commemorative account: Peter Robert Borien
20 1927 to 2015.

21 "It is with a huge sense of pride that I write this
22 commemorative account about this truly exceptional man,
23 my father, Peter Robert Borien.

24 "Peter was born on 25 October 1927 at ... Cape Town
25 South Africa. He was one of eight children born to

1 William and Amelia Borien. William was of French and
2 Dutch ancestry, Amelia's roots were in Scotland.

3 "William worked as a leather worker in a tannery --
4 Amelia worked as a domestic maid. They were
5 a desperately poor family who suffered daily hardships
6 primarily because of William's poor health. Peter's
7 mother, Amelia, became the main provider of the family
8 and the glue which held the family together.

9 "William and Amelia were blessed however with a son,
10 Peter, who was honest, extremely hard-working and
11 responsible.

12 "He was also blessed with a wonderful singing voice.
13 His strong work ethic and singing abilities were handed
14 down to him by his mother, with whom he shared a very
15 close and special relationship.

16 "From an early age he would sing in his local
17 protestant church choir. It did not take long for his
18 singing skills to be recognised. Soon after he became
19 the cantor in his church for which he was paid half
20 a crown every Sunday for his singing at three different
21 Sunday services. The money would go straight to his
22 mother to help her to feed [the] family.

23 "Peter attended Wesley Training College, as did,
24 unbeknown to him at the time, his future wife,
25 Ruby Vincent.

1 After leaving school, Peter worked during the day as
2 a tailor's cutter at Jacques Hau Clothing Factory in
3 Micawber Road, Woodstock and as a travelling salesman
4 during the evenings and weekends. His reputation as
5 a hard-working young man in the city of Cape Town and
6 the surrounding areas went before him. When I returned
7 to South Africa later in my life I found that my
8 father's work ethos and his determined approach to life
9 had reached almost legendary proportions through the
10 continuous retelling of stories about my father by his
11 sister and her family.

12 "In 1947 Peter met Ruby Vincent for the first time.
13 They were engaged the following year and married on
14 24 September 1949 at St Francis RC Church, Woodstock in
15 Cape Town.

16 "Peter, willingly gave up his position in the
17 protestant church to marry Ruby, a Roman Catholic. It
18 led to him being effectively cast aside by the local
19 protestant vicar.

20 "A year before, in 1948, the South African
21 government introduced a system of social segregation in
22 which the race and colour of a person's skin determined
23 their right of access to jobs, schools, shops, buses and
24 trains. Separate entrances were created for white
25 people and non-white people in cinemas, museums and

1 shops. Crude processes were used to determine the
2 colour band in which people were classified, and
3 barriers were put up which immediately limited the
4 educational and employment opportunities for millions of
5 black and coloured people.

6 "The arbitrary nature of the new system caused
7 confusion and frustration in many families. In my
8 father's family some of William's and Amelia's children
9 were classified as coloured whilst others were
10 classified as white. My father was classified as
11 non-white and suffered public humiliation at the hands
12 of the Nationalist Government and its agencies. He
13 became increasingly frustrated and angry at the way all
14 people of colour were denigrated and intimidated by the
15 authorities.

16 "Seeing no future for himself and his three children
17 in Apartheid South Africa he decided to take his family
18 to the UK. His priority was for his three children to
19 have a better life, detached from poverty, so that none
20 of us would have to experience the poverty which he had
21 grown up with in his childhood.

22 "Selling every possession they owned and using money
23 earned by working on the ocean trawlers Peter bought
24 five tickets for passage on a ship to England.

25 "In August 1956 my father and mother arrived in

1 Southampton with three young children, very little money
2 and nowhere to stay.

3 "Needless to say life suddenly became very tough
4 again for my mum and dad. Those early days were spent
5 with relatives and in centres for the homeless when our
6 relatives were no longer able to assist us.

7 "I remember months of one-room bedsits, my mother
8 and father going off each day to work and then coming
9 home for one of them to head off for another job in the
10 evening.

11 "My most vivid memory however was my father trying
12 to sell a packet of cigarettes he had bought from
13 [South Africa] so that he could feed us that evening.

14 "Somehow my father and mother eked out an existence.
15 My father eventually obtained jobs with two tailoring
16 companies, W Caston and then with Fogel and Sons, where
17 my father's experience as a tailor's cutter was put to
18 good use. He managed to buy a bicycle and would use it
19 every day, to cycle in all weather conditions, the
20 10 miles from our home in Tottenham in North London to
21 his places of work in Dalston and Stoke Newington.
22 Strapped to the back of the bike was the cloth he
23 brought home at night to sew in readiness for the next
24 day.

25 "In 1969 the family moved to Wickford in Essex.

1 Peter continued his work as a tailor's cutter,
2 travelling by car up to London [every] day. In 1983 he
3 took up the same role with Bender Clothing Company on
4 the Charfleets Industrial Estate on Canvey Island.

5 "At the age of 60 he decided it was time to start
6 a new career! Instead of slowing down he went on to
7 work at Metwins, an engineering company in
8 Canvey Island -- a job he held until he was 78. Working
9 had been a part of his whole being and he wasn't going
10 to stop simply because the official retirement age was
11 65.

12 "Peter was the rock on which his family was built.
13 None of his children, grandchildren and
14 great-grandchildren would be where we are today if it
15 was not for him and his belief in the opportunities
16 which might arise from a good education. Although we
17 all know that education is more than academic
18 qualifications his UK family hold 5 first degrees,
19 2 masters degrees, 2 doctorates and numerous diplomas
20 and certificates. He was very proud of us all.

21 "It is in his honour and his memory that the Borien
22 Educational Foundation for Southern Africa was
23 established in 2004 to assist children living in the
24 poorest areas of South Africa to escape the poverty he
25 endured. The charity works to support children in

1 55 schools in the poorest area of South Africa through
2 the educational programmes and activities it runs. My
3 father's support of the charity's work was always
4 understated but news of our work was always
5 enthusiastically received.

6 "Peter was an exceptional person. He was thoroughly
7 decent and hardworking. He never said a bad word about
8 anyone, never complained about anything and even in his
9 final days never asked for help. He was always
10 eternally grateful for everything he had, especially
11 before and after meals, thanking God every day for what
12 he had and was always encouraging us to be grateful for
13 what we had, rather than moaning about what we didn't
14 have. When he was distressed or worried he would sing
15 hymns and songs, the words of which he managed somehow
16 to remember even though some were over 50 years old.

17 "Peter made his family what it is today and
18 supported each family member to achieve their dreams.
19 He achieved more in his life than I ever will and we all
20 miss him with every breath.

21 "I thank God that my mother had 65 years with him
22 and that my brother, sister and I had a great father
23 like him.

24 "Peter died on 11 February 2015, aged 87, 12 days
25 after being discharged from Rochford Community Hospital.

1 He had been wrongly sectioned under the
2 Mental Health Act at Basildon Hospital after becoming
3 unwell on 24 December 2014."

4 That's the end of the statement. Could we put up
5 the remaining photos, please?

6 (Images shown)

7 That's the last photo, Chair.

8 What would be convenient is if we could take our
9 break now and to reconvene at ten past 3.

10 THE CHAIR: I'd like to thank the Borien family for their
11 picture of a remarkable life, yes.

12 MR GRIFFIN: Thank you.

13 THE CHAIR: Thank you.

14 (2.38 pm)

15 (A short break)

16 (3.11 pm)

17 MR GRIFFIN: The next commemorative account is from Greg and
18 Paula Johnson. It's about their son, Luke Johnson.
19 And, Chair, Mr and Mrs Johnson are present here with us
20 this afternoon. This account will be read by me and we
21 have a lovely photo up on the screen.

22 Statement by GREG AND PAULA JOHNSON (read)

23 MR GRIFFIN: "Commemorative account of Luke Johnson.

24 "Luke was our first-born child in September 1980, we
25 were very young at 19 years old but we were very much in

1 love. Luke was a beautiful baby and was adored by his
2 grandparents and special to them as their first
3 grandchild.

4 "Luke enjoyed early school life and was loved by his
5 3 younger brothers, he was very intelligent and capable
6 of any given task, he could swim like a fish and was
7 a lifeguard at 15.

8 "He lied about his age to prove he could do it and
9 [he] passed!!

10 "When he was 16 he was working part time in a garage
11 servicing and fitting gearboxes at weekends, which he
12 loved.

13 "Luke loved chemistry at school and really
14 understood it.

15 "He enjoyed photography, and left secondary school
16 with 7 GCSEs.

17 "At 18 he was a judo Black Belt and went on to teach
18 this in local schools full-time.

19 "On his motorbike, which he drove frightfully fast
20 and loved this as well.

21 "He was always tinkering with something, never
22 bored, loved the company of lots of friends and family.

23 "But for us at 16 things changed because Luke who
24 had never smoked discovered cannabis which would become
25 life-changing for him. Luke was unfortunately one of

1 the people badly affected by this drug, he sadly by the
2 age of 21 had his first admission to a mental health
3 unit. He wasn't a party-going bad boy, he just took the
4 wrong path with cannabis and then other drugs followed.

5 "Happy times were few and far between for the next
6 13 years. Repeated admissions for his mental health,
7 followed by begging and then prison.

8 "Luke was sentenced to 8 months for taking
9 a screwdriver to someone's front door, he didn't touch
10 the door but bottled out of attempting to enter, dropped
11 the screwdriver and left, he was on a lot of drugs, both
12 prescription and street drugs.

13 "His sentence basically wrecked him and he wasn't
14 fit to serve the sentence for over 10 months.

15 "He served his time in the hospital wing because he
16 was so unwell and they kept him in by mistake for an
17 extra six weeks with Luke protesting that he should be
18 released, but they didn't listen, upon discovery of
19 their terrible error they threw him out, he was dead
20 within a week.

21 "We often reflect on how we could have done things
22 differently or better, but we know this is grief. We
23 think of Luke every day and know that he was unable to
24 cope with life on his own.

25 "There is no more pain for him which was the worst

1 thing of all to watch him suffer.

2 "Love you always Luke.

3 "Mum and dad."

4 Can we put up the remaining photos, please?

5 (Images shown)

6 Thank you very much.

7 Chair, that is the end of that account.

8 THE CHAIR: Thank you very much indeed for letting us have
9 it. I'm very grateful.

10 MR GRIFFIN: Chair, there are two more accounts to be read
11 today and they will be read by my colleague
12 Rachel Troup.

13 MS TROUP: Chair, the next account is from Heather Coleman
14 about her daughter, Ellen Armstrong. I'll be reading
15 that, but, before I do, Heather would like to apologise
16 that she has not been able to attend today and wishes to
17 thank the Inquiry for giving her daughter, Ellen,
18 a voice. She also says this:

19 "My heart goes out to all of those bereaved families
20 and friends of our loved ones who should still be with
21 us."

22 Statement by HEATHER COLEMAN (read)

23 MS TROUP: "Ellen was born on 13th November 1976. She was
24 the second of four surviving siblings. The cot death of
25 a younger brother when Ellen was seven years old and the

1 birth of a sister when she was eight culminated in the
2 breakup of my marriage. Until that time we lived in
3 East Sussex and then in Tamworth until September 1985
4 when we returned to Beccles. There we lived with my
5 parents until I bought a house locally. All four
6 children were educated in Beccles until the age of 18.
7 During that time I started teaching in September 1989
8 and remarried in April 1991. The children all had
9 a very good relationship with their stepfather and were
10 all very close to their maternal grandparents.

11 "Despite all of the changes during their formative
12 years, all of my children grew up as stable and
13 well-rounded individuals. They had regular contact and
14 holidays with their father both in Suffolk, at his home
15 in the Midlands and with their maternal grandmother in
16 Yorkshire.

17 "Ellen grew up to be a very empathic and caring
18 person. She had a big heart and a fearless attitude to
19 life. She could be stubborn and wouldn't give up on
20 anything she thought worth fighting for.

21 "Ellen always said that she had a happy childhood,
22 with a great love of the big outdoors and anything
23 adventurous especially if it involved water! Along with
24 her siblings she was a strong club swimmer and loved
25 sailing. School holidays usually involved visits to

1 distant family members, youth hostelling or house swaps.
2 She participated in many trips offered to her by her
3 Middle and High Schools. The most memorable was
4 a three-year exchange programme to Kenya run by her
5 High School when all participants had to raise the money
6 during the first year, go to Kenya in the second year
7 and to pay for Kenyan students to come to England in the
8 third year. Ellen spent a week at a High School in
9 Nairobi and two weeks working at a school for disabled
10 children in Mombasa. The following year each of the
11 participants hosted a Kenyan student for three weeks.

12 "Ellen was an accomplished clarinet player in her
13 school orchestras at Middle and High schools. Although
14 she followed the sciences academically, she was
15 imaginative and creative, bubbling over with ideas.

16 "Following her 'A' levels Ellen undertook
17 a [Teaching English as a Foreign Language] course in
18 London followed by six months in Romania living with
19 a family while teaching English to young children in
20 a local school. During her stay she had holidays in
21 Transylvania and Egypt. On her return she taught
22 English to foreign students until she went to
23 Liverpool University to study for her degree in
24 Marine Biology, where her final year was spent on the
25 Isle of Man. While there she learnt to Scuba dive with

1 her partner, also a marine biologist. They both
2 continued to build their PADI qualifications while
3 working to support themselves, eventually getting work
4 as Scuba instructors in the Dominican Republic and then
5 in Cyprus with Ellen specialising in teaching young
6 children. They both scuba-dived around the world and
7 visited the elephants in Chiang Mai, Thailand
8 (a long-held dream).

9 "Ellen and her partner continued to work together.
10 They spent two years working in Bulgaria until the
11 summer of 2006 when their relationship ended as a result
12 of serious traumatic incidents. Ellen came home and got
13 medical help. For the first time she was prescribed
14 with anti-depressant medication which had to be modified
15 to a low dose as she experienced debilitating side
16 effects from the original dosage.

17 "In 2007 she returned, alone, to Bulgaria to work
18 for 2 years until the summer of 2009. Although she
19 continued to take anti-depressants the following years
20 were good ones for Ellen, living a full and happy life.
21 To help her recovery she bought a wonderful rescue dog
22 (Trail Hound) and spent hours walking the local marshes.
23 By the following spring she was recovered enough to
24 return to Bulgaria by herself to live and work until
25 2011 when she came home to work as a carer until the

1 birth of her son in 2013. She was very popular with her
2 clients, some of whom she maintained contact with after
3 she had left.

4 "In June 2011 Ellen embarked on a new relationship.
5 All went well until four months before the birth of her
6 son in 2013. At that stage a number of serious problems
7 developed, all of which Ellen had to cope with while
8 pregnant and [which] led to the end of the relationship.
9 As a family, we did everything we could to help.

10 "In June 2014 Ellen had to leave [her] rented
11 accommodation and [she] took the opportunity to find
12 housing for herself and [her] son. Close to the beach
13 and sea she was happy and started to make a new life for
14 herself.

15 "Between late September 2014 and January 2015, Ellen
16 was devastated by the loss of her beloved maternal
17 grandparents within three months of each other. At the
18 time I was often with her to help out with her highly
19 energetic little boy who was still a very poor sleeper.

20 "Despite our warnings that she needed time and space
21 to help her [to] fully recover from the trauma she had
22 experienced over the previous year, Ellen started a new
23 relationship in May 2016. She was very happy and
24 in October 2016 she announced her pregnancy. By
25 mid-November she had become increasingly anxious.

1 Looking for causes of her anxiety, she continuously
2 researched online for side effects of an anti-depressant
3 that she had stopped then restarted in early pregnancy.
4 She convinced herself that her actions had caused her
5 permanent brain damage causing the disconnect with her
6 emotions.

7 "From early January 2017 Ellen's anxiety was so
8 debilitating that she could not be left alone. I spent
9 weekdays with her and weekends when her partner could
10 not make it (he lived and worked 30 miles away).
11 Following a severe panic attack in mid-March I took her
12 to her antenatal clinic at the local hospital where she
13 was assigned to a psychiatric paediatric nurse. A nurse
14 who was with her throughout her illness and [who] became
15 a trusted and wonderful support. Ellen was hospitalised
16 a few days before the birth of her baby in May 2017.

17 "I will not go into the details of the catastrophic
18 treatment Ellen was subject to as a patient in her final
19 two hospital stays. She took her own life on
20 6th April 2018.

21 "During those [last] few weeks, until her death,
22 I spent every day with Ellen. It was heartbreaking.
23 She had lost her appetite, was unable to sleep and
24 didn't want to get up in the mornings. Although she
25 felt completely disassociated from her emotions, she

1 appeared most responsive to her children, playing with
2 them and taking her son to bed every night. To them and
3 to anyone who did not know her Ellen appeared perfectly
4 normal, responding with her lovely smile and warm
5 nature. Her inability to emotionally connect
6 exacerbated her deep distress. She persistently
7 reiterated that she could not go on using phrases [such
8 as] 'the worst nightmare for me ... I've been
9 transported to a place of no return, where every second
10 is hell ... my head can't process anything ... it's like
11 a fog that has physical attributes ... thoughts are on
12 a roundabout and come and go ... whirling around on the
13 periphery of my consciousness ... there's no emotion'.

14 "To anyone who didn't know her, Ellen presented as
15 normal. But to me, whenever we were alone, she
16 continuously reiterated her inability to 'feel'. She
17 believed she was letting her children down. Nothing
18 could shake her belief that she would never recover from
19 ... permanent brain damage and the loss of her
20 connection to the world around her.

21 "Ellen was desperate to live. Her last long letter
22 is completely rational and demonstrates a deep awareness
23 of the consequences of what she intends to do.

24 "I am in no doubt that the reliance on medication is
25 oversubscribed by far too many psychiatrists including

1 every one of [those] responsible for Ellen's care.
2 There are far too many patients where it does more harm
3 than good, indeed it costs lives. The boundaries
4 between psychiatry and psychology are not distinct.
5 They overlap and all practitioners should be fully aware
6 of that. It amounts to a national scandal.

7 "Ellen had an optimistic outlook on life. She was
8 compassionate with a wonderful zest for life and
9 adventure. She had a lovely smile, and was always
10 friendly and a good listener, drawing people to her.
11 Everyone who knew her remembers her sunny personality
12 and [her] infectious giggle. As a family we are
13 learning to live with these consequences together,
14 trying to do what Ellen would have wanted us to do.

15 "Grief is multi-layered and such a difficult
16 journey. We are lucky to have such a close knit and
17 supportive family. Together we cry and together we
18 laugh. Although we still cry the happy memories rise to
19 the surface more often. Within the close family losing
20 Ellen has changed our lives forever, but her love of
21 life and positive outlook underpins the value of family
22 and friends that help us move forward. To our family
23 every day brings back a myriad of memories, family time
24 spent with her wonderful children (now 7 and 11) who now
25 live apart with their respective fathers but spend time

1 together with us on holidays and short stays. A memory
2 box that Ellen put together with quotes from both her
3 and her siblings of times remembered from childhood.
4 Small, thoughtful gifts.

5 "Hindsight has been hard and difficult to deal with.
6 The last eighteen months of Ellen's life were her worst
7 nightmare. Every clinical intervention failed to lift
8 her from what she called 'a living hell'. For most of
9 the time when Ellen was not in hospital, I was with her.
10 Although very aware of how ill Ellen was, I never lost
11 hope that a solution could be found. In the end she
12 found a small window of time when she knew that it would
13 not be me who found her. Her last four A4 page long
14 letter is rational and full of love for her family and
15 her desire to live. She had lost all hope and was
16 completely aware of what she was doing.

17 "Such a devastating and preventable loss inevitably
18 raises feelings of guilt and so many questions. How
19 could this happen? What went wrong? And always, what
20 could I have done to prevent it? At the time I was very
21 aware of many things that had gone wrong with her
22 treatment and other serious concerns raised by the RCA
23 report.

24 "The anger I experienced was overwhelming. The
25 impact it had, not only on myself but on my close family

1 made me determined to do something about it.
2 I undertook a six-week course of CBT which allowed me to
3 start doing something practical about finding answers to
4 those questions. That journey has been cathartic and
5 helped me in so many ways but would not have been
6 possible without the support of my family, especially my
7 husband and some wonderful new friends along the way,
8 people fighting for change.

9 "Hindsight is a wonderful thing. I only wish I knew
10 then what I know now. I now have two goals in mind:

11 "1) For the NSFT to acknowledge that they knew about
12 but did not act on a pattern of serious concerns that
13 had been evident for years. Concerns that cost far too
14 many preventable deaths.

15 "2) For all psychiatric clinicians to realise that
16 medication can do more harm than good and to be open to
17 alternative treatments. They should all be fully aware
18 that psychiatry and psychology are not mutually
19 exclusive disciplines."

20 Could we have the remaining photos? Thank you.

21 (Images shown)

22 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Ms Troup. Will you make sure that we
23 convey our thanks to Heather Coleman?

24 MS TROUP: Of course.

25 THE CHAIR: Thank you.

1 MS TROUP: The next account, we see a photograph, if that
2 could go up, please, of Annie Cooper, provided by
3 Robert Cooper, along with some further information about
4 her which I will read.

5 Statement by ROBERT COOPER (read)

6 MS TROUP: "Anne, born [on] 16th April 1963 in Tripoli to
7 Joan and Edwin Cluff. She returned to England with her
8 family when she was two years of age and grew up in
9 Harlow with her sister and brother. Anne married
10 Robert Cooper in 1982 and they spent twenty three years
11 together happily married, [and] blessed with three
12 children. Anne enjoyed working with the youth service,
13 libraries and at Homestead School. She helped many
14 young people to cope with their own lives and put her
15 all into caring and supporting others."

16 Chair, that is the end of that account.

17 THE CHAIR: Thank you, and, again, will you please thank
18 Mr Cooper very much?

19 MS TROUP: Of course.

20 That is the last account for today and I understand
21 that we'll return at 10.00 am tomorrow.

22 THE CHAIR: Thank you all.

23 (3.32 pm)

24 (The hearing adjourned until
25 Wednesday, 18 September 2024 at 10.00 am)

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