

CONDUCTING THE INQUIRY

I was appointed to chair the Inquiry in October 2013, following the withdrawal of Sally Bradley QC as a result of the ill health that was to lead to her untimely death.

In due course, I appointed two Panel members to assist me. Alyson Leslie has a background in social work: her work includes serious case reviews into child abuse. Professor Alexander Cameron is a former Director of Social Work in Scotland and a former Chairman of the Parole Board for Scotland. He also has expertise in residential child care and fostering services. Their extensive experience in social care generally, and child care in particular, were of great assistance to me throughout the Inquiry.

Because Jersey is a small society, and because of the high emotions generated by the subject matter of the Inquiry, it was necessary for us to keep to ourselves and not mix socially on the island. I am further indebted to them for their fellowship and company.

Counsel to the Inquiry have worked tirelessly in assimilating and presenting a vast body of evidence. I personally would like to thank Patrick Sadd, Harriet Jerram, Cathryn McGahey QC, Paul Livingston and Stephen Doherty.

We have been enormously assisted, both during the Inquiry and in the preparation of this Report, by oral and written submissions from all Interested Parties.

In particular, we would like to record our appreciation of the assistance provided by Jill Gracia of the Jersey Care Leavers' Association. She attended the Inquiry daily and provided invaluable liaison for us.

It is important that we recognise the assistance given to witnesses by Victim Support Northern Ireland. They provided counselling and support throughout the evidence of the numerous, and at times harrowing, accounts of survivors. The fact that they were, and are, unconnected with Jersey gives them a credibility that no island-based organisation could provide.

It is equally important to recognise that the needs of those survivors will not cease with the publication of this Report. Therapeutic support under the Historic Abuse Redress Scheme continues to be available and can be accessed by all survivors through their General Practitioners.

Unlike most public inquiries, we did not have a dedicated secretariat. That burden fell on Eversheds, Solicitors to the Inquiry, and on the Panel. At the outset, the States of Jersey nominated Mike Haden to be Secretary to the Inquiry. We very soon realised the potential for conflict, or at least the perception of conflict, if we had a States employee, who was also an Honorary Police Officer, working within the Inquiry. That is not to take away any of the credit that is due to him for all the work that he did from the States Greffe in the physical set-up and logistics of the Inquiry.

The decision not to take advantage of the offer of Mike Haden as Secretary to the Inquiry was in keeping with our need not only to be independent, but to make it clear to all that we were not beholden to anyone.

We recognise the contribution of the Historic Abuse Redress Scheme, which was launched on 29 March 2012, once all criminal proceedings had been concluded. Some witnesses who gave evidence before us had had the benefit of counselling through the Redress Scheme. That gave them the courage to come forward and give evidence to us.