

Witness Name: Elias Calocane

Statement No: WITN0087001

Dated: 12 November 2025

## THE NOTTINGHAM INQUIRY

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### WITNESS STATEMENT OF ELIAS CALOCANE

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I Elias Calocane, will say as follows:-

1. I make this statement in response to a Rule 9 request sent to my solicitor on 2 September 2025.
2. This statement is based on my knowledge and beliefs. I have considered documents in order to prepare this statement, including documents disclosed by the Inquiry but which I had seen previously. Where any information is not from my own knowledge or belief, I make that clear below. I reserve the right to amend this statement when further documents become available.
3. I wish to express my condolences to all the victims of this horrendous tragedy. To the surviving victims, Wayne Birkett, Marcin Gawronski, and Sharon Miller, and their friends and family. And to the families and friends of Ian Coates, Grace O'Malley-Kumar, and Barnaby Webber, who were killed. This should never have happened to them, nor should it ever happen to anyone else, and I hope that through this process, there will be meaningful change which will actually address the deeply systemic issues that led to this.
4. I am the brother of Valdo Calocane, who I will refer to as Valdo throughout my statement. Valdo is 5 years older than me. We had lived together my whole life until he left home at the age of 18 or 19.

5. I am a software engineer. I mention this as I think it is relevant context in terms of the conversations that I had with Valdo about him being monitored, which I will address further below.
6. I was born in Portugal and I am an EU citizen. As a family, we moved from Portugal to Wales in 2007 when Valdo was 16 and I was 11. Neither of us spoke any English – we spoke Portuguese. We both started at the same secondary school – I started in year 7 but Valdo went back 2 years due to the language barrier, and so he started in year 10. There was a Learning Support Assistant at the school who had spent some time in Portugal, and he helped us by teaching us English and so for the first 6 months or so, we both spent a lot of time with him getting to grips with the language.
7. We are a close family. I would say that Valdo and I had a pretty close relationship when we were growing up, especially when I reached my late teens. We shared a bedroom until he left home and we grew closer during that period. He had always been very independent and keen to stand on his own two feet and support us as a family. He was very selfless and was always looking out for us by trying to make sure we could enjoy things that he could not enjoy as a kid. If my family wanted something and we couldn't afford it, then as soon as he started earning his own money, he would buy it for us.
8. When I left home and went to University in 2015, we would be in contact fairly regularly via text message and sometimes on the phone. We would see each other at special occasions such as family celebrations or Christmas. However, it became much harder to have regular contact with Valdo when he became ill as he slowly became more paranoid. I believe I only saw Valdo in person on two occasions between January 2020 and June 2023 – once in October 2020 and once in November 2022. I will address those contacts below.
9. Overall, I think Valdo had a good relationship with my parents. There were some fairly typical issues between him and my parents when he was younger as he struggled with the boundaries that my parents put in place and he wanted more independence but he became closer to them as he grew and matured,

particularly when he moved out of the family home. Although we were brought up in a Christian religious household, when Valdo was a teenager, he said that he did not want to be religious and did not want to go to church. At the time, I saw this as part of Valdo being a teenager and of wanting to be independent.

10. I do not remember exactly when Valdo left the family home but I believe it was when he was still at school. He lived in Wales for a while and then at some point he moved to Birmingham where he did a University access course. As far as I can remember he said he was moving because of job opportunities and then at some stage he told us that he was either doing or had done an access course. He was someone who wanted to have things figured out before telling people what was happening so he would often tell us once he had a job or had moved to avoid anyone worrying about him. I believe he started at Nottingham University in September 2017.
11. Valdo always had a very strong work ethic in terms of paid employment. He had struggled a bit at school, which I think was mainly due to being moved back a couple of years, which knocked his confidence. I think it then took him time to find his feet academically after he left school which is why he put himself through the access course, in order to be able to attend university. We know now that his studies were a big stressor during his illness. He was desperate to get a good degree and job afterwards, and really wanted to surprise my parents with it, which led to a lot of stress and sleepless nights.
12. I have been asked whether I was ever worried that Valdo was being adversely influenced in any way by any individual, organisation or others. I am aware that there has been some media claims that Valdo was involved in gangs. I have no idea where this suggestion has come from as I have never known any suggestion or indication that Valdo was associated with or involved with gangs. Where we grew up in Wales, as far as I am aware, there were no gangs or gang culture, and this is not something that ever came up until these apparently groundless claims were made in the media. He was always someone who was very independently minded and set in his ways so the idea that he was under the influence of others doesn't fit with his character at all. For example, after he

left school my parents wanted him to go university but he initially stood his ground saying that it was a waste of money and instead he would work and support himself, until he later went to university through his own choice.

13. I had never known Valdo to show any affinity for knives or other weapons.
14. I am now aware that Valdo told professionals that he tried cannabis once when he was 28 years old. I had never known Valdo to use recreational drugs. He was always anti-drugs and anti-alcohol. I had never seen him take drugs or seen him intoxicated in any way. I am not surprised that he didn't tell me this at the time given it was a one off thing. I am probably more surprised that he tried it at all, rather than that he didn't tell me.

#### **My initial concerns about Valdo's mental health**

15. I first began to have concerns about Valdo's mental health in May 2020. Whilst there had been unusual conversations before that in April 2020, at the time, I did not see that as issues with his mental health and it is only with hindsight that I can see that he was clearly experiencing psychosis at that time.
16. After Valdo was admitted to hospital at the end of May 2020, I produced a document for my mum to give to his psychiatrist, Dr Seedat, providing information about the communications that I had been having with Valdo over the previous week but also some further details of our contact which I thought may be relevant [NGFP0001787]. I prepared this document because I thought it would be helpful in showing the medical professionals what had been happening with Valdo and to help them come up with some sort of diagnosis. I prepared it from reviewing the messages that I exchanged with Valdo, my own memory of the telephone conversations that we had and some notes that I started writing at the time when I was trying to make sense of what was happening and the things that Valdo was saying. As I did not have direct contact with the medical team, I gave the document to my mum who passed it on to Dr Seedat. I have used this document to refresh my memory of my contact with Valdo at that time.

17. That document includes a message that Valdo sent me on 1 October 2017 when Valdo sent me some messages saying that he thought he was being hacked and as a result, he cancelled his bank cards. I did not consider this to be suspicious at the time as this is something that can happen and Valdo only mentioned it once. I included it in the document for Dr Seedat because I wanted him to have anything that might be relevant and as Valdo was by May 2020 expressing some beliefs around being hacked, I included it.
  
18. On 12 April 2020, Valdo and I had a long text exchange. I had asked if he wanted to speak on the phone instead but he didn't respond to that. During the messages, Valdo told me that he had changed his phone number because his old number was 'compromised' and that I should now use his new number and should not reference the new number if I messaged the old number. He said that he was sure that someone in his home network was monitoring him, that they were able to see his mobile phone and laptop and that they had been doing so for months. When he was talking about 'home network', I understood this to be reference to the shared router within his house share and a concern that other people in the house could access this and see what he was doing when using wifi. I explained to him that this would be very advanced monitoring and tried to gently probe why he thought it was happening but he wasn't able to explain this other than saying he was sure it was happening. I thought Valdo was being paranoid but I didn't see it as anything more than that at that time. It didn't seem to be too far away from lots of the conspiracy theories that were going around at that time, because of the pandemic in particular, and so I saw it in that context. It was clear to me that he was worried and I felt that I could reassure him and rationalise with him, and he was responsive to that reassurance.
  
19. That text exchange on 12 April 2020 also involved Valdo asking me about my faith and how I was able to reconcile "faith and intelligence" and Valdo spoke about his own feelings about religion. We would speak about faith all the time given our upbringing and because I am a Christian, so that wasn't particularly unusual. As part of that text conversation, Valdo went on to say that the previous night he had been feeling "immense anguish, paranoia, anguish and hatred because of this spying/monitoring thing" and that he had experienced dark

thoughts, wanting to hurt himself permanently. I felt very worried about him having those feelings and that is why I spoke about how faith could be used to get him through those dark thoughts. My focus was on trying to help him with those feelings.

20. Eventually Valdo agreed to speak on the phone. I do not remember a lot of that conversation but as I recorded in the note for the psychiatrist responsible for Valdo's care in May 2020, Dr Seedat (referred to at paragraph 16, [NGPF0001787]), in the call he continued to express concerns about being monitored and it seemed as if he thought this was a specific person that he had been living with but that he had confronted them and they had denied being involved.
21. Between 12 April and 18 May 2020, I checked in on Valdo every now and again but our messages were mainly about music and a few about university work. He didn't mention the monitoring again. I didn't think much of it at that time as I saw it as him having had a difficult moment when we had been in touch on 12 April when he had been anxious and a bit paranoid but that I thought it had passed.
22. However, in the week of 18 May 2020, things seemed to escalate quickly and drastically and that is when I first became genuinely worried about Valdo's mental state. Valdo was calling me and my parents erratically, saying strange things and not making a lot of sense. On 18 May, Valdo called me in the morning and he was crying. I don't remember a huge amount about that phone call as I didn't take a note at the time but I do remember that he was crying uncontrollably, and it felt very concerning. It was a couple of days later that he told me what had happened before that phone call – he had been watching a video about capital punishment in the early hours of the morning and writing his thoughts about it but he could hear voices/people laughing and mocking him. He had associated these voices with the people who he said were monitoring him in his last apartment and became angry that the person/people had followed him to his new home. He went out and found the book of John from the New Testament on a table outside and had taken a copy. He started reading it and began crying uncontrollably. It was then that he called me at around 11am. I remember that I

wasn't really able to work for the rest of the day as I was so confused by what was happening with Valdo and I didn't really know what to do. I cannot remember if I told my parents immediately or if I wanted to take some time to try and figure out what was happening before speaking to them; a lot of that week was a blur.

23. On 19 May 2020, Valdo and I had another text exchange in which he said "the things that are happening are beyond whatever you could think" and "either something extraordinary is happening or I am losing my mind". I tried to explore with him what he meant by this and initially he said that he didn't feel he could say more. He then said "I hear voices". This was the first time that Valdo had ever said to me, or anyone in the family, that he was hearing voices.
24. I tried to ask him about the voices and also asked if we could speak on the phone but he didn't want to. In that conversation, I suggested that Valdo might want to go and stay with our parents until things had calmed down with covid (as it was the middle of lockdown) or that we could stay with each other but he said he was fine. I suggested he may be more comfortable elsewhere as at that time, I thought he was still staying at the flat where he thought he was being monitored, but he replied "I am comfortable. Don't worry. It's just fatigue".
25. We then had a long text exchange the following day on 20 May 2020 between 8am and 10am. He began by again saying that he was hearing voices in his head but he tried to downplay this by saying it was silly and not serious. Valdo was keen that I didn't tell my family about what he was saying, I expect because he didn't want to worry them.
26. He went on to tell me that on 21 April 2020 he had moved from the flat that we had thought he was living in (in Salisbury Street) to another property (in Brook Court) but that some of the people from his previous flat had followed him. He was saying strange things such as "I know that you are starting to think it's paranoia but the paranoia doesn't start at this point" and that someone in the other apartment in his block had recounted his dream to other people. He said "I know this happened just as I know I exist. If this didn't happen, then I don't exist". He referred to the people in the apartment block monitoring him and said

that it had been happening for weeks but that “from Monday things got weird”. He thought that they had rented the apartment to be able to monitor him and referred to those people “mocking him”. It felt as if he didn’t really know what was happening but he truly believed those things, although he also seemed to recognise that people may think he was making it up. I spent quite a lot of that conversation trying to understand what the voices were saying to Valdo. He said that it was one voice, the same voice he had heard also coming from his neighbour and that it said “oh my God” over and over again and also reported his thoughts and actions in real time. It was clearly totally real to him. I was so confused and thrown by it all and I had no idea what was going on but I thought that if I could understand this then I could explain to Valdo why the voices weren’t real and reassure him.

27. I also spoke again about faith as I thought this may provide Valdo with some comfort and support. At some stage he had said he had been reading the bible and it was helping him so I tried to persuade him to continue with this. Faith is the framework I knew could help provide support and so in that moment, I thought it may also help him.
  
28. Valdo then called me about an hour later. He wanted to check I was ok as he was worried that “someone had come and got me”. He sounded very calm but what he was saying worried me hugely. He explained that crazy or seemingly impossible things happen to him, which he dismisses and then something irrefutable happens to show they are true. He told me that he had at least one voice in his head, that it was real and that he could talk in his head to the voice outside his head. He also spoke about having a voice outside his head, which was the one who had reported his dream to the neighbours next door. It was difficult to follow at times, and it wasn’t always clear to me when he was talking about the voices inside his head or the voices/people outside his head. He mentioned responding to the voices he was hearing by either saying or implying that he would harm them if they tried to hurt him. I couldn’t make sense of what he was saying and whether he was talking about real people or the voices. I was just trying to deal with what was in front of me. He spoke about technology and asked me whether there was any technology that could map his thoughts

accurately enough to know them in real time. I tried to reason with him to persuade him that no one would be doing that to him but he didn't really seem to accept this. That afternoon, Valdo messaged me to say that he had had another dream and "they saw the dream. They're talking about it right now". He said there were at least 3 men and 1 woman but then he didn't want to talk about it anymore so we stopped exchanging messages.

29. Valdo and I then spoke again the following evening, on 22 May 2020. He had messaged earlier in the day to say he was feeling much better but that evening, he sounded very on edge and was paranoid about my safety. He called again the following day, and we spoke about faith. He mentioned that he had been to hospital, and my sense was that it was the previous evening, but I can't remember if he said anything more about it. He said he had had an encounter with God and that the Holy Spirit was telling him he was saved. I didn't see that specifically as related to his mental health given that I am a Christian and so in the context of our background of having grown up in a religious home and my own faith, I perceived it in terms of him finding faith.
30. I became aware that Valdo had been arrested on 24 May 2020 through my mum. I do not have a firm recollection of exactly when my mum told me, but it would have been very close in time to the arrest. I remember that my mum told me that Valdo was arrested as he was trying to break in somewhere, that he was not making any sense and that my parents and sister (who was a child at the time) were going to drive to his flat in Nottingham. I was aware that when my mum reached Nottingham, she was told that Valdo had been arrested again as he had tried to break into a neighbour's apartment and the neighbour had jumped out of the window and been taken to hospital. I think at some point it was passed on to me that the reason Valdo had been trying to break in was because he thought my mum was in danger and was being raped in the neighbouring apartment, but I cannot remember exactly when I was told this or by whom.

## **Valdo's first admission to hospital**

31. It was my mum that told me that Valdo had been detained under the Mental Health Act and admitted to hospital on 25 or 26 May 2020.
32. During Valdo's first admission, and in all of his subsequent admissions, apart from one occasion addressed at paragraph 54 below, I did not have any contact with the medical professionals involved in Valdo's care at any stage and all of the information I received was from my mum and occasionally my sister who was at some meetings with my parents. At no point prior to June 2023 was I asked to provide any information to health services or police regarding Valdo. The only way that I was able to communicate with professionals was by feeding relevant information back to my mum and supporting her in raising this with professionals by talking things through with her, such as the document referred to above, [NGPF0001787]. I wrote that document as I thought that Valdo was now in a place where they could figure out what was going on with him and they needed as much information to do that and to aid them in reaching a diagnosis.
33. I did not visit Valdo or have any direct contact with him whilst he was in hospital in May/June 2020. I could not visit as it was during the pandemic and so there were significant restrictions on travel and hospital visits. I think Valdo may have also temporarily lost his mobile phone at that time and so I wouldn't have been able to contact him by phone, even if I had wanted to. All of the information that I had about Valdo's mental health during that admission is what was relayed to me by my parents and occasionally my sister. As far as I remember, my mum reported that Valdo was still relatively unwell during the admission, but she had been told that he could not stay in hospital and he had to be managed in the community. I do remember her telling me about an incident when Valdo had been hallucinating and thought there was something hiding in a cupboard, but I don't remember the exact details.
34. When Valdo was discharged from hospital on 17 June 2020, my mum told me that the doctor had said that Valdo had had an acute psychotic episode but that a formal diagnosis was not possible at the time. I believe it was also relayed to

me that the doctor had stressed that they were not going to put a label on it until Valdo reached the point of being unwell again. My sister, who had also been at a meeting with my parents and the doctor, texted me to say that the doctor had said that 20% of people who have such an episode recover and don't have another, but if it happened again then it could be a long-term condition. I wasn't really convinced by the idea that it wasn't possible to diagnose Valdo until it happened again, but I was also hopeful that he wouldn't become ill again as the doctors were discharging him and so maybe they were right, and he would be in the 20% as the doctors knew what they are doing.

35. When Valdo was discharged from hospital, I was aware that he was supposed to be receiving some sort of support from mental health services in the community but I didn't know much about the detail of what this involved or was supposed to involve other than I thought they would be checking in on how well he was doing and progressing. I was aware that my mum was in contact with a nurse who had been assigned to Valdo and when we had concerns about his mental health deteriorating, my mum could either contact the nurse or the crisis team in Nottingham so they could go and visit Valdo. I did not however know much about the day to day contact with him, apart from knowing that he was being given medication to take I do not recall knowing which medication it was or how often or for how long he had to take it other than I think I may have been told he needed to take it for an extended period, perhaps around 6 months. I think I thought that the medication was more recovery related rather than an ongoing thing.

### **Valdo's diagnosis**

36. When Valdo was discharged from hospital on 17 June 2020, he was not as acutely unwell as he had seemed before his admission, which led me to believe that he was "better", at least for a period of time. However, in hindsight, even though he was more stable, he was clearly quite unwell.
37. I believe that I saw Valdo as "better" at times because of my own lack of understanding of psychosis generally. The only diagnoses that we were ever told about for Valdo was 'first episode psychosis' or later, 'psychotic episode'. No-

one explained to us what this meant. Consequently, at that time, because Valdo's presentation had been described as an acute psychotic *episode*, I didn't understand it to be a long-standing condition that was always present but rather an episodic thing that was tied to specific events which then led to his admission to hospital.

38. Once an episode was over, my understanding at the time was that Valdo was not psychotic anymore. This is because I didn't understand psychosis properly at that time due to the lack of an explanation from professionals to me or to my family. It was only after Valdo was assessed during the criminal proceedings when the doctors properly explained what it meant to live with psychosis, that I truly understood the nature of Valdo's medical diagnosis/condition.
39. Throughout the whole period of May 2020 to June 2023, I would say that I definitely did not understand Valdo's illness. I didn't understand his paranoid thoughts about monitoring to be psychotic delusions or that for him, they were completely and utterly real. Every time that we spoke, I would try to reason with him about those beliefs, which I perceived as paranoia, as I thought that if I could rationally explain to him why they were not true and what he was saying was not possible, then he would be able to accept this. Because I saw his illness as episodic I did not really understand him expressing paranoid views about things to be an illness or a sign that he was psychotic. I didn't understand that his refusal to take medication was part of his psychosis, that he believed that being medicated was people trying to control him and this his beliefs about this were confirmed by the fact that he was never totally free from the voices even when he was taking his medication. I did not know anything about the possibility of masking symptoms, and I also didn't think that his paranoia was necessarily indicative of him still being unwell. Unfortunately, I think my lack of understanding at the time was reflective of a wider societal lack of understanding about psychosis, how it can present, and what impact it can have on the person experiencing it. It is only since Valdo has been detained in Ashworth that I have really learnt about his illness and what it means.

40. My lack of understanding about Valdo's illness hugely informed my response to Valdo's illness. As time passed, he clearly became much better at masking his symptoms when he was in contact with us and so it wasn't obvious that he was unwell in terms of our understanding of what that meant.
41. My parents tried proactively to get a diagnosis from the doctor but when they were saying they would not give one, I trusted that and believed that they knew what they are doing. I try to stay away from self-diagnosis, and my approach is to trust the experts, which is what we did. I thought that if there was more to tell us, they would be doing that. This was the whole reason I wrote the document for Dr Seedat [NGPF0001787] in order to help the experts give us a diagnosis. I thought if we could give them as much information as possible then they could work out what was actually happening with Valdo. At no time, as a family, were we offered any support from the mental health professionals to educate us on what psychosis meant either generally or for Valdo.

#### **Valdo's second admission to hospital**

42. For a few weeks after Valdo was discharged on 17 June 2020, he seemed ok. We were in touch semi-regularly by text message. However, on 11 July 2020, there were again red flags that Valdo was not well. He had begun calling my family and I erratically sounding very jittery, jumping between topics, expressing concerns about our well-being and safety and not making much sense.
43. Valdo's fixation on the family's safety and particularly saying that we were all in danger and we were not safe in this country tended to happen when he was acutely unwell and in periods of intensity before he was admitted to hospital such as in May and July 2020. I spoke to my parents and as Valdo was living away from us all, we agreed that my mum would call mental health services to let them know our concerns so that they could go and check on him. I can't remember exactly what response she got but I think initially they said he was fine.
44. I do not remember exactly what I was told about Valdo's second admission to hospital on 14 July 2020. I recall that my mum told me that he had been banging

on a neighbour's door and the police were called. I am not sure if I knew at the time that he had pushed his way into the flat.

45. As explained above, I did not have any contact with professionals during Valdo second admission to hospital and all of the information available to me was communicated to me by my mum.
46. I was not aware of the record made by Dr Seedat on 16 July 2020 which records that "Dr Seedat observed that there seems to be no insight or remorse and that the danger is that this will happen again and perhaps Valdo will end up killing someone". Nothing like this was ever said to me or passed on to me by my mum as she also wasn't aware of this. I was really shocked to read this when we obtained Valdo's medical records after the attacks.
47. I also did not have contact with Valdo during that admission or any subsequent admissions.

#### **My contact with Valdo in 2020 and 2021**

48. Broadly, my contact with Valdo outside his detentions and when he was in the community followed a similar pattern. It was mainly via text message and occasionally speaking on the phone. It varied in terms of how frequently we were in contact. Particularly from around the middle of 2021, most of those interactions were about Valdo's paranoia around technology and him seeking to prove that his views were real and that technology was responsible for them.
49. In October 2020, Valdo came to visit me for the day. I think this was the first time that I had seen him in person since Christmas 2019. He seemed more stable than when we had been in touch in May and July 2020 in that he was calmer and settled but I wouldn't say that he was 'back to normal' and in hindsight, he was clearly still unwell. He mentioned that he had heard voices and I told him that I knew that as he had told me that back in May. However, he had clearly forgotten that he had told me about them. As I often did, I tried to ask him about the voices in an attempt to understand what he was talking about and to then try and show him that there was no rational basis for him to think there were voices

or anyone was monitoring him but he didn't really want to talk about it. As I have explained above, I didn't see this at the time as Valdo being psychotic. It wasn't clear to me whether he was taking his medication – I definitely asked about this but he seemed a bit evasive and I remember saying that he needed to take his medication as the professionals had said this was necessary for a certain amount of time and he said he would. In retrospect, I think that that visit was the first time that Valdo showed behaviours which indicated that he had delusions which were explaining the voices he was hearing as he was asking me about technologies that might be able to control or put thoughts into someone's mind. Previously, his focus had been on technology that could monitor people whereas it seemed that he was moving towards a view that technology could insert thoughts into a person's mind. My response to that further demonstrates my inaccurate perception of his illness as in that moment I felt that I could reason with him by explaining this wasn't possible and it felt to me that he was receptive to this.

50. I think that when Valdo came to see me in October 2020, I might have suggested that I could go and see him in Nottingham but he was reluctant to commit to this and at the time, I brushed this off. In time, it became much more apparent how much he didn't want any of us to visit him and I remember times when my parents were trying to arrange to see him and he was refusing. I would often get frustrated with this as I thought it was him being thoughtless about my parents and I didn't understand at the time that it was his attempt to protect them from the danger he perceived they were in.
51. My contact with Valdo between seeing him in October 2020 and his third admission in September 2021 was similar to before in that we were in touch semi-regularly by text message and occasionally by speaking on the phone.
52. From my perspective, Valdo's views around technology and government interference were the most present symptom throughout the whole time that he was unwell. When I had contact with Valdo, these beliefs always seemed to be present but I would say that they became more complex and specific to government interference following his second admission to hospital in July 2020

although from later in 2020 until the middle of 2021, he didn't always speak about them in much detail and in hindsight, I think this was the time that he became better at masking his illness with my family. He has since told me that during this time he was still hearing voices despite taking medication and that made him think even more that the voices were being caused by technology as the medication didn't stop the voices.

53. At times Valdo would tell me that the government and others were controlling him but I always saw this as paranoia and I never for one moment thought there was any truth in this and I was not worried that this was actually happening.
54. There was a point in May 2021 when as a family we were worried that Valdo's mental health was deteriorating. I spoke to him at some stage towards the end of May and he was frantic and he told me that he had not taken his medication for 2 to 3 weeks. This was the only time that Valdo expressly told me that he was not taking his medication. My mum was also worried about him as he had been sounding strange during their calls. I spoke to my mum and we agreed that she would contact the crisis team in Nottingham to let them know so they could go and see him. For some reason, my mum wasn't able to be available when the crisis team called back so she gave them my number. I remember taking the call as I was at friend's wedding. I cannot remember who I spoke to but they told me that they had had contact with Valdo, that he was fine and they didn't think any immediate action was needed. I am aware that there is a note within Valdo's records that I 'agreed with this plan'. From my perspective, that was me saying 'okay' and that the professionals knew what they were doing as they were the ones with the expertise and who were having face to face contact with Valdo.
55. I was aware that Valdo had driven to my parents' house in Wales in July and in August 2021 but that he had refused to enter the house as he thought it would put them in danger. My parents called me when he was outside the house and I remember it as I was at a friend's house. I was on the phone for a couple of hours speaking to my parents who were very upset as they couldn't understand why he wouldn't go into the house. At that time, I thought he was being paranoid, somewhat like a conspiracy theory, as opposed to seeing it as a symptom of his

illness and that he was actively psychotic. I remember thinking that this was quite similar to the sort of theories around at the time about QAnon and I think I even sent Valdo an article about apophenia as I thought he may be experiencing that. We had a picture of what active psychosis looked like for him and how he was presenting at that time wasn't it. It was really worrying for my parents and I was concerned for them. I spoke to him and I told him he needed to be mindful of how making them feel. I remember getting really annoyed as I had this view that I should be able to reason through his symptoms and I saw it as him not listening to me and being selfish. After those visits, my contact with Valdo reduced significantly as I checked out slightly. I was very angry with him. Due to my lack of understanding, I didn't see his behaviour in the context of an illness but rather as someone who was being inconsiderate of our parents.

### **Valdo's third admission to hospital**

56. In the lead up to Valdo's third admission at the beginning of September 2021, I remember that my mum had told me that she was worried about him and that she had contacted mental health services to raise her concerns.
57. I don't recall being told exactly how Valdo came to be admitted to hospital apart from I remember that my mum telling me that someone had gone to see him at his flat to assess him and that he ended up being arrested but that he resisted arrest and so was taken into some form of custody. I have been asked whether Valdo told me this and I don't think that he did as was acutely psychotic at that time and when he was that unwell, his recollection of events was often very poor.
58. Overall, I don't recall a huge amount about that admission. As set out above, I was still annoyed about what I thought was him upsetting my parents in July and so I had checked out a lot more after that. I do however remember my mum saying he would be in hospital for longer and that she was clearing out his place.
59. By that point, I had stopped thinking about whether there would be more of a diagnosis than 'psychotic episode' as they weren't telling us anything else and I

assumed that if there was more, we needed to know as a family then they would tell us.

60. I would have found out at some point that Valdo had been discharged from hospital, and my understanding was that it would be the same arrangements as before – that Valdo would receive support in the community. By that point, I felt more and more defeatist about it all but also because of my lack of understanding about his illness, I also felt frustrated. I genuinely felt pretty hopeless and that it would all end by Valdo eventually taking his own life.
61. For a period after Valdo's third admission, I found it harder to tell when Valdo was acutely unwell, as it seemed like he had become more used to his symptoms and better at dealing with them. So as explained above, I did not know when he was still actively psychotic.

#### **Valdo's risk**

62. I do not recall anything being passed on to me about Valdo's risk to himself or to other people. As far as I am aware, nothing about risk to himself or to others was ever said to my mum as she never passed that on to me and she would have done so if it was significant.
63. I would say that I had an almost constant underlying concern that Valdo was a risk to himself. This stemmed primarily from the text exchange we had on 12 April 2020 when Valdo had talked about hurting himself permanently. It was not something he ever mentioned again but it was significant to me and so it always stayed in the back of mind. I was worried that Valdo would end up hurting himself when he was acutely unwell but we felt that there was little we could do as a family as my mum had been raising concerns as much as she was able but was reliant on mental health services to assess Valdo and take action, and Valdo's communication with us was limited by his illness.
64. In terms of Valdo's potential risk to others, this was not something that appeared to me to be a particular risk at the time based on what I knew. I knew that when Valdo had been acutely psychotic, he had banged on doors and gone into other

people's apartments but I had only been told what had been passed on to my mum and so the details around this were limited. I had never understood that he had randomly attacked or assaulted anyone, particularly strangers, and I had never been told that this was a risk he presented.

65. I had also known that Valdo had resisted arrest in September 2021 but again, I did not have any details about this, but I understood it was his response to being detained rather than him being proactively violent to another person. No one had ever spoken to me, or my family, about risk in the context of mental illness and it never occurred to me that Valdo being so unwell would lead to him attacking someone. Prior to the attacks I had no understanding at all of what risk meant in terms of mental health.
66. In January 2022, my mum told me that Valdo had had an altercation with his flatmate but that was all I knew. I thought it was some sort of fight between Valdo and one other person, so I did not see it in the context of him being psychotic and the psychosis causing him to be a risk to others.
67. I did not know about Valdo assaulting his co-workers in May 2023 until after the attacks in June 2023.

#### **Valdo's fourth admission to hospital**

68. At some stage in January 2022, my mum told me that Valdo had told her that he had had a fight with his housemate but I do not remember any detail about this other than what I have said at paragraph 66 above.
69. I believe my mum told me that they were doing a mental health assessment of Valdo to see if he should go to hospital but as a family, we were not aware that Valdo had then been detained between 28 January and 24 February 2022. My mum was not contacted and Valdo didn't tell us and therefore, I did not receive any information at that time about his mental health. The first time that we became aware that Valdo had been sectioned in January and February 2022 was in the criminal court proceedings after June 2023.

## **Arrest warrant in September 2022**

70. I was not aware that there had been a warrant for Valdo's arrest issued in September 2022 and I was not aware that he had been summonsed to court. I do not know which address the court summons was sent to but I am aware that Valdo had moved address twice since the incident in September 2021 so I do not know if the summons was sent to the correct address at the time.

## **Contact with Valdo in 2022**

71. My contact with Valdo between September 2021 and when I saw him in November 2022 was quite limited. We had some contact by phone but we did not see each other. This was due to a combination of feeling frustrated with him as that we were often speaking about the same thing but he was showing no insight and I perceived this as stubbornness. I was also frustrated with not having any control over this and a general lack of understanding about his mental illness.

72. In the contact we had, it felt as if we were going around in circles about his feelings around the family's safety and government interference and technology. However, as we were cut out of his care, and as it became much harder to us to be able to detect Valdo being in crisis because he was in another city, refusing to see us and able to mask his symptoms to some extent, it felt as if there was nothing we could actually do as a family.

73. Given my limited understanding of his illness and therefore the treatments for it, I did not realise that the fact Valdo was still speaking about government interference and displaying this paranoia was actually all to do with the lack of proper treatment he was receiving. Given the episodic nature of the treatment he had received, I thought for the most part that's how things were supposed to work: that when he was acutely unwell, Valdo would be in hospital or given more intense treatment, but that when he was in the community it was up to him to take medication and adhere to treatment, and there was nothing we could do until he reached crisis which was when the professionals would properly step in. Of course, Valdo's compliance in the community was impossible due to his

complete lack of insight, which at that time, I also did not understand. I was left with the incorrect idea that it was on him to do certain things to get better, instead of him needing to receive better treatment in order for this to occur.

74. As set out below, by around September 2022, Valdo had told us that he had moved to Coventry and in hindsight, I believe that this was in part because he thought it would ensure our safety because it meant we wouldn't try and visit Nottingham to see him.
75. I was not aware that Valdo had been discharged back to his GP in September 2022. This was not shared with me and as far as I am aware, my parents were not told about it either. I did not have any contact with mental health services between September 2022 and June 2023. At that time, I believed Valdo was still under the care of mental health services but I assumed that my mum was not receiving any updates from them because Valdo had asked that information shouldn't be shared with his family which my mum had been told about in either late 2021 or early 2022.
76. Whenever I asked Valdo what was happening with his mental health and support from mental health services, he just wouldn't answer. Eventually, I stopped asking him about it as I could never get a response from him. I would say that by this stage Valdo had learnt how to mask his symptoms when he spoke with me. He was always calm and whilst he talked about his beliefs in terms of people monitoring him, he never presented in the way he had in May 2020, June 2020 and May 2021 so I did not think he was actively psychotic.
77. In around September 2022, after he had graduated, Valdo told us that he had moved to Coventry and found an engineering job. I therefore thought that Valdo was living in Coventry from then until June 2023 but I did not know his address. I assumed that his mental health care would have been transferred to Coventry as my mum had told me that when Valdo had previously mentioned the possibility of moving to Birmingham in 2020, the mental health professionals explained that if this were to happen, he would be transferred to the care of a new team in Birmingham. I just thought that this was standard practice when a

person receiving mental health support moved. I did not however give it a huge amount of thought at the time as my mum had been told that we were not going to be given information about Valdo's care as he had not consented to this.

78. I saw Valdo once in 2022. This was on 5 November 2022 when I was in Birmingham with my mum and sister as I was taking my sister to a concert. Valdo came to meet us saying that he was concerned that my sister would not be safe at the concert. He arrived in the evening and went out with my mum whilst I took my sister to the concert. I assumed at that time that he had travelled from Coventry to see us. I cannot remember if I saw him briefly after the concert but we agreed to meet the following morning. I don't know where he stayed that night but he may have said he was travelling back to Coventry for the night. We were together for around a couple of hours and I remember him being fairly closed off. He was calm but a bit withdrawn and would often stare off into the distance. Given my feelings at that time, I probably perceived this as him being stubborn and overly paranoid, particularly about our safety. In hindsight it is clear that he was actively psychotic given his focus on our safety. I did not see Valdo again until after the attacks on 13 June 2023 and my contact with his was very limited. We had several months when we did not speak.
79. In Christmas 2022, when I was staying with my parents, I spoke to Valdo on the phone and he told me about some research he had done to support his theories around government interference. We had a by then typical back and forth about how his beliefs could not be real but he said he wanted to send us the research. I told him that I wouldn't read it so he sent it to my parents instead.
80. I am not entirely sure what level of contact Valdo was having with my parents around this time. At the time, my impression was that he would call them every now and then but I didn't keep close track of this. I am aware that he called them at Christmas as this is when he sent them a zip file of documents which he felt was evidence that he was being interfered with by government. I am also aware that there were times when they tried to see him but he was resistant to this which in itself made me frustrated as I saw how upsetting this was for them.

### **Incident in May 2023**

81. I was not aware that Valdo had assaulted two colleagues in May 2023 and that police had been called. I only found out about this when it was revealed publicly at one of the court hearings after 13 June 2023.

### **Events of 12 and 13 June 2023**

82. As stated above, I believed Valdo was living in Coventry from around September 2022 onwards and therefore, when I had contact with him on 12 and 13 June, that is where I believed he was living.

83. I had not had any contact with Valdo since December 2022 when he called me via Whatsapp at 11.50am on 12 June. I was at work at that time, so I missed the call. He then rang me again at 7.09pm and I was able to answer the call. We spoke for approximately 44 minutes. Valdo did not say where he was but during that call I heard an announcement in the background that 'this train will be arriving at Blackfriars' so I assumed that he was in London at that time. I didn't ask him where he was as I thought that may make him more paranoid and at the time, there didn't seem to be any significance in asking him why he was in London. He was calm during the call but what he was saying was strange, although no stranger than many other conversations that we had had before. In many ways, this conversation was a copy of other conversations we had had in terms of his fixation on being monitored.

84. At the beginning of the call, Valdo said something like 'this will be the last time I will talk to you. After this, I will leave you alone'. I assumed he was saying this as we hadn't spoken in several months so he was making a point that he wouldn't bother me anymore after our call.

85. The content of our conversation was similar to previous conversations that I had had with him. I gave a statement to the police shortly after the attacks which I have reviewed and which sets out the things that Valdo said to me. He said 'This is not a mental illness I am fine. I am not ill but there is 2 way communication and 24/7 voices in my head, they are intelligent people and they are making

threats'. He talked about some files he had sent my parents at Christmas, which he thought would prove to everyone that his beliefs were real. He was going around in circles, which had been my experience of previous conversations with him, and I felt he just wanted to say what he wanted to say so I didn't interrupt him at first and I just let him talk. The majority of the call was him talking about his delusional beliefs and trying to persuade me that some research he had done would prove everything he believed. He talked about his mind being controlled and I remember that there were some connection issues during the call due to a black spot in my house which I explained to Valdo but he was adamant that it was the technology he was referring to interfering and that he was being monitored. At some point he said 'just disassociate yourself from me, if anything happens don't come and see me in the hospital'. I am not sure I gave much thought to this statement at that time given it was in the context of him expressing a lot of delusional beliefs and he had said these kinds of strange things before especially in the context of us (the family) staying away from him so that we were not put in danger, and us not being safe in the UK because of technology and monitoring. I talked to him about the fact that I thought he was ill and that he needed help and medication. I tried to reason with him, but it was clear that he wasn't really listening to me as he said he was not unwell and would repeat that everything that was happening to him was being caused by technology and that we were not safe as a result. He spent a lot of time trying to persuade me to look at the research he had sent to my parents over Christmas and eventually I agreed that he could send it to me.

86. Valdo sent me the documents he had referred to at 11.52pm that evening by email in a .zip file. I was asleep at that time, so I did not open the email or the folder until after he called at around 4.52am.
87. Valdo called me on Whatsapp at 4.52am on 13 June 2023. I was asleep so the call woke me up. According to my phone, the call lasted 1 minute and 5 seconds. The first thing he asked me was whether I had received the documents. He was fixated on them. I said I had not opened them yet as I was asleep. He then told me that he loved me and that this would be the last time we would speak and I should take the family out of the country. I thought he might do something to hurt

himself. Given what he had said back in April 2020 about hurting himself permanently, this is what I thought he was referring to in that moment. I thought the reference to taking the family out of the country were about his paranoid beliefs that we were at risk. I asked him, 'are you going to do something stupid?' and he replied 'it's already done' and then he hung up. After he hung up, I tried to open the .zip file he had sent me, but it was corrupted so I couldn't open it immediately. I sent him a series of messages from 04.58 stating "You are going to have to think about what will happen to our parents if you do something stupid (04:58)", How are they going to feel (04:59), Your file also doesn't open (05:03), It's corrupted (05:03) (see Exhibit [WITN0087002]). I had hoped this would get a response from him as he had been so keen for me to see the documents. I was also worried about what he may do to himself and by mentioning the impact on our parents I was hoping he would engage. Although the messages were sent, they never showed as delivered on WhatsApp. At some stage shortly after I used a software which allowed me to partially recover some of the contents of the .zip file and I could see it was a series of articles and videos about various things such as brain imaging and telepathy - the same sort of content that we had been discussing many times over the years.

88. I didn't really know what Valdo had meant when we had spoken but I felt very worried as it was strange and so I tried to call him back at 4.56am, 5.10am, 5.33am, 8.09am, 8.11am, 11.13am. My concern was that he might do something to harm himself or commit suicide.
89. I also called my mum after speaking to Valdo at 4.52am as I was worried. She was at work and had not spoken to him. She told me she would ring me back and we then spoke at 6.47am when I explained in more detail my contact with Valdo the previous evening and that morning. She said she would try and get in touch with him and then messaged me a bit later to say he wasn't answering her calls. I felt that there was nothing we could do as we weren't able to get hold of Valdo.
90. I didn't contact anyone else at that time. I was not sure who to contact. I googled Coventry Police station online for information about what to do if you were

concerned about someone. I looked at the missing person form which I thought about filling in but I felt like I had very limited information which could help find Valdo and also the website suggested that it was not suitable to use the missing person form if you had seen or heard from the person in the last 24 hours so I did not complete it.

91. I didn't know what else to do as I couldn't get hold of Valdo. I thought if Valdo had attempted to harm himself it may be on the local news in Coventry, so I kept an eye on news in Coventry on Twitter. Eventually, I went to work. I checked Twitter again. At around 9.40am, I saw that 'Nottingham' was trending and so I clicked through, partly out of curiosity as I associated Nottingham with Valdo. I saw there had been an attack and as more details emerged, such as the age of the person arrested and the area, I became more and more concerned that it sounded like Valdo and so I called the police helpline number that was displayed and provided information about my contact with Valdo that morning and the previous night, as well as his mental health history. Someone called me back at around 11am and said that two detectives were coming to see me to take a statement. It was only when they came to see me that afternoon that I received confirmation that it was Valdo who had been involved in the attacks as on the phone they had said they couldn't confirm anything.

### **My contact with the police following the attacks**

92. I was visited by two detectives Joanne De Waele and Josette Davis from the East Midlands Special Operation Unit at Northampton Police in the afternoon on 13 June and they took a witness statement from me about my contact with Valdo on 12 and 13 June as well as some background information. They told me that three people had been killed and three more injured with one person in a critical condition. They said that Valdo had been arrested and was in custody. I stressed to them how unwell he must be even if he appeared as if he was not, and this is partly why this is addressed in my witness statement. When the police interviewed me I was in a state of shock and I was reflecting on what Valdo had said to me in the last call including the reference to "its already done". I think this is probably because I was asked a question by the police about this comment

and the call. I said to the police that something was different in that last call. This is a comment that I made to the police with the benefit of hindsight. However, at the time of the last call when Valdo said "it's already done" my only concern was that Valdo was unwell and that Valdo was going to harm himself.

93. The same detectives then came to speak to me and my family on 14 June at a family member's house as my parents had travelled to stay there. As far as I remember, they did not take any more statements during this meeting but instead they asked questions about Valdo, his background and our family history. We gave them a lot of information about the family including where we all worked, our home addresses, the addresses of wider family members and information about when we moved to Portugal and when my dad obtained Portuguese citizenship. I remember them saying that this information would be fed into a central hub given it was a major investigation and so it would be accessed by a variety of agencies. They also spoke to us about our own personal safety in light of everything that had happened.
94. I had some more contact with one of the detectives, Joanne De Waele over the following days which was mainly sending her information and documents such as the document that we had written for the doctor in 2020 and more information about Valdo's medical history. I also sent them the .zip files Valdo sent to parents over Christmas.
95. We went back returned to Wales on 14 June 2023 and the following day, there were press outside our door, but they were also outside the houses of the extended family members whose addresses we had provided to the police the previous day. I emailed the two detectives at around 5pm that day saying that I was concerned that information had been leaked. Joanne replied and said this had not been done by police. We also had some further communication about the family's personal safety. I believe I had a few calls with the detectives on 16 June as the Telegraph had published an article with information we had provided to the police on 14 June, and I was still concerned about information being leaked. Eventually, my contact with those two detectives fizzled out.

96. I was provided with limited information about the events on 13 June 2023. In terms of the prosecution and criminal proceedings against Valdo, I believe I was told the dates for the court hearings so that we could attend if we wanted to do so.
97. I was eventually put in contact with a representative from Nottinghamshire Police, Detective Constable Neil Beddoe. I think this was because I was a witness in the criminal proceedings and so he was the point of contact for any logistics and for any procedural questions I had. Neil Beddoe and his sergeant came to see me at the end of October 2023 and we had a conversation about logistics and my questions about being a key witness as I didn't really know what that meant at the time and I didn't really understand the process in terms of me being a key witness but also a close family member of Valdo. Throughout my interactions with him, I was always told that the police couldn't give me much information as the criminal proceedings were still going on so the focus was really on procedural issues.
98. I did not have contact with any family liaison officers or with the Senior Investigating Officer as far as I am aware.
99. In terms of the police's previous interactions with Valdo, I believe we were told at some stage that there were other incidents being investigated but that the police could not disclose any other information. We gradually learnt of previous incidents in media reporting, at the sentencing hearing and then in subsequent reviews, and from our own review of Valdo's medical records.
100. I also had some contact with Cambridgeshire Police and South Wales Police at some point after 13 June due to concerns regarding the family's safety and also the safety of my housemates in light of my association with Valdo.
101. On 27 February 2024, I texted DC Beddoe to ask for a copy of the information that my family and I had provided to the police on 13 and 14 June 2023. This was because of my previous concerns that that information had been leaked to the press, and I wanted to cross-reference the note of what we had told the

police with what had been reported in the press. As set out above, I had raised this concern at the time, but I didn't take it any further then as there were other things to focus on, such as the charges that Valdo was facing. However, when it was announced that the IOPC would be doing an investigation of the police's handling of matters, I thought I should raise it. After I raised this with DC Beddoe, I was contacted by Detective Chief Inspector Gareth Harding on 12 and 14 March 2024 and it was agreed that my concerns would be treated as a complaint to Nottinghamshire Police. I didn't really feel this was the right approach given what I had been told about other agencies being able to access the information which is why I had suggested that the IOPC could look at it as I thought this would mean there was a wider consideration of who might have leaked the information

102. The outcome of the complaint investigation, which is set out in a letter dated 5 July 2024 [Exhibit WITN0087003] sets out the matters that I complained about. These were:

102.1. That information we had shared with the police on 13 and 14 June 2023 had been leaked to the media. There were specific details which were published in an article in the Telegraph newspaper on 15 June 2023 which would not have otherwise been available to the public but which we had provided to the police in the previous days. This information included the date that our family moved from Guinea Bissau to Madeira, the date on which my parents obtained Portuguese citizenship, my parents' professions, and our addresses. This was of particular concern to us as within days of speaking to the police, there were members of the press knocking on our doors.

102.2. That more was not done by the police to respond to the perception that the attacks were a terrorist attack. I was concerned that the implication that the attacks may have been related to terrorism would have likely increased the media interest in our family and thus increased the risk to us as well as fuelling prejudice around West African immigrants.

- 102.3. That Valdo was declared fit for interview on 13 June despite being acutely unwell. I wanted to understand who had assessed his mental health and whether a Mental Health Act assessment had been undertaken.
- 102.4. To understand whether Valdo's report that he had been threatened with a knife whilst in London and the day before the attacks had been investigated. At that stage, I was unsure whether this had happened and whether it was relevant to my brother's mental state at that time and I had not been able to get any information about this from the police.
103. My complaint was referred by Nottinghamshire Police to the IOPC given that the IOPC were already undertaking an investigation. However, the IOPC wrote to me on 22 March 2024 to confirm that they had referred the matter back to Nottinghamshire Police so that a local investigation could be undertaken [IOPC0000014]. I received the response to Nottinghamshire Police's local investigation in a letter dated 5 July 2024 [Exhibit WITN0087003]. The investigation found that nothing had been done incorrectly. It didn't consider the assessment of Valdo in police custody as it was said that this was being investigated by the IOPC.
104. On 1 August 2024, I submitted an appeal to the IOPC regarding the complaint outcome from Nottinghamshire Police as there were some comments within the response that gave me cause for concern. In particular, the response stated that there was information reported in the media that had not been obtained from the family and gave the examples of our family being from Guinea Bissau and of having moved to Madeira. I was concerned by the statement that this information had not been obtained by police as my parents and I strongly recalled providing this information as part of the family background in our meeting with the police on 14 June 2023. I was also concerned as one of the pieces of information we had provided was when my father obtained Portuguese citizenship which had then been published in the Telegraph and it seemed unlikely that a UK journalist could easily access that information, as appeared to be implied by Nottinghamshire police. I also wished the IOPC to reconsider my complaints

about the police's delay in addressing speculation that the attacks had been terror related.

105. On 20 May 2025, I received a letter from the IOPC which enclosed a further response from Nottinghamshire Police dated 3 March 2025. This is exhibited at [Exhibit WITN0087004]. I followed this up by email on the same day as the further report from Nottinghamshire Police did not appear to address the concerns I had raised about information that we provided to the police on 14 June 2023 seemingly not being recorded anywhere or our request for a copy of the document which recorded the information we had provided that day [see Exhibit WITN0087005].
106. I received a final response from the IOPC on 22 July 2025 [Exhibit WITN0087006] stating that my application for a review of Nottinghamshire Police's investigation had not been upheld. In particular, the IOPC found that information contained within media reporting more likely came from a 'different source' than the police, and that Nottinghamshire Police followed appropriate advice regarding media reporting.
107. I am still not convinced that the information we provided to the police on 14 June was not leaked. I feel that the investigation was too narrow in its focus on Nottinghamshire Police as given that we were told multiple agencies would be able to access the information we provided, I still feel it is possible that another agency leaked this if Nottinghamshire police did not but I do not think anyone has really looked into this. I also still do not have a full record of the information we provided at the meeting with the police on 14 June and I am concerned about what was recorded and where that information was recorded but I have never received a full record of that information. My parents and I submitted SARs to Nottinghamshire Police and received heavily redacted copies of the information on file from that meeting, which does not reflect the full information we provided about ourselves.

## **My contact with Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust after 13 June**

108. The first contact that my family had from Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust after 13 June 2023 was in around February 2024. I believe that they emailed my mum and then we had a meeting in Summer 2024 at my parents' home with Amy Kaye, a family liaison officer and Diane Hull, who I believe was the Chief Nurse from the Trust. It felt as if part of the focus of that meeting was to manage the Trust's reputation and for them to try and work out whether we would be speaking to the media. I think they spoke a bit about providing support to us and made some sort of apology about the failings in Valdo's care, but I do not remember much of the detail. That was the only meeting that we had with the Trust. We had some subsequent correspondence with them, which was mainly done by my mum although I was occasionally copied into emails, and which was about the process of obtaining Valdo's medical records.
109. I then had some email correspondence with Diane Hull in February 2025 as I had seen something in the media in which the bereaved families had said that the Trust had told them that Valdo did not have treatment resistant schizophrenia. I was concerned that the Trust had misinformed the families as Valdo had been diagnosed with treatment resistant schizophrenia shortly after being admitted to Ashworth Hospital in 2023 and so I wanted to understand where this information had come from. I emailed Diane Hull on 5 February 2025 and she responded on 7 February 2025 to say that Valdo had never been diagnosed with treatment resistant schizophrenia by the Trust. I responded to say that was technically right (in that the Trust had never made such a diagnosis) but this was different to what was being reported – that the Trust had said Valdo did not have treatment resistant schizophrenia. She did not reply to that email. I emailed her again in July this year, but she also hasn't replied to that. I attach at Exhibit [WITN0087007] a copy of those emails.
110. I don't believe I have had any other communications with the Trust. As a family, we were not involved in their internal investigation, and we were never invited to be involved.

111. In a letter I wrote on 31 January 2024 I referred to the Chief Executive of Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust 'already starting to cover his back by justifying their actions'. I cannot remember exactly what I was referring to but I think it was likely reference to a quote that he gave and which was reported in the media a few days earlier in which he had said that "If a patient no longer engages with our services and support and they do not meet criteria to be detained under the Mental Health Act, they are discharged back to the care of their GP and can be referred back into our services at any time". I felt that this quote was an attempt to avoid responsibility for responding to the needs of a mentally unwell patient.

### **Concerns regarding Valdo's care and the interactions with him by agencies**

112. I feel that the attacks on 13 June 2023 were entirely preventable as if Valdo had received appropriate care and treatment, he would never have reached the point of crisis that he did on 13 June 2023. Since then we have seen the medical records held by Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust about Valdo's care. I have a number of concerns about the inadequate care that he received. I expect I will have further concerns once we have received additional information through the Inquiry but I have set out below my initial thoughts about the failings in Valdo's care.

113. During the 2 years that Valdo was under the care of the mental health services, it is clear that there was no real plan to ensure treatment in a coherent, long-term and holistic way either when he was in hospital or when he was managed in the community. My sense is that he only received discrete interventions rather than anyone ever taking a proper overview of his care, including what was working, what wasn't working and what was needed to keep him well. He desperately needed more help to address his lack of insight into his illness, whether through a longer period in a hospital setting, or whether when he was managed in the community; but there was no plan for this. The only significant interventions Valdo received were when he was in an acute crisis and often when he had done something which had put others at risk. Over this period, given that

the existing plan was not working after multiple attempts, I do not understand why it was never reviewed and changed.

114. In my view, Valdo's mental health wasn't taken seriously enough and all the relevant institutions: Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, Cygnet Group, Priory Group, Nottingham City Council (the AMHP service), Nottingham University and Nottinghamshire Police, knew about his mental health issues, but all of them turned a blind eye and did not do enough to get him proper treatment. We know that BAME people tend to have more difficulties when dealing with mental health services in the UK, and this was most certainly the case for Valdo.
115. I am aware that Valdo's case isn't the first example of failures in mental health provision resulting in catastrophic outcomes. I know there have been many investigations before this in other cases which have identified similar failings but this doesn't appear to result in actual learning. This time a particular set of failures may have taken a different form from previous incidents but the same themes and systemic failures persist. I think there needs to be a systemic change to ensure there is learning from all the investigations into these incident is embedded as otherwise they all become meaningless.
116. Overall, it is apparent to me that there is significant under-resourcing of mental health services. Resourcing is the biggest overarching problem in my view and I feel that it impacted every aspect of Valdo's care – the decisions to discharge him early, the failures to admit him sooner, and the inadequate care available to him in the community. My feeling is that this longstanding lack of resourcing creates a 'feedback loop' in mental health services – there is a lack of support in the community so they wait for a crisis to happen, then they react and intervene for a short period to reduce the crisis and then the cycle starts again. It is only one example but I feel that the availability of an Assertive Outreach Team may have made a difference in Valdo's case, but I understand most of those teams have been disbanded as they are considered too expensive to run. However, such a team would have had the expertise to work with someone like Valdo who was disengaging and not complying with medication.

117. It is apparent from reading through Valdo's records that he was discharged too early on each occasion that he was in hospital, including when he was still experiencing symptoms of psychosis and before there was a robust care plan in place addressing what to do if he either didn't engage with mental health professionals or stopped taking his medication. I feel that if those admissions had been longer then, this would have allowed for a better assessment of Valdo and time to understand his illness so that the chance of relapsing when he was discharged would have been much lower.
118. I believe that Valdo should have been discharged on a Community Treatment Order on the occasions he was detained under section 3 of the Mental Health Act. This would have allowed professionals to better ensure that he was complying with his medication and to return him to hospital sooner and before he was in crisis if he was not.
119. I do not think the care plan for Valdo in the community was sufficient to manage his illness. The meaningful intervention from professionals in Valdo's case only really happened when he was in extreme crisis. If they had become involved earlier, he would not have reached that point. For example, one of the care plans included that when Valdo was feeling overwhelmed due to his psychotic symptoms, he should contact the crisis team, his family or the GP. I feel that this is a lot to expect of someone experiencing a psychotic episode, particularly when part of their psychosis relates to the professionals and the mental health treatment that is being offered. There were also times when it was apparent that Valdo was still very unwell, for example in November 2020 when he admitted he was still hearing voices, yet little was done to address this and increase the support he was receiving in the community. There were also times where Valdo appeared to be taking his medication but told professionals that he didn't think it was working and when he was still experiencing symptoms, yet nothing was done to review the approach being taken to his care. I was surprised to learn that Valdo had such limited contact with psychiatrist when he was in the community as I feel this would have allowed for better oversight of his care. I also feel that the support provided by Valdo's care coordinator after May 2022,

when his care coordinator changed, was inadequate as after then it appears that there was barely any attempt by services to contact Valdo and assess him.

120. As a family, we were shocked to discover that Valdo had been diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia as early as July 2020 and that this had not been communicated to us. We had repeatedly asked about Valdo's diagnosis as we felt this would help us understand his condition and how to respond to this, but it feels that professionals were positively obstructive about this. As will be apparent from my statement, I did not really understand what psychosis was throughout 2020 to 2023. No professional ever took time to educate us on what psychosis meant for Valdo, what to look out for in terms of signs of ongoing psychosis and how we should respond in light of that.

121. There were multiple occasions when my mum, and therefore us a family, were excluded from Valdo's care and not given relevant information about him. This did not only relate to his diagnosis but also how he was presenting in the community, that he had been admitted to hospital, how he was in hospital, his risk and how this related to his psychosis, and the arrangements for his care including the decision to discharge him from mental health services.

122. I feel that if that information had been shared, not only would we have been more informed as a family, but we would have also been able to have a better dialogue with mental health services about what we were seeing in our contact with Valdo and whether intervention was needed. I remain sceptical about how much difference this would have made in reality given the services we were seeking to navigate and that were treating Valdo. This is because in our experience as a family a crisis was needed before anyone in mental health services actually did anything for Valdo. I do think better communication with us and involvement of us as a family would have improved the likelihood of Valdo getting better.

123. It does not make sense to me that Valdo was able to withdraw his consent to share information with us as a family when he could not even consent to his own treatment and when he was very confused and disorientated. I feel that the concept of capacity was inconsistently applied by professionals at various

stages which suggests to me that here must have been a lack of understanding about capacity.

124. In my view there were several occasions when the assessment of Valdo when he was in the community was not robust enough. For example, there were times when he was 'assessed' over the telephone, but I do not know how that can allow for a proper assessment of someone, particularly if they have become good at masking their symptoms. There were also times when my mum raised concerns with mental health services, but it took days for them to respond and to assess Valdo. One such occasion was on 11 July 2020 when my mum raised concerns but there was a delay in seeing Valdo and in my view, if he had been seen earlier, the events of 14 July 2020 may have been avoided.
125. There were also at least two occasions when in my view Valdo should have been detained under the Mental Health Act as he was obviously unwell, rather than released – on 24 May 2020 and on 19 January 2022. These were opportunities to provide him with treatment earlier and in the case of 24 May, this could have prevented a member of the public suffering serious injuries.
126. In my view there were multiple failings around the management of Valdo's medication. For example, there were occasions when he was in police custody and he should have been given medication to prevent a further deterioration, but he was not. I do not think enough was done to address Valdo's psychotic beliefs around his medication. I feel he should have been given medication by depot injection given the issues around compliance yet often this decision was left to him despite him having been assessed as lacking capacity to make decisions about his treatment. I have counted that depot was mentioned 29 times in Valdo's medical records, yet it was never actually given to him. I also do not think there was enough early intervention when it was apparent to professionals that Valdo was not taking his medication including because he told them that he was not.
127. I do not think information was adequately shared between services that were in contact with Valdo. For example, in relation to his apparent diagnosis of paranoid

schizophrenia, it is not clear to me that this was shared across mental health services or with others such as the independent providers as the vast majority of Valdo's medical records refer to him having a diagnosis of 'Psychosis' or 'First Episode Psychosis'. I think this is likely to have contributed to a lack of understanding of Valdo's condition and/or an underestimating the severity of it. I also do not think there was adequate sharing of information between mental health services, the GP and the police. For example, the arrest warrant was apparently issued for Valdo at around the same time that he was discharged by mental health services. I feel that if there had been better communication between agencies, they would have had a clearer picture of what was happening with Valdo.

128. I think the decision to discharge Valdo from mental health services was wrong. In the summary of his care plan on 29 June 2021, it says that he was entitled to 3 years of support on the 'first episode of psychosis pathway' yet he was discharged from mental health services after 2 years. I feel that more should have been done in light of Valdo's history and instead of his disengagement being seen as a symptom of his mental illness, it was used as a reason for mental health services to discharge him so that no one had any proper oversight at all of his care.

129. I would like to set out my views regarding recommendations in submissions and once I have had an opportunity to review the evidence that the Inquiry is gathering. However, in my view the failings in Valdo's care are deep rooted and indicate the extent to which mental health services are fundamentally under resourced and broken. I believe action is needed at a government level to ensure that there is meaningful change so that this doesn't happen again. It is not realistic to rely on individual agencies and NHS Trusts alone to make those changes – it needs to be addressed from the top down.

**Statement of truth**

I believe the content of this statement to be true. I understand that proceedings may be brought against anyone who makes, or causes to be made, a false statement in a document verified by a statement of truth without an honest belief of its truth.

Signed **GRO-B** .....

Dated: 12/11/2025

## Index to First Witness Statement of Elias Calocane

<u>No.</u>	<u>URN</u>	<u>Document Description</u>
1	NGPF0001787	Correspondence between Elias Calocane and Valdo Calocane between October 2017 and May 2020
2	WITN0087002	Texts between Elias and Valdo Calocane 12-13 June 2023
3	WITN0087003	Outcome of complaint from Nottinghamshire Police from 5 July 2024
4	IOPC0000014	Letter from the IOPC dated 22 March 2024
5	WITN0087004	Letters from the IOPC to Elias Calocane from 20 May 2025 and 3 March 2025
6	WITN0087005	Email from Elias Calocane to the IOPC from 20 May 2025
7	WITN0087006	Letter from the IOPC to Elias Calocane 22 July 2025
8	WITN0087007	Emails from Elias Calocane to Diane Hull dated 5 and 7 February and 16 July 2025