

Witness Name: Amber Sargent

Statement No: WITN0392001

Dated: 19 March 2026

THE NOTTINGHAM INQUIRY

FIRST WITNESS STATEMENT OF AMBER SARGENT

INTRODUCTION

1. I, Amber Sargent am a healthcare consultant with almost 20 years' experience in healthcare roles, including extensive experience leading and contributing to investigations and reviews. My work has involved evidence gathering and analysis, interviewing, benchmarking against regulatory and policy standards, and producing written reports with findings and recommendations.
2. During my career, I have worked across a range of organisations within the healthcare and public sector. This has included employment in management and healthcare consulting firms delivering independent investigations, reviews and improvement work for healthcare providers, including leading and participating in a significant number of mental health homicide investigations; a role within the regulatory body (CQC) and a position within a national healthcare investigation body (HSSIB) conducting system-level investigations into patient safety and service delivery. These roles have

required me to operate within formal governance frameworks and to engage with a wide range of stakeholders, including healthcare organisations, regulators, senior leaders, clinicians and members of the public.

3. My qualifications include:

- a. Post Graduate Diploma in Human Factors, The University of Loughborough.
- b. BSc (Hons) in Criminal Justice. The University of Hertfordshire.
- c. BSc (Hons) in Sociology, The University of Surrey.

4. I held the position of Director of Theemis Consulting Limited between 14th April 2022 (when the business was incorporated) and 29th August 2025 (when the company was dissolved).

5. Theemis Consulting Limited provided consulting services to organisations requiring independent investigations, service reviews, and applied research to understand safety issues and support improvement. The organisation undertook commissioned work across a range of healthcare and public sector settings. Theemis Consulting Limited comprised three Directors and engaged a pool of Associate consultants, contracting individuals with relevant subject-matter expertise to undertake specific pieces of commissioned work in line with agreed terms of reference.

WITNESS STATEMENT

6. This witness statement is made to assist the Nottingham Inquiry (the “Inquiry”) with the matters set out in the Rule 9 Request dated 14th January 2026. This is in respect of the Independent investigation into the care and treatment provided to VC and the January 2025 report titled Independent

- investigation into the care and treatment provided to VC (NHSE0000298). In answer to the Inquiry's questions the following responses are provided.
7. Theemis Consulting Limited was appointed by NHS England on 14 February 2024 to conduct the independent investigation. The appointment followed a mini-competition process under the NHS England investigation framework, through which a number of approved independent organisations were invited to bid for the work. Theemis submitted a proposal setting out its proposed approach to the investigation and the composition of the investigation team and was subsequently selected to undertake the investigation.
8. The Terms of Reference were initially drafted by NHS England in accordance with the standard terms of reference for mental health homicide investigations and aligned with the Patient Safety Incident Response Framework (PSIRF) (NHSE0000054). These were reviewed by all Directors of Theemis Consulting Limited. Following further consultation with NHS England, additional elements were incorporated into the Terms of Reference. These additions were intended to ensure that the investigation scope included consideration of communication, risk assessment and risk management processes relevant to patients with severe mental health problems. The final Terms of Reference were agreed through email correspondence and online meetings and reflected in our final published report (NHSE0000298, pg. 43 and NHFT0000530).
9. The documents received/reviewed by Theemis for the purpose of carrying out the investigation have been provided to the Inquiry team as requested. The evidence required for review was identified by Theemis in accordance with

the agreed Terms of Reference and included material relevant to the care and treatment of VC, as well as organisational policies, procedures and governance documents. All documents reviewed and considered as part of the investigation are recorded within the evidence log **(TCLT0000002)**

10. I led the investigation, with input from Kathryn Whitehill and Laura Pickup in their roles as Directors of Theemis Consulting Limited. Interviews were conducted by me, Kathryn Whitehill, Peter Burgin, Jane Ewbank, Geoffrey Brennan, Oliver Shanley and Margaret Obi. The selection of interviewers was based on their professional background and expertise relevant to the role and experience of each interviewee.

11. Interview transcripts were uploaded into NVivo for qualitative analysis, which supported the identification of key themes that informed the findings of the report. I was the primary author of the report, with contributions from Laura Pickup and Kathryn Whitehill, who also undertook peer review of the draft report. As sections of the report were drafted, they were shared with members of the investigation team for comment using tracked changes. I reviewed these comments and amendments were made where supported by the evidence. Further peer review of the report in its entirety was undertaken by the whole investigation team to ensure the report accurately reflected their perspectives.

12. Theemis Consulting Limited did not instruct external expert witnesses to provide independent expert opinions for the purposes of the investigation into the care and treatment of VC. The investigation was undertaken by a multidisciplinary investigation team with extensive experience in healthcare

investigations, service reviews and system-level improvement work, including national-level investigations.

13. The investigation team was selected based on professional background, qualifications and expertise relevant to the scope of the investigation, including clinical, governance, safety and organisational perspectives. The team's analysis and conclusions were informed by their collective expertise, review of documentary evidence and interviews conducted as part of the investigation, rather than by reliance on separately commissioned expert opinion.

14. The team included Dr Jane Ewbank and Professor Oliver Shanley, both of whom were members of the investigation team rather than separately instructed external experts. The expert opinion of Dr Jane Ewbank is provided at (TCLT0000105). Professor Oliver Shanley contributed through interview support, professional guidance, and peer review of draft report chapters and the final report, rather than by providing a standalone expert opinion.

15. Biographical details and summaries of qualifications and areas of expertise for members of the investigation team are provided in the table below at Annex A. As Theemis Consulting Limited has since been dissolved, copies of individual CVs are no longer held. No separate documents containing external expert opinions were commissioned or provided to Theemis for the purposes of preparing the report.

16. Details of the interviews undertaken for the purposes of the investigation are set out at Annex B below. The document identifies all individuals who were

interviewed, the interviewer(s) involved, and the unique reference number (URN) allocated to each interview transcript.

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

Name: Amber Sargent

Dated: 19 March 2026

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<u>No.</u>	<u>Inquiry URN</u>	<u>Document Description</u>
<u>1</u>	<u>NHSE0000298</u>	<u>Theemis Report, Independent investigation into the care and treatment provided to VC (January 2025)</u>
<u>2</u>	<u>NHFT0000530</u>	<u>Terms of Reference as set out in the Theemis published report</u>
<u>4</u>	<u>NHSE0000054</u>	<u>NHS England, Patient Safety Incident Response Framework (PSIRF)</u>
<u>5</u>	<u>TCLT0000002</u>	<u>Evidence log</u>
<u>6</u>	<u>TCLT0000105</u>	<u>Expert opinion of Dr Jane Ewbank</u>

Annex A: Table of the investigation team, professional background and involvement in the VC investigation

Name	Professional background and qualifications	Role in investigation
Geoff Brennan	Registered Nurse for Learning Disabilities and a Registered Mental Health Nurse. Geoff worked clinically in, on and around mental health wards for over thirty years. In that time, he was a health care assistant, staff nurse, charge nurse, practice development lead, nurse tutor, deputy Nursing Director and nurse consultant. In 2020, the Royal College on Nursing Institute awarded Geoff the “Mental Health Nurse of the Year” in recognition of his work to make inpatient services safer and more therapeutic.	Core team member: Interviewer and peer review of report
Peter Burgin	An experienced investigator, with a public sector career spanning four decades. He has worked for inquiries and investigations into the Hillsborough disaster, Gosport War Memorial Hospital, issues raised by the former surgeon Ian Paterson, East Kent Maternity Services and issues raised by the David Fuller case. He has extensive experience in securing evidence through formal and informal discussions at the most senior level, analysing the evidence and writing reports to enable system and organisational learning.	Core team member: Interviewer and peer review of report
Dr Jane Ewbank MA MB BS MRCPsych	An NHS Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist since 2002 across medium and low secure hospital settings as well as with a community forensic team. As part of a multi-disciplinary team, her work involves assessing and treating mentally disordered offenders as well as supporting non-forensic colleagues with risk assessments. This has involved working with patients who have committed extremely serious violent and sexual offences including homicides, some of whom are graduates from the high secure hospital system, others being assessed and diverted from police custody or prison. She has extensive experience working with Ministry of Justice restricted patients both in secure inpatient settings and following their discharge into the community. Dr Ewbank	Core team member: Interviewer and peer review of report

	<p>has been the MAPPA lead for her Mental Health Trust working closely with Police and Probation and other agencies managing high risk offenders in the community. She has significant experience with patients detained under the Mental Health Act, under both civil and forensic sections, and has provided reports for Court, both within her NHS practice and as an independent medicolegal advisor for solicitors and the Crown Prosecution Service. Her medicolegal assessments have covered issues including diminished responsibility, insanity and dangerousness and have involved making sentencing recommendations to Courts, including giving oral evidence. Building on her forensic experience, Dr Ewbank has undertaken work for the Prison Service doing psychiatric assessments and reports for Parole Board Hearings on life sentenced and IPP prisoners where there are significant mental health issues contributing to release decisions. This has included giving evidence at Parole Board Hearings. She has been commissioned by HM Coroner to provide psychiatric reports to assist the Coroner in cases of deaths in Broadmoor High Secure Hospital and provided oral evidence to the Coroners hearings.</p>	
<p>Richard McMaster, PhD, MSc, BSc, C.ErgHF MCIEHF</p>	<p>Richard is a chartered ergonomics and human factors specialist with a particular interest in safety-critical systems. He has 18 years' experience in planning, leading and delivering research and applied projects within nuclear, defence, healthcare, telecommunications, and emergency services domains. His work has focused on the optimisation of human performance and safety systems through pragmatic involvement at all organisational levels; this has seen him engaging with people from frontline/shop floor positions up to senior command/boardroom level.</p>	<p>Core team member: Peer review of report</p>
<p>Mrs Justice Margaret Obi</p>	<p>Margaret is a former partner in a leading criminal defence practice where she specialised in serious crime including murder, manslaughter, and terrorism offences. In 2014 she left private practice to</p>	<p>Core team member: Interviewer and peer review of report</p>

	<p>become an independent legal consultant.</p> <p>In February 2023, Margaret was appointed as the first Commissioner for Service Police Complaints. In this role, she provides independent oversight of the Service Police (Navy, Army, and Air Force) complaints system, makes recommendations to improve policing practice, and independently investigates the most serious and sensitive cases which may include deaths in custody.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Margaret’s work has involved: advising international legal teams defending allegations of war crimes in the International Criminal Court and disputes between states in the International Court of Justice • advising and chairing various statutory bodies as an independent Legal Assessor or Legally Qualified Chair • Trustee/Director of Appeal - a charity and law practice dedicated to fighting miscarriages of justice and advocating for reform of the criminal justice system • chairing Safeguarding Panels on behalf of the Cricket Regulator <p>Margaret was appointed as a Deputy High Court Judge in 2018 and an Acting Judge of the Supreme Court of the British Indian Ocean Territory in 2023. In 2025 Margaret was appointed as a High Court Judge.</p>	
<p>Laura Pickup PhD, MSc, Grad Dip Phys C.ErgHF FCIEHF</p>	<p>Laura is a Chartered Ergonomist and Human Factors specialist with 25 years’ experience in applying safety science and human factors to safety critical industries. She originally qualified as a Chartered Physiotherapist and for the last 10 years has returned to work in healthcare as a Human Factors professional, supporting and investigating within healthcare organisations. She previously held the role of Senior Investigator for the Healthcare Safety Investigation Branch (HSIB) between 2019 and 2023.</p>	<p>Core team member: Evidence analysis and peer review of report</p>
<p>Amber Sargent,</p>	<p>Amber Sargent is a senior healthcare</p>	<p>Core team</p>

BSc (Hons)	consultant and investigator with almost 20 years' experience leading investigations, service reviews and transformation work across the healthcare system. Her career spans senior roles in healthcare consulting firms, working for the regulatory body (CQC) and as a National Investigator for the Health Services Safety Investigation Body. Throughout Amber's career she has led and contributed to complex, high-profile investigations into patient safety, quality, governance and system performance.	member: Lead investigator, interviewer and report author
Professor Oliver Shanley, OBE	Oliver is a senior leader with over 30 years' experience of working in several mental health settings. He originally qualified as a mental health nurse, working in a variety of clinical settings including forensic mental health services. Throughout his career Professor Shanley has focussed on improving the quality of services. He is committed to ensuring that people with a lived experience are central to decision making in mental health services. He has worked in executive leadership roles since 2003 including the Chief Nurse for London and a Chief Executive of a mental health provider. He attained a Doctorate at Kings College London in 2012 and was appointed Visiting Professor to the University of Hertfordshire in 2014. In the 2016 New Year's Honours list Professor Shanley was awarded an OBE for services to mental health and learning disability nursing. In 2023 he was the independent Chair of the independent review into Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust.	Core team member: Interviewer and peer review of report
Kathryn Whitehill LLM, PG Diploma Legal Practice at Bar of England and Wales, GDL, MPH, BA (Hons), Dip Occ Ther	Kathryn has worked in and around healthcare for the whole of her career in a senior capacity in variety of different roles, clinician, senior manager, regulatory and as a senior investigator into healthcare matters. The breadth of her experience means she has developed deep expertise in understanding healthcare from a system perspective. She is passionate about helping healthcare organisations understand the strengths and weaknesses of their services from the perspective of different voices including those using	Core team member: Interviewer and peer review of report

	<p>services and staff. Kathryn's expertise in healthcare systems is underpinned by her post graduate qualifications in public health, law and criminology. She has undertaken nationally leading work in many of her roles and of particular note is her recent work developing investigation models and governance systems for a national safety body.</p>	
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Annex B: Interviews undertaken for the purposes of the investigation

<u>Date of interview</u>	<u>Name of Interviewee</u>	<u>Inquiry reference</u>	<u>Theemiss Code name</u>	<u>Recording ID</u>	<u>Interviewer</u>
<u>31/05/2024</u>	<u>Celeste Calocane, Amissao Calocane and Elias Calocane</u>	<u>TCLT0000115</u>	<u>GF(T)01</u>	<u>fid8542</u>	<u>Amber Sargent, Margaret Obi, Oliver Shanley</u>
<u>03/06/2024</u>	<u>Chair SI Report - Jackie Craissati (JC)</u>	<u>TCLT0000409</u>	<u>GF(T)02</u>	<u>fid8541</u>	<u>Amber Sargent, Dr Jane Ewbank</u>
<u>06/06/2024</u>	<u>Dr Susan Elcock (SE)</u>	<u>TCLT0000810</u>	<u>GF(T)03a</u>	<u>fid8708</u>	<u>Kathryn Whitehill, Peter Burgin</u>
<u>06/06/2024</u>	<u>Laura Belshaw (LB)</u>	<u>TCLT0000343</u>	<u>GF(T)04</u>	<u>fid8710</u>	<u>Kathryn Whitehill, Peter Burgin</u>
<u>06/06/2024</u>	<u>Jennifer Thompson (JT)</u>	<u>TCLT0000340</u>	<u>GF(T)05</u>	<u>fid8709</u>	<u>Kathryn Whitehill, Peter Burgin</u>
<u>06/06/2024</u>	<u>Rebecca Baddams (RB)</u>	<u>TCLT0000809</u>	<u>GF(T)06</u>	<u>fid8715</u>	<u>Kathryn Whitehill, Peter Burgin</u>
<u>07/06/2024</u>	<u>EIP Service Manager - Kelly Simpson (KS)</u>	<u>TCLT0000814</u>	<u>GF(T)07</u>	<u>fid8707</u>	<u>Amber Sargent, Dr Jane Ewbank</u>
<u>07/06/2024</u>	<u>Psych Consultant Redwood 1 Karthik Thangavelu (KT)</u>	<u>TCLT0000751</u>	<u>GF(T)08</u>	<u>fid8706</u>	<u>Amber Sargent, Dr Jane Ewbank</u>
<u>07/06/2024</u>	<u>Care Coordinator 1 - Claudia Birtles(CB)</u>	<u>TCLT0000748</u>	<u>GF(T)09</u>	<u>fid8703</u>	<u>Amber Sargent, Dr Jane Ewbank</u>
<u>07/06/2024</u>	<u>Care Co-ordinator 2 -</u>	<u>TCLT0000750</u>	<u>GF(T)10</u>	<u>fid8705</u>	<u>Amber Sargent, Dr Jane Ewbank</u>

	<u>Gary Carter(GC)</u>				
<u>07/06/2024</u>	<u>EIP Team Leader Sharon Heath (SH)</u>	<u>TCLT0000749</u>	<u>GF(T) 11</u>	<u>fid8704</u>	<u>Amber Sargent, Dr Jane Ewbank</u>
<u>10/06/2024</u>	<u>EIP Consultant Psychiatrist - Tuhina Lloyd (TL)</u>	<u>TCLT0000516</u>	<u>GF(T) 12</u>	<u>fid8702</u>	<u>Amber Sargent, Dr Jane Ewbank</u>
<u>10/06/2024</u>	<u>GP (Primary Care) Tim Baker (TB)and Primary Care Nurse Stuart Keeling - (SK)</u>	<u>TCLT0000350</u>	<u>GF(T)13</u>	<u>fid8729</u>	<u>Amber Sargent, Dr Jane Ewbank</u>
<u>10/06/2024</u>	<u>Rowan 1 Ward Manager Amanda Frost (AF)</u>	<u>TCLT0000753</u>	<u>GF(T)14</u>	<u>fid8725</u>	<u>Amber Sargent, Dr Jane Ewbank</u>
<u>14/10/2024</u>	<u>Consultant Rowan 1 Faizal Seedat (FS)</u>	<u>TCLT0000754</u>	<u>GF(T)15</u>	<u>fid8988</u>	<u>Amber Sargent, Dr Jane Ewbank</u>
<u>14/10/2024</u>	<u>Previous EIP team leader Emma Robinson (ER)</u>	<u>TCLT0000755</u>	<u>GF(T)16</u>	<u>fid8990</u>	<u>Amber Sargent, Dr Jane Ewbank</u>
<u>06/06/2024</u>	<u>CRISIS Team manager Josephine Baker (JB)</u>	<u>TCLT0000756</u>	<u>GF(T)17</u>	<u>fid8992</u>	<u>Amber Sargent, Geoff Brennan</u>
<u>06/06/2024</u>	<u>Dr Susan Elcock Part 2 (SE)</u>	<u>TCLT0000347</u>	<u>GF(T)03 b</u>	<u>Named</u>	<u>Kathryn Whitehill, Peter Burgin</u>
<u>24/07/2024</u>	<u>Carolyn White Non Executive</u>	<u>TCLT0000336</u>	<u>GF(T)18</u>	<u>fid9515</u>	<u>Kathryn Whitehill, Peter Burgin</u>

	<u>Director (CW)</u>				
<u>19/07/2024</u>	<u>Ifti Majid CEO (IM)</u>	<u>TCLT0000338</u>	<u>GF(T)19</u>		<u>Kathryn Whitehill, Peter Burgin</u>
<u>08/08/2024</u>	<u>George Linje (GL) Ward Manager Priory Arnold</u>	<u>TCLT0000402</u>	<u>GF(T)20</u>	<u>fid9680</u>	<u>Amber Sargent, Geoff Brennan</u>
<u>08/08/2024</u>	<u>Diane Hull</u>	<u>TCLT0000821</u>	<u>GF(T)21</u>	<u>fid9679</u>	<u>Amber Sargent, Peter Burgin</u>
<u>15/08/2024</u>	<u>Priory Consultant Forensic Psychiatris t -Dr Ajith Gurusingh e</u>	<u>TCLT0000403</u>	<u>GF(T)22</u>	<u>fid9735</u>	<u>Amber Sargent, Dr Jane Ewbank</u>
<u>15/08/2024</u>	<u>Deputy Chief Nurse (ICB) Diane- Kareen Charles (DC)</u>	<u>TCLT0000179</u>	<u>GF(T)23</u>	<u>fid9734</u>	<u>Amber Sargent, Oliver Shanley</u>
<u>04/09/2024</u>	<u>Deputy Director MH and Learning Lucy Anderson (LA)</u>	<u>TCLT0000180</u>	<u>GF(T)24</u>	<u>fid9933</u>	<u>Amber Sargent, Peter Burgin</u>
<u>04/09/2024</u>	<u>DRFS Second Interview - Faisal Seedat (FS)</u>	<u>TCLT0000758</u>	<u>GF(T)25</u>	<u>fid9938</u>	<u>Amber Sargent, Geoff Brennan</u>
<u>04/09/2024</u>	<u>Debbie Dolan (DD) and Alison Harrison (AH) Bed Managers</u>	<u>TCLT0000757</u>	<u>GF(T)26</u>	<u>fid9934</u>	<u>Amber Sargent, Peter Burgin</u>

<u>05/09/2024</u>	<u>Angela Purdue (AP) Rowan 1Ward Manager</u>	<u>TCLT0000745</u>	<u>GF(T)27</u>	<u>fid10003</u>	<u>Amber Sargent, Dr Jane Ewbank</u>
<u>11/09/2024</u>	<u>Rosa Waddingham (RW) Chief Nurse ICB NHS Notts</u>	<u>TCLT0000177</u>	<u>GF(T)28</u>	<u>fid10019</u>	<u>Amber Sargent, Oliver Shanley</u>
<u>20/09/2024</u>	<u>Lucy Dadge (LD) Chief Commissioning Officer ICB</u>	<u>TCLT0000178</u>	<u>GF(T)29</u>	<u>fid10143</u>	<u>Amber Sargent, Oliver Shanley</u>