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## Interim Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Heathwick Disaster on 16th December 2011

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Littledunidge.

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# Contents:

FOREWORD

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

1. INTRODUCTION .....	3
2. THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS – Including the emergency response.....	3
3. THE EXPLOSIONS – the official account.....	7
3.1    At the Petrol Station	
3.8    Outside the Cafe	
3.11   At the Laundrette	
4. OTHER THEORIES.....	9
5. PROVISIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS.....	10
APPENDIX (Victim list).....	14

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

#### **A. Heathwick: Location and Character.**

1.1 Heathwick is a small town, fifteen miles from the airport that bears its name. The community far predates the airport, though many of the present inhabitants work there, or commute to the nearby towns of Markby and Newhallen. The church (St Michael's) which still stands even after the catastrophe, has architectural features from the 11th century. The total population of Heathwick was, at the last census, 9421. It is considered to be a typical English town; so much so, that market research organisations often use it for surveys and focus groups.

1.2 Prior to the events of Friday 16th December 2011, Heathwick High Street was composed of a mix of small shops, some of them in premises dating back hundreds of years. Many of the shops had residential accommodation above, but most of the town's inhabitants live in streets away from the town centre, almost all of which were untouched by the blasts. Heathwick School, half a mile away to the west, was also physically unaffected, although one teacher and ten of its pupils were among the dead.

1.3 Heathwick High Street runs uphill from west to east. At the bottom of the hill, at the extreme west end of the town, is the school, which stands behind an extensive public park, and the police station, which was relocated from its former, central, position as part of a cost-cutting measure in 2010.

1.4 At the east end of the High Street, opposite St Michael's church, there was, until 16th December, a Globoil service station, with six pumps, served by underground tanks.

#### **B. A brief summary of the events on the day of the disaster**

1.5 At 9.22am, at least three explosions took place in the vicinity of Heathwick High Street. These were heard by people for miles around, and also registered as interference on CCTV and data connections with time-code logs in several locations, though in most cases they appeared to represent one event. The High Street was extensively damaged, with several shops collapsing completely, and none left untouched. 65 people died at the scene, or shortly afterwards.

1.6 The rescue and recovery process was lengthy, and hampered by fear of further explosions and collapses, by the presence of live electrical wires in several places, and by the weather and lack of natural light inevitable at that time of year.

1.7 Initially, it was assumed that the incident had been caused by the accidental ignition of exposed petrol on the forecourt of a service station, and that this, and the subsequent explosion of stored fuel, had triggered a further explosion in the gas works along the high street. However, survivors who had been on the scene immediately prior to the disaster appeared in the media with alternative theories, including accounts of suspicious activity, possibly of a terrorist nature. Although those theories

were at first discounted by the police, subsequent forensic examination has revealed that, while some of them are unfounded, the disaster may have had more complex causes than originally assumed. In the case of two of the blasts, terrorism cannot be ruled out, although it is unlikely that the sites and consequences of those blasts were envisaged by their perpetrators.

## **2 THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS**

2.1 The weather on Friday 16th December 2011 was cold and overcast. Rain was forecast, but did not start to fall until shortly after the incident. Traffic in Heathwick High Street was severely disrupted by work on a gas main, which had started the previous day. A large trench, running along the north side of the road for almost the entire length of the shops, had reduced the flow of traffic to one lane, controlled by temporary automatic lights sited beyond the shops at either end.

2.2 On the morning of December 16th, PriGas contractors were extending the trench in the direction of the church. For a short time, a mechanical digger needed to occupy the entire width of the street. The automatic traffic lights were not set to take into account this new blockage in the road, and from about 9 am the presence of the digger had a severe effect on the flow of traffic. Cars approaching from the west filled the one clear lane along the street, making it impossible for cars to enter the town from the east. Reports of the congestion reached the local police at 9.11 am, and at 9.15 PC Nigel Lewis (now deceased) was dispatched to investigate.

2.3 At 9.22 am, a loud explosion was heard throughout the county. This was followed by others, in rapid succession; so close together, in fact, that many witnesses have described a single blast. The precise number is still in dispute, but forensic examination of the scene has revealed that this was not a simple chain reaction. The evidence available at present suggests that three of the blasts were independent of each other. They are: the first explosion at the petrol station; an explosion in a Post Office trolley outside the Coffeeland cafe, and the blast at the launderette at the south-west end of the street. Between them, the three explosions caused major damage to every building in the street.

2.4 It appears that those three blasts were almost simultaneous. Work is still underway to determine the precise order in which they occurred, but it is likely that there was, at the very most, a matter of only seconds between them. We appreciate that, not least for insurance purposes, there is considerable interest in establishing which explosion damaged which building, but that has yet to be conclusively determined, and may never be.

2.5 Officers at Heathwick Police station heard the first explosion, but did not know its precise location. They immediately contacted their divisional Headquarters (DHQ), expecting to be told of an accident at the airport. DHQ informed them that all CCTV coverage of Heathwick High Street had been lost. It was only then, at 9.27, that the officers at Heathwick Police Station looked outside, and saw black smoke over the town centre.

2.6 At 9.24, the emergency services received their first 999 call, from Mr Stuart Penton, who told them there had been an explosion at the Globoil garage, and that

there were casualties. As the recording of the call reveals, Mr Penton was in a state of shock, but his information was clear, and the operator passed it on to Heathwick Police, to the Fire Brigade, and to the Ambulance Service as soon as Mr Penton hung up. That message was received at Heathwick Police station and divisional HQ at 9.28. The county's Major Incident protocol was activated, and a message was sent via the media appealing to the public to avoid the Heathwick area. At this stage, most emergency service personnel on the ground, and all in the command centre, believed they were dealing with one event, centred on the petrol station. That is where all emergency vehicles were sent.

2.7 Within minutes, the 999 service was swamped with calls, and the local mobile network collapsed under the weight of traffic. New, and conflicting, information was coming in constantly from other sources.

2.8 Since the closure of Heathwick fire station, the town has been dependent on services from Newhallen. Their appliances were out of the station, attending what later turned out to be a false alarm. The co-ordinator called in help from the fire service at the airport, but they were on standby for a possible emergency landing, involving a potential terrorist incident on board a plane. That plane eventually landed without incident, but crucial minutes for getting assistance to Heathwick town were lost.

2.9 The road between Heathwick Police Station and the town centre was already blocked with traffic before the blast, and more congestion built up very quickly. Officers from Heathwick police station had to take a circuitous route to reach the petrol station, on the far side of the town. They arrived at 9.47. The Fire Brigade were not yet in attendance. The petrol station was in flames.

2.10 Mr Penton, who had made the initial emergency call, was, by then, at the petrol station. With the aid of Rev Jonathan Davis from St Michaels (who did not, at that stage, know that his daughter had died in the collapse of the cafe) Mr Penton had, at considerable personal risk, extricated the assistant from the wreckage of the shop at the back of the site. The shop assistant told them that the blast happened moments after he had sold a petrol can and fuel to a man whose tank had run out in the middle of town [see 4.3]. He also confirmed that fuel delivery was underway at the time of the blast. When the emergency services arrived, they found three key witnesses, all of whom were convinced that the explosion was the result of an accident at the petrol station. It is understandable, therefore, that the police, when asked by reporters, felt able to rule out terrorism at an early stage. It was only later (when the emergency services managed to penetrate the High Street itself; and after experts from Globoil insisted that their delivery protocols were robust, and that a small spillages from a petrol can could not cause such catastrophic explosions) that it became apparent that the incident might be more complex.

2.11 At 9.55am, a triage unit for casualties and a temporary mortuary, were set up in the church.

2.12 At 09.57, the first fire appliance arrived.

2.13 The wind was blowing from the east, and a pall of dark, toxic smoke was billowing across the town. At 10.05am, the officer controlling operations from County Police Headquarters (Chief Inspector Gloria Roberts) made the decision that only two officers could be spared from what she still believed to be the primary disaster site to investigate the impact the blasts might have had in the High Street itself. At this stage, she imagined that their main task would be to comfort shocked people, and to advise them to keep their doors and windows shut to avoid breathing in fumes from the fire up the hill.

2.14 At approximately 10.07am, the two police officers entered the town (accompanied by a firefighter with breathing equipment) they were surprised by the extent of the damage. It became clear very soon that the incident was far worse than had previously been thought. The scenes of death and mutilation have been extensively described in the press, and were captured in video on the mobile phones of some of the survivors. Those films, and witness statements, will be published as appendices to our final report. It is probably sufficient to say here that PC Donald Tovey, who was the first officer to enter the burning wreckage of the school coach, and has been praised for saving at least three lives on board, is still receiving in-patient psychiatric counselling as a result of what he saw there.

2.15 At 10.12am, the officers in the town radioed for help. However all the emergency personnel on the scene were fully engaged in fighting the fire at the petrol station, or dealing with the dead and injured in the cars alongside. At 10.13, Chief Inspector Roberts called in helicopter assistance, hoping that aerial surveillance might give her a better idea of the situation on the High Street itself.

2.16 The helicopter arrived at 10.29am, over an hour after the blasts. The black smoke obscured its view of the scene. Messages from the officers in the High Street had, however, alerted the team at the petrol station to the severity of the situation in the town, and assistance had been called in from all neighbouring counties.

2.17 Our final report will contain a full description of the rescue and recovery effort. It will note in detail the damage incurred, with extensive scientific analysis of the causes of the collapses, fires, electrical faults and floods that followed the blasts. The precise cause of death of each of the victims will be officially described and determined at the inquests, which are expected to take place within the next six months. Those verdicts, and any evidence pertaining to them, will be incorporated in our final report, along with our assessment of whether some lives could have been saved had help arrived more quickly.

2.18 Unknown to the police, a radio journalist was reporting from inside the town from about 10.05am. At 10.47, the first television crew arrived. A media liaison desk was set up in the church. Police at the scene felt the need to give out reassurance that the event was an accident, which is what they truly believed at the time. More journalists arrived throughout the day. From about 11.00, the police restricted access to the High Street, but until then, reporters moved at will amidst the wreckage. Although some impeded the rescue effort (as will be described in our final report) others helped supplement the meagre rescue force available early on. For example, it was a message from the radio station which resulted in the electrical supply to the

town being disconnected at 10.15. This removed a danger to rescue workers and survivors moving about in the wreckage.

2.19 There has been much criticism of the footage posted on the internet showing scenes of panic, death and distress on the school coach immediately after the explosions. All British terrestrial channels were offered copies of the pictures, and all declined to show it. One national newspaper paid for copies, but did not, in the end, publish the pictures. Investigations have been made, and the source of the video has been found to be a child who was on the bus with a mobile phone. The child, and his parents (who offered the footage for sale) have been contacted by social services and offered counselling. This Inquiry does not see itself as having a role in the matter.

2.20 While interviewing survivors and eye-witnesses, reporters picked up theories about the explosion which contradicted the official explanation. Two in particular (the suggestion of an attack by Animal Rights activists (from Miss Doreen Talbot) and suspicions about an abandoned white van (aired by Mr Blackstock) raised media suspicions about a terrorist link. These two theories were later discounted [see section 4], but they prompted a more detailed examination of the scene by explosives and anti-terrorist experts. This led to the following theory of the causes of the disaster which this Inquiry currently accepts as the most likely to be true:

### **3 THE EXPLOSIONS**

3.1 **AT THE PETROL STATION:** The scientific examination began on 17th December, and is still continuing. Full details of its extensive interdisciplinary scope will appear in our final report. We consider its provisional findings to be persuasive:

3.2 The scene at the burnt-out petrol station was extensively examined. The only private vehicle on the forecourt at the time of the blast: a black taxi cab. This was completely burnt out. The driver, Charles Perry, was killed. Examination of the wreckage strongly supports the theory that the explosion originated within the passenger compartment of the cab. No human remains were found there. Fragments of charred luggage were distributed widely across the site. These showed firm evidence of contact with explosive material. The investigators are in no doubt that the explosion at the petrol station was deliberate. The presence of a delivery tanker on the forecourt at the time may have exacerbated the effect of that explosion. It has been suggested that there may have been a problem with the delivery, resulting in the presence of spilt petrol or volatile fumes when the taxi blew up. It has also been pointed out that one of the victims may have been carrying petrol in a plastic container at the time. However both he, and the tanker driver, were killed, and so cannot provide us with firm information.

3.3 All CCTV footage from the petrol station was destroyed in the fire, as was that from almost all the 27 cameras in the High Street. However, the camera at Hobbey's Bank was networked to a central recording hub in London. Although not trained on the street, the camera caught a peripheral image of the taxi for two seconds [from 09.21.26 to 09.21.28]. It was driving erratically, across the pavement and in the direction of the petrol station. Despite the nature of his manoeuvre, Mr Perry appears not to be looking at the road, but at one of two people. There is no sign of a passenger onboard. Digital enhancement of the images on the camera in the preceding and

following seconds indicates that the object of Mr Perry's attention was either Mr Joseph Donaldson, who was killed in the disaster, or an unidentified man, whose image has since been extensively circulated in the media, but who has failed to come forward. The man would have had time to get clear of the scene before the explosion. Indeed, he appears to be passing the camera at speed. It is conjectured that this man was Mr Perry's passenger.

3.4 We will never know why Mr Perry drove his cab into the petrol station. It is possible that he was conducting a suicide attack. However, investigations into his background suggest that is unlikely. It is conceivable that the passenger in some way forced him to drive the explosives to the place where they would do most damage. It is also possible, and perhaps most likely, that he innocently went to fill up while his passenger, for some reason we will never know, left the cab.

3.5 It is obvious, of course, that Mr Perry and his passenger were probably en route to the airport. They had been held up in the traffic. A great deal of work has gone in to tracing the movements of Mr Perry's taxi earlier in the day. It appears on CCTV recordings away from Heathwick several times in the hour before the explosion. There is no footage of him collecting his passenger, but a man very like the person seen outside the bank is in the back seat just outside Newhallen at 08.39am.

3.6 On a normal day, without the delays caused by the roadworks on December 16th, Mr Perry and his passenger could reasonably have expected to have arrived at the airport well before 9.22am, when the explosion took place. It is a matter of conjecture, but nevertheless possible, that the unidentified passenger was intending to explode his luggage, or possibly already had it primed to explode, at the airport at 09.22am.

3.7 Airport security would, of course, have intercepted the explosives had the man attempted to go air-side. It is therefore the contention of the investigators that he probably intended the explosion to happen in the check-in area of the airport, which at that time would have been extremely crowded. The Inquiry feels that this explanation is more convincing than the notion that the explosion at the petrol station was planned. For our recommendations in relation to this matter, see section 5

3.8 OUTSIDE THE CAFE: It was at first thought that the various explosions and collapses within the town were the consequences of the blast at the petrol station. Investigators were bemused, however, at the extent of the damage caused well down the high street. At first it was thought that all secondary effects were the result of the fracturing of the gas main exposed in the roadworks. However, one of the seriously injured victims, whose identity must be protected here, asked to see the police. The victim assumed that she had been the object of the attack, stressing that she had recently taken action which might have compromised her attempts to hide in this country. This victim has since died of her injuries. Her identity is being protected for the sake of her family.

3.9 Painstaking examination of a Post Office cart which was outside the cafe at the time of the blast indicated the presence of different explosives from those found in the taxi. They appear to originate from a parcel. Fuller details will be given in our final report. It is unlikely that the quantity of explosives involved would have been sufficient to damage the cafe as severely as proved to be the case. Scientists suggest



that it was the combination of this bomb, the petrol station blast, and the ensuing gas fireball that brought the building down.

3.10 The apparent target of the parcel bomb gave police evidence which has led to an arrest. For legal and security reasons, no more details can be given here.

3.11 AT THE LAUNDERETTE: This explosion has been described in the press, and is accepted by the investigating team as the main cause of damage at the extreme west end of the High Street. Tests are still being carried out to determine the extent to which the blast from this explosion impacted upon the force-fields of the others, thus determining how and where damage and deaths occurred. It is possible that the fire in the gas main owed more to the event in the laundrette than to the explosion at the petrol station or the blast or an unidentified man, whose image has since been extensively circulated in the media, but who has failed to come forward. The man would have had time to get clear of the scene before the explosion. Indeed, he appears to be passing the camera at speed. It is conjectured that this man was Mr Perry's passenger.

3.11 AT THE LAUNDERETTE: This explosion has been described in the press, and is accepted by the investigating team as the main cause of damage at the extreme west end of the High Street. Tests are still being carried out to determine the extent to which the blast from this explosion impacted upon the force-fields of the others, thus determining how and where damage and deaths occurred. It is possible that the fire in the gas main owed more to the event in the laundrette than to the explosion at the petrol station or the blast outside the cafe. If so, this explosion may be the main reason for the high toll of death and injury on the school coach, where so many innocent lives were lost.

3.12 The explosion at the laundrette seems, again after extensive research, to have been caused by the lighting of a cigarette in proximity to volatile fumes. For this to have happened at any time would have been a tragedy for those concerned. The horrible coincidence of it happening at that precise moment makes it seem even worse, though the lesson to be learned from it is one that has been taught in coroners' courts time and time again. We will, however be recommending that steps are taken to stop the use of out-of- date dry cleaning machines such as the one installed at Heathwick.

#### **4 OTHER THEORIES**

4.1 The understandable public appetite for explanations of what happened at Heathwick, and their thirst for eye-witness accounts, inevitably led to the promulgation of theories which have turned out to be without foundation. Great play has been made in the press of the presence on the High Street of a badly-parked white van, which was blocking the exit from the main car park. Mr Blackstock, who has provided extensive, and very helpful evidence to the Inquiry, spoke at length to reporters about his conviction that it had been abandoned, and was the source of the explosion.

4.2 It is understandable that Mr Blackstock should take that view, since he was running down the hill, away from the High Street in a westerly direction at the time of the blast. By the time he looked back, the van was in flames.

4.3 Scientific investigation has shown that the van was a victim of the combined effect of the launderette blast and the fire in the gas trench. No evidence of explosives was found on board. The van was legally registered to Mr John Hardy, who died in the wreckage of the petrol station. Brian Smiley, The sales assistant at the petrol station (rescued by Mr Penton and the Rev. Davis) was extensively questioned by the police when he had sufficiently recovered from his injuries. Mr Smiley identified Mr Hardy from family photographs, and remembered clearly his assertion that the van had run out of petrol, and that he had walked to the garage to get more. There is no reason to suppose that Mr Hardy's purchase was anything other than innocent. His bereaved family can be reassured that the fact that he was carrying a can of petrol across the forecourt at the time of the blast in no way contributed to the disaster. The Inquiry offers them its condolences for the loss of a loving husband and father.

4.4 Similarly, Mr Farouk Osman can be absolved of blame. He was identified in some reports as the 'Backpack Man' allegedly acting suspiciously at the west end of the High Street just before the blasts. Not only has his presence been established as entirely innocent, but he is to be commended for his courageous help to victims at the scene. He undoubtedly saved at least three lives, at the cost of serious burns to his hands and face. His efforts on the school coach were particularly heroic, especially in view of the fact that the driver was mortally injured, and the only teacher on board had been killed instantly.

4.5 The other theory championed by the press was that the explosions were an attack on Heathwick by animal rights activists, opposed to the sale of live pets in a local shop. An activist had been spotted by the one of the survivors, Miss Dorren Talbot, just before the blasts. The activist was identified by journalists as Kate Daintree, a 17-year-old student, who died at the scene. Miss Daintree was vilified in the press, with lurid details of her supposed private life featured in many articles. Although it appears to be true that Miss Daintree was distributing animal rights literature on the day, the police have confirmed that there is absolutely no evidence that she was involved in causing the explosions. The Inquiry would like to take this opportunity to send its condolences to her parents, who have suffered a double blow in both losing their daughter and seeing her turned into a national hate figure. The attacks on Mr Daintree by listeners to his programme on Radio Heathshire are to be particularly regretted.

## **5 PROVISIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

This Inquiry still has work to do. However we feel confident in proposing the recommendations outlined below. The figures in square bracket refer to the paragraphs in this report to which they apply;

5.1 Although there has been considerable criticism of the initial response of the emergency services, and with hindsight it is possible to see that the first attenders misjudged the situation, it is important to realise that the priority for everyone at this stage was fighting the fire at the petrol station, making sure it did not spread, and checking for survivors in cars along the road outside the garage. There were serious

shortcomings in the handling of the disaster in the town itself. However, it is the view of the Inquiry that the individuals concerned should not be criticised or penalised for decisions they might now regret, but which were taken in good faith at the time. [2.1 -2.15]

5.2 The Inquiry is, however, concerned that the initial slowness of Heathwick's own small police presence to respond stemmed largely from an over-reliance on technology. It has been suggested in the press (and medical evidence to the Inquiry suggests it is the case) that some lives might have been saved had help arrived sooner. Vital minutes were lost while the staff of Heathwick police station investigated the failure of their electronic links with the outside world at a time when they could have determined the location of the incident by looking out of the window and observing the source of the smoke. However, they were not to know this, and all the individuals concerned displayed great bravery later in the day. We suggest that no disciplinary action is appropriate, though there is a lesson to be learned. [2.5]

5.3 Several witnesses to the Inquiry have criticised the decision to move the police station out of the town centre. However, we feel this is not a matter on which it is appropriate for us to comment. Although a quicker response might have been possible had the police base been closer to the scene, it is worth noting that the old police station (which was in the process of being converted into a wine bar) was severely damaged in the disaster. [2.5]

5.4 The Inquiry has been assured by PriGas that all necessary precautions were taken at the site of the roadworks, and that a gas explosion cannot have been the primary cause of the disaster, though they accept that gas leakage, and ignition, occurred subsequently, probably as a consequence of other blasts. However, Mr B. Blackstock, a survivor, has stated that one of the workmen at the scene (most probably Mr Gavin Alderson, deceased) was expressing concern about the state of one of the pipes immediately before the explosion. Scientific analysis of the remains of the pipework has failed to establish the truth. This Commission of Inquiry is of the view that this matter may never be conclusively resolved. [2.1]

5.5 It has been argued that the death toll would have been lessened, and the rescue effort less difficult, had traffic been running smoothly on the day. PriGas has been criticised in the media for failing to reprogram the traffic signals to avoid the gridlock experienced while the digger was manoeuvring across the road. The late Mr Alderson was responsible for traffic management at the site. It is not possible to determine what steps, if any, he took while the digger was in the road. The Commission of Inquiry is of the view that, while a smooth flow of traffic might have prevented the deaths of the individuals who found themselves stuck in the High Street at the time of the blasts, the weight of traffic at that time of day would have resulted in the same number of vehicles in the affected stretch of road. There would still have been deaths; the identity of the victims would have been different. [2.1]

5.6 Whether PriGas is in any way liable for the deaths which did happen is a matter for the courts. However, it is the view of the Inquiry that although it is not clear that PriGas can be absolutely absolved of blame, they cannot be held entirely responsible. [2.1]

5.7 Considerable distress has been caused to victims, bereaved relatives, and the proprietors of businesses destroyed in the disaster by the refusal of insurance companies to pay out on policies while the precise cause of each loss is uncertain. It is the view of the Commission of Inquiry that, although the blast inside the taxi and outside the cafe might well have been the result of terrorist action, they cannot be regarded as indubitably the only cause of the losses incurred. It is our view that, where policies do not cover losses caused by terrorist action, it would be appropriate, and humane, for companies to give their customers the benefit of the doubt. [2.4]

5.8 The disaster fund, to which the public have contributed so magnificently, is to be congratulated for its generosity and flexibility in paying grants to those affected. However, that should not absolve the insurance companies from their moral responsibilities in this matter, regardless of their legal position

5.9 There have been calls in Parliament and from members of the public for more controls on the behaviour of the press at times of disaster. The Inquiry has sympathy with any survivors or bereaved relatives who were harassed, or distressed by press intrusion. It has to be said, however, that members of the press helped with the relief effort, and that without the TV generators and lights, the rescue work which continued after dark on 16th and 17th December would have been much less effective. It was also press interaction with witnesses which raised the possibility of terrorist involvement in the incident. We therefore feel that our only recommendation in this regard should be an appeal to editors and individual journalists to exercise the constraints inherent in normal human decency when covering harrowing human stories. [2.17/2.18]

5.10 The part played by the taxi in the explosions has not, so far, been revealed in the press. We expect that publication of this report, and our speculation about the intentions of the bomber, will bring about calls for greater security in airport check-in areas. We feel very strongly that this would be a mistake. Life would become intolerable for travellers, and terrorists such as this unidentified man would simply go elsewhere. We appeal for calm over this matter, and for every effort to be made by the authorities and the public to find the man behind this outrage. He may have failed in his original goal, but he has, at least in part, been responsible for the deaths of 65 innocent people. [3.1-3.7]

5.11 The absence of a second schoolteacher on the coach is to be deplored. There is no way of knowing whether Mr Knox, who should have been present, would have survived or been able to assist the injured and dying. We accept his expression of remorse, but recommend that children on school trips should never be left in the care of a single adult. [4.4]

5.12 Although an incident such as the comparatively small explosion at the launderette would not normally stimulate the establishment of a Commission of Inquiry, that blast contributed to the death toll on the day. For that reason, we call here for steps to be taken to ensure that such out-of-date dry cleaning machines are removed from public use. [3.12]

Inevitably, the public demand action after a momentous event such as the Heathwick tragedy, but this Inquiry feels that it is of paramount importance to maintain a sense of

proportion. No one can fail to be horrified at the accounts of how victims in the café were scalded by boiling liquids. However, calls for liquids on sale for public consumption to be restricted to temperatures below 40 degrees Celsius strike us as both outside our remit, and less than sensible.

It is our hope that this interim summary of events will put an end to press and internet speculation about the disaster, which can only exacerbate the pain of those injured or bereaved.

## **APPENDIX**

### **THE VICTIMS OF THE HEATHWICK DISASTER**

Most of the 64 who died were killed by falling masonry, flying glass, blast injuries and burns.

#### **On the School bus:**

Apley, Philip	56 Driver
Hunter, Elizabeth	36 Teacher
Johnson, Joshua	13
Knight, Chenelle	12
Kohli, Shilpa	13
Lennahan, Rory	12
Nailor, Calum	12
Nandi, Rahil	12
Palmer, Kayleigh	12
Quinn, Jeffrey	13
Tracy, Liam	12
Young, Charmaine	13

#### **In the newsagent's:**

Cahill, Anthea	54 Gardener
Cahill, Patricia	56 Gardener
Noble, Chloe	2 Child
Noble, Lucy	26 Mother
Patel, Touseef	62 Newsagent

#### **In the street between the newsagent's and the bank:**

Alderson, Gavin	39 Gas company foreman
Carter, Sharon	24 Political researcher
Donaldson, Alice	55 Died walking to the funeral, having left the public bus
Donaldson, Joseph	57 Died walking to the funeral, having left the public bus
Dunn, Serena	29 Died walking to the funeral, having left the public bus
Lee, Lorraine	37 Housewife
Lewis, PC Nigel	22 Police officer
Wilkins, Sarah	83 Pensioner
An unidentified man,	?50
known only as 'Matey'	

#### **In the flat above the wedding shop:**

Potts, Terry	33 Art teacher
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#### **In the flat above the florist's shop:**

Sharp, Margaret	78 Pensioner
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#### **In the street between the bank and the church:**

Daintree, Kate	17 School student
Dougall, Gillie	44 Housewife

Flood, Edmund	62	Died walking to the funeral, having left the public bus
Inman, Richard	26	Cyclist
Krasinski, Stanislaw	40	Motorcyclist
Krasinski, Nina	38	Pillion passenger
Nailor, Janine	47	Florist, daughter of Mrs Sharp

**Outside the Church:**

Larkin, Matthew	72	Retired Steeplejack
Whatmore, Ben	68	Pensioner

**At the petrol station:**

John Hardy	29	General trader
Oxley, Keith	31	Tanker driver
Perry, Charles	42	Taxi driver

**Outside the bakery:**

Harman, Joseph	35	Baker
Rabane, Lotte	79	Retired actress

**In the flat above the bakery:**

Harman, David	73	Retired Baker
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**In the bakery:**

Harman, Sheila	70	Retired teaching assistant
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**In the street between the bakery and the launderette:**

Broadbrook, Paul	27	Designer
Fletcher, Deanna	25	Clerical worker
Pilbury, Frank	44	Funeral director
Robinson, Norbert	34	Postman

**In the coffee shop:**

Davis, Belinda	37	Archivist
Eames, Lily	2	Child
Lang, Nell	2	Child
Lang, Polly	2	Child
Morgan, Juliet	39	Sales executive
Orme, William	47	Architect
Sorley, Suzanne	38	Mother
Sorley, Max	3	Child

**In the flat above the shoe shop:**

Galliard, Noel	51	Author
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**In the shoe shop:**

Gibbon, Raquel	32	Unemployed
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**In the flat above the dance studio:**

An unidentified woman ?25

**In the dance studio:**

Tate, Maggie            30 Fitness instructor

**In the launderette:**

Lorenzo, Marco        67 Proprietor

Lorenzo, Stefano      30 Son of the above

**Motorists who died in their cars:**

Lapsom,, Barbara      62 Retired nurse

Thorpe, Sally          25 Beautician

Viner, Kelly            17 School student.

Many casualties suffered injuries, some extremely severe. The most serious hurt were Nicholas Birkham, 19 (a charity worker); Leonard Gibbon, 13 (whose mother died in the shoe shop); Robert Grey, 36 (Hearse driver); Farouk Osman, 24 (Student); Francine Palmer, 38 (whose daughter died on the school coach); and Samuel Riley, 18 (a member of staff at the coffee shop).

We wish also to record the demise of Lucy Noble's unborn baby, who would have been a brother for Chloe, and to acknowledge the anguish of the family of Donald Whyman, 59, whose body, on its way to his funeral, was severely mutilated by an explosion blast.

One of the two horses of the hearse was killed outright. The other horse was gravely injured, and had to be put down. There has been considerable public interest both in determining the identity of the injured horse and in the degree of the suffering it endured in the aftermath of the blast, when rescue workers were preoccupied with saving human life. Because both the funeral director and his assistant were killed in the disaster, it has not been possible to determine whether this is 'Dime' or 'Dollar'. We can confirm that a veterinary surgeon put him out of his misery at the earliest possible opportunity. However, this was three hours after the explosions.

*Designed by Alicia Rice and Arundati Dandapani*