

# Man acquitted of rape at Maidenbower flat after jury hears there was no forensic evidence to place him there

By Crawley News | Posted: October 12, 2015

**ACQUITTED:** Matthew Edwards is not guilty of rape and trespass with intent to commit a sexual offence

A MAN who was accused of raping a woman at a block of flats in Maidenbower has been acquitted by a jury after just two hours of deliberations.

Matthew Edwards was cleared of two offences – rape and trespassing with intent to commit rape – following a four-day trial at Hove Crown Court.

The jury made its decision on Friday, having sat through evidence and several witness statements since the hearing began on Tuesday last week.

The 39-year-old tree surgeon, of Felcourt Road in East Grinstead, was alleged to have forced the complainant into her flat in Maidenbower in the early hours of February 28.

But the court heard there was insufficient evidence linking him to the scene. This was following a thorough forensics investigation which concluded there was no DNA, fibres, fluids or fingerprints matching those of the defendant.

Mr Edwards' defence was simply that he had never been at the property on the night of the alleged offence.

Among those who gave evidence in support of him were his two teenage sons, who said their father stayed at his own address with them and had not left the building the entire night.

<http://www.crawleynews.co.uk/Man-acquitted-rape-Maidenbower-flat-jury-hears/story-27966977-detail/story.html>