



Prison for bogus rape claim teenager

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THE CASE of a Banbury woman jailed for lying that she was raped should serve as a warning to anyone who make false allegations, the Crown Prosecution Service said this week.

Shop supervisor Clare Newson, 19, claimed she was the victim of a sex attack in an alleyway by her home in Horsham Close.

But a police investigation discovered the allegation was false and she was charged with perverting the course of justice.

As reported in last week's Banbury Guardian, she admitted the offence when she appeared before Oxford Crown Court last week. She has now been sentenced to six months at a young offenders' institution.

Newson claimed she was raped by a local man, Andrew Grindle, who she met in a taxi queue after a night out in Banbury last August. But after police pointed to inconsistencies in her story, she changed her mind and admitted that she had consented to sex.

The court heard how she boasted to a friend of a sexual conquest the following morning and may even have instigated the romp.

Mr Grindle suffered the trauma of arrest and was subjected to threats and abuse that left him unable to go out, prosecutors said.

But as Newson began her sentence last week her family still maintained her innocence.

Sister Amanda, 17, said Clare had been advised by the police and her barrister to plead guilty "so she would only get a slap on the wrist.

"She did not want anything big to come of it." Her mother Paula, 40, added: "We just want her back home. She won't cope in prison."

Newson shut her eyes and wept uncontrollably as Recorder John Ryder passed sentence. He told her: "It is notable that at no stage at all have you expressed any concern for Andrew Grindle, an entirely innocent man."

Newson indicated she would deny the charge at an earlier hearing, he said, and continued to tell probation officers Mr Grindle was to blame.

Graeme Logan, for Newson, said she was a "naive young woman who found herself in an impossible situation".

"This was not malicious allegation," he said.

Newson told police her parents and boyfriend had pestered her to report Mr Grindle. "To be honest I didn't think it would come this far," she said. "I thought he'd get a warning or something."

Helen Draycott, head of the Thames Valley Crown Prosecution Service Trials Unit, said the consequences for those falsely accused of rape can be devastating.

"This case sends out a clear message that such false allegations, which after all show a complete disregard for the genuine victims of rape and their ordeals, will not be taken lightly.

"These false allegations not only divert resources from tackling real rape cases but also contribute to a cynicism and suspicion in society which can inhibit genuine rape victims from coming forward and lead to rapists going unpunished."

<https://www.banburyguardian.co.uk/news/prison-for-bogus-rape-claim-teenager-1-599633>