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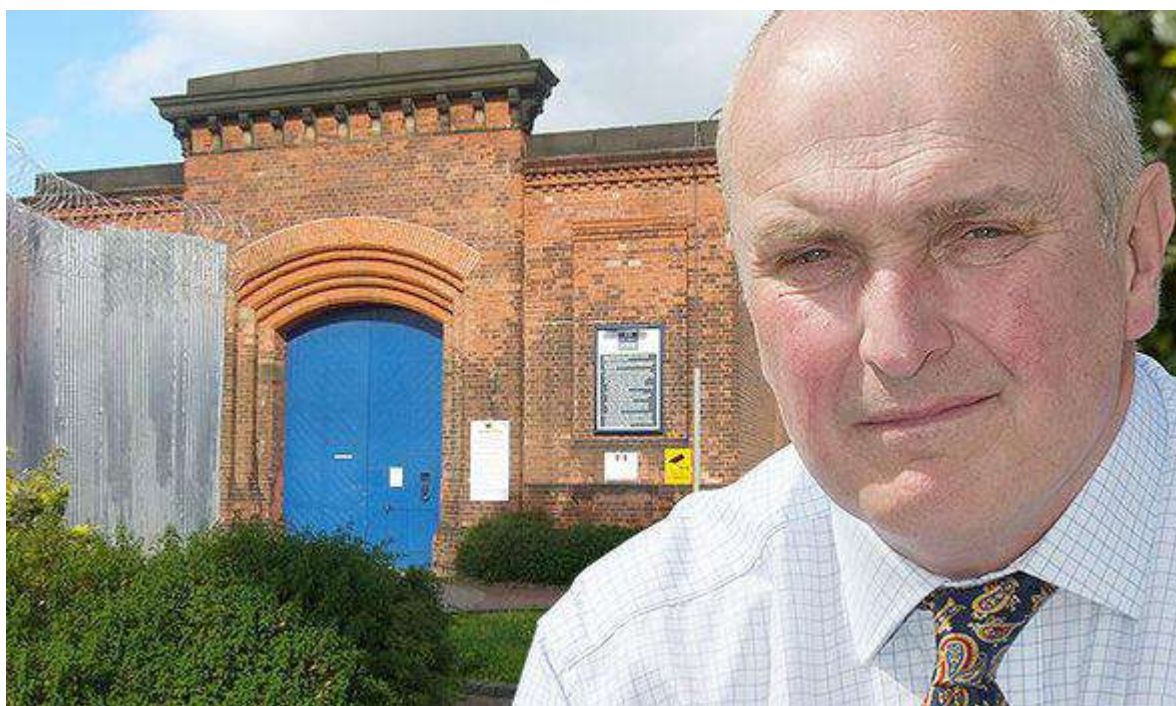
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Jail hell over Police rape blunder: Businessman latest victim of justice scandal

A BUSINESSMAN has spent nearly eight months in jail while falsely accused of crimes including rape because police failed to disclose texts that proved his innocence.

By [PAUL JEEVES](#)

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On the day of the trial the defence presented the data to the judge who instantly threw out the case

His solicitor yesterday branded his ordeal “tortuous”.

The shocking case follows in the wake of a series of recent police failures nationwide to disclose vital information that subsequently exonerated men charged with rape.

Following his arrest Mr Adlington, left, who had never previously been in trouble with police, begged officers to check his accuser’s phone insisting her messages would completely exonerate him.

Despite he and his lawyer being told that phones had already been seized during his first interview their contents were withheld for months.

In one racy message sent after an encounter which she later claimed had been rape the woman wrote: “Oh darling, that was one of the most wonderful experiences of my life. Let’s do it again – only harder.”

In another she begged him to “join me in the shower” while another message said: “I don’t need sleep, I only need you babe XXX”.

Mr Adlington, 53, was convinced that once of cers examined the phone the case would be dropped.

He told them he believed that he was being “set up” by the woman and her lover after a car was set on fire near his home, which the man told police he had been sleeping in when the blaze started.



The case follows recent police failures that would subsequently exonerate men charged with rape.

DESPAIR

Mr Adlington, a father of two from Buxton, Derbyshire, was arrested in May last year on suspicion of causing arson with intent to endanger life.

Stunned, he was told he would be kept in custody over the Bank Holiday weekend until an appearance before Derby magistrates court where he would be given bail and allowed home.

But in court prosecutors described him as a “serious danger” and his application for bail was refused.

The businessman was sent to Nottingham Prison where he endured a “living hell” among “robbers, rapists, killers and drug addicts” for seven months and 22 days.

As his despair grew to the point of contemplating suicide he was then told he had been charged with four counts of rape. Again his legal team urged Derbyshire officers to check phone records but received no reply until hours before Mr Adlington was due to stand trial at in January.

A CPS request for the evidence was also submitted in November but was not received until January 11.

Once the evidence was disclosed the case was immediately dismissed by a judge on January 16.

Mr Adlington said: “It has cost me everything my home, my business, my good name – everything.

I’ve sent emails to the police asking for an explanation but I’ve not received a single reply, no apology or anything

Robert Adlington

I’ve sent emails to the police asking for an explanation but I’ve not received a single reply, no apology or anything. Surely a ‘sorry’ is the least I deserve for having my life destroyed?”

Solicitor James Riley said Mr Adlington’s had endured a torturous journey through the criminal justice system branding it “one of the most unique cases” he had ever experienced.

The CPS later ruled it had insufficient evidence to charge the rape allegations or arson but instead charged him with two allegations of making threats to kill.

Mr Riley said: “In my personal view these charges were simply holding charges in order to keep him in custody.”



The CPS offered no evidence in respect of the two allegations of threat to kill.

Mr Adlington made his first appearance before Chesterfield magistrates court on May 26, 2017, where he formally entered not guilty pleas and trial was fixed for July 21.

Bail was refused.

On the July 18 the CPS notified Mr Bunting that it was proposing to lay an additional charge of arson with intent to endanger life.

This stopped the trial taking place and his custody time limit was extended at a hearing on July 19 when the case was transferred to Derby Crown Court for a hearing on August 16.

At that hearing the CPS offered no evidence in respect of the two allegations of threat to kill and these matters were discontinued.

However, a new charge of harassment was alleged alongside arson with intent to endanger life.

The defence statement was served to the court on October 13 in which a further request was specifically made for copies of the prosecution's phone evidence.

But instead of receiving the information requested on October 26 the CPS announced it was intending to lay three additional counts of rape.



Mr Adlington made his first appearance before Chesterfield magistrates court on May 26, 2017

On November 2 Mr Adlington appeared and entered not guilty pleas to each of the new allegations but was again remanded in custody.

Mr Adlington's legal team finally received some of the phone data on January 11.

On the day of the trial the defence presented the data to the judge who instantly threw out the case.

Mr Riley added: “Phone evidence that significantly undermined the Crown’s case had not been obtained or considered by the CPS until the day of his trial, despite repeated defence requests. As a result the defendant was held in custody for several months when an earlier review of this evidence would have no doubt led to the case being dropped.”



Robert Adlington revealed the personal hell he faced while imprisoned on remand at Nottingham Prison

Lessons Derbyshire Police’s Detective Chief Superintendent Kem Mehmet said: “We have already referred our investigation into this case to an independent regional review team.

“Once the review is complete, we will ensure that any lessons are learned and may then be in a position to comment further.”

A CPS spokesman said: “The CPS stopped this case five days after receiving additional material from the police in January 2018. The material was retrieved from the complainant’s phone at the request of CPS after receiving a defence statement.

“We are content that we complied with our disclosure obligations in this case and that the prosecution was promptly discontinued after we received new material and concluded the evidential test was no longer met.”

BEING LOCKED UP WITH MURDERERS DROVE ME TO THE POINT OF SUICIDE

FOR eight months Robert Adlington found himself locked- up alongside murderers and rapists and admitted that he came close to committing suicide as his despair set in.

After being denied bail he was sent to Nottingham Prison, a category B establishment housing around 1,000 criminals as well as those on remand.

He said: “Those first three weeks in prison were a living hell. I could easily have topped myself.

“I was absolutely terrified. Everybody in there knew each other, it was like a reunion meeting place for crooks and criminals – I felt like I was an uninvited guest at a get-together and had no idea what to do or how to cope.



For eight months Robert Adlington found himself locked- up alongside murderers and rapists.

“I was just left by the wayside. At no stage did anybody from the prison service check on me or ask me if I was alright, not once.”

Incredibly as he contemplated suicide it was his cell mate – a convict serving life for murder – spotted his distress and helped him out.

He added: “In the end a murderer helped get me through it. He said I would end up dying if I didn’t quickly put everything that had gone on in the outside world out of my head. He said I had to wipe my brain clean and just accept my new surroundings. It was difficult but with his advice I just about coped.

“But it was a living hell and something I wouldn’t wish on my worst enemy.

“Being in prison after committing a crime must be horrific enough but I can barely explain how it feels to find yourself in that situation when you know you are completely innocent.”

He added: “I could have been looking at spending 30 years inside a cell if those messages had not finally been disclosed. I knew I was innocent but nobody else did until those messages finally arrived and proved what I had been telling the police from day one.

“But to have found myself locked up with murderers, drug addicts and violent robbers just because somebody said something I still find incredible.

“Every time we applied for bail I got my hopes up but every time they were dashed and I was sent back to my cell.



After being denied bail he was sent to Nottingham Prison, a category B establishment.

“I now need to try and rebuild my life but I feel I have lost almost everything and nobody has even had the decency to say sorry.”

“Nobody tells you anything. I didn’t even know how to place food orders or how to serve up the meals. Nobody explains anything, you are just expected to know the system and get on with it.

“There’s always things going off, you can’t relax and you need to watch your back all the time.

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/964309/police-falsely-accuse-man-of-rape-robert-Adlington>