

Halesowen News

6th February

Rape accuser stalked me and launched ‘vendetta’ against me, court hears

By [James Connell](#)



SCENE: The photo of the building where the alleged rape happened in 1998. This photo was taken in 2014.

A FATHER says the woman who accuses him of raping her was ‘stalking’ him before they had sex, harassed his family and carried out a ‘vendetta’.

Richard Hirschfield is accused of raping the woman on a fire escape of what was the Midland Shire Farmers Building in The Butts in Worcester in July, 1998. The 43-year-old denies forcing himself on the then 16-year-old after drinks at the Paul Pry pub but accepts they had consensual sex.

His trial continued at Worcester Crown Court yesterday where it was revealed the defendant attended a voluntary interview with West Mercia Police on March 1, 2018 and again on March 4 last year.

He told officers he been going through 'a matrimonial dispute at the time', that the complainant had been giving him the eye, 'sort of stalking me in a way'. He added "There was some sort of attraction from the girl towards me."

He said the two had consensual sex in a doorway before he had a kebab and returned home to where he then lived in Coventry Avenue, St John's.

The defendant said it was the Wednesday or Thursday of the following week that the complainant confronted him in a cafe in the Crowngate shopping centre when he was with his then wife and a child, shouting at him 'I didn't know you were married!' and accusing him of forcing himself on her.

The defendant told officers that he and his now ex-wife went to report the complainant to police in Deansway. This was also the time the complainant reported the alleged rape to police for the first time although the court heard that no police records survived because notebooks had since been destroyed.

She was video interviewed by police about the allegation February 16, 2018.

In 2016 he said he and his wife received messages over Facebook Messenger from the complainant. He said one of the messages said: "I had to move out of Worcester because of you, you horrible person."

Hirschfield also said she accused him of being a paedophile, an allegation for which police confirmed there was no evidence and which the defendant said 'makes me feel sick'.

He also said the woman shared pictures of his family on social media. He denied that he had ever told her he was a fireman.

The trial continues.

<https://www.worcesternews.co.uk/news/18215054.rape-accuser-stalked-launched-vendetta-court-hears/>

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Father cleared of Worcester rape

By [James Connell](#)



TRIAL: Richard Hirschfield was cleared at Worcester Crown Court

A FATHER unanimously cleared of rape now hopes he and his family can move on with their lives after being put through a ‘horrible’ three years.

The jury of 11 men and one woman returned a unanimous not guilty verdict, acquitting Richard Hirschfield of a rape he had been accused of committing more than 20 years ago. Mr Hirschfield, who always maintained his innocence, told a jury the sex in a Worcester doorway was consensual.

The panel cleared him after around half an hour of deliberations at Worcester Crown Court this afternoon.

The woman, now in her late 30s, claimed she was raped at 16 on a fire escape at the Midland Shires Farmers building in The Butts in Worcester in July 1998 after drinks with the defendant in the Paul Pry pub. The woman appeared as a witness, declining the use of a screen. She first reported the matter on July 29, 1998, the day she confronted Mr Hirschfield in a Worcester cafe when he was with his then wife. She described officers as far from sympathetic in 1998 but returned to police with the allegation and was video interviewed about it on February 16, 2018. However, it was 43-year-old Mr Hirschfield the jury believed as he told them the rape never happened. Speaking after he was cleared, Mr Hirschfield said: "It has been a horrible three years for me and my family, including my two children. I have always been innocent with regard to this and I have been cleared by a full jury, unanimously.

"It's going to take a while to get my life back on track. I have suffered anxiety and depression over the years with this going on. My family now want to put it behind us and move on with our lives.

"The law should be changed. It's too easy for people to make up accusations and put innocent people and their names through the papers."

Mr Hirschfield was represented throughout the four day trial by Martin Butterworth who reminded the jury there was no independent evidence that the rape happened. Mr Butterworth said of the allegation the woman made: "It wasn't true when she said it then and it isn't true when she says it now."

He said she had 'distorted what actually happened either deliberately or through wishful thinking or attention-seeking or simple delusion'.

"Her complaint, made after she had seen this man with his wife, had been false" said Mr Butterworth.

<https://www.halesowennews.co.uk/news/regional/18217431.father-cleared-worcester-rape/>