

Two women who attacked and robbed taxi driver in South Bank are jailed

Claire Davies and Jayne Maughan threatened to cry rape if the cabbie didn't hand over money, a court was told

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Taxi driver James Stubbs was attacked in South Bank

Two women who attacked and robbed a taxi driver – threatening to cry rape if he didn't hand over money – are behind bars today.

Claire Davies and Jayne Maughan whispered in the back of the cab as they hatched their plan to steal the driver's takings, a court heard.

They'd asked taxi driver James Stubbs, 44, to take them to Tesco to buy drinks, but the supermarket was shut at 1.40am.

They struck when he took them back to South Terrace, South Bank, where they both lived at the time.

Davies grabbed him around the neck and took his wallet carrying £100 to £200 takings, while Maughan rummaged or "mooched" around the car's central console.

Mr Stubbs chased Davies as she emptied the wallet, but Maughan jumped on his back, Teesside Crown Court heard.

The pair pulled him to the ground, tore his T-shirt, scratched his back, blocked his path, threatened him and demanded money.

He was told if he didn't hand over money, they'd tell police they had been raped, said prosecutor Harry Hadfield yesterday.

He managed to press the distress button in his taxi after the robbery on August 18 last year.

Grandad-of-three Mr Stubbs, from Grangetown, said at the time he thought he was "a goner".

He since said he was left shocked and in pain, he had to accept what happened as he relied on his job to pay the bills, but doubted he'd work in South Bank again. He was previously attacked in his taxi in 2008.

The women were arrested, both carrying cash, after police went to Maughan's home and heard someone say: "****, they're coming."

Maughan, 39, denied the robbery. She was convicted by a jury after a trial last month and still denies the offence.

Davies, 31, admitted the robbery and criminal damage – smashing a window in a separate incident.

Maughan had 45 previous offences including robberies and burglaries, while Davies had 14.

David Lamb, defending mum-to-be Maughan, said she had no violence on her record in more than 10 years and no prison for 12 years.

He said: "She stands upon the brink of motherhood for the first time. Clearly she's desperate for that child not to be born in Low Newton Prison.

"She took her chances at trial and lost. The jury found her guilty but she still continues to maintain her innocence."

He said her pregnancy and the recent death of her mother could spur her to turn her life around.

Andrew Teate, representing Davies, said she had no previous violence and showed regret, remorse and empathy for the taxi driver.

He said she reformed her character, underwent drug detoxification, had a trusted cleaner's job in prison and was now described as "an entirely different person".

Judge Tony Briggs said the plan was hatched in the back of the taxi on the spur of the moment, heavily influenced by drink, and Maughan played the "lesser role".

He said taxi drivers were vulnerable at night in their service to the public, and they were entitled to the courts' protection.

Maughan was jailed for 15 months, Davies 12 months.

Mr Stubbs said of the sentences: "I would have thought they would have got longer to be honest but it's all right at the end of the day.

"I do feel justice has been done."

He said today that he moved to work for Marske-based Frontline Taxis soon after the attack.

He added: "I had to change firms because I didn't feel safe. I haven't had any bother since. I just want to move on with my future now and put this all behind me."

<https://www.gazettelive.co.uk/news/teesside-news/two-women-who-attacked-robbed-6742003>