

# Swindon Advertiser

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## Rape claim was teen lie

WILTSHIRE TIMES EXCLUSIVE: TWO 15-year-old girls have admitted lying about a terrifying rape and sexual assault at a Chippenham bedsit.

Police charged the teenagers who claimed they had been taken off the street at knife point for perverting the course of justice.

They both pleaded guilty when they appeared before magistrates at Chippenham youth court on Tuesday.

A man in his early 20s was arrested and questioned but has been released without charge. He was staying with a friend near the town centre.

The two girls, who cannot be named for legal reasons, invented the devious lie after leaving the man's house on January 13.

They met him while they were walking through the town with a friend and he invited all three teenagers back to the bedsit.

One of the pair of 15 year-old girls, from Corsham, disappeared into another room with the man. When she came out, she left the bedsit with her friends and tearfully claimed to them that she had been raped.

But she later told the truth and the pair of 15-year-olds came to an agreement to fabricate a story.

The police were called after the girls told their teacher about the rape and one of them, from Southwick, near Trowbridge, said she had also been sexually assaulted.

Kate Brown, prosecuting, said: "One of the girls made it clear on initial contact that she was attracted to the male and indicated that she wanted to fulfil certain sexual acts on him prior to going into the room.

"The male adult had been arrested and interviewed and was on police bail.

"Evidence came to light after further investigation."

During a police interview one of the 15-year-olds later admitted lying, but the other girl made no comment.

Defence solicitor Roger Stanbury said: "The story soon proved to be untrue.

"Three girls taken off at knife point in the middle of Chippenham in broad daylight is unbelievable."

Inspector Steve Headley of Chippenham police was pleased the two 15-year-olds had pleaded guilty.

He said: "The problems that false allegations cause are many fold.

"Not only is it a serious offence and a waste of police time but it also puts the person who is arrested through an horrendous ordeal."

False Allegation Support has claimed that people wrongly accused of rape are sometimes driven to suicide.

A spokesman for Wiltshire Victim Support said they were on hand to offer advice.

She said: "We listen and if it is appropriate we offer confidential advice, or put them in contact with someone else who can help."

Sentencing for the two girls has been adjourned for reports until February 18.

This case comes just two months after The Crown Prosecution service ruled there was insufficient evidence against a plasterer accused of rape and dropped the case.

Ashley Lawrence, 24, said the allegation was all lies and had destroyed his life.

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