

5 January 2018 - Jail for man who raped 12-year-old girl



A 25-year-old man who was found guilty of raping a 12-year-old girl in Rotherham has been sent to prison for eight years.

Brett Ashley McLaughlan, formerly of Lister Avenue, Rawmarsh, appeared before Sheffield Crown Court today (Friday 5 January) to be sentenced.

McLaughlan was found guilty of rape following a trial at Sheffield Crown Court in October in 2017. He was jailed for eight years today. He was also handed a Sexual Harm Prevention Order (SHPO) and placed on the Sex

Offenders Register for life.

His co-accused, 20-year-old Ben Chivers, was jailed for ten years in November 2017 after pleading guilty to multiple child sexual offences against three victims.

The court heard how McLaughlan raped his victim, who cannot be named for legal reasons, in Rotherham in 2015.

Temporary Detective Sergeant Gareth Gent said: "While we have been able to demonstrate that Chivers targeted and groomed young girls on social media, his friend McLaughlan played an active role in this child's abuse and he was found guilty of rape last year.

"This is an incredibly serious sexual offence that has a devastating impact on the victim's life. The fact that he committed this appalling crime against a girl of only 12-years-old is horrifying and quite rightly, he is now behind bars for a lengthy period of time.

"This girl has shown remarkable bravery, firstly in coming forward and then throughout the joint investigation into her abuse, whilst being supported by Barnardo's during the process.

"McLaughlan refused to accept responsibility for his sexual offending, meaning his victim had to endure a painful trial process.

"I hope this sentence offers his victim some small reassurance that her abusers are both now behind bars where they can cause no further harm.

"I also hope it reassures the wider community of our relentless pursuit of justice for victims of sexual offences and child sexual exploitation – we urge anyone who has concerns about sexual abuse or exploitation to contact police or a support agency so we can help."

Ian Thomas, Strategic Director of Children's Services at Rotherham Council said: "We welcome the sentence handed out today and commend the victim for coming forward. This is a truly despicable crime. This man has raped a 12-year-old girl and then put her through further heartache with this trial.

"I hope that this conviction now helps her to help recover from this ordeal and confine this horrific abuse to the past.

"Rotherham is no hiding place for evil and through our partnership working with both South Yorkshire Police and Barnardo's we will support victims like this to help them bring their perpetrators to justice."

Please remember victims of sexual offences are guaranteed lifelong anonymity under the Sexual Offences Act. Anyone who identifies a victim, or who posts information about a victim that could lead to them being identified, is breaking the law.

More information about child sexual exploitation can be found on the South Yorkshire Police website here: www.southyorks.police.uk/spotthesigns.

Anyone with concerns about a child can call police on 101, or call/text the national helpline Say Something on 116 000.

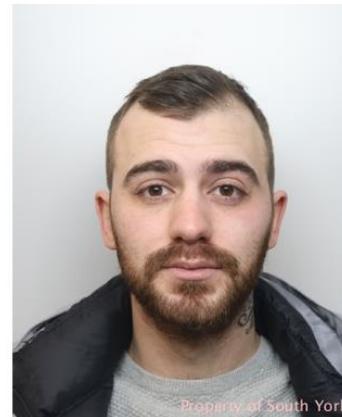
The NSPCC also has 24/7 help available by calling 0808 800 5000 or emailing help@nspcc.org.uk.

2 January 2018 - Sheffield man jailed for child sexual exploitation

A 28-year-old man has been sentenced to 32-months in prison after admitting sending sexually inappropriate messages to a Sheffield teenager.

Liam Lyndon Devere, formerly of Greystones Road, Sheffield, appeared before Sheffield Crown Court on Thursday 28 December where he was sentenced after pleading guilty to causing/inciting a girl aged between 13 and 15-years-old to engage in sexual activity.

The court heard how Devere sent his victim, who cannot be named for legal reasons, sexually explicit communication in a bid to commit sexual offences against her.



Investigating officer Detective Constable Mark Spencer said: "This investigation was particularly complex, as we pursued a prosecution against Devere without statements from the victim.

"Child abuse is a horrific crime that can have a devastating impact upon its victims and in some instances, victims are unable to engage with a criminal investigation as their experiences have been too traumatic and emotionally distressing.

"This does not deter us from prosecuting individuals that commit this awful crime however, and the evidence on Devere's digital devices was strong enough to secure this conviction. As a result, he is now behind bars where he can cause no further harm.

"I truly hope that this successful conviction offers some comfort to his victim and that she is able to begin her journey towards recovery."

15 December 2017 - Man sentenced to 16 years in prison for child sexual offences

A 54-year-old man has been given a 16 year prison sentence for a string of sexual abuse committed against teenage girls from across the country.



Craig Lewis, 54, of College Road, Cranwell Village, Lincolnshire, appeared before Sheffield Crown Court yesterday morning (Thursday 14 December), to receive his sentence after being found guilty of child grooming, sexual assault and causing a child to watch a sex act.

An investigation was launched into Lewis in December 2016 after an anonymous referral made to the NSPCC was reported to police.

Detective Constable Elizabeth Portman who oversaw the investigation in to Lewis has said: "Lewis, who previously pleaded guilty to possession of indecent images, inciting a child to engage in sexual activity and possession, distribution and making of indecent images, abused three teenagers girls aged between 13 and 14-years-old from Rotherham,

Grimsby and Oxford."

Officers charged Lewis with meeting a child following sexual grooming and inciting a child to engage in sexual activity, after an investigation revealed he had used online social media apps to form a relationship with and arranged to meet one of the victims on a number of different occasions. During these meetings, Lewis encourage the victim to take and share photos and videos of herself online.

Through this investigation and a review of his mobile phone activity, officers identified two further victims and with assistance from both Lincolnshire and Oxfordshire police Lewis was charged with the remaining offences.

DC Portman continued: "Lewis' actions were absolutely despicable as he knew the ages of his victims and continued to commit the sexual abuse. I'm glad he has now been punished and I hope the victims are able to take some assurance in knowing he has been brought to justice.

"It has taken incredible courage from all of the victims to report the abuse and I would like to commend them for their bravery. Our commitment remains ensuring children are kept safe and we will always do our utmost to ensure offenders are brought to justice."

If you have any concerns, or would like to report an incident, please call 101 or the national child sexual exploitation line, Say Something, on 116000.

27 November 2017 - Man jailed for sexually abusing Rotherham girls

A 20-year-old man has been sentenced to ten years in prison for the sexual abuse of three young girls in Rotherham in 2015.

Ben Chivers (right), formerly of Rawmarsh, Rotherham, appeared before Sheffield Crown Court today (Monday 27 November) to receive his sentence.

Last month, Chivers pleaded guilty to raping a 12-year-old girl, three counts of sexual activity with a 13-year-old girl and three counts of sexual activity with a 14-year-old girl.



Temporary Detective Sergeant Gareth Gent from Rotherham said: "Chivers targeted underage girls online, grooming them with affection.

“Once his victims were in his grasp, he encouraged them to meet up and subjected these three girls to horrendous sexual abuse.

“They have been remarkably brave throughout our investigation and they are to be commended for their courage.

“I hope that with the lengthy sentence passed down today, this is another step forward in the girls’ recovery from their abuse, knowing that the person who caused them such harm is now behind bars for a long time.”

Ian Thomas, Strategic Director of Children and Young People’s Services at Rotherham Council said: “Chivers clearly preyed on these young girls’ vulnerability knowing full well their ages and knowing full well what he was doing was wrong.

“Rotherham is no hiding place for evil and through our partnership working with both South Yorkshire Police and Barnardo’s we have been able to work with these courageous victims to support them and to help them bring their perpetrators to justice.

“This sentence today once again shows we will not stop until we find the people committing these acts of evil and making sure they pay for what they have done.”

Chivers was also placed on the Sex Offenders’ Register for life and given a Sexual Harm Prevention Order (SHPO).

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Chivers’ co-accused, Rotherham man Brett Ashley McLaughlan (25), will appear before Sheffield Crown Court in January 2018 to be sentenced after being found guilty of rape following a trial in October.



26 October 2017 - Two more years in jail for Sheffield child abuser

A 30-year-old man convicted of multiple child sexual exploitation offences in Sheffield has had two years added on to his prison sentence.

Shane Whiteley (right), formerly of Hackenthorpe, Sheffield, was jailed for eight years on Friday 28 April this year, following a trial in which he was found guilty of conspiracy to cause child prostitution.

Whiteley has been on trial at Sheffield Crown Court this week, charged with attempting to cause child prostitution in connection with the same investigation.

He was found guilty of this offence and today (Thursday 26 October) ordered to serve another two years in prison when his current jail term ends.

Detective Constable Sarah Dolby from Sheffield's child sexual exploitation team said: "Following the successful conviction and sentencing of four men and a woman for the systematic grooming and sexual abuse of children in Sheffield, we continued to work hard to progress outstanding matters against Shane Whiteley.

"After another six months of partnership working between South Yorkshire Police, the Crown Prosecution Service and the local authority, we have been able to bring Whiteley back to court and secure a further conviction.

"Once again I'd like to recognise the courage of our victims, nine very brave women who came forward at the beginning of our investigation in 2015, who put their faith in South Yorkshire Police.

"I hope this addition to Whiteley's jail sentence reassures our victims, and any victims of child sexual exploitation, that we will not rest until those involved in this horrific crime are brought before the courts."

30 June 2017 - Convicted sex offenders have appeals rejected

Two men convicted of child sexual exploitation offences in Rotherham have had their request for appeals rejected by the Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales and two High Court judges.

Arshid Hussain (top right) and Basharat Hussain (below right), who were jailed in February last year for sexually exploiting girls in Rotherham, appeared before the Court of Appeal in Leeds yesterday (Thursday 29 June).

The Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales Lord Thomas ruled that all appeals be dismissed.



He also ruled that the sentences handed down to Arshid and Basharat, 35-years in prison and 25-years in prison respectively, would stand.

Detective Chief Inspector Martin Tate was the Senior Investigating Officer for Operation Clover, the multi-agency investigation into the Hussain brothers and their criminal network who groomed and exploited young girls in Rotherham between 1987 and 2003.



Speaking after the appeal hearing, he said: “I am really pleased with the rulings passed by Lord Chief Justice Lord Thomas.

“The sentences given to Arshid and Basharat last year are some of the largest ever imposed for sexual offending in the UK, but Lord Thomas ruled that this was entirely proportionate. The Lord Chief Justice was clear that this was some of the worst sexual offending he had ever presided over, and that these sentences must act as a deterrent nationally. He also stated that no civilised society can tolerate such offending and the courts must protect the public.

“While the appeals process is not normally one that police comment on, I feel it only right that we continue to recognise the bravery of the young women who have had to face yet another challenge in their battle for justice. No sentence will ever recover the years of abuse, and in many people’s eyes, no sentence is ever long enough. In my view however 35 years in prison is a significant message from the courts that any offending of this type will be dealt with in the most robust way possible.

“Any appeal hearing can be difficult for victims of crime, but particularly so for victims of child sexual exploitation and especially the young women we have supported throughout Operation Clover.

“This latest hearing understandably caused some concern and anxiety, but they are relieved with the outcome from court. It is entirely understandable that victims and the wider public want justice from these investigations as soon as possible. It is critical however that the police and CPS get these very complex investigations right. They must be legally sound and stand up to intense scrutiny. We obviously have the support of our extremely professional and victim focused prosecution CPS lawyers and appointed barristers. They work tirelessly with us to convict offenders.

“The trial, presided over by HHJ Judge Wright in Sheffield, allowed the victims to tell their story in their own time and with the correct support under the legal provisions of what we call special measures. I hope that encourages other victims that if they come forward they will be heard and we will discuss all options around giving evidence.

“I hope this latest result demonstrates how committed the police and the criminal justice system are in our support for victims of sexual abuse and that once convicted, we continue to do all we can to ensure that dangerous predators remain behind bars.”

12 May 2017 - Rotherham CSE Investigation Concludes With 21st Conviction

A 45-year-old man has been sentenced to nine years and six months years in prison this afternoon, after being found guilty of sexually exploiting a child.

Zalgai Ahmadi, formerly of Rotherham, was handed the term by a judge at Sheffield Crown Court after a jury heard how he falsely imprisoned and sexually assaulted a 14-year-old girl in 2003.

Ahmadi was not in the UK when officers working on Operation Clover deemed him a suspect in 2013, but he was subsequently detained at Heathrow Airport while attempting to return to the UK under a different name in 2016.



Ahmadi is the 21st defendant to have been found guilty following South Yorkshire Police investigations, taking the combined total sentencing beyond 290 years for historic child sexual exploitation offending in Rotherham.

Since inception in 2013, the major crime investigation team has also helped convict five people in Sheffield to a combined total of over 43 years in prison.

Senior investigating officer DCI Martin Tate said: “Our thoughts are with the victim of this heinous crime and the women who were subjected to the horrific sexual abuse investigated under Operation Clover.

“The victim in this case has shown tremendous courage. Despite coming face-to-face with her abuser and having to relive her trauma before the court, she has maintained her dignity and composure.

“Hopefully she can now draw comfort from seeing Ahmadi brought to justice.

“I would urge anyone who may have been a victim of abuse to come forward and talk to someone. We will listen, we will help and we will bring perpetrators to justice.”

“A range of agencies are available to offer support to victims of sexual exploitation and South Yorkshire Police receives strong backing from Victim Support, Barnardos, Sheffield Futures, GROW and the wider voluntary sector.

“Staff at our partner agencies are extremely passionate about helping victims and survivors and we can’t thank them enough for their dedication.”

Anyone with concerns about child sexual exploitation should contact the police on 101 or the new national helpline Say Something on 116 000. The Rotherham Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) can also be contacted on 01709 336 080. Always call 999 in an emergency.

Operation Clover has been superseded by Operation Stovewood. Dedicated to tackling historic child sexual abuse, Stovewood is run by the National Crime Agency.

Ian Thomas, Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services at Rotherham Council, welcoming today's sentencing.

He said: "This is yet another key milestone in our tireless campaign to crack down on those criminals who seek to cause horrendous suffering through vile crimes of sexual abuse. The victim here was a child at the end of the day whose childhood was shattered as a result of people like Ahmadi.

"I am glad for her that he has been found guilty and sentenced and I hope that this helps her to try and put the past behind her and move on with her life. This latest sentencing takes the total years given to both historic and current offenders to over 330 years. We shall leave no stone unturned in our bid to stamp out this crime."

28 April 2017 - Group jailed for Sheffield child sexual exploitation



Five people who groomed and sexually abused girls in Sheffield have been jailed for a combined total of over 40 years today (Friday 28 April).

Following a seven-week trial that concluded last month, four men and a woman were convicted of a series of child sexual offences including conspiracy to cause child prostitution, arranging child prostitution and rape. Their details and their sentences, which total 43 years in prison, were passed down to them by a judge at Sheffield Crown Court today and are as follows:

Christopher Whiteley, 23, formerly of Hackenthorpe, Sheffield – jailed for 15 years

Matthew Whiteley, 25, of Weakland Crescent, Hackenthorpe – jailed for seven years

Shane Whiteley, 30, of Weakland Crescent, Hackenthorpe – jailed for eight years

Amanda Spencer, 26, formerly of Rotherham – jailed for three years to run consecutively to her current 12-year prison term

Taleb Bapir, 39, of Verdon Street, Burngreave – jailed for ten years

Detective Chief Inspector Martin Tate, the senior investigating officer, said: "Today's hearing is a culmination of a two-year investigation into the organised grooming and sexual abuse of children in Sheffield.

"Five very dangerous sexual offenders are now behind bars for their horrendous crimes, thanks in large part to the courage of nine incredibly brave women who put their faith in South Yorkshire Police.

"I am grateful to those victims for coming forward and having confidence in our officers to investigate these crimes thoroughly and bring those responsible before the courts.

“I hope today’s hearing and these custodial sentences mark another step forward for the victims as they try to rebuild their lives and come to terms with the awful abuse they faced.

“I again offer my thanks to Sheffield City Council social care and the Crown Prosecution Service for working alongside to bring this case to court, and to the voluntary sector, who are committed to helping victims of abuse and who have been excellent sources of support throughout our investigation.”

Anyone with concerns about child sexual exploitation should call 101, or 999 if a crime is in progress. Advice and support is also available by calling or texting the national helpline Say Something on 116 000.

Pictured in collage clockwise from top left: Christopher Whiteley, Shane Whiteley, Matthew Whiteley, Amanda Spencer, Taleb Bapir

Issued Wednesday 22 March 2017

Four men and a woman who targeted, groomed and sexually abused girls in Sheffield between 2005 and 2011 have been found guilty of numerous sexual offences.

On trial at Sheffield Crown Court over seven weeks were brothers 23-year-old Christopher Whiteley, Matthew Whiteley, 25, and Shane Whiteley, 30, each charged with multiple child sexual exploitation offences. (Collage left to right: Christopher, Matthew, Shane)

On Friday 17 March, a jury returned partial verdicts with remaining verdicts delivered on Monday 20 March.

A jury found Christopher Whiteley, formerly of Hackenthorpe, Sheffield, guilty of multiple counts of rape, sexual assault against a child under 13, conspiracy to arrange child prostitution and theft.

They also found Matthew Whiteley and Shane Whiteley, both of Weakland Crescent, Hackenthorpe, each guilty of conspiracy to cause child prostitution.

Appearing alongside the Whiteley brothers on trial was 26-year-old Amanda Spencer (middle right), formerly of Rotherham and currently in prison. A jury found her guilty of four counts of arranging child prostitution.

A fourth man, 39-year-old Taleb Bapir (bottom right) of Verdon Street, Burngreave, was found guilty of rape.

The verdicts reached by the jury on Monday could not be reported until today (Wednesday 22 March) for legal reasons.

Temporary Detective Chief Inspector Martin Tate, who oversaw the investigation into this group, said: “Between 2005 and 2011, these individuals targeted, groomed and exploited vulnerable girls for sexual gratification.

“The victims’ lives were damaged and childhoods stolen by this group’s heinous crimes. Nine very brave young women gave evidence of their abuse in this trial, supported by numerous family members who were also significantly affected by these crimes.

“The bravery of the victims has resulted in the conviction of five very dangerous offenders who are now in prison for multiple sexual offences. The jury found the defendants not guilty on some charges and, whilst disappointed, I respect the jury’s decision.

“It demonstrates the complexity of these prosecutions and does not detract from the numerous guilty verdicts against five offenders.

“I commend the victims, many of whom are now vulnerable women trying to rebuild their lives, for their bravery in coming forward and speaking to police about the horrific abuse they faced. I am grateful they put their trust in us to take this prosecution forward.

“Not one of those convicted accepted responsibility for their horrific crimes, meaning the victims have had to recount in detail before a jury the awful and upsetting abuse they were subjected to.

“This was a joint prosecution with Sheffield City Council social care and the Crown Prosecution Service and I would like to thank them for their commitment to this case. We are passionate about close partnership working and protecting vulnerable people together. I am also proud of the South Yorkshire Police staff involved in this case over a period of nearly three years. They work tirelessly to bring these complex and difficult cases to court.

“I also want to take this opportunity to thank the agencies we have worked closely alongside throughout our inquiry, who have played vital roles in supporting our victims and preparing them for this trial.

“Although this prosecution is a key event in rebuilding lives, it is only the start of the process for many. Many wonderful people in the voluntary sector are committed to helping victims of abuse. Specifically I would like to thank City Hearts, an organisation and charity that helps numerous young women.

“This case sadly highlights to us all that there are both men and women out there who would seek to sexually exploit children, and that any community or any child could fall victim to this devastating abuse.

“As a result, we remain absolutely determined to finding those responsible for these abhorrent crimes and bringing them to justice. I would encourage any victim of crime or abuse to contact police on 101 or 999. We absolutely want to help. You can also call or text the national helpline Say Something on 116 000.”

Jayne Ludlam, Executive Director of Children, Young People and Families at Sheffield City Council said: “Today I want to commend the bravery of the young women involved in this case, who spoke out against the exploitation that they suffered and then had to re-live it all again in court. It sends a clear message to anyone involved in the sexual exploitation of vulnerable young people- you will be identified, pursued and prosecuted.

“Their testimonies and courage will have helped to prevent other young people suffering similar abuses and we are grateful for this.

“Here in Sheffield we are not afraid to tackle child sexual exploitation. We will now, as we always do, in cases such as this, review the way we work, and continue improving and developing our services.

“We will continue to work with partner agencies such as South Yorkshire Police, as well as parents, carers and young people in our fight to prevent sexual exploitation being perpetrated against children and young people.

“Our absolute priority, though, will be to continue to work and support those affected by this case.

“We would encourage anyone affected by abuse such as this to report it. We will support you throughout and do our utmost to bring those responsible to justice.”

The group have been remanded in custody and will appear again before Sheffield Crown Court on Friday 28 April for sentencing.

2 February 2017- Men sentenced to more than 80 years behind bars for child sexual exploitation-

Six men have been sentenced to a total of 81 and a half years in prison for their role in the sexual exploitation of two children in Rotherham nearly 20 years ago.

Appearing at Sheffield Crown Court today (Thursday 2 February) was 32-year-old Basharat Dad, of Eldon Road, Eastwood, Rotherham, who was sentenced to 20 years behind bars after a jury found him guilty of multiple child sexual offences last week.

His brothers Nasar Dad, 36, of Cranworth Road in Eastwood, Rotherham, and Tayab Dad, 34, of St Lawrence Road, Tinsley, Sheffield, were jailed for 14 years and six months, with one year on licence, and ten years each for their crimes.



Amjad Ali, 36, of Broad Lane, Hodthorpe, Worksop, pleaded guilty to sexual intercourse with a girl under 13 at a court hearing last year. Today he was sentenced to 11 years in prison, and one year on licence.

Also sentenced today were 40-year-old Mohammed Sadiq, who was jailed for 13 years with one year on licence, and 42-year-old Matloob Hussain, who was jailed for 13 years and one year on licence.

Speaking after the sentencing, Temporary Detective Chief Inspector Martin Tate said: "Today's hearing is the culmination of a lengthy and complex investigation into the sexual abuse and exploitation of vulnerable children in Rotherham nearly two decades ago.

"This is our third significant inquiry into child sexual exploitation in Rotherham and with the lengthy jail terms handed down to these individuals today, we have now put 18 criminals behind bars for over 280 years.

"This was a South Yorkshire Police led investigation in partnership with Rotherham Council and the Crown Prosecution Service, and I would like to thank them for their assistance with the investigation.

“Following the successes achieved, we will now continue to move forward using the learning and best practice we have acquired over the last few years, through work done with our brave victims, their families and partnership agencies, to apply this practice to future investigations.

"I'd encourage any victims and survivors out there who are yet to come forward to please get in touch or tell someone you trust. Officers and specialist support agencies are here to listen, to investigate and to bring perpetrators of this heinous crime before the courts.”

Pictured top row left to right: Tayab Dad, Nasar Dad, Basharat Dad
Bottom row left to right: Matloob Hussain, Mohammed Sadiq, Amjad Ali