

Press release: Bradford rapist will spend longer behind bars

A rapist from Bradford will spend longer in prison after Solicitor General Robert Buckland QC MP referred his original sentence to the Court of Appeal as unduly lenient.

Lee Duffy, 26, was aged between 19 and 22 when he carried out his violent attacks against 3 separate women aged between 16 and 19.

Duffy was convicted of 4 counts of rape and 3 counts of causing actual bodily harm at Bradford Crown Court in June this year. He was originally sentenced to 8 years in prison, but the Court of Appeal quashed that sentence and he will now serve 13 years.

Speaking after the hearing, the Solicitor General said:

“These crimes deserved a tougher punishment and I am pleased the Court has seen fit to increase the prison term. This demonstrates our commitment to victims of sexual offences that they will be taken seriously.

“I hope the increased sentence brings some closure to the victims, and they can begin to move on from what will have been a traumatic time.”

Press release: More than £3m invested in space exploration

A further £230,000 of funding has been awarded to studies into experiments that could be built and flown to the International Space Station (ISS), which could potentially support future human exploration of space.

The £3 million from the UK Space Agency Aurora Science programme, which is exploiting the data from robotic exploration, including our major investment in ESA's ExoMars mission, will target questions of past and present life on Mars, investigating the presence of water and the geochemical environment as well as atmospheric trace gases and their sources.

Science Minister, Jo Johnson, said:

“Science enables and shapes the UK's future in space exploration. This government funding will play a vital role in ensuring UK academics can continue to study the secrets of our solar system, from the polar regions of the Moon to the potential of life on Mars.

“Research and innovation are at the core of our Industrial Strategy, and by investing in these types of projects, we are reinforcing our position as a world leader in these important and exciting areas.”

The £3 million has gone to 17 academics and individual scientists working at UK research organisations. The scientific objectives of the first mission in the Aurora programme, ExoMars, are to understand Mars’s environment and its atmosphere.

In addition, £230,000 of funding has been awarded to the UK microgravity and space environments community in academia and industry. Four proposals have been funded, which will study concepts and designs for experiments which will deliver high quality science on the ISS as part of a national science programme.

British ESA astronaut Tim Peake was involved in many experiments during his sixth-month mission on the ISS from December 2015 to June 2016, including several with contributions from UK scientists.

Libby Jackson, Human Spaceflight and Microgravity Programme Manager at the UK Space Agency, said:

“Microgravity science in the UK has grown rapidly since we joined the ISS programme back in 2012. Any future mission to the ISS represents a really exciting opportunity to build on this and to ensure that the UK science community is properly placed to capitalise on the research opportunities that such a flight would offer.”

The studies undertaken will address how high quality science can be implemented within the constraints of the ISS and provide an accurate cost for the full flight experiment.

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[News story: RAF football team play Irish Defence Forces](#)

The Royal Air Force Ladies football team travelled to Dublin to play an Irish Defence Forces team and promote defence relations between Ireland and the UK.

In wet and blustery conditions in late September, the Royal Air Force team started well, dominating possession and creating chances. However, a shot from the Irish side caught the RAF goalkeeper off guard to make it 1-0. The second half brought a flurry of chances for the visitors, but the Irish Defence Forces team put away another goal to end the match 2-0. A well-disciplined match, with strong and competitive performances from both sides, it was fantastic preparation for the Royal Air Force team in their campaign to retain their Inter-Services title in March 2018.

Following the match, the Irish Defence Forces team hosted their Royal Air Force visitors to dinner where the teams exchanged gifts, and Senior Aircraftwoman Rachael Rutherford was awarded player of the match.

[Government response: Cancer Research UK's campaign about the Early Diagnosis Workforce](#)

The Department of Health's response to the Cancer Research UK campaign.

In September, Cancer Research UK (CRUK) started [a campaign](#) urging the government to train and employ more NHS diagnostic staff.

This is the government's response:

Cancer is a priority for this government and survival rates are at a record high, with 7,000 more people surviving cancer compared to 3 years ago. This is thanks to great efforts to diagnose cancer earlier and the incredible care cancer staff provide patients day in and day out.

The government knows it needs to get the right staff in place. This is why Health Education England will publish a comprehensive cancer workforce plan by the end of the year. NHS England will continue to drive forward implementation of the independent Cancer Taskforce's recommendations, as the department strives to save an extra 30,000 lives a year by 2020.

Press release: Boston Prime director banned for 12 years

Boston Prime Ltd went into Special Administration on 9 February 2015 owing over £8 million to creditors. Following an investigation by the Insolvency Service, George Alex Popescu has been disqualified from acting as a director for 12 years.

A disqualification order was made in the High court on 2 August 2017.

The court found Popescu had breached his fiduciary duties to act in the best interest of Boston Prime and failed to ensure that both Boston Prime, and himself individually, as the approved person, complied with the FCA's rules and guidance, following a proposed conditional sale of the company to a multinational group of companies in July 2014, which subsequently did not complete.

The Insolvency Service's investigators discovered that Popescu relinquished control of Boston Prime's affairs, including control of its bank accounts and books and records, to the purchaser following the proposed sale, without informing the FCA of the sale or change in control and that after he relinquished control.

The investigation also found he caused or allowed adjustments to be made of over \$3 million to client's trading accounts which were subsequently disputed by clients; caused or allowed the transfer of \$3 million from a trading account of Boston Prime to that of connected company and caused or allowed payments totalling \$6.2 million to be made to two connected companies.

When asked to explain these transactions by the Insolvency Service's investigators, Popescu was unable to provide the precise details or their legitimacy.

Commenting on the disqualification, Robert Clarke, Investigations Group Leader at The Insolvency Service, said:

Directors have a duty to ensure that they exercise sufficient control over company operations to ensure that the company complies with relevant regulations and that its transactions can be accounted for.

This disqualification should serve as a warning to other directors who fail to fulfil their duties.

Notes to editors

Boston Prime Limited (Company No. 07435569) was incorporated on 10 November 2010.

George Alex Popescu was born in October 1981 and was registered with Companies House as a director of Boston Prime Limited between 10 November 2010 and 9 February 2015. He was disqualified from acting as a director or being concerned in the promotion, formation or management of a company for a period of 12 years on 2 August 2017.

Boston Prime Limited was incorporated on 10 November 2010 and traded from Citypoint Suite 1248, 1 Ropemaker Street, London, EC2Y 9HT.

When Boston Prime Limited went into Special Administration on 9 February 2015, the company disclosed assets estimated to realise £770,820, and liabilities to creditors of £8,185,981.

A disqualification order has the effect that without specific permission of a court, a person with a disqualification cannot:

- act as a director of a company
- take part, directly or indirectly, in the promotion, formation or management of a company or limited liability partnership
- be a receiver of a company's property

Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a [range of other restrictions](#).

The Insolvency Service, an executive agency sponsored by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), administers the insolvency regime, and aims to deliver and promote a range of investigation and enforcement activities both civil and criminal in nature, to support fair and open markets. We do this by effectively enforcing the statutory company and insolvency regimes, maintaining public confidence in those regimes and reducing the harm caused to victims of fraudulent activity and to the business community, including dealing with the disqualification of directors in corporate failures.

Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is [available](#).

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