

# Convicted sex offender, caught in an undercover police sting, has sentence increased

A Cumbrian man has been immediately imprisoned after the Attorney General's Office referred his original sentence to the Court of Appeal.

Thomas Thompson, 58, groomed a 13-year old girl who he met in an online chat room. Thompson had made overtures to several underage girls, and other users who sent him indecent images of children. The young girl confirmed that she was only 13 years old, and the online conversation soon turned sexual. They arranged to meet near Derby on 15 May 2021, planning to engage in sexual intercourse.

Thompson was in fact communicating with an undercover police officer and was arrested on his arrival at a retail park near Derby. He was charged with one count of arranging or facilitating the commission of a child sex offence, one count of attempting to meet a child following sexual grooming and two counts of making indecent images of children (B & C Categories).

Thompson pleaded guilty prior to his trial, and on 16 July 2021 he was sentenced to 2 years imprisonment suspended for 2 years, with an unpaid work requirement for 200 hours and 30 days of rehabilitation activity.

Following the decision at Carlisle Crown Court, Thompson's case was referred to the Court of Appeal under the Unduly Lenient Sentence (ULS) scheme. On 28 September 2021, the Court found his sentence to be unduly lenient and increased it to 2 years and 6 months' immediate imprisonment.

This is the latest in a series of cases which have seen offenders' sentences increased following a decision by the Court of Appeal that, in cases where the offender had been talking to an adult posing as a child, the sentence must reflect the offenders illegal intentions.

After the hearing at the Court of Appeal, the newly appointed Solicitor General, Alex Chalk QC MP, said:

Thompson's actions were predatory and premeditated, and fuelled child sexual abuse. Good police work stopped him in his tracks, and should serve as a warning to those thinking of grooming underage victims in cyberspace. I am pleased that the Court of Appeal has seen fit to increase his sentence.

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# Grave of Royal Flying Corps Observer killed in action in the Great War identified.

Originally buried in an unmarked grave by the German forces over a century ago, the now identified remains of 21-year-old Corporal (Cpl) Bertie Frederick George Jeffs have today (Tuesday 28 September) been rededicated, marking the sacrifice he made for his country.

The rededication service was held at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's (CWGC) Douchy-les-Ayettes Cemetery, on the Somme, in France, and was conducted by Reverend (Sqn Ldr) Kate Bruce Station Chaplain RAF Coningsby. It was attended by members of XI(F) Squadron RAF and organised by the MOD's Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC).

Following the service of Cpl Jeffs, Tracey Bowers, JCCC said:

"Cpl Jeffs bravery should never be forgotten and to have members of XI(F) Sqn RAF here to honour him along with the researchers who worked so hard on the case has made today even more special."

Cpl Jeffs was serving with 11 Squadron Royal Flying Corps as the Observer onboard a Royal Aircraft Factory F.E.2b fighter aeroplane piloted by Sergeant Ernest Haxton. On the afternoon of 10 October 1916 at approximately 14.40, whilst on an offensive patrol, they were attacked by hostile forces north east of Bapaume and shot down. Sadly both brave airmen were killed and lie next to each other in the cemetery. Bertie Jeffs was born on 15 July 1895 in Headington, Oxfordshire to Francis Henry Jeffs and Amelia Elizabeth Jacobs. The Reverend Kate Bruce said:

"For 105 years Bertie Frederick George Jeff's body has lain unknown – except to God. Now this has been corrected thanks to those who have offered compelling evidence concerning his identity.

"It is a great privilege to join with representatives of JCCC, XI(F) Sqn RAF and others to honour Bertie Jeffs and his pilot, Ernest Haxton, giving thanks for their courage and sacrifice. Two young men, 21 and 23 years old respectively, who sacrificed all that might have been in their lives for all that has been and is for countless others. 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.' (John's Gospel 15.13)."

The new headstone at the grave was prepared by the CWGC who will now care for them in perpetuity.

Liz Woodfield, CWGC Director of External Relations said:

"Today, Cpl Jeffs receives the named headstone his sacrifice so richly deserves. We commend all that made this possible. He is unknown no more but named and at rest alongside those he served with. We will remember him and

his comrades, for ever more.”

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## [North Korea ballistic missile tests, September 2021: FCDO statement](#)

Press release

A Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office spokesperson responds to short range ballistic missile tests carried out by North Korea.



**A Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office spokesperson said:**

The UK condemns North Korea’s decision to launch a short-range ballistic missile, in violation of UN Security Council Resolutions.

The UK remains committed to the goal of denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula and commends the diplomatic efforts of the US and regional partners to seek peace on the Korean Peninsula and preserve regional stability. We urge North Korea to return to dialogue.

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## [Foreign Secretary meeting with the](#)

# Foreign Minister of Pakistan, 28 September 2021

Press release

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss met Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi today (Tuesday 28 September).



An FCDO Spokesperson said:

The Foreign Secretary met Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi on his visit to London this morning.

The pair spoke about their commitment to strengthening bilateral ties between the two countries, including deepening economic links.

The Pakistan Foreign Minister and the Foreign Secretary discussed the ongoing situation in Afghanistan, and the need for the international community to work together to ensure a coordinated approach. They reaffirmed their commitment to preventing Afghanistan from becoming a safe haven for terror and providing vital humanitarian assistance for ordinary Afghans.

The foreign ministers also discussed the need for action to cut carbon emissions and protect biodiversity. They agreed to work together to achieve ambitious climate change objectives at November's COP26 summit in Glasgow.

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# British Embassy Bucharest calls for project proposals to improve police handling of domestic violence

The deadline for submitting project bids has been extended to 4 October 2021.

This project is part of a wider British Embassy portfolio of projects which seeks to support the Romanian government and civil society in responding to gender based violence.

Domestic violence affects people across the world and social backgrounds every day, in both normal and crisis situations. UN statistics show that, globally, one in three women is a victim of physical aggression. Moreover, in times of crisis, cases of domestic violence tend to escalate. Since the outbreak of COVID-19, emerging data and reports, have shown that all types of violence against women and girls, particularly domestic violence, have intensified. In a country like Romania where, unfortunately, family abuse is often normalised this is a worrying trend.

Statistics from 2018 show that 24% of Romanian women have suffered violence from their partner, while 28% knew other victims amongst their friends and relatives. Only 47% of the surveyed women were aware of the legislation protecting them from domestic violence and 74% were unaware of the existence of a specialised support system. In 2019, the Romanian police registered 44,094 cases of domestic violence and 51 deaths. This means that a Romanian woman was killed almost every week.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the movement restrictions had an impact on everyone's lives, but a particularly dramatic one on the lives of domestic violence victims.

Romania did not deviate from the global trend and reported an increase in the number of cases soon after the restrictions were put in place and continued throughout 2020.

Police officers are often the people who are the first to have contact with victims and are the first point of contact for them as they navigate the system that is in place to offer them protection.

## **Objective**

To promote a better understanding of gender-based violence amongst police officers who handle domestic violence cases and to facilitate the inclusion of victim-centred care practices and trauma informed care in their response to and work on prevention of domestic violence. It should also include forms of gender-based violence beyond physical violence, for example, coercive behaviour, financial control and emotional abuse.

## Scope of work

The project should have a national reach, while also paying special attention to vulnerable communities, where victims of domestic violence are likely to stay in abusive relationships.

## Activities

It is essential that the project implementer builds effective relationships to secure buy in at a policy and operational level for this project to be successful. Potential activities could include:

- policy development with government, police departments and those with lived experience on victim-centred responses and trauma informed care in domestic violence situations
- development of training materials for operational partners who respond to domestic violence incidents and/or have contact with survivors in a policing context
- support for those with lived experience of domestic violence to engage with policy makers and operational partners on the development of materials and training packages
- training on victim and trauma focused responses and signposting to specialist support networks
- creating a support network for police officers who work on domestic violence issues
- supporting materials to raise awareness of victim-centred approaches across police teams to increase awareness of domestic violence issues linked to other reported crimes

This is not an exhaustive list. The embassy welcomes innovative proposals from potential implementing partners that suggest additional or alternative activities to deliver the key objectives.

## Project approach

Bidders are asked to submit a project proposal which will be approved by the British Embassy Bucharest and will form the basis for project planning. The proposal should set out how the implementing partner will deliver activities to support the objectives set out above with an implementation plan and supporting activity based budget. The British Embassy Bucharest will oversee the project planning and provide the necessary contacts to the implementers.

The project implementer will manage project logistics, including travel plans, lodging, car hiring etc. and is expected to consider the pandemic context and its possible impact on the project implementation when submitting the bid.

The embassy will provide contact persons and focal points for UK institutions or experts that might be needed in the process.

## **How to bid**

The deadline for submitting project bids has been extended to 4 October 2021.

Project bids must include:

Activity based budgets should list the activities needed to deliver the outcomes (results) of the project. All costs should be in Romanian Lei (RON).

Bids should be completed in English.

Send all completed forms to [rsvp.bucharest@fcdo.gov.uk](mailto:rsvp.bucharest@fcdo.gov.uk) and [anamaria.dima@fcdo.gov.uk](mailto:anamaria.dima@fcdo.gov.uk).

State in the subject line of the email: Name of implementing organisation and title of the project.

## **Reporting**

The reports to be produced during the course of this project are to be delivered in English:

- an inception note detailing approach and proposed activities. This should also set out key stakeholders who will be engaged, a proposed schedule of activities, risks, safeguarding approach and any additional details, including a communications plan
- a draft report
- three-monthly financial reports
- the final report, following a facilitated process of commenting

## **Composition of the project teams**

The British Embassy Bucharest will nominate a Project Director, British Embassy Bucharest (Tanya Collingridge, Deputy Head of Mission) and a Project Manager (Ana Maria Dima, Senior Political Officer) to oversee the project delivery.

Project proposals should demonstrate that the implementing partner's staffing levels are appropriate to deliver the aims of the project and that the staff have relevant expertise and experience in in domestic violence victim support, as well as detailed knowledge of the domestic violence situation in Romania.

## **Timing and scope of input**

The bidding round is an open and competitive process, assessed by the British Embassy in Bucharest. Results will be issued by late September to early October. Once a bid is approved, a Grant Agreement will be signed with the successful bidder.

Your organisation will be expected to sign the contract within one week of the funds being awarded. Failure to do so may result in the funds being re-allocated. The implementing organisation will be required to submit report updates and a final evaluation of the project.

There are no pre-payments. Reimbursements will be completed once activities have taken place and all receipts submitted. Implementing organisations will request repayments using an invoice (including receipts and a financial report of spend) and the repayments will be carried out during those dates agreed upon in the respective contract.

The budget should be presented in RON. All payments will be made in RON to a bank account held in Romania.

Send any questions on the call for bids to [anamaria.dima@fcdo.gov.uk](mailto:anamaria.dima@fcdo.gov.uk).

It is expected that the project will be carried out from October 2021 to February 2022. The crucial milestones will be the submission of the draft report (early March 2022) and the final report (April 2022).

## **Budget**

Grant applications must include an estimated budget of up to £17,500 or equivalent of 84,875 RON. Depending on the quality of the proposals, the British embassy reserves the right not to grant all or part of the available funds. The embassy also reserves the right to award a grant of less than the amount requested by the applicants. In such a case, applicants will be asked to increase the amount that they co-finance, to propose other co-financing means or to decrease the total costs without altering the substance of the proposal.