

# Abuse inquiry told boy was 'jailed for sex with men'

2 hours ago



Independent Inquiry into Child Sex Abuse



**A care home abuse survivor jailed as a teenager for having sex with men has told an inquiry the authorities meant to care for him "destroyed" his life.**

The man, known as P16, said he was jailed as a boy after performing sex acts on older men for money. The CPS called his prosecution "shocking".

Another care resident said he was made to join "masturbation competitions".

The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) hearings into care in Nottinghamshire ended on Friday.

It is part of a wider inquiry led by Professor Alexis Jay into child sexual abuse in England and Wales.

## 'I was only 15 or 16'

P16 said he reported being physically and sexually abused by a resident at his children's home to staff, but they "swept it under the carpet".

He began long distance running to get away from the abuse but ended up being paid to perform sex acts on older men in toilets, which he did not see as abuse at the time because of what he had already suffered.

When arrested by police he again disclosed the abuse from the resident, but pleaded guilty to charges because social workers told him it would mean "I could go home sooner".

In a statement read to the inquiry, P16 said: "I was prosecuted when older men paid for me to have sex with them in a public toilet. I was only 15 or 16.

"I can't get my head round it, I never could."

He was detained until he was 18.



PA

P16 said the convictions were wrongly recorded, remain on his records and have seen him "persecuted" as an adult.

He said: "Those convictions have followed me around for a long time. They were mistakenly shared as convictions against children when they weren't, I was the child."

Ed Brown QC, for the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), described P16's prosecution as "shocking" and "truly dreadful", but added it pre-dated the existence of the CPS.

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The inquiry also heard written statements from other survivors of abuse.

They disclosed being physically and sexually abused by staff and residents in children's homes and foster care across Nottinghamshire.

One victim, D37, said staff at Beechwood Community Home in Mapperley "picked out boys to be gagged" and abused, adding he was also raped and "forced to participate in masturbation competitions with other boys and members of staff on multiple occasions".

"I remember winning one of those," the statement said.

"I thought it was good. I thought I had won something, I had achieved something. Because of my childhood I thought it was normal."

### 'Apologies are cheap'

The final day of IICSA's Nottinghamshire hearings, being held at The Oval cricket ground in London, heard calls from abuse survivors for changes to the system.

David Hollas, an advocate for members of the Nottingham Child Sexual Abuse Survivors Group, said improved police contact and therapeutic support was "a starting point", but he described the litigation system for victims as "broken" and demanded further improvements.

"Words and apologies are cheap - it's action that is needed," he said.

In their closing statements to the inquiry, public bodies apologised for failings and spoke about reforms they have made.

Andrew Sharland QC, for Nottinghamshire County Council, said it was "profoundly sorry" large numbers of children were abused by its employees and then "far too often" not believed by social workers and others.

He said a "pervading culture of disbelief" of children "no longer exists", adding all settlements over civil claims would come with a personal apology.

Samantha Leek QC, representing Nottinghamshire Police, said the force "will re-examine their own systems and practices" following the evidence put to the inquiry.

She said it acknowledged officers had not properly scrutinised claims of abuse in the past, but said it would ensure complainants are "taken seriously, kept informed and supported and treated with respect".

Steven Ford QC, on behalf of Nottingham City Council, said the authority accepted failings happened historically and "in the very recent past", but said factors such as reduced staff turnover and fewer agency workers had improved its care services.

But Caoilfhionn Gallagher QC, representing dozens of inquiry participants, said survivors had been "frustrated" by Nottingham City Council's "evasive" responses, and criticised the number of "non-apology apologies" issued "repeatedly" by its staff.

She said victims appreciated efforts by Nottinghamshire Police and Nottinghamshire County Council to address issues, but had "real concern" about Nottingham City Council's approach to the inquiry.

IICSA is due to publish a report on the Nottinghamshire section of its investigation in the summer.