

# Former police officer and barrister from Edinburgh jailed for sexual abuse

Detectives from the specialist child abuse investigation team of Essex Police have secured justice for a woman who was abused by an Edinburgh man more than 30 years ago.

Sixty-nine year-old James Boyle was convicted in April of abusing the female between 1986 and 1991 when she was a teenager.

The offences took place in Cambridgeshire while Boyle was a serving Cambridgeshire Police officer. He later retrained to become a barrister.

The victim reported what had happened to her in 2018 following an exchange of messages on social media.

She told the police that Boyle's abuse had left her feeling upset, ashamed, and guilty.

However, following the investigation Boyle, of Sunbury Place, Edinburgh was convicted of two counts of rape and one of indecent assault following a trial at Cambridgeshire Crown Court.

At the same court on Monday he was sentenced to 16 years in jail.

Investigating officer Detective Sergeant Carla Hillyer, now positioned on the specialist Quest team of Essex Police, said: "James Boyle's abuse has had a significant impact on the victim, and I want to pay tribute to the bravery she has shown in coming forward and telling us what happened.

"At the time he was questioned in relation to the offences, Boyle was a trained defence barrister. He knew the system, and had support from many professional colleagues, providing character references in his defence.

"He denied the abuse he subjected the victim to ever happened.

"And yet the jury saw through this and found him guilty.

"No court result will ever turn back time but I hope this helps the victim move forward.

"She has been listened to and she has been believed. It is never too late to get justice."

DS Hillyer added: "I also want to highlight the work of Detective Constable Adam Clarke who has worked tirelessly on this case.

"I am pleased our efforts have resulted in Boyle's conviction and justice for the victim."

Essex Police highlight that support is there for anyone affected by rape and sexual abuse, and no victim or survivor is alone. Synergy Essex provides specialist support for victims and survivors of rape and sexual abuse of all ages and all genders across Essex, Thurrock and Southend.

An NSPCC Scotland spokesperson said: "For more than 30 years ago Boyle had got away with exploiting his position of trust as a serving police officer to sexually abuse a young person.

"His victim has been forced for decades to live with the knowledge that he had never faced justice for his terrible

actions. Thankfully, that has changed today.

“We hope the brave woman in this case can now find some comfort in Boyle’s conviction and sentencing.

“It is so important that anyone who has experienced sexual abuse speaks out, no matter who the offender is and how long ago the offence took place, and that they are given all the support they need to move forwards with their lives.

“Children and young people can contact Childline on 0800 1111, and adults can contact the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 8005000 or by emailing [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).”

Synergy Essex is a partnership of rape and sexual abuse centres in Essex: CARA (Centre for Action on Rape and Abuse), SERICC Rape and Sexual Abuse Specialist Service and Southend-on-Sea Rape Crisis (SOS Rape Crisis). Synergy Essex is independent from the police and provides support for victims and survivors throughout their journey. Victims and survivors can self-refer, or be referred by a parent, partner, friend or professional and can access specialist emotional support, counselling and advocacy. For victims and survivors who report to the police, Synergy Essex provides an Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) service, providing support throughout the criminal justice process. For more information visit the Synergy Essex website: <https://synergyessex.org.uk/>