

Former social worker convicted of sexual assault at Barnardo's home

A former social worker has been convicted of physically and sexually assaulting children at a Barnardo's residential home in East Lothian.

Peter Livingstone carried out a shocking campaign of abuse against five young victims while he was employed at Tyneholm House in Pencaitland in the 1980s.

Livingstone, 66, indecently assaulted one child by removing his clothing and massaging his body and naked buttocks and touching his penis and testicles on various occasions.

The depraved health worker touched the testicles of a second victim aged between 12 and 13 and instructed him to masturbate in his presence.

Livingstone then placed his hand inside his own trousers and carried out a solo sex act on various occasions between April 1981 and November 1982.

A jury also found he had attacked a third child by seizing and dragging him by the hair, forcing him to remove his clothing and making him stand naked facing the corner of a room at the boys' home.

Further offences included assaulting two children on various occasions between 1979 and 1983 and did drag one boy by the

hair, throw him on a bed, punch him on the body and press his knee into his chest.

Livingstone denied the allegations but was found guilty on Friday, February 14 of six offences of assault, indecent assault and using lewd, indecent and libidinous practices following an eight day trial at Edinburgh Sheriff Court.

He was acquitted of two charges of indecent assault and one of using lewd, indecent and libidinous practices after the jury found the three allegations had not been proven by the Crown.

Offences date back to 1979

All the offences took place at the former Dr Barnardo's residential home at Tyneholm House, Pencaitland, East Lothian, between April 23, 1979 and April 15, 1983.

Livingstone, from Clermiston, Edinburgh, has now been warned by a sheriff he is facing a lengthy jail sentence and has had his name added to the sex offenders register.

Advocate James Wallace, defending, said his client has no previous convictions and has adhered to his bail conditions since first appearing in court in August 2023.

Following the jury's verdict Sheriff Matthew Auchincloss said: "You have been convicted of extremely serious charges committed against young children by this jury.

"Because you have no previous convictions I am effectively bound to call for a criminal justice social work report.

"That means you will meet with a specialist social worker who will interview you, carry out a risk assessment and produce a report for me.

"The content of the report will have a significant bearing on the sentence in this case.

"I am going to release you on bail however I have to warn you that a custodial sentence is uppermost in the court's mind.

"Please take this time to get your affairs in order."

The sheriff placed Livingstone on the sex offenders register on an interim basis and sentence was deferred to March.

Tyneholm House in Pencaitland was opened by Barnardo's as a home for boys in 1948.

The property became a mixed accommodation in 1970 before changing to a home for children with physical and learning disabilities in 1973.

The home was finally closed in 1985 and the building is currently used as a care home for the elderly.

Barnardo's has been contacted for comment.



66-year-old Peter Livingstone outside Edinburgh Sheriff Court
PHOTO Alexander Lawrie