

Former social worker jailed for abuse at children's home

A former social worker who sexually abused several boys at a Barnardo's residential home in East Lothian has been jailed and placed on the sex offenders register.

Peter Livingstone carried out a "depraved" campaign of physical and sexual abuse while he was employed at the charity's Tyneholm House in Pencaitland in the 1980s.

Livingstone, 67, indecently assaulted one victim by massaging his naked buttocks and touching his the boy's penis and testicles on several occasions.

The former residential social worker also groped the testicles of a second child, instructed him to masturbate in his presence and fondled himself, all between April 1981 and November 1982.

Livingstone was found to have attacked a third boy 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 care home.

He denied all the allegations against him but was found guilty by a jury of six offences of assault, indecent assault and using lewd, indecent and libidinous practices following an eight day trial at Edinburgh Sheriff Court last month.

The jury also found the Crown had not proven a further two charges of indecent assault and one of using lewd, indecent

and libidinous practices.

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.

The charity has now released a statement paying tribute to the bravery of the victims and condemning Livingstone's behaviour towards them.

Livingstone returned to the dock for sentencing yesterday (FRI) where a sheriff said he had been in "the position of the highest trust" and told him he had "betrayed that trust for your own depraved ends".

Sheriff Matthew Auchincloss said: "You were found guilty by a jury of the physical and sexual abuse of boys at a children's home in East Lothian for the period of April 1979 to April 1983.

"At the time you were employed by Barnardo's to care for these children, the children were already particularly vulnerable given they were in residential care.

"Given the nature of the offending there is no appropriate way of dealing with you other than a custodial sentence."

Livingstone, of Clermiston, Edinburgh, was jailed for 30 months and was placed on the sex offenders register for 10 years.



Peter Livingstone PHOTO Police Scotland

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Mr Wallace said Livingstone had worked with the elderly in the NHS for 20 years after leaving his position with Barnardo's and has no previous convictions.

Martin Crewe, the Director of Barnardo's Scotland, said: "We would like to pay tribute to the victims who have shown great courage and bravery throughout this process.

"We strongly condemn the actions of this individual.

"Keeping the children and young people in our care safe is of paramount importance to Barnardo's and we take this responsibility very seriously.

"We continually review and update our safeguarding training, policies and procedures and will put in place any learnings from this case."

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.

Lynne Barrie, Procurator Fiscal for Lothian and Borders, said: "Peter Livingstone cruelly exploited a position of trust and power to prey on vulnerable children.

"These boys should have been safe under his care but were instead abused and assaulted, causing them lasting trauma.

"I would like to commend the strength and courage of the victims, and to thank them for coming forward. This prosecution would not have been possible without them.

"COPFS is committed to robustly prosecuting non-recent

allegations of abuse of children in care and securing justice.

“I would urge anyone who has experienced similar offending to come forward and report it, regardless of how long ago the offences took place.”



Peter Livingstone (67) Outside Edinburgh Sheriff Court PHOTO
Alexander Lawrie