

David Carrick: The serial rapist and abuser in a police uniform

For 20 years, David Carrick, a serial rapist and violent sexual predator, wore a police uniform and, for much of that time, also carried a gun.

In his private life, he told his victims: "You are my slave," as he controlled and abused them, subjecting them to appalling acts of degradation. They would never be believed as it would be their word against that of a serving officer, Carrick told them.

Carrick was finally stopped when one woman did decide to report him. In October 2021, after publicity about disgraced Met Police officer PC Wayne Couzens, she contacted police in Hertfordshire, where Carrick lived and committed many of his crimes.

The victim described how, a year earlier, she had met Carrick on Tinder, the dating app. On their first encounter, he showed her his police warrant card, claimed he had met famous people - including then prime minister Boris Johnson - and said he handled firearms. He told her he wanted a submissive woman.

After plying her with drink, he took her to a hotel room where, she said, he raped her. Carrick was then arrested and charged.

Carrick has now admitted 49 charges relating to 12 victims. His guilty pleas leave the Metropolitan Police - the force he served in - once again apologising for failing to root out a criminal in uniform.

At his first court appearance, he denied the allegation - but, as a defendant in a court case, Carrick's name was made public. Det Ch Insp Iain Moor, of Hertfordshire Constabulary, who led the investigation, describes this first complainant as a trigger.

Seeing him finally in the dock, Carrick's many victims - previously intimidated and silenced - gradually began to come forward. "The investigation snowballed," Det Ch Insp Moor says. The first complainant did not realise she would empower so many women to strip away the law-and-order mask of a monster.

The Met has apologised after it emerged Carrick had come to the attention of the Met and three other forces nine times.

Assistant Commissioner Barbara Gray says the force "should have spotted his pattern of abusive behaviour". She says failings "may have prolonged" the suffering of Carrick's victims.

Carrick's earliest known victim described being falsely imprisoned, raped and threatened by him in 2003, as his probationary period in the police was ending.

He went on to rape, sexually assault and abuse a series of women, calling them his prostitutes. He would tell some what to wear, where to sleep and what to eat, sometimes even banning them from food altogether. Some he banned from speaking to other men, or even to their own children. Others he urinated on.

One woman described Carrick whipping her with a belt, another how he regularly imprisoned her in a small cupboard under the stairs. She stayed there "intimidated and humiliated until he chose when she could come out", Det Ch Insp Moor says, adding: "I have seen bigger dog crates."

He says Carrick developed relationships with women "to sustain his appetite for degradation and control". "He thrived on humiliating his victims," Det Ch Insp Moor says. Three women were in "controlling and coercive" relationships with Carrick. And police believe there may be more victims.

Hertfordshire Constabulary has set up a dedicated section on its website, allowing people to report directly online without going through a police control room or the general online reporting system.

In police interviews, Carrick appeared relaxed, claiming the sexual activity had been consensual or had not happened.

And for months, it appeared his victims would have to go through the ordeal of court, as Carrick denied the charges. Suddenly, in December 2022, he admitted most of the offences. He was still due to go on trial, in February, on the remaining charges but now the arch-manipulator has pleaded guilty to those as well.

His conviction has left the police with serious questions to answer.

Carrick joined the Met, aged 26, in 2001, after a spell in the Army. He had passed the vetting procedure despite having twice in the previous year been implicated, although not arrested or charged, in possible offences - including burglary, involving a former partner he had refused to accept he was no longer in a relationship with.

In 2002, Carrick, the rookie cop, was investigated by his own force, after being accused of assaulting and harassing an ex-partner. There were no criminal charges and he was not referred to the Met's directorate of professional standards.

PC Carrick's career saw several more reports of assault, harassment and domestic abuse, but none led to a criminal prosecution. He was on the radar of police in Hertfordshire, Hampshire and Thames Valley.

One allegation was made in 2009, when Carrick became a member of the armed teams guarding the Houses of Parliament, government offices and diplomatic missions.

In 2017, he sailed through his police re-vetting - but two years later, he was accused of grabbing a woman by the neck. Again, there were no criminal charges. And although the Met was informed, it decided against a misconduct process.

In summer 2021, Carrick was accused of rape and arrested by Hertfordshire Constabulary, but the Met allowed him to continue working - on restricted duties.

While the Met was publicly proclaiming its commitment to protecting women after the murder of Sarah Everard, it now admits its professional-standards department made no attempt to check the full record of another officer accused of rape.

Ms Gray, who recently took over the department, says she is incredulous, stressing Carrick should have been re-vetted and suspended.

The rape case did not proceed, after the woman withdrew her complaint. And Carrick was preparing to return to full duties when he was arrested again, on another rape allegation. He was charged, named publicly and his 17 years of offending finally exposed.

The Met has asked the police watchdog to review its decision-making on Carrick, a case Ms Gray describes as "devastating for the victims that have had to go through pain and suffering at the hands of a serving police officer".

"It's devastating to the trust and confidence that we are working so hard to earn from women and girls across London," she says. "We know this is a day when policing has definitely taken a step back."

During his sentencing hearing on Monday, Southwark Crown Court heard he held a black handgun to one woman's head before telling her, "You are not going," as he raped her.

Prosecutor Tom Little KC told the court: "She bit his arm and he put his hand behind the bed. He searched for something and then put a black handgun to her head, which was the item he found behind the bed, and said to her "you are not going".

"She froze. The prosecution does not contend that it was a real firearm. (The victim) couldn't say whether it was or not."

The Metropolitan Police apologised after it was revealed that Carrick had come to the attention of police over nine incidents, including rape allegations, between 2000 and 2021.

The court also heard that Carrick used cameras in his home to monitor his victims and shut one woman in a small cupboard as punishment while "whistling at her as if she was a dog".

David Carrick's offences

Carrick, from Stevenage, Hertfordshire, has pleaded guilty to 49 offences spanning two decades:

His full list of offences are:

24 counts of rape

9 counts of sexual assault

5 counts of assault by penetration

3 counts of coercive and controlling behaviour

3 counts of false imprisonment

2 counts of attempted rape

1 count of attempted sexual assault by penetration

1 count of causing a person to engage in sexual activity without consent

1 count of indecent assault

