

**Thursday 6 February 2014**

## **“Schools are no safer now than they were 50 years ago”, say Caldicott abuse survivors**

Today, Thursday 6 February, as former Caldicott Preparatory School headmaster Roland Peter Wright and former teacher Hugh Henry are sentenced at Amersham Law Courts (a satellite court to Aylesbury Crown Court), the men who were sexually abused as children at Caldicott School warn that British schools are still nowhere near as safe as they should be for children, despite claims to the contrary from the Department for Education.

Roland Peter Wright, the former headmaster of Caldicott Prep School in Farnham Royal, Bucks, was convicted of 10 counts on a single indictment of sexually abusing five pupils at the school between 1959 and 1970. Hugh Henry, a former friend of Wright’s, pleaded guilty to 13 counts on the same indictment against nine pupils between 1959 and 1973 from both Gayhurst School in Gerrard’s Cross and Caldicott.

Tom Perry, author of the @MandateNow campaign led by NAPAC (the National Association for People Abused in Childhood), and four leading survivor charities, was the first former pupil to file a complaint against Wright. He said: “People are appalled when they hear of the sexual abuse we suffered and shocked at the failure of some staff who worked at the school, to report what they knew or suspected. Many parents have a mistaken belief that things have changed since our day, but sadly there is still no law requiring staff working in schools who either suspect or know of abuse to report it to anyone. In this respect, nothing has changed in the last fifty years.”

**Cheryl Gillan MP (C)** and a former Education Minister says : “For many years I have supported my constituent who bravely made public the abuse he suffered at school in order to protect more children from abuse in the future particularly in regulated activities. In the light of all the recent developments I hope the campaign for mandatory reporting will now be re examined by Ministers with a view to introducing better safeguarding for our children.”

Tom Perry said: “As many recent cases have demonstrated, there continues to be a systemic failure to report abuse in many schools. Surprisingly, and for reasons that have yet to be explained, the DfE ( <http://www.thesurvivorstrust.org/documents/dfe-noneply-170114.pdf> ) and the NSPCC ( <http://www.thesurvivorstrust.org/documents/nspcc-precis.jpg> ) have stated they do not want legislation introduced which requires even ‘known abuse’ to be reported by institutional settings. A law is urgently required to ensure that schools and other institutional settings make any such reports of known or suspected to the Local Authority.”

Tom continued: “Had Mandatory Reporting existed when I was abused, I and others who attended this school are confident Wright would have been stopped long ago. Even as a ten year-old, I questioned why the captain of rugby, who traditionally sat at Wright’s table in the school dining room, took morning tea to his bedroom and often then failed to return to breakfast. My innocent mind could not explain it; I merely thought ‘that’s what I will have to do if I become captain.’ Indeed, that is exactly what happened.”

Tom, who attended Caldicott from 1963 to 1967, continued: “Adults not speaking out remains a common problem which must be addressed. There are many examples where the toxic combination of adults being unwilling and children being unable to speak has often led to no report being made. As a result, child abuse has continued for years and sometimes decades. Hillside First School in Weston-super-Mare is just one example and many more exist. We must support adults involved in regulated activities to speak out. The most effective way to do this is by creating a legal requirement to report known or suspected abuse – by taking the right action they will be protected by the legislation. Legislation combined with an enhanced role for the Local Authority officer will result in a full and well trained triage assessment function -- this will finally deliver credible child protection in institutional settings.”

Tom was also the founding contributor of the BAFTA award winning documentary ‘Chosen’ <http://truevisiontv.com/films/details/97/chosen> about institutional child abuse and its long-term effects.

Over 100,000 people have signed **@Mandate Now** and Paula Barrow’s **Daniel’s Law** petition calling for mandatory reporting which requires staff working in ‘regulated activities’ to report suspected or known child abuse to the Local Authority for independent assessment.

## CONTACT

Tom Perry is available for interview – landline 01494 775063 and mobile 077987 43210 Tom will be at Amersham Law courts on 6 February 2014

## NOTES TO EDITORS

5 minute guide to Mandatory Reporting in Regulated Activities:  
<http://www.thesurvivorstrust.org/documents/5-minute-guide.pdf>

@MandateNow's [response to NSPCC policy position "Mandatory reporting: a consideration of the evidence"](#)

Watch the Daniel's Law film on YouTube

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W1eTGoZgzNM&feature=youtu.be>

Paula has joined forces with @MandateNow coalition of Survivor Charities led by the National Association of People Abused in Childhood (NAPAC) to campaign jointly for the introduction of Daniel's Law.

### About @MandateNow

@MandateNow campaigns for the introduction of Mandatory Reporting of allegations and known child abuse in all Regulated Activities and is now managing the political and legislative activities for Paula Barrow's highly successful [Daniel's Law petition](#). The @MandateNow petition is [here](#) and it accords precisely with Paula's objectives for Daniels Law.

@MandateNow is supported by:

NAPAC.	<a href="http://www.napac.org.uk">www.napac.org.uk</a>
THE SURVIVORS TRUST	<a href="http://www.thesurvivorstrust.org">www.thesurvivorstrust.org</a>
SURVIVORS UK	<a href="http://www.survivorsuk.org">www.survivorsuk.org</a>
RESPOND	<a href="http://www.respond.org.uk">www.respond.org.uk</a>
INNOCENCE IN DANGER	<a href="http://www.innocenceendanger.org/en/">www.innocenceendanger.org/en/</a>

### Supporters of mandatory reporting of child abuse include:

Keir Starmer, former Director of Public Prosecutions

Church of England. Panorama broadcast 04.10.13

Catholic Church in England. Panorama broadcast 04.01.13

Both these faith groups are defined as Regulated Activities by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

CEOPS has supported the call for Mandatory Reporting in its **CEOP Thematic Assessment** 'The Foundations of Abuse': A thematic assessment of the risk of child sexual abuse by adults in institutions

### Supporting MPs:

Sarah Champion MP (Rotherham - PPS to Shadow Education Minister)

Simon Danczuk MP (Rochdale)

Barry Gardiner MP (Brent North)  
Cheryl Gillan MP (Chesham and Amersham)  
Roger Godsiff MP (Birmingham Sparkbrook and Small Heath)  
Andrew Gwynne MP (Shadow Health Minister)  
Sharon Hodgson MP, (Shadow Minister for Women and Equalities)  
Lucy Powell MP (Shadow Minister for Childcare and Children)  
Tom Watson MP (West Bromwich East)

**Peers:**

Baroness Hussein Ece  
Baroness Walmsley

**The MP's and Peers who support @MandateNow (and Daniel's Law) do so in a personal capacity. The Government continues to resist the call for mandatory reporting in Regulated Activities.**

**Bodies that have suggested that Mandatory Reporting needs to be considered**

HMIC Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary - Suggested Mandatory Reporting should be considered in its report 'Mistakes Were Made' of **March 2013**

HAC Home Affairs Committee; Child Sexual Exploitation and Grooming Report **10.06.13** said it wants Mandatory Reporting considered.