



Rochdale child sex abuse ring

🕒 This article is more than **9 years old**

Rochdale grooming case: nine men jailed for up to 25 years each

Serious sexual abuse, including rape of vulnerable teenage girls, took place between 2005 and 2013

Frances Perraudin

Fri 8 Apr 2016 10.40 EDT

First published on Fri 8 Apr 2016 08.28 EDT

Nine men have each been sentenced to up to 25 years in jail for a catalogue of serious sexual offences against teenage girls in Rochdale, exposed following [widespread media coverage](#) of grooming cases in the area.

The men were found guilty last month of abusing their victims, aged 13 to 22, between 2005 and 2013. The defendants pleaded not guilty to the charges during two separate trials at Manchester Minshull Street crown court, which lasted a total of 15 weeks. A 10th man pleaded guilty and was sentenced last September.

During the sentencing, Judge John Potter said the fact that the women, now in their 20s, had given evidence was a testament to their “bravery, courage and fortitude”. Three of the victims were present in court to watch the sentencing and the public gallery erupted into applause when the sentences were read out.

The principal victim in the case, who was abused by all of the defendants, walked into a police station in 2012 claiming to know about “Rochdale grooming”, after news emerged of the convictions of a number of Asian men for grooming white girls for sex.

The victim reported that when she was aged 14 and 15 she was repeatedly sexually groomed by a large number of men from the Rochdale area. The victim - described by prosecutors as an “extremely vulnerable young woman” who had had a difficult home life and a learning disability - said her phone number had been passed around and that hundreds of men would ring her wanting to meet for sex.

The 10 men were charged as part of Operation Doublet, a police investigation into the alleged sexual exploitation of teenage girls by men in Rochdale. The operation has led to more than 100 people being arrested and questioned, the majority of whom had links to Rochdale.

Many of the offences date back 10 years and were first reported shortly after they were committed. In some cases the victims decided they no longer wanted to cooperate with police inquiries, while in other cases the police decided not to pursue the allegations. The victims were later approached by detectives to give evidence after the principal complainant came forward in 2012.

During the trial’s opening, the prosecution told the jury that even in the relatively short period of time since the offences had taken place “the whole of society has a much greater understanding of child sexual exploitation”.

Det Ch Insp Jamie Daniels, the senior investigating officer for Operation Doublet, said it had been an extremely complex case and commended the victims for their bravery. “Only with their support have we arrived at this point,” he said. “The process can be emotionally demanding and traumatic for the victims and we do not

underestimate the courage this took.”

He said child sexual abuse was more than a criminal issue. “It is a social problem that we are working closely with our partners to tackle on many levels. Criminal investigations and convictions allow us to remove the offender but there is a huge amount of work behind the scenes. These are victim-led investigations and the long-term wellbeing and care of those victims is of paramount importance.”

In a statement read out to the court on Thursday, one victim said her experiences had been eating her up inside and that it was hard to describe the “brilliant relief” that came from telling someone. “After all these years something had been done. My head was clear and I could start to move on,” she said of the guilty verdict.

Afraz Ahmed, 33, of Rochdale, was found guilty of various sexual offences, including rape, conspiracy to rape and sexual activity with a child. He was sentenced to 25 years in jail. Another defendant, 40, who cannot be named for legal reasons, was convicted of rape and attempting to abduct a child. He was sentenced to 23 years.

Choudry Ikhalag Hussain, of Rochdale, was convicted in his absence of rape, sexual activity with a child and conspiracy to rape. The 38-year-old, who left the country during his trial and is currently believed to be in Pakistan, was sentenced to 19 years.

Mohammed Dauood, 38, of Burnley, was convicted of rape, sexual activity with a child and sexual assault. He was sentenced to 16 years in jail. David Law, 46, of Ilkeston, Derbyshire, was convicted of conspiracy to rape and sentenced to 11 years.

Rehan Ali, 27, of Blackley, and Kutab Miah, 35, of Rochdale, were both found guilty of rape and sexual activity with a child. Ali was sentenced to seven years and Miah to nine.

Abid Khan, 38, of Liverpool, and Mohammed Zahid, 54, of Rochdale, were both found guilty of sexual activity with a child. Khan was sentenced to six and a half years and Zahid to five.



Mahfuz
Rahman.
Photograph:
Greater

The 10th man, Mahfuz Rahman, 29, is serving a five and a half year sentence at Garth prison, having pleaded guilty in September to three counts of sexual activity with a child.

A spokesperson for the NSPCC child protection charity said the victims in the case had shown “a great deal of bravery to speak out, particularly the young girl who walked into a police station after seeing coverage of other child abuse cases in the Rochdale area and told detectives her grim story. This sends out a strong message that other victims of abuse can feel confident they will not be ignored and will be taken seriously”