

**Report to Northumberland
and Tyne & Wear Health
Authority of the
Independent Inquiry Panel
into the Health Care and
Treatment of
Raymond Wills**

July 2002

Foreword

Raymond Wills presented all of the agencies and their personnel with a considerable professional challenge and a dilemma about how to engage him when he appeared reluctant to accept help.

Acknowledgements

The panel acknowledges:

The co-operation of the family of RW and their difficulties in having to deal with RW as well as the aftermath of his actions and this inquiry.

The support of Mrs C Weightman and Mrs H Fisher in the preparation of this report.

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Section 1

Introduction

Our Terms of Reference

We were appointed by the Newcastle and North Tyneside Health Authority on 3rd May 2001 to enquire into the health care and treatment of RW and to report to the authority in due course with our report, findings and recommendations. (As part of a reorganisation of the NHS, the health authority ceased to exist on 31st March 2002 and was succeeded by Northumberland and Tyne & Wear Health Authority, to whom the report is presented.) The inquiry panel were:

- Mr Derek Winter - Solicitor - (Chairman)
- Dr Adrian Berry - Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist
- Mrs Kay Whittle - Previously Director of Social Services
- Mrs Helen Smith - Previously Area Manager in Probation Services

The inquiry was established under the terms of the Health Service Guidance HSG (94) 27 following the conviction and sentence of RW on 26th February 2001 at Newcastle upon Tyne Crown Court for the manslaughter of his sister Caroline Anne Wills and his nephew Ashley Jordan Catchpole (aka Wills).

Our terms of reference were as follows:

Raymond Wills - dob 28.7.1971

- Examine the care the patient was receiving at the time of the incident and the suitability of that care in view of the patient's history and assessed health and social care needs.
- Examine the extent of which that care corresponded with statutory obligations, relevant guidance from the Department of Health, and local operational policies, and the adequacy of the care plan plus monitoring.
- Consider the effectiveness of the inter-agency working in terms of assessment, care planning and service delivery including reference to housing, probation and the non-statutory sector.
- Arising from the findings, make recommendations of changes that should be made to improve the local system for the care of people with mental health problems.

The inquiry panel met on:

- 08.06.01 at the offices of Newcastle and North Tyneside Health Authority (the authority)
 - 18.06.01 at the offices of the authority
 - 24.07.01 at the offices of the authority
 - 31.08.01 at the offices of the authority
 - 08.10.01 at the offices of the authority
 - 09.10.01 at the offices of the authority
 - 10.10.01 at the offices of the authority
 - 23.11.01 at the offices of the authority
 - 12.12.01 at the offices of the authority
 - 16.01.02 at the offices of the authority
- and undertook a number of telephone conferences.

The Chairman and Dr Berry visited RW at Ashworth Hospital on 26th July 2001 and on the 28th January 2002.

The panel heard evidence from a number of witnesses and considered documentation provided by relevant agencies.

All of those witnesses who gave formal evidence have had the opportunity to amend/approve the transcripts of their evidence.

The agencies involved have been given full opportunities to disclose all relevant documentation/information to the inquiry panel.

The report has been written with the expectation that all witnesses and agencies have provided full and frank disclosure to the inquiry panel.

Section 2

Information

The Care Programme Approach

The Care Programme Approach (CPA) extends the aftercare provisions of the Mental Health Act 1983 to people considered to be vulnerable on discharge from hospital and to other people considered to be vulnerable who are already living in the community. It is an assessment of need, involving service users and carers (if appropriate) as well as the allocation of a key worker and an agreed care plan.

Schizophrenia

Schizophrenia is a severe and enduring mental illness usually characterised by abnormal perceptions (e.g. hearing voices), firmly held abnormal beliefs (e.g. ideas of persecution), abnormalities in the expression of emotion and a disordered pattern of thinking.

Schizophrenia is a relatively common form of severe mental illness and local estimates suggest that in the Newcastle upon Tyne and North Tyneside area one would expect 140-235 new cases of schizophrenia every year.

Schizophrenia is often a long-term illness and as such one would estimate that at any given time 2,000-4,000 residents in the Newcastle upon Tyne and North Tyneside area to be suffering from schizophrenia.

Schizoid Personality Disorder

Personality disorders refer to conditions, which develop during early life and persist throughout adolescence and adulthood.

Schizoid personality disorder is characterised by emotional coldness or detachment and limited capacity to express warmth or feelings. There

is also an apparent indifference to praise or criticism and little interest in sexual experience with a preference for solitary activities.

There is also often an excessive preoccupation with fantasy and insensitivity to prevailing social norms and conventions.

Mental Health Services Configuration for Newcastle and North Tyneside 1988/2001

1988 – 1995 North Tyneside

In 1988 adult acute inpatient services for North Tyneside residents were transferred from St George's Hospital, Morpeth to the newly commissioned district general hospital site at Rake Lane, North Shields. These services were provided by North Tyneside District Health Authority.

Community mental health services previously provided by St George's Hospital also transferred to the new North Tyneside mental health services.

The community teams were not based within catchment areas but were centrally located on the Tynemouth Victoria Jubilee Infirmary site. The teams were GP practice linked and community psychiatric nurses took referrals directly from GPs. The social workers in mental health were based outside of the teams in Preston Hospital, North Shields.

In 1992, three distinct community teams evolved and were based within the catchment area they served; they were Wallsend, North Shields and Whitley Bay. The Longbenton area of North Tyneside had its services provided from Newcastle mental health services.

1995

In 1995 the service provider for the adult mental health services changed and services were provided by Newcastle City Health NHS Trust. Mental health services were organised by division and Newcastle division and North Tyneside division came into being. The North Tyneside division took on the Longbenton area of North Tyneside. This remained the case until 1997 when following further re-organisation within Newcastle City Health NHS Trust all mental

health services were brought together into the mental health programme.

1990 - 2001 Newcastle Services

Newcastle services have seen little change since 1990, the structure and organisation of services has remained the same, the only changes being to team bases and re-located in patient settings.

Consultants have worked as part of the sector teams serving distinct catchment areas.

1988 - 1995 Joint Arrangements

Prior to 1995 there were no organised links between what were then separate Newcastle and North Tyneside services. Care programme arrangements were organised separately, however since 1991 both areas have been targeting the severe and enduring mentally ill.

When services merged in 1995 an integrated Care Programme Approach (CPA) was adopted across Newcastle and North Tyneside from both a health and social service perspective.

Care Planning

Under CPA care priorities fell under one of three tiers. Those on tier one would normally see a consultant psychiatrist. Reviews for these patients were deemed to have been carried out at out patient appointments. For those on tiers two and three invariably there were two or more disciplines involved. Reviews for these patients would take the form of three to six monthly formal CPA review meetings.

2001 and the Future

With the formation of Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland Mental Health NHS Trust (3Ns) services will be provided at locality bases. Each of three localities will have a locality director with responsibility for ensuring comprehensive service delivery and co-ordination from the 3Ns Trust, primary care and local authority perspective.

Care co-ordination to supercede CPA was implemented on 1 April 2002.

Section 3

Raymond Wills: Narrative of Key Dates and Events

This narrative is based on case records, documents and material supplied by the different agencies.

Some letters and reports are summarised. Its purpose is to provide a record of key dates and events, which are relevant to a review of RW's health care and treatment. The narrative is selective and does not include all known facts and events about RW's history.

Raymond William Wills (RW) was born on the 28th of July 1971 at Princess Mary Hospital, Newcastle upon Tyne. RW was the son of KW and MW. RW's sister, CAW, (born on 30th August 1973) and her son, AJC (born on 30th July 1994) were killed by RW on the 20th March 2000.

It is recorded that in July 1984 RW left Cramlington High School, (having cut his wrists as a consequence of bullying) to attend St Benet Biscop Catholic School in Bedlington.

There was no formal relevant agency involvement with RW or his family up until December 1984, when the future care arrangements for the elderly and infirm paternal grandparents of RW required consideration.

RW was admitted to the North Tyneside General Hospital on the 5th March 1985 for observation having inflicted a wound to his right wrist. RW was reported to have been an isolated and untrusting child. A referral was made to a principal clinical psychologist who concluded that "whilst admission to the day unit at Preston Hospital, North Shields was desirable, RW lacked enthusiasm". In the event RW was referred to a principal clinical psychologist at Northumberland Health Authority. Northumberland County Council Social Services Department was informed upon the discharge of RW and family therapy was arranged.

By the 14th of March 1985 family therapy had begun. There were sessions of family therapy on the 28th March 1985, 18th April 1985 and the 23rd April 1985. On the 24th April 1985 RW had an appointment with an educational psychologist. Family therapy continued on the 3rd June 1985 and although a further session had been arranged on the 26th June 1985, the family therapist cancelled that appointment. By the 5th July 1985 the family made contact with the family therapist to indicate that everything was fine with RW and school and that the family required no further sessions or contact. In those circumstances the family therapist closed the case although it was clear from recordings made at the time that there were complex family dynamics in place.

RW left school in 1986 with three Certificates of Secondary Education and became a part-time factory worker before moving on to be employed as a full-time printing apprentice until he was dismissed for incompetence/bad time keeping. Thereafter RW was unemployed.

Records indicate that RW saw his GP with anxiety symptoms on the 13th July 1987 and again on the 8th January 1988 when it was recorded by his GP that the "problem persists". RW was appropriately referred to a clinical psychologist.

By the 2nd March 1988 an appointment had been offered to RW at the Young People's Unit at Newcastle General Hospital. In a report dated the 17th June 1988 the Young People's Unit reported to the GP for RW that he had been suffering from "a disabling obsessional neurosis". This included compulsive handwashing and a habit of kicking things to avoid touching them with his hands. "His sister feels unable to bring her friends home because of his strange habits". Inpatient treatment was indicated in the report and as such the GP of RW was notified that RW was to be admitted to the Young People's Unit and a pre-admission assessment arranged.

By the 27th June 1988 RW had been admitted to the Young People's Unit with weekend leave.

During the period of admission of RW a psychological report disclosed that RW had an IQ of 101. The report recommended that RW's "difficulties appeared to centre on his inability/unwillingness to face the every day situations associated with maturation and he is using various means of avoidance rather than attempting to develop more positive strategies". The Young People's Unit reviewed the case of RW on the 3rd August 1988 and by the 12th August 1988 he was discharged.

The discharge report from the Young People's Unit of the 19th August 1988 reported to the GP for RW that there were complex family dynamics. Problems were identified for RW as shyness and difficulties meeting with people, together with obsessions secondary to this, although RW "never exhibited any of his symptoms whatsoever" during his six week admission.

Although RW had been discharged by the Young People's Unit he maintained contact with the nursing sister from the unit in August and September 1988, as well as in November, when the senior clinical psychologist, who had previously reported, continued work with the family. RW was to be engaged on a Youth Training Scheme.

Records indicate that in November 1988 RW failed to keep two appointments at the Young People's Unit and that he had left home for a week with a view to look for employment in Birmingham.

By the 18th January 1989 RW was not attending the Youth Training Scheme although he had been pretending to do so. The parents of RW made the decision that it was in RW's interest that he ought to leave their home until he "showed he was willing to persist in the work situation and to continue to face his difficulties rather than just run away from them".

On the 21st January 1989 RW was admitted to the Royal Victoria Infirmary (RVI) with a laceration to his left wrist. Records indicate that there was "no significant psychiatric pathology which merited a psychiatric admission". The mother of RW did visit RW at the RVI and records made at the time indicate that she "made it quite clear that they would not have him back home".

As a consequence RW left the parental home to live at the Stepping Stones Hostel, Gosforth, which was a small independent hostel for homeless teenagers.

Records and information that were available to the panel indicate that the parents of RW continued to support him in the emotional sense whether he was with them or living independently.

On the 30th January 1989 the senior clinical psychologist who had been dealing with RW made a report to the GP for RW.

On the 3rd May 1989 the GP for RW was notified by the plastic surgeon at the RVI that RW had "failed to keep multiple appointments following exploration of the laceration to his left wrist".

A further report from the senior clinical psychologist dated the 28th June 1989 was made to the GP for RW even though he had only kept two appointments "out of the many which had been offered to him". The report indicated that "relationships with his family remain strained". The report went on to state that RW's "mental state does seem to have improved somewhat". In those circumstances no further appointments for RW were to be given to him unless he wanted them. It was clear that RW was not engaging with anyone or any particular service that could offer him support.

By September 1989 RW had moved to a flat at 138 Westgate Court, Westgate Road, Newcastle. RW's parents moved locally in November 1989 and it would appear that there were no further attendances at the Young People's Unit.

Until the 6th November 1989 there appeared to have been no criminal activity on the part of RW. On this date RW was sentenced by Newcastle Magistrates Court to a 12 month conditional discharge for an offence of theft, together with a payment of £22 compensation.

The GP for RW referred him to a psychiatrist on the 18th April 1990. The basis of the referral was that RW had "suicidal tendencies and no motivation in life ... has a devastating phobia for everything ... very isolated and retracted". Records further indicate that RW was reported as having been prescribed Diazepam 5 mg twice daily which was discontinued after a few days.

Diazepam (valium) is a drug used principally for the short term treatment of anxiety - the usual dosage being 5 - 30 mg daily. Its use is limited because of the risks of developing dependency.

The psychiatrist to whom the GP had made the referral of RW saw him on the 20th April 1990. The psychiatrist found RW depressed with suicidal ideas and insomnia. There appeared to be an inconsistent history of self-harm including an attempted gassing with a camping stove. The psychiatrist concluded, "further assessment is essential". The psychiatrist wanted to look at the records from the Young People's Unit and to make arrangements for a family assessment.

In a report from the psychiatrist dated the 25th May 1990 it was concluded that RW had a "schizoid personality, tends to be rather self conscious and paranoid at times". The report went on to say that there was "no current evidence that he has any form of psychotic illness but I would think he may well be at risk from this and it is a little worrying that recently he had a big argument with his mother and was

aggressive towards her and his sister, having accused them of talking about him behind his back".

Records from Newcastle General Hospital indicate that RW had overdosed and was admitted to the Newcastle General Hospital on the 1st June 1990. Further reports indicate that RW "presents with anger" and had "feelings of anger". RW himself reported that "I feel I am dirty because of things I think about - violent things: bashing people's skulls".

The discharge of RW from Newcastle General Hospital took place on the 5th June 1990 with an admission plan to St George's, Morpeth. The discharge summary from the psychiatric registrar at the time sent to the psychiatrist for RW and his GP concluded that RW had "a kind of learned helplessness syndrome with very poor social skills and once assessment had proven he did not have a depressive illness he was discharged".

The admission of RW to Alnwick House, St George's Hospital, Morpeth, was an informal admission on the 14th June 1990 under the care of the psychiatrist previously seen by RW for a rehabilitation assessment. An occupational therapist reported that RW had "poor self esteem" and would "avoid social contact and lacks confidence". RW "feels aggressive but not able to express it". The impression of RW was that he had an inadequate personality and there were queries about depressive neurosis and prodromal schizophrenia.

In a review, which took place on the 31st July 1990, it was reported that a psychologist "feels Raymond has angry and aggressive feelings towards his parents and his former psychiatrist re being told he couldn't live at home and doesn't want responsibility. Psychology feel he is potentially dangerous".

A decision was made not to pursue social skills training with RW "as he chooses to be alone and therefore should not be encouraged to change unless in the future he decides he wants to".

On 23rd August 1990 against medical advice RW discharged himself from St George's Hospital, Morpeth to 138 Westgate Court, Westgate Road, Newcastle. The family of RW were advised, along with his GP. The diagnosis of RW at this time was "schizoid personality". Arrangements were to be made for RW to have the benefit of a community psychiatric nurse.

A report prepared by the psychiatrist for RW on the 4th September 1990 concluded that RW had "little motivation to improve his social

interaction but worked quite well with staff in the Occupational Therapy Department ... unable to cope functioning in groups and was unwilling to talk about any of his problems at a psychological level". The report went on to say "at no stage did we see any evidence of psychosis or major depression". Furthermore the report concluded "I think he is someone who will remain unable to cope properly and may be at risk in the future".

It would appear that a referral was made to Newcastle Social Services on the 17th October 1990 after RW had visited his parents on the 16th October 1990 and was reported to be "aggressive and made threats towards them and a doctor". It was decided that in the light of the CPN visit arranged for the following day that any urgent intervention would be more appropriately dealt with by the Doctors Deputising Service.

On the 20th May 1991 RW attended the RVI, having cut his wrists as a suicidal gesture after an argument with his grandfather. Psychiatric assessment at the time suggested schizoid personality.

The psychiatric review at the RVI for RW was arranged for the 24th May 1991. There had been no further attempts at self-harm by RW.

On the 6th June 1991 the GP for RW was advised about the situation of RW and an unsuccessful referral was made to a community psychiatric nurse.

At a further appointment for RW at the RVI on the 28th June 1991, records indicate that RW had "ideas of persecution from parents/Young People's Unit/relatives" and speaks about "harming others/himself".

RW did not attend the further appointment at the RVI on the 17th July 1991 and was discharged. The GP for RW was advised of the discharge of RW and confirmed the referral of RW's "chronic" psychiatric problems to a community psychiatric nurse.

That community psychiatric nurse later reported on the 21st October 1991 that he had not been able to make contact with RW. It would appear that there was only sporadic engagement by RW with the available services at this time.

The next recordings about RW did not feature until the 23rd March 1993 when RW saw his GP whose records at that time disclosed "depressed early psychosis". The GP for RW prescribed Fluvoxamine (100 mg daily). *This was an antidepressant medication with fewer*

toxic side effects than older antidepressant drugs. The most troubling side effects were usually nausea and loss of appetite though the medication was usually well tolerated. The usual dose is 100-300mg daily and therapeutic effect usually occurs after two to six weeks of treatment.

Newcastle Social Services received a referral from Housing on the 3rd September 1993 about RW. This referral in itself may have prompted appropriate support services for RW. A medical assessment had been recommended but a subsequent home visit on the 10th September 1993 by a psychiatrist was unsuccessful.

In November 1993 there were reports of RW having been to France.

On the 14th December 1993 there was a review of RW's case. Records made at the time indicated that there had been repeated attempts made to see RW with no success. *It was clear that RW was not engaging with the available services.*

On the 7th January 1994 a psychiatrist was called out to RW by a GP to undertake an assessment of RW with a view to "a Section 2". The psychiatrist concerned referred RW to the Harbour Day Unit at Blyth for "urgent help". The situation at the home of RW was said to be "acute". However, the psychiatrist took a view that admission under Section 2 of the Mental Health Act 1983 "could be detrimental to his future co-operation with the service". The report of the psychiatrist went on to say, "whilst I feel this young man is probably exhibiting signs of an early schizophrenic illness, it may be that he is just a severe unresolved adolescent disturbance and I do not feel it appropriate to label him as a psychotic until more information is available. The previous admissions have only served to reduce his subsequent co-operation with the services ... urgent assessment and probably continuing attendance at Harbour may prove more effective".

This was a serious episode and is illustrative of the dilemma facing professionals about the "labelling" of individuals which sometimes has the effect of discouraging those individuals from engagement with the relevant services.

By the 10th January 1994 it was reported that RW was "not too bad since he saw" the psychiatrist on the 7th January 1994. A referral was made to Blyth Community Hospital for RW to see another psychiatrist who by the 17th January 1994 had liaised with a community psychiatric nurse about the referral of RW to Blyth Star Workshop. Although RW missed an appointment on the 24th January

1994 he was reviewed by the psychiatrist at Blyth Community Hospital at an outpatient clinic on the 27th January 1994. The psychiatrist considered that "the differential diagnosis with this young man is a severe compulsive disorder or prodromal symptoms of schizophrenia". Arrangements were made for RW to be seen by the Home Treatment Team and for a review by the psychiatrist within a fortnight.

In a report to the GP of RW from the psychiatrist's registrar it was confirmed that RW was to be reviewed by the Community Rehabilitation Team and a place was to be organised for him at Blyth Star Enterprises or the Harbour Day Unit to which RW was agreeable.

The Harbour Day Unit accepted RW on the 10th February 1994 but RW failed to attend his first appointment on the 14th February 1994.

Despite "strenuous efforts to engage him in the Day Hospital and in the Outpatient Clinic" RW was discharged from the Harbour Day Unit on the 2nd March 1994.

Once again RW was slipping away from the available services.

Records disclosed that on the 8th March 1994 a community psychiatric nurse met with the family for RW. It appeared that RW was to seek alternative accommodation, initially at a bed and breakfast, until North Tyneside Council found him permanent accommodation. The needs of RW were described as "social and that the monitoring of his mental health through psychiatric outpatient appointments is sufficient at present".

On the 4th May 1994 RW was sentenced by North Tyneside Magistrates Court to a one year conditional discharge for an offence of criminal damage.

On the 21st July 1994 RW was seen by his new GP in North Shields (with whom he had registered on the 6th May 1994). RW was depressed and prescribed Fluoxetine (Prozac) 20 mg daily.

Fluoxetine is an antidepressant medication of the same type as Fluvoxamine. It causes less nausea and loss of appetite and is generally non sedating and well tolerated. The usual dose for treatment of depression is 20 mg daily and its therapeutic effect takes some two to six weeks to occur.

RW was seen again by his GP on the 4th August 1994 and referred on the same day to the North Shields Community Mental Health Team (NSCMHT).

That referral was received by the NSCMHT on the 8th August 1994 for "self harm problems". A key worker was allocated the following day. By the 16th August 1994 a letter was sent by the key worker to RW with an appointment for the 24th August 1994. The first appointment by the key worker with RW was not kept by RW. In the circumstances the key worker wrote on the 26th August to RW to follow up that missed appointment. RW was then discharged by the NSCMHT.

When RW saw his GP on the 31st August 1994 RW had not had the appointment from NSCMHT as he appeared to have moved house. *Once again RW was slipping away from the available services.*

The police received a report on or about the 19th October 1994 that RW was sleeping rough in a tent at Cramlington. Assistance by the police was offered to RW, which he declined.

On the 29th November 1994 RW referred himself as homeless to Northumberland County Council having been moved on by the police from a tent in a field at Cramlington. An overnight stay was arranged for RW at Ardgowan House. At this time RW admitted to suicidal feelings but not to intent. It was concluded that RW "should receive ongoing social support and should not be allowed to slip through the net".

A social worker researched the history of RW confirming the diagnosis of RW as "severe obsessional compulsive disorder or prodromal symptoms of schizophrenia". The social worker had established that RW had been discharged from the Mental Health Team earlier in the year when his needs were found to be social. The social worker also attempted to secure alternative accommodation for RW making enquiries of Lamb House, who were not prepared to have him as he had "a history of violence to sister". Blyth Star Enterprises were not prepared to have RW.

In the event a list of bed and breakfast accommodation was given to RW who was described at this point as agitated. RW left Ardgowan House (without telling anyone where he was going).

An urgent referral was made by Northumberland County Council to its Mental Health Team as a result of a report from a member of the public that RW was found lying in mud in a field that morning. Although an appointment for RW was arranged with the social worker on the 2nd December 1994 RW missed that appointment.

The father of RW on the 6th December 1994 made a referral to Northumberland County Council who recorded that RW "has been living at home with family but has become more withdrawn and paranoid recently. Situation came to a head last night when there was a row and RW apparently hit his pregnant sister. Father is putting him out today but wants advice on accommodation for RW as his current mental state makes him vulnerable".

On the 18th January 1995 RW left bed and breakfast accommodation at Hodgson's Road, Blyth, and at about that time referred himself "again" to Northumberland County Council, as he was homeless. It would appear that the bed and breakfast accommodation had "broken down due to an argument". On the 20th January 1995 the father of RW also made a referral to Northumberland County Council.

RW was then accommodated at Ardgowan House until the 16th March 1995.

On the 25th January 1995 RW was visited by a social worker who reported that RW was "suspicious of people especially in the field of mental health". RW had indicated that "previous therapeutic interventions had been unhelpful".

The Northumberland County Council assessment plan was summarised as follows:

User/client:

- Long history of mental health problems.
- Difficulties with maintaining relationships.
- Of no fixed abode (left B&B accommodation).
- Needs ongoing support.

Carer:

- Home situation broke down.
- Can no longer offer accommodation to son.

Although RW had an appointment with a social worker on the 26th January 1995 he did not keep that appointment.

On the 31st January 1995 RW was seen at Ardgowan House by a social worker. RW was reported to have walked to his parent's home in Cramlington each day and "had left all of his clothes there".

A request was made of RW that he tell people where he was and that if he was going out to leave by the front door and not by a side door or over the fence.

By the 8th February 1995 staff at Ardgowan House did not feel that RW was receiving any value/therapeutic assessment with them. It was reported that RW:

"Leaves the house each day - returns at midnight not informing anyone of his movements.

Sneaking out of back door to climb over yard wall, not having any meals".

Alternative accommodation was to be found for RW at Blyth Star. RW was said to be "amenable" to this.

On the 10th February 1995 and the 3rd March 1995 RW failed appointments to see his social worker.

However, on the 8th March 1995 RW visited Blyth Star and "understood some of the requirements to achieve" a mental health assessment which would take about six weeks.

On the 13th March 1995 staff at Ardgowan House expressed some concerns about the abusive behaviour of RW and "drug misuse/belongings going missing".

Although RW ought to have been at Ardgowan House on the 16th March 1995 he was not and staff continued to report that RW "had been climbing out of his bedroom window". In the belongings of RW there was a book which had a checklist of equipment "tent, sleeping bag, matches, soup" and there was a hand-written note "avoid institutions - destroy labels".

RW had been due to move to Blyth Star from Ardgowan House on the 16th March 1995.

The father of RW contacted Northumberland County Council on the 17th March 1995 to advise that the previous Thursday RW had left the family home having packed his bags and had given no indication about his future plans.

In a telephone call from RW to his mother it was established that he was in the Hartlepool area. Northumberland County Council was informed of this the following day and that RW had "absconded many times, once to France".

Northumberland County Council then undertook what was to be an unsuccessful search for RW.

On the 27th March 1995 the parents of RW were visited by representatives of Northumberland County Council to collect further background information in the event that RW was to return. At this time the police were also in contact with the parents of RW to advise that they had found the tent of RW in the Whitby area with suicide notes.

In a social history report prepared by Northumberland County Council on the 10th April 1995 RW was reported to have become "very jealous of his younger sister who was popular and had lots of friends and he became aggressive towards her". The report went on to say that RW had evidenced "some symptoms of early schizophrenia, early psychosis and severe unresolved adolescent disturbance ... paranoid delusions and his episodes of self harm could relate to elements of a border line personality disorder". The report went on to say that RW "makes a habit of throwing himself through the net especially when specific services are set up".

The report concluded that RW "presents a major dilemma".

This was very commendable activity on the part of Northumberland County Council in an attempt to engage with RW and to promote his welfare, but the good work that had been undertaken would be lost later as RW slipped away.

It appears to be unfortunate that all of this information did not appear to find its way to the GP records.

On the 11th April 1995 Northumberland County Council received information to the effect that RW had telephoned his mother from Huddersfield having travelled from Whitby to Teesside and then alluded to moving on to the Birmingham area while still living in a tent.

On the 10th June 1995 RW was cautioned for a shoplifting offence by the Avon and Somerset Police. At this time he was believed to be living at 1 Robertson Road, Bristol. However, by the 4th August 1995 his address had changed to room 74, 1 Jamaica Street, Bristol.

Records indicate that RW left Bristol for Dover on or about the 22nd August 1995.

On the 5th September 1995 RW was given a six month conditional discharge by Dover and East Kent Magistrates Court for criminal

damage and taking a motor vehicle without the consent of the owner.

On the 20th October 1995 RW registered with a GP at 302 London Road, Dover.

RW appeared before the Dover and East Kent Magistrates Court again on the 27th October 1995 and on this occasion was sentenced to a two year Probation Order with payments of £403 compensation and £75 costs in respect of three burglaries (remitted from Bristol Magistrates Court which were for non dwelling house burglaries in Bristol on the 4th July 1995, 1st August 1995 and 3rd August 1995 as well as a failure to surrender to bail at Bristol Magistrates Court on the 4th July 1995 and the 23rd August 1995) and the theft in Dover of red hand flares valued at £16 on the 24th September 1995.

In November 1995 the initial assessment undertaken by the Probation Service was that RW had been "homeless... does have some mental health problems but a specialist report was not thought appropriate". Objectives by the Probation Service for the next quarter would include assistance for RW with his emotional and "mental health problems". Assessment was of a medium risk of re-offending and medium risk of harm given previous suicide attempts. Although the probation assessment was in November 1995 it was not signed by a senior probation officer until the 18th April 1996.

On the 13th December 1995 a case involving RW at Bristol Magistrates Court was adjourned in the absence of RW. He later appeared at that court on the 4th January 1996 to be sentenced to a one year conditional discharge for an offence of theft/burglary of a non dwelling house.

By the 7th January 1996 RW had attempted to burgle a café in Dover. Although initially remanded in custody RW was granted conditional bail with conditions of residence, curfew (7pm to 7am) and daily reporting.

There were reports that by the 8th January 1996 RW had returned to the home of his parents in Cramlington.

On the 24th January 1996 RW was arrested for breach of his bail conditions and then remanded to Canterbury Prison.

A mental health assessment undertaken at that time by a forensic community psychiatric nurse was "inconclusive". The probation officer for RW was informed by a doctor at Canterbury Prison that his view of RW and that of the forensic community psychiatric nurse was that

"there is nothing currently psychiatric about him, he is anxious about being in prison - uncommunicative but gave a reasonable history - his behaviour and body language suggest there may be more to him but there is nothing conclusive. Unless circumstances change there will be no further review".

It was clear that they did not have access to the full history of RW.

On the 26th January 1996 Stonham Housing reported to Probation that there had been a noose hanging from the light fitting in the room of RW. At the same time Probation learn of RW's arrest and of his remand into custody. Probation notified their prison counterparts about RW who were to tell the Prison Hospital, as RW appeared to be on an ordinary wing. Probation records indicate that "he will not be on the hospital wing as there is not room for him there".

By the 7th February 1996 Probation visited RW who is described as communicative.

At Dover Magistrates Court on the 12th February 1996 RW was sentenced to a 60 hour Community Service Order with a money payment supervision order payable at £5 per fortnight to commence on the 26th February 1996 in respect of a non dwelling house burglary.

The probation officer for RW in February 1996 undertook a quarterly assessment of him. The key worker for RW at Stonham Housing was identified and it was recorded that staff at Stonham "had been concerned about RW's depression and suicidal tendencies". RW was assessed as being of medium risk at re-offending and low/medium risk of possible self harm. The quarterly assessment was signed by a senior probation officer on the 10th April 1996.

There are indications that RW had plans to move to Southampton *(and once again had a desire to slip away from the available support services)*.

On the 8th March 1996 RW met with his probation officer for what was described as "a long session". Discussions took place about what would make RW happier. Probation records disclose that it "still all boils down to feelings about his family - especially his mother who sent him to the secure unit at age 16. Says he can't be angry with her as it would lead to violence". RW had told his probation officer that there were a lot of sex offenders in the Unit. There was speculation on the part of the probation officer about whether or not RW "is trying to tell me he was s/abused in there".

No such evidence has been forthcoming about this speculation or that RW had ever been detained compulsorily.

Further discussions between RW and his probation officer took place on the 15th March 1996 when RW talked some more about his family, particularly his mother and how controlling he felt she was, but that he was frightened to express any anger towards her.

By the 12th April 1996 the Probation Service had recorded that RW had completed 43.5 hours out of the 60 hours of community service sentence imposed on 12th February 1996.

There was a report from Stonham Housing on the 18th April 1996 to the probation officer for RW that he had set fire to a mattress in the garden at the property.

A further report from Stonham Housing on the 24th May 1996 to the probation officer for RW disclosed that Stonham Housing were "very concerned" about the behaviour of RW. A warning letter had been sent to him. The probation officer was to broach the subject of a psychiatric referral for RW with him. Probation records indicate that RW had told someone that he had knocked an old man down in the street last year and this had been in the national press.

Stonham Housing sent a second warning letter to RW on the 3rd June 1996. This was about "an incident with a knife". RW had reported that he himself had been threatened with a knife by another resident who had kicked his door in over a dispute about dirty dishes.

By the 2nd July 1996 it was reported that RW was of no fixed abode.

There is information to the effect that RW visited his parents at Cramlington on or about the 19th July 1996 until the 3rd August 1996.

On the 5th August 1996 the Probation Service at Southampton notified their counterparts in Dover that RW was now living in Southampton at temporary accommodation at Patrick House.

On the 6th August 1996 RW was accommodated at 4 Rose Road, Southampton.

On the 8th August 1996 probation officers from Dover and Southampton exchanged information about RW including a belief that he had been "sectioned at 16" even though there was no formal evidence of this.

RW appears to have moved to 10 Southampton Street, Southampton on the 13th September 1996 before returning to live at 4 Rose Road, Southampton on the 27th October 1996.

At a meeting between RW and his probation officer in Southampton on the 25th October 1996 RW talked about having "travelled around the country - Bristol, Doncaster, Durham, Dover and ... still angry with his mother".

In November 1996 there was a review by his probation officer. Records indicate that RW had changed address twice "within Southampton" and that RW was "wary of workers in the mental health field". RW had attended 10 appointments out of a possible 10 but none were home visits as this was "not suitable". Records reveal a reported assault by RW on another client of the Probation Service, which RW had denied. The mental health of RW was to be monitored and referred "to appropriate agencies". Monthly office contact would continue.

On the 21st November 1996 the Probation Order was formally amended from Dover to Southampton Probation Service.

On the 12th December 1996 RW registered with a GP in Southampton with his address being 4 Rose Road, Southampton. Although by the 31st December 1996 his name was removed from that GP's register.

In December 1996 and January 1997 there were reports that RW was said to be with his family in Cramlington presumably over the Christmas and New Year break.

On the 9th January 1997 RW and his probation officer met in Southampton and probation records disclosed "no problems".

In April 1997 there was a further review by the probation officer for RW (who had been on sick leave for three months). RW had been seen by other probation personnel and had attended four out of five possible appointments. The plan of the Probation Service at this point was to seek the discharge of the Probation Order for RW on the grounds of "good progress".

On the 20th June 1997 the probation officer for RW in Southampton undertook the review of the "risk of harm" presented by RW and which highlighted concerns as follows:

- 1 Suicidal tendencies (withdrawn) - noose found in room.
- 2 Got involved in potentially violent situation - subject to bullying.
- 3 Set fire to mattress in garden.
- 4 Used garden as a toilet.
- 5 Obsessive behaviour - either washing in bleach or not at all.

The report went on to say that RW "refuses any contact with medical professionals and leaves area when pressed".

The view was expressed that RW "appears to be a risk to himself - will not seek help - may eventually deteriorate to being forced to see a doctor".

Those concerns included "a risk to self eventually... possible likelihood of events being repeated ... serious harm (ie: life threatening/traumatic to staff will be the consequences of events being repeated) ... establish pattern of events threatening physical or emotional harm".

In July 1997 a further review of RW's position was undertaken by his probation officer. The Probation Order was still active as RW had failed to attend the Southampton Magistrates Court on two occasions, namely the 24th April 1997 and the 22nd May 1997. The court would not discharge the Probation Order in the absence of RW. Furthermore there were outstanding warrants about fines for RW which were not being paid despite the money payment supervision order.

When RW met with his probation officer on the 15th August 1997 in Southampton it was recorded that he was "depressed". The prospect of RW seeing a psychiatrist was discussed at length but RW indicated that he would be leaving the area and "going back up north".

It was clear to the panel that this was further evidence of a realisation by RW that appropriate services were to be made available to him which he was reluctant to access, which accounted for him moving yet again.

By the 26th August 1997 Northumbria Probation advised the probation officer in Southampton that RW was in North Shields and that he had made an application to Stonham Housing for accommodation and who had accepted him for 25/33 Railway Terrace, North Shields.

There is information to the effect that RW was stopped and searched by the police with no further action being taken on the 28th August 1997.

On the 4th September 1997 the probation officer for RW in Southampton advised Northumbria Probation that she had "some concerns" about the mental health of RW. A new probation officer from Northumbria Probation was identified and met with RW on the 18th September 1997. That probation officer recorded that RW was "difficult to engage as he is not accepting that he has any problems".

On the 20th September 1997 RW was arrested for a burglary. The custody record (CR) records that he was fit and well and not under medication.

In October 1997 the probation officer in Southampton undertook her final assessment. RW had moved to the North East and in those circumstances Northumbria Probation were temporarily supervising RW. Whilst this caretaking arrangement was in place no file appears to have been sent between Southampton and Northumbria Probation.

On the 10th October 1997 RW reported to the police that someone had assaulted him. Upon enquiry that person asserted self defence so no further action was taken. RW did attend an Accident and Emergency Department as a result of injuries he sustained.

On the 21st October 1997 RW failed an appointment with his probation officer.

On the 26th October 1997 the Probation Order of the 27th October 1995 expired.

When RW met with a probation officer on the 29th October 1997 he was still "denying any problems".

When RW was arrested on warrant on 6th November 1997 and held in custody the CR disclosed that he was not under any medication, that he was fit and well and that his current address was 25 Railway Terrace, North Shields.

By the 28th November 1997 RW was arrested again on warrant. The CR at this point described him as fit and well and not under any medication.

On the 12th December 1997 RW was arrested for possession of an offensive weapon and on a warrant. The CR disclosed that he was fit and well and not under medication.

On the 16th January 1998 RW was arrested on warrant for non payment of fines. The CR described him as fit and well and not under medication.

On the 21st January 1998 at North Tyneside Magistrates Court RW was sentenced to a two year probation order for a theft/non dwelling house burglary and possession of an offensive weapon (a butterfly knife being confiscated from him) as well as a charge of failing to surrender to custody. In the pre-sentence report it was outlined by the probation officer for RW that he had a pen knife for his own protection after an assault upon him by another resident at Stonham Housing.

This was an escalation in the nature and seriousness of RW's offending.

On the 27th January 1998 Probation made contact with RW.

On the 8th February 1998 RW moved to the Avalon Guest House, 23 North Parade, Whitley Bay. This appears to have been as a consequence of an incident between RW and a member of staff at Railway Terrace.

On the 9th February 1998 RW was arrested for criminal damage. The CR disclosed that he was fit and well - no medication, RW said to be of no fixed abode.

On the 10th February 1998 RW met with his probation officer who described him as "reluctant around mental health issues. Not willing to see GP or psyc at this time".

On the same day RW was given a 12 month conditional discharge by North Tyneside Magistrates Court for the offence of criminal damage.

A further meeting took place between RW and his probation officer on the 16th February 1998 when RW "agreed to discuss mental health problems".

The supervision plan for RW had an objective with regard to the mental health of RW so as to "motivate him to take appropriate steps to accessing medical intervention".

It was also recorded that a recent incident with RW demonstrated that there are links between "alcohol usage and anger/aggression which could result in harm". RW would be seen weekly.

On or about the 18th February 1998 RW was stopped and searched by the police, which resulted in no further action.

RW continued to meet with his probation officer and on the 23rd February 1998 as a consequence of RW's vulnerability Probation made a referral to Enterprise 5 Housing Association Limited (E5) (which is an association "formed for the benefit of the community whose objects were to carry on for the benefit of the community, the business of providing housing, accommodation, and assistance to help house people and associated facilities and amenities for poor people or for the relief of aged, disabled, handicapped (whether physically or mentally), or chronically sick people").

RW was still reported to have "formed a deep mistrust of psychiatric services and a fear of being sectioned".

RW was still worried that the press was following him and that they were going to write articles about him being smelly.

It was clear that the relationship between Probation and E5 was purely informal in its nature although undoubtedly of great benefit to its users.

On the 6th March 1998 a support worker from E5 met with the probation officer for RW to discuss the needs of RW, who was not in attendance.

Although the support worker tried to meet with RW on the 10th March 1998 this was not successful although RW met with his probation officer on the 13th March 1998 and 16th March 1998.

The support worker sought reassurance from the Probation Service about the temperament of RW on the 17th March 1998 as a consequence of which a risk assessment of RW was undertaken by his probation officer. This disclosed that there was no history of violent offences, that there had been a conviction for the possession of an offensive weapon, namely a knife, and that the parents of RW had confirmed that he had difficulty managing anger, (for example the aggressive incident with a member of staff at Railway Terrace, which could be linked to excessive alcohol consumption and authority figures). The risk of harm assessed by the probation officer was that of "being minimal".

Records indicate that RW met with his probation officer on the 23rd March 1998 but by the 27th March 1998 he had been arrested for an alleged theft (shoplifting). The CR at this time disclosed that RW was fit and well - no medication - good health and the address for RW was given as 23 North Parade, North Shields.

There then followed a number of meetings with RW. On the 30th March 1998 he met with his probation officer and again met with her and his support worker on the 3rd April 1998. The support worker met RW alone on the 7th April 1998. However, on the 20th April 1998 RW failed his appointment with his probation officer.

On the 23rd April 1998 RW went to see his GP with his probation officer. It was reported that RW was "heard barking like a dog and talking to himself". RW refused a referral to a psychiatrist. The GP for RW prescribed Zopiclone (Zimovane) for seven days - dose not known.

Zopiclone is used for the short term treatment of insomnia. Its relatively short duration of action reduces the risk of sedation the day after ingestion. The usual dose is 7.5 mg at night. Its use is limited to short term treatment because of the risk of dependence in a small number of patients.

RW met with his probation officer on the 30th April 1998 and again on the 6th May 1998.

RW met with his support worker on the 11th May 1998 but on the same day was arrested on a warrant. The CR at this time indicated that he was fit and well, not under current medication - appeared subdued and spoke in a very quiet voice. It was recorded that RW had been acting strangely prior to his arrest.

In those circumstances RW was kept in custody to appear before the Newcastle Magistrates Court the following day when it is believed he was released on bail. At this time the address for RW was said to be 23 North Parade, North Shields.

On the 15th May 1998 and the 21st May 1998 RW met with his probation officer and support worker but failed a meeting with them on the 1st June 1998. Records reveal that all three met on the 8th June 1998.

RW met with his support worker and an E5 housing officer on the 10th June 1998.

After a meeting between RW and his support worker on the 12th June 1998 RW secured a tenancy of 23 Waterville Road, North Shields (E5 accommodation) on the 15th June 1998 on condition that he received ongoing outreach work from E5 outreach services twice weekly.

At Newcastle upon Tyne Magistrates Court on the 17th June 1998 RW was sentenced to fines totalling £50 for two offences of theft (shoplifting).

On the 23rd June 1998 RW moved in to 23 Waterville Road, North Shields,

There then followed a series of meetings with RW by his probation officer and/or his support worker, on the 3rd, 8th, 9th, 10th, 16th, 24th and 27th July 1998.

Although a meeting did not take place with RW on the 30th July 1998 a review by his probation officer indicated that he "has made excellent progress".

In August 1998 the parents of RW moved to new accommodation in Cramlington.

On the 4th August 1998 when the probation officer for RW met with him and the support worker RW "agreed to see his GP". The probation officer for RW then went on to make an appointment for RW with a GP on the 7th August 1998.

On the 6th August 1998 the support worker visited RW.

RW was seen by a GP with his probation officer on the 7th August 1998. The GP made "strong overtures" of RW "needing to see a psychiatrist... clearly upset".

Records show that RW "has depression and phobias but does not wish help".

Although the support worker did not meet with RW on the 12th August he was able to meet with him on the 13th and 20th August 1998.

On the 21st August 1998 RW attended his GP with his support worker so as to re-establish contact with the medical profession. Records disclose that the "support worker is happy with the situation".

There was then contact by the support worker on the 24th, 26th, 27th, 28th August 1998 and also the 1st and 3rd September 1998, although an appointment was missed on the 7th September 1998.

RW met with his probation officer on the 8th September 1998 having failed an appointment with her on the 24th August 1998.

Although RW did not meet with his support worker on the 10th September 1998 he did meet with him on the 14th September 1998 and then with his probation officer on the 15th September 1998. At this time the probation officer undertook a review and it is noted that RW "has continued to make good progress".

RW went on to meet with his support worker on the 17th and 21st September 1998.

However, on the 21st September 1998 at North Tyneside Magistrates Court RW was fined £70 and ordered to pay £65 costs for failing to pay Metro fare and giving false details.

On the 29th September 1998 RW met with his probation officer and then on the 1st October 1998 he met with his support worker.

On the 5th, 8th, 21st, 26th, 29th and 30th October 1998 RW failed appointments with his probation officer and/or support worker.

On the 21st October 1998 the probation officer for RW prepared a 'level of service inventory survey' of him upon which RW scored 24. *There appears to be no analysis of what this meant for RW other than completion of a standardised form.*

On the 1st November 1998 at the Royal Victoria Infirmary Newcastle Upon Tyne, RW was treated for a laceration to his right index finger after an accident with a saw.

Although RW had an appointment with his GP on the 3rd November 1998 he did not attend. However, he attended upon his GP the following day and reported an assault 12 days earlier for which he was given stitches.

The support worker was not able to meet with RW on the 6th and 12th November 1998 but in the intervening period RW did meet with his probation officer on the 9th November 1998.

On the 20th November 1998 RW telephoned his support worker who was not available and at the same time saw his GP. It is recorded in the GP records that RW "says OK".

On the 26th and 30th November 1998 RW met his probation officer and/or support worker.

On the 3rd December 1998 RW was arrested for theft (shoplifting). The CR disclosed that he was fit and well - no medication - no attempt at self harm in the past - not currently under treatment by a doctor/psychiatrist. The address for RW was given as 23 Waterville Road, North Shields.

At Newcastle Magistrates Court the following day RW was given an absolute discharge for the offence of theft (shoplifting) but was then escorted to Sheffield on warrant. The CR disclosed RW to be fit and

well - no medication - has attempted self injury in the past - he is not currently under treatment by a doctor/psychiatrist - good health.

At Sheffield Magistrates Court on the 7th December 1998 RW was sentenced to a £50 fine and payment of £50 costs and £10 compensation for a theft/burglary of a non dwelling house.

On the same day the support worker had tried to visit RW.

When the probation officer of RW undertook a review on the 14th December 1998 it is recorded that she was "trying to get RW to see a psychiatrist or at least to discuss issues more fully with his GP but still very resistant".

Further visits by the support worker to see RW on the 14th and 21st December 1998 were not successful.

It is recorded that RW met with his probation officer on the 7th and 11th January 1999.

On the 18th January 1999 RW was fined £50 with £75 costs by the Newcastle Magistrates Court for failing to pay a Metro fare.

On the 8th and 15th February 1999, as well as the 1st March 1999, there were unsuccessful visits to see RW by his probation officer and/or his support worker.

When the probation officer for RW met with him on the 2nd March 1999 there were reports about problems for RW with neighbours.

On the 12th March 1999 it is recorded that the support worker informed the probation officer for RW that given the sporadic contact he was experiencing with RW then support for RW may be withdrawn.

RW was arrested for theft (shoplifting) on the 13th March 1999. At this time the CR disclosed that he was fit and well - no medication - has not attempted self injury in the past - not currently under treatment by doctor/psychiatrist - RW denies he is suicidal. The address for RW is still at 23 Waterville Road, North Shields.

RW was arrested again on warrant on the 23rd March 1999. The CR disclosed that he was fit and well - no medication - has not attempted self injury - not currently under treatment of doctor/psychiatrist.

At North Tyneside Magistrates Court on the 24th March 1999 the absconding whilst on bail charge was withdrawn.

Although RW failed an appointment with his probation officer on the 29th March 1999 they did meet on the 7th April 1999 and acknowledged "that he was struggling re: money management, depression, isolation and independent living".

Although the probation officer for RW was due to meet with him at his home on the 9th April 1999 they met at the probation office, as he did not want her to "go into the flat as embarrassed about the mess".

On the 12th April 1999 the probation officer for RW informed E5 that he was still keen to continue with support.

On the same day RW was fined £75 with costs of £65 by North Tyneside Magistrates Court for failing to pay a Metro fare.

Records indicate that on the 14th April 1999 RW was arrested for theft (shoplifting). The CR disclosed that he was fit and well - not under medication - has not attempted self injury in the past - is not currently under treatment by doctor/psychiatrist.

Due to the arrest of RW he was not available for the home visit due to be made to him by his probation officer.

In readiness for the appearance of RW at North Tyneside Magistrates Court on the 15th April 1999 for an offence of theft (shoplifting) a pre-sentence report had been prepared by the probation officer for RW who reported that: "RW has a long history of mental health problems and while he has received medical treatment in the past he is now very suspicious of psychiatric services and has not, therefore, had any contact with them for a significant period of time ... although his GP is keen to make a referral to psychiatric services she is constrained by RW's reluctance to engage with them". RW is said to present a "medium risk of re-offending". In relation to risk of harm to the public the probation officer for RW stated that "he presents as a greater risk of harm to himself than others".

North Tyneside Magistrates Court proceeded to sentence RW to a two year Probation Order for offences of theft (shoplifting) together with another charge of failing to surrender to custody.

On the same day RW was given an Absolute Discharge by the Newcastle Magistrates Court for an offence of theft (shoplifting) from the day before.

RW was due to meet his probation officer on the 21st April 1999 but did not do so. The initial assessment by the probation officer of RW

led to the conclusion that there was a medium risk of re-offending and there were no indications of harm to others". At this time weekly contact was felt to be appropriate between his probation officer and RW.

There is information to the effect that RW was stopped and searched by the police on the 21st April 1999 but no further action was taken.

RW failed a further appointment with his probation officer on the 18th May 1999 because it would appear that he had been arrested for an alleged breach of the peace and a Section 20 Assault for which he was bailed (although the charge was ultimately withdrawn on the 21st June 2000). The CR at this time described RW as fit and well - smelled of intoxicating liquor - not under medication - handcuffed - has attempted self injury in the past - not currently under treatment by doctor/psychiatrist - police surgeon in attendance. RW certified fit and suitable to detain and interview. The address for RW is still given as 23 Waterville Road, North Shields.

RW was arrested for a Section 47 assault upon a friend on the 28th May 1999 but that allegation was subsequently withdrawn.

On the 3rd June 1999 RW called to the probation office "somewhat distressed".

RW believed he had "seriously assaulted a man in the Newcastle area ... eventually began to deny any involvement in this matter but expressed concerns as to what he might be capable of ... when pushed he retracted his statement ... at times he feels anger inside him but that he just shouts to get rid of it".

The probation officer for RW discussed these issues with a senior colleague as a consequence of which the risk assessment of harm to others changed to medium.

Also on the 3rd June 1999 RW was fined £110 with costs of £40 for trespassing on a railway by the Newcastle Magistrates Court.

RW was arrested for the possession of a combat knife on the 5th June 1999 when he was caught shoplifting at Marks & Spencer. The CR disclosed him to be fit and well - not under medication - no attempt at self injury in the past - not currently under doctor/psychiatrist.

On or about the 9th June 1999 informal and verbal complaints by neighbours of RW to Enterprise 5 Housing begin to be made. The support worker reported this on to the Probation Service the next day.

The support worker made unsuccessful visits to see RW on the 11th and 15th June 1999. Although he was able to see him on the 16th June 1999 in order to tackle the complaints being made from neighbours and to try and get RW support and medication to help him sleep RW was not available for further meetings with the support worker on the 17th and 18th June 1999, as well as the 21st June 1999.

On the 19th June 1999 RW had been arrested for theft (shoplifting). The CR disclosed him to be fit and well - not under medication - handcuffed - has not attempted self injury - not currently under treatment of a doctor/psychiatrist. The address for RW is still given as 23 Waterville Road, North Shields.

By the 22nd June 1999 a neighbour had made a formal complaint to North Tyneside Healthcare NHS Trust about RW.

Although RW did not meet with his support worker on the 23rd June 1999 they did meet on the 25th June 1999 to discuss alternative accommodation, as there were concerns about the safety of RW.

RW was arrested for breach of bail conditions on the 27th June 1999 and detained for court the following day. The CR disclosed him to be fit and well - no attempt at self injury - not currently under treatment of a doctor/psychiatrist - appears in good health - police surgeon in attendance - RW fit to be detained for court appearance. Zopiclone prescribed for sleep.

The following day RW was able to meet with his support worker and made applications for re-housing from 23 Waterville Road to a local authority as well as housing associations and a housing trust.

As RW had failed appointments to see his probation officer on the 14th and 21st April 1999 as well as the 18th May 1999 he was due to appear at the North Tyneside Magistrates Court for the alleged breach of the Probation Order made on the 21st April 1999.

On the 6th July 1999 RW was arrested for theft (shoplifting). The CR disclosed he was fit and well - no current medication - no attempt at self injury in the past - not currently under treatment of doctor/psychiatrist - surgeon in attendance - RW fit to detain and interview - Dihydrocodeine prescribed.

RW was remanded in custody on the 7th July 1999 until the 26th July 1999.

The support worker attempted to visit RW on the 12th July 1999 and on the 15th July 1999 the family of RW was in touch with Probation because they had "not heard from RW".

RW was interviewed in prison by his probation officer on the 20th July 1999 and at this point he "agreed to see a psychiatrist". *This was clearly after very active persuasion by his probation officer.*

When RW appeared before the Newcastle Magistrates Court on the 26th July 1999 he was sentenced to 21 days imprisonment for offences of theft (x 4 shoplifting) as well as the possession of a combat knife and breaching bail on two occasions as well as outstanding fines. This meant RW was immediately released from custody.

On the 2nd August 1999 RW met with his probation officer and support worker and made further applications for re-housing. RW agreed to meet his support worker every Monday and a supervision plan was completed by his probation officer. It was noted that RW was "still agreeing to see a psychiatrist". The risk of re-offending was assessed as being medium/high with a medium risk of serious public harm. Weekly contact was still felt appropriate by Probation.

There are reports that on or about the 9th August 1999 that RW was assaulted by two youths for alleged following and winking at young girls and trying to hold their hands. The alleged assault was reported to the police by RW but RW did not want any further action taken.

Although RW did not meet with his support worker on the 9th August 1999 they did meet on the 10th August 1999 when RW went with him to his GP for treatment to injuries to his head following the assault from the previous day. Records disclose that RW was "waiting for an appointment with psychiatrist".

On the 13th August 1999 RW met with his probation officer and also his support worker. RW attended to see his GP when it was recorded that he "shouts in the evening and overnight - doesn't know why". It is recorded that RW refused a referral to the Community Psychiatric Nursing Team and that he "really needs to be assessed by psychiatric long term". Zopiclone is prescribed for 10 days but the dosage is not known.

On the 16th August 1999 RW visits 37 Sallyport Crescent, Newcastle upon Tyne, with his probation officer.

The following day when RW visited his probation officer he agreed to the move but was still reported as being "very unsure". By the 19th

August 1999 the Probation Officer for RW has made a referral of RW to the Probation Psychiatric Clinic using a proforma referral form. Upon this document it is stated that RW "has a history of psychiatric illness which has links to his offending. For many years he has refused contact with any medical professionals. He is currently motivated towards engaging in an assessment... has no conviction for actual violence (x 2 pos offensive weapon). He has recently recounted a serious assault and is concerned about what he may be capable of (see attached PSR)".

On the 24th August 1999 an appointment for RW was sent by the psychiatrist to RW so they could meet at the North Shields Probation Office on the 6th September 1999.

There appears to have been further meetings between RW and his support worker in August 1999.

On the 28th August 1999 there are reports of RW allegedly following females in North Shields. RW reported to the police his concerns that he may be assaulted as a result of such allegations.

RW moved to 37 Sallyport Crescent, Newcastle upon Tyne, with the assistance of his support worker on the 1st September 1999. RW also reports that intimidation and threats and assaults upon him were continuing.

RW met with his support worker on the 2nd September 1999 and again on the 6th September 1999 when RW was seen at the Probation Psychiatric Clinic.

The psychiatrist who saw RW at the Probation Psychiatric Clinic wrote to the probation officer for RW on the 9th September 1999 reporting among other things the assault upon RW because of his shouting/barking episodes. RW was described as "restless and suspicious... denied psychotic symptoms initially... admitted to them later on".

RW had been hearing voices. RW had explained that he shouted at the voices so they would stop.

The psychiatrist reported that:

- 1 RW was likely to have been suffering from a mental illness for the past few years and RW was now agreeable to engage with professionals.

- 2 The psychiatrist wanted to acquire from the probation officer for RW a comprehensive understanding about the past offending history of RW so as to clarify his offending pattern and risk.
- 3 Once RW had registered with a new GP in Newcastle an assessment could be arranged.

The panel makes the following observations:

- 1 *A copy of the proforma referral form was missing from the Probation file.*
- 2 *There was no schedule of previous convictions on the file of the psychiatrist.*
- 3 *The GP details were on the referral form.*
- 4 *The psychiatrist did not access the Probation file, which could have been made available.*
- 5 *There was a delay from the 20th July 1999 in progressing this particular referral.*

On the 13th September 1999 RW missed an appointment with his GP. Both RW and his support worker are believed to have attended North Shields Police Station about RW's stolen benefit book on the 13th September 1999.

RW met with his support worker on the 20th September 1999 but did not meet with his probation officer on the 22nd September 1999.

RW made telephone contact with the probation office on the 29th September 1999 but missed an appointment to see his GP on the 30th September 1999.

On the 27th October 1999 the probation officer for RW wrote to the psychiatrist from the Probation Psychiatric Clinic with details of RW's GP.

On the 28th October 1999 RW met with his support worker and visited the Vaughan Centre. RW's flat was described as being "spotless" and he was visiting his parents each Sunday.

At this time the psychiatrist who had seen RW at the Probation Psychiatric Clinic wrote to the probation officer and GP for RW with his assessment report to arrange a referral to the local psychiatric services.

On the 12th and 21st October 1999 RW was not at home when visited by his probation officer but was available on the 1st November 1999.

On the 2nd November 1999 the quarterly assessment undertaken by the probation officer for RW assessed him as being a medium risk of re-offending and medium risk of serious public harm. Contact was now to be bi-weekly.

RW met with his support worker on the 4th November 1999 but was not available on the 11th November 1999. When the probation officer and support worker visited RW on the 16th November 1999 he was not in although they undertook a successful visit on the 25th November 1999. The support worker made an abortive visit to see RW on the 2nd December 1999.

RW was seen by his GP on the 3rd December 1999 who then made a referral on the 9th December 1999 to a psychiatrist who did not receive it until the 17th December 1999.

It was noticeable to the panel that the probation officer for RW was not involved in that process in order to support RW or to plan effectively. The probation officer did not meet the psychiatrist and there were no formal feedback arrangements.

The clarification of roles for individuals and agencies is important for effective service delivery.

On the 23rd December 1999 RW met with his support worker but not his probation officer.

The psychiatrist had written to RW on the 23rd December 1999 to offer an appointment on the 6th January 2000, which RW attended to be seen by a senior house officer. It is recorded that RW "screams and shouts every day and all night" causing trouble ... was assaulted by neighbour for shouting and barking at night ... hearing voices... distressing him a bit ... feels low ... appetite poor ... low energy levels ... poor concentration". There was found to be a history of probable auditory hallucinations, which RW was responding to by shouting back. The initial management plan was:

- 1 To start RW on the antipsychotic Olanzapine 5 mg and Temazepam 10 mg at night.
- 2 For a review on the 11th January 2000 with the psychiatrist.

Olanzapine is an antipsychotic medication principally for the treatment of schizophrenia. It has few side effects and is relatively non sedating and well tolerated. The usual dose is 5-15 mg daily. The antipsychotic effect of the medication in reducing symptoms of schizophrenia would be expected to occur within two to six weeks of treatment.

On the 6th January 2000 RW missed an appointment to see his GP.

On the 10th January 2000 Newcastle City Health NHS Trust Care Programme Approach identified the current address of RW, his GP, consultant and key worker. RW was at significant risk of self harm and a complexity of assessed client needs was estimated at "more complex".

The summary of the risk assessment was:

- No known history of violence or threats of violence impose no current risk thereof.
- No history of suicidal/self harm behaviour impose current risk thereof.
- No known history of severe self neglect impose no risk thereof.
- No known history of being subject to Mental Health Acts 1959/1983.

Whilst the panel acknowledges the need for proforma documentation there is a concern that an overall picture may be lost and initiatives "gained from experience" may not be pursued given the limited amount of detailed information which such a form can hold. In this instance it would have been assumed, simply from reviewing the form, that RW had no previous history of suicide or self harm or of violence to others.

On the 11th January 2000 RW was reviewed by the psychiatrist and a senior house officer. Olanzapine was increased to 10mg and Temazepam to 20mg daily. A review date of the 25th January 2000 was fixed.

On the 12th January 2000 the assessment by the senior house officer was notified to the GP for RW.

On the 20th January 2000 the support worker met with RW. The following day RW was visited by his probation officer at home. It was recorded that RW "not keen to let me in because he says his flat is a mess... seems somewhat withdrawn but didn't want to force him to let me in".

Records of a supervision review reveal that reporting had been fully achieved and constructive activities had been partially achieved. Liaison with the support worker and psychiatric services had been fully achieved. Contact between RW and Probation on a monthly basis was felt appropriate.

The panel was concerned that the probation officer appeared to be insufficiently informed with too heavy a reliance on the information being passed through the support worker.

On the 24th January 2000 a letter was sent to RW to rearrange his review from the 25th January 2000 to the 8th February 2000.

RW met with his support worker on the 27th January 2000.

RW was arrested for theft (shoplifting) on the 1st February 2000. The CR disclosed him to be fit and well - no medication - no attempt at self injury in the past - not currently under doctor/psychiatrist. The following day at Newcastle Magistrates Court RW was fined £50 for the offence of theft (shoplifting).

It was clear to the panel that the probation officer was not always told about RW's appearances at court unless a court duty probation officer picked it up.

On the 2nd February 2000 RW consulted his GP and was prescribed Co-dydramol, which is used for the treatment of mild to moderate pain. RW also met with his probation officer who described a "very big difference ... talkative and engaging ... says that he is happy to take the medication but is still ... having problems sleeping".

When RW was reviewed by another senior house officer on the 8th February 2000 in the presence of his support worker and the psychiatrist, it was noted that RW was less withdrawn, more sociable and relaxed within himself but complaining of low mood, helplessness and sometimes wished that he was dead. It was reported that RW had stopped taking his Temazepam due to its sedative effect.

The following day the senior house officer wrote to the GP for RW to share information about him and to confirm that Olanzapine had been increased to 15mg.

On the same day the probation officer for RW made contact with the police about any arrangements they needed to make to see RW if there was a pending investigation into an alleged assault involving RW.

RW was arrested for attempted theft (shoplifting) on the 11th February 2000. The CR described him as fit and well - currently under medication - has not attempted self injury in the past - is currently under treatment by a doctor/psychiatrist - taking Olanzapine.

On the 15th February 2000 the support worker telephoned the senior house officer who had seen RW on the 8th February to discuss medication for RW which would be dealt with by the GP.

On the 16th February 2000 the support worker visited RW together with his probation officer to persuade RW to go and see his GP which he agreed to do. It is recorded that RW "does not appear as well as previously".

It would appear that this was the last visit made by the probation officer for RW and that in the absence of that probation officer on sick leave a duty probation officer would deal with clients when they called to the office. Nobody was allocated the responsibility for the case of RW in terms of active case management despite the fact that the Probation Order would not be completed until 14th April 2001. This reflected the belief of the probation officer at the time about a high caseload and staff shortages.

On this day RW was made subject to a 12 month conditional discharge for an offence of attempted theft and failure to surrender to custody by North Tyneside Magistrates Court.

There was an abortive visit by the support worker to see RW on the 23rd February 2000.

RW consulted his GP on the 28th February 2000. Olanzapine 7.5mg (x2) was prescribed.

When RW was visited by his support worker on the 2nd March 2000 he was described as being unsettled - not well - being without medication for a week - "noose in shower" which was seen by the support worker.

The following day the support worker telephoned the senior house officer who had seen RW on the 8th February 2000. It is recorded that: "visited RW yesterday... found a rope noose hanging from the shower rail... wondered what it would be like to be in a noose... thinks about death a lot out of curiosity". The support worker did not feel that RW was currently at immediate risk (nor did the senior house officer or the psychiatrist) as the incident had been reported a day

after RW had considered it. The support worker had attempted to telephone Probation with this information.

On the 7th March 2000 at an outpatients appointment both the senior house officer and psychiatrist established that RW thinks about death "but doesn't have the guts to go through with it". Paroxetine 20 mg daily commenced, Olanzapine 15mg continued.

Paroxetine is an antidepressant medication the same class as Fluoxetine and Fluvoxamine. The usual dose for the treatment of depression is 20-50 mg daily. It is generally well tolerated although withdrawal symptoms on discontinuation are reported to be more frequent than with other antidepressants of this type. Therapeutic effect occurs usually after two to six weeks of treatment.

Contingency support plans were also discussed for RW.

There was an abortive visit by the support worker to meet with RW on the 9th March 2000.

At a further outpatient appointment on the 10th March 2000 it was established that RW still has "thoughts of hanging etc but denies active plans". There was to be a low threshold for admission of RW if he deteriorated.

The senior house officer wrote to RW's GP on the 13th March 2000 to share information including the prescription of Paroxetine 20mg.

On the 15th March 2000 RW completed an application for housing so as "to be near my family who live in Cramlington for support".

The support worker notified Probation on the 15th March 2000 that he intended to leave and another weekly support worker would be taking over. Probation appeared to learn of the noose for the first time at this point following the incident on the 3rd March 2000.

When RW was seen at a further outpatients appointment on the 16th March 2000 having been escorted to it by his support worker, it was recorded that he has "no further suicidal plans but still thinks about hanging". Records indicate that RW was stable at present. RW depressed. RW is requesting assistance with re-housing to be nearer to his parents. The senior house officer planned a further review of RW for the 28th March 2000. Information given by RW to his support worker was that he had not felt too well lately but was beginning to pick up after attending the Vaughan Centre over the past three days.

On the 20th March 2000 RW killed his sister, Caroline Ann Wills, and Ashley Jordan Catchpole, at their home at 24 Loanwood Drive, Cramlington.

On 26th February 2001 RW was convicted of the manslaughter of his sister Caroline Wills and his nephew Ashley Jordan Catchpole (aka Wills) and was made subject to a hospital order under Section 3 of the Mental Health Act 1983.

Section 4

Conclusions

- 1 The offence took place at a time when RW had been actively engaged by the relevant services probably for the first time.
 - RW was under close review.
 - The Probation assessment was accurate.
 - The actions of the Police and Social Services were within context.
 - RW was prescribed the correct medication.
 - RW had a stable address.
 - RW was not seeking to avoid engagement with the relevant agencies/services he had done previously.
- 2 The pathway to compulsory services for individuals like RW is not always clear, there being no defined threshold criteria to be considered by professionals. When professionals have a difficulty in engaging the unwilling, there may be reluctance by professionals to stigmatise and potentially drive away the user or prospective user by "labelling them". Difficult decisions had to be taken in the event of RW's reluctance to engage.
- 3 No protocol or policies were in place to deal with individuals who are solitary and seemingly unco-operative.
- 4 The user's right to privacy has to be recognised and balanced against their protection and that of the public.
- 5 Professionals had a tendency not to fully recognise the contribution of the family to the care of RW and may not have gathered accurate and up to date information about him.
- 6 Constant organisational change is a problem - these changes appear to have been frequent and rapid. The users of such services can become lost.

- 7 Violent incidents should not be overlooked or minimised.
- 8 It is not satisfactory to respond to incidents in isolation.
- 9 Geographical boundaries should not curtail, interfere with or jeopardise the provision of care.
- 10 The changing role of the Probation Services to more of an enforcement agency is of concern as they have traditionally had a rather pivotal role in the collation of material and the identification of the needs of a user who offends. The panel would not wish to see that role diminished unless other arrangements were in place.
- 11 Probation files were not transferred between areas.
- 12 Probation were not as actively involved with the psychiatric appointments and feedback as they should have been.
- 13 The arrangements between the support workers and Probation were too informal. Roles and responsibilities were not defined.
- 14 Although there was CPA documentation, it did not contain accurate information - there was no overall assessment and it was not clear what relevant and historical information was available to each of the agencies in a co-ordinated manner.
- 15 Information was held by individuals/agencies but a full picture was not available to or sought by treating psychiatrists (as users move around it is unlikely that GP records are fully maintained, RW was at 33 ascertainable locations).
- 16 The ability of GPs to deal effectively with users with mental health problems could be impaired when information is not communicated to them.
- 17 The psychiatrist did not have all of the relevant information to fully assess RW at the Probation Clinic and in particular, those matters pertaining to RW violence/weapons.
- 18 Clinical judgement can only be effectively exercised with the fullest information readily available.
- 19 There were delays and omissions in the exchange of information.
- 20 There is a need to communicate and pass on information and to liaise between all those who were or should have been

concerned with RW so as to provide care for him. This would include consultant psychiatrists and members of the consultant's team, nursing staff, general practitioners, community psychiatric nurses, probation officers, social workers, the police, the Crown Prosecution Service, hostel staff, housing and the family.

- 21 The interface between the police, courts, probation and mental health services is not sufficiently robust for the freeflow of information for users who are of low priority.
- 22 Although RW had self-injured, it has only just been verified that approximately 8 years ago, RW had seriously self-mutilated and had not sought any medical treatment for this. Had this been known to professionals involved with RW then this knowledge would have led professionals and agencies to have approached the management of RW in an entirely different way. Having said that, it also highlights the limitations of professionals and agencies if they have no way of acquiring such knowledge without the co-operation of the user. For example, the Police have only recorded that RW's distinguishing features/marks were a scar to his left hand and a tattoo.
- 23 RW's offence history from 06.11.1989 to 26.02.2001 disclosed 18 convictions with the commission of 32 offences and one caution as well as offending on the Metro. In this period, police officers formed their own self assessed and informal intelligence views about RW with particular regard to his mental health, suicidal tendencies and his propensity in recent times to be carrying weapons. Entries on the various Custody Records about the detention of RW appeared to be self-reported matters from RW or from police intelligence.
- 24 At no stage was all of the relevant information collated. The panel acknowledges the time and practicalities of busy practitioners having to do this.
- 25 However, even with that information/collation of material it may have made no difference to the outcome - the risk assessment of harm to others would in all likelihood have remained the same (medium risk).
- 26 There was no single critical omission or evidence of cumulative failures.

- 27 In all of the circumstances, the health care and treatment was not necessarily ineffective given the nomadic lifestyle of RW and the consequent geographical difficulties that flowed from that.
- 28 It was the panel's view that the offence was not understandable, the tragedy of it being that it took place at a time when RW had been engaged probably for the first time by the relevant services. Risk can be assessed and managed but not eliminated. On all of the evidence available to the panel, we cannot conclude that the deaths could have been prevented or even anticipated.

Section 5

Recommendations

We recommend that the key agencies should consider the following:

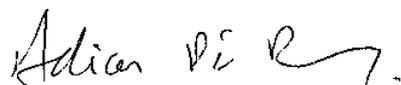
- 1 There should be joint training/awareness and understanding of roles, responsibilities and relationships - knowing where to look and who to ask.
- 2 Consistent policies should be developed for all agencies within the framework of an agreed strategy to manage mentally disordered offenders (which would include the Police who may have several Mental Health Trusts to cover).
- 3 That they should be able to demonstrate that care is planned, provided and monitored with appropriate evaluation of its effectiveness.
- 4 The clear definition of roles and responsibilities (particularly inter-agency relationships) which are regularly evaluated so as to maintain and improve standards and services for users.
- 5 The promotion of inter-agency strategies to demonstrate how they may provide services to engage with the unwilling and to keep all such services under review so that those agencies can appropriately meet the needs of those unwilling to engage.
- 6 There ought to be detailed and accurate recording which should include a full history so that comprehensive information is available.
- 7 All agencies should, as a matter of good practice endeavour to obtain corroborative information about a patient rather than accepting and relying upon what information may be to hand or self-reported.
- 8 Demonstrate that comprehensive record keeping is established and maintained to an appropriate standard together with the proper archiving of material to ensure its availability and accessibility.

- 9 Agencies should work towards establishing a workable and integral system of electronic patient records so that a central record is maintained to which the GP can have immediate access to get a fuller picture of the patient.
- 10 Ensure the provision of assertive care for users living in the community and to note and act upon warning signs/symptoms to prevent relapse, even when users cross geographical boundaries.
- 11 Demonstrate that the recruitment and retention of dedicated and appropriately qualified staff at all levels with reasonable caseloads is prioritised.
- 12 Implement and maintain appropriate procedures that demonstrate how they engage and encourage the involvement of family members of users, as they are frequently the most likely to give detailed background information, which can promote the welfare of a user. However, in making such alliances the agencies will need to balance the individual's right to privacy/confidentiality. Therefore, the patient should be encouraged to give permission to the family members and agencies to exchange information openly

We accordingly submit the Report and our recommendations for the consideration of the Northumberland and Tyne & Wear Health Authority (successor body to Newcastle and North Tyneside Health Authority) this 22nd day of July 2002.



Derek Winter



Adrian Berry



Kay Whittle



Helen Smith

Northumberland and Tyne & Wear 

Health Authority

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Further copies available from:
Chief Executive
Northumberland and Tyne & Wear Health Authority
Newcastle General Hospital
Westgate Road
Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 6BE