

Stancombes additional Addendum Statement.

We fought to protect our families, and to protect ourselves, as Elsie's parents. During the criminal trial, we refused to know the full extent of what she suffered. We couldn't bear it. Yet we were told it had to be heard, it had to be a fair trial for the perpetrator, it needed to be on record, our welfare wasn't important, the future damage this was going to cause didn't matter, protecting us, our family, our friends, Elsie's sister, protecting Elsie's name didn't matter. Because her name had been released, her injuries could be made public, even with us pleading with them not to allow this. Because she was no longer with us she lost all her anonymity, all of her privacy, all of her dignity

The judge's sentencing remarks devastated us, they were not necessary. The CPS and judge knew how important it was to us that those details were not to be made public. But they were. And Elsie, as well as us was failed. Those remarks never needed to be spoken in open court. They never needed to be live-streamed. We didn't do this, we tried to protect her, her dignity. We didn't fail her. But we were failed, over and over again.

We kept asking: why are so many details of the event itself, and the devastation he caused, being released? We already know what happened. We already know the horror that unfolded. Why is it necessary to share these details again and again?

We stressed that surely releasing this information only proves the danger of having it accessible to other young people. Knowing the content the perpetrator was able to view, and how he tried to imitate other terror attacks. Some of this content is no longer accessible in other countries, yet it was/is available here. Surely, we cannot hope to break this pattern if we continue to release the very details that can drive other people to commit such crimes.

The Fight for Justice

I often try to understand how this happened, I have no answers. In my job, if I made a decision or judgment that led to someone being seriously injured or worse, someone losing their life I would be held accountable. I could be charged with corporate manslaughter, face a significant fine, or at the very least, lose my job. That's the responsibility I carry, and that's what I'm paid to do: keep people safe, follow processes.

And if someone in my team made that decision? I'd still be accountable. That's how it works in the private sector.

“So why hasn't this already been applied to all of those involved in protecting Elsie before now?”

Accountability in my world means I do everything possible to prevent harm. I follow procedures, I flag when those procedures fall short, and I know, clearly, that I am personally responsible for decisions. That's not a threat, it's to safeguard. It's what

drives better decision-making. It's what protects people, protects the institution I work for.

But in the public sector? When mistakes are made, when bad judgments lead to real harm or even death, all we hear is: "Lessons have been learned." Where is the follow-up? Where is the accountability? Where is the consequence?

This isn't about wanting people punished. It's not about charges or job losses. It's about ensuring that the weight of decisions is felt by those making them. That they know their actions have consequences not just for others, but for them, personally. Only then will the culture change. Only then will people pause before making a choice and ask themselves: What does this mean for the people involved? What if I'm wrong? Have I done everything I can?

Elsie's life was taken by a young person, a perpetrator who was still legally a child, yet was known by those closest to him to be violent and dangerous. And yet, beyond the perpetrator himself, no one, not even his parents, who allowed that danger to grow inside their home, is being held accountable.

We are left with a painful and deeply unjust question:
When a parent knows their child is dangerous, allows them to possess weapons, and authorities have already visited the home how is that not neglect?

If a child were malnourished or unwashed, social services would act immediately. But when a child is surrounded by weapons, involved in violent behaviour, and known to be a threat the system does nothing. That is a failure. The parents of the boy who killed our daughter were fully aware of the risk he posed. They lived with him. They knew he had access to weapons, that he was involved in violent behaviour, and that he posed a danger to others. Police and safeguarding services had visited that home and still, it was deemed appropriate for a child to live there with no serious intervention. No action was taken. Why?

Our daughter paid the price for that failure. We are good, law-abiding parents. We have always taught our children the difference between right and wrong. We live in line with the law and contribute positively to our community. And yet we are the ones left with a life sentence of grief and pain, while the people who allowed this danger to grow in their home, people that treated him, continue their lives without consequence.

We demand accountability, so we urge this public inquiry to ask the hard questions:

- **Why is it, that despite numerous interactions with institutions and programmes intended to protect our children, that an individual, now deemed by some as one of the most dangerous criminals in our prison system was not prevented from committing the most serious criminality and terrorism?**
- **When does a parent become complicit in a crime committed by their child?**
- **Why is knowingly allowing access to weapons or violent behaviour not considered a serious form of neglect?**

- **How can it be that services visited that home and still took no steps to protect the public, including children like our daughter?**
- **Why does our society enable minors to have access to hate, terror, violence, and aged controlled materials, at their fingertips?**
- **Should a venue and event full of young children be locked and secure and if not why not?**
- **Was this a terrorist attack? If not, why was it not deemed a terrorist event?**

What we are dealing with here isn't simply a choice of weapon; it's about an individual who had been flagged repeatedly by various agencies, and yet no meaningful intervention took place. That is where the focus should lie: ensuring that individuals with a desire to cause harm are stopped, long before they pick up any weapon, be it a knife, or anything else. If we fail to address the underlying issues, the tools will keep changing, but the tragedy will remain the same.