



JUDICIARY OF
ENGLAND AND WALES

THE CROWN COURT SITTING AT MAIDSTONE

Regina v David Fuller

Sentence

The provisions of the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 1992 apply to this case. Under those provisions where a sexual offence has been committed against a person, no matter relating to that person shall during the person's lifetime be included in any publication if it is likely to lead members of the public to identify that person as the victim of the offence.

1. David Fuller, on 8 October 2021 you pleaded guilty to counts 3 – 53 of the indictment. On 4 November, four days into your trial on counts 1 and 2, you pleaded guilty to the murders of Wendy Knell and Caroline Pierce. You must now be sentenced for your crimes.
2. On 22 June 1987 a 25 year old woman Wendy Knell was dropped off outside her flat in Guildford Road, Tunbridge Wells by her boyfriend. She lived alone in a ground floor studio flat, which you had been watching. You got into her room, probably through an insecure window, attacked her with a blunt instrument to the head and asphyxiated her. You must have taken her by surprise as the room bore no signs of a struggle. You sexually assaulted her and left her naked and dead under a duvet. Blood stains around the room demonstrated that she had bled profusely, including through pillows. You were very familiar with her street having lived previously just 100yds away yourself. You had left a distinctive footmark in blood on her blouse which was much later matched to shoes you had owned at the time.
3. Miss Knell was successful, happy and independent. She was a Manageress at Supasnaps in Camden Road. She planned to marry her boyfriend Ian Plass who gave evidence at your trial. Her mother, Pamela Knell has described her as a hard-working, trusted woman who longed to have children. The shock of her daughter's death meant she had to leave work and she became very lonely. It was a cause of distance in her marriage which was not repaired before Wendy's father's death. The impact of the murder remains fresh and she feels her own life was ruined. Wendy Knell's sister Jane, described a life cut short far too soon

while she had so much to give and a family left behind with pain, anger and so many regrets.

4. Five months later by 24 November 1987 you had identified another lone and vulnerable local young woman who lived in a basement flat in Grosvenor Park. Caroline Pierce was just 20 years old. She went home from seeing friends by taxi and you probably attacked her before she got to her door. Screams were heard by neighbours across and around the Woodbury Cemetery behind her flat. Her nearly-naked body was found in a water filled dyke at St. Mary-in-the-Marsh on the Romney Marshes on 15 December. She too had been struck to the head with a heavy object and asphyxiated. You had sexually assaulted her before leaving her with only tights on, in a location close to where your grandparents lived.
5. Miss Pierce was a lively young woman, finding her place in the world, working as a manager at Buster Browns an American Restaurant also in Camden Road, just $\frac{1}{4}$ mile away from where Wendy Knell worked. There is evidence that you visited both locations and may well have seen the women in their working environments. Caroline had herself complained that she felt insecure in her flat and she had the window locks repaired, this may explain why you attacked her before she could get inside. Her mother Katrina Frost has written of a 34 year long nightmare she has endured from the time she was taken across Kent in the middle of the night to identify the badly damaged body of her only child. She too describes the unending guilt and regular reminders of the family's loss. The impact of the murder and the injustice of it remaining unsolved for so long, has spread over the generations and far across the world.
6. These were premeditated killings; carefully planned and executed. You were a 32 year old prowler hanging around the locality where these women lived, just a couple of miles from where your wife, who you married that year, had a staff house at Broomhill Bank School. A number of young women reported such behaviour around the time you were operating: spying through windows, entering property when women occupants were out. This included at the very flat where you attacked Caroline Pierce. You carried out sufficient reconnoitring to be in a position, I am sure to select your victims specifically, and to attack both of your victims shortly after they had reached their homes.
7. I am also sure that each murder involved sexual conduct, most likely post-mortem. Semen was found in Miss Knell's mouth and vagina as well as on her duvet, and there was evidence of anal penetration shortly before or after she died. Blood pattern analysis which the jury was hearing on the day you decided to change your pleas to ones of guilty, demonstrated that this young woman's body had been moved into a number of different positions while she was

bleeding from your attack on her. I am sure this was so that you could sexually assault her in multiple ways. Miss Pierce's remains were found in such a degraded condition that the same degree of pathological specificity was not available to the court. However she was found naked and evidence of you having left sperm on the inside of her tights remained. These facts together with what I have concluded is the primary spur for all the offending I have to sentence you for today, namely a deep-seated necromania exhibited in necrophilia convince me that these murders were sexually motivated. Once you had killed these women you spent time with their bodies satisfying your sexual deviancy.

8. These deaths, which became known as 'the bed-sit murders', caused a high degree of alertness in the local area. People were vigilant. The police patrolled regularly. You are cunning and intelligent. I have no doubt at all that you were restrained from attacking more women in their homes because of these developments. As with all undetected murders, cases are never formally closed and are subject to regular reviews considering any new information that comes to light or advances in DNA science. In 2008, Kent Police formed a Cold Case team; a dedicated resource to review undetected murders. Two of the founding members of that team were Detective Constables Alan DAVIES and Joanna GODFREY. In 2019 the team pushed for a forensic review having been made aware of an advancement in DNA Science. Exhibits from the Crime Scene of Caroline Pierce were reviewed using this technique recovering new samples which later partially matched the crime scene of Wendy Knell; the first time a formal scientific link between the two murders was made.
9. The Familial DNA Process had been unsuccessful on an earlier attempt but was tried again given improvements in the science. The police had a full DNA profile from an unknown suspect at both murder scenes. This person was not on the national DNA database. The familial search looks for close relatives who are on the database. The National Crime Agency provided a list of 1000 names from the database, all of whom had some elements similar to the crime scene DNA. This was reduced mathematically to 90 people, and each one was given a grading. A significant deployment of staff nationwide was required to visit the individuals, take a fresh sample voluntarily and ask for family details including a family tree. Kent Constabulary had support from over 20 other police forces. One person's DNA profile bore significant similarities to samples from the crime scenes. This person had a relative of the right age and profile including proximity to Tunbridge Wells as a likely match. It was you. As a result you were arrested on 3 December 2020 and a DNA sample taken from you in custody provided a positive match for the scene DNA within 36 hours. In interviews you firmly denied the murders. The investigative work continued eg a bloody finger-mark left on a plastic bag behind Miss Knell's bed was matched to your left forefinger just this year.

10. DC Davies, who became the Case Officer and DC Godfrey the disclosure officer worked closely with CPS Case Lawyer Libby Clark and prosecution counsel to prepare the case for trial. They were supported by the Major Incident Room team led by Office Manager Samantha Baker. The forensic case was led by Senior Crime Scene Investigator Emma Jennings. She ensured that the integrity of all exhibits including continuity over a 34-year period was to the highest standards. These five individuals are commended by the court for their persistence and skill. The meticulous work of scenes of crime officers and scientists who attended the scenes and took samples which were securely preserved for decades allowed the prosecution to build a compelling case and that work is the reason you have ultimately been brought to justice.
11. Having got married in 1987 and escaped detection so far, in November 1988 you applied for a job in maintenance at the Kent and Sussex Hospital. You worked there from January the following year until July 2002. You were promoted to a maintenance supervisor until May 2011. From then until your arrest you were employed as an estates supervisor at Pembury Hospital. This employment gave you access to areas which are ordinarily out of bounds; in particular, the mortuaries of both hospitals. You would get through the security by using your employee swipe card outside the hours that the mortuary staff worked. You were not disturbed or challenged over all those years, but there are signs that you had prepared subterfuge to ensure you had a ready explanation for your presence in those parts of the hospital, such as carrying items of maintenance equipment.
12. Once inside the mortuaries, away from CCTV surveillance, you systematically and persistently sexually abused the bodies of at least 102 dead women and girls. The youngest was aged 9 the oldest had reached 100 before her death. You photographed and filmed the acts you carried out before transferring the images onto computer hard drives which you concealed. To date over 80 of those human beings have been identified, the names of some 20 may never been established. Inevitably, this has caused anguish both to those who knew your victims, but also numerous others who have no way of knowing whether their loved ones were the targets of your deviant interference.
13. The mother of your youngest known victim stood up and spoke at this hearing. She said of her daughter, she was the kindest and bravest person she has ever met. She laughed and loved like no other and was grateful for life. She described the dreadful and unnatural way you offended against her precious child after her mother had been into the mortuary to mourn, how you saw the letter she had written to her and moved the toys and clothing her mother had left her with.

14. A member of your oldest known victim's family wrote that he feels as if he has lost his mother all over again.
15. When your house was searched four portable hard-drives were found in a box attached to the rear of a chest of drawers in a wardrobe. Explicit printed images of dead women being sexually abused by you were found hidden within the office and the wardrobe. It is clear from this evidence that over the course of many years, you were not only obsessively preserving the images of your abuse, you exhaustively catalogued and indexed them. To do so you copied images of the mortuary logbook showing the names and ages of those brought into the mortuary. These latter photographs were taken in 2018 rather than at the time of earlier abuse and you used the information there in your complex filing system. Although you denied it you did research into your victims and possible victims including looking at social media accounts they had. Once you had captured your sexual abuse you viewed the images, tried to manipulate the videos and, on occasion, made large numbers of stills from the videos. One hard drive alone contained over 800,000 images and 504 videos.
16. You recorded your penis in the mouths, anuses and vaginas of the dead. You penetrated the bodies with your fingers and tongue. You carried out repeated offences against victims on the same occasion and on multiple successive days. Sometimes you abused a woman before and after a post mortem had been carried out. Some had committed suicide and bore the marks, others had medical paraphernalia present when you penetrated their bodies. Two were members of the same family who had died together. Some you removed from fridges, some you placed on the floor and in different positions. Some you sat astride. On occasion you removed the victim from body bags or removed clothing or sheets. Sometimes you attached a TENS machine to the victim and your own genitals. A TENS machine was found in your house. In some videos you ejaculated.
17. Relatives of your victims told the court how their worlds have been made so much darker because of your monstrous conduct. Despite this they have shone a light into court today by describing in loving words the special people they lost. They are haunted by your abuse, some reported to them years after they first had to cope with the death of their loved ones. They describe being nauseated and heart-broken by the immorality of your abhorrent acts. You have sullied and stolen fond memories, and ripped open old wounds. Your violations go against everything right and humane. They are incomprehensible. Many speak of inconsolable guilt of not being able to protect the vulnerable, of their own and their family's damaged mental health, the impossibility of un-knowing what they have been told happened, of un-seeing the images they have imagined. It has shaken their sense of being able to trust the world, trust

hospitals, predict the respect and decency with which those who are vulnerable will be treated. They have been left in a dark place. They feel the outrage and revulsion that their daughters, wives, sisters, mothers and aunts would have felt at your objectification of girls and woman and they speak on behalf of them. They have bad days and less bad days. Some wish they had never been told, some have chosen not to tell their wider families of what they have learnt, to save them from the pain. Keeping such a secret is a heavy burden. The shock of what you did has caused a kind of white noise which is inescapable.

18. Deep sorrow and immense courage has been displayed in court today. The court has listened carefully to and read every single word of these dozens of statements which must have been unspeakably harrowing to compose. If there is any benefit to the transparency of this sentencing hearing may it be of some comfort to each person who has spoken or written that they have been able to pay tribute publicly to their precious loved ones and give them the dignity of their own memories in life. If it is at all possible I hope that the end of this sentencing process will allow them to leave you here, in this court, when they leave, to banish the shadow you have cast and return to their purer memories of the person they knew and loved.
19. Although when interviewed by the police you admitted committing these offences you claimed not to have done so for sexual pleasure. I reject that obvious lie. Indeed throughout your accounts, you sought to minimise your actions. Another of your hard-drives contains image after image of raped and murdered women and girls downloaded from the internet. Three of the hard-drives contained large number of indecent images of children at all three categories A, B & C. Category A images include depictions of penetrative sexual activity involving a child. Examples of those found are: a still image of a child aged 2-4 years being orally raped by an adult penis and 1 minute of film showing a child aged no more than 6 being vaginally raped by a man. Category B images contain non-penetrative sexual activity involving children. Examples include a film of a young girl lying on a bed while a man masturbates above her. Category C images do not fall within the other categories. An example is a film of a young girl exposing her genitalia to the camera. Prohibited and extreme images were also found.
20. The portable drives also revealed recordings you had made of a relative of your wife when that lady visited you in your home. You set up a camera disguised as a pen in the bathroom and covertly recorded her undressing, showering, drying herself and when she used the toilet. The pen-camera was itself found in the pocket of a jacket hanging in the office.

21. In addition you used images you'd stolen from her own computer and manipulated them by photo-shopping her head and face onto the bodies of some of the dead women you had sexually abused.
22. It took nine officers five months to work through the property seized from your home. The digital material included 100 hard drives in total, 1300 CDs, 2,200 Floppy Discs, 30 mobile phones, 34,000 photoprints, negatives, slides and camera film roles. The contents of the Hard drives equate to 23 Terabytes of digital material. It has taken six officers working on four specially purchased high powered machines 12 months to process 95% of the material.
23. There is so much sorrow in this community because of what you have done. But many people have worked hard to bring you to justice for these repellent crimes. By way of demonstration it is necessary to describe how the police identified your victims. DCI Chris Greenstreet was appointed the Senior Identification Manager to lead the victim identification and family engagement process. Digital material downloaded was reviewed by Mr David Shipley, a detective sergeant at the outset, who retired but came back as a civilian officer to finish this investigation. He has viewed every second of the offending, enabling DC Nicola Hilton to build the case and provide identification evidence to the Victim ID Team. The two lead ID officers, DC Tania Pickering and DC Rachel King, then presented their investigations to Paul Fotheringham Trainee Detective Chief Superintendent in victim ID Panels. To date 28 panels have been held and 82 victims identified to a sufficient standard for certainty. The details of the identified individuals were then passed to the Family Engagement Team who identified the next of kin. When you were first charged with 13 of these offences in July this year I imposed a reporting restriction to prevent a jury in the trial of the murder charges becoming aware of these further offences before I had heard legal argument about whether any unfairness would flow from all the allegations being tried together. The police were not yet ready to proceed to informing the victims' families but information had been disseminated to at least one media publication and it was necessary for the prosecution to bring the charging timetable forward and seek a court order. Following the hearing on the 8th October, the co-ordinated notification of over 80 families across the country began. This involved:
- 166 Family Liaison Officers with supervision
 - 27 Police Forces
 - 320 staff a day, over five days

This was a significant undertaking for the Kent Constabulary, and the work of all six officers is commended by the court, together with DS Clare Lockwood, Trainee Detective Inspector Shelly Chantler, DCI Garry Cook and Detective Superintendent Ivan Beasley. No such undertaking could be faultless, those who heard the news were totally unprepared for it, but from all I have seen the

team of 12 Kent Police Family Liaison Officers has displayed exemplary sensitivity in this exceptional case.

24. There is no sentencing guideline for sexual penetration of a corpse contrary to s.70 SOA 2003 or for for possessing extreme pornography. The maximum sentence for both is 2 years. I have regard to the Sentencing Council Guideline for Possession of indecent photograph of a child and indecent photographs of children, under the relevant Acts, effective from 1st April 2014. The maximum sentence under the Protection of Children Act 1978 is ten years imprisonment. I have also considered the Voyeurism guideline, effective from 1st April 2014. The maximum sentence under s.67 of the Sexual offences Act is 2 years' imprisonment. Given the exceptional features, in particular the period of offending and the staggering multiplicity of victims a number of sentences are to be made concurrent and I have paid careful attention to ensure the sentence overall is just and proportionate as the Totality guideline requires. I allow a quarter reduction for the guilty pleas. Had these offences come before me for sentence individually each sentence would have been more severe.
25. In my judgment each of these offences was of high culpability, almost all of them of the highest possible blameworthiness. The offences committed in the mortuaries involved an astonishing breach of trust and invasion of privacy which was repeated so much that it became habitual. The dead bodies of women and children were used for your sexual gratification repetitively, sometimes the offences were repeated before and after a relative visited the dead, each was recorded and some were further manipulated when reduced to digital images. The mortuary offences were also of the highest category of harm as the impact statements the court has heard have testified. You had no regard for the dignity of the dead. Women and children who had recently died, often in tragic circumstances such as road traffic accidents or by suicide were defiled at a time when they were utterly alone and unable to resist or report your exploitation. As you well knew, those who cared for them were mourning their loss at the very time they were being abused. The subsequent revelations have demolished the peace in which the memories of loved ones were being held.
26. **Counts 3 - 6** reflect s. 70 penetrative sexual activity with the youngest victim (count 3) and also recordings and still images of her during the offending (category A in count 4; category B in count 5, and category C in count 6). She was 9 years of age at the date of the offending. The sentence is 12 months on count 3, 6 months on count 4, 2 months on count 5 and 1 month on count 6 making a total of 1 year 9 months.

27. **Count 7 and 8** are s.70 charges in respect of two different adult females, each of whom was offended against on multiple occasions. The sentence is 3 months on each count consecutive making a total of 6 months consecutive
28. **Count 9 - 12** reflect the abuse of the body of another child victim, who was 16 years old (count 9). and also recordings and still images of her and the offending at category A, B and C (count 10 – 12). The sentence is 6 months on count 9, 3 months for count 10, 2 months concurrent for count 11 and 1 month concurrent on count 12 making a total of 1 year consecutive
29. **Counts 13 -14** reflect s. 70 offending against two different adult females. The sentence is 3 months on each count concurrent.
30. **Count 15** (possessing an extreme pornographic image) is an all-encompassing charge designed to reflect the films and images of penetrative sexual activity taken during the offending against all the adult victims. The sentence is 6 months concurrent.
31. **Counts 16- 38** are all counts of sexual penetration of a corpse. Each count relates to a separate victim, aged between 18 and 84. All the individuals were victims of penetrative sexual activity. The sentences are 3 months on each count consecutive to each other reaching a total of 5 years 9 months consecutive.
32. **Count 39** (possession of an extreme pornographic image) reflects offending against the much older sister of the child victim, the subject of count 40, in the mortuary. The activity falls short of penetrative sexual activity. The sentence is 6 months concurrent.
33. **Counts 40 and 41** reflect offending against a 16 year old child, the younger sister of the victim of count 39. Count 40 represents the sexual activity, and count 41 represents the images taken of it. The sentence is 6 months on count 40 and 2 months concurrent on count 41 making a total of 6 months consecutive.
34. **Count 42** is a group charge (s.70) to reflect the sexual penetration of the corpse of multiple further identified women. The offences involved penetrative sexual activity. The sentence is 6 months consecutive.
35. **Count 43** is a group charge of possessing extreme pornographic images, to reflect offending against multiple victims not involving penetrative sexual activity. The sentence is 6 months concurrent.

36. **Count 44** is the voyeurism offence using the camera in the bathroom. This is a category 2 offence aggravated by the location and concealment of the camera. The sentence is 6 months consecutive
37. **Count 45** is a printed indecent photograph of a child, albeit torn up, found during the search of the home office. The sentence is 3 months consecutive.
38. **Counts 46, 47 and 48** (making indecent photographs of children) reflect the internet sourced indecent images of children found in electronic form. There were 8,300 category A images (count 46); 8,400 category B images (count 47); and 197,109 category C images (count 48). I take into account the very young age of some of the children shown. The sentence is 6 months on count 46, 3 months concurrent on count 47 and 1 month concurrent on count 48 making a total of 6 months consecutive
39. **Count 49** (possession of extreme pornographic images) reflects the extreme pornography sourced from the internet. There were nearly 1,500 images found. The sentence is 3 months concurrent.
40. **Count 50** (possession of prohibited images of children) reflects prohibited images of children sourced from the internet. There were over 1000 images found during the review of the electronic material. The sentence is 3 months concurrent.
41. **Counts 51-53** reflect three further s.70 penetrative sexual activity against victims who were more recently identified. Count 51 concerns the oldest of the identified victims, who was 100 years old. Count 52 concerns the second oldest victim, who was 89 years old. The sentence is 3 months on count 51, 3 months on count 52 and 3 months on count 53, each consecutive making a total of 9 months consecutive.
42. The total sentence imposed on counts 3 to 53 is 12 years imprisonment.
43. There is only one sentence for murder: it is life imprisonment. You took two lives and it is right that the sentence of life imprisonment is the one that I shall pass on you. However, the law also requires me to specify the minimum term for which you must be detained before you can be considered for release on licence or to specify that those provisions which allow the release of a life prisoner are not to apply in your case.
44. There can be no dispute that the two murders you committed would be likely to lead, today, to a whole life order. This is because they each required a substantial degree of premeditation and planning, and sexual or sadistic

conduct. This is exceptionally high seriousness according to Schedule 21 paragraph 4 to the Criminal Justice Act 2003 and would be so, even without taking account of the other fifty offences for which you must be sentenced and which are therefore associated with the murders for the purpose of the law. Those offences obviously and powerfully aggravate your situation.

45. The court must take account of the time you have spent on remand; just over a year since 5 December 2020 although it may not make very much difference in this case. Your guilty pleas to murder provide little mitigation coming as they did after the trial had begun. As late as April 2021 you permitted a Defence Statement to be served on your behalf in which you denied killing the two victims and you challenged the reliability of the DNA evidence against you. A few weeks before the trial was due to begin you changed your position, admitting the killings but denying murder. Eventually you had to accept there was no way out and after a jury had begun to hear about these terrible events you admitted you had no viable defence. No mitigation has been put forward on your behalf relying on the contents of any psychiatric report. There is no diminution in your culpability; you are no significant distance from the norm in respect of any mental capacity or functioning. You are clever and deliberate in all you do. Dr Blackwood a consultant psychiatrist described the murders as principally informed by features deriving from your desire to have sex with corpses and from psychopathic personality traits of deficient affective experience (callousness, a striking lack of emotional empathy and deceptive person behaviours.)
46. You have lately expressed regret for your crimes through counsel: but I see no evidence whatsoever that this is real repentance for your deeds rather than a hollow gesture at a time when you are under public scrutiny. In time your regret may become true remorse.
47. Today marks 34 years since Caroline Pierce's body was found in 1987. You murdered Miss Knell and Miss Pierce long before current legislation came into force. To give effect to the principle that protects against non-retroactivity I must ensure that the punishment I impose does not exceed what would have been imposed had you been convicted before the Criminal Justice Act 2003 and Schedule 21 of that Act were in force. This is the effect of Schedule 22 and the Criminal Practice Direction VII (Sentencing) N.
48. This means that before I impose the sentence I consider just and proportionate for these murders I must consider what minimum term the Secretary of State for the Home Office would have notified to you under the practice which prevailed before December 2002.

49. The best guide to that practice is a letter written by Lord Bingham, then Chief Justice, to judges on 10 February 1997. Lord Bingham wrote, that for a single, unexceptional murder, 14 years should be regarded as the period that would actually have to be served before release on licence. Markers which would take a murder out of the unexceptional category would include evidence of gratuitous violence or sexual maltreatment, humiliation or degradation before the killing and multiple killings. He said, "*While a recommendation of a punitive term longer than, say 30 years will be very rare in deed, I do not think one should set any upper limit. Some crimes will certainly call for terms very well in excess of the norm.*"
50. The Court of Appeal in *R v Sullivan and others* [2004] EWCA Crim 1762 reviewed the subsequent Consolidated Criminal Practice Direction issued in 2003 and summarised the totality of the guidance available before December 2003. As well as 20 years and over in an especially grave case, and in an extremely serious case a term starting at 30 years, the court recognised that in cases of exceptional gravity no minimum term could be expected. The court reiterated the efficacy of Lord Bingham's letter.
51. The effect of this guidance is that the court may not make a whole life order unless it is of the view that under the practice followed by the Secretary of State before 2002, the Secretary of State would have been likely to issue a notification that he did not intend that the defendant should ever be released on licence.
52. With all this in mind I turn to consider the submissions made on your behalf that pre 2003 judicial recommendations for minimum terms of over 30 years were reserved for the rarest of cases and whole life recommendations were rarer still. Secondly, that it is not clear whether and in what circumstances the Secretary of State would notify a whole life order and so the court cannot be satisfied that he would have done so in this case.
53. In *R v Secretary of State for the Home Department, ex parte Hindley* [2000] UKHL 21: [2000] 2 All ER 385 the practice of the Secretary of State up until that date was considered. In his speech Lord Steyn observed that since the introduction of the tariff system for the Home Secretary to apply, by way of a statement made to the House of Commons on 30 November 1983., followed by the imposition of the first whole life tariff under that system by the then Home Secretary (Mr Douglas Hurd) in 1988, whole life tariffs had been imposed on thirty occasions. This is informative because it allows me to assess, at least against the submission that such notifications were rarer than the rarest, whether this extremely serious case is one in which the Home Secretary would have been likely to notify a whole life tariff.

54. There are some crimes which are so wicked that even if the prisoner is detained until he dies it will not exhaust the requirements of retribution and deterrence. I have no doubt at all that had the Secretary of State been required to set a tariff for the totality of your murderous, bizarre and grossly repellent offending David Fuller, you would have been notified that you would never be released from prison. In my judgment your offending falls into that extreme category and would have been considered by any reasonable judge or Home Secretary to do so, whether you were sentenced in 1988 shortly after the murders or today.
55. And who are you David Fuller? You are 67 years old. In 1973 and 1976 you were convicted of dozens of burglaries committed by climbing into homes through windows. You have spent the subsequent 45 years living an outwardly mild and ordinary life, you were described as a man who was good under pressure, while in seclusion you committed acts of the deepest darkness. Having killed two young women who were full of the promise of life you became a vulture, picking your victims from among the dead, within the hidden world of hospital mortuaries which you were left free to inhabit, simply because you had a swipe card. The depravity of what you did reveals that your conscience is seared; calloused over. The sentence I am about to pass means you will spend every day of the rest of your life in prison. For the murder of Wendy Knell you are sentenced to life imprisonment and the release provisions will not apply. For the murder of Caroline Pierce you are sentenced to life imprisonment and the release provisions will not apply. I have taken into account each of the other offences you committed in imposing sentence and the 12 years imprisonment that those determinate sentences amount to will be served concurrently with the life sentences. Please take him down.
56. Mr Atkinson, Mr Saxby. Counsel's job in a case like this is unusually onerous. Both prosecution and defence teams have shown the best of the English Bar throughout. Thankyou for the clarity of your submissions and the professionalism evident in all your work.
57. I also wish to thank the charity Rubicon Cares which provides trauma counselling for people affected by crime for being willing to provide counselling to jurors in the trial should they have needed it.
58. Finally, the court staff here at Maidstone Crown Court have served their community very well.

Mrs Justice Cheema-Grubb

15 December 2021