



JUDICIARY OF  
ENGLAND AND WALES

**The Queen**

**-v-**

**Joanne Christine Dennehy**

**Gary John Stretch**

**Leslie Paul Layton**

**Robert James Moore**

**In the Crown Court at Cambridge sitting at the Central Criminal Court**

**28 February 2014**

**Sentencing remarks of Mr Justice Spencer**

Joanne Dennehy, Gary Stretch, Leslie Layton and Robert Moore, you may remain seated for the time being.

Joanne Dennehy, within the space of 10 days at the end of March last year you murdered three men in cold blood. Although you pleaded guilty you have made it quite clear that you have no remorse for those murders. With the help of one or more of your co-defendants you dumped the bodies of your three victims in remote rural areas around Peterborough hoping they would not be found. Only a matter of days later you attempted to murder two more men, this time openly on the streets of Hereford, victims chosen entirely at random. Miraculously they survived. You claim to feel remorse for stabbing those two men nearly to death. I have no hesitation in rejecting that suggestion. You are a cruel, calculating, selfish, and manipulative serial killer.

You Gary Stretch actively assisted Joanne Dennehy in dumping the bodies of all three men she had murdered, making use of your local knowledge. You were her driver in Hereford and stopped the car to enable her to get out and attempt to murder two more men. You knew exactly what she was likely to do. The jury convicted you of attempted murder as well.

You Leslie Layton actively assisted Joanne Dennehy and Gary Stretch in dumping the bodies of two of the three men she had murdered. One of them was your housemate. The other was your landlord. You had every opportunity to distance yourself from these crimes. Instead you chose to go along with them. When the police were trying to find your missing housemate and needed your help as a member of the public, you repeatedly lied to them to cover your own tracks and to protect Joanne Dennehy and Gary Stretch. Had you told the truth, it is possible they would have been arrested before the attacks in Hereford.

You Robert Moore gave shelter and assistance to Joanne Dennehy and Gary Stretch for two nights when you knew or believed she had committed those murders and that he had helped her dump the bodies.

I have to sentence each of you for your part in these appalling offences. Before I do so, however, I need to set out the factual basis on which I sentence you all.

Your first victim, Joanne Dennehy, was a 31 year old Polish man, Lukasz Slaboszewski. He had come to this country in 2005. Somehow you met and befriended him. Within a matter of days of meeting him you murdered him. He texted his friend to the effect that life was beautiful now that he had you as his girlfriend. You lured him soon afterwards to 11 Rolleston Garth in Peterborough, where you had been living. There can be no doubt that you lured him there specifically to kill him. You stabbed him once through the heart. Whilst you decided how to dispose of his body permanently, you put the body for the time being into a wheelie bin. You made a point of bringing a 14 year old girl whom you had

befriended to 11 Rolleston Garth where you opened the bin and showed her the dead body. You deny doing this, but the detail of her account is so clear and compelling that I find it impossible to accept your denial. That conduct is an aggravating feature of the murder and of the charge of preventing the lawful and decent burial of the body. You set about acquiring a vehicle specifically to dispose of the body. With money you borrowed for the purpose from your landlord and third victim, Kevin Lee, you bought a Vauxhall Astra, travelling with Gary Stretch by taxi to collect it. This was within two days of the murder. Later the same evening, you and Gary Stretch were driving around remote areas on the outskirts of Peterborough looking for a suitable site to dump the body. The site chosen was Thorney Dyke, close to where you, Gary Stretch, had lived some years earlier. You boasted to Georgina Page that no-one would ever find the bodies dumped there.

The second man you murdered, Joanne Dennehy, was John Chapman. He was 56 years old. He was murdered a week or so later, probably in the early hours of Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March, Good Friday. You stabbed him to death in his own bed sitting room at 38 Bifield where by now you were also living. John Chapman was a kindly, harmless and inoffensive man who had served his country in the Royal Navy but had fallen on hard times through his weakness for alcohol. You, Joanne Dennehy, were well aware of that vulnerability and exploited it. You, Gary Stretch, and you, Leslie Layton, met and drank with John Chapman at 38 Bifield only a matter of days before he was murdered. You, Leslie Layton, lived in another bed sit room on the same floor of the building. You, Joanne Dennehy, said or hinted to Georgina Page when you visited her a few days later that you had killed this man because he came into the bathroom when you were having a bath and would not leave. I bear in mind that it is a feature of your psychopathic personality that you are a pathological liar. There is clear evidence that you had threatened John Chapman that you would get him out of the house by any means. Eviction notices had been served on the tenants at 38 Bifield by your landlord and third victim Kevin Lee, someone you wanted to lead to believe you were helping. You had only just moved into 38 Bifield. John Chapman described you to another tenant, Toni Ann Roberts as "the mad woman". It was she whom he told that he was having problems with you, and that you had said you would get him out

of the house by any means. I am quite sure that this, once again, was a planned and premeditated killing.

You stabbed John Chapman to death in his own bed sitting room. You stabbed him once in the neck, severing the carotid artery, and five times in the chest. Two of the stab wounds penetrated the heart, one of them inflicted with sufficient force to pass first through the breast bone. There was no injury to suggest that John Chapman had attempted to defend himself. His blood alcohol level was four times the limit for driving. It may even be that you stabbed him as he lay asleep on his bed.

You, Leslie Layton, had a photograph of John Chapman's dead body on your mobile phone, a photograph taken at 7.32am that day, not long after the murder. You were never asked about that photograph by the police in interview, because it had been deleted from your phone and had not then been retrieved by forensic analysis. You had the opportunity at your trial to give evidence and tell the jury, if it was truly the case, that you did not take that photograph, did not delete it, and knew nothing of it. You did not give evidence. Instead the theory was put forward by your counsel in his closing speech that the photograph might have been taken by Joanne Dennehy using your phone and that she might have deleted the image without your ever knowing it was there. That was only a theory. There is no evidence to support it. Bearing in mind how critical the evidence of this photograph was to the prosecution case against you in rebutting your defence of duress, and how important it would have been for you to challenge it, I am quite sure that the reason why you chose not to give evidence about this photograph was that you knew it was you who took it and you who deleted it.

Soon after you had murdered John Chapman you, Joanne Dennehy, were using the dead man's mobile phone. I strongly suspect that it was you who was using it as early as 6.34am to call Gary Stretch, an hour before the photograph was taken, but I cannot be sure of that as the telephone schedule shows that from time to time over the previous few days John Chapman had himself called Gary Stretch, albeit never so early in the morning.

When you, Leslie Layton, were confronted with the body of John Chapman early that Friday morning your reaction was not to call for help but to photograph the body for your own purposes as a morbid souvenir. That showed a callous indifference to the plight of your housemate. When Gary Stretch came round to 38 Bifield soon afterwards that morning you were able to leave the house, free of threat or fear, and you went out shopping with a friend. You could and should have raised the alarm then, but instead you chose to meet up again with Gary Stretch later that afternoon knowing that the body of John Chapman still lay upstairs in the room where he had been murdered. You played your part in helping to dump the body of John Chapman later that night, in the same ditch at Thorney Dyke where the body of Lukasz Slaboszewski lay undiscovered. I shall return to that.

The third man you murdered, Joanne Dennehy, was your landlord Kevin Lee. He was 48 years old, a much loved husband and father. By a combination of bad judgement on his part born of genuine compassion and desire to help you, and the strange fascination that you held for him, as you did for other men, Kevin Lee became infatuated with you. Over a period of several months you led him to believe that you had been grossly abused as a child and even that you had killed your own father and served many years in prison as a result. That was pure fantasy. You had a perfectly decent and proper upbringing and the advantage of a good home. Kevin Lee befriended you, gave you employment in his property letting business and provided you with accommodation in a series of bedsits in the houses his company owned and rented out. Your relationship with Kevin Lee became so close that you felt able to confide in him that you had committed the first murder. You were to tell Georgina Page later that it was because he had seen the body that you had to kill Kevin Lee. That may be part of the reason, but it was only part. I am quite sure that the reason you murdered Kevin Lee in the way that you did, and dumped his body in the way that you did, was to gratify your own sadistic lust for blood.

Like your first victim, you lured your third victim Kevin Lee to 11 Rolleston Garth specifically in order to murder him. You had whetted his appetite sexually by telling

him that when he came to see you that Friday afternoon you were going to dress him up and rape him. That is what he told his best friend Dave Church when he met him that afternoon on business less than an hour before his fatal rendezvous with you at Rolleston Garth. It was not the first time Kevin Lee had described to Dave Church the sort of extreme sexual activity you and he were taking part in together. You stabbed Kevin Lee five times in the chest. The wounds penetrated both lungs and the heart. This time there were injuries to suggest that your victim tried to defend himself.

With two dead bodies now to dispose of, at two separate addresses, you Joanne Dennehy and you Gary Stretch were seen by various witnesses engaged in the cleaning up operations. Then in the evening, with you as well now, Leslie Layton, the three of you set about dumping these two bodies and covering your tracks. You, Leslie Layton, I am quite satisfied on all the evidence, were a wholly willing participant in getting rid of the bodies and setting fire to Kevin Lee's Mondeo car. The three of you travelled to another remote rural area on the outskirts of Peterborough at Newborough to dump the body of Kevin Lee. You, Joanne Dennehy, had indeed dressed Kevin Lee in a black sequinned dress of your own. As a final humiliation, his body was dumped in the ditch still wearing that dress, with his naked buttocks exposed. I have studied the photographs of his body as it was found in the ditch, rather than rely on the sanitised photograph which, quite properly, was all the jury were allowed to see. I am quite satisfied that Kevin Lee's body must have been deliberately positioned or deliberately left that way, with his bare buttocks prominently exposed upwards, still wearing the sequinned dress.

I am prepared to accept, however, that you, Leslie Layton, played no part in that and, as you told the police, did not get out of the car on that occasion. But you, Leslie Layton, were active in driving the Mondeo, probably with Kevin Lee's body in the boot, and as the CCTV clearly showed you were prominent in obtaining petrol with which to set fire to and destroy the Mondeo. This was done on an area of waste ground at Yaxley quite deliberately chosen, I am sure, to be as far away as possible

from where Kevin Lee's body had been dumped, out beyond the other side of Peterborough.

The three of you then returned in the Astra to 38 Bifield where the body of John Chapman was loaded into the car. You, Leslie Layton, admitted in interview that you played an active part with Joanne Dennehy in carrying his body downstairs from the top floor. It was probably his body that you, Gary Stretch, were seen carrying to the car and putting in the boot, causing the suspension to drop. The three of you drove out to Thorney Dyke where John Chapman's body was dumped in the same ditch where the body of Lukasz Slaboszewski still lay. This time you got out of the car, Leslie Layton, and must have seen there was another body already there. The jury rejected your defence of duress. You had ample opportunity in the course of that day to distance yourself from Joanne Dennehy and Gary Stretch. It was fascination not fear which led you to stay with them and help them to dispose of the bodies. That is why you had no qualms about accepting Gary Stretch's offer to stay at his flat overnight.

You Gary Stretch, also relied on the defence of duress before the jury. Whatever the true nature of your relationship with Joanne Dennehy there is not a shred of evidence that you were ever in fear of her. Had you been, you would not have dispensed with the gun which I am sure you had in your possession when you went on the run to Hereford two days later.

You, Leslie Layton, and you, Robert Moore, were more than willing to give Joanne Dennehy and Gary Stretch whatever assistance they wanted in evading the police, even though you knew full well that murders had been committed and bodies dumped. Leslie Layton told the police that it was from your house, Robert Moore, that the tarpaulin was borrowed in which to wrap or carry the bodies that Friday. I do not sentence you on the basis that you lent them the tarpaulin knowing why it was needed. That allegation has never been made. But you knew that the body of the first victim had been stored for a while in a wheelie bin at 11 Rolleston Garth, close to where you lived. That much is apparent from what you told the probation

officer, although you made no comment in interview when the police questioned you on the topic. It is quite clear, not least from the text messages you sent her, that you were besotted with Joanne Dennehy and prepared to do almost anything to indulge her. Knowing what she and Gary Stretch had done you were willing to put them up in your house and willing even to expose your young daughter to their influence. When they could not return to their own accommodation because the police were looking for them, you provided them with food and shelter for two nights running, Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March..

Over that Easter weekend you, Leslie Layton, were undoubtedly wracked with guilt and worry over what you had done. That is why your friends Toni Ann Roberts and Michelle Bowles described you as distressed and upset on the Sunday evening when they spoke to you. That did not stop you trying to cover your tracks, however, nor did it induce you to go to the police and tell them what you knew about the disappearance of John Chapman which was, by now, headline news in the media. Instead, when the police came to see you on Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March and again on the afternoon of 1<sup>st</sup> April you lied time and again in denying all knowledge of what had become of John Chapman. You said you had not seen him since the previous Wednesday or Thursday. In fact on the Friday night you had helped to dump his dead body in a ditch. You said you had not seen Joanne Dennehy since the previous Wednesday. You lied to the police in a determined attempt to pervert the course of justice. The jury rejected your defence of duress. By now Joanne Dennehy and Gary Stretch were far away in East Anglia. All you had to do was tell the police the truth if you had the remotest concern for your own physical safety. I am sure you did not. You were thinking only of yourself and your friends in crime. Whilst the police were speaking to you that Monday afternoon you had several calls from Joanne Dennehy, calling you on the phone of the dead man the police were asking you about. As soon as the police had left, you rang Joanne Dennehy back, no doubt to report the progress of the police investigation as you knew it, as she had requested you should in a revealing earlier text message you neglected to delete from your phone.



On the Monday evening, you, Joanne Dennehy and Gary Stretch, paid a visit to Georgina Page in King's Lynn. There you both talked in a matter of fact way about the murders. It was there that you, Gary Stretch, boasted that the bodies would never be found. You, Joanne Dennehy, became excited and animated when you saw reports on television that you were wanted. Ecstatic was the way Georgina Page described you to the jury. You told her that when you dressed Kevin Lee up you had lubricated his backside and shoved something up it to make it look as though it was a sexual act. I am quite sure that you, Gary Stretch, did threaten Georgina Page before you left her house, saying that you would get your father to sort it out if anyone grassed on the two of you. Georgina Page told the jury that she understood by this that if she went to the police she might be killed. You, Joanne Dennehy, said that you knew the two of you would get caught and go to prison for a long time. You, Gary Stretch, laughed and said "My kids are grown up, so I don't care". The two of you returned to Peterborough and spent a second night at Robert Moore's home.

Early on Tuesday morning, 2<sup>nd</sup> April, you set off together from his home for Hereford. You chose Hereford because it was somewhere Gary Stretch knew well. You had burgled a house at Diss in Norfolk the previous day. This time you burgled another house in Herefordshire looking for valuable electrical items you could sell easily. By now the two of you were well and truly on the run and your behaviour was totally lawless.

You met up with other criminals at a flat in Kington, about 20 miles from Hereford on the Welsh border. The two of you, and the rest of the group you met, agreed to sell the stolen property to someone in Hereford with whom there would be a rendezvous. One of the men in the group you met was Mark Lloyd. He gave evidence at the trial over a long period and, like the jury, I had a good opportunity to assess him. I bear in mind the need for caution in relation to his evidence. However, I am quite sure he was not a willing passenger in the Vauxhall Astra when it set off for Hereford. I am also sure that before you left the flat in Hereford there was an incident in the kitchen, out of sight of Joanne Dennehy, when you, Gary Stretch, showed Mark Lloyd a hand gun which was in the waistband of your trousers.

Whether the gun was in fact loaded, as Mark Lloyd believed on the basis of his experience of such weapons, matters not. His evidence that you were in possession of such a gun was not challenged in cross-examination, although I accept that it was your counsel's judgment not to challenge it. I accept too that you had denied in interview having such a gun, but you told many important lies in your interviews, so that denial counts for very little. Nor did you give evidence to contradict Mark Lloyd's evidence about the gun, where any denial would have been tested.

I am sure that you did have such a gun in your possession, and sure that you led Mark Lloyd to believe you had it with you to rob a drug dealer if you could find one. You left the flat and disposed of the gun somewhere before the journey to Hereford began. That is significant in itself because it shows you were not truly in fear of Joanne Dennehy and did not consider that you needed a gun for your own protection against her. It is more likely, in my judgment, that you realised you were bound to be apprehended by the police sooner or later and did not want to compound your criminality by being caught in possession of a firearm. The fact that you had access to such a gun is, however, relevant to the danger you may pose to the public. I shall return to that.

Either before the journey to Hereford began, or during the course of the journey, I am quite sure that you, Joanne Dennehy, said words to the effect that Gary Stretch had already had his fun, in the sense of carrying out the burglary, and now you wanted your fun. I am also sure that you said earlier, at the flat, that you had killed three people, that Gary Stretch had helped to dispose of the bodies, and you had to do some more. By the time you arrived in Hereford I have no doubt that you had already formed the intention of killing at least one more man, at random, by stabbing him to death, and that you Gary Stretch knew perfectly well that this was bound to happen. In the event two men were nearly killed, not one.

On the jury's verdicts you, Gary Stretch, either shared Joanne Dennehy's intention to kill the two men she stabbed in Hereford or at the very least realised that she would stab them with the intention of killing them. On the facts of this case there is

no real difference. One way or the other you foresaw the inevitability of what was going to happen and you played your part in bringing it about.

I am quite sure on the evidence that it was you, Gary Stretch, who spotted the first victim, Robin Bereza, as you drove down the road. He was walking his dog ahead of you on the nearside pavement. You lied to the police in interview in suggesting that you had pulled up only after passing him and you lied in suggesting that you did not see what happened because it was taking place behind the car. The truth, I am sure, is that you decided to stop the car when and where you did, pulling up before you reached him, in order to give Joanne Dennehy the advantage of surprising her victim by attacking him from behind. Whether you actually uttered the words “Will he do?”, as Mark Lloyd told the jury, is less important. The fact is that you initiated the opportunity for the attack.

You, Joanne Dennehy, claim that you were under the influence of alcohol when you carried out this attack and that you feel remorse for what you did. You had undoubtedly been drinking whiskey from a bottle during the journey that day but despite the expert’s back-calculation of your possible alcohol level, I reject entirely any suggestion that you were so inebriated that you were unaware of what you were doing or that you were disinhibited by the alcohol you had consumed. Only a minute or so before the first attack you and Mark Lloyd went into the Green Lane store, as shown on the CCTV. You appear to have been in high spirits and, from the way you were behaving towards the young woman behind the counter, you were possibly in a state of euphoria at what was in prospect, but there was no indication at all that you were grossly affected by drink.

Robin Bereza was 63 years old at the time, a retired fireman who had kept himself fit. That afternoon he had chosen to walk his dog rather than go jogging. You attacked him from behind, taking him completely unawares. You stabbed him first in the back then a second time in the right upper arm. When he turned to face you and asked what on earth you were doing you told him “I want to hurt you, I am going to fucking kill you”. He tried to fight you off, kicking out at you. You pursued him into

the road, continuing the attack, but eventually you did desist, probably because of the arrival of another car at the scene waiting to turn into a side road. You, Gary Stretch, had driven the car slowly behind Joanne Dennehy and beckoned to her to get back into the car. You did and said nothing to show any disapproval or surprise at any stage at what she was doing. I accept the evidence of Mark Lloyd that you exercised some degree of physical restraint over him, for otherwise I am sure he would have got out of the car and distanced himself from what was going on. You Joanne Dennehy calmly got into the car, looking across and smiling at the driver of the other car waiting to turn right at the junction where this was taking place.

Although you managed to inflict only two stab wounds to Robin Bereza you caused him potentially fatal injuries. The deep wound to his back penetrated the chest wall causing a haemo-pneumothorax as well as bruising the lung and fracturing a rib. Had the blood and air not been promptly drained from his chest cavity by expert medical treatment, his life would have been in danger. The other stab wound shattered the shoulder blade and fractured the bone in the upper arm. It was only by pure chance that the nerves in the arm were not damaged irreparably with a drastic loss of function. The attack has had a profound effect on him emotionally and psychologically, and I shall return to this.

You, Joanne Dennehy, were not satisfied with the outcome of this first attack. You had not succeeded in your objective of killing another man. You required Gary Stretch to find you another victim and you, Gary Stretch, were happy to oblige her. It was no coincidence that the second victim was another man walking his dog. Using your local knowledge you, Gary Stretch, drove to a cul-de-sac adjacent to a path well used by dog walkers. As you told the police in interview, it was close to where your grandmother used to live. This time your victim was a 56 year old man, John Rogers who lived nearby and who was taking his dog for a walk. He had only gone a few yards down the path when you attacked him from behind, stabbing him in the back. When he turned round you stabbed him repeatedly. You pushed him backwards for several yards, stabbing him all the time. When he fell over you continued to stab him to the front and to the back. It was a relentless and frenzied attack with only one

purpose, to kill him. You left him for dead, picked up his dog, and left the scene. As he lay there helpless he thought he was dying. You accept that you thought you had killed him. That is what you told the police officer who arrested you a few minutes later.

You stabbed John Rogers more than 30 times. He had deep wounds to his chest, abdomen and back. Both lungs had collapsed. His bowel was perforated and exposed. Had he not received the most expert and prompt medical treatment he would have died from these injuries. So severe was the force of the stab wounds that nine ribs were fractured. He also received wounds to his hands and arms which could have resulted in irreparable nerve damage. He too has suffered grievous emotional and psychological harm, to which I shall return.

The death and destruction for which you are responsible, Joanne Dennehy, has caused untold distress to the families and friends of the men you murdered and to the victims who survived and their families. Many of those affected are in court today. I have read and taken into account the victim personal statements from John Chapman's brother-in-law, from Kevin Lee's widow, and from Robin Bereza and John Rogers. The cruel and aggravated circumstances of Kevin Lee's death in particular have been very hard indeed for his loved ones to bear. They are here in court as a tribute to his memory and to see justice done. You Joanne, Dennehy, described yourself to Kevin Lee as a monster for what you had done in the past. Kevin Lee's widow describes you as a monster who has taken and ruined her family's lives. Robin Bereza speaks of his inability to grasp the reality that anyone could be so evil as to attack someone in this way for no reason, someone you had never met. The experience has totally shaken his confidence and turned a robust former fireman into a nervous shadow of his former self. The lives of his wife and family have likewise been turned upside down and it is only with their love and support that he has been able to come to terms at all with the enormity of this experience.

John Rogers acknowledges that he owes his life to those who came to his assistance so promptly and the doctors who treated him so expertly. He continues to

experience the physical consequences of the attack. For example he no longer has the dexterity to play the guitar, and he is a keen musician. The psychological trauma has been just as devastating, and perhaps even greater. Only through the love and devotion of his wife has he been able to get through the ordeal at all.

Having set out the factual basis on which I pass sentence, I now deal with each of you in turn.

**Joanne Dennehy**

First you, Joanne Dennehy. For murder there is only one sentence, life imprisonment. But I am required to determine the minimum term you must serve. Parliament has laid down different starting points for the minimum term, depending upon the seriousness and circumstances of the case. In your case only two starting points could conceivably be appropriate, either a whole life order or a term of 30 years. If the latter, the gravity of your offending is such that the minimum term would have to be very substantially in excess of 30 years.

The issue in your case, therefore, is whether or not there should be a whole life order. Any question as to the lawfulness of such a sentence has been dispelled by the recent judgment of the Court of Appeal in the case of *McLoughlin* [2014] EWCA Crim 188. My duty is to apply the provisions of paragraph 4 of schedule 21 to the Criminal Justice Act 2003, and to consider whether the seriousness of the offence (or the combination of the offence and one or more offences associated with it) is exceptionally high. If the seriousness is exceptionally high, the appropriate starting point is a whole life order. Paragraph 4(2) provides that cases that would normally fall within this category include the murder of two or more persons where each murder involves a substantial degree of premeditation or planning, or the abduction of the victim, or sexual or sadistic conduct.

For the reasons I have already explained, I am quite sure that each of these three murders did involve a substantial degree of premeditation or planning. I am sure on the evidence that you lured your first victim Lukasz Slaboszewski to 11 Rolleston

Garth specifically in order to kill him. I am quite sure on all the evidence that you murdered John Chapman not on the spur of the moment because he had been watching you in the bath but because by then you had got a taste for murder and, as you had told him, you were prepared to do whatever it would take to get him out of the house. I am quite sure that you lured Kevin Lee to 11 Rolleston Garth that Friday specifically in order to kill him. I am also quite sure that this was a murder which involved sexual and sadistic conduct on your part. It is true that there is no medical evidence at post mortem of sexual interference, but the whole circumstances of the killing bear out what he told his friend he was expecting, namely that you were going to dress him up and rape him. You admitted as much to Georgina Page. The way in which his body was dumped was part of the playing out of your sexual and sadistic motivation.

Quite apart from meeting the threshold of seriousness in the examples given in paragraph 4, there were other aggravating features to these three murders. First, each of them involved stabbing with a knife or knives that you took to the scene for that very purpose, even if only within the same building. Second, having murdered Lukasz Slaboszewski and having put his body in a wheelie bin, you made a point of inviting a 14 year old girl to come to 11 Rolleston Garth specifically to show her the body in the bin. Third, John Chapman, although not physically disabled, was to your knowledge a particularly vulnerable victim on account of his alcoholism and you exploited that vulnerability. Fourth, you went to great lengths to dump each of the three bodies in a remote area where you hoped it would not be found. Fifth, having committed these murders and dumped the bodies, and knowing that you were wanted by the police, you attempted to murder and very nearly succeeded in murdering two more men, selected at random, by stabbing them repeatedly. Although there are separate counts which cover the dumping of the bodies and these two attempted murders, the overall criminality of your conduct in this case must be reflected in the minimum term you are required to serve. The starting point for your minimum term must therefore be a whole life order rather than 30 years. Your counsel submits that a whole life order is not necessary in your case because the minimum term would in any event be so long.

In addition to the most recent decision of the Court of Appeal to which I have referred, I have also considered carefully the guidance in this area given by the Court of Appeal in the case of *Oakes* [2013] 2 Cr App R 22. In particular I bear in mind that a whole life order should be imposed only where the seriousness of the offending is so exceptionally high that just punishment requires the offender to be kept in prison for the rest of his or her life. I am required to consider all the material facts before concluding that a very lengthy finite term will be not be sufficiently severe. I bear in mind that a whole life order is reserved for the few exceptionally serious offences in which, after reflecting on all the features of aggravation and mitigation, the court is satisfied that the element of just punishment and retribution requires the imposition of a whole life order. I also remind myself that I am setting the penal element of the sentence only. I am not concerned with risk to the public on release. That is a matter solely for the parole board or, very exceptionally, for the Secretary of State.

I have considered your criminal record. You are now 31 years of age. You have been in and out of prison in recent years serving short sentences, mainly for offences of dishonesty, although I note that in 2012 you were convicted of possessing a bladed article in a public place, razor blades, and later in the year you received a community order for an offence of assault occasioning actual bodily harm. I have read the psychiatric report on you from Dr Farnham, dated 26<sup>th</sup> October 2013. I note that his assessment is that you suffer from a severe emotionally unstable personality disorder, and from an antisocial personality disorder. In his opinion you also suffer from paraphilia sadomasochism, a disorder of preference for sexual activity involving the infliction of pain or humiliation or bondage. It is Dr Farnham's assessment that you suffer from a psychopathic disorder, that is a personality disorder characterised by superficial charm, callous disregard for others, pathological lying and a diminished capacity for remorse.

You have not sought to put forward any partial defence to murder based upon your psychiatric condition. You very strongly declined the opportunity to do so by the firmness of your guilty pleas to all counts on the indictment when you were first



arraigned on 18<sup>th</sup> November last year. Your counsel accepted in mitigation that you do not have the normal range of emotions and you do not form personal attachments. Others end up suffering because of your personality and that risk is removed by your being in custody. I do not consider that your personality disorders or psychiatric condition afford any mitigation in this case.

You have shown no genuine remorse. Quite the reverse. In the letter you have written to me you say in terms that you do not feel any remorse for the murders, and to claim otherwise would be a lie. You claim in that letter, and this formed part of your counsel's mitigation, that you do feel remorse for the attempted murders. You say that you are ashamed of the brutality and fear you heaped upon those two victims and that the attacks will always be a great source of regret. The only reason you can offer for the attempted murders is "drunken cruelty plain and simple, compelled by my lack of respect for human life". As I have already made clear, I reject your protestations of remorse for these attempted murders. I note that you told the psychiatrist that you killed to see how you would feel, "to see if I was as cold as I thought I was. Then it got moreish and I got a taste for it." It is very significant, in my judgement, that from a single stab wound to the heart to kill your first victim you progressed by the end to the frenzied attack on John Rogers when you so nearly killed him, stabbing him more than 30 times. You told the psychiatrist you saw the killings as a kind of fetish and that you were sadistic.

I have considered very carefully all the circumstances of this case, and all the features of aggravation and mitigation, including your guilty pleas. I am quite satisfied that the seriousness of these murders is exceptionally high and that the element of just punishment and retribution requires the imposition of a whole life order. Even if, contrary to my conclusion, any of the three murders did not involve a substantial degree of premeditation or planning, the overall circumstances of the three murders, taken in combination with the attempted murders and the dumping of the bodies, plainly makes this a case of exceptionally high seriousness and one of the rare cases which requires a whole life order.

Having regard to the Sentencing Council guideline for attempted murder, I am satisfied that each of these attempted murders, if they stood alone, falls into the highest category in level 1, where the sentencing range after a trial is 27-35 years custody and the starting point 30 years. There must be life sentences for the attempted murders. Had the offences of preventing the lawful and decent burial of a body stood alone, the appropriate total sentence for those three offences, after a trial, would in your case have been at least 16 years imprisonment, but you did at least plead guilty, for which you are entitled to credit although it makes no difference overall.

**Joanne Dennehy** for these three cruel and brutal murders I sentence you to life imprisonment and the term you will serve is a whole life order. That reflects the seriousness not only of the three murders but also the two attempted murders and the three offences of preventing the lawful burial of the bodies of your three victims. For the two attempted murders, there will be concurrent sentences of life imprisonment. For each of the offences of preventing burial, there will be concurrent sentences of 12 years imprisonment.

### **Gary Stretch**

I deal with you next, Gary Stretch. I have to sentence you for three offences of preventing the lawful and decent burial of the bodies of the three men who had been murdered, and for two offences of attempted murder. They are all very serious offences indeed, for which a very lengthy sentence of imprisonment is inevitable.

I consider first the three counts of preventing lawful and decent burial. It is a common law offence for which there is no maximum penalty. These were offences at the very top of the scale of seriousness. I have been referred to a number of authorities. In particular I have been assisted by the guidance of the Court of Appeal in the case of *Godward* [1998] 1 Cr App R (S) 385. This is an offence which can vary enormously in its seriousness. The most important factor is the intention of the offender. If the intention was to obstruct the course of justice by concealing a body,

so as to make it difficult or impossible to bring home a charge against the person responsible for the death, then a sentence at the top of the appropriate scale is required. That is plainly the position here. The case of *Skinner*, referred to in *Godward*, tends to suggest that any of these three offences on its own would have merited a sentence of at least 7 ½ years imprisonment after a trial.

Although Joanne Dennehy initiated these offences, you played a leading role in selecting the sites where these three bodies were dumped. In particular you had lived near Thorney Dyke and boasted to Georgina Page that no one would find the bodies. Just how close you came to achieving that objective is demonstrated by the fact that the farmer who found the two bodies in the ditch at Thorney Dyke on 3<sup>rd</sup> April had for several days been working in that area of his land without spotting them. I am quite sure that you carried out reconnaissance of the outlying rural areas around Peterborough to find suitable places to dump the bodies. You helped to clean up the scenes of the murders. You helped to load the bodies into the car. You drove the car to the scene. As I have already made clear, I reject entirely any suggestion that you were in fear of Joanne Dennehy. On the contrary, you were revelling in helping her and in the publicity of being described as “Britain’s most wanted”. You were luxuriating in the notoriety which you enjoyed through your association with Joanne Dennehy and her crimes. Taking account of totality, and passing concurrent sentences to reflect the overall criminality of the three offences, the overall sentence for these three counts of preventing the burial of the bodies, if the offences stood alone, would be 15 years imprisonment.

I turn to the two attempted murders. For the reasons I have already explained, on the facts of this case there is little difference between the alternative mental states which the jury were required to consider. Joanne Dennehy had to your knowledge already murdered three men. She was talking that day about wanting her fun and doing more. It was therefore obvious to you that if and when she found another victim she was bound to try to kill him. For that reason there is precious little difference between a shared intention to kill on the one hand and a realisation that there was a real risk she would kill, with the intent to kill, on the other. I am quite

satisfied that you knew perfectly well that when the opportunity arose she would attempt to kill again.

You did not wield the knife, but you played a crucial part in facilitating these two dreadful attempted murders. As I have already set out, you stopped the car where and when you did specifically so that she could get out and attack Robin Bereza from behind, catching him unawares. In that sense you both assisted and encouraged Joanne Dennehy to commit the offence, fully believing and expecting that she would stab her victim to death. You knew there were no half measures with Joanne Dennehy. You said or did nothing to stop her. Quite the opposite. You sat and watched what she was doing, and beckoned her back to the car when the time was right. For the reasons I have already explained, I am quite sure as well that you exercised some physical restraint on Mark Lloyd for a short time at least in order to stop him leaving the car and raising the alarm.

When Joanne Dennehy made it clear that she wanted a second victim you drove her to a spot where you knew, from your local knowledge of Hereford, that dog walkers were to be found. It was no coincidence that John Rogers, walking his dog, was the next victim. Again, you assisted and encouraged Joanne Dennehy to commit that second and very nearly fatal attack, knowing perfectly well that murder was what she intended. Had either of these two victims died, you would have been facing a life sentence for murder. The starting point for your minimum term for one such offence of murder would have been 25 years, and if both men had died, the starting point would have been at least 30 years.

Both victims survived, but these two attempted murders are still offences of the utmost seriousness, and at the very top of the scale under the Sentencing Council guideline. Your counsel submits that your culpability was markedly less than Joanne Dennehy's and that this means that these were, in your case, at most level 2 offences. I disagree. In my judgment they are plainly level 1 offences, that is to say offences of a kind which would attract a starting point of 30 years for the minimum term had the charge been murder. That is equivalent to a determinate sentence of

60 years. In both cases, for the reasons I have explained, the victim has suffered serious and long term physical and psychological harm. That means that under the guideline the starting for these two attempted murders would be a determinate sentence of 30 years imprisonment, with a sentencing range of 27 to 35 years. That would be the appropriate level of sentence for someone with no previous convictions whatsoever.

You have an appalling criminal record, albeit mainly for offences of dishonesty. That record, however, includes many convictions for dwelling house burglary where the potential for confrontation with a householder is always a risk. You also have a conviction for robbery as a young man, for which you received a custodial sentence of 5 years. That, I am told, arose in the course of a house burglary. More recently in 2000 you were sentenced to a total of 4 years imprisonment for handling stolen goods. When you breached your licence following release from that sentence you received a consecutive sentence of 2 years for a dwelling house burglary. In 2008 you received a total sentence of 15 months imprisonment for harassment of your former partner, threatening via a third party to kill her. When she was due to give evidence you intimidated her to try to prevent her giving evidence. As a result there is an indefinite restraining order in force against you. These offences show a violent, aggressive and impulsive side to your character which you try to hide by portraying yourself as a harmless failed burglar who is always caught because of his enormous size.

Your counsel has submitted that your sentence for these two attempted murders should be significantly shorter because you were only a secondary party and not a principal offender. It is well established on the authorities that for murder the starting points in schedule 21 apply equally to secondary parties as to principals, although the starting point may well have to be adjusted to reflect a secondary party's lesser culpability on the facts of the particular case: see *Attorney General's Reference (No.24 of 2008)* [2009] 2 Cr App R (S) 41. The same reasoning applies to the situation here. I accept that your culpability was substantially less than that of Joanne Dennehy in these offences, but it was still very great. If the two attempted

murders stood alone the appropriate total sentence for you for those offences would be 27 years.

The offences you committed in Hereford amounted to entirely distinct criminality from the offences you committed in Peterborough. Consecutive sentences are therefore required as between the two sets of offences. On what I have indicated so far, that would make a total of 42 years. Because the offences are so distinct and so serious, and because I have not treated either set of offences as aggravating the seriousness of the other, only a modest further reduction for totality is appropriate. I therefore conclude that if a determinate sentence were the appropriate course to follow in your case, these offences together would merit a total determinate sentence of 38 years, made up of 13 years concurrent for each of the prevention of burial offences and 25 years concurrent for each of the attempted murders. If 38 years were your sentence, you would serve 19 years before release on licence.

However, I have to consider whether a determinate sentence is appropriate at all or whether it is necessary to pass a sentence of life imprisonment or, alternatively, an extended sentence of imprisonment.

Because you have been convicted of offences of attempted murder I am required by law to consider whether you are a “dangerous” offender, in other words whether there is a significant risk to members of the public of serious harm occasioned by the commission by you of further specified offences, which for practical purposes means serious harm from any significant offence of violence. In making that assessment I must take into account all information available to me about you and about the nature and circumstances of these offences of attempted murder and the other offences of which you have been convicted, including information about any pattern of behaviour of which any of those offences forms part.

I bear in mind that these attempted murders are offences at the very top of the range of seriousness. You were convicted as a secondary party, not as a principal, but these offences demonstrate your willingness to involve yourself in the most

serious violence. Second, I bear in mind that likewise the offences of preventing burial were of the most serious kind, committed in order to interfere with the course of justice. They did not involve any violence but they demonstrate a willingness to assist a triple murderer to evade justice. Third, you have a previous conviction for a serious offence of robbery, albeit a very long time ago, and a more recent conviction for harassing your ex-partner by indirectly threatening to kill her, compounded by intimidating her, or attempting to intimidate her, into not giving evidence against you. Fourth, you are an inveterate house burglar, where the risk of conflict with a householder is always present. Fifth you threatened Georgina Page with violence, albeit indirectly, if she went to the police. That was not just for bravado because Joanne Dennehy was present. Sixth you were prepared to arm yourself with a handgun whilst you were on the run from the police, although you disposed of the gun without using it, and I accept there is no other evidence you have ever possessed or used a firearm.

Your counsel rightly urges upon me the most powerful point in mitigation against the imposition of a sentence based on dangerousness, namely the fact you committed these offences in the thrall of Joanne Dennehy. That opportunity will never arise again. I have considered carefully the guidance of the Court of Appeal in the recent decision in *Saunders* [2013] EWCA Crim 1027, and the circumstances in which a life sentence may be appropriate and necessary for its “denunciatory” value reflecting public abhorrence of the offence, and where the notional determinate sentence would be very long indeed, as here, measured in very many years. However, I would first have to be satisfied that there is a significant risk that you would commit further offences of violence if at large and a significant risk of serious harm to members of the public as a result.

I have considered very carefully all the submissions, both written and oral, made so powerfully by your counsel, but despite those submissions, I have no hesitation in reaching the conclusion that there is a significant risk of serious harm to members of the public from the commission by you of further specified offences. I accept that these offences of attempted murder in which you played a full part arose from the

special circumstances of your association with Joanne Dennehy. However, having seen the way she attacked the first victim, you encouraged her to attack again, knowing that she was likely to kill. That persistence on your part, as well as hers, demonstrates all too clearly your potential for causing serious harm to the public in the future, particularly in the light of the other factors I have just identified. I therefore conclude that the threshold of dangerousness is clearly met.

That being so, the next question, under s225(2) of the 2003 Act is whether the offences are together so serious as to justify a sentence of life imprisonment. In my view they are. A very long determinate sentence would not in my judgment be sufficient to protect the public. Nor would an extended sentence be appropriate bearing in mind the very long custodial term which would dwarf even the maximum extension period of 5 years. I bear firmly in mind that a sentence of life imprisonment must always be a last resort. But in my judgment, this is a case where a life sentence is required in order to reflect public abhorrence of these offences of attempted murder committed jointly whilst you were seeking to evade arrest for helping to dispose of the bodies of three men already murdered by Joanne Dennehy.

As the Court of Appeal made clear in *Saunders*, it remains open to the court to pass a discretionary life sentence even where the pre-conditions for a sentence under section 225 of the Act are not met. Had that been the position in your case (which I stress it is not), I would in any event have passed a discretionary life sentence on that alternative basis, having regard to the overriding need to protect the public from you indefinitely.

**Gary Stretch**, for each of the offences of attempted murder the sentence is life imprisonment. You will serve a minimum term of 19 years, that being one half of the determinate sentence which would otherwise have been appropriate. That term of 19 years reflects the criminality not only of the attempted murders but also the three offences of preventing burial. For those offences there will be concurrent terms of 15 years imprisonment. You will receive credit against the term of 19 years for the time you have already spent on remand which, by my calculation, is 332 days.



The effect of this sentence is that you will serve 19 years in prison before you are even eligible to be considered for parole. It will then be a matter for the parole board to decide if and when it is safe to release you, and if you are released you will remain on licence for the rest of your life.

### **Leslie Layton**

I deal with you next Leslie Layton. I have to sentence you for preventing the lawful and decent burial of the bodies of two of the men Joanne Dennehy had murdered. I also have to sentence you for perverting the course of justice by lying to the police when they were trying to find what had become of John Chapman, one of the men who was murdered. For the reasons I have already explained, these offences of preventing burial are at the very top of the range of seriousness. Had they stood alone, each individually would have merited a sentence of 7½ years or more. You were actively involved in dumping these two bodies, but your involvement spanned a single day, Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March. I am satisfied that you played a subordinate role to Gary Stretch and Joanne Dennehy, although you were a perfectly willing participant.

It is an aggravating feature of the offences that you had already taken that photograph of John Chapman's dead body on your mobile phone. That casts a flood of light on your attitude towards the fate of your housemate and on your lack of concern or respect for human life and for the decency and dignity of a body after death. You had every opportunity to distance yourself from what you were being asked to do but chose to go along with it. You assisted physically with the removal of John Chapman's body from the house. You travelled with each of the bodies to the separate sites where they were dumped. You were prominent in setting fire to and destroying Kevin Lee's vehicle, as a further way of preventing the circumstances of his death being discovered and hence preventing his lawful and decent burial.

Yours was also a serious offence of perverting the course of justice. You lied to the police repeatedly in what you knew to be a murder investigation. You did so to cover your own tracks and to protect Gary Stretch and Joanne Dennehy. You had no

reason to be in fear of them because they were far away in East Anglia when the police came to see you, as you well knew. Whether they would have been apprehended sooner had you told the police the truth, we shall never know. It is certainly possible they could have been arrested before committing the offences in Hereford. That is an illustration of the potential seriousness of your offence.

You are now 37 years of age. You have previous convictions for offences involving vehicles and for dishonesty but you had never been to prison before. These offences are wholly outside your normal league. You were caught up in the excitement and fascination of these appalling murders committed in one case quite literally on your doorstep by a woman who undoubtedly exercised some psychological influence over you and other men with whom she came into contact, including her victims. But that does not excuse what you did. Nor do you have the mitigation of guilty pleas.

I have had regard to the guidance in the authorities to which I have been referred and in particular *Tunney* [2007] 1 Cr App (S) 91 and *Gonsalves* [2008] 1 Cr App (S) 40, both of which involved perverting the course of justice in homicide cases. They emphasise the need to consider three factors in particular. First, the seriousness of the substantive offence. Here it was murder. It could not be more serious. Second, the persistence of the offender's conduct. Here you persisted in these false statements over a period of two days, although the most extensive lies were told on the afternoon of Monday 1<sup>st</sup> April. Third, the effect of what you did on the course of justice itself. Here your attempt was unsuccessful in the sense that the police soon discovered the truth of what had happened, and John Chapman's body was in any event discovered, fortuitously, two days later. There must plainly be a consecutive sentence for the offence of perverting the course of justice because it involved quite separate and distinct criminality from the two offences of preventing burial.

**Leslie Layton.** Were it not for the fact that I must bear in mind the totality of the sentence I am passing upon you, the individual sentences would have been longer. For the two offences of preventing the lawful and decent burial of bodies you will serve concurrent sentences of 10 years imprisonment. For the offence of perverting

the course of justice you will serve a consecutive sentence of 4 years imprisonment. So your total sentence is 14 years imprisonment. You will serve one half of that sentence in prison and upon release you will be on licence for the remainder of the sentence and liable to recall if you commit any further offence or breach your licence.

### **Robert Moore**

I deal finally with you, Robert Moore. You had the good sense to plead guilty to the two counts you faced, although your guilty pleas did not come at the first reasonable opportunity so you cannot expect full credit. It is clear to me from the pre-sentence report that you do not fully understand even now just how serious your conduct was in giving shelter to Joanne Dennehy and Gary Stretch for two nights when you knew they were wanted by the police for the most serious of offences.

You are 56 years of age and a man with no previous convictions whatsoever. I am prepared to accept that you came under the spell of Joanne Dennehy and were flattered by her attention. You must have known the sort of woman you were getting involved with when you were made aware that the body of one her victims was in a wheelie bin at her address close to your home. You admitted to the probation officer that you knew that. You kept in close touch with Joanne Dennehy and Gary Stretch by phone in what might be described as a fawning manner, texting that you had food waiting for them. When Joanne Dennehy and Gary Stretch went on the run in East Anglia you texted them that the police were after them and you wished them luck. They returned to your home again that night.

When you were interviewed by the police you repeatedly lied about your involvement in helping Joanne Dennehy and Gary Stretch. Had you not provided them with shelter for those two nights and had you instead done your duty as a citizen by telling the police straightaway what you knew, it is possible that they would have been arrested earlier, and before the offences in Hereford were committed. Again, we shall never know but it illustrates the seriousness and the potential consequences of what you did.

The maximum sentence for the offences to which you have pleaded guilty is 10 years imprisonment. I have had regard to the guidance in the authorities in this area, notably *R v Elfes* [2006] EWCA Crim 2799 and *Attorney General's Ref (No:16 of 2009)* [2009] EWCA Crim 2439. In both those cases, however, the duration and value of the assistance was greater than in your case. I also take into account your good character and the health issues which are revealed in the pre-sentence report. I have had the opportunity to observe you in the dock during the sentencing hearing at Cambridge two weeks ago as well as in the dock here today. I accept that you are genuinely remorseful.

Had you been convicted of these two offences after a trial, the sentence would have been four years imprisonment. As it is you pleaded guilty at a late stage, but that took courage. You will receive credit of one-quarter for those pleas.

**Robert Moore.** For each of these offences you will serve a sentence of 3 years imprisonment concurrent. That means you will be released when you have served one half of the sentence and you will remain on licence for the rest of the sentence.