

# Troubled man pulled out gun in front of three children, court told

**BY POLINA GANEVA**  
A man who threatened to shoot his neighbour was yesterday spared jail.  
Jason Fielding, 43, of Barnsley, had been drinking and taking drugs when he pointed an unloaded air gun at Liam Kelly, Sheffield crown court was told.  
On May 20th, Mr Kelly and his three young cousins were in the garden next door.  
Mr Kelly leaned on Fielding's wall. It provoked an angry reaction, Ian

Goldsack, prosecuting, told the court.  
Fielding told Mr Kelly: "Get off my wall or I will smoke you. Move or I will f\*cking smoke you."  
Mr Kelly refused.  
Fielding went inside his house, retrieved his air gun and pointed it at Mr Kelly.  
Mr Kelly later told police he was so scared he felt "his bowels would give out involuntarily". He ran away in panic.  
He reconsidered his reaction and not wanting to "look bad" in front of

his cousins went to Fielding's house and kicked the door "in anger" and aimed punches at Fielding.  
Fielding was found at the scene drunk and drugged, in possession of cannabis and a gun which he at first denied owning.  
Fielding was then arrested at 9 o'clock and charged with affray. He was slurring and still holding his pistol.  
Earlier that day, Fielding called the police three times "saying strange things and getting quite teary at points", said Mr Goldsack.

Fielding told police he had become concerned for his safety by Mr Kelly's cousins, who "threatened and cursed".  
He admitted one count of affray.  
Fielding had a history of substance and alcohol misuse plus mental health and accommodation problems, James Gould, for Fielding, told the court.  
He was given a home through a housing project but would lose his accommodation because of his conviction.  
He had obsessive compulsive dis-

order, dissocial personality disorder and was attending sessions for assistance with addiction.  
He had convictions for harassment, common assault, violence, possession of cannabis and of a prohibited weapon. But he had never before been convicted of affray.  
Mr Gould asked for a suspended sentence. He noted that Fielding did not load or shoot his gun.  
Judge J Goose said the number of Fielding's previous convictions and the fact that there were children present at the scene aggravated the

case.  
The fact that it was a first time offence and that he pleaded guilty were in his favour.  
The judge gave Fielding a 12 month sentence suspended for two years and a community order requiring him to be under supervision. The probation service would help Fielding find new accommodation and settle down there.  
The Judge warned Fielding: "If you fail, we may have to see you in court again."

## 'Please don't take away one of the things that make Sheffield great' Plan to demolish independent shops faces thousands of objections

**BY POLINA GANEVA**  
Independent businesses are threatened by demolition plans that seek to replace them with new restaurants, cafes and student apartments.  
But a protest opposed to the plans has gathered 14,000 signatures to a petition.  
The planning application for 162-170 Devonshire Street was submitted to Sheffield City Council by Primesite Ltd on September 17.  
It includes plans for a three storey building which is to have "ground floor commercial space, 10 studio apartments and 4 one-bedroom apartments".  
Residents strongly opposed the idea have been joined by the Green Party and many local musicians, poets and shop owners who are keen to keep independent, home-grown businesses running.  
The existing building now houses places like Rare and Racy, a bookstore from 1969 that sells old books many of which are out of print. It also has an exclusive and wide selection of jazz records.  
Other places that will be affected by the demolition if it happens is the vintage clothing and trinkets store Rag Parade and Natural Bed Company, an established independent retailer in furniture and bedding since 1974.  
Sheffield University student Rob-in Chapman, of Glossop Road, said: "I strongly disagree with this proposal."  
"One of the main reasons I came here was because of the culturally significant independent shops on Devonshire Street."  
"Shops such as Rare and Racy offer something that housing and restaurants never could for me as a student. Please do not get rid of the only part of Sheffield's shopping district that I actually want to go to."  
Arctic Monkeys' drummer Matt Helders, born in Sheffield, has added his name to the long list of the people that are objecting.  
On his Twitter account, he posted a message urging everyone to go to Sheffield City Council's planning application page and object.



Rare and Racy, one of the shops threatened by the demolition plan

"You can't let 'em knock down these shops," Mr Helders said.  
Since then many people from other cities have strongly expressed their objections as well.  
Mr Rhys Martin from Bristol said: "It would be a big shame to lose this exciting building to boring commercial space and flats. I'm not from Sheffield and came to visit a friend once.  
"We came to this shop [Rare and Racy] and I bought some records and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. I even went round the back and took some photos of the cool graffiti and artwork."

"In a time when high streets of cities are all beginning to look the same with commercial buildings and bland flat buildings, I think it is really important to keep independent shops that are different to your HMVs and Virgin Megastores.  
"This shop gives some character and richness to Sheffield that is becoming rare in the UK these days. I really like Sheffield and believe the rest of the UK could learn a lot from it.  
"Please don't take away one of the things that make Sheffield great."  
In response to the many objections, Cllr Julie Dore, Leader of Sheffield City Council said: "We have a City Center master plan and we need to completely regenerate the area. We are not a ruthless council that just come in and knock down buildings.  
"It's like demolition of homes, nobody who lives in a house has the council come along suddenly and say "We are really sorry." We don't do it for fun. We do it because we think it is the right thing to do."  
Sheffield City Council is currently waiting for an amended application after they submitted questions to the developers and are soon to schedule another meeting when they will discuss the objections.

## Gifts for orphans - 'Wish come true'

**BY POLINA GANEVA**  
Sheffield-bred medical students made orphans' wishes come true with a project aimed at making worse-off children feel the Christmas spirit.  
Ehsan Nawaz, Mohamed Swamad and Ali Emad raised more than £1000 in a cultural event which they then used to buy presents for the kids in the Bulgarian orphanage and centre for children with disabilities Detelina.  
"Christmas is all about giving and I would try to do something similar if I was back home," said Mr Emad. "I am glad we organized this and were able to make so many children happy."  
The Director of the establishment, Mrs Nataliya Neckkova, told the students they have to make effort to gift something to each of the 41 children living there.  
She said: "It was a brave and honorable thing of them to do. At first I was skeptical and thought they would not go through with it, but they did and the children were delighted."  
Each child was asked to write a letter to Santa asking what they would like for Christmas. Those letters were given to the trio and the entirety of the funds raised was used to fulfill the wishes.  
After organising an event at the University, they raised the money and went shopping for the toys. With the help of local students studying music they came up with a number of entertainment acts for the children to go along with the present gifting.  
"There were so many nice toys we bought. I think my favourite present has to be the remote control car, BMW i8," said Mr Swamad. "I would not mind one myself."  
With the help of Professor Regina Komasa-Penkova, Head of the International Department at the University, the event was an interactive evening for the children. The en-

tertainment consisted of a dance group act, singers and a theatre group which acted out the birth of Jesus.  
The birth was completed with the entry of Santa Claus, who met the children one by one and give them the gifts which they requested.  
"It was a wonderful celebration," said Prof Penkova. "I was touched but the children even more so - some of them cried because they had never taken part in something like this and because they loved their presents."  
Each year at Pleven Medical University for the past three years there has been an international day; allowing the diverse cultural backgrounds at the university to unite and showcase their country's traditions.  
This year exhibited the most diverse selection of countries with a total of 13 different countries.  
Unlike previous years, the students collectively decided to keep a cause for this year's international day which was the 'Wish come true' Christmas party for children at the Detelina orphanage. All money raised from donations and entry fee were used to orchestrate the party.  
"Personally I believe that the previous event ran pretty smoothly," said Mr Ehsan. "It took a lot of time and effort. We started planning for it 2 month in advance, organising team leaders for each country and regular meetings. This allowed us to keep time for any unseen problems."  
The event began with each country displaying their cultural food, clothes and dances related to their countries. Each stall and team was given marks by the judges based on a criteria. This was followed by performances by each country which included presentations, singing and mainly dancing.  
The winners on the day were Nepal, and Mr Ehsan said "they deserved all the prizes they received."



Maria, 6 and Svetoslava, 7 enjoyed the celebration at their home

### The voice of the city

**Ms Sophie Smith, Roebuck Road:**  
This is a completely outrageous proposition; quite apart from the senseless corporate destruction of shops that epitomize individuality and local personality, these plans will eradicate a large chunk of Sheffield's alternative sector, where unlike with restaurants and cafes there is a shortage of retailers and a gap in the market. We do not need more food places and flats, there are enough of them. As a university student I was first attracted to the city by areas such as Division St, this is a terrible idea!

**Mr Gareth Roberts, Pearson Place:**  
The Devonshire Quarter Action Plan, which is a material consideration in this planning decision, contains specific guidance. But successive planning committees have allowed this to slip, letting developers do what pays them best, i.e. small apartments and late night drinking. To maintain an appropriate 'urban village' balance the planning application should be rejected, or amended to ensure developers offer retail space suitable for small and locally distinctive independent shops.

**Ms Nicky Ward, St Wirksworth:**  
This is one of my favourite areas to shop, because there is something new, different and interesting every time you go in. It draws me and my friends into the city from the Peak District, in a way that bland chain stores will never do. We travel specially to go there and shop, which takes time and money but we love it. Don't take me wrong, Sheffield is still special, but it won't be this way if you carry on destroying the places and the livelihoods of the people and local businesses that make it so.

**Ms Coral Williamson, London:**  
I strongly object to the demolition not just of buildings in Devonshire Street, but of the independent spirit the area has enjoyed for years and years. Devonshire Green was my favourite place to shop during my student years. I am an alumna of Sheffield University now and still enjoy visiting from time to time - I don't want to have that taken away. I'm sure many people still feel the same today. Don't ruin the independent quarter and its cultural importance for the sake of a few flats you can build anywhere.

**Ms Libby Hamblin, Thrush Street:**  
I strongly object to these plans. Devonshire Street is an interesting and characterful area, with a thriving independent business community. Demolishing the existing Victorian buildings and replacing them with a new build, would entirely take away from the unique look and feel of the area. The businesses which reside in the current buildings, have done for years, and compliment their character and style. The plan completely disregards the fact that the current buildings are a major contributor to their appeal.

**Mr David Sissons, Ratcliffe Road:**  
They say they will replace the distinctive shops under threat like Rare 'n' Racy with something similar, in which case what's the point in demolishing the originals? Developers always make this kind of statement and it's always a con. What results is a bland imitation, with none of the distinctive character and feel of the previous. Developers have bluffed just about every urban area in the UK. They show time and time again that they have no idea of what constitutes character and atmosphere.

**Ms Harriet Francesco, St Albans:**  
As a frequent visitor to the city, I completely object to this proposal. The Devonshire Quarter provides colour and vibrancy to the Sheffield's City Centre, which is now slowly turning bland and boring, and plays a significant role in the city's economy. Licensed premises and an apartment complex would contribute nothing to the city centre which already accommodates a wealthy proportion of housing, restaurants and cafes. Not only the building will disappear, the spirit of the street will as well.

**Mr Dominic Beatson, Norwich:**  
There are plenty of untapped spaces in Sheffield and around it, a lot of which would really benefit from being renovated and utilised in a new way. Occupied buildings which form the cornerstones of independent trade in the city are not the place to achieve this in my opinion. It is the sick nature of the capitalist mentality to seek further financial gain at the demise of other people's loss. There is absolutely no reason to support this application or the plan to build some flats and cafes there.

## 'Out of this world' picture story

**BY POLINA GANEVA**  
The 'Out of This World' festival, themed around magic, sci-fi and horror, was introduced for the first time yesterday.  
Workshops teaching magic tricks and a magical display could be found in front of the Town Hall and in the Peace Gar-

dens.  
The festival's sci-fi theme, featuring a convention, walkabouts, displays, workshops and film screenings, was situated in the Winter Garden, Tudor Square and the Showroom cinema.  
The horror zone was based on the Moor which had many workshops and

craft sessions as well as a creepy puppet show.  
The festival was made to replace traditional Fright Night and was aimed more at families with children rather than students and adults.



Bringing different characters together -The Joker from the Batman Franchise and The Iron Partiot from the Iron Man Franchise met up to take a selfie together



Be a part of the universe - Children and adults could take pictures with a stormtrooper hat and a Stormtrooper from the Star Wars franchise



Cosplayers happy to pose -The Winter Soldier from Captain America may look a bit scary but was otherwise glad to take pictures

## Sheffield Unknown

The Wesley Hall Methodist Church is not a small church but not a very big one either. It was built in 1836 but suffered decline and abandonment in the 1960s. It was renovated to serve the believers in Crookes and is now a central part of the Christian community there.  
But not only true believers walk the halls of the old church these days - the rooms are rented out to those who need them, following the Christian virtue of giving.  
The stones between yellow and grey that form the facade of the Church make it look a bit frightening and unwelcoming but that feeling subsides when you are greeted by warm interior and the opportunity to be part of something unique and almost magical, as participants say.  
When you enter from the main gate, you can go inside to the main hall and light a candle, pray, contemplate your existence and that of others; or you can take a detour to the side to find one of the other spacious rooms with huge windows and explore what is happening inside. Maybe you would have been lucky enough to have arrived on a Saturday - and witness the art of creation in its purest form - the creation of literature.  
They simply call it Writer's Retreat but as an event and an experience to those that take part it is far from simple. The words that they use to describe it are ones that pop in mind when you try to describe euphoria - amazing, utterly motivating, overwhelming, inspirational.  
It happens every last Saturday of the month - and for good reason as it very emotionally overbearing on the writers themselves.  
Ten to twelve people, closed in the room with one idea and one purpose - to write as much as possible and to soak the almost palpable feeling of creativity and inspiration.  
Nine until five, with only an hour's break in between, it feels like a full-time job but whoever tried it returned at least once. The authors make up the rules - and they are strict but fair - no talking in the room, chatting is for lunch time or for before or after the Retreat.  
Sharing ideas is a crucial part of the process - but the essential is the quiet acknowledgement that everyone is working, and you should be, too.  
Do not mistake the hushed sounds of the room with awkward silence - the stillness is not uncomfortable. The simple but soft red chairs and the lit candles around the big table in the middle make it cosy. The non-intrusive smell of wax sets a mood perfect for creation. Everyone sit in a circle - with their own laptop and their own mug of teas or coffee - left to themselves, yet part of the group.  
The sounds are even more soothing - gentle typing, the wind outside and the soft breathing of the person closest to you reminds you that you are not alone but does not bring you out of your creative trance.  
On the side there is an electric kettle and biscuits - included in the price and necessary for writing, some authors say. And it has been proven that chewing improves concentration - although the atmosphere is one that promotes concentration the most.  
The location is not random - Crookes is a quiet neighbourhood but still bustling with life which leaves the writers with many options on where to go for lunch. The old church provides that comfort for the soul that is so needed when you have an art block or trouble concentrating. Crookes outside provides the option to return to the active world as fast as possible.  
The Retreat is there for people to hide away from reality - for a day - and to focus all their attention on their next literary masterpiece. With no one to interfere in any way, the authors can write stripped from worry - no family and friends around, no busy traffic, no loud noises.  
"For me it is the most motivational experience ever." Those are the words of the person who uses words as her trade.  
And really, if you are there walking the halls of Wesley Hall Methodist Church on that special Saturday, you will see for yourself.  
**BY POLINA GANEVA**