

Friday, 22 June 2007, BBC.CO.UK

A mother has been sentenced to 12 years in prison for her part in the gang rape of her young daughter and another girl.

Caroline Dunsmore was sentenced at the High Court in Edinburgh for overseeing 10 years of abuse of Dana Fowley, now 27, and a second victim.

John O'Flaherty was sentenced to 13 years for his role.

The judge said he was minded to give a life sentence to a third person, Morris Petch, on whom sentence was deferred. Ms Fowley has waived her anonymity.

Outside the court on Friday, Ms Fowley said she still loved her mother.

She said: "Of course I realise that my mother had to be brought to justice, but as a daughter I love her and when I heard her getting sentenced today I was gutted.

"I was totally gutted with what my mum was given, but at the end of the day it was a justified sentence. It was a victory, all of the sentences that were handed out."

During the trial, the court heard how the children were subjected to frequent sexual abuse.

The offences took place in the Pilton area of Edinburgh over several years and began when the girls were under the age of 10.

The abuse was orchestrated by Billy King, who was married to Dunsmore, 43, and who is now deceased.

Dunsmore had previously pleaded guilty to several rape charges and to abusing Ms Fowley between 1987 and 1995 when she was aged six to 15, while acting with King.

O'Flaherty, 50, admitted having sex with the same girl at least 12 times and was jailed for 13 years.

Petch, also 50, was taken into custody after failing to turn up for sentencing last month. He will now be sentenced in August.

Judge Lord Malcolm told Dunsmore that "over many years, you participated fully in a paedophile group".

He added that the abuse had caused Ms Fowley "very serious damage".

"You took no steps to remove her from that situation," said the judge, who told the court that he had taken account of Dunsmore's own deprived background and history of being sexually abused.

Sentencing O'Flaherty, Lord Malcolm said: "You repeatedly were prepared to take advantage of this young child to satisfy your deviant desires and it's clear from the reports you have no real remorse or understanding for the damage caused by your conduct."

He added that O'Flaherty had instead sought to avoid personal responsibility for the offences by blaming others.

The massive paedophile ring still continues to be investigated.

Police recently revealed they have identified three more men, aged between 40 and 65, whom they believe were also involved in the abuse.

Another three men, including King, and a woman died before any charges could be brought against them.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/edinburgh_and_east/6230072.stm