# Dewsbury man admits to arson under alleged government control belief



A 30-year-old Dewsbury man, Daniel Hirst, has admitted to committing arson while allegedly operating under the belief that he was being controlled by the Government. The incident unfolded on April 10 when Hirst reportedly set fire to his own sofa within his residence on Field Lane and immediately informed a neighbour, who contacted emergency services for assistance.

During the proceedings at Leeds Crown Court, Prosecutor Rebecca Randall presented details of the event, stating that when responders arrived, Hirst indicated that he believed he had been subjected to Government experimentation for five years, suggesting that this manipulation was the reason behind his actions. "He thought the Government had been controlling him for five years and had set the house on fire," Randall recounted. In his subsequent interactions with police, Hirst chose to remain silent, answering "no comment" during his interview.

Although Hirst was charged with arson, the court noted that the fire was not extensive and posed no severe risk to human life, as he and his dogs were the only occupants present at the time. Defence attorney Mollie Briggs argued that the blaze was "not significant," stating that Hirst had acted quickly to notify others and contained the fire to the living room area. She pointed out that the damage caused was relatively limited, although specific financial assessments of the damages were not stated in court.

Further addressing Hirst's background, Ms Briggs remarked that he had faced a series of personal struggles, including the loss of his parents and an uncle, alongside a battle with cancer, but noted that he had never been formally diagnosed with any mental health issues. However, at the time of the incident, he had been consuming alcohol and cannabis, which may have contributed to his state of mind.

In a notable moment during the hearing, a person caring for Hirst's dogs was present in the public gallery, and he expressed gratitude towards her via video link from HMP Leeds.

His Honour Judge Ray Singh ultimately issued a two-year suspended sentence for Hirst, which includes a requirement to complete 30 days of rehabilitation activities and to adhere to a 12-month drug rehabilitation order. This ruling reflects a focus on rehabilitation rather than punitive measures given the circumstances surrounding Hirst's actions and background.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Murder_of_Jo_Cox> - While not directly related to Daniel Hirst's case, this URL provides context on legal proceedings in the UK, especially regarding sentencing and unusual motivations behind crimes.
* <https://www.courts.michigan.gov/492eca/siteassets/publications/benchbooks/evidence/evidbb.pdf> - This PDF discusses legal evidence and testimony in court, which can be relevant when considering Daniel Hirst's interactions with the legal system.
* <https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/community-safety-partners/pdf/overview-report-bethany.pdf> - This report touches on community safety and legal responses in West Yorkshire, which might provide context for handling unique cases like Hirst's.
* <https://www.westyorksfire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-04/Reports%20-%20Comm%20Safety%20-%2028.04.23.pdf> - This document provides information on fire safety and legal responses to arson incidents in West Yorkshire, which is relevant to Daniel Hirst's case.
* <https://www.gov.uk/court-and-tribunal-venues/leeds-crown-court> - This URL gives details about Leeds Crown Court, where Daniel Hirst's case was heard, providing context on legal processes and venues.