# Peter Sullivan freed after 38 years as new DNA evidence prompts justice system rethink



Peter Sullivan's recent exoneration marks a significant moment in the long history of miscarriages of justice in the UK. After spending an astonishing 38 years in prison for a crime he did not commit—the 1986 murder of 21-year-old Diane Sindall—Sullivan was freed following the revelation of new DNA evidence that did not match his profile. His conviction, reached in 1987, was based on forensic evidence that, at the time, was inconclusive. In light of recent advancements in DNA testing techniques, Sullivan's case has brought renewed attention to justice reform, highlighting flaws within the legal system and the ongoing struggles of those wronged by it.

At 68, Sullivan expressed remarkable composure regarding his long incarceration, stating through his lawyer that he is "not angry... not bitter." He aims to reconnect with his family, a privilege taken for granted during nearly four decades of confinement. His exoneration is historic, being the longest-serving wrongful imprisonment in British history. The emotional toll on both Sullivan and the family of the victim is profound; while Sullivan seeks peace, the ripple effects of this injustice continue to haunt those left behind.

The path to Sullivan's release, however, was not straightforward. The Criminal Cases Review Commission, initially hesitant to revisit the case, eventually acknowledged the failure of the original verdict and supported the advanced forensic re-evaluation. Despite the triumphant breakthrough, the police have reopened the investigation into Sindall's murder, raising the question of accountability for the crime itself and the long-term implications of such cases.

In a completely different vein, discussions around healthcare have taken centre stage with new findings regarding weight-loss drugs. A growing consensus suggests we may be entering a "golden age" of obesity treatment, led by innovative drugs that significantly improve metabolic health. GLP-1 receptor agonists, originally developed for diabetes, have emerged as groundbreaking treatments for obesity-related issues. Recent studies have shown that these medications, including emerging names such as Zepbound (tirzepatide) and Wegovy (semaglutide), can facilitate remarkable weight loss and positively impact cardiovascular health.

Clinical trials indicate that participants using Zepbound can experience an average weight reduction of over 20% of their body weight, alongside improvements in conditions such as sleep apnea and metabolic dysfunction. Importantly, these treatments not only focus on weight loss but also address underlying metabolic health, helping reduce obesity-related risks like cardiovascular disease and diabetes. Experts emphasise that the obesity epidemic affects nearly 40% of adults in the UK, making the development of these medications crucial to public health.

However, challenges remain surrounding the accessibility and affordability of these treatments. High costs and inconsistent insurance coverage pose significant barriers, necessitating broader strategies to ensure equitable access to effective weight management solutions. As such, researchers and healthcare policymakers are engaged in an urgent conversation about how to best utilise these drugs while ensuring that they do not become a privilege for the few.

Both Sullivan's case and the rise of GLP-1 medications underscore broader societal issues: the quest for justice and accountability, and the urgent need for effective healthcare solutions. As the conversation surrounding these topics unfolds, it paves the way for a deeper examination of how systemic forces shape individual lives, whether through the criminal justice system or the realm of healthcare.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraph 1: [[1]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cql252n2qd7o), [[3]](https://apnews.com/article/9badb50e7bf076c6319a7aab6249a670)
2. Paragraph 2: [[1]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cql252n2qd7o), [[3]](https://apnews.com/article/9badb50e7bf076c6319a7aab6249a670)
3. Paragraph 3: [[3]](https://apnews.com/article/9badb50e7bf076c6319a7aab6249a670)
4. Paragraph 4: [[2]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cql252n2qd7o), [[4]](https://time.com/7284750/weight-loss-drug-wegovy-zepbound/), [[5]](https://apnews.com/article/2df62bb4f1270bdfbeed61b7661f535e)
5. Paragraph 5: [[4]](https://time.com/7284750/weight-loss-drug-wegovy-zepbound/), [[6]](https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2025/05/obesity-glp1-weight-visceral-fat/682784/?utm_source=apple_news)
6. Paragraph 6: [[7]](https://time.com/6972086/ozempic-anti-inflammatory-drug/)

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cql252n2qd7o> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cql252n2qd7o> - An article discussing various newspaper headlines, including Peter Sullivan's release after 38 years in jail due to new DNA evidence, and the emergence of a 'golden age' of weight-loss drugs.
3. <https://apnews.com/article/9badb50e7bf076c6319a7aab6249a670> - Peter Sullivan, a 68-year-old man who spent 38 years in a British prison for a murder he did not commit, was exonerated and released after new DNA evidence proved his innocence. Convicted in 1987 for the 1986 murder of 21-year-old Diane Sindall near Liverpool, Sullivan maintained his innocence for decades. Sindall had been sexually assaulted and beaten before her body was found, and while crucial forensic evidence was previously inconclusive, recent DNA testing in 2024 identified that the biological evidence did not match Sullivan. The Court of Appeal in London overturned his conviction, and Sullivan, who watched the hearing via video, expressed no bitterness, stating through his lawyer that he sought peace and reunion with loved ones. His case marks the longest-serving wrongful imprisonment in U.K. history. The police have reopened the investigation, though the new DNA does not match any profiles in the national database. The Criminal Cases Review Commission, initially hesitant to review the case, acknowledged the error and later succeeded in using advanced forensic techniques to secure Sullivan’s release. Both Sullivan’s and Sindall’s families continue to cope with the emotional impact of the decades-long miscarriage of justice.
4. <https://time.com/7284750/weight-loss-drug-wegovy-zepbound/> - A recent study published in the New England Journal of Medicine and presented at the European Congress on Obesity compared the effectiveness and side effects of two leading weight-loss drugs: Wegovy (semaglutide) by Novo Nordisk and Zepbound (tirzepatide) by Eli Lilly. In a trial involving 751 participants over 15 months, Zepbound showed greater weight loss benefits, with users losing an average of 20.2% of their body weight compared to 13.7% for those on Wegovy. Zepbound also led to a greater reduction in waist circumference. Both drugs had similar gastrointestinal side effects, although Zepbound users reported more injection-site reactions. Despite Zepbound’s higher weight-loss efficacy, experts note that weight loss alone shouldn’t determine a drug's suitability. Wegovy is FDA-approved for reducing cardiovascular risks in patients with a history of heart problems, a benefit not yet approved for Zepbound, though studies suggest both drugs can support heart, liver, and kidney health. Zepbound is also approved to reduce sleep apnea risk. Future research, including studies on weight maintenance and pills versions of both drugs, is expected to help tailor treatments more effectively. Both companies are also pursuing FDA approval for oral versions of their treatments to widen accessibility.
5. <https://apnews.com/article/2df62bb4f1270bdfbeed61b7661f535e> - In the first direct comparison of leading obesity medications, Eli Lilly's Zepbound (tirzepatide) demonstrated significantly greater weight loss than Novo Nordisk's Wegovy (semaglutide). Over 72 weeks, trial participants on Zepbound lost an average of 50 pounds (22.8 kg), compared to 33 pounds (15 kg) for those on Wegovy. Conducted with 751 U.S. participants without diabetes but with obesity and related conditions, the study found Zepbound users lost about 20% of body weight and 7 inches of waist circumference on average, outperforming Wegovy’s 14% body weight and 5-inch waist reduction. Nearly 32% of Zepbound users lost at least a quarter of their body weight versus 16% for Wegovy. Both drugs caused mostly mild to moderate gastrointestinal side effects, with dropout rates of 6% for Zepbound and 8% for Wegovy. Despite Zepbound’s superior efficacy, accessibility, cost, and insurance coverage—including Wegovy’s preferred status on CVS Health's formulary—impact usage. Experts emphasize the importance of multiple treatment options due to the widespread prevalence of obesity, which affects approximately 40% of American adults. The GLP-1-based drugs continue to grow in popularity, with Zepbound generating $4.9 billion and Wegovy $8.8 billion in global sales last year.
6. <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2025/05/obesity-glp1-weight-visceral-fat/682784/?utm_source=apple_news> - GLP-1 drugs, originally developed for diabetes, have proven highly effective for weight loss, prompting questions about their appropriate use. These drugs, though powerful, are expensive, often not covered by insurance, and require lifelong use with notable side effects like nausea. The article argues that the focus shouldn't be on weight loss alone, but on improving metabolic health, particularly by reducing visceral fat—a dangerous type of fat linked to serious conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and certain cancers. Former President Donald Trump serves as an example: despite being classified as obese in 2020, his recent weight loss and improved cholesterol metrics are more significant indicators of health improvement due to "intensive lipid-lowering therapy." The article criticizes using BMI as a primary metric for prescribing GLP-1s, noting its limitations and advocating for better diagnostic tools to assess insulin resistance and visceral fat. Although awareness of BMI's limitations is growing, it remains central in clinical trials and treatment decisions. The FDA has started to shift away from BMI-based guidelines, while pharmaceutical companies like Novo Nordisk and Eli Lilly introduce discount programs. However, critical long-term data on GLP-1s' safety, effectiveness, and strategies for discontinuation are still lacking. The article concludes that GLP-1s should be seen as one tool among many in addressing America’s metabolic health crisis.
7. <https://time.com/6972086/ozempic-anti-inflammatory-drug/> - Glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1) receptor agonists, such as Ozempic and Wegovy, are widely used for managing diabetes and obesity but are now being recognized for their potential anti-inflammatory properties. These drugs may help reduce systemic and local inflammation, benefiting conditions such as heart disease, cancer, kidney disease, metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease (MASLD), and neurodegenerative diseases including Alzheimer's and Parkinson's. Emerging research suggests they lower inflammation independent of weight loss, affecting various tissues and immune responses. However, their use should be cautious due to potential side effects, cost, and lack of long-term safety data in non-diabetic populations. Discussion with healthcare providers is essential to determine their appropriateness for individual patients.