# Survivors of Nottingham attacks push for stronger role in public inquiry and reforms



Survivors of the Nottingham attacks, which claimed the lives of three individuals in June 2023, are actively seeking a more prominent role in discussions surrounding a public inquiry into the incident. Their solicitor, Greg Almond from Rothera Bray Solicitors, revealed that these survivors, including Wayne Birkett and Sharon Miller, have reached out to local MPs and the East Midlands Mayor, Claire Ward, in an effort to establish a unified voice. Their goal is to ensure that the recommendations from the inquiry translate into tangible actions that prevent similar tragedies in the future.

The harrowing incident involved Valdo Calocane, who stole a van from caretaker Ian Coates before using it as a weapon, resulting in the deaths of 19-year-old students Barnaby Webber and Grace O’Malley-Kumar, alongside Mr Coates. The public inquiry, which is set to span two years, has garnered attention following its recent announcement detailing its comprehensive terms of reference aimed at uncovering crucial facts and recommendations.

Calocane, whose mental health issues have been well documented, was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia and had previously displayed a pattern of concerning behaviour. A psychiatrist had warned in 2020 that his severe mental illness posed a potential risk to others, a sentiment echoed by family members who lamented systemic failings in his care. Despite this, he was repeatedly discharged back into community care, leading to multiple missed opportunities to prevent the catastrophic outcome.

The findings from an independent review by the Care Quality Commission outlined significant shortcomings in the coordination among mental health services that ultimately contributed to the tragedy. The report highlighted deficiencies in understanding and managing Calocane's risk, underscoring the need for improved integration across healthcare providers to prevent future incidents. Both the families of the victims and mental health professionals are calling for urgent reforms in how such cases are handled.

Wayne Birkett, who sustained life-altering injuries, including severe memory loss and physical incapacitation, and Ms Miller, who copes with significant psychological and orthopaedic impacts, have expressed their desperation for the inquiry to shed light on the failures that allowed Calocane to perpetrate such violence. Mr Almond explained, “They want to draw a line under this terrible incident that’s affected them completely unexpectedly.” Both survivors, previously engaged in productive careers, now face an uncertain path toward recovery and reinstatement in the workforce.

Moreover, the survivors reported feeling sidelined and unsupported in this process. Almond noted their concerns about the lack of coordinated dialogue among various stakeholders, which has left them feeling excluded from discussions essential to their recovery and the broader context of the inquiry. Ms Miller stated, “The inquiry will uncover the truth about all the missed opportunities to stop him... Not a day goes by where I don’t think about what he did.”

As the public inquiry progresses, there are broader implications for community mental health services and the accountability of healthcare providers. The Health Secretary’s acknowledgement of the review's findings indicates a potential shift towards implementing systemic changes within the NHS to ensure no further tragedies occur. The ongoing dialogue among survivors, their representatives, and local officials is critical in fostering a powerful collective voice that resonates on the national stage, advocating for the necessary reforms sparked by this heartbreaking incident.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/city-needs-powerful-voice-on-national-stage-after-nottingham-attacks-lawyer-O55RPBGLCFILZEK3WH3EXYHWMA/), [[2]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/city-needs-powerful-voice-on-national-stage-after-nottingham-attacks-lawyer-O55RPBGLCFILZEK3WH3EXYHWMA/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/city-needs-powerful-voice-on-national-stage-after-nottingham-attacks-lawyer-O55RPBGLCFILZEK3WH3EXYHWMA/), [[3]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cn47mm7ggv0o), [[4]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/article/2024/aug/12/doctor-warned-valdo-calocane-could-kill-three-years-before-nottingham-stabbings)
* Paragraph 3 – [[5]](https://news.sky.com/story/he-got-away-with-murder-families-of-nottingham-attack-victims-react-to-review-into-killer-13303453), [[6]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/08/13/nhs-failings-treatment-nottingham-killer-valdo-calocane/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[2]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/city-needs-powerful-voice-on-national-stage-after-nottingham-attacks-lawyer-O55RPBGLCFILZEK3WH3EXYHWMA/), [[7]](https://nottstv.com/survivors-of-nottingham-attacks-had-little-support-and-feel-left-out-of-government-talks-on-inquiry/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/city-needs-powerful-voice-on-national-stage-after-nottingham-attacks-lawyer-O55RPBGLCFILZEK3WH3EXYHWMA/), [[2]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/city-needs-powerful-voice-on-national-stage-after-nottingham-attacks-lawyer-O55RPBGLCFILZEK3WH3EXYHWMA/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/city-needs-powerful-voice-on-national-stage-after-nottingham-attacks-lawyer-O55RPBGLCFILZEK3WH3EXYHWMA/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/city-needs-powerful-voice-on-national-stage-after-nottingham-attacks-lawyer-O55RPBGLCFILZEK3WH3EXYHWMA/> - Survivors of the Nottingham attacks, who suffered life-changing injuries, have written to local MPs to create a 'powerful voice on the national stage' amid the public inquiry into the fatal incident, their solicitor has said. Valdo Calocane killed 19-year-old students Barnaby Webber and Grace O’Malley-Kumar, and caretaker Ian Coates, 65, before attempting to kill three other people in the city in June 2023. The scope of the two-year public inquiry, which will make recommendations to prevent similar incidents in the future, was published by the Government last week. Greg Almond, from Nottingham-based Rothera Bray Solicitors, is representing two of the three survivors and said the terms of reference for the inquiry were 'very comprehensive'. Sharon Miller and Marcin Gawronski Wayne Birkett and Sharon Miller, along with Marcin Gawronski, survived being struck by a van which Calocane stole from Mr Coates. Mr Almond said of the terms of reference: 'They hopefully will ensure that we get the answers that we need, both for my clients and for the people of Nottingham.' Mr Birkett and Ms Miller have written to Nottingham MPs and the East Midlands Mayor, Claire Ward, to ask for a meeting to create a 'joined-up approach' and ensure recommendations from the inquiry are implemented. Mr Almond said: 'What we’re concerned about, is that various different people are not coming together, and it’s about a coordinated approach to this, so that we can speak with a powerful voice on the national stage. I think that’s what Nottingham needs, so that there is a joined up approach from the various elected leaders.' Calocane was sentenced to an indefinite hospital order in January last year after admitting manslaughter by diminished responsibility and attempted murder. Nottingham Crown Court heard he had been diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia. Mr Birkett suffered a head injury in the attack by Calocane, which put him in a coma and caused severe memory problems, headaches and dizziness, as well as fractures to his shoulder and legs. He has no memory of the attack. Ms Miller suffered significant orthopaedic and psychological injuries, now walks using a stick, and is cared for by her partner of 33 years. Mr Almond said of the impact of the attacks on the survivors: 'It’s completely changed their lives. They were both very hard working people beforehand. They’ve not been able to return to work. The fact that this is in the news a lot, that the perpetrator’s face is shown a lot, it’s very difficult for them.' Mr Almond said that the public inquiry is 'very important' to Mr Birkett and Ms Miller so they 'can move forward with their lives'. He added: 'They want to draw a line under this terrible incident that’s affected them completely unexpectedly, they were just on the way to work. They want to try and hopefully get back to work if they can, and try and live a normal life.' In a statement, Ms Miller said: 'The inquiry will uncover the truth about all the missed opportunities to stop him (Calocane), and what needs to be done to prevent something as appalling as this from happening again. Not a day goes by where I don’t think about what he did to Grace, Barnaby, and Ian.'
3. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cn47mm7ggv0o> - An independent review by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) found systemic issues in the care of Valdo Calocane, who killed three people in Nottingham in June 2023. The report highlighted missed opportunities in managing Calocane's mental health, including inadequate integration between mental health services and other healthcare providers. The CQC emphasized the need for improved decision-making and communication to prevent future tragedies. The report also noted that Calocane's risk was not fully understood or managed, leading to his discharge despite ongoing issues. The CQC called for more detailed scrutiny of Calocane's interactions with mental health services in an independent homicide review. The findings have raised concerns about the safety of community mental health care and the importance of coordinated efforts among healthcare providers and support services.
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/article/2024/aug/12/doctor-warned-valdo-calocane-could-kill-three-years-before-nottingham-stabbings> - Medical records reveal that a psychiatrist warned in 2020 that Valdo Calocane's severe mental illness could lead to fatal consequences. Despite this, Calocane was discharged into community care and was sectioned four times between 2020 and 2022. The psychiatrist's notes indicated concerns about Calocane's lack of insight and remorse, suggesting a potential risk of him killing someone. The family of Calocane has criticized the NHS for missed opportunities to prevent the attacks, calling for a public inquiry and an overhaul of mental health services. They argue that the system failed to provide adequate treatment and support, leading to the tragic events in Nottingham.
5. <https://news.sky.com/story/he-got-away-with-murder-families-of-nottingham-attack-victims-react-to-review-into-killer-13303453> - Families of the victims of the Nottingham attacks have condemned the NHS for major failures in the care of Valdo Calocane. An independent review found that Calocane was allowed to avoid long-lasting antipsychotic medication because he disliked needles. The report also revealed incidents of violence, including Calocane punching a police officer and holding his flatmates hostage. The families expressed anger over the systemic failings and called for a public inquiry with statutory powers to hold individuals accountable. They emphasized the need for change to prevent future tragedies and ensure justice for the victims.
6. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/08/13/nhs-failings-treatment-nottingham-killer-valdo-calocane/> - An independent report by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) has identified five missed opportunities in the treatment of Valdo Calocane, who killed three people in Nottingham in June 2023. The report highlights systemic failures in the NHS, including inadequate management of Calocane's mental health and poor decision-making. The families of the victims have criticized the NHS, stating that doctors have 'blood on their hands' due to these failings. The Health Secretary has called for mental health services across England to apply the report's recommendations to prevent future tragedies. The report underscores the need for significant improvements in mental health care and accountability within the NHS.
7. <https://nottstv.com/survivors-of-nottingham-attacks-had-little-support-and-feel-left-out-of-government-talks-on-inquiry/> - Survivors of the Nottingham attacks, including Wayne Birkett and Sharon Miller, have expressed feelings of exclusion from government discussions regarding the public inquiry into the incident. Their solicitor, Greg Almond, stated that the survivors have received little support since the tragedy and feel left out of communications by the government and authorities involved in the case. Almond emphasized the importance of involving both the bereaved and the injured in the process to understand the full impact of the events and to ensure that lessons are learned to prevent future tragedies.