# Double murder in Mersea leaves family shattered



In April 2023, a tragic and shocking double murder unfolded in Mersea, Essex, when Ellie Baxter discovered the lifeless bodies of her parents, Stephen and Carol Baxter, in their conservatory. The discovery, which struck Ellie at a time when she was in early pregnancy with her second child, began a long ordeal of grief and horror as the details of the case emerged.

Ellie had visited her parents, both of whom had dedicated their lives to building a successful business and creating a loving family environment. With their backgrounds grounded in humble beginnings, the couple had turned their enterprise, CazSplash, into a thriving business. However, their lives were violently upended by a betrayal that came from close quarters when Luke D'Wit, a family friend and business associate, was implicated in their deaths.

On the fateful day of the discovery, Ellie found her parents sitting upright in their favourite armchairs, dead from what later investigations would reveal to be a lethal dose of fentanyl, a powerful opioid. Reports indicate that this devastating act was perpetrated by D'Wit, who had cultivated a close relationship with the Baxters over several years, ingratiating himself into their lives under the pretext of providing support and assistance for their business.

As the case unfolded, Ellie faced further turmoil when police officers arrived to question her regarding her parents' deaths. Initially a suspect, she was arrested on suspicion of murder, but D'Wit was soon charged instead. Following a five-week trial, he was convicted and sentenced to life in prison.

Ellie later recounted her ordeal, revealing that D'Wit had poisoned her mother with fentanyl over an extended period, leading them to believe she was suffering from a degenerative disease. D'Wit had manipulated Carol’s health information, even creating false online personas to provide misleading advice about her condition that resulted in a decline in her health. Meanwhile, he continued to present a façade of normalcy, even taking Ellie and her family out for dinner during the time he was endangering her parents' lives.

In the aftermath of the horrifying discovery, Ellie found herself grappling with profound emotional pain, exacerbated by the complications of her pregnancy. She described the moment of finding her parents' bodies as “really horrible,” explaining how the shock of the situation left her with physical pain from grief.

Following their deaths, there were initial suggestions that carbon monoxide poisoning could be the cause until tests revealed the presence of fentanyl. In a chilling twist, Ellie noted that D'Wit, who was present during the family's tumultuous period, had been helping her plan their funerals while simultaneously managing to manipulate events from behind the scenes.

Detective Superintendent Rob Kirby, who led the investigation, characterised D'Wit as “cold and calculating,” believing that he would have continued his violent behaviour had he not been apprehended. Investigations have since extended to the deaths of D'Wit’s father and grandfather, although no definitive conclusions about their fates have been drawn.

The case has left Ellie Baxter grappling with the loss of her parents and the shocking betrayal inflicted upon them by someone they had welcomed into their lives. Despite the conclusion of the trial, Ellie openly expressed that she continues to face challenges in processing the events, acknowledging the long road ahead in navigating her grief and the memories of a happy family life that have been irrevocably altered.

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

## References

* <https://www.essex.police.uk/news/essex/news/news/2024/march/baxter-murder-investigation/> - This URL supports the claim that Luke D'Wit was convicted and sentenced for the murder of Stephen and Carol Baxter, and it details the complex investigation and D'Wit's manipulation of the victims.
* <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/luke-dwit-carol-stephen-baxter-fentanyl-poisoning-murder-essex-england/> - This URL corroborates the details of the case, including how D'Wit used fake personas to manipulate Carol Baxter and the discovery of fentanyl as the cause of death.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - This URL is the source of the original article but does not provide additional external corroboration beyond the text itself.
* <https://gb.readly.com/magazines/real-crime/2024-05-16/663f5df4a4a7b5eb3cafb334> - This URL provides further details about the case, highlighting D'Wit's manipulation and the trial process.
* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news> - Although not directly linked, BBC News would typically cover significant UK crime stories like the Baxter murders, providing additional context and details.