# Mother's Lengthy Jail Term for Inheritance Fraud Exposes Flaws in Legal System



### Mother Jailed for Fraudulent Inheritance Theft from Daughters

Katherine Hill, a 53-year-old from Pontardawe, South Wales, has been sentenced to 30 months in prison for stealing £50,000 left to her daughters, Gemma and Jessica Thomas, by their grandmother. Hill conspired with her 93-year-old father, Gerald Hill, to illegally access and drain the inheritance accounts over the course of just over a year. The fraudulent activity took place between March 2016 and March 2017.

The sentence was handed down at Swansea Crown Court, where Judge Recorder Greg Bull KC called Katherine Hill "thoroughly dishonest." Gerald Hill received a 12-month suspended sentence due to his advanced age and the potential burden on the prison system.

Gemma and Jessica's inheritance was stipulated in their grandmother Margaret Hill's will to be accessible once they turned 25. The funds were moved from a trust into a Barclays savings account against legal advice and subsequently withdrawn in large sums, including one £15,000 withdrawal.

The fraud came to light in 2018 when Gemma requested early access to her funds. During the court proceedings, Jessica Thomas expressed the emotional and psychological trauma inflicted by the betrayal. Both daughters testified to experiencing long-term trust issues and anxiety as a result.

### Campaign Against Indefinite Jail Terms

Thomas White, 40, has been imprisoned for 12 years under an Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) sentence, originally given a two-year minimum term for robbery. Despite IPP sentences being abolished in 2012, existing sentences were not retroactively dismissed. White has since been transferred between 12 different prisons, most recently returning to HMP Manchester.

Diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia, White's mental health has deteriorated due to his indefinite imprisonment, leading his family to call for his transfer to a psychiatric facility. His sister, Clara White, has criticized the handling of IPP prisoners, highlighting the lack of progress and the system's detrimental effects on mental health.

Reforms under the Victims and Prisoners Bill recently reduced the licence period for released IPP prisoners but did not address those still imprisoned. Campaigners continue to advocate for a resentencing exercise for all IPP prisoners, a move recommended by the cross-party justice committee in 2022. The Ministry of Justice has not commented during the pre-election period.

Both cases highlight ongoing issues within the UK’s criminal justice system, from familial fraud to the implications of abolished indefinite sentences.