

01/22 (2)

## Fox Tom

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**From:** Sam Poling [sam.poling@bbc.co.uk]  
**Sent:** 21 February 2003 14:27  
**To:** 'Tom.Fox@sps.gov.uk'  
**Subject:** Request for Interview - John Porteous

Dear Tom

Further to our meeting yesterday, Thursday, we would like to formally request an interview with a prisoner, Mr John Porteous, who is currently serving an eight-year sentence at Peterhead Prison after being convicted on charges of lewd and libidinous behaviour. The offences were alleged to have taken place at Quarriers Homes in Inverclyde between 1969-1976.

We are investigating a possible miscarriage of justice regarding the conviction of Mr Porteous. We believe we have information which could prove that the two accusers were not honest when giving evidence during Mr Porteous' trial and therefore we are now questioning his conviction. An appeal is currently being put together by his legal team and we feel very strongly that for our programme not to be allowed access to John Porteous would be standing in the way of justice.

We think there are serious grounds for reasonable doubt surrounding his conviction and have a number of interviewees who will testify that the two accusers were lying. John Porteous was convicted on corroborative evidence alone. Yet we have strong evidence that all the accusers in the case of John Porteous were in contact with each other immediately prior to making the allegations and during the build-up to his trial. We also have strong evidence to suggest that the motivation on the part of one of the accusers to make the allegations was financial. We also have testimony that on a logistical level it would have been near impossible for the attacks to be carried out as were described by the two accusers in court.

Three of our interviewees are members of the alleged victims' families who say their brothers/sisters etc are lying. I only point this out to you to highlight that in no way will any added stress be brought to the victims' families because they are fully in support of our programme and John Porteous. In any case, as this is a matter of a sexual nature, we are not allowed to identify any of the victims unless they give us leave to do so.

We are aware that John Porteous is more than happy to be interviewed by ourselves and we are receiving every co-operation from his legal team. We feel it is vital that Mr Porteous is able to speak freely with us to help us gain any information which could prove that a miscarriage has taken place which we strongly believe is the case.

We would like this interview to be recorded on camera to be included in our programme which is due to be transmitted some time in April/early May. The people involved in the interview would be myself as reporter, Sonya Rothwell who is the producer of the programme and a two man crew - camera and sound. We would like to carry out this interview at Peterhead at your earliest convenience, bearing in mind that, as discussed, our edit for the programme begins on March 24th.

This is a genuine attempt by ourselves to expose what we believe is a miscarriage of justice and that because of this, a man who may well be innocent, is now serving an eight year prison sentence. We realise there will be terms which may well restrict the kind of questions we will wish to ask and we are more than happy to discuss this further at your convenience. We also accept that a representative from the Scottish Prison Service may well want to be in attendance for the interview, this we have no problem with whatsoever.

Many thanks once again for your time yesterday. We look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards

Sam

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