Grooming gangs still abusing girls a decade after Rochdale scandal, says whistleblower

<u>The Telegraph</u> newspaper is starting to take TV channel GB News seriously.

Child sex abuse perpetrated by British Pakistani grooming gangs is still taking place and being ignored by the police almost a decade after it was exposed, a new documentary has claimed.

Maggie Oliver, the former detective turned whistleblower, who helped expose the Rochdale paedophile scandal, said her foundation, which was set up to support victims, is still being contacted by dozens of girls every month.

While many are coming forward to report historic abuse that occurred when they were younger, there are also those who claim they are still being targeted by older men seeking to sexually exploit and rape them.

She said: "This is going on today. We've been approached by 60 victims in the last three days who are currently being failed by the police. It is not a historical problem. Very little has changed. We have seen trials. But all too often these children are still being judged, and fobbed off and that is not good enough."

"Child sexual abuse and exploitation by 'grooming gangs' is a current problem. We see through our work at The Maggie Oliver Foundation that, if anything, these gangs are getting more sophisticated in their tactics and the problem more widespread. Access to mobile phones and apps like Snapchat makes young girls so much more accessible to these criminals. It's so important that the public are aware of this so they

can spot the signs and we can keep the pressure on police and statutory services to take these crimes seriously and protect those at risk from these dangerous men."

In one case being handled by The Maggie Oliver Foundation, a woman who was abused from the age of 13 claims she is still being targeted by the same gang. She said her abusers have sent her photographs of her family members threatening to harm them if she does not comply with their demands. When she raised the case with police she said she was dismissed and at one point even branded a "prostitute".

Elsewhere, a group of survivors came forward to the foundation in 2021 after their case was closed by police. They had a significant amount of evidence, including phone messages and photographs of injuries inflicted by the perpetrators, which they had also shared with the detectives, but this was not considered enough to charge the suspected rapists. The case has since been reopened.

Grooming Gangs: Britain's Shame is broadcast on Saturday at 8pm on GB News