

'The Centre Cannot Hold'

From [Sky News](#)

A young woman who says she was “raped and sold” in Hull has not been interviewed by police, despite a high-profile two-year investigation into grooming gangs in the area.

Kate (not her real name) claims to be the victim of a gang of sex abusers in the East Yorkshire city. Police did not recognise her name when it was provided by Sky News with her permission, although other alleged victims in the case say they were told of her.

Her testimony could reopen a case that has stalled after police failed to find enough evidence to support [claims by other women in Hull](#).

Kate told Sky News: “I ended up in Hull because of a gang of individuals who were trafficking me for sexual exploitation. The place I remember most was Hessle Foreshore. I just remember being in the back of cars – just being raped and sold.”

Hessle Foreshore is somewhere other girls mention as a location for the abuse. Kate also names some of the same individuals said to have been involved in the abuse that have been mentioned by other alleged victims.

If Kate’s claims are true, it adds another dimension to the case and raises questions about the scale of the problem.

She says she was taken to several other cities as well.

“The only way I can describe it is different hubs,” Kate told Sky News. “So, you would have a local group in one area, but they were networked in with other people in other areas. So, what they would do is they’d swap girls – and you’d be that group for say the night and then you’d go back to yours – but

there were common people throughout them all.”

Kate says she is still considering whether to talk to the police. It was a personal risk for the other women to come forward and they provided additional evidence; diaries and school accounts, Snapchats and photos that support claims they were threatened, beaten, and strangled. Some of them said they received threats after they had spoken to the police.



Humberside Police say they have made multiple arrests, but after seizing 150 devices from suspects did not find enough supporting evidence.

After initially suggesting Operation Marksman would not include people trafficked into Hull, Humberside Police later clarified that it would if they were being abused by the same suspects in the same places. Kate is mistrustful having spoken to police forces about sexual abuse in other areas but she has allowed Sky News to pass on her details to Humberside Police.

She said: “I think I’d need some reassurances, before I spoke to any police again, that I wouldn’t be palmed off as a liar or that I’m insane or that I’m a prostitute...”

The biggest fear for the people of Hull is that if what the young women say is true, it could well still be happening – which is why Sky News will continue to follow this story wherever it takes us next.