

**WITNESS STATEMENT****Criminal Procedure Rules, r 27. 2; Criminal Justice Act 1967, s. 9; Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, s.5B**URN    

Statement of: Nigel Carey

Age if 18 or under: 018 \*see overleaf (if over 18 insert 'over 18') Occupation: Geo-Physicist

This statement (consisting of 5 page(s) each signed by me is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.

Victim / Witness signature:

Date:

I am the above named and I reside at an address known by the Police. I am making this statement regarding Scott Lafferty who I met around 22 years ago through my work as a Geo-Physicist.

Scott originated from the Seattle area of the United States and although having no formal qualifications or University degree wrote a software programme to assimilate readings from sonar surveying of the sea bed. The software was a world leader and has tried to be replicated over the last 20 years with limited success. Scott was bordering on genius in his intellectual understanding of computer programming. Scott and the people he chose to work with did well financially and Scott was very selective with whom he would work and often only at my recommendation. Generally Scott was not business savvy and I believe had been let down by others in the past. He didn't trust many people.

I would also state that my relationship was always more a business relationship than socially based. I have invited Scott to my home on a few occasions over the years and once with his partner. I have visited Scott again on one occasion in Pembrokeshire where he lived with his then partner Rose. Each of these occasions it was business related rather than social.

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The geophysical Survey Industry is a small industry and often this would mean people working at sea aboard ship or vessel for prolonged periods of time. In this environment people often become friends to a degree in addition to work colleagues. Scott it is fair to say was awkward in social situations but with a complex personality. He was able to function well in technical or business related interactions but was also intense in a more social situation. If Scott was to become interested or research a subject he would be almost obsessed that people would often try and remove themselves from any conversations. Given the way Scott presented, I would not have been surprised if Scott appeared on the 'Autistic Spectrum' to some extent. In fact I will comment on this later in this statement.

In August 2017, I received telephone call from Scott to say he needed to talk urgently and that he had left his partner Rose. He told me he was making his way from Pembrokeshire to where I lived. He eventually arrived with his 4 dogs and stayed the night as I was unable to find him any suitable hotel accommodation. On his arrival he was quite calm and told me he had concerns for his physical safety from Rose and her family. He told me that his relationship with Rose was not one of sexual intimacy and their relationship was loveless. Scott never mentioned anything specifically about any threats or why he felt unsafe but they feeling he left me with that Rose and her family were after his money. He told me strategy with the issue was to come to an arrangement to payoff Rose's mortgage. The whole story relayed by Scott was strange but all I could say was that I didn't understand rather than disbelieved what he had told me. Scott I had always viewed as emotionally vulnerable and so I felt that he would be easily manipulated. He also said that he had left the house at 4am and not informed Rose of his intention to leave as he feared for his life.

I advised that Scott consult a solicitor regarding what he had told me and I understand that he reported his belief about Rose to the Police in Newport, Gwent or Salisbury or Reading. Scott was insistent that I did not let anyone know where he was and specifically mentioned Rose should not know anything of his whereabouts.

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I was able to arrange a holiday let cottage in the Salisbury for Scott to stay for the following week. I know that Scott's friend Steve Lambert came over from the United States to stay with him for a while. I understood Steve to be an old family friend. Steve was also very smart but also like Scott a socially awkward individual. I know Scott and Steve travelled around the UK booking accommodation. It wouldn't be unfair to say that Scott was acting as though he was 'on the run'. After Scott left the Salisbury accommodation I had arranged for him telephone contact from Scott was sporadic.

At some stage Scott fell out with Steve and was convinced Steve was trying to hack into his computer email accounts, records and finances. At some point Scott told me that Steve had changed after first beginning to help him with his accounting. He told me he was scared of Steve and again I understand that Scott reported this to the Police. I tried to keep in contact with Scott most weeks. Sometimes I was successful, sometimes not.

By the end of 2017, Scott had moved into his house at Calton Walk, Bath. Scott had owned the property for some time but it was not habitable due to an amount of water damage caused by a burst water pipe. In the October Scott agreed to meet me face to face and I visited him at Calton Walk. Scott was speaking and acting more rationally about matters and I hoped this was the end of whatever was happening in his life.

Following this we kept in contact fairly regularly, although, I tried not to discuss any financial issues or business as I didn't want to be treated by Scott with any suspicion. In this period if Scott wanted to talk he would bombard me with calls.

In January 2018, I tried to ring Scott without success but eventually managed to get hold of him by phone. The call was strange and I got the feeling he didn't want to speak to me which was a complete change in attitude than before. Contact with Scott between then and March was difficult but eventually resumed and I felt eventually that things were back to normal.

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On 5<sup>th</sup> April 2018, I received a call from Scott and he said he wanted to meet up. I unfortunately had to decline as I was due to leave for a holiday the following day and Scott broke down in tears on the phone saying "I need a friend". This was the first time Scott showed any real emotion to me. I arranged to meet Scott later that day at his house at Calton Walk and found Scott an emotional and physical wreck. Scott had clearly made an effort knowing we were to meet but it was clear that he was not taking care of himself. As we talked one moment he was fine and the next moment he would suddenly break down in tears. He told me that he had self-diagnosed himself with 'Asperger's syndrome' but he was happy with this. I think Scott looked up this as a reason why he was the way he was and different to many other people. He told me he had become forgetful and had blanks in his thinking processes and was unable to be motivated to do anything. He said that he was often unable to use his computer as though there was a block of some kind. I asked Scott if he had referred matters of how he felt and his symptoms to his doctor. He said he had but that the doctors didn't believe him and felt he was making some of it up. I was angry about this as it was clear he was not alright, and insisted he should go back to the doctor and if necessary demand to see a different one. He also told me that he had checked into a clinic whilst in the Devon area over something that had happened whilst he was 'on the run'. He did not elaborate what this was and I did not ask. Either way, I believe the people at this clinic did not believe Scott's symptoms were true either. I tried to encourage Scott to follow how he felt through medically whilst I was on holiday.

I exchanged a few texts with Scott whilst I was on holiday, and then on the 16<sup>th</sup> April 2018, I spoke to Scott by telephone and he sounded fine albeit a little subdued. I enquired about his progress with his doctor and he was not specific in detail but he was okay. I did not want to push him, and so suggested I would leave him in peace and he was to call me over the next week or so when he was ready to meet – he agreed.

Unfortunately during the next few weeks I had pressures of my own I was dealing with and did not realise

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how much time had passed.

On Monday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2018, I received an email from a business colleague asking if I had heard from Scott. It occurred to me that I had not heard from him since our call and so text messaged his mobile telephone which received no immediate response (this was not unusual) – as I was travelling in Nigeria I decided to leave it with the intention of going to see him on Friday when I was back in the UK.

Although at this stage I understand that the official reason for Scott's death has not been released, it is clear that suicide is a distinct possibility. I would like to state that during one of our conversations when he was 'on the run' I had actually challenged Scott to confirm he was OK. He stated categorically that he was and had no intention of harming himself. As he was also besotted with his dogs I do find it difficult to believe he would not have left them cared for in some way.

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