

Just 8 days' jail for convicted thief who fleeced gran, 87, of her life savings

A CONVICTED thug who conned an 87-year-old widow out of £15,000 in savings for building work he never did is serving just eight days in jail.

Shaun Price and accomplice James Loveridge received credit for pleading guilty, despite being involved in a car chase to flee police and denying being the men who duped the pensioner when they were caught.

Price, 22, who already had convictions for theft, criminal damage and harassment, will be freed tomorrow.

Loveridge, 18, who had a conviction for assault, will walk free next week after just a fortnight in jail.

Last night, Mrs Wilson's son Richard said the sentence was no deterrent because their crime was so lucrative.

He added: 'The fact they got more than £7,000 each for a few weeks in jail means it pays better than a job. I certainly don't earn a wage that high, it pays better than any job I know.'

And campaigners said: 'British justice

By Liz Hull

in an unmarked car as he returned to the property in upmarket Stockton Heath, Cheshire. When confronted, he tried to escape in a van driven by Price, but they were caught after a high-speed chase.

Despite initial denials, they eventually admitted fraud by dishonestly making false representation for their own gain.

Loveridge, of Elton, Cheshire, and Price, of Widnes, were sentenced to four months in jail on January 23, but were only locked up for a few days each because of their guilty pleas and the fact that both had to wear electronic tags while awaiting trial were taken into account.

The money they stole amounted to half the insurance payout Mrs Wilson received when her husband Peter died aged 84 last year.

Her son said: 'When the police searched the homes of the two men, they couldn't find any trace of the money. She won't see a penny of that ever again.'

Mr Wilson added that although their punishment was short-lived, the ordeal would affect his independent mother for the rest of her life.

After she was duped, he was so fearful that she might be exploited again that he moved her out of her home of almost 40 years and into a retirement complex where she felt more protected.

Yesterday, the electronics engineer criticised the courts for failing to punish or deter the cruel comen.

He said: 'I was shaking when I found out. Four months seems like a kick in the teeth. It doesn't feel like a real punishment.'

'They did this to an old person who has worked for the benefit of society as a teacher the whole of her working life.'

Paul Green, a spokesman for Saga, the organisation for the over-50s, said: 'Eight days is an insult - eight years would have been much more appropriate.'

'The perpetrators clearly have no shame, but British justice has been put in the dock as well and found guilty of complete failure.'

Mrs Wilson's MP, David

Mowat, said: 'This appears derisory. Given that this man already had a criminal record, it is a completely inadequate sentence and a failure of the justice system.'

The Tory MP said he would be raising the case with Justice Secretary Chris Grayling, who has vowed to 'teach criminals that they will be punished for their crime'.

Despite a Coalition pledge to end so-called soft sentences, new figures show barely a quarter of all criminals convicted of serious offences were jailed in 2012.

More than 700 arsonists, 70 rapists, 1,100 people convicted of sex assaults, 2,745 fraudsters, 162 who killed by reckless driving and 77 kidnappers were among those who walked from court that year.

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'This seems like a kick in the teeth'

has been put in the dock and found guilty of complete failure.'

Chester Crown Court heard that Price and Loveridge, who both live in caravan parks, targeted the grandmother last September, spending a week convincing her to pay for unnecessary roof repairs.

They persuaded the retired teacher to go to her bank and withdraw £4,800, then returned the following day to collect a further £9,800 from her.

But Mrs Wilson told her 49-year-old son about the visits and he immediately contacted police. He also called his mother's bank to put a stop on the joint account he shared with her, so that when the comen returned the following day for another £7,800, she was unable to withdraw it.

He said: 'Mum thought I had sent some workers to do some jobs for her, but I didn't know anything about it.'

'When I checked how much was missing from her account I couldn't believe my eyes. They took thousands and just kept coming back for more each time.'

Police placed a secret camera in bushes at the front of Mrs Wilson's home, which recorded Loveridge walking up the drive on September 27.

Three days later officers were waiting



Duped: Elspeth Wilson, above, was conned by Shaun Price, inset, and his accomplice James Loveridge

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'I'm not sure of her exact size. Larger than a warthog but smaller than a hippo'

The wife's dress size? Half of men don't have a clue

By Larisa Brown

NEXT time your other half gets your dress size wrong, ladies, don't take it to heart. He's not trying to drop hints about your weight - he simply doesn't have a clue what it is.

Half of men have no idea what size clothes their partner wears, according to a survey. This was despite 54 per cent saying they had bought the lady in their life an item of clothing before.

Meanwhile some 19 per cent aren't sure what their partner's size is, while 31 per cent were more confident, saying they would be able to pick out the right one in store.

The majority of those who said they were clueless but had bought something for their other half before admitted they had guessed

the correct size, whereas 29 per cent said they had asked a shop assistant to help.

A cautious 17 per cent of men said they had opted to 'buy a small size as a form of flattery should it be the incorrect size'.

When asked if such tactics had worked, 65 per cent of the 1,921 men in relationships who were questioned for the survey admitted to 'getting it wrong' on at least one occasion.

The survey carried out by vouchercloud.com also found that 57 per cent of men wouldn't dare buy their wife or girlfriend a dress even if they knew the correct size because they might pick the wrong style.