

News

Ban after man did sex act at restaurant

A REGISTERED sex offender performed a sex act as he collected drinks from a McDonald's drive-through.

CCTV captured Max Calder with his trousers round his ankles as he committed the act.

He was seen performing the sex act as he collected his McDonald's order from the Ashby branch on Monday, December 30 last year.

Police were called to the restaurant, just off the A511, where 23-year-old Calder admitted to the offence after being shown the CCTV from the drive-through window.

He appeared before Leicester Magistrates' Court on Friday where it was heard he had two previous convictions for exposure from 2022.

The convictions had led to a community order and Calder having to sign on to the sex offender register for five years.

Prosecutor Tracy Lovejoy asked magistrates for the five-year period to be extended and said the offence of outraging public decency, which can lead to a sentence of up to six months in jail, was aggravated by the fact Calder had done it before.

Andrew Bolc, representing Calder, of Croft Close, Netherseal near Swadlincote, said he had no objection to the extension of his client's time on the sex offenders' register.

He asked for the case to be adjourned for a pre-sentence report to be prepared.

He told the magistrates: "You have got here a young man, two-and-a-half years since the last offending. He has been on comprehensive programmes, completed without fault or blemish, and unfortunately he finds himself back here."

Magistrates agreed to the adjournment.

Calder, who pleaded guilty to outraging public decency, was released on the condition that he does not contact the victim and does not visit any McDonald's restaurants in Leicestershire.

By EVA MILLETT

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A PROMINENT Leicestershire trans rights activist has described the recent Supreme Court Ruling on gender recognition as a "devastating step backwards" for the trans community.

Katie Neeves, *right*, a public speaker and trans awareness trainer, criticised the legal decision that ruled that the term "sex" refers to biological sex only, meaning under the Equality Act 2010 a "woman" is a biological woman or a girl - a person born female.

The decision allows organisations to exclude trans women from single-sex spaces, even if they have a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC), which Katie says contradicts existing legislation and has already caused confusion and distress.

"It completely undermines the Gender Recognition Act," said Katie.

"It's unworkable, it's discriminatory and it sets us back 50 years."

The ruling, made in a case involving the Equality and Human Rights Commission, clarifies that "sex" in the Equality Act refers to biological sex. Katie argues this creates a legal contradiction, as those who hold a GRC are legally recognised as their acquired gender under the 2004 Gender Recognition Act.

"Most trans people don't have a Gender Recognition Certificate just because it's a humiliating process to go through," she said.

"But when you do get one, you're issued with essentially a new birth certificate that says for all intents and legal purposes you are now legally that gender and sex.

"However this ruling under the Equality Act 2010 is disregarding that.

"It's riding roughshod over that. So it conflicts with the laws, which law do you go with?"

Katie, 56, is a well-known trans activist locally and nationwide, speaker and founder of Cool-2BTrans, an organisation that supports transgender people and promotes wider understanding.

A former photographer, she came out as trans at 48 and delivers trans awareness training across the UK and beyond.

She has appeared on major broadcasters including ITV and the BBC, and was named Hero of the Year at the 2023 British Diversity Awards.

Katie believes the confusion caused by the conflict of laws will lead to unlawful discrimination not just towards trans women, but any woman who presents as masculine.

"It will lead to people unwittingly breaking the law," said Katie.

"Service providers will look at this ruling and think 'I better stay on the right side of the law'.

"They will have to discriminate against trans people and they've got

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Katie Neeves

to prove that it was for a legitimate aim and proportionate response. That's the critical thing. And if they can't prove that, they've broken the law.

"They've discriminated against trans people and are opening themselves up to being taken to court."

Katie describes on the Cool-2BTrans website that she was assigned male gender at birth and the government name Martin.

However, from her earliest memories, when around three or four, her head and heart were telling her "something different" to the label she was given.

She spent much of her life cross-dressing, wearing women and girls' clothing. "It felt right," Katie wrote in

her blog. "But then I would feel guilty about it as I knew it was socially unacceptable and afterwards, I would be consumed by feelings of guilt, disgust and self-loathing."

"It was a vicious cycle. I only accepted myself as a crossdresser in my mid-twenties and as soon as I accepted it, the problem disappeared. I was happy as a man who needed to crossdress for many years.

"I realised I had a condition called gender dysphoria, which is a feeling of great unease about your head and your heart telling you are the opposite gender to the sex you were assigned at birth, however, my gender dysphoria was satisfied by regular crossdressing."

Despite the confusion following the recent ruling on single-sex spaces, Katie said she has never encountered any issues in Leicester

using women-only toilets or facilities since coming out as trans in 2018. However, she acknowledges that this isn't the case for many other trans people, and that acceptance is fragile in the face of political and media hostility.

"I've been accepted wholeheartedly, everywhere I go," said Katie. "I've never had any problems at all."

"I don't care what anyone thinks about me. All I care about is how people treat me."

"I just want to be treated with respect. There's no need to punch down on trans people. We don't mean any harm, we just want to be happy."

Many in the trans community alongside Katie have argued that the ruling will perpetuate misinformation and prejudice, subsequently putting trans and cis-gendered people at risk.

Katie recalled a viral incident on social media where a woman who had undergone chemotherapy and lost all of her hair was chased out of a women's-only toilet because she was mistakenly identified as a man.

"This was never about toilets, it's fearmongering," said Katie.

In Leicester, Katie has been an active figure in the LGBTQIA+ community. She has delivered presentations at local institutions such as Leicester College and has been interviewed multiple times on BBC Radio Leicester, discussing her experiences and advocacy work.

Her efforts have been recognised



EXPOSURE: CCTV captured Calder doing sex act at the drive-through



'BEING TRANS IS TOUGH ENOUGH: A protest in Leicester in April