

Teeside Court hears woman fled Middlesbrough flat after alleged attempted rape

A man accused of attempting to rape a woman after inviting her to his Middlesbrough flat for food, a shower and clean clothes has gone on trial, Teesside Crown Court has heard.

Selvaratnam Nallathamby, 56, denies two counts of attempted rape. He appeared before the court with the assistance of a Tamil interpreter.

The court heard that on April 3, 2025, Nallathamby approached the complainant near the NatWest bank on Linthorpe Road and asked whether she was homeless.

Prosecutor Emma Atkinson told the jury that after the complainant replied she was, Nallathamby offered to take her to his flat on Elkington Walk, Middlesbrough, where she could have food, a shower and clean clothes. The court heard he also paid her bus fare.

Miss Atkinson described what followed as a "terrifying ordeal".

The jury heard that after the complainant had finished showering, Nallathamby allegedly armed himself with a claw hammer before demanding she perform a sexual act.

Miss Atkinson told jurors the complainant refused and that Nallathamby then threatened to rape her.

The court heard the pair struggled and fell to the floor, where Nallathamby allegedly grabbed the complainant's leg and attempted to remove her trousers.

Miss Atkinson said the complainant managed to flee the flat barefoot wearing borrowed trousers and a jacket before knocking on neighbours' doors for help. Neighbours contacted police.

When interviewed by police, Nallathamby denied attacking the complainant or making any sexual demands. He claimed he asked her to leave after she produced a crack pipe and became racist towards him.

The complainant cannot be identified for legal reasons.

The trial continues.