



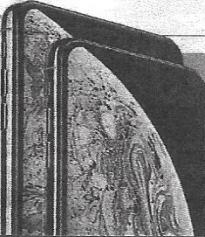
# *“Drina”*

## A Case Study

Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board  
Conference

10<sup>th</sup> December 2018

Steven Davies



## EXCLUSIVE FIRST LOOK AT THE NEW IPHONE XS

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## LONDON FASHION WEEK REBOOTED

THE TRENDS YOU NEED TO KNOW NO  
» LIFESTYLE STARTS ON PAGE 31

# TORTURED SLAVE LEFT AT MERCY OF HER CRUEL TRAFFICKER

» BEATEN WOMAN NOW MISSING AFTER POLICE AND COUNCIL ALLOW STEPFATHER TO TAKE HER HOME

### EXCLUSIVE

Rachael Burford

A VULNERABLE woman who was found starving, beaten and forced to work as a slave was returned to her suspected trafficker in a major blunder by council officials, the Standard has learned.

The woman, who had learning disabilities, was discovered by chance, filthy and freezing and apparently living in a garden shed, when bailiffs raided a house in east London.

Neighbours later said they had seen her showering naked in the garden and being forced to unload scrap metal from vans, but they had been too frightened to alert the police. Barking and Dagenham council bosses arranged for the woman, who

is in her thirties, to be accompanied by her stepfather when she was returned to Romania in December 2016, despite him having been apparently involved in her trafficking and abuse.

After fast-tracking the flights from Luton Airport, one official was apparently heard to joke: "This is good, Brexit works."

The woman's removal — which enraged frontline staff concerned for her welfare — breached national guidelines allowing her more time to recover in safe accommodation after being accepted as a victim of modern slavery.

Social workers in Romania say the pair have been missing since April last year. After a "shocked" health worker turned whistleblower, a report was commissioned by Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Adults Board. It said she had

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# Profile of DRINA

- A 35 year old Romanian female with Learning Disabilities
- Found by Bailiffs in a garden in London in 2016, dirty dishevelled and smelling of human excrement.
- She had been living in the garden shed on a dirty mattress with no sanitation. There was a lock on the shed door.
- Bailiffs persuaded her into the house where there was an adult Romanian female(OS).
- The Bailiffs gave her food and called police believing that she was being kept as a slave.

- Before the police arrived, Drina was bundled into the back of a van and driven away.
- The bailiffs filmed this and gave the footage to police when they arrived.
- The occupant of the house was arrested for **false imprisonment and kidnap**.
- Drina was later found in an address in another part of London in clean clothes and the occupants were arrested.
- She was initially taken to a police station but no-one was able to communicate with her.
- She was then taken to a care home for elderly people with dementia on an emergency (best interests) basis.
- No verbal account could be obtained from Drina since neither police nor social care could find an interpreter who could speak her Roma dialect.

- OS was interviewed and provided a prepared statement denying allegations of kidnap and false imprisonment and claimed she and her husband had cared for Drina since she arrived from Romania.
- There was significant evidence to contradict her account but her husband was not located.
- Enquiries found that Drina came to the UK with her stepfather 6 months earlier.
- An adult safeguarding meeting was held for Drina which included her stepfather, OS (believed to be her step sister **who was still on police bail**) and the officer in the case.
- As no Roma interpreter could be found **her stepfather spoke on her behalf and asked to take her back to Romania.**

- A medical was carried out at the care home and injuries were discovered including recent burns and scars but **this information was never shared with police.**
- Drina was supervised at the care home 24/7 but **no DOLS process was initiated.**
- 2 MCA assessments were carried out and she was found to have a permanent impairment. She was not able to understand or retain information about where she should live, what care she needed or with whom she wanted contact.
- The assessments stated that Drina was unlikely to regain capacity.

- Drina was interviewed at the care home with her social worker from the Community Learning Disability Team CLDT, an Enquiry Officer and Interpreter.
- **She implicated her stepfather as a possible suspect.**
- The OiC was notified and an NRM was completed which received a positive reasonable grounds decision.
- Romanian Social Services confirmed that the family were known to them and that Drina lacked capacity in all areas and her step-father managed her disability allowance.
- In another meeting in which her step-father was present, Drina indicated that **she wanted to go home to Romania.**
- The Team Manager spoke to the NRM case worker about Drina's wishes and was told that they had no objection to her going home and the **safeguarding was a matter for police and the local authority.**

- At the final safeguarding meeting before she was returned home, Drina disclosed that she was **beaten, locked in a room and deprived of food by her stepfather.**
- A Romanian speech and language therapist was used to interpret in this meeting (not the interpreter used for the capacity assessments)
- Her step-father **who was present at this meeting** denied this, stating that she should not be listened to because of her disability.
- Entry on the AIS system stated:

*“Despite ongoing safeguarding investigation, it was agreed between the GM and TM that Drina would be repatriated with her stepfather to Romania. It won't be possible to establish all the facts as Drina is not a reliable witness. Stepfather has been compliant with authorities. HRA assessment required.”*

*What learning can we take away  
from this case?*