

From **The Times**
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Long walk to justice

Merseyside police must answer questions about the conviction of Eddie Gilfoyle

It is welcome news that the police have asked the Crown Prosecution Service to reconsider the case of Eddie Gilfoyle, after The Times's discovery of notes that cast doubt on his conviction. Mr Gilfoyle has spent 17 years in prison for the murder of his pregnant wife. The notes uncovered by Times reporter Dominic Kennedy, of interviews with officers conducted by an internal police review, suggest that Merseyside Police were cavalier with physical evidence that could have proved that Mrs Gilfoyle committed suicide. But someone was equally cavalier with written evidence. In 1994 the Police Complaints Authority was told by the police that the notes of the interviews with officers had been destroyed. The Times was told last year that no such notes had ever existed. Yet they do exist. They show that a police surgeon gave an estimated time of death at the scene that implies Mr Gilfoyle was at work when his wife was hanged. Yet this information was never given to the jury.

The police have rightly decided that the Crown Prosecution Service should take a fresh view on whether Mr Gilfoyle received a fair trial. But the case should also be referred to the Independent Police Complaints Commission, for important questions remain unanswered.

Why did Merseyside Police repeatedly claim that these notes did not exist? Who gave out that information? If the police copy of the notes was indeed destroyed, what was the justification for keeping something so vital from the defence? Crucially, what else may be missing from the Gilfoyle evidence file? It is a matter of public confidence that these questions be asked. Seventeen years on, justice demands a proper answer.