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TRANSCRIPT OF “FILE ON 4” – “THE COMPENSATION CATCH”

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“FILE ON 4”

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Producer: Emma Forde

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ACTUALITY OF SAWING

EMMA: A lot to do, but we're on track to finish in the next few days. This is my new bedroom basically. The one that was here before was the only one I could access and it was really small, so we've had it made bigger, wheelchair accessible all the way around, so I've had to use the money that I got to make these changes to have an easier life really.

CURWEN: This is Emma. We're in her home, which is a building site – it's all bare plaster and workmen's tools. The reason she needs these adaptations to her house is because she recently had part of her leg amputated. She can only afford the building work thanks to compensation from public funds, for violence and abuse she suffered as a teenager. Now, two decades later, she's decided to waive her anonymity to tell her story.

EMMA: I met an older person, an older man. I was in a vulnerable situation. I'd fallen out with my family and he sort of took me under his wing and groomed me really. And then, for the following two years, I was tortured and raped literally pretty much daily, stabbed. I've lost my leg as a result of being stabbed. Cigarette burns,

EMMA cont: bite marks, locked in a bedroom for days on end, denied food. I wasn't allowed to do anything at all so, yeah, it was very controlling and I was completely conditioned to comply.

CURWEN: And you got pregnant?

EMMA: I did get pregnant, I didn't have any choice about that. I had my child, who is amazing, and when she was 5 weeks old, we left because he attempted to cut her throat. And we managed to get away and get to a women's refuge.

CURWEN: Emma's abuser was never convicted. She tried to have a fresh start, went on to get a good job, met someone new and had more children. But several years ago, the pain in her leg became severe and the psychological trauma resurfaced. She was so distressed she was unable to work. In 2012, she applied to get compensation for the lasting effects of the attacks - to a body called the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority. The CICA can provide recompense for blameless victims of violent crime if they qualify under certain rules. For Emma, the first response was not good.

EMMA: A flat no, basically. It was a very generic letter, because it had happened not within the two years' timeframe and that was purely the reason.

CURWEN: The rules say, in most cases, the application should start within two years of the crime happening. For Emma, it was many years since the sexual and physical abuse. It is possible to plead that special circumstances apply, and Emma consulted lawyers, who did win the right for her case to be considered. So how long did it take before you got the first offer of compensation?

EMMA: Four years.

CURWEN: So when you finally got the first offer, how much was it?

EMMA: It was just under £25,000.

CURWEN: Emma was very unhappy, because that amount did not acknowledge the sexual violence she had suffered, nor the fact she'd had a child as a result of rape. If you don't agree with the award on offer, you can ask for it be reviewed by the CICA. If that still does not satisfy the victim, the next option is to take it all the way to a tribunal. Solicitor Sarah Brumpton from Irwin Mitchell, who was in charge of the case, says it's a hard decision to make.

BRUMPTON: It's always very difficult for people, it's very stressful and it retriggers memories of what happened. We find that we have to offer people a lot of care and support when we're going through that process, and sometimes people find it so difficult that they don't do it. They find that they can't face going to the tribunal, but sometimes we have no choice, because that's the only way we can get to the right decision.

MUSIC

EMMA: It was like a courtroom, quite a lot of people in there, recording, and then there was a panel of three people, and yeah, it felt like I was on trial. Everything was obviously directed straight towards me.

CURWEN: The tribunal is an independent panel of three experts who judge the facts and can cross-examine the applicant.

EMMA: The spotlight was on me, so I was in full fight or flight mode. Every question I was asked was basically questioning what had already been written in statements about how this has affected my life and how it affects my day to day living, how it affects my mobility. It came to the end of the day and there was still no decision on what was to be made and I was made to wait another four or five days for that decision to come through via email.

CURWEN: When the email came through, the amount offered was a surprise.

EMMA: Just over £277,000.

CURWEN: That's a huge difference from £25,000, which is what they first offered.

EMMA: Absolutely, absolutely. A huge, huge difference. That recognition, that validation, you were a victim of serious sexual violence and it's believed and it's there in black and white that that's the case.

CURWEN: The majority of Emma's award was not for her injuries, but for the loss of earnings she suffered, because of the psychological damage that meant she couldn't work. Emma says the solicitor's fees cost around a quarter of her award, but she thinks the biggest price was the toll the process took on her mental health.

EMMA: I can absolutely say six years going through that process was harder than the two years that I went through.

CURWEN: The two years you were attacked?

EMMA: Yeah, absolutely, in terms of feeling and the emotion, what I felt for two years, I then felt that for six, and it prolonged it. And each delay, each time where it was questioned, I went through that re-traumatisation and the process all over again. I think the system is designed with hurdles for people to give up. I could not have done any of this case - it's too complex. If I would have made the application myself, I would have accepted what they said on that first letter of refusal and accepted that it was out of time. Such a big hurdle to take and without the support ...

CURWEN: What do you think might happen for other people who are offered the level of award that you were offered initially?

EMMA: I think that the majority of people would take that award. I purely believe that there's many, many victims out there that just cannot possibly put themselves through such a hostile process, because that's what it is - from start to finish it felt hostile.

MUSIC

CURWEN: So how is the scheme meant to work? Criminal Injuries Compensation, funded by the state, has been in existence since 1964. It's meant to be a scheme of last resort, used only if victims cannot sue their attackers or claim insurance payouts. The maximum award is now £500,000 - a figure that's stayed the same for twenty years. The distressing experience of applicants like Emma prompted Baroness Newlove, the Victims Commissioner for England and Wales, to produce a report into the scheme, published in January.

NEWLOVE: The CICA, which is the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority, is a compensation scheme that is aimed to rehabilitate victims of crime. So it's seen as a compensation, as a remedy that society recognises damage and harm that's done to you, and it's helped them with their practical needs as they cope and recover through the trauma they've been through.

CURWEN: Does it meet those aims at the moment?

NEWLOVE: For some people I have to say it does, but the majority, as the review that I launched a couple of weeks ago, shows that it doesn't. It actually re-traumatises victims, and it's not as easy and transparent as people hope it is. And for me that's not a good way forward to help them cope and recover.

CURWEN: The scheme has had many incarnations, but the rules have become more stringent since 2012. For most people, the awards are not large - the average was just over £9,000 last year, and that's 18% down on the previous year. The Government is undertaking an official review into the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme. It also promised to scrap an old rule, which blocked victims from claiming money if they had lived under the same roof as their abuser. But one burning issue is the slow pace of the process. The Authority tells victims they can expect to wait up to 12 months, but complex cases take longer. Roger Goodier, who was a judge sitting on Criminal Injuries tribunals until 2015, has concerns about how the Authority deals with victims at the early stages of the process.

GOODIER: The aim should be to get the decision right first time. I've got experience of cases where the Authority has totally ignored representations that have been made by or on behalf of an applicant, and it's reviewed a decision, come to the same decision, and then it comes to the appeals tribunal and the appeal succeeds, and the applicants can say, well, why have I had to wait all this time going through all these hurdles for me to get what I thought I was entitled to in the first place?

CURWEN: We have spoken to people who've been offered initially £20,000 and it's ended up being a quarter of a million or more. Do you think that that suggests that the CICA are making initial offers that are too low?

GOODIER: I can't say to what extent the Authority is getting it wrong on a regular basis. All I can say is that, when they come to an appeal, there are a substantial number of cases where the decision is changed for the benefit of the appellant.

CURWEN: In fact, CICA figures show only 3.5% of cases went to appeal at a tribunal last year. Of those, only a quarter found in favour of the victim. In future, there may not be as many substantial awards like Emma's, because her loss of earnings was related to her past wages, under the scheme drawn up in 2008. The rules were amended in 2012 to be much less generous, with lost earnings now awarded at the rate of Statutory Sick Pay, about £92 a week.

GOODIER: One of the flaws of the 2012 scheme, one of the unfairnesses is the unavailability of a proper award to compensate for loss of earnings. The value of the awards has insidiously been eroded over the last 20 years or so, and the stated purpose of the 2012 scheme was to reduce the cost of the scheme. They tried to shave £50 million and they did that by making some harsh decisions or decisions that result in what I consider to be harsh treatment of deserving victims.

CURWEN: We wanted to know why Emma's compensation case had taken so long. The Ministry of Justice, which sponsors the CICA, would not comment on individual cases, but told us that to ensure people get the right compensation, a lot of information must sometimes be gathered from the police, medical experts and others, and that can be a long process, but is necessary to make a fair assessment of compensation. In some

CURWEN cont: circumstances they can consider making an interim payment - and Emma did receive one. They also told us:

READER IN STUDIO: The percentage of new applications being decided within twelve months stood at 81% in March last year.

CURWEN: Further tightening, more restrictions mean fewer people can qualify for offers, or offers are lower than in the past in England, Wales and Scotland. Yet the situation is not the same across the United Kingdom. Northern Ireland has a separate scheme, which is unchanged since 2009, where the £500,000 cap does not apply and loss of earnings provisions are still far more generous. But wherever you are, the question remains – [MUSIC] does how much you get depend on whether you've got someone to advise you? The Victims Commissioners Report found 39% of people have been represented throughout the process - some by lawyers and others, free of charge, by charities. But that last option is becoming less available. It's because of a civil lawsuit from 2017, brought against a charity called Victim Support Scotland. Simon Di Rollo, QC represented the man involved.

DI ROLLO: My client and his two brothers were abused by their mother when they were children, and they had disclosed this abuse some years later, and there was a criminal trial at which the mother was prosecuted. And in the course of the criminal proceedings, Victim Support Scotland approached my client and asked him if he wanted any help to handle his claim for Criminal Injuries Compensation. They filled in a form for him and submitted the form to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority and then basically indicated to him that they would look after the claim thereafter.

CURWEN: The CICA offered him £17,000.

DI ROLLO: He took the decision to take what was on offer at that stage. And then thereafter, he discovered that his brother had received a significantly higher award, and when he questioned that, he discovered that a claim for loss of earnings hadn't been included in his claim, and that meant that he had lost out by a substantial amount.

CURWEN: The victim took the difficult decision to sue the charity for £100,000. The sheriff, or judge, in Edinburgh found in his favour - the lawsuit was settled for an undisclosed sum. As a result, Victim Support Scotland changed its policy and stopped advising and representing people throughout the compensation process. The charity declined our request for an interview but told us:

READER IN STUDIO: The decision to withdraw from Criminal Injuries Compensation claims representation - taken over a year ago - was an incredibly difficult one. But the sheriff's ruling means providing that service poses too many risks for claimants, our staff and volunteers. We must protect our core role in supporting victims of crime. As a charity, we are not currently in a position to accept the degree of liability for the success or otherwise of those claims resulting from this case. The sheriff's decision raises fundamental questions about compensation for victims of crime and, more widely, the role of charities within this arena.

CURWEN: It seems, for those who can't afford to pay for a lawyer, another door may have closed. The question is, are victims with representation more likely to challenge the CICA's decisions at review or appeal, and are these victims more likely to achieve a higher award? This is something that Baroness Newlove is keen to look into further - why there is sometimes a big uplift, as in Emma's case, after a low first offer.

NEWLOVE: Sometimes it looks like a tokenistic gesture. To then be awarded £277,000 - that is a huge, huge amount. And so for me, it's about making sure we do this proper and the victim/survivor understands that award and how they've worked it out. It's troubling to find out that they get offered a qualified amount, as they see it, the Criminal Compensation Scheme, but then instruct a lawyer which then the figure that they come out with is tremendous. That worries me. Why are we not allowing victims information to challenge to get the same award? And my concern is that families either accept the smaller amount because they're tired, and then it doesn't help them to rehabilitate. And then secondly, if they find another family who have actually gone to a solicitor and that amount has been trebled, how does that make them feel? We're going to re-traumatise them.

CURWEN: We asked the Ministry of Justice whether initial offers from the CICA are regularly falling short. They told us every effort is made to get the decision right first time, but if victims are unhappy with the outcome, they can challenge this via a review or at a tribunal. They added that applicants do not need paid representation to make a claim, and people can apply online or over the phone with help from CICA customer support. But even when substantial amounts are awarded to victims, it might not be the end of the traumatic experience.

ACTUALITY IN LIFT

RECORDED VOICE: Lift going up.

CURWEN: I've come to a block of flats in the Midlands, to meet a young woman whose sister applied for compensation.

ACTUALITY OF DOOR OPENING

CURWEN: Hello Alice

ALICE: Hiya.

CURWEN: Hi, I'm Lesley.

ALICE: Hi.

CURWEN: Nice to meet you.

ALICE: Come on in.

CURWEN: Thanks very much.

ALICE: Go and take a seat in the lounge.

She was extremely intelligent. She was very creative. She was an excellent artist. She could play the guitar, she played drums, she wrote music. She went on to achieve two degrees and

ALICE cont: was working towards a Masters, so she was an extremely creative and extremely intelligent person.

CURWEN: Were you close?

ALICE: Very close, I loved her dearly.

CURWEN: This is Alice - not her real name - talking about her younger sister whose life was blighted by abuse.

ALICE: She endured a very traumatising childhood. She endured ongoing trauma physically, sexually, mentally, and it really took its toll on her over the years. Due to the abuse, which was at the hands of someone within the family, she developed complex PTSD and schizophrenia and she went on to develop chronic fatigue as well as uncontrollable epilepsy, so she had a multitude of conditions that she was battling.

CURWEN: When her sister was 18, she found out about the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme and decided to apply - she was given a small award. Years later, it was suggested to her that the amount had been too low and she decided to have the case reviewed. As in Emma's case, it was the start of a very long process.

ALICE: She was told that she would have a lump sum awarded to her, and that lump sum she would be able to do whatever she wanted to with. So she would be able to pay off any debts she had, she could get any mental health treatment, any physical health treatment, any respite breaks, support to help her in all the areas she needed to live a happy life. And she was waiting on that and pinning a lot of hope on the fact that once that came in, she could really begin life.

CURWEN: The final award, decided by a tribunal, was just under the maximum possible amount of £500,000. For Alice's sister, it seemed like the start of getting her life back together.

ALICE: My sister was extremely pleased about this, because she felt that this would greatly improve her quality of life, both now and in the future. In fact,

ALICE cont: she had actually written a letter saying, ‘Thank you for your help in getting me my Criminal Injuries Compensation Award, it really does feel life-changing.’

CURWEN: It may have been a life-changing amount, but the outcome was not what she hoped, because the Authority decided to put the majority of the money into a trust. In this case, that meant the CICA dictated what the money could and couldn’t be spent on. The rest of the award would have been without strings, but all the legal fees would have to come out of it. Solicitor Neil Sugarman is a managing partner at GLP solicitors.

SUGARMAN: The tribunal decided that she would be awarded just under the maximum amount of money. The CICA, after the event, they came back and said, ‘Okay, the lion’s share of the money, the most substantial part of the money has got to go into a trust, which can only be spent on care and supervision. Care within the scheme is defined as in connection with bodily functions and the preparation of meals, and supervision is defined as supervision to avoid you being a danger to yourself or somebody else.’ And that was the problem, because they would look very closely at how that money was spent, and that’s what would have prevented the client spending the money as she wanted to do.

CURWEN: Establishing a trust can be a recognised approach to ensure that money is kept safe to provide for someone’s specific needs, often for vulnerable people. But in this case, according to Alice, it was a real blow for her sister.

ALICE: She was devastated. She’d been under the impression she would be able to do what she needed to do to be well. She wanted to purchase herself a home and a car - normal things. She had a fair bit of debt, because she’d been paying for medical treatments and thinking that the award would come in and she would simply pay her debt off. She wouldn’t be able to pay for therapeutic therapies. It was so tightly restricted other than to have a carer, and my sister needed so much more than just a carer. It made her increasingly unstable. In fact, she used to write a ton of journals. There’s a paragraph here I will read: ‘This is not my money; I cannot choose to use it in a way that suits my best interests. I have nothing to pay off the few debts I have left and care will not cover that. I will never have a chance to go on holiday or do something nice. We told our landlord today

ALICE cont: we could not pay the rent arrears as I suppose that is not a care need. It's a real possibility that soon we won't have a home and I have not got enough money to even get through the month. I cannot do this anymore.'

CURWEN: To Alice's sister, it seemed most of her money would be locked away in the trust, and of the remainder, she thought most of that would be swallowed up in legal fees. She instructed her lawyers to keep fighting against the use of a trust. The legal battle with the CICA went on for a year or more, and Alice's sister was still waiting for her award. By now, it had been six years since the case was re-opened. Then, in May last year, things took a devastating turn.

ALICE: I was at my home. My mum called me and she said that she needed me to get to her quickly. So I said, 'Mum, where's my sister? Something's really wrong, isn't it?' And she said, 'I can't tell you over the phone,' and I said, 'I need to know - is she dead?' [CRIES] and she said, 'Yes,' and I just broke down and I just couldn't stop crying, because I knew why. I knew she couldn't carry on anymore.

CURWEN: Alice's sister had taken her own life. She was thirty years old. An inquest is to be held into her death. Your sister had a lot of difficulties. She'd been through a lot of trauma. I mean, some people would argue that in a way it would make sense to put the money in trust to protect it for her.

ALICE: How is that protecting her? To me, all it did was make her lose all hope, take away the last glimmer of hope that she could finally live a life worth living. And I believe this was a contributing fact to why she took her life.

CURWEN: Baroness Newlove says she was distressed to find that the Authority was imposing restrictive trusts on victims like Alice's sister.

NEWLOVE: I just don't understand why they restrict it when this person who needed an assistance and told that she could not use the money for a house or money for counselling, I don't get the justification of allowing her not to do that. I do not understand that, and that's something that we need to look into to ensure that the money's

NEWLOVE cont: used for the purpose that they were awarded for in the first place. They've been through enough in their life and I just don't agree with that at all.

CURWEN: Again, the Ministry of Justice wouldn't comment on individual cases like Alice's sister. But they said the Scheme allows compensation to be placed in a trust as a way of safeguarding the award in the best interests of the applicant, particularly in cases where they may lack capacity or be vulnerable to exploitation. When somebody dies before their case is completed, their claim to compensation often dies with them. There are some limited circumstances where family members may get payments. But with Alice's sister, her family - and her lawyers - didn't get a penny. They may not be alone. Figures obtained from Freedom of Information requests show that since 2012, 308 people died before their application was resolved. The Ministry of Justice said, 'The CICA deeply sympathises with the families of someone who dies before we are able to resolve their application. But we have processes in place to ensure that high risk cases are prioritised.'

MUSIC

CURWEN: There's increasing concern about victims of violent crime who don't even qualify for compensation under the current rules.

ACTUALITY LOOKING AT SCANS

KATE: So these are the CT scans. You can see there ...

CURWEN: Oh, I can see the crack right down your jaw and another one at the other side. That's a big injury, isn't it?

KATE: Yeah. Yeah, for a small face it was a big injury.

CURWEN: That's Kate - again it's not her real name - showing me photos of herself, before and after a violent attack in 2014.

KATE: My ex-partner attacked me and broke my jaw. My jaw broke in three places. I had to have three plates, metal plates in my jaw, screwed in, and the

KATE cont: police came to the hospital and arrested him. My face was swollen for a year after, but I also lost feeling in some of my jaw, so that's numb. My teeth went all crooked. My face was just a mess, basically, for a long time. I was upset, angry, confused that someone I thought I loved could do this to me. I realised I'm not ever going to look the same again. I couldn't go a day without or a minute without thinking about my face, it really affected me.

CURWEN: Her attacker was jailed for grievous bodily harm. Kate says she was left with physical and psychological damage.

KATE: I've just never felt so low - for maybe two years, I was so, so depressed. I was on antidepressants, I was diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and anxiety. I just felt like a completely different person and it has changed me. Those were the worst times of my life.

CURWEN: She heard about Criminal Injuries Compensation and applied for an award on her own. She was offered £8,500. She went to solicitors to see if they could help her get a higher award. In the meantime, confident of getting an award, Kate took out a loan to spend £5,000 on braces to correct the displacement of her teeth. But there was a serious problem with her application. It hinged around an incident which had taken place at a party the previous year.

KATE: I think it was the first night I'd been out after the attack and it was the first time that I had drunk alcohol. I went to a party, bumped into a girl that we didn't really get on, we had a bit of history and she was antagonising me, she was talking to other people and laughing and looking over and I took that that she was teasing me. I did feel threatened. She was standing really close to me, I was sort of backed into a bit of a corner and I ended up throwing the drink that I had in my hand at her. We had a bit of a scuffle, it got broken up. I ended up texting her, you know, drunk, stupid words, and I thought nothing of it. I had a few scratches on me. The next day, I got a phone call from the police saying that she had called them and I had to go in and speak to them about it and be interviewed about it.

CURWEN: What were the charges?

KATE: Common assault and sending abusive messages.

CURWEN: Do you regret throwing your drink over the woman?

KATE: Yes, definitely. You know, I've never done anything like that again or I've never done anything like that before and it was just a stupid moment. I was just so angry that this person had done this to me and that he'd changed my face and I was never going to be the same again, and I was just really angry at the world.

CURWEN: Kate pleaded guilty to the charges and was given a community order lasting six months. The rules say the Criminal Injuries Scheme is meant to be for 'blameless' victims of violent crime. Convictions like hers disqualify victims from applying. Kate's conviction came at just the wrong time - it is 'spent' now; in other words, disregarded by officialdom. But it was still 'unspent' during the period when she applied for compensation. Her solicitor is Alex Brown, partner at Dean Wilson.

BROWN: The CICA is regarded as a pot of last resort and is there to provide justice to those who don't contribute to crime in this country. And there is merit in that certainly, but under previous schemes with the CICA there was an element of discretion retained. But this discretion was taken away in the 2012 scheme, so what we are seeing now is often people, as a result of injuries they've suffered, now being disbarred because they commit a crime, minor or not, and if it falls in the category that's unspent, then they're automatically disbarred from receiving any compensation. My view on this case in particular is one of the more unfair cases I think I've ever seen. If she made the application now, and there wasn't the time limit on bringing the application, it would be successful. Her conviction is now spent and she would be entitled to that compensation again.

CURWEN: The CICA had made the original offer of £8,500 after Kate's conviction for common assault. They later withdrew it. Now she is in debt because of treatment expenses and her chances of getting compensation are slim.

KATE: Just completely shocked and devastated. I just feel like there's just no justice and I just feel in a way that they're just out to find any means in not to pay people that deserve it.

CURWEN: Some people might say people with convictions shouldn't get any money. Isn't that fair enough?

KATE: But I didn't have a conviction before I was attacked and I was a blameless victim in that situation. I didn't do anything to provoke that. Had that not happened to me, I wouldn't have then gone on to have a conviction myself. I think they should look at it case by case.

MUSIC

CURWEN: The Ministry of Justice told us that currently, awards are not made to anyone who, on the date of their application or during the application process, have unspent convictions that resulted in a community or custodial sentence. They said:

READER IN STUDIO: The rule exists to recognise that the applicant may themselves have caused distress, loss or injury to another person through the offence or offences of which they were convicted.

CURWEN: But Kate has decided to pursue her claim for compensation to an oral hearing at a tribunal, even though she can't afford legal help. Baroness Newlove believes that victims like her should have their cases looked at individually, and that's a view shared by the general public. Research by Anglia Ruskin University given exclusively to File on 4, questioned 200 people about the compensation rules in sexual abuse cases. It showed that 74% of those surveyed disagreed with the focus on 'blameless victims' – 82% thought the rule on unspent convictions was unfair. And 80% disagreed with having a two year time limit to apply. Unspent convictions and the two year rule are part of the current Government review. But unless and until the rules are changed, victims of violence say they are being let down. Our request for an interview with someone from the CICA or a minister was turned down. But the Ministry of Justice said in a statement:

READER IN STUDIO: Over £154 million was awarded under the Scheme last year, but compensation is only one part of the picture and our Victims Strategy sets out how we will improve the practical and emotional support on offer at every stage of the justice system.

CURWEN: What about those victims of violent crime who are applying now? I asked the Victims Commissioner, Baroness Newlove, if the current scheme is fit for purpose.

NEWLOVE: No, I do not think it is fit for purpose, especially when now they are known as the last resort, and this funding isn't about getting a lottery ticket. It isn't about getting a cheque. Most victims feel that, you know, they don't want to even apply for this, but it is there for them to apply and we should make it a lot easier by making it transparent, simplify it. You know, these are not easy traumas that people have been going through and we should treat them as human beings first and foremost.

ACTUALITY OF BUILDING NOISES, ELECTRIC SCREWDRIVER

EMMA: Just having a shower room that I can get into and move around in and not have to rely on other people and it will allow me to be more independent, which is all I really want.

CURWEN: Emma, who's looking forward to moving in to her newly adapted house, is glad the money she was awarded has made it all possible. But it was a devastating experience for her, and she worries about other victims applying for state-funded compensation.

EMMA: The concept of it and the whole idea is a great one. The process of it, they tell you, this is a free agency for blameless victims of violent crime. I don't feel very blameless, I don't feel like a victim, I feel like I'm the one that's committed the crime, because that's how they've tret me. There was always a hurdle that were needed to be jumped over, and I just thought of all those other victims that were having to jump over these hurdles that couldn't, and that still can't, that are left behind.