

Edward Heath child abuse claims investigated by five police forces

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Detectives in Wiltshire, London, Jersey, Hampshire and Kent now known to be examining claims that former Tory leader was a paedophile

The child abuse controversy surrounding Sir [Edward Heath](#) grew on Tuesday as it emerged that at least five police forces have been running investigations into the late former prime minister.

Detectives in Wiltshire, London, [Jersey](#), Kent and Hampshire have examined claims that the former Tory leader was a paedophile. But the Metropolitan police said that it had dismissed an allegation that he raped a 12-year-old boy.

As the breadth of police inquiries into Heath's activities became apparent, a brothel-keeper was identified as the woman who triggered the latest in a series of controversies that have linked a high-profile establishment figure to alleged child abuse.

Myra Forde, 67, who has twice been jailed for operating a brothel in Salisbury, Wiltshire, where Heath lived after leaving office, is reported to have had a prosecution against her dropped after threatening to expose him as a paedophile.

The Independent Police Complaints Commission sparked a flurry of revelations when it revealed it was [investigating claims](#) made by a retired senior officer that Wiltshire police dropped the prosecution in the 1990s.

The former officer making the allegations of a coverup was a constable at the time, and rose to the rank of inspector or above.

Wiltshire police appealed on Monday for potential victims and witnesses to Heath's alleged abuse to come forward. The force said it had received a number of calls after issuing the appeal.

Forde, who was originally from the Philippines, trained runaway children as sex workers from her property in Salisbury, less than a mile from Heath's house. One 13-year-old girl would go straight from school to Forde's brothel, which she called the Oriental Massage Parlour, according to reports of her trial at Winchester crown court.

Following her release from prison, Forde was caught again in December 2009, admitted inciting prostitution, and was sentenced to five years in prison.



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After Monday's revelations, [the Mirror reported a claim](#) by an unnamed man that he was raped at age 12 by [Heath, who died aged 89 in 2005](#). The alleged victim claimed he was picked up by the politician in a car on the A2 in north Kent, within the Metropolitan police area.

Scotland Yard said that it had assessed an allegation of rape against Heath in April but decided that there were "no lines of inquiry that could proportionately be pursued by the Met".

The force has also reportedly been investigating claims against Heath as part of Operation Midland, which was set up to examine claims of systematic child abuse [by a Westminster paedophile ring](#), bringing the total number of forces looking at allegations against the former PM to five.

Scotland Yard said it "does not provide a running commentary on Operation Midland".

Separately, Kent police said it had received a new allegation against Heath on Tuesday. A statement said: "Kent police has today received a report of a sexual assault having been committed in east Kent in the 1960s. The victim has named Sir [Edward Heath](#) in connection with the allegation.

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Police appeal for information on Monday

“Detectives are making initial inquiries and will obtain a full account from the victim.”

A statement from the States of Jersey police said Heath features as part of Operation Whistle, which was set up after the Jimmy Savile scandal and the [Jersey Care inquiry](#). The operation is looking into allegations of widespread abuse in the island’s care homes, including the [Haut de la Garenne](#) children’s home.

A spokeswoman for Hampshire police said: “We are investigating allegations, we have nothing further to add at this stage.”



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The allegations against Heath, who was unmarried and subject to lurid speculation about his private life, come amid a succession of claims about establishment figures sexually abusing children and the crimes being covered up. The government has set up the [Goddard inquiry](#) to investigate the scale of child sexual abuse and of establishment coverup.

Brian Binley, who was MP for Northampton South from 2005 to 2015 and worked in Heath’s office earlier in his career, said he would be “very, very surprised” if there was substance to the allegations, adding that he believed Heath was a “good guy”.

Binley questioned why the retired Wiltshire police officer had not come forward sooner. “We must remember that Ted Heath was never even questioned about these allegations and it might be that the police at the time felt that the allegations were so unreliable as to dismiss them – as they do, of course, with many allegations made,” he said.