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Police Yet to Make Arrests a Year After Man Attacked in Park

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— Categories: Crime



A man left with life-changing facial injuries after a violent assault in a Pontypridd park says he feels “seriously let down” by police, more than a year after the incident took place, with no arrests being made yet. Gareth Jones, 42, was punched in the face in broad daylight, resulting in multiple surgeries and ongoing health complications. Despite providing the alleged attacker’s name and pointing out nearby CCTV, no charges have ever been brought.

The assault happened around midday on July 16, 2024, in Ynysangharad Park. Gareth had met a friend and was walking across the bridge behind the Principality building when they

bumped into someone his friend recognised. After a casual exchange, the situation suddenly turned violent. “He put his can on the floor and basically just punched me straight on the jaw. Obviously, I wasn’t expecting it. It was a shock. There had been no buildup, no screaming, shouting; it was a flash incident,” said Gareth.

The force of the punch knocked Gareth off his feet and caused devastating injuries. “He hit me in such a way that my wisdom tooth went up into my top jaw, and it completely snapped my bottom jaw.” Despite the pain, Gareth chased the man across the bridge, but made the decision not to retaliate. “I’ve worked hard the last few years to get myself on the straight and narrow... so I thought to leave it with the police.”

Investigation Fails

What followed has left Gareth deeply frustrated with South Wales Police. He claims the officer assigned to his case mishandled evidence and failed to take accurate notes. “He said to me that it was the right side of my face that was broken, but it wasn’t. It was my left side,” Gareth recalled. “He said the boy hit me with his left hand, but it was his right. He even put the incident in a different location and I had to correct him on that, too.”

Gareth says communication with the officer was virtually non-existent over the next year. “I have had virtually zero contact with that officer for a year. He has not kept me up to date with the progress of the case,” he said. A year later, Gareth claims he received a text message stating the case was likely to be dropped. After contacting the police himself, he was told no further action would be taken.

South Wales Police confirmed a 54-year-old man was arrested but later released. A spokesperson said: “The incident has been investigated as far as reasonably possible... pending further investigative opportunities. If any new information comes to light, the incident will be reinvestigated.”

Gareth, who has undergone three surgeries, including the fitting of a titanium plate from his ear to his chin, still faces the possibility of more operations. He’s suffered recurring infections, including an abscess that burst on his face. “I have a loose screw in my face that they couldn’t get out... I’ve been cycling through antibiotics every three to four weeks.”

Emotionally, the experience has been just as traumatic. “It’s just completely knocked my confidence. I don’t look people in the eye in the street anymore,” Gareth said. “My mental

health has really suffered.”

He is filing a formal complaint about how the investigation was handled and hopes his experience encourages others to speak up. “I feel like I have a duty to push this as far as I can because really, this could happen to anyone,” he said. Despite everything, Gareth is determined to keep fighting: “People deserve someone in their corner.”