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## Convicted Sex Offender Secretly Photographed Children at Tenerife Hotel Pool, Court Hears

July 20, 2025

— Categories: Crime



Newly revealed details showed that a convicted sex offender secretly took photos of children in swimwear at a hotel pool in Tenerife while on an unauthorised overseas trip.

Ronald Barnbrook, 73, from Park Road South in Middlesbrough, has been jailed again after breaching the terms of his Sexual Harm Prevention Order (SHPO) and the sex offenders

register. The images, described in court as “deeply disturbing,” were taken during a holiday to the Spanish island last November, travel he failed to report to police, as required by law.

Under the SHPO, Barnbrook was legally obligated to inform police at least seven days in advance before leaving the U.K. He did not. Authorities only became aware of his trip after he was flagged by Border Force while boarding a flight from Newcastle Airport.

Police later searched Barnbrook’s home and examined his mobile phone, where they discovered an image of a young girl in a bikini. That led to the device being seized. A full forensic review uncovered 28 additional images, including photographs of naked children and girls in swimsuits, many of whom were photographed around the pool area of the Tenerife hotel where Barnbrook had stayed. None of the children or their parents were aware they had been targeted by a convicted child sex offender.

Prosecutor Shaun Dryden told Teesside Crown Court that while there was no physical interaction, Barnbrook had admitted to a probation officer that he had performed sex acts over the photos.

Barnbrook previously served a three-year prison sentence for child sex offences. He pleaded guilty to three charges: breaching the sex offenders register notification requirement, breaching the SHPO, and failing to attend a magistrates’ court hearing earlier this year.

In mitigation, defence counsel Nigel Soppitt said Barnbrook had lived an isolated life since his release from prison, and claimed he had generally complied with the SHPO for eight years. “His best friend is his Xbox,” Soppitt told the court, describing the pensioner’s life as socially withdrawn. He added that Barnbrook had shown cooperation with probation services and maintained consistent contact with his supervising officer.

Soppitt also claimed that the defendant did not approach or interact with the children and only took photos from a distance. Nonetheless, the court rejected the appeal for leniency. Sentencing Barnbrook to 22 months in prison, Judge Richard Bennett condemned his conduct as a calculated breach of public protection laws.

“Had those parents known a convicted sex offender was sitting near them, taking pictures of their children, the sense of violation and fear would have been overwhelming,” the judge

said. “The law requiring him to report travel exists to protect the public, and he willfully ignored it.”

Barnbrook will serve approximately 40 percent of his sentence in custody before being released on licence.