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Fourth Suspect to Face Trial Over Kirkby Shooting of Rikki Berry

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— Categories: Crime



A fourth man is set to face trial next year in connection with the murder of 36-year-old Rikki Berry, who was fatally shot outside his girlfriend's home in Kirkby last summer. Known to friends and family as "Nuggy," Berry was killed in a targeted shooting on Quarryside Drive on July 17, 2023.

Ryan Walsh-Westhead, 24, from Burscough Street in Ormskirk, appeared at Liverpool Crown Court on Tuesday via video link from Her Majesty's Prison (HMP) Altcourse. Dressed in a grey t-shirt and with short brown hair, he spoke only to confirm his name and date of birth

during a brief administrative hearing. No plea was entered, and he was remanded into custody.

He faces one count of murder and another of possessing a firearm with intent to endanger life. A trial has been scheduled for January 27, 2026, and is expected to last for two weeks. The Honourable Recorder of Liverpool, Judge Andrew Menary KC (King's Counsel), presided over the hearing and addressed the seriousness of the charges.

Three men: Michael Smith, Adam Williams, and Connor Walsh, were previously convicted of his murder at Liverpool Crown Court and also found guilty of possessing a firearm with intent to endanger life. They received life sentences totalling a minimum of 92 years. The fourth suspect, Walsh-Westhead, has been charged with the same offences and will stand trial in 2026.

“In this matter, the defendant, Mr Walsh-Westhead, has been charged with the offence of murder. He appears today having been sent to this court in respect of that charge,” Judge Menary said. “No formal application for bail is made today. The allegation is that this defendant was involved in the shooting of a man called Rikki Berry. Three other defendants who have been tried for this matter have been convicted. The defendant plainly therefore faces a serious allegation.”

He added, “Mr Walsh-Westhead, that concludes this hearing today. The next hearing, so far as you are concerned, is on the 6th of October, which is the date that you will be asked to enter your plea. You are free to go with the officer.”

The court has already heard that Berry was shot three times by a balaclava-wearing attacker on an electric bike. The prosecution argued that Smith was the gunman, while Williams drove a car in convoy with the bike. Walsh, who was riding in the back seat, was connected to the crime scene through DNA found on a bullet casing.

Smith and Williams were each sentenced to life with a minimum term of 31 years, while Walsh received a life term with a minimum term of 30 years.

Gunshot residue was later discovered inside a Mercedes allegedly used by the suspects, strengthening the case against the group. Detectives continue to investigate the wider circumstances surrounding the shooting.

A 45-year-old woman from Kirkby was also arrested last week on suspicion of assisting an offender. She has since been released under investigation.

Detective Inspector Graeme Osborne of Merseyside Police said, “Merseyside Police is relentless in our pursuit of anyone involved in gun crime and serious organised crime. Offenders should be assured that we will leave no stone unturned in our efforts to take their weapons off them and that time is no barrier in our efforts to bring people to justice.”