



# Brothers on trial for murder of Anthony Littler 42 years ago

By Danny Shaw

**Two brothers have gone on trial charged with the murder of Anthony Littler, who was violently attacked as he walked home from East Finchley tube station in May 1984.**

Michael Stewart, 57, and Anthony Stewart, 60, were among a group who “ambushed” the 45-year-old civil servant in an alleyway leading from the station to East End Road as he returned shortly after midnight from a pub in south London, the Old Bailey heard.



Victim: Anthony Littler

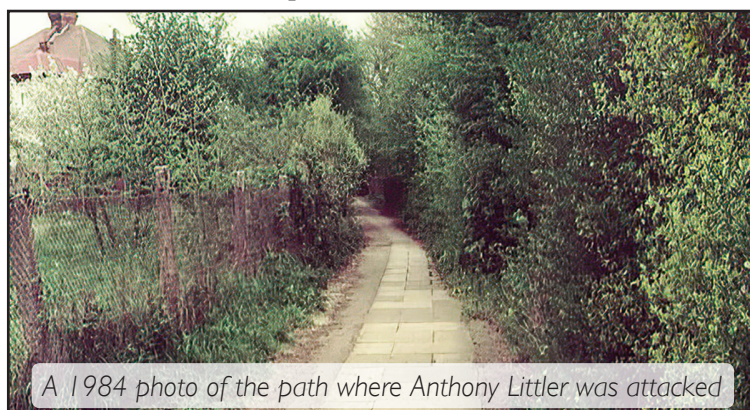
Opening the prosecution case on 20th April, John Price KC said the attack on Mr Littler, who lived in a flat on Leslie Road, N2, was not the only time that the brothers, aged 15 and 18 at the time, had used violence on men in public. “For quite a while this had been a habit or hobby of theirs. It was something they enjoyed doing. They had begun by targeting men whom they thought might be homosexual,” he said. The jury was told that Mr Littler was struck with an iron bar, baseball bat or length of wood, sustaining two skull fractures and a “catastrophic”

brain injury. He was found in a pool of blood about 100 yards from the exit of the footpath on East End Road. He had credit cards and £80 in cash still on him and his black briefcase was next to his body.

Moments after the attack, Michael Stewart made a 999 call from a public phone box “in panic” when the assailants realised the severity of Mr Littler’s injuries, said Mr Price. “They fled the scene, without pausing to grab his briefcase or to go through his pockets,” he said.

According to the prosecution, the Stewarts confessed their involvement in the crime to their younger brother Daniel, who was ten at the time and lived with Michael and the boys’ mother in Prospect Ring, N2. It’s also alleged that Michael Stewart “bragged” about the attack to a former girlfriend. In 2022, police re-opened the murder inquiry for the fourth time, deploying covert investigative techniques. The brothers’ cars were bugged and Michael Stewart was “befriended” by two female undercover officers who secretly filmed and recorded their conversations.

Michael and Anthony Stewart, who are both in custody, have pleaded not guilty. The trial is expected to last until mid-June.



A 1984 photo of the path where Anthony Littler was attacked



Under threat: The trees at the front of the Park Road site. Photo Mike Coles

## Developer reveals plans for homes site... and trees will be removed

By Lynn Winton

**The developer buying the Park House site opposite East Finchley tube station (The Archer, April 2026) intends to submit a planning application for 70 or more private homes once the purchase of the site from Barnet Council is complete.**

Oliver Kuropatwa, whose property company London Placemaking is buying the site, revealed the scale of his plans at a meeting with East Finchley residents.

In addition, both he and Barnet Council have confirmed that there will be a replacement nursery on the site as part of the agreement. Monkey Puzzle Nursery currently uses Park House but is moving to another location further up the High Road to avoid any disruption from building work.

However, he also disclosed that in order to achieve this, the five established trees that line the front of the site will be destroyed. This came as a shock to the attending residents, many of whom had successfully helped to put these trees under Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). It is not illegal to propose removing a TPO tree, but it would require consent from Barnet Council, who would be obliged to consider the amenity value, health and condition as well as public benefit versus harm. There is a strong presumption in favour of retention, especially for prominent groups of healthy trees that contribute to character and street frontage, such as these.

Roger Chapman, Chair of the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood, has written to Mr Kuropatwa to point out that, given the

sensitivity of this site and the strength of local feeling, it is important that any emerging proposals are clearly grounded in planning policy.

He told The Archer: “We’re not against development at Park House, but selling the site doesn’t remove the Council’s responsibility to get the scheme right.

“These protected birch trees and one protected yew tree are

a valued part of the site and townscape, and there’s no clear evidence their loss is unavoidable. What’s needed is a better, policy-compliant design that works with them, not against them.

“If the developer continues to bring forward plans that do not follow the policies of the local plan we shall vigorously oppose them.

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