NO charges were brought in more than half of the rape cases reported in Peterborough last year because of a lack of evidence.

Figures obtained by the Evening Telegraph show that out of the 65 reported cases of rape in the Greater Peterborough area during 2011, 33 of them were “filed” by police due to insufficient evidence.

Just six out of the 65 cases resulted in charges being brought; while eight reported cases were dropped after investigations revealed that no offences had taken place.

Peterborough MP Stewart Jackson said the figures are concerning and could make rape victims wary of reporting the crime.
But Detective Inspector Karryann Beeby, of the serious crime unit, said that every case is different and victims should come forward.

She also revealed that when a case comes to court, Cambridgeshire police have a conviction rate of 85 per cent in rape cases, higher than the national average which is around 60 per cent.

She said the majority of cases are non-violent cases where the victim and attacker know each other and one or both have been drinking.

She said: “The majority of rapes happen in people’s homes and the majority happen with people they know through an existing relationship or a former one. It’s very rare to have a stranger rape.

“DNA evidence doesn’t really help in finding out whether a person did or did not consent, so it is very difficult as you are literally relying on one person’s version of events against another’s.

“Although 33 reports were filed for insufficient evidence, we do put these cases to the Crown Prosecution Service and it is up to them to decide whether we can pursue it through the courts.”

Mr Jackson said: “I think Cambridgeshire Constabulary has done a very good job recently on improving its service to victims of that particularly despicable crime but women in particular might be very reluctant to come forward if they do not think there’s going to be a chance of a conviction.”

Police said of the eight cases of “false” allegations, most were dealt with by offering support to the claimant who often has underlying mental or domestic issues.

However, in one case, a woman from the Ortons claimed she had been raped by an ex-partner in January 2011.

She later admitted it had not taken place and she was cautioned for perverting the course of justice.

But those found guilty at court face stern sentences, with rape carrying a maximum life imprisonment sentence.

DI Beeby said Peterborough is home to a number of support services for rape victims, such as the Oasis Centre in Rivergate home to the Sexual Assault Referral Centre and the Rape Crisis Care Group.

The Oasis Centre helpline can be reached on 0845 089 6262.

THERE were 65 reported cases of rape in the Northern Division of Cambridgeshire in 2011, of those:

- Two were filed as the alleged victim declined to prosecute.

- 12 cases are still classed as “ongoing” and as such are still being investigated.

- 33 cases were filed due to insufficient evidence.

- Six cases resulted in charges being brought against suspected rapists, while one resulted in a summons being issued.

- Eight cases were dropped after investigations found that no offence had occurred.
- There was one case in which rape was mistakenly listed as the crime on the police’s systems.

- One case was referred to as a “duplicate”, that is, the same crime was listed twice.

https://www.peterboroughtoday.co.uk/news/crime/peterborough-rape-case-prosecution-figures-are-revealed-1-3487146