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FATHER'S SEX CHANGE PLEA

A FATHER told a court he could not be charged with importuning for an immoral purpose in Bedford Hill, Balham, as he was really a woman.

A sex-change operation performed on 49-year-old Michael Kent of Glenwood Road, Catford, was put forward as his defence. But he was found guilty and given a year's conditional discharge at Croydon Crown Court.

Judge John Clay told the jury, "When you came to court you envisaged you would be trying a case of greater importance than this.

"You may think it most regrettable that this case is before you, but you cannot choose your cases, and I regret that neither can I.

"You may feel considerable sympathy with a man who is born a man and has fathered two children and was originally called Michael, but who has a strong desire to be a female and to be called Michelle."

The judge added that the law was that a person born a man and remains biologically a man, is a man for the purposes of the offence under the Sexual Offences Act.

A person should not be held to be not a man because he had become philosophically, psychologically or socially a female.

The court was told that Kent was arrested in Bedford Hill after being seen talking to the drivers of cars which pulled up at the kerb.

He was wearing women's clothes.

**'I may
sue
the
surgeon'**

At the police station he was given a medical examination and then charged with importuning for an immoral purpose.

In the witness box, Kent, wearing a wine-coloured woollen dress, denied he had been talking to drivers for an immoral purpose. He spoke to one motorist to ask directions, and he spoke to the other to ask for a handbag she had left in the car.

Kent said he had a wife and two children, of which he was the father.

The sex-change operation had not been successful, as he could not have normal sex with a man.

"I am a woman who cannot have sex," he declared, and said he might sue the surgeon.

After the jury's verdict, Judge Clay refused to allow the prosecution their costs.