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Courts

Woman who reneged on suicide pact jailed

A woman has been jailed for four years after entering into a suicide pact with a man, before backing out and leaving him to die alone.

Natasha Gordon, a 44-year-old former pole-dancer, had denied encouraging the 31-year-old postman, Matthew Birkinshaw, to take his own life but was convicted last month. She showed no emotion

In brief

in the dock as the sentence was imposed yesterday.

During her trial, Leicester crown court heard that Gordon, described as an 'enthusiastic advocate' of suicide, did not alert police officers to the danger. Birkinshaw was in after leaving him alone and, within hours, was attempting to arrange similar pacts with other people.

The victim's mother, Margaret Birkinshaw, described her son in court as: "A man with the misfortune to meet someone who wanted to do him harm when he

most needed kindness and support."

Gordon backed out of the agreement with Matthew Birkinshaw by getting out of his car before he took his own life on 17 December 2015. Birkinshaw was found in the Flat Pumro by the Rutland Water reservoir.

Passing sentence, the judge Mrs Justice Cheema-Grubb told Gordon: "[Birkinshaw] into believing you were genuine. You were gripped by your self-centredness."

Kevin Rawlinson