

Ann Widdecombe Murder — Case Summary

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Captured: 19 July 2026 (updated 17:08 BST)

The Victim

Ann Widdecombe, 78 — former Conservative MP, prisons minister, prominent Brexit campaigner, later Reform UK spokesperson. Found dead at her home in **Haytor, Devon** on Thursday **10 July 2026** with serious injuries. Described by counter-terrorism police as a "**targeted attack**".

Her last public appearance was a live **TalkTV** interview at **08:05** on the morning of Wednesday 8 July, talking about Nigel Farage and Reform UK.

The Suspect: Joshua Kerry

Identity

- **Full name:** **Joshua Kerry** (birth name: Joshua James Kerry)
- **Age:** 28 (reported) — Companies House records suggest **25** (born Nov 2000), creating an unresolved discrepancy
- **From:** **Rotherham, South Yorkshire** — a council house in the Kimberworth Park area
- **Former job:** Office worker at a **lift company** (elevator/escalator firm). Stopped working when his father died.
- **Appearance:** White British male. CCTV stills show a man in a white shirt and shorts. The Daily Mail published a photo of him smiling while holding a jar of Easter eggs (2024).

- **Companies House:** Director of **JJK TRADING LTD** (dissolved), SIC 64304 (investment activities), registered at 44 Stanley Road, Clacton-On-Sea — Farage's constituency.

Family

Father — Paul Yates

- Described as a "**highly intelligent**" former research engineer in the **steel industry**
- Lost a leg and was later diagnosed with **stomach cancer** in his sixties
- Died **shortly before Christmas 2025**
- His surname was **Yates**, not Kerry — suggesting Joshua uses his mother's maiden name, or the parents were not married
- The family is **well-known in the Kimberworth Park area** of Rotherham; several family members have served in the military

Two brothers

- Both moved out of the family home before the father's death
- Joshua remained living alone after they left
- Names and whereabouts not publicly reported

Unnamed female relative

- Posted on Instagram on **8 July** — the same day Widdecombe was killed
- Questioned whether it was safe for **Nigel Farage** to hold in-person surgeries in Clacton
- Previously called **Donald Trump a "psychopath"** and appeared to welcome violence against him ("he would be able to comprehend a bullet")
- **Not believed to be close to the suspect**
- **No suggestion** she knew of Widdecombe's death at the time
- Media are not naming her

Personality & Neighbour accounts

- Described as a "**loner**", "**quiet and shy**", "**polite**"
- Became **reclusive after his father died** — rarely left the house
- One neighbour said his rusty car had **moss growing on it** from disuse
- Would **wheel out neighbours' bins** and **accept parcel deliveries** for them
- A neighbour said: "*He was someone you'd have a conversation with but that changed after his dad died. He became very quiet. He kept himself to himself.*"

Timeline of 8 July

Time	Event
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07:51	CCTV in Rotherham shows Kerry getting into a red hatchback . A neighbour reported seeing what looked like a " wooden stick or iron bar, about a foot long " protruding from under his T-shirt as he got in
08:05	Widdecombe appears live on TalkTV from her Devon home
~mid-morning	Kerry drives ~280 miles / 450km from Rotherham to Haytor, Dartmoor
12:19	Widdecombe's last message — to a Channel 5 researcher
12:30	Police believe she was attacked in her bungalow (per Express)
12:48	Widdecombe fails to respond to a follow-up text from the producer
Evening	Kerry presumably drives back to Rotherham
Next day (9 Jul), 11:40	Body discovered — almost 24 hours after the attack

Arrest

- **Saturday 11 July, ~9pm** — Armed police swooped on his Rotherham home. Neighbours said officers ran up, hammered on the door. **Kerry answered, confirmed his name, and was taken without resistance** — they didn't need to force the door.
- Initially arrested on **murder suspicion**
- Later **re-arrested by Counter Terrorism Policing** on suspicion of a **terrorism-related offence**
- Police say they're "**not looking for anyone else**"

Legal restrictions on naming

The BBC and Guardian have not named Kerry — suggesting reporting restrictions may apply at this stage. His name was published by the Daily Mail, Daily Express, and Human Events.

The Investigation

Counter-terrorism involvement

- **Initial police statement (10 July):** Devon and Cornwall Police said there was "**nothing to suggest**" the murder was politically motivated
- **Tuesday 14 July:** Counter Terrorism Policing South East **took over** the investigation, citing "**new information**"

- **Current:** Being investigated as a suspected **terrorist attack**, with police examining whether a **leftwing or single-issue cause** may lie behind it (per The Guardian)

Key evidence

- **CCTV** from Rotherham showing Kerry with what appears to be a weapon-sized object
- **Red hatchback** used for the drive to Devon
- Extensive CCTV at Widdecombe's home (friends confirmed it was installed)
- Suspect held for over a week without charge — questions being raised about sufficiency of evidence

Farage: Kerry was a "hard-left activist"

Nigel Farage has claimed the suspect is a "**hard-left activist**" who expressed hatred of him "many times". Farage stated: *"I have it on good authority that the murder suspect was a hard-left activist. He attended various marches and hated anyone with an opposing view."* (The Sun, 18 Jul)

This was echoed by the **Outspoken podcast** (Darren Donaldson), which claimed Kerry was "believed to be plotting to kill other right wing figures".

Kerry's relative questioned Farage's safety

On **8 July** — the same day Widdecombe was killed — a **female relative of Kerry** (unnamed in reports) posted on Instagram questioning whether it was safe for **Nigel Farage** to hold in-person surgeries in Clacton ahead of the by-election. According to the Metro (19 Jul):

- She agreed with another user that Farage should hold surgeries, but questioned his safety doing so
- She had previously posted calling Donald Trump a "**psychopath**" and questioning his intelligence
- In one post, she appeared to welcome violence against Trump, saying he "would be able to comprehend a bullet"
- There is **no suggestion** she knew of Widdecombe's death at the time, and it is **not believed** she was close to the suspect

Suspect's company linked to Farage's constituency

An X user (@Overlordmainst1) noted that the **address registered for Joshua Kerry's company** is located in **Nigel Farage's own Clacton constituency** — described as "a coincidence you just couldn't make up".

Related Developments

Separate arrest — "glorification"

A **University of Aberdeen employee and former Labour candidate** was arrested by Police Scotland for allegedly **glorifying Widdecombe's murder** online — described by some accounts as a "trans activist" celebrating the death.

Norfolk "far-right terror plot" — diversion allegations

On the same weekend, **12 men were arrested** on suspicion of planning a far-right attack on an Islamic festival in Norfolk. All 12 were **released without charge** days later. Figures including **Richard Tice** and multiple X accounts have accused the government of using this as a "**deliberate diversion tactic**" away from the Widdecombe murder investigation.

MPs advised to create "safe rooms"

Just three months before the murder, MPs and high-profile public figures were reportedly advised to **create secure areas inside their homes** — guidance that has drawn scrutiny in light of Widdecombe's death.

Man arrested over threat to Farage

A **man in his 20s** was arrested by the Metropolitan Police after allegedly posting a threat on X to **shoot Nigel Farage**. Arrested in south London on suspicion of sending threatening communications. (15 Jul)

Reform UK calls for round-the-clock MP security

Zia Yusuf, Reform UK's home affairs policy chief, called for all British lawmakers to be provided with **full, round-the-clock security** if they desire it, following Widdecombe's murder. Farage has said he will need security "**for the rest of his life**" following a series of alleged breaches.

Counter-terror chief: attack was "brutal"

Assistant Commissioner Laurence Taylor (CTP South East) described the alleged attack as "**brutal**", but stopped short of declaring it a terrorist incident, saying: "*I don't want to rule anything out.*"

"Hard-Left Activist" Claim — What's the Evidence?

The claim that Kerry is a "hard-left activist" has been widely circulated but the publicly available evidence is thin. Here's a breakdown:

The source

The claim originates almost entirely from a **Nigel Farage opinion column in The Sun** (18 Jul 2026). Farage wrote:

“I have it on good authority that the murder suspect was a hard-Left activist. He attended various marches and hated anyone with an opposing view. He had expressed his hatred of me on more than one occasion. He was an intolerant individual obsessed with Soviet communism. He may also have been known to the authorities.”

What's actually verified vs. claimed

Claim	Evidence status
Kerry was a "hard-left activist"	Farage's word only. No named sources, photos, social media posts, or documentary evidence produced. Counter-terror police have not confirmed any political motive
He "attended various marches"	No specific marches named or proven. No photographic evidence released
He "expressed hatred of Farage"	Farage claims this. His relative also questioned Farage's safety on Instagram on the day of the murder — but this is circumstantial
"Obsessed with Soviet communism"	No evidence publicly available
"May have been known to authorities"	Vague — could mean anything from a previous police contact to general surveillance

Police position

Assistant Commissioner Laurence Taylor (head of Counter Terrorism Policing) has stated the attack was "targeted" and "brutal" but has **not** specified a left-wing motive. The Guardian reported

police are examining "whether a leftwing or single-issue cause may lie behind it" — presented as one line of inquiry among several, not a conclusion.

Social media amplification

Tommy Robinson (@TRobinsonNewEra) posted: "*Couldn't look more far left if he tried. No wonder 'hope not hate' are deleting articles*" — reaching a large audience but offering no additional evidence.

Summary

At this stage, the "hard-left activist" narrative is **Farage's assertion amplified by right-wing X accounts**, without independently verified public evidence. The police investigation is ongoing and have not confirmed any political motive. It remains one theory among several being examined.

Companies House: Joshua James Kerry

Pulled from the public register (Companies House):

Detail	Value
Full name	Joshua James KERRY
Company	JJK TRADING LTD (company no. 15312256)
Status	Dissolved (struck off 29 April 2025)
Incorporated	27 November 2023
Registered address	44 Stanley Road, Clacton-On-Sea, CO15 2BS
SIC code	64304 — Activities of open-ended investment companies
Role	Director
Date of birth	November 2000

Note on age discrepancy: Companies House records show a birth date of November 2000, making him **25** at the time of the murder. All news reports say **28**. This could mean the arrested person is a different Joshua Kerry, or the reported age is wrong. The Clacton address (Farage's constituency) matches reports that the suspect has a connection to the area.

Sources

- BBC News — "Ann Widdecombe murder probe: What we know so far"
 - The Guardian — "Ann Widdecombe killing: police investigating possible leftwing motivation"
 - Metro — "Loner Ann Widdecombe suspect left home with foot long pole"
 - Metro — "Ann Widdecombe murder suspect's relative questioned Farage's safety" (19 Jul)
 - Daily Mail — "The 'quiet and shy' 28-year-old held over the murder of Ann Widdecombe"
 - Daily Express — "Ann Widdecombe murder suspect named and pictured"
 - The Sun — "Intolerant Ann Widdecombe suspect was hard-Left activist who hated Nigel Farage"
 - Document News — "Ann Widdecombe's suspected killer identified" (father Paul Yates, family background)
 - Human Events — "Suspect revealed to be Joshua Kerry of Rotherham"
 - Nitter / X — various accounts (Jack Posobiec, Alex Barnicoat, ScottieMcNut, PolitlcsUK, benonwine, Overlordmainst1, TRobinsonNewEra, Unionbuster, DarrenDonaldson)
 - Document News — Background on Kerry's work and family
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