

Police halt inquiry with a plea to women

Rape 'victim' made it up

By WENDY SARGEANT

THE woman who claimed she was raped on York Bridge last week made it all up, police at Morecambe have confirmed.

Police closed the inquiry on Monday when it was confirmed that the offence did not take place. It is understood that the 'victim' had recently been under some considerable pressure for a variety of reasons and she will be referred for medical help and counselling.

Det Ch Insp Neil Smith, heading the inquiry, told *The Visitor*: "All reported offences of this nature are treated seriously and sympathetically. It is fair to say that on occasion false reports of such offences are made.

"These invariably lead to an extensive deployment of police resources at not inconsiderable cost.

"Intensive investigations such as these invariably elicit the truth."

The police have urged any other women who suffer sexual assaults or rape not to be deterred by this incident.

Assistance

Det Ch Insp Smith added: "Any genuine victim of rape should not hesitate to contact the police at the earliest opportunity and victims can be assured that they will receive all the help and support available.

"We would like to thank both the media and the public for their assistance in connection with this investigation."

The incident prompted intense media coverage and numerous members of the public contacted police with reports of sightings of the 'rapist'.

It is not clear yet whether the woman will face prosecution.

Det Ch Insp Smith said: "In all cases like this the Crown Prosecution Service are consulted and consideration is given to prosecution for wasting police time. "Prosecution does not follow in all cases, it depends on individual circumstances."