My initial strategy was to interview Peter West to gain his initial account and to develop that account through questioning. This would possibly take two tapes, bearing in mind the seriousness of the allegation, by which time it would be in everybody’s interests to conclude and allow Peter his continuous rest and then start afresh in the morning.

Obviously this would be the initial plan, but it all depended on what Peter had to say. If he went no comment then I would have worked through my objectives, giving plenty of opportunity for him to comment, doing right by Section 34 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, and it could be that the interview was fully completed in the evening.

As Peter was commenting, my intention was to work through his account in an open manner, allowing him to elaborate, to obtain his full first account. This would probably have taken two tapes after which we would have concluded the interview to allow Peter to have continuous rest then start again in the morning.

During the interviews in the morning I would have began to work through my interview objectives as outlined at the beginning of the interview.

1. Relationship with Sandra and Brenda;
2. Sandra’s bedroom and his use of it;
3. His comments on arrest;
4. Injuries to Sandra and himself;
5. His movements between 9pm and Brenda Bailey returning home.

Some of these objectives would have been covered in Peter’s first account, mainly 3, 4 and 5. Objectives 1 and 2 would have been partly covered but not in too much detail, so I would have started with these objectives to include more detail, such as contact with Sandra and use of mobile phones. More detail about his relationship with Brenda (general and sexual), bearing in mind the condom find and her hysterectomy.

Having covered these objectives, I would then have come back to certain topic areas to cover them in fine grain detail. I would have done this on the basis of those topic areas that were inconsistent with the evidence and information we had, and which were inconsistent within themselves such as, Peter mentioned not seeing any glasses (to the best of my belief) then says that there was a glass at her bedside.

Having obtained the forensic results, at a subsequent interview, I would have gone into more detail about the injuries to both of them and also concentrated on his clothing, bearing in mind the scientific evidence on his shirt, Sandra’s
blood and his hair being found at the scene. Inevitably because of the detail required at this stage of the interview, my questioning may well have become more direct because I would be requiring specific detail.

All this would be leading up to my challenges, if appropriate, where I would put to him, in a structured manner the inconsistencies in his account and the evidence. By this stage due to the leg-work done during the earlier interviews, Peter should have no escape from the challenges because his account would have been fully tied down so, inevitably, question marks would be raised if he changed his account. Also during the challenges, the evidence of bad character would be put to him. Clearly he is denying this offence so his previous convictions become highly relevant.