

Kirsty Bentley

Detective Inspector Greg Williams of the Canterbury Criminal Intelligence Service says the investigation into the 1998 murder of Ashburton teenager Kirsty Bentley is still open. "As I have always said, we are fully committed to solving Kirsty's murder." In a statement released the day after the final programme in the television documentary series *The Investigator* was screened, Mr Williams said police were approached a year ago by documentary maker Bryan Bruce, who wanted to include the Kirsty Bentley murder investigation in his series about "cold" cases.

"We declined to be involved in the programme. We have also declined to be involved in other TV programmes such as *Sensing Murder*. The overriding decision for us must always be that there is some investigative value for the case," he said. "I have been consistent in my approach regarding this matter for some time and this is based on legal advice." He said there had been some suggestion that the investigation had tunnel vision. "This has never been the case. The investigation has looked at well over 300 persons of interest, many of whom are yet to be eliminated for a variety of reasons." The investigation was reviewed in March 1999, followed by a further review in September 2001 that involved experts, investigative practitioners and Crown solicitors. A further independent review carried out last year in June was almost completed, he said. Fifteen-year-old Kirsty went missing nearly nine years ago while walking her dog beside the Ashburton River. Her body was found in the Rakaia Gorge two weeks later. Her killer has never been found.