

Press Release

17 May 2018

## Statement on Mark van Dongen case outcome

Following the conviction of Berlinah Wallace in Bristol today for guilty of throwing a corrosive substance with intent (she was cleared of murder and manslaughter) over her ex-boyfriend Mark van Dongen who eventually ended his life by euthanasia in a Belgian hospital, **Mark Brooks, Chairman of the ManKind Initiative, a national charity supporting male victims of domestic abuse, said:**

"Whatever the type of crime the conviction was eventually based on, it does not take away the fact that Mark is no longer with us and was a victim of a vicious calculated domestic abuse crime that eventually led to him ending his life. It was made worse by the fact that his ex-partner who carried out this attack denied she was responsible.

"I would urge any man who is in a similar abusive and toxic relationship to call the police, call helplines and speak to those closest to you. There are people who will believe you and help you escape."

Berlinah Wallace, 48, hurled the corrosive fluid at Dutch engineer Mark van Dongen in Bristol in 2015. Fifteen months later he ended his life by euthanasia in a Belgian hospital. He was paralysed from the neck down and had lost a leg, ear and eye.

Since the age of 16, an estimated 1.6 million men in this country have been victims of partner abuse in the country. In 2016/17, 13 men died at the hands of their partner or ex-partner.

Men or their friends/families can call 01823 334244 or [www.mankind.org.uk](http://www.mankind.org.uk)

**ENDS**

## **Notes to Editors**

For the latest statistics about male victims of domestic abuse, please follow this link:

<http://www.mankind.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/35-Key-Facts-Male-Victims-March-2018-1.pdf>

## **About the ManKind Initiative**

The ManKind Initiative ([www.mankind.org.uk](http://www.mankind.org.uk)), is a national charity which runs a help-line, information and referral service for male victims of domestic abuse and domestic violence. The help-line number is 01823 334244 (weekdays 10am-4pm). It received 1,800 calls from male victims (or from people on behalf of victims – often mothers and sisters) every year.

## **Media**

Journalists requiring further information please Mark Brooks on 07834 452357  
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