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**Male Victims of Domestic Abuse and Partner Abuse:  
Briefing on Gender and Sexuality of Perpetrators  
*The Gender of their Perpetrators is Overwhelmingly Female***

## **Background**

Over the past number of months, a range of falsehoods have started to circulate around the domestic abuse sector that the majority of the perpetrators who commit domestic abuse and partner abuse against men are also actually men.

Even to the point where a senior MP was told this by senior people within the domestic abuse sector at a reception in May. It has also featured in a number of documents, a Parliamentary Debate (the first reading of the Domestic Abuse Bill) and has been brought up in a number of meetings.

It is an untruth – a deliberate falsehood to designed to minimise the experiences of heterosexual male victims, and also having the unintended consequence of portraying male same-sex relationships as being highly abusive.

The word 'deliberate' is used because if the claim was mistakenly used, it would be accepted and acknowledged as a mistake (and will be a genuine mistake by many who are unwittingly passing the information on because of supposed key sector figures who are passing the figures on as fact).

In terms of evidence, there is no statistical evidence to prove that the majority of perpetrators are male. Following are the statistics of who commits domestic abuse and partner abuse against men.

### **(1) Core UK Statistics:**

The latest officially verifiable statistics, including from the Office for National Statistics and the Scottish Justice system, on the sexuality of the victims and perpetrators are set out below. They show that c10-12% of male victims of partner abuse are in same-sex relationships - clearly not the majority.

### **(i) Scottish Justice Survey**

This is the main report in the UK where both the sexuality of the victims and perpetrators can be found in one dataset with a direct link. Given the sample size, there is no reason not to believe these figures read across to the rest of the UK.

The 2017/18 Scottish Justice Survey asks Scottish victims of partner abuse for the gender of their perpetrator (these are anonymised surveys). The figures (they do not add up to 100% as some do not reply) are below and the female figures are included for completeness:

	<b>Male Victim</b>	<b>Female Victim</b>
<b>Male Perpetrator</b>	9%	97%
<b>Female Perpetrator</b>	88%	1%

In effect, the figures show that less than 10% of male victims of partner abuse in Scotland are victims at the hands of a male perpetrator.

The source is Scottish Crime and Justice Survey 2017/18: Partner Abuse (Figure 9.11, page 131) <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-crime-justice-survey-2017-18-main-findings/>

### **(ii) Domestic Abuse recorded by Police Scotland**

These figures are based on the gender of the victim and the accused regarding those contacting Police Scotland. These are based on the percentage of the total domestic abuse victim population. In 2017/18, the figures were:

	<b>Male Victim</b>	<b>Female Victim</b>
<b>Male Accused</b>	2%	81%
<b>Female Accused</b>	16%	1%

In effect, 18% of victims contacting Police Scotland were male - of which one in nine had both a male victim and a male accused.

The source is Domestic abuse in Scotland: 2017 - 2018 (page 3): <https://www.gov.scot/publications/domestic-abuse-recorded-police-scotland-2017-18/>

### **(iii) Office for National Statistics: Sex of perpetrator of partner abuse, by sex of victim, year ending March 2015 Crime Survey of England and Wales**

The following table found that only 7% of male victims of abuse identified a male partner as the perpetrator of their abuse, and of those who provided an answer, 83% (45/54) reported a lone female perpetrator as against 13% (7/54) a lone male perpetrator. This showed that the majority of male victims of partner abuse had female perpetrators. This survey is anonymised so is not based on actual reports:

**Sex of perpetrator of partner abuse, by sex of victim, year ending March 2015 CSEW**

England and Wales	Adults aged 16-59		
	Male	Female	All
	Percentage		
Male	7	59	43
Female	45	2	15
Both male and female	2	1	1
Don't know/can't remember	15	6	9
Don't wish to answer	32	32	32
Unweighted base - number of adults	283	834	1117

Source:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/adhocs/005898sexofperpetratorofpartne rabusebysexofvictimyearendingmarch2015csew>

**(iv) Office for National Statistics: Sexuality of Victims**

There is further information regarding the sexuality of victims of partner abuse in the annual crime survey for England and Wales. There is no specific direct link to the gender of the perpetrator or the accused. However, some fair assumptions of a linkage can be made.

The latest figures show that 2.2% of male victims who are heterosexual stated they were victims of partner abuse in 2017/18, whilst 5.1% of men who were gay were (the figures followed a similar pattern to female victims).

Far fewer men (2.7%) in the UK declare themselves as being gay or bisexual as opposed to 93% declaring themselves as heterosexual. In volume terms, it means that whilst men are more likely to be in an abusive relationship if they are gay than heterosexual, due to the overwhelming volume of men who declared as heterosexual, the actual volume of gay male victims is far less – less than 10% of the volume of male victims.

Percentage of the population	Partner abuse (non-sexual)	
	Men	Women
<b>Sexual orientation<sup>5,6</sup></b>		
Heterosexual or straight	2.2	5.1
Gay or lesbian	5.1	8.4
Bisexual	5.6	14.1

The sources are:

Domestic abuse: findings from the Crime Survey for England and Wales, year ending March 2018 - Appendix Table 8:  
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/domesticabusefindingsfromthecrimesurveyforenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2018/relateddata>

Office for National Statistics: |Sexual Identity (2012-2017):  
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/sexuality/datasets/sexualidentityuk>

## (2) Abusive same-sex relationships

The Office for National Statistics (Crime Survey for England and Wales) state that in 2017/18, there were:

- 695,000 male victims of domestic abuse (1.31m women)
- 404,000 male victims of partner abuse (936,000 women) - a subset of domestic abuse

For the majority of male victims to be a victim of domestic abuse and partner abuse at the hands of other men would mean that there are at least 347,000 men were committing domestic abuse against other men (intimate partner abuse or adult family abuse). There is no evidence to prove this and the figures in other ONS statistics show that cannot be the case given the data on who what to whom.

If we looked at partner abuse, that claim therefore would be that there are over 200,000 men committing partner abuse against their current or former partner.

The Office for National Statistics state the following:

- 1.7% of men define themselves as being gay and 0.6% as bisexual - 2.3% in total
- 93.2% of men define themselves as heterosexual or straight

The same figures show male statistics:

- 23,995,000 heterosexual or straight men
- 444,000 gay men
- 149,000 bisexual men

Therefore, given there are 643,000 gay or bisexual men and there are 404,000 male victims of partner abuse, for the majority of male partner abuse victims to be carried out by men on other men (202,000) would mean a significant number of gay/bisexual men are in abusive relationships (many of course will not be in any relationship at all!). This is based on the 643,000 gay or bisexual men not being abusive to each other for those in relationships.

There is the continual issue that the public and practitioners view domestic abuse as intimate partner violence (partner abuse).

Source: ONS statistics on domestic abuse:

ONS domestic abuse: findings from the Crime Survey for England and Wales: year ending March 2018 <https://bit.ly/2FY8UYc> Table 1)

Source: ONS statistics on sexual orientation

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/sexuality/bulletins/sexualidentityuk/2017>

### (3) Homicides

The detailed homicide statistics for the period April '12 to Mar 15 for male victims of homicide were produced by the ONS for a bespoke piece of research on homicide.

Table 1: Offences currently recorded as homicide for male victims, over 16 years old, by sexuality of victim and by relationship of victim to principal suspect, April 2012 to March 2015<sup>1</sup>

#### England and Wales

Relationship to suspect	Number of victims
Boyfriend, girlfriend	10
Common-law spouse or cohabiting partner	14
Ex-boyfriend, girlfriend	2
Spouse (incl. civil partner)	7
Adulterous relationship	16 *
Homosexual	5 *
Not Known	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>

\* Men killed by men

Source: Homicide Index, Home Office

It means that over the three period of the 38 men definitely known to have been a victim of homicide by an (ex) intimate partner, 33 were killed by a woman and 5 by a man.

Source: ONS Offences currently recorded as homicide for male victims, over 16 years old, killed by a female suspect by relationship of victim to principal suspect, April 2012 to March 2015 (Homicide Index)