

Quotes from six women on Why the Government, MP's and the Statutory Authorities (police, councils, CAFCASS, GP's, the judiciary, social services and housing officers) need to take male victims seriously.

**(1) Olivia White, friend of Pete Davegun, who was murdered by his partner said:**

“As a society we do not recognise that men can be and are victims of domestic abuse. We never hear enough people talking about it in the media, in Parliament or in Government. There is just silence. It is as if men like Pete do not matter. No wonder so few come forward to get help or recognise the signs. MP's debating the domestic abuse bill need to wake up. It is vital that the new law and how it is put into practice treats and recognises all victims as equals.”

**(2) Ann Goodchild, a domestic abuse campaigner who was close to a male victim who lost his life due to domestic abuse, said**

“From my experience, far too many people, including some in official positions, turn a blind eye to male victims of domestic abuse. It is as if they do not believe they can be victims or perhaps they don't want to believe it. This has to change. The new domestic abuse law has to not just apply to men and their children, those in charge need to make sure it is actually applied to them. If they don't, then more male victims will suffer in silence or not be listened to and there is the continuing risk that more will lose their lives.”

**(3) Debra Livesley, whose former partner David Edwards was murdered by his wife, said**

“David hid the abuse he suffered because he was embarrassed. The signs were there for so many to see including the police and the health service but because he was a man it didn't register that he was a victim of domestic abuse. This cannot continue. We need the new law and any guidance to make sure they are no longer ignored, not recognised and not taken seriously. David was a wonderful man, he must not be forgotten”

**(4) Katie Brown, sister of Gary Cunningham who was killed by his partner, said**

“Gary was a wonderful brother who had his life taken because of domestic abuse. All the signs were there, but because he was a man it was overlooked. This cannot

continue and we all have a duty as family, friends and society to wake up to the fact that men are victims of domestic abuse. We need MP's to wake up too and this must start with the new domestic abuse law and its guidance. It will be a travesty if it makes it harder for them to be recognised – we cannot afford to let my brother's life be in vain.”

**(5) Sara Westle, mother of Eddie who was murdered by his partner, said:**

“I miss my son terribly. I feel robbed and stripped. When he was murdered it was the most awful that could have happened. We need everyone to wake up and recognise that men are victims of domestic abuse too. This includes the Government and MP's. The new law has to be applied to men as well as women, else what happened to my son will not have been taken take seriously.”

**(6) Barbara Lavelle, mother of Paul who was killed by his partner, said:**

“My wonderful son Paul didn't speak to us about what was happening. If he had then maybe we could have helped. Domestic violence happens both ways. It's not just men hurting women. But for men it's a difficult subject. They don't want to admit they are being abused by a woman. And in many cases they don't know where to go to for help. This is why this new law has to support men, has to fully recognise them and has to make sure that nothing is done to make it harder for them to get help.

29 June 2020