

Stand With Him

“The voices of women who have been personally affected by men who have been, and, many who still are, victims of domestic abuse”

<https://www.mankind.org.uk/stand-with-him/>

c/o ManKind Initiative, Flook House, Belvedere Road, Taunton, TA1 1BT

Registered Charity No. 1089547 – Company Registration No. 3869893

Chair: Mark Brooks OBE – chairman@mankind.org.uk (07834 452357)

19 February 2021

Interpersonal Abuse Unit
Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Team
Home Office
5th Floor, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London, SW1P 4DF

Dear Home Office

Submission: Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG): Call for Evidence

<p style="text-align: center;">“Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)” Request for Parallel Strategy (Ending Intimate Violence Against Men and Boys)</p>

We are a group of women who have been personally affected by the experience of an individual male victim of domestic abuse we know, whether that be as mothers, sisters, daughters, friends, colleagues or new partners of a man who has been in this situation. Many of whom are still in this situation. We are part of the Stand With Him campaign organised by The ManKind Initiative charity.

We are writing on behalf of the man we know and as well as all male victims to state that this is no longer acceptable, and is in fact, demeaning and re-traumatising for them to continue to be defined and classed as victims of crimes against “Women and Girls” by this Government. We are also supporting all male victims of domestic abuse in this regard.

We would therefore request that the Government:

- Agrees and starts the process of creating a parallel and complementary strategy to the “VAWG” strategy, entitled “Ending Intimate Violence Against Men and Boys”.

- Works with charities, academics and practitioners who specifically focus and have expertise in the field of these crimes* to create such a strategy.
- Ensures this strategy is started and is developed in parallel with the work undertaken to create the “VAWG” Strategy.

The reasons for the need for a complementary strategy and parallel strategy include:

- It is factually incorrect to class men and boys who are victims of these crimes as being women and girls;
- This decade is meant to reflect and respect diversity and different aspects of both individual and society but for male victims of these crimes the Government chooses to ignore this;
- The approach minimises and disrespects the lived experience of the men we know who suffer these crimes, contributing to their vulnerability;
- Reporting rates for male victims of these crimes continues to be far too low, which then has an impact on service provision and funding. It is our judgment that current policies act as a disincentive and barrier to reporting;
- Male victims of these crimes continue to be more invisible than they should be to society at large and classing them as victims of “VAWG” crimes contributes to this;
- The approach hampers the creation of nuanced and gender responsive services and understanding at a national, regional and local level;
- There continues to be chronic under provision of resources and funding through national, regional and local bodies, and,
- Our research shows we need a gender-inclusive and a gender-informed approach to these crime types and classing male victims in this way fails this approach.

We, of course, support women and girls who are victims of these crimes and support all efforts including those under a refreshed “VAWG” strategy.

Please ensure the voices of those who we love, care for and share friendships with are not silenced, marginalised or forgotten. We urge you to ensure this happens and that they are no longer incorrectly and demeaningly classed as being victims of “VAWG” crimes.

Thank you for your consideration and please do not hesitate to contact us through the ManKind Initiative charity as above.

Yours sincerely

1. AH, Carmarthenshire, brother (*he was a victim for 17 years, which ultimately resulted in him taking his own life*)
2. Alexandra, Birmingham, step sister (*my step brother was murdered*)
3. Alison, Edinburgh, friend (*he was a victim for over 30 years*)

4. Alison H, Surrey, mother (*my son was a victim, not been listened to or believed because he is a man*)
5. Ann G, Southampton, mother (*my son took his own life*)
6. Ann, Leeds, mother (*my son was emotionally and physical abused and alienated*)
7. Anna, Southampton, sister (*my brother took his own life*)
8. Barbara L, Wirral, mother (*my son was murdered by his partner*)
9. Belinda, East of England, partner (*my partner suffered domestic violence in his former marriage*).
10. Brenda, Hertfordshire, mother (*my son has been scarred for life because of his ex*)
11. Caroline M, Birmingham, ex-partner (*my ex-partner was murdered*)
12. Cath, Bolton, mother (*my son was subjected to violence*)
13. Christine, Northern Ireland, Partner (*my partner was abused by his ex*).
14. CM, Yorkshire, mother (*My son was subjected to domestic, mental and financial abuse leading to illness. He was not believed despite clear evidence*).
15. Diana, Edinburgh, mother (*my son has been a victim*)
16. Diana, Cheshire, ex-wife (*my ex-husband suffered domestic abuse that he hid from his daughters*)
17. Debbie L, Chorley, ex-partner (*my ex-partner was murdered by his wife*)
18. Eileen, York, mother (*my son suffered mental trauma even after the relationship ended*)
19. Elizabeth, Norwich (*I have friends and a colleague who were victims*)
20. Emily, Hampshire, daughter and partner (*both my father and partner have been victims of domestic abuse and controlling coercive behaviour from their previous partners*).
21. Fiona, Worcestershire, friend (*my friend's brother was murdered by his partner 2019*)
22. Hannah, London, sister (*my brother was a victim of domestic abuse and was never taken seriously- particularly by work*).
23. Hannah, London, daughter (*my father was a victim for 18 years*)
24. Hannah, Birmingham, friend (*my friend's brother was killed by his partner 2019*)
25. Jackie, Carmarthenshire, mother (*my son was a victim*)
26. Janet, Sussex, mother
27. JW, Cheshire, mother (*my son has full parental responsibility but his ex is still causing trouble for the family*)
28. Jo, South Wales, daughter (*my elderly father's new wife physically and financially abused him*)
29. J, North West, fiancée (*my partner suffered at the hands of his ex-wife*)
30. JLW, Cheshire, sister (*my brother suffered for five years*)
31. Kate, Herefordshire, partner (*my partner suffered coercion, control and physical violence from his ex*)
32. Kathy, North West, partner (*my partner instead of his ex-abuser he was never taken seriously*)
33. Katie B, Birmingham, brother (*he was killed by his partner*)
34. Jenny, Birmingham, friend (*my friend's brother was murdered by his partner 2019*)
35. Laraine, Birmingham, mother (*my daughter lost her ex partner to domestic abuse*)
36. Lisa, Shropshire, sister (*my brother is a victim of domestic abuse and parental alienation*)
37. LM, Northern Ireland, mother (*my son is an abusive relationship*)
38. Louise C, Birmingham, mother (*son was murdered by his partner 2019*) –
39. Margaret, Birmingham, ex-husband (*my ex-husband is abused by his partner*)
40. Maureen, Cornwall, stepmother (*family member was a victim*)
41. N R, East Anglia, daughter
42. Natalia, wife (*my husband was subjected to awful abuse by his previous partner*)
43. Olivia, London, friend (*my friend was murdered by his girlfriend*)
44. Rosie, Worcestershire, sister (*my brother was a victim and his ex-partner continues*)
45. Ruth, Birmingham, friend (*my friend's brother was murdered by his partner 2019*)
46. Sally, Carmarthenshire, mother (*I am the mother of a son who has suffered domestic abuse and has received no legal support*)
47. Sally, London, partner (*my partner was abused by his ex and his reports were ignored*)
48. Samantha, Dorset, partner (*my partner was and I think still is, in a way a victim of domestic violence from his ex*)
49. Sara W, Leicestershire, mother (*my son was murdered by his girlfriend*)
50. Sarah, Hertfordshire, sister (*My brother was abused and blackmailed and was never believed*)
51. Sharon, Bromley, girlfriend (*my boyfriend was in an abusive relationship for several years*)
52. Sue, Kent, wife (*my husband was a victim of abuse for 15 years, and it still carries on now through parental alienation*)
53. SW, Essex, sister (*brother was murdered by partner*)

54. Tamara, Sussex, partner (*my partner left his last relationship because of the verbal abuse which was being said in front of his children*)
55. Tamsin H, Chorley, friend (*my friend was murdered by his wife*)
56. Tracey, mother (*my son is going through mental abuse*)
57. Vicki, Leicester, mother
58. Zoe, Birmingham, cousin (*cousin was killed by his partner*)
59. Anonymous Girlfriend, London, partner (*my boyfriend is a victim of domestic abuse from his ex-wife*).
60. Anonymous mother, YM, Armagh, mother
61. Anonymous sister, UK, sister (*my brother is currently suffering domestic abuse at the hands of a female Perpetrator*)
62. Anonymous mother/sister , Northern Ireland, mother (*My son was a victim of mental abuse and still it continues*)
63. Anonymous, Manchester, mother
64. Anonymous, Gloucestershire, mother
65. Anonymous, Warwickshire, sister (*my brother was a victim and took his own life*)
66. Anonymous, Yorkshire, friend (*my suffers from mental, financial and domestic abuse*)

* Note: These testimonies have been sent freely to the charity over the past month and have been anonymised where necessary and where requested. All signatories have a direct connection to a male victim as described. Some signatories do not wish to be contacted by anyone bar the charity.