

# Charity leaders slam TWO YEARS of Home Office inaction on equally recognising male victims of abusive crimes.

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Britain's leading charities supporting male victims/survivors of sexual and domestic abuse have today expressed their disappointment with the Home Office for failing to meet their own promises in recognising millions of men and boys who have been affected by intimate crimes.

On March 31<sup>st</sup>

2022, the Home Office published its updated position statement SUPPORTING MALE VICTIMS as a pillar of their national strategy on Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls and the National Plan on Domestic Abuse. The government continues to categorise men and boys affected by crimes such as sexual violence, domestic abuse, stalking, forced marriage and so-called 'honour-based' abuse as being victims of violence against women and girls.

The position statement made a number of clear commitments to male survivors. While some commitments, including continued funding of the Male Rape Fund and helplines for male victims have been seen through, other commitments have never been observed.

These included promising to ensure that all government communications relating to Violence Against Women and Girls would clarify that the Home Office considers VAWG to be a classification of crime that includes crimes against men and boys, and to ensure that all communications would be fully inclusive of male victims.

Since then, there have been numerous written and published statements from Ministers and government departments which have either ignored male victims entirely, or minimized and marginalized their situation. Notably, in the first nine months of the ENOUGH! campaign which also commenced in March 2022, the government issued 147 different communications about VAWG crimes, not a single one of which directly referenced, acknowledged or addressed male victims.[ii]

In addition, the Government failed to state clearly last year that the additional Strategic Policing Requirement which placed VAWG crimes as a national priority included men and boys, when it does.

But perhaps most strikingly, the position statement also committed to update the published remit of the Minister for Safeguarding to clarify that the role included responsibility for abusive crimes against men and boys, by explicitly listing this on the list of Ministerial roles and responsibilities. After two years this simple promise of a few words has not been kept.

Duncan Craig OBE, founder and CEO of **We Are Survivors**, the UK's largest charity for male survivors of rape and sexual abuse, says:

*"We have always argued that treating male survivors as nothing more than a footnote to tackling violence against women and girls is tokenistic, inadequate and insulting to me and my fellow survivors. I am a male survivor, not a woman or a girl, and female victims/survivors deserve not to have us lumped in with them. But after two years it is clear that even the most paltry of promises to male survivors have not been kept. It's not just that we are an afterthought, we now seem to have been forgotten entirely."*

Mark Brooks OBE, Chair of the **Mankind Initiative**, Britain's leading charity for male victims of domestic abuse says:

*"It is beyond disappointing that government officials continue to ignore their own promises to male victims of horrific crimes. We have continually and politely asked for the commitments made two years ago to be delivered but nothing changes. Just this month TV viewers were deeply shocked to witness the appalling violence meted out to a male domestic abuse survivor in the documentary My Wife, My Abuser. I think they'll be equally shocked to learn that the government considers him to be a victim of 'violence against women and girls'. It has gone on far too long. We call on all political parties to commit to end this and commit to introducing a separate strategy to address intimate violence against men and boys, which can operate parallel and complementary to the vital and much-needed efforts to end violence against women and girls."*

[The Men and Boys Coalition](#) is the umbrella charity for the men's health and wellbeing sector in the UK, and leads the campaign for a separate strategy for male victims of abusive crimes. MBC Chair Ally Fogg adds:

*“Across the country there are dozens of charities and services, large and small, supporting men and boys who have been affected by crimes of abuse. We have yet to find a single one which agrees with the government’s position. We can now see clearly that the policy of addressing male victims within the national VAWG strategy is failing badly. The men and boys who have already been through so much really don’t need to be put through this indignity too.”*

End.

## NOTES TO EDITOR

1. Duncan Craig OBE, Mark Brook OBE and Ally Fogg can all be available for interview. **Please call 0744 360 3140 to arrange.**
2. For further reading on the inclusion of male victims/survivors in the National VAWG strategy, please see the MBC briefing document
3. Please be aware that the Home Office retracted and republished their March 2022 position statement ‘Supporting Male Victims’ in response to complaints. Some .gov.uk pages now list the document as dating from May 2022, but all content described in this press release was contained in the version published March 31<sup>st</sup> 2022 and was not amended.

 FOI response:

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