Mother urges public to help change homicide law following death of son

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Mother urges public to help change homicide law following death of son

The mother of Matthew Haynes Fox is urging the public to support calls for a new homicide offence after the issue was included in a major Law Commission consultation.

Sue Matthew's has campaigned for a change in the law following the death of her son Matthew, in circumstances where medical assistance was not sought.

She is calling for the introduction of a bespoke criminal offence covering cases in which there has been a culpable failure to seek medical help or intervention and a person dies as a result.

The issue is now being considered as part of the Law Commission's review of homicide offences in England and Wales.

The public consultation, which closes on September 30 2026, asks:

"We invite consultees' views on the need and justifications for a bespoke offence in cases in which there has been a culpable failure to seek medical assistance or intervention and death results."

The question appears in Chapter 10 of the consultation under Question 14.

Members of the public, bereaved families, campaigners, charities, legal professionals and other organisations can respond. Consultees may answer as many or as few of the questions as they wish.

Sue said: "Matthew was my son and he should still be here.

"Living with his loss is something our family faces every single day. Alongside that grief, we have had to live with the knowledge that the law does not adequately address what happened.

"I believe that where someone culpably fails to seek medical assistance and another person dies, there must be proper accountability.

"This is not about revenge. It is about ensuring that the law recognises the seriousness of that failure and protects other vulnerable people in the future.

"The Law Commission is now asking for views on this exact issue. This is a real opportunity for the public to be heard and I am asking people to take a few minutes to respond.

"You do not need to understand complicated legal language. You can answer in your own words and explain why you believe the law should change.

"Every response matters. The more people who take part, the stronger the message will be that this gap in the law cannot be ignored."

Sue is being supported by solicitor advocate Katie McCreath, founder of Staffordshire based KMC Legal & Finance.

Ms McCreath submitted the legal question concerning a culpable failure to seek medical assistance for consideration as part of the Law Commission's homicide law review.

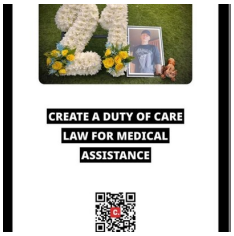
She said: "The current consultation represents an important opportunity to examine whether the criminal law deals adequately with cases where a person dies after someone culpably fails to seek medical assistance.

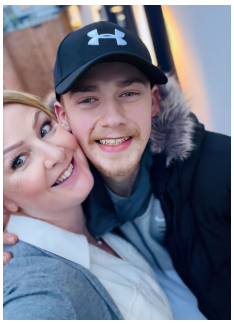
"The proposed offence would not seek to criminalise every delay, mistake or difficult decision

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surrounding medical care. The focus is on conduct that is culpable and sufficiently serious to justify criminal responsibility.

“The Law Commission is gathering evidence and views before making any recommendations. It is therefore vital that people with relevant experiences, as well as members of the wider public, take part.

“Sue has shown extraordinary courage in turning the devastating loss of Matthew into a campaign intended to protect others.

“We are encouraging people to read Question 14 and explain, in their own words, whether they believe a bespoke offence is needed and why.”

The Law Commission is reviewing homicide law with the aim of considering whether reforms are required to improve its clarity, coherence, fairness and effectiveness.

The review is divided into three areas covering homicide offences, defences and sentencing. The current consultation concerns homicide offences, with consultations on defences and sentencing expected separately.

Sue and Ms McCreath are available for television, radio and newspaper interviews to discuss Matthew’s story, the perceived gap in the current law and why public responses to the consultation are important.

ENDS

Notes to editors

1. The Law Commission consultation on homicide offences is open until September 30 2026.
2. The relevant section is Chapter 10, “Other homicide offences”, Consultation Question 14.
3. Question 14 asks: “We invite consultees’ views on the need and justifications for a bespoke offence in cases in which there has been a culpable failure to seek medical assistance or intervention and death results.”
4. Anyone may respond to the consultation and respondents do not have to answer every question.
5. The consultation is being conducted by the Law Commission for England and Wales as part of its review of homicide law. (Consult Justice?)
6. Interviews are available with Sue Matthews, Matthew’s mother, and Katie McCreath, solicitor advocate and founder of KMC Legal & Finance.

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High resolution photographs of Matthew, Sue and Katie McCreath are available on request.

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