

## False rape claim victim's relief

Published: 11:47

Updated: 11:47

Sunday 03 May 2009

---

### **A millionaire businessman has spoken of his relief after he was cleared of carrying out a violent sex attack.**

Anthony Atherton, 51, was accused of attacking a 49-year-old woman in the kitchen of his home in Victoria Road, Bolton last August.

A jury at Leeds Crown Court took an hour to acquit Mr Atherton of attempted rape, sexual assault, assault by penetration, making a threat to kill and false imprisonment.

He claimed the woman, who cannot be named for legal reasons, set him up.

Mr Atherton is a former supermarket shelf-stacker who built his business up from scratch and then made millions by selling his online retail company Dabs.Com to British Telecom in 2006.

Mr Atherton, who is known by his middle name David, denied the charges and was cleared following a two-week trial.

He said: "I'm grateful after eight months of hell to be vindicated."

His solicitor Paul Schofield said: "From the very onset Mr Atherton firmly denied all these allegations.

"He claimed that this case was a malicious complaint and a 'set up'. The verdicts, the speed with which they were returned, and the order for costs, all vindicate him completely."

<https://www.lep.co.uk/news/latest/false-rape-claim-victim-s-relief-1-162541>