

Father 'driven to suicide after he was wrongly accused of being a paedophile on Facebook'

- Steven Rudderham was called a pervert online in January
- The 48-year-old was found hanged in a cemetery days later
- His family say he was traumatised by the accusations
- Police say they are considering investigating the posts

By [SAM WEBB](#)

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The grieving family of a man found hanged in a cemetery claim he was driven to suicide following paedophile accusations on Facebook.

Steven Rudderham, 48, was traumatised when his name, address and photograph were published online, along with a message calling him a 'dirty perv' and claiming he was a paedophile.

Within 15 minutes, the message had been shared hundreds of times and the bricklayer from Hull, East Yorkshire, began receiving death threats on Facebook, an inquest heard.

He was found hanged in the city's Hessle cemetery three days later.



Mr Rudderham's daughter Bethany Beaumont, 19, said: 'They've destroyed an innocent life for no reason.'

Grief: Steven Rudderham's parents Dave and Carol Matthews say their son was driven to suicide after he was accused of being a paedophile on Facebook

'It was disgusting. It was slander.'

His mother Carol Matthews said: 'I want to know why someone did something like that. I hope they rot in hell. It took a person's life. We will never get over it.'

Police have confirmed they are considering an investigation into the Facebook posts in the days leading up to Mr Rudderham's death. A Humberside Police spokeswoman said no one had made any allegations of a sexual nature against him.

Yesterday's inquest heard Mr Rudderham was working towards examinations as a building site manager before the internet accusations.

He normally saw Ms Beaumont every day and she realised immediately the profound effect the paedophile accusations had on him.

She said: 'He just couldn't believe it. He was just looking at the wall and he wouldn't eat. It was like someone had ripped his life apart.'

Mr Rudderham was afraid of walking the streets in case he was spotted and decided to stay with his daughter to prevent him being targeted at his home.



Distraught: Mr Rudderham's daughter says her father was devastated by the accusations

Ms Beaumont told the Hull inquest even people who had known her father for years joined in the cyber bullying.

She said: 'There were people who had known him for years commenting on it, he was so upset. I had never seen him like that.'

'He stayed at my house that night because of what the comments were saying, about people coming to his house and smashing it up.'

On Saturday, January 26, his body was found by a member of the public.

Police were called at about 2pm but Mr Rudderham was pronounced dead at the scene.

A memory stick was recovered on his body and police have also seized a computer hard drive.

Mr Rudderham had discussed giving police a memory stick with evidence about the accusations on it in the days before his death.

Mr Rudderham's mother was told of her son's death on her birthday and puts the blame solely on her son's Facebook accusers.

She said: 'I went berserk when I found out what had happened, he didn't want to stay in his house because he was frightened.'

Mr Rudderham's family say he served time in HMP Hull in 2010 for fighting but had no convictions for sex offences.

Dr Latifu Sanni was also told about the paedophile accusations made against Mr Rudderham before he carried out the post-mortem.

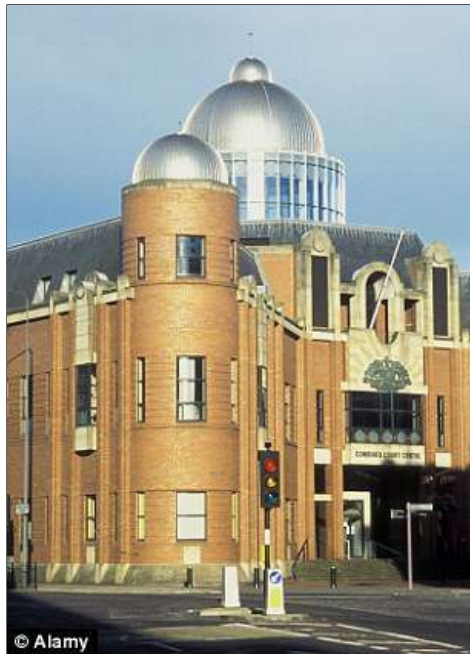
The inquest heard there had been no evidence of medical depression in the months before his death. No drugs and no significant amounts of alcohol were found by a post-mortem.

The inquest was attended by his family, including his mother and stepfather David Matthews, his sister Lisa Elm and daughters Bethany, Anna and Danielle Beaumont.

Recording a verdict of suicide, Coroner Paul Marks said: 'The medical cause of death was hanging.'

'He was actively pursuing a qualification to improve his status and job prospects. In the last few days of his life, he received a pejorative message on a social networking site which greatly troubled him.'

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The Hull-based inquest recorded a verdict of suicide