

Weston man cleared of rapes ‘relieved’ 11-month nightmare at an end

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[Tom Wright](#)



The rape charges were dropped at Bristol Crown Court.

An innocent Weston man, who endured an 11-month ‘nightmare’ after being falsely accused of rape, has spoken at his relief of being cleared.

Jerry-Lee Hall feels he was ‘persecuted’ for a year once wrongly accused and had to prove his innocence because of court failings.

Mr Hall was charged with eight counts of rape in February 2017 but it was not until a fortnight ago they were dropped.

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) said there was 'no evidence' to support the allegations.

The 47-year-old said people looked at him with 'daggers' when the news of his arrest broke.

Mr Hall said: "It was the worst time of my life.

"It was a nightmare. I had worries about leaving my house and being seen in public.

"I'm very angry it has taken this length of time.

"There's not much worse you could be accused of and it has such a stigma. You are assumed by people to be guilty and you have to prove your innocence.

"Most nights I'd wake up at 1-2am with a cold sweat and couldn't get back to sleep.

"I felt so ashamed of something I never did."

Several high-profile rape trials have collapsed in recent weeks because of CPS errors in disclosing evidence it received. Steps to improve the process were announced last month.

But Mr Hall, of Damson Road, feels the CPS is seeking to reach a 'quota' of convictions.

He said: "If you are in an industry and you make mistakes, you are held accountable and you lose your job.

"But there doesn't seem to be any accountability for mistakes within the CPS.

“Disgusting allegations were thrown at me and it affected not only me, but my family and friends.

“It just isn’t good enough for the CPS to stand up and say ‘we offer no evidence’.

“I have been persecuted for a year.”

The law allows rape accusers to remain anonymous, regardless of whether they are victims or not – even in this case the Mercury cannot reveal any details about the woman who accused him.

Those charged with a sexual offence however can be named throughout the legal process, which is something Mr Hall believes needs changing.

He said: “Rape is disgusting and you pray to God someone who is guilty doesn’t get away with it but to accuse an innocent person is wrong.

“I feel people charged with rape should be given the same anonymity as the accuser – that should remain the case until a guilty verdict.

“Those who falsely accuse others should be held accountable for their actions.”

[https://www.thewestonmercury.co.uk/news/court/weston-super-mare-man-innocent-of-eight-rapes-](https://www.thewestonmercury.co.uk/news/court/weston-super-mare-man-innocent-of-eight-rapes-angry-over-cps-failings-which-saw-him-persecuted-for-one-year-1-5394899)

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