The founder of the British acid house scene today told how his life was wrecked by a rape allegation.

Steve Proctor — who was cleared by a jury’s unanimous verdict — called for anonymity of sex crime suspects until proved guilty, saying the unfounded claims cost him his job and the trust of friends and colleagues.

The father-of-two’s comments echo the concerns of broadcasters Neil “Dr” Fox and Paul Gambaccini after they were also cleared of sex charges.

He said that the damage caused by wrongful accusations fanned by “no smoke without fire” rumours affects ordinary people as well as celebrities.

In the Eighties and Nineties Mr Proctor started the Balearic/acid house scene and as a DJ played Ibiza, the Shoom, the Hacienda and the Wag as well as the O2 and the Royal Albert Hall. But in May 2010 he was accused of raping a woman he knew. After being on bail for 13 months he was cleared by the jury’s verdict.

However, he remains unemployed and suffers from depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. Now 56 and living on benefits in Crouch End, he said: “I was close to killing myself, this has destroyed my life. I felt the police’s attitude was that I was guilty until proven innocent.

“I kept contacting the police every month that I was on bail and each time I was told they were still investigating.”
He said that some people still ignore him while others “think they have the right to insult me to my face or online”. He added: “Rape must be truly horrendous for any woman, and it is absolutely right that the police do all they can to get to the facts so that real victims feel they will be listened to when they come forward. However, I was innocent and yet everyone knows what I was accused of.”

Samira Noor-Khan, a criminal defence lawyer at Hodge Jones & Allen, said: “The only way to prevent massive harm to innocent people wrongly accused is for there to be general anonymity until charge with the possibility of the police applying to a court to lift that anonymity in certain circumstances.”