20th October 2003

My living hell of false rape claim

A FATHER of two has launched a formal complaint after being wrongly arrested over an allegation of rape.

Dave Howie, 33, was never charged but said repercussions after the allegations led to him being verbally and physically assaulted, quitting his job and suffering from depression.

He said he was upset that it took the police three weeks to clear him after he initially spent two hours being questioned in the police station a few days after the alleged incident.

He now wants the woman who made the complaint to be prosecuted for making a malicious allegation so that he can clear his name publicly.

Police have referred his complaint, made through Blackburn solicitors Farleys, to the police complaints authority.

Mr Howie, of Shadsworth, Blackburn, said he was arrested in January after a female friend told police he had raped her in the early hours of January 1.

But he said evidence from his mobile telephone and computer showed the matter was not rape but a consensual act and no charges were brought against him.

He said people who believed that he was guilty threatened him with violence.

His 13-year-old daughter was assaulted in March and told that her father was a rapist. He was assaulted himself after he attended a friend's funeral in February.

Mr Howie, who is not married nor in a relationship, worked at a construction company in Oswaldtwistle before the allegation.
He said: "When the police arrested me I was in shock and nearly sick in the police car. I could not believe what was happening.

"I could not sleep afterwards. I ended up taking time off work then left the job. I am on anti-depressants now and taking tablets for anxiety.

"My family has stuck by me and said it will come out in the end. But I want charges to be brought against her for making malicious allegations.

"I could have gone to jail and lost contact with my kids, my life would have been over. I want everybody to know that it was malicious. When this woman assaulted my daughter, she was not even interviewed or cautioned and I am not happy about it. I want this matter sorting out."

A spokesman for Lancashire police said the matter had been passed to the police complaints authority and that she could not comment while the investigation was continuing.