

Individual 19

Dear Sir/Madam

I was made aware of the Domestic Violence and family proceedings Bill this morning and I am delighted to see that the assembly is considering this.

Having recently moved to Northern Ireland from [REDACTED], I welcome the proposed Bill that will see the same protection and rights given to victims as their counterparts already have in England, Wales and Scotland.

This Bill is not only necessary but a step in the right direction as part of the evolutionary process for legislation and tougher sentencing must also be a part of this.

I also speak from personal experience when it comes to this Bill. I grew up in abusive household where I was the victim of not only physical abuse but psychological abuse. The abuse took place for over 20 years until I was able to leave home and break contact with my abuser. Had laws been in place then, my abuser could have charged and prosecuted and imprisoned and I would not have had to endure so much suffering.

I can't change the past, but I can help other victims in raising my voice and sharing my experience.