# Belfast man faces custody over horrific abuse amid calls to fix NI’s slow domestic violence justice system



A Belfast man has been remanded into custody following serious allegations of domestic abuse directed towards his former partner, raising alarms about the persistent issues surrounding domestic violence in Northern Ireland. Cameron Pike faces a range of grave accusations, including choking his partner until she lost consciousness, making numerous death threats against her and himself, holding a knife to her throat, and reportedly engaging in acts of cruelty towards animals, such as hitting her dog and swinging a kitten against a fridge.

This case illuminates broader systemic issues within the justice mechanism surrounding domestic abuse in the region. Recently released statistics indicate that 55% of domestic abuse cases prosecuted during 2023/24 resulted in convictions. However, these figures also highlight a troubling trend of significant delays in bringing such cases to court, with victims often enduring lengthy waits for justice. As a result, many victims are left feeling unsupported and vulnerable, compounding an already precarious situation.

Geraldine Hanna, the newly appointed Victims' Commissioner, has called attention to these delays, which can extend for years, profoundly affecting the well-being of victims. The challenges of navigating a justice system described by some as 'dire' underscore an urgent need for reform and improved resource allocation. Hanna's concerns resonate in the context of recent calls for systemic changes to ensure that victims are provided with timely and effective support throughout the judicial process.

In recent years, new domestic abuse legislation has attempted to address these issues more robustly. This includes measures to criminalise coercive control and non-fatal strangulation, which have seen nearly 1,300 arrests made under the new laws since their implementation. Such legislative advances signify a shift towards more proactive measures to protect victims and hold abusers accountable. However, the efficacy of these laws is undermined by the slow-processing speed of the justice system.

Compounding these systemic failures is the reality faced by many victims during the holiday season. Survivors like Louise Gilmore have shared their harrowing experiences of domestic abuse, highlighting the critical need for outreach and support services to assist those in similar situations. As Gilmore poignantly urges, victims should not suffer in silence but rather seek help, particularly during times when familial and societal pressures can intensify the already precarious environment in which they find themselves.

Pike's case, representing just one instance in a spectrum of domestic violence incidents, underscores the urgent need for societal change. It is a stark reminder of the ongoing battle against domestic abuse and the necessity for a justice system that not only punishes offenders but also prioritises the safety and recovery of victims. The community must galvanise around survivors, utilizing newly established laws and calling for reforms to ensure that nobody has to endure such distressing circumstances alone.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraph 1: [[1]](https://m.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/courts/ni-man-accused-of-choking-his-ex-hitting-her-dog-with-a-knife-and-swinging-kitten-against-fridge-denied-bail/a286763861.html)
2. Paragraph 2: [[2]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/northern-ireland/half-of-all-domestic-abuse-cases-result-in-conviction-new-figures-show-XROO5VNKCZBVFE3GJNCPXX4SBI/), [[3]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/northern-ireland/dire-justice-system-harms-victims-with-delays-lasting-years-to-get-cases-to-court-2PR44LMD6JG7HGLP5YI7HHXASM/)
3. Paragraph 3: [[4]](https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/nearly-1300-arrests-made-under-new-domestic-abuse-laws-in-northern-ireland/a1264916325.html)
4. Paragraph 4: [[6]](https://www.sundayworld.com/news/northern-ireland-news/brave-belfast-woman-who-survived-horrific-domestic-abuse-urges-victims-to-ask-for-help-over-christmas/239977428.html)
5. Paragraph 5: [[5]](https://fermanaghherald.com/2024/03/newtown-man-accused-of-domestic-abuse-refused-bail/)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://m.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/courts/ni-man-accused-of-choking-his-ex-hitting-her-dog-with-a-knife-and-swinging-kitten-against-fridge-denied-bail/a286763861.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/northern-ireland/half-of-all-domestic-abuse-cases-result-in-conviction-new-figures-show-XROO5VNKCZBVFE3GJNCPXX4SBI/> - This article discusses the concerning delays in domestic abuse prosecutions in Northern Ireland, highlighting that 55% of all domestic abuse cases prosecuted in 2023/24 ended in conviction. The piece emphasizes the impact of these delays on victims and the need for systemic improvements to expedite justice.
3. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/northern-ireland/dire-justice-system-harms-victims-with-delays-lasting-years-to-get-cases-to-court-2PR44LMD6JG7HGLP5YI7HHXASM/> - The article highlights the 'dire' state of the justice system in Northern Ireland, with delays lasting years for cases to reach court. Victims' Commissioner Designate Geraldine Hanna expresses concern over the prolonged process and its detrimental effects on victims, calling for systemic reforms and better resource allocation.
4. <https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/nearly-1300-arrests-made-under-new-domestic-abuse-laws-in-northern-ireland/a1264916325.html> - This report details the significant impact of new domestic abuse legislation in Northern Ireland, with nearly 1,300 arrests made under the new laws. The legislation, which includes offenses like coercive control and non-fatal strangulation, aims to provide better protection for victims and hold perpetrators accountable.
5. <https://fermanaghherald.com/2024/03/newtown-man-accused-of-domestic-abuse-refused-bail/> - The article covers the case of Marcus Elliffe, a 38-year-old from Newtownbutler, who was refused bail after being charged with multiple domestic abuse offenses. The charges include threats to kill, assault causing actual bodily harm, false imprisonment, and harassment, with incidents dating back to March 2023.
6. <https://www.sundayworld.com/news/northern-ireland-news/brave-belfast-woman-who-survived-horrific-domestic-abuse-urges-victims-to-ask-for-help-over-christmas/239977428.html> - This article features Louise Gilmore, a Belfast woman who survived severe domestic abuse, urging other victims to seek help, especially during the Christmas period. It details her harrowing experience and the physical injuries sustained, emphasizing the importance of not suffering in silence and reaching out for support.
7. <https://www.sundayworld.com/crime/courts/woman-beater-who-punched-headbutted-and-held-knife-to-his-partners-throat-avoids-jail/a1652300623.html> - The piece reports on Cameron Withers, a 19-year-old who avoided jail despite a 'disturbing litany' of abuse against his former girlfriend. The abuse included physical assaults, threats with a knife, and attempts to suffocate the victim, highlighting the complexities of sentencing in domestic abuse cases.