

Press Statement from Stand Against Racism & Inequality (SARI) on behalf of Kamil Ahmad Ali and family

“Stand Against Racism & Inequality (SARI) send our heartfelt sympathies to Kamil’s family who we continue to support to achieve justice in their brother’s name.

We also supported Kamil two years before his life was tragically taken when he reported to us that he was suffering racist incidents at the hands of Jeffrey Barry – who was later to take Kamil’s life in the most vicious of assaults.

At the time we worked hard to get these incidents taken seriously but unfortunately did not manage to get the evidence needed to get Barry evicted from the accommodation as Kamil would have wanted.

We then closed the case as all incidents had ceased at that time.

Whilst Barry has serious mental health issues, his motivations for harassing, attacking and murdering Kamil included racism and this was not sufficiently taken into account by agencies that had a duty to combat this hatred. Kamil tried to speak out about how at risk he felt. He told those around him that Barry hated him because of his ethnicity.

We cannot bring Kamil back but we can and must learn from this tragedy. SARI has produced its own plan for reaching out into refugee and asylum seeker communities so they report to us more and to make it easier for them to trust and access our service. This includes new drop-ins by our service to local refugee centres. We have also amended our Hate Crime & Vulnerability Risk Assessment Matrix so that that when a victim is in shared accommodation with their attacker this must be treated immediately as high risk and a plan put in place by the authorities to ensure safety. Such cases must also now be reviewed for longer - after things appear resolved - if the offender and victim remain in the same accommodation.

This tragedy also illustrates the vulnerability of asylum seekers placed in accommodation for people with complex needs and the need to always consider all aspects to a person’s identity or needs. Kamil had Post Traumatic Stress, he was disabled and he was a Kurdish, Iraqi Asylum Seeker.

He suffered barriers and challenges both because of his disability and because of his language barrier, culture, ethnicity and experiences of torture that rendered him an asylum seeker. Kamil came to the UK to be safe. Instead he suffered further abuse, humiliation and ultimately lost his life due to an atrocity, while this country was still assessing whether he should even be granted asylum. We would like the government to seriously consider how they support asylum seekers such as Kamil and ensure they are placed in accommodation and support services that properly address racism.”