



# **Ending Violence Against Women and Girls:** Analysis of Responses to the Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

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Justice Spokespeople for Scottish Labour, November 2023*



**Scottish Labour**

The Change Scotland Needs

# Acknowledgements

We wish to thank all individuals and organisations who responded to our consultation and to all who provided input and advice at subsequent roundtables and meetings. We are particularly grateful to the women and girls who met with us to discuss their lived experiences of sexual harassment and male violence in Scotland.

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# Introduction

In November 2022, on behalf of Scottish Labour, we launched our consultation 'Ending Violence and Sexual Harassment Against Women and Girls'.<sup>1</sup> As the Justice Spokespeople for Scottish Labour, we are committed to ensuring the party has the strongest policies to tackle the rising level of violence against women and girls (VAWG) in Scotland. We believe that this is a watershed moment. Women, and many men, are saying enough is enough.

Scotland should be a society that is safe for all women and girls - whether at home, on the street, at school, on the bus, at work or online. Sadly, in 2023, many women and girls across the world live in constant fear of men. In Scotland, one woman is killed by her partner or ex-partner every six weeks. At least 1 in 5 women will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime.<sup>2</sup> Recorded rapes reached the highest level on record in 22/23<sup>3</sup> and in 21/22, just 51% of rape and attempted rape trials resulted in conviction.<sup>4</sup>

For too long the onus has been placed on women and girls to regulate their behaviour to accommodate boys and men. There has also been a lack of male voices speaking up against VAWG in Scotland in recent years. Getting men involved in the conversation at a young age, when they are at school, is one of the ways that we as a society will start to make serious inroads into tackling the epidemic of male violence. We are grateful to our colleague Michael Marra MSP for leading a roundtable on challenging misogyny in schools and universities when acting as the party's Education and Skills spokesperson, and to Anas Sarwar MSP for his support in making tackling VAWG a key priority for the party.

We were pleased that Scottish Government officials took an interest in our work by attending our roundtable engagement. We set out to be constructive and will also share a copy of this document with them.

We need to see protecting women and girls from all forms of male violence – be it physical, sexual, financial, or psychological – as lifesaving, not optional. Until this issue is prioritised at a systemic level, women and girls across Scotland will continue to face harassment in settings where they are supposed to be safe.

1 <https://news.stv.tv/scotland/woman-killed-by-partner-or-ex-every-six-weeks-in-scotland-it-must-stop-says-crime-analyst-laura-richards>

2 <https://www.ncdv.org.uk/domestic-abuse-statistics-uk/#:~:text=1%20in%205%20adults%20experience,1%20in%206%2D7%20men.>

3 <https://www.heraldscotland.com/politics/23601272.rapes-scotland-highest-level-record/>

4 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/criminal-proceedings-scotland-2020-21/pages/10/>

Over the past year we have both individually and collectively met with a wide variety of organisations, individuals, professional bodies and campaigners, to discuss Scottish Labour's approach to tackling and ending VAWG. Sessions on the consultation were held both at the Scottish Labour Party Conference and the Scottish Labour Party Women's Conference, where a wide range of contributions were made from the floor, and an online consultation event was organised by the Scottish Labour Party Women's Committee for women Labour Party members. We have both also attended Constituency Labour Party meetings and a wide range of other events to discuss the consultation.

We thank all who have engaged with us and put considerable efforts into formulating the written submissions to the consultation, which will continue to inform our work. We are aware of the campaign work of a number of trade unions who have proactively fought to address the issues of violence and abuse of their women members and thank them specifically for their representations and detailed sector specific submissions. We are particularly grateful to the women and girls who have met with us to discuss their lived experiences of sexual harassment and male violence.

This report summarises findings from responses to the consultation, our engagement with relevant stakeholders during three roundtable events and subsequent meetings, submissions from trade unions and women's organisations, and discussions with a wide range of groups and women and girls with lived experience.

Scottish Labour is committed to working with the Scottish Government on this issue to guarantee that real, meaningful change happens sooner rather than later, and to ensure the women and girls of Scotland - of today and of the future - are able to thrive and reach their full potential without living in the shadow of male violence.

**Pauline McNeill MSP**

**Katy Clark MSP**

# Summary

This report sets out key themes raised in responses to the consultation paper and subsequent roundtable discussions. Responses about how to tackle and prevent violence against women and girls (VAWG) in Scotland were diverse and wide-ranging. We have identified the following key topics that were consistently raised in written and verbal responses to our consultation.

## 1. The justice system fails women and girls.

- The majority of the victims of crime are women and girls.
- The number of domestic abuse and sexual offences cases being dealt with by the criminal courts in Scotland has increased significantly in recent years.
- Approximately 70% of the cases now being dealt with in the High Court of Justiciary are now rape, attempted rape and sexual offences.<sup>1</sup>
- Rape victims repeatedly tell us that they find the justice system retraumatising.
- Court backlogs were specifically highlighted as a barrier for women being able to carry on with their lives.

## 2. The justice system does not currently deliver for victims. Significant reform is needed to make it victim-focused.

- VAWG is an issue which affects all women irrespective of their social class.
- However, there is recognition of the links between deprivation and offending, and that women's economic independence is central to the empowerment of women and making the eradication of VAWG a reality.

## 3. Preventing and tackling violence against women and girls cannot be achieved without a significant shift in societal and cultural norms alongside legal reform and sector specific action.

- The perception that our society allows men and boys to behave with impunity, including abusively, without consequences, runs deep.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.copfs.gov.uk/about-copfs/sexual-offences-review/#:~:text=The%20Sexual%20Offences%20Review%20recognises,has%20further%20increased%20in%202022.>

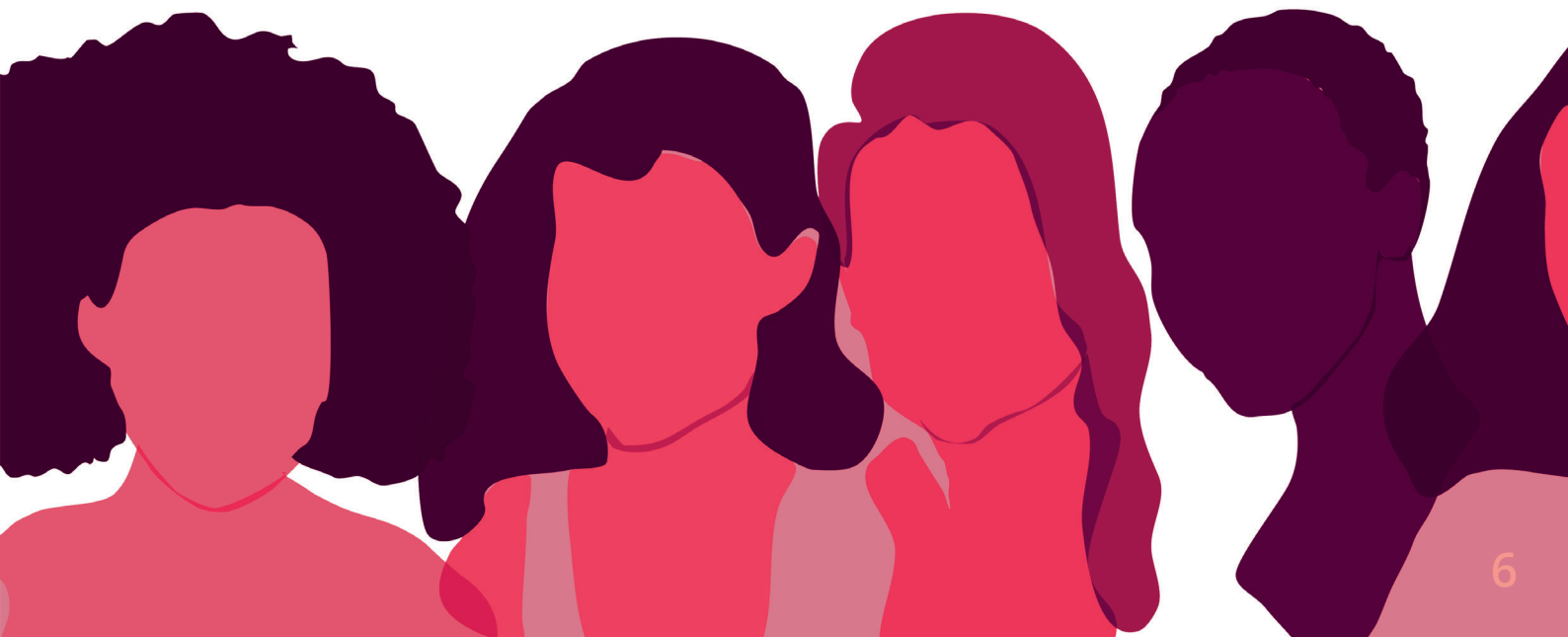
- Men's lack of accountability was discussed particularly in relation to everyday sexism and harassment of women and girls in the street, workplaces, schools, and online. Responsibility and blame are often allocated to women and girls instead of questions being asked of men's behaviour.
- Boys and men must be encouraged and empowered to confront sexual harassment and VAWG in daily life, including challenging sexist and misogynistic attitudes and behaviours amongst their colleagues and peers. We must also address the pressures on boys and men to adopt gender stereotypes and educate men on the link between these stereotypes and gender-based violence.
- Introducing further legislative changes without the appropriate evidence-base can undermine efforts to tackle VAWG. Any major policy and legislative changes introduced in an attempt to tackle or reduce VAWG must be evidence-led and based on robust, high quality data.

#### **4. Educating young people, especially boys and young men, about healthy relationships and consent from a young age is key to long-term change.**

- As part of our consultation process, we met with senior pupils at Greenfaulds High School who offered an important insight into their experiences as young women and what would be helpful from an education perspective.
- Changing attitudes and challenging behaviours amongst children and young people, from nursery and primary school onwards, is key to long-term change in tackling sexual harassment and VAWG.
- Specialist support and staff are needed in schools to effectively educate young people, particularly boys and young men, on such complex and sensitive matters. Schools should not be expected to deliver this education by themselves.
- Placing better quality controls on online platforms that primarily cater to young audiences is key to reducing VAWG, both online and offline.
- Developing educational resources on gender-based violence for all children and young people across Scotland should be a key priority in effectively tackling VAWG. This should be extended to include children in primary school. Bespoke workshops that specifically teach boys and young men about healthy relationships and interactions with girls and young women should be developed and rolled out across the whole curriculum.

## 5. More needs to be done to invest in diverse and far-reaching services that support women and girls affected by sexual harassment and abuse from men.

- VAWG services are underfunded and insufficiently resourced for the level of need that the society we live in now presents. They would benefit from long-term funding to ensure women and girls are receiving appropriate treatment in relation to their specific needs and circumstances (e.g., age, ethnicity, religion, gender identity, sexuality, motherhood). This includes the provisioning of a range of services, including single-sex services and services that meet the needs of trans and non-binary people.
- It is important that workplaces or services (such as job or child contact centres) understand VAWG and its consequences so that they can offer appropriate, tailored support to those women and girls affected by differing forms of abuse (e.g., financial, emotional, psychological, verbal, physical).
- There is a lack of understanding about the extent and nature of VAWG (e.g., in public spaces, schools, online) and a national public messaging campaign developed in partnership with NGOs and specialist women's and victims' organisations could help raise awareness.
- Programmes and services designed to address and tackle VAWG should be closely and regularly evaluated and monitored to track any change in attitudes or behaviours.



## Respondent Profile

- In total, there were 44 formal written responses to the consultation paper, of which 12 were from organisations and 32 from individuals. A breakdown of responses is provided in the following table. A list of organisations that responded to the consultation paper can be found in Appendix 1.

Table 1: Respondent Groups

Total organisations	<b>12</b>
Academic/research	1
Advocacy	3
Trade Unions	6
Labour Party Groups	2
Individuals	32
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>44</b>

- To accompany responses to the consultation paper, we also held three roundtable events with relevant stakeholders to discuss their ideas about how to tackle VAWG. These three workshops focused on the following themes: **young women's experience of cybercrime**; **educating boys and men** and; **achieving Independent Legal Representation for victims of rape** (in collaboration with Rape Crisis Scotland). These topics were decided based on an initial analysis of responses to the consultation in March 2023 as well as themes that deserved a deeper dive. A list of organisations that participated in these roundtables can be found in Appendixes 2 and 3.
- We also met privately with women and girls with lived experience of sexual harassment and male violence to discuss their ideas around how the law could potentially be strengthened to protect women and girls in Scotland. We wish to thank them for sharing their time, their ideas, and their experiences with us.
- We have incorporated into this summary all that has been said to us verbally in the wide range of events, meetings and discussions we have had during this consultation, and this will continue to inform our work and policy going forward.



## Methodology

- Responses to the consultation were submitted via email to **Pauline.McNeill.MSP@Parliament.Scot**. All responses were entered manually into Microsoft Excel to create a complete database of responses.
- Although there were 44 responses, the rate of response was not consistent. Some responses were detailed; others were brief. While the consultation gave all who wished to comment an opportunity to do so, given the self-selecting nature of this type of exercise, any figures quoted here cannot be extrapolated to a wider population beyond the respondent sample.
- When referring to respondents who made particular comments, the terms 'a small number', 'a few' and so on have been used. While the analysis was qualitative in nature, as a very general rule of thumb it can be assumed that 'a small number' or 'a few' indicates less than 10% of respondents. Where larger numbers of respondents are referred to, 'a significant minority' is 10–25% of respondents, 'a large minority' is 25–50% of respondents and 50%+ is 'a majority'.

## Analysis of Responses

- The analysis of responses is presented in the following chapters which follow the order of questions raised in the consultation paper. It also includes further comments noted during the three roundtable events to supplement submitted responses to the consultation.
- Responses were entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet for detailed analysis. Quotations have been included where they illustrate a point of view clearly and have been selected across the range of respondent sub-groups.
- Throughout responses, some respondents referred to personal experience of gender-based violence, in order to illustrate issues being raised. In order to retain anonymity for these respondents, we have not made specific reference to any individual cases.
- Some respondents provided commentary on a specific question in their response to another question. Where this has occurred, responses have been moved to the relevant question to avoid duplication.

- Given the self-selecting nature of this type of exercise, the findings should not be considered representative of the experiences of all women and girls who have experienced gender based violence and sexual harassment in Scotland.
- Respondents were asked to answer 2-3 questions per theme, spanning: young women and sexual harassment; online crime; domestic abuse; men's responsibility; women's experiences of the justice system; proposals for justice reform; street harassment and; lack of data on Black Minority Ethnic (BME) and Disabled Women and Girls.



## Key Findings

- **Educating young people, especially boys and young men, about healthy relationships and consent** from a young age is key to long-term change.
- Preventing and tackling violence against women and girls cannot be achieved without a **significant shift in societal and cultural norms** alongside legal reform.
- The importance of **centring the voices and experiences of women and girls** with diverse viewpoints in any conversations when developing policies, strategies and laws to protect them.
- There is a pressing need to develop more **credible and accessible information and guidance** for women and girls who have experienced sexual harassment and men's abuse, regarding what to do and who to contact for advice. This should be nationally co-ordinated and developed with relevant women's organisations and in collaboration with women and girls directly.
- Any major policy and legislative changes on tackling VAWG should be **evidence-led** and based on **robust, high-quality data**, and recognise the **diversity of women's lived experience**.
- Current programmes funded by the Scottish Government (such as the 'Equally Safe at School' strategy and the Caledonian System) must be regularly **evaluated and monitored to assess any change** in behaviours or attitudes.
- Placing **better quality controls** on social media sites and platforms is key to challenging and reducing VAWG online. Social media companies should be **held accountable** when illegal or distressing activity takes place on their platforms, particularly in relation to enabling VAWG online.
- More needs to be done to **invest in diverse and far-reaching services** that support women and girls affected by sexual harassment and men's abuse in relation to their specific needs and circumstances.

# 1. Young Women and Sexual Harassment

How can we tackle these issues with young men and women? Is this the key to long-term change? (Q1)

- A majority of respondents noted that while young women and girls are increasingly encouraged to speak about and report objectification, sexual harassment and male violence, there remains a **lack of awareness of safe spaces and on-the-ground help** for those seeking information or those at crisis point.
- The majority of respondents also noted the importance of speaking to children and young people about healthy sexual and personal relationships and **encouraging healthy interactions between genders from a very young age.**
- Scottish Women's Convention, in their participatory research with young women, found that many are generally supportive of combining sex education between the sexes, arguing that separation contributes to a lack of knowledge and further engrains gender stereotypes.
- However, Rape Crisis Scotland noted that *"it is not enough to only educate young people without **changing the culture** of the schools, organisations and society they are a part of. It is the responsibility of everyone in Scottish society to challenge and end rape culture."*
- The majority of respondents highlighted the **importance of educating boys and young men** to respect women and girls from a young age.
- The need for more male role models to **step up and challenge other boys and men** when they witness women and girls being sexually harassed and physically or verbally abused, both online and in everyday life, was raised in numerous responses to the consultation and during the roundtable discussion.
- Several submissions, particularly from trade unions, argued that **the workplace should be recognised as a site where abuse and harassment are particularly prevalent.**
- Unite's response pointed to an STUC survey which found 45% of women have experienced sexual harassment at work. They added that *"domestic violence and abuse causes distress to members and can affect their employment through lower productivity, absenteeism, and in some cases acts of violence being carried out in the workplace"*.

- In its submission, the trade union USDAW argued that *“Any strategy to tackle and prevent gender-based violence must address the risks faced by women at work as the workplace is a major risk factor for many women, particularly those in low paid part-time work. The workplace can also be a source of support and best practice where trade unions and employers work together to tackle and prevent violence and abuse.”*
- Multiple respondents suggested that women should be able to access support at work or be signposted to specialist VAWG services where appropriate.
- GMB union noted that *“Women are typically paid lower than men which reduces their financial independence and increases the opportunity for an abuser to financially abuse their partner. Low pay and pay discrimination must be addressed by employers across the public and private sector.”* The union added that this was a key reason it had made equal pay a central priority.
- TSSA Scotland noted that incidences of their members working in ferry terminals – particularly women – being abused and threatened by members of the public had risen sharply in the past few years.
  - o Similarly, the RMT union noted in its submission that an RMT survey of its rail workers found more than 60% of women reported being sexually harassed at work by members of the public in the last five years. A separate survey of the union’s ScotRail members found more than 80% of women members had experienced workplace violence in the previous year, with nearly all saying it had happened on multiple occasions.
- At roundtable events, trade unions also urged that any campaigns should highlight and signpost relevant rights and legislation – such as the Protection of Workers (Retail and Age-restricted Goods and Services) (Scotland) Act 2021, which makes threatening, abusing or assaulting a retail worker a statutory offence.
- The RMT union noted in its submission that it has also been campaigning for the Scottish Government to introduce additional protections against abuse and assault at work for public transport workers, to mirror the legislation which exists for retail and blue light workers.

**“...going into school to talk about sexual consent is key: students need to hear from speakers who are not school staff, and who are experts in their field, providing them without embarrassment the facts and key elements to understand how healthy gender interactions and sexuality should look like.”**

[Individual consultation respondent]

What have been the benefits of the Equally Safe programme in schools? How could these be built upon or developed further? Should there be a programme built into the school curriculum? (Q2)

- While the majority of respondents supported the 'Equally Safe at School' (ESAS) programme, it was noted that it should be **rolled out across the curriculum** and that it should even extend to primary schools.<sup>1</sup>

While schools have responsibility for addressing issues such as health and wellbeing, equality, and safeguarding, they are not required to undertake a specific programme of work in relation to gender-based violence, and this needs to change.

- The Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (ASLEF) noted that a national programme built into the school system would allow the message to "reach more people and ensure **a consistent message is heard across the nation.**"

- A significant minority of respondents noted that long-term funding of the ESAS programme, and other related schemes, should be a key priority in tackling VAWG in Scotland.

- It was also noted by multiple respondents that the **onus should not be placed on teachers** to provide educational resources, and that students should hear from speakers who are experts in their field who are mindful of the realities of being a young person today. Engaging with young people and listening to their voices and experiences is vital to enacting long-term change.

- An individual respondent who identified themselves as a secondary school teacher noted the **alarming rise in young boys repeating sexist and misogynist views** in class and in assignments. They noted that they would appreciate more help from the government in how to adequately address this upsetting use of language without alienating pupils.

*"We believe education is a key element in the overall Equally Safe strategy and that the Equally Safe at School programme will lead to longer term change. **Educating our young people at an early age and stage of development can only have positive impacts on how they treat each other and develop respectful relationships as they grow older.**"*

[Victim Support Scotland]

<sup>1</sup> As of 5 October 2023, 72 schools have registered to implement ESAS – this represents around a fifth of Scottish secondary schools.

## 2. Online Crime

Does the new Online Safety Bill do enough to protect women and girls from online abuse/sexual abuse? Should the offence of 'cyberflashing' be created for Scotland? (Q1)

- There was general support for the new Online Safety Bill, though consensus amongst individuals and organisations that it **does not go far enough to protect women and girls online**.
- Rape Crisis Scotland noted that the *"main failing is that women and girls are not addressed specifically by the Bill or in any detailed guidance"*, and that the law does not hold VAWG at its core.
- The majority of respondents believed that placing **better quality controls on social media sites and platforms** is key to challenging and reducing VAWG online. The anonymity of abusers online was noted by various respondents, with online platforms providing the opportunity to intimidate, cause fear or alarm or sexually harass individuals with impunity.
- The majority of respondents noted that **social media companies should be held accountable** when illegal activity takes place on their platforms, particularly in relation to enabling VAWG online.
- ASLEF noted that whilst the Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009 made it illegal to coerce a person into looking at a sexual image, which would cover 'cyberflashing', it was not introduced to address cyberflashing specifically as the technical capability for such offences to be committed was not the same as it is now, with smart phones becoming the norm in the years since.
- While a large minority of respondents supported the creation of a specific offence of 'cyberflashing', a few warned against introducing further legislative changes without appropriate thresholds to ensure that perpetrators can be prosecuted.
- Those in favour of strengthening the law to target cyberflashing noted the importance of **holding social media companies accountable** when a person's private images or videos were uploaded or leaked online without their consent.

*"Scots law could be reformed to provide a **comprehensive, straightforward offence**, clearly labelled to **target cyberflashing**. I have proposed and drafted a **consent-based cyberflashing offence** which focuses on the harms to victims, rather than the motives of perpetrators."*

[Professor Clare McGlynn]

What further types of technology could be used to keep women and girls safe online? What could be done specifically in Scotland to better address and tackle online/cyber sexual crime? (Q2)

- A large minority of respondents highlighted the **importance of engaging in meaningful conversations** about how society engages with and influences the development and use of technology in a safe and secure manner. This includes **placing better controls** on current online platforms and holding social media companies legally accountable when VAWG occurs on their platforms.
- A few respondents noted the importance of **centring the voices of women and girls** in any conversations about developing technology to protect them online. At one of our roundtables, a representative from YouTube outlined the difficulties around monitoring content given how many videos are being constantly uploaded. Scottish Labour Women's Declaration highlighted the importance of including female voices and perspectives at design level, ensuring that technology protects women and girls online from its inception, and before the technology takes on a mind of its own.
- A significant minority of respondents noted that many **women and girls feel there is little point in reporting online abuse** to the police because they **feel it is unlikely to be treated seriously** or have a positive outcome. Police Scotland must do more to ensure women and girls have confidence that their complaint will be sensitively handled when reporting online/sexual cybercrime.





- A few respondents noted that Police Scotland require **increased funding to invest more resources into addressing online/cybercrimes** targeted towards women and girls. Many noted that Police Scotland should build upon their advertising campaigns (such as their 'Don't Be That Guy' campaign) to create more awareness of their initiatives to tackle VAWG.
- ASLEF, from their perspective as a rail union, noted that the British Transport Police should work in conjunction with rail operators and Police Scotland to assist in tackling and prosecuting offenders with the use of body cameras worn by staff at stations and on-board services, where it is agreed. They believe that this **collaborative working will help stop and prosecute abusers** who carry out their crimes such as cyberflashing via Bluetooth and airdropping whilst on trains.

***"Placing better quality controls on current online platforms is key to reducing online assaults against women and girls."***

[Scottish Women's Convention]



### 3. Domestic Abuse

Are there ways that Clare's Law could be strengthened? Should Clare's Law be reviewed to encourage police officers to proactively visit the new partners of those convicted of domestic abuse? (Q1)

- A majority of respondents argued there is **currently a lack of knowledge** surrounding Clare's Law and how to access it.
- A majority also agreed that Clare's Law **should be strengthened to better protect victims of domestic abuse**, though respondents varied in their approach to legal reform.
- GMB Scotland argued that Clare's Law should be strengthened to give **provisions for lifetime restraining orders** for those convicted of gender based violence. They also argued that Clare's Law must be strengthened by **reducing the amount of time** the police have to respond to disclosures.
- Scottish Women's Convention recommended that the **Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse Scotland is integrated into sex and relationship education** to empower women and girls to utilise the law when experiencing domestic abuse or stalking.
- A significant minority of respondents noted that the **police should liaise with specialist VAWG services** to ensure perpetrators of domestic violence do not fall through the net if they move away from their communities.
- A majority of respondents were, however, **unsure or undecided if police should visit the new partners of those convicted of domestic abuse**. Some argued that this could potentially lead to further violence within the relationship. Others highlighted staffing and resource management issues within Police Scotland as potential barriers to ensuring a uniform approach across the force. Further consultation and engagement with Police Scotland would be required to test the effectiveness of such an approach.
- Instead, it was argued that Police Scotland should **respond to disclosures about a partner's behaviour as quickly as possible**, and that applicants should be supported by signposting and referral to specialist domestic abuse services who can support them with safety planning and any decision they may make about their relationship.

*"It is possible to strengthen Clare's Law by **reducing the timeframe for police to disclose information about an individual's violent or abusive behaviour**; this is something the UK Government has indicated it is intending to do, and this should also be applied."*

[ASLEF]

Do you think the Caledonian System should be more widespread? Should there be more programmes to work with men who have perpetrated domestic abuse in order to cut rates of re-offending? (Q2)

- A majority of respondents agreed that the Caledonian System **should be more widespread**, with a few noting that the scheme should be compulsory for all men convicted of VAWG.
- Scottish Women's Convention noted that only those with a prison sentence over five years will go through educational programmes within prison, and that it would be useful to **further extend** the Caledonian System to include a larger volume of convicted abusers.
- A few respondents noted that the Caledonian System should **extend beyond the prison estate** as it is imperative to continue to work with those men who have left custody to reduce reoffending rates.
- A few respondents also noted that there **must be more programmes** to work with men who have perpetrated domestic violence, and that the Caledonian System should only be one of many schemes designed to break the cycle of VAWG.
- However, there is currently no evidence to suggest that mandatory education programmes work for offenders of domestic abuse, though there is currently more demand than availability for programmes.
- A significant minority of respondents noted that the Scottish Government should continually **monitor and evaluate the scheme** to understand if it is successful in achieving its aims and objectives in tackling domestic violence and men's abuse of women. Labour Women's Declaration also noted that it is unclear if the scheme has reduced rates of reoffending. There is currently no publicly available data that addresses the usefulness of the scheme in reducing repeat offending.
- A few respondents highlighted the importance of **developing more support mechanisms and supportive practices** for women and girls affected by domestic abuse as a key aspect of violence prevention as it ultimately challenges patriarchal attitudes that blame women for men's abusive behaviour. Programmes should also be established to support victims of domestic violence, rather than simply focus on the rights and rehabilitation of the perpetrator.

*"...the Scottish Government **must be more transparent** on the evidence base and rationale for the [Caledonian] System and report on any achieved outcomes to justify it and prove that it is meeting its intended aims."*

[GMB Scotland]

## 4. Men's Responsibility

Are there new offences that would assist in combatting violence against women? If so, what types? (Q1)

- A large minority welcomed the proposals made by the Independent Working Group on Misogyny and Criminal Justice in Scotland, chaired by Baroness Helena Kennedy KC, including the proposal to make an **aggravation of misogyny** and new criminal offences relating to **public sexual harassment** and **stirring up hatred against women**.
  - o GMB Scotland also noted that **sex for rent** is an issue that should be criminalised, particularly given the potential exploitation of female tenants by private landlords in the midst of the cost-of-living and housing crises.
- A few respondents highlighted the Parliament's **overreliance on introducing legislation without considering alternative measures** or minor reforms to existing laws. It was consistently raised in responses to the consultation and during the roundtable discussions that major legislative and policy changes that seek to tackle VAWG must be **evidence-led** and based on **robust, high-quality data**.
- It was also noted during roundtable discussions that prisons do not necessarily rehabilitate men convicted of gender-based violence, nor does imprisonment stamp out sexist and misogynistic attitudes and behaviours upon release. **Bespoke services geared towards education and rehabilitation** should be further developed alongside wider legal reform of the justice system in an attempt to break the cycle of violence against women.



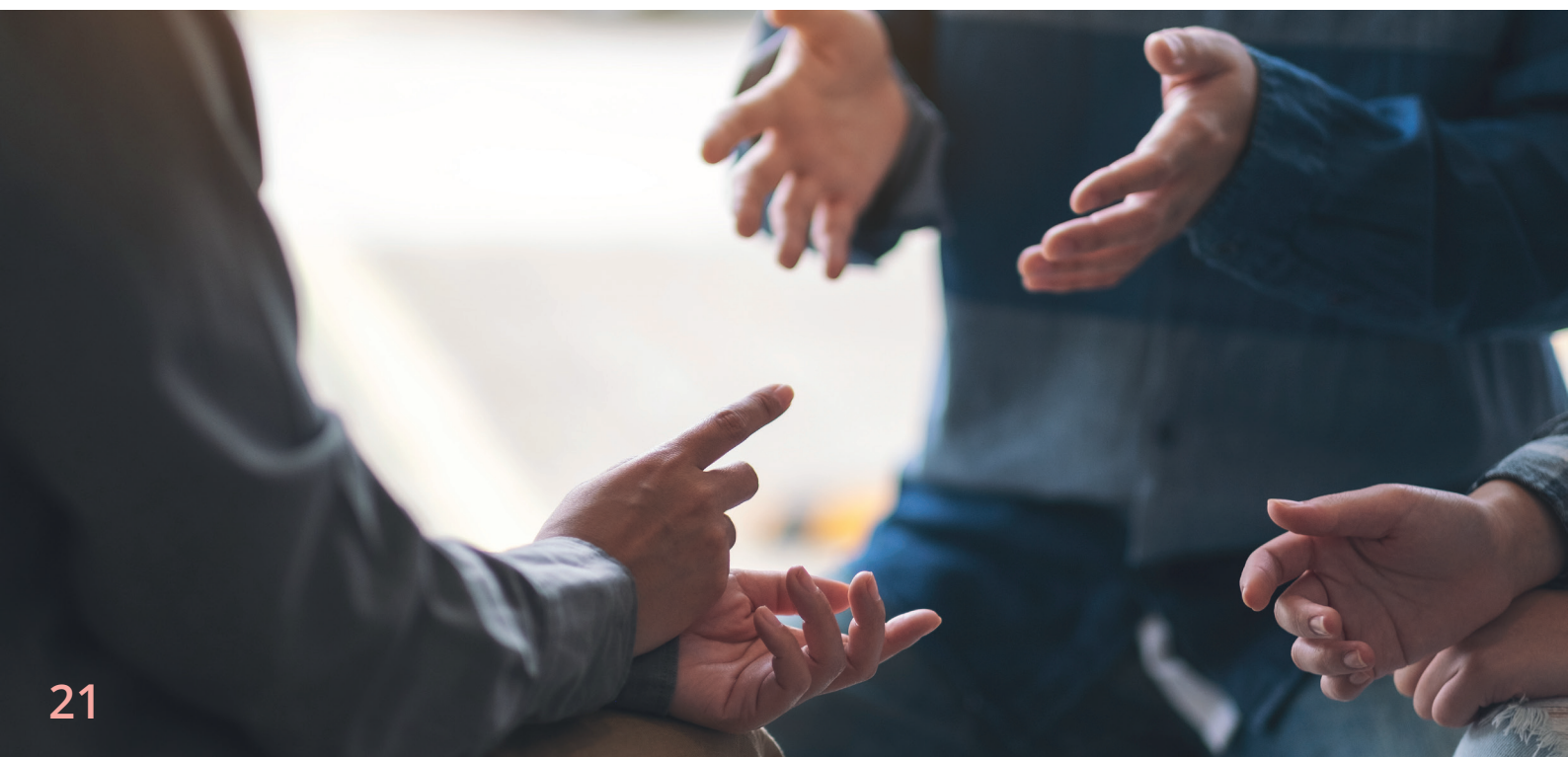
## How else can we tackle society's attitudes to abuse and violence against women? (Q2)

- A majority of respondents agreed that men need to become fully embedded within conversations concerning their behaviour, and that **men talking to other men about VAWG** is what is most desperately needed.
- A large minority of respondents noted that there is a **real need for male role models and male voices** within the feminist movement, to appeal to young men and boys as well as ensuring that the burden is not placed on women and girls to consistently discuss male violence and abuse. Women should not be expected to do the heavy lifting in any conversation about VAWG.
- A majority of respondents argued that **education and early interventions** are required in order to effectively abolish men's abuse of women. Men and boys need to be educated and empowered to both recognise their own behaviour and that of their peers. Part of the unwillingness to challenge toxic and abusive behaviour towards women might potentially come from a lack of knowledge or skills to talk about gender inequality or misogyny.
- A few respondents mentioned and praised the work of Police Scotland's 'Don't Be That Guy' campaign, noting that it is a worthy initiative but that **it needs to go further**.
- An individual respondent noted that *"It is men who are missing in conversations focusing on tackling VAWG; it is men who need the courage to call out bad behaviour when they see male peers engaging in it."* Both individuals and organisations highlighted that **too many boys and men believe that this does not concern them** because, in their own opinion, they themselves are not sexist or misogynistic.
- In response to this question, the NASUWT union noted that many of these **attitudes emerge from an early age and are commonly held by school pupils**. It had surveyed school teachers and found over a third said they had been sexually harassed by a colleague and over two fifths had been sexually harassed by a pupil.
- Some respondents to the consultation noted that Scotland requires a **national strategy** to deconstruct the narrative that implies women and girls are lesser than men.

- One respondent noted that a **holistic approach to tackling VAWG** as the combination of healthcare, forensic services, mental health support, financial advice, legal aid and women's refuges could be delivered in an integrated and co-ordinated way.
- Many respondents commented in passing that society must continue to **challenge gender roles and patriarchal attitudes** that damage women and girls on a daily basis in order to effectively tackle and ultimately end VAWG. Scotland, especially cities like Glasgow and Dundee, still suffer from a 'hard-man' image, which is incredibly damaging to both men and women.
- An individual respondent noted that *"Challenging the culture around relationships, jobs and children is another step to challenging sexist, outdated notions surrounding women's primary role as caregivers and housewives."*
- It was also argued in responses to the consultation and roundtable discussions that boys and men should feel comfortable to express love, kindness, and respect without fear of ridicule, and that these behaviours should become increasingly normalised and discussed from a very young age.

*"...men taking to other men is what we need: how many more panels by women talking to rooms full of only women discussing sexual violence do we need? It is men who are missing at these events and in the conversations."*

[Individual consultation respondent]



## 5. Women's Experiences of the Criminal Justice System

Do you believe that court backlogs will discourage women from reporting sexual offences? (Q1)

Do you believe court backlogs may discourage victims from pursuing justice, and withdrawing from the court system? (Q2)

- A majority of respondents agreed that **court backlogs discourage women from reporting** sexual offences.
- A large minority of respondents highlighted the fact that women and girls are currently waiting three to four years for their trial to be heard before the courts, with many receiving a 'not guilty' or 'not proven' verdict. This is enough to discourage women from reporting sexual offences to the police in the first place.
- Many respondents to the consultation and roundtable discussion noted that the **court backlog prevents many women from moving on with their lives**, with some feeling they must keep the memories fresh so they can give evidence properly and remember specific details.
- A large minority of respondents highlighted **women's severe lack of faith in the justice system** – the police, the courts, and the jury – and that the fear of a long-drawn out, traumatising process contributes to underreporting.
- Rape Crisis Scotland argue that a *"clear strategy to tackle the backlog and improve timescales for future cases must be a priority."*

*"Many women fear that approaching the police will **put them in more danger** and will not report the abuse if it will only put them at risk of further violence."*

[USDAW]

What measures could be taken to improve women's experience of the justice system when they report a sexual offence? (Q3)

- A large minority of respondents noted that there remains a **strong discourse of victim-blaming in the media and society more generally** that serves to justify or excuse perpetrators' abusive actions and puts up barriers to women reporting and seeking specialist support for sexual crimes. It is the responsibility of everyone in society to challenge rape myths or outdated narratives surrounding the 'perfect victim'. This would hopefully encourage women to report a sexual offence when victimised.

- A few respondents noted the **lack of faith in the police** when reporting rape or sexual violence. Scottish Women's Convention argued that the **attitudes of police officers are key barriers to reporting**, and that women have experienced disbelief and scepticism when reporting sexually motivated crimes.
- A few respondents noted that the **justice system – from reporting to trial – should be more joined up** to ensure women are aware of the progression of their case. Women with lived experience of the justice system described feeling ignored and gaslit by police officers and court personnel when attempting to find out more about their case.
- A large minority highlighted the **importance of trauma-informed training across the sector** – police, courts, lawyers – to encourage a more sympathetic, respectful approach for potential victims of sexual and gender-based violence. Long-term funding for specialist advocacy workers working with victims is also imperative to instil women's faith in the criminal justice system.
- A few respondents highlighted the importance of the **extension of independent legal advice and representation** from solicitors to survivors of sexual violence. A great number of contributors to the roundtable event held at the Scottish Parliament also expressed support for independent legal representation. Many pointed to evidence of such a system working well in jurisdictions such as Ireland and Spain, helping to minimise the trauma suffered by victims during the process and ensuring they are fully prepared for the daunting trial process.
- A few respondents, including Rape Crisis Scotland and GMB Scotland, noted that courts could implement **separate entrances for victims** and the accused so that the alleged abuser or their family could not come into contact with a victim-complainer, which might cause further distress or intimidation.
- An individual respondent raised concerns about the **recent changes in Scottish sentencing policy** for under 25s convicted of rape and serious sexual assault, noting that further research to review the basis for changes in sentencing policy should be a priority if women and girls are to regain trust in the system.

*"An incoming Scottish Labour Government should address the need to **change public perceptions** of the police in matters of domestic and other forms of gendered abuse to help tackle this problem."*

[USDAW]



## 6. Proposals for Justice Reform

Would a pilot of single-judge trials for serious sexual offences be justified due to the long delays before cases come to trial and due to the disproportionate impact this has on women and children? What is the risk to fairness for the accused if juries were removed? (Q1)

- Responses on introducing a pilot of single-judge trials for serious sexual offences were **mixed**.
- Rape Crisis Scotland, GMB Scotland and Scottish Women's Convention are in favour of a pilot of single-judge trials for serious sexual offences.
- A few respondents raised concerns about the pilot, with one respondent arguing that they were *"not sure if this would be a fair solution"*.
- ASLEF noted that they were *"disappointed that we are in a situation where the use of single-judge trials is being considered, however due to the issues this backlog can cause for women and girls in Scotland we would be cautiously open to a pilot being run if it can be shown to be fully compliant with Article 6 of the ECHR (the Right to a fair trial)."*
- Some respondents applauded the removal of juries for rape trials given the complex nature of such cases and high burden of proof; others raised concerns about the removal of juries, given that most judges are (at least perceived to be) white, male, and from privileged backgrounds.
- Respondents in favour of the pilot noted that its **merits must be robustly assessed** before proceeding with any permanent changes to the legal system.
- Due to the diversity of responses, we believe that these are issues that require detailed legal examination. We intend to carefully scrutinise any significant changes to jury trials as part of the *Victims, Witnesses and Justice Reform (Scotland) Bill*.
- Overall, respondents largely agreed that **something must be done** to urgently reduce the court backlog and achieve justice for women and girls, and that this should be a priority for the party.

*"Jurors can have **prejudicial attitudes** hence the need for education in schools to shape attitudes around consent."*

[GMB Scotland]

Would it be beneficial to establish a new specialist criminal court dealing with serious sexual offences? (Q2)

- A large minority of respondents were **generally supportive** of the establishment of a new specialist criminal court to deal with serious sexual offences, though many noted that **this court should not be perceived to hold less weight than the High Court.**
- Those in favour argued that the specialist court might give victims more confidence in reporting and would hopefully ensure trials were handled more **sensitively, timely and robustly.**
- Rape Crisis Scotland noted that they *“strongly oppose[d] there being any sentencing limit placed on the court and the full range of sentences should be available in these cases.”* This viewpoint was widely expressed amongst those in favour of establishing a specialist court for serious sexual offences.
- A few respondents noted that **floating trial diets must be abolished** and are entirely unacceptable and inappropriate for serious sexual offences.
- Again, this is an issue that we intend to scrutinise when considering evidence as part of the *Victims, Witnesses and Justice Reform (Scotland) Bill*.

*“Faster, more streamlined processes for reporting violent crime generally, and especially sexual violence, so that victim’s initial effort is not wasted – leading to them maybe becoming discouraged and no longer wanting to pursue prosecution.”*

[Individual consultation respondent]

## 7. Street Harassment

Do you agree that there should be a new offence to deal with street harassment in Scotland? (Q1)

- A majority of respondents agreed that a **new offence to deal with street harassment** should be introduced in Scotland.
- A significant minority expressed hope that Baroness Kennedy KC's proposed misogyny law might lead to a reduction in street harassment.
- A few respondents noted that this might be difficult to police. An individual respondent noted that *"men must call out other men and, if safe, directly challenge them on it if they witness a woman or girl being harassed in public."*
- It was noted by respondents to the consultation and raised in roundtable discussions that **introducing new crimes does not necessarily resolve or reduce the underlying issue**, and that attitudes towards women must radically change alongside introducing specific laws to regulate men's behaviour towards women.

What other measures do you think might help women to feel safer on our streets? (Q2)

- A majority of respondents highlighted the importance of **improving lighting in public areas** - such as parks, streets and bus stops - so women and girls feel safe walking home alone, especially at night and during winter.
- A majority of respondents also noted the importance of public transport in ensuring women can get home safely without fear of harassment or abuse.
- A few respondents noted the importance of staff being visible on public transport - "staffed ticket offices, conductors on trains and buses, and staffed taxi ranks mean that there is always someone there to support women's safety and potentially provide refuge away from harassers." [Labour Women's Declaration].

- TSSA Scotland argued in its response that **closures of rail ticket offices, a drop in British Transport Police numbers and a reduction in the number of staff on trains were all key factors** *“in an increase in anti-social behaviour going unchallenged on the railway which has had a corresponding increase in violence against women and girls”*. This is borne out by statistics: British Transport Police figures for Scotland showed anti-social behaviour among under-18s jumped by 63% in the year to March 2022 compared to pre-Covid 2019-20, while threatening and abusive behaviour overall was up by nearly a third.<sup>1</sup> Statistics from BTP also show there were 63 reports of sexual assault on ScotRail trains between 2017 and 2021. Over the same period, 26 sex assaults were recorded at Scottish train stations.<sup>2</sup>
- We also heard from Unite the Union about their Get Me Home Safely Campaign to make free transport home for hospitality staff a prerequisite for all new alcohol licenses. They shared that many of their women members have been harassed or assaulted when travelling home after night shifts, whether that be on public transport or walking home in the dark because they could not afford a taxi. A number of Scottish Labour Councils have already agreed to this licensing condition.
- We did not receive evidence regarding taxis but are acutely aware from work in our regions that the number of taxis on our streets has decreased, reducing further the transport options available which could potentially be having an impact on the safety of women and girls.

*“Car parks are often deserted by the time women leave their store late at night and staff parking spaces are invariably the furthest away from the entrance. Growing numbers of employers are switching car park lights off to reduce costs and lower their environmental impact but this has **left women feeling unsafe and anxious.**”*

[USDAW]

1 <https://www.scotsman.com/news/transport/crackdown-on-post-covid-bounce-in-anti-social-behaviour-on-transport-urged-3779308>

2 <https://www.scotsman.com/lifestyle/travel/campaigners-demand-more-action-to-protect-women-on-scotlands-rail-network-3724148>

## 8. Lack of Data on Violence Against Black Minority Ethnic (BME) and Disabled Women and Girls

What are the ways in which policy making would benefit from more data, with the goal of bringing down the levels of violence against women and girls in BME communities as well as disabled women and girls? (Q1)

- The majority of respondents noted that the **collection of more and better-quality data** would allow policymakers and legislators to understand the ways in which policy and the law impacts women's lives in different ways.
- The majority of respondents were supportive of the collection of **disaggregated data**, particularly **intersectional approaches to data**. This is particularly useful when attempting to introduce or monitor policies that affect the lives of minority groups, such as Black or disabled women.
- A few respondents criticised the Scottish Government's approach to data collection. Rape Crisis Scotland noted that the data currently published by the government in relation to sexual offences and justice is *"extremely limited – it is not even broken down by gender of victim, there is no equality data."* This makes it incredibly difficult to see how we can be effective in efforts to improve justice responses to crimes such as rape if we lack the most basic data. More data that specifically looks at the intersectionality of misogyny would enable policymakers to tackle the issue holistically.
- GMB Scotland noted that the European Institute for Gender Equality set standards for collecting data should be used when collecting evidence and research.
- A few respondents noted that the lack of robust data means that any **solutions to tackling VAWG in Scotland are often generalised** and often **miss opportunities** to tackle issues which are specific to BME communities and disabled women and girls.
- The Scottish Government should ensure full co-operation on the part of the public sector in terms of data collection and data publishing.

*"The correct data can help to **direct resources and services** where and how they are required by those with intersecting inequalities."*

[Rape Crisis Scotland]

What other ways are there to bring down the levels of violence against disabled women and girls as well as women and girls in BME communities?  
(Q2)

- A large minority of respondents noted the importance of **including BME and disabled women's voices** in any targeted awareness campaigns and community outreach to change attitudes and normalised behaviours towards women and girls.
- A large minority of respondents noted that **education is key in reducing discriminatory behaviour** towards BME and disabled women and girls. Scottish Women's Convention highlighted that women from ethnic minority communities, especially refugees and people seeking asylum, have stated that "work within communities is vital in preventing violence and hatred." Community groups should harbour positive feeling and encourage cultural exchange.
- A large minority of respondents noted the **importance of investing in bespoke services and funding** for BME and disabled women. Rape Crisis Scotland noted that there is a "clear need" for funding for specialist services that women can access if they wish to do so. Funding a diverse range of services for women of different backgrounds and lived experiences should be a priority in order to properly tackle and end VAWG.

*"Improve their agency in society as a whole, for a start, for example by **increasing BME/disabled representation on panels, boards, and councils or any decision-making or advisory roles** that could make a difference for BME and disabled women and girls."*

[Individual consultation respondent]

# Respondents also raised the importance of:

## Terminology

- A minority of individual respondents criticised the consultation's focus on violence against women and girls, rather than all victims of violence, or male victims of domestic violence.
- A large minority of respondents noted the exclusion of LGBTQ+ women and girls from Section 8, stating that data collection must include the differing needs and experiences of women in relation to race, ethnicity, age, sexuality, gender identity, and so on.
- A few respondents noted that data on sex, rather than gender identity, needs to be collected to enable effective policy making on violence against women and satisfy the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- GMB Scotland argued that a category on femicide should also be included in any consultation on tackling VAWG.

## Male victims of violence

- A few respondents noted the exclusion of male victims of violence, especially domestic violence.
- It was noted that more funding afforded to public and third sector organisations to **support male victims** – specifically more helplines set up to help men experiencing domestic abuse. Staff members in domestic violence agencies need to be properly trained and up to date with best practice on how to help or assist male victims of domestic violence when they ask for help. Introducing statutory training in the identification and support of male victims of domestic abuse in schools and workplaces is needed.
- **Busting the myths** around men experiencing domestic abuse – society needs to encourage men to discuss their feelings, worries and emotions around intimate-partner violence and abuse, without fear of ridicule.
- Schools should also be **openly discussing this issue** with male pupils, fostering an environment where young boys can identify when they are experiencing abuse in a relationship in its many forms, and empower them to seek help and intervention when they feel ready.

## Further context:

- There are many more issues relating to VAWG that were not specifically covered in the consultation – or were hardly raised in the responses – but may nonetheless help inform party policy going forward.
- For example, the Scottish Labour justice team have met with campaigners on the issue of spiking, where a person puts alcohol or drugs into another person’s drink without their knowledge (or directly into their body in the case of needle spiking). There has been an increase in spiking incidents reported to the police in recent years<sup>1</sup> and the party has called on police, licensing authorities, the night-time industry and universities to work together to keep women safe.
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in Scotland, but victims have nevertheless been treated in Scottish hospitals in recent years. Scottish Labour believes governments and public bodies must continue to work together to protect women and girls from FGM, and more training and support services should be put in place to help women and girls who are victims of FGM.
- Scottish Labour stood on a manifesto commitment to strengthen support for the victims of human trafficking, an example of VAWG that persists across the globe. The party believes legislation passed by the UK Government is making life harder for victims, who find it increasingly hard to access support due to their immigration status.
- The issues of VAWG in prisons, the role of women’s prisons, alternatives to custody for women offenders, and support for women offenders who have been victims of sexual and physical violence, were not raised by many respondents. However, these are issues Scottish Labour’s justice team are very engaged in. Scotland has proportionally one of the largest female prison populations in northern Europe,<sup>2</sup> and yet almost 40% of women charged are not being charged for violent offences.<sup>3</sup>
- Scottish Labour contends there’s no route to tackling these issues without addressing wider personal and social issues and so custodial sentences are often blunt instruments. Proportionally, more women are on remand than men in Scotland<sup>4</sup> yet a high number of them will be mothers, may have suffered domestic abuse and/or have caring responsibilities. For these reasons, alternatives to custody are vitally important for the protection and rehabilitation of these women. Katy Clark hosted a member’s debate on this issue in June and made many of these points.

1 <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/police-scotland-buys-more-toxicology-tests-after-rise-in-spiking-k7j2xgr55>

2 <https://www.scottishlegal.com/articles/scotlands-prison-population-rate-remains-above-european-average>

3 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics-2021-22/pages/5/>

4 *ibid.*



- The consultation summary references assaults on women and girls working in education and public transport. It should be noted that this appears to be a pattern across the wider public sector. A survey by UNISON published this month found nearly 55,000 violent incidents had been recorded against public sector workers last year, a 31% increase.<sup>1</sup>

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1 Unison Scotland, Violence at Work report, 2023



## **Recommendations:**

These recommendations are based on the evidence received and suggestions for a way forward. They are not the full extent of the action and change that is needed but, along with the detailed responses received, they will inform the work of the Scottish Labour's justice team as we hold the Scottish Government to account and also develop our own policy proposals for tackling violence against women.

Throughout this work we are committed to continuing to work with women across our Party and trade union movement, and continuing our dialogue with young people, to develop a policy programme which listens to the voices of women and girls. Our priority is to empower women and girls and ensure their voices and interests are recognised and acted upon.



## To deliver the culture change needed that prevents violence occurring in the first place, Scottish Labour calls for:

- **A comprehensive cross-campus strategy to educate young people and tackle sexism, misogyny and sexual harassment in all education settings is necessary.** This should aim to ensure children and young people can learn about gender inequality from a young age and includes lessons targeted towards young boys and men regarding the links between gender stereotypes and sexism, misogyny and sexual harassment.
- **The Scottish Government to expand upon the Equally Safe at Work programme and develop specific sectoral plans with the trade unions to support workplaces in taking a zero-tolerance approach to abuse and harassment of their workforce, particularly those public-sector workforces dominated by women such as school staff and teachers who report an increase in violence at work.**
- **A national public messaging campaign, co-ordinated by the Scottish Government in partnership with relevant organisations, to raise awareness about the nature of violence against women and girls in Scotland and set out a clear route map of where women and girls can find help if they experience sexual violence.**

## **To strengthen the protections available to women and girls in Scotland:**

- **Scottish Labour supports the closing of loopholes in law on the distribution of intimate images so that images cannot be shared without consent. The UK Labour Party sought to strengthen the Online Safety Act to criminalise content which constituted, encouraged or promoted violence against women and girls but these amendments were defeated. Pauline McNeill will continue to work with Professor Clare McGlynn to consider how Scottish Labour can strengthen protections in Scotland.**
- **Scottish Labour continues to call for misogyny to be criminalised and, whilst we welcome proposals from Scottish Government to legislate for criminalisation, we urge them to move faster and criminalise misogyny as soon as possible. The Independent Working Group on Misogyny and Criminal Justice was set up in 2021 and progress over the last two years has been too slow.**

- **Women are more likely than men to use public transport and have the right to feel safe when travelling. Scottish Labour continues to call on the Scottish Government to prevent any reduction in ticket office opening hours, commit to no cuts to staffing on trains and invest in the lighting and infrastructure of bus and train stations to ensure women and girls feel safe.**
- **Scottish Government should work with trade unions to assess policies and actions that could protect public-facing workers and whether further legal protections could be beneficial, building on the Protection of Workers (Retail and Age-restricted Goods and Services) (Scotland) Act 2021.**
- **There should be steps taken to make it possible for all men convicted of VAWG to have access to the Caledonian System and services should be expanded to ensure work continues with men and their families once they leave custody.**
- **The Scottish Government should ensure offender programmes are able to meet demand and should consider schemes to work with perpetrators of sexual violence, in addition to domestic violence.**

## **There is a need to improve experiences of the justice system for the women and girls who do experience violence:**

- **There should be a right for legal advocacy for rape victims. Katy Clark MSP has called on the Scottish Government to pilot the provision of non-means-tested advice and legal representation from the initial stages in rape, attempted rape and serious sexual offences cases and is assessing how this could be included in the upcoming Victims, Witnesses, and Justice Reform Bill.**
- **The backlog in court cases is resulting in women and girls losing confidence in the justice system. Scottish Labour calls on the Scottish Government to urgently develop a clear strategy to tackle the backlog and improve timescales for future cases that relate to VAWG, which includes further utilisation of virtual trials, strengthening legal aid and addressing prison escort staff shortages.**
- **Police Scotland must be adequately resourced and trained on trauma-informed practice so that they can investigate and act appropriately to enforce existing legal protections, such as the Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm Act, the Domestic Abuse Act and in delivering their own Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy.**

## **To ensure that Scottish Government actions to tackle VAWG are effective and properly targeted:**

- **Public bodies should be regularly gathering and publishing robust, high-quality and intersectional data so that there is good evidence to identify gaps in services and to evaluate policy aimed towards tackling VAWG - this is particularly important in ensuring interventions are not generalised and meet the needs of minority groups such as women from BME communities and women with disabilities.**
  
- **Policies funded by the Scottish Government to tackle VAWG should be regularly reviewed and monitored with their effectiveness assessed against set criteria such as**
  - a) **reducing violence in schools and in workplaces**
  - b) **attitudes towards women and girls and evidence of attitudinal change among the people worked with, i.e., young people, offenders etc.**
  - c) **reductions in reported crime and reoffending in relation to VAWG**

**These reviews and data collection should ensure that necessary changes can be made to ensure interventions are impactful.**

## Appendix 1 – Respondent Organisations

Eastwood Constituency Labour Party
GMB Scotland
Labour Women’s Declaration
National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT)
Rape Crisis Scotland
Scottish Women’s Convention
The Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (ASLEF)
TSSA – the transport and travel union
Unite the Union Scotland
USDAW
Victim Support Scotland
Professor Clare McGlynn (Durham Law School)



## Appendix 2 - Roundtable Engagement

Edinburgh Bar Association
Education Institute of Scotland (EIS)
Emily Test
Engender
Glasgow Bar Association
Greenfaulds High School
Just Right Scotland
Law Society of Scotland
NASUWT, the Teachers' Union
NUS Scotland
Rape Crisis Scotland
Scottish Government (Equality Unit; Violence Against Women and Girls Unit)
Scottish Legal Aid Board
Scottish Women's Aid
Scottish Women's Rights Centre
Shakti Women's Aid
Universities Scotland
YouTube
Victim Support Scotland
White Ribbon Scotland
Zero Tolerance Scotland

## Appendix 3 - Academic/Expert/Lived Experience Engagement

Eamon Keane (University of Glasgow/School of Law)
Jackie Main (Glasgow Caledonian/Fearless Glasgow)
Professor Clare McGlynn (Durham University/Durham Law School)
Professor Michelle Burman (University of Glasgow/Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research)
Professor Thomas McMillan (University of Glasgow/School of Health and Wellbeing)
Ronaldo Alfredo Renucci KC (Faculty of Advocates)
Emma and Suzy (Speak Out Survivors)
Silvia Vazzana (Victim-survivor and campaigner for victims of stalking)
Miss C (Victim-survivor and campaigner)
Ellie Wilson (Victim-survivor and justice reform campaigner)

# Appendix 4 - Questions and Motions

## Parliamentary Questions

Pauline McNeill (Glasgow) (Scottish Labour Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether any of the women's organisations that it funds provides help and assistance to women fleeing abusive family situations, rather than intimate partner violence and abuse, and if this is the case, whether it can provide a list of those organisations.

Pauline McNeill (Glasgow) (Scottish Labour Party): To ask the Scottish Government what progress it has made on expanding the Caledonian System, since January 2022.

Pauline McNeill (Glasgow) (Scottish Labour Party): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment has been made of the impact of the reported funding reduction of between £550,000 and £650,000 to the women's justice service, and specifically the reported reduction of capacity from 12 to eight beds in the Turning Point Scotland 218 service.

Pauline McNeill: To ask the First Minister what the Scottish Government is doing to tackle repeat offending, in light of a recent report that found that people who experience frequent and serious repeat violence often do not bring this to the attention of the authorities. (S6F-0236)

Pauline McNeill (Glasgow) (Scottish Labour Party): To ask the Scottish Government for what reasons there are no high secure healthcare beds for women in Scotland.

Pauline McNeill (Glasgow) (Lab) To ask the Scottish Government what its position is on whether there are any gaps in Scots law in relation to tackling image-based sexual abuse. (S6O-02338)

Pauline McNeill (Glasgow) (Lab) To ask the Scottish Government what it is doing to help educate children and young people about any dangers of online pornography. (S6O-02245)

Pauline McNeill (Glasgow) (Lab) supplementary to S6O-01940 re courtroom behaviour - To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide an update on the progress being made to ensure that domestic abuse legislation better reflects victims' experiences

Pauline McNeill (Glasgow) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Government what recent meetings it has had with Universities Scotland to discuss gender-based violence in higher education. (S6O-01859)

Katy Clark (MSP for West Scotland, Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide an update on what actions it is taking to tackle sexual harassment in schools.

Katy Clark (MSP for West Scotland, Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide an update on the proposed £500,000 fund for local organisations in international development partner countries to take forward work to ensure women and girls are safe, equal and respected. (S6O-00321)

## Motions

Pauline McNeill MSP, Motion S6M-10555: BBC Radio 5 Live and BBC Bitesize Survey on Issues Facing Teenagers

Katy Clark MSP, Motion S6M-03350: Advice and Legal Representation for Victims of Rape and Serious Sexual Offences

Katy Clark MSP, Motion S6M-02286: International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls

## Other Debates of Relevance

S6M-08122: Women's and Girls' Safety (Public Transport)

## Motions from Scottish Labour Conferences

### Gender Based Violence - agreed by Scottish Labour Party Annual Conference 2023

Conference notes the continual rises of crimes involving violence against women and girls, despite crime reductions overall; further notes that the SNP Government's rhetoric on addressing this is rarely backed up with action.

Conference believes that violence against women and girls is a stain on our society and has no place in Scotland in 2023. Women will never be equal if they are not safe from violence. The prevalence of violence against women and girls has led to an idea that it is somehow inevitable or impossible to end - this is plain and simply wrong. There is violence against women in every walk of life. Women and girls experience abuse by men and it must be called out for what it is. This epidemic is rooted in the prevalence of misogyny and inequality across our society.

Conference resolves that the Party should propose a long-term, strategic response that provides specific measures to tackle this endemic issue including:

- Looking at ways to address inequality in schools and ensuring young people are educated on calling out misogyny and sexual harassment;
- Ensuring legal measures go far enough to protect women and girls from online abuse;
- Looking at reviewing and strengthening Clare's Law;
- Investigating new offences in combating gender-based violence;
- Finding new ways to tackle society's attitudes to abuse and violence against women;
- Looking at ways to improve women's experience of the justice system;
- Calling for the improvement of data and policy making for violence against women and girls who are BME, disabled or live with additional factors which increase vulnerability.





**Scottish Labour**

The Change Scotland Needs