

A silhouette of a woman's head and shoulders in profile, looking towards the left. The background is a sunset sky with orange and yellow clouds, and a city skyline is visible in the distance. The bottom half of the image has a blue gradient with horizontal light streaks.

Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Action Plan



MORE TRUST | LESS CRIME | HIGH STANDARDS

Message from the Commissioner

Throughout the world, one third of women and girls are affected by violence, making it the most prevalent and damaging form of abuse for both victims and wider society. In England and Wales, two women a week are killed by a former or current partner, the police receive a domestic abuse related call every 30 seconds and more than one in 20 women (6.2%) have experienced rape or attempted rape since the age of 16*. In the last 12 months around 3500 men in London have been accused of such offences.

Our mission under the New Met for London Plan is to deliver More Trust, Less Crime and High Standards. With this plan **we commit to transforming how we protect the public from harm and how we combat violence against women and girls largely committed by predatory men.**

At the heart of our plan are commitments to both solve more rapes, domestic violence, child abuse and other cases of predatory offending, and to target the most dangerous offenders to get them off the streets before they can harm again. We are determined to do all we can to ensure women and girls feel safe wherever they are. This is a tremendous task and one which the Met cannot achieve alone.

These draft commitments will form the basis of our action plan. They have been developed using feedback and consultation, but we know that effective engagement is continuous. This is why we are asking our local police leaders to use them as a basis for new conversations you; with local people affected by how we tackle violence against women and girls, and with those who we must work with to make the difference we know is needed. The QR code at the end of this leaflet allows you to tell us what you think.

These commitments will be supported by action. There is much that is already underway, but we will continue to listen and we will reform how we operate to meet these commitments.

We have much more to do, but we are working hard to change.



Sir Mark Rowley QPM | Commissioner

First steps:

- We have spent time with women and girls across London to identify the places where we must improve safety, routinely directing police resources to these problems.
- We have worked with others to make festivals, events and night time venues safer for women, deploying officers to spot risks early.
- We are building bigger teams so that the officers who investigate domestic abuse and serious sexual offences are better equipped to do their jobs. When we have completed this work, over 500 more officers and staff will be working in public protection roles.
- We have charged 500 more cases of rape and serious sexual offences in the last 12 months compared to the previous year, as we increasingly target dangerous men. Our performance compared with other forces is significantly improved.
- We have developed new tools to identify people who pose a risk to women and girls and we have taken action by arresting and convicting them.
- Our response to stalking continues to improve; we have expanded the Stalking and Threat Assessment Centre, more than doubled the number of Stalking Protection Orders in place, and our detection rates are higher.
- Our detection rates for child abuse, including child sex abuse, are higher.
- We have accepted our deep rooted problems in relation to culture and standards and we have shared progress on how we are removing those inside our organisation who pose a risk, but we know how much more work is needed before we are confident that our culture is right.
- We are investing in new ways to listen to victim's experiences and we will develop these to ensure we are recognising the voices of victim survivors of VAWG, particularly minoritised victim survivors.

* **Footnote:** (n.d.). Retrieved from (DFID (2013) Addressing g Violence against Women and Girls through Security and Justice (S&J) Programming, CHASE Guidance Note 4, London: DFID. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/267720/AVAW-security-justice-progA.pdf

10 Draft Commitments at a glance

Pillar 1 – Building Trust and Confidence

Commitment 1

We will work to eliminate police perpetrated domestic abuse and sexual offences and we will improve the effectiveness of our response to these crimes.

- More effective identification and targeting of police perpetrators, regularly publishing results
- More effective support to victim survivors of police perpetrated Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)
- Improvement to vetting processes for all police officers and staff where VAWG risk is present
- We will ensure effective external scrutiny of our response to police perpetrated VAWG

Commitment 2

We will improve how we listen to those impacted by Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG). We will involve them in our plans, introduce external scrutiny of VAWG cases and share more data with the public. We will take specific action to understand how we can improve engagement with minoritised women and girls.

- We will produce a VAWG engagement plan for London in collaboration with the VAWG sector and other partners, using a range of methods to hear Londoners' views to shape our VAWG response and understand its impact
- We will share information with the public about our progress on VAWG commitments, and share more VAWG data in an interactive way
- We will deliver targeted local engagement activity with partners across communities and boroughs
- We will open up new routes for external scrutiny of VAWG cases, including the potential for funded work

Commitment 3

We will demonstrably prioritise Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) by **investing resources to improve capacity and capability**. This means having the right number of officers and staff in the right places (capacity) and the right skills, equipment and training to best protect women and girls wherever you work in the Met (capability).

- We will increase the resources dedicated to VAWG and public protection via our New Met for London Plan
- We will treat VAWG as a 'whole Met response', not just for those in dedicated roles, and this will include identifying the learning and development needs across the whole workforce
- We will take immediate steps to prioritise VAWG in current training cycles
- Under the Strengthening Public Protection programme, we will drive a significant increase in training to all Public Protection VAWG teams

Commitment 4

We will tackle sexism and misogyny in the Met.

- We will implement a new programme to transform the Met's culture, with specific focus on sexism and misogyny
- We will ensure the Met is training all new and current officers and staff to identify and call out sexism and misogyny

Commitment 5

We will look outside the Met for ways to improve our response to Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) and we will be innovative and precise; testing new approaches, learning what works and tackling gaps in our data.

- We will seek to identify and implement approaches that are working well in wider policing
- We will try new things, and we will actively seek new approaches through engagement
- We will deliver the activities required to meet our Open Data Strategy; prioritising VAWG as an area for wider and more transparent access to our data, insight and findings
- We will apply data science and analytics to key areas and knowledge gaps to enable more precise activity against VAWG

Pillar 2 – Relentless Pursuit of Perpetrators

Commitment 6

We will do much more to identify and tackle the most dangerous and prolific perpetrators of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).

- We will make tackling VAWG perpetrators the job of the whole of the Met, understanding how we target central and local resources more effectively to reduce the harm they pose
- We will improve our overall performance for bringing more VAWG perpetrators to justice and reducing repeat victimisation
- We will increase our forensic intervention, contribution and speed in support of public protection operations
- We will deliver Operation Soteria learning by ensuring a context led, suspect focused and victim centred approach to rape investigation and prosecution
- We will use new approaches (for example the Top 100 initiative) to identify harmful and repeat offenders and mitigate the risk they pose, implementing what works
- We will change our systems to better identify precursor offences that are not automatically categorised as VAWG, so that risky offenders can be identified much earlier

Commitment 7

We will make better use of police powers to protect women and girls from perpetrators, such as civil orders and protection orders.

- We will train more officers to understand and use civil orders
- We will increase the number of orders in place for victim survivors

Commitment 8

We will take action to improve support and care for VAWG victim survivors through the criminal justice process to ensure a consistent and compassionate service everywhere in London.

- Working with MOPAC, charities and partners, we will improve VAWG victim survivor care through a new multi-agency victim hub, and we will put victim survivors first by improving referral rates and trauma informed practice
- We'll bring in external expertise and challenge from victim's organisations to understand cases which can prove difficult to drive early intervention and reduce repeat victimisation.
- We will improve how we receive and analyse feedback from VAWG victim survivors at multiple stages of our service
- We will seek to understand and address any disparity in our service to, or the confidence of, VAWG victim survivors
- We will seek to deliver proportionate outcomes for victim survivors, using the new Out of Court Disposal framework for defined VAWG offences, putting victim survivors first and where there is an evidence base for effective intervention

Pillar 3 - Safer Spaces

Commitment 9

We will identify high risk and high harm locations for Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), and target resources to those places to improve the safety of women and girls in London's public spaces.

- We will be more determined to hear and act on what women and girls are saying about where they do not feel safe in London through local engagement and technology
- We will provide our local leaders with more regular and more actionable intelligence analysis on VAWG problems and we will help patrolling officers see live data about VAWG problems when they patrol

- We'll produce publicly available hotspot maps of violence against women and girls in London, using them to raise awareness and to target our operational response
- We will work with others to create more Safe Space initiatives across London and make planned events (like festivals) safer for women
- We will work with our partners locally to share information on problems and create joint solutions that improve the safety of women and girls in public spaces, pushing for planning, licencing and public space management to be VAWG centric

Commitment 10

We will focus on preventing Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) through our Strongest Ever Neighbourhoods programme, including prevention work in schools and with young people to protect them and prevent harm in private, in public and online.

- We will work in local partnerships to support delivery of VAWG related prevention activities in schools and with young people including online harm, stalking, the VAWG toolkit, and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- We will establish VAWG prevention as a key responsibility for neighbourhood teams, tracking local VAWG problem solving initiatives as an indicator of performance
- We will define more clearly the role of Safer Neighbourhood teams in protecting victims and offender management

What Next

This leaflet sets out the Met's ambitions for how we will tackle VAWG over the coming years. Our plans will continue to grow and change as we involve Londoners and our partners; our response will be firmly grounded in this feedback and will see us tackle all forms of sexual offences and domestic abuse. **We are resolute in our commitment to protect women and girls.**

Smart Survey



Please scan the QR code to access the survey.