



The Mayor of
West Yorkshire's
**Safety of
Women and Girls**
Strategy



Contents

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Foreword	2
Introduction	4
National Context	6
Local Context	8
The Journey So Far	10
External Consultation	12
Strategy on a Page	14
Themes	
Education and Prevention	16
Behaviour Change	18
Safe Spaces	20
Supporting the Sector	22
Cross-Cutting Themes	
Role of Men and Boys	24
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	25
Funding	26
A Thank You	27
How to Access Help	28

Foreword

Tracy Brabin,
Mayor of West Yorkshire



West Yorkshire is home to over 1.2 million women and girls, and every one of them should feel safe. Safe at home, at work, on a night out, walking in a park, anywhere.

They should not have to live in fear or adapt their behaviours due to harassment, abuse, or violence.

During my election campaign I laid out ten manifesto pledges to the public.

One of those commitments is keeping women and girls safe. That is why I put it at the heart of my [Police and Crime Plan](#) and created this strategy.

As women with lived experience of violence perpetrated by men, the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, Alison Lowe, and I are committed leaders in campaigning for justice for women and girls and working to prevent harm before it happens.

The continued epidemic of violence against women and girls requires us all to explicitly consider what we can do to bring about change.

We will deliver this strategy with a public health approach, that brings long term change for the women and girls of West Yorkshire. The focus must shift on how we can work together to ensure this societal change happens. This will be a challenging and complex ambition to achieve but doing nothing is not an option.

Working with partners and stakeholders across West Yorkshire, we listened, consulted, and identified good practice that we can spread across our region. We want West Yorkshire to be the exemplar region where we can empower, educate, and thrive.

As the first woman metro Mayor in the country with Police and Crime Commissioner powers, I am privileged to be in a position where I can influence not just the police service, but other services and businesses that can help to keep women and girls safe. This includes my responsibilities in transport, skills, housing, and culture, and working closely with the business community to ensure change happens.

Together we can make West Yorkshire a safe, just, and inclusive place for women and girls.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tracy Brabin".

Tracy Brabin
Mayor of West Yorkshire



Alison Lowe OBE, Deputy Mayor
for Policing and Crime for West Yorkshire

As a survivor of sexual and domestic abuse I feel a strong personal responsibility towards making West Yorkshire safer for women and girls.

When it happened to me, I did not believe that I had a voice. But I am here now as the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime in West Yorkshire to tell you that you will be heard, you will be believed, and you will be supported.

The Mayor of West Yorkshire and I will continue to ensure support for victims and survivors of domestic and sexual abuse is always there, as, and when it is needed.

We will work with the police, partner agencies, voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations and victims and survivors to ensure we deliver for those who are most vulnerable, putting them at the heart of our response. We will continue to lobby government for change, ensuring the Mayor's and my voice are heard at a national level.

This strategy builds on years of work but there is still a lot to do to increase the safety of women and girls. I can't wait to see the incredible things we will achieve together. Our time is now.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alison Lowe".

Alison Lowe OBE
Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime
for West Yorkshire

Introduction

Women and girls at the heart of policing

The Mayor, Tracy Brabin, made ten pledges as part of her election manifesto. One of the Mayor's pledges was to put women and girls at the heart of policing. This pledge was embodied with the publication of the [Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024](#) in March 2022.

This Safety of Women and Girls Strategy outlines how we will work in partnership with stakeholders in West Yorkshire, as well as at a regional, national, and international level. We will deliver change with voluntary, community and social enterprises, the private sector, local communities and most importantly, listen to the voices of women and girls, to improve the lives of all people across our region.

The Mayor's Police and Crime Plan sets out a clear vision for community safety in West Yorkshire, to be safe, just and inclusive, with the pledge of embedding the safety of women and girls at the heart of the plan. Since the publication of the Police and Crime Plan, we have worked to deliver on the pledges to ensure the safety of women and girls is prioritised.

Co-designed with partners and stakeholders, we have consulted with the people of West Yorkshire. We have embedded the voices of those with lived experience and identified good practice, but more importantly, the challenges, and lessons to learn. Some of these voices are highlighted as quotes throughout the strategy.

The focus for the Safety of Women and Girls Strategy is to complement and build upon existing partnership work to deliver long-term societal change. The scope of the strategy includes violence against women and girls as well as broader issues of safety, therefore identifying and driving change for the future.

We recognise that anyone can be affected by violence and become victims and survivors of crime, however the nature of these often high-harm crimes disproportionately affects women and girls.

This strategy advocates men and boys to be allies and sets out how they can help to support the safety of all in West Yorkshire. By incorporating the role of men and boys as a cross cutting theme, the strategy can embed their voice and recognise the bigger societal picture, without alienating a section of society who can help us aid the safety of women and girls.

The delivery and impact of this strategy will be monitored through the relevant metrics of the [Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024](#)¹ performance framework and the [Mayor's Policing and Crime Annual Report](#). In addition, the existing structures of West Yorkshire community safety governance and partner coordination will be utilised.



¹ The Police and Crime Plan - West Yorkshire Combined Authority (westyorks-ca.gov.uk)

National Context

The challenges

To understand what action is needed, we must bring light to the challenges that are faced.

VAWG (violence against women and girls) is defined as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.”¹

The [Crime Survey of England and Wales](#) estimated that in the last 12-month period approximately 2.1 million women aged 18 to 74 were victims of some form of abuse as a child, and an estimated 1.6 million women aged 16-74 suffered domestic abuse in England and Wales. 3% of women aged 16 to 74 experienced sexual assault or attempted sexual assault and 5% experienced stalking.²

1 in 5 women are victims of sexual assault or attempted assault in their lifetime. According to data from the 2019-2020 Crime Survey of England and Wales, 69% of women aged 16 and over said that they felt very safe or safe walking alone after dark. For women aged 75 and over, that figure falls to 58%.

The government priorities seek to address the challenges women and girls endure, with specific focus on victim support, perpetrators, and prevention.

In the [Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy](#), the government set out how the crimes against women and girls are varied. The strategy references rape and other sexual offences, stalking, domestic abuse, ‘honour-based’ abuse (including female genital mutilation and forced marriage and ‘honour’ killings), image based sexual abuse as well as many others.³

The government seeks to make improvements to the criminal justice system, through greater transparency and accountability, placing the safety of women and girls at the heart of their national strategies. Government and the National Chief Police Council have developed and prioritised their framework, and strategies, embedding the VAWG agenda across departments.

The [National Police Chiefs Council \(NPCC\)](#) set out a framework to coordinate and standardise the policing of VAWG. The three overarching pillars are improving trust and confidence in policing, relentlessly pursuing perpetrators and creating safer spaces. Although we recognise that these issues do not start and end with policing, we appreciate and welcome the appetite for national change and the scrutiny of policing standards.

[Recent Office for National Statistics \(ONS\) data](#) confirms that the number of crimes recorded by police in England and Wales has hit an all-time high, with a big increase in violent and sexual offences.

- The number of rapes rose by 20% on pre-COVID figures, with 70,600 recorded in the year to June 2022 which is a new record.
- There were 912,181 domestic abuse offences, 6% more than last year and 14% more than in 2019-2020.

¹ [Violence against women \(who.int\)](#)

² [The lasting impact of violence against women and girls – Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

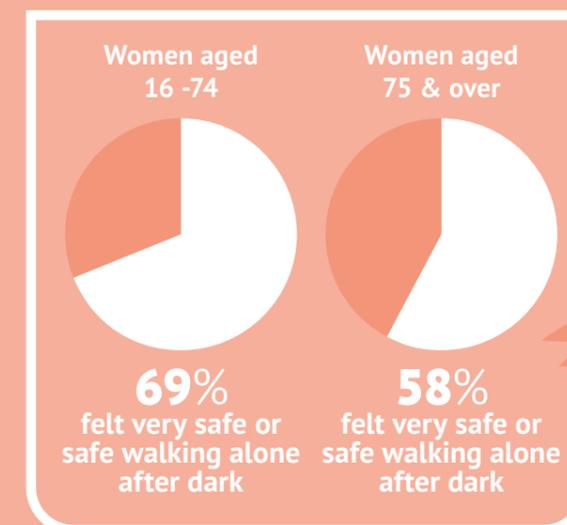
³ [Tackling Violence Against Women And Girls Strategy \(accessible version\) – GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Crime Survey of England and Wales 2019-2020

Women aged 18-74

2.1 million
victims of abuse as children

1.6 million
suffered domestic abuse



Local Context



1.2 million

women and girls live
in West Yorkshire



92,859

crimes involving a
female victim aged 10+



1 in 5

VAWG offences are
committed in a public space

“

It is also vital the community safety partnerships across West Yorkshire ensure that their approaches to supporting the safety of women and girls locally is not narrow e.g. focussed on safety at night in parks, but it looks at the broader impact of violence against women and girls.

We are committed to working with West Yorkshire Police to pursue perpetrators and support the implementation of the West Yorkshire Police Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy.

Inevitably, reinforcing trust and confidence in policing is a personal journey, but we are proud that the Mayoral Combined Authority, West Yorkshire Police, and partners have incorporated innovation and good practice across the region.

West Yorkshire Police have published their own [VAWG Strategy](#) which complements the national framework. The Mayor receives reports and statistical information from the police on their performance against the metrics contained within the [Police and Crime Plan](#) and holds the police to account for delivery of her pledges and her vision that West Yorkshire be a safe, just and inclusive place to be, for all. As a result of this challenge, West Yorkshire Police has a renewed focus on protecting women and girls which has seen several examples of innovation for victims here in West Yorkshire.

- Forensic marking – SmartWater is a forensic solution to deter violent and sexual offences, as well as being a physical marker used to identify perpetrators.
- Extension of Bradford’s Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) to include street-based harassment. This prohibits drivers causing alarm, harassment to women and girls or distress whilst in their cars.
- Use of Section 60 powers to search night-time economy users for needles in allegations of spiking. These powers are specially used to prevent and detect the carrying of dangerous instruments or harmful weapons.

The Mayoral Combined Authority will maintain strategic oversight through the West Yorkshire Domestic and Sexual Abuse Board including district based reporting of risk and challenges for these issues. Through chairing the Local Criminal Justice Board, the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime can influence partners to improve the experience of the criminal justice journey and importantly, achieve better outcomes for women and girls.

The Mayor’s ambition for the reduction and eventual elimination of VAWG across West Yorkshire is a constant of all her work, however we recognise that the cost-of-living crisis is the new pandemic that has directly impacted the stability of communities. Women and girls will experience greater risk of harm because of the financial pressures the UK is facing.

A recent [Women’s Aid](#) survey found that almost three quarters (73%) of women living with and having financial links with the abuser said that the cost-of-living crisis had either prevented them from leaving or made it harder for them to leave. We will continue to work with our network of partners and commissioned services to monitor and understand any uplift in victim and survivors’ numbers over the coming months.

West Yorkshire is home to 1.2 million women and girls, all with unique lived experiences. It is the Mayor’s vision to ensure there is a consistent approach to addressing the safety of women and girls across West Yorkshire.

A [survey](#) conducted in 2021 within an area of West Yorkshire, with over 1300 responses from women, highlighted the following key issues⁴:

- 45 per cent had been followed or stalked and 21 per cent had suffered sexual assault or rape.
- 97% believe that ‘being a woman’ affects their personal safety.

Looking at West Yorkshire Police data for the 12 months between September 2021 and 2022 there have been:

- 92,859 crimes where we have a female victim aged 10+, this includes females as perpetrators as per the Home Office definition.
- That is a 15% increase on the previous 12 months.
- Nearly 1 in 5 of recorded VAWG offences are committed in a public space.

We recognise it may be troubling to see rises in numbers, this could be a direct result of increased reporting due to national and local VAWG related campaigns and increased measures by police forces to tackle these crimes and support victims.

⁴ Women Friendly Leeds

The Journey So Far

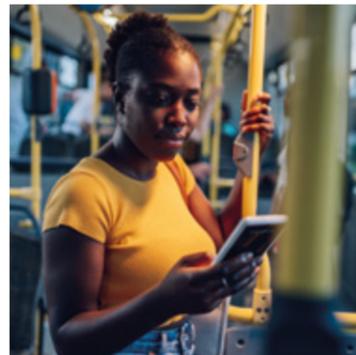
Working Together



Mayoral Combined Authority funded **52 new Independent Sexual Violence and Domestic Violence Advisors** in the region and supported the establishment of a new service for victims of domestic abuse related stalking.



Active upstander training for those who work in the night-time economy.



Night-time safety bus programmes in Leeds and Huddersfield offering support to anyone vulnerable on a night out.

West Yorkshire Police **increased trauma informed officers** and delivered specialist VAWG training.



Dedicated PCSOs to keep our transport network safer for everyone, including women and girls.



Mayoral Combined Authority **funded projects to support the safety of women and girls across the night-time economy** including 'safe space hubs,' street marshals and the extension of the West Yorkshire 'Ask for Angela' initiative.

Launched a **dedicated safety of women and girl's webpage** on the Mayoral Combined Authority site.

Mayoral Combined Authority have introduced the **Bus Safety Feedback Tool**. Using MCard, via the app and on the website, passengers can say what types of things are making them feel unsafe on the bus network, and when and where.

Violence Reduction Unit funded venues to use SmartTag canister to deploy forensic liquid to tag an offender deterring violent and sexual offences.



Mayoral Combined Authority launched a **West Yorkshire Independent Stalking Advocate Service** to provide specialist support.



West Yorkshire Police hosted a **VAWG Week of Action** supported by the Mayoral Combined Authority.

Mayoral Combined Authority secured over **£14 million in multi-year funding** from the Ministry of Justice for victim support services.

Mayoral Combined Authority worked with **9 West Yorkshire universities and colleges** to tackle predatory or misogynistic behaviour on campus



Welcomed a **pilot for a specialist sexual violence court** to support rape victims in Leeds Crown Court to assist with ongoing efforts to tackle the backlog and increase the volume and speed of cases.

Other support for females, funded by the Mayor in West Yorkshire:

- Rape Crisis Centres support female victims of sexual violence.
- Counselling for women.
- One to one and group support.
- Support for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic women.
- Support for sex-workers and women being or who have been sexually exploited.

External Consultation

Women and Girls Call for Evidence

In Autumn 2021, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime hosted a [Women and Girls Call for Evidence](#). This event set out the Mayor's intentions to drive forward this agenda, providing the bedrock to fulfil the Mayor's pledge of putting women and girls at the heart of the [Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024](#). Most importantly the event was about listening to partners, women and girls' groups and residents on what they saw as the issues that were priorities for women and girls' safety.

[The first strategy co-design event, in May 2022](#), was with statutory, and voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations. It was an opportunity for all in attendance to have their say on the key themes and priorities within the document following extensive research and surveys.

The below table highlights the key priorities in order of importance from the first co-design event.

Male Education and Prevention	73.44%	<div style="width: 73.44%;"></div>
Domestic and Sexual Violence	73.44%	<div style="width: 73.44%;"></div>
Women & Girls - Multiple and Complex Needs	56.25%	<div style="width: 56.25%;"></div>
Women & Girls - Minority / Disadvantaged Communities	56.25%	<div style="width: 56.25%;"></div>
Child Sexual Exploitation	53.12%	<div style="width: 53.12%;"></div>
Misogyny	43.75%	<div style="width: 43.75%;"></div>
Role of Men and Boys	42.19%	<div style="width: 42.19%;"></div>
Personal Safety	35.94%	<div style="width: 35.94%;"></div>
Workforce Development*	34.38%	<div style="width: 34.38%;"></div>
Safe Travel	26.56%	<div style="width: 26.56%;"></div>
Night-time Economy	25%	<div style="width: 25%;"></div>
Vulnerability Because of Disability	20.31%	<div style="width: 20.31%;"></div>
Other	10.94%	<div style="width: 10.94%;"></div>
Safety in the Workplace	6.25%	<div style="width: 6.25%;"></div>

All the women and girls spoken to as part of the consultation welcomed the Mayor's focus and many women shared their own stories as part of the Mayor's "[call for evidence](#)".

Partners and communities have also welcomed our priorities following consultation. We provided actions and examples of the work to support the safety of women and girls, as well as demonstrate the work that has already taken place since the publication of the [Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024](#).

At the second co-design event in September 2022, the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime met with partners including the police, local authorities, health, education, VCSE and those supporting and advocating for women and girls.

The event focused on the work undertaken to date on the development of the strategy, running through the proposed key themes and suggested actions, developed from the first co-design workshop in May 2022. It also allowed for further discussion with partners, ensuring the areas of focus were covered sufficiently, and the key actions were agreed.

*Trauma informed services and interventions



Strategy on a Page

The four themes have been chosen after extensive consultation with the public and partner organisations across West Yorkshire.

Under each theme there are actions which we will deliver upon with the support of our partners and wider organisations.

The three words of our vision **safe, just, inclusive** exemplify our clear long-term ambition for West Yorkshire.

Vision

Ultimate end goal of what we want to achieve

West Yorkshire: **Safe. Just. Inclusive.**

Key Themes

What we need to focus on



Education and Prevention



Behaviour Change



Safe Spaces



Supporting the Sector

Cross-Cutting Themes

Where we will put our energy



Role of Men and Boys



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Education and Prevention

Theme 1



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Going into schools as early and as frequently as possible, making school-based work a regular piece of work. Organisations working in schools would like access to POL-Ed resources developed for schools.

Education and Prevention should not be limited to educational settings. We encourage West Yorkshire to take a public health approach and implement programmes of education and awareness of healthy relationships and consent.

By public health approach, we mean the involvement of multiple services, working together to implement programmes to prevent people from violent behaviour. Focusing on the wellbeing of our entire region, we want to administer long-term societal change, and we must start early to apply the effectiveness of our themes, ahead of violent, harmful, and abusive acts.

Education has a key role in supporting the safety of women and girls. It has the powerful ability to transform behaviours and attitudes, improving the lives of all. We want to encourage staff and students to challenge gender stereotypes within and outside education settings.

Coercive control affects women and girls of all ages. We acknowledge abuse and exploitation of older people is under-represented and under-reported. Elderly women can be abused or neglected when relying on someone else, or subject to financial exploitation. Intergenerational abuse can also impact parents who are struggling with abuse from their own children and do not know where to go for support.

Delivery Actions

- Develop a safety of women and girls engagement offer in the education sector through a programme of events. The Mayoral Combined Authority will strengthen links between universities, colleges, and schools to drive an education and prevention approach.
- Through an expansion of working with the education sector, Mayoral Combined Authority to build links between universities, colleges and schools and aid recruitment of third-party support services to attract a representative workforce.
- The Mayor, utilising the Mayor's Safer Communities Fund, will work with theatre, art and sporting organisations that educate and raise awareness of the safety of women and girls through their creative methodologies to make a difference.
- Support West Yorkshire Police to maximise the reach and impact of their young people offer, Pol-Ed. This will include support programmes for young people on cybercrime awareness and education to target and stop exploitation and abuse facilitated online.
- Deliver programmes on cybercrime awareness and education to target exploitation and abuse.



Behaviour Change

Theme 2



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How do we affect the culture, as training is only one aspect? Culture is the hardest thing to change.

We seek to challenge negative attitudes and behaviours in children and young people through outreach and education as they prepare for the adult world.

To empower and encourage progressive views and healthy attitudes towards women and girls, we want to provoke peer to peer conversations amongst men of all ages which will begin to create shifts in societal behaviour.

The value that behavioural change programmes and initiatives have is powerful. We can make a difference working across West Yorkshire to ensure women and girls are no longer harassed and abused online, in person, at home or in their work environment.

We cannot tolerate any form of misogynistic behaviours and must ensure we intervene at the earliest points of abuse to prevent devastating crimes from occurring.

Delivery Actions

- Through Safer Streets 4 funding, we have appointed a training provider to deliver a 'Train the Trainer Acceptable Behaviour Change Programme', delivered to Youth Workers, which will challenge and empower men to do more to support women and girls' safety and assess their own behaviour prompting better, more considerate, and appropriate alternative decisions.
- Work with partners to review perpetrator programmes. Deliver and evaluate in West Yorkshire to understand what works.
- Work with partners in the business community to introduce bespoke women and girls' policies and workforce training to address potential misogyny, victim blaming, and understanding of trauma, including potentially through the Fair Work Charter.
- Delivery of a West Yorkshire wide safety of women and girls' media campaign, that puts West Yorkshire at the forefront of driving social change.
- Change male behaviours and improve public space safety through the delivery of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, working in partnership with stakeholders.



Safe Spaces

Theme 3



The strategy recognises that there are physical spaces in West Yorkshire that do not always feel safe, either because of the way they look, or due to the time of day, or how busy or quiet they are. The strategy also recognises that a sense of safe space extends beyond the physical public space to include the home, the workplace, and the digital world.

The strategy aims to ensure women and girls know of safe environments they can go near their education institution, home, workplace, or an anonymous safe zone online for support, welfare and guidance.

We want to maximise academic learning in the field of safe spaces. We recognise it goes beyond encouragement and campaigns. We need to support safety through outreach and change, whilst listening and acknowledging the barriers to feeling safe in different types of spaces.

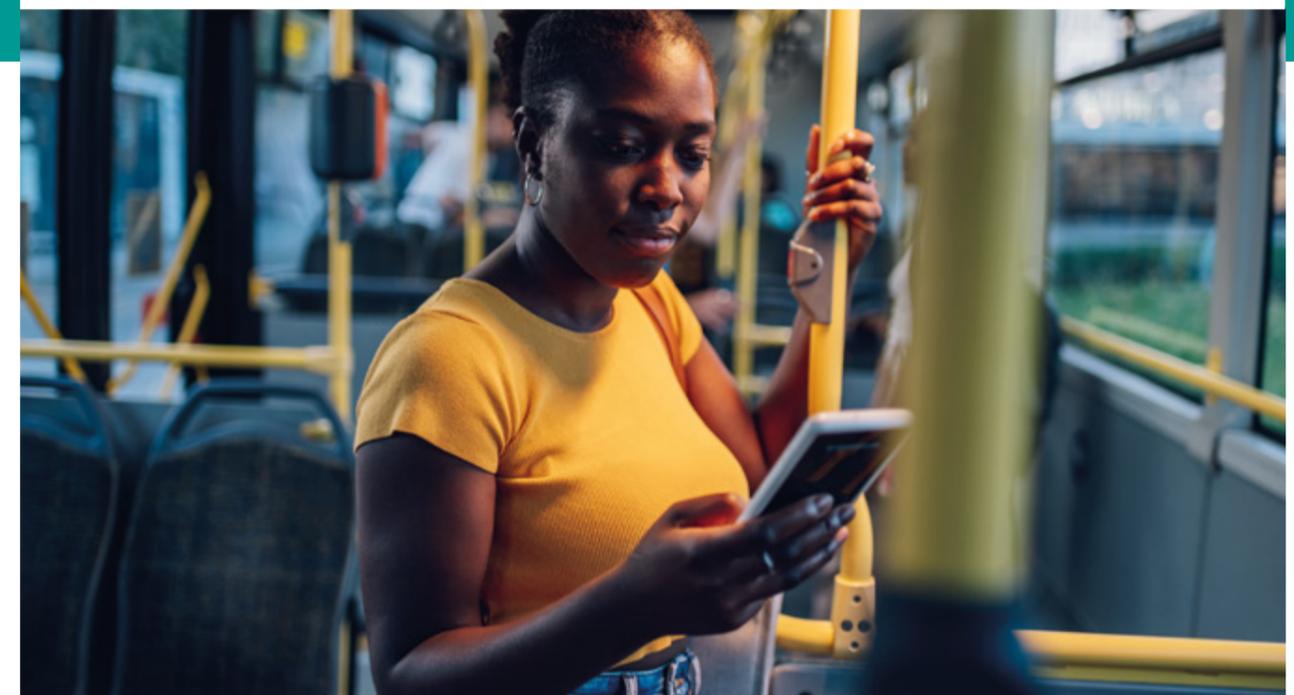
The Mayoral Combined Authority will promote the safety and use of parks by women and girls through understanding the barriers to women feeling safe in parks, supporting community groups to develop park-based activity offers for women and girls and delivering days of action to improve the look and feel across 10 target parks in West Yorkshire.

The Mayoral Combined Authority will continue to work with West Yorkshire Police to pursue perpetrators to ensure public, private and digital spaces are safe.

West Yorkshire Police have also increased safety patrols and have dedicated patrol plans for the night-time economy across West Yorkshire. Key clubs and pubs identified are being visited regularly with licensing and there is a focus on safety improvement.

Delivery Actions

- Take the learning from the Safer Streets Fund safety in parks research and the understanding of barriers to feeling safe, and implement in wider public spaces and shared areas, including educational settings, colleges and universities.
- Support opportunities for employers to create anonymised online support platforms and reporting processes should a colleague at work need help. Potential for in-work welfare spaces for those in need and developing corporate domestic abuse policies and strategies
- Working with the wider Mayoral Combined Authority, transport teams and partners to develop best practice across staff to aid the personal safety of women and girls on the transport networks across West Yorkshire. The Mayoral Combined Authority will ensure Metro transport network staff are trauma informed and are the best possible capable guardians.
- Mayoral Combined Authority to work with the West Yorkshire hospitality sector to amplify the roll out of capable guardians and trauma informed approaches both in the night-time economy and the wider hospitality sector.



Supporting the Sector

Theme 4



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More emphasis needs to be put on private/public organisations to champion the VAWG Strategy in the workplace.

We need to support the women and girls' sector to be able to sustainably deliver services in West Yorkshire. This is about lobbying and influencing at national, regional, and local level to ensure the women and girls' sector, both statutory, non-statutory and voluntary groups have the resource, skills, and reassurance they need to deliver services.

We want to cultivate our relationships with businesses as a route to influence employers to understand what they can do to support women's safety and support industries to be more gender inclusive.

Financial security is a major stress in individual and familial life. It can contribute to the likelihood of someone engaging in abusive behaviour towards a partner or family member. An economic downturn, such as the cost-of-living crisis, will increase the likelihood of unemployment, particularly for women, where financial independence can be a critical factor in a decision to leave a relationship.

We should not build barriers for women from moving forward from traumatic situations or block women and girls who are at the very beginning of their journey, or even at rehabilitation. The focus must be on empowerment. Reporting a crime should not have a negative impact on the wellbeing of women and girls. We will continue to support grass roots organisations who work within communities through the [Mayor's Safer Communities Fund](#) to help those most in need.

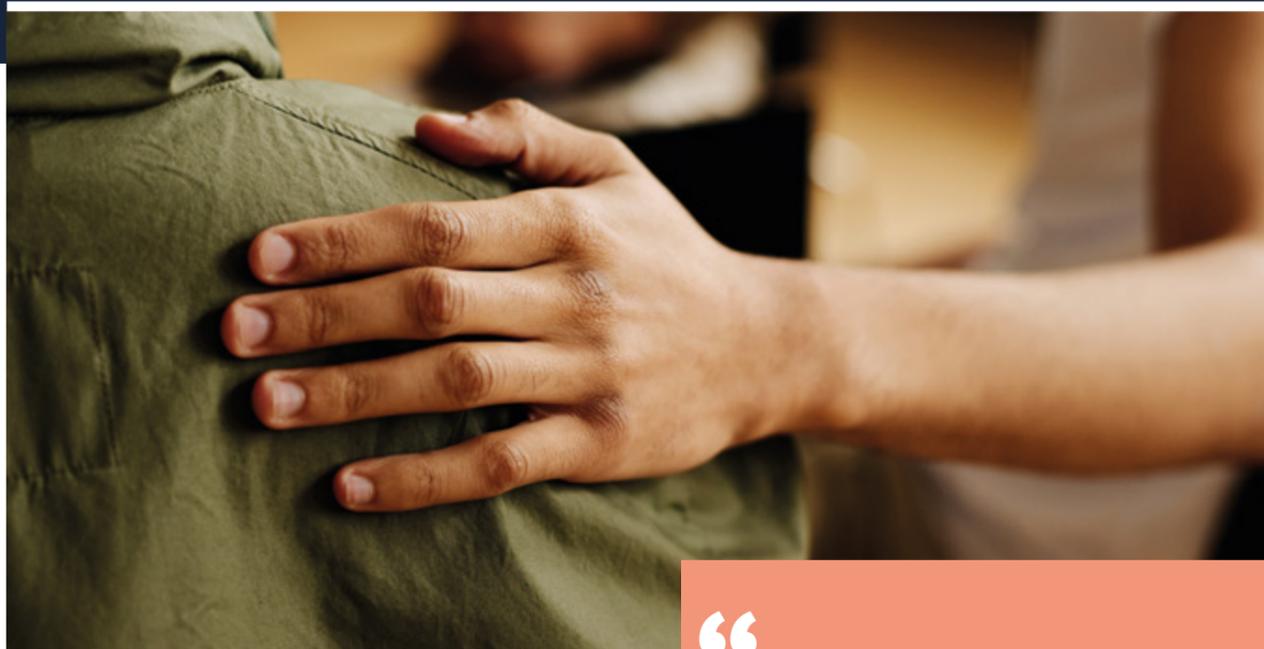
Delivery Actions

- Work to commission services that meet the needs of communities, reduce crime, and help victims, survivors, and witnesses to cope and recover, as far as possible, from the harm they have suffered. Equality and diversity and the experience and outcomes for people who use the Mayor's funded services will be central to how we commission.
- Support the introduction of a West Yorkshire VAWG Independent Advisory Group.
- Use the powers, responsibilities and influence of the Mayor to aid the skills market to support recruitment into the women and girls' sector, including encouraging and training workers into more specialist roles.
- Using the Mayor's voice to influence government to secure multi-year funding settlements to support sustainable services for women and girls.
- Work with partners to deliver focused training on unconscious bias, privilege, equality, diversity, and intersectionality.



Cross-Cutting Themes

Role of Men and Boys



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Consultation with men and boys – what do we need to address the behaviours and culture shift.

Although the strategy focuses on the safety of women and girls, we want men and boys in West Yorkshire to be empowered as allies.

In an increasingly challenging world for younger people, where online presence is just as relevant as the real world, we understand that gaps have been identified around specific targeting of male behaviours, and we want to be teaching, challenging, and encouraging individuals to speak out and recognise when certain behaviours are not acceptable.

The key to unlocking toxic masculinity is to change the narrative and challenge harmful views at the root. Equality and empowerment for women and girls is an issue for all. Our view is that all have a societal role to play to change, educate and call out problematic behaviour.

We need to understand male views, upbringing and societal pressures. To do so, we must consider the following together with our themes and actions:

- Is it widely understood how the cultural dynamic of men and boys from different community groups intersects with this agenda?
- How can we in West Yorkshire, eliminate men and boys' fear of speaking out and empower them to be upstanders and allies.
- How do we empower and educate men and boys to resolve issues?

Cross-Cutting Themes

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion



We understand that despite immense positive change, it must be highlighted that toxic behaviours and attitudes still occur. Individuals can be targeted because of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, socio-economic background, sex, or sexual orientation.

We are aware of the intersectional issues that women and girls who, for example, have a disability, who are from Black African/Caribbean, Southeast Asian, Minority Ethnic, or who are LGBTQIA+ can face in being disproportionately targeted for violence and abuse.

We are aware that violence, abuse, and harassment violations are deep-rooted in gender inequality, as are subconscious biases which have developed over generations of negative cultural attitudes towards women and girls. Despite the encouraging shift in societal conversations, challenging these behaviours and attitudes can remain problematic in communities and must remain a priority.

When we say communities, we mean groups of people with shared interests. This might be due to a shared location, a shared faith, a shared ethnicity or cultural heritage, a shared characteristic (such as LGBTQIA+ communities), or a shared disability. It may also include people across the region who are united by an interest in the same activity.

We also recognise that these communities contain a diverse range of views, which cannot be represented by a single spokesperson.

We also acknowledge each individual experience of disadvantage, discrimination, abuse and harm can vary, and as a result, women and girls who are victims, their family members, friends and/or support groups can also feel they lack the support and confidence to report or feel empowered due to the lack of representation and understanding of their lived experience.

We are aware that there are cultural barriers, and we understand there is not a generic solution to resolve the harm caused to women and girls. For example, [young Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority women are also more likely to experience domestic violence from multiple perpetrators, such as extended family members.](#)⁵ However, progressive action is needed, and we want to support all in West Yorkshire to encourage change.

For this reason, equality, diversity, and inclusion cannot stand alone as its own theme. It will continue to be evaluated and embedded within all workstreams across the Mayoral Combined Authority, as well in the themes we set out to deliver within this strategy.

“

A view of improving staff representation, ensuring staff reflect the communities they serve to understand the challenges they face.

⁵ www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2014/04/special-rapporteur-violence-against-women-finalizes-country-mission-united

Funding



The themes and actions of the Mayor's strategy will be delivered by a variety of funding sources across a variety of organisations. This includes but is not exclusive to the Mayor's Safer Communities Fund, the Community Safety Fund, UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Violence Reduction Unit funding, core Ministry of Justice victim's funding (open to all victims, regardless of gender) and Home Office Safer Streets Funding.

We are pleased that the West Yorkshire UK Shared Prosperity Fund will include a funding allocation of £992,760 over the next three financial years (inclusive of financial year 2022-2023), to support the delivery of the co-designed priorities and actions, as set out in the Safety of Women and Girls Strategy.

Since the implementation of the Police and Crime Plan, The Mayoral Combined Authority and West Yorkshire Police also have supported many projects for the safety of women and girls including:

- Projects to increase the safety for women and girls and tackle anti-social behaviour.
- Projects to support the safety of women and girls across the night-time economy in West Yorkshire.
- Funding through the Violence Reduction Unit and Safer Prosperity Fund to keep driving the safety of women and girls' agenda.
- Projects funded through the Safer Streets Fund and the Ministry of Justice victims funding.
- Increased the number of Independent Sexual Violence Advocates and Independent Domestic Violence Advocates with the creation of over 25 full time equivalent roles across West Yorkshire.
- Funding secured to tackle domestic abuse.



A Thank You

We would like to thank all of our partners who were involved in the creation of this strategy, those that participated in the consultation process and or attended the co-design events. We value your continued committed partnership working. We all have a vital contribution to make to improve the quality of life for the people of West Yorkshire and deliver this strategy.

Organisations who attended the strategy co-design events:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| Anah Project | Huddersfield Town Foundation | St Annes |
| ARK Leeds | Human Kind | Staying Put |
| Barnardos | Inspire North | Stop Hate UK |
| Basis | JAMES | Support After Rape & Sexual Violence |
| Bevan - Homeless Outreach Nurse | Joanna Project | Tender Education and Arts |
| Black Health Initiative | Keighley Asian Women & Childrens Centre | The Brunswick Centre |
| Bradford Council | Kirklees Clinical Commissioning Group | The Children's Society |
| Bradford People First | Kirklees Council | Together Women |
| Bradford VAWG Steering Group | Leeds City Council | Turning Point |
| Calderdale Council | Leeds College of Building | Victim Support |
| Calderdale Recovery Steps | Leeds Faiths Forum | Wakefield Council |
| Care and Repair Leeds | Leeds Jewish Council | Wakefield Council Youth Hub |
| Change Grow Live Leeds | Leeds Trinity University | Well Women Wakefield |
| Collaborate Digital Media | Leeds Womens Aid | West Yorkshire Police |
| Communities Together | Luminate | Women Centre |
| Connect Housing | Neesie | Women Zone |
| Conscious Youth | NHS - DA Specialist Social Prescribers | Women's Health Matters |
| Crimestoppers | NHS Digital | Women's Lives Leeds |
| EdShift | North Kirklees Women's Refuge | Yorkshire Asian Business Association |
| Embrace CVOC | NSPCC | Yorkshire Childrens Centre |
| Empath Action CIC | Peacemaker International | Youth Association |
| Engage Leeds | Probation | |
| Family Fit Yorkshire | Pursuit of Happiness | |
| Focus4Hope | Rosalie Ryrie Foundation | |
| Gasped | Safer Kirklees | |
| Getaway Girls | Scope | |
| HM Prison and Probation Service | Smart Works Leeds | |
| HM Prison Service | Spectrum People | |

How to Access Help and Support

We understand the sensitivity of the issues raised in this strategy, and that these topics can be traumatic and upsetting. If you, or someone you know may be affected by any of the issues raised, you may wish to contact the following organisations for advice and support.



In an emergency, always dial 999

If you have any reason to believe that a child or adult is at immediate risk of harm, **always contact the police on **999**.**

You can also report Anti-Social Behaviour, Criminal Damage and other crimes online at: westyorkshire.police.uk/report-it
For a non-emergency incident dial 101.

Organisation	Advice or support available	Contact details	Website
Victim Support (West Yorkshire)	Victim Support provides advice and guidance to people who have experienced a crime or traumatic incident.	0300 303 1971	victimsupport.org.uk/resources/west-yorkshire/
Victim Support (National)	Victim Support provides advice and guidance to people who have experienced a crime or traumatic incident.	08 08 16 89 111 or live chat at their website	victimsupport.org.uk
Domestic Abuse West Yorkshire Police	Specially trained officers in our district Safeguarding Units who can provide support and practical assistance to those who suffer domestic abuse, for example in making your home safer.	101 or 999 in an emergency	westyorkshire.police.uk/domesticabuse
Rape Crisis	Rape Crisis Centres provide independent and confidential services for women and girls of all ages who have experienced any form of sexual violence, at any time in their lives. You can find your nearest branch and use their live chat helpline on their website.	0808 802 9999	rapecrisis.org.uk/get-help
Childline	Childline provides support for anyone aged 18 or under offering a private and confidential service where children and young people can talk about anything. You can call them 24/7 or contact them online.	0800 111	childline.org.uk/get-support/
Samaritans	Support and guidance for anyone experiencing emotional distress.	116 123 24 hours a day, every day. Email jo@samaritans.org	samaritans.org
Mind	For information, advice, and support for anyone experiencing a mental health problem.	0300 123 3393	mind.org.uk
Crimestoppers	An independent charity allowing you to give information about crime anonymously over the phone or online.	0800 555 111	crimestoppers-uk.org

Find out more about the safety of women and girls, the Mayor of West Yorkshire, the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority using the details below, or by scanning the QR code.



Email policingandcrime@westyorks-ca.gov.uk

Web westyorks-ca.gov.uk/policingandcrime/

Twitter @MayorOfWY @DeputyMayorPCWY @WestYorkshireCA

