

Letter to the Mayor about London Holistic Advocacy Wrap Around Service (LHAWAS) support

Key information

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Contents

[Letter to the Mayor about London Holistic Advocacy Wrap Around Service \(LHAWAS\) support](#)
[Response from the Mayor](#)

Letter to the Mayor about London Holistic Advocacy Wrap Around Service (LHAWAS) support

Dear Sadiq,

London Holistic Advocacy Wrap Around Service (LHAWAS) support

I am writing to you to follow on from our discussion yesterday (19 June 2025) at Mayor's Question Time about the funding for the London Holistic Advocacy Wrap Around Service (LHAWAS) which is a partnership project led by Southall Black Sisters.

I welcome the work you have done to help tackle gendered violence. Actions such as naming it as your top priority, as well as the work you have done through MOPAC funding projects such as LHAWAS which supports hundreds of migrant victim-survivors of domestic abuse, have helped to tackle this issue across London.

Over the past six years, LHAWAS has enabled over 700 destitute migrant victim-survivors to access safe accommodation and subsistence, supported over 1000 victim-survivors through casework, provided immigration advice to nearly 500 victim-survivors, delivered counselling to 165 victim-survivors, and facilitated group work sessions for over 700 victim-survivors.

There is no equivalent service in London capable of meeting the urgent and complex needs of migrant victim-survivors with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF).

It is in this context that I write to you with concern that the funding for LHAWAS is currently due to end at the end of September 2025 with no alternative provision planned for this financial year. A tender process is due to take place, by MOPAC, to fund a new service which will start in April 2026.

This means there will be a six-month period when this vital support will not be available, and this essential service would be on a cliff edge. This break will also cause disruption in the referral pathways, staffing and reputation of the service.

It's vital to secure both transitional and long-term funding for LHAWAS so it can provide essential support for some of the most marginalised victim-survivors across London, particularly Black, minoritised and migrant women facing domestic abuse and NRPF issues.

I am calling on you to commit to continue funding support until at least April 2026 and urgently work with LHAWAS on securing both contingency funding and more secure long-term support, so Black, minoritised and migrant victim-survivors can access specialist, life-saving support in London to escape domestic abuse and lead lives free of violence and fear.

Thank you for taking the time to look into this issue. I hope you are able to ensure that the quality work provided by LHAWAS will be able to continue in London uninterrupted.

Yours sincerely,

Zoë Garbett

Green Party Member of the London Assembly

Response from the Mayor

Dear Zoë,

Thank you for highlighting your concerns about the future funding for the London Holistic Advocacy Wrap Around Service (LHAWAS). I apologise for the delay in responding.

The progress and impact of this project have been impressive, and I am pleased that the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) has been able to support its continuation well beyond the initial two-year commissioning period.

As you may be aware, Southall Black Sisters (SBS) were originally awarded funding for a two-year programme from 2019/20 to 2021/22, and MOPAC had since then extended the grant for a number of years, up until 30 September 2025. This was in recognition of the value of the programme and the lack of alternative support

available at that time for victims-survivors with no recourse to public funds (NRPF).

While LHAWAS was a unique programme at the time of commissioning, MOPAC has since awarded 13 grants to partnerships – including by and for organisations specialising in support for migrant survivors – and funded an additional 32 projects assisting survivors with NRPF through the Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation (DASA) programme. This demonstrates our ongoing commitment to this cohort.

Reductions in Ministry of Justice funding in 2025/26 have increased the budget pressures facing victim support services in London. In light of this and given that alternative provision for victims with NRPF is now available through the DASA programme, MOPAC took the difficult decision not to offer a further extension to LHAWAS beyond the end of their grant agreement.

Since then, I am pleased to say that MOPAC has supported SBS in obtaining a further £3m grant, ensuring they can continue to provide support to victims with NRPF in London. The Greater London Authority and MOPAC are also in the process of finalising grant awards for the DASA ‘by and for’ grants fund and will be able to announce the details of grant awards for that fund later this year.

I remain committed to ensuring that all survivors, including those with insecure or unknown immigration status, can access safety and support. We continue to work with the Metropolitan Police Service to improve operational practice and lobby the Government for legislative changes to establish a ‘firewall’ for victims and survivors of violence against women and girls – an essential step in removing barriers for those with NRPF.

If you would like more information about services available for this client group, please contact VAWG@mopac.london.gov.uk.

Thank you again for your engagement and support.

Yours sincerely,

Sir Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London

[Back to table of contents](#)