

# Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

**MOPAC Evidence & Insight**

June 2019

**MAYOR OF LONDON**

OFFICE FOR POLICING AND CRIME

## Background

- E&I were tasked by MOPAC's Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) team to provide evidence to support decision making in relation to allocation of the Mayor's VAWG fund. Two key questions:



### What do we know about VAWG across London?

Used a range of sources including previous MOPAC publications, Crime Survey for England and Wales, Police recorded data, CPS data, sector reports and some key literature



### What insight can we gather from the sector to understand more about service provision and the gaps and challenges faced by service providers?

- VAWG Service provider survey was hosted online between 16<sup>th</sup> May 2019 and 31<sup>st</sup> May 2019 and received **40 responses**.
- The purpose of the survey was:
  - To understand what VAWG services are being delivered across London
  - Gather the views of service providers on the gaps in service provision
  - Gather the views of service providers on the challenges their organisation faces in delivering services to victims/ survivors

## Contents & Limitations

- This evidence pack explores the following topics:
  - Trends over time: what we know from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and Police recorded data
  - Who reports to the police in London?
  - Perpetrators
  - Londoner's attitudes to VAWG
  - Prosecutions
  - Deep dive: Findings from the Rape Review
  - How can we support victims/survivors?
  - What are the challenges to service delivery?
- It should be noted that the information provided in this pack is by no means exhaustive of all data sources and information available in relation to Violence against Women and Girls. This pack is intended to provide an overview of some of the key issues.
- It should be noted that the results from the service provider survey are based on a small sample, comprising those who received and completed the survey.
- Information recorded and held by police can only provide a partial picture of the level of crime experienced by the public. Police recorded crimes are also prone to changes in recording practice and legislation.

# **Trends over time: what we know from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and Police recorded data**



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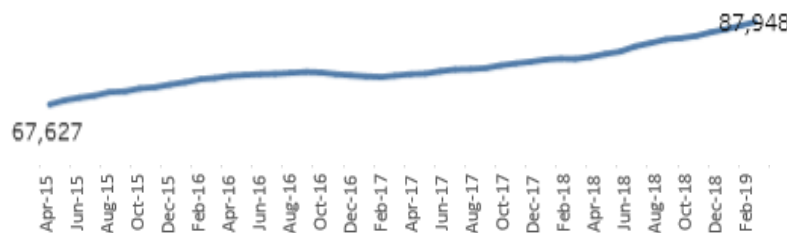
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## Domestic Abuse recorded by police has increased, however most recent results from CSEW suggest little change in prevalence

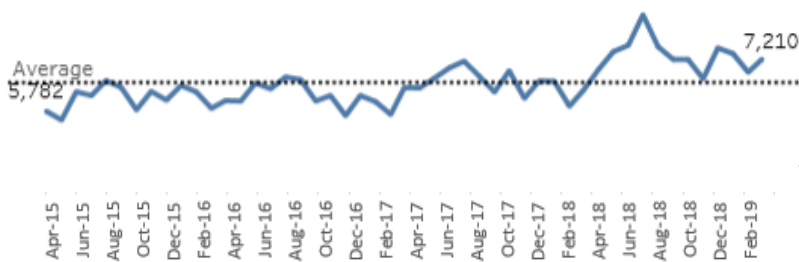
Police recorded Domestic abuse offences have been increasing over the years

Between March 2018 and March 2019 the rolling 12-month total for Domestic abuse offences increased by 12%, with 9,128 additional offences recorded by the police.

Rolling 12 month offending trend

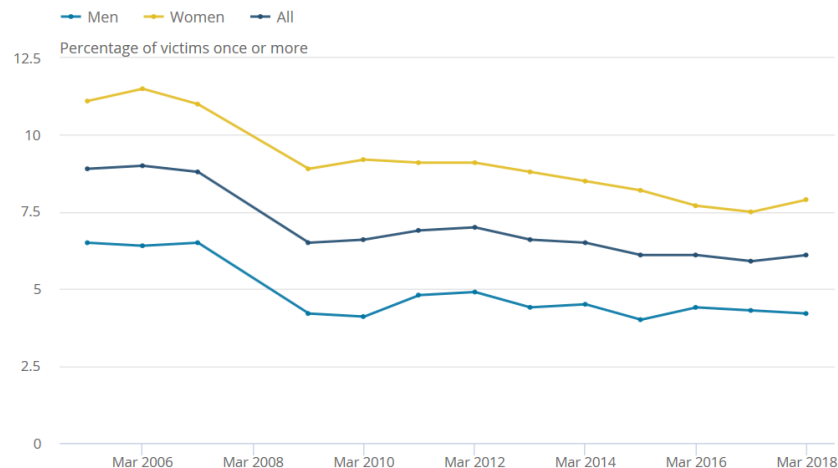


Monthly offending trend



However, the most recent Crime Survey for England & Wales results related to domestic abuse, suggest little change in prevalence in recent years

The cumulative effect of these changes has resulted in a small, significantly lower prevalence for the year ending March 2018 (6.1%) compared with the year ending March 2012 survey (7.0%). This indicates a **gradual, longer-term downward trend**



## Sexual offences recorded by police has increased, however most recent results from CSEW suggest little change in prevalence of sexual assaults

Police recorded sexual offences and rape offences reported to the police have been increasing over the years

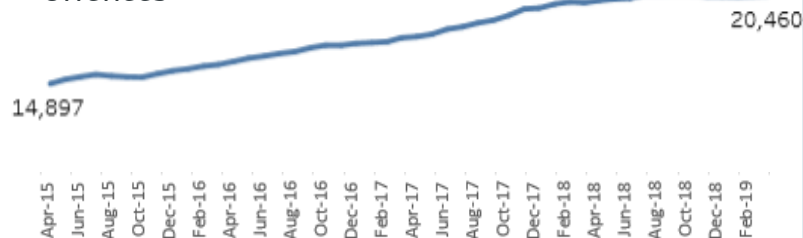
Between March 2018 and March 2019 the rolling 12-month total for rape offences increased by **2%**, and by **15%** between March 2017 and 2019.

Rolling 12 month offending trend for rape offences



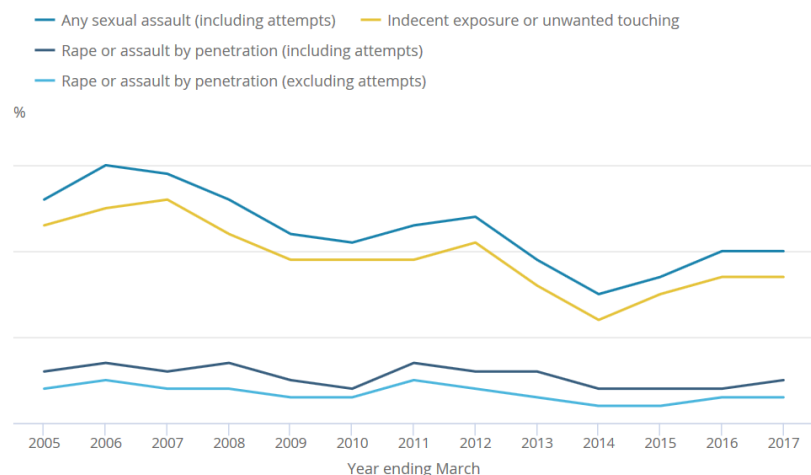
Between March 2018 and March 2019 the rolling 12-month total for total sexual offences increased by **5%**, and by **27%** between March 2017 and 2019.

Rolling 12 month offending trend for total sexual offences



However, the most recent Crime Survey for England & Wales results related to sexual assault, suggest **little change in the prevalence of sexual assault over the years**

The overall prevalence of sexual assault experienced by adults aged 16 to 59 in the last 12 months has not changed significantly since the year ending March 2005 CSEW, ranging between 1.5% and 3.0% over this period



SOURCE:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/sexualoffencesinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2017>

MOPAC Crime Dashboard

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## Analysis indicates that increases in recorded crime can be primarily attributed to increased compliance with crime data integrity

Using Metropolitan Police Service recorded crime data and Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) data published by Office for National Statistics (ONS), E&I conducted analysis to explore what is beneath the recorded numbers:

- The two primary data sources related to domestic abuse and sexual offences contradict each other in terms of any potential increase. Police recorded offences have significantly increased over time, whilst prevalence as measured by CSEW shows little change.
- Prevalence estimates using London level CSEW data indicates that the number of recorded crimes is well below the potential victims per year.
- Following the publication of HMICFRS Crime Data Integrity reports in 2014, there was an increase in the levels of recorded violence and sexual offences – two areas that were found to have been previously under-recorded by police across England and Wales.

### Are these increases due to better police recording?

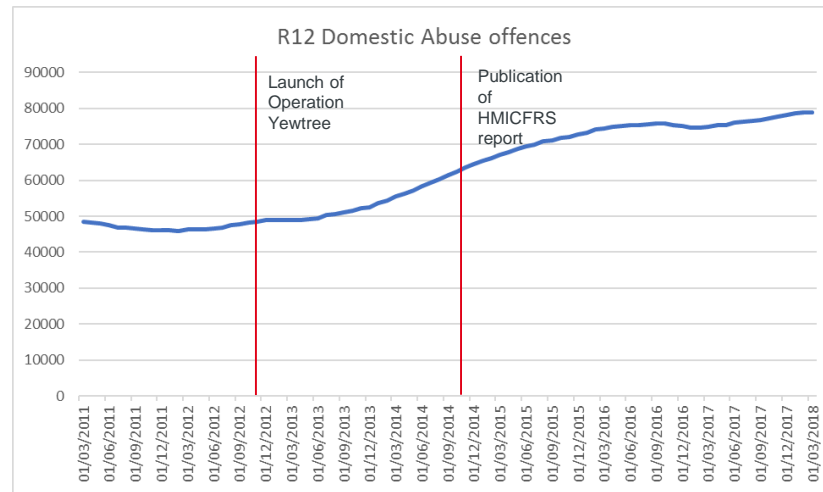
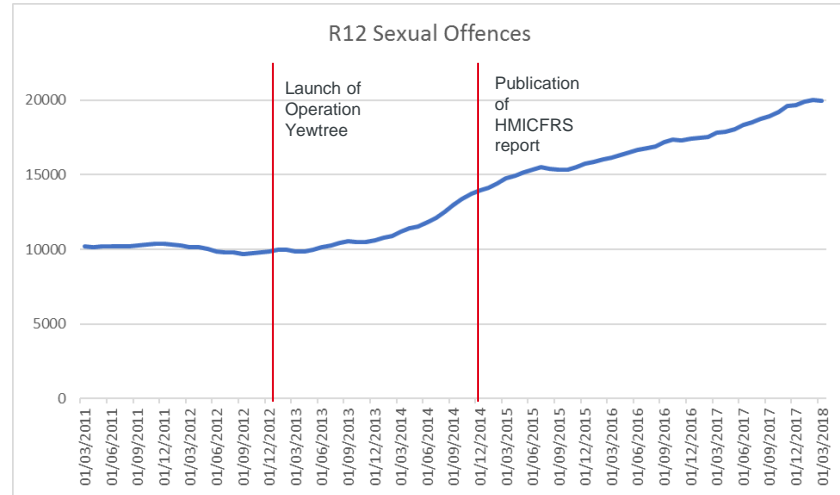
- Following the launch of Operation Yewtree there was a slight increase in overall recorded sexual offences
- However, there was a clear increase in the number of historic sexual offences coming to the attention of the police following the launch of Operation Yewtree with historic offences recorded by police have increased 134% over five years.
- The addition of previously non-notifiable offences such as malicious communications has had a clear impact on recorded domestic abuse.
- There has been a reduction on the level of 'no criming' of rape offences and a slight increase for other sexual offences with the impact of 'no criming' deemed to be negligible.

### Sexual offences are increasing at a higher rate within the rest of the country

MPS recorded sexual offences increased by 6.6% compared to 10% across the rest of the country (England & Wales excl. MPs)

## Two major milestones - 'Operation Yewtree' and improved compliance with recording standards has had a clear impact across various areas

- Op Yewtree – the investigation into historic sexual offences committed by Jimmy Saville, was launched in October 2012.
- HMICFRS released the report into crime data integrity in November 2014. This found to impact violence and sexual offences most.
- At the end of FY 2014/15 following the publication of the report by HMICFRS, domestic abuse offences across the MPS increased by 21% and Sexual Offences by 32%.
- Domestic abuse offences recorded by police continue to be largely within the VAP category (~80% of DA) with these offences increasing by over a quarter as at the end of 2017/18 when compared to end of March 2015.
- Following operation Yewtree being launched there was a period whereby sexual offences did not see immediate increases. However, by end of the following FY these offences had increased by 13%.
- The ways which offences of domestic abuse or sexual offences come to police attention remains unchanged over time with calls to police or caller at station being the most frequently recorded methods.





## Sexual Violence offences are not evenly spread, with inner London boroughs tending to suffer more offences – *enabling a targeted approach*

Police recorded data: Rolling 12 months to May 2019						
Borough	Total Sexual offences volume	Total Sexual offences Rates per 100 pop.	Other Sexual offences volume	Other Sexual offences Rates per 100 pop.	Rape offences volume	Rape offences volume Rates per 100 pop.
Westminster	1219	5.1	781	3.3	438	1.8
Hammersmith and Fulham	661	3.6	297	1.6	364	2
Lambeth	1034	3.2	600	1.8	434	1.3
Camden	688	2.9	391	1.6	297	1.2
Islington	667	2.9	433	1.9	234	1
Barking and Dagenham	573	2.8	318	1.5	255	1.2
Haringey	776	2.8	430	1.6	346	1.3
Newham	960	2.8	546	1.6	414	1.2
Southwark	856	2.8	509	1.6	347	1.1
Croydon	1023	2.7	530	1.4	493	1.3
Greenwich	736	2.7	437	1.6	299	1.1
Hackney	728	2.7	451	1.7	277	1
Tower Hamlets	783	2.6	446	1.5	337	1.1
Kensington and Chelsea	393	2.5	238	1.5	155	1
Kingston upon Thames	414	2.4	250	1.4	164	0.9
Lewisham	709	2.4	394	1.3	315	1.1
Hounslow	613	2.3	355	1.3	258	0.9
Wandsworth	689	2.2	437	1.4	252	0.8
Brent	682	2.1	442	1.3	240	0.7
Ealing	713	2	425	1.2	288	0.8
Bromley	574	1.8	359	1.1	215	0.7
Enfield	595	1.8	355	1.1	240	0.7
Havering	463	1.8	313	1.2	150	0.6
Waltham Forest	481	1.8	311	1.1	170	0.6
Hillingdon	509	1.7	342	1.1	167	0.6
Merton	360	1.7	243	1.2	117	0.6
Redbridge	498	1.7	306	1	192	0.6
Harrow	410	1.6	256	1	154	0.6
Sutton	332	1.6	209	1	123	0.6
Bexley	363	1.5	203	0.8	160	0.7
Barnet	551	1.4	349	0.9	202	0.5
Richmond upon Thames	282	1.4	192	1	90	0.5

### Sexual offences

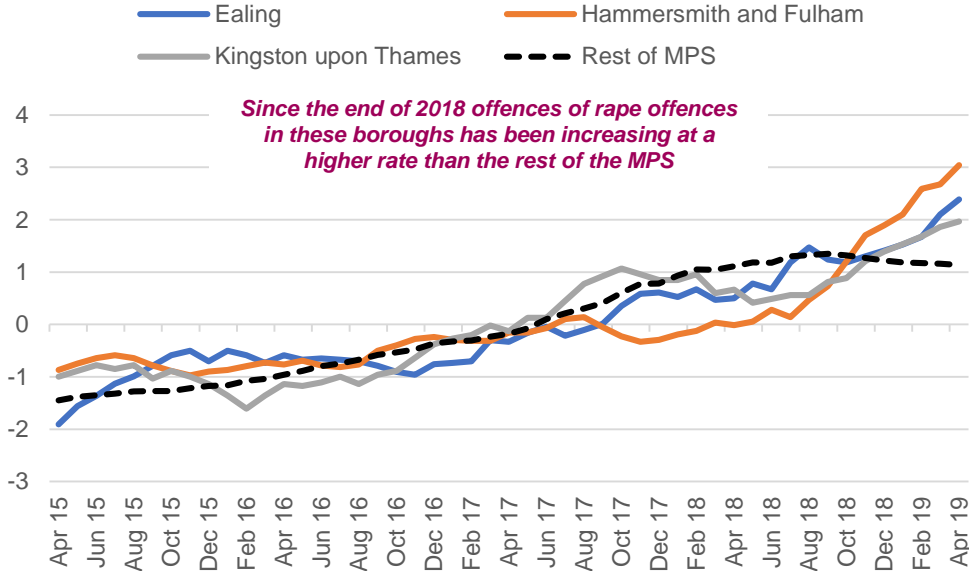
- The borough that consistently reports the highest volume of sexual violence offences is **Westminster**. **Lambeth, Croydon, Newham and Southwark** consistently make up the rest of the top five.
- Richmond upon Thames recorded the lowest volume of offending, followed by Sutton, Merton and Bexley.
- When considering rates per 1000 population, **Westminster** and **Hammersmith and Fulham** have the highest rates of total sexual offences, followed by **Lambeth, Camden and Islington** at a slightly lower rate.
- 27% of all sexual offences occurred in the most vulnerable wards (top 0-20%) compared to 13% of offences occurring in the least vulnerable wards (bottom 80-100%).

### Rape

- Croydon, Westminster, Lambeth and Newham** have the highest recorded volumes of rape.
- When looking at rates per 1000 population, **Hammersmith and Fulham, Westminster, Croydon, Haringey and Lambeth** have the highest rates of Rape offences per 1000 population.
- 28%** of rape offences occurred in the most vulnerable wards (top 0-20%) compared to 14% of offences occurring in the least vulnerable wards (bottom 80-100%).

# Rape has considerably increased in a small number of London boroughs

## Rape Trends - Rolling 12 months



## Above average offending - Rape (last 7 months)



**+100%** increase in Hammersmith & Fulham  
**+29%** increase in Kingston upon Thames  
**+28%** increase in Ealing

There has been no change in rape offence levels within the **MPS (excl. these boroughs)** during this same period – **R12 April '18 vs April '19**

## Data enables targeted approaches to the challenge.

- In the financial year 18/19 the MPS recorded **10** domestic abuse offences per 1,000 population.
- **Croydon** had the highest volume of offences per borough, followed by **Newham** and **Greenwich**.
- **Greenwich** had the highest rate per 1000; **Barking & Dagenham**; **Tower Hamlets**; Hounslow and Haringey.
- **29%** of all domestic abuse offences occurred in the most vulnerable wards (top 0-20%) compared to **11%** of offences occurring in the least vulnerable wards (bottom 80-100%).

London Borough	Domestic Abuse Crime Offs	Domestic Abuse Incidents
Greenwich	13.4	20.3
Barking and Dagenham	13.3	22.8
Tower Hamlets	12.3	20.5
Hounslow	12.2	20.1
Haringey	12.0	18.9
Lewisham	11.9	19.5
Newham	11.7	18.2
Islington	11.6	18.1
Southwark	11.4	17.0
Hackney	11.1	18.8
Croydon	11.0	18.4
Enfield	10.8	17.1
Waltham Forest	10.4	16.7
Hammersmith and Fulham	10.4	17.1
Brent	10.3	16.2
Havering	10.2	16.4
Hillingdon	10.0	17.0
Lambeth	9.9	15.8
Bexley	9.6	14.4
Sutton	9.1	14.8
Camden	9.1	13.9
Ealing	9.0	16.2
Westminster	8.9	14.0
Merton	8.8	13.4
Bromley	8.6	13.3
Kingston upon Thames	8.6	13.4
Kensington and Chelsea	8.2	13.3
Redbridge	8.1	13.8
Wandsworth	8.0	12.9
Harrow	7.9	12.2
Barnet	7.5	12.3
Richmond upon Thames	6.0	9.7

## Ongoing gap : knowledge and understanding of the prevalence of Harmful Practices (FGM, Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriage) remains limited

### Forced Marriage

- In 2017, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) gave advice or support related to a possible forced marriage in 1,196 cases, a decrease of 19% compared to the previous year
- London had the greatest number of cases (29%), an almost 10% increase when compared to 2016

Of the cases, that FMU provided support to:

- **30%** involved victims **under 18 years** of age
- **30%** involved victims aged **18-25**
- Over three-quarters (78%) involved **women**

**290**  
**Honour Based Violence**  
offences were recorded by  
police in 18/19, an increase  
from 265 offences in 17/18



**117**

**Forced Marriage**  
offences were recorded by  
police in 18/19, an  
increase from 81 offences  
in 17/18

### Female Genital Mutilation

- Data from NHS digital indicates that there were 1,715 individual women and girls who had an attendance where FGM was identified or a procedure related to FGM was undertaken in the period October 2018 to December 2018. These accounted for 2,150 attendances reported at NHS trusts and GP practices where FGM was identified or a procedure related to FGM was undertaken.
- 45% (765) of attendances by women and girls were in the commissioning region of London.



SOURCE: NHS Digital regularly report on a data repository of individual level data collected by healthcare providers in England, including acute hospital providers, mental health providers and GP practices – the FGM Enhanced Dataset. The latest release relates to October 2018 – December 2018

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/730155/2017\\_FMU\\_statistics\\_FINAL.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/730155/2017_FMU_statistics_FINAL.pdf)

MOPAC quarterly report Q4 18/19

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## On-going gap: our knowledge of the scale and extent of prostitution in the UK & London remains limited

Our knowledge of the scale and extent of prostitution is limited due to challenges in gathering robust data

- Prostitution, particularly 'indoor prostitution', is mostly hidden and the population is transient
- Use of technology poses a challenge to monitoring the extent of prostitution
- Individuals involved in prostitution may be less likely to report to the police and access support services
- There is some suggestion that services do not routinely assess and monitor whether their users are involved in prostitution

Evidence that does exist can provide some useful insight, however there are issues with its applicability to the industry as a whole

- Most studies are small scale and/or relate to specific groups individuals involved in prostitution
- Prostitution is very diverse and individuals involved in prostitution operating in different sectors tend to face different issues

**72,000**

The estimated number of individuals involved in prostitution in the UK

**32,000**

The estimated number of individuals involved in prostitution in London

Some estimates suggest that **85-90%** of individuals involved in prostitution are women

**The number of prosecutions commenced relating to 'street prostitution' has fallen from 553 in 2013/14 to 57 in 2017/18**

**In 2017/18**

**96** prosecutions commenced for 'controlling prostitution'

**106** prosecutions commenced for 'kerb crawling' (compared to 148 in the previous year)

**74** prosecutions commenced for 'brothel keeping' (compared to 90 in the previous year)

## Support should be targeted and seek to address the broad range of issues faced by individuals involved in prostitution

Many of the barriers to exiting prostitution overlap with the drivers of involvement

The drivers of involvement and barriers to exiting prostitution are complex and will differ for each individual. These factors include:

- ❖ Housing
- ❖ Money, income and debt
- ❖ Age of entry into prostitution
- ❖ Offending and criminalisation
- ❖ Coercion (partner, relative, other including trafficking)
- ❖ Drug and substance misuse
- ❖ Migrant population
- ❖ Physical and/or mental health issues
- ❖ Childhood violence (emotional, physical, verbal, sexual)
- ❖ Lack of education, qualifications or training

The literature indicates a number of approaches/ components which may help to support those wishing to exit prostitution:

- **Dedicated support services/ caseworker model:** have the advantage of providing one individual (caseworker), or agency, to take responsibility for ensuring that appropriate support is available
- **Holistic support:** services that address all needs as opposed to one issue in isolation
- **Outreach services:** an effective way of achieving an initial engagement or awareness with individuals which can then lead to more sustained engagement
- **Trauma-informed practice:** may be useful helping staff to better empathise with clients and understand their needs
- **Staged approach:** exiting prostitution is not a distinct act but a process involving several stages of change, which occur over time
- **Multi-agency working:** improved joined-up, multi-agency working and tailored referral pathways between the voluntary and statutory sector services that come into contact with women involved in prostitution

# Who reports to the police in London?



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## No compelling evidence of an increase in victim confidence to report

- HMICFRS highlighted the under-recording of victims of violence and sexual offences. Victim confidence to report is difficult to unpick, but looking across data sources gives us a compelling case that there has **not been a significant increase in willingness to report**.

Survey Source	Told Anyone						Told Police					
	1999/2000 (BCS)	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	1999/2000 (BCS)	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
<b>CSEW -Victims of Sexual Assault</b>	70%	58%			68%		18%	17%			17%	
<b>CSEW - Victims of Domestic Abuse</b>			81%			77%		21%				20%
<b>Public Attitude Survey (London) – All victims</b>			75%	74%	72%	71%			70%	69%	66%	65%

- Across timeframes – as measured by the CSEW – approximately 20% or less Domestic Abuse or Sexual Assault victims tell the police. This has not changed over the last 18 years.
- Victims of domestic abuse or sexual assault are far more likely to tell other organisations/other people. Need for effective Police - partner liaison.

### Prevalence estimates for these types of offences have also been shown to be fairly stable over time

- Using the Mid-Year 2017 population estimate for London and the London level CSEW estimated prevalence we can suggest that **approximately 246,700 adults aged 16 to 59 years who live in London experienced any form of domestic abuse in the year prior to completing the survey**, equating to a prevalence rate of approximately 4 in 100 adults between these ages.
- **Similarly, an estimated 151,000 adults aged 16 to 59 years experienced any form of sexual assault (including attempts) in the year prior to completing the survey, which is a prevalence rate of approximately 3 in 100 adults.**



## Underreporting continues to be a significant issue

### Underreporting is a significant issue

The Crime Survey for England & Wales showed that around **5 in 6** (83%) victims of sexual assaults did not report their experience to the police



For domestic abuse and sexual offences, the level of response to CSEW that indicates that people have told police remains consistent over time, with a slight reduction in the case of domestic abuse in the most recent results

### Reasons for not reporting are numerous and complex...

- There is an extensive body of research looking at the reasons and barriers that prevent victims of sexual violence from reporting<sup>1</sup>. This includes:
  - Cultural myths about 'real' rape
  - Fear of retaliation
  - Concerns for privacy
  - Feelings of shame and self-blame, fear of disclosing to family and friends and fear of stigma
  - Lack of trust in the police and criminal justice system (including fear of not being believed and taken seriously, or of not being treated with dignity)
- Taylor and Norma (2011) suggested that **when victims do report**, they do so **despite the potential personal and material costs** involved – with three key motivators<sup>2</sup>:
  - A belief in the criminal nature of sexual assault
  - A desire to protect others
  - A desire to raise community awareness and ensure the proper recording of crime statistics (civic duty)
- The research also noted that being able to access police and receiving a supportive response (being taken seriously and being believed) was often described as 'empowering' and 'healing' even if the report did not go any further in the CJS

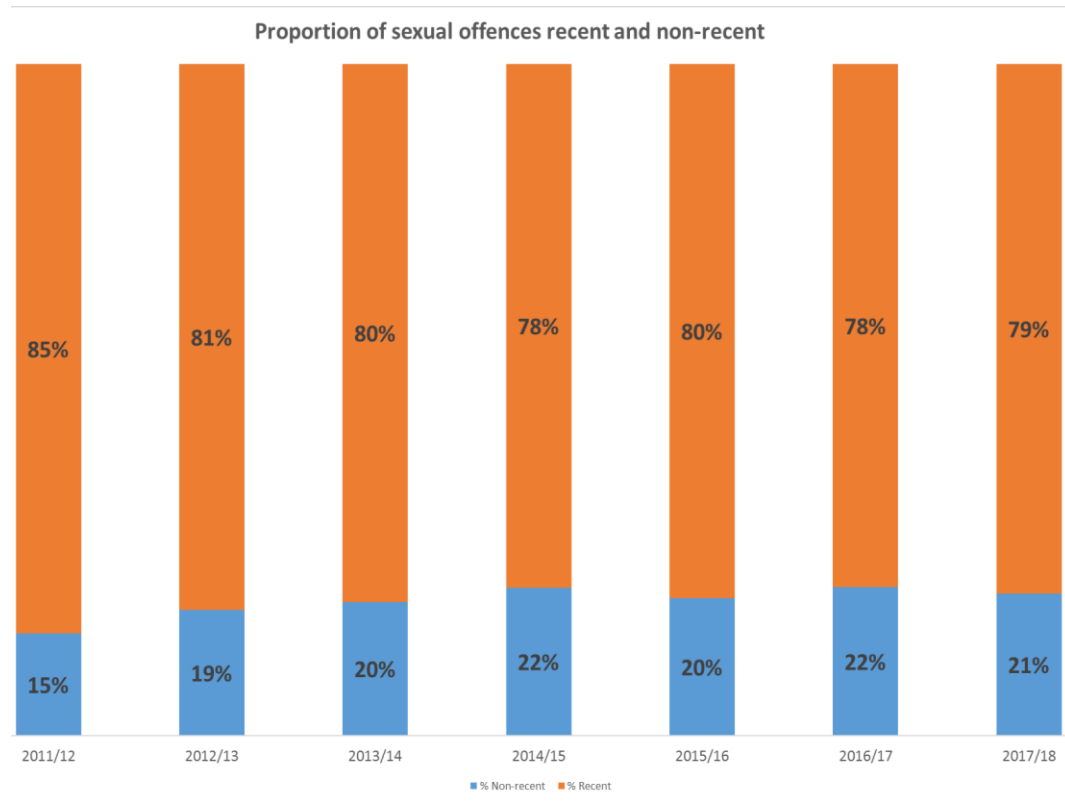
SOURCE: E.g., Hohl, K. & Stanko, E. (2015). Complaints of rape and the criminal justice system: Fresh evidence on the attrition problem in England and Wales. European Journal of Criminology, 12(3), pp. 324-341.

<sup>2</sup>Taylor, S.C. and Norma, C. (2011) The "Symbolic Protest" Behind Women's Reporting of Sexual Assault Crime to Police. Feminist Criminology, 7(1) 24-47.

CSEW results and MOPAC report: Beneath the Numbers

## An increase in more non recent sexual offences recorded by police

- Since Operation Yewtree in 2012 there has been an increase in recorded non-recent sexual offences.
- Comparing year ending March 2013 (the first full year end following the launch of Operation Yewtree), non-recent sexual offences recorded by the MPS **had increased by 134%** in the year ending March 2018.
- Over the same period, recent offences that had occurred less than 1 year from recording date had also doubled.
- There is a clear confirmed upward trend in both recorded recent and non-recent offences.
- **Between 2011/12 and 2012/13 the proportion of non-recent offences increased from approximately one in seven of the total to one in five. This has remained fairly consistent since this time.**



- The impact of non-recent offences being recorded had an initial impact following the launch of this high profile investigation into historic sexual offences. Since this time, there has been a consistent proportion of sexual offences recorded by police that are non-recent.

# Women and Girls are disproportionately affected by rape, sexual offences and Domestic abuse offences



## Sexual offence victims

**87%**

of victims were female, with **over 16,000** cases with female victims recorded in the year up to March 2019

**26%** of female victims were **under 18**  
**48%** of female victims were **under 25**  
**74%** of female victims were **under 35**



**Black** female victims are over-represented, **18%** compared to **16%** of the London population

### Police recorded Vulnerability

- **45%** of female **Sexual offence** victims had been recorded as 'vulnerable' (7,333)
- Of those the majority (63%) were **under 18** years old at the time of the offence



## Domestic Abuse victims

**76%**

of victims were female, with **over 60,000** cases with female victims recorded in the year up to March 2019

**1 in 3** female victims were **25-34**



**Black** female victims are over-represented, **20%** compared to **16%** of the London population

### Police recorded Vulnerability

- **16%** of female Domestic Abuse victims had been recorded as 'vulnerable' (10,390)
- Of those, over half (**57%**) were indicated as **intimidated**
- **1 in 4** estimated to be repeat victims

## Understanding where particular groups of victims are disproportionately affected may provide useful insight in relation to demand and support needs

Younger age groups appear to be disproportionately affected in certain boroughs in London

Under 18 victims appear disproportionately in police recorded Sexual offences. This is considerable in a number of London boroughs, including Havering, Bexley and Sutton.

18-24 year old victims appear disproportionately in police recorded Sexual offences. This is considerable in a number of London boroughs, including Westminster, Kensington & Chelsea, and Hammersmith & Fulham.



Borough	Under 18 victim populations compared to total populations			18-24 year-old victim populations compared to total populations				
	Borough proportion of under 18s	Proportion of Sexual offence victims under 18	Difference	Borough proportion	Proportion of Domestic Abuse victims	Difference	Proportion of Sexual offence victims	Difference
Havering	23%	42%	19%	8%	17%	9%	18%	10%
Bexley	23%	39%	16%	8%	20%	12%	18%	10%
Sutton	23%	39%	16%	7%	17%	10%	16%	9%
Bromley	23%	34%	11%	7%	15%	8%	16%	9%
Barking and Dagenham	30%	41%	11%	9%	18%	9%	14%	5%
Richmond upon Thames	23%	33%	10%	6%	16%	10%	16%	10%
Enfield	25%	35%	10%	8%	18%	10%	19%	11%
Croydon	25%	34%	9%	8%	18%	10%	19%	11%
Greenwich	24%	32%	8%	9%	18%	9%	18%	9%
Hillingdon	24%	32%	8%	9%	17%	8%	20%	11%
Merton	23%	30%	7%	7%	17%	10%	20%	13%
Hounslow	24%	30%	6%	8%	16%	8%	18%	10%
Lewisham	23%	29%	6%	8%	19%	11%	21%	13%
Waltham Forest	24%	30%	6%	8%	16%	8%	16%	8%
Harrow	23%	29%	6%	8%	16%	8%	18%	10%
Haringey	22%	27%	5%	9%	17%	8%	20%	11%
Newham	25%	30%	5%	11%	19%	8%	21%	10%
Lambeth	19%	24%	5%	8%	18%	10%	23%	15%
Southwark	20%	25%	5%	10%	19%	9%	24%	14%
Barnet	23%	28%	5%	8%	16%	8%	20%	12%
Brent	23%	28%	5%	9%	19%	10%	19%	10%
Redbridge	25%	30%	5%	8%	16%	8%	18%	10%
Kingston upon Thames	22%	26%	4%	10%	19%	9%	25%	15%
Ealing	24%	26%	2%	8%	16%	8%	21%	13%
Islington	18%	19%	1%	12%	19%	7%	23%	11%
Tower Hamlets	22%	22%	0%	11%	20%	9%	27%	16%
Hackney	23%	22%	-1%	8%	17%	9%	18%	10%
Wandsworth	20%	18%	-2%	8%	16%	8%	20%	12%
Hammersmith and Fulham	19%	17%	-2%	9%	16%	7%	26%	17%
Camden	19%	16%	-3%	11%	19%	8%	27%	16%
Kensington and Chelsea	18%	15%	-3%	8%	16%	8%	25%	17%
Westminster	18%	12%	-6%	9%	18%	9%	29%	20%
London	23%	27%	4%	9%	18%	9%	21%	11%

SOURCE: London datastore central trend 2018 <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/projections>

MOPAC Crime Dashboard: Rolling 12 months to April 2019

## Understanding where particular groups of victims are disproportionately affected may provide useful insight in relation to demand and support needs

Black victim populations compared to total populations					
Borough	Borough proportion	Proportion of Domestic Abuse victims	Difference	Proportion of Sexual offence victims	Difference
Lambeth	28%	40%	12%	29%	1%
Haringey	20%	29%	9%	25%	5%
Kensington and Chelsea	8%	17%	9%	15%	7%
Wandsworth	13%	22%	9%	16%	3%
Camden	9%	17%	8%	12%	3%
Southwark	28%	35%	7%	26%	-2%
Hammersmith and Fulham	14%	21%	7%	17%	3%
Brent	20%	27%	7%	23%	3%
Hackney	24%	30%	6%	27%	3%
Merton	12%	17%	5%	15%	3%
Islington	15%	20%	5%	13%	-2%
Lewisham	31%	36%	5%	29%	-2%
Westminster	8%	12%	4%	10%	2%
Kingston upon Thames	5%	8%	3%	13%	8%
Ealing	13%	16%	3%	17%	4%
Richmond upon Thames	3%	6%	3%	5%	2%
Barnet	10%	13%	3%	10%	0%
Harrow	10%	13%	3%	12%	2%
Sutton	7%	10%	3%	10%	3%
Redbridge	10%	12%	2%	14%	4%
Croydon	27%	29%	2%	26%	-1%
Hounslow	8%	10%	2%	10%	2%
Waltham Forest	20%	21%	1%	21%	1%
Bromley	11%	12%	1%	12%	1%
Tower Hamlets	9%	10%	1%	12%	3%
Newham	20%	21%	1%	23%	3%
Havering	8%	8%	0%	8%	0%
Enfield	21%	21%	0%	23%	2%
Hillingdon	11%	10%	-1%	8%	-3%
Bexley	12%	10%	-2%	11%	-1%
Greenwich	24%	20%	-4%	18%	-6%
Barking and Dagenham	26%	17%	-9%	17%	-9%
London	16%	20%	4%	18%	2%

Black victims of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence appear to be disproportionately affected in certain boroughs in London

Black victims appear disproportionately in police recorded Domestic Abuse offences. This is notable in a number of London boroughs, including Lambeth, Haringey, Kensington & Chelsea and Wandsworth.

Black victims appear disproportionately in police recorded Sexual offences. This is notable in a number of London boroughs, including Kingston upon Thames, Kensington & Chelsea and Haringey.

SOURCE: London datastore central trend 2018 <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/projections>

MOPAC Crime Dashboard: Rolling 12 months to April 2019

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## Insights from CSEW and other sources can be used to identify victim needs and needs which may not be captured by police data

- **Younger adult victims appear under-represented in the police data.** CSEW prevalence estimates for London based on 16-59 year old respondents show that 16-24 year olds most frequently experience both domestic abuse or sexual offences. This differs from the police recorded victims data that shows 20-34 year old victims as most frequently recorded (compared to the same cohort).
- Women aged between 16 and 19 and between 20 and 24 were more likely to be victims of any domestic abuse (9.5% and 9.7% respectively) compared with those in the 55 to 59 aged group (4.1%).
- 1 in 8 **single adult women living with children** were victims of domestic abuse in the preceding 12 months to the survey compared with 6.4% of those living in a household with no children.
- For sexual assaults women who were **separated and divorced** (7.7%) were the most likely to be victims.
- There are indications that vulnerabilities such as **long-term illness or disability** and **low-income** impact on the likelihood of victimisation.
- Nearly **4 times as many women in the lowest income bracket (less than £10,000 per annum) had experienced domestic abuse in the preceding 12 months (12.8%), compared with those in the highest household income bracket (£50,000+ per annum = 3.7%).**
- London's Victims Commissioner has also conducted work with women and girls directly affected by domestic abuse who have experienced barriers in receiving support because of their **immigration status** leading to reticence to report the abuse to authorities in **fear of being deported**.

SOURCE: CSEW results for London

<https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/protect-victims-of-crime-with-insecure-status>

MOPAC report: Beneath the Numbers

# Perpetrators



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# The majority of Domestic abuse and Sexual violence perpetrators are male

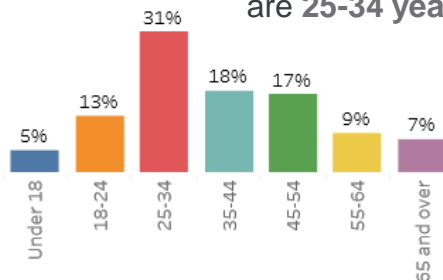


**98%**

of Sexual offence perpetrators were male

## Sexual offence perpetrators

Almost 1 in 3 Sexual offence perpetrators are 25-34 years old



Black perpetrators are over-represented, 25% compared to 16% of the population

White and Asian perpetrators are under-represented

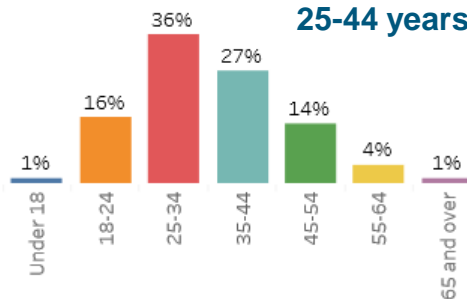


**90%**

of Domestic abuse perpetrators were male

## Domestic Abuse perpetrators

More than half of Domestic abuse perpetrators are 25-44 years old



Black perpetrators are over-represented, 24% compared to 16% of the population

Asian perpetrators are under-represented, 15% compared to 20% of the population



# Londoner's attitudes to VAWG



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## Relatively few respondents prioritise sex-related crime or Domestic violence amongst their Top 3 Priorities for policing in London as a whole

### The Public Attitude Survey

Each year, 12,800 Londoners are interviewed about their experiences and attitudes towards policing. Interviews take place throughout the year and are distributed evenly across all London boroughs. The Public Attitude Survey (PAS) gives us an indication of public perceptions of how well the MPS responds to violence against women and girls. For the most recent PAS data we know that:

- **70%** of Londoners agreed that the Metropolitan Police Service effectively tackle VAWG.
- Levels of agreement varied by borough with respondents from **Haringey** least likely to agree.
- Relatively few respondents prioritise sex-related crime (1.5%) or domestic violence (0.9%) amongst their **Top 3 Priorities** for policing in **London as a whole**.

In the last year:

- Around **1 in 10** Londoners say they have experienced non-contact, non-sexual harassment
- **2%** say they have experienced unwanted sexual contact
- When asked **where** in London their most recent experience had happened, the majority said:

on the street



(61%)

on public transport



(22%)

**77%**

of Londoners agreed that their local area is a **safe place for women and girls** to grow up

More broadly, the PAS indicates that some groups are less positive about the police overall:

- LGB residents, younger age groups, Black residents and people who self-report a mental health disability may have less positive perceptions of the police
- This may have implications on their willingness to report to the police

## Findings from the Youth Survey reveal worrying attitudes, normalisation and acceptance of behaviours that could constitute domestic abuse

### Youth voice

In 2018, Young Londoners aged 14 to 16 were asked about their attitudes towards VAWG behaviours, and their experiences of **sexual harassment**. Results of the Youth voice survey reveal interesting insights:

- **Nearly half** felt it was 'always or sometimes' ok to **check their partner's phone** to see what they've been doing or who they've been talking to
- **Over 1 in 5** had experienced **unwanted sexual comments** or jokes/taunts of a sexual nature, with this tending to be more common amongst females than males
- **6%** felt it was 'always or sometimes ok' to **hit or push a partner** during an argument



- Despite a notable proportion of young people saying they have experienced sexual harassment, results suggest that many do not seek help or talk about these experiences
- Normalisation of these behaviours forms a key barrier to accessing support
- Young people also expressed uncertainty around who to speak to

**Prosecutions ...**

**and Deep dive: Findings from the  
Rape Review**

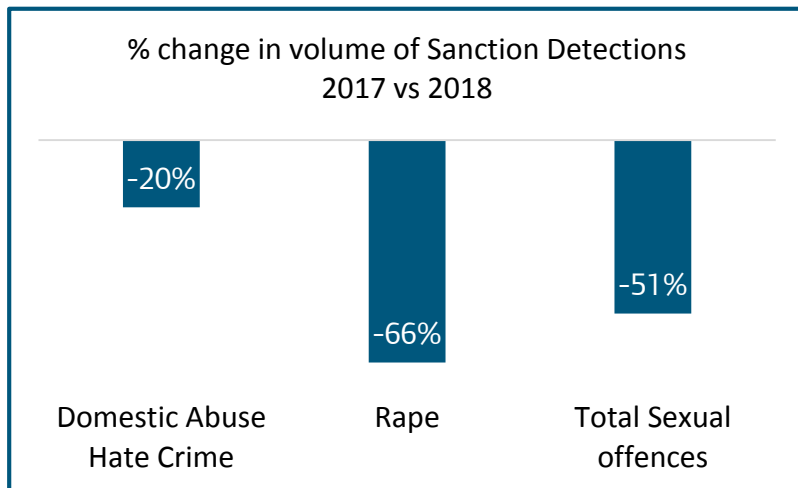


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## Conviction rates are lower in London compared to the national rates for VAWG related offences

Sanction detections for VAWG related offences have Decreased over the last 12 months. This compares to a **26% decrease in all TNO SDs** during the same period.



**Over 75%** of all people proceeded against for a **domestic abuse** offence were **charged**



**90%** of all people proceeded against for a **sexual offence** were **charged**

### Conviction rates

Conviction rates are lower in London compared to the national rates for VAWG related offences



**16%** of all non-convictions for a **rape offence** were due to victim issues, of which:

- **9.8%** was as a result of victim retraction
- **5.6%** was due to victim's evidence not supporting the case

**53%** of all non-convictions for a **Domestic Abuse offence** were due to victim issues, of which:

- **26%** were due to victim non-attendance at court
- **25%** were as a result of victim retraction

# Rape review

- **MPS Rape Review 2005-2012**

- Long term project to drive insights into the nature of reported rape in London
- Annual reviews resulting in 8 years of data from rape cases (a sample of 4,550 cases)
- Developed considerable learning around victim vulnerabilities, attrition and investigation, as well as key factors impacting on attrition and case outcome

- **The current MOPAC Rape Review**

- Revisits and updates the methodology used between 2005 and 2012
- Coding of all rape allegations made to the MPS in April 2016 (a sample size of 501) across 160 variables

## **Overall, the profile of those reporting has remained largely consistent:**

- Young – almost 1 in 3 are under 18 years
- Female – 9 in 10 of all victims
- Overrepresentation of Black victims – 22% of cohort compared to 16% of population

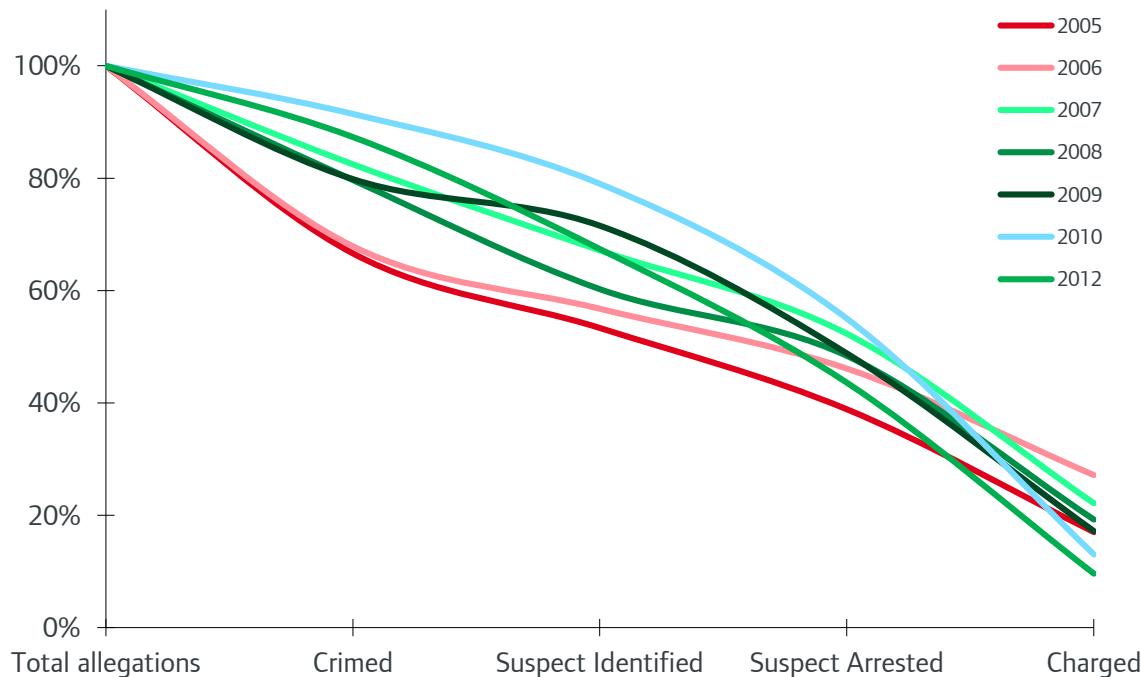
## **However, there have been some shifts:**

- Increase in male reporting
- Shifts in the ethnicity of those who report – particularly stark for Asian victims



## Attrition rates have remained broadly consistent, with the majority of allegations failing to reach the charge stage

- Attrition remains a key challenge, especially in Rape cases.
- Comparison of attrition rates across seven previous Rape reviews, reveals generally consistent trend, with most cases failing to reach the charge stage. There have been some shifts in where attrition occurs in the process.



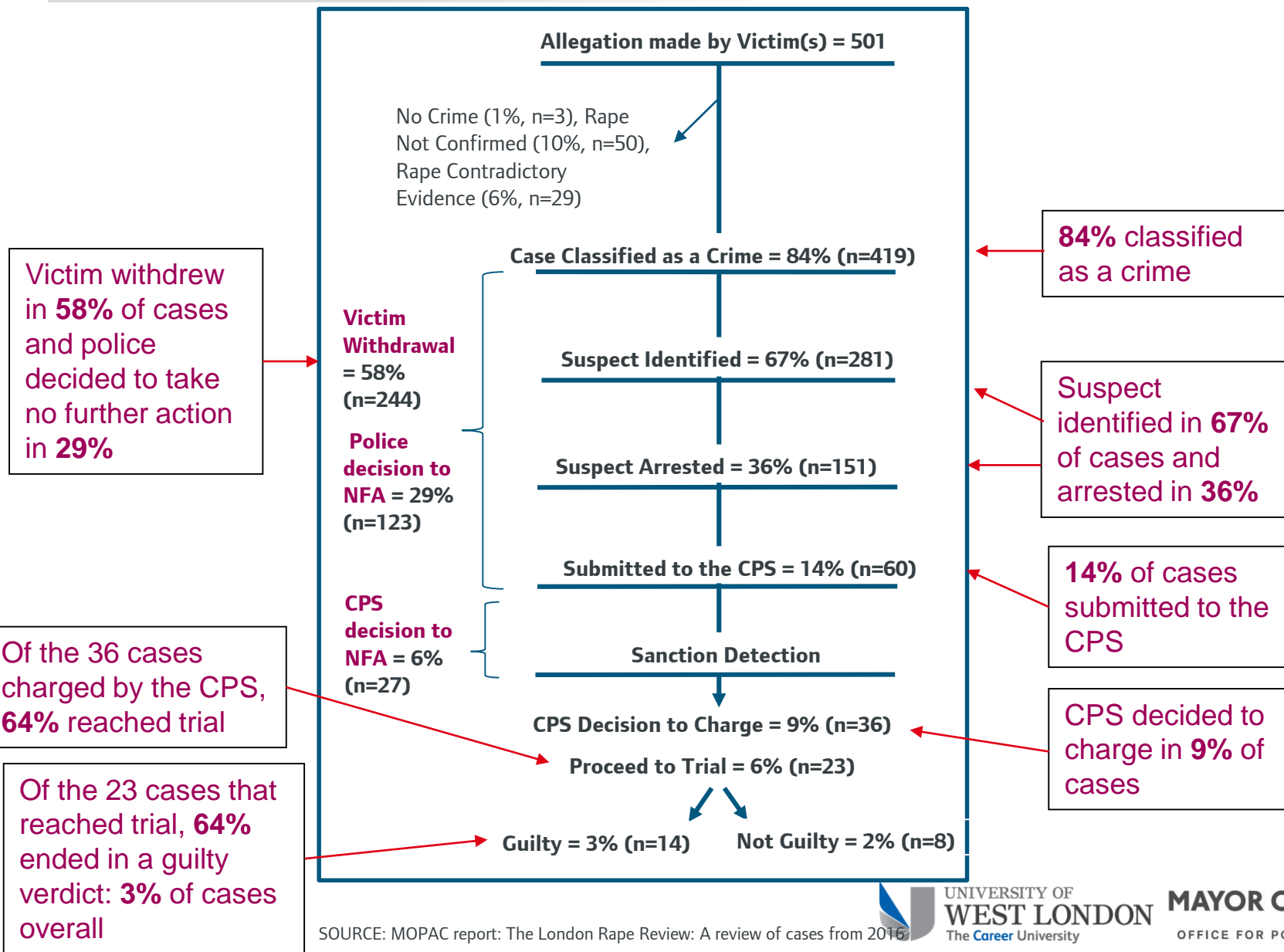
- However, the **stages of fallout changed**:
  - In 2005/6 the greatest drop out was at the allegation to crime stage
  - In 2010/12 attrition occurred later in case progression when charging a suspect
  - The 2012 review saw the lowest rate of suspects charged.

SOURCE: E.g. Kelly, L., Lovett, J. and Regan, L. (2005). A gap or chasm? Attrition in reported rape cases. Home Office Research Study 293, London: HMSO; Hohl, K. and Stanko, E. (2015). Complaints of rape and the criminal justice system: Fresh evidence on the attrition problem in England and Wales. European Journal of Criminology. 12(3),

pp324-341

MOPAC report: The London Rape Review: A review of cases from 2016

# Majority of cases end during the investigation stage





# Victim withdrawal was the most common form of attrition

## Attrition of rape allegations

- Victim withdrawal was the most common form of attrition in the sample (58%), followed by police no further action (29%).
- The majority of cases (86%) were not submitted to the CPS. Only 9% of cases were charged by the CPS, 6% proceeded to trial and 3% resulted in a conviction.
- Victims/survivors who withdrew did so soon after reporting. Just under half of all withdrawals occurred within 3 months of reporting and 18% within the first 30 days. Reasons for victim withdrawal were complex and often interrelated.

## Reasons given for withdrawal

In the sample of cases analysed as part of the Rape review 2019, there were typically multiple reasons given for withdrawal, the most common were:

- The stress and trauma caused or exacerbated by the investigation, particularly because of having to talk in detail about the incident
- A desire to move on from what had happened, often intensified by feeling surprised and overwhelmed by the process of official police investigation
- Concern for their own safety, or for the perpetrator's own situation, particularly in cases with a domestic abuse overlap where the victim's priority often was to put an end to the harmful behaviour, rather than a prosecution
- The act of reporting in and of itself being enough, with reasons for reporting focusing on wanting to get the incident off their chest or seeing reporting as their civic duty
- Not having wished to report the rape in the first place, particularly in cases where the report was made within the context of the Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour Based Violence (DASH 2009)



## Overlap between rape and domestic abuse

### Domestic abuse accounts for 28% (n=142) of all cases

- Victims in cases involving domestic abuse were more likely to be female compared to the overall sample, less likely to be White and more likely to be Asian.
- Suspects in cases involving domestic abuse were more likely to be Asian, have a prior police record, and have a history of domestic abuse and sexual assault

#### Victims

- 94% (n=132) Female
- 46% (n=62) White
- 31% (n=42) Asian
- 34% (n=47) MH Issues

#### Suspects

- 33% (n=41) Asian
- 49% (n=69) prior police record
- 34% (n=47) history of DA
- 14% (n=19) history of sexual assault/rape

### 17% (n=86) of all rapes were reported in response to DASH questions asked when police attended a domestic abuse call

- Of these, over three-quarters resulted in victim withdrawal (higher than the overall rate of 58%)

## Victims present with complex needs

### Victim needs


(e.g. mental health, under 18, learning difficulty)

The majority of victims had at least one need present




### Cumulative needs were common among victims

  
Just over 1 in 3  
had two needs  
present

  
1 in 5 had three or  
more needs present

41% of victims presented with a **mental health issue**: a significant increase from previous rape reviews

 There was a significant relationship between **mental health** and **previous victimisation**

### Other complex needs less prevalent within the data:

- Victim has links to gangs (n=2, 0.4%)
- Victim is a missing person/homeless (n=37, 7%)
- Victim is a sex worker (n=14, 3%)
- Victim is an asylum seeker (n=9, 2%)
- Victim requires interpreter (n=47, 9%)

16% of victims had a prior police record

Victims who had a prior police record were **more likely** to have been **previously victimised (45%)** compared to victims without a prior police record (27%)

Almost one third (31%) of victims resided in a ward in the bottom 20% of vulnerable localities in London

11% of victims resided in a ward in the top 20% of vulnerable localities

## The profile of suspects has remained reasonably consistent with previous years' reviews

The profile of suspects has remained reasonably consistent with previous years' reviews. Almost all suspects were male (99%) and aged between 18 and 49 (77%).

### There remains an over-representation of Black suspects and an under-representation of White suspects

- There is also an overrepresentation of suspects aged 18-29 years and an underrepresentation of suspects aged under 18 years

Demographic	2012	2016	2011 Census comparison
Gender: Male	99%	99%	49%
Ethnicity: White	36%	43%	60%
Ethnicity: Black	44%	35%	16%
Ethnicity: Asian	17%	19%	18%
Age: Under 18 years old*	16%	12%	22%
Age: 18 to 29 years	40%	35%	20%
Age: over 30 years	44%	53%	56%

### A proportion of suspects are recorded as having a history of previous offending

- 29% (n=148) had a prior police record
- 12% (n=61) had a history of Domestic Abuse
- 7% (n=36) had a history of Sexual Assault / Rape

SOURCE: MOPAC report: The London Rape Review: A review of cases from 2016

# What factors predict victim withdrawal?

## Victim Withdrawal

Victim/Survivor Characteristics	Male	x3 less
<i>Model fit</i>	<i>0.03</i>	
Suspect Characteristics	Prior police record	x2 less
	Family member	x4 less
<i>Model fit</i>	<i>0.07</i>	
Offence Characteristics	<b>DASH</b>	<b>x3 more</b>
	Injury sustained	x2 less
	Witnesses	x2 less
<i>Model fit</i>	<i>0.10</i>	
	<b>Multiple OICs involved</b>	<b>x8 more</b>
	<b>Early Evidence Kit</b>	<b>x2 less</b>
	<b>Video recorded interview</b>	<b>x6 less</b>
Procedural Characteristics	<b>Suspect denies rape</b>	<b>x6 less</b>
	<b>Evidence casts doubt</b>	<b>x8 less</b>
<i>Model fit</i>	<i>0.43</i>	
<b>Full Model Fit</b>	<b>0.47</b>	

The strongest predictors of victim withdrawal were procedural characteristics.

For example, withdrawal was 6x less likely in cases where the victim participated in a Video Recorded Interview.

Victim, suspect and offence characteristics were less important in predicting withdrawal. However, being male (3x less likely) and reporting via the DASH (3x more likely) were significant predictors.

# What factors predict police no further action?

## Police NFA

<b>Victim/Survivor Characteristics</b>	Mental health issues <b>Under 18 years</b>	x2 more <b>x3 less</b>
<i>Model fit</i>	<i>0.10</i>	
<b>Suspect Characteristics</b>	18 to 29 years Family member	x3 less x3 less
<i>Model fit</i>	<i>0.12</i>	
<b>Offence Characteristics</b>	Witnesses Offence location private	x2 less x2 less
<i>Model fit</i>	<i>0.08</i>	
<b>Procedural Characteristics</b>	<b>Other evidence casts doubt</b>	<b>x7 more</b>
	<b>Inconsistent victim account</b>	<b>x6 more</b>
	<b>Police perception of chance of conviction</b>	<b>x5 more</b>
	<b>No forensic opportunities</b>	<b>x5 more</b>
	Suspect denies rape	x3 less
	<b>Suspect involved in another rape</b>	<b>x8 less</b>
	<b>Early advice from CPS</b>	<b>x10 less</b>
	<b>Suspect arrested</b>	<b>x15 less</b>
<i>Model fit</i>	<i>0.64</i>	
<b>Full Model Fit</b>	<b>0.70</b>	

Procedural characteristics – particularly those related to evidence – were the most important predictors of police NFA.

If other evidence cast doubt on the case, police NFA was 7x more likely. If there were no forensic opportunities, police NFA was 5x more likely.

Cases where the victim was under 18 years old were 3x less likely to end in police NFA.

Case characteristics were better at predicting police NFA than victim withdrawal.

**How can we support  
victims/survivors?**



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## Victims/survivors often have complex needs which extend beyond sexual violence and require attention from multiple support agencies

- Research highlights the importance of tailoring support services to compliment the needs of the survivor
- An audit of the ISVA role across England and Wales found that over half of an ISVAs caseload included clients with risk factors such as mental health (94%), suicide risk (91%), multiple needs (86%), drug and alcohol misuse (79%), learning disability (75%), domestic violence or repeat victimisation (71%), vulnerable young persons (68%), homelessness (65%) and gang association (44%)
- **Advocacy** is often sought out for a range of overlapping problems affecting the survivor's life; for example, accommodation, legal, employment and education
- Whilst there is a multitude of research evidencing victim support needs - including those for both emotional and practical support. There is comparatively little research and evidence looking into the impact of different types and level of support on victims<sup>1</sup>.
- Similarly, whilst there is research documenting the work and the role of Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs), arguing that they encourage victims to continue to engage with the CJS<sup>2</sup>, there have to date not been any published evaluations on their impact on victims and / or case progression and outcomes.



SOURCE: Lea S, Falcone MA, Doyle K, et al. (2015) An Audit of Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs) in England and Wales. London: Kings College London and LimeCulture

<sup>1</sup> Crawford, A. and Enterkin, J. (1999) *Victim Contact Work and the Probation Service: A Study of Service Delivery and Impact*. Centre for Criminal Justice Studies: University of Leeds; Tapley, J. (2005) Public Confidence Costs – Criminal Justice from a Victim's Perspective'. *British Journal of Community Justice*, 3(2), pp: 25-37.

<sup>2</sup> Robinson, A. (2009) *Independent Sexual Violence Advisors: A Process Evaluation*. London: Home Office Research Report 20



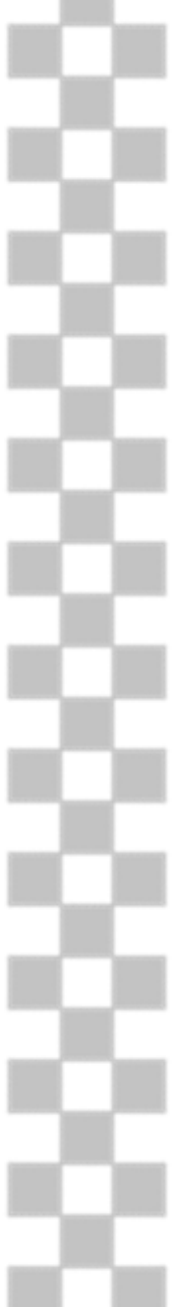
## Personal factors may be present in whether a victim accesses support. Some victim/survivor groups may need greater encouragement and may present with additional needs

- Sexual orientation and ethnicity has been shown to impact the extent to which a survivor will obtain adequate support from service providers and ultimately reach recovery; in particular those who identify as bisexual and black experience the greatest disadvantage.
- Research also suggests that demographics, features of the offence, and lifestyle influences such as personal relationships, education and healthcare, can influence a survivor's willingness to seek mental health support.
- **'Beneath the Numbers' revealed some insight from service providers on perceived barriers and gaps in reporting and groups who may require more support:**
  - BAME victims may be less willing to come forward potentially influenced by their wider perceptions towards the police
  - Males may be less likely to come forward for fear of being viewed as weak
  - How the potential fear of being ostracised or isolated from some communities may lead some not to report
- London's Victims Commissioner has also conducted work with women and girls directly affected by domestic abuse who have experienced barriers in receiving support because of their immigration status leading to reticence to report the abuse to authorities in fear of being deported
- Analysis conducted by ONS into sexual offences in England and Wales showed that although there are low levels of reporting to police, almost half of those victims that report did so because they wanted to prevent it happening to others or that it was the right thing to do. Conversely, the most frequent reasons for victims to tell anyone but not to tell the police were due to embarrassment, feeling that the police couldn't help or that it would be humiliating to report.

SOURCE: Allen, N.E., Bybee, D.I. and Sullivan, C.M., 2004. Battered women's multitude of needs: Evidence supporting the need for comprehensive advocacy. *Violence against women*, 10(9), pp.1015-1035/ Astbury, J., 2006. Services for victim/survivors of sexual assault/ Sigurvinsdottir, R. and Ullman, S.E., 2015. The role of sexual orientation in the victimization and recovery of sexual assault survivors. *Violence and Victims*, 30(4), pp.636-648/ Ullman, S.E. and Brecklin, L.R., 2002. Sexual assault history, PTSD, and mental health service seeking in a national sample of women. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 30(3), pp.261-279/ Ullman, S.E., 2007. Mental health services seeking in sexual assault victims. *Women & Therapy*, 30(1-2), pp.61-84

Sexual offences in England and Wales: year ending March 2017 ONS – February 2018

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/sexualoffencesinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2017#reporting-of-sexual-assault-by-rape-or-penetration>



## Many victims of crime still do not know about the Victims' Code of Practice or understand their entitlement

London's Victims' Commissioner undertook an extensive review of Compliance with the Victims' Code of Practice (VCOP). This review highlighted that:

- **No more than one third** of participating victims had been told about VCOP and their entitlements not only when they reported, but at any stage at all in their case. This was one aspect of a wider lack of information for victims about what happens in the criminal justice process that was identified by the Review.
- Victims aware of the Code of Practice highlighted a number of ways in which it does not meet their needs and that what is in place is inconsistently used by practitioners.
- It is clear that Victim Personal Statements are used inconsistently and are not always effectively supporting either improved justice outcomes or victims' recovery.
- Other research has shown that key factors in victim satisfaction (for those who decide to report to the police) include:
  - Being kept informed (about the CJ process, timely updates, services available): In this respect, a positive impact of automated or online programmes, such as TrackMyCrime has been noted in the research<sup>1</sup>.
  - Procedural justice and perceptions of being treated fairly: Numerous studies have shown that the ways in which the police respond to victims has a strong impact on the victims' wellbeing and ability to cope, including the potential – if police response was negative – to exacerbate symptoms of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder<sup>2</sup>.

SOURCE: [https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/vcop\\_final\\_pages.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/vcop_final_pages.pdf)

1 Wedlock, E., & Tapley, J. D. (2016). What works in supporting victims of crime: A rapid evidence assessment.

2 Elliott, I., Thomas, S., and Ogloff, J. (2014) Procedural justice in victim-police interactions and victims' recovery from victimisation experiences. *Policing & Society*. 24(5), pp: 588-601; Wemmers, J.A. (2013) Victims' experiences in the criminal justice system and their recovery from crime. *International Review of Victimology*. 19(3), pp: 221-233.

## 'What works' in tackling sexual violence - Perpetrators

- There is limited research focusing specifically on interventions with sexual violence perpetrators. The research that does exist tends to centre on clinical and therapeutic techniques to alter thinking patterns and reduce the tendency to act in violent ways.
- However, the research looking into education-based approaches to prevention has been able to evidence a reduced the likelihood of offending in those most at risk of committing violent acts, including among men with a history of sexual violence<sup>1</sup>

### What can we learn from Emotional intelligence (EI)?

- A small number of studies have examined the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and levels of violence/aggression with some evidence to suggest that levels of EI are associated with lower levels of aggression.
- A systematic review and meta-analysis of studies relating measures of cognitive and affective empathy to offending found that low cognitive empathy was strongly related to offending, while low affective empathy was weakly related to offending. The relationship between low empathy and offending was relatively strong for violent offenders, but *relatively weak for sex offenders*. This relationship was stronger for younger people than for older people.

<sup>1</sup> Gidycz, C. A., Orchowski, L. M., & Berkowitz, A. D. (2011). Preventing sexual aggression among college men: An evaluation of a social norms and bystander intervention program. *Violence against women*, 17(6), 720-742.

Gower A L, Shlafer R J, Polan J, McRee A-L, McMorris B J, Pettingell S L, Sieving R E (2014) Associations between adolescent girls' social-emotional intelligence and violence perpetration. *Journal of Adolescence* Volume 37, Issue 1, January 2014, Pages 67-71 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence>

Ruth Castillo R, José M. Salguero J M, Pablo Fernández-Berrocal P F, Balluerka N (2013) Effects of an emotional intelligence intervention on aggression and empathy among adolescents. *Journal of Adolescence* Volume 36, Issue 5, October 2013, Pages 883-892  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2013.07.001>

Jolliffe D, Farrington D P (2004) Empathy and offending: A systematic review and meta-analysis *Aggression and Violent Behaviour*, Volume 9, Issue 5, August 2004, Pages 441-476  
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# What are the challenges to service delivery?



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## Structural and organisational factors can challenge the delivery of support services to victims/survivors of sexual violence

- Macy et al (2010) identified a range of barriers to delivery of support within sexual assault and domestic violence services; sustainability, funding, resourcing and failure to provide an inclusive service capable of addressing additional substance use or mental health issues were prominent themes.
- More than half of respondents to the Women's Aid annual survey reported 'funding cuts and uncertainties' as their biggest challenge and this was also the most commonly identified challenge in the recent survey of VAWG service Providers undertaken by MOPAC. Practitioners who participated in the VCOP compliance review also spoke of the challenge of funding.
- The Review of the compliance with the VCOP highlighted the funding cuts to Sexual Violence: "while 15 per cent of all recorded sexual offences take place in the capital, only six per cent of government funding comes to London. Demand for support services for women has increased by 83% since 2010, yet over the same period, funding has declined by 50%".
- The Review went on to say: "Acute and constant resource pressures on statutory and voluntary services mean that they cannot realistically deliver the current set of victim entitlements on a consistent basis. Neither a Victims' Code or a Victims' Law can make a difference if the services delivering it cannot afford to cope with demand".

**Key findings from the 2018 annual Women's Aid survey, published in the Domestic Abuse 2019 report, indicated that for 2017/2018:**



### **Funding**

- More than half of respondents were running an area of their domestic abuse service without dedicated funding
- More than half reported 'funding cuts and uncertainties' as their biggest challenge

SOURCE: Macy, R.J., Giattina, M.C., Parish, S.L. and Crosby, C., 2010. Domestic violence and sexual assault services: Historical concerns and contemporary challenges. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 25(1), pp.3-32

[https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/vcop\\_final\\_pages.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/vcop_final_pages.pdf)

Women's Aid Federation for England, 2017 - data from Routes to Support, the UK violence against women and girls service directory and Welsh Women's Aid, <https://1q7dqy2unor827bqjls0c4rn-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Domestic-Abuse-Report-2019-Key-Findings.pdf>

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## Increasing demand on services may result in victims/survivors not being able to access the support they need

Qualitative research undertaken in 2018 with 15 representatives from organisations in London working with survivors of domestic abuse and sexual violence showed that:

### Most respondents felt that demand on their organisation had increased

citing increases in the number of referrals to their organisation, increases in their caseloads over time, the number of clients on their waiting lists (for those organisations that provided counselling), or increases in the number of staff members of the support organisations themselves

It was also suggested that the level of demand from victims increased as services were introduced or became better known. Talking specifically about the experience of male victims, one respondent said:

"In 2001 I think we had 20 people a week. Now we have 150. So yes, it has increased. Just year on year... a steady increase each year."

"We're supposed to have 29 cases with the facility for an additional two, that's the contract. I constantly run at 30, 31 and right now I think I've got 35."

"I think generally there's an untapped demand for services for male victims. So a good example is that we expanded our [service] because somebody generously gave us some; a private donor, generously gave us some money. Because our [service] relies on public donations, so we don't actually get any money from the state if you like. And we know that, once we increased the capacity, we had more [service users]"

### One respondent expressed concerns that increased demand could reduce the levels of service delivered

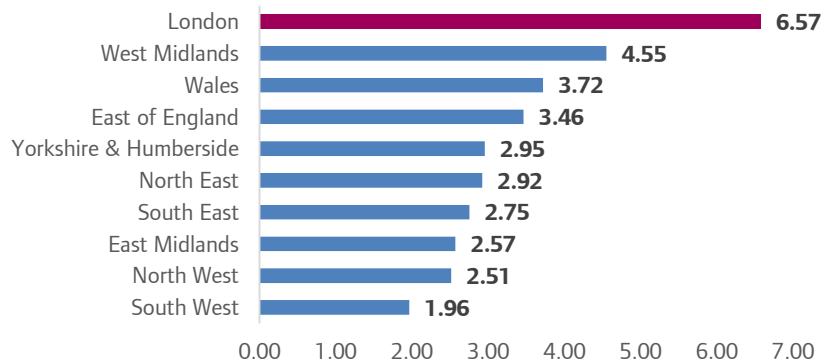
As more victims were coming to the attention of the organisation, and the level of resource was not increasing commensurately, the organisation was having to prioritise individuals who were at a higher level of risk, and consequently was not able to provide services for some of those who would have been supported in the past. Another respondent also expressed fears:

"And I do honestly believe that the old adage that we're only seeing the tip of iceberg is true in any abuse. Sexual, DV... You're only scraping it. I think there's a ... risk that if it was done properly, services wouldn't manage it. There would be too much of an influx of clients, and I don't think any organisation would be able to survive such an increase in work..."

## Two thirds of victims seek refuge services outside of their home borough which makes understanding geographical demand challenging

- The number of refuge beds per estimated victims in London is far greater than the rest of the country.
- However at only 6.6 beds per 1,000 victims, London are still under capacity. (*Avg. 10 DA offences per 1000*)

Number of refuge bed spaces per 1,000 estimated female victims



### Demand for Refuge

- 60% of referrals to refuge service in England were declined
- 17% of all referrals were declined due to lack of space/capacity to support the survivor
- An estimated 21,084 referrals to all refuge services in England were declined in 2017/18

3%

of women access refuge services in their own borough



2 in 3 women access refuge services outside of their home borough

SOURCE: Source: Women's Aid Federation for England, 2017 - data from Routes to Support, the UK violence against women and girls service directory and Welsh Women's Aid, <https://1q7dqy2unor827bqjls0c4rn-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Domestic-Abuse-Report-2019-Key-Findings.pdf>



# What did the VAWG service provider survey tell us about gaps and challenges?

## Nearly half of respondents highlighted funding as an issue

Respondents indicated a real sense of concern about the lack of long term, sustained funding and the subsequent implications this has for meeting the demand of service users.

This issue is not only associated with organisations of lower income brackets.

*'[...] the demand is much more than we can provide services to meet. At least for the last 2 years we have had a waiting list of 6+ months.'*

*(organisational income 'under £250,000')*

*'we struggle everyday to meet the many multiple needs of our service users who come to us after being turned away by statutory services due to funding cuts.'*

*(organisational income 'over £750,000')*

## Many felt long-term, sustainable funding, would have a positive impact on their ability to better meet demand

Some respondents suggested using potential funding to invest in hiring specialist staff (e.g. translators, paid counsellors), specialist services (e.g. therapy), developing infrastructure and facilities (e.g. accommodation for refugees, creche for children under school age), provide specialist training and/or developing *'[...] technology and transformation'*.

One respondent commented on the time it takes to access and receive funding; 'so many layers to get through' can direct already limited resources away from clients.

*"The main gaps are the time it takes for services to tap into funding and receive the funding. There are so many layers to get through that [by] the time you are finished you are no longer focused on the victims. this needs to change."*



# What did the VAWG service provider survey tell us about gaps and challenges?

## Others recognised accessibility issues for certain demographic groups

Two respondents from organisations that provide services across demographic groups, noted the issue of certain demographic groups not accessing their services. One respondent voiced 'LGBTQ and BME' do not access their service as much as other groups.

Knowledge gaps in how different ethnic groups access service provisions. One respondent from an organisation providing services to African and Caribbean women and girls highlighted the issue of equal access to services.

*'There is a total lack of understanding of African and Caribbean heritage women and girls affected by domestic and sexual abuse across the board. Discriminatory practices have prevented equal access for black women and girls'*

*'Women have to wait at least 6 months before accessing our services due to the demand especially for counselling.'*

*'Another gap is the low number of free/subsidised counselling places we can offer.'*

## More than a third identified gaps in counselling services

Twelve respondents highlighted issues surrounding counselling services, including long-waiting lists, a lack of resources to fund paid counsellors, and an inability to provide services for those on lower incomes.

**Gaps in a joined-up approach** were also noted, with some respondents highlighting the need for a Pan London service with one respondent suggesting a 'Pan London Referrals Co-ordinator to manage referrals to all specialist rape and sexual abuse support services.'

*'We need to be able to offer the service pan London and not on a lottery postcode.'*