

Lesley Griffiths AC / AM  
Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Busnes y Llywodraeth  
Minister for Local Government and Government Business



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

William Powell AM  
Chair Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales

21 May 2014

Dear Bill,

**Petition – P-04-540 Stop Sexism in Domestic Abuse**

The petition considered by the Petitions Committee on 11 March 2014 relates to the Welsh Government's policies on domestic abuse. Committee has invited my views on the petition, particularly on whether the forthcoming legislation will address any of the issues in the petition.

The Welsh Government undertook a White Paper consultation on policy and legislative proposals aimed at tackling violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence between November 2012 and February 2013. A total of 147 consultation responses were received, with strong support for the proposals. A summary report, together with the consultation responses, can be found on the Welsh Government's website at the link below:

<http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/people-and-communities/vawwhitepaper/?status=closed&lang=en>

The response of all respondents to the consultation, including a response from the petitioner, have been used to inform the development of legislation, which the Welsh Government plans to introduce to the National Assembly in June this year. As the Bill is yet to be introduced, I am unable to provide detailed information on the content of the Bill at this stage.

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*Wedi'i argraffu ar bapur wedi'i ailgylchu (100%)  
paper*

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However, it is important to highlight the Welsh Government remains committed to supporting all victims of such abuse and violence. However, we recognise in Wales, consistent with the rest of the world, women are disproportionately impacted by all forms of intimate violence. Statistics from the 2012/13 Crime Survey for England and Wales self-completion module on intimate violence, asked of adults aged 16 to 59 show:

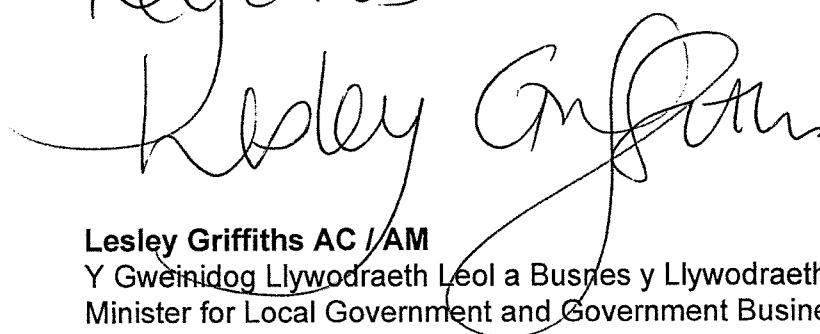
- 7.1% of women and 4.4% of men reported having experienced any type of domestic abuse (inclusive of sexual violence) in 2012/13. These figures have been estimated as equivalent to 1,151,000 female victims and 721,000 male victims in England and Wales.
- Overall 30.0% of women and 16.3% of men had experienced domestic abuse since the age of 16. These figures were equivalent to an estimated 4.9 million female and 2.7 million male victims.
- 2.0% of women and 0.5% of men who had experienced some form of sexual assault (including attempts) in 2012/13. This is equivalent to an estimated 331,000 female victims and 75,000 male victims.
- 19.1% of women and 2.7% of men who had experienced some form of sexual assault (including attempts) since the age of 16. This is equivalent to an estimated 3.1 million female victims and 451,000 male victims.

Further to these stark statistics, the Welsh Government recognises and agrees with the Council of Europe (Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence) regarding the gendered nature of domestic abuse and sexual violence. The fact perpetrators are predominantly men and victims mostly women, recognising this, as not only violations of human rights, but also forms of gender-based discrimination.

Whilst the Welsh Government recognises the disproportionate impact on women, as stated above, we remain committed to supporting all victims of such violence and abuse and this will be reflected in the forthcoming Bill.

I would further like to clarify a point in the petition document, which incorrectly attributes a quote to the Welsh Government regarding the link between masculinity and violence. This statement was not made by the Welsh Government. It is a quote from an independent Task and Finish Group Report provided to the Welsh Government to inform the policy development underpinning the Bill. In conclusion, I do not consider the petition accurately reflects either the position of the Welsh Government or the widely evidenced disproportionate impact of domestic abuse on women.

Regards



**Lesley Griffiths AC /AM**

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