

Ideas generated at the Time to Tackle Violence Against Women and Girls meeting



Held 28th September 2022 at Hereford FC Suite
Organised by **Herefordshire Labour**

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Panel members’ final ‘wishes’ and pledges:

Jocelyn Anderson:

Sexual violence is simply wrong. I want action ‘upstream’ to prevent VAWG – the latest health and wellbeing strategy for Worcestershire for example doesn’t even mention this [Note: Herefordshire’s does talk about ‘special consideration’ for ‘women exposed to domestic abuse and sexual violence’]. Above all I want a strategy that follows through!

DCI Ross Jones:

I want to change the length of time it takes to go from investigation of the crime to charge and to trial. I wish we didn’t have to still discuss this and how hard it is to tackle, after my 22 years in policing. Sadly the scale of abuse being committed is no surprise to me...

Cllr Ange Tyler:

We struggle to get all partners to come to the Community Safety Partnership meetings quarterly, to report and to follow-up. I will tackle the partners and challenge them to do this, as our new priorities for the Partnership are Sexual Violence and Domestic Abuse.

Participants’ top priorities written at the end of the meeting:

These statements ranged from the broadest statements to personal pledges, as well as specific proposals for agencies to take up.



Broad statements of intent:

Stop all violence towards women and girls

I want an end to sexual violence

I wish the criminal justice system put the victim first

I want all men to be feminists

Sexualised behaviours and language has to be challenged, whoever it is from

Encourage more discussion /raise awareness of these issues generally

National social media campaign about the issue

More action, less planning!

Stop writing more strategies and do something!

Funding, funding, funding!

Education at all levels not just schools!

Specific proposals:

These are grouped below as follows:

- **men's role**
 - men taking responsibility as part of a wide societal change without being defensive
 - accountability! Men need to speak up when their friends are sexist or disrespectful towards women
 - men must own this
 - 'a call to men!' all men to pledge to challenge misogyny and end violence on women and girls
 - Support men in challenging men. Calling them out about their behaviour . Why don't they?

- **education of children and young people**
 - continue supporting education of young people in Hereford
 - speak, challenge and talk to young people about this – as I always have as a youth worker
 - get Purple Leaf into Kington!
 - Educate kids, get access to schools to somehow break down the male misogyny
 - Better education in both primary and secondary schools around male sexual violence
 - Increased preventive education and support, especially in post 16/uni education & male-heavy workspaces and courses
 - The Council to mandate all schools run the Purple Leaf programme ongoing
 - The Council remove the misogynist programme *A Fertile Heart* from the Catholic Secondary School

- **development of services**
 - funding for West Mercia Partnership to communicate with boys and men and set up community services for boys and men on social media and challenging behaviour
 - improve accessibility to resources in rural locations, possibly through Talk Community Hubs (HCC)
 - campaign for many more rural buses e.g. to and from Kington and nearby rural areas so victims of violence know they have a way to access services or just get away
 - reduce wait times for support
 - make therapy more accessible to survivors- no one should be too complex or not sit in the right box to get help. Every survivor needs and deserves help
 - fund more support to reach more women and children
 - a special team set up by the council working across all support teams, who take action to make sure each child/woman has the services and support they need
 - NHS psychological services for boys and men who commit sexual crimes against girls and women

- **getting into action & leadership rather than more plans and strategies**
 - The Council to show leadership and set in place a Sexual Violence policy for its staff. (2 comments on this)
 - Increased discussion with targeted action and political accountability
 - Local authorities need to lead the way and 'own' the issue
 - Various community leaders being more proactive in raising awareness of the problem
 - Ensure responsible 'groups' get results from action plans
 - Ensure delivery of preventative measures under Safer Streets 4 is effectively targeted

- **public campaigning and communication**
 - more public messaging about toxic male behaviour
 - encourage more 'open' conversations in the workplace about domestic/sexual abuse
 - shame programmes like *Love Island* out of existence. It promotes misogyny!
 - Encourage neighbours to contact social services if they hear possible abuse through walls... when they fear their name being given out!
 - getting people talking about sexual violence and domestic abuse
 - as individuals we should attempt to befriend an elderly person for a chat... so they can tell us of their anxieties!

- **criminal justice system**
 - speeding up the conviction process – absolutely necessary not to deter victims from reporting

- definitions of sexual violence and domestic abuse need expanding
- Home Office programmes for men

Individual pledges:

- This evening has been an eye opener, very challenging. I will listen and learn and help
- To do what I can to create a space/resources to bring Purple Leaf programme to Kington
- I will work with the contacts I've made tonight to raise awareness of sexual violence in their local area
- I intend to approach the clinical commissioning group to at least ask what they could do to encourage any service they could fund relevant to tonight's issue
- I pledge to tackle and challenge rape myths and stereotypes when I hear them #TimeToChange
- To carry on working with Herefordshire Women's Equality Group's sub-group: End Male Violence Against Women and Girls
- To challenge the men in my family and friends who are male re misogynist comments and sexist behaviour

Useful links

[Home - Time for Change](#) – has video and resources to use in campaigning in Herefordshire

[Community Safety Partnership - Herefordshire Safeguarding Boards and Partnerships](#) – home page of the CSP

www.wmrsasc.org.uk - West Mercia Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre and their related site www.purpleleaf.org.uk that focuses on :

- Empowering individuals and organisations
- Enabling positive change through: assessment, intervention and support
- Transforming working cultures and lives

[West Mercia Women's Aid | WMWA is a full member of the Women's Aid Federation of England. \(westmerciawomensaid.org\)](#) website of West Mercia Women's Aid