



Dear Candidate

I am writing to you as a local charity providing support services to survivors of sexual violence living in your prospective constituency area.

Over recent years sexual abuse and violence and its impact has been high in the public awareness. You will no doubt be aware of the work of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse in our area. Statistically 1 in 5 women will experience some form of sexual violence between the ages of 16 – 59, while upwards of 85% of women will experience misogyny in a public place. We also know that in some areas there is no support available for survivors of rape and that people are turned away from refuge on a daily basis. The figures for men experiencing abuse and their need for support are also being more widely acknowledged.

We believe Nottingham/shire is leading the way in many areas. We were first police area to recognise misogyny as a hate crime, sparking a national discourse on the subject, and Nottingham was the first city to declare itself a FGM-free zone. The East Midlands is one of the few areas in the UK bucking the trend against falling rape conviction rates. Whilst credit must be given to the survivors, we believe that strong partnership working including the support provided from services such as ours has also played its part.

We are anxious that, as we move between Parliaments, key pieces of legislation and parliamentary discourse may be lost and we are writing to all candidates to ask them to pledge to the following:

- To continue work around drafting the Domestic Abuse Bill ensuring that it supports all survivors of domestic violence, including those of insecure immigration status.
- To continue the discourse around misogyny as a hate crime.
- To continue to ring-fence money for sexual and domestic violence services to ensure that all survivors are able to access support when it is needed.

This General Election period is unique in that it is happening during the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. Leadership from the top is necessary on this very important issue and we are asking all parliamentary candidates to sign up to the White Ribbon Campaign and pledge that they will never commit or condone violence against women. More information can be found here: <https://www.whiteribbon.org.uk/promise>

We hope that you feel able to make the above commitments and look forward to hearing your response. We have also written to other parliamentary candidates and will be publishing this generic letter and any responses on our website.

Should you be elected to Parliament we would also be pleased to meet with you to further discuss our work and the needs of survivors.

Yours sincerely,

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Campaigns and Administration Officer



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