

Tom Franklin,
Chief Executive,
Magistrates' Association

14 January 2026

Dear Tom Franklin,

Experiences of the criminal justice system

The [Equality and Social Justice Committee](#) recently considered evidence in relation to experiences of the criminal justice system at its meeting on [15 December 2025](#).

The [Fact File report](#) presented by Dr. Rob Jones highlights that the number of women remanded at magistrates' court in Wales increased by 25 per cent in 2024. This appears to contrast with the commitment in the Women's Justice Blueprint to 'build confidence' in alternatives to remand.

We would appreciate if you could help us understand the factors influencing remand decisions in Wales, and the circumstances under which short custodial sentences—particularly for women—are considered appropriate. In light of evidence of poor outcomes associated with these disposals, what key principles or objectives guide magistrates in making these decisions?

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request. We would appreciate a response by 13 February.

Yours Sincerely,



Jenny Rathbone MS

Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor Cydraddoldeb a Chyfiawnder Cymdeithasol

Chair, Equality and Social Justice Committee