



Llinell Gymorth Camdriaiaeth yn y Cartref
a Thrais Rhywiol Cymru Gyfan

All Wales Domestic Abuse and Sexual
Violence Helpline

0808 80 10 800



Cymorth i Ferched Cymru
Welsh Women's Aid

Rhoi Merched a Phlant yn Gyntaf
Putting Women & Children First

19th June 2014

The Chair
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

Dear William Powell AM,

RE: RESPONSE TO 'PETITION – P-04-540 STOP SEXISM IN DOMESTIC ABUSE'

Thank you for your letter seeking Welsh Women's Aid's views on the statistics provided in the petition referenced above, along with our other views on this topic.

In regards to the statistics this petition provides, these are not any of the generally accepted statistics that I am familiar with, and in fact directly contradict them. As these figures are not referenced or explained, I am unfortunately unable to comment further. However, in regards to the correct and commonly accepted statistics I can provide the following:

- According to the Crime Survey for England and Wales, between 2012-13 there were an estimated 1.2 million female victims of domestic abuse and 700,000 male victims,¹ with at least 29.9% of women and 17% of men in England and Wales having experienced it at some point.² However, women are much more likely to be high risk victims than men,³ and women make up around 89% of all those who have experienced four or more incidents of domestic violence;⁴
- Studies have shown that women suffer a greater amount and more severe abuse from male partners;⁵
- Women were victims in 94% of the domestic abuse cases reaching conviction in 2010;
- Nearly 2500 sexual assaults against women are reported in Wales each year;
- Some 30 women in Wales will report honour-based violence, with 23 reporting forced marriage;

¹ Office for National Statistics (2013) Focus on violent crime and sexual offences 2012/13, Chapter 4: Intimate Personal Violence and Partner Abuse.

² Smith, K., Osborne, S., Lau, I. et al (2012) Homicides, Firearm offences and intimate violence 2010/11: Supplementary Vol. 2 to Crime in England and Wales 2010/11. London.

³ Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (2014) Everyone's Business: Improving the Police Response to Domestic Abuse.

⁴ Walby, S. and Allen, J. (2004) Home Office Research Study 276: Domestic Abuse, Sexual Assault and Stalking: Findings from the British Crime Survey. Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate.

⁵ M. Hester (2009) Who Does What to Whom? Gender and Domestic Violence Perpetrators, Bristol: University of Bristol in association with the Northern Rock Foundation.

Pendragon House, Caxton Place | Pentwyn, Cardiff | CF23 8XE

Email: admin@welshwomensaid.org.uk | Tel: 02920 541 551

info@welshwomensaid.org.uk | www.welshwomensaid.org | [@WelshWomensAid](https://www.facebook.com/WelshWomensAid)

Registered Charity Number: 1140962 | VAT REG No. 922 7943 07



Linell Gymorth Camdriniaeth yn y Cartref
a Thrais Rhywiol Cymru Gyfan

All Wales Domestic Abuse and Sexual
Violence Helpline

0808 80 10 800



**Cymorth i Ferched Cymru
Welsh Women's Aid**

Rhoi Merched a Phlant yn Gyntaf
Putting Women & Children First

- FGM is a well-known practice in some communities in Wales. It is estimated 18 or more will be victims each year;⁶
- On average two women a week are killed by their current or ex-partner in England and Wales, and each year, 7 women will die at the hands of a male partner or family member.

You may have also come across the statistic that 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men experience domestic abuse to describe the prevalence of gender violence, however, this statistic is misleading.⁷ Its origin is a report into domestic abuse conducted ten years ago for the Home Office. The definition of domestic violence used was gender neutral, including 'those incidents involving household members or other relatives regardless of where they took place. The report used findings from the British Crime Survey, which showed that 23% of women and 15% of men had 'ever' experienced violence, but the 'type' of violence was therefore not necessarily just 'intimate partner/domestic abuse. This definition also included one-off as well as repeated incidents, but the defining factor in domestic abuse is that it is persistent, so the over statistic does not give a picture of the gender divide of domestic abuse.

In regards to the gendered nature of the proposed Bill, our understanding was always that this was not a Bill about violence in general. This is a piece of legislation aimed at addressing the worrying levels of gender-based violence towards women in Wales; whether it is sexual violence, domestic abuse, stalking, harassment, forced marriage, trafficking or female genital mutilation, it is far too high.

It is a well-researched and internationally accepted fact that women the world over suffer these particular types of violence disproportionately to men, because they are women⁸.

The World Health Organisation's figures show that violence causes more deaths and disability than cancer, malaria, traffic accidents and war combined amongst women aged 15–44 worldwide.⁹ This follows international definitions of violence against women, such as CEDAW¹⁰ and the UN Declaration on the Elimination of VAW¹¹. CEDAW, for example, defines VAW as 'violence that is directed towards a woman because she is a woman, or that affects women disproportionately.' We must recognise this in how we deliver government policies and new legislation. It would be unreasonable to ignore the huge difference in the level of this violence against women in Wales.

We understand that the Bill will not lead to significant increases in funding for women-only services. All the services available to men will continue, and many of the positive changes we expect to see will also benefit men. We hope to see the issue of domestic abuse and violence against women itself being raised higher up the agenda in public bodies, so organisations like local authorities have to take account of the policies they have in place to tackle violence against women.

⁶ Wales Violence Against Women Action Group (2012). 2013 Calendar. Available online at www.walesvawgroup.com.

⁷ N. Charles (2010). 'Developing a Domestic Abuse Strategy in Wales'. In N. Charles, C. A. Davies and S. Jones, *Gender and Social Justice in Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press).

⁸ UNIFEM estimates that up to 70 percent of women experience physical or sexual violence from men in their lifetime — the majority from husbands, intimate partners or someone they know.

⁹ WHO 1997.

¹⁰ Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.

¹¹ UN General Assembly Declaring on the Elimination of VAW.

Pendragon House, Caxton Place | Pentwyn, Cardiff | CF23 8XE

Email: admin@welshwomensaid.org.uk | Tel: 02920 541 551

info@welshwomensaid.org.uk | www.welshwomensaid.org | [@WelshWomensAid](https://www.instagram.com/WelshWomensAid)

Registered Charity Number: 1140962 | VAT REG No. 922 7943 07



Llinell Gymorth Camdriniaeth yn y Cartref
a Thrais Rhywiol Cymru Gyfan

All Wales Domestic Abuse and Sexual
Violence Helpline

0808 80 10 800



Cymorth i Ferched Cymru
Welsh Women's Aid

Rhoi Merched a Phlant yn Gyntaf
Putting Women & Children First

We are hopeful that the result will be a more strategic, better researched way of commissioning services across Wales, so that victims do not suffer a postcode lottery of provision – and this will undoubtedly also help male victims.

Schools will have better trained specialists available to help young men and women who want to talk about gender-based violence, and both boys and girls will learn about healthy relationships.

There has never been any dispute that men also suffer from violence in Wales, however, the numbers of men suffering from these forms of violence are significantly lower than women and the reasons for the violence are very different. There are a number of criminal justice strategies to tackle violent crime in our community, as well as a number of programs and services designed to help men who are victims of sexual or domestic abuse. This is a targeted and proportionate use of resources aligned with the level of need for male victims. This provision will not be affected by the proposed Bill, and targeted services will continue to be provided.

The Bill will not mean that male victims will be overlooked or that the services will stop in favour of women only services. It will however raise the issue of violence against women up the agenda in public bodies and make sure that they take steps to tackle it because the number of women who suffer is so significant. It will also seek to address some of the underlying social factors that have created the disproportionate suffering of women from violence by providing a framework for education and prevention work.

I hope that the information provided has addressed your queries, but please do not hesitate to get in touch if I can provide further clarification or information.

Yours Sincerely,

Tina Reece
Public Affairs Manager

Pendragon House, Caxton Place | Pentwyn, Cardiff | CF23 8XE

Email: admin@welshwomensaid.org.uk | Tel: 02920 541 551

info@welshwomensaid.org.uk | www.welshwomensaid.org | [@WelshWomensAid](https://www.instagram.com/WelshWomensAid)

Registered Charity Number: 1140962 | VAT REG No. 922 7943 07