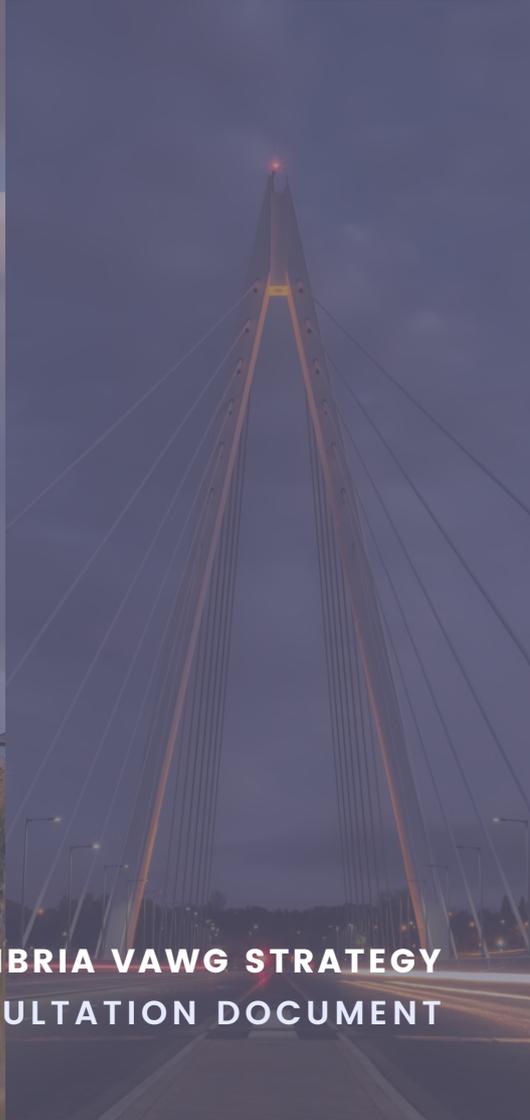
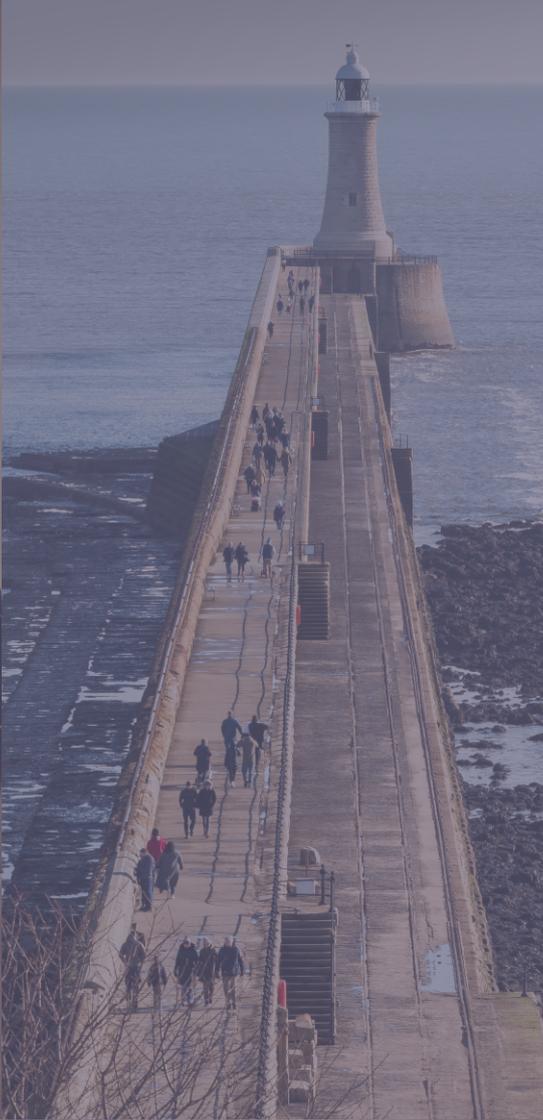


VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & GIRLS STRATEGY

PUBLIC CONSULTATION
DOCUMENT





Foreword

As your Police and Crime Commissioner I am absolutely committed to tackling all forms of Violence against Women and Girls, and I know there are many others across Northumberland, Tyne and Wear who share this aim.

The purpose of this document is to set out how we can work together to end that violence. That is not an easy task, the challenge we face is huge, but across our region we have organisations and individuals determined to work together on this.

In this document you will see recommendations for preventing VAWG offences from being perpetrated in the first place, for pursuing perpetrators when they do commit these crimes and for supporting victims.



We need a plan around how to tackle VAWG, because too many women and girls are suffering right now, because of the 42 domestic homicides in our region since 2011, because of the 4,439 sexual assaults reported to Northumbria Police in one year alone, and because 1 in 3 women and girls will experience some form of sexual abuse in their lifetime.

For a strategy to succeed in ending this violence and abuse it has to be one we all share, and that's why I am asking the public and key organisations to have their say. Even if you have experienced violence as a woman or girl but did not want to report it to the police, we want to hear from you. Now is the time to shape the response across Northumberland, Tyne & Wear.

Together we can end Violence against Women and Girls, and I look forward to working on our shared plan for that.

Kim McGuinness

Northumbria Police & Crime Commissioner

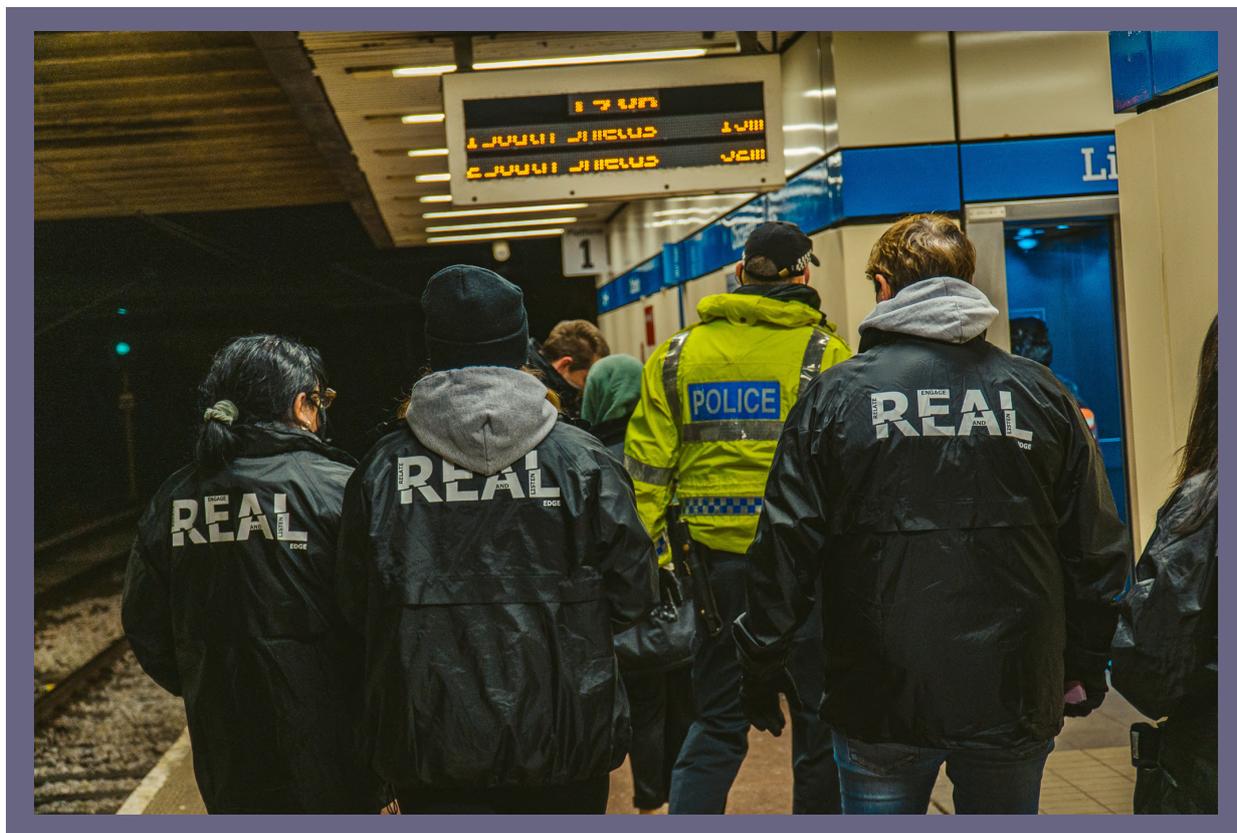
What is VAWG?

VAWG includes those crime and incidents of violence and abuse that disproportionately affect women and girls. It encompasses but is not limited to:

- Sexual violence
- Domestic abuse
- Stalking and harassment, including on-line harassment and cyber-stalking
- Forced marriage, so called 'honour based' abuse, female genital mutilation (FGM) and other culturally specific forms of abuse
- Child sexual abuse, including grooming for sexual purposes
- Child to parent violence and abuse

VAWG is rooted in the inequality of women and girls and is overwhelmingly perpetrated by men against women and girls – in the year ending March 2020 alone, there were an estimated 618,000 female victims (aged 16-74) and 155,000 male victims of sexual assault (including attempts). 98.3% of perpetrators were male. However, I acknowledge that men and boys can also be victims of violence and abuse, and women can perpetrate abuse. While we use the term 'violence against women and girls', this refers to all victims of any of these offences. I am committed to tackling VAWG crimes in any form and ensuring support for all victims, regardless of sex or gender.

Please see the [Government's position statement](#) on male victims for more information.



Why is it so important to focus on VAWG?

VAWG causes high levels of harm and is prevalent across all local types of communities in Northumbria and beyond, but is often hidden.

- An estimated 2.3 million people experienced domestic abuse in 2019/20. This is equivalent to 5.5% of the adult population – 7.3% of women and 3.6% of men.
- An estimated 1 in 3 women and girls will experience some form of sexual abuse in their lifetime.
 - Northumbria Police recorded 4,439 reports of sexual offences in the year ending March 2020 alone, including 371 reports of rape of a female child.
- In the last 12 months:
 - 20% of women have experienced unwanted sexual comments
 - 6% had experienced being followed or threatened
 - 14% had experienced unwanted non-sexual touching.
- 2,024 'honour'-based abuse offences were recorded by the police in 2019/20. 40 of those incidents were recorded in Northumbria.
- Between 2015 and 2021, 27,255 women and girls who had undergone FGM have been seen by NHS services.
- Victims of VAWG crimes can go on to have serious physical and psychological injuries which can affect them for life.
- Two women a week are killed by a current or former partner in England and Wales alone. Since 2011, there have been 42 domestic homicides in Northumbria.

The numbers of reports to police are increasing each year. This may be because there are more victims, or because people have more confidence to report. Either way, it is vital that we do all we can to address this violence and abuse, and to ensure that where victims do wish to pursue a criminal justice pathway, they are supported and face as few barriers as possible. In the year ending March 2020, there were 52,210 rapes recorded by police in England and Wales, however only 843 resulted in a charge or a summons – a rate of 1.6% – and even fewer found guilty. This must change and I am working with key partners to address issues in the criminal justice system.

However, there is work to do outside of the criminal justice system too. That includes work to prevent violence and abuse happening in the first place; to intervene early where it does occur to reduce the risk of it escalating; support to help adult and child victims cope and recover from the longer-term impacts; and work to tackle perpetrators who are the cause of the violence and abuse.

How can I help?

As your PCC, I want to know what's important to you. I want a new VAWG Strategy that reflects your priorities, which my office can then action.

We think that there are 4 key areas that need to be worked on when it comes to VAWG:

NORTHUMBRIA

Preventing VAWG

Supporting victims and survivors

Pursuing perpetrators

Creating stronger systems

(This includes improving criminal justice outcomes and ensuring agencies work together)

VAWG STRATEGY



My ask of you

Please answer these 4 questions to help us shape these 4 pillars of work:

Preventing VAWG

VAWG is endemic locally, nationally, and globally. We know most men are not perpetrators of violence and abuse but there are enough men causing harm to make it a problem that must be prevented. Men and boys need to be part of the solution to VAWG, as the primary perpetrators.

What do you think men and boys can do to help prevent VAWG? Can you give any examples of good practice that you have seen?

Supporting victims and survivors

If you have been a victim/survivor, or know someone who has, is there anything you think could be improved? Or anything that you thought was done well?

(This could be something related to the support available or the police response).

Pursuing perpetrators

How can we improve the response to perpetrators of VAWG?

Creating stronger systems

Would you feel confident to report violence and abuse to the police? Please explain why/why not, if possible.

You can answer these either online, [here](#), or via email to enquiries@northumbria-pcc.gov.uk - I really appreciate you taking the time to help shape future plans for how we better tackle Violence Against Women & Girls.

Yours,

Kim McGuinness

Northumbria Police & Crime Commissioner

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & GIRLS STRATEGY

PUBLIC CONSULTATION
DOCUMENT



[/KIMCGUINNESS](#)



[@NORTHUMBRIAPCC](#)



[@PCC_KIM_MCGUINNESS](#)



[NORTHUMBRIA-PCC.GOV.UK](#)



ENQUIRIES@NORTHUMBRIA-PCC.GOV.UK

2022



KIM MCGUINNESS
NORTHUMBRIA
POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER