

Level	Organisation
Evaluation, regulations, inspection	HMICFRS, HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate, HM Inspectorate of Probation, Cabinet Office, National Audit Office, Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills), Estyn, Care Quality Commission, Care Inspectorate Wales
Research and evaluation	Academia, professional bodies, analysts in central Government and national/local organisations

National levers

- 8.4 Most of the levers described in this chapter are not specific to the prevention of sexually motivated crimes in public spaces. The focus is on how adaptable the system is to allow the right interventions to be prioritised and developed; and whether existing levers are sufficient and can be adapted for use in preventing sexually motivated crimes in a way that reduces demand on the overall system.
- 8.5 While preventing sexually motivated crimes in public spaces cannot be tackled by policing alone, the Home Office remains the lead department for tackling violence against women and girls in England and Wales. This means that many of the strategic levers in place for delivering this prevention activity, and which have been reviewed by the Inquiry, do relate to policing. One example of a lever deployed since 2023 is the inclusion of violence against women and girls within the Strategic Policing Requirement.

Strategic Policing Requirement

“I think VAWG [violence against women and girls] is a really good example of an area where you have the engagement of 43 Home Office Chief Constables and 100% commitment in relation to VAWG across Policing. Putting VAWG into the Strategic Policing Requirement as a National Priority has elevated it to such status. I think the work that Maggie Blyth has led nationally around plans, pillars and strategy has been very effective.”

A witness to the Inquiry¹

- 8.6 The Police Act 1996 is a key piece of primary legislation, which outlines the structure and administration of police forces in England and Wales. It focuses on the organisation and governance of those forces. In 2012, section 37A of the Police Act 1996 was enacted, introducing a requirement for the Home Secretary to “issue a document (the ‘strategic policing requirement’).”² The first Strategic Policing Requirement publication was in 2012. With this document, the Home Secretary fulfils their statutory duty to set out the national threats, and the appropriate national policing capabilities required to counter these threats.³

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- 8.7 The aim of the Strategic Policing Requirement is to enable the Home Secretary to set the direction, in terms of what are the biggest threats to public safety, and to ensure that the police have the right capabilities to deliver an appropriately robust, national response. The Strategic Policing Requirement is intended to support Chief Constables and Police and Crime Commissioners to plan, prepare and respond to the national threats set out, and to ensure that the individual forces' national responsibilities are fulfilled.⁴
- 8.8 The Strategic Policing Requirement includes mentions of prevention throughout – for example, the importance of serious crime prevention orders, and the Prevent, Pursue, Protect, Prepare (4P) framework for tackling counter-terrorism and serious organised crime. It is therefore an important lever for preventative measures. Provisions in the Police Act 1996 require that the Home Secretary must, from “time-to-time”, issue a Strategic Policing Requirement, and, in so doing, obtain the advice of such persons as appear to the Home Secretary to represent the views of chief officers of police and local policing bodies.⁵ The most recent update was in 2023 under the former Government (the update before that was in 2015). According to the 2023 Strategic Policing Requirement, at the time of publication the Home Office had committed to revisiting the Strategic Policing Requirement again within two years of publication to ensure that it remained in step with any key changes or shifting threats and priorities in the policing landscape – and to review it at least every two years thereafter.⁶
- 8.9 Chief Constables and Police and Crime Commissioners should be supported to “plan, prepare and respond to these threats by clearly linking the local response to the national”.⁷ Police and Crime Commissioners are required to have regard to this Strategic Policing Requirement when issuing or varying their Police and Crime Plans. They must keep the Police and Crime Plan under review in light of any changes made to the Strategic Policing Requirement by the Home Secretary. Chief Constables must have regard to both the Police and Crime Plan and the Strategic Policing Requirement when exercising their functions. Police and Crime Commissioners are responsible for holding them to account for doing so.⁸ Six of the seven threats in the most recent update of the Strategic Policing Requirement have been included for some time and are not new to policing. They comprise: terrorism, serious and organised crime, national cyber event, child sexual abuse, public disorder and civil emergencies.⁹
- 8.10 Violence against women and girls was included in the Strategic Policing Requirement for the first time in 2023.¹⁰ This followed a recommendation within the 2021 inspection report from HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS), *Police Response to Violence Against Women and Girls*. Recommendation 1.2 stated:

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“To increase the prioritisation of VAWG [violence against women and girls] offences in policing, we recommend [...] Immediately, the Home Office should add the policing of violence against women and girls to the Strategic Policing Requirement.”¹¹

- 8.11 The former Government accepted these recommendations in full, and added violence against women and girls to the 2023 update of the Strategic Policing Requirement. The then Home Secretary said in the Foreword:

“I also want to ensure we deliver justice and high-quality outcomes for women and children who are victims of rape, sexual offences and domestic abuse. I have therefore included VAWG [violence against women and girls] as an additional national threat.”¹²

The aim of the inclusion, as described in the document, is to ensure that forces can maximise the capabilities required, including seizing the opportunities presented by Operation Soteria (as described in Chapter 6 of this Report), to prevent and pursue violence against women and girls offending.¹³

- 8.12 Some witnesses acknowledged that the inclusion of violence against women and girls was a positive¹⁴ step forwards, placing it as a priority alongside other crime types and national threats, especially counter-terrorism and serious and organised crime. However, one witness to the Inquiry felt that the inclusion of violence against women and girls had limited impact in terms of how forces approached it,¹⁵ explaining that violence against women and girls was already a priority in all their Police and Crime Plans. Others acknowledged the importance of its inclusion in ensuring it was seen as a priority, but felt that the priority was not matched with funding or with the regional and national capabilities afforded to counter-terrorism.¹⁶ This last point is covered in further detail in paragraphs 8.13 to 8.18.

How the policing system can prioritise prevention of sexually motivated crimes against women in public spaces

Role of the National Police Chiefs’ Council

- 8.13 The National Police Chiefs’ Council is a membership body that operates under a collaboration agreement pursuant to section 22A of the Police Act 1996. The National Police Chiefs’ Council currently has 103 members and operates 13 different committees. It covers all UK police interests both in the UK and overseas.¹⁷ The National Police Chiefs’ Council hosts national programmes of change on behalf of policing. Key examples are the National Police Chiefs’ Council Violence Against

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Women and Girls Taskforce, which was set up to support the National Policing Lead for Violence Against Women and Girls in her role; and Operation Soteria, the programme to improve the investigation and prosecution of rape and serious sexual offences, which is discussed in Chapter 6.¹⁸ The National Police Chiefs' Council has no powers of direction to ensure that forces take a consistent approach to policing activity.¹⁹

- 8.14 The National Police Chiefs' Council receives funding from the Home Office to deliver its national response related to violence against women and girls, including the taskforce. The Home Office reported to the Inquiry that, for the 2024/25 financial year, £1.42 million was allocated to the National Police Chiefs' Council Violence Against Women and Girls Taskforce, £6.8 million to the Operation Soteria programme and £3 million to the Vulnerability Knowledge and Practice Programme.²⁰ Chief Constables also receive funding to address issues arising from violence against women and girls related crime. This includes the core victims grant from the Ministry of Justice to commission services for all victims of crime, and ring-fenced Ministry of Justice funding specifically to provide services for victims of violence against women and girls.
- 8.15 Police and Crime Commissioners may also receive other funding from the Ministry of Justice or Home Office for ring-fenced activity aimed at tackling violence against women and girls, including for delivery of perpetrator programmes – and these grants must be spent on the purposes for which they were intended.²¹ However, these funds are not utilised by all Police and Crime Commissioners (the Inquiry received evidence suggesting that only 27 areas received funding for preventative and diversionary services from the Home Office's Domestic Abuse and Stalking Perpetrator Intervention Fund).²² Police and Crime Commissioners are also given a total funding package for policing in their force area from the Home Office and must decide on their priorities, including the level of focus on violence against women and girls. In determining allocation of funds, Police and Crime Commissioners must be guided by their local Police and Crime Plans, which are developed in consultation with their local communities and scrutinised by their Police and Crime Panel, and also have regard to the Strategic Policing Requirements set by the Home Secretary. While this should result in some funds being allocated to violence against women and girls related crime (given that violence against women and girls has been a Strategic Policing Requirement since 2023), this funding is not ring-fenced, unlike that provided for counter-terrorism. The Inquiry notes that the lack of ring-fencing for violence against women and girls can result in Police and Crime Commissioners making decisions to fund other areas as a priority, meaning that some forces have more resources than others with which to tackle violence against women and girls. As the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners said in April 2025, in its written submission to the Home Affairs Committee's inquiry on Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls: "Funding can feel like a postcode lottery due to the inconsistent and short-term nature of some of the allocations."²³

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- 8.16 The then National Policing Lead for Violence Against Women and Girls (Temporary Chief Constable Maggie Blyth) was complimented throughout our evidence-gathering for her focus, determination and effectiveness in raising the priority of, and making continuous and sustainable improvements to, the policing approach to violence against women and girls.²⁴ The positive impact of this motivation and challenge to the sector should not be underestimated, and it is work the National Police Chiefs' Council should strive to continue wherever possible to ensure that forces are well equipped to continue this level of ambition, especially in the space of prevention of sexually motivated crimes against women in public spaces.
- 8.17 In December 2021, the National Policing Lead for Violence Against Women and Girls launched a national framework for delivery, which laid out the immediate actions required for policing to commit to build trust and confidence, relentlessly pursue perpetrators and create safer spaces. As part of this, and to make progress on consistency, the National Policing Lead requested that all forces carry out a self-assessment. Witnesses agreed that this had a significant impact in both raising the profile of violence against women and girls and starting to drive forward a consistent approach across all 43 forces in a way that had not been achieved previously.²⁵ A consistent approach to identifying and supporting forces to make improvements in how they prevent sexually motivated crimes against women in public spaces, linked to the policing activity organised under the 4P framework (Prevent, Pursue, Protect, Prepare; see paragraph 8.8) and the public health approach, will help to increase the priority of the issue and make further progress on consistency across forces.
- 8.18 There needs to be continued support for prevention of violence against women and girls to ensure that it remains a priority. The National Police Chiefs' Council Prevention Coordination Committee considers issues where there is a shared interest between public health and policing, including how to attract more investment to help with the prevention of crime.²⁶ Continued collaboration between these areas of focus will help policing collectively tackle issues that have an impact on all aspects of policing in terms of prevention, including getting the right national and local buy-in from government departments and local partnerships, so that prevention is not seen as primarily a policing role.

Role of HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services

- 8.19 Inspection is an essential national lever for the Government, Police and Crime Commissioners and the public to hold Chief Constables to account and drive forward continuous improvements. HMICFRS independently inspects and reports on the efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy of individual forces' performance through its PEEL programme²⁷ and through its thematic inspections.

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27 The police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL) programme is the assessment framework used by HMICFRS. It sets out the characteristics of good performance against a set of questions to assist inspectors in making consistent assessments across police forces, and to enable forces to see what they are being graded against.

- 8.20 HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary, Sir Andy Cooke QPM DL, told the Inquiry that HMICFRS has completed several inspections on violence against women and girls, including the 2021 *Police Response to Violence Against Women and Girls* report.²⁸ Since 2021, HMICFRS has published a further 18 reports on thematic inspections linked to this Inquiry's area of focus. The Inspectorate works closely with the National Police Chiefs' Council, College of Policing and commissioned and non-commissioned service providers to use insights gained from their inspections on the effectiveness of forces in protecting vulnerable people. This includes work to develop the national strategic threat assessment and the violence against women and girls national framework for delivery, with their input used to shape the self-assessment tool used by forces.²⁹

Role of the College of Policing

- 8.21 The College of Policing's mission focuses on three key areas: leadership, standards and performance to "boost professionalism".³⁰ The College of Policing sets the training curriculum in policing across England and Wales, and sets standards through the Authorised Professional Practice (and, occasionally, through Codes of Practice). It is also the centre for 'what works' in reducing crime³¹ and it leads a board to identify innovations and promising practice that should be evaluated and scaled, on which sits the Chair of the National Police Chiefs' Council and the HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary.³²
- 8.22 The Chief Executive Officer of the College of Policing also acknowledged that there are now strong working practices and systems in place that encourage cohesive working between the College of Policing, HMICFRS and the National Police Chiefs' Council. This is positive, provided that the necessary amount of challenge exists within the system to elicit the change needed.³³
- 8.23 The College of Policing should also take advantage of the launch of the national programme for neighbourhood police officers across England and Wales to ensure that a clear focus is set and maintained in order to identify, respond to and prevent sexually motivated crimes against women in public spaces. This must be part of the job description, training and guidance.

The national policing system

- 8.24 During our strategic interviews, we heard from the Chair of the National Police Chiefs' Council, Chief Constable Gavin Stephens,³⁴ the HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary, Sir Andy Cooke QPM DL,³⁵ and the Chief Executive Officer of the College of Policing, Chief Constable Andy Marsh QPM³⁶ about their collective efforts to tackle violence against women and girls and promote prevention. They were

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confident that the national system was now set up in a better way to support forces to address the improvements needed in relation to violence against women and girls. They said that they were also better equipped than they had been previously to adapt and flex to a national priority, as was the case for homicide prevention, as described in paragraph 8.25.

How priorities are identified and then taken forwards

- 8.25 HMICFRS and the College of Policing agreed that the approach they used for homicide prevention demonstrates that a 'smarter systems approach' across the National Police Chiefs' Council, HMICFRS and College of Policing can have an impact on addressing a priority.³⁷ This included a homicide prevention framework that brought together the best available evidence to support police forces to: (i) analyse and understand problems; (ii) develop and implement effective interventions and tactics; and (iii) identify where partnership support was needed. The framework was developed jointly between the National Police Chiefs' Council, HMICFRS and the College of Policing, and formed part of the national policing homicide prevention strategy,³⁸ which aimed to develop better partnership working to support and evolve the public health approach, offering further wide-ranging interventions and prevention methodology. HMICFRS also undertook a thematic inspection to check progress within forces and make recommendations for further improvements.³⁹
- 8.26 While the Inquiry did not evaluate the success of the homicide work (as it is not within scope), it considers that the approach taken on homicide prevention is likely to align with the public health approach that would support improvements in prevention of sexually motivated crimes against women in public spaces. It is important to ensure that there is consistency across forces and that, where best practice is being identified, it is being shared in the best possible way. A thematic inspection in this area will help to raise it as a priority within police forces and to drive forward the improvements necessary, supported by robust evaluation. It will also be important to support policing and wider partnerships to understand how best to translate national priorities into tangible operational delivery.
- 8.27 Given the extent of the threat, as identified in Chapter 2, we would urge the Government to support the national bodies to take a similar approach to that for preventing homicide and apply it to improvements in the prevention of sexually motivated crimes against women in public spaces as a priority.

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Funding

“[H]ealth can say what the benefits of doing a hip replacement are at a certain age, but we (policing) are not that sophisticated [in terms of understanding the impact of prevention].”

A witness to the Inquiry⁴⁰

- 8.28 Funding is a strong national lever to be able to ensure that resources are being directed against the right priorities in the prevention and tackling of crime. The overall sum of government funding for policing is set at Spending Reviews (where the Government determines how it will fund public services over several years), while the detail is outlined and agreed annually. Most of the public funding for police forces in England and Wales is provided by the Home Office and is agreed by the House of Commons on an annual basis at the police funding settlement. The Home Office then expects individual Chief Constables to allocate funding and resources appropriately in response to national threats, as part of their requirement to have due regard to the Strategic Policing Requirement. Analysis by the National Audit Office, in its 2025 report on violence against women and girls, found that between 2021/22 and 2023/24 the Home Office underspent by £22 million against its total £149 million budget (15 per cent).⁴¹ The National Audit Office also noted that underspends reduce the potential for the Home Office to achieve impact.
- 8.29 In addition to central government funding, Police and Crime Commissioners decide the figure for a local police precept, which is part of the council tax total. Police precept (i.e. the amount people pay for the police through their council tax) accounts for around 34 per cent of the funding that the Police and Crime Commissioners receive via the settlement and is paid directly by local taxpayers.⁴²
- 8.30 The Government also provides several bespoke grants, such as Safer Streets, to help local areas tackle priority areas (see funding section in Chapter 7). These are often undertaken with a requirement for evaluation attached to them and usually managed either by the Police and Crime Commissioner or the relevant governance body, such as the Community Safety Partnership. This can create a very complex funding landscape across the various policing and partnership priorities. Projects usually take years to get short-term funding, and this can create problems. This is especially the case when trying to get involvement from charities and other voluntary organisations, who need much longer-term commitments to make staff available.⁴³ Chief Constables and Police and Crime Commissioners want instant results, but a prevention action engaging with preschool children would not show benefits for over ten years, making it difficult to measure outcomes – which in turn makes it difficult to secure sustained funding.⁴⁴
- 8.31 Several attendees at an Inquiry evidence-gathering session highlighted that you cannot do meaningful prevention activity without necessary funding models and resources, as well as innovative thinking to reframe the problem and deliver

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pragmatic solutions.⁴⁵ The National Audit Office reported that the Home Office acknowledged it had not previously prioritised funding for prevention despite it being one of the main pillars of the *Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls* strategy (2021) and the *Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan* (2022).⁴⁶ In fact, a quarter of the commitments allocated to prevention were allotted to the Department for Education, which has spent £0.52 million on all activities linked to the violence against women and girls strategy. The report does, however, acknowledge that the mission approach taken by the current Government aims to address this with more focus on prevention.⁴⁷

- 8.32 Police forces have received short-term funding from the Home Office linked to, for example, Safer Streets, Violence Reduction Networks/Units/Partnerships and county lines⁴⁸ work (Project ADDER).⁴⁹ The Inquiry also heard examples where Chief Constables had been supportive of investment in some areas – for example, funding Project Vigilant.⁵⁰ However, the short-term funding models have an impact on the progress that areas can make, and on the recruitment and retention of staff (especially those from the charity and voluntary sector), both in terms of planning and of evaluation. This means that projects are often stopped and their full benefits not realised, including in terms of national roll-outs.
- 8.33 As an example, Safer Streets funding was passed to Police and Crime Commissioners to deliver lots of local initiatives.⁵¹ This was a positive, practical decision, but there was no pathway in place to take those initiatives that were successful locally further and develop them into national initiatives, and from there to business-as-normal approaches. The Chair of the National Police Chiefs' Council, Chief Constable Gavin Stephens, agreed that it would be beneficial to consider, through Spending Reviews, a shared fund for activities that cut across different government departments and other service delivery models where there is commonality. This would enable issues to be tackled collectively, achieving a better impact and a more cohesive approach.⁵²
- 8.34 Police forces also need to get better at evaluation in order to secure sustained funding for the future. Research commissioned by the National Police Chiefs' Council conducted a systematic review of the number of studies that have been carried out by policing on the economic analysis of investing in prevention. This showed that policing had carried out around 270 academic studies into this issue, whereas education as a comparison had carried out around 20,000, and health around 200,000.⁵³ Evaluation of the effectiveness of measures to prevent sexually motivated crimes against women in public spaces will be pivotal in helping to secure the longer-term, cross-party investment needed to have an impact in this area. The

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48 County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more areas within the UK. These gangs often exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and/or store the drugs and money, and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

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ability to demonstrate the benefits of prevention to secure funding is also an issue. This is something at which policing could improve and should be informed by evidence.⁵⁴

- 8.35 However, as noted earlier in this Report (see Chapter 5), prevention is not just the responsibility of the police – it involves partnership working. If it is all short-term, funding can be a barrier to achieving the partnership working needed, making it difficult for partners to commit to activity in a way that will have an impact.

Local partnership working on prevention

- 8.36 The current Government is moving in the right direction in terms of prioritising and improving local partnership working on prevention, but progress is still too slow. The former National Policing Lead for Prevention⁵⁵ described how one of the biggest challenges faced by policing in terms of prevention is getting traction from government departments other than the Home Office for their work. This includes, but is not limited to, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, the Ministry of Justice and the Department of Health and Social Care. Sometimes policies and initiatives do not get traction at a local level because governance arrangements go through the Home Office. This enables some local partners to deprioritise initiatives tackling violence against women and girls by saying that it is a 'community safety' – and therefore policing – responsibility. As violence against women and girls is sometimes not seen as having an impact on growth and the economy, for example, it is assumed that there is no need for other authorities, such as health and education, to get involved or take the policy seriously.
- 8.37 There are a range of different governance models at the local level to deliver a partnership approach to reducing crime, enhancing justice and achieving safeguarding priorities. It is down to local areas to decide on the most appropriate governance model for the crime type and challenge they are trying to address. Often each governance model will have responsibility for funding associated with tackling a particular crime type or priority.
- 8.38 Community Safety Partnerships are the key governance model covering issues around public safety.⁵⁶ They were introduced by section 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and bring together local partners to formulate and implement strategies to tackle crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour in their communities. The responsible authorities that make up a Community Safety Partnership are: (i) the police; (ii) fire and rescue authorities; (iii) local authorities; (iv) health partners; and (v) the Probation Service. They operate on the basis that no single agency can address or prevent all the drivers of crime and antisocial behaviour, and that effective partnership working is vital to ensuring safer communities. There are over 300 Community Safety Partnerships in England and Wales. Given that some partners, such as health, operate across different boundaries from policing

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jurisdictions, often police forces have to attend more than one Community Safety Partnership to discuss similar or related issues, and often areas of focus are not easily prioritised without additional funding.⁵⁷

- 8.39 Some witnesses recognised that there was a need for local areas to decide local priorities, but also that consistency was required where it made sense – for example, in relation to evaluation and data collection. Others commented that the effectiveness of local activity was linked to the amount of funding available to support partnership working across the various priorities. Many respondents in the former Government's 2023 review into Community Safety Partnerships also requested that the relationship, responsibility and accountability structures between Community Safety Partnerships and Police and Crime Commissioners should be clearly defined – for example, through updated guidance or legislation. Many responses underlined that Police and Crime Commissioners should communicate more clearly with Community Safety Partnerships about funding and strategy, and ensure that they understand the issues Community Safety Partnerships are facing in their local areas. Some respondents from Community Safety Partnerships flagged that they did not feel they had the resources to tackle the most significant risks affecting their locality.⁵⁸
- 8.40 The Inquiry heard from the Minister for Safeguarding and Violence Against Women and Girls, the Rt Hon. Jess Phillips MP, that the current Government helped to resolve this challenge locally by getting the national, cross-Government governance in place to support the right partnership arrangements at the local level.⁵⁹ The Prime Minister has made tackling violence against women and girls a key priority.⁶⁰ As set out in Chapter 2, this aims to halve violence against women and girls in a decade and restore confidence in policing.

A statutory duty for tackling violence against women and girls

- 8.41 In Wales, the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 places a duty on local authorities and local health boards to prepare local strategies to support the national strategies on these issues. The Act outlines the matters to which they must have regard in preparing and reviewing them. There is a similar duty on these bodies to implement their local strategies.⁶¹
- 8.42 In their inspection report, *Police Response to Violence against Women and Girls*, HMICFRS recommended that the Home Office should consider whether there needs to be a statutory duty placed on local partners to collaborate on tackling violence against women and girls. This recommendation has not yet been implemented. Several witnesses agreed that a specific statutory duty for preventing violence against women and girls would have limited impact, without being accompanied by significant funding and resources alongside it.⁶²

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Comparison with work to prevent serious and organised crime and terrorism

“Unlike CT [counter-terrorism] and SOC [serious and organised crime] which emphasise proactive approaches to suspects, the current VAWG [violence against women and girls] strategy is predominantly reactive, focusing on responses to incidents after they occur.”

Evidence to the Inquiry⁶³

8.43 Throughout our evidence-gathering we heard about the difference between the priority placed on prevention of violence against women and girls and that placed on prevention of serious and organised crime, and counter-terrorism. Evidence reviewed by the Inquiry suggests that more needs to be done to better align the provisions available to the police to tackle violence against women and girls with those for the other two crime types.⁶⁴

8.44 The Minister for Safeguarding and Violence Against Women and Girls, the Rt Hon. Jess Phillips MP, provided her view, reflecting on society’s perception:

“I don’t think that [the] level of harm is acknowledged in the same way for VAWG [violence against women and girls] as it is for terrorism. When a woman is murdered, you will hear ‘this is an isolated incident, the public doesn’t need to be frightened’, suggesting that there is no need to worry because they have found the person, and he was only a threat to her. It ignores the notion that this is a systemic wrong in society that has a breeding ground, like terrorism.”

8.45 Some of the differences in the approach taken to the three crime types, based on various levers at a national and local level, are given in Table 5. The table illustrates the differences, as well as the relative funding positions.

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Table 5: Differences between various levers for violence against women and girls, serious and organised crime, and counter-terrorism

	Violence against women and girls	Serious and organised crime	Counter-terrorism
Inclusion in the Strategic Policing Requirement⁶⁵	Yes (added into the latest Strategic Policing Requirement 2023)	Yes (added into the first Strategic Policing Requirement 2012)	Yes (added into the first Strategic Policing Requirement 2012)
Cost estimate (to society)	Cost estimate is not published. Estimates, based on 2021 Home Office estimated figures, are at least £5.5 billion in relation to rape, and £74 billion in relation to domestic abuse ⁶⁶	At least £47 billion annually ⁶⁷	As an example, the five terrorist attacks which took place across the UK in 2017 are estimated to have cost up to £172 million in direct costs ⁶⁸
Overarching legislative framework	Police Act 1996 ⁶⁹ Sexual Offences Act 2003 ⁷⁰	Police Act 1996 ⁷¹ Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 ⁷²	Counter-terrorism and Security Act 2015 ⁷³
Government strategy	<i>Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls</i> strategy ⁷⁴ (2021; new one due to be published in 2025)	<i>Serious and Organised Crime Strategy 2023–2028</i> ⁷⁵	<i>CONTEST: The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism 2023</i> ⁷⁶

65 Section 37A of the Police Act 1996 requires the Home Secretary to issue a Strategic Policing Requirement document to set out the national threats and the appropriate national policing capabilities needed to counter these threats. [***]

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	Violence against women and girls	Serious and organised crime	Counter-terrorism
Funding position	Unknown. However, as of summer 2025, the Government had announced the following funding commitments for violence against women and girls related activity: £27.6 million (this includes £2.2 million to roll out domestic abuse specialists in 999 control rooms under Raneem's Law⁷⁷ and £13.1 million for the new National Centre for Violence Against Women and Girls and Public Protection⁷⁸) £19 million to Police and Crime Commissioners to commission domestic abuse and stalking perpetrator interventions in 2025–2026⁷⁹ £53 million in the Drive Project across England and Wales between 2025 and 2029 for pursuit of domestic abuse perpetrators to tackle the highest harm cohort to reduce reoffending⁸⁰ £17.5 million in victim services £3.1 million on prevention and early intervention to help stop violence against women and girls happening in the first place, identify what works to prevent it, and improve multi-agency working	£2.9 billion is the Government's estimate of total expenditure on tackling serious and organised crime in 2015/16, including frontline spending to tackle crime (£2.2 billion) and spending on back-office functions (£0.7 billion)	Ring-fenced
National capability	No	Yes (National Crime Agency ⁸¹ plus Regional Organised Crime Units ⁸²)	Yes (Counter Terrorism Policing) ⁸³
Full-time National Police Chiefs' Council Lead role	No (Lead changed to a 'programme director' role)	Yes (National Policing Lead for Serious and Organised Crime)	Yes (National Policing Lead for Counter-terrorism)
'4P' approach	Yes	Yes	Yes
Local profile	No	Yes	Yes
Local governance model	Down to local decision-making	Down to local decision-making	Local Prevent delivery groups

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- 8.46 The gaps in the response, in terms of how policing approaches violence against women and girls, in comparison with the response to serious and organised crime and counter-terrorism, was a key finding in the 2021 HMICFRS inspection report, *Police Response to Violence Against Women and Girls*.⁸⁴ The report recommended some key factors in increasing the prioritisation of violence against women and girls offences in policing to a level similar to those relating to counter-terrorism and serious and organised crime. These included:
- a full-time National Police Chiefs' Council Violence Against Women and Girls National Policing Lead;
 - the addition of violence against women and girls as a threat to the Strategic Policing Requirement;
 - having the right governance through the then Crime and Policing Board;
 - considering the establishment of an annual strategic assessment of violence against women and girls; and
 - putting in place the Prevent, Pursue, Protect, Prepare (4P) framework⁸⁵ for forces to work in partnerships to implement the annual strategic assessment.⁸⁶
- 8.47 One witness raised⁸⁷ a particular point about the funding and focus given to violence against women and girls, and to the National Policing Lead role at the National Police Chiefs' Council in comparison with the National Policing Leads for other Strategic Policing Requirement crimes.⁸⁸

National Centre for Violence Against Women and Girls and Public Protection

- 8.48 Unlike for serious and organised crime and counter-terrorism, there are not the same regional and national capabilities for violence against women and girls, which provide forces with the enhanced specialist capacity needed. The previous Home Secretary, however, announced in February 2025 the establishment of the National Centre for Violence Against Women and Girls and Public Protection.⁸⁹ This has received money from the Government to support its development, and has a focus on improving standards and practice. It will build on the work by the National Police Chiefs' Council Violence Against Women and Girls Taskforce (under Temporary Chief Constable Maggie Blyth).⁹⁰ The Inquiry heard evidence that one ambition of the National Centre for Violence Against Women and Girls and Public Protection is

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85 The 4Ps are: **Prevent** people from taking part in criminal or terrorist activities; **Pursue** offenders involved in criminal or terrorist activities to disrupt and prosecute them; **Protect** people, organisations and systems from criminal or terrorist activities; and **Prepare** for criminal or terrorist activities to reduce their impact.

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to streamline and simplify self-assessments to improve quality, effectiveness and the practicality of implementation across these areas of policing, rather than add to the already quite cluttered landscape.⁹¹

- 8.49 The Government has developed the idea of having a national centre after learning from counter-terrorism, where policing has established a national structure. The benefits include the ability to keep up to date with technology and data advances, including those to track and identify offenders, as well as overt and covert action to keep track of repeat offenders. For counter-terrorism, this approach has had a positive impact on improving consistency across policing. While some forces are better than others, “you don’t see the same level of fracture across the country” as is seen for violence against women and girls.⁹²
- 8.50 The Inquiry sees the establishment of a national centre as a positive step forwards, in developing measures to prevent sexually motivated crimes against women in public spaces, provided that the centre has a data-driven focus on ‘prevent’, as well as ‘pursue’, activity. The Chair of the National Police Chiefs’ Council, Chief Constable Gavin Stephens, agreed that it was a positive step forwards and saw it as a major part of the overall police reform programme:
- “The National Centre for VAWG [violence against women and girls] will be a focal point for ensuring strong standards by having a body of experts that can work with academics and researchers to make sure strong practices are being developed and implemented to all forces.”⁹³
- 8.51 This focus on evidence will help with the evaluation mechanisms for prevention activity, provided that there is good coordination with other relevant bodies across the sector that also have a responsibility for prevention within the public health approach.
- 8.52 The Government has also announced that it will take a greater leadership role on policing and crime. This includes through raising performance and standards across every police force in England and Wales to deliver better consistency across police forces. To achieve this, the Home Office has announced a new, internal Police and Performance Unit. The intention is for this to provide higher-quality data to spot trends and drive up standards and consistency through a national police framework. The Home Office recognises that one of the key challenges with this is how progress is measured and monitored for the reasons described in Chapter 7.
- 8.53 It appears to the Inquiry that the National Centre for Violence Against Women and Girls is a positive step forwards, and the long-term nature of the strategy and ambition should provide a better focus on prevention of violence against women and girls generally – given that this requires longer-term resources, including those invested to deliver effective outcomes. However, without clarity on what specific data the Home Office will be requesting in relation to preventing sexually motivated crimes in public spaces, it is hard to determine the potential impact in this area. The

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Government also needs to ensure that their national priorities are linked to measurable goals at the local level and that there is the right accountability to measure the impact of any activity undertaken.

Recommendation 29: Government prioritisation of the prevention of sexually motivated crimes against women in public spaces

Immediately, the Government should take action to make it clearer that preventing sexually motivated offences against women in public is an essential part of tackling violence against women and girls. This should include the following:

- a. The Government should ensure that this Report, the detail of the violence against women and girls strategy, and the prevention strategy at Recommendation 25 (and the evaluation of its success, if available) are before the Secretary of State to inform her view on how to update future versions of the Strategic Policing Requirement. This is so that the Secretary of State can use this information to assess the level of importance and prominence to give to the threat of violence against women and girls (compared with the other identified national threats); and specifically to the prioritisation of the prevention of sexual offences against women in public spaces.
- b. The Government should commit to and pursue a positive ambition that generally these crimes are preventable, not inevitable, with a clear focus on prevention being key to meeting the target of halving violence against women and girls over ten years.
- c. The Government should ensure that there is a clear focus on identifying, responding to and preventing sexually motivated crimes against women in public spaces in the job descriptions, training and guidance for the remodelled neighbourhood policing roles.
- d. The Government has, previously, provided an initial response to *Creating a Safer World – The Challenge of Regulating Online Pornography*, the 2025 Independent Pornography Review conducted by Baroness Bertin. This included recognising the need to act urgently to tackle the harms from illegal and harmful pornography online, and the link between attitudes and behaviours in the online and offline world. The Government also recognised that this is crucial in order to deliver the mission to halve violence against women and girls in ten years. It is deeply worrying that harmful content that would be illegal offline remains unrestrained online. Therefore, the Government should provide a full response to each of the recommendations in the Review by February 2026, to enable cross-cutting prevention activity alongside the recommendations in this Report.

Appendix A. Methodology

This appendix describes how the Angiolini Inquiry carried out its work to produce this Report. It covers the following:

- establishing the Inquiry, including defining the Terms of Reference for Part 2 of the Inquiry, and in particular paragraph 3 to which this Report relates;
- evidence-gathering and investigation; and
- Maxwellisation.

Establishing the Inquiry

Background

- A.1 On 30 September 2021, Wayne Couzens, a serving officer with the Metropolitan Police Service, was sentenced to life imprisonment with a whole-life order for the abduction, rape and murder of Sarah Everard. In his sentencing remarks, Lord Justice Fulford stated that Couzens “used his position as a police officer to enable this to happen” and described how Couzens’ crimes have “very considerably added to the sense of insecurity that many have living in our cities, perhaps particularly women, when travelling by themselves and especially at night”.¹
- A.2 On 22 November 2021, the then Home Secretary, the Rt Hon. Priti Patel MP, addressed Couzens’ crimes and sentencing, announcing to Parliament that she was “launching an independent inquiry” and confirming “that the Right Honourable Dame Elish Angiolini QC has agreed to be the Chair of that inquiry”.² This was the first announcement confirming that the Angiolini Inquiry would be established.
- A.3 In her announcement on 22 November 2021, the then Home Secretary also confirmed that the Inquiry would be made up of two parts: Part 1 and Part 2. Part 1 was to establish “a definitive account of the career and conduct of Sarah Everard’s murderer, and identify any opportunities missed”³ and Part 2 was to “consider the broader implications for policing arising from part 1”.⁴ The then Home Secretary described how she would “set out the terms of reference for part 2” once the report

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addressing Part 1 was published.⁵ However, in June 2022, the Chair wrote to the then Home Secretary to explain that she was prevented from finalising and submitting the Part 1 Report until the then ongoing proceedings against Couzens, and other relevant criminal and misconduct proceedings, were concluded. In the same letter, the Chair proposed to commence preparations for Part 2 ahead of the Part 1 Report being published. In July 2022, the then Home Secretary agreed that Part 2 should proceed as soon as practically possible, without waiting for Part 1 to conclude.

- A.4 In February 2023, the Inquiry was further commissioned to conduct Part 3, which is to consider the case of David Carrick, a former officer with the Metropolitan Police Service convicted of 49 offences committed against women, most of them rape or serious sexual assault.

Scope

- A.5 The Angiolini Inquiry was commissioned as an independent, non-statutory inquiry. However, the then Home Secretary also explained that she would not rule out converting the Inquiry to a statutory footing if required.
- A.6 The Inquiry was able to fulfil the Terms of Reference for Part 1 without the need to convert to a statutory footing.
- A.7 The Part 1 Report was published on 29 February 2024. The Chair outlined 16 recommendations “designed to ensure that everything possible is being done to prevent those entrusted with the power of the office of constable from abusing that power”.⁶
- A.8 On 25 March 2024, it was announced that the then Home Secretary, the Rt Hon. James Cleverly MP, the National Police Chiefs’ Council and the College of Policing accepted all the recommendations made in the Part 1 Report.⁷

Defining the Terms of Reference for Part 2

- A.9 The Terms of Reference for Part 2 of the Inquiry were drafted by the Home Office, in consultation with the Chair of the Inquiry, Sarah Everard’s parents and relevant policing organisations. The Terms of Reference outline the focus of Part 2, for the Inquiry to examine, provide recommendations on improvement and, where appropriate, highlight examples of good practice in three areas, across three paragraphs:
- paragraph 1 – the extent to which systems, policies and processes for the recruitment, vetting and transfer of police officers are fit for purpose and help to identify those who display misogynistic and/or predatory attitudes and behaviours;

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- paragraph 2 – the extent to which aspects of police culture observed across police forces enable misogynistic and/or predatory attitudes and behaviours, and what the role of standards is; and
- paragraph 3 – the extent to which existing measures prevent sexually motivated crimes against women in public spaces.

Consultation

- A.10 The draft Terms of Reference were published by the then Home Secretary, the Rt Hon. Suella Braverman MP, on 18 January 2023 and were subject to public consultation, to ensure the Inquiry heard from those with an interest in the subject matters the Inquiry would be exploring. In particular, the consultation sought stakeholders' views on the importance of each of the three areas of focus for Part 2, as well as their respective sub-areas. It offered the opportunity for stakeholders to identify anything they felt was missing from the draft Terms of Reference.
- A.11 This consultation took the form of a survey, which was opened online⁸ on 27 January 2023 and closed on 24 February 2023. On 13 March 2023, the Chair of the Inquiry wrote to the then Home Secretary to outline the analysis and findings from the survey: 780 individuals and 60 charities/organisations responded to the survey overall. Details of the consultation response were discussed in the Chair's letter to the then Home Secretary on 13 March 2023.⁹
- A.12 In line with consultation feedback, the Chair of the Inquiry advised the then Home Secretary that the Terms of Reference, as drafted, were largely fit for purpose and met stakeholders' expectations, subject to some minor amendments to reflect the feedback received.
- A.13 The Terms of Reference for Part 2 were announced by the then Home Secretary on 11 May 2023, and this Report relates to Part 2, paragraph 3. The Terms of Reference for Part 2, paragraph 3 include that the Inquiry produce "a summary of existing measures to prevent sexually motivated violence against women in public spaces, for example, police and wider public safety/justice activity to protect women in public and measures to encourage individual and collective citizens action to improve women's safety in public spaces".¹⁰
- A.14 In preparing this Report on Part 2, paragraph 3, the Inquiry has been able to fulfil this element of the Terms of Reference, again without the need to convert the Inquiry to a statutory footing.

Data privacy

- A.15 Due to the nature of the Terms of Reference, the Inquiry expected to receive personal data, including sensitive personal data. Therefore, a necessary framework for receiving and processing this data was put in place, which included a clear Privacy Policy and Disclosure Protocol.

⁸ Paper copies were available where needed. However, the Inquiry received no requests for the survey to be sent to individuals in this format.

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A.16 A copy of both the Privacy Policy and Disclosure Protocol were published on the Inquiry's website and updated to reflect the Part 2 Terms of Reference (www.angiolini.independent-inquiry.uk).

The Inquiry team and support

Inquiry Secretariat

A.17 The Inquiry comprises a Secretariat of civil servants, as well as legal investigators.

External support

A.18 The Inquiry is provided with legal support by a team of solicitors from Eversheds Sutherland. Eversheds Sutherland's Technology Team also contributes by providing bespoke, secure technology platforms to store and analyse the Inquiry's evidence.

A.19 During Part 1 of the Inquiry, a group of expert individuals was also appointed to provide advice to the Inquiry, referred to as the Inquiry's 'Reference Group'. To maintain the independent nature of the Inquiry, each person was selected on the basis that they had expertise relevant to the Terms of Reference, with the knowledge that they had never worked for any of the police forces disclosing evidence to the Inquiry or the sponsoring department, the Home Office. The Reference Group has been retained and expanded to provide advice in relation to Part 2, and its members are:

- Zoë Billingham CBE, formerly HM Inspector of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services;
- Baroness Ruth Hunt, co-founder and co-director of Deeds and Words;
- Sir Stephen Lander KCB, formerly Director General of MI5 and Chair of the Serious Organised Crime Agency;¹¹
- Sir Iain Livingstone QPM, former Chief Constable of Police Scotland;
- Nóirín O'Sullivan, formerly the first female Garda Commissioner;
- Andrea Simon, Director, End Violence Against Women Coalition; and
- Charlotte Triggs, OBE, former Senior Police Adviser and lawyer with the Crown Prosecution Service, contributor to the 'Police complaints handling, investigations and misconduct issues: independent review' and former lead investigator to the Inquiry.

A.20 Finally, the Inquiry was supported by media monitoring and communications specialists.

¹¹ The Serious Organised Crime Agency was replaced by the National Crime Agency in 2013.

- A.21 All third-party providers to the Inquiry were procured via the appropriate government processes and evaluated by members of the Inquiry Secretariat and independent civil servants.
- A.22 During the Inquiry, information has been shared with the public via the Inquiry's website, which contains information about the Inquiry team, the background to the Inquiry's work, and copies of the Terms of Reference and other key policies and protocols.

Evidence-gathering and investigation

- A.23 To establish a sound evidence base, the Inquiry wrote to a number of organisations to request documents relevant to the Inquiry's Terms of Reference for Part 2, paragraph 3. This included requesting and analysing documentation held electronically and in hard copy, such as:
- statements;
 - email communications;
 - memoranda;
 - policy documents;
 - reports;
 - social media communications and data;
 - spreadsheets; and
 - crime reporting data.
- A.24 The requested documentation was disclosed to the Inquiry via a secure, online file-sharing platform.

Disclosing organisations

- A.25 For the purposes of Part 2, paragraph 3 of the Terms of Reference, the Inquiry requested and received disclosure from the following organisations:
- Bawso;
 - Cabinet Office;
 - City of London Police (National Business Crime Centre);
 - College of Policing;
 - Crown Prosecution Service;
 - Department for Education;

- Department for Transport;
- Department of Health and Social Care;
- Estyn;
- HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS);
- HM Prison and Probation Service;
- Home Office;
- Lancashire Police;
- Local Government Association;
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government;
- Ministry of Justice;
- National Crime Agency;
- National Police Chiefs' Council;
- NHS England;
- Ofsted;
- Thames Valley Police;
- UK Health Security Agency;
- Welsh Government;
- Welsh Local Government Association; and
- White Ribbon.

A.26 Part 1 of the Angiolini Inquiry investigated how an off-duty police officer was able to abduct, rape and murder a member of the public, Sarah Everard. The second stage of the Inquiry, Part 2, outlined how the Inquiry was:

- to establish if there is a risk of recurrence across policing;
- to investigate police culture; and
- to address the broader concerns surrounding women's safety in public spaces that were highlighted by Sarah's death.

A.27 To assess wider policing practice and culture relevant to the Terms of Reference, the Inquiry needed to engage with multiple forces across England and Wales face to face, as well as via disclosure of information requests. This was to ensure the Inquiry operated fairly, and to address, understand and accurately articulate the issues nationally, while balancing the level of resource and costs associated with addressing policing nationally. The approach taken to this is described below, in which the Inquiry sought evidence from eight fieldwork forces.

Fieldwork forces

A.28 As described in this Report, there are 43 territorial police forces in England and Wales, with a further three national special forces,¹² namely British Transport Police, the Civil Nuclear Constabulary and the Ministry of Defence Police, which have different funding and accountability arrangements. The time and costs needed to investigate this number of forces was not a pragmatic use of resource or Inquiry time. Therefore, the Inquiry sought the participation of a nationally representative sample of police forces for the Inquiry to receive disclosure from, and conduct fieldwork with, in order to ensure sufficient evidence was collected, while avoiding unnecessary costs and delays. The core criteria for the sample force selection considered:

- geographical placement, including a range of:
 - urban- and rural-based forces; and
 - coverage of regions across England and Wales;
- the size of population the force covered, the number of its officers and the funding received; and
- the gender breakdown in each force, both across the leadership team, across the senior operation staff, and beyond.

A.29 Using this criteria, the Inquiry identified and invited the following forces to participate in the sample:

- Avon and Somerset Police;
- British Transport Police;
- Durham Constabulary;
- Merseyside Police;
- Metropolitan Police Service;
- Northamptonshire Police;

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- South Wales Police; and
- Sussex Police.

- A.30 The Inquiry provided opportunities to other bodies and individuals, but they declined to provide information. The Inquiry is satisfied that it has obtained a broad range of information to inform its conclusions and has been able to meet the Terms of Reference for Part 2, paragraph 3.
- A.31 The disclosing organisations were overwhelmingly supportive of the Inquiry's aims, disclosing over 5,600 pages of key policy documents, witness statements, and other documentation to inform the Inquiry's findings.
- A.32 The Inquiry was, and continues to be, grateful to disclosing organisations for their support to the Inquiry by disclosing relevant and necessary documentation as part of the evidence-gathering process.

Case file review

- A.33 The Inquiry asked the fieldwork forces to provide a sample number of files relating to sexually motivated crimes committed against women in public spaces (i.e. rape, sexual assault and indecent exposure). For the purposes of this Report, the information has been used in particular to inform the Inquiry's understanding of each force's ability to:
- prioritise and investigate reports of sexually motivated crimes committed against women by strangers in public spaces;
 - comply with standards/guidance, including the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime in England and Wales, concerning the handling and investigation of sexually motivated crimes; and
 - learn from and respond to the experiences of those reporting sexually motivated crimes, and understand the reasons why they may disengage from the policing process before the outcome.
- A.34 The Inquiry looked at the end-to-end process from receipt of the report to the outcome, against an agreed methodology, to understand, for each fieldwork force, to what extent they fulfil the points above.
- A.35 Separately, as detailed above, the Inquiry also requested disclosure of evidence relevant to the Terms of Reference prior to, and as a result of, the fieldwork force visits.

Witness evidence

- A.36 As well as reviewing publicly available information and seeking further disclosure of evidence via information requests to organisations, over the course of Part 2, paragraph 3 activity, the Inquiry engaged with a range of witnesses through the following evidence-gathering methods.

A.37 In every aspect of the Inquiry's evidence-gathering process where we have heard from individuals, it has been critical that they felt able to give open and transparent evidence. Therefore, unless individual witnesses held, or hold, positions where there is, or was, an expectation of public accountability, which would particularly be the case for those in senior and/or leadership positions, they have been anonymised, as outlined in the Privacy Notice.¹³ This has been true for every fieldwork force interview, the evidence-gathering sessions and the public survey.

A.38 The following witnesses, with expertise in areas relevant to the Inquiry's Terms of Reference, also provided evidence to the Inquiry:

- Professor Don Grubin, Emeritus Professor of Forensic Psychiatry, University of Newcastle, and an Honorary Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist in the NHS;
- Professor Fiona Vera-Gray, Co-Director at the Child and Women Abuse Studies Unit at London Metropolitan University;
- Dr Ellie Cosgrave, academic expert in public safety design, Director of Publica's Campaign for Inclusive Cities and Associate Professor in Urban Innovation at University College London; and
- Antounette Philippides, psychotherapist and Chair of the charity StopSO (Specialist Treatment Organisation for Perpetrators and Survivors of Sexual Offending), with a background in criminal justice.

Fieldwork visits

A.39 The fieldwork sought to gather evidence in key areas of interest to the Inquiry, primarily recruitment, vetting and transfers, and police culture and standards, as well as further detail on measures to prevent sexually motivated crime against women in public spaces, being relevant to Part 2, paragraph 3 of the Terms of Reference.

A.40 This evidence was collected using a range of different methods, including:

- in-person visits by Inquiry secretariat to each of the police forces' headquarters;
- interviews;
- focus groups with a range of witnesses, including those in key leadership positions and a range of other job roles, as well as female-only and mixed groups; and
- a review of relevant case files.

A.41 At the time of this Report's publication, the Inquiry had gathered evidence from hundreds of witnesses during the course of Part 2 of the Inquiry. In relation to Part 2, paragraph 3 of the Terms of Reference, the Inquiry also heard, in a great level of detail, about the work being conducted by forces and with wider statutory and non-statutory organisations to prevent sexually motivated crimes against women in

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public spaces. This frontline insight was invaluable to the Inquiry's understanding of the subject matter, and gave further colour and shape to the activity going on in this space.

- A.42 The Inquiry was greatly supported by those who provided information relevant to Part 2, paragraph 3 of the Terms of Reference, significantly adding to the material provided via the disclosure process. The Inquiry was, and continues to be, deeply grateful to the witnesses who took the time to provide key information, and sometimes further documents, to the Inquiry.

Strategic interviews

- A.43 In order to consolidate a national understanding of prevention measures and supplement the evidence gathered via the fieldwork forces, the Inquiry also sought insight from a range of national and strategic leaders in areas relevant to the Terms of Reference.
- A.44 For the purposes of Part 2, paragraph 3 of the Terms of Reference, the Inquiry met and interviewed 18 individuals identified for their strategic leadership positions or for their relevant expertise. This included current and former police officers, individuals employed by policing organisations, current senior leaders of police forces, academics, practitioners and other witnesses with expertise, representatives from charity and voluntary sector organisations, and relevant political leaders.

Evidence-gathering sessions

- A.45 The Inquiry hosted a series of seminars, referred to as evidence-gathering sessions, to obtain evidence relevant to Part 2, paragraph 3 of the Terms of Reference. These were designed to bring together additional groups of key stakeholders which, again, included current and former police officers, individuals employed by policing organisations, current senior leaders of police forces, academics and practitioners with expertise, and representatives from charity and voluntary sector organisations, to examine the key issues and themes that the Inquiry was exploring.
- A.46 The sessions asked attendees to offer their insights on the subject matter, and attendees were asked to provide examples and views on current measures to prevent sexually motivated offending against women in public spaces. Attendees were also asked for their opinions on the current barriers to, and opportunities for, the success of measures in this space, and what (if anything) should change or improve to ensure that greater, and more successful, prevention activity is implemented.
- A.47 Across all evidence-gathering sessions for Part 2, paragraph 3 of the Terms of Reference, the Inquiry heard evidence from over 40 witnesses. This greatly facilitated the Inquiry's task.

Online evidence-gathering sessions

- A.48 The Inquiry held five online sessions to gather evidence in relation to Part 2, paragraph 3 of the Terms of Reference. The first three sought the views and experiences of strategic and operational leaders, as well as experts in particular fields, on measures to prevent sexually motivated crimes against women in public spaces.
- A.49 The Inquiry recognises the need to hear directly from women's groups that work with victims of sexually motivated crimes, and violence against women and girls more broadly. Therefore, two further sessions were arranged with crucial relevance to Part 2, paragraph 3 of the Terms of Reference, to hear the experiences and views of women's groups in this space. These sessions gained insight from a range of organisations and expert representatives, with the aim of ensuring that the diverse range of voices, with an emphasis on hearing from representatives of those who have been victimised, were heard, recorded and incorporated into the Inquiry's work.

In-person evidence-gathering session

- A.50 The Inquiry also conducted an in-person evidence-gathering session to hear evidence and views from strategic and national leaders on topics relevant to Part 2, paragraph 3 of the Terms of Reference. In particular, the Inquiry sought to gather evidence from attendees about what works to address and prevent sexually motivated crimes against women in public spaces, and further examine the barriers and opportunities to delivery.

Public survey

- A.51 As well as seeking insight from those with expertise into topics relevant to Part 2, paragraph 3 of the Terms of Reference, the Inquiry also recognised the importance of understanding the wider public's views and experiences relating to the prevention of sexually motivated crime against women in public spaces.
- A.52 The Inquiry developed a survey for the general public, to gather views on:
- perceptions and experiences of safety in public spaces;
 - awareness and evaluation of pre-existing measures to improve the safety of women and prevent sexually motivated crimes in public spaces; and
 - insights into public support for measures in future, including types of measures that they believe would make women feel safer and less at risk from sexually motivated crimes in public spaces, and which sectors/organisations they would trust to deliver preventative measures.
- A.53 The survey opened for a five-day period and received responses from 2,000 individuals. The Inquiry utilised the services of an independent organisation that specialises in the delivery of public opinion polling to manage the survey launch and record responses for review and analysis conducted by the Inquiry secretariat. This included the use of a pre-existing, opt-in panel for the sample.

A.54 The Inquiry does not take for granted the time, effort and emotional input asked of every individual who participated in this survey. Each response has contributed to building greater insight into public opinion about the prevention of sexually motivated crimes against women in public spaces, and has fundamentally informed this Report.

Availability of contextual data

A.55 The Inquiry faced a number of analytical challenges. This included the data availability, quality, consistency and subsequent reliable interpretation, as well as difficulty obtaining evidence specific to sexually motivated crimes against women in public. For example, there were inconsistencies in the way certain data was captured and recorded by individual forces, which impacts the reliability of conclusions from that data when the Inquiry is making necessary comparisons. Therefore, the Inquiry has considered information relating to violence against women and girls more broadly where available.

Previous reviews and surveys

A.56 As well as requesting, and receiving, a great number of documents as part of the disclosure request process, the Terms of Reference stated that the Inquiry would also draw upon evidence from recent relevant reports to inform its work. For the purposes of Part 2, paragraph 3 of the Terms of Reference, this included research and findings published by:

- central and local government;
- previous inquiries and government-commissioned reviews;
- strategic and senior leaders from across policing organisations; and
- charities and non-profit organisations.

A.57 In addition, to support the Inquiry's findings, the team conducted desk-based research, using publicly available information as part of evidence-collection methods to identify relevant existing measures. As well as this, data sets, including surveys and insights from the general public, were taken from:

- College of Policing and Crown Prosecution Service data summaries;
- GOV.UK;
- Office for National Statistics;
- YouGov; and
- other publicly available sources.

Published strategies, plans and commitments

A.58 The Inquiry also reviewed publicly available strategies, frameworks and/or plans addressing violence against women and girls, and, where possible, documents that address the prevention of sexually motivated crimes against women in public spaces. This included gathering information published by:

- Police and Crime Commissioners;
- 43 forces across England and Wales;
- central government departments (as outlined in the disclosing organisations above);
- local governments in areas across England and Wales; and
- charities and non-profit organisations.

Academic and expert research

A.59 The Inquiry also conducted a review of available research and academic literature in areas relevant to the Terms of Reference, to develop a wider contextual understanding of the current landscape and theories on preventing sexually motivated crimes against women in public spaces.

Media and communications analysis

A.60 The Inquiry was also provided with research and analysis conducted by media monitoring and communications specialists. This was carried out using a wide range of public media outlets and social media channels.

A.61 The purpose of this research and analysis was to support the Inquiry in providing possible lines of enquiry that were explored with witnesses. Furthermore, it provided additional context that the Inquiry considered while making its recommendations.

Maxwellisation

A.62 Maxwellisation is the process by which an individual or organisation is notified of potential criticism(s) that the Inquiry is minded to make in its report(s), in order to provide them with a fair and reasonable opportunity to respond in advance of the report being finalised and published. It is a legal process that the Inquiry is required to follow.

A.63 For this Report, as part of the Maxwellisation process, 21 organisations and 4 individuals were notified of potential criticisms that the Inquiry was proposing to make, with 25 responses received. All responses were considered carefully and taken into account by the Inquiry when finalising its conclusions and this Report.

Appendix B. Summary of measures

- B.1 The Inquiry examined more than 250 existing measures to prevent sexually motivated crimes against women in public spaces (n=253). These were identified through all the evidence-gathering methods set out in the methodology (Appendix A), and included measures disclosed to the Inquiry (either as documents, or in interviews or evidence-gathering sessions), as well as those identified through open-source research. The resulting list was not exhaustive but intended to illustrate the scale and type of measures in place, and was large enough to ensure that the evidence reviewed provided a fair representation of the existing picture to enable the Terms of Reference to be fulfilled.
- B.2 Individual examples from the list of measures are included in the chapters of this Report. This appendix provides a summary of the type and scope of these measures overall.

Focus of the measures

- B.3 While the questions posed to witnesses focused on measures to prevent sexually motivated crimes against women in public spaces, the majority of measures in the list were not specifically targeted to these crimes in those circumstances, but rather were broader in scope. They are nonetheless relevant to the prevention of such crimes, and important to consider. The Inquiry categorised 112 as being related to broader prevention activity (for example, police patrols or use of CCTV); 72 as relating to prevention of violence against women and girls more generally (for example, healthy relationship education sessions, and inclusion of violence against women and girls in the strategic policing requirement); and 71 as focused on prevention of sexual offending against women (for example, sexual offender programmes and management, and improvements to the investigation and prosecution of rape cases).

Primary, secondary, tertiary and cross-cutting measures

- B.4 In line with the Inquiry's focus on the public health approach (see Chapter 2), measures were categorised as primary, secondary, tertiary or cross-cutting.¹ Cross-cutting refers to measures which cut across two or more of the three main primary, secondary and tertiary public health prevention levels. For definitions of all categories, see Chapter 2.

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Table 6: Total number of measures reviewed, categorised as primary, secondary, tertiary or cross-cutting²

Category of measure	Number
Primary	27
Secondary	80
Tertiary	57
Cross-cutting	89

B.5 When the small number of international measures are excluded, the Inquiry notes that tertiary-level measures were more likely to be national in application (across England and Wales, n=44) than regional or local (across a smaller geography, n=12). Cross-cutting measures (i.e. those which span public health prevention levels) were more common at regional or local levels (n=58) than national levels (n=29). Both primary and secondary measures were evenly spread across national and local/regional areas.³

Most common types of measures

B.6 When seeking evidence from witnesses and disclosing organisations, the Inquiry did not define what constituted a measure to prevent sexually motivated crimes against women in public spaces. This was to ascertain (and not constrain) the breadth of evidence that was received about activity that was seen by witnesses and disclosing organisations as falling into this category.

B.7 Measures were then grouped by category. Categories were identified through open coding (i.e. reviewing the measures and identifying common themes, as opposed to using a predetermined list of categories). Each measure was then assigned to a single category.⁴ The most commonly identified categories⁵ were as follows:

- **Strategies and plans** (n=56): This included national strategies and frameworks, as well as local-level plans. Many of these related to tackling violence against women and girls more broadly; some to preventing this in particular circumstances (for example, Women's Night Safety Charter,⁶ or plans to help encourage women to stay active by making parks safer).
- **Public information campaigns** (n=27): These comprised national and local campaigns.
- **Sexual offender management** (n=26): These included sex offender behaviour change programmes, as well as information on the structures and processes in place to manage sexual offenders in the community.

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⁵ Defined as those with 10 or more measures.

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- **Measures to increase safety in identified hot spots for sexually motivated crimes** (n=24): Many of these related to the safety of women in the nighttime economy.
- **Education** (n=17): This primarily comprised measures aimed at educating children in schools, young men in higher and further education, and communities.
- **Safe space design measures** (n=14): These included planning frameworks and guidance for the design of spaces.
- **Policing measures to improve the investigation of sexual offences** (n=10): These included initiatives like Operation Soteria, with the aim of “transforming the investigation of rape”.⁷

B.8 Categories with between five and nine measures were:

- apps (n=9);
- criminal justice preventative and protective orders (n=7);
- bystander interventions, including bystander programmes (n=6);
- services for victims (n=6, including those aimed at particular groups of victims, such as sex workers); and
- details of roles identified as having a particular focus on preventing sexually motivated crimes against women in public spaces (n=5), such as police Designing Out Crime Officers, and transport champions for tackling violence against women and girls.

B.9 Other categories had four or fewer measures.

B.10 To note however, some measures could have been categorised in more than one group, and/or had multiple measures contained within them. For example, the Inquiry reviewed examples of cross-cutting campaigns and programmes run by local authorities. Some of these included academic research, public campaigns, use of an app, education, safe space design measures and community engagement.

Conclusions

B.11 Further details of individual measures are given in the chapters of this Report, together with information on evaluation of their effectiveness, where available. While noting that the list of measures is illustrative and not exhaustive, the Inquiry concludes the following:

- Multiple measures were put forward as contributing to the prevention of sexually motivated crimes against women in public spaces, although few focused specifically on these circumstances.

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- These included measures from policing, probation, prisons, wider criminal justice, local authorities, governments, academia, charities, education, health, and housing and transport sectors, among others.
- Measures spanned the three public health levels of prevention (primary, secondary and tertiary), although many were cross-cutting.

Appendix C. Glossary of terms

Abstraction of staff: This involves taking officers away from their core roles to cover other duties.

Appropriate authority: As defined by the Independent Office for Police Conduct, the appropriate authority for a person serving with the police is, for a chief officer or an acting chief officer, the local policing body for the area of the police force of which that officer is a member; or, in any other case, the chief officer with direction and control over the person serving with the police. In relation to complaints not concerning the conduct of a person serving with the police, the appropriate authority is the chief officer of the police force with which dissatisfaction is expressed by the complainant.

Ask for Angela: This is a national scheme operating in pubs, clubs and other venues, designed to discreetly help anyone who is feeling vulnerable on a night out to get the support they need.

Authorised Professional Practice: This guidance outlines the actions that everyone involved in policing needs to take to ensure that a consistent level of service is provided to the public. It is developed and owned by the College of Policing, and is subject to public consultations and quality assurance processes. The Authorised Professional Practice guidelines are the strongest guidance that the College issues. However, they are not mandated, and officers and staff are expected to use professional discretion when applying them.

Bystander training: These are training programmes designed to educate and support individuals on how to intervene safely and effectively in situations where they witness inappropriate or harmful behaviour.

Cambridge Crime Harm Index: This is a measure of the seriousness of crime based on the harm caused to victims. It uses sentencing guidelines to assign a harm score to each type of crime.

Community Safety Partnerships: These were introduced as part of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and work on the principle that no single agency can address all drivers of crime and antisocial behaviour. They bring together local partners to address crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour in their communities. The partners involved are: police, fire and rescue authorities, local authorities, health partners and the probation service.¹

Continuous Integrity Screening: This is a national vetting process that continuously checks the integrity of police officers, staff, volunteers and contractors.

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Counter-terrorism: This is a government-led policy and strategy which focuses on preventing individuals becoming terrorists, protecting against attacks and mitigating the impact of attacks.

Criminal justice system: This is the collective term for public bodies, such as the police, the Crown Prosecution Service, the courts and HM Prison and Probation Service, that work to uphold the law, take action against people who commit crimes, and protect the public.

Data washing: As used in this Report, data washing refers to a process where existing data is cross-checked against different systems to identify errors or inconsistencies. The term can also be used to describe a process where data is reviewed, analysed and cleansed.

Fieldwork force(s): This term is used to describe the sample of eight forces from different areas of England and Wales (Avon and Somerset Police, British Transport Police, Durham Constabulary, Merseyside Police, Metropolitan Police Service, Northamptonshire Police, South Wales Police, Sussex Police). The Inquiry identified these forces to act as a nationally representative sample, as far as possible, in order for the Inquiry to collect evidence via disclosure and fieldwork with each force.

Gender-based violence: This is violence directed against a person because of that person's gender, or violence that affects those of a particular gender disproportionately. This term is often used in relation to, or as a synonym for, violence against women and girls. Types of violence experienced by victims can include physical harm, sexual harm, economic harm and psychological harm.

Home Office forces: As described in this Report, Home Office forces are the 43 territorial police forces in England and Wales (as opposed to the national police forces, namely British Transport Police, the Civil Nuclear Constabulary and the Ministry of Defence Police, which have different funding and accountability arrangements).

Intensive Supervision Courts: The Intensive Supervision Courts are a form of problem-solving court which seek to address the root cause of offending behaviour, with the goal of reducing reoffending and supporting offenders to turn their lives around for the good.² They are an alternative to custody and use enhanced community-based sentences to divert individuals who are at risk of receiving custodial sentences of 2 years in the Crown Court, and 12 months in the Magistrates' Court.

Manosphere: This is an umbrella term used for a network of online anti-feminist, misogynistic, pro-men communities.

Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements: Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements are a set of statutory arrangements to assess and manage the risk posed by certain sexual and violent offenders. Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements were established by sections 325 to 327 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003. They bring together the police, probation and prison services to form the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements Responsible Authority. The Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements areas align with the police force areas.

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Nighttime economy: This is an umbrella term for commercial and leisure activities that take place during the evening and nighttime hours – generally considered to be 6pm–6am. These can include everything from nightclubs, bars and restaurants, to late night shopping and 24-hour services.

Offender Assessment System: Commonly referred to as OASys, the Offender Assessment System is a risk and needs assessment tool used by HM Prison and Probation Service to manage offenders and identify programmes to reduce the risk of further offences.

Operation Soteria: This is a programme designed to transform how the police handle the investigation of rape and other serious sexual offences.

PEEL: PEEL stands for Police Efficiency, Effectiveness and Legitimacy, and it is the assessment framework used by the HM Inspectorate of Constabulary. The PEEL programme sets out the characteristics of good performance against a set of questions, to assist inspectors to make consistent assessments across police forces, and for forces to see what they are being graded against.

Peelian principles: The Peelian principles are a set of nine principles for policing. They originate from Sir Robert Peel's founding principles and were distilled into the nine principles of policing by Charles Reith in 1948. They are seen as underpinning how policing operates in England and Wales.

Perpetrator profile: A perpetrator profile consists of detailed descriptions and/or characteristics of individuals who engage in harmful or criminal behaviour. These profiles are often created for investigative purposes, risk assessment and targeted intervention.

Police and Crime Commissioners: These are elected officials in areas of England and Wales to make sure that local police forces meet the needs of the community. They are responsible for police budgets, the appointment of Chief Constables, and setting local policing priorities. In some areas the role is delegated to a Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime. Some Police and Crime Commissioners are also responsible for local fire and rescue services.

Police National Computer: This is a national policing information system. It is the main database of criminal records in the UK and is used by frontline police officers and other UK law enforcement organisations to access real-time information of national and local significance.

Police National Database: This is a national intelligence-sharing system used for the purpose of preventing and detecting crime. It makes police intelligence available to licensed users in police forces and other organisations.

Prevent, Pursue, Protect, Prepare (4P) approach: The 4Ps are an approach to tackling serious organised crime and counter-terrorism. The 4P framework aims to: prevent people from taking part in criminal or terrorist activities; pursue offenders involved in criminal or terrorist activities to disrupt and prosecute them; protect people, organisations and systems from criminal or terrorist activities; and prepare for criminal or terrorist activities to reduce their impact.

Primary prevention: This is a category of intervention or measure often used as part of a public health prevention model, designed to prevent the emergence of a problem. It may include tackling the root causes of the issue and is typically aimed at population-level change, to stop the issue before it has a chance to develop.

Project Vigilant: This is a policing approach aimed at identifying predatory men in the nighttime economy, and preventing them from offending.

Public health approach: The NHS describes public health as “helping people to stay healthy and protecting them from threats to their health”.³ This can include activities which involve helping individuals, but often also involves “dealing with wider factors that have an impact on the health and wellbeing of many people”.⁴ In terms of what this means in relation to preventing sexually motivated crimes, public health in this context looks behind the issue to understand what is driving it, with a focus on the principle that prevention is better than cure. Often, public health approaches use primary, secondary and tertiary interventions to try and address every side of the issue, from root causes all the way to reducing the impact of crimes after they have occurred (including reducing the risk of reoffending).

Public spaces: For the purposes of the Inquiry’s work, public spaces are registered common land, streets, open public spaces, unregulated outside spaces such as publicly accessible sports groups, public areas outside buildings and public transport.

Rape myth: These can be described as beliefs and attitudes people may have about the perpetrator or victim of rape and sexual violence that are commonly and persistently held and accepted, despite being factually inaccurate or completely false.⁵

Recency, Frequency, Gravity, Victims (RFGV) algorithm: This is a harm scoring matrix that has been developed for identifying perpetrators of domestic abuse who pose the greatest risk.

Recidivism: This term is used by and across the criminal justice system to refer to perpetrators who reoffend. This is often described as ‘the recidivism rate’, which refers to the number of individuals who have already committed at least one offence who then go on to commit further offence(s).

Safer Streets mission: This is a government-led initiative to improve public confidence in neighbourhood policing. It focuses on strategies to address violence against women and girls, knife crime, and reduce antisocial behaviour and shoplifting.

Secondary prevention/intervention: This is a category of intervention or measure often used as part of a public health prevention model, designed to confront and address those at risk of offending. In health terms, this means quickly isolating and treating confirmed cases. In relation to sexually motivated crimes, this Report considers secondary interventions to address those at high risk of offending, with the aim of diverting them.

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Serious and organised crime: The government describes these crimes as involving individuals planning, coordinating and committing serious offences, whether individually, in groups and/or as part of transnational networks. The main categories of serious offences covered are child sexual exploitation and abuse, illegal drugs, illegal firearms, fraud, money laundering and other economic crime, bribery and corruption, organised immigration crime, modern slavery and human trafficking, and cybercrime.

Sexually motivated crime: This refers to the types of offences defined by the Sexual Offence Act 2003, and also any other crime that is sexually motivated but not defined as a sexual offence.

Strategic Policing Requirement: This is the Home Secretary's assessment of the current national threats, and the policing capability required to respond to them. This is in accordance with section 77 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. Police and Crime Commissioners, as well as Chief Constables, must consider the Strategic Policing Requirement when carrying out their functions. As of 2023, the national threats set out in the Strategic Policing Requirement are violence against women and girls, terrorism, serious and organised crime, a national cyber incident, child sexual abuse, public disorder and civil emergencies.

Strategic Threat and Risk Assessment: This is an assessment of the influences and levers that contribute to an issue being a national threat (for example, violence against women and girls). It prioritises threats and provides an analysis of policing's future capability and capacity to respond, which in turn provides insights to help equip policing leaders and local forces to inform planning and decision making. It also highlights gaps in existing knowledge to allow policing and its partners to focus activity to improve their understanding.

Street Angels/Street Pastors: This refers to a network of trained volunteers who operate in their local community, usually at night, to offer practical assistance to the vulnerable, including those under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the homeless, the lonely, and those suffering from poor mental or physical well-being.

Tertiary prevention/intervention: This is a type of intervention or measure often used as part of a public health prevention model, which aims to prevent an established issue from worsening. This means activities focused on responding to, or treating the problem, minimising the impact of violence, restoring health and safety, and preventing further victimisation and perpetration.

Victim Personal Statement: Victims, or their bereaved close relatives, have the right to explain in their own words how a crime has affected them, whether that is physically, emotionally or in any other way. This explanation, called a Victim Personal Statement, is considered by the judge or magistrate when determining what sentence the defendant should receive.

Violence against women and girls: Violence against women and girls is an umbrella term used to describe any form of abuse directed at women and girls, whether occurring in public or in private life, that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm. Violence against women and girls is often referred to as VAWG.

Violent and Sex Offender Register (ViSOR): This is a national multi-agency database for managing offenders and other persons posing a risk of harm to the public.

Witness statement: This is obtained by the police as part of a criminal investigation. It is the written or video-recorded account by a victim or witness of what they saw, heard or know about a crime.

Appendix D. List of abbreviations

ACAS	Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service
CCTV	closed-circuit television
GPS	Global Positioning System
HMICFRS	His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services
Licensing SAVI	Licensing Security and Vulnerability Initiative
MOPAC	(London) Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime
PNC	Police National Computer
PND	Police National Database
SSRI	Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor
UN	United Nations
ViSOR	Violent and Sex Offender Register

