

Our vision is a Scotland free from sexual violence

Rape Crisis Scotland has identified four key strategic priorities that we will work to in order to progress towards our ultimate vision. **These are:**



**Public
Awareness**



**Service
Improvement**



**Justice
Reform**



Prevention

Rape Crisis Scotland is an independent charity. We do not work in isolation. Our work is guided by the voices and experiences of survivors of sexual violence, we work closely with local rape crisis services across the country and we will engage with and form partnerships with numerous stakeholders to realise our aims.

Key stakeholders include Police Scotland, the Crown Office, NHS Scotland, Local Authorities, the Scottish Government, Rape Crisis Centres, Activists and the broader Violence Against Women Sector.

Sexual violence is a cross cutting issue - many agencies and services have a role to play in improving responses to survivors. In the coming years, RCS will seek to enhance our capacity to influence policy development across all areas potentially impacting on survivors, to ensure that survivors' needs and concerns are at the centre of relevant policy making.

We will support the implementation of *Equally Safe: A Delivery Plan to Support Scotland's Strategy to Prevent & Eradicate Violence Against Women & Girls* www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00528064.pdf



INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS ABOUT SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Rape Crisis Scotland has created award-winning, innovative campaigns to increase public awareness of sexual violence that have succeeded in achieving a broad reach and impact. This has included the billboard campaign 'This is not an invitation to rape me', TV advertisement 'Not Ever' and animations 'I Just Froze'.

From now until 2021 we will continue to lead the way in awareness raising with creative campaigning, engaging with the media, and increasing our public presence as the experts in sexual violence. We will work with the media as an influential platform to change misconceptions about sexual violence, raise awareness of the support available and hold those who have power to account where appropriate.



IMPROVE RESPONSES FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE ACROSS SCOTLAND

Rape Crisis Scotland is fortunate to have fostered good working relationships with multiple partners. We have built a reputation across Scotland as a constructive, reliable and expert charity which advocates for survivors of sexual violence.

These partnerships are key to the reduction and ultimately elimination of sexual violence. We will continue to work strategically at a Government level on the delivery of Equally Safe to address issues and feed in to the development of policies, legislation and any matter that impacts upon the experience of survivors and the prevention of sexual violence.

We will also work with all agencies - in particular the NHS and Police Scotland - to ensure that the health and support needs of survivors, especially directly after a rape or sexual assault, are considerably improved, and we will continue to monitor this. We will use our involvement in the Chief Medical Officer's Task Force to ensure that the experiences of survivors and their concerns are at the forefront of all steps taken to transform forensic and health responses to survivors of rape and sexual assault.



SUPPORT THE DELIVERY OF HIGH QUALITY SPECIALIST SERVICES FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

We strongly believe that anyone experiencing or who has experienced sexual violence should be able to access specialist support at the point of need, irrespective of their postcode or how recently the sexual violence took place.

We will work to ensure that every local authority across Scotland has a specialist sexual violence support service.

The demand for Rape Crisis Centres in Scotland continues to outweigh the capacity; in many areas of Scotland there are significant waiting lists in place. To address this we will work with key partners to develop a funding strategy that provides security and sustainability for Rape Crisis Centres and allows them to meet demand.



IMPROVE JUSTICE RESPONSES TO SEXUAL CRIME

At Rape Crisis Scotland we will continue to provide support to anyone affected by sexual violence through our daily national helpline and will consider digital solutions, including developing an online support service to enhance access to our support provision. Although there have been significant attempts in recent years to improve justice responses to rape and other sexual offences, it is clear that considerable and concerning issues remain.

One clear gap we will seek to address is the lack of independent research into sexual offence complainers' experiences and views of the criminal justice process. The Evidence and Procedure Review has the potential to transform rape complainers' experience of the criminal justice process, and we will thus engage fully with this as it progresses to make sure that survivors needs are central to its progress.

We will continue to provide training to police and Crown Office staff involved in the investigation and prosecution of sexual offences.

We will provide specialist support and advocacy to complainers who are engaged or considering engaging with the criminal justice system through our National Advocacy Project.

We will carefully consider the processes for protecting complainers' privacy in relation to access to their medical or other sensitive records, reflect on complainers' experiences on this issue, and any further protection which may be required.

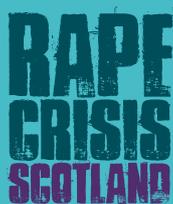
As lead partner in the Scottish Women's Rights Centre, we will support the provision of specialist legal advice to women experiencing gender based violence, and support the development of the Scottish Women's Rights Centre.



TACKLE THE CAUSES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

To reduce or eliminate sexual violence, we must undertake evidence based prevention work aimed at tackling the causes of this violence. Work with young people around consent and healthy relationships is crucial. We will continue to deliver our evidence based interventions with young people across Scotland through our Sexual Violence Prevention Project, and expand this project from its current reach of approximately one third of schools in Scotland, to all schools. This will considerably increase young people's awareness of issues around consent and healthy sexual relationships, with a view to a long term reduction in the prevalence of sexual violence. Participation of young people in our prevention work is important to us, and we will continue to support young people to engage and shape local interventions.

We will pilot and evaluate a Whole Schools approach to preventing violence against women and girls, and - taking account of the key learnings from the evaluation - develop a national Whole Schools approach.



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