

Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and the work of the Transport Champions



**TACKLING
VIOLENCE
AGAINST
WOMEN & GIRLS**

Introduction

- An ONS study found that women consistently reported feeling unsafe and that two out of three women had experienced at least one form of harassment in the last 12 months.
- In addition, there have been several recent, high-profile cases where women have been unsuspecting victims.
- Women's experiences and their perceptions of safety can have a detrimental impact on their life chances, through limiting the journeys they take and the lives they lead.
- In July 2021 myself and Laura Shoaf were appointed the first VAWG Transport Champions, to address safety on all our transport networks.
- We were tasked with developing recommendations for the DfT to help solve this inherent issue and make our networks safer.

Methodology

- Eight roundtable events took place which gathered evidence, ideas for safety improvements and best practice.
- Over 200 participants attended including charities, local authorities, Police and Crime Prevention Teams, transport operators, women's advocacy groups, planners and place makers.
- National surveys were also undertaken by Transport Focus, and a UK wide transport staff survey was distributed via UTG, to various LAs/CA's staff members.

What policies or initiatives have you seen which have been effective in improving safety for women and girls on the transport network?

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|----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Infrastructure | 4. Communication |
| a. Design Principles | a. Victims |
| b. Design | b. Bystanders |
| c. Maintenance | c. Potential perpetrators |
| 2. Transport Staff | 5. Policy making |
| a. Training | a. Data collection |
| b. Safeguarding | b. Principles |
| 3. Enforcement | 6. Technology |
| a. Reporting | a. Innovation |
| b. Collaboration | |

Key findings

- No woman or girl should need to change their behaviour. Instead, we need to target the perpetrator and create more hostile environments for them.
- The whole end to end journey needs to be considered.
- Every females lived experiences are different, and will vary based on age, sexuality and ethnicity, amongst many other things.
- Standardisation and intelligence are needed to encourage reporting and ensure every incident is dealt with appropriately.
- Safety is a societal issue and not solely about transport, so all government departments need to help change social norms, attitudes and behaviours.
- Work needs to be ongoing, with continual efforts made to tackle VAWG.

Short-term priorities

Recommendation 1: Better national transport planning guidance on ways to make transport infrastructure safer with a clear, monitored reporting service for infrastructure damage or issues

Recommendation 2: Improvements in the collection of gender disaggregated data

Recommendation 3: Undertake a national communications initiative into tackling VAWGs, which is promoted nationally across all of our transport networks

Recommendation 4: Deliver better, effective training across the transport industry to help manage incidents involving VAWGs

Recommendation 5: Review current safeguarding practices and standardise Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for all front facing staff across the transport industry

Medium term goals

Recommendation 6: Encourage an increased uptake of women working in the transport industry

Recommendation 7: Embrace more use of technology to combat VAWGs

Recommendation 8: Introduce Gender Responsive Budgets to support the delivery of gender equality infrastructure and policies

Long term ambitions



Recommendation 9: Create a national, intelligence database which captures incident reporting for all transport modes and areas

Recommendation 10: Develop a national education initiative in schools which educates young people on ways they can play a role in preventing VAWGs

Recommendation 11: Target available resources including staffing and deployment of police forces at locations which will have the greatest impact on our transport networks

Recommendation 12: Establish more Safer Travel Partnerships between operators, local authorities and the police

Recommendation 13: Continue to raise awareness and make a positive impact through the VAWG strategy

TfWM actions and next steps



- Transport Champions to review the recommendations and be updated on progress made by the DfT on a 12-18 month basis.
- Deliver a safe, secure and reliable transport system during the Commonwealth Games through enhanced passenger safety measures, safer transport infrastructure, increased venue security, and good communication on a range of safety issues.
- Continue to roll out and promote TfWM's 'Empower Campaign'; making it easier for women and girls to report unwanted attention, intimidation and harassment.
- Continue to deliver initiatives through the West Midlands Safer Travel Partnership including vital education programmes within schools, various safety campaigns and through its wider partnership and engagement work.
- Continue to work with those women and girls who have lived experiences of VAWGs and continue to influence and change social norms and behaviours.
- Embed safety and tackling VAWGs across all TfWM departments, work programmes and agendas.