



**domestic  
abuse  
commissioner**

Domestic Abuse Commissioner for England and Wales  
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**The Policing, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill and Violence against Women and Girls**

**Cc, Victoria Atkins MP, Minister for Safeguarding**

Dear Kit Malthouse MP,

I hope that you have been keeping well since we last met. Thank you again for that very helpful discussion on domestic homicides.

I wanted to reach out with regards to the Policing, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, which I believe provides an important, and timely opportunity for the Government to prevent and tackle the root causes of violence against women and girls, including domestic abuse.

In particular, I wanted to draw your attention to my proposal to extend clause 12 of the Bill regarding the prevention and reduction of serious and violent crime, to explicitly include violence against women and girls, on the face of the legislation. I believe this presents a significant opportunity to demonstrate the Government's commitment in this area and would send a strong message to police forces on the importance of both preventing and tackling domestic abuse in the same way as any other form of serious and violent crime. I have attached a copy of the briefing that I submitted to the Commons Bill Committee with this letter.

Domestic abuse represents one-third of violent crime recorded by the police, and approximately one-fifth of all adult homicides (and half of adult homicides where the victim is female), and affected 2.3 million adults in the last year.

Whilst, I strongly welcome the significant protections provided to victims of domestic abuse, via the new Domestic Abuse Act, including the creation of several new criminal offences and the introduction of new Domestic Abuse Protection Orders and Notices, the criminal justice system still has however, a significant way to go in bringing perpetrators to justice and providing a consistently good response to domestic abuse survivors. To achieve the wholesale reform needed to improve criminal justice outcomes for victims and survivors, and build confidence in the process, it is imperative that issues of violence against women and girls are a central consideration of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill.

As you will be very well aware, over the last couple of years there has been a notable decline in the number of offences prosecuted by the Crown Prosecution Service related to domestic abuse, despite there being an increase in police recorded offences, and no reduction in prevalence. Between April 2014 and March 2020, the annual number of domestic abuse flagged cases referred to the CPS by police fell by 37%, with similar declines in prosecutions (34%) and convictions (31%). In the year ending March 2020, only 9% of domestic abuse related crimes recorded by the police led to a charge or summons. The CPS convicted 47,534 domestic abuse cases, compared to 758,491 domestic abuse related police recorded offences.

I would be most grateful to meet with you at the earliest opportunity to discuss these proposed measures in further detail, and if at all possible, before the Bill passes into Report stage in the House of Commons.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nicole Jacobs". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nicole Jacobs  
Domestic Abuse Commissioner for England and Wales