



ENDING PUBLIC SEXUAL HARASSMENT: THE CASE FOR LEGISLATION

POLICY BRIEFING | NOVEMBER 2020

CONTENTS

Introduction	3
What is ‘public sexual harassment’?	4
What causes public sexual harassment?	5
The issue: the negative impact on girls	6
The case for legislative change	8
Legislative solution – a call to action	11
Appendix	13
About the team and contact information	18

Cover photo: Maya and Gemma are the founders of Our Streets Now.
Credit: Plan International/Joyce Nicholls.

INTRODUCTION

Public sexual harassment is widespread and relentless in the UK. From parks and bus stops to our local high streets, girls and women across the UK are facing harassment every day. They're being followed, shouted at, touched, groped and grabbed, and they want it to stop. It blights the lives of girls and women, affecting their mental health, self-esteem, sense of safety and seriously impinges on their right to equal access to public space.

This harassment is going unreported and unpunished. It is not criminalised effectively, a glaring gap in the protection the UK provides its girls and women. That must end.

Global children's charity Plan International UK and grassroots youth campaign Our Streets Now are campaigning to make public sexual harassment a criminal offence in the UK. In less than 100 days after its launch, the [Our Streets Now petition](#) calling for the criminalisation of public sexual harassment gained 100,000 signatures, and it now has over 220,000.

This briefing describes what 'public sexual harassment' is; how prevalent it is; how it has a damaging and deleterious impact on the lives of girls and women; why the current law provides inadequate protection; and how by creating a new, targeted, bespoke offence of public sexual harassment can help reshape and reset the national conversation about the rights of girls and women to enjoy public spaces and all facets of civil society safely and in accordance with their rights under international law.

This legislative change is not only desirable but necessary – for the UK to create the protective framework to comply with its international treaty obligations, and for girls and women as a further critical step towards gender equality and social justice.

Our Streets Now and Plan International UK have commissioned leading international human rights lawyers to develop a cutting-edge legislative solution – a draft bill, drawing on best practice from across the world but tailored to the UK's unique legal traditions and context. It creates effective, unprecedented protection for girls and women from public sexual harassment. It is a vital missing link in the UK's safeguarding mechanism for girls and women. It is Parliament-ready.

WHAT IS 'PUBLIC SEXUAL HARASSMENT'?

Fundamentally public sexual harassment is unwanted sexual behaviour, actions or gestures, which could be verbal, non-verbal or physical, in public spaces. This means it occurs in spaces that are accessible to the public, such as the streets, parks, gyms, university campuses, public transport and shopping centres. Sexual harassment also occurs online, but this briefing and our campaign focus on sexual harassment in offline everyday life.

Public sexual harassment encompasses a wide range of behaviours including: leering or persistent staring; following; sexually propositioning; sexual gestures; sexually explicit comments; intrusive persistent questioning; 'catcalling'; 'wolf-whistling'; non-consensual physical contact such as kissing, groping, stroking etc.; non-contact technology-enabled sexual behaviour, such as 'Air Dropping' unwanted illicit images to someone's phone (also known as cyber-flashing); 'up-skirting'; and viewing or showing pornography in public.



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Public sexual harassment is usually directed towards girls and women, although it can be experienced by all. Other aspects of a person's identity, aside from their sex or gender, can shape their experience of public sexual harassment. For example, a person's race, disability, gender identity or sexuality can compound and intensify their experience, as perpetrators exploit the many vulnerabilities in a victim's identity.

WHAT CAUSES PUBLIC SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

Sexual harassment is a form of violence against women and girls. Like other forms of gender-based violence, it is an expression of power and gender inequality. It is caused by, reproduces and reinforces the idea that women's and girls' bodies are subject to men's desire and ownership and therefore fair game for comment, intrusive scrutiny, unwanted physical access and judgement, even in public spaces, whatever their age or wishes.

The high prevalence of various forms of abusive sexual behaviours indicates how sexual harassment is normalised in society and not just tolerated but excused. Without a dedicated legislative solution to this widespread problem, the freedom of girls and women to exist safely in public is severely impaired and unfairly restricted.



THE ISSUE: THE NEGATIVE IMPACT ON GIRLS

Public sexual harassment is widespread and relentless. 66% of girls and young women aged 14-21 have experienced public sexual harassment. While 38% of 14-21 year old girls reported unwanted sexual attention at least once a month, this rose to 42% of Black, Asian and ethnic minority girls, and 49% of LBTIQ+ young people ([Plan International UK, 2018](#)). During the lockdown between March and April 2020, in which members of the public were allowed to leave their homes for an hour each day, 1 in 5 girls were still experiencing public sexual harassment ([Plan International UK polling, 2020](#)).

“

On several occasions men have tried flirting with me and called me exotic as though it's a compliment. I get "I've never been with a brown/mixed girl"

”

Testimony for Our Streets Now

It often starts young. 35% of girls aged 14-21 have experienced it while wearing school uniform (Plan International UK, 2018). A survey by [YouGov and EVAW](#) (End Violence Against Women) Coalition found that more than a quarter of women who had experienced public sexual harassment were aged under 16 the first time it happened.

Girls rarely report incidents – to anyone. Despite the shocking frequency, 42% of girls aged 14-21 who had been sexually harassed in public didn't tell anyone about it. When asked why, 33% were too embarrassed, 28% didn't think they would be taken seriously, and 26% did not know who to tell ([Plan International UK, 2019](#)).

It is significantly underreported to the police: 76% of girls who have experienced harassment in their lifetime have never reported it to the police and 57% say they wouldn't know where to report street harassment if it happened to them. 72% said knowing it was a criminal offence would make them more likely to report it to the police (Plan International UK, 2020).

“

I was about 15, I was on the tube coming home from a work placement in a design house. I had dyed hair, sort of tangerine colour [...] a smart looking man came and sat next to me, he tapped me on the leg. I took my headphones out and he said quietly to me “I have never had sex with anyone with that hair colour before”. I was so shocked and sickened, **I felt disgusted and dirty. I never told anyone. That was just one of many sadly, this one just stuck out in my mind.**

”

Testimony for Our Streets Now

Girls often blame themselves. Girls are often made to feel they were ‘asking for it’, and feel social condemnation holding them personally responsible for not preventing or controlling it. Hence, they adopt avoidant behaviours, restricting how they would otherwise wish to behave in public, where they go and when. These ‘unwritten rules’ – this form of enforced self-policing – place the onus on girls and women to stay safe, rather than tackling the actions of perpetrators.

Girls’ freedom is restricted. Girls change their behaviours to avoid sexual harassment in public, such as not wearing certain clothes, not exercising outdoors, changing the time they travel, taking different routes, not going out alone or not going out at all ([Plan International UK, 2018](#)).

“

I walked home from uni down a main road and a car with 4 men slowed down and started making comments at me out the window. I took my headphones off and realised they were commenting on my bum in my gym leggings. **They followed me until I found an alternative route home.** I took this longer route for the rest of the year.

”

Testimony for Our Streets Now

Girls do not know their rights.

Adolescent girls learn to accept being sexually harassed as a normal part of growing up, and an inescapable and natural part of being a young woman, partly because the law is not always on their side. While some behaviours can be captured by legislation, the law is very unclear, unfocused, ambiguous and not enforced by authorities in respect of these harmful and abusive behaviours, despite their serious impacts. If those in authority have a lack of clarity about what is illegal and what is not, it is entirely understandable that this imprecision and uncertainty is shared by girls and women.

The hundreds of testimonies amassed by Our Streets Now detail the prevalence and impact of public sexual harassment across the UK – see www.ourstreetsnow.org

THE CASE FOR LEGISLATIVE CHANGE

1. Deliver on Government commitments

As a form of violence against women and girls, the UK Government has publicly committed to tackling public sexual harassment. This includes in the [Conservative party's manifesto](#) (page 20), which states: *"We will protect people from physical attack or harassment whether for their sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion or disability."*

Positively, the Home Office has committed to addressing public sexual harassment through its refreshed national [Violence Against Women and Girls \(VAWG\) strategy](#), in which it states: *"Whether it's in the workplace, on the street, or as part of domestic or sexual abuse; sexual harassment in any situation is unacceptable."* So far, there is little evidence of the implementation of the strategy in regard to public sexual harassment.

"WHETHER IT'S IN THE WORKPLACE, ON THE STREET, OR AS PART OF DOMESTIC OR SEXUAL ABUSE; SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN ANY SITUATION IS UNACCEPTABLE."

The Home Office's Violence Against Women and Girls strategy

Other forms of violence against girls and women are rightly high on the Government's agenda, including issues such as online harms, domestic abuse, sexual harassment in the workplace and in universities and the Law Commission's review of hate crime legislation. Despite the relevance to workplace sexual harassment and online harassment, very little attention is paid to public sexual harassment specifically. While sexual harassment in the workplace is unlawful under civil law under the Equality Act 2010, our analysis has uncovered legislative gaps around public sexual harassment, and this needs to be addressed in order to tackle it.

The legal obligations placed on employers to take action on workplace sexual harassment no longer extends to harassment carried out by 'third parties', that is, harassment by non-employees, such as members of the public. For example, if an employee is sexually harassed by a third party harasser, such as a client or a customer, they may not be properly protected by workplace sexual harassment law. Therefore, public sexual harassment legislation will help keep workers safe in the workplace, where employers may not step in to safeguard workers when they work in public facing roles, where harassment is a foreseeable occupational hazard.

2. Address weaknesses in the legal framework

The Government's VAWG Strategy states that “we have strong laws that make it clear that harassment, sexual assault and rape are against the law and, where a criminal offence has taken place, this should be investigated by the police.” (page 16).

In reality, current legislation is piecemeal and not fit for purpose. No law has been enacted specifically to prevent and prosecute public sexual harassment and thus it is entirely unsurprising that this form of seriously harmful conduct falls through the legal cracks. (See appendix 1 for existing laws and their inadequacies in respect of capturing public sexual harassment). Some legislation covers certain aspects of public sexual harassment, such as ‘upskirting’ or when it escalates to physical abuse or attacks. However, since no current legislation is directed at the problem of public sexual harassment specifically, it is incredibly difficult to counter through existing legal avenues – and it simply has not been happening.

The complex and piecemeal evolution of existing laws limit police ability to respond, confuse victims, and give abusers and harassers a pass. The lack of clarity around the legal status – or current non-status – of public sexual harassment is part of the reason that victims often do not report incidents and cannot access justice, leaving them unprotected. Girls and women experience a wide range of harmful behaviours when out and about in public, and this must be reflected in the legal framework. At present, the legal framework does not send a clear message that public sexual harassment is unacceptable. In fact, it is invisible.

Across the world, a number of countries have put in place specific legislation to address public sexual harassment in its entirety. The UK is lagging behind the front runners, but now has an opportunity to catch up. (Details of laws in other countries are in appendix 2).

AT PRESENT, THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK DOES NOT SEND A CLEAR MESSAGE THAT PUBLIC SEXUAL HARASSMENT IS UNACCEPTABLE. IN FACT, IT IS INVISIBLE.

3. Make progress on obligations under international law

The UK's obligations under Article 5 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and Article 40 of the Istanbul Convention clearly require the UK Government to take steps to tackle public sexual harassment.

The UK Government has not ratified the Istanbul Convention, but has repeatedly publicly stated its commitment to doing so, as [outlined in a statement](#) on the progress on the Istanbul Convention: *"The UK signed the Istanbul Convention in 2012 to signal the UK's strong commitment to tackling violence against girls and women (VAWG) and this Government remains committed to ratifying it"*. Introducing new legislation and strengthening the legal framework is an important step towards ratifying the Istanbul Convention, in keeping with Article 40, which demands all forms of sexual harassment be criminalised.

In addition, as one of the leaders of the Action Coalition on gender-based violence for the Generation Equality Forum, introducing this law would be a tremendous statement of the UK's ambitious intent for its work on tackling gender-based violence globally.

**INTRODUCING NEW
LEGISLATION AND
STRENGTHENING THE
LEGAL FRAMEWORK IS
AN IMPORTANT STEP
TOWARDS RATIFYING THE
ISTANBUL CONVENTION**

4. Address significant data gaps

Effectively tackling public sexual harassment requires robust data, however, data collection on public sexual harassment is highly fragmented.

Criminalising public sexual harassment could lead to increased reporting of incidents and consequently data that more accurately reveals the true extent of the problem that girls and women contend with in their daily lives.

LEGISLATIVE SOLUTION – A CALL TO ACTION

All forms of public sexual harassment must finally be taken seriously by making it a specific unambiguous stand-alone criminal offence to address and quell a very real, pervasive, damaging social problem that previously has not been adequately tackled: our bill is a bespoke, self-contained, cutting-edge legislative solution that meets three vital goals simultaneously:

1. For the first time, it provides proper, effective legal protection for girls and women from sexual harassment in public;
2. It fills a glaring gap in the UK's protective mechanism that will assist the UK to finally ratify the critical Istanbul Convention and thus meet our international law obligations;
3. It helps promote a fundamental paradigm shift in our society's understanding of how girls and women should be able to enjoy public spaces and civil society – resulting in a vindication of their right to equal access to all parts of society without fear of abuse or intimidation.

Our laws express our aspirations for the standards of behaviour in society – how we treat one another and have a right to be treated. This is precisely why we need a focused, tailored and proportionate criminal offence making all forms of public sexual harassment subject to criminal sanction.

This will help to deter perpetrators and will support victims in two ways: by allowing them to report abusive behaviour to the police and receive appropriate post-incident support as they seek justice; but beyond this, as has been seen with FGM legislation, the symbolic nature of a specific criminal offences targeting harmful behaviour and violence, particularly where it is gender-based, provides great confidence to vulnerable girls and women wondering if the legal authorities will take it seriously. Historically, a clear problem was knowing which offence the abusive behaviour was and what penalty should be incurred – a legal dilemma that has all too often in the past led to institutional inaction and injustice. With our legislation there will be no doubt. And no excuse. It will mark a new departure in the protection of girls and women in public spaces in the UK.

Public sexual harassment is part of a wider culture of gender inequality and requires a multi-faceted approach that includes legislative, policing, community and educational responses. Other crucial policies, such as relationships and sex education, must be implemented to effectively address public sexual harassment.

However, a legislative solution designed specifically to target the particular form that this form of abusive gender-based violence takes in the UK in 2020 is absolutely critical. The Bill that we want to see adopted best encapsulates the protections the Istanbul Convention requires – and that girls and women deserve.

Let's make this the generation to end the harassment of girls and women in public places. We have developed the legislative tools. We need to finish the job.



APPENDIX

Appendix 1. Related laws

The existing laws¹ that loosely relate to the area of harassment are:

- **Public Order Act 1986:** gives the police powers to act in respect of a broad range of criminal offences relating to public disorder, including behaviour causing or likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress. The Public Order Act was enacted during the Thatcher administration to consolidate and extend the law on acts of public disorder. To use it in respect of public sexual harassment would be to artificially shoe-horn the gender-based abuse into the rubric of an offence designed for different purposes and which does not have the critical sexual element at the heart of the crime's definition or legislative intent. The Public Order Act has been very rarely used to prosecute gender-based verbal harassment.
- **Protection from Harassment Act 1997:** makes it an offence for someone to pursue a course of conduct which he or she knows or ought to know amounts to harassment and can include harassment by two or more defendants against an individual or harassment against more than one victim. This Act was created to cover repeated harassment or stalking, and therefore requires a course of conduct. This means that a person would have to be harassed several times in the same way by the same individual in order for this legislation to apply. This does not reflect the overwhelming majority of cases of public sexual harassment, in which violence is a one-off, opportunistic incident. Again, it lacks the sexual element.
- **Sexual Offences Act 2003** contains a number of offences, including rape, assault by penetration, and sexual assault, which can be used to prosecute the most serious criminal behaviour, i.e. that which amounts to unlawful sexual contact. It also contains a number of offences relating to sexual offences against children, grooming and the abuse of positions of trust.

¹ This refers to England and Wales; Scottish legislation such as section 38 and section 39 of the Criminal Justice and Licensing Act 2010, sometimes with 'sexual aggravators' applied, covers similar activity that could be considered threatening or abusive or as stalking, with the Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009 covering other activity that would be classified as rape, sexual assault and other sexual offences.

- **Protection of Freedom Act 2012**, now includes an offence of stalking involving fear of violence or serious alarm of distress. This offence may be prosecuted where someone causes another person serious alarm and distress through behaviour, which could include sexual harassment that has a substantial effect on their day-to-day activities. This Act also includes a stalking offence where a course of conduct amounts to stalking and the person knows or ought to know that their behaviour amounts to stalking, but where someone is not necessarily put in fear of violence or caused serious harm or distress.
- **Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019** criminalises ‘upskirting’, where a person operates equipment or records beneath a person’s clothing without their consent, for the purpose of sexual gratification or for the purpose of humiliating, alarming or distressing the victim.
- **Common Law – Outraging Public Decency** can cover a variety of behaviours making it an offence to do in public any act of a lewd, obscene or disgusting nature which outrages public decency. This has previously been used for ‘upskirting’ in England and Wales until new legislation was applied under the Voyeurism section of Sexual Offences Act 2003, and has also been used for activity such as public masturbation, sexual activity in a public place, and some instances of exposure.
- **Malicious Communications Act 1988** makes it illegal in England and Wales to send or deliver letters or other articles for the purpose of causing distress or anxiety and has been utilised for recording incidents such as ‘cyber-flashing’.
- **Railway Byelaw 6** prohibits a variety of activities on the railway including the use of obscene or offensive language, as well as not allowing passengers to ‘molest or wilfully interfere with the comfort or convenience of any person on the railway’, and has been used in some sexual harassment incidents that have not met the threshold for Public Order offences.

Appendix 2. Overview of laws in other countries

In order from earliest to most recent:

- Belgium – 2014.** In 2014, Belgium passed a law to combat sexism in public spaces and, consequently, imposes fines and potential imprisonment on those who commit public sexual harassment. The court can impose a prison sentence of one month to one year and/or a fine of 50-1000 euros to whoever adopts a sexist behaviour as described in article 2 of the law. Thus, the concept of sexism is understood as: “any gesture or act that, in the circumstances of Article 44 of the Penal Code, is evidently intended to express contempt for a person because of his gender, or that regards them as inferior or reduces them to their sexual dimension, and which has the effect of violating someone’s dignity”.
- Peru – 2015.** Peru passed Law no. 30314 in 2015. The purpose of the law is “to prevent and punish sexual harassment produced in public spaces that affect the rights of people, especially the rights of women”. The law contemplates sanctions of administrative nature through fines for perpetrators who commit public sexual harassment.
- The legislation defines public sexual harassment as “physical or verbal conduct of sexual nature or connotation carried out by one or more people against another or others, who do not want or reject these behaviours because they consider that they affect their dignity, their fundamental rights such as freedom, integrity and free transit, creating in them intimidation, hostility, degradation, humiliation or an offensive environment in public spaces”. The law sees manifestations of public sexual harassment as: acts of a sexual, verbal or gestural nature; comments and advances of a sexual nature; obscene gestures that are unbearable, hostile, humiliating, or offensive; improper touching, rubbing against the body, friction against the body or masturbation in transport or public places; exhibitionism or showing genitalia in transportation or public places”.
- Portugal – 2015.** Public sexual harassment became a crime in 2015. Article 170 of the Penal Code states “anyone who harasses another person, performing acts of an exhibitionist character, formulating proposals of a sexual nature or embarrassing them to sexual contact, shall be punished with imprisonment for up to one year or with a fine of up to 120 euros if a more serious penalty does not fall under another legal provision”. The penal framework for public sexual harassment is aggravated when committed against children under 14 years of age, passing the maximum penalty to three years.

- **Argentina – 2016.** In 2016, the city of Buenos Aires approved the Law no. 5742 “to prevent and punish sexual harassment in public spaces or public access, verbal or physical, that harass, mistreat or intimidate and generally affect the dignity, freedom, free movement and the right to the physical or moral integrity of persons, based on their gender, identity and/or sexual orientation”. The act does not constitute a crime. Perpetrators of public sexual harassment are punished with two to 10 days of public utility work and a fine of 200-1000 pesos.
- **Brazil – 2018.** Law no. 13.718 was created in 2018. The law defines public sexual harassment as a crime. Art. 215-A states: “to practice against someone and without their consent, a libidinous act with the aim of satisfying their own lust or that of a third party”. The penalty for perpetrators of public sexual harassment is imprisonment, from one to five years. The law also typifies as a crime the disclosure of a sex scene, pornography, rape scene or rape of vulnerable person.
- **France – 2018.** Law no. 703 was approved in 2018. It includes sexist insults, degrading or humiliating comments, or hostile and offensive sexual/sexist behaviour towards a person in public spaces. The law allows on-the-spot fines of between 90 euros and 750 euros, with higher penalties for committing against a minor of 15 years of age and for a person in authority abusing their power. Also, for perpetrators who commit against vulnerable people (due to age, illness, disability, physical or mental deficiency, pregnancy, or economic situation), in a vehicle used for collective passenger transport, because of the sexual orientation, true or supposed, of the victim.

The legislation considers public sexual harassment as “physical or verbal behaviour of sexual nature or connotation, based on gender identity and/or sexual orientation, carried out by one or more people against another or others, which they do not want or reject these behaviours as they affect their dignity, their fundamental rights such as freedom, integrity, and free movement, creating in them intimidation, hostility, degradation, humiliation or offensive environment in public spaces and in private spaces of public access. Sexual harassment in public spaces or with public access can manifest itself in the following behaviours: direct or indirect sexual comments to the body; non-consensual photographs and recordings; improper or non-consensual physical contact; persecution or cornering; masturbation or exhibitionism; obscene gestures or other expressions”.

- Chile – 2019.** Law no. 21153 was approved in 2019. On article 494, it says “ the person who carries out, in public places or with free public access, and without the consent of the victim, an act of sexual significance capable of provoking an objectively intimidating, hostile or humiliating situation commits sexual harassment, and that does not constitute a misdemeanor or crime to which a more serious penalty is imposed, consisting of: acts of a verbal nature or performed by means of gestures – in this case, a fine of 1-3 monthly tax units will be imposed; conduct consisting of approaches or persecution, or acts of obscene exhibitionism or explicit sexual content – in any of these cases, the penalty of imprisonment will be imposed in its medium to maximum degree and a fine of 5-10 monthly tax units”. The law also states that a minimum degree (61-540 days) and a fine of 5-10 monthly tax units will be applied to those who, in public places or of free public access, “capture, record, film or photograph images, videos or any audiovisual record of the genitalia or other intimate part of the body of another person for purposes of sexual significance and without their consent”. Penalties also apply to those who disseminate these images.
- Costa Rica – 2020.** Law no. 9877 was approved in 2020. The law’s aim is “to guarantee the equal right, to all people, to transit or remain free from sexual harassment in public spaces, in private spaces of public access and in means of paid transportation of people, whether public or private, establishing measures to prevent and punish this form of violence and sexual discrimination that threatens the dignity and security of people”.

The legislation understands public sexual harassment as “all conduct or conducts with sexual connotations and with a unidirectional nature, without the consent or acceptance of the person or persons to whom it is directed, with the potential to cause annoyance, discomfort, intimidation, humiliation, insecurity, fear and offence, which generally comes from a person unknown to the recipient and which takes place in public spaces or public access”. The conducts that are classified as crimes are exhibitionism or masturbation; persecution or cornering; production of audiovisual material. Taking photos or videos with sexual intentions in public spaces will carry a prison sentence of one year to a year and a half, which could increase to two years if the material is shared. If the perpetrator masturbates or shows their genitals in public places, it is a six-month prison sentence. Chasing or cornering someone for sexual purposes can be punished with eight months to one year in jail. Conducts that carry a penalty are uttering, directing or executing with sexual connotation towards another person without their consent (i.e. noises, words, hisses, gasps, moans, gestures). Legislation states that touching is considered sexual abuse, not sexual harassment, and is still a crime that can be reported and persecuted.

ABOUT THE TEAM



Our Streets Now

Our Streets Now is a grassroots, youth-led campaign group that was founded by sisters Maya and Gemma Tutton in April 2019. We aim to tackle PSH in two ways; by enacting legislative and political change, and by increasing awareness and education around PSH. Our campaign was founded upon the mandate given by 210,000 people signing our petition to make PSH a criminal offence and has sparked a national conversation on the issue of sexual harassment, platforming the voices of girls and women who are victims of PSH.

We believe girls and women deserve to feel safe, and be safe, in public space. It is not only right, it is their legal right. We want to bring that right to life.

The legal team

The campaign is supported by a group of internationally recognised lawyers with a particular expertise in human rights and violence against women. Chief architect of the draft bill is Dexter Dias QC who was principal author of the groundbreaking report to Parliament on behalf of the Bar Human Rights Committee that helped strengthen the UK's law on FGM. Dexter has advised the UN on the rights of women and girls and been involved in some of the biggest cases nationally and internationally engaging fundamental human rights. He is Visiting Researcher at Cambridge and previously Harvard. Dexter has worked closely with Charlotte Proudman, barrister and Junior Research Fellow at Queens' College, Cambridge. Charlotte has a PhD from Cambridge, where she researched gender-based violence, and specialises in cases where she protects girls and women from harmful practices, abuse and violence.



Plan International UK

Plan International UK is a global children's charity. We strive to deliver and protect the rights of millions of children – especially girls – across Latin America, Africa, Asia and the UK. We work to give every child the same chance in life. But when you're a girl it is even harder to be safe, to be in school and to be in charge of your body.

We know that girls' rights are global; wherever in the world a girl is born or lives, she should be safe, free from abuse, and have equal rights. This is why, in 2016, we turned our attention to the UK. We work to advance girls' rights in the UK through our advocacy, campaigns and programmes with girls.

Contact information

For further information about the Bill or the campaign please contact both Our Streets Now and Plan International UK:

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