

# TEMPLATE POLICY PAGE

Category:	Sexual Crime
Country:	United Kingdom
Year:	/

Policy 1:	<p><b>Improving the criminal justice response</b></p> <p>In April 2007, the Government published an Action Plan on Sexual Violence and Abuse - <a href="#">click to view</a></p> <p>This sets out three main actions to tackle rape and sexual violence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> increasing access to support services for victims;</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> improving the criminal justice response; and</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> preventing sexual violence and abuse.</li></ul> <p><b>Why?</b></p> <p>The BCS IPV2 2007/2008 estimates that only 12% of adults who have experienced rape report it to the police. 40% of people tell no-one. The current conviction rate for all recorded offences of rape is low at around 6.5% (Data from 2006-7). When cases make it to court, the conviction rate is higher -58%- but the majority of victims withdraw from the criminal justice process at the investigative stage. This indicates a lack of confidence in the process and shows that in order to improve conviction rates, we need to concentrate on improving the criminal justice response.</p> <p><b>Key actions so far</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Introduced specially trained officers and specialist rape prosecutors and improved training and guidance for the police, the Crown Prosecution Service and barristers;</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Supported police forces to develop rape action plans;</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Established a 'Rape Monitoring Group' which meet quarterly to improve local performance of the police and CPS on the investigation and prosecution of rape;</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Established, within the Crown Prosecution Service, a specialist Rape Prosecutions Delivery Unit;</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Introduced a range of special measures in court to assist victims in giving evidence; including the use of screens and live links;</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Introduced a statutory code of practice for victims of rape entitling them to an enhanced service from the criminal justice system;</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Extended the network of Sexual Assault Referral Centres to 29 with a further 16 in development to help ensure that victims receive medical care and counselling and can assist the police investigation through a forensic examination;</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Increased the number of Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (currently 43) to provide advocacy and support for victims;</li></ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provided funding through the Victims Fund for voluntary organisations supporting victims of sexual violence;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Rolled out the use of intermediaries to help vulnerable witnesses give</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> evidence and extending the use of victim personal statements;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provided extra resources to the Rape Support Programme to ensure they visit all forces with an expert on rape from the voluntary sector to help with training and establish links between forces and voluntary sectors;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provided funding for the production and roll out of a training DVD for police officers informing them on what to do when a rape is first reported</li> </ul>
<p><b>Policy 2:</b></p>	<p><b>To increase access to support and health services for victims of sexual violence and abuse</b></p> <p>In April 2007, the Government published an Action Plan on Sexual Violence and Abuse - <a href="#">click to view</a></p> <p>This sets out three main actions to tackle rape and sexual violence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> increasing access to support services for victims;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> improving the criminal justice response; and</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> preventing sexual violence and abuse.</li> </ul> <p><b>Why?</b></p> <p>Research estimates the health-related cost of each rape at £73,487. This includes the emotional and physical impacts of injuries and illnesses and estimates of the associated costs to health services and of lost output from time spent at less than full health. Relevant link for research: <a href="http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/statistics/statistics39.htm">http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/statistics/statistics39.htm</a></p> <p>Sexual violence and abuse can cause physical injuries, sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies. It is also a significant cause of mental illness. In the immediate aftermath of an assault victims may experience a range of social and psychological impacts including guilt, anxiety, tearfulness, shame, self-blame, disbelief, physical revulsion and powerlessness. Mental health problems such as post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety and panic attacks, depression, social phobia, substance abuse, eating disorders and self-harm may persist for years after the attack.</p> <p>Failure to provide good immediate medical care and support may increase the likelihood of the above conditions occurring and persisting, and increase long-term pressure on GPs, substance abuse treatment services and services for mental health, Genito-Urinary Medicine (GUM) and family planning.</p> <p>Where appropriate services are not in place, victims of sexual offending may report to A&amp;E departments, GUM services and GPs, creating an additional burden on services which are not equipped to deal effectively with victims of sexual crime.</p>

	<p><b>Key actions so far</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Extended the network of Sexual Assault Referral Centres to 29 with a further 16 in development to help ensure that victims receive medical care and counselling and can assist the police investigation through a forensic examination;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Increased the number of Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (currently 43) to provide advocacy and support for victims;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Grant awarded to consortium of sexual violence organisations, led by the Women’s National Commission, to draft National Service Standards on sexual violence for organisations working with victims of sexual violence;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Published new national Sexual Assault Referral Centre guidelines stating the base line quality markers for all SARCs to enable them to provide consistent, equitable and high quality service;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Guideline development group established to produce Guidance for PCTs/LAs on commissioning services for victims of sexual violence and abuse;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> National Indicator Set includes a placeholder indicator on support services for victims of sexual violence;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Funding a booklet giving advice to young people who have been sexually assaulted;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Core funding of sexual violence umbrella groups, The Survivors Trust and Rape Crisis England and Wales;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> £1.25m from the Victims Fund allocated to 39 voluntary sector organisations providing services for victims of sexual violence and abuse;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 1.6m Special Fund for the sexual violence voluntary sector will keep open much needed services to victims of rape and sexual abuse;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The National Programme on Mental Health Violence and Abuse Policy</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Implementation is supporting the routine enquiry of abuse (in child and/or adulthood) in all assessments in all mental health provider trusts (including equipping trust trainers to cascade requisite training courses);</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Established a group of organisations representing victims of sexual violence and abuse to advise Ministers on how best to build the capacity and sustainability of the sexual violence voluntary sector.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Policy 3:</b></p>	<p><b>To maximise prevention of sexual violence and abuse</b></p> <p>In April 2007, the Government published an Action Plan on Sexual Violence and Abuse - <a href="#">click to view</a></p> <p>This sets out three main actions to tackle rape and sexual violence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> increasing access to support services for victims;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> improving the criminal justice response; and</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> preventing sexual violence and abuse.</li> </ul> <p><b>Why?</b></p>

The ultimate aim of work on sexual violence and abuse is to reduce its prevalence. A range of work is already underway, which includes both interventions specific to sexual violence and abuse, and interventions that are more general, but that still have a potential impact on prevalence of sexual violence and abuse.

**Key actions so far**

- Working to implement guidance on 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and 'Working Together to Safeguard Children Who May Have Been Trafficked';
- Published new guidance in June 2009, 'Safeguarding children and young people from sexual exploitation', that aims to help local agencies apply the core guidance in 'Working Together' effectively in the context of sexual exploitation;
- Introduction of PSA 13 "Keeping Children Safe";
- Funding the Child Exploitation and On-line Protection Centre-CEOP- the UK's first all-encompassing approach to tackling child abuse in both on-line and offline environments;
- Revising and re-publishing the practice guide for those who work with children 'What to Do If You're Worried a Child is Being Abused';
- Funding a Children's Commissioner to promote the awareness of the views and interests of children;
- Delivering sex and relationships education (SRE) in all secondary schools;
- Funding Stop-It Now! Helpline to provide support for people at risk of offending;
- Funding to improve Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA);
- Standards for MAPPA introduced;
- Funding a database (ViSOR) for sexual and violent offenders available in every police and probation area and prison in England and Wales;
- Publication of the Review of the Protection of Children from Sex offenders;
- Introduced a new vetting and barring scheme to help ensure those working with children are safe to do so;
- Working with EU counterparts to explore opportunities for exchanging information on convicted sex offenders;
- Implementing the new Code of Practice on the Management of Police information;
- Through Operation IMPACT, developing a new system for sharing information about individuals known to the police between forces;
- Funding the Serious Crime Analysis Section at the Central Police Training and Development Authority to analyse rape and serious sexual assault cases at the earliest stage of their offending;
- Funding initiatives to prevent violence against women involved in prostitution;
- Running a campaign aimed at educating those who pay for sex about the realities of engaging in sex with a woman who has been trafficked.

**Policy Supplement 1:**

**To maximise prevention of sexual violence and abuse**

In April 2007, the Government published an Action Plan on Sexual Violence and Abuse (<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/Sexual-violence-action-plan?view=Binary>).

This sets out three main actions to tackle rape and sexual violence:

- increasing access to support services for victims;
- improving the criminal justice response; and
- preventing sexual violence and abuse.

**Why?**

The ultimate aim of work on sexual violence and abuse is to reduce its prevalence. A range of work is already underway, which includes both interventions specific to sexual violence and abuse, and interventions that are more general, but that still have a potential impact on prevalence of sexual violence and abuse.

**Key actions so far**

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- Publishing a consultation (July 2008) on Safeguarding Children from Sexual Exploitation;
- Introduction of PSA 13 "Keeping Children Safe";
- Funding the Child Exploitation and On-line Protection Centre-CEOP-the UK's first all-encompassing approach to tackling child abuse in both on-line and off-line environments;
- Revising and re-publishing the practice guide for those who work with children 'What to Do If You're Worried a Child is Being Abused';
- Funding a Children's Commissioner to promote the awareness of the views and interests of children;
- Delivering sex and relationships education (SRE) in all secondary schools;
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- Funding to improve Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)
- Standards for MAPPA introduced;
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	<p>Police Information;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Through Operation IMPACT, developing a new system for sharing information about individuals known to the police between forces;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Funding the Serious Crime Analysis Section at the Central Police Training and Development Authority to analyse rape and serious sexual assault cases at the earliest stage of their offending;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Funding initiatives to prevent violence against women involved in prostitution;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Running a campaign aimed at educating those who pay for sex about the realities of engaging in sex with a women who has been trafficked.</li> </ul> <p>An Action Plan for 2008-9 will be available shortly</p>
<p><b>Policy Supplement 2:</b></p>	<p><b><u>Improving the criminal justice response</u></b></p> <p>In April 2007, the Government published an Action Plan on Sexual Violence and Abuse (<a href="http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/Sexual-violence-action-plan?view=Binary">http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/Sexual-violence-action-plan?view=Binary</a>).</p> <p>This sets out three main actions to tackle rape and sexual violence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> increasing access to support services for victims;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> improving the criminal justice response; and</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> preventing sexual violence and abuse.</li> </ul> <p><b>Why?</b></p> <p>The BCS IPV 2001 estimates that only 15% of adults who have experienced rape report it to the police. 40% of people tell no-one. The current conviction rate for all recorded offences of rape is low at around 6% (Data from 2005-6). When cases make it to court, the conviction rate is higher-34%- but the majority of victims withdraw from the criminal justice process at the investigative stage. This indicates a lack of confidence in the process and shows that in order to improve conviction rates, we need to concentrate on improving the criminal justice response.</p> <p><b>Key actions so far</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Introduced specially trained officers and specialist rape prosecutors and improved training and guidance for the police, the Crown Prosecution Service and barristers;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Supported police forces to develop rape action plans;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Established a 'Rape Performance Group' to improve local performance of the police and CPS on the investigation and prosecution of rape;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Established, within the Crown Prosecution Service, a specialist Rape Prosecutions Delivery Unit;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Introduced a range of special measures in court to assist victims in giving evidence; including the use of screens and live links.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Introduced a statutory code of practice for victims of rape entitling</li> </ul>

	<p>them to an enhanced service from the criminal justice system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Extended the network of Sexual Assault Referral Centres to ensure that victims receive medical care and counselling and can assist the police investigation through a forensic examination;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Piloted Independent Sexual Violence Advisers in 38 areas to provide advocacy and support for victims;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provided funding through the Victims Fund for voluntary organisations supporting victims of sexual violence;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Rolled out the use of intermediaries to help vulnerable witnesses give evidence and extending the use of victim personal statements</li> </ul> <p>An Action Plan for 2008-9 will be available shortly.</p>
<p><b>Policy Supplement 3:</b></p>	<p><b><u>To increase access to support and health services for victims of sexual violence and abuse</u></b></p> <p>In April 2007, the Government published an Action Plan on Sexual Violence and Abuse (<a href="http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/Sexual-violence-action-plan?view=Binary">http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/Sexual-violence-action-plan?view=Binary</a>).</p> <p>This sets out three main actions to tackle rape and sexual violence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> increasing access to support services for victims;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> improving the criminal justice response; and</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> preventing sexual violence and abuse.</li> </ul> <p><b>Why?</b></p> <p>Research estimates the health-related cost of each rape at £73,487. This includes the emotional and physical impacts of injuries and illnesses and estimates of the associated costs to health services and of lost output from time spent at less than full health. Relevant link for research: <a href="http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/statistics/statistics39.htm">http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/statistics/statistics39.htm</a></p> <p>Sexual violence and abuse can cause physical injuries, sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies. It is also a significant cause of mental illness. In the immediate aftermath of an assault victims may experience a range of social and psychological impacts including guilt, anxiety, tearfulness, shame, self-blame, disbelief, physical revulsion and powerlessness. Mental health problems such as post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety and panic attacks, depression, social phobia, substance abuse, eating disorders and self-harm may persist for years after the attack.</p> <p>Failure to provide good immediate medical care and support may increase the likelihood of the above conditions occurring and persisting, and increase long-term pressure on GPs, substance abuse treatment services and services for mental health, Genito-Urinary Medicine (GUM) and family planning.</p> <p>Where appropriate services are not in place, victims of sexual offending may report to A&amp;E departments, GUM services and GPs, creating an</p>

additional burden on services which are not equipped to deal effectively with victims of sexual crime.

**Key actions so far**

- Extended the network of Sexual Assault Referral Centres to ensure that victims receive medical care and counselling and can assist the police investigation through a forensic examination;
- Piloted Independent Sexual Violence Advisers in 38 areas to provide advocacy and support for victims;
- Grant awarded to consortium of sexual violence organisations, led by the Women’s National Commission, to draft National Service Standards on sexual violence for organisations working with victims of sexual violence;
- Guideline development group established to produce Guidance for PCTs/LAs on commissioning services for victims of sexual violence and abuse;
- National Indicator Set includes a placeholder indicator on support services for victims of sexual violence;
- Funding a booklet giving advice to young people who have been sexually assaulted;
- Core funding of sexual violence umbrella groups, The Survivors Trust and Rape Crisis England and Wales;
- £1.25m from the Victims Fund allocated to 40 voluntary sector organisations providing services for victims of sexual violence and abuse;
- £1M emergency funding to prevent the closure of at-risk rape crisis centres;
- Through a two year Mental Health Trust Project, piloting the implementation of routine enquiry about violence and abuse in mental health services as part of assessment and care planning;
- Established a group of organisations representing victims of sexual violence and abuse to advise Ministers on how best to build the capacity and sustainability of the sexual violence voluntary sector.

An Action Plan for 2008-9 will be available shortly

**Relevant legislation:**

The principal legislation is **The Sexual Offences Act (2003)**. This represented a complete overhaul of the legal framework for sexual offences. It also eliminated discrepancies in penalties for offences against boys and girls and between homosexual and heterosexual activity.

The first part of the Act deals with the definition of sexual offences and with issues of consent. The second part deals with offenders with and has a particular emphasis on the protection of vulnerable individuals.

- The act provides a clear legal definition of **rape** and also sets out a number of other sexual offences.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For example, any kind of intentional <b>sexual touching</b> of somebody else without his or her consent is an offence.</li> <li>- Other offences included under the Act include <b>exposure</b> (or 'flashing'), <b>voyeurism</b> (including by electronic means such as web-cams), and <b>sex in public toilets</b>.</li> <li>- Under the Act, it is an offence to give someone any <b>substance</b> without their consent and with the intention of stupefying them so that sexual activity can take place (whether or not they are successful).</li> <li>- The Act introduced a statutory definition of <b>consent</b> for the first time. This set out that consent is given where a person 'agrees by choice [to sexual activity], and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.'</li> </ul>
<p><b>Trends:</b></p>	<p>Collecting statistics on rape and other sexual offences is problematic because there is a degree of under-reporting.</p> <p>The Home Office produces two sets of statistics on serious sexual crimes. These figures are compiled from the recorded crime statistics supplied to the Home Office by police forces in England and Wales, and from the British Crime Survey (BCS) and can be found at:</p> <p><a href="http://rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds">http://rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds</a></p> <p>The most recent quarterly update to June 2010 of Crime in England and Wales shows that the total number of sexual offences rose by 8% in the 12 months to June 2010 to 55,217. Of these 44,513 offences fell into the category of 'most serious sexual crime', an increase of 10%.</p> <p>It is important to understand that a rise in reported rapes does not necessarily mean an increase in rapes being committed because sexual crime remains under-reported. We know that only about 11% of all serious sexual assaults are reported to the police and that many victims worry about reporting. The recent figures suggest that more victims have felt able to come forward and that more crimes are being investigated: this is good news.</p> <p>However, the government is not complacent and recognises the need to be aware that increased reporting could also mean some increase in the incidence of this horrific crime. Therefore, steps to tackle rape and sexual violence across the piece are being taken. These range from awareness raising as a prevention measure to stronger support for victims.</p>
<p><b>Contacts:</b></p>	<p><b>National organisations:</b></p> <p>There are a number of organisations in the UK which work with victims of sexual violence and speak on their behalf:</p>

	<p><b>Rape Crisis (England and Wales)</b> is an umbrella group which provides co-ordination for a national network of rape crisis centres.</p>
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<http://www.rapecrisis.org.uk>

**The Survivors Trust** is a national umbrella agency for over 120 specialist voluntary sector organisations.

<http://www.thesurvivorstrust.org>

**Survivors UK** provides information, support and counselling for men who have been raped or sexually abused.

<http://www.survivorsuk.org>

**Completed template to be sent to the EUCPN Secretariat at**  
[eucpn@ibz.eu](mailto:eucpn@ibz.eu)