

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



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Introduction

- In July 2021 Laura Shoaf and Anne Shaw were appointed the first VAWG Transport Champions
- Their work links to the governments *Tackling violence against women and girls strategy* (July 2021)
- They were tasked with developing recommendations for the DfT to help make our transport networks safer



What will be covered:

- Reasons why this area is important
- The role of the Transport Champions and work undertaken
- Summary of the recommendations put forward to the DfT
- Next steps for the Transport Champions
- Ways this influenced TfWMs own agenda



Why does this matter?



Over ¼ of women reported experiencing harassment over the last year when traveling

ONS data

Women aged 16 – 35, ethnic minority groups and lower income groups felt the most unsafe

Transport Focus Survey



90% of women have experienced unwanted behaviours on public transport, at least once in their lifetime

Suzy Lamplugh Trust

Women tend to make more journeys on public transport, trip chain and work more unsociable hours

National Travel Survey Data

Over 4% of GDP is lost because women don't take up employment or training opportunities

ONS data



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.

Methodology



- During 2021, eight roundtable events took place to gather evidence, ideas for safety improvements and best practice
- Over 200 participants attended from a range of organisations covering:-
 - Local Authorities
 - Police and Crime Prevention Teams
 - Transport operators (from all modes)
 - Women's advocacy groups, victim and survivor groups and support groups
 - Planners and place makers
 - Ethnic minority groups, younger and older peoples representatives, disabled groups as well as a range of charities
- We looked beyond the traditional transport groups
- The same key messages came across in every roundtable

Methodology

Key areas spoken about in the roundtables covered...



Transport policy making



Communication & awareness



Innovation and technology



Infrastructure design & maintenance



Transport staff



Enforcement

Methodology

- National surveys undertaken by Transport Focus (2,000 people) and a UK wide transport staff survey distributed, via the Urban Transport Group
- During January 2022, all key findings fed into the draft recommendations
- Final recommendations produced in February 2022





Short-term priorities

Recommendation 1: Better national transport planning guidance on ways to make our transport infrastructure safer

Recommendation 2: Improvements in the collection of gender disaggregated data

Recommendation 3: Undertake a national communications initiative to tackle VAWGs, which is promoted nationally, across all transport networks

Recommendation 4: Deliver improved training across the transport industry to help manage incidents involving VAWGs

Recommendation 5: Review current safeguarding practices and standardise DBS checks for all front facing transport staff

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 on all transport modes and areas

Recommendation 10: Develop a national education initiative in schools which educates young people on ways to prevent VAWGs

Recommendation 11: Target available resources at locations which will have the greatest impact (especially staffing/police forces)

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 tackling VAWG strategy

Launch of the recommendations Transport for West Midlands

- Launched the recommendations on International Women's Day
- Attended by 50+ people
- Recommendations presented to Trudy Harrison MP and the Department for Transport



Key findings

- No woman or girl should need to change their behaviour. Instead, we need to target the perpetrator and create more hostile environments.
- 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.
- Improved intelligence is needed to encourage reporting and ensure every incident is dealt with appropriately.
- Safety is a societal issue and not solely down to transport alone, with all government departments needing to change social norms, attitudes and behaviours.
- This work is ongoing, with continual efforts needed to tackle improved safety for women and girls.

DfT progress on the recommendations

Exploring new
guidance / toolkits
for transport
professionals

Reviewing all current
procedures,
employment checks
& training across the
transport industry

Revised Manual for
Streets and new
Local Transport Plan
guidance to capture
designing & planning
for women and girls

Rail Passenger
Survey & National
Transport Attitudes
Survey to include
personal safety
questions

Launched the Home
Offices 'Enough'
Campaign across all
transport networks

Working with
Connected Places
Catapult (CPC) to
explore how
technology can
improve safety



Influence Treasury policy & the 2024 Spending Review (i.e. gender responsive budgets)

Continue to share best practice through the Confederation of Passenger Transport and many others

Work with DfE to ensure VAWGs is covered in the curriculum

Work alongside the Home Office to deliver a single, national reporting database on crime on public transport

Created a new industry-led Transport Employment and Skills Taskforce

Influence rail workforce reform and Great British Railways, in areas of personal safety



Next steps for the Champions

- Meeting regularly with wider government departments and Ministers.
- Transport Champions are updated on progress made by the DfT regularly.
- Continuing to work with those women and girls who have lived experiences of violence.
- Continuing to influence and make change for women and girls on safety.



Ways this influenced TfWMs own agenda

- Delivered a 'Safe Public Transport Commonwealth Games'.
- More than 650,000 spectator journeys were made on shuttle buses and around ¼ million passengers travelled through New Street daily, during the games.
- Continue to deliver initiatives through the West Midlands Safer Travel Partnership including education programmes, safety campaigns and through wider partnership and engagement work.
- Embed safety and tackle VAWGs across all TfWM work agendas.



Concluding thoughts

To tackle violence against women and girls, a multi-faceted approach needs to be taken including:

- Increased surveillance, in the form of extra transport staffing and police as well as better use of technology like CCTV.
- Roll out environmental design measures, such as increased visibility, lighting, alarms, phones and good maintenance of our transport facilities.
- Ensure there are many ways to report incidents including hotlines, texting and phone apps so all incidents are reported.
- Deliver on awareness campaigns through advertising and grassroots action.
- Exploit technology through smartphone apps to report incidents, inform people of public transport, to record experiences and create maps with hotspots of offending.
- Continue to improve the safety of women and girls and raise the profile of this work across all areas of society.

Rail Delivery Group



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Thank you for listening

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