| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information ResponseOur reference: FOI 23-0841Responded to: 17th April 2023 |
| --- | --- |

Tackling domestic abuse is a priority for Police Scotland and we are committed to working with our partners to reduce the harm it causes and ultimately eradicate it.

Domestic abuse is a despicable and debilitating crime which affects all of our communities and has no respect for ability, age, ethnicity, gender, race, religion or sexual orientation.

Police Scotland will not tolerate it.

Police Scotland will proactively target perpetrators and support victims to prevent domestic abuse from damaging the lives of victims and their families.

Police Scotland defines domestic abuse as:

“Any form of physical, verbal, sexual, psychological or financial abuse which might amount to criminal conduct and which takes place within the context of a relationship. The relationship will be between partners (married, cohabiting, civil partnership or otherwise) or ex-partners. The abuse may be committed in the home or elsewhere including online”

This definition is included in the Joint Protocol between Police Scotland and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS), “In partnership challenging domestic abuse” which is a public document that can be found at the Police Scotland website on [Police Scotland (scotland.police.uk)](https://www.scotland.police.uk/spa-media/ymzlwhwj/joint-protocol-between-police-scotland-and-copfs-in-partnership-challenging-domestic-abuse.pdf?view=Standard) or on the COPFS website on [Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (copfs.gov.uk)](https://www.copfs.gov.uk/)

Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

[**https://www.scotland.police.uk/IsThatMe**](https://www.scotland.police.uk/IsThatMe)

**"At the start of a relationship, we don’t always see the man we might become.”**

**Freedom of Information Request:**

**1. Would you please advise whether:**

**• the campaign will be issuing an advertisement that will equally address female abuse of male victims; and**

**• the language of the campaign will be amended to be inclusive for all domestic abusers and victims.**

**2. Please provide the data set by which the Police Scotland have ascertained the gendered stereotypes applied in this advertisement.**

In regards to both of your questions, all Police Scotland public communications campaigns are based on a robust evidence base, drawn from primary research with the identified target audience, extensive academic research and analysis of multiple sources of police data.

As part of that process, based on the evidence gathered, we identify:

* The specifics of what the problem is
* Who we need to speak to
* Where and how we can make the biggest impact
* What the barriers are to changing behaviour.

Our campaigns are created using behaviour change methodology, where we identify the specific behaviours we want to change and then work out the most efficient and effective means of achieving the greatest measurable impact for the budget available.

Evidence shows that more general, generic campaigns do not work as effectively as those that target specific priority audiences with tailored messages.

In terms of our current domestic abuse campaign, the key facts are as follows:

* Almost 65,000 incidents of domestic abuse were reported to police last year (2021/22)
* 81 per cent involved a female victim and a male perpetrator
* 15 per cent involved a male victim and female perpetrator
* 4 per cent of incidents involved same sex partners.
* Behaviours that are identifiably abusive start to emerge in young men between the ages of 18 and 25
* Those aged 18 to 25 are more likely to change their behaviour than older audiences.

Police Scotland has undertaken a number of domestic abuse campaigns since its inception in 2013, the majority of which have been non-gendered. The most recent non-gendered campaign ran for six weeks from December 2021.

The current domestic abuse campaign specifically targets young men aged 18-25. Based on the evidence, we know that these young men represent the greatest threat in terms of future prolific domestic abuse.

We’re hoping that this campaign will influence young men and their behaviours at a very early stage and ultimately stop them from becoming domestic abusers in the first place.

The majority of paid-for advertising we have purchased for this campaign specifically targets at this audience group. We have however shared the campaign creative on our corporate and local social media channels to inform the public what we are doing and why.

We are currently considering domestic abuse campaigns that will target other specific niche audiences. We remain committed to an annual calendar of regular non-gendered domestic abuse content for our local and corporate communications channels that provides reporting and support information for all victims of abuse.

The data set used in regards to this campaign is linked below:

[Key points - Domestic abuse: statistics recorded by the police in Scotland - 2021/22 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/domestic-abuse-recorded-police-scotland-2021-22/pages/2/)

If you require any further assistance please contact us quoting the reference above.

You can request a review of this response within the next 40 working days by email or by letter (Information Management - FOI, Police Scotland, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, G40 4EH). Requests must include the reason for your dissatisfaction.

If you remain dissatisfied following our review response, you can appeal to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner (OSIC) within 6 months - [online](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal), by email or by letter (OSIC, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, KY16 9DS).

Following an OSIC appeal, you can appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

This response will be added to our [Disclosure Log](http://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/freedom-of-information/disclosure-log) in seven days' time.

Every effort has been taken to ensure our response is as accessible as possible. If you require this response to be provided in an alternative format, please let us know.