



Nottingham
Women's Centre
come on in

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23rd May 2017

Dear Candidate,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Nottinghamshire Domestic and Sexual Violence Campaigns Group, a forum for local charities who provide services to survivors of domestic and sexual abuse living in your prospective constituency area.

With the election only a few weeks away, we ask for your commitment that you will support women if elected:

1. Will you take the Women's Aid's Pledge for this General Election? The Pledge sets out how candidates can Hear Her, See Her, and Support Her. I have attached more information about the Pledge, which also includes information on domestic abuse, why it is a pressing issue for your future constituency, and the work of Women's Aid. Can I count on you to Hear Her, See Her and Support Her if you are elected as our MP?
2. Will you tell us how else you intend to defend women's rights and reduce the financial, social and political inequalities still present in society?

You may already know that, on average, two women a week are killed by a partner or ex-partner in England and Wales. Every hour, the police receive over a 100 calls relating to domestic abuse. One in five women have experienced some form of sexual violence since the age of 16. Domestic and sexual violence costs the public billions each year and, more importantly, devastates the lives of women and children up and down the country. Since 2010, 20 women in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire have been killed by a partner, former partner or male relative. The Istanbul Convention to prevent, provide support to survivors and prosecute perpetrators of domestic and gender-based violence has recently received Royal Assent.

Nottingham city was the first city to declare itself an FGM-free zone and Nottinghamshire Police were the first force to categorise misogyny as a hate crime. Our area is very much leading the way in taking action to recognise and reduce violence against women and girls. We are currently one of three areas taking part in a 5 year national pilot for the Hear Her, See Her and Support Her approach to addressing domestic violence and abuse.

We want the next Government to take action and ensure all of us can live free from violence and abuse. That is why we ask you, if elected, to listen to the changes that domestic abuse survivors are calling for (such as safer family courts and changes to voting rules), end the postcode lottery response to domestic abuse, and support women and children fleeing abuse to escape to safety with a new funding system for refuges.

We look forward to hearing your response. **We would be grateful if you could respond by 31st May so that we have time to communicate your response to the women we work with before the elections.** Please Email your reply to joanne@nottinghamwomenscentre.com

You can also show your commitment by tweeting 'I pledge to Hear, See, and Support survivors of domestic abuse with @womensaid as part of my election promise'.

If possible, we'd also be keen to arrange a face-to-face meeting with you after the elections. **Please note that any responses will be added to the Nottingham Women's Centre website and disturbed in our e-bulletin before the election in June,** and that we have sent a similar correspondence to the other candidates also.

Yours sincerely,

Joanne Ratcliffe

On behalf of the Nottinghamshire Domestic and Sexual Violence Campaigns Group