Sheffield Sexual Violence Needs Assessment 2024



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# Introduction:

This needs assessment attempts to collate a better understanding of sexual violence to inform the development of a new VAWG strategy for Sheffield. Gathering good data and useful insights around sexual violence in all its forms is a complex issue for several reasons including methodological constraints, data recording variation and data transparency/sensitivity.

An overarching theme arising from this work is the need for a more comprehensive and nuanced regional and local understanding of sexual violence.

**Recommendation: To utilise this needs assessment to work regionally with partners to explore the regional picture of sexual violence and identify new and existing avenues for change.**

**Recommendation: To further evaluate how intersectionality is considered in the data gathered and workplans in this area and across the wider strategy, including via the DA/SA Anti-Racism Group.**

# Understanding the scale and nature of rape and serious sexual offences (RASSO) in the UK and Sheffield

****What do we know about prevalence?****

#### National data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW):

Using estimate data from the Crime Survey of England and Wales (CSEW) shown in Table 1 and details of the Sheffield population, shown in Table 2, to create estimates for Sheffield, Table 3.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **National Estimate** | **In the last year (%)** | | | **Since the age of 16 (%)** | | |
| Men | Women | **All** | Men | Women | **All** |
| **Sexual Assault (including attempted offences)** | 0.9 | 3.2 | **2.1** | 5.7 | 27 | **16.6** |
| Rape or assault by penetration (including attempts) | - | 1.1 | **0.6** | - | 8.7 | **4.7** |
| Indecent exposure or unwanted sexual touching | 1.2 | 2.7 | **1.9** | 15.9 | 25.7 | **5.6** |

**Table 1: National percentage estimates for sexual assault including attempted offences.**

A table showing the 16-74 population of Sheffield from mid-2022. 

There are 208,078 men, 209,155 women, and 417.233 total.

**Table 2: Sheffield Population as of 2022.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sheffield estimates** | **In the last year** | | | **Since the age of 16** | | |
| Men | Women | **All** | Men | Women | **All** |
| **Sexual Assault (including attempted offences)** | 1,873 | 6,693 | **8,762** | 11,860 | 56,472 | **69,261** |
| Rape or assault by penetration (including attempts) | - | 2,301 | **2,503** | - | 18,196 | **19,610** |
| Indecent exposure or unwanted sexual touching | 2,497 | 5,647 | **7,927** | 33,084 | 53,753 | **23,365** |

**Table 3: Sheffield estimates for sexual assault including attempted offences.**

Additional data estimates around RASSO:

* In a survey of over 1000 LGBT+ people, the charity Galop found that 77% of respondents had been sexually assaulted since the age of 18, with 52% of respondents having experienced sexual assault by penetration.[[1]](#footnote-2)
* Data from the CSEW showed that in the three years ending March 2018, disabled women were almost twice as likely to have experienced any sexual assault in the last year (5.7%) than non-disabled women (3.0%).[[2]](#footnote-3)

National police data, year ending September 2023:

* There were 191,186 offences sexual offences recorded by the police in the year ending September 2023, 36% (67,938) were rape offences.
* The rate of sexual offences per 1,000 is 3.2

British Transport Police data, 2023:

* The British Transport Police recorded 2336 reported sexual offences in 2023[[3]](#footnote-4).

South Yorkshire Police data, year ending September 2023:

#### Sexual assault data:

* There were 4,552 sexual offences recorded by SYP in the year ending September 2023.
* The rate of sexual offences per 1,000 is 3.3.
* There were 850 recorded cases of adult rape in the year ending September 2023.

Data from our public consultation surveys:

Between 31st May 2024- 15th July 2024 the Domestic Abuse Co-ordination Team (DACT) ran a public consultation exercise consisting of two public-facing surveys.

The first survey covered VAWG in its entirety and had 214 responses and the second focused on sexual harassment and had 155 responses.

#### Insights from Survey 1:

70 of the 214 survey respondents selected that they had experienced sexual violence. Of these only 6 (9%) respondents selected this as the only form of harm they had experienced out of those listed.

The five most common experiences in those who had experienced sexual violence were:

* sexual harassment in a public space (62.9%),
* domestic abuse by a partner or ex-partner (45.7%),
* sexual harassment at work (41.4%),
* stalking/harassment from a stranger/acquaintance (41.4%),
* stalking/harassment from a partner or ex-partner (32.8%).

#### Survey 2:

107 of the 155 responses to this survey stated that they had been sexually harassed in Sheffield, of these respondents 26 (24.2%) stated that this escalated to sexual assault.

Data on the intersection between domestic abuse and sexual violence:

Although most sexual violence does not occur in the context of domestic abuse. We know that sexual violence can be a part of domestic abuse between intimate partners. There is no accurate measure of sexual violence in this context.

What we know is reliant on administrative data from local services and processes. An indication of the scale can be provided by questions asked of administrative data from the domestic abuse provider and MARAC process. This is shown below:

* In 2023, IDAS received 19 referrals from Sheffield Rape and Sexual Assault Centre (SRASAC), and 18 referrals from the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) known as Hackenthorpe Lodge.
* Cases on the IDAS client system with a completed ‘Abuse Profile’ showed that in 2023, 14% of profiles disclosed sexual abuse (258 Individuals).
* In 2023, 1095 individuals had a DASH risk assessment completed by IDAS, of which 735 (67%) said yes to the question “*Does the abuser(s) do or say things of a sexual nature that made you feel bad or that physical hurt you or someone else?”*
* 15% of the high-risk cases (41) discussed at MARAC in Q1 of 23/24 referenced sexual violence as part of the abuse. SRASAC were involved in 5 cases, and the SARC were involved in 4 of these cases.

**Recommendation: During the strategy, we should consider how data can be better captured in this area to improve understanding of sexual violence within domestic abuse cases as part of the MARAC process and on client profiles.**

****What do we know about the victims of sexual assault?****

**Data from the Crime Survey of England and Wales shows us that:**

* A higher proportion of adults aged 16 to 24 years were victims of sexual assault in the last year compared with those aged 25 years and over.
* A higher proportion of full-time students were victims of sexual assault in the last year than those in any other occupation type.
* A higher proportion of single adults were victims of more sexual assault in the last year than those with any other marital status.

**Data from police recorded data shows us that:**

* The victim was female in 86% of sexual offences.
* Police recorded crime showed that females aged 15 to 19 years and males aged 10 to 14 years were most likely to be victims of sexual offences.
* For female victims of rape, the perpetrator was most likely to be an intimate partner (46%), whereas for male victims of rape the perpetrator was most likely to be an acquaintance (38%).

**Recommendation: To expand engagement with both universities in the city and other further and higher education providers, as part of RASSO and beyond, to develop plans around the specific student population in Sheffield and disproportionate impact of sexual violence on this age group.**

# **Impact of sexual violence:**

Sexual violence has a significant and lasting impact on the person impacted, and a significant impact on wider society.

## Mental Health:

Data from the CSEW can go some way to revealing the impact of sexual violence on mental health. It has shown that:

* 63% of female victims of a sexual assaults by rape or penetration (including attempted) reported “mental or emotional problems”, this figure was 47% for male victims. [[4]](#footnote-5)
* Around one in ten victims (12% of men and 10% of women) said they had attempted suicide as a result. [[5]](#footnote-6)

These findings are supported by academic research which shows that most mental health disorders were more prevalent in survivors of SA, and depressive disorders and posttraumatic stress disorders (PTSD) were especially prevalent.[[6]](#footnote-7)

Further research has shown that in the month following sexual assault 74.5% of survivors met the criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and revealed that most symptom recovery occurred within the first 3 months following sexual assault, after which point the average rate of recovery slowed. At 12 months the prevalence estimate for PTSD was 41.5% [[7]](#footnote-8) .

Recent research has shown that psychiatric service users have a high prevalence of past year and adult lifetime (since the age of 16) sexual violence, with higher rates found in women than men. [[8]](#footnote-9)

Research has also found that sexual interpersonal violence is particularly associated with self-harm and suicidality, and women who have experienced any sexual IPV are seven times more likely than those who had not experienced sexual IPV to have attempted suicide. [[9]](#footnote-10)

**Recommendation: To discuss with providers around the mental health support needs of victims over time post sexual violence to inform support pathways and conduct further work to consider whether support options are adequate for populations disproportionately impacted by sexual violence.**

## Physical health:

Data from the CSEW shows that 36% of victims of sexual assault by rape or penetration (including attempts) reported that they suffered some sort of physical injury. The most common types of injuries were minor bruising or black eye (23%) and scratches (15%). [[10]](#footnote-11)

In addition to this, the trauma from sexual violence is known to impact access to medical care, in particular gynaecological care. Cervical screening, also known as a smear test, is a highly effective way of identifying HPV, a virus linked to 99% of cases. At the age of 25 women and those with a cervix are invited for their first smear test, then results depending on a one-to-three-year basis, data on uptake from the NHS in 2022-2023 showed that a third of women under 50 did not take up this offer.[[11]](#footnote-12) Research by Jo’s Cervical Cancer Trust and Rape Crisis which surveyed victim/survivors of sexual violence revealed that 48.1% said they have not attended directly because of their experience of sexual violence, with a further 31 (23.7%) saying they have delayed the test in the past for the same reason. They also found that 91.2% of victim/survivors felt healthcare professionals need more information to better support survivors.[[12]](#footnote-13) This is supported by a report by Healthwatch published in 2024 which showed that 15% of victim/survivors had been hesitant to access screening due to a past traumatic experience unrelated to cervical screening, with suggestions supported by victim/survivors including Trauma Cards, home-testing and trauma-informed training.[[13]](#footnote-14)

## Social and economic cost:

Providing a true economic measure of the impact of sexual offences is not possible. But the most recent government attempt at an estimate for the cost of sexual offending (including rape) in England and Wales is £12.2 billion per year. [[14]](#footnote-15)

Developing a local understanding of the economic and social impact of sexual violence is complex and there is a reliance on specialist data from local services. Using this data is challenging due to measurement differences, disproportionate funding and capacity, multiagency working and data sharing agreements. Research in this area has called for the further development of mechanisms to enable this valuable data to contribute to a wider understanding of violence.[[15]](#footnote-16)

In Essex some work has been undertaken in this area, by using local Rape Crisis administrative data the estimated lifetime costs of adult sexual abuse in Essex were calculated as £248,431.50.[[16]](#footnote-17)

Additional data from the CSEW:

The CSEW provides some indication of the social and economic impact of sexual violence on individuals.[[17]](#footnote-18)

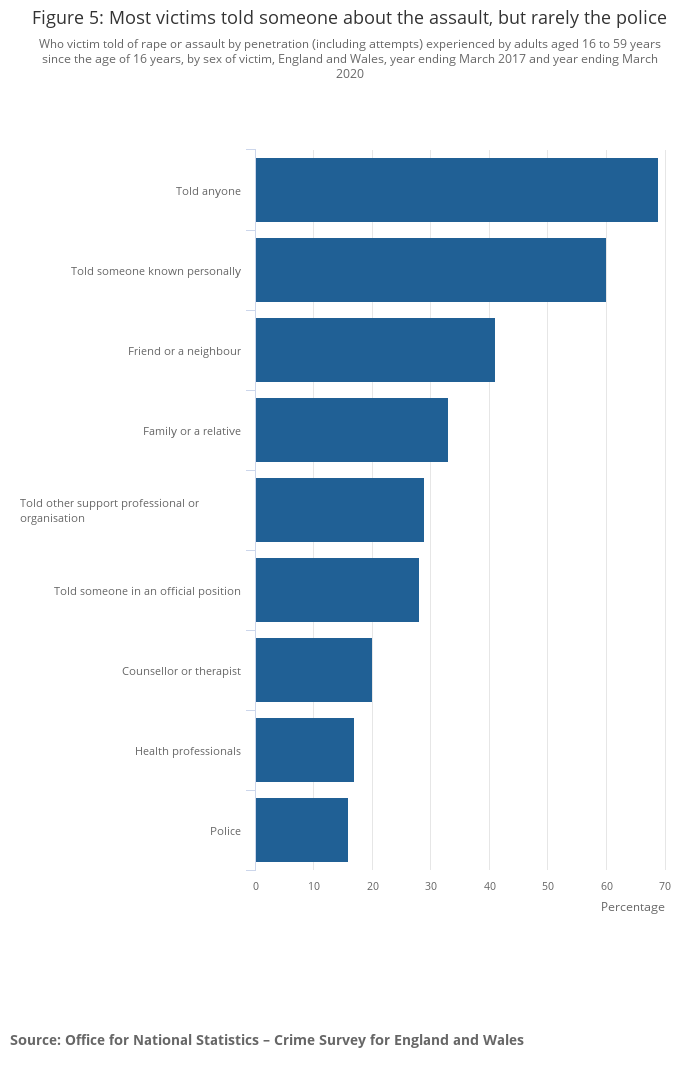
It shows that:

* 21.1% of respondents took time off work, ranging from a day to over a month
* 5.6% of respondents lost their job or gave up working
* 29.3% of respondents stopped going out so much
* 50% of women and 42% of men reported a lack of trust or difficulty in other relationships

**Recommendation: To explore the potential for creating Sheffield or South Yorkshire specific understanding of lifetime cost of sexual violence with local and academic partners.**

# **Sexual assault disclosure and prosecution:**

## Disclosure:

Data from the CSEW shows us that an estimated 69% of victims of sexual assault by rape or penetration told someone about what they had experienced. However, it should be noted that more victims told someone about the rape or assault by penetration when the perpetrator was a stranger (83%) compared to a partner or ex-partner (65%). [[18]](#footnote-19)  
**The latest estimates from the CSEW showed that fewer than one in six victims (16%) of rape or assault by penetration reported the crime to the police. There was also a difference in reporting behaviour amongst age groups with just 10% of 16- to 19-year-olds reporting the assault to the police, compared with 27% of 35- to 44-year-olds.**

### For those that did report to the police **the top five primary reasons** were:

* to prevent it happening to others (47%)
* believing it to be the right thing to do (44%)
* wanting the perpetrator(s) punished (43%)
* to prevent it happening again (40%)
* wanted protection (31%)

**For those of who did not report to the police (84%) the top five reasons were:**

* embarrassment (40%)
* didn't think they could help (38%)
* thought it would be humiliating (34%)
* didn't think they would believe me (25%)
* too trivial/not worth reporting (22%)

#### Trust in the police:

In 2021, 47% of women and 40% of men reported declining trust in the police following the publication of details about the rape and murder of Sarah Everard by serving Metropolitan Police officer Wayne Couzens.[[19]](#footnote-20)

A 2024 survey of over 1000 women found that a quarter of women (25%) said their trust in the police to handle violence against women and girls has gone down over the last year.[[20]](#footnote-21)

### Plan International UK found that one in five girls and young women (20%) did not trust the police at all to help them if they are in difficulty, with up to one in four 17- to 21-year-olds actively recording distrust in the police (24%).[[21]](#footnote-22)

#### The role of wider societal attitudes in disclosing and reporting decisions:

Gender inequality is known to be a key driver of VAWG, with the Council of Europe identifying four factors as the root of the problem: cultural, legal, economic and political factors.

Recent research by the Crown Prosecution Service has revealed that societal myths and stereotypes attitudes towards women’s credibility as a victim remain deeply rooted across society – particularly among young people, and despite some progress misconceptions around rape and consent are still prevalent.[[22]](#footnote-23) The findings of this research are summarised below.

**Consent:**

* **70%** knew that being in a relationship or marriage does not mean consent to sex can be assumed.
* **62%** of respondents recognised that even if no physical force is involved a person might not be free and able to consent to sex; in people aged 16-24 this was only **40%**.
* **49% of respondents said** they were unsure or did not know what reasonable consent meant.
* **54%** of respondents knew that if a person says online, they want to meet up and have sex, that doesn’t mean they have to have sex when they meet; in people aged 16-24 this was only **28%**.

**Victim response:**

* **74%** knew that it can still be rape if a victim doesn’t resist or fight back
* **67%** knew thatvictims may not immediately report to the police
* Only **26%** knew victims will not always seem distressed when talking about what happened to them

**Perpetrator actions:**

* **71%** of people knew that if a man has been drinking or taking drugs, he is still responsible if he rapes someone, in the 18-24 group this fell to **46%.**
* **17%** of people recognised that few offenders use physical violence.

In addition to this CPS research, the final report into improving CPS responses to rape complaints and complainants published in 2024, raised some concerns around the emergence of new rape myths and the impact on criminal justice outcomes. This included myths and stereotypes around dating app usage and non-conventional sexual practices such as BDSM.[[23]](#footnote-24)

**Reccomendation: To take a multi-partner approach to consider how these persisting and emerging rape myths can be debunked via the councils White Ribbon action plan, education in schools and wider organisations including the criminal justice system.**

What do we know about perpetrators of sexual violence?

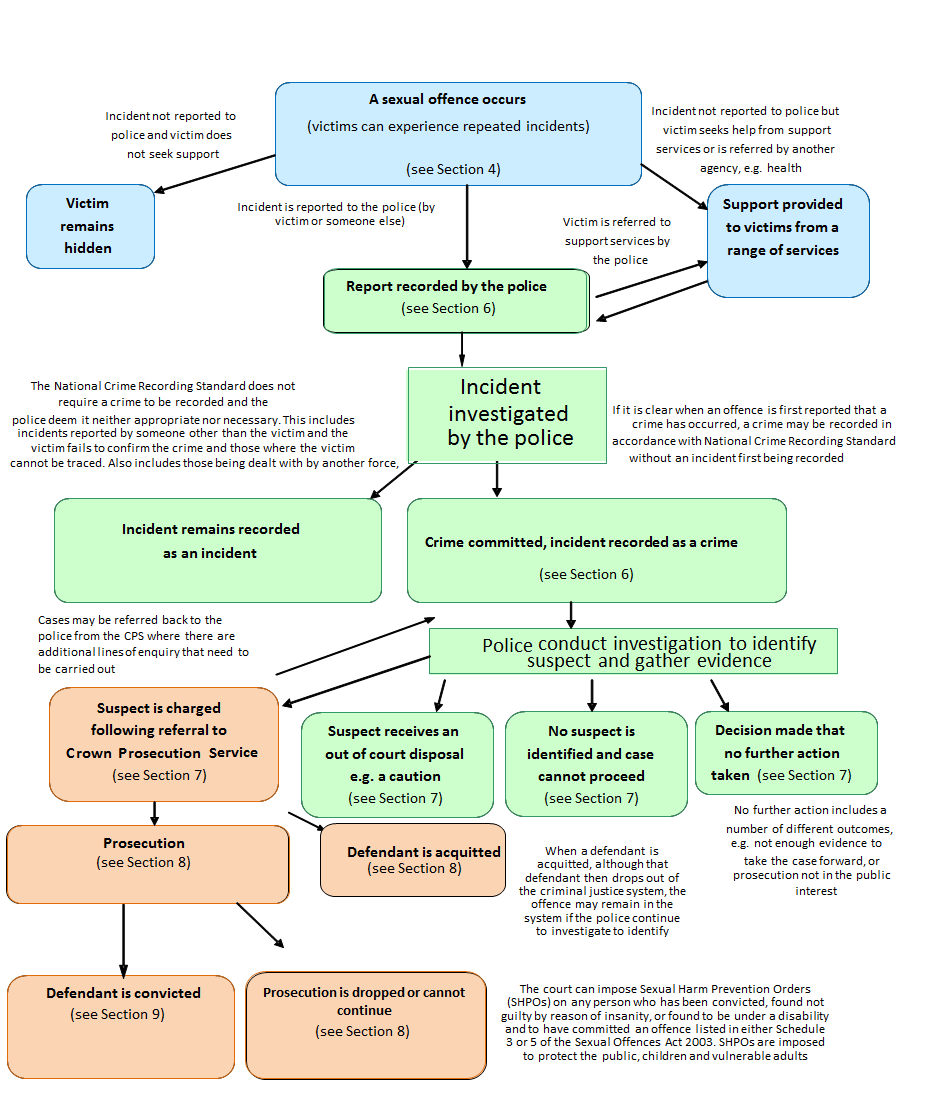
Data from the CSEW[[24]](#footnote-25) indicates that 98% of perpetrators of rape or sexual assault by penetration are male, and 65% reported that the perpetrator was a male aged between 20 and 39 years. The perpetrators were:

* partners of ex-partners (44% for women vs 25% for men)
* someone known to the victim who is not a partner/ex-partner or family member (37% for women vs 32% for men)
  + friend (12%)
  + date (10%)
* a stranger (15% for women vs 43% for men)

In 2023, South Yorkshire Police rolled out Operation Sentinel to disrupt predatory behaviour in the nighttime economy, by identifying and supporting members of the public who may be vulnerable to offending and target would be offenders. No data on the success of this work was provided for this report.

The criminal justice system:

The schematic below provides a brief overview of the complexity of the criminal justice system regarding sexual offences.



2021 End to End Rape Review:

In 2021 the Government outlined its ambitions in relation to the prosecution of rape and serious sexual offences in the Criminal Justice System in the Rape Review. This outlined an action plan to improve the experience of victims and increase prosecutions which had experienced a decline since 2016.

As part of this the government created a criminal justice system dashboard to monitor progress of rape cases through the CJS to monitor progress of the ambition of returning the volumes of cases being referred by the police to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS); charged by the CPS; and going to court, to at least 2016 levels. National and South Yorkshire data from the dashboard is shown below.

### National data in the year January- December 2023 for cases of adult rape (annual rolling).

### Data For

### South Yorkshire in the year January- December 2023 for cases of adult rape (annual rolling).

South Yorkshire performs better than the national average in two out of three measures. However, victim and witness engagement on the day of the trial is lower than the national average.

South Yorkshire Police performs at a level comparable to the national average in most areas. It performs better in terms of cases resulted in a completed trial or guilty plea but has a higher number of trials rearranged on the day of the trial.

**Recommendation: To work with partners to better understand and evidence the scale and impact of short notice trial rearrangement and support for victims of RASSO offences and other offences in scope of this strategy.**

Operation Soteria Bluestone:

Since the 2021 Rape Review there has been extensive work to develop a framework for a new operating model (NOM) that can be rolled out for how the police and CPS deal with rape cases as part of a programme of work called Operation Soteria Bluestone.

The NOM was based on the six pillars of Soteria. These are:

1. having a suspect-focused investigation;
2. targeting and disrupting repeat suspects;
3. supporting [victims](https://hmicfrs.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/glossary/victims/) by using a [procedural justice](https://hmicfrs.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/glossary/procedural-justice/) approach;
4. improving investigators’ knowledge, learning and well-being;
5. using data and analysis effectively; and
6. improving RASSO investigations through effective use of [digital forensics](https://hmicfrs.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/glossary/digital-forensics/).

The NOM aims promotes a victim-centred, suspect-focused context-led approach to RASSO investigations. All forces must have implemented the NOM by November 2024.

The most recent inspection by HMICFRS of 9 early adopter forces found that there were positive indications that the NOM was leading to a positive cultural change and improvements in RASSO investigations. However, it noted that significant areas require improvement making 14 recommendations to chief constables, the National Police Chiefs Council, the College of Policing and others.[[25]](#footnote-26)

#### Regional significance:

South Yorkshire Police was not an early adopter force of Soteria and therefore there is no publicly available data yet to assess progress in this area. However, we do know that South Yorkshire Police was the force with the highest proportion of victim/survivor responses to the police experience survey.

Criminal Prosecution Service (CPS) Victim Transformation Plan:

Following a needs assessment by Crest Advisory the CPS launched a Victim Transformation Programme to improve the response victims get with the CPS, this will be rolled out from spring 2024. There are four main commitments in this plan: an improved universal offer to victims, an enhanced offer for victims with the greatest need, piloting new ways of strengthening victim engagement and communication, and building organisational and leadership culture. In the context of rape and serious sexual offences (RASSO) this transformation plan includes the provision of an enhanced response to victims, with more tailored communications to victims. Yorkshire and Humber will be a trailblazer in this area, and key to this will be dedicated Victim Liaison Officer roles in RASSO units, a dedicated ISVA inbox and pre-trial meetings with victims.[[26]](#footnote-27)

At the time of writing, this is an ongoing piece of work.

**Recommendation: To continue work with partners, including as part of the RASSO Quarterly Meeting, to ensure that progress in monitored, issues are addressed, and this work informs strategic ambitions and maximise opportunities for joint working as a result of Operation Soteria and the Victim Transformation Programme.**

What do we know about convicted sexual offenders?  
Whilst we are aware that well established delays and concerns are around the criminal justice system mean that only a small number of perpetrators of sexual violence are convicted, the following data shows the scale of convicted sexual offenders nationally and regionally.

#### MAPPA data:

Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) are designed to protect the public, including victims of crime, from serious harm by sexual or violent and other dangerous offenders. The responsible authorities are the police and probation services. Category 1 MAPPA offenders are registered sexual offenders. This includes offenders required to comply with notification requirements under the Sexual Offence Act 2003, Part 2.

The police have statutory responsibilities to manage the notification requirements of sexual offenders in Category 1 and will perform the role of lead agency when they are no longer subject to National Probation Services (NPS) statutory supervision. They must ensure that all breaches of notification requirements are promptly followed up and appropriate action taken.

Each Category 1 MAPPA offender is managed at either Level 1 (ordinary agency management), Level 2 (active multiagency management) or Level 3 (active enhanced multiagency management). [[27]](#footnote-28)  
  
The MAPPA population nationally as of 31st March 2023 was 91,040, and 70-75% of MAPPA offenders are Category 1, consistent over the last decade.[[28]](#footnote-29)

* 76% of those managed at level 1 were Category 1 offenders
* 31% of those managed at level 2 were Category 1 offenders
* 23% of those managed at level 3 were Category 1 offenders

Protective notices are designed to further safeguard victims, 5,653 Sexual Harm Protective Orders (SHPOs) were imposed in 2022/23, a decrease of 2% on last year.

### Regional data:

Data from the most recent accounts from South Yorkshire from the year 2022/2023[[29]](#footnote-30) show that there is a total of 2512 MAPPA offenders as of March 31st, 2023. Of these 1806 are Category 1 MAPPA offenders. 99% (1794) are managed at Level 1, and 1% (12) are managed at Level 2. No category 1 offenders are managed at Level 3.

In South Yorkshire 170 (9%) Category 1 MAPPA offenders are subject to Sexual Harm Protection Orders (SHPO), and 4 (0.2%) are subject to notification orders.

In the year 2022/2023:

* 21 Category 1 offenders were cautioned or convicted for a breach of notification requirements.
* 6 Category 1 offenders managed at Level 2 were returned to custody.
* 9 Category 1 offenders had their lifetime notification requirements revoked upon application in this period.
* No SHPO were breached in this period.

SHPO are not exclusive to offenders managed under MAPPA. An FOI to SYP revealed that the total number of SHPOs in South Yorkshire was at the time of responding 942. In the year April 2023- March 2024 there were 68 breaches of SHPO. [[30]](#footnote-31)

In August 2024 His Majesty’s Inspectorate Constabulary and Fire Resue Service (HMICFRS) published a report into the progress made in early adopter forces in implementing the national operating model (NOM) for Soteria. One of the areas identified was that the identification and disruption of repeat offenders was an area needing more consistency and improvement, noting that MAPPA arrangements are only for convicted sexual offenders.[[31]](#footnote-32)

#### Probation data:

From national probation data we know that:

* 2096 sexual offenders are being managed on a community order
* 2001 sexual offenders are being managed on a suspended sentence order

## The most recent data for the completion of targeted interventions for people convicted of sexual offences for is a 57.5% completion rate. We do not have regional data in this area available for this report.

Prison population of convicted sexual offenders:

The prison population for those convicted of sexual offences of as of June 2024 is 14,437, representing 16% of all the prison population.[[32]](#footnote-33) It should be noted that given low reporting and conviction rates this does not mean that those convicted of other offences are not also perpetrators of sexual violence.

**Recommendation: To utilise existing involvement within the countywide RASSO Steering Group to identify opportunities for improvement in the arrangements for disrupting repeat offenders.**

# **Understanding the scale of (sexual) harassment in the UK and Sheffield:**

Developing estimates from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW):

#### **Harassment estimates from the year ending March 2023:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **​**  **National Estimates​** | **In the last year (%)​** | | |
| Men​ | Women​ | All​ |
| **Any Harassment​** | 7.2​ | 13​ | **10.2**​ |
| **Sexual Harassment​** | 3​ | 8​ | **5**​ |
| **Non-sexual Harassment​** | 5.7​ | 7.7​ | **6.7**​ |

***Table 5:* National percentage estimates for harassment including sexual harassment.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **​Sheffield Estimates​** | **In the last year ​** | | |
| Men​ | Women​ | All​ |
| **Any Harassment​** | 14, 982​ | 27, 190​​ | **43,558**​ |
| **Sexual Harassment​** | 6,242​ | 16,732​ | **20,862**​ |
| **Non-sexual Harassment​** | 11, 860​ | 16,105​ | **​27,955**​ |

#### **Table 6: Sheffield estimates for harassment including sexual harassment.**

**By using CSEW data it is estimated that over 20,000 people in Sheffield, the majority women, have experienced sexual harassment within the last 12 months.**

The CSEW revealed that the likelihood of experiencing sexual harassment was highest among younger age groups. This was particularly the case for women, with 23% of those aged 16 to 24 and 16% of those aged 25 to 34 experiencing some form of sexual harassment in the previous year compared with 5% of those aged 35 and over.

Due to the student population Sheffield has a population bulge in this age group. According to the most recent census data there are approximately 45,145 women between the age of 16-24 in Sheffield​.

​**Therefore, using CSEW estimates, we can estimate that 10,383**​ **16–24-year-old women in Sheffield have experienced sexual harassment in the last year.**

The most common location of in-person harassment took place was in public, which was true of 75% of those who had experienced sexual harassment. 27% had experienced sexual harassment in the workplace and 19% had experienced sexual harassment on public transport.

Estimates from the UK Government Sexual Harassment Survey 2020:

A dedicated and comprehensive sexual harassment survey developed by the UK Government was published in 2020 and the following estimates are elaborated on below.[[33]](#footnote-34)

This survey found that 72% of the UK population experienced at least one form of sexual harassment in their lifetime, while 43% experienced at least one sexual harassment behaviour in the last 12 months. This estimate is significantly higher than the CSEW estimate for sexual harassment in the last 12 months.

**If we were to use this estimate for sexual harassment in the last year and apply it to the Sheffield population, we get an estimate that 179,410 people in Sheffield, the majority women, have experienced sexual harassment within the last 12 months.**

Women, young people (under 35), ethnic minorities, LGB individuals, and those with disabilities were significantly more likely to experience sexual harassment within the last 12 months. 75% believed that their identity was a factor in their harassment.

The data from this survey support those of the CSEW showing that public spaces were the most common location of sexual harassment, 42% had experienced sexual harassment on the street, 31% in a club, pub or bar and 28% on public transportation.

This survey found that 29% of those in employment experienced some form of sexual harassment in their workplace or work-related environment in the last 12 months. This is a similar proportion to the CSEW. Men were almost as likely to experience sexual harassment as women in the workplace, but most frequently the perpetrator was reported to be a man (63%) rather than a woman (22%). Those who are LGB and disabled, and those under 35 were more likely to experience sexual harassment at work.

Additional sources of sexual harassment data:

Workplace sexual harassment:

Research from 2016 by the Trades Union Council showed that 63% of women aged 18–24 had experienced some form of sexual harassment in the workplace compared to an average of 52% women of all ages. [[34]](#footnote-35) Further polling in this area by the Trades Union Council has revealed that 43% women have experienced at least three incidents of sexual harassment in the workplace.

TUC data also reveals that different intersecting identities compound the experience of sexual harassment:

* 68% lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) people have been sexually harassed at work. But LGBT women most likely to experience instances of unwanted touching, sexual assault and rape at work. 66% did not report the incident, and the majority were not satisfied with the response if they did. [[35]](#footnote-36)
* 68% of disabled women had been sexually harassed at work. 66% did not report the incident, and 53% of those who did report were not satisfied with the response. [[36]](#footnote-37)
* 37% of BME women state race **and** gender as the reason for experiencing verbal abuse. [[37]](#footnote-38)

Other trade unions have conducted sector specific research into workplace sexual harassment. Survey results of over 12,000 healthcare staff by the trade union Unison revealed that 10% of NHS staff experienced sexual harassment at work, and sexual assault was reported by 29% of all the health workers who’d experienced sexual harassment. [[38]](#footnote-39)

Research by Sheffield Hallam University has shown that those on precarious contracts are 60% more likely to report being a victim of sexual harassment, with the hospitality workforce being disproportionately young, female, from a minoritised background, on zero-hours contracts and on the lowest rates of pay. [[39]](#footnote-40)

Sexual harassment in education:

Research has shown that sexual harassment is rife within education in the UK. A 2021 Ofsted Rapid Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges found that[[40]](#footnote-41):

* 92% of girls had experienced sexist name calling
* 80% of girls had experienced unwanted or inappropriate comments of a sexual nature
* 79% of girls had experienced sexual assault of any kind

A 2024 survey by Unison of school support staff found that 15% of respondents had witnessed sexual harassment in school in the last five years, rising to 25% in secondary schools. This was most often instigated by male students to female students and sometimes female staff. 10% of female staff in secondary schools had experienced sexual harassment from male students. [[41]](#footnote-42)

In Sheffield, in 2023 Learn Sheffield in part of their wider ‘Developing Healthy Attitudes’ work explored the sexual harassment experiences of young people Sheffield secondary schools. This qualitative piece of work revealed the scale and normalisation of sexual harassment, reflecting wider society, and explored what young people saw as the factors behind it. [[42]](#footnote-43)

At a higher education level the Office for Students, the independent regulator of higher education in England, has this year (June 2024) introduced a condition of registration that requires institutions to set out how they will continue to tackle harassment and sexual misconduct that affects their students. Universities will have until 1 August 2025 to implement the change.

Data from the University of Sheffield Campus Climate report for 2023 revealed that 62% of students that responded had been subjected to sexual violence (SV) in the past year. With 45% having experienced sexual harassment: ‘someone making an inappropriate sexual comment to them/about them or trying to talk about sex with them when they didn't want to’. Female and non-binary students were more likely to experience sexual violence than male students. [[43]](#footnote-44)

No data was provided by Sheffield Hallam University for the purpose of this report.

Sexual harassment in public:

Data from the CSEW showed that sexual harassment in a public place was the most common form of sexual harassment experienced at 75%.[[44]](#footnote-45)

In a survey of girls and young women aged 12-21, Plan International UK showed that 75% of girls and young women in the UK have experienced some form of public sexual harassment in their lifetime. Also showing the impact of intersecting identities with[[45]](#footnote-46):

* 92% of girls and young women who consider themselves to have a disability have experienced public sexual harassment.
* 90% of LGB girls and young women have experienced public sexual harassment
* 88% of mixed-race girls have experienced public sexual harassment compared to 75% of white girls.

The data also tells us that using public transport is another domain in which sexual harassment is experienced disproportionately by women. A survey by the British Transport Police (BTP) earlier this year (2024) found that over a third of women have been sexually harassed or sexually offended on their commute by tube or train. [[46]](#footnote-47)Further data from the BTP has revealed a 10% increase in sexual offence reporting between 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 and a 20% increase in VAWG offences in the same period.[[47]](#footnote-48) This could be in part due to increased awareness of reporting. However, a RMT union survey in this area in 2023 indicated that more than 80% of women working on public transport saying that sexual harassment on public transport is becoming more of a problem. [[48]](#footnote-49)

# Sexual harassment in Sheffield:

****Impact of sexual harassment on mental health:****

#### Workplace sexual harassment:

**Research into the impact of workplace sexual harassment revealed that the largest impact is on the victim/survivor’s mental health.** In their work from 2016 they found that overall, 9% reported that the harassment had a negative impact on their mental health. In subsequent work they found that 34% of disabled women reported that their most recent experience of sexual harassment had had a negative effect to their mental health, and 16% of LGBT respondents said the harassment had a negative effect on their mental health.

The Government Sexual Harassment Survey 2020 found that of those who had experienced sexual harassment, 54% stated that their quality of life had been very or fairly affected by at least one of their experiences.[[49]](#footnote-50)

#### Public sexual harassment:

Research by Plan International showed that for girls and young women aged 14-21, 92% associated their incidents with a negative emotion: 49% felt unsafe; 44% felt anxious; 36% felt embarrassed and 32% felt degraded by the experience.[[50]](#footnote-51)

****Economic and social impact:****

#### Workplace sexual harassment:

**Research into the impact of workplace sexual harassment revealed that workplace sexual harassment had an impact on both workplace participation and employment. 21% had avoided certain workplace situations and 15% felt less confident at work. 6% had left that role or employer and 7% had wanted to but could not.** [[51]](#footnote-52) **When considering the impact on LGBT staff, 16% had left their role due to sexual harassment and 20% felt less confident at work.**[[52]](#footnote-53)12 % of disabled said their most recent experience of sexual harassment had caused them to leave their job or employer, and 21% reported that it had impacted relationships with colleagues.

#### Public sexual harassment:

Research by Plan International showed that for girls and young women aged 12-21, 62% have avoided doing something due to either experiencing or feeling worried about public sexual harassment, including exercise, socialising, hobbies, work and education. For LGBT girls and young women this was 78% and for disabled girls and young women this was 83%.

Disclosure and reporting of sexual harassment:

Much of sexual harassment goes unreported, and there is considerable overlap in the rationale in reporting decisions across sexual assault and sexual harassment.

A poll conducted in 2023 by the TUC found that only 30% of women who say they experienced sexual harassment at work told their employer about what was happening. Reasons for not reporting included feeling like they would not be believed or taken seriously (39%), and fear of reporting negatively on their relationships at work (37%) or on their career prospects (25%). [[53]](#footnote-54) This is echoed by their work specifically focused on LGBT and disabled female workers. Their report on LGBT sexual harassment at work also revealed additional concerns that not reported around revealing their sexual orientation and/or gender identity (25%). [[54]](#footnote-55)

Plan International UK data for girls and women aged 12-21 revealed that only 26% of those who have experienced public sexual harassment have ever reported an incident to the police. Of those, only 26% said the police took their case forward and dealt with it as a crime.[[55]](#footnote-56)

What do we know about perpetrators of sexual harassment?

When considering sexual harassment in its entirety, it is often perpetrated by someone known to the victim, as well as strangers.

The Government Survey of Sexual Harassment found that 76% had experienced it by a stranger, but around 63% experienced at least one behaviour from someone that they knew. Most commonly, but not exclusively the perpetrators of sexual harassment were men. 45% had experienced sexual harassment from a group. 16% had experienced repeated sexual harassment from the perpetrator/s at some point. [[56]](#footnote-57)

This is supported by estimates from the CSEW which found that 74% of perpetrators of sexual harassment were strangers.[[57]](#footnote-58)

****Upcoming legislative changes:****

Two pieces of legislation related to sexual harassment will come into force in October 2024.

* Protection from Sex-Based Harassment in Public Act 2023, which introduces a specific offence for public sexual harassment from October 1st, 2024.
* The Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023 places increased responsibility on businesses to take 'reasonable steps' to prevent sexual harassment from October 26th, 2024.

**Recommendation: To use the data collated in this needs assessment and new Sheffield data from the public consultation surveys to develop plans specifically focusing on sexual harassment for inclusion in the new strategy. To include plans to increase knowledge in this area and support for those who have witnessed and experienced sexual harassment.**

**Recommendation: To utilise the introduction of these two pieces of legislation to raise awareness of sexual harassment and support options.**

**Recommendation: To monitor the impact of these legislative changes across agencies over the course of the strategy as part of existing work around RASSO and the White Ribbon workplan.**

****What does the data tell us about other forms of sexual violence?****

## **Exposure, voyeurism and image-based offences (upskirting, flashing and revenge porn):**

#### **National data:**

The links between lower-level offences (including lower-level sexual offences) and escalating risk of rape and serious sexual offences are becoming increasingly acknowledged. Most notably the Angiolini Inquiry Part 1, which examined how a serving Metropolitan Police officer could abduct, rape and kill Sarah Everard in 2021, called for more training and awareness of the seriousness of masturbatory incident exposure.

As outlined in the previous section, the Crime Survey of England and Wales (CSEW) places indecent exposure under the larger category of sexual assault, in a sub-category with unwanted sexual touching. By separating this out estimates for Sheffield specifically for indecent exposure are shown below.

Estimated prevalence of indecent exposure:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Within the last year | Since the age of 16 |
| National estimate (%) | 0.4 | 7.1 |
| Sheffield estimate (people) | 1669 | 29, 624 |

Data on police recorded crime recorded by the Home Office shows that there were 12,900 offences classed as exposure and voyeurism (88E) in England and Wales between January and December 2023.[[58]](#footnote-59)   
  
The introduction of the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, an amendment of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 to make upskirting a specific offence of voyeurism. Official data relating to voyeurism prosecution rates are not routinely published by the CPS, however we know that in its second year (April 2020-June 2021) there were 47 individuals prosecuted by for 128 offences which is more than double the amount of in the year prior. This release outlined shops as the most common place for these offences and revealed that of those convicted a third of offenders were also committing other sexual offences.[[59]](#footnote-60) A FOI request made to the CPS revealed that since ‘upskirting’ was made a specific offence there have 323 charged offences resulting in convictions that have had a first hearing at magistrates' court as of April 2023. [[60]](#footnote-61)

January 2024 saw the introduction of new legislation around non-consensual image sharing, which has been expanded through the Online Safety Act and reworded to “sharing and threatening to share intimate images.” This expansion includes the creation of “deepfakes” and “down-blousing” and includes cyberflashing as a new offence. The new legislation is part of a wider attempt to keep at pace with emerging forms of harm because of the rapid development of technology including social media and AI. The first conviction for cyberflashing took place in February 2024.

Data from the CPS from 2022, which refers to the previous iteration of this offence amended via the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, reveals that there were 825 suspects were charged with 1,048 revenge porn offences between April 2020 and June 2022  [[61]](#footnote-62)

The Revenge Porn Helpline is part of the charity SWGfL, and provides support those aged 18+ impacted by image-based abuse. In 2023 they received 19,000 reports, an increase of 106% on the year prior. [[62]](#footnote-63)

#### **Local data:**

Local data in this area is limited, in part because these forms of harm are emerging and newly legislated against. South Yorkshire Police (SYP) recorded incidents published by the Home Office showed that there were 58 recorded offences of exposure and voyeurism in 2023.[[63]](#footnote-64) We also know from an FOI submitted to SYP this year that in 2023 267 offences were recorded under the previous ‘revenge porn’ legislation. Of these only 9 reached an outcome of charged/summonsed.[[64]](#footnote-65)

#### **Spiking:**

Spiking is currently not a standalone criminal offence, it is charged and prosecuted under two mains pieces of legislation: the Offences against the Person Act 1861, and Sexual Offences Act 2003. [[65]](#footnote-66) The later, the most relevant to this needs assessment, is written as “administering etc. a substance with intent to engage in a non-consensual sexual activity”. However, the Kings Speech in June 2024 outlined that spiking will be made a standalone offence.

#### **National data:**

Official statistics on spiking are not routinely published, but following lockdown a large amount of public interest grew in this area. In the year ending April 2023 the NPCC reported that police received 6,732 reports of spiking, 957 relating to needle spiking.[[66]](#footnote-67)

Further data obtained from an FOI request from Channel 4 in 2023 revealed that almost 20,000 reports of spiking were received in the past five years by 39 police forces.

An FOI made to the CPS in 2024 revealed that between 2018 and September 2023 there were 98 charges that made a magistrate first hearing under the Sexual Offences Act 2023 related to spiking, but only 17 convictions [[67]](#footnote-68)

#### **Regional data:**

In June 2023 an FOI request was made to SYP in relation to drink spiking[[68]](#footnote-69). From this request we know:

* In 2021 there were 276 recorded incidents of drink spiking.
* In 2022 there were 320 recorded incidents of drink spiking.
* In 2023 (January-May only) there were 73 recorded incidents of drink spiking.

In a following FOI request[[69]](#footnote-70), the 2022 data was later requested to include both recorded drink and injection spiking across each month.

Impact of spiking:

There is a lack of research on the prevalence and impact of spiking with a recent review stating that more focused research is needed to accurately estimate the prevalence of spiking and underlying motivations.[[70]](#footnote-71)

A recent study exploring the increase in spiking calls for spiking to be seen as a traumatic event and treated with this lens even in absence of sexual or physical harm. It outlines that the psychological impact of spiking given the absence of clear memory, which is associated with the development of PTSD. This study has highlighted that the flaws in current guidance around spiking, which indicates that current guidance around testing if “clinically indicated” and a lack of psychological support and support pathways.[[71]](#footnote-72)

Sexual exploitation:

Unlike child sexual exploitation which has had a statutory definition since 2017, there is no legal definition of adult sexual exploitation in the UK and therefore in no national level data collected. The Spicer Review published in 2018 in light of sexual exploitation of children and adults in the North East, highlighted the adult sexual exploitation was often not recognised in adults.[[72]](#footnote-73)

***National data:***

However, a report by the STAGE Partnership, now called the Adult Sexual Exploitation (ASE) Partnership, which operates across the North of England shows that they supported 805 women have been supported since it was formed in 2019. 75% of these women had experienced exploitation that started in adulthood. [[73]](#footnote-74)

As there is not a single criminal offence related to sexual exploitation there is no reliable data in this area. However, we do know that sexual exploitation often overlaps with other areas such as VAWG, sex work and prostitution, modern slavery and human trafficking.

#### **Local data:**

As outlined previously the lack of a consistent definition means that there is no reliable data in this area. Across South Yorkshire there are multiple providers who provide support for sexual exploitation including Ashiana, Changing Lives and the Snowdrop Project.

**Recommendation: To undertake further work during the strategy timeframe to better understand the prevalence and needs of those who experience these lesser understood forms of sexual violence in scope of the strategy.**

Support for victims of sexual violence:

### **Sexual assault referral centres (SARCs):**

The NHS is responsible nationally for commissioning sexual assault referral centres.  They offer a range of services, including crisis care, medical and forensic examinations, emergency contraception and testing for sexually transmitted infections.

A survey found that 72% of people were unaware there are specialist NHS sexual assault services who can offer confidential support.[[74]](#footnote-75) In 2022 the NHS ran a targeted campaign to raise awareness of SARCs as the number of people accessing SARCs halved after the first lockdown compared with the previous year, despite official figures showing that domestic abuse and sexual assault and abuse increased.

There is no national data on SARC referrals, but research by Coventry University[[75]](#footnote-76) suggested that:

* 23,888 people used SARC services in 2018/19.
* 9/10 service users over 18 are women.
* Over 75% of adults and children that attend are White British.
* Most referrals to SARCs are via the police.

#### **Hackenthorpe Lodge SARC:**

In Sheffield the commissioned SARC is at Hackenthorpe Lodge, which covers the region of South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw.

Data made available on the SARC usage in South Yorkshire is outlined below.

In 2023 there were 440 appointments by individuals across South Yorkshire.

There were 360 referrals between April- December 2023, and 319 appointments, of these:

* + The main referrer is South Yorkshire Police, at 65%.
  + 350 referrals reported on gender; 324 were female, 22 were male, 1 was non-binary and 3 preferred not to say.
  + Only 191 referrals reported on ethnicity; 161 were White, 10 were Black/Black British, 9 were Asian or British Asian, 7 were of mixed ethnicity, 3 were from another ethnic background and 1 preferred not to say.

There was no data provided for this report on the nature of support and onward referrals and outcomes.

Data from the DACT public consultation this summer revealed that just less than 10% of respondents were aware of Hackenthorpe Lodge, this figure rose to 21% when only looking at respondents who had experienced sexual violence.

**Recommendation: To build a better understanding of the awareness and use of the Sexual Assault Referral Centre in Sheffield.**

Data from Rape Crisis UK reveal that in 2022-2023, over 88,000 people accessed Rape Crisis services, including almost 40,000 new referrals.

### **Independent Sexual Violence Advocate Support:**

ISVAs are specialist professionals who provide information and support through the criminal justice process for people who have experienced sexual violence or abuse. The ISVA role sits within commissioned provider of sexual violence support, which are most often charities, and often member organisations of national membership organisations such as Rape Crisis UK and/or The Survivors Trust. In England they are most commissioned by the regional Police and Crime Commissioner via central government funding.

*National Support:*

Given differences in localities and commissioning arrangement across England and Wales there is a lack of national data about the scale and range of support ISVAs provide.

Some further insight can be provided by Victim Support is a national charity supporting people who have experienced crime and traumatic events, who hold several ISVA contracts across England and Wales. In the year ending March 2022, Victim Support reported an increase in the number of referrals for sexual assault cases, 26,641 in the year ending March 2022 from 9,114 in the year ending March 2017. of these referrals (around 80% each year) were for female victims. In the year ending March 2022, 53% of the victims supported were aged between 16 and 35 years.[[76]](#footnote-77) This provides some valuable insight into who is receiving ISVA support and demonstrates the victim demographics highlighted previously.

As an organisation they have conducted some research into the support provided in a pilot project with Safe Lives to explore the support ISVAs provided[[77]](#footnote-78). This pilot showed that:

* The majority of victims were female (89%) and majority of perpetrators were male (98%).
* 54% experienced sexual abuse as a one-off incident and 43% experienced sexual violence as a on-going pattern of abuse.
* At the point of accessing a service, a large proportion of victims reported mental health issues and several additional vulnerabilities.
* Most victims made a police report before engagement with the ISVA service (88%).

The 2024 HMICFRS review into the implementation of Operation Soteria specifically noted increasing demand and lack of funding for victim support services, and ongoing concerns around the police response to RASSO cases raised by ISVAs. This is reflected in Recommendation 10 of the HMICFRS review which calls for extra national funding for RASSO victim support organisations that is on a longer-term basis for consistency.[[78]](#footnote-79)

Local support:

In South Yorkshire the ISVA service is commissioned by the Police and Crime Commissioner, which now sits within the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA). The contract is held by four sexual violence services representing each district as a South Yorkshire Sexual Violence Partnership. The Sheffield ISVA contract is held by Sheffield Rape and Sexual Assault Centre (SRASAC).

Data from 2023 shows that there were 606 referrals to the ISVA service, which is an average of around 50 per month. In total, 487 people were supported by an ISVA and 43 also received counselling at SRASAC.

### **Counselling:**

#### **National picture:**

The provision of counselling for victim/survivors of sexual violence is complex and varied depending on local commissioning arrangements and geographical location. There is an acknowledged national shortage of counselling provision for victim/survivors for sexual violence.

Many Rape Crisis Centres provide free specialist, trauma-informed, counselling for women who have experienced sexual violence, some also provide counselling to men and/or children. Rape Crisis have recently revealed that nearly 14,000 survivors are waiting for a service, and the latest analysis of Rape Crisis waiting list data revealed that over 80% of those on waiting lists were waiting for specialist counselling services.[[79]](#footnote-80)

Due to a range of factors, some victim/survivors of sexual violence may choose to access non-specialist counselling or seek counselling privately, there is no national data on this. Many will not have the means to access counselling.

*Local picture:*

SRASAC provides a free counselling service to all children and adults of all genders, and this contract is commissioned by the local Police and Crime Commissioner and the Sheffield Domestic Abuse Co-Ordination Team (DACT). The counselling provided lasts up to 20 weeks. In 2023 there were 557 referrals to counselling at SRASAC, around 46 per month, and in total 268 people were supported in counselling and there were 2,866 counselling sessions delivered overall. 99% of clients stated that this counselling had helped them. Data from our public consultation survey showed that 60% of respondents who had experienced sexual violence knew of SRASAC.

Saffron Sheffield is a local charity that supports women in Sheffield via free, long-term specialist trauma counselling and psychotherapy. In the year 2023-2024 they have been funded by the South Yorkshire ICB, 20 grants and fundraising.[[80]](#footnote-81) They accept complex cases, including those who are often denied access to other counselling routes. In 2023-2024,82% of clients had required over 20 sessions, with the sessions lasting up to 40 sessions. The service provides counselling to victim/survivors of many forms of trauma, including sexual violence, and the data for 2023-2024 reveals that 24% of those supported had experienced sexual abuse, rape or sexual exploitation in adulthood. As outlined in their impact report the demand for support is going with 681 women registered for therapy in January 2024 vs 320 in June 2022. At any one-time Saffron can support around 75 women.[[81]](#footnote-82)

Historically VIDA Sheffield has provided support to women who have experienced abuse and trauma, including sexual violence via free, trauma-focused therapy. Unfortunately, due to a lack of funding this service, which supports around 200-250 women a year faces closure which is likely to impact existing services.

Given the prevalence of sexual violence in 16-25 age range, the University of Sheffield this year has launched a new in-house counselling service for victim/survivors of sexual violence. There is no data available to date on this new service. [[82]](#footnote-83)

Although not specific to sexual exploitation, The Snowdrop Project, a charity that provides support to victim/survivors of modern slavery and exploitation, has seen an increase of 263% in referrals to their counselling service over the last 12 months. In 2023 they supported 107survivors supported through counselling, with 52 new referrals.[[83]](#footnote-84)

**Associated recommendation: To discuss the mental health support needs of victims over time post sexual violence with providers to inform support pathways and conduct further work to consider whether support options are adequate for populations disproportionately impacted by sexual violence.**

### **Specific support for students- The University Report + Support Tool:**

Both the University of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam University use the Report + Support Tool to as part of their approach to enable students to report sexual violence (amongst other forms of harm) and access support. This can be done anonymously if wished.

Within the last year the University of Sheffield has developed a care pathway for students who have experienced sexual violence and harassment. The Student Mental Health Counselling and Therapies Service has been allocated additional resources to increase staffing levels to meet need and is ensuring staff receive up to date training and development in this area. There is no update as to the rollout of this pathway currently.

No update has been provided by Sheffield Hallam University for the purpose of this report.

**See associated recommendation: To continue to engage with both universities in the city as part of RASSO and beyond to develop plans around the specific student population in Sheffield and disproportionate impact of sexual violence.**

#### **Survivor voice:**

This needs assessment has highlighted a gap in the opportunities for victim/survivors of sexual violence, including sexual harassment, to feed into local decision-making processes.

**Recommendation: To utilise the ongoing work in the city around embedding the voice of domestic abuse victim/survivors to explore the avenues for further embedding the voice of victim/survivors of sexual violence, including sexual harassment, and other forms of related harm.**

# Recommendations from the sexual violence needs assessment:

**Recommendation: To utilise this to further work regionally with partners to explore the regional picture of sexual violence and identify new and existing avenues for change.**

#### **Recommendation: To further explore how intersectionality is considered in the data gathered and workplans in this area and across the wider strategy, including via the DA/SA Anti-Racism Group.**

**Recommendation: To consider how data can be better captured to improve understanding of sexual violence within domestic abuse cases as part of the MARAC process and on client profiles.**

**Recommendation: To discuss the mental health support needs of victims over time post sexual violence with providers to inform support pathways and conduct further work to consider whether support options are adequate for populations disproportionately impacted by sexual violence.**

**Recommendation: To explore the potential for creating Sheffield or South Yorkshire specific understanding of lifetime cost of sexual violence with local and academic partners.**

**Recommendation: To take a multi-partner approach to consider how persisting and emerging rape myths can be debunked via the council’s White Ribbon action plan, education in schools and wider organisations including the criminal justice system.**

**Recommendation: To utilise existing involvement within the countywide RASSO Steering Group to identify opportunities for improvement in the arrangements for disrupting repeat offenders.**

**Recommendation: To work with partners to better understand and evidence the scale and impact of short notice trial rearrangement and support for victims of RASSO offences and other offences in scope of this strategy.**

**Recommendation: To continue work with partners, including as part of the RASSO Quarterly Meeting, to ensure that progress in monitored, issues are addressed, and this work informs strategic ambitions and maximises opportunities for joint working as a result of Operation Soteria and the Victim Transformation Programme.**

**Recommendation: To expand engagement with both universities in the city and other further and higher education providers, as part of RASSO and beyond, to develop plans around the specific student population in Sheffield and disproportionate impact of sexual violence on this age group.**

**Recommendation: To use the data collated in this needs assessment and new Sheffield data from the public consultation surveys to develop plans specifically focusing on sexual harassment for inclusion in the new strategy. To include plans to increase knowledge in this area and support for those who have witnessed and experienced sexual harassment.**

**Recommendation: To utilise the introduction of these two pieces of legislation to raise awareness of sexual harassment and support options.**

**Recommendation: To monitor the impact of these legislative changes across agencies over the course of the strategy as part of existing work around RASSO and the White Ribbon workplan.**

**Recommendation: To undertake further work during the strategy timeframe to better understand the needs of those who experience these lesser understood forms of harm in scope of the strategy.**

**Recommendation: To build a better understanding of the awareness and use of the Sexual Assault Referral Centre in Sheffield.**

**Recommendation: To utilise the ongoing work in the city around embedding the voice of domestic abuse victim/survivors to explore the avenues for further embedding the voice of victim/survivors of sexual violence, including sexual harassment, and other forms of related harm.**

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