

“Landmark moment” as Domestic Abuse Bill introduced to Parliament

The government’s landmark Domestic Abuse Bill will be introduced in Parliament today, signalling a major step forward in transforming the response to this crime.

The Bill is the most comprehensive package ever presented to Parliament to tackle domestic abuse, both supporting victims and bringing perpetrators to justice.

Following extensive work with stakeholders and charities, the government carried out a public consultation on measures to be included in the Bill that saw more than 3,200 responses.

[A draft of the Bill was published in January](#) and has undergone extensive scrutiny by a Joint Committee of cross party MPs and Peers as part of the government’s collaborative approach to ensure this historic legislation is correct. The Committee published a report on the draft bill in June and made a set of recommendations which the government has considered carefully.

Measures in the Bill include:

- introducing the first ever statutory government definition of domestic abuse, which will include economic abuse
- establishing a Domestic Abuse Commissioner to champion victims and survivors
- introducing new Domestic Abuse Protection Notices and Domestic Abuse Protection Orders to further protect victims and place restrictions on the actions of offenders
- prohibiting the cross-examination of victims by their abusers in the family courts
- providing automatic eligibility for special measures to support more victims to give evidence in the criminal courts

The Prime Minister, who launched the consultation at Downing Street in March last year, said:

Domestic abuse can take many forms, from horrific physical violence to coercive behaviour that robs people of their self-esteem, their

freedom and their right to feel safe in their own homes, but the immense bravery I've seen demonstrated by survivors is consistent throughout. We have a duty not only to bring the perpetrators of these vile crimes to justice, but to support victims as they rebuild their lives.

This Bill will help us do just that and represents a true step-change in our approach. It couldn't have happened without the victims, charities, campaign groups and frontline agencies who have worked alongside government to ensure we get this right, and as we reflect on reaching this important milestone together I want to express my thanks to them once more.

Responding to the Joint Committee's report, the government has either accepted or partially accepted the majority of recommendations and has committed to consider several further as the Bill progresses through Parliament.

Also being announced today are government plans to support asylum seekers suffering domestic abuse by ensuring they have access to refuges, ensuring that victims can receive the specialist support they need.

The government will also undertake a review into the statutory response to migrant victims of domestic abuse.

Home Secretary Sajid Javid said:

Domestic abuse destroys lives and tears families apart, but all too often it is hidden behind closed doors.

This landmark Bill is an opportunity to help those who suffer this deeply harmful crime and support those who bring the perpetrators to justice.

Justice Secretary David Gauke said:

This Bill marks a fundamental shift in our response to domestic abuse – establishing greater protections for victims, whilst ensuring perpetrators feel the full weight of the law.

By banning abusers from cross-examining their victims in the family courts, and giving courts greater powers through new protection orders, we are making sure the justice system is better equipped than ever to tackle this horrific crime.

Minister for Crime, Safeguarding and Vulnerability, Victoria Atkins said:

Having spoken to survivors of domestic abuse, I have been both

shocked by their stories and moved by their resilience and strength. As a government, we must do all we can to support those who have suffered this horrendous abuse.

The Domestic Abuse Bill goes further than ever before and recognises the complex nature of domestic abuse, while putting the needs of victims at the forefront.

In January, the government published a report into the economic and social cost of domestic abuse, which revealed the cost to victims of domestic abuse in the year ending March 2017 in England and Wales was an estimated £66 billion. It is estimated that around 2 million adults experience domestic abuse each year, affecting almost 6% of all adults.

The introduction of the Domestic Abuse Bill follows a meeting, hosted by the Prime Minister in Downing Street last week with domestic abuse survivors, frontline experts and charities, including Refuge, SafeLives and Women's Aid. During the event the Prime Minister reiterated her personal commitment to tackling this issue, which has been a priority throughout her career. Discussions were intended to inform the delivery of the Bill through Parliament, with attendees urged to continue pushing for change to stamp out abuse and support victims, and to work with the Prime Minister's successor in taking this important policy forward.

Roads policing review to improve safety

- government will review roads policing as part of [Road Safety Action Plan](#)
- review will highlight best practice and identify gaps in service
- a pilot programme of new initiatives could be running as early as next year

A first-of-its-kind joint review into roads policing and traffic enforcement will be launched later this year, in a bid to improve road safety.

The 2 year review, jointly funded by the Department for Transport (DfT) and Highways England, will look at how roads policing currently works, its effectiveness, and where improvements could be made or gaps bridged.

The DfT will be looking at this with the Home Office and the National Police Chiefs' Council. A pilot programme based on the review and consultation feedback could begin next year, and could test out new initiatives or ways of working to see what works best in reducing road casualties.

Road Safety Minister Michael Ellis said:

We have strong laws in place to ensure people are kept safe on our roads at all times.

But roads policing is a key deterrent in stopping drivers breaking the law and risking their and other people's lives.

This review will not only highlight where police forces are doing good work, it will show what more can be done to improve road safety.

The review will also look at how the police and different agencies work together, the information they share and how improvements may increase capability and capacity.

It will also consider how best to police roads in rural and urban areas, and the strategic road network.

In order to find out what currently works well, a call for evidence will be launched this autumn. Findings and recommendations will be ready in 2020.

The review will not increase the burden on existing police forces. In fact, to help free up police time, the department has rolled out a new version of the Collision Reporting and Sharing software and provided a smartphone app to work on existing police mobile devices as well as funding to buy tablet computers.

This app enables officers to accurately report crash data and locations on site, rather than having to return to a police station to duplicate paperwork on a computer.

The DfT has also invested in the development of roadside breathalysers, which once finished, will enable suspected drink drivers to be tested at the roadside, without having to go back to the police station for a test, and the reading can then be used in court.

[PM's words from reception held at Downing Street to celebrate the winning England Cricket team](#)

PM Theresa May's words from reception held at Downing Street to celebrate the winning England Cricket team.

PM's words from reception held at Downing Street to celebrate the winning England Cricket team

The final was not just cricket at its best but sport at its best – courage, character, sportsmanship, drama, incredible skill and even the odd slice of luck...

All combining to create a real thriller, one of the great sporting spectacles of our time.

It was a fitting end to what has been a great tournament – and I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in once again making our country a sporting showcase for the world.

The players and coaching staff.

The organisers and volunteers.

The incredible spectators from 10 nations who brought such colour and passion to England and Wales this summer.

The runners-up yesterday, New Zealand.

Real champions show their true character not just in victory but also in defeat, and I am sure everyone here agrees that their response on the field yesterday shows what Black Caps are made of, what New Zealanders are made of.

They are a credit to their team, a credit to their sport and a credit to their nation.

Then of course, there is England.

Or “World Cup-winning England”, as we can get used to saying.

You are a team that represents modern Britain – and that plays like no other side in the world.

In the group stage you responded to setbacks not by giving in but by coming back stronger than ever.

And, when the odds were against you in the biggest game of your lives, you simply and stubbornly refused to lose.

It is that determination, that character, that has made you world champions.

But more than that you have made history.

You have helped the nation fall in love with cricket once again.

And, perhaps most important of all, as we saw across the country last night and at the Oval this morning, you have inspired countless future Morgans, Rashids and Archers.

This was a record-breaking World Cup.

Yesterday we saw a final for the ages.

And here today we have a team that will be spoken of in awe for generations to come.

Thank you all once again.

On behalf of the whole country congratulations to – and I just want to say this one more time – England's World Cup winners.

[Social media, young people and mental health](#)

The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care spoke at the Bright Blue and Barnado's conference 'Left to their own devices?'.