

# Rape victims in Wales to benefit from UK Government funding boost

- Rape support centres across Wales awarded 50 per cent funding uplift
- Part of funding increase totalling £32 million over three years
- More victims than ever to receive UK Government funded support

Victims of rape and sexual assault across Wales will be helped by a 50 per cent funding boost for specialist support services the UK Government has announced.

Over £1.3m has been awarded to six rape support centres over two years across Wales. This funding will mean more rape victims than ever will be able to get vital advice, support and counselling.

More than 8000 sexual offences were recorded by police across Wales last year, and today's announcement is part of a 50 per cent increase that will cover services across England and Wales – totalling £32m over three years up to 2022.

The UK Government is also investing £1 million to recruit more Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs) across the country, who provide advice and support for victims, acting as the link between police, support services and criminal justice agencies.

## **Secretary of State for Wales Simon Hart said:**

Rape and sexual violence are truly devastating crimes which have long term impacts on victims' lives.

I am encouraged that organisations in each of Wales' four police force areas will be able to help more people to receive the support and advice they need to recover as a result of UK Government funding.

Across England and Wales more than 160,000 sexual offences were recorded by police last year. The £32m provided by the UK Government directly funds 76 rape support services and a further 18 via Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) over three years, and ensures there is vital help for victims in all 42 of England and Wales' PCC areas.

This is the second time the UK Government has increased funding in the last year to the Rape Support Fund, bringing it to £12 million per year from April. The increase will allow our local services to plan for the future – offering them stability and security so that they can focus on delivering services that victims so desperately need.

The move builds on new laws brought in by this UK Government that will ensure

serious violent and sexual offenders spend longer behind bars – ensuring the public and victims are protected from these heinous crimes.

## **ENDS**

### **Further information:**

Funding has been awarded to the following six rape support centres:

<b>PCC area</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Provider</b>
<b>Dyfed Powys</b>	Aberystwyth	Mid Wales Rape Support Centre
<b>Dyfed Powys</b>	Newtown	New Pathways (Dyfed Powys)
<b>Gwent</b>	Torfaen	Cyfannol Women's Aid
<b>North Wales</b>	Bangor	Rape And Sexual Abuse Support Centre North Wales
<b>North Wales</b>	Wrexham	Stepping Stones North Wales
<b>South Wales</b>	Merthyr Tydfil	New Pathways (South Wales)

### **Notes to editors:**

- Victims across Wales will benefit from an over £220,000 funding boost, raising the total MoJ funding for rape support services in Wales to over £680,000 p.a. for 2020-22.
- MOJ funding for victim support services has almost doubled since 2012/13 (by increasing revenue raised from offenders). This year we awarded about £92 million on these services. In previous years this has been £96m due to a £4m MoJ contribution to the Home Office's modern slavery contract – this funding has now been directly transferred to the Home Office.
- MOJ provides a contribution to rape support services across England and Wales and the level of grant funding varies. In 2018/19 we allocated around £7.2 million to these centres to provide independent, specialist support to female and male victims of sexual violence, including victims of child sexual abuse. This increased to £8 million in 2019/20 and will further increase to £12m p.a. for 2020 -2022.
- In 2019/20 we allocated Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) around £68 million funding to locally commission emotional and practical support services for victims of crime, including victims of sexual violence, as they are best placed to respond to local need.
- The Crime Survey for England and Wales estimated that 20% of women and 4% of men have experienced some type of sexual assault since the age of 16, equivalent to an estimated 3.4 million female victims and 631,000 male victims.
- In September 2018 we published the first cross-government Victims' Strategy was published which outlined how we will improve the support on offer for victims at every stage of the justice system.