

UK's first Domestic Abuse Commissioner announced as government pledges to tackle crime

The Home Secretary has today (Wednesday 18 September) announced Nicole Jacobs as the designate Domestic Abuse Commissioner. Ms Jacobs was the former Chief Executive Officer at charity Standing Together Against Domestic Violence and has more than two decades of experience working to reduce domestic abuse.

The role of Domestic Abuse Commissioner will lead on driving improvements on the response to domestic abuse in the UK, championing victims and making recommendations on what more should be done to better protect victims and bring more offenders to justice.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

Domestic abuse is unacceptable, and I am absolutely determined to do all I can to protect victims and their families and ensure perpetrators face tough action.

I am delighted that Nicole will be taking on the crucial role as Commissioner and acting as a voice for those who need it most.

Also today, the Home Secretary will co-chair a roundtable with the Secretary of State for Justice, Robert Buckland, to listen to the experiences and concerns of victims of sexual violence and to understand better what barriers could be preventing victims from engaging with the criminal justice system.

Designate Domestic Abuse Commissioner Nicole Jacobs said:

Establishing the Office of the Domestic Abuse Commissioner shows the government's commitment to reducing harm and improving the lives of those who experience domestic abuse.

It is an honour and a privilege to be appointed as the first Commissioner and I intend to raise the voices of victims and survivors of all ages, status and background and ensure that we shine a light on practice that fails them.

Minister for Safeguarding and Vulnerability, Victoria Atkins, said:

The focus of the Commissioner will be to stand up for victims and survivors, raise public awareness and hold both agencies and government to account in tackling domestic abuse.

I look forward to working with Nicole, and together we can bring about the most comprehensive package of measures ever attempted in England and Wales.

The independent Office of Domestic Abuse Commissioner will be tasked with encouraging good practice in preventing domestic abuse; identifying both those at risk of abuse as well as those perpetrating it and improving the protection and provision of support to those affected by domestic abuse. They will also be able to publish reports that hold statutory agencies and the government to account.

Ms Jacobs will initially work as the designate Commissioner until the Commissioner's Office is placed on a statutory footing. Both the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary have stated their commitment to tackling domestic abuse, with commitments to bring in legislation during the Queen's Speech.

During her career, Ms Jacobs has worked in a number of roles linked to domestic abuse, including as a frontline practitioner, in senior operational and management roles, and as a trainer and strategic leader. She will take up the role this week.