

WOMEN'S SAFETY ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT

FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT 2024



Transport for
West Midlands

KAREN WHYBRO
WOMEN'S SAFETY CONSULTANT

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS (VAWG)

The murder of Sarah Everard by a serving police officer in March 2021 marked a turning point in public discourse around violence against women in the UK. Her death sparked national outrage and reignited widespread concern over women's safety, particularly in public spaces.

In the aftermath of Sarah's murder, thousands of women shared their own experiences of harassment, assault, and fear, highlighting how common and normalised gender-based violence had become. The case prompted vigils, protests, and a renewed focus on the systemic failures within policing and the justice system, including how such institutions often fail to protect women or hold perpetrators accountable. Women's faith in the police was understandably shaken, resulting in police services across the country undertaking training and developing strategies to review their professional standards, internal and external processes regarding violence against women and girls.

Shortly after, the U.K. Home Office announced additional funding for local authorities to tackle women's safety in public spaces and various initiatives and interventions were subsequently launched across the country to increase perceptions of safety and tackle the ongoing issue of VAWG.

In July 2024, the National Police Chief's Council (NPCC) declared violence against women and girls a 'national emergency' in a report stating 3,000 crimes of violence against women and girls (VAWG) are recorded each day, with at least 1 in 12 women becoming victims each year.

When citing crime data, it is always important to consider that both victim services and the CSEW (crime survey for England and Wales) estimate the majority of serious sexual offences are unreported. The need to rebuild faith and trust in the police is of critical importance for victim-survivors to receive justice.



INTRODUCTION

Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) commissioned Karen Whybro Consultants to review the current provision provided to improve women's safety (including perceptions of safety) on their transport services.

The purpose of the findings and recommendations report is to give a comprehensive overview of the focus, strategy, and processes currently in place to keep women safe on TfWM services and to make a series of short and medium-term recommendations on how this could be improved, focussing on three pillars: Culture, Policy and Design.

The report provides a short review of the impact of current research, policy, and practice of women's safety work across transport links globally and nationally. It then provides a series of findings specific to TfWM and offers a series of recommendations, based on the Culture, Policy, and Design pillars to strengthen, extend and improve women's safety through the inclusion of a specific section to the existing Bus Passenger Charter.

SCOPE OF REPORT

In the course of collating information and researching current provision for Women's Safety on Transport for West Midlands network, the following policies, practices, and public information has been reviewed:

- PARS 2021-2022 & 2022-2023 Survey data
- Safer Routes to Travel Report 2023
- Time to Talk Survey results
- West Midlands Bus Passenger Charter
- Calico Pilot Analysis report
- West Midlands Police VAWG data
- Safer Travel Plan 2024
- DfT Anti-Social Behaviour Pilots Proposal Guidance

In addition, conversations between myself, Karen Whybro, TfWM Security and Policing Manager, Paul Franks, and Education Officer, Paula Shortland, have provided great insight into the current provision on the TfWM network and to the wider community.



VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & GIRLS ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT

In July 2024, the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) declared violence against women and girls (VAWG) a national emergency, citing a 37% increase in crimes of this nature, with 3,000 offences recorded each day, with 1 in 12 women being victims each year[1]. The scale of violence against women and girls was described as an “epidemic” by HMIFRCS in 2021 following their review into the prevalence of the crimes and behaviours which disproportionately affect women and girls. Of course, policing is just one area in the work in reducing and preventing VAWG with multi-partner and stakeholder participation essential to have the swift and impactful improvements required to improve the experiences of women and girls in everyday life. [1] NPCC, 2024.

Safe and reliable public transport is an essential element to how people express their human right of freedom of movement, and much research has already shown that women and girls too often not only take on vital “safety work” to improve their own safety when travelling, but a worrying percentage avoid public transport altogether, posing the question: if transport is not safe for half the population, is it even a public service at all?

Current national provision to tackle VAWG on public transport

What is encouraging, is the continued focus and work being undertaken by many organisations, including transport services to specifically focus on issues facing women and girls, from “low-level” behaviours to more serious criminal acts. The willingness to engage with communities on the issue, create and implement strategies and new processes has successfully shone a light on the lived experiences of women and girls, who witness and experience behaviour below the standards expected in public.



Government and police VAWG policies have now extended down to other public organisations to create their own strategies focussing on these crimes and behaviours, from local authorities to transport services. These typically focus on policy, process and practice with training and communications to support implementation of initiatives.

CULTURE, POLICY & DESIGN

The underpinning of effective strategies requires a focus on three elements to the work: Culture, Policy, and Design. All three pillars need consideration and engagement in order to support and implement effective improvements of women's safety with each focus required to support the others. Recent research conducted in areas where gender-sensitive planning has been implemented, shows that physical design is becoming a key focus for pre-empting issues facing women and girls while travelling, supporting the critical use of policies, processes, tools, and technology in order to both prevent and react to incidents of VAWG[2]. For too long, victims changing their behaviours has been the sole focus for behaviour change initiatives and campaigns, further embedding victim-blaming narratives and public misconceptions around victims of sexual violence. [2] Muhoza, C. et al, *Mainstreaming gender in urban public transport, 2021*.

Fortunately, there is now emerging work on a much-needed switch of focus, from the victim to the perpetrators of VAWG, to improve attitudes and behaviours of individuals as well as the experience of victims when reporting. Public awareness campaign posters such as those installed on London Underground stations and tube trains were among the first communications tools to tackle unwanted sexual behaviours experienced by women following a survey by British Transport Police indicating that a third of women have experienced sexual harassment while travelling on public transport and shockingly, that girls aged just 11 were also experiencing the same[3].

[3] *British Transport Police, 2023*.

Similarly, the 'Is This OK?' campaign from Transport for Greater Manchester produced campaign materials that ask perpetrators to reflect on their behaviours with a series of posters installed on their network and across social media platforms.[4] [4] *Transport for Greater Manchester, 'Is This OK?' campaign, 2023*.



VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & GIRLS ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT

In 2015, Transport for London introduced their “Report it to Stop it” campaign, as part of ‘Project Guardian’, focussing specifically on tackling unwanted sexual behaviours on public transport. However, it was subsequently found that 9 out of 10 people still did not feel able to report such incidents. Police and non-urgent reporting tools have improved the ability of travellers to report incidents quickly and safely, including the 61016 text helpline and associated Travel Guardian app along with the “See It, Say It, Sort It” campaign British Transport Police (BTP). Since the pandemic, reporting of these crimes on public transport has increased by 61%.[5]

The use of safety apps, such as imabi (the creators of the Travel Guardian app), have become increasingly popular for women to effectively share their locations while travelling, as well as identify ‘safe spaces’ created by regional Women’s Safety Charters, such as those in London and Essex[6], to find help and support or plan a safe route on their journey (for example, interventions similar to the recent Mayor of Yorkshire “Just Don’t” video campaign). [PF1]

The introduction of improved policy and campaigns to improve cultures has seen a 25% increase in the levels of teenage girls reporting of offences to British Transport Police. However, the issue of underreporting is still of significant concern.[7]

[5] British Transport Police data, 2021

[6] Chelmsford City Council, 2023

[7] British Transport Police, 2024

[PF1]Other campaigns include Just Don’t funded by West Yorkshire Mayor which would help us as well with focus on ‘Safe Spaces’ and ‘end to end journeys’

Another tool in improving attitudes and behaviours on public transport is the emerging work in using virtual reality technology to raise awareness of sexual harassment and train individuals (both professional and civilian) in safely and effectively disrupting incidents through encouraging individuals to be Upstanders, not bystanders. BTP and TfWM have introduced virtual reality experience training for staff to raise awareness of women’s experiences of sexual harassment on public transport through scenario simulation[8]. The effectiveness of these is yet to be evaluated.

[8] British Transport Police ‘Zero Tolerance Project,’ 2024



VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & GIRLS ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Recently, many organisations have benefitted from commissioning external training to help disrupt and reduce VAWG through models such as as being an upstander, not a bystander. TfWM staff have undertaken training which is a proven intervention to help reduce incidents of sexual harassment and unwanted behaviours towards women. Research shows that promoting self-efficacy in individuals to disrupt and challenge unwanted behaviours around them has real and lasting effects on reducing sexual violence[9]. Raising of awareness educates individuals on what is and isn't acceptable behaviours[10] and learning the tools to intervene safely and effectively allows individuals to act in reducing sexual violence[11]. The impact and effect have found to be long-lasting in changing attitudes towards behaviours and having more sympathy for victims of behaviours[12] encouraging individuals to act when witnessing events.

[9] Jewkes, Flood & Lang, 2014

[10] Fenton et. al, 2015

[11] Storer, Casey & Herrenkohl, 2016

[12] McMahon et. al, 2021

The introduction of Transport Safety Officers (TSOs), established by TfWM in 2021 and extended to 4 other areas of England with funding from Department of Transport in 2023, intended to enhance public safety and help prevent violence against women and girls on and around public transport. It is worth noting that the TSO introduction is part of the previous governments anti-social behaviour action plan rather than the national VAWG strategy. This DfT ASB pilot is due to run into early 2025, with evaluation being undertaken throughout. A full evaluation report will follow in late 2025.

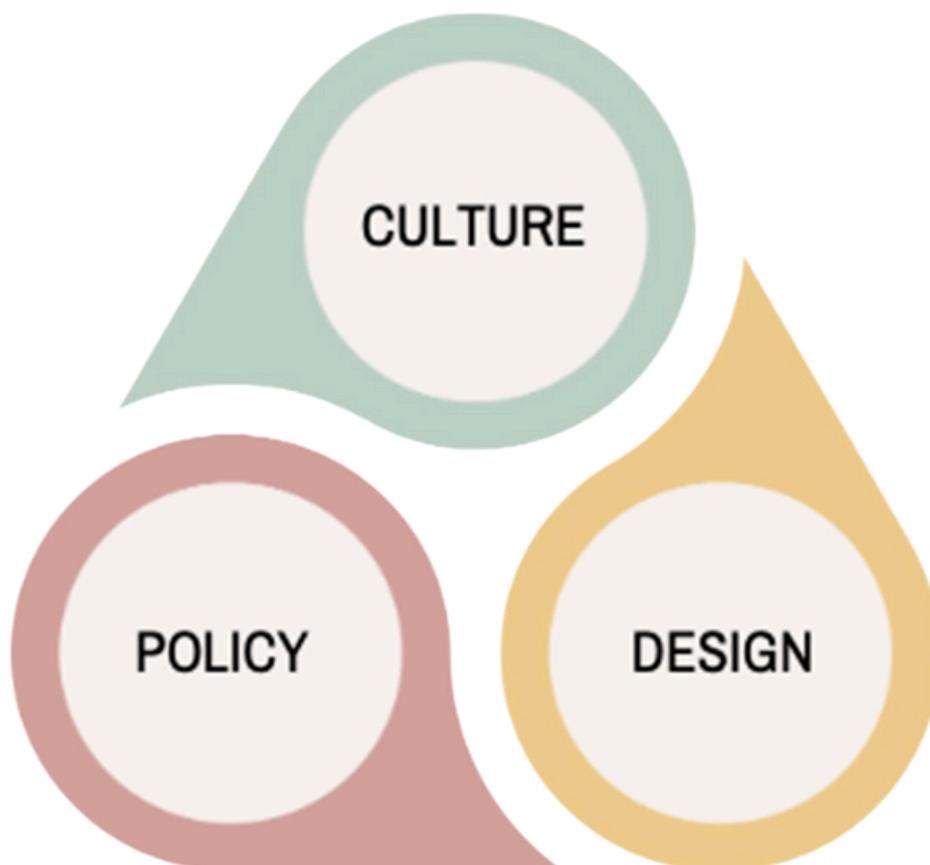


FINDINGS

Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) VAWG provision

While reviewing the current provision for tackling violence against women and girls by Transport for West Midlands (TfWM), it was important to assess a complete view of policy, process, and practice in order to identify key findings of strengths and successes and recommendations of areas that require strengthening, extending of further embedding.

TfWM is clearly leading the way in having a clear strategy to tackle VAWG on public transport, from its formation of a multi-stakeholder collective: 'Safer Travel Partnership' which includes British Transport Police, West Midlands Police and TfWM to the various initiatives to improve processes and policy as well as the attitudes and behaviours of staff, customers and passengers on its network. As the leads on the report produced for the Department for Transport (DfT), West Midlands Transport Champions defined key areas of improvement for all transport networks, some of which can clearly be seen as already implemented or beginning to be implemented on the TfWM network. What follows are the key findings of this report, focussing on the current provision of TfWM to tackle VAWG on its network, using the model of Culture, Policy & Design as visualised below:



FINDINGS

Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) VAWG provision

CULTURE

It is important to define the context of “culture” for the topic of women’s safety. Culture determines the attitudes and behaviour of everyone associated with an organisation, from leaders to colleagues to consumers. Crucially, the culture must be defined and upheld by everyone within an organisation in order to create a positive experience for all.

In respect of women and girls, the cultural attitudes to gender as well as beliefs and behaviours towards female individuals, are a determining factor in the prevalence and seriousness of gendered violence. Research on sexual violence illustrates that women’s experiences are part of a continuum which includes social and cultural notions of entitlement and power imbalance.[13]

Disrupting and correcting attitudes and behaviours considered “low-level”, such as sexist jokes, victim-blaming and gender stereotypes, plays an important part of creating and upholding a positive culture for women and girls as opposed to one where they are normalised, leading to further harm. To ensure awareness, understanding and situational safeguarding, a key component is the education and training to all staff within an organisation that is grounded in feminist research.

Safer Travel Partnership Pledge

The newly created Safer Travel Partnership Pledge illustrates TfWM’s commitment to improving culture for women and girls on their network:

“No woman or girl should have to live in fear of going out, traveling, or altering their normal routine. Safer Travel pledges to continue raising awareness, emphasising the importance of reporting unwanted behaviour, and educating individuals on acceptable conduct. We promise to listen to our passengers and ensure that our public transport network is safer, allowing women and girls to travel with confidence. Our staff will be well-trained and confident in their responsibility to help and support victims. Together, as a partnership, we pledge to work collaboratively to make the public transport network a safer and supportive environment for everyone.”



FINDINGS

Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) VAWG provision

CULTURE FINDING 1:

EDUCATION & TRAINING FOR STAFF



It is clear that a variety of education is being provided to staff within TfWM, in order to increase understanding and awareness of both women's experience and how to disrupt unwanted behaviours through being upstanders for TSOs through external partners Calico and Suzy Lamplugh Trust. Additionally, safeguarding education is provided for drivers on the network which is an essential element of safety for all. The provision of an education officer to work with young people as outreach in schools is a valuable and important position.

However, the education and training specifically on the subject of VAWG currently is somewhat ad-hoc and requires consistency in delivery, a wider breadth of participants and regular repeated sessions to fully embed the principles. A continued focus on the Education Officer role in respect of VAWG is needed, predominantly with engaging with young girls and boys about what is and isn't acceptable and the overlap with anti-social behaviour. The Education Officer is an excellent role which can be truly impactful if necessary training is extended and VAWG specific focus increased.

FINDINGS

Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) VAWG provision

CULTURE FINDING 2:

PUBLIC AWARENESS & COMMUNICATIONS

From reviewing survey responses from the recent Personal And Road Safety (PARS) tracking studies, it is clear that the Project Empower and “See Something Say Something” campaigns have raised awareness in female passengers, however the impact on men and the associated required behaviour change is notably weak. Crucially, 64% of those surveyed did not report incidents witnessed or experienced, with the most common reason cited as “felt that the incident was not serious enough”. This suggests that passengers are not reporting “lower level” behaviours which are known as pre-cursors to more serious offences and therefore the likelihood of disruption or reduction of these behaviours is low.

When reviewing the campaign assets, it is noticeable that the design of the infographic could well suggest that individuals should hesitate until the incident had reached a level of seriousness before it 1) should be reported and 2) will be dealt with by authorities. The design of the poster, with a series of behaviours set out on a linear continuum suggests a journey that a victim would travel, rather than demonstrating that any of those behaviours could occur to anyone at any point. It, inadvertently, suggests that there is a scale of harm as a hierarchy which could potentially dissuade a victim from reporting or believing they would be taken seriously when experiencing anything less than physical violence. These are two separate campaigns. See Something Say Something (81018) is for ASB and is reported into the Safer Travel ASB Office and Empower is a WMP/Safer Travel campaign for unwanted sexual behaviour with reports going straight through to the police.



FINDINGS

Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) VAWG provision

CULTURE FINDING 2: PUBLIC AWARENESS & COMMUNICATIONS

While the promotion of the process of reporting via Project Empower is key to encouraging to report to West Midlands Police, there is currently no campaign focussing on the behaviours of perpetrators of unwanted sexualised or gendered actions.

To ensure a clear zero-tolerance stance and to effect behaviour change on the network, perpetrators and other passengers require education through clear and visible communications of both positive and negative behaviours.

Application of the bystander to upstander model would strength this message and promote self-efficacy in all passengers, leading to reduced incidents of unwanted behaviours.



A continued focus for young people on anti-social behaviour, with modelled examples of what is and isn't tolerated, and inclusion of VAWG scenarios specifically to illustrate women and girls' experiences is required. The introduction of a Safer Travel card for passengers through which they can discreetly report an issue will assist further with reporting. Crucially, passengers must have access to easy methods of reporting, such as QR codes and text message facilities in order to assist in the process.

Inclusion of all the relevant communications and campaigns for women's safety in any passenger charter is **essential**.

FINDINGS

Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) VAWG provision

POLICY

While not every policy and procedure has been reviewed for this report, those supporting and strengthening the findings have been considered. While many separate VAWG strategies exist, from police to local authorities, it would be preferable for a shared strategy across all partners of the Safer Travel Partnership, in order to effectively implement initiatives, improve policy and procedure and align shared targets.

Nationally, under-reporting of VAWG crimes is a significant concern, with an estimated 5 out of 6 rapes going unreported, for example[14]. Faith and trust in police have unfortunately reduced amongst women following some recent events, however, reporting has increased due to a better awareness of VAWG and changes in law regarding specific crimes, e.g. coercive control. Nationally, stalking and harassment continues to be the most common crime reported by women to police and sexual harassment is a significant issue on public transport.

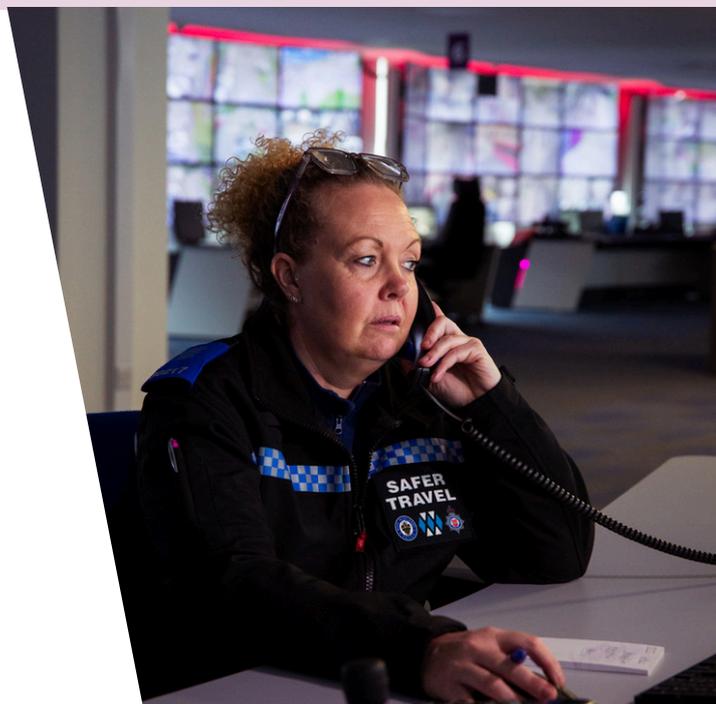
POLICY FINDING 1:

UNDER-REPORTING

It is clear that although incidents of unwanted sexual behaviours are witnessed and experienced by a large amount of passengers on the TfWM network (53%) [15] a lack of reporting means that the necessary data is not being gathered to ensure incidents are passed to authority bodies or victims receive support and assistance when required. When gathering the data via surveys such as PARS, the data currently is not sex disaggregated, meaning it is difficult to interpret and evidence women and girls' experiences.

[14] Rape Crisis England and Wales

[15] PARS, 2023-24



FINDINGS

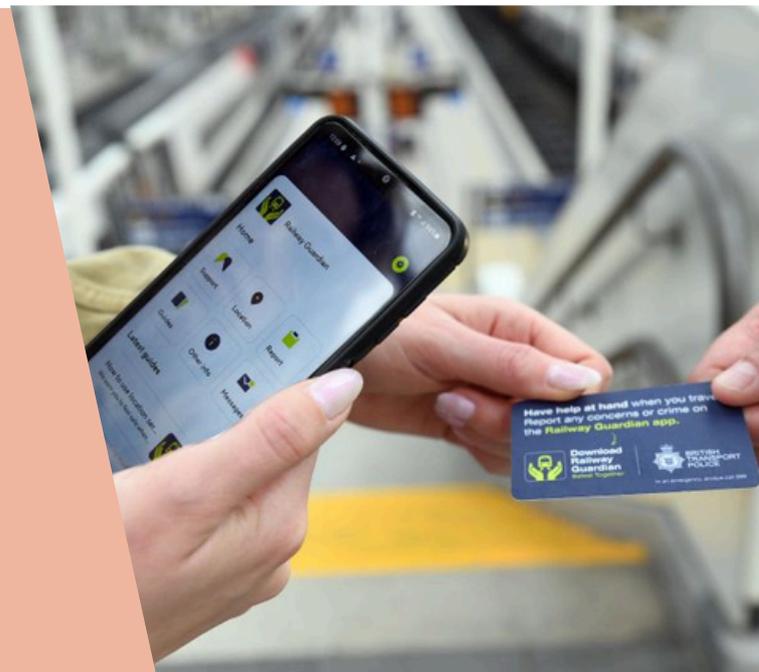
Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) VAWG provision

POLICY FINDING 1: UNDER-REPORTING

Furthermore, many survey responses cited “authorities do nothing” as a reason why they do not report, indicating a lack of faith in the police services to respond to and deal with incidents. Additionally, by using search terms of the types of reporting of incidents on the network, it is clear that many reports to Safer Travel include behaviours which do not meet the threshold of a crime. It is therefore imperative that the work begun in 2023 to identify trends of VAWG related harmful behaviours is tackled through focussed interventions in order that public awareness can be raised in how such behaviours are still reportable. It is important to highlight this to key stakeholders and services work at the Safer Travel Partnership and encourage further engagement from police with passengers to improve trust and faith in the system.

81018 service is an excellent strategy for increasing reporting, if under-publicised and promoted to passengers. The limited hours when the service is live restricts and limits the ability for all passengers to utilise this service, outside of office hours.

If possible, alignment with the British Transport Police 61016 and Travel Guardian app would significantly improve effectiveness and ease of reporting and gathering of data.



The Safer Travel cards are an opportunity to make more people aware, with swifter access to reporting through QR codes and the ability to ask for help discreetly directly from drivers as a reactive response. Increased reporting is needed to ensure that accurate data is gathered and scrutinised, evaluated against the types of behaviours and whether an increase or decrease can be measured.

FINDINGS

Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) VAWG provision

POLICY FINDING 2:

ENGAGEMENT

The Transport Safety Officers provide an excellent point of contact for passengers, visually demonstrating the importance of safety on the transport network. However, extension of their working hours and more female officers would naturally engage more women and girls and increase reporting rates.

In addition, women regularly report ‘natural surveillance’ as a major factor in feeling safer, therefore the inclusion of female officers in sight of passengers will have a direct impact on how safe women and girls feel when travelling and visiting stations. The ‘Time to Talk’ scheme encourages engagement with passengers and visitors and could specifically target women and girls with separate awareness campaigns within safe spaces at stations. Additionally, where peak times have been identified as requiring further intervention (e.g. school pupils in groups returning home) specific work in partnership with schools on inappropriate behaviours towards girls should be extended.

It is vital that the inclusion of the visibility of reporting processes and engagement with TSOs and/or police officers through the ‘Time to Talk’ opportunities are included in the Passenger Safety Charter as a gendered issue.



FINDINGS

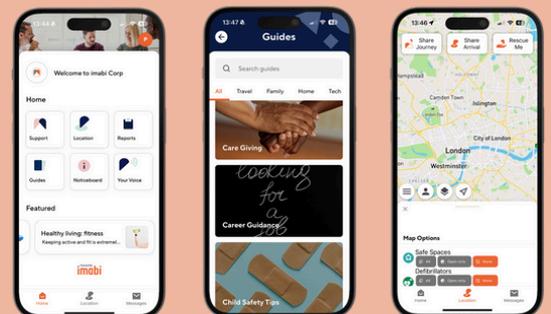
Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) VAWG provision

DESIGN FINDING 1:

SAFE SPACES

The creation of Safe Spaces has become a national focus in the work to prevent and reduce violence against women and girls. Several towns and cities now have Women's Safety Charters in place, with private businesses as well as public organisations pledging to prioritise women's safety and provide places of positive cultures and assistance to women and girls. In addition, the use of schemes such as Ask for Angela, providing assistance for women and girls experiencing unwanted sexual behaviours have been utilised to increase reporting and disrupt incidents.

A network of safe spaces can then be marked on interactive maps, including safety apps, such as imabi, which women and girls can use to plot safe journeys. The inclusion of transport locations such as bus, train and tram stations would greatly increase the public awareness of Safe Spaces, as well as ensure trained staff who are engaged with providing a positive culture and enabled to signpost victims to support services and reporting processes.



Any Passenger Charter must include a list or representation of Safe Spaces across the area in order that women and girls are aware of places they can utilise if needed or plan routes around accordingly. Best practice indicates engagement with women's groups (organised or informal) in order to use lived experiences to create safer spaces for women which also includes wayfinding. This can be achieved through women's safety walks and focus group sessions in references to perceptions of safety and the impact of built design.

FINDINGS

Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) VAWG provision

DESIGN FINDING 2:

TARGETED HOTSPOTS OF VAWG OFFENCES

West Midlands police data indicates that the majority of VAWG related incidents (60%) occur on buses, with the remainder occurring at stations (13%) and stops (27%) [16].

Following national patterns, incidents peak at times of busier social occasions, including Summer and Christmas months. The largest proportion of time when incidents occur is between 2pm and 8pm, reaching a peak at mid-afternoon.

Police data indicates particular bus services where most incidents are occurring which could be used to form a strategy of educational focus in neighbouring schools by the Education Officer, as well as increased engagement and surveillance of these areas by TSOs and police officers.



Although this is currently in place, limited resources results in gaps in data and inconsistency of support. Where incidents are commonly reported at specific bus stops, there is a necessity for public awareness communications to be present, illustrating behaviour change campaigns as well as reporting processes.

In addition, a consideration of gender-sensitive design where any new locations are created would assist in prevention of VAWG related incidents, focussing on visibility, lighting, and ability to provide natural surveillance.

[16] VAWG Related Police Data, 2023

RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the review of the current provision within Transport for West Midlands, it is obvious there is a strong will to create a safer network for all passengers across all forms of public transport. While current policy has focussed on physical passenger safety, there are gaps in both process and culture to tackle specific issues facing the diverse lived experience of women and girls on public transport in the West Midlands area.

Using the 'Policy, Culture and Design' matrix, a series of recommendations is suggested in order to strengthen the current provision, increase both perceptions and safety of women and girls and, therefore, improve the experience for all passengers. For each aspect, a breakdown of recommendations to achieve the current goals of the Safer Travel Partnership is given below in order to create a clear strategy and impact current practices, processes and policies.

This set of recommendations is intended to offer a starting point to fill some current gaps and extend provision and process to increase the safety of women and girls across the network. Further instruction on how to achieve these goals can be obtained through additional commissioned work with experts in each area.

STRAND 1: CULTURE

The culture of any organisation underpins the experience of both staff and customers in a space. A shared set of principles and values, along with a code of ethics, will establish the behaviours of individuals within a setting. However, a culture is upheld by both those in senior positions in collaboration with all employees. A top-down approach alone rarely ensures a positive culture is either established or sustained and, along with effective processes and policies, each individual must understand their role in upholding it. Ensuring individuals feel a sense of safety, trust and self-efficacy is crucial to a positive culture being embedded and protected by those within it. Externally, it is imperative that those accessing and using a service are aware of the standards of behaviour and attitude within an organisation to create and sustain faith and trust as part of a positive experience. Passengers, especially women and girls, using the network of Transport for West Midlands must have faith, not only in the logistical aspect of travel, but in the broader engagement with staff should they require help, advice or support before, during and after a journey. With so many women reporting avoiding public transport due to safety concerns, the way in which staff respond to this group of customers would remove barriers for those not accessing the network and improve the experience for current travellers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

STRAND 2: POLICY

Effective and efficient policies are critical in upholding culture, ensuring positive experiences for both employees and customers, and delivering outcomes for anyone working in the organisation or using the network. With underreporting of harmful sexual behaviours and a lack of faith and trust in authority within some communities (including women and girls), it is more crucial than ever that individuals who have negative experiences on transport can rely on efficient processes to assist with, investigate and resolve incidents to a high standard and suitable conclusion.

Additionally, robust and effective processes must be used in practice to ensure policies are living and breathing documents rather than pieces of paper left in a drawer. How incidents of harassment, grievances or complaints are dealt with by each member of an organisation has the ability to build or destroy faith and trust for women reporting their experiences. This includes staff being trained in how to avoid victim-blaming and how to respond positively to reporting of incidents, as well as being aware of social and cultural misperceptions and myths around sexual violence, domestic abuse and other behaviours associated with violence against women and girls which currently result in poor justice outcomes for victim-survivors.

In order to achieve an increase in reporting, passengers must be aware of easy, safe and effective processes and how they can access them. Promoting both current and upcoming tools for reporting is imperative in creating a sense of safety for women and girls on public transport. This includes (but is not limited to) awareness campaigns through posters and videos, and through continued community engagement, especially with women and girls as a distinct group. Educational settings and TfWM events are a crucial part of this communication but a better understanding of how isn't using the network in order to reach customers who may be avoiding public transport due to safety fears. Experience walks (safety walks for women) are an invaluable way to engage with female users to offer insights into real-time observations, views and perceptions and should be conducted during both daytime and after dark. Extending this further, future processes and practices should be co-created and designed in collaboration with women and girls in order to represent their views and ensure policies and practices are fit for purpose for specific groups. Where current data collection focuses on passengers' experiences, it does not go far enough in understanding those of women and girls and all future data must be sex-disaggregated to better understand these and inform future practice.

RECOMMENDATIONS

STRAND 3: DESIGN

The physical design of any space directly impacts how safe people feel within it. The build of a space: the use of lighting, furniture and fittings, wayfinding, access in and out, signage and much more all define the experience of those inhabiting it. For women and girls, this is particular pertinent, with many reporting inadequate design being a reason for avoiding spaces altogether or planning and undertaking longer, more complex journeys due to safety fears. When designing and creating any space in the public realm, the design aspect must always consider gender and how it intersects with individuals' response to the space.

It is often useful to employ teams within police services such as 'designing out crime' officers to audit a space and give recommendations as to how to improve the safety. However, this guidance would be for all users rather than a focus on the distinct experience of women and girls. Therefore, it is crucial that engagement with women and girls is undertaken to identify issues within existing spaces and inform the design and build of any future spaces. Women's walks (both daytime and after dark) are an excellent way to gather views and perceptions of female users to highlight current issues and inform planning going forward. This should then be used in any guidance to professionals involved in design, planning and build to ensure co-creation exists in practice.

When considering design of individual spaces, it is imperative that wayfinding and journeying are included in order to reduce the areas in which women report feeling most unsafe. Creating a network of 'safe spaces' across the network would allow women to pre-plan journeys, knowing there are places of refuge, help points and individuals who can provide assistance. Natural surveillance is one of the easiest ways we can make places feel safer: the more women and girls inhabit and use a space, the safer women and girls feel. Therefore, encouraging women and girls to use the network is of the utmost importance and design plays a critical role in achieving this. Signage for wayfinding is too often overlooked, especially when considering many passengers will be visiting the area for the first time and potentially be unclear about a route. Ensuring easy and effective journey planning would provide reassurance to many women using the network. Additionally, communications which signpost entrances and exists, to allow women and girls to identify easy and convenient routes in and out of an area is essential. All data collated from women's walks must be used to inform signage and design to strengthen this intervention.

TABLE OF RECOMMENDATIONS

CULTURE

RECOMMENDATION	SOLUTION 1	SOLUTION 2	SOLUTION 3
BEHAVIOUR CHANGE CAMPAIGN, DIRECTED AT PERPETRATOR BEHAVIOUR	Video/poster campaign utilised for public awareness of non-criminal behaviours (inc. intersectionality of women's experiences, ASB overlap)	Campaign must indicate the harm to victim/target, the nature of the harmful behaviour and modelled good behaviour through promotion of self-efficacy using bystander to upstander model	Promotion of campaign in all safe spaces throughout the network
SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT OF PUBLIC AWARENESS OF CURRENT INITIATIVES	Launch and continuation of the Safer Travel card scheme	Increased promotion of 81018 support number, including its thresholds for reporting	Amended poster campaign for reporting that clearly indicates process

POLICY

RECOMMENDATION	SOLUTION 1	SOLUTION 2	SOLUTION 3
ALIGN AND COMBINE CURRENT REPORTING METHODS, IF POSSIBLE, WITH BTP	Consider funding options to use/create reporting app for TfWM	Create video campaigns which promotes reporting tools	Ensure an internal policy guidance for non-criminal VAWG related behaviours
IMPROVE AND INCREASE ENGAGEMENT WITH COMMUNITY TO INCREASE REPORTING	Women's safety walks & focus groups (extended to young people)	Commit to 10 engagement events for co-creation opportunities for future interventions	Extend engagement & interventions with young people on peak times through school partnership

RECOMMENDATIONS

POLICY (contd.)

RECOMMENDATION	SOLUTION 1	SOLUTION 2	SOLUTION 3
EXTEND DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS FOR FURTHER UNDERSTANDING	Collect and analyse sex-disaggregated data to ensure women's experiences are understood	Consider new ways to gather views of those not using the network in order to identify barriers and concerns	Communicate outside of regular events and audiences with members of public to deepen data
GAIN WHITE RIBBON ACCREDITATION	Identify ambassadors within the organisation as male allies to lead on White Ribbon strategy	Organise a series of internal and external events communicating White Ribbon objectives with all staff and wider community	Gain White Ribbon accreditation for whole organisation

DESIGN

RECOMMENDATION	SOLUTION 1	SOLUTION 2	SOLUTION 3
CREATE SAFE SPACES ACROSS THE NETWORK FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS	Safe spaces training to ensure employees know how to create positive experiences for women	Advertise the network of safe spaces for journeying purposes	Review and evaluation of impact and effectiveness of safe space intervention
TARGETED FOCUS ON VAWG HOTSPOTS ACROSS NETWORK	Increased data collection from police data, CSEW, local data and reporting	Audit of physical build of key locations with specific reference to VAWG	Women's safety walks with TfWM team to collect distinct perceptions on design



KAREN WHYBRO

WOMEN'S SAFETY CONSULTANT

07733 291220

karenwhybro@gmail.com