



# **GENDER EQUALITY**



## **A ROADMAP FOR WALES**

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## Introduction

Wales has a strong legislative foundation for equalities but there is still work to do to address the inequality that continues to shape women's lives. Women face a pay penalty, dominate in low-paid, part-time work and continue to take on the majority of unpaid care. Violence and harassment remain features of society and in some cases, particularly online, appears to be getting worse. Many women, especially BAME, disabled and LGBT+ women, continue to experience discrimination and some remain at greater risk of poverty and isolation. The cost of this inequality is not just felt by women, but also the economy. Evidence suggest that £13.6bn could be added to Wales economy by 2028 if we achieved gender equality.<sup>1</sup>

Phase One looked at what is working well, what improvements could be made and mapped the policy and legislative framework in regards to gender equality in Wales.<sup>2</sup>

The recommendations from Phase One included:

- Developing a vision and shared language for gender equality in Wales
- A definition of what a feminist Welsh Government looks like including vision and principles
- A vision for gender equality with a focus on equality of outcome, not just equality of opportunity
- Meaningful conversation with stakeholders and the wider public to set tangible actions to advance gender equality

We have worked with both the Expert Advisory Group and the Steering Group and drawn on international examples to compile the vision for gender equality and the principles of a feminist government set out overleaf. Both these and the shared language referenced in Annex 1 have been key themes throughout the Advisory Group meetings, meetings with stakeholders and women's groups.

The Roadmap has been created specifically to highlight what stakeholders feel are the most pressing issues for both them and the women they support, setting out the medium term actions Welsh Government could take in order to make a difference to the women of Wales. These policy areas are not exhaustive and it should be recognised that each policy area,

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<sup>1</sup> Chwarae Teg (2019) *The Economic Value of Gender Equality*

<sup>2</sup> Chwarae Teg (2018) *Rapid Review of Gender Equality Phase One* [ONLINE] <https://www.cteg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/final-Rapid-Review-of-Gender-Equality-Phase-One.pdf> Accessed: May 2019

invariably interconnects with others. There will be the need to further consider other areas that are in Welsh Government's competence, and apply new ways of working to develop actions to tackle inequality.

## Women's Voice

The Roadmap therefore marks the start of a journey. While these recommendations will ensure we move forward, in isolation, they will not be enough to meet the ambition of the new vision for gender equality. This report must be viewed alongside the wider work of the Gender Equality Review, so that the necessary structural change can take place to ensure that equality and well-being are at the forefront of the Welsh Government's entire programme for government.

The work of the Review, including the Roadmap sets out how securing a more diverse representation across all aspects of Welsh life is key. There are a number of recommendations within the Roadmap that will ensure that women's voices are heard, but there is also a need for a renewed energy to delivering a gender-balanced Assembly, Welsh Government, local councils and ensuring better diversity among public appointments. It is also important that women are involved in the decision making around funding and designing services, for example funding and designing healthcare services so that women's health needs are recognised and better understood.

The success of the recommendations made here depend on a dramatic shift taking place in the tools and approaches taken by Welsh Government when they make decisions. The principles for feminist government set out below should be at the centre of this change.

## Vision for Gender Equality

A gender equal Wales means an equal sharing of power, resources and influence for all women, men and non-binary people. This is a vision where the government aims to create the conditions for equality of outcome for all.

We want a Wales where:

- All women can have economic independence and paid and unpaid work is valued
- Diverse women are fairly represented in positions of influence and empowered to play a meaningful role in society
- All women are free from discrimination and free to live their lives as they choose
- Men's violence against women stops
- All domestic violence and coercive behavior stops

- Existing power structures that disadvantage women are challenged
- All women, men and non-binary people enjoy equal rights and protections and equality of outcome

## Principles of a Feminist Welsh Government

A feminist Welsh Government:

- Is committed to equality of outcome for all women, men and non-binary people and actively works to drive cultural and structural change
- Pro-actively works to advance equality and remove the barriers against all women's participation in the economy, public and social life
- Puts a gender perspective at the heart of decision-making, resource and budget allocation
- Takes an intersectional approach to all of its work and ensures diversity of representation, participation and voice
- Is people-focused and collaborative, ensuring that all communities are meaningfully engaged in its work
- Is open, transparent and accountable and welcomes scrutiny through a gender lens
- Makes use of policy development and analysis tools to embed gender equality into all of its work and actively monitors progress towards equality using a robust evidence base
- Leads by example and supports other public bodies to take action to deliver equality

## Methodology

This report provides medium term recommendations to advance gender equality in Wales. It represents the issues felt most acutely by stakeholders engaged with during the course of Phase One and Two of the Gender Equality Review.

To do this we have carried out a range of activities including desk-based research, statistical analysis and significant stakeholder engagement. In line with the newly accepted vision for gender equality and principles for feminist government, it was essential that the Roadmap was shaped by the voices of women and took an intersectional approach.

Stakeholder engagement has been carried out through online tools, meeting with stakeholders across Wales and meeting with smaller groups of women who may not have historically engaged with gender equality research. The input of the Advisory Group, consisting of stakeholders from different organisations within the third sector, has been invaluable.

Through an online survey respondents were asked to rank the following policy areas according to their own priorities, in order to give us an early indication of what the priority areas were. The survey attracted 88 responses in total, plus one email response. The question asked was:

*As part of Phase 2 of the Gender Equality Review a Roadmap for gender equality will be produced. This will set out actions in a number of policy areas, which have the greatest potential to drive change. From the below list, please rank the policy areas that you believe should be prioritised for action to have the greatest impact in advancing gender equality.*

*We are particularly keen to understand which areas should be prioritised for groups that might be facing additional barriers as a result of race, sexuality, disability, socio-economic background or other protected characteristic.*

The policy areas listed were:

**Education and Skills**

**Economy**

**Employment**

**Childcare**

**Care – Paid and Unpaid**

**Violence, Harassment and Abuse**

**Housing**

**Representation**

**Health**

**Media and Arts**

**Transport**

**Criminal Justice**

**Social Security and Welfare Reform**

Recommendations from Phase One of the Gender Equality Review included the need to “begin a meaningful conversation with stakeholders and the wider public to set tangible actions to advance gender equality.”<sup>3</sup> With this in mind, a series of stakeholder events were held across Wales: 28 February 2019, 27<sup>th</sup> March 2019, 9 April 2019 and 9<sup>th</sup> May 2019.

A paper version of the online survey was used at the stakeholder events, in a group setting, with delegates being encouraged to consider the needs of their client groups and also their personal experiences. Discussions following this gave delegates the opportunity to feed back their thoughts on why these areas were important, who they were impacting the most and any potential solutions.

Similar discussions were held, in a more informal setting with several women’s groups, held on: 19<sup>th</sup> February 2019, 29<sup>th</sup> March 2019, 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019 and 15<sup>th</sup> May 2019. We met with women from Betws Family Centre, Pembrokeshire People First, ACE Port Talbot, sex workers in two parlours in Cardiff and SEEdS (Survivors Empowering and Educating Services) via Welsh Women’s Aid in Cardiff.

A full list of stakeholders can be found in Annex 2.

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<sup>3</sup> Chwarae Teg (2018) *Rapid Review of Gender Equality Phase One* [ONLINE] <https://www.cteg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/final-Rapid-Review-of-Gender-Equality-Phase-One.pdf> Accessed: May 2019

## Intersectionality

Women's lives are not just shaped by gender, but also by race, ethnicity, sexuality, disability, age, class and many other characteristics. It's therefore important that an intersectional lens is taken to all policy work. Embedding this lens has been a key priority across the work of the Gender Equality Review. A definition of intersectionality was developed at the outset of the Review, in conversation with stakeholders, and has remained at the core of the development of this Roadmap and the wider work of the Review.

*By Intersectionality we mean recognising the way in which power structures based on factors such as gender, race, sexuality, disability, class, age and faith interact with each other and create inequalities, discrimination and oppression. Crucially, it is about understanding the way in which characteristics, such as gender, race or class, can interact and produce unique and often multiple experiences and disadvantage in specific situations.*

*One single form of discrimination cannot and should not be understood in isolation from another. A truly intersectional approach ensures that this does not happen.*

## Rationale

Long standing structural inequality, stereotypes and discrimination mean that policies and programmes impact women differently to men. This inequality can often be more acutely felt by women who are from BAME communities, LGBT+ or are disabled. An intersectional equality lens therefore needs to be embedded into all of the Welsh Government's work in the long-term.

Due to the timescales of Phase Two, it has been necessary to focus on a smaller number of policy areas that stakeholders tell us have the biggest impact on women's lives. This has allowed us to have more in-depth discussions with stakeholders and ensure that the Roadmap is based upon a robust evidence-base. The policies that feature in the Roadmap are:

- 1. Health**
- 2. Education and Skills**
- 3. Poverty and Welfare Reform**
- 4. Employment**
- 5. Childcare**
- 6. Transport**
- 7. Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)**

## Health

Health is a policy area that has been raised in all of our formal stakeholder groups, as well as our conversations with women's groups. Access to good quality, easily accessible healthcare is a key tenet of a healthy, equitable society.

Good healthcare and in its turn, good health, has a truly transformative element. Without this it is impossible to thrive and it impacts upon education, employment, experiences of poverty, to name but a few.

## Education and Skills

Stakeholders emphasised that embedding gender equality into education from an early age is key to achieving it. The consultation on Relationships and Sexuality Education and how gender equality can be embedded into the new curriculum is broadly welcomed. Stakeholders agreed that Relationships and Sexuality Education is an extremely important addition to the curriculum, but that it must not stand alone, it should be contextualised throughout the whole curriculum in order to support the drive towards a significant culture change in wider society. Stakeholders considered good quality, non-gender stereotyped careers advice as

vital in ensuring that young people were encouraged to aspire to the career of their choosing, without being held back by traditional stereotypes of what constitutes a job for a woman or man. We know that segregation of men and women in different sectors and roles is a key factor leading to the gender pay gap, therefore investing in our education system and ensuring it is challenging stereotypical perceptions among young people must be central to action to advance equality.

## Poverty and Welfare Reform

Poverty is gendered. Women's experience and risk of poverty often differs from men and can take many forms, including in-work poverty, food poverty, period poverty and time poverty. Welfare reform is having a significant impact on poverty levels, therefore it is imperative that both issues are viewed together. Women have been significantly and adversely affected by welfare reform, and the continued roll-out of Universal Credit further increases the risk of women getting stuck in low pay and poverty. On average, 12 months after Universal Credit roll-out, food banks see a 52% increase in demand, compared to 13% in areas with Universal Credit for 3 months or less.<sup>4</sup>

Despite rising employment rates, work no longer appears to be a direct route out of poverty. Women hold 80% of all the part-time jobs in Wales, are more likely to be found in low paid work and are therefore more likely to be impacted by poverty.<sup>5</sup> They are also more likely to be economically inactive than men, 27.6% compared to 20.4% for men.<sup>6</sup> The persistent poverty rates in Wales are a national crisis that cannot be ignored. Women cannot reach their full potential if they are having to constantly worry about whether they will be able to feed themselves and their family. Tackling the root causes of poverty and supporting those who are living in poverty is a vital foundation to achieve equality.

## Employment

42% of women aged 16-64 are working part-time, compared to just 12.7% of men, with women generally clustered in low paid sectors. Women are more likely than men to be in different roles, sectors, occupations and hold part-time contracts. Women often have significantly more caring responsibilities which can affect the type of work they are able to take up. Most of our stakeholders referenced the gender pay gap as the most pressing

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<sup>4</sup> Trussell Trust (2018) *The next stage of Universal Credit: Moving onto the new benefit system and foodbank use* [ONLINE] <https://www.trusselltrust.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2018/10/The-next-stage-of-Universal-Credit-Report-Final.pdf> Accessed: June 2019

<sup>5</sup> Chwarae Teg (2018) *November 2018 Response to Fair Work Commission*

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

concern for women in Wales, however further exploration also brought through concerns about ways of working and access to wrap-around childcare.<sup>7</sup>

Women often have to ‘trade-off’ between flexibility and being able to progress their career which can leave them stuck in jobs far below their skills and qualifications level, often in low pay. Ensuring that workplaces do not create unnecessary barriers for women and are free from discrimination would ensure that women are able to fulfil their potential and significantly reduce their risk of poverty.

## Childcare

In order for women to access good employment opportunities or to access additional learning opportunities and avoid them being trapped working below their skill level and potentially at greater risk of poverty, women need good quality, easily accessible childcare. Stakeholder discussions around childcare were framed around the new childcare offer from Welsh Government. Stakeholders were keen to stress that the new offer is very welcome, but equally felt that there could be further improvements made in order for the offer to benefit more women, such as reducing the eligible age of the child and providing wrap-around solutions to fit women’s working patterns. Investing in the right childcare solution could therefore have a significant impact on women’s lives.

## Transport

Issues with transport were generally referenced in the more rural areas of Wales, where interconnectedness of services is less likely. Without good quality, safe and reliable public transport, women are unable to travel to access key services or travel further to work, which may allow them to earn higher rates of pay.

## Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence

Violence against women and girls can be both a cause and a consequence of gender inequality. There is a desire to make Wales the safest place in Europe to be a woman but violence and harassment continue to blight our society.

Both the advisory group and the survivors of domestic abuse that we met with as part of our stakeholder engagement, gave us valuable insight into the issues faced by women, not only those at crisis point, but their experiences of accessing support post-crisis. Stakeholders told

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<sup>7</sup> Chwarae Teg (2019) *State of the Nation* [ONLINE] [https://chwaraeteg.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/SOTN2019\\_english.pdf](https://chwaraeteg.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/SOTN2019_english.pdf) Accessed: June 2019

us that accessing services post-crisis can be particularly difficult for them, especially when trying to continue in their employment, during a period of profound re-adjustment and a need for financial stability.

Wales has set bold ambitions to be a world leader for gender equality. This simply cannot become a reality unless we eradicate gender-based violence and harassment.

## Health

### Access to specialist health services

Access to specialist services such as midwifery, abortion, miscarriage and other gynaecological services emerged as a critical concern among stakeholders. While women live longer, they face more health issues throughout their lives and there is often a lack of understanding of specific health issues experienced by women and girls.<sup>8</sup> This is an issue that affects women at all stages of their lives and can have a notable impact on their ability to engage fully in education, training, and employment and have negative impacts on overall well-being.

Stakeholders highlighted particular issues in continuity of midwifery care. Research from 2018 found that 81% of women rated seeing the same person among their top five priorities in relation to maternity and post-natal care.<sup>9</sup> The research found that women who were unable to develop a relationship with their named midwife experienced conflicting information, which was backed up by stakeholders we spoke to.<sup>10</sup>

Access to other gynaecological services were also highlighted as an issue. Research shows there are inequalities in accessing abortion services, with women facing long waiting lists and being forced to pay for private care.<sup>11</sup> The British Pregnancy Advisory Service reported that across Wales, 52% of women accessing an abortion through the BPA receive funding from NHS Wales compared to 98.9% across the UK.<sup>12</sup>

Accessing specialist miscarriage care, particularly care for recurrent miscarriages, is a further challenge with services often being 'out of area' or in England. In 2018 Fair Treatment for Women in Wales highlighted a number of issues with miscarriage care in Wales. With no dedicated recurrent miscarriage clinics in Wales, women can find pathways to achieving a referral to a dedicated clinic in England lengthy and complicated.<sup>13</sup> Miscarriage can cause

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<sup>8</sup> WEN Wales *Manifesto for Women and Girls* 2018

<sup>9</sup> Consultant Midwives Cymru (2017) *Your Birth – We Care: A Survey of Women's Views of Maternity Care in Wales 2017*. [ONLINE] <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-03/your-birth-we-care.pdf> Accessed: May 2019

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

<sup>11</sup> WEN Wales *Manifesto for Women and Girls* 2018

<sup>12</sup> Cited in WEN Wales *Manifesto for Women and Girls* 2018

<sup>13</sup> Fair Treatment for the Women of Wales (2018) *Making the Case for Better Miscarriage Care in Wales* [ONLINE] <http://www.ftww.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Miscarriage-report-FINAL.pdf> Accessed: May 2019

both significant physical symptoms as well as considerable psychological distress, which are only made worse by issues accessing services.<sup>14</sup>

Issues related to accessing services is felt even more acutely by those living in rural areas, or with additional needs or protected characteristics. For example, 42% of Deaf British sign language users in Wales say communication at their appointments is not adequate because they do not have an interpreter.<sup>15</sup> Women living in rural areas felt dissuaded from opting for a home birth due to concerns about the distance they would need to travel to their nearest hospital if there were complications and as yet there is no specialist gender identity clinic in Wales.<sup>16</sup>

### Equal treatment within health services

The issue of equal treatment and a lack of equalities awareness from health professionals came through particularly strongly from LGBT+ stakeholders. This echoes concerns outlined in 2015 by Stonewall who reported that 57% of health and social care practitioners in Wales with direct responsibility for patient care don't consider sexual orientation to be relevant to an individual's health needs.<sup>17</sup> This is despite previous and extensive research, including that carried out by Stonewall that clearly shows the significant impact on mental and physical health and wellbeing of sexual orientation. The report also stated that 75% of those staff holding patient-facing roles had not received training on health needs of LGB people, the rights of their same-sex partners or parents and perhaps most importantly, using inclusive language and practices for LGB people.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid

<sup>15</sup> WEN Wales *Manifesto for Women and Girls* 2018

<sup>16</sup> Stakeholder feedback during Phase Two of the GER

<sup>17</sup> Ibid

<sup>18</sup> Ibid

## Recommendations

1. We strongly echo the recommendation made by Fair Treatment for the Women of Wales to give serious consideration to “opening two dedicated recurrent pregnancy loss clinics, one in North Wales and one in South Wales.”<sup>19</sup>
2. Those health boards with elements of provision that aren’t already fully aligned with NICE guidelines on Miscarriage and Ectopic Pregnancy and that are working to make improvements, should have these improvements time bound and an explanation provided of whether these improvements will bring them up to the required standard
3. Steps should be taken to ensure that staffing levels are such that women have a maximum of two different midwives
4. All patient facing health care practitioners to receive mandatory training over the next two years on the health needs of LGBT+ people, the rights of their same-sex partners or parents and the importance of using inclusive language and practices for LGBT people
5. GP’s should not be able to refuse to prescribe hormone treatment recommended by gender identity specialists by stating they are “not confident”, if the requisite information has been provided by the gender identity clinic to support the prescription

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<sup>19</sup> Fair Treatment for the Women of Wales (2018) *Making the Case for Better Miscarriage Care in Wales* [ONLINE] <http://www.ftww.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Miscarriage-report-FINAL.pdf> Accessed: June 2019

## Measuring Progress

Our health recommendations at this time cannot be specifically measured within the current National Indicators.<sup>20</sup> However, there is some scope for expanding and strengthening National Indicators 1, Percentage of live single births with a birth weight of under 2,500g, and 24, Percentage of people satisfied with their ability to get to/access the facilities and services they need. These could be updated to include measurements of women seeking and receiving support around miscarriage and the percentage of LGBT+ people satisfied that they can access the facilities and services that they need, although the National Survey for Wales may not be the best way to measure this at present.<sup>21</sup> There is potential for Welsh Government to work with experts in the third sector to build an appropriate measuring system.

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<sup>20</sup> Welsh Government (2016) *How to measure a nation's progress? National Indicators for Wales Technical Document* [ONLINE] <https://gweddill.gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/161115-national-indicators-for-wales-technical-document-en.pdf> Accessed: June 2019

<sup>21</sup> Welsh Government (2019) *National Survey for Wales* [ONLINE] <https://gweddill.gov.wales/statistics-and-research/national-survey/content-materials/?lang=en> Accessed: June 2019

## Education and Skills

### Tackling Stereotypes in the new curriculum

Education plays an important role in the development of young people. Stakeholders stressed that all issues of gender stereotyping within the education system should be challenged in order to provide balance throughout that development.

The impact of gender stereotypes is clearly seen in the proportion of women studying STEM subjects and going into non-traditional sectors. While girls outperform boys on STEM subjects at GCSE, the drop-off rate is stark with just 7% of girls who study STEM GCSEs go on to qualify at Level Four in a core STEM area, compared to 24% of boys.<sup>22</sup> Apprenticeships are often a route into careers in non-traditional sectors and the gender imbalance is even more stark here, with women accounting for just 2.4% apprenticeship starts in construction, engineering and manufacturing in 2017/18.<sup>23</sup> This imbalance continues into employment and is a known contributing factor to the gender pay gap.

Research tells us that “teachers, in some cases, become role models and a source of support for young women, influencing their career choices.”<sup>24</sup> Teachers must therefore be supported to understand how their own unconscious bias and inadvertent stereotyping can influence young women’s long-term goals and aspirations.

Given the important role that teachers play, providing them with the right training and support to recognise and challenge stereotypes is key. This is not necessarily being provided through current teacher training. An evaluation of the Fair Foundations programme in March 2015, which provided training and support to teachers and developed equality strategies for schools, found that after taking part in the programme, teachers had a far better understanding of the impact that gender stereotyping has on future career aspirations<sup>25</sup>

To be most effective, efforts to tackle gender stereotyping needs to be delivered through a whole school approach. The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) stated

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<sup>22</sup> Techniquet, Facts about Women in STEM, 2018 <https://www.techniquet.org/blog/surprising-facts-women-stem-wales> / WISE Statistics cited in GI-Assessment *Hidden talents: the overlooked children whose poor verbal skills mask potential* 2017 [https://www.gi-assessment.co.uk/media/169573/gi1842\\_hidden-talents-report.pdf](https://www.gi-assessment.co.uk/media/169573/gi1842_hidden-talents-report.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> Welsh Government data cited in Hagedyck, D. “The latest analysis on women in apprenticeships: Supporting women into work and diversifying the workplace” Blog Post <http://www.learningandwork.wales/2019/02/21/the-latest-analysis-on-women-in-apprenticeships-supporting-women-into-work-and-diversifying-the-workplace/> Accessed 27.06.19

<sup>24</sup> Chwarae Teg (2018) *Bright: A report exploring young women’s career aspirations*

<sup>25</sup> Chwarae Teg (2015) *Evaluation of the development, delivery and impact of the Fair Foundations programme*

that “to stop the perpetuation of gender inequality through schools as well as to address its existence in society at large, initiatives to promote gender equality in and through schools are imperative. Schools have enormous potential to effect change in gender relations, views and practices vis-a-vis gender, and create a gender-sensitive and gender-equal generation of men and women.”<sup>26</sup>

## Early access to good quality, tailored careers advice

Concerns were raised that the careers advice currently offered to young people is inadequate. Stakeholders reported that gender stereotyping within careers advice is a significant barrier to young people and that it only serves to steer young people into typically gendered roles. Chwarae Teg’s Bright report found that one of the main criticisms of careers advice services from young women and girls, was the “traditional and conventional approach to young people’s career aspirations”.<sup>27</sup> The EHRC’s *Is Wales Fairer?* report similarly highlighted this as a critical issue, stating that careers guidance and work experience should “tackle gender norms, expectation and stereotypes to challenge gender segregation”.<sup>28</sup>

Confidence was also a key theme, particularly in terms of encouraging girls to consider careers in male dominated sectors such as STEM. According to the report *Work It Out*, 54% of young women and 39% of young men felt they lacked confidence and many of the respondents also felt they “had low self-confidence and low self-esteem.”<sup>29</sup> Stakeholders expressed support for an increase in meaningful work and volunteer placements as part of the curriculum to provide young people with the experience of work and in turn build their confidence.

## Childcare whilst studying

Although there are different options available to parents who wish to access training or education, such as the Childcare Grant via Student Finance Wales, funding from Payments, Childcare and Employment (PACE) and Flying Start (an early years programme), there are many conditions that parents have to navigate in order to access these. PACE offers amongst other things, funded childcare for parents who are 16-24 and not in education, employment or training (NEET) or parents who are over 25 years old and not in employment.<sup>30</sup> Although

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<sup>26</sup> London School of Economics and Political Science (2019) *Promoting gender equality in/through schools - examples to learn from* [ONLINE] <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/internationaldevelopment/2019/02/12/promoting-gender-equality-in-through-schools-examples-to-learn-from/> Accessed: June 2019

<sup>27</sup> Ibid

<sup>28</sup> Equality and Human Rights commission (2018) *Is Wales Fairer? The State of Equality and Human Rights 2018* [ONLINE] <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/is-britain-fairer-2018-is-wales-fairer.pdf> Accessed: June 2019

<sup>29</sup> Ibid

<sup>30</sup> Chwarae Teg (2019) *A review of Childcare Policies in Wales*

the new childcare offer from Welsh Government provides 30 hours of free childcare to parents who are employed or self-employed, residing permanently in Wales and starts from the term after the child's third birthday until given a place in full time education, stakeholders felt that being unable to access the childcare offer in order to retrain or improve qualifications is a significant barrier to women in particular.

## Relationships and Sexuality Education

We welcome the acceptance in principle of the recommendations of the Sex and Relationship Expert Panel, in particular that appropriate specialised learning pathways for Relationships and Sexuality Education, be developed for initial teacher education and existing workforce and look forward to their full implementation, following the recently closed consultation.<sup>31 32</sup>  
<sup>33</sup> There are previously produced resources, or projects with this existing expertise, such as Spectrum, currently funded by Welsh Government and who can support Welsh Government in considering how to embed this learning throughout the new curriculum in an ongoing and meaningful way. Spectrum supports schools, including primary and secondary level, in conjunction with teachers, to “deliver lessons and promote understanding of health relationships and gender inequality.”<sup>34</sup> However currently there is no requirement for schools to access this support and therefore it often becomes a piecemeal undertaking.

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<sup>31</sup> [ONLINE] <http://record.assembly.wales/Plenary/4985#A43520> Accessed: June 2019

<sup>32</sup> Welsh Government (2019) *Consultation document, Draft Relationships and Sexuality Education Guidance* [ONLINE] <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2019-02/consultation-document-draft-relationships-and-sexuality-education-guidance%20.pdf> Accessed: June 2019

<sup>33</sup> Welsh Government (2019) *Draft Guidance, Relationships and Sexuality Education* [ONLINE] [https://gov.wales/draft-guidance-relationships-and-sexuality-education?\\_ga=2.247538375.1387171979.1560945031-782398995.1540372736](https://gov.wales/draft-guidance-relationships-and-sexuality-education?_ga=2.247538375.1387171979.1560945031-782398995.1540372736) Accessed: June 2019

<sup>34</sup> Chwarae Teg (2019) *Gender Inclusive Education Report*

## Recommendations

1. All teachers and career professionals to receive gender-awareness training in their initial training, to be continuously reinforced and updated so they can recognise the harm stereotyping can cause, including their own unconscious biases
2. Welsh Government should closely monitor and report on the action they are taking to increase the numbers of girls studying STEM subjects and put targets in place for apprenticeship providers to redress the imbalances across frameworks.
3. Careers advice should be tailored to the individual and start early in the education system to ensure that both girls and boys receive careers advice that is specific to them and not to their gender. Careers Wales should report on the actions they are taking to achieve this change
4. Careers Wales should publish annual progress reports outlining the impact of their work experience programme and activities to engage businesses. This reporting must provide disaggregated data about who is benefitting, measure whether there is any gender segregation and consider the impact on young people's confidence and subject/ career choices.
5. RSE needs to be delivered by those with specialist training and expertise, rather than it being an added-on responsibility for all teachers.
6. Promoting healthy relationships within the confines of RSE is to be welcomed, however this should be embedded across the whole curriculum in order to provide contextual reference. This will help ensure that school resources, teacher language and behaviour, and behaviour of students do not undermine efforts to reduce inequality

## Measuring Progress

There are no specific National Indicators that would currently be able to measure progress of these recommendations. However, schools could play a key role in measuring satisfaction with careers guidance. Careers Wales could also be encouraged to collect and publish more evidence to map the gender breakdown of those they support and their destinations, and report this in their monitoring to Welsh Government. Recommendation Two above would also strengthen progress measurements.

## Poverty and Welfare Reform

### Women's experience of poverty

We know that women experience poverty in different ways to men. Our stakeholders told us that with women still bearing the vast majority of caring responsibilities, time poverty can be a key issue for them. This can then have a cumulative impact on their ability to earn a wage capable of sustaining their families financially. "Socio-economic disadvantage and deprivation is [also] strongly linked to poorer outcomes in education and health."<sup>35</sup> The report by the UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, stated that in the UK "single parents in the bottom 20 per cent of income will have lost 25 per cent of their 2010 income by 2021–2022 as a result of changes to tax and benefit policies, and the poverty rate for children in single-parent households will jump to a shocking 62 per cent by then."<sup>36</sup>

In-work poverty was cited as a particular concern among stakeholders. Women are keenly feeling the effects of austerity measures put in place by the UK government over the last decade, with many families feeling that their finances are precarious at best. With 90% of single parent households being female and 46% of these households living in relative poverty in the period 2014-2015 to 2016-2017, women are being impacted at a far higher cost than men.<sup>37</sup>

Poverty can have a devastating effect on both BAME and disabled women in Wales. Chwarae Teg's *State of the Nation* report states that 43.8% of BAME women and 48.5% of disabled women are economically inactive.<sup>38</sup> A report by Runnymede Trust stated that "BME women have, on average, borne the brunt of cuts to benefits and benefitted the least from the tax cuts introduced since 2010. There is a clear compounding effect of gender and racial inequalities that extends across the income distribution, but is felt most acutely at the lowest incomes for Black and Asian women. This has had significant implications for their incomes and has percolated through to their experiences of daily life."<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Equality and Human Rights Commission (2018) *Is Wales Fairer – Summary Report 2018*

<sup>36</sup> United Nations (2019) *Report of the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights* [ONLINE] <https://undocs.org/A/HRC/41/39/Add.1> Accessed: June 2019

<sup>37</sup> Chwarae Teg (2019) *State of the Nation 2019* [ONLINE] [https://chwaraeteg.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/SOTN2019\\_english.pdf](https://chwaraeteg.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/SOTN2019_english.pdf) Accessed: June 2019

<sup>38</sup> Ibid

<sup>39</sup> Runnymede Trust and Women's Budget Group with RECLAIM and Coventry Women's Voices (2017) *Intersection inequalities: The impact of austerity on Black and Minority Ethnic women in the UK* [ONLINE] <https://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/PressReleases/Correct%20WBG%20report%20for%20Microsite.pdf> Accessed: June 2019

## Welfare Reform

It is estimated that 80% of the savings that have been made from welfare and tax changes since 2010 have come from women's pockets.<sup>40</sup> Of the £26 billion of welfare cuts, £22 billion of them were borne by women.<sup>41</sup> When discussing welfare reform with stakeholders, the vast majority cited Universal Credit as one of the main concerns facing their service users. UK government policies are fuelling divisions – Universal Credit, its administration and the associated reductions of tapers are having a far more punitive effect on women than men.

The EHRC reported that cuts to Universal Credit work allowances “have the largest negative households in deciles 2 and 3 of the income distribution...These are mostly households with one adult in work but on relatively low earnings (often working part-time).”<sup>42</sup> As women make up the vast majority of part time workers, the impact is likely to be greater. Although results by household ethnicity for Wales were too small to produce reliable results, the report also states that “the uprating freeze, the two-child limit and the cuts to UC work allowances have an especially large impact on Pakistani and Bangladeshi households”.<sup>43</sup>

In one of the women's groups we spoke to, some of the members stated that they were so concerned about the negative effects of Universal Credit that they were trying to avoid any kind of change of circumstance to delay their move to the benefit, although they were resigned to the fact that eventually they would have no choice.

The recent publication by the United Nation's Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights was damning in its assessment of Universal Credit, stating that “a system supposedly designed to bring major and much-needed improvements is fast falling into Universal Discredit.”<sup>44</sup> The report also highlighted the rigidity of the assessment period, the difficulty in obtaining direct to landlord payments and the 5 week waiting period for the first payment.<sup>45</sup> The report also states that the policy of making single payments to an entire

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<sup>40</sup> Chwarae Teg (2019) *State of the Nation 2019* [ONLINE] [https://chwaraeteg.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/SOTN2019\\_english.pdf](https://chwaraeteg.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/SOTN2019_english.pdf) Accessed: June 2019

<sup>41</sup> WEN Wales et al (2018) *Equality for Women and Girls in Wales: Our Manifesto, 2018* [ONLINE] [http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/LR\\_11509-WEN-Manifesto-20pp-A4-English.pdf](http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/LR_11509-WEN-Manifesto-20pp-A4-English.pdf) Accessed: May 2019

<sup>42</sup> EHRC (2018) *The cumulative impact of tax and welfare reforms* [ONLINE] <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/cumulative-impact-assessment-report.pdf> Accessed: July 2019

<sup>43</sup> Ibid

<sup>44</sup> United Nations (2019) *Report of the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights* [ONLINE] <https://undocs.org/A/HRC/41/39/Add.1> Accessed: June 2019

<sup>45</sup> Ibid

household “can entrench problematic and often gendered interpersonal dynamics”.<sup>46</sup> Although the report acknowledges that there a commitment has been made to ensure payments go to the main carer in a household, it posits that this does not go far enough. It also holds that single parents of whom, 90% are women are “more than twice as likely to experience persistent poverty as any other group.”<sup>47</sup> Of Universal Credit recipients, single parents make up a third of those who have had their benefits capped.

While some of the issues with Universal Credit are caused by it’s design, the way in which it is administered further impacts on women and has been linked to increased hardship and risk of poverty. The 2016 Scotland Act has allowed the Scottish Government to make a number changes to the way Universal Credit I administered in order to mitigate the impacts on women, including; adjustment of payment schedule to fortnightly upon request after the first assessment period and to allow direct payments to landlords, without extenuating circumstances.<sup>48</sup> We are therefore pleased that both the National Assembly Equalities Committee and the Welsh Government are exploring devolving administration powers over social security benefits such as those developed within the 2016 Scotland Act.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> United Nations (2019) *Report of the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights* [ONLINE] <https://undocs.org/A/HRC/41/39/Add.1> Accessed: July 2019

<sup>47</sup> Ibid

<sup>48</sup> Ruth Patrick (2017) *Scotland is changing the way universal credit is paid to help people budget* [ONLINE] <http://theconversation.com/scotland-is-changing-the-way-universal-credit-is-paid-to-help-people-budget-85135> Accessed: June 2019

<sup>49</sup> Ibid

## Recommendations

1. We recommend that Welsh Government put in place a comprehensive strategy for tackling poverty that is ambitious, time bound and measurable. This strategy should be developed with an intersectional equalities lens, mainstream gender and equality into all actions and, where necessary, develop targeted action to support groups at greater risk of poverty including women, BAME communities and disabled people.
2. Welsh Government should explore new ways of collecting and publishing poverty data that support analysis through a gendered and intersectional equalities lens
3. Welsh Government must progress options to devolve the administration of social security as a matter of urgency and ensure that consideration includes the potential to transformational impact these levers could have for vulnerable groups in Wales, including women as well as considering financial implications for WG

## Measuring Progress

Currently National Indicators 18, Percentage of people living in households in income poverty relative to the UK median, and 19, Percentage of people living in households in material deprivation, are the main indicators that measure poverty in Wales.<sup>50</sup> To be effective, poverty measures should take a more holistic approach and incorporate elements of poverty that can be gendered, such as period poverty, time poverty, access to leisure and education. It is also important that poverty statistics be collected on an individual basis rather than by household, this would enable a gendered and intersectional lens to be used to measure the impact of poverty on women. Statistics that could be useful to monitor around Universal Credit roll out across Wales are behavioural based, i.e. increases in rent arrears, foodbank use, which member of the household is Universal Credit being paid to and what are the barriers in accessing the benefit.

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<sup>50</sup> Welsh Government (2016) *How to measure a nation's progress? National Indicators for Wales Technical Document* [ONLINE] <https://gweddill.gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/161115-national-indicators-for-wales-technical-document-en.pdf> Accessed: June 2019

## Employment

Stakeholders identified three specific areas where they felt that Wales could do better in terms of addressing gender inequality within the employment sector: different ways of working, addressing the gender pay gap and discrimination. We know that women tend to cluster in low-paid, part-time jobs, often because these are seen as more flexible for women with caring responsibilities. We also know that BAME women and disabled women are far less likely to be economically active, face greater discrimination and are more likely to be impacted by multiple layers of barriers.

### Ways of working

Stakeholders discussed the impact and implications of the gender pay gap on women and its potential causes, with a focus on different ways of working. It was felt that flexible and agile working is key to women being able to participate fully and productively within the workplace. We know that there are many benefits, both to businesses and employees when modern working practices such as agile and flexible working are embedded into an organisation's DNA. These include greater staff satisfaction; increased productivity; larger recruitment pool; better staff retention; reduced overheads and reduced absenteeism.<sup>51</sup> In addition staff see an improved work/life balance and are better able to respond to caring responsibilities, something that we know impacts women acutely.<sup>52</sup>

### Gender Pay Gap

Although the stakeholders generally welcomed gender pay gap reporting requirements, the consensus was that the threshold for reporting this should be lowered. While this is a UK Government policy, public bodies in Wales are required to publish pay gap analysis under the Welsh Specific Equality Duties. Compliance has been patchy to date. We welcome the project undertaken between Knowledge and Statistics within Welsh Government and public bodies that will ensure that Public Sector Equality Duty data will be published openly and accessible in order to provide a single access point. However this does not negate the need for public bodies to ensure such data is published in a clear and accessible part of their own website, to ensure the information is seen more widely and not only by those specifically looking for the information.

The majority of businesses in Wales are SMEs, who are not currently covered by the reporting regulations. Our response to the Fair Work Commission, recommended that SME's be

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<sup>51</sup> Chwarae Teg (2016) *Research into Perceptions of Modern Working Practices*

<sup>52</sup> Ibid

encouraged to provide gender pay gap statistics, to improve transparency and provide a more comprehensive picture of the gender pay gap in Wales.

## Discrimination

Discrimination in employment adversely affects BAME and disabled women at a far higher rate than white or non-disabled women. One women's group were worried that despite applying for multiple jobs for which they were amply skilled, they were not getting past the application stage and that they may be being discriminated against because their names were not typically British or Welsh. As the CEDAW Shadow (2019) report found, "BME and disabled women face multiple barriers, often experiencing discrimination at every stage of the recruitment process".<sup>53</sup> The report also found that disabled women were likely to be lower paid than non-disabled people and less likely to be employed, along with working fewer hours than non-disabled women.<sup>54 55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> WEN Wales (2019) *CEDAW Wales Shadow Report* [ONLINE] <http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Wales-UN-CEDAW-shadow-report-UK-Jan-2019-WEN-Wales-1.pdf> Accessed: May 2019

<sup>54</sup> Ibid

<sup>55</sup> Chwarae Teg (2019) *State of the Nation 2019* [ONLINE] [https://chwaraeteg.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/SOTN2019\\_english.pdf](https://chwaraeteg.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/SOTN2019_english.pdf) Accessed: May 2019

## Recommendations

1. All public bodies should publish their gender pay gap analysis in a clear and accessible part of their website alongside collating and publishing ethnicity and disability pay gaps, this would be considered best practice and reflects discussions in relation to UK reporting regulations
2. A media campaign from Welsh Government, in conjunction with Business Wales, should be produced, highlighting the benefits of flexible and agile working, targeting businesses in Wales and showcasing examples of good practice
3. Welsh Government should make it a requirement that all businesses in Wales, accessing business support should provide gender pay gap information, in line with that of public bodies
4. Now that the Fair Work Commission has reported, Welsh Government should revisit the Economic Contract and associated Calls to Action to ensure that all businesses accessing funding demonstrate a commitment to advancing equality for all, particularly those that we know to be at the most disadvantage in the labour market such as disabled or BAME women. This is in line with the Commission's definition that identified that principles of equality and inclusion underpin all other facets of Fair Work.

## Measuring Progress

National Indicator 17, gender pay difference, currently uses ONS data to measure the gender pay gap.<sup>56 57</sup> This data, although disaggregated by gender lacks an intersectional lens and does not allow for full disaggregation by protected characteristics although we welcome the recent publication of ethnicity pay gap data in July 2019.<sup>58</sup> The technical guidance published in 2016 also stated that this should measure median full-time earnings only. By not including data for part-time workers a significant factor in the gender pay gap, the part-time pay penalty, is not being captured.

The *Fair Work Report* has recommended that Indicator 16, the percentage of people in employment who are on permanent contracts and who earn more than 2/3 of the UK median wage, be “replaced with one focused on the proportion of workers in Wales paid at or above the Welsh Living Wage”.<sup>59</sup> It also recommends removing the indicator for job satisfaction and including an indicator for trade union recognition and collective bargaining. Questions related to fair work are also being developed to be added into the National Survey for Wales. Any new indicators that are developed following the Fair Work report, must be disaggregated by gender and other protected characteristics wherever possible.

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<sup>56</sup> Welsh Government (2016) *How to measure a nation's progress? National Indicators for Wales Technical Document* [ONLINE] <https://gweddill.gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/161115-national-indicators-for-wales-technical-document-en.pdf> Accessed: June 2019

<sup>57</sup> Office for National Statistics (2018) *Gender Pay Gap in the UK: 2018* [ONLINE] <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/bulletins/genderpaygapintheuk/2018> Accessed: June 2019

<sup>58</sup> Office for National Statistics (2019) *Ethnicity Pay Gaps in Britain 2018* [ONLINE] <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/articles/ethnicitypaygapsingreatbritain/2018> Accessed: July 2019

<sup>59</sup> Fair Work Commission (2019) *Fair Work Wales* [ONLINE] <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-05/fair-work-wales.pdf> Accessed: June 2019

## Childcare

### Access to childcare

Throughout all of our engagement with stakeholders, access to good quality and affordable childcare was regularly highlighted as a key barrier to women entering, remaining and progressing in work. There are multiple factors affected by the disproportionate childcare responsibilities shouldered by women, such as health, poverty and women's ability to enter and progress in work.<sup>60 61</sup>

Although the new childcare offer was widely welcomed by stakeholders, there remain concerns about availability and the current eligibility criteria.

The review of childcare policies in Wales carried out by Chwarae Teg highlighted that "one of the significant points often missing in the childcare discussion are the childcare needs of parents with school age children. Parents may need wraparound childcare before school, after school and during the holidays."<sup>62 63</sup> There was also a consensus that accessing good quality, affordable childcare can be a 'postcode lottery'. The Family and Childcare Trust Childcare Survey reported that "only half of local authorities in England and Wales have enough childcare for parents working full time."<sup>64</sup> It also reports that 40% of local authorities do not "have enough early education for three and four year olds eligible for the universal free entitlements."<sup>65</sup> Availability of childcare for disabled children decreased by 11% between 2014 and 2015.<sup>66</sup>

Parents who work irregular hours often find that sourcing childcare that is flexible enough to fit around their working patterns can be very difficult. Chwarae Teg's Childcare Briefing, published in August 2018 stated that "provision between 8am-5pm is often the norm and is

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<sup>60</sup> WEN Wales et al, Equality for Women and Girls in Wales: Our Manifesto, 2018. [ONLINE] [http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/LR\\_11509-WEN-Manifesto-20pp-A4-English.pdf](http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/LR_11509-WEN-Manifesto-20pp-A4-English.pdf) Accessed: June 2019

<sup>61</sup> WEN Wales (2019) *CEDAW Wales Shadow Report* [ONLINE] <http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Wales-UN-CEDAW-shadow-report-UK-Jan-2019-WEN-Wales-1.pdf> Accessed: May 2019

<sup>62</sup> Chwarae Teg (2019) *Review of Childcare Policies in Wales*

<sup>63</sup> Ibid

<sup>64</sup> Family and Childcare Trust (2018) *Childcare Survey* [ONLINE] <https://www.familyandchildcaretrust.org/sites/default/files/Resource%20Library/Childcare%20Survey%202018%20Family%20and%20Childcare%20Trust.pdf> Accessed: June 2019

<sup>65</sup> Ibid

<sup>66</sup> WEN Wales (2019) *CEDAW Wales Shadow Report* [ONLINE] <http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Wales-UN-CEDAW-shadow-report-UK-Jan-2019-WEN-Wales-1.pdf> Accessed: June 2019

not sufficient.”<sup>67</sup> It also went on to say that “to successfully support women in work, a childcare system must address existing challenges and be affordable, flexible and available at times and locations that support working parents, including wraparound provision”<sup>68</sup>

## Access to information

Stakeholders told us that accessing clear information in one place about accessibility, providers, cost and eligibility was essential for them, at the moment they feel that information is hard to come by and difficult to understand.

## Parental Leave

It was also felt that parental leave should be shared equally and that remuneration should be equalised with maternity pay. Research tells us that uptake of shared parental leave by men has been low with only 250 men in Wales in 2016/17 accessing this.<sup>69</sup> Whilst Shared Parental Leave is a UK Government policy, we believe that Welsh Government should support calls for the UK government to take action to evaluate and improve the current scheme.

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<sup>67</sup> Chwarae Teg (2018) *Briefing Paper: Childcare Briefing* [ONLINE] <https://chwaraeteg.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Briefing-Paper-childcare-Aug-2018.pdf> Accessed June 2019

<sup>68</sup> Chwarae Teg (2018) *Briefing Paper: Childcare Briefing* [ONLINE] <https://chwaraeteg.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Briefing-Paper-childcare-Aug-2018.pdf> Accessed June 2019

<sup>69</sup> WEN Wales et al, *Equality for Women and Girls in Wales: Our Manifesto*, 2018. [ONLINE] [http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/LR\\_11509-WEN-Manifesto-20pp-A4-English.pdf](http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/LR_11509-WEN-Manifesto-20pp-A4-English.pdf) Accessed: June 2019

## Recommendations

1. Changes should be made to the current Childcare Offer to lower the eligible age to at least 2, if not to the end of parental leave, to better support parents back to work. Consideration should be given to how the Offer can reach those who need it most, including re-evaluation of the household cap.
2. Welsh Government should produce a comprehensive, easy to use and accessible online hub that provides information on:
  - a. Who is eligible for the offer
  - b. How to access eligibility checks
  - c. Details on the two elements of the offer and how local authorities can be contacted in relation to the early years provision
  - d. A list of registered providers able to offer both elements of the offer<sup>70</sup>
3. Welsh Government should open up dialogue with the UK government to call for an increase in paternity leave pay “to 90% of full pay and give fathers 12 weeks of non-transferable paternity leave to enable both parents to take their full share and the opportunity to care for their children.”<sup>71</sup>
4. Public bodies should pay Shared Parental Leave at an enhanced rate and publish their parental leave policies

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<sup>70</sup> Chwarae Teg (2018) *Briefing Paper: Childcare Briefing, 2018* [ONLINE] <https://chwaraeteg.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Briefing-Paper-childcare-Aug-2018.pdf> Accessed June 2019

<sup>71</sup> WEN Wales et al, *Equality for Women and Girls in Wales: Our Manifesto, 2018*. [ONLINE] [http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/LR\\_11509-WEN-Manifesto-20pp-A4-English.pdf](http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/LR_11509-WEN-Manifesto-20pp-A4-English.pdf) Accessed: June 2019

## Measuring Progress

National Indicator 24, the percentage of people that are satisfied with their ability to access services, could be used to measure parents' access to childcare and relevant information.<sup>72</sup> The *National Survey for Wales* already includes questions on childcare that would provide most of the information required, such as: amount of childcare used; ease of finding childcare for school holidays; ease of finding childcare to fit in with work; what times of day childcare needs improving; type of childcare mainly used; ease of affording childcare; ease of finding after-school childcare and satisfaction with childcare.<sup>73</sup> What the survey lacks is any questions about the ease of finding information on childcare.

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<sup>72</sup> Welsh Government (2016) *How to measure a nation's progress? National Indicators for Wales Technical Document* [ONLINE] <https://gweddill.gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/161115-national-indicators-for-wales-technical-document-en.pdf> Accessed: June 2019

<sup>73</sup> Welsh Government (2019) *National Survey for Wales* [ONLINE] <https://gweddill.gov.wales/statistics-and-research/national-survey/content-materials/?lang=en> Accessed: June 2019

## Transport

### Access to public transport

Public transport was raised as a particular issue among stakeholders from rural areas of Wales, particularly from the women's groups in Ammanford and Haverfordwest. Stakeholders told us that there were concerns that public transport is continually being downgraded and lost, with fewer and less frequent services. Often these are not fit for purpose for those needing to travel to work, particularly those who work part-time or irregular hours. In 2015, the Enterprise and Business Committee within the National Assembly for Wales, published the report *Bus and Community Transport Services in Wales* along with a summary paper *Summary of the Inquiry into Bus and Community Transport Services in Wales Survey*.<sup>74 75</sup> In response to the question "How far do you agree with the following statements in relation to both bus and community transport services in your area?"<sup>76</sup> (The statement being "I can usually get to where I want to go at the time I want to go using bus services"), 39% of rural respondents disagree/strongly disagreed with the statement, compared to 29% of urban respondents.<sup>77</sup>

Without adequate public transport, women find it extremely difficult to travel any distance to access more highly paid jobs than they are able to find locally. One group of stakeholders stated that although there were higher paid jobs in the nearest town, women were not able to access adequate public transport to get there. The report, *Working Women's Journeys* showed that "a considerably higher proportion of women work closer to home than men, and the fact that women still undertake the lion's share of caring responsibilities is the most likely reason. Working closer to home makes it easier for women to balance caring and work but it also limits their employment opportunities and earning potential, and often results in the under-utilisation of women's skills."<sup>78</sup>

Access to transport also has an impact on women's access to services. Women also told us that it can make getting to health appointments at their nearest hospital impossible and many

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<sup>74</sup> Business and Enterprise Committee, National Assembly for Wales (2016) *Bus and Community Transport Services in Wales* [ONLINE] <http://senedd.assembly.wales/documents/s49886/Report%20-%20Bus%20and%20Community%20Transport%20Services%20in%20Wales%20PDF%20713KB.pdf> Accessed: June 2019

<sup>75</sup> Business and Enterprise Committee, National Assembly for Wales (2016) *Summary of the Inquiry into Bus and Community Transport Services in Wales Survey* [ONLINE] <http://senedd.assembly.wales/documents/s46494/Summary%20of%20the%20Inquiry%20into%20Bus%20and%20Community%20Transport%20Services%20in%20Wales%20Survey.pdf> Accessed: June 2019

<sup>76</sup> Ibid

<sup>77</sup> Ibid

<sup>78</sup> Chwarae Teg (2016) *Working Women's Journeys: An Overview of the Relationship between Commuting and Gender*

of them have to rely on friends or family for support with this. This was echoed in the EHRC report *Is Wales Fairer?* Which stated that people's ability to participate in all aspects of life is impacted by poor transport, particularly those households who do not have access to a car, older people in rural areas and disabled people.<sup>79</sup>

## Safety

Safety concerns were also raised, primarily by women with disabilities and/or learning disabilities in relation to inadequate lighting at stations and a lack of staff on late night train services, leading to women feeling vulnerable to sexual harassment. Research by Transport for London in 2013 found that 1 in 7 women had experienced unwanted sexual behaviour and fewer than 10% of those women had reported this.<sup>80</sup> The research led to a campaign *Report it to Stop it* which helped to raise awareness of the issue and led to an increase in reporting of sexual harassment. A year since it was launched "36% more people now come forward to report unwanted sexual behaviour on the network. This increase has, in turn, led to a 40% increase in arrests."<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Equality and Human Rights commission (2018) *Is Wales Fairer? The State of Equality and Human Rights 2018* [ONLINE] <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/is-britain-fairer-2018-is-wales-fairer.pdf> Accessed: June 2019

<sup>80</sup> The Guardian *Has Transport for London found a way to stop you being groped on the tube?* Published 04.04.16 <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2016/apr/04/transport-for-london-found-way-to-stop-you-being-groped-on-tube>

<sup>81</sup> Ibid

## Recommendations

1. Equalities evidence and the voices of expert by experience must be considered as legislative proposals to improve public transport are further developed. This must include women living in rural areas, given the impact of bus services on their ability to access work, public services and training.
2. Welsh Government should work with key partners to run a Wales wide survey in order to collect views on safety on public transport
3. We echo the recommendations of the Equality and Human Rights Commission to:  
“improve transport accessibility for disabled people and older people in Wales<sup>82</sup>:
  - a. The Welsh Government should set enforceable specific disability access requirements for all planning and transport infrastructure projects and services.
  - b. Transport for Wales should work with Network Rail and rail contractor KeolisAmey to improve accessibility of the existing rail infrastructure across Wales.
  - c. Public transport providers and regulators should provide training to ensure all staff have the knowledge and skills to help meet the needs of disabled passengers.”

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<sup>82</sup> Equality and Human Rights commission (2018) *Is Wales Fairer? The State of Equality and Human Rights 2018* [ONLINE] <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/is-britain-fairer-2018-is-wales-fairer.pdf>  
Accessed: June 2019

## Measuring Progress

National Indicator 25, percentage of people feeling safe at home, walking in the local area and when travelling, is the main indicator related to transport.<sup>83</sup> The National Survey for Wales currently collects information on travel and disability that could be used to further measure progress in relation to transport. The survey has a specific section on travel and disability, which asks the respondent whether buses have been used in the last year; whether they wanted to use buses more or less and; why they don't use buses more.<sup>84</sup> These questions are repeated for trains, taxis and coaches and cover local and long distance travel. The respondent is also asked what stops them travelling on buses more and provides the options: cost; overcrowding; attitudes of others; delay and disruption to service; fear of crime; difficulty with communication; difficulty getting to or from stop/station; difficulty getting in or out of the transport; anxiety/lack of confidence; lack of help, assistance or information; too busy/not enough time; do not need or want to; journey takes too long.<sup>85</sup> Again, these questions are repeated for other forms of public transport.<sup>86</sup>

A similar set of questions are asked under the transport heading: how often have used bus in last 12 months; overall satisfaction with bus services; satisfaction with reliability of bus services; satisfaction with frequency of bus services. These questions are repeated for train services and the respondent is asked to give their view on the state of the transport system and reasons they don't use buses and trains more for routine travel.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Welsh Government (2016) *How to measure a nation's progress? National Indicators for Wales Technical Document* [ONLINE] <https://gweddill.gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/161115-national-indicators-for-wales-technical-document-en.pdf> Accessed: June 2019

<sup>84</sup> Welsh Government (2019) *National Survey for Wales* [ONLINE] <https://gweddill.gov.wales/statistics-and-research/national-survey/content-materials/?lang=en> Accessed: June 2019

<sup>85</sup> Ibid

<sup>86</sup> Welsh Government (2016-2017) *National Survey for Wales Questionnaire* [ONLINE] [https://gweddill.gov.wales/docs/caecd/research/2016/160817-national-survey-questionnaire-2016-17-en.pdf#search="TrLBus"&zoom=110](https://gweddill.gov.wales/docs/caecd/research/2016/160817-national-survey-questionnaire-2016-17-en.pdf#search=) Accessed: June 2019

<sup>87</sup> Welsh Government (2019) *National Survey for Wales* [ONLINE] <https://gweddill.gov.wales/statistics-and-research/national-survey/content-materials/?lang=en> Accessed: June 2019

## Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence

### Online and street harassment

The women we spoke to felt very strongly that violence, harassment and abuse are all common place and that there is still a stigma around standing up for women

Online and harassment was mentioned in multiple stakeholder discussions, with women expressing that it disempowers women. Stakeholders stated that social media has made this worse and believe that women do not stand for political nomination because of the online abuse women receive. This abuse is often sexualised in a way that is not replicated for men in public life. A report by Welsh Women's Aid stated that women are 27 times more likely to be harassed online than men and that online abuse often intersects with other forms of discrimination such as racism, ableism and homophobia.<sup>88</sup>

Although not as prevalent within stakeholder discussions, street harassment is also an issue of concern for women in Wales. The report *It's not OK* by Plan International UK, highlighted that across the UK "almost two-thirds (63 percent) of girls in our polling had experienced unwanted sexual attention, including catcalling, sexual comments and being stared at, or sexual exposure."<sup>89</sup> It also found that "66 per cent of girls in the UK have experienced unwanted sexual attention or sexual or physical contact in a public place."<sup>90</sup>

Welsh Government has produced an online safety action plan for children and young people to link with the delivery of the National Strategy on Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence 2016-2021, however it is disappointing that neither online abuse or street harassment is not specifically mentioned in this strategy, given its prevalence and the use of

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<sup>88</sup> Welsh Women's Aid (2019) *ONLINE ABUSE: The use of the digital world to perpetrate violence against women and girls* [ONLINE] <https://www.welshwomensaid.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Online-Abuse-The-use-of-the-digital-world-to-perpetrate-VAWDASV.pdf> Accessed: June 2019

<sup>89</sup> Plan International UK (2018) *It's not OK: Girls' experiences and views* [ONLINE] <https://plan-uk.org/file/plan-uk-street-harassment-reportpdf/download?token=CyKwYGSJ> Accessed: July 2019

<sup>90</sup> Ibid

digital technology by perpetrators to control and coerce their victims.<sup>91,92</sup> The plan is also not gendered and does not recognise the disproportionate impact on girls and young women.<sup>93</sup>

## Joined up and sustainable support

Stakeholders stated that accessing support while trying to cope with or leave an abusive relationship was easier than accessing support after resettling in the community. It's felt that there are pockets of knowledge in various places rather than in one specific resource. Accessing support and advice post abuse can necessitate having to take time off work, leading to a reduction in earnings. A survivor quoted within the National Strategy on VAWDASV states "we need more support for us so we're not seen as a case to be closed or passed on to someone else, we have needs in our own right, and support should be available for as long as we need it, not time limited."<sup>94</sup> The strategy states that "survivors do not experience violence in silos and neither should agencies respond in silos; accessible and holistic provision is needed" and that this should be "addressed by services and partnerships in an integrated and coordinated way".<sup>95 96</sup>

## Housing

Some stakeholders were concerned that women who share a joint tenancy with the perpetrator of domestic abuse can essentially become homeless and remain in refuge for longer than is necessary. When a woman enters refuge, there is a risk that the perpetrator may damage the property, run up rent arrears or abandon the property. Both parties remain jointly and severally (separately) liable for any repair costs or rent arrears and this can block a woman from accessing alternative housing, should she be unable to return to her home. Although the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 ensures that "perpetrators of domestic abuse

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<sup>91</sup> Welsh Government (2016) *National Strategy on Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence* [ONLINE] <https://gweddill.gov.wales/docs/dsjlg/publications/commsafety/161104-national-strategy-en.pdf> Accessed: June 2019

<sup>92</sup> Welsh Government (2018) *An online safety action plan for children and young people in Wales* [ONLINE] <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-07/online-safety-action-plan-for-children-and-young-people-in-wales.pdf> Accessed: July 2019

<sup>93</sup> Welsh Women's Aid (2019) *ONLINE ABUSE: The use of the digital world to perpetrate violence against women and girls* [ONLINE] <https://www.welshwomensaid.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Online-Abuse-The-use-of-the-digital-world-to-perpetrate-VAWDASV.pdf> Accessed: July 2019

<sup>94</sup> Welsh Government (2016) *National Strategy on Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence* [ONLINE] <https://gweddill.gov.wales/docs/dsjlg/publications/commsafety/161104-national-strategy-en.pdf> Accessed: June 2019

<sup>95</sup> Welsh Government (2016) *National Strategy on Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence* [ONLINE] <https://gweddill.gov.wales/docs/dsjlg/publications/commsafety/161104-national-strategy-en.pdf> Accessed: July 2019

<sup>96</sup> Ibid

can be targeted for eviction to help prevent those experiencing domestic abuse from becoming homeless” this is by no means a quick process and still leaves survivors of domestic abuse with potentially substantial rent arrears and/or costs for damage.<sup>97</sup>

## Sustainability of Funding

Concerns around the sustainability of funding of specialist services, particularly those that support BAME or disabled women have been mounting. Nearly all of the organisations surveyed by Welsh Women’s Aid in 2016 reported that “funding and service continuation was their organisation’s main challenge in that year.”<sup>98</sup> When discussing support services with a group of sex workers in Cardiff, there was great concern that the support they currently receive from a worker within the Partnerships and Citizen Focus department within Cardiff Council is about to be lost, with no ongoing funding being provided or any alternative support being offered, leaving them “high and dry”. The post was unique to Cardiff and whilst it began as more of a strategic role to bring together different agencies involved with sex workers, it became clear that there was a distinct unmet need facing the women working within the parlours. The role therefore evolved to provide support to these women to engage with different agencies and sectors, some of which could be hostile and discriminating to these women due to the nature of their job.

## Engaging with marginalised groups

Sex work and its place within the VAWDASV framework can generate strong feelings. There was a consensus amongst the sex workers we consulted that framing the act of purchasing sexual services as an act of sexual violence against them was not something that they necessarily identified with. The women that we spoke to were pleased to have been involved in the consultations of the Gender Equality Review and there is a willingness to engage further with both statutory and third sector organisations in the future. It is imperative that sex workers do not feel further isolated as they are already marginalised and may be at greater risk. Whilst not every woman that we spoke to expressed a desire to exit the industry, we would agree with the CEDAW Shadow Report (2019) when it argues that “women involved in prostitution must be supported by Welsh Government, including provisions to support those who choose to exit prostitution.”<sup>99</sup> The National Strategy on VAWDASV suggests that there is

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<sup>97</sup> CIH Cymru (2016) *Housing in Wales Fact Sheet: The Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016* [ONLINE] <http://www.cih.org/resources/PDF/Wales%20Policy/Renting%20Homes%20factsheet%20-%20English%20Final.pdf> Accessed: June 2019

<sup>98</sup> Equality and Human Rights commission (2018) *Is Wales Fairer? The State of Equality and Human Rights 2018* [ONLINE] <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/is-britain-fairer-2018-is-wales-fairer.pdf> Accessed: June 2019

<sup>99</sup> WEN Wales (2019) *CEDAW Wales Shadow Report* [ONLINE] <http://www.wenwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Wales-UN-CEDAW-shadow-report-UK-Jan-2019-WEN-Wales-1.pdf> Accessed: May 2019

an appetite to “increase protection and access to appropriate support services for this often vulnerable group”.<sup>100</sup> The *Statutory Guidance for the Commissioning of VAWDASV Services in Wales* will allow the voices of sex workers in Wales to be heard and we welcome the emphasis placed on the “importance of working with all stakeholders during the commissioning process, such as police, PCCs, education services, housing providers, HMPPS, the Third Sector, specialist VAWDASV services, survivors, service users, victims and other non-devolved crime and justice agencies.”<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Welsh Government (2016) *National Strategy on Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence, 2016* [ONLINE] <https://gweddill.gov.wales/docs/dsjlg/publications/commsafety/161104-national-strategy-en.pdf> Accessed: June 2019

<sup>101</sup> Ibid

## Recommendations

1. Welsh Government should continue to work to develop a sustainable funding solution for VAWDASV services throughout Wales to ensure that the ambitions of the VAWDASV Act are realised.
2. Tackling online and street harassment and abuse should be specifically included within the National Strategy on Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence
3. Welsh Government should begin a comprehensive mapping out of all VAWDASV services within Wales in order to bring together an online resource accessible to the public, but utilising a fast exit button and a disguise this page option, such as those often found on VAWDASV websites, in order to help women to keep their online footprint invisible
4. When commissioning services around post-crisis services, in line with the Statutory Guidance for the Commissioning of VAWDASV Services in Wales published in March 2019, priority must be given to those services that offer flexibility in terms of geography and availability<sup>102</sup>
5. The new Commissioning Guidance should be reviewed at periodic intervals of 6 months, 12 months and 18 months to consider whether safeguards designed to ensure smaller, specialist organisations are able to bid fairly for contracts and to ensure meaningful partnership working are having the desired effect. Changes to the guidance should be considered where necessary
6. Welsh Government should ensure sustainability of funding for support to women often described as 'hidden', including sex workers, to ensure they are able to access vital services.
7. As part of any discourse around VAWDASV Welsh Government should ensure the full diversity of voices are heard including those who are heard from less regularly such as sex workers, survivors of Female Genital Mutilation, honour based violence and disabled women.

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<sup>102</sup> Welsh Government (2019) *Statutory Guidance for the Commissioning of VAWDASV Services in Wales, 2019* [ONLINE] <http://www.assembly.wales/laid%20documents/sub-ld12217/sub-ld12217-e.pdf> Accessed: June 2019

## Measuring Progress

National Indicators 24, percentage of people satisfied with their access to services, and 25, percentage of people feeling safe at home, walking in the local area and when travelling, could be used to measure some progress on the above.<sup>103 104</sup> However, this data and subsequently the indicators do not include references to online harm and only measure safety as “after dark”. The *National Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Indicators for Wales* have been recently published, which will assist considerably in measuring any progress, however, as with the National Indicators mentioned above, they do not contain any reference to online harm. The new VAWDASV Indicators are first stage indicators with further development taking place over the next 12 months. This further development “will also provide further indications of whether or not data can be disaggregated according to local area, equality group and other contextual information that will aid analysis.”<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Welsh Government (2016) *How to measure a nation’s progress? National Indicators for Wales Technical Document* [ONLINE] <https://gweddill.gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/161115-national-indicators-for-wales-technical-document-en.pdf> Accessed: June 2019

<sup>104</sup> Welsh Government (2019) *National Survey for Wales* [ONLINE] <https://gweddill.gov.wales/statistics-and-research/national-survey/content-materials/?lang=en> Accessed: June 2019

<sup>105</sup> Welsh Government (2019) *National Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Indicators for Wales: Technical Document* [ONLINE] <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-06/technical-document.pdf> Accessed: June 2019

## Conclusion

When Welsh Government commissioned Phase 1 of the Gender Equality Review, they signalled an aspiration to make Wales a better, fairer and more equal country for women and girls. The Phase 2 reports, including this Roadmap, seek to make that aspiration a reality.

This Roadmap sets out a number of actions that can deliver change in key areas affecting women's lives. Going forward Welsh Government must apply a similar lens to other areas within competence. We would recommend an approach that builds on the one taken to develop this Roadmap and the wider work of the Review, which sets out new models to develop evidence-based policy in which equalities is mainstreamed.

By seeking the views of our "experts by experience", the stakeholders involved in the Advisory Group, the women's groups who opened their doors to us and those who approached us to give us their perspective, we have uncovered a wealth of knowledge and a willingness to collaborate, that has enabled us to compile this report. The voice of experts by experience is crucial to developing policy that is responsive to the needs of diverse women across Wales.

Feedback from our stakeholders has shown the value in having a space available to come together with other groups across different sectors in Wales. Without funding however, we would not have been able to achieve this. We strongly believe that funded, stakeholder engagement needs to be at the forefront of Welsh Government's policy process.

To achieve gender equality, there needs to be a fundamental cultural and behavioural change, one that we believe Welsh Government, with the support of the private and Third Sector can lead from the front. Wales stands on the cusp of becoming a world leader in gender equality, and we believe that by accepting these recommendations, and those of the wider Review, that aspiration can become a reality.

## Annex 1

### Definitions

Phase One of the Gender Equality Review brought through a clear resolve to develop a shared language around gender equality, in order to provide clarity throughout the second phase. The following definitions were put to stakeholders in Wales for consultation through the summer of 2018 and were developed with the help of the Expert Advisory Panel and the Steering Group and were accepted by Welsh Government in February 2019. These definitions have helped to focus the work of the review and will ensure that going forward, Wales has a shared and clear language around gender equality.

#### Definition of Gender

By Gender we mean both identity and the way in which gender shapes society and day-to-day life. While it can include sex, it is not synonymous with (the same as) sex and does not only refer to gender identity or gender expression. Gender identity can be expressed in a variety of ways, such as masculinity, femininity and non-binary, and can be regulated by stereotypes and norms.

Gender also shapes the organisation of our society, the economy and power relationships, as ideas about what is considered appropriate for men and women are carried through social, legal, cultural and economic policy, practices and processes. These processes reproduce inequality by ascribing differently valued attributes, behaviours and roles to men, women and non-binary people.

#### Definition of Intersectionality

By Intersectionality we mean recognising the way in which power structures based on factors such as gender, race, sexuality, disability, class, age and faith interact with each other and create inequalities, discrimination and oppression. Crucially, it is about understanding the way in which characteristics, such as gender, race or class, can interact and produce unique and often multiple experiences and disadvantage in specific situations.

One single form of discrimination cannot and should not be understood in isolation from another. A truly intersectional approach ensures that this does not happen.

## Definition of Gender Equality

By gender equality we mean that regardless of sex, gender identity or gender expression people enjoy the same social, economic, and political rights, resources, opportunities and protections.

An egalitarian society must seek to address the imbalances in power and resources that gendered systems create, which prevent equality of outcomes. It does this on an intersectional basis recognising that gender is always intersected by all the other dimensions of inequality.

## ANNEX 2

### STAKEHOLDERS

ACE Port Talbot  
BAVO  
BAWSO  
Betws Family Centre  
Both Parents Matter  
Bridgend College  
British Association for Shooting and Conservation  
CCHA  
Children's Commissioner  
Cymorth Cymru  
Disability Wales  
EHRC  
ERS Cymru  
EYST  
Fair Treatment for Women in Wales  
Future Generations Commissioner  
Hafan Cymru  
Llamau  
Lleisiau Merched Cymru  
Local Government  
Members of public  
NUS Wales  
Older People's Commissioner  
Oxfam Cymru  
Pembrokeshire People First  
Plan International UK  
Race Council Cymru  
Race Equality First  
Safer Wales  
SEEds (Welsh Women's Aid)  
Service users of Partnership and Citizen Focus (Cardiff Council)  
Stonewall Cymru  
Stonewall Cymru  
Swansea, Neath Port Talbot Citizens Advice  
Wales NHS  
Wales TUC  
Welsh Government  
Welsh Women's Aid  
WEN Wales  
WLGA  
Women Connect First  
Women's Institute



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