



SAFER AGEING ELECTION INDEX

#TAKETHEOATH

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Political Parties fail to address abuse of older people in 2024 General Election.

While Hourglass has produced its own manifesto for securing a safer ageing society by 2050. It has also reviewed how responsive each political party manifesto has been to both older victim survivors and a wider focus on abuse and violence committed against older people, going into the UK general election of 2024.

Overall, Hourglass is disappointed by the lack of focus and commitment to support older victim-survivors of violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation in political party manifestos.

The only political party to specifically mention the abuse of older people or “elder abuse,” was the Northern Ireland Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), which committed in their manifesto to “support tough measures to address all forms of elder abuse, including financial crime.”

While recognition of the abuse of older people is an important first step, especially a focus on financial crimes or “economic abuse,” more details on the proposed support and “tough measures” is needed, and Hourglass finds it extremely worrying that the DUP is the sole political party that understands the severity of this issue, and the need that older victims and their families have in it being recognised.

As well as being the only manifesto to specifically mention the abuse of older people, encouragingly, the DUP manifesto also mentions wider provisions to tackle the digital divide, and support community and public transport for older people. While these measures do not directly link to the abuse of older people, loneliness and isolation linked to the digital divide and lack of transport can both be risk factors for abuse and violence committed against older victims.

The Green Party Manifesto also illuminates

wider provisions and support for older people, stating “We will ensure that tailored and specific provision is readily available for the particular needs of communities...., older people [In housing] We would ensure that the needs of the elderly, families with children, people living with a disability or requiring support through sheltered housing are adequately catered for.

While most parties included strategies to tackle domestic abuse, this was always through a Violence Against Women and Girls strategy rather than a via a specific separate strategy directed towards older victims.

The Conservative Party Manifesto advocated for a specific 25-year prison term for domestic murders, regardless of whether a weapon is used. As well as this, the party manifesto raised their previous legislative changes with the Domestic Abuse Act which created a statutory definition of domestic abuse and gave new powers to police and the courts. They also highlighted allowing pre-recorded evidence from rape victims and introducing mandatory reporting for child sexual abuse. Both of these, if broadened, could have an impact on older victim-survivors.

The Labour Party Manifesto voiced a landmark mission to halve violence against women and girls within a decade, advocating for 13,000 additional neighbourhood police and community PCSOs; and specialist domestic abuse advisers in 999 control rooms at peak

times. There are also calls for a fraud strategy within the Labour Party Manifesto.

Plaid Cymru seeks to focus protection measures on women – including creating a national register for domestic abusers. The party would look to delegate all Police and Crime Commissioner roles and responsibilities to the Welsh Justice Minister.

The Green Party manifesto in particular calls for a new gender-based DA strategy to be developed, “Develop and implement a new UK-wide strategy to tackle gender-based violence, including domestic violence, rape and sexual abuse, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and trafficking.” Within this, there were some encouraging calls and policy ideas for lived experience voices, greater victim rights, and trauma focused support, with the Green Party manifesto pledging to expand restorative justice measures for victims, and the Lib Dem manifesto pledging “mandatory training for police and prosecutors in understanding the impact of trauma on survivors... Embedding domestic abuse specialists in every police force and 999 operator assistance centre to ensure that reports from survivors are handled effectively and sensitively.”

As well as this, the Lib Dem Manifesto also supports an expansion of refuges and rape crisis centres, as well as recognises the need for sustainable funding for DA support services, especially those based on a by and for set up. The Lib Dems are calling for the Police and

Crime Commissioner system to be scrapped (which also appears within the Plaid Cymru manifesto). This would mean alternative funding and commissioning ideas are necessary. Hourglass views these measures as highly positive and undoubtedly necessary, but would have liked to see recognition of the specific needs and support for older victim survivors.

2024 UK GENERAL ELECTION MANIFESTOS REVIEW

Background

Hourglass has produced its manifesto for securing a Safer Ageing Society by 2050.

It is the intention of this review document to assess how responsive the political party manifestos have been to these demands and pledges, going into the UK general election of 2024. The charity also proposes to use this document to monitor performance of those parties in power following the election – and to ensure those in opposition maintain their influence in these key manifesto areas.

This index was independently researched by Dr Seth Alexander Thévoz, FRHistS and produced by the Hourglass Policy Unit

Methodology and Scoring

We have compared the party manifestos against the Hourglass manifesto, and have measured the parties' offerings against our own key criteria. In each category, the parties have been given one mark when they have directly promised

something that we have asked for; and we have awarded half a mark if they indirectly offered something of relevance, or demonstrated some synergy in their platform. The assessment of the individual manifestos has been compiled entirely independently from the compilation of criteria.

The following UK political parties have been looked at: The Alba Party; the Alliance Party of Northern Ireland (APNI); the Conservative and Unionist Party; the Democratic Unionist Party; the Green Party; the Labour Party; the Liberal Democrats; Plaid Cymru; Reform UK (including their Northern Ireland partners – Traditional Unionist Voice [TUV]); the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP); the Scottish National Party (SNP); Sinn Fein, and the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP). For the Conservatives, Labour and the Lib Dems, we have looked at their separate Scottish and Welsh manifestos alongside their UK-wide versions.

1. STRATEGY

Criteria 1.1: Begin consultation and evidence gathering to create a dedicated strategy to end violence and abuse against older people, to complement Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategies, and ensure older victim-survivors are given parity with other demographics.

Most parties offered at least some suggestion of a wider strategy for tackling Violence Against Women and Girls, as a manifesto priority, without specifying a wider remit including older people.

The two parties which explicitly included such a strategy were the DUP and the Liberal Democrats. Their relevant commitments were:

DUP (2): “support tough measures to address all forms of elder abuse, including financial crime. Violence Against Women & Girls DUP MPs will:

- seek to address gaps in funding for specialist support for survivors of domestic abuse;
- support robust and up-to-date vetting in police forces across the UK;
- seek an improved response to trolling and other forms of technology-facilitated abuse against women online;
- promote a review of arrangements governing the disclosure of victims’ personal information in sexual and domestic abuse cases;

- call on the Government to review the ‘No Recourse to Public Funds’ (NRPF) for migrants who suffer domestic abuse and are at risk;
- seek a review by DWP of the requirement for those experiencing domestic abuse to apply for split payments of certain benefits.”¹

LIB DEM (1): “Ensuring survivors of violence against women and girls are properly supported in the criminal justice process, including through mandatory training for police and prosecutors in understanding the impact of trauma on survivors. Ensure that survivors of domestic abuse are properly supported throughout the criminal justice system by: Embedding domestic abuse specialists in every police force and 999 operator assistance centre to ensure that reports from survivors are handled effectively and sensitively.”²

Most parties had parts of their manifesto touching on some thematic elements of this, typically in being committed to a strategy against violence against women and girls. But no party advocated for a separate strategy focused on abuse and violence committed against specifically against older people, or the unique needs of older victims and victim-survivors.

Alliance Party [APNI] (0.5): “We want to build a fair, sustainable world: reducing poverty and inequality, addressing the climate crisis, and ensuring that the most marginalised groups, such as women, girls, people with disabilities and the LGBT+ community, are at the forefront of international development and humanitarian assistance policy.”³

CONSERVATIVE (0.5): Tackling violence against women and girls

“We have made violence against women and girls a strategic policing requirement for the first time, making clear to the police that these crimes are as significant as terrorism, serious and organised crime and child sexual abuse. We have strengthened the law to punish predators with new offences for stalking, controlling or coercive behaviour, non-fatal strangulation and suffocation, sharing of intimate images or ‘revenge porn’, non-consensual taking of images of a woman breastfeeding, ‘up skirting’ and raised the maximum penalties for harassment. We will legislate to create new offences for spiking, the creation of sexualised

deepfake images and taking intimate images without consent. We will support victims of domestic abuse including through our Domestic Abuse Act, which created a statutory definition of domestic abuse and gave new powers to police and the courts.

We will toughen sentencing for murders that take place within the context of domestic abuse with new aggravating factors, such as if they involve coercive and controlling behaviour or gratuitous attacks. We will introduce a 25-year prison term for domestic murders, regardless of whether a weapon is used.

Those who kill their domestic abusers will not face the same starting point. This will be accompanied by a review of homicide sentencing, looking to close loopholes that allow some killers to get off lightly”⁴

GREEN (0.5): “Simple things like more police on the beat and greater support for domestic violence units can make a huge difference. But Greens recognise it’s time to do more - so we will tackle structural injustice and transform our policing and justice system. Elected Greens will work to end violence against women and girls. Gender-based violence is a key measurable priority for all police forces and that all police officers are trained to recognise and tackle domestic violence.”⁵

LABOUR (0.5): “We will no longer tolerate the violence against women and girls that stains our society. For too long, violence against

women and girls has been ignored. Our landmark mission to halve violence against women and girls in a decade will require a national effort. We will use every government tool available to target perpetrators and address the root causes of abuse and violence. That starts with tougher enforcement and protection. 13,000 additional neighbourhood police and community PCSOs; and specialist domestic abuse advisers in 999 control rooms at peak times”⁶

PLAID CYMRU (0.5): “Create a Domestic Abuse Register to protect women is a means of preventing death and injury because it enables the early identification of abusive men. This would shift the responsibility away from the potential victims (as happens under Clare’s Law) and on to the authorities and the offender themselves.”⁷

SDLP (0.5):” Hold the Department of Justice responsible on its policy and legislation. In the last mandate, new legislation was introduced on a range of areas including domestic abuse and stalking. However, there has been very limited provision for the implementation, training or monitoring of these new offences. Moreover, not all recommendations from the Gillen Review have yet been implemented. At all levels of government, the SDLP has relentlessly campaigned for the new Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy to be fully implemented and funded. In the past, SDLP

MPs supported the successful Istanbul Convention Bill on preventing and combatting domestic violence.”⁸

UUP (0.5): “We support ensuring that legislation tackling violence against women and girls is robust and responsive to developing challenges.”⁹

Reform UK did not have anything to say on the subject in their manifesto.

1. STRATEGY

Criteria 1.2: Ensure that the lived experiences and voices of all victim-survivors are central to all strategy and policy development considerations.

Four parties had firm policies aligning with this recommendation, the Greens, the Lib Dems, the SDLP, and the UUP:

GREEN (1): “Green MPs will expand restorative justice when crimes do take place, both to give victims a voice and to help offenders take responsibility for the harm they have done.”¹⁰

LIB DEM (1): (“As above, in Criteria 1.1, with its commitment to: mandatory training for police and prosecutors in understanding the impact of trauma on survivors... Embedding domestic abuse specialists in every police force and 999 operator assistance centre to ensure that reports from survivors are handled effectively and sensitively.”)¹¹

SDLP (1): “Systemic reforms must be introduced to protect the rights of victims We support the introduction of an effective communication strategy to raise awareness of the Victim and Witnesses Charters and how

information that signposts services, support providers and entitlements to services can easily be accessed.”¹²

UUP (1): [On disability policy] “We firmly believe that the most effective way to develop these policies is by ensuring that individuals with lived experience are not just included, but are at the forefront of creating these policy interventions. Their unique perspectives and challenges are invaluable in shaping policies that truly meet their needs...The confidence in the Northern Ireland justice system is at an all-time low where many believe sentencing structures are broken and in need of a complete overall. Victims and Witnesses of crime are seldom informed of the progress of their case and are further marginalised by not being informed when a prisoner is being released... Stand by Victims - All too often victims have been regarded as an afterthought by our justice system, as the focus turns to the ‘rights’ of the victim makers. Victims need to see a change in culture within the justice system whereby the

State is seen to be fulfilling its duty of protecting law abiding citizens. The police solve crimes, courts hand out meaningful sentences and victims are given the support they need.”¹³

The manifestos of the Conservatives, DUP, Reform UK, Sinn Fein, the SNP and TUV did not have anything relevant to say on the subject in their manifestos.

Beyond that, two more parties, Labour and Plaid Cymru, had things to say offering synergy in this area:

LABOUR (0.5): “We will reform the justice system to put the needs of victims first. Labour is committed to championing the rights of disabled people and to the principle of working with them, so that their views and voices will be at the heart of all we do. We will introduce the full right to equal pay for disabled people. Building on gender pay gap reporting, we will introduce disability and ethnicity pay gap reporting for large employers. We will support disabled people to work by improving employment support and access to reasonable adjustments. We will also tackle the Access to Work backlog and make sure people can try out a job without fear of an immediate benefit reassessment if it does not work out.”¹⁴

PLAID (0.5): “We reaffirm our commitment to ensure that LGBTQ+ voices and experiences are heard and will continue to actively promote LGBTQ+ rights. The voices of disabled people will be at core of this policy to ensure the full enjoyment by persons with disabilities in daily life with dignity, their human rights, and fundamental freedoms from poverty, social exclusion, discrimination, and negligence.”¹⁵

2. LEGISLATION AND ENFORCEMENT

Criteria 2.1: Pledge to review the efficacy of existing legal protections, and enforce robust laws specifically targeting those who abuse, exploit and neglect older people, with strict penalties for perpetrators.

None of the parties directly addressed this criterion, though five parties went some way to doing so – the DUP, Labour, the Lib Dems, Plaid Cymru and Sinn Fein.

DUP (0.5): “promote a review of arrangements governing the disclosure of victims’ personal information in sexual and domestic abuse cases; seek a review by DWP of the requirement for those experiencing domestic abuse to apply for split payments of certain benefits promote a review of arrangements governing the disclosure of victims’ personal information in sexual and domestic abuse cases; seek a review by DWP of the requirement for those experiencing domestic abuse to apply for split payments of certain benefits.”¹⁶

LABOUR (0.5): “Fraud accounts for almost two in five crimes, but the Conservatives have failed to respond to the scale of the challenge. Labour will introduce a new expanded fraud strategy.”¹⁷

LIB DEM (0.5): “Ensure that survivors of violence against women and girls and domestic abuse get the support they deserve by: Fully implementing the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, with protections for all survivors regardless of nationality or immigration status.”¹⁸

PLAID (0.5): “Plaid Cymru believes that everybody should have access to justice, within easy access of the community in which they live. We would provide additional help to prevent these legal aid ‘deserts’ which means that individuals are prevented from accessing timely advice and support. This involves supporting the legal workforce to move into these fields of provision and making the whole field more sustainable. Plaid Cymru would pilot a court in the community scheme which visit areas of the country with an appropriate timetable to resolve local justice needs. This could also help reduce the backlog of court cases.”¹⁹

SINN FEIN (0.5): “Sinn Féin will also continue to advocate for victims and survivors of institutional abuse to protect their right to truth, justice and redress that they have been denied for too long.”²⁰

ALBA, the Alliance, Conservatives, Greens, Reform UK, the SDLP, SNP, TUV and the UUP did not have anything relevant to say on the subject in their manifestos.

2. LEGISLATION AND ENFORCEMENT

Criteria 2.2: Establish dedicated task forces or units within the criminal justice sector to investigate and prosecute cases of neglect and abuse promptly and effectively irrespective of the abuse taking place within older people’s own homes and care homes.

One party offered pledges in its manifesto which tackled this criterion – the Liberal Democrats:

LIB DEM (1): “Addressing the delays in domestic abuse referrals from the police to the CPS and subsequent decision making by the CPS, acknowledging the unique risk these delays can pose to women’s safety ...Ensure that survivors of violence against women and girls and domestic abuse get the support they deserve by... Ensuring that survivors are properly supported within the criminal justice system.”²¹

In addition, four parties offered pledges which offered some synergy in this area:

APNI (0.5): “Alliance believes human rights are inherent and universal: an essential part of modern governance that protects the individual from injustice...It is imperative that the next UK government restores the rule of law, civil liberties, and equal access to justice as

foundational pillars of our society.”²²

DUP (0.5): “Support tough measures to address all forms of elder abuse, including financial crime. Increasing funding for speech and language and mental health support services within the criminal justice system, including prison service;”²³

GREEN (0.5): “Develop and implement a new UK-wide strategy to tackle gender-based violence, including domestic violence, rape and sexual abuse, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and trafficking.”²⁴

LABOUR (0.5): (As above, in Criteria 2.1.)

ALBA, the Conservatives, Plaid, Reform UK, Sinn Fein, the SDLP, SNP, TUV and the UUP did not have anything relevant to say on the subject in their manifestos.

3. AWARENESS AND EDUCATION

Criteria 3.1: Launch nationwide public awareness campaigns to educate people about the signs and consequences of abuse, exploitation and neglect of older people. Working hand in hand with key charities and agencies.

The strongest response on this was from the Liberal Democrats, who pledged:

LIB DEM (1): “Ensure that survivors of violence against women and girls and domestic abuse get the support they deserve by ensuring that survivors are properly supported within the criminal justice system, as set out in chapter 11. Ensure that survivors of domestic abuse are properly supported throughout the criminal justice system by addressing the delays in domestic abuse referrals from the police to the CPS and subsequent decision making by the CPS, acknowledging the unique risk these delays can pose to women’s safety.”²⁶

In addition, one other party offered some link in their manifesto, with Labour pledging:

LABOUR (0.5): “Violence and abuse against women and girls does not come from nowhere. Misogyny is one root cause, and therefore Labour will ensure schools address misogyny

and teach young people about healthy relationships and consent.”²⁷

ALBA, the Alliance, Conservatives, DUP, Greens, Plaid, Reform UK, the SDLP, Sinn Fein, SNP, TUV and the UUP did not have anything relevant to say on the subject in their manifestos.

3. AWARENESS AND EDUCATION

Criteria 3.2: Integrate education on ageing, rights of older people, and ‘expectation of trust’ into school curricula and professional training programmes for healthcare workers, social workers, police, legal professionals and caregivers (volunteers, professional or otherwise).

None of the parties directly addressed this criterion.

4. SUPPORT SERVICES

Criteria 4.1: Expanded and ring-fenced funding for support services tailored to older individuals, (with a focus on specific needs for groups such as older men, older LGBT, older minority groups, and older disabled people) including helplines, counselling services, shelters for older victims of abuse, and community based, person centred/victim-led options.

Only the Lib Dem manifesto specifically mentioned funding for VAWG support services, albeit not older people specific.

LIB DEM (0.5): “Ensure that survivors of violence against women and girls and domestic abuse get the support they deserve by expanding the number of refuges and rape crisis centres to meet demand. Ensuring sustainable funding for services to support survivors of domestic abuse, with a particular focus on community-based and specialist ‘by and for’ services.”²⁸

The DUP and Green Party manifestos mentioned:

DUP (1): “Recent years have seen a large number of bank branches closing in towns and villages across Northern Ireland, indeed across the whole of the United Kingdom. This impacts older people, the vulnerable and those living in rural areas, where banks have been a visible part of the social fabric... invest more in

community transport, including services that provide a lifeline to older people. As media consumption patterns change, most people spend less time on traditional channels and consume more media online via phones and tablets. The people who in the main depend more on the traditional channels are older people. Yet this is the group the BBC has betrayed by scrapping free licence fees for over 75s. We will campaign to reverse this.”²⁹

GREEN (1): “We will ensure that tailored and specific provision is readily available for the particular needs of communities of colour, children and adolescents, older people and Lesbian, Gay Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Queer and Asexual (LGBTIQA+) communities [In housing] We would ensure that the needs of the elderly, families with children, people living with a disability or requiring support through sheltered housing are adequately catered for.”³⁰

4. SUPPORT SERVICES

Criteria 4.2: Ensure accessible, quality assured health and social care services, including mental health support, for older people and support for those working in the sector.

The Conservatives, Labour, Lib Dems and Plaid Cymru all had policies directly addressing this criterion.

CONSERVATIVE (1): “We will invest in and modernise the NHS. We have taken the long-term decision to train the staff the NHS needs, by backing the NHS’s first ever Long-Term Workforce Plan. By the end of the next Parliament, there will be 92,000 more nurses and 28,000 more doctors in the NHS than in 2023. We are also delivering record increases in training places for other clinicians, such as midwives and paramedics and we are boosting training places for dentists and other dental care professionals by 40%. We will improve working conditions for all NHS staff. We are committed to supporting a high-quality and sustainable social care system, building on our additional investment of up to £8.6 billion over the last two years. At the next Spending Review, we will give local authorities a multi-year funding settlement to support social care

and will take forward the reforms in our ‘People at the Heart of Care’ White Paper. We will attract and retain a high-quality care workforce, make reforms to shape the market for older people’s housing and support unpaid carers. We will implement our planned reforms to cap social care costs from October 2025... We will further improve access to NHS services across England by training more staff in rural and coastal areas. For the first time the NHS Constitution will reflect the bespoke healthcare needs of rural and coastal communities and the need for the NHS to tailor services accordingly. We will roll out new digital health checks to 250,000 more people every year, helping to prevent hundreds of strokes and heart attacks... Mental health should have parity of esteem with physical health. To support children, young people and adults with their mental health, we will:

- Expand coverage of Mental Health Support Teams from 50% to 100% of schools and colleges in England by 2030.

- Open early support hubs for those aged 11-25 in every local community by 2030.
- Increase the planned expansion of NHS Talking Therapies by 50%, supporting people with anxiety, stress and depression.
- Boost the capacity of Individual Placement and Support for Severe Mental Illness by 140,000 places.
- Pass a new law to provide better treatment and support for severe mental health needs in the first session of the next Parliament.”³¹

LABOUR (1): “We will build consensus for the longer-term reform needed to create a sustainable National Care Service. We will explore how we best manage and support an ageing population. Labour will undertake a programme of reform to create a National Care Service, underpinned by national standards, delivering consistency of care across the country. Services will be locally delivered, with a principle of ‘home first’ that supports people to live independently for as long as possible. Our new standards will ensure high-quality care and ongoing sustainability, and ensure providers behave responsibly. Labour will develop local partnership working between the NHS and social care on hospital discharge. Labour will ensure the publication of regular, independent workforce planning, across health and social care. Labour will bring [mental health service] waiting times down and intervene earlier. We will recruit an additional

8,500 new staff to treat children and adults through our first term.”³²

LIB DEM (1): “We will:

- Introduce free personal care based on the model introduced by the Liberal Democrats in government in Scotland in 2002, so that provision is based on need, not ability to pay.
- Create a social care workforce plan, establish a Royal College of Care Workers to improve recognition and career progression, and introduce a higher Carer’s Minimum Wage.
- Establish a cross-party commission to forge a long-term agreement on sustainable funding for social care.”³³

PLAID CYMRU (1): “Plaid Cymru strongly believes in the principle of healthcare free at the point of delivery, funded through general taxation. [We] will work to ensure that our NHS is properly funded through a new fairer and needs-based funding model for Wales. Plaid Cymru believes that we should move public health towards becoming a wellness service that is geared towards keeping people healthy. A preventative public health strategy which rebalances resources to prevent people becoming ill would help the NHS overall by stopping patients entering the system earlier than necessary. Health inequalities are an important part of this agenda, including those determined by class, race and gender. A review of the financing model for Wales should better consider the determinants of healthcare to meet

our needs. Plaid Cymru has been working to deliver a National Care Service for Wales. We believe that social care, like health care, should be free at the point of use, and that the distinction between the two is artificial. Ending this distinction will also help with reducing Delayed Transfers of Care, the time that people remain in hospital rather than care settings. We will continue to work towards this goal, particularly to support those with dementia.”³⁴

Four more parties, the Greens, Reform UK, the SDLP and the UUP, offered some synergy in their manifestos:

GREEN (0.5): “[In mental health] We will ensure that tailored and specific provision is readily available for older people.”³⁵

REFORM UK (0.5): “Use Independent Healthcare Capacity
Cut waiting lists by using UK & overseas providers. The vast majority do not mind who delivers the cure, we just want the pain gone. This independent sector includes many not for profit health providers that provide some of the best care. Organisations such as Nuffield Health and Marie Curie, which provides end of life cancer care are charities. We want to encourage more of these organisations to end the NHS crisis.”³⁶

SDLP (0.5): “Working alongside the SDLP Opposition at Stormont, SDLP MPs will: Make representations directly to the Treasury for a health service transformation intervention; Seek

dedicated resource to reduce waiting lists which have remained out of control; Argue for terms and conditions for health service staff which reflect their contribution to our society and address workforce retention challenges; Argue for a government backed indemnity scheme for GPs in Northern Ireland to avert the unnecessary closure of local practices; Fight for the expansion of Multi-Disciplinary Teams across Northern Ireland.”³⁷

UUP (0.5): “We will remain steadfast in investment and strengthening our social care system.”³⁸

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Criteria 5.1: Foster community-based initiatives and neighbourhood programmes to empower communities to identify and address abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Criteria 5.2: Promote intergenerational activities and initiatives to strengthen social connections and combat ageism and stereotypes.

None of the parties directly addressed this criterion.

6. LEGAL AID AND ADVOCACY

Criteria 6.1: Guarantee access to legal aid for older people facing abuse, exploitation or neglect, to help them navigate legal proceedings and seek justice.

None of the parties directly addressed this criterion, but five parties offered synergy in this area:

GREEN (0.5): “Restore legal aid for public law cases so everybody can uphold their rights in court.”³⁹

LABOUR (0.5): “We will reform the justice system to put the needs of victims first, tackle the prisons crisis and cut reoffending. Labour will introduce a ‘Hillsborough Law’ which will place a legal duty of candour on public servants and authorities, and provide legal aid for victims of disasters or state-related deaths.”⁴⁰

LIB DEM (0.5): “Establishing a new right to affordable, reasonable legal assistance, and making the Legal Aid system simpler, fairer and more generous.”⁴¹

PLAID CYMRU (0.5): “Stop abusers further harassing their victims through court

proceedings and strengthen restraining orders and sanctions for breaching them.”⁴²

ALBA, the Alliance, Conservatives, DUP, Sinn Fein, the SNP, the TUV and the UUP did not have anything relevant to say on the subject in their manifestos.

6. LEGAL AID AND ADVOCACY

Criteria 6.2 Establish advocacy groups and networks to amplify the voices of older people and advocate for their rights at local, regional and national levels.

None of the parties directly addressed this criterion.

7. RESEARCH AND DATA COLLECTION

Criteria 7.1 Invest in research to better understand the prevalence, causes, and consequences of abuse, neglect and exploitation, and to identify effective prevention, intervention and recovery strategies.

Criteria 7.2 Implement comprehensive data collection systems to track cases of abuse and commit to regular publication of data to enable evidence-based policy development and targeted interventions.

None of the parties directly addressed this criterion.

8. KEY WORDS

This was a more quantitative-based exercise, looking at whether language and/or key themes of interest to Hourglass were reflected in the respective party manifestos. Points were also allocated to parties that demonstrated a prioritisation of issues related to the abuse of older people. These were the following:

- Mental health
- Debt
- Social care/reform
- Lessons learned from the pandemic
- Pensions
- VAWG
- Older People
- Domestic Abuse
- Fraud
- IDVA/ISVA
- Policing
- Justice
- Social Care
- Crime
- Courts

Parties which reflected more than half of these keywords were allocated 1 point, and parties which reflected fewer than half of these keywords (but still multiple examples) were allocated 0.5 points.

The Alliance, Conservatives, DUP, Greens, Labour, Lib Dems, Plaid Cymru, the SDLP and the UUP were all allocated 1 point.

ALBA, Reform UK, Sinn Fein, the SNP and the TUV were all allocated 0.5 points.

9. ENGLAND

An assessment was undertaken for Hourglass's England-specific policies. The policies covered were assessed in aggregate, and were:

9.1. Research, undertake consultation and develop a strategy to tackle abuse and neglect of older people. This would complement the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy and include specific commitments to fund and properly resource older people's services. This should include a duty to fund and properly resource services for older people and particularly those aligned to the Victims and Prisoners Bill.

9.2. Implement a consistent and accessible data collection system in each police force in England, that categorises crime according to age.

9.3. Mandate all Police and Crime Commissioner (PCCS) to have specialist older person Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVAs) and Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs) in every local area as is currently in place for younger victims.

9.4. Introduce Powers of Entry for social workers to investigate suspected abuse of older people.

9.5. Widen the scope of the Forfeiture Act 1982 to include abuse.

9.6. Commit to support and fund the annual Hourglass Safer Ageing Index.

9.7. Create an Older People's Commissioner in England.

None of the parties offered anything like this full platform, with just one party proposing any of these points, the Liberal Democrats on the final point:

LIB DEM (0.5): Support people to age well by: Establishing a Commissioner for Older People and Ageing.

None of the remaining parties had anything relevant to say on the subject in their manifestos.

10. NORTHERN IRELAND

A similar assessment was undertaken for Hourglass's Northern Ireland-specific policies. The policies covered were assessed in aggregate, and were:

10.1. Research, undertake consultation and develop a strategy to tackle abuse and neglect of older people. This would complement the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy and include specific commitments to fund and properly resource specialist services for older victim-survivors of abuse.

10.2. Ensure there is adequate and ring-fenced funding and support available for charities which offer front line support services to older victim-survivors of abuse.

10.3. Urgently pass the Adult Protection Bill into law. This law must also extend powers of entry for social workers to investigate suspected abuse older people.

10.4. Ensure crime data collection remains robust and commit to the routine publication of Health and Social Care data on adult safeguarding. 5. Commit to support and fund the annual Hourglass Safer Ageing Index

None of the parties offered the full Hourglass platform, with two parties touching on these points, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats:

None of the remaining parties had anything relevant to say on the subject in their manifestos.

11. SCOTLAND

A similar assessment was undertaken for Hourglass's Scotland-specific policies. The policies covered were assessed in aggregate, and were:

11.1. Develop a strategy to tackle abuse and neglect of older people, which builds on previous work by the Scottish Government in this area, and commitment to fund and properly resource specialist services for older victim-survivors of abuse.

11.2. Implement a consistent and accessible data collection system and commit to publishing all relevant data pertaining to the abuse and neglect of older people. This must include police, courts, NHS, social care providers and other government agencies.

11.3. Urgently review the Domestic Abuse Act (Scotland) (2018), to broaden the definition of domestic abuse to include abuse perpetrated by a family member or carer.

11.4. Introduce 'Willie's Law' and an economic abuse strategy which would require a medical professional to co-sign legal documents of vulnerable people to prove they have legal capacity.

11.5. Create a Victim and Witnesses Commissioner and an Older People's Commissioner in Scotland.

None of the parties offered the full Hourglass platform, with two parties touching on these points, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats:

None of the remaining parties had anything relevant to say on the subject in their manifestos.

12. WALES

A similar assessment was undertaken for Hourglass's Wales-specific policies. The policies covered were assessed in aggregate, and were:

12.1. Ensure implementation and a yearly review of the National Action Plan to Prevent the Abuse of Older People with support from Hourglass, ensuring it complements the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse, and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) strategy, with specific commitments to fund and properly resource specialist services for older people.

12.2. Advocate for all police forces in Wales to implement a consistent and accessible overarching data collection system that allows for categorisation of crime by victim and perpetrator age, and work with Hourglass to call on Westminster for this change. Ensure that police forces are encouraged to make this data publicly accessible on a yearly basis.

12.3. Mandate all Police and Crime Commissioner (PCCS) to have specialist older person Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVAs) and Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs) in every local area as is currently in place for younger victims.

12.4. Engage with Hourglass on any developing Government policy to tackle abuse and neglect of older people.

12.5. Increase provision of specialist services that support older victim-survivors of abuse throughout Wales and ensure these have sustainable funding.

12.6. Commit to support and fund the annual Hourglass Safer Ageing Index

None of the parties offered the full Hourglass platform, with two parties touching on these points, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats:

CONSERVATIVE (0.5): (As above.)

LIB DEM (0.5): (As above.)

None of the remaining parties had anything relevant to say on the subject in their manifestos.

CONCLUSION

The full assessment yielded the following results for the UK political parties:

| Position | Party | Score |
|----------|------------------------------------|-------|
| 1 | Liberal Democrats | 11.0 |
| 2= | Green Party | 7.5 |
| 2= | Labour Party | 7.5 |
| 4 | Plaid Cymru | 6.5 |
| 5 | Conservative Party | 5.5 |
| 6 | Democratic Unionist Party | 5.0 |
| 7 | Social Democratic & Labour Party | 4.5 |
| 8 | Ulster Unionist Party | 3.5 |
| 9= | Alba Party | 2.0 |
| 9= | Alliance Party of Northern Ireland | 2.0 |
| 9= | Traditional Unionist Voice | 2.0 |
| 12= | Reform UK | 1.5 |
| 12= | Sinn Fein | 1.5 |
| 14 | Scottish National Party | 1.0 |

It should be noted that the maximum possible score would be 38 – therefore all of the parties still have some way to go in fully addressing the Hourglass Manifesto.

Nevertheless, it was apparent that some parties had already gone some way in both adopting specific pledges within the Hourglass Manifesto, and showed a marked predisposition in their manifestos to consideration of tackling the domestic abuse of older people.

The Hourglass demands most likely to be met were a commitment to listening to the voices of victims of abuse, and wider policies towards

health and social care provision. However, even then, the tone and direction of the policies could vary considerably; for instance, in stressing private-sector versus voluntary provision.

Ultimately, this assessment offers a helpful introduction to how explicitly – or not – the different parties have engaged with the Hourglass Manifesto; but the scoring alone is no substitute for a more detailed look at what each of the manifestos has to say.



OATH
OLDER AGE TOMORROW'S HOPE



A SAFER AGEING SOCIETY BY 2050

FREE FROM ABUSE, HARM, EXPLOITATION AND NEGLECT.

HOURGLASS IS THE WORKING NAME OF HOURGLASS (SAFER AGEING), A CHARITY REGISTERED IN ENGLAND AND WALES (REG. NO. 1140543), AND ALSO IN SCOTLAND (REG. NO. SC048278).
HOURGLASS (SAFER AGEING) IS REGISTERED AS A COMPANY IN ENGLAND AND WALES UNDER NUMBER 07290092.





THERE ARE OVER TWO AND A HALF MILLION REASONS WHY WE SHOULD ALL TAKE THE OATH. BECAUSE THAT'S HOW MANY OLDER PEOPLE SUFFER ABUSE, HARM, NEGLECT AND EXPLOITATION EVERY YEAR.

WHY?

Older people are victims of the same forms of abuse as all other age groups. This includes physical, sexual, domestic, economic and psychological abuse. Yet their voices are rarely heard. OATH is about creating a voice so loud that it cannot be ignored any longer.

WHY?

Your signature makes that voice louder. Your signature shows you are prepared to have your voice heard. Taking the OATH shows you are prepared to help older victims of abuse when they need us most.

WHY?

By signing the OATH, you'll be supporting Hourglass, the only UK-wide charity working to end the abuse, harm, exploitation and neglect of older people and lobby to achieve a Safer Ageing Society by 2050. Hourglass will use your support to collaborate and work with all third sector and voluntary abuse/age sector organisations to recognise the need for a safer ageing society.

We need to create a Safer Ageing Society, where we can all grow old safely, without fear of abuse. Safer ageing should no longer be a hope, it should be a promise.



BY SIGNING THE OATH, I COMMIT TO THE FOLLOWING:

CREATE CHANGE:

I will support calls to ensure local and UK-wide services and strategies are focused on creating a safer ageing society for older people, free from abuse and neglect.

ENSURE PARITY:

I will support campaigns to ensure parity for older victim-survivors of abuse and ensure investment in specialist services that focus on education, prevention, and recovery for older people subject to abuse.

PROVIDE THE RATIONALE:

I will promote research and evidence that underpins decision-making around related legislation and policy development, both within my own organisation and in my community.

INFLUENCE AND BUILD CONSENSUS:

I will promote OATH, support the case for safer ageing, and deliver key messages to decision-makers and society generally.

BE A COMMUNITY CHAMPION:

I will help to highlight the need for a safer ageing society in every community of the UK. I will help promote the creation of inter-generational understanding and support.

APPENDIX 1:

PARTY MANIFESTOS CONSULTED, FOR THE 2024 UK GENERAL ELECTION

- Alba Party.
- Alliance Party of Northern Ireland.
- Conservative Party.
- Scottish Conservative Party.
- Welsh Conservative Party.
- Democratic Unionist Party.
- Green Party.
- Labour Party.
- Scottish Labour Party.
- Welsh Labour Party.
- Liberal Democrats.
- Scottish Liberal Democrats.
- Welsh Liberal Democrats.
- Plaid Cymru.
- Reform UK.
- Social Democratic and Labour Party.
- Scottish National Party.
- Sinn Fein.
- Traditional Unionist Voice.
- Ulster Unionist Party.

APPENDIX 2: FULL SCORING CRITERIA

| PARTY: | | ALBA | Alliance NI | Conservative | DUP | Green | Labour | Lib Dem | Plaid Cymru | Reform UK | SDLP | Sinn Fein | SNP | TUV | UUP |
|---------------------------------------|--|------|-------------|--------------|-----|-------|--------|---------|-------------|-----------|------|-----------|-----|-----|-----|
| 1. Strategy | 1.1 Begin consultation and evidence gathering to a create a dedicated strategy to end violence and abuse against older people, to complement Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategies, and ensure older victim-survivors are given parity with other demographics. | 0 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 1 | 0.5 | 0 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0 | 0 | 0.5 |
| | 1.2 Ensure that the lived experiences and voices of all victim-survivors are central to all strategy and policy development considerations. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0.5 | 1 | 0.5 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 2. Legislation and Enforcement | 2.1 Pledge to review the efficacy of existing legal protections, and enforce robust laws specifically targeting those who abuse, exploit and neglect older people, with strict penalties for perpetrators. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 0 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 2.2 Establish dedicated task forces or units within the criminal justice sector to investigate and prosecute cases of neglect and abuse promptly and effectively irrespective of the abuse taking place within older people's own homes and care homes. | 0 | 0.5 | 0 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 3. Awareness and Education | 3.1 Launch nationwide public awareness campaigns to educate people about the signs and consequences of abuse, exploitation and neglect of older people. Working hand in hand with key charities and agencies. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 3.2 Integrate education on ageing, rights of older people, and 'expectation of trust' into school curricula and professional training programmes for healthcare workers, social workers, police, legal professionals and caregivers (volunteers, professional or otherwise). | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|-----|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|-----|-----|-----|
| 4. Support Services | 4.1 Expanded and ring-fenced funding for support services tailored to older individuals, (with a focus on specific needs for groups such as older men, older LGBT, older minority groups, and older disabled people) including helplines, counselling services, shelters for older victims of abuse, and community based, person centred/victim-led options. | 0.5 | 0 | 0.5 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0.5 | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 0 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0 |
| | 4.2 Ensure accessible, quality assured health and social care services, including mental health support, for older people and support for those working in the sector. | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| 5. Community Engagement | 5.1 Foster community-based initiatives and neighbourhood programmes to empower communities to identify and address abuse, neglect and exploitation. | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 0 |
| | 5.2 Promote intergenerational activities and initiatives to strengthen social connections and combat ageism and stereotypes. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 0 | 0.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 6. Legal aid and Advocacy | 6.1 Guarantee access to legal aid for older people facing abuse, exploitation or neglect, to help them navigate legal proceedings and seek justice. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 6.2 Establish advocacy groups and networks to amplify the voices of older people and advocate for their rights at local, regional and national levels. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| 7. Research and Data Collection | 7.1 Invest in research to better understand the prevalence, causes, and consequences of abuse, neglect and exploitation, and to identify effective prevention, intervention and recovery strategies. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 7.2 Implement comprehensive data collection systems to track cases of abuse and commit to regular publication of data to enable evidence-based policy development and targeted interventions. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|--|-----|---|-----|---|---|---|-----|---|---|-----|---|-----|-----|---|---|---|
| Key words/issues | Mental health Debt Social care/reform Lessons learned from the pandemic Pensions VAWG Older People Domestic Abuse Fraud IDVA/ISVA Policing Justice Social Care Crime Courts | 0.5 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0.5 | 1 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0 | 1 | |
| England | <p>1. Research, undertake consultation and develop a strategy to tackle abuse and neglect of older people. This would complement the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy and include specific commitments to fund and properly resource older people's services. This should include a duty to fund and properly resource services for older people and particularly those aligned to the Victims and Prisoners Bill.</p> <p>2. Implement a consistent and accessible data collection system in each police force in England, that categorises crime according to age.</p> <p>3. Mandate all Police and Crime Commissioner (PCCS) to have specialist older person Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVAs) and Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs) in every local area as is currently in place for younger victims.</p> <p>4. Introduce Powers of Entry for social workers to investigate suspected abuse of older people.</p> <p>5. Widen the scope of the Forfeiture Act 1982 to include abuse.</p> <p>6. Commit to support and fund the annual Hourglass Safer Ageing Index.</p> <p>7. Create an Older People's Commissioner in England.</p> | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Northern Ireland | 1. Research, undertake consultation and develop a | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|--|---|---|-----|---|---|-----|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | <p>strategy to tackle abuse and neglect of older people. This would complement the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy and include specific commitments to fund and properly resource specialist services for older victim-survivors of abuse.</p> <p>2. Ensure there is adequate and ring-fenced funding and support available for charities which offer front line support services to older victim-survivors of abuse.</p> <p>3. Urgently pass the Adult Protection Bill into law. This law must also extend powers of entry for social workers to investigate suspected abuse older people.</p> <p>4. Ensure crime data collection remains robust and commit to the routine publication of Health and Social Care data on adult safeguarding. 5. Commit to support and fund the annual Hourglass Safer Ageing Index</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Scotland | <p>1. Develop a strategy to tackle abuse and neglect of older people, which builds on previous work by the Scottish Government in this area, and commitment to fund and properly resource specialist services for older victim-survivors of abuse.</p> <p>2. Implement a consistent and accessible data collection system and commit to publishing all relevant data pertaining to the abuse and neglect of older people. This must include police, courts, NHS, social care providers and other government agencies.</p> <p>3. Urgently review the Domestic Abuse Act (Scotland) (2018), to broaden the definition of domestic abuse to include abuse perpetrated by a family member or carer.</p> <p>4. Introduce 'Willie's Law' and an economic abuse strategy which would require a medical professional to co-sign legal</p> | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------|--|---|---|-----|---|---|---|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | documents of vulnerable people to prove they have legal capacity. 5. Create a Victim and Witnesses Commissioner and an Older People's Commissioner in Scotland. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Wales | <p>1. Ensure implementation and a yearly review of the National Action Plan to Prevent the Abuse of Older People with support from Hourglass, ensuring it complements the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse, and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) strategy, with specific commitments to fund and properly resource specialist services for older people.</p> <p>2. Advocate for all police forces in Wales to implement a consistent and accessible overarching data collection system that allows for categorisation of crime by victim and perpetrator age, and work with Hourglass to call on Westminster for this change. Ensure that police forces are encouraged to make this data publicly accessible on a yearly basis.</p> <p>3. Mandate all Police and Crime Commissioner (PCCS) to have specialist older person Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVAs) and Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs) in every local area as is currently in place for younger victims.</p> <p>4. Engage with Hourglass on any developing Government policy to tackle abuse and neglect of older people.</p> <p>5. Increase provision of specialist services that support older victim-survivors of abuse throughout Wales and ensure these have sustainable funding.</p> <p>6. Commit to support and fund the annual Hourglass Safer Ageing Index</p> | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| | | ALBA | Alliance NI | Conservative | DUP | Green | Labour | Lib Dem | Plaid Cymru | Reform UK | SDLP | Sinn Fein | SNP | TUV | UUP |
|--|---------------|------|-------------|--------------|-----|-------|--------|---------|-------------|-----------|------|-----------|-----|-----|-----|
| | TOTALS | 2.0 | 2.0 | 5.5 | 5.0 | 7.5 | 7.5 | 11.0 | 6.5 | 1.5 | 4.5 | 1.5 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 3.5 |

the Government to review the 'No Recourse to Public Funds' (NRPF) for migrants who suffer domestic abuse and are at risk; 3 seek a review by DWP of the requirement for those experiencing domestic abuse to apply for split payments of certain benefits.[1]

LIB DEM (1): "Ensuring survivors of violence against women and girls are properly supported in the criminal justice process, including through mandatory training for police and prosecutors in understanding the impact of trauma on survivors... Ensure that survivors of domestic abuse are properly supported throughout the criminal justice system by: Embedding domestic abuse specialists in every police force and 999 operator assistance centre to ensure that reports from survivors are handled effectively and sensitively." [2]

Alliance Party [APNI] (0.5): "We want to build a fair, sustainable world: reducing poverty and inequality, addressing the climate crisis, and ensuring that the most marginalised groups, such as women, girls, people with disabilities and the LGBT+ community, are at the forefront of international development and humanitarian assistance policy." [3]

CONSERVATIVE (0.5): Tackling violence against women and girls

"We have made violence against women and girls a strategic policing requirement for the first time, making clear to the police that these crimes are as significant as terrorism, serious and organised crime and child sexual abuse. We have strengthened the law to punish predators with new offences for stalking, controlling or coercive behaviour, non-fatal strangulation and suffocation, sharing of intimate images or 'revenge porn', non-consensual taking of images of a woman breastfeeding, 'up skirting' and raised the maximum penalties for harassment. We will legislate to create new offences for spiking, the creation of sexualised deepfake images and taking intimate images without consent. We will support victims of domestic abuse including through our Domestic Abuse Act, which created a statutory definition of domestic abuse and gave new powers to police and the courts.

We will toughen sentencing for murders that take place within the context of domestic abuse with new aggravating factors, such as if they involve coercive and controlling behaviour or gratuitous attacks. We will introduce a 25-year prison term for domestic murders, regardless of whether a weapon is used. Those who kill their domestic abusers will not face the same starting point. This will be accompanied by a review of homicide sentencing, looking to close loopholes that allow some killers to get off lightly [4]

GREEN (0.5): "Simple things like more police on the beat and greater support for domestic violence units can make a huge difference. But Greens recognise it's time to do more - so we will tackle structural injustice and transform our policing and justice system... Elected Greens will work to... End violence against women and girls... gender-based violence is a key measurable priority for all police forces and that all police officers are trained to recognise and tackle domestic violence." [5]

LABOUR (0.5): "We will no longer tolerate the violence against women and girls that stains our society... For too long, violence against women and girls has been ignored. Our landmark mission to halve violence against women and girls in a decade will require a national effort. We will use every government tool available to target perpetrators and address the root causes of abuse and violence. That starts with tougher enforcement and protection... 13,000 additional neighbourhood police and community PCSOs; and specialist domestic abuse advisers in 999 control rooms at peak times [6]

PLAID CYMRU (0.5): "Create a Domestic Abuse Register to protect women is a means of preventing death and injury because it enables the early identification of abusive men. This would shift the responsibility away from the potential victims (as happens under Clare's Law) and on to the authorities and the offender themselves." [7]

SDLP (0.5): "Hold the Department of Justice responsible on its policy and legislation. In the last mandate, new legislation was introduced on a range of areas including domestic abuse and stalking. However, there has been very limited provision for the implementation, training or monitoring of these new offences. Moreover, not all recommendations from the Gillen Review have yet been implemented... At all levels of government, the SDLP has relentlessly campaigned for the new Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy to be fully implemented and funded. In the past, SDLP MPs supported the successful Istanbul Convention Bill on preventing and combating domestic violence." [8]

UUP (0.5): "We support... ensuring that legislation tackling violence against women and girls is robust and responsive to developing challenges." [9]

Reform UK did not have anything to say on the subject in their manifestos.

Criteria 1.2: Ensure that the lived experiences and voices of all victim-survivors are central to all strategy and policy development considerations.

Four parties had firm policies aligning with this recommendation, the Greens, the Lib Dems, the SDLP, and the UUP:

GREEN (1): "Green MPs will expand restorative justice when crimes do take place, both to give victims a voice and to help offenders take responsibility for the harm they have done." [10]

LIB DEM (1): "(As above, in Criteria 1.1, with its commitment to: mandatory training for police and prosecutors in understanding the impact of trauma on survivors... Embedding domestic abuse specialists in every police force and 999 operator assistance centre to ensure that reports from survivors are handled effectively and sensitively.)" [11]

SDLP (1): "Systemic reforms must be introduced to protect the rights of victims We support the introduction of an effective communication strategy to raise awareness of the Victim and Witnesses Charters and how information that signposts services, support providers and entitlements to services can easily be accessed." [12]

UUP (1) [On disability policy] "We firmly believe that the most effective way to develop these policies is by ensuring that individuals with lived experience are not just included, but are at the forefront of creating these policy interventions. Their unique perspectives and challenges are invaluable in shaping policies that truly meet their needs... The confidence in the Northern Ireland justice system is at an all-time low where many believe sentencing structures are broken and in need of a complete overhaul. Victims and Witnesses of crime are seldom informed of the progress of their case and are further marginalised by not being informed when a prisoner is being released... Stand by Victims - All too often victims have been regarded as an afterthought by our justice system, as the focus turns to the 'rights' of the victim makers. Victims need to see a change in culture within the justice system whereby the State is seen to be fulfilling its duty of protecting law abiding citizens. The police solve crimes, courts hand out meaningful sentences and victims are given the support they need." [13]

Beyond that, two more parties, Labour and Plaid Cymru, had things to say offering synergy in this area:

LABOUR (0.5): "We will reform the justice system to put the needs of victims first... Labour is committed to championing the rights of disabled people and to the principle of working with them, so that their views and voices will be at the heart of all we do. We will introduce the full right to equal pay for disabled people. Building on gender pay gap reporting, we will introduce disability and ethnicity pay gap reporting for large employers. We will support disabled people to work by improving employment support and access to reasonable adjustments. We will also tackle the Access to Work backlog and make sure people can try out a job without fear of an immediate benefit reassessment if it does not work out." [14]

PLAID (0.5): "We reaffirm our commitment to ensure that LGBTQ+ voices and experiences are heard and will continue to actively promote LGBTQ+ rights... The voices of disabled people will be at core of this policy to ensure the full enjoyment by persons with disabilities in daily life with dignity, their human rights, and fundamental freedoms from poverty, social exclusion, discrimination, and negligence." [15]

DUP (0.5): "promote a review of arrangements governing the disclosure of victims' personal information in sexual and domestic abuse cases; seek a review by DWP of the requirement for those experiencing domestic abuse to apply for split payments of certain benefits promote a review of arrangements governing the disclosure of victims' personal information in sexual and domestic abuse cases; seek a review by DWP of the requirement for those experiencing domestic abuse to apply for split payments of certain benefits." [16]

LABOUR (0.5): "Fraud accounts for almost two in five crimes, but the Conservatives have failed to respond to the scale of the challenge. Labour will introduce a new expanded fraud strategy." [17]

LIB DEM (0.5): "Ensure that survivors of violence against women and girls and domestic abuse get the support they deserve by: Fully implementing the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, with protections for all survivors regardless of nationality or immigration status." [18]

PLAID (0.5): "Plaid Cymru believes that everybody should have access to justice, within easy access of the community in which they live... We would provide additional help to prevent these legal aid 'deserts' which means that individuals are prevented from accessing timely advice and support. This involves supporting the legal workforce to move into these fields of provision and making the whole field more sustainable... Plaid Cymru would pilot a court in the community scheme which visit areas of the country with an appropriate timetable to resolve local justice needs. This could also help reduce the backlog of court cases." [19]

SINN FEIN (0.5): "Sinn Féin will also continue to advocate for victims and survivors of institutional abuse to protect their right to truth, justice and redress that they have been denied for too long." [20]

LIB DEM (1): "Addressing the delays in domestic abuse referrals from the police to the CPS and subsequent decision making by the CPS, acknowledging the unique risk these delays can pose to women's safety... Ensure that survivors of violence against women and girls and domestic abuse get the support they deserve by... Ensuring that survivors are properly supported within the criminal justice system..." [21]

APNI (0.5): "Alliance believes human rights are inherent and universal: an essential part of modern governance that protects the individual from injustice... It is imperative that the next UK government restores the rule of law, civil liberties, and equal access to justice as foundational pillars of our society." [22]

DUP (0.5): "Support tough measures to address all forms of elder abuse, including financial crime... increasing funding for speech and language and mental health support services within the criminal justice system, including prison service." [23]

GREEN (0.5): "Develop and implement a new UK-wide strategy to tackle gender-based violence, including domestic violence, rape and sexual abuse, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and trafficking." [24]

LABOUR (0.5): (As above, in Criteria 2.1.) [25]

LIB DEM (1): "Ensure that survivors of violence against women and girls and domestic abuse get the support they deserve by... Ensuring that survivors are properly supported within the criminal justice system, as set out in chapter 11... Ensure that survivors of domestic abuse are properly supported throughout the criminal justice system by... Addressing the delays in domestic abuse referrals from the police to the CPS and subsequent decision making by the CPS, acknowledging the unique risk these delays can pose to women's safety." [26]

LABOUR (0.5): "Violence and abuse against women and girls does not come from nowhere. Misogyny is one root cause, and therefore Labour will ensure schools address misogyny and teach young people about healthy relationships and consent." [27]

LIB DEM (0.5): "Ensure that survivors of violence against women and girls and domestic abuse get the support they deserve by... Expanding the number of refuges and rape crisis centres to meet demand. Ensuring sustainable funding for services to support survivors of domestic abuse, with a particular focus on community-based and specialist 'by and for' services." [28]

DUP (1): "Recent years have seen a large number of bank branches closing in towns and villages across Northern Ireland, indeed across the whole of the United Kingdom. This impacts older people, the vulnerable and those living in rural areas, where banks have been a visible part of the social fabric... invest more in community transport, including services that provide a lifeline to older people... As media consumption patterns change, most people spend less time on traditional channels and consume more media online via phones and tablets. The people who in the main depend more on the traditional channels are older people. Yet this is the group the BBC has betrayed by scrapping free licence fees for over 75s. We will campaign to reverse this." [29]

GREEN (1): "We will ensure that tailored and specific provision is readily available for the particular needs of communities of colour, children and adolescents, older people and Lesbian, Gay Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Queer and Asexual (LGBTIQ+) communities... [In housing] We would ensure that the needs of the elderly, families with children, people living with a disability or requiring support through sheltered housing are adequately catered for." [30]

Pass a new law to provide better treatment and support for severe mental health needs in the first session of the next Parliament. [31]

LABOUR (1): "We will build consensus for the longer-term reform needed to create a sustainable National Care Service. We will explore how we best manage and support an ageing population... Labour will undertake a programme of reform to create a National Care Service, underpinned by national standards, delivering consistency of care across the country. Services will be locally delivered, with a principle of 'home first' that supports people to live independently for as long as possible. Our new standards will ensure high-quality care and ongoing sustainability, and ensure providers behave responsibly. Labour will develop local partnership working between the NHS and social care on hospital discharge... Labour will ensure the publication of regular, independent workforce planning, across health and social care... Labour will bring [mental health service] waiting times down and intervene earlier. We will recruit an additional 8,500 new staff to treat children and adults through our first term." [32]

LIB DEM (1): "We will: - Introduce free personal care based on the model introduced by the Liberal Democrats in government in Scotland in 2002, so that provision is based on need, not ability to pay. - Create a social care workforce plan, establish a Royal College of Care Workers to improve recognition and career progression, and introduce a higher Carer's Minimum Wage. - Establish a cross-party commission to forge a long-term agreement on sustainable funding for social care." [33]

PLAID CYMRU (1): "Plaid Cymru strongly believes in the principle of healthcare free at the point of delivery, funded through general taxation. [We] will work to ensure that our NHS is properly funded through a new fairer and needs-based funding model for Wales... Plaid Cymru believes that we should move public health towards becoming a wellness service that is geared towards keeping people healthy. A preventative public health strategy which rebalances resources to prevent people becoming ill would help the NHS overall by stopping patients entering the system earlier than necessary. Health inequalities are an important part of this agenda, including those determined by class, race and gender. A review of the financing model for Wales should better consider the determinants of healthcare to meet our needs... Plaid Cymru has been working to deliver a National Care Service for Wales. We believe that social care, like health care, should be free at the point of use, and that the distinction between the two is artificial. Ending this distinction will also help with reducing Delayed Transfers of Care, the time that people remain in hospital rather than care settings. We will continue to work towards this goal, particularly to support those with dementia." [34]

GREEN (0.5): "[In mental health] We will ensure that tailored and specific provision is readily available for... older people." [35]

Cut waiting lists by using UK & overseas providers. The vast majority do not mind who delivers the care, we just want the pain gone. This independent sector includes many not for profit health providers that provide some of the best care. Organisations such as Nuffield Health and Marie Curie, which provides end of life cancer care are charities. We want to encourage more of these organisations to end the NHS crisis." [36]

SDLP (0.5): "Working alongside the SDLP Opposition at Stormont, SDLP MPs will: Make representations directly to the Treasury for a health service transformation intervention; Seek dedicated resource to reduce waiting lists which have remained out of control; Argue for terms and conditions for health service staff which reflect their contribution to our society and address workforce retention challenges; Argue for a government backed indemnity scheme for GPs in Northern Ireland to avert the unnecessary closure of local practices; Fight for the expansion of Multi-Disciplinary Teams across Northern Ireland." [37]

UUP (0.5): "We will remain steadfast in investment and strengthening our social care system." [38]

GREEN (0.5): "Restore legal aid for public law cases so everybody can uphold their rights in court." [39]

LABOUR (0.5): "We will reform the justice system to put the needs of victims first, tackle the prisons crisis and cut reoffending... Labour will introduce a 'Hillsborough Law' which will place a legal duty of candour on public servants and authorities, and provide legal aid for victims of disasters or state-related deaths." [40]

LIB DEM (0.5): "Establishing a new right to affordable, reasonable legal assistance, and making the Legal Aid system simpler, fairer and more generous." [41]

PLAID CYMRU (0.5): "Stop abusers further harassing their victims through court proceedings and strengthen restraining orders and sanctions for breaching them." [42]



Hourglass

Safer ageing · Stopping abuse

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24/7 Helpline: 0808 808 8141

Our helpline is entirely confidential and free to call from a landline or mobile, and the number will not appear on your phone bill.

Text message: 07860 052906

Texts from outside the UK will be charged at their standard international rate which will differ depending on location and service charges of your phone provider. The number will appear on your bill and in your phone records but will not be identified as Hourglass.

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