

Dear Colleague,

**Consultation - Experiences of the criminal justice system: women's experiences in the criminal justice system**

The **Senedd's Equality and Social Justice Committee** is looking at the experiences of different groups of people in the criminal justice system in Wales.

Women make up around 5% of the prison population however, figures from the Prison Reform Trust suggest that women are more likely than men to report mental health issues; report experiencing emotional, physical or sexual abuse as a child; be in prison for their first offence; and have a drug or alcohol problem on entry.

As part of a series of short inquiries, the Equality and Social Justice Committee is looking strategically at women's experiences across the criminal justice system, with a view to identifying issues that may need a greater focus.

This inquiry will focus on the provision of services for female offenders, alongside seeking to improve understanding of the distinct needs and vulnerabilities of women who offend.

**Invitation to contribute to the inquiry**

The Committee would like to invite you to submit written evidence. In responding, it would be helpful to have your comments on the terms of reference which are to consider:

- the progress being made, if any, by the Welsh Government in realising its ambitions for the transformation of services for female offenders including implementation of the Female Offending Blueprint;
- the evidence for the development of Women's Rehabilitation Centres and arguments for reducing custodial sentences for women in Wales, including views on the Women's Centre that will open in Swansea; and
- the availability of appropriate custodial provision and support for different groups of women including girls under the age of 18, disabled women, those with mental health problems, women from ethnic minorities, those who have experienced sexual violence or domestic abuse, women with alcohol or drug problems and Welsh speaking women.

Submissions should arrive by **23 September 2022**.

If you wish to submit evidence, please send a copy to: [SeneddEquality@Senedd.Wales](mailto:SeneddEquality@Senedd.Wales)

## Guidance

Submissions should be no longer than five sides of A4, with numbered paragraphs, and should focus on the terms of reference.

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please provide a brief description of the role of your organisation.

Please see the [guidance for those providing evidence for committees for full details](#).

## Bilingual Policy

The Committee welcomes contributions in both or either of our official languages, English and Welsh. Information not submitted bilingually will not be translated and will be published in the language of submission only. We expect organisations to implement their own standards and schemes and to comply with their statutory obligations.

## How we use your information

We will usually publish correspondence or written evidence on our website. If you have responded in a personal capacity, your name will be published along with your contribution, unless you have asked for your contribution to be anonymised. If you have responded in a professional capacity, the published version of your response will include your name, your job title/role, if relevant, and the name of your organisation.


## Contact details

If you wish to speak to someone regarding this consultation, please use the following contact details:

Email: [SeneddEquality@Senedd.Wales](mailto:SeneddEquality@Senedd.Wales)

Telephone: 0300 200 6565

Yours sincerely,



Jenny Rathbone MS  
Chair of the Equality and Social Justice Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.  
We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.