



GENERAL ELECTION 24

**WE ARE  
SURVIVORS.**



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# Male Survivors **MANifesto**

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SURVIVORS.**

# A Male Survivor

# MANifesto

**We Are Survivors** has been supporting male victims / survivors for over fifteen years, and in that time we have learned so much on how to meet the needs of male survivors, and their loved ones.

As the UK goes to polls on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2024, we are asking all political parties to ensure that positively tackling the impact of sexual abuse, rape and sexual exploitation; along with leading a joint effort to prevent harms from occurring in the first place, are a key priority of Government.

International research suggests that 1 in 6 males will be affected by sexual violence in their lifetime; 1 in 4 victims of child sexual abuse are boys; and over 1 in 10 victims of rape are male.

However, it is currently the case that all of these boys and men are classed as victims of ‘violence against women and girls’, and we believe that, in order to improve the lives of all victims’, we have to be clear about the language we use and on how we understand sexual offences.

**We Are Survivors** is committed to ensuring that ***NO Male Survivor Is Left Behind***, and we call on all political parties and candidates to join us in making this vision a reality.



**Duncan Craig OBE**  
Chief Executive Officer

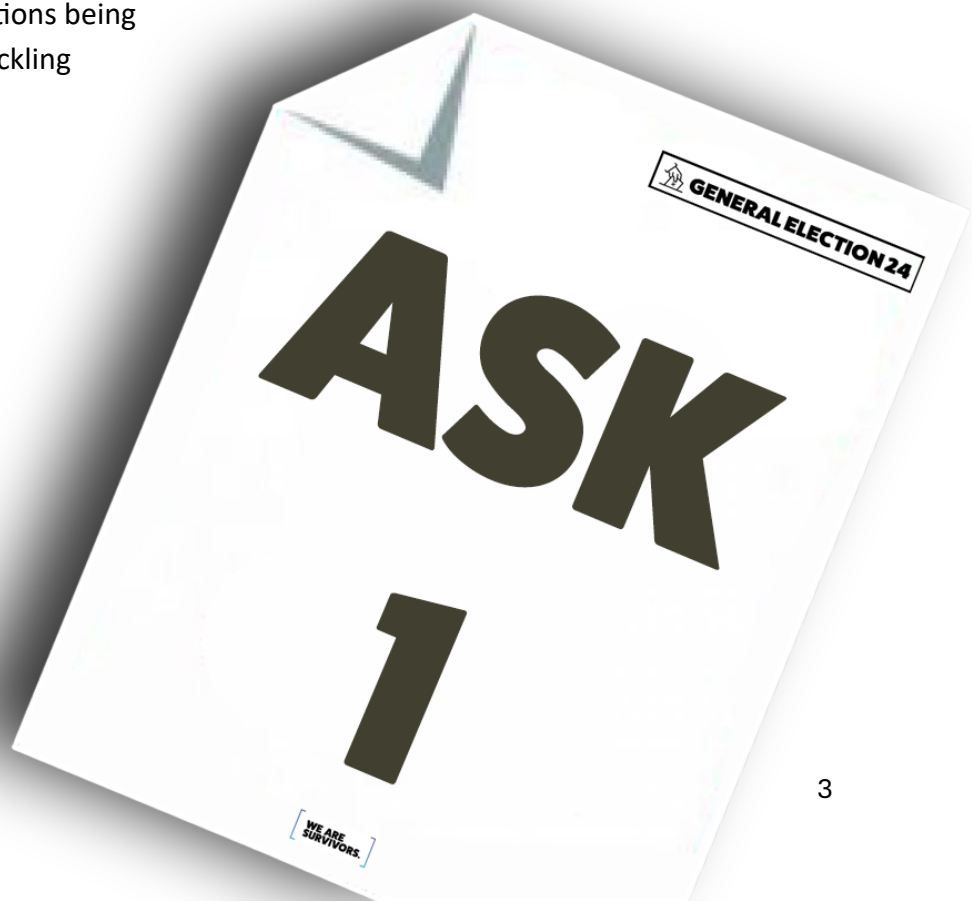
## **To remove data and information pertaining to male victims / survivors from all policies, strategies and campaigns on Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).<sup>1</sup>**

Since 2009 across the world, governments and world Leaders have focused much attention on one of the biggest challenges in modern times, tackling violence against women and girls. There have been varying degrees of success, but sadly we largely remain a global society where women are being beaten and killed in the home; raped and sexually violated; forced into marriage and overwhelming far too often, at the hands of men.

**We Are Survivors** has always been and remains 100% committed to proactively playing its part in the UK's effort to bring this modern day epidemic to an end.

The current status quo of including the rape and sexual offence crimes committed against boys and men within violence against women and girls policies, strategies, reports and plans must end. Victims / survivors deserve to be seen in their own right, whilst the public must be able to understand the facts of the sexual violence problem facing society. Statutory agencies, leaders, organisations need to be able to be better informed on the actuality of the problem, and they should be able to report the efficacy of solutions being delivered in collective action in tackling violence against women and girls.

**We Are Survivors** is clear in our ask that any strategy that is developed to tackle violence against women and girls should only include data and activity that is focused on women and girls.



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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-violence-against-women-and-girls-strategy>

## **To develop and publish a specific policy on tackling sexual violence, rape, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of male victims / survivors.**

The 2,400+ male victims / survivors of rape, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation that access **We Are Survivors** every year, along with the thousands of men that have accessed support since 2009, are all classed currently in the UK as victims of violence against women and girls.<sup>2</sup> This includes the 200+ men that, in 2020, were revealed to be victims of the biggest rape case in British legal history.<sup>3</sup>

Whilst this is factually inaccurate, this confusing use of language creates an array of problems for researchers, academics, policy makers, and leaders in understanding male victims / survivors needs; and places victim / survivor organisations in an extremely difficult position in developing support responses for all victims / survivors, primarily not having a clear policy to associate and develop a response with.

Whilst the historic and ground breaking position statement on male victims of crimes considered violence against women and girls was developed in 2019,<sup>4</sup> and refreshed in 2021, there is a growing call from many academics, sector leaders, and survivors themselves to create a specific policy or strategy focused on male victims.

**We Are Survivors** asks that this strategy is given the time it deserves and should sit alongside and expertly compliment the *Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls* strategy.<sup>5</sup>

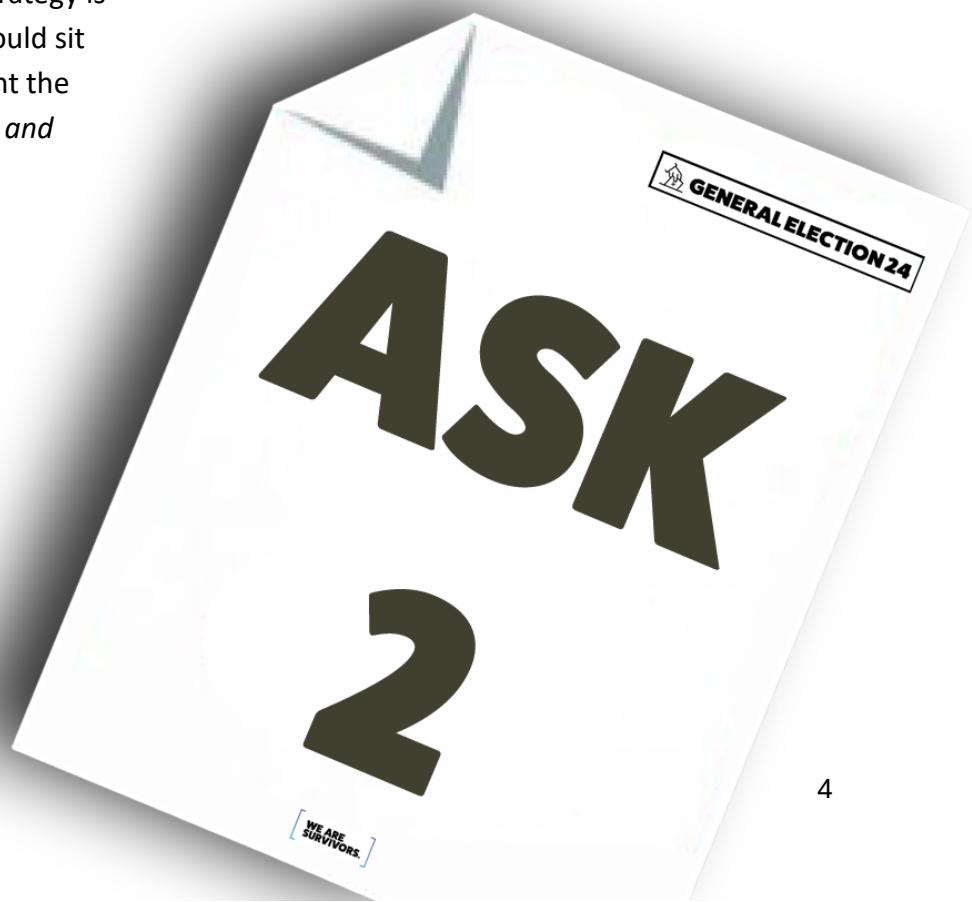
Separate strategies that meet the distinct needs of male and female victims/survivors separately will finally bring this modern day epidemic to an end.

<sup>2</sup> [https://data.parliament.uk/DepositedPapers/Files/DEP2022-0294/Supporting\\_Male\\_Victims\\_March\\_2022.pdf](https://data.parliament.uk/DepositedPapers/Files/DEP2022-0294/Supporting_Male_Victims_March_2022.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-50987823>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategy-to-end-violence-against-women-and-girls-2016-to-2020/male-victims-position-paper-march-2019-accessible-version>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-violence-against-women-and-girls-strategy>



## **To undertake a review of the legal definition of Rape and its impact on male victims / survivors of ‘forced to penetrate’ sexual offences.**

It has often been viewed by survivor support agencies that the treatment of male victims of rape can sadly be different depending on the gender of the perpetrator. Recent national headlines<sup>6</sup> involving the sexual abuse of two boys by a female adult in a position of power<sup>7</sup> was another example of the minimisation of the crime because the perpetrator was female. These crimes are generally considered to be equivalent to rape yet are not dealt with equally.

The current definition of Rape is defined in law (Sexual Offences Act 2003<sup>8</sup>) as:

- (1) A person (A) commits an offence if—
  - (a) he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis,
  - (b) B does not consent to the penetration, and
  - (c) A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

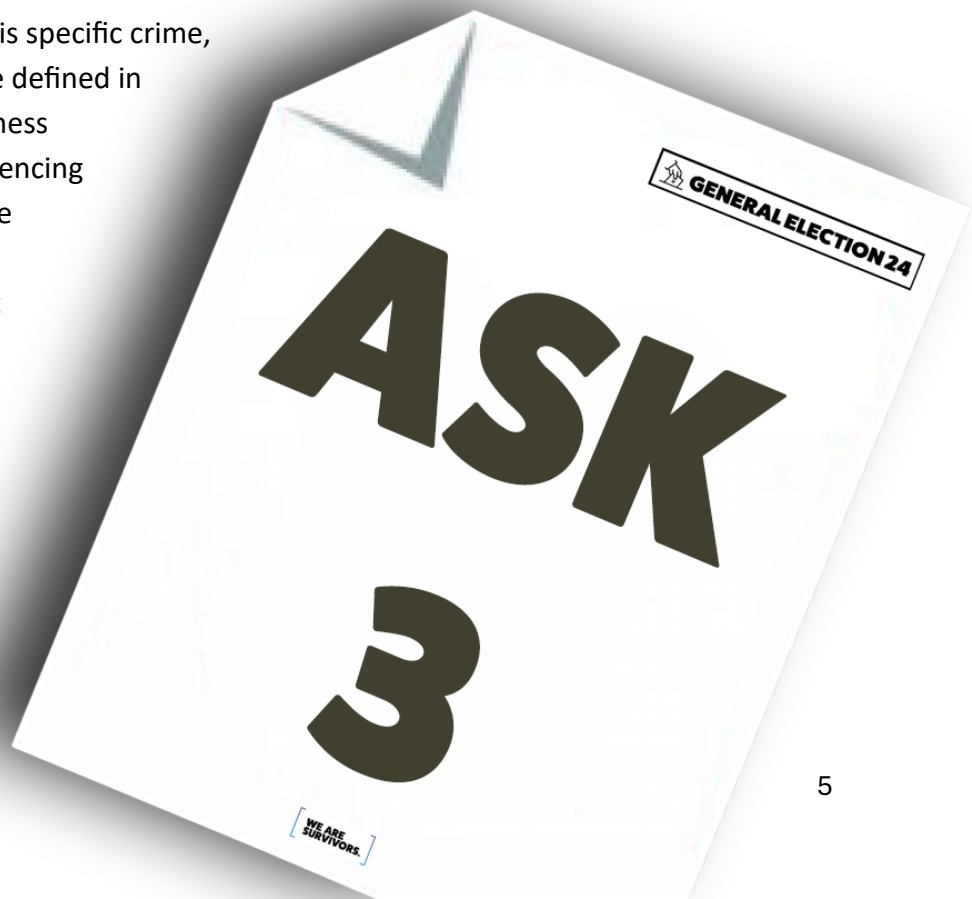
making it clear that whilst male and females can be victims of rape, yet only males can commit the act of Rape.

**We Are Survivors** believes that this specific crime, of ‘forced to penetrate’, should be defined in law as rape to ensure the seriousness of the crime and subsequent sentencing is equal, whilst also supporting the increase in understanding by the public of this crime and its impact on victims / survivors’ lives.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/what-f-greater-manchester-teacher-29197817>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-69026069>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/42/contents>



## Our MANifesto.

Our MANifesto has been developed through various discussions with male survivors and we aim to present this as a way for political parties and candidates to better understand the vital importance of recognising male victims / survivors of sexual abuse, rape and sexual exploitation.

**We Are Survivors** wants all political parties and candidates to:

- think about how they can meet the needs of male victims / survivors in their plans.
- include a commitment to improving the response to male victims of sexual violence.
- continue to provide a key focus on tackling violence against women and girls in the next Parliament.

At a local level, **We Are Survivors** also wants all candidates to act in the best interest of male victim / survivors. We ask candidates to champion their local survivor support offer and where there is none, work to bring about change.

**We Are Survivors** believes that to make our vision of a society where NO male survivor is left behind a reality, we need to build and maintain a strong relationship between Government, local elected members and others.

We want our relationship with Governments, political leaders and policy makers to be focused on all victims and survivors of sexual offences on their healing journeys; whilst ensuring NO male survivor is left behind.

For further information, to arrange discussions, and to learn more about male victims / survivors of sexual abuse, rape and sexual exploitation, please contact:

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