



VAWG Experts by Experience Panel Design

Consultation findings - March 2023

Safer Communities Team
Community Safety & Resilience



Background

- In our Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy 2021-27 Lambeth Council committed to establishing an advisory group to ensure our work to tackle gender-based violence and abuse is **led by the needs and wishes of people with lived experience**
- The ultimate aim is to support us in delivering our VAWG strategy, **improving the safety and wellbeing of everyone in the borough**, including **all** victims and survivors
- These principles – of **safety** and **people having a say in decisions that matter** - are key priorities reflected in our Borough Plan, *Lambeth 2030: Our Future, Our Lambeth*



Lambeth
2030
OUR FUTURE, OUR LAMBETH



In February and March 2023, we ran a **consultation** to hear the views of local victims and survivors about our plans for a **new Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) Experts by Experience panel**



We engaged **41** participants

14 focus group attendees

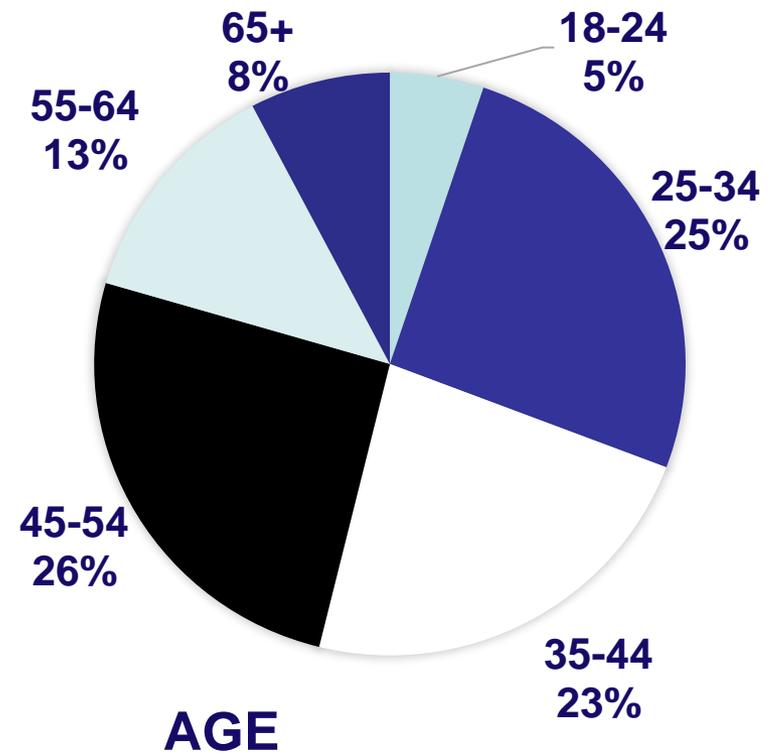
2 1:1 interviewees

25 survey respondents

Demographics

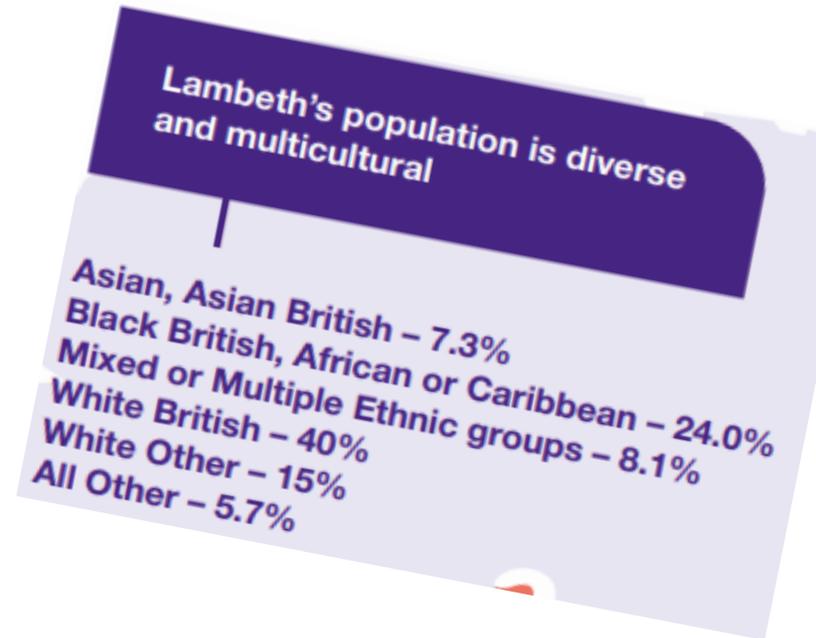
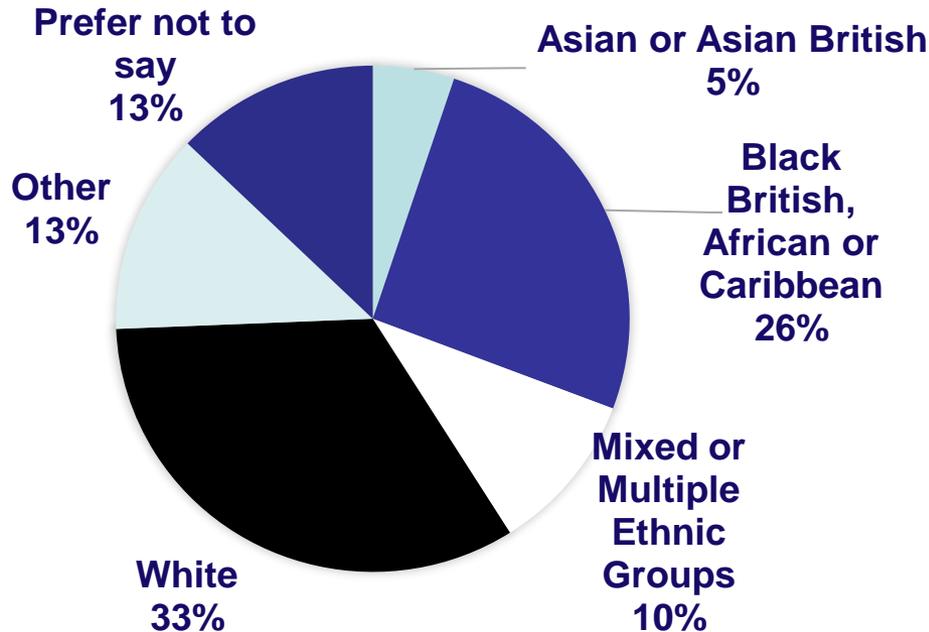
The consultation was widely publicised and attracted responses from a diverse range of victims and survivors

- **87%** were **women**, **5%** were **men**; one respondent identified as trans
- **18%** identified as **LGB+** compared to 8.3% of Lambeth as a whole – although gay men were not represented
- **26%** have **disability or long-term health condition**, compared with 17% of the Lambeth population



Ethnicity

At least **54%** of respondents were from **Black, Asian or Multi-Ethnic groups**, 33% were White consisting of White British and other white groups including Spanish and Portuguese speaking participants.



↑ *Data from Census 2021*

Findings: establishing a panel

Victims and survivors want to be involved in decision making and there was broad support for the concept of the panel

Respondents stressed that there should also be **flexible opportunities** to get involved, not limited to panel membership

Key themes about how the panel should be set up were:

- **Flexibility** and **openness**: *‘just be real and transparent’*
- **Sustainability** – the panel will need to grow and evolve over time to meet changing needs
- Victims and survivors must see the **impact** of their involvement, to know it is **making a difference**

Panel activity

Respondents thought that the activities of the panel should be determined in collaboration with panelists, in line with their skills and interests

There was support for a **range of areas** the panel could focus on. The most popular were:

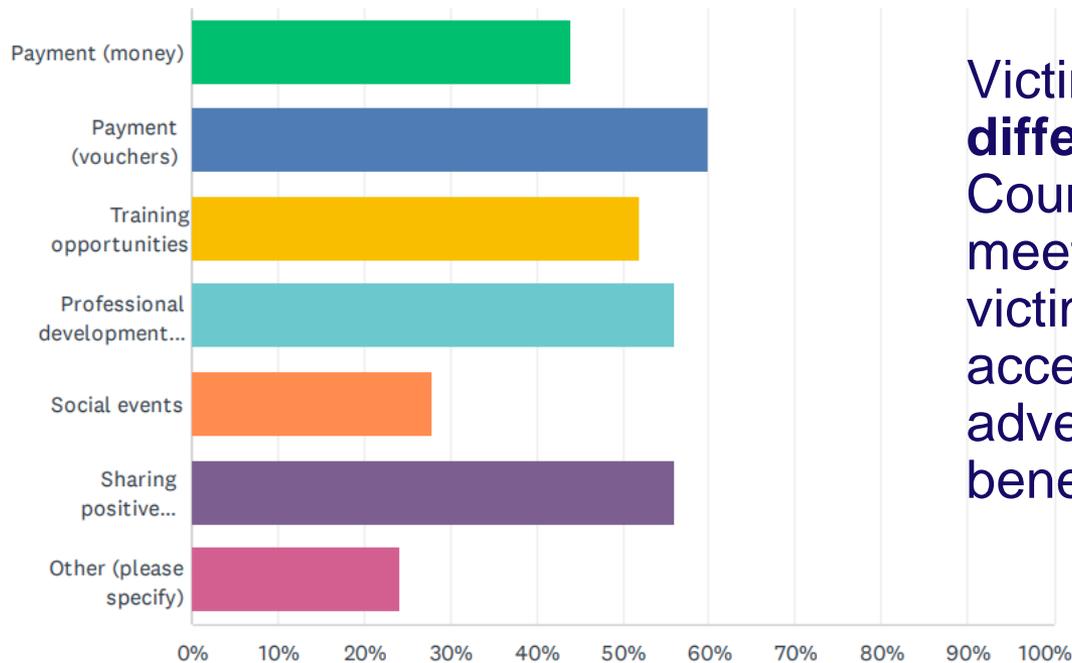
- **Scrutiny** of the Council's work
- Reviewing local **services**
- Designing **training** and **policy**
- **Awareness raising**



Compensation, incentives and rewards

The majority of respondents want panel members to be compensated for their time through voucher or monetary payment

However, **payment should not be the only method** of making panel members feel valued – as is reflected in our survey results.



Victims and survivors have **different needs** and the Council should work flexibly to meet the diverse needs of victims and survivors, e.g. if accepting payment might adversely impact someone's benefit entitlement



There was broad agreement that the panel should be representative of Lambeth, including *'people from all backgrounds, ages, races and religions'*. Victims and survivors reflected that *'we should see ourselves on the panel'*

To **increase accessibility**, respondents suggested that:

- The panel is facilitated in a **culturally competent** way by trained facilitators
- The Council proactively engages with **grassroots organisations** to engage survivors from **minoritised groups**
- A clear **code of conduct** and **equality training** for panel members is in place
- Some meetings are held **online**

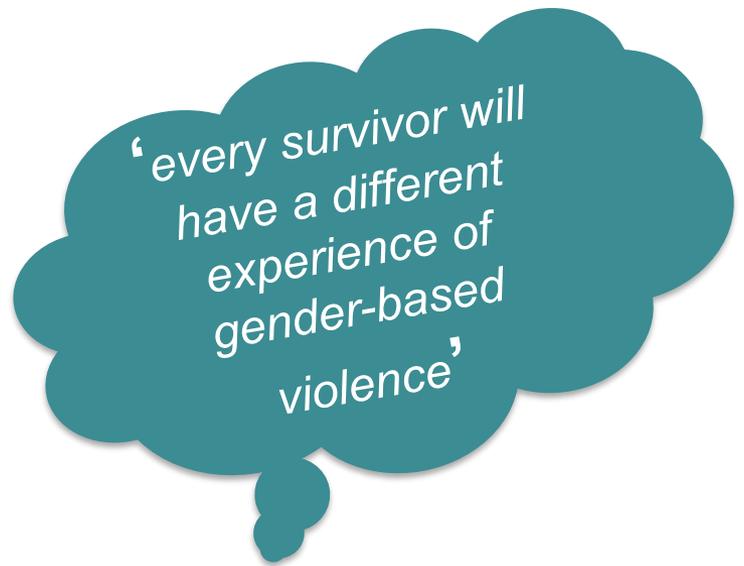
Accessibility

Support

Respondents recognised that involvement in the panel could be emotionally challenging

Suggestions for mitigating against the emotional impact of involvement included:

- **Clear expectations**
- **Training** to increase confidence
- Signposting to **support organisations**
- **Wellbeing events** and treatments
- Access to **psycho-social support** such as regular check ins, supervision and counselling



Lambeth

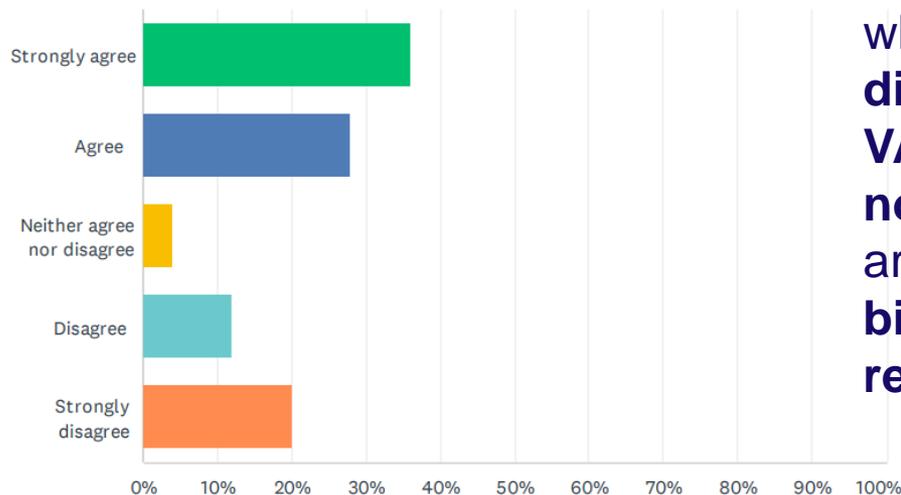
Gender

A variety of viewpoints were expressed by victims and survivors about the gender makeup of the panel. **The majority supported the panel being open to people of all genders**

“A collective voice for survivors is very powerful and the panel would be most effective if it represents a diverse range of survivors across the borough”

Q2 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the panel should be open to people of any gender?

Answered: 25 Skipped: 0



Our VAWG strategy is inclusive of all victims and survivors, whilst recognising the **disproportionate impact of VAWG on women and gender-nonconforming people**. We are mindful that **male and non-binary survivors were under-represented** in this consultation



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Recommendations



1. Recruitment and flexible opportunities

- Create a **clear role description** and **promote widely** across the community
- **Informal recruitment** process to reduce barriers
- Scope and set up a **Survivor Forum** to enable flexible opportunities for participation beyond the panel
- Use a **different approach to engage young people** who were under-represented in our consultation i.e assertive engagement with young people via existing forums and spaces

2. Gender

- The panel should be open to people of **all genders**
- **Engage with specialist LGBT+ and male support services** to better understand how we can reduce barriers for these groups
- Provide **women-only spaces** as needed; likewise, **separate groups of panel members** can be created as necessary i.e to centre Black, Asian and Multi-Ethnic victims and survivors

3. Compensation and Support

- Develop **transparent and flexible policy** for compensation and reward
- Provide **induction training**, including around equality, diversity and inclusion
- Establish a clear **code of conduct** alongside panel members with robust and **culturally competent facilitation**
- Work with panel members to identify their skills and areas of interest **to co-produce priority activities**

4. Reviewing and sharing learning

- As the panel is developed, **continually review** what is working and what needs to be adapted to meet the needs of victims and survivors; monitor the experience of panel members, capturing the **impact of their involvement**
- **Share learning** across the Council and our partners so that we can maximise the impact of this new approach

We are grateful to those victims and survivors who participated in the consultation

We are now taking time to act on the recommendations and preparing to recruit for the panel

If you have any questions or would like to find out more about how to get involved please contact:

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