

## Contact your local candidate for the May 2022 elections



### Local elections 2022

On Thursday 5 May 2022, elections are taking place in all London borough councils, some English metropolitan boroughs and all local authorities in Wales and Scotland, along with the Northern Ireland Assembly elections (see [here](#) for full list.) There are also elections for 7 local authority mayors.

The End Violence Against Women coalition sees these elections as an important opportunity for the public to call on their local candidates to commit to addressing gender-based violence locally, including instances of harassment and intimidation, sexual violence, forced marriage, and domestic violence. Whilst violence against women and girls has received widespread coverage in recent years due to high-profile murders and shocking statistics in the criminal justice system (see [here](#) for our Snapshot report for our reflections), we know that there remains a post-code lottery when it comes to the extent to which local areas prioritise violence against women and girls, including funding life-saving services.

In order to vote in the elections, you will need to be registered to vote already, but we have outlined some actions that everyone can take below whether you are registered or not for this election. We encourage you to play a part in calling for more action to address violence against women and girls in your local area.

### What power do local councils have?

Local councils have enormous power over the basic services we all depend on. As well as bins, libraries, roads and parks, local councils have considerable influence over local schools, as well as policing and some parts of health. Importantly, local councils often fund the specialist services for women and girls who need crisis help or long-term support after experiencing abuse.

Once elected, many councils are run by a 'cabinet' where a set of typically six to eight individual councillors from the biggest party are appointed to key positions including, for example, schools and community safety. Some of these people will oversee multi-million pound budgets which can be directed in part to violence against women services and initiatives to prevent abuse.

We encourage you to spend a few minutes browsing your local council website – it will tell you a bit more about its structure and key people – check out the 'your council' or 'council and democracy' section to see who has been a local councillor recently and what party they belong to.

### **How do I find my local candidates?**

If you are not sure what council area or what council ward you live in you can find it [here](#).

A full list of election candidates should be on your local council website by early April. It will list them by ward and give their home address.

### **What action can I take to ensure candidates commit to addressing gender-based violence?**

#### **Ask your candidate to commit to the pledges below**

If you use Twitter and Facebook (or Meta) you will find a lot of local election activity there, both from the individual candidates and the local parties pages. You can send them messages as a local voter asking them to commit to the pledges below.

You might also be able to find email addresses for candidates on any campaign website or page they have set up, and contact them by email with these pledges.

Any response you receive through any of these channels is 'on the record' and they can be held to it if elected.

#### **You can keep it really simple and ask them to make this overall pledge:**

*"I will prioritise addressing violence against women and girls locally, with an emphasis on prevention and support. I will work to ensure there is help and support available locally for all victims and survivors who need it."*

#### **If you want to ask them to make a more detailed commitment, you could ask them to answer the following questions:**

*If elected, will you push for the council to draw up or develop an 'ending violence against women and girls plan'? As part of this, will you work to ensure the council properly funds specialist support services for women and girls facing abuse, including services for minoritized groups?*

*If elected, will you communicate with all schools in our area to ensure that Relationships and Sex Education is delivered as part of a 'whole school' approach to*

*addressing violence against women and girls, ensuring they have connected with local women's organisations who can sometimes deliver classes and can also help if children or parents disclose abuse?*

*If elected, will you commit to ensuring that support services for women and girls who experience abuse is provided without discrimination, including provision for those with No Recourse to Public Funds and an end to data-sharing agreements between services and the Home Office which put women at risk of harm?*

**Let us know about any pledges**

We welcome you sharing any promises or pledges made to you with EAW – [let us know](#) how your candidates respond.