

## **ANGIOLINI INQUIRY CHAIR HIGHLIGHTS CRITICAL GAPS IN PREVENTION AND CALLS FOR URGENT NATIONAL ACTION TO STOP PREDATORS FROM COMMITTING SEXUALLY MOTIVATED CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN**

### **Second Report reveals critical need for a relentless focus on the perpetrators of these crimes, and a lack of coordination and grip for prevention activity**

The Angiolini Inquiry's second Report, released today, calls for a fundamental shift in the focus of activity to prevent sexually motivated crimes against women in public spaces. Chair Lady Elish Angiolini KC makes a clear statement: measures targeted at making spaces safer (such as better street lighting) and advising women on how to protect themselves (for instance, providing information on safe routes home) are important - but not enough.

Instead, the prevention focus must be squarely on identifying and targeting the predatory men who commit these crimes. Work to identify and intervene early when someone is showing predatory behaviour, and to investigate effectively and swiftly when an offence has taken place, needs to be combined and coordinated in a way it currently is not. Every opportunity must be taken to improve what we know about the patterns of behaviour of these perpetrators, and what will disrupt and change that behaviour. This is currently lacking.

Lady Elish expresses great concern that basic questions about the prevalence of these crimes cannot be answered and outlined key gaps in knowledge about how many women nationally report being the victim of sexually motivated crimes in public spaces. For example,

questions, such as ‘how many women reported being raped by strangers in public spaces in England and Wales last year?’. There is also limited data on sexual assault and indecent exposure. Lady Elish warns that, without this data being gathered and recorded consistently across forces, it cannot be analysed to spot patterns of offending, which amounts to a critical failure.

Lady Elish therefore calls for urgent, coordinated action to shift public attitudes, disrupt harm and create a culture that enables women to feel safer in public spaces.

The Report highlights a troubling lack of momentum, funding and ambition for prevention work in this area, as well as a lack of progress on previously accepted recommendations from Lady Elish’s Part 1 Report. Although Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) was categorised as a ‘national threat’ in 2023 (requiring police forces to coordinate their response and resources to tackle such crimes in line with other national threats), 26% of police forces have yet to implement basic policies for investigating sexual offences, including indecent exposure. Furthermore, the Part 1 Report recommended that those with convictions and/or cautions for sexual offences should be barred from policing. This has not yet been implemented. The Home Office has informed the Inquiry that it does intend to address this recommendation, but this will not be implemented until 2026.

Despite this, the Inquiry heard about many impressive and creative campaigns, programmes and other measures aimed at preventing sexually-motivated crimes against women in public. These come from across sectors, Government departments, charities and academia. This is encouraging; but there must be decisive action by Government to coordinate and boost these patches of positive prevention activity.

As a starting point, the Inquiry recommends immediate focus on and sustainable funding for two policing programmes aimed at preventing predators offending, and offenders reoffending, respectively: Project Vigilant and Operation Soteria. These measures are available now, and have proven success. Funding them properly is one way for Government and policing to show it is taking the safety of women in public spaces seriously.

Chair Lady Elish Angiolini said:

“My Reports sets out how sexually-motivated crimes against women remain widespread across public spaces in England and Wales, yet efforts to prevent them are fragmented, underfunded and overly reliant on short-term solutions. While measures such as improved lighting and safety advice are valuable, there is an urgent need to refocus on preventing predators from offending and stopping perpetrators from reoffending. The Government and police should demonstrate their commitment to women’s safety by fully supporting and funding the roll out of Project Vigilant and Operation Soteria, programmes specifically aimed at tackling these issues.

This Report should mark a turning point. In the wake of tragic cases like Sarah Everard’s and many others, the need for change is pressing and the evidence is clear.

Throughout this investigation, I have never lost sight of the victims of these abhorrent crimes. I have had the privilege of engaging with leaders who are dedicated to supporting victims. I want to take this opportunity to pay special tribute to Baroness Newlove whose work (and contributions to the Inquiry), should be honoured and remembered, always.

The recommendations set out in this and the previous Report are practical and achievable; what is now required is courageous leadership, national coordination and sustained investment to protect women in public spaces.”

Ends

## Notes to editors

This Report is the culmination of more than 2 years investigative work. The full Report can be accessed here [www.angiolini.inquiry@independent-inquiry.uk](http://www.angiolini.inquiry@independent-inquiry.uk).

The Inquiry is also examining the crimes committed by David Carrick and seeks to understand how he was able to remain in policing for such a long period of time. Carrick, a former Metropolitan police officer, was sentenced in February 2023 and November 2025 for numerous crimes against women.

Part 2 of the Inquiry addresses broader issues raised by both these cases and other tragedies in respect of policing and the protection of women.

Project Vigilant is aimed at identifying and disrupting predatory men in the night-time economy before they offend. It is a policing measure which was developed initially in Thames Valley Police.

Operation Soteria aims to improve the investigation and prosecution of rape through a perpetrator-focused, victim-centred approach. It was developed initially in Avon and Somerset Police.

Both Vigilant and Soteria are rapidly building the knowledge base on the men who commit these offences, including their patterns of behaviour. Multiple witnesses from across sectors identified these as effective. But Vigilant has received only limited funding for further rollout across a small number of police forces; and while Soteria has been funded for national rollout, the budget needed to continue embedding, researching and learning from it is only guaranteed for a year.

## About the Inquiry

The [Angiolini Inquiry](#) is an independent non-statutory inquiry. Part 1, published in February 2024, focussed on examining Wayne Couzens' career and previous behaviour. Part 2 examines broader issues about policing and the safety of women. The Chair has split her findings for Part 2 into two Reports. The first of these two reports, focused on sexually motivated crimes against women in public, will be launched today. The second report, focused on police vetting, recruitment and culture, is expected next year. Further information about the scope of the third report is available in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of the [Terms of Reference](#).

## About Lady Elish Angiolini KC (Phonetic pronunciation – Ailish Anjolini)

Lady Elish was appointed in 2021 by the then Home Secretary, the Rt Hon Priti Patel MP to lead a two-part inquiry to address the issues raised by the abduction, rape and murder of Sarah Everard by an off-duty Metropolitan police officer. Lady Elish is a Scottish lawyer, she was the Lord Advocate of Scotland from 2006 until 2011, having previously been Solicitor General from 2001. She was the first woman, the first Procurator Fiscal, and the first solicitor to hold either

post. From September 2012 – September 2025, Lady Elish was the Principal of St Hugh's College, University of Oxford and a Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford.