

**PUBLIC  
PROTECTION**  
EAST LOTHIAN & MIDLOTHIAN

SUPPORTING SAFER COMMUNITIES



## 16 days of activism 2021



### What is 16 days of activism?

**16 days of activism** is an annual international campaign that runs from 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, until 10 December, International Human Rights Day. It is used as an organising strategy by individuals and organisations around the world to call for the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls.

It provides an opportunity to increase awareness of violence against women and girls, galvanize advocacy efforts, and share knowledge and innovations.

Our VAWG Co-ordinator in East Lothian and Midlothian sought support from the National VAW Network to co-ordinate a Scotland-wide campaign and provide supporting campaign materials. We worked with our local communications leads to develop our local plan with activities and events during the 16 days, adapted this in each Council area, approached around the two key themes:

**#WhatWillYouDo**  
**#LightUp**



International Day for the Elimination of  
Violence Against Women

25 November



Human Rights Day

**Read on to learn  
more about our  
16 days in East  
Lothian and  
Midlothian.....**

## Police Engagement Events

The Police Domestic Abuse Prevention Delivery Group has a Prevention Plan, with a focus on targeting perpetrators and raising awareness through education. In partnership with Women's Aid East and Midlothian and Public Protection Office colleagues, Police officers from East Lothian and Midlothian set up local information stalls at Asda at Straiton, Tesco at Hardengreen, Musselburgh and Penicuik and Haddington Farmer's Market. These stalls provided a good opportunity to engage with staff and customers to highlight domestic abuse, availability of support, promote the White Ribbon campaign and encourage men to take the pledge. Three further events were cancelled due to Covid-staffing related challenges.

Our Police colleagues also visited the Civil Nuclear Constabulary at Torness, where staff took the White Ribbon pledge and are now fully committed to it. Officers in Musselburgh Police Station also took the White Ribbon pledge.

In Midlothian, Police officers worked in partnership with Women's Aid, Citizen's Advice Bureau, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and they engaged with Network Rail, Scottish Rail, Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre and SACRO – to raise awareness of the issues and impact of gender based violence, and commit to tackling this in partnership.



Photos: Stalls at Asda and Haddington Farmer's Market and our Midlothian Area Commander making his pledge

Police Scotland report that dealing with incidences of domestic abuse is the greatest single demand on their time,



with an average of **one** incident being reported to them every **nine** minutes.



Source: Police Scotland, 2018.



# 16 days of activism in East Lothian and Midlothian 2021

16 Days of Activism Project  
#WhatWillYouDo

EAST LOTHIAN YOUNG  
VOICES SPEAK OUT



edinburgh rape crisis centre  
supporting survivors of sexual violence

As part of Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre's 16 Days of Activism 2021 campaigning their East Lothian and Midlothian Sexual Violence Prevention Worker worked with a group of 15 young people (from s3 to s6) in East Lothian on the national theme of this year's campaign – [#WhatWillYouDo](#). Over a series of workshops, the young people were asked their views, experiences and concerns, and what changes they would call for.

The participants recorded audio clips, highlighting – in their own words – their concerns, observations and calls to action. The topics they talked about include: the impact of social media, uniforms discrepancies and shaming, locker room culture and peer pressure, covert picture taking, being in educational settings with perpetrators, and transphobic bullying. Click to read the [blog](#).

The changes they want to see are:

- more accountability and action from their fellow pupils to speak out and challenge abusive behaviours and language;
- more accountability and action from the educational institutions they attend; and
- prevention education and awareness raising to help foster an environment where harassment and misogyny are called out.

Click on the links to find out more about [ERCC's Prevention Project](#), listen to the [Soundcloud](#) or read the [Transcript](#).

If you would like to help make the changes, contact [info@ercc.scot](mailto:info@ercc.scot)



Pictures produced by young people in East Lothian

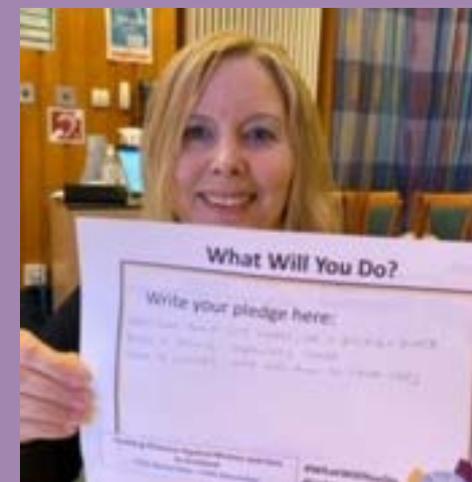
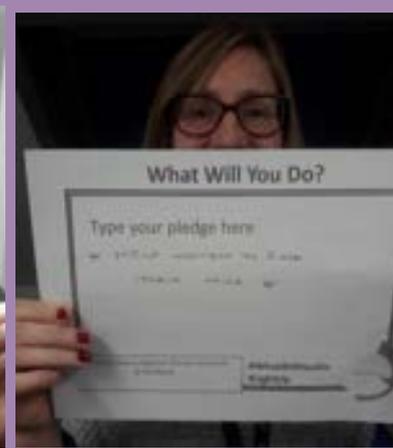
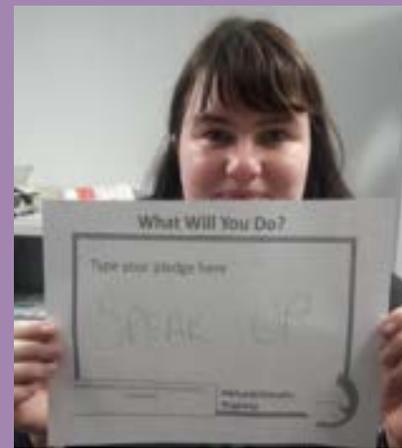


Photo: East Lothian and Midlothian Sexual Abuse Service Team

# 16 days of activism in East Lothian and Midlothian 2021

## Pledges #WhatWillYouDo

During the 16 days staff and EMPPC partners across East Lothian and Midlothian made pledges. Here's a selection.....



# 16 days of activism in East Lothian and Midlothian 2021

## Pledges

And here is a selection of some of our pledges.....

I pledge to ensure that my organisation embeds Equally Safe in our strategic objectives, in our policies and practice.

I pledge to campaign for adequate, sustainable funding to ensure that all women, children and young people who have been subjected to abuse can access specialist local support when they need it, in the way they need it and for however long they need it.

I pledge to think of how we can work with youth workers and other staff to challenge sexism.

I pledge to ensure that our Public Protection training courses provide staff in East Lothian and Midlothian with opportunities to increase their knowledge and skills – with a focus on prevention, recovery and challenge of gender based violence.

I pledge to ensure that EMPPC keeps raising the profile of gender based violence.

I pledge to keep striving for gender equality between women and men, girls and boys. Always be part of the global struggle to end violence against women and girls.

I pledge to speak up when I hear people trivialise or minimise harassment or abuse against women and girls.

I pledge that my officers will take all reports of honour based abuse seriously, see complainers immediately and on their own, respect the wishes of complainers and reassure them and establish a safe means of contact

I pledge to support staff through Safe and Together. I pledge to talk to young people about healthy relationships.

I pledge to call out incidents of violence against women and girls. It's simply unacceptable! Zero tolerance.

I pledge to ensure survivors voices are heard.

I pledge to subscribe to engender podcasts & listen to one podcast a day. I pledge to share this podcast link with my colleagues

## White Ribbon Campaign Pledges

During the 16 days staff across East Lothian and Midlothian made pledges.

Make your pledge never to commit, condone, or remain silent about men's violence against women in all its forms.



## What is the White Ribbon Campaign (WRC)?

The WRC is the largest effort in the world of men working to end men's violence against women. It relies on volunteer support and financial contributions from individuals and organisations. Learn more here [White Ribbon Scotland](https://whiteribbon.org.uk)

## Social Media

Throughout the 16 days, EMPPC partners posted on their twitter and Facebook sites and shared partners' posts to promote awareness of gender based violence. Our posts promoted the nationally prepared key facts and messages, local activities and events, and pictures of staff and EMPPC members in East Lothian and Midlothian making their pledges.



**Top Tweet** earned 5,256 impressions

Today is the global launch of 16 days to end violence against women and girls - it's everyone's business to take action!

#whatwillyoudo #LightUp  
@ELCouncil @midgov @ELHSCP  
@MidlothianHSCP @PoliceScotland  
@WomensAidEML @EdinRapeCrisis  
@QMUUniversity  
[pic.twitter.com/mziMLTgWoN](https://pic.twitter.com/mziMLTgWoN)



In Midlothian, 10 social media posts on the Council Facebook and twitter generated an average of 4,416 people viewing each post. Midlothian also generated an average of 309 posts on the small Health and Social Care Partnership channels!

# 16 days of activism in East Lothian and Midlothian 2021

## Across East Lothian and Midlothian Council and Health and Social Care Partnerships

East Lothian Council and Midlothian Council created a dedicated area on their websites, with a campaign button on the front page using the 16 days logo, to direct people to information on the 16 days and ways that people could get involved. This included links to relevant websites, such as the White Ribbon Pledge.

The Council Leader in East Lothian and Depute Council Leader in Midlothian were photographed making their pledges and giving their support to the campaign. In Midlothian every elected member of the Council was e-mailed to inform them about the campaign, and encourage them to get involved on social media using the hashtags. In East Lothian elected members were briefed on the campaign and the 16 days pledge sign shared with them in advance.

In Midlothian staff were encouraged to change their Microsoft Teams backgrounds for (the many) meetings in support of the campaign, and the background was shared with EMPPC partners – keeping the message literally in sight!

Both Councils and Health and Social Care Partnerships included information on the campaign and ways to get involved in their weekly staff e-mails, bulletins and blogs.



Pictures: Microsoft Teams Backgrounds used by staff during 16 days

Midlothian Council's Cabinet, made up of 5 Elected Members, is the principal decision-making committee of the Council. On 30<sup>th</sup> November the Cabinet approved a groundbreaking Equally Safe Housing and Homeless Policy. The policy states *“We will provide a proactive housing response to all who have experienced gender based violence”* and the 14 objectives start with a commitment to deliver Scotland’s Equally Safe strategy.

At the same meeting the Cabinet agreed that the senior leadership team in Midlothian should progress work to establish a Midlothian Equally Safe Strategy. This strategy will further support Midlothian’s commitment to advancing women’s rights and equality and the eradication of Violence against Woman and Girls and will complement the Equally Safe Housing Policy and their bronze Equally Safe and Work accreditation.

# 16 days of activism in East Lothian and Midlothian 2021



WAEML's AGM took place in Fisherrow Centre, Musselburgh, where survivors contributed and shared their some of the work that they have been doing on their survivor board. The audience heard about the new Housing First project operating in East Lothian and staff and survivors shared their experiences of domestic abuse and the impact of Covid-19.



Photos: WAEML's AGM



Read more about the Housing First project [here](#)



Photo: WAEML's Chief Executive Officer making her pledge

## Reflections from our Women's Aid East and Midlothian CEO

“It was great to see such a diverse effort locally over the 16 days; the campaign offers a fantastic opportunity to focus on advocating and raising awareness against gender-based abuse. It is vital though to recognise that efforts need to remain consistent beyond the 16 days. It is no secret that we have a long way to go to ensure gender equality is achieved. Our work is far from over and we need everyone to fulfil their pledges and I look forward to continuing with our collective efforts so we can achieve real change”.

## EMPPC Learning and Development Events

During the campaign, we held two training events for staff working in East Lothian and Midlothian. On 30<sup>th</sup> November, 17 people attended a session on **Black and Minority Ethnic Women's Experiences of Gender Based Violence** facilitated by **Shakti Women's Aid**. Shakti has been supporting black and minority ethnic women experiencing gender abuse since 1986, and Shakti means 'Strength' in various South Asian languages. The trainers smoothly navigated through the complexities of gender based abuse as it affects BME women, focusing on:

- Honour-Based Abuse,
- Forced Marriage,
- Female Genital Mutilation,
- Abandonment and Human Trafficking and
- No Recourse to Public Funds status

Very important training to complete. I found the topics covered very interesting, and shocking in some areas. Definitely worthwhile and delivered in a manner which allowed us to learn, think and listen to the views/experiences of others"

(course participant, Shakti training)

On 8<sup>th</sup> December, **Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre** led training on **Responding to disclosures of rape and sexual abuse**, with 29 participants from across services. The training focused on:

- The impact of sexual violence and how to identify trauma responses in survivors
- How to respond to survivors' disclosures appropriately, empathetically and confidently
- The risk factors relating to vulnerable adults and children
- Services available from ERCC

"It was interesting to read some statistics about the myths relating to sexual violence. It was eye opening to be encouraged to think of it from the point of view of a jury which highlighted how much more work is still needed on educating the public"

(course participant, ERCC training)

### Responding to disclosures of sexual violence – key learnings

- Unlike what the myths say, sexual violence stems from gender inequality and is about power and control
- Sexual violence has a profound, traumatic impact on survivors
- Active listening and awareness are key when responding to disclosures
- The way one responds to disclosures could be the first step towards healing or could further traumatise survivors



# 16 days of activism 2021

Our VAWG Co-ordinator attended the national 16 days summit on 10<sup>th</sup> December, hosted by the Scottish Government and COSLA. This was held on the last day of the campaign, which is Human Rights Day. The summit brought together leaders from public bodies and organisations across Scotland to strengthen commitment to the next phase of the national Equally Safe Strategy.



Click on the link to watch the 7 minute video from the event to hear from partners across Scotland as they reflect on 'The Shadow Pandemic' [Violence Against Women: The Shadow Pandemic – Learning and Reflections from Partners across Scotland - YouTube](#)

## International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

takes place every year on 25<sup>th</sup> November. In 1960 the Mirabal sisters were brutally assassinated because of their identity as women and activists. Their only crime was having fought for their rights against the Dominican dictator, Rafael Trujillo (1930-1961). In 1993, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a declaration for the Elimination of Violence Against Women which defines this type of violence as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.” In 1999 the General Assembly proclaimed 25 November as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. Watch 2021’s short video here [Gender equality – We must do better, and we can!](#)

**International Human Rights Day** is observed every year on 10 December — the day the United Nations General Assembly adopted, in 1948, the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) (UDHR). The UDHR is a milestone document, which proclaims the inalienable rights that everyone is entitled to as a human being - regardless of race, colour, religion, sex, language, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Available in more than 500 languages it is the most translated document in the world.

**2021 Theme: EQUALITY - Reducing inequalities, advancing human rights**

# 16 days of activism 2021 – key facts



**1 in 3**

women experience physical or sexual violence mostly by an intimate partner.

Source: UN Women, 2018. Facts and figures: Ending violence against women

In 2019-20, Police Scotland recorded **62,907** incidents of domestic abuse.

Source: Domestic Abuse statistics: 2019-20, Scottish Government

## COVID-19 and Violence Against Women and Girls



Since the outbreak of COVID-19, social restrictions have increased the risk and intensity of violence against women and girls.

Demand for both specialist support and universal services is anticipated to grow as social restrictions are lifted.



Source: UN Women, 2020  
COSLA and Scottish Government, 2020

Disabled women are **twice as likely** to experience men's violence as non-disabled women.



Almost **1 in 2** disabled women will be abused in their lifetime at the hands of their partner, family or carer.



Sources:  
- Engender, 2018. Our Bodies, Our Rights: Identifying and removing barriers to disabled women's reproductive rights in Scotland, 2018  
- Wise Women, 2015. Daisie Project: Violence Against Disabled women Survey

Women and children who experience VAWG are at a **very high risk of poverty.**

**89%** of women experience financial abuse, as an aspect of coercive control, when experiencing domestic abuse.



Source: Close The Gap: Women Work and Poverty - What You Need To Know (2018)

VAWG creates barriers to employment and other economic resources by negatively impacting women's health and wellbeing



Source: Zero Tolerance, 2018

Almost two thirds of children who experience domestic abuse also experience physical or emotional abuse or are neglected



Violence Against Women and Girls costs Scotland **£4 billion.**

Domestic abuse costs the Scottish public purse **£2.3 billion.**



Source: Scottish Government, 2016. Equally Safe: Scotland's Strategy to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls.

## What's next?

The summit on 10<sup>th</sup> December was an opportunity to strengthen commitment to develop the next phase of Equally Safe, the strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls, nationally and locally.

If you would like to know more about this, please contact our Violence Against Women and Girls Co-ordinator at [emppo@eastlothian.gov.uk](mailto:emppo@eastlothian.gov.uk)

Thank you to everyone who supported our 16 days of activism campaign across East Lothian and Midlothian IN 2021.

We are already thinking about the 2022 campaign! If you have any suggestions for this and would like to get involved, we would love to hear from you! You can get in touch with us at [emppo@eastlothian.gov.uk](mailto:emppo@eastlothian.gov.uk)

**Follow us on twitter @EMPPC1**