



September 2020

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about domestic and sexual violence.

Protecting women and girls from violence and supporting victims is of the utmost importance. To support this commitment to tackling violence against women and girls (VAWG), increased funding of £100 million has been pledged.

As well as increased funding, there has been continued action to combat VAWG by significantly strengthening our laws and introducing new tools to protect victims. This includes the criminalisation of forced marriage, two new stalking offences, a new offence for failing to protect a girl from Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), lifelong anonymity for victims of forced marriage and FGM, a new mandatory reporting duty on FGM, the national roll-out of the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (also known as 'Clare's Law'), making Domestic Homicide Reviews mandatory and a new offence of domestic abuse covering controlling and coercive behaviour.

The Government has also supported the introduction of a new civil Stalking Protection Order to stop perpetrators and protect victims at the earliest possible opportunity, particularly victims of so-called 'stranger stalking'.

I welcome the announcement at the Queen's Speech of the landmark Domestic Abuse Bill. I know the Government is fully committed to enacting this vital legislation as soon as possible. I look forward to examining the Bill in detail when it is published and working closely with the Government to pass the most effective legislation.

The Bill will create a legal definition of domestic abuse to provide clarity that domestic abuse can be financial, verbal and emotional as well as physical and sexual and that critically it is about patterns of abuse over time. Measures in the Bill also include the introduction of new Domestic Abuse Protection Notices and Domestic Abuse Protection Orders to further protect victims and place restrictions on the actions of offenders.



Chris Heaton-Harris

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A Domestic Abuse Commissioner has also been appointed to stand up for victims and survivors; raise public awareness; monitor the response of local authorities, the justice system and other statutory agencies; and hold them to account in tackling domestic abuse.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris'.

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY