



Ariennir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Funded by
Welsh Government



diverse
cymru
Promoting equality for all

Age of Justice

An executive summary of
the **Diverse Cymru** research
project into Crimes Against
Older People (50+) carried
out on behalf of the **Welsh**
Government

Foreword

When we were approached to work with the Welsh Government on a research and awareness raising project into crimes against, and targeted at, older people (50+) it was clear that it represented the ideal opportunity to further the cause of equality; to look at a protected group who are often overlooked.

We reached out to older people and older people's organisations, along with public and non-statutory bodies who work with those affected by crimes against older people, through a series of engagement groups, interviews and a comprehensive survey.

The response and the willingness to share openly, candidly and freely about peoples beliefs, impressions and experiences of age-related crime were beyond anything we had hoped, allowing us to gather the views of nearly 200 individuals and dozens of organisations.

From all their input we were able to draw together a series of recommendations which will raise awareness of crimes against older people, help people get the support and protection they need and will help to establish a framework for a fairer, kinder and more equal society in Wales.

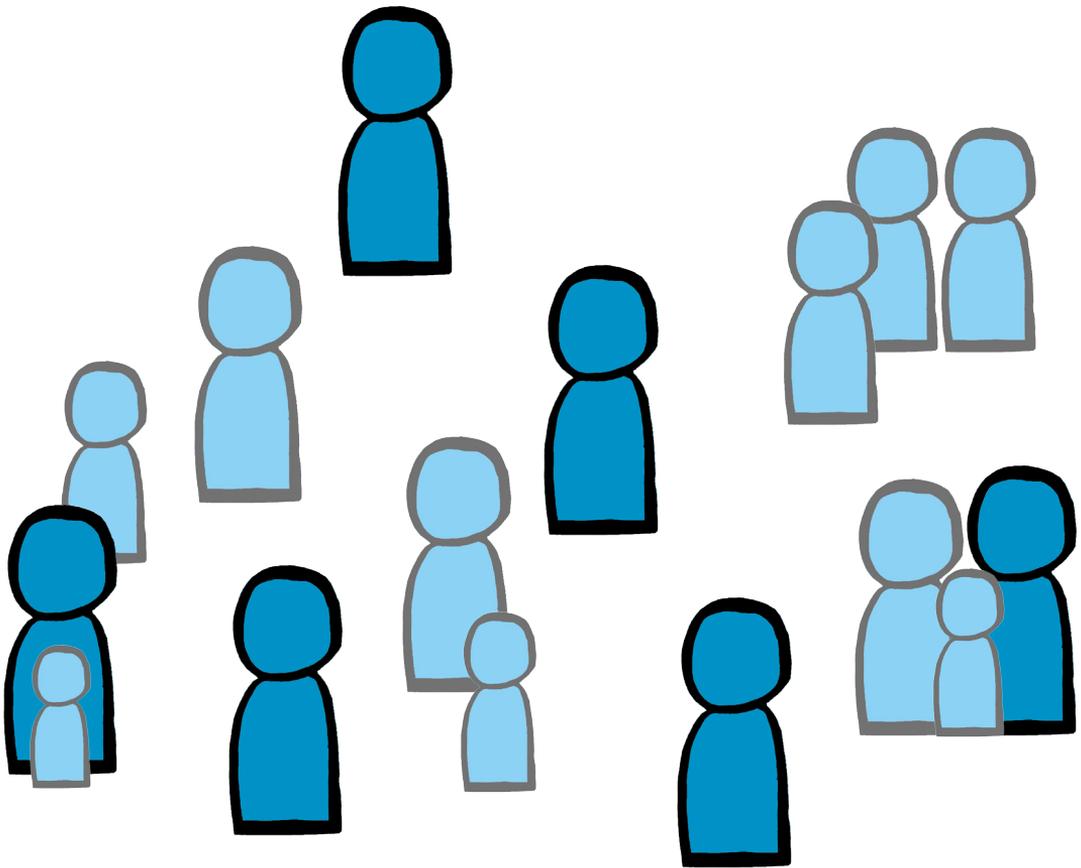
My sincerest thanks to the Welsh Government and the other organisations that assisted us. Thanks also to all those who participated in the project and to everyone who offered us support and guidance in bringing such an ambitious piece of work to fruition.

We must create an Age of Justice and it is our hope this project represents the first step in achieving that goal.

Martyn Jones
Chief Executive

diverse cymru

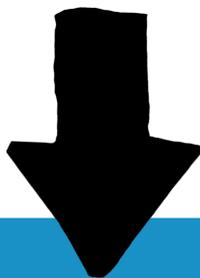
“We’re all human, all afraid of differences, being together shows us we’re essentially the same.”



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Look out for the **recommendations** we're making to help tackle crimes against older people as well as raising awareness of the issues and supporting people who have been affected by age-related crime.



What are Crimes Against Older People?

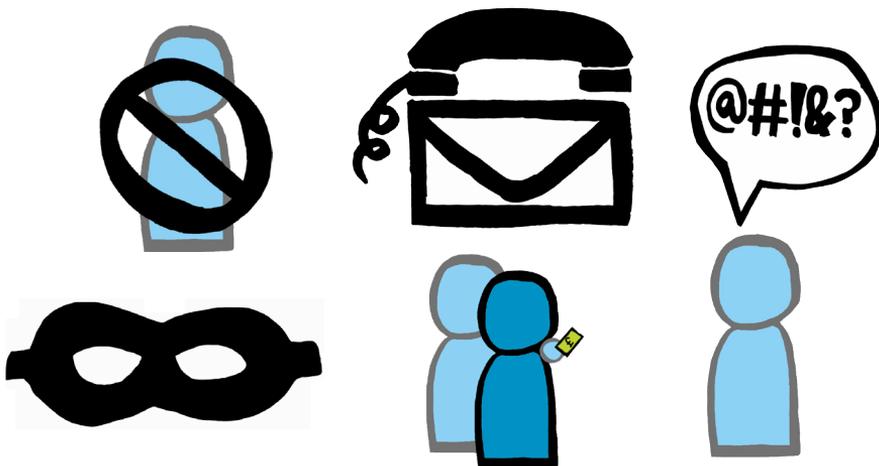
Over 50% of survey respondents thought every type of crime, except threatening behaviour, were age-related. Scams, burglaries, neglect, anti-social behaviour and 'mate' crime as well as threats and verbal insults were most frequently thought to be crimes against older people.

People felt that vulnerability or perceived vulnerability associated with ageing was the key factor in these crimes.

Across engagement groups people spoke of confusion around the definition of crimes against older people.

Several organisations indicated that the range of crimes made it difficult to define, with some even having different definitions between departments.

As a result data on crimes against older people was not generally or readily available.

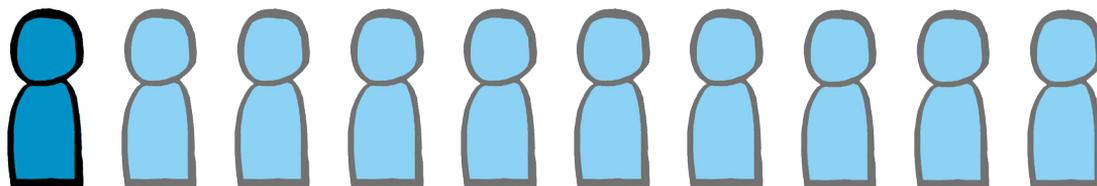


Recommendation 1: Wales needs a common definition of crimes against older people that focuses on and records where age is a motivating or specific factor.

Crimes & Perpetrators: Experiences and Effects

“My dad would say ‘no’ if asked if he was frightened by being alone. Though if anyone were to break in it would ruin him. He keeps the doors locked all the time.”

10% of people who completed our survey reported that they had been victims of age-related crimes.



Respondents also stated family members (20%), friends (13%) and neighbours (11%) had been victimised.

People spoke to us about being intimidated in their community but felt that they were patronised and their experiences were trivialised when they reported incidents to the police.

Interviews highlighted the varying impact of crimes against older people, which included fear of being targeted again, increased isolation and reduced independence.

Dementia and mental ill health were perceived as factors increasing the likelihood of becoming a victim.

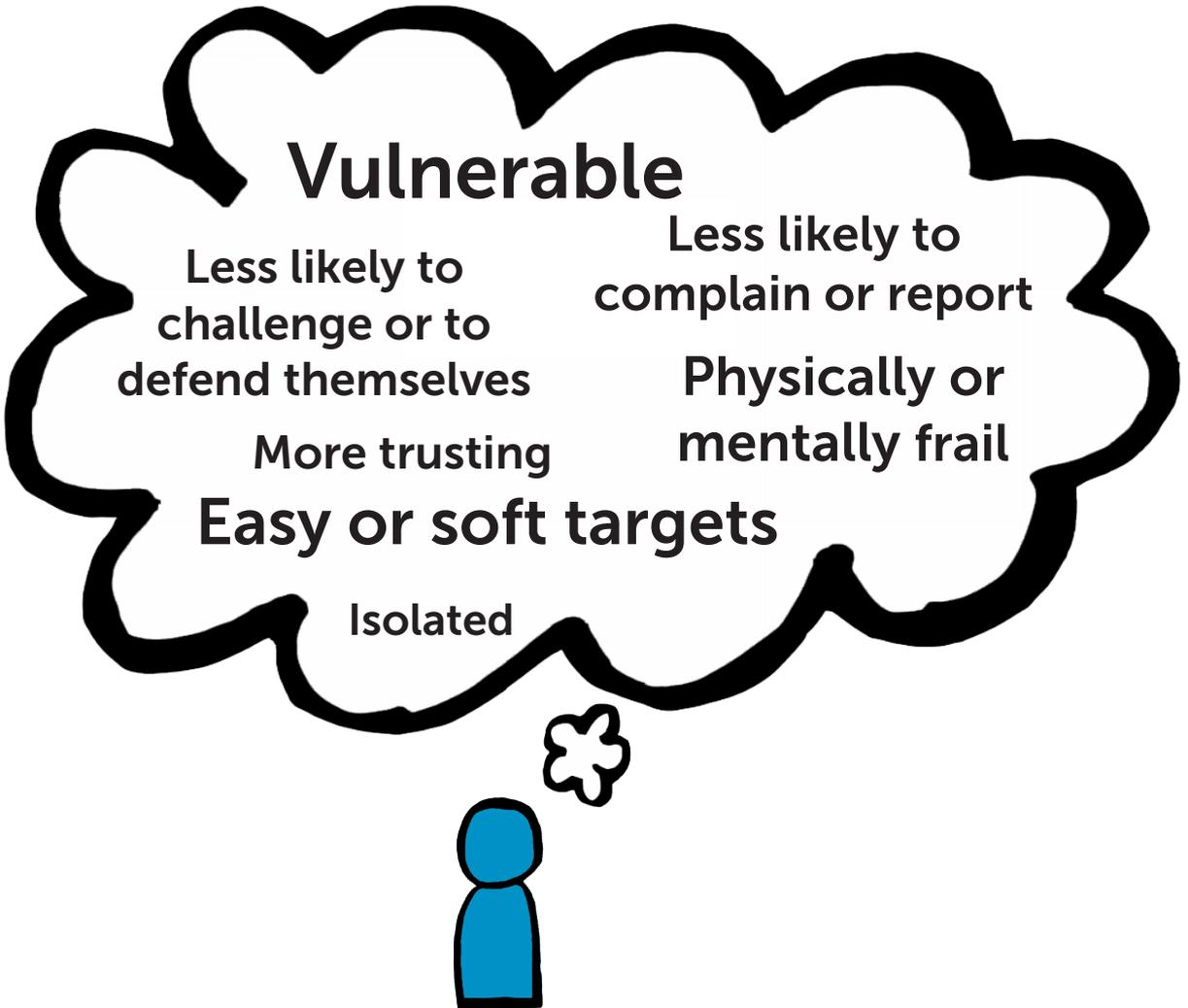
The impacts of crimes on the mental health of victims were discussed. Older people were perceived as being less likely to bounce back and more likely to become isolated.

Recommendation 2: Awareness raising should highlight the impacts of crimes against older people and the support that is available.

Why do Crimes Against Older People Happen?

There were many common responses about the reality and perceptions around why crimes against older people happen.

These included being or being seen as:



Other issues highlighted included the lack of available support.

Generalisations and stereotypes reinforcing societal perceptions of older people's value, as well as dispersed families and a lack of community and social integration, were also mentioned as possible root causes of crimes against older people.

Barriers to Reporting Crimes Against Older People

Regularly cited barriers to reporting were:

- Fear of reprisals or making a situation worse
- Not being believed, understood, listened to, or taken seriously
- Fear of unwelcome interventions, losing care, support or family
- Not knowing who to report to or how
- Being seen as interfering when reporting concerns about others
- Feelings of guilt, embarrassment, and shame
- Communication difficulties and mental capacity

There was also a feeling that older people who report receive a negative response from agencies and do not trust them.

A key barrier identified was the difficulty in securing prosecutions due to a lack of evidence. Many older people said they would not report future crimes when no action was taken previously.

Although some organisations monitored scams or particular types of crimes against older people, most did not have a common reporting system or any data available.

Community Cohesion Coordinators generally felt that these crimes are not within their remit. Some felt that mate crime, anti-social behaviour, and intergenerational working link to crimes against older people and should be part of their work.

Recommendation 3: Future National Community Cohesion delivery plans should specifically mention crimes against older people.

Recommendation 4: A common reporting and recording system for crimes against older people should be implemented across all criminal justice agencies and councils in Wales.

Improving Reporting

“I’ve reported crimes to all or most of these people with absolutely no results whatsoever. I feel very downhearted and wouldn’t waste my time again to so little effect.”

Some of the most commonly cited ways to remove barriers to reporting were:

- More empathy and understanding for older people
- Training and education for police, social services, health, housing and third sector agencies around communicating with and supporting older people
- Training, information, and awareness raising for older people, families and the public
- A single point of contact and agencies working together to support an individual
- More visible policing
- Regular progress updates

Engagement groups also mentioned the need to have clear and consistent messages and information available in a wide-range of community languages, including what crimes against older people are and how to report.

Participants suggested specialist police and Victim Support staff who can speak with older people face-to-face and support them. Part of this would mean quickly responding to initial

Recommendation 5: Specific training in older people’s issues and concerns should be rolled out to all police, social services, local authority departments, fire and rescue services, Community Cohesion Coordinators, Victim Support and third sector support organisations.

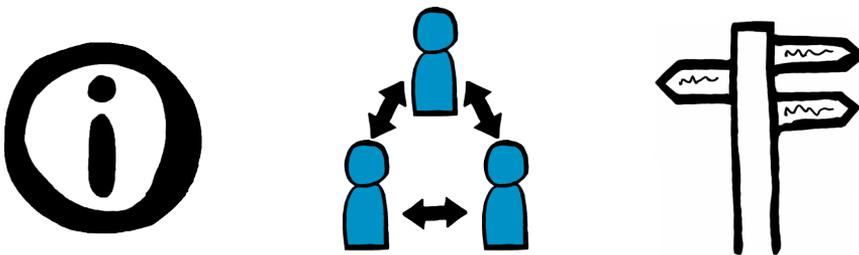
reports and effectively dealing with crimes against older people.

The groups suggested that all agencies, helplines and contact points should be aware of all possible pathways and support older people to be able to report to, and receive support from, the right agencies.

A key element was the idea of services sharing information and linking together in a multi-agency approach to look at criminal and civil justice options, restorative justice, social care, housing, health, support, and community solutions together.

One group suggested that community safety partnerships could act as a vehicle for this work, with appropriate resources.

Some organisations felt that crimes targeted against older people should be treated, prioritised and recorded in similar ways to hate crimes.



Recommendation 6: Multi-agency processes, with appropriate information sharing, should be developed and implemented specifically for crimes against older people. These should include a single point of contact and active referral processes.

Recommendation 7: The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act must become a vehicle for delivering actions to tackle crimes against older people, challenging ageism, Strategic Equality Plans, and improving community cohesion.

Supporting Older People

“One agency should be the main contact with one contact number and a person on the end of the phone.”

When asked how best to support older people the most common responses included:

- Ensure there is a range of support available, including practical support, emotional support, access to day centres, peer support groups and dementia-friendly schemes
- Tailoring support to match victims' needs
- Rebuilding victims' confidence and tackling isolation through support services and befriending
- Public information and awareness raising campaigns including what crimes against older people are, how to report, where to go for support and clear procedures for getting help
- Listening to older people and ensuring there is advice, befriending, and counselling available
- Having a free telephone helpline for older people

Where possible the option and support to talk to the perpetrator were also suggested (restorative justice).

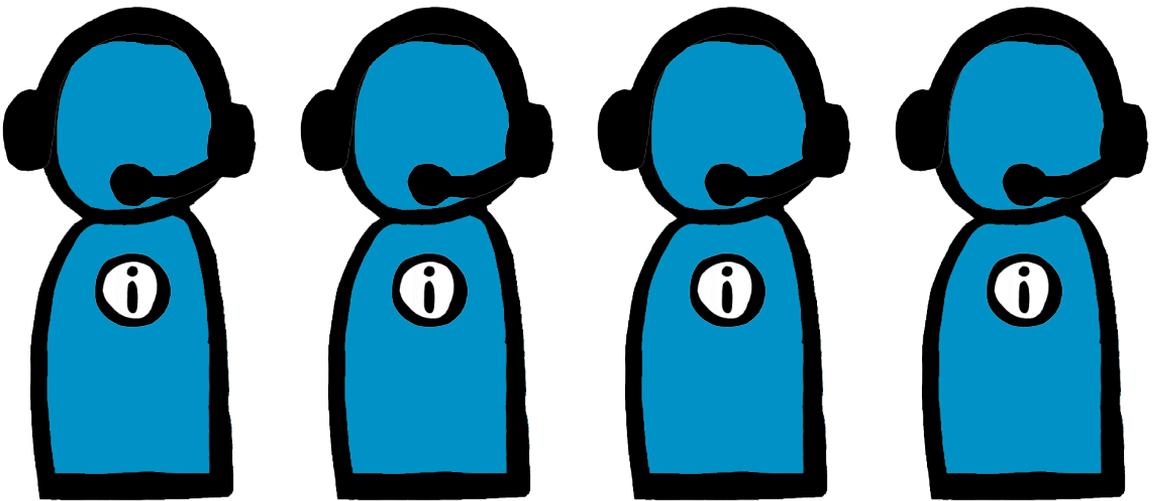
The point was raised that safeguarding is a public responsibility; and that everyone should know how to report to social services.

Other feedback included suggestions that communities should be able to be more hands-on by providing spaces, such as community cafes, where several generations can interact.

Recommendation 8: A helpline for crimes against older people should be implemented.

This could help form the basis a more substantial issue: addressing societal perceptions of older people and valuing them, which are vital elements of tackling crimes and improving reporting and support.

Interviews focused on ensuring that there is targeted and accessible information for older people, referrals to Victim Support, active referrals to community organisations and other organisations, and raising awareness of crimes against older people.



Recommendation 9: A high-profile campaign with information resources should be implemented. This should include information on what crimes are, how to report, tackling ageist stereotypes, and support available.

Recommendation 10: A wide range of community support services should be available and promoted. This should include counselling, befriending, peer support, and dementia-specific services.

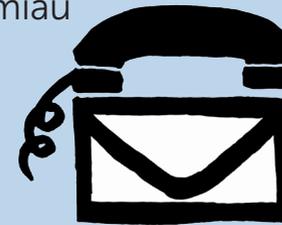


What are Crimes Against Older People? / Beth yw Troseddau yn Erbyn Pobl Hŷn?

Only 61% of people considered all of the following to be an age-related crime/hate crime when the crimes committed somehow relate to the age of the person / Ddim ond 61% o bobl wnaeth ystyried bod bob un o'r canlynol i fod yn drosedd sy'n gysylltiedig ag oedran/trosedd casineb pan mae'r troseddau a gyflawnwyd yn ymwneud ag oedran y person rywsut:



- Antisocial behaviour / Ymddygiad gwrthgymdeithasol
- Burglaries / Lladradau • Domestic abuse / Cam-drin domestig
- Malicious complaints / Cwynion maleisus • Neglect / Esgeuluso
- 'Mate crime' / 'Troseddu cyfeillio' • Violent crimes / Troseddau treisgar
- Sexual abuse / Cam-drin rhywiol • Vandalism / Fandaliaeth
- Threatening behaviour / Ymddygiad bygythiol • Scams / Sgamiau
- Threats and verbal insults / Bygythion a sarhad lafar

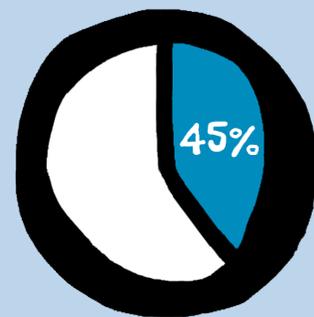


When, in fact, **they all are** / Pan, mewn gwirionedd, **maent i gyd yn**

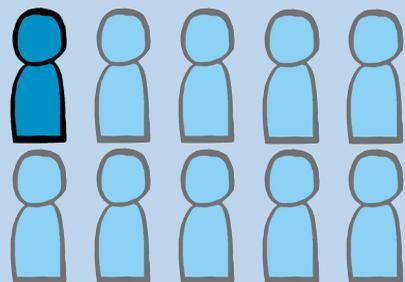
Who is Affected? / Pwy sy'n cael eu Heffeithio?

1 in 10

have experienced a crime because they are an older person / wedi dioddef trosedd oherwydd eu bod yn berson hŷn



of people knew one or more older people who had experienced an age-related crime / o bobl yn gwybod un neu fwy o bobl hŷn sydd wedi cael profiad o drosedd sy'n gysylltiedig ag eu oedran



42% of people said that there was "too little" or "far too little" information and awareness of what crimes against older people are.



Dywedodd 42% o bobl fod yna "ddim digon" neu "llawer ddim digon" o wybodaeth ac ymwybyddiaeth amdano beth yw troseddau yn erbyn pobl hŷn.

Report and Support / Adroddiad a Chefnogaeth



In Wales anyone aged 50 or above is considered to be an older person.

Crimes against an older person can take many forms and can have an effect on anyone.

No one should go through it alone, no matter what the situation.

Yng Nghymru, mae unrhyw un o 50 oed neu'n uwch yn cael ei ystyried i fod yn berson hŷn.

Gall troseddau yn erbyn person hŷn cymryd sawl ffurf a chael effaith ar unrhyw un.

Ni ddylai unrhyw un yn mynd drwy hyn ar ben eu hunain, ta beth yw'r sefyllfa.

Report crimes against older people / Adrodd am troseddau yn erbyn pobl hŷn:

Police/Heddlu: **999** (emergency / argyfwng)
101 (non-emergency / di-argyfwng)

Victim Support / Cymorth i Ddiodefwr:

victimsupport.com
080 8168 9111

Age Cymru advice line/ Llinell cymorth Age Cymru:
08000 223 444

For more information on the help and support that's available or to read the **Age of Justice** report go to / Am fwy o wybodaeth ar yr help a chefnogaeth sydd ar gael neu i ddarllen yr adroddiad **Oedran Cyfiawnder** ewch i:

diverseecymru.org.uk/ageofjustice