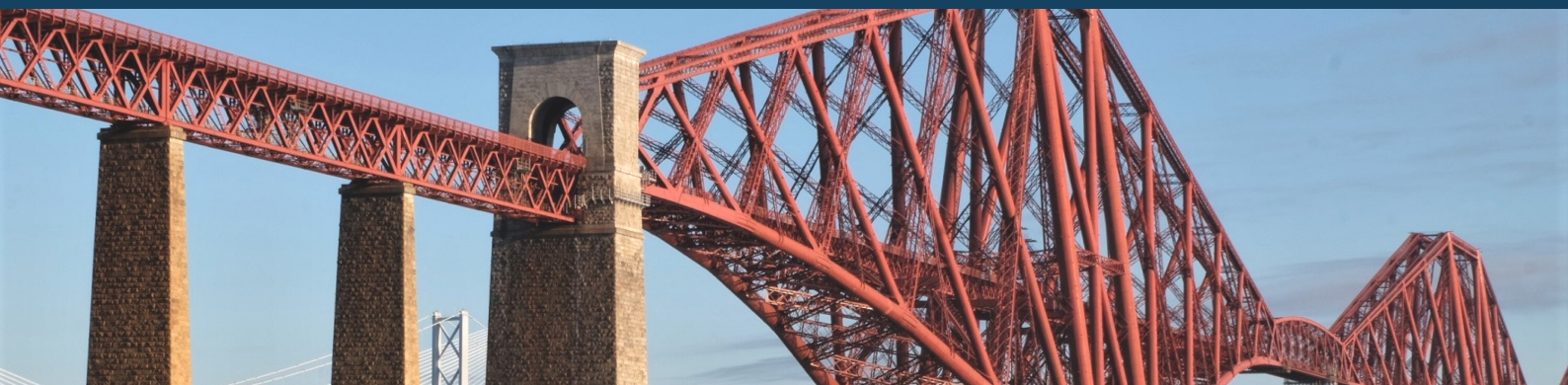


APRIL 2022

MBM NEWSLETTER



PETITION ON RECORDING RAPE



The Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee considered our petition at their [meeting](#) on 23 March. When the petition was first discussed in October 2021, MSPs agreed to write to a number of organisations for further information: COPFS, SCTS, EHRC, Police Scotland and the Lord Advocate. Submissions were [received](#) from all but the Lord Advocate. We submitted [further evidence](#) prior to the recent meeting, at which MSPs decided to write to the Scottish Government for its consideration of the recent rulings of the inner house of the Court of Session and whether there are plans to revise its guidance on collecting data on sex and gender following those recent rulings, and to write again also to Police Scotland, the Crown Office and the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service.

You can read the official report of the session [here](#) and watch the contribution by Ruth Maguire MSP [here](#). Full information about the petition is [here](#).

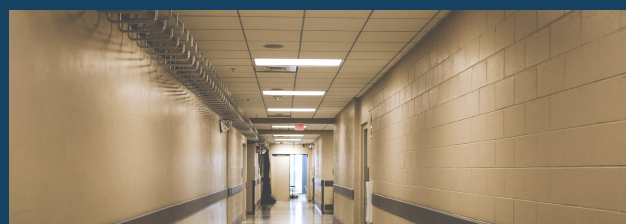
In January, we [wrote](#) about how the current Police Scotland policy evolved.

HATE CRIME

During the passage of the Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Act, the Scottish Government indicated that it would involve us and For Women Scotland in the development of explanatory notes for the legislation.

This [promise](#) was not honoured and we were informed that the explanatory notes had been published on 8 March. The Act has not yet been brought into force. In January, we wrote a blog about Police Scotland's recording of non-crime hate incidents, which you can read [here](#).

PRISONS REVIEW



The Scottish Prison Service is currently undertaking a review of its transgender prisoner policy. We have [written](#) about how the review process is an opportunity to chance to get policy making here back on track, balance the interests of transgender prisoners with those of women prisoners and staff and ensure a complete record is laid down for the future of how decisions were reached. We have been invited to meet SPS officials about the review next month

GRA REFORM



At the start of the year, we received a number of [FOI responses](#) from the Scottish Government setting out which groups they had consulted with regarding their proposed reforms of the Gender Recognition Act. These FOIs were covered in [The Telegraph](#) and Lisa was interviewed on [BBC Woman's Hour](#).

The [EHRC](#) wrote to the Scottish Government, asking it to pause its plans for GRA reform in light of recent court rulings and concerns about the impact of gender self-identification on women's sex-based rights.

We have written about the [unanswered questions](#) that remain about the proposed reforms and the [lack of clarity](#) that exists regarding the interaction between the GRA and the Equality Act 2010. We met officials on [17 January](#) and Shona Robison MSP, the relevant Cabinet Secretary, on [21 January](#), and [wrote again](#) after that meeting as well as publishing details of all of our interactions with the Government.

The draft bill was introduced to the Scottish Parliament on 2 March and the Equality, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee has issued a [call for written evidence](#), the deadline for which is 16 May.

Earlier this week, we co-ordinated a multi-signatory [letter](#) to The Times about comments made by Scottish Government Minister Lorna Slater MSP, who in an interview with [The Herald](#), compared women with concerns about self-ID to racists, anti-Semites and climate change deniers.

Today's atmosphere, she says, is reminiscent of 1990s America and "ridiculous bathroom laws". She says: "Just let people get on with their lives. My understanding is that there's money in this from certain right-wing American groups that's been flooding into organisations in the UK."

False balance is being introduced, Slater believes, adding that the BBC "only recently stopped putting on climate deniers because they required balance. We wouldn't put balance on the question of racism or anti-Semitism, but we allow this fictional notion of balance when it comes to anti-trans [views]. The whole thing is disgusting."

Ms Slater also suggested that those with concerns about the Government's draft legislation should be censored in the media. Our letter was covered in The Times and [The Herald](#).

MEDIA



Our [analysis](#) of staff associations for female staff at Scottish universities was covered in [The Times](#).

We have been [quoted](#) in over 30 news articles so far this year, and wrote opinion pieces for [The Herald](#) on the SNP manifesto commitment on GRA reform and for [Holyrood magazine](#) on the impact of GRA reform on social conventions.

DONATIONS

We continue to do much of our work on an unpaid basis, but with some financial support in the form of donations made by a number of supporters. We are incredibly grateful to everyone who sees fit to support our work in this way. You can donate via [PayPal](#) on a one-off or regular basis. If you would prefer to make a donation to us directly, please [contact us](#) for our bank account details.

We are currently looking at how we might fund our work from the second half of this year onwards. If you are aware of trusts and foundations that might consider supporting work on women's sex-based rights, please [get in touch](#).