
The Statutory
Independent
Inquiry into
Grooming Gangs

Terms of Reference Consultation

Summary Report

March 2026

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Foreword

The victims and survivors of Grooming Gangs, and their families, have gone unheard for far too long. It is our most significant responsibility as the Chair and Panel of this independent, statutory Inquiry to put that right, and we are absolutely committed to ensuring this Inquiry will deliver the truth, the accountability, the change and the justice for which victims and survivors should never have had to wait.

The Terms of Reference are central to this mission. They define the scope of our work, the questions that we need to ask, and the powers we will have to address the critical questions that victims and survivors have been raising for many years. Getting them right from the beginning is imperative for this Inquiry's success.

When we received the draft Terms of Reference from the Home Secretary in December, our priority was clear: the voices of victims and survivors must be central to this Inquiry, and they must be heard. Over the last three months, we have had the privilege of meeting with victims and survivors across England and Wales who shared their experiences of group-based child sexual exploitation and abuse with honesty and courage. Their contributions were powerful – they were based on the reality of their lives, in the disappointment of the services that have failed them, and in their determination for this Inquiry not to repeat the same mistakes of the past. The Panel and I are extremely grateful to every person who spoke with us, and to the organisations that supported them to do so.

Our conversations have been wide-ranging and extensive, including with those from the criminal justice system and policing, healthcare professionals, local authorities and Members of Parliament from all parties, as well as community and voluntary sector organisations. This has been invaluable in shaping the Terms of Reference. We are grateful to those individuals for sharing their time and expertise with us and we welcome their support as the Inquiry officially launches and moves into its delivery phase.

Finally, the Panel and I want to thank every individual and organisation who responded to the online consultation or wrote directly to the Inquiry. Your views have been reflected in the analysis and have informed and shaped the decisions we have made on the Terms of Reference.

Based on the strength of feeling from the public, and most importantly from victims and survivors, it was clear that the Terms of Reference needed to be stronger in parts. They needed to provide a clear steer for us to get answers, scrutinise decisions, and to hold individuals and institutions accountable, working alongside the national policing

operation, Operation Beaconport. There must be no room for ambiguity. We have strengthened the Terms of Reference to reflect this, and this document sets out what has changed and why those changes were necessary.

The Government has recognised the need for an Inquiry that will deliver justice to victims and survivors and rebuild trust. It also recognised the need to look to the future to make recommendations to ensure children have the protection they need. This can only be successful if the system, both national and local, is willing to learn from its mistakes, to acknowledge uncomfortable truths, and to take a proactive approach that does not allow for delay in finding answers and responding to these. To do this means truly listening to those who have been directly affected by failures, and a clear commitment from all organisations involved, including government, to be transparent and accountable. The Panel and I are pleased to reaffirm that commitment from the Inquiry.

With the Terms of Reference now agreed with the Home Secretary, the Inquiry can begin the next stage of its important work. Our commitment is clear – victims and survivors will be at the heart of everything we do, and we will ensure that this Inquiry delivers the answers and real and lasting change that they deserve.



Baroness Anne Longfield CBE
Chair, Statutory Independent Inquiry
into Grooming Gangs



Zoë Billingham CBE
Panellist, Statutory
Independent Inquiry into
Grooming Gangs



Eleanor Kelly CBE
Panellist, Statutory Independent
Inquiry into Grooming Gangs

**Victims and survivors - A personal note from the Chair, Baroness Anne Longfield
and Panellists Zoë Billingham CBE and Eleanor Kelly CBE**

To all victims and survivors of grooming gangs,

We wrote to you in December 2025 to express the humility, determination, and deep sense of responsibility with which Zoë, Eleanor and I are approaching our roles as Chair and Panellists of the Statutory Independent Inquiry into Grooming Gangs. In that letter we made a commitment to you that we would ensure this Inquiry does not repeat the mistakes of the past, but that it delivers real and lasting change for victims and survivors, underpinned by truth and accountability.

Over the past three months we have had the privilege of speaking with some of you across England and Wales, both in person and via email, with many more of you sending in your views through the online consultation. These conversations have reinforced our dedication to the commitments we made to you back in December. We have been humbled by the courage, resolve and clarity with which you have all shared your thoughts and expertise on the Inquiry's draft Terms of Reference.

You have held us to account for reflecting your experiences and your needs in the work of the Inquiry. You have relayed to us your personal lived experiences, experiences that never should have happened to you, and you have confidently explained how these experiences relate to your clear expectations of the Inquiry. The Inquiry exists to deliver for you all, and we have listened to each and every one of you that has engaged with us.

We also recognise that many of you have not come forward and perhaps may never wish to or be able to. We understand that there are many reasons why this may be the case. All victims and survivors of these terrible crimes are welcome to share with the Inquiry what they feel able to; all are equal and accepted. We are clear that the work of the Inquiry is for all victims and survivors, and you are always in our minds as we deliver this work.

We have said before that we understand that victims and survivors are a diverse group of people coming from different backgrounds and different places. You have had unique experiences in all aspects of your lives. Each victim and survivor of grooming gangs is important to the Inquiry. Our responsibility is to deliver meaningful change for you, recognising the diversity of your experiences and views. We hope the changes we have made to the Terms of Reference show our commitment to reflecting what matters to you the most.

Our discussions on the Terms of Reference mark the beginning of our conversation with you through the duration of the Inquiry, not the end. Our next step will be developing a

Victim & Survivor Charter which will set out our commitments and our approach to engaging with you throughout the Inquiry. We will provide further information about how you will be able to take part in shaping the Charter and the wider engagement approach. Your voices will be a crucial part of this process, and we are grateful for the thoughts some of you have shared on the Charter and engagement already.

Our website provides details of how to get in touch with us if you have any questions on what the Terms of Reference mean for you, or thoughts on shaping our approach to engagement with victims and survivors. We very much look forward to continuing our conversation with you.

With kind regards,

Baroness Anne Longfield CBE, Zoë Billingham CBE, Eleanor Kelly CBE

Introduction

The Statutory Independent Inquiry into Grooming Gangs (the Inquiry) is being set up because of the serious and long-lasting harm experienced by victims and survivors of grooming gangs.

The Government established the Inquiry in response to recommendation two of Baroness Louise Casey's [National Audit on Group-based Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse](#), published in June 2025.

On 9 December 2025, the Home Secretary confirmed to Parliament Baroness Anne Longfield CBE as Chair to the Inquiry, alongside Panellists Zoë Billingham CBE and Eleanor Kelly CBE. The Home Secretary also published the [draft terms of reference](#) for the Inquiry.

Terms of Reference (ToR) consultation

Since their appointment in December, the Chair and Panel have delivered a focused and time-limited consultation on the draft ToR.

A key priority for the consultation was to provide victims and survivors with safe, accessible, and meaningful ways to share their views. This approach ensured the consultation was informed by lived experience and expertise.

The consultation included:

- **Online survey** – the survey was open from 9 February to 6 March 2026, providing opportunity for individuals and organisations to contribute their views on the draft ToR. Overall, the survey received 25,494 responses. Of these, 24,522 responses were identified as responses coming from the [groominggangjustice.uk](#) campaign (GGJ campaign). For purposes of the analysis, responses from the [groominggangjustice.uk](#) campaign were analysed separately from those received from individuals or organisations (see Annex A for further detail).
- **Targeted engagement with victims and survivors** – between 20 February and 18 March, the Chair and Panel hosted five face-to-face sessions with victims and survivors in England and Wales to hear directly their views on the draft ToR. The Chair and Panel would like to thank Hayley Harewood and Keeping our Girls Safe, Maggie Oliver and the Maggie Oliver Foundation, alongside others for their help facilitating these conversations. The Chair and Panel also held one-to-one meetings with victims and survivors to provide those who preferred not, or were not able, to take part in the face-to-face sessions.
- **Engagement with Parliamentarians and a wide range of stakeholders** – separate sessions were held with cross-party parliamentarians and key

stakeholders, including from the criminal justice system, children’s social work and family services and voluntary or third-sector organisations.

- **Narrative responses submitted to the Inquiry consultation inbox** – a total of 42 email correspondences were received through the consultation inbox providing views on the draft ToR.

Annex A includes a summary of how feedback to the consultation was analysed.

The consultation sought views specifically on the draft ToR; it did not cover:

- the Government’s decision to focus the Inquiry on grooming gangs,
- the potential locations or scope of any local inquiries or case specific work, or
- how the Inquiry will engage with victims, survivors, professionals, or communities in the future.

The feedback received across the consultation activities has been analysed to ensure the final ToR are fully informed by lived experience and expertise. This report summarises the results of the consultation and resulting amendments to the draft ToR. The final ToR are published alongside this report.

Next steps

Following the publication of the final ToR the Inquiry will be formally established and will run for no more than three years. During the lifetime of the Inquiry, specific reports and recommendations will be published on local area investigations and other relevant areas of work which are deemed key by the Chair and Panel. At the end of the Inquiry a final report and recommendations will be published for the Government to consider and respond to.

From April 2026 onwards key activity for the Inquiry includes:

- The Chair setting out a plan for what the Inquiry will deliver and by when (by mid-June 2026).
- The Inquiry developing and publishing the criteria by which local areas for investigation will be selected (by 30 June 2026).
- The Inquiry and Operation Beaconport agreeing and publishing a Memorandum of Understanding on how they will work together and share information safely and securely (by 30 September 2026).

There will be further opportunities for those with lived experience and expertise to be involved in the work of the Inquiry. There will be specific calls for evidence, information provided on core participant status and how personal testimonies from all victims and survivors can be shared to inform the work and findings of the Inquiry.

The Inquiry is also committed to publishing a Victim and Survivor Charter; the development of which will include the views of victims and survivors and relevant experts. The Charter will set out the Inquiry's commitment to victims and survivors on how they will be involved throughout the Inquiry, how they can share their views and the trauma-informed approach underpinning the Inquiry's approach.

The Inquiry website provides details of how to get in touch if you have any questions on the ToR, or thoughts on the approach to engagement with victims and survivors.

Key themes

The ToR are central to the Chair and Panel's commitment to ensuring the Inquiry delivers the truth, the accountability, the change and the justice that victims and survivors deserve.

It is crucial the ToR are fully informed by lived experience and expertise and the findings from the consultation have therefore been used to update the draft ToR. Changes relevant to the consultation themes are summarised below and new or updated wording is in bold to clearly show where changes have been made. More general feedback, for example that the ToR should be written in clear, plain English, has also been reflected in the final ToR. The numbering used in this report reflects the numbering in the final ToR.

The key themes which emerged from the consultation are summarised below. For survey responses (both from individuals and organisations, and those received via the GGJ campaign), the approximate number of responses relevant to a particular theme is provided to give a sense of how often themes were mentioned.

The feedback provided across the engagement events with victims and survivors, parliamentarians and stakeholders mainly reflected the views expressed by those who responded to the survey. Where feedback from these engagement events contradicted, or did not feature in the survey responses, this is reflected.

Views on the Inquiry's draft Terms of Reference

Of the responses to the online survey from individuals and organisations (i.e. those not received via the GGJ campaign), the majority - 963 (99%) - provided views on the draft ToR. All of the responses from the GGJ campaign provided views on the draft ToR. Feedback was also gathered across all engagement events with victim and survivors, stakeholders and parliamentarians.

Theme 1: The role of victims and survivors

A common theme across the consultation activities was the need for the ToR to make clear that victims and survivors would be at the centre of the Inquiry. Of the responses from individuals and organisations, 63 (6%) referred to the need to engage victims throughout the course of the Inquiry and many highlighted the importance of taking a trauma-informed approach and having the necessary safeguarding processes in place.

Of the responses received via the GGJ campaign, 61% referred to the need for survivors, their families and advocates to be closely engaged by the Inquiry.

Many victims and survivors also spoke about the need for the ToR to reflect different forms of abuse, and ensuring the Inquiry did not focus on one specific model of abuse. The importance of the ToR reflecting the vulnerabilities of children in care and residential care was also mentioned by a number of victims and survivors.

How the ToR reflect this feedback

The ToR are clear that victims and survivors must be at the centre of the Inquiry's approach and have been expanded to provide additional detail on how this will be achieved:

2.1 Victims and survivors must be at the **centre** of the Inquiry's approach, with trauma-informed engagement and support appropriately provided, **alongside a focus on achieving outcomes that respond to victims and survivors' needs within the set timescales. The Inquiry must consider where there has been long-term negative treatment of victims and survivors and its ongoing impact upon them, their children and families.**

2.2 The Inquiry must be clear and open. **To ensure that victim and survivor voices are heard and at the centre of the Inquiry, a Victim and Survivor Charter must be developed. The Inquiry must work with victims and survivors to develop this Charter which will set out the Inquiry's commitment to victims and survivors on how they will be engaged throughout the Inquiry. The Victim and Survivor Charter must include the ways in which all victims and survivors can share their experience and evidence with the Inquiry to inform its work regardless of whether they are in a local investigation area or not.**

2.3 Engagement must be inclusive and representative. **It must be recognised that victims and survivors are not all the same, that they may have different experiences and characteristics, and will have become involved in abuse and exploitation through different routes. This must include (but should not be limited to) the Inquiry acknowledging grooming, abuse and exploitation which happens in person, online, via child trafficking, and through criminal exploitation. The Inquiry must also recognise that victims and survivors will have a range of characteristics,**

different risk factors and vulnerabilities that may have played into the abuse or the response to that abuse. The vulnerabilities of children in care and residential care will be carefully considered by the Inquiry as they relate to group based child sexual exploitation and abuse. Engagement must include victims and survivors across England and Wales.

Theme 2: The role of ethnicity, religion and culture in the committal of the abuse

The role of religion, ethnicity and culture was a common theme across consultation activities. In the online survey, 320 (33%) responses from individuals/organisations referred to the ToR needing to focus on specific religions as drivers of grooming gangs. In 291 (30%) responses, reference was made to the ToR needing to focus on the ethnicity, religion and culture of perpetrators. In 70 (7%) responses, reference was made to the ToR needing to focus on the ethnicity, religion and culture of victims.

The draft ToR referred to the Inquiry examining how ethnicity, religion or culture played a role in responses at a local and national level, and for the Inquiry to consider the background (including ethnicity, religion and culture) of perpetrators and victims. Feedback from across the consultation was clear that the ToR should directly state that the Inquiry will also examine whether and how ethnicity, religion and culture caused and/or drove the abuse experienced by victims and survivors of grooming gangs.

There were differing views with some recommending the ToR focus on certain ethnic and religious groups. Whereas others discouraged the ToR from focussing too heavily on particular groups for fear of excluding victims whose abuse was not undertaken by those groups.

This theme was mentioned in 79% of the 24,522 GGJ campaign responses.

During in-person engagement, some victims and survivors shared that ethnicity, religion and/or culture were relevant to their selection as victims, the nature of their abuse, and how institutions responded to it. Others expressed concerns that their experiences may not be included or represented appropriately as they did not have the same experiences as other victims and survivors.

How the ToR reflect this feedback

The ToR have been expanded so that the Inquiry explicitly has the power to examine how ethnicity, religion and culture may have caused the abuse and exploitation. They now state:

4.3 The Inquiry must examine the factors that allowed or caused exploitation and abuse to happen and go unaddressed at a local and national level - including the

role of ethnicity, religion and culture of perpetrators and victims. This must include examining the response of statutory bodies and any issues of denial, as discussed in the National Audit.

4.4 The Inquiry should take account of findings from new research commissioned by the Home Office in response to [Recommendation 10 of the National Audit](#), which will explicitly examine the role of ethnicity, religion and culture, when considering the factors that drive and enable group-based child sexual exploitation and abuse.

4.6.2 Specifically, the Inquiry **must** consider (as decided by the Chair **and Panel for each local inquiry**):

- The nature, adequacy, and timeliness of **statutory service responses** (both immediate and long-term) to suspected or confirmed cases of grooming gangs;
- Missed opportunities for intervention, protection, and effective collaboration;
- The response to, and impact on, individuals who reported grooming gang crimes, including victims, survivors, and professionals;
- **How different risk factors and vulnerabilities played into the abuse or the response to that abuse;**
- Whether ethnicity, religion or culture played a role in the **causes** and response; and
- The extent to which identified failures have led to changes in practice, policy, or legislation, and whether those changes have been effective

Theme 3: Individual accountability and recommendations for criminal proceedings

The role of the Inquiry in holding individuals accountable where failures have been identified, and in making recommendations for criminal proceedings was another common theme across all consultation activities. In the online survey, 115 (12%) responses from individual/organisations referred to the ToR needing to focus on individual failures, and 136 (14%) mentioned ensuring the Inquiry makes recommendations for prosecutions/criminal investigations.

Responses referred to the need for the Inquiry to make recommendations for people to be prosecuted and for the Inquiry to commit to publicly naming those individuals who it is believed fell short of their duty.

In the responses received via the GGJ campaign, 81% referred to evidence of negligence or deliberate cover-ups being passed to the police for investigation, and 20% mentioned

that the Chair must forward any evidence of possible criminality encountered during the Inquiry to the Police or National Crime Agency.

In person, many victims and survivors emphasised the need for accountability by sharing their own personal experiences of individual failings.

How the ToR reflect this feedback

The ToR have been updated to better reflect the Inquiry's role in identifying systemic, institutional and individual failures, and making recommendations for improvement at both national and local level as appropriate:

1.3 The Inquiry will take a strong approach to right the wrongs of the past and must ensure that institutions and individuals will be held to account for past failings. Under the terms of the Inquiries Act 2005, the Inquiry is unable to determine criminal or civil liability. For all criminal allegations or evidence from 1996 to the end of the Inquiry a referral will be made to Operation Beaconport – an operation that was recommended in Baroness Casey's National Audit and which is overseen by the National Crime Agency (NCA).

1.4 Together the Inquiry and Operation Beaconport will bring more perpetrators to justice, hold statutory services to account, act upon misconduct in public office, ensure that institutions are not allowed to mark their own homework and deliver justice for victims and survivors.

4.2 The Inquiry **must** look at systemic, institutional and individual failures, and make recommendations for improvements at both national and local levels as appropriate. **This must include looking at the treatment of victims and survivors before, during and after their abuse, including any lack of support offered to them by statutory services and any ongoing negative treatment across generations. The Inquiry must also assess whether the views of professionals working within statutory services and any culture within those services negatively affected how victims and survivors were viewed by professionals, and the treatment of the victims and survivors, their children and their families. The Inquiry must identify failures in behaviours and practice which may have amounted to intentional or unintentional inaction or cover-ups. The Inquiry must hold to account individuals, institutions and statutory services responsible for those failures. It will not be part of the Inquiry's function to determine civil or criminal liability of named individuals or statutory services. For all criminal allegations and evidence from the Inquiry between 1996 and the end of the Inquiry a referral will be made to Operation Beaconport, overseen by the NCA. Where appropriate the Chair and Panel may ask national inspectorates to support the work of the Inquiry.**

4.6.4 The Inquiry **must** make referrals to relevant professional bodies, as appropriate, where failures to carry out duties and responsibilities are suspected. **For all criminal**

allegations or evidence, a referral will be made to Operation Beaconport, which is overseen by the NCA.

6.4 In undertaking its work, the Inquiry may, where necessary and appropriate, engage with matters that intersect with ongoing criminal investigations. The Inquiry must take all necessary steps to avoid prejudicing such investigations, including liaising with relevant law enforcement bodies. The Inquiry's work is conducted under the authority of its Terms of Reference and is not intended to interfere with or substitute for criminal proceedings. Where there are lines of inquiry the Inquiry is unable to pursue within the timescales established by these Terms of Reference due to ongoing criminal proceedings, this should be noted in the relevant report but **must** not delay the timely delivery of that report.

6.5 Within six months of the formal setting up date of the Inquiry, Operation Beaconport and the Inquiry should jointly publish a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). This document **must** set out the principles, protocols, and mechanisms for collaboration between the Inquiry and policing colleagues.

Theme 4: The role of the Inquiry in assessing whether individual and institutional behaviour amounted to 'cover-ups'

Some responses referred to concerns about whether past failings were fully acknowledged by institutions including failures not being addressed properly and withholding information.

Responses emphasised the need for the ToR to focus on institutional failures and holding those institutions to account. Of responses from individuals and organisations, 66 (7%) mentioned the ToR should focus on institutional failures. Common institutions mentioned were: police (in 51 responses, 5%), councils and Local Authorities (39, 4%), social services (30, 3%), government (18, 2%) and CPS (17, 2%).

During in-person engagement, victims and survivors also shared their experiences of and emphasised the impact of institutional failures. They mentioned specific institutions which they were concerned about and these generally included those mentioned above.

How the ToR reflect this feedback

The ToR have been updated to state:

1.1. The Independent Inquiry into Grooming Gangs (the Inquiry) is established in recognition of the great harm experienced by victims and survivors of grooming gangs **and the failures of statutory services that were supposed to protect them.**

1.2 This Inquiry responds to Recommendation 2 of Baroness Casey’s National Audit on Group-Based Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (June 2025) (the “National Audit”), which called for a time limited, targeted and proportionate inquiry into cases of failures or obstruction by statutory services in relevant local areas. It will identify failures in practice and hold to account the individuals and institutions responsible for those failures. It **must** drive real and lasting change in safeguarding systems **and the criminal justice system** at both local and national levels, making sure that lessons are learned and that victims and survivors are placed at the centre of **any future change**.

4.1 Building on the work of the National Audit, this Inquiry will identify and shine a light on failings in previous and current responses to tackling grooming gangs locally and nationally. **It will look at evidence of the response in local areas across England and Wales, as well as at the role of national government and systems in that response. Any investigations by the Inquiry must include where things have gone wrong in relation to victims and survivors who do not live in the investigation area, for example where they had been trafficked.**

4.2 The Inquiry **must** look at systemic, institutional and individual failures, and make recommendations for improvements at both national and local levels as appropriate. **This must include looking at the treatment of victims and survivors before, during and after their abuse, including any lack of support offered to them by statutory services and any ongoing negative treatment across generations. The Inquiry must also assess whether the views of professionals working within statutory services and any culture within those services negatively affected how victims and survivors were viewed by professionals, and the treatment of the victims and survivors, their children and their families. The Inquiry must identify failures in behaviours and practice which may have amounted to intentional or unintentional inaction or cover-ups. The Inquiry must hold to account individuals, institutions and statutory services responsible for those failures. It will not be part of the Inquiry’s function to determine civil or criminal liability of named individuals or statutory services. For all criminal allegations and evidence from the Inquiry between 1996 and the end of the Inquiry a referral will be made to Operation Beaconport, overseen by the NCA. Where appropriate the Chair and Panel may ask national inspectorates to support the work of the Inquiry.**

Theme 5: Scope, reporting and independence of the Inquiry

Some responses referred to the scope of the Inquiry and recommended it be national. Of the responses from individuals and organisations, 45 (5%) mentioned the ToR should commit to investigating issues in any area where grooming gangs had been, or are currently, active, rather than focusing on local investigations in specific areas. This was

to ensure all victims and survivors had the opportunity to share their experiences with the Inquiry.

Of the responses received via the GGJ campaign, 19% suggested that the Inquiry should investigate all areas where there is evidence of material abuse (including London), and 28% mentioned the need for regular progress reports to Parliament and the public throughout the Inquiry.

This theme also emerged strongly during in-person engagement, with victims and survivors emphasising the need for individual experiences to be included regardless of whether the abuse occurred in an area selected for the local investigations.

Some survey responses also mentioned concerns about the independence of the Inquiry (53, 5% of the non-campaign responses) and flagged the need for the ToR to state clearly how it would operate independently from government and how it would report its findings in a timely way. In person, victims and survivors sought similar reassurances.

How the ToR reflect this feedback

The ToR have been expanded to provide further information on the scope, reporting and independence of the Inquiry:

1.5 The formal setting-up date of the Inquiry, as per section 5(1)(a) of the Inquiries Act 2005, is 13 April 2026.

4.5 To fulfil its purpose, the Inquiry will deliver the following focused objectives through local investigations and a national review. **Local investigations may take several forms including local hearings, written research and collation of evidence, data collection and analysis.**

4.7.1 To identify national-level recommendations for change in England and Wales. **These recommendations must be based on information from local investigations, local hearings, reviews and data collection and analysis. They must also be informed by those issues already addressed by the National Audit, the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, or other government commitments.**

4.7.2 **Where local investigations find instances of the failure of political or institutional accountability mechanisms, consider where those instances have relevance across all of England and Wales** and propose actionable recommendations to address and rectify those failures.

5.1 The Inquiry will cover England and Wales. Should the Inquiry find any material relating to the other devolved administrations, it will pass them to the relevant authorities wherever possible. **The Inquiry will liaise with the public inquiry announced by the Scottish Government in February 2026, into Scotland's response**

to group-based child sexual abuse and exploitation, to ensure appropriate ways of working where cross-border issues arise.

5.6 The Inquiry will consider which local areas to review. The criteria used to select local areas will be published by the Inquiry within three months of the formal setting-up date and will be informed by a combination of factors including the experiences of victims and survivors, and evidence of prevalence, harm and risk. The Inquiry must not consider that the absence of identified cases in a local area means that there is no harm being done there – a variety of factors should be considered when selecting local areas. The Chair and Panel may decide for any local area that public hearings are required, but in other areas they may not be required. In all cases the Inquiry must be sensitive to the impact on victims and survivors.

6.6 The Inquiry will operate for no more than three years, within a budget of £65 million. **Within three months of the formal setting up date, the Chair and Panel must** determine what must be delivered within this timeframe and budget (and dates for those deliverables) and **agree that assessment with** the Home Secretary.

6.7 These Terms of Reference must be reviewed on an annual basis between the Home Secretary and the Chair and Panel, with consultation with Welsh Ministers as appropriate, including to review progress and ensure the Inquiry can deliver within budget and to time. **If timescales or budget are at risk the Chair and Panel have a duty to provide the Home Secretary with proposals to remedy that.**

7.3 The Inquiry may publish interim reports and emerging findings during its three-year duration in relation to both local investigations (as set out in section 4.6), and national findings as the Chair and Panel deem appropriate. The final report must be submitted to the Home Secretary by 31 March 2029.

Views on which additional services or organisations should be included in the local investigations

The draft ToR referred to a range of services or agencies for inclusion in the local investigations. Respondents across the consultation activities were asked for views on additional services and agencies for inclusion. Common suggestions were:

- Health services, such as hospitals, community hospitals and GPs
- Mental health services, including Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Sexual health and pregnancy advice services
- Educational inspectorates, including Ofsted, Estyn and Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)

- Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman
- Religious institutions and organisations, such as Mosques and Churches
- Criminal justice and health regulators

How the ToR reflect this feedback

The ToR have been expanded to cover the above services and agencies for inclusion in the local investigations:

4.6.1 The objective of the local investigations is to identify failures in **organisations**, systems and procedures, and failures by individual leaders, in protecting children from grooming gangs within local areas, and make recommendations for immediate and longer-term change and improvement where required. **For each local inquiry, the Chair and Panel must set out the historic time period which that local inquiry will focus on, in line with the evidence they have received. The nature of the local investigations means that any area may be required by the Inquiry to undertake alternative forms of review and data collection and analysis alongside more formal local investigations in specific areas.**

4.6.2 Specifically, the Inquiry **must** consider (as decided by the Chair and Panel for each local inquiry):

- The nature, adequacy, and timeliness of **statutory service responses** (both immediate and long-term) to suspected or confirmed cases of grooming gangs;
- Missed opportunities for intervention, protection, and effective collaboration;
- The response to, and impact on, individuals who reported grooming gang crimes, including victims, survivors, and professionals;
- **How different risk factors and vulnerabilities played into the abuse or the response to that abuse;**
- Whether ethnicity, religion or culture played a role in the **causes and** response; and
- The extent to which identified failures have led to changes in practice, policy, or legislation, and whether those changes have been effective

4.6.3 In any local area, this may include examination of the actions of the **following statutory services and related organisations (as determined by the Chair and Panel; the Chair and Panel may at any time determine that additional statutory services or related organisations should be examined on the basis of new evidence):**

- Education settings
- Youth and community services, including Youth Offending Teams

- Religious institutions and organisations

- Voluntary or third sector organisations, such as victim support organisations

- Multi-agency partnerships, including Community Safety and Local Safeguarding Partnerships (and their predecessors)

- National and regional safeguarding boards in Wales

- Local authorities (including **children’s social care, children’s homes, family services, housing services, taxi and private hire vehicle licensing, parks and community cohesion services**)

- **Health services (hospitals, community hospitals, GPs)**

- **Mental health services (including CAMHS)**

- **Sexual health and pregnancy advice services**

- Police forces

- The wider Criminal Justice System (including the Crown Prosecution Service)

- **Educational, health, social care and criminal justice inspectorates**

- **Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman**

- **Public Services Ombudsman for Wales**

Views on when the Inquiry window should start

The draft ToR stated the Inquiry would examine issues arising between 1 January 2000 and the setting-up date of the Inquiry. Across the consultation events, a common theme was for the Inquiry to extend and cover issues prior to 2000.

During in-person engagement, some victims and survivors felt the Inquiry should not have a timeline but be open to all victims and survivors who were willing to share their experience, regardless of when it occurred. Victims and survivors also gave examples of abuse which occurred in the 1990s and expressed concern that this would not be included under the draft ToR timeline.

The online survey asked whether respondents agreed with the proposed timeline starting on 1 January 2000. Around half of the 574 responses from individuals and organisations to this question suggested the timeline should start pre-1990 (312, 54%), 240 (42%) suggested the timeline should start between 1990 and 1999 and 22 (4%) suggested after 2000.

Of the GGJ campaign responses, 38% referred to the Inquiry having the power to examine cases predating the year 2000 and all stated the timeline should start at 1990.

How the ToR reflect this feedback

The ToR have been updated to state:

5.5 The Inquiry must examine issues arising between 1 January 1996 and 31 March 2029. Information the Inquiry receives outside of these dates may still be considered as part of the wider evidence base and final reporting.

Annex A: Consultation methodology and approach to analysis

This Annex summarises the consultation methodology and approach to analysing responses and feedback.

Online survey

The online survey was open from 9 February to 6 March 2026, providing opportunity for individuals and organisations to contribute their views on the draft ToR.

The survey consisted of:

- Several closed format questions covering whether the respondent had lived or professional experience of grooming gangs; which services or agencies should be included in the local investigations; and the timeline for the Inquiry
- One open-format free-text question where respondents could share their views of the draft ToR
- Questions about respondent background and demographics, or details of the organisation responding

A copy of the survey questionnaire can be found in Annex B.

Overall, the survey received 25,494 responses. Of these, 24,522 responses were identified as responses coming from the groominggangjustice.uk campaign (GGJ campaign). The GGJ campaign responses covered at least one of the campaign's 10 demands and the majority were completed very quickly – in around 20 seconds per response – indicating they are automated responses. There were also a small number of responses (19) which used the wording from the campaign but appeared to be sent by an individual. These were treated as GGJ campaign responses. For purposes of the analysis, responses from the groominggangjustice.uk campaign were analysed separately from those received from individuals or organisations.

Analysis of responses from the online survey from individuals and organisations

Analysis of the closed questions in the online survey was carried out in Excel to provide descriptive analysis of the responses.

To analyse responses to the open-format question in the online survey, the responses were manually coded to identify key themes.

The team developed an initial set of themes based on an understanding of the policy context and wording of specific questions in the consultation. This set of themes was used to develop a coding framework which each member of the team used to code individual responses. Further themes were added to the coding framework if they came up multiple times across different responses.

A total of 41 themes were identified (see Table C2, Annex C). Not all themes were directly relevant, or in scope, of the ToR.

Of the 972 non-campaign responses, 862 were from individuals, 34 from organisations and the remaining 75 selected "Other". Of these, 213 responses came from those with any kind of lived

experience (personal or professional), with 63 from victims and survivors. A breakdown of responses by a range of demographic sub-groups are included in Annex C.

Analysis of GGJ campaign responses

Due to the high number of responses originating from the GGJ campaign, automated text analysis using a Large Language Model (LLM) was applied to replicate the process of manual coding.

An initial exploration of a sample of the responses was performed. From this, it was identified that each of the GGJ campaign responses covered at least one of the 10 demands from the campaign (see Table A1). These demands were therefore selected as themes and were developed into a coding framework.

A sample of 1,404 responses (5.7%) were selected from the 24,522 responses received from the GGJ campaign and were manually coded using the coding framework.

The full set of GGJ campaign responses were provided to a LLM alongside the coding framework and a set of instructions (a 'prompt') for how to perform thematic coding. The LLM produced a full coded dataset alongside explanations of why themes were selected for each response.

A comparison was made between the output from the manual coding and the LLM's output for the sample of responses to evaluate the performance of the LLM, treating the human analysis as the 'true' gold standard. Accuracy-based metrics widely used to evaluate model performance in machine learning, including recall (proportion of true themes identified), precision (proportion of predicted themes that are correct), and F_1 (harmonic mean of recall and precision) were calculated.

The process of using the LLM to produce an output was run five times, with performance evaluated after each iteration. Spot checks were performed where misclassification had taken place and iterative amendments to the coding framework were made to improve the LLM's interpretation of the semantic meanings of the 10 campaign demands.

After the five iterations, a hybrid dataset of coded responses was compiled to maximise performance, i.e. for each theme, the iteration that achieved the best accuracy result in comparison to the manually coded responses was selected. The hybrid dataset was then compared again to the manually coded dataset and achieved an F_1 score of 0.81 (where 1 represents perfect performance). This is widely considered to be a 'good' score when evaluating the performance of AI tools.

The full results of the automated analysis are presented in Table A1. It is understood that, when respondents asked the GGJ campaign to submit a response on their behalf via the campaign website, they were not given the option to advocate or express preferences about which specific themes should be included in their response. Instead, it is understood that the campaign automated production of responses covering a selection of the 10 demands. For this reason, the results may not represent the true views of the individuals that signed up to the campaign. It is reasonable to assume, however, that the 24,522 individuals that submitted a response via the campaign are supportive of some or all the demands of the GGJ campaign. There were also a small number of responses (19) which used the wording from the campaign but appeared to be sent by an individual, as opposed to an automated response. These were treated as campaign responses and included in the analysis.

Table A1: Number and percentage of responses referring to each of the 10 campaign demands

Please note that automated analysis was used to analyse the responses from the campaign, therefore the figures below should be interpreted as estimates of the numbers and proportions of responses that mentioned each of the 10 demands.

10 demands from the groominggangsjustice.uk campaign	Estimated number of GGJ campaign responses referring to demand	Estimated % of all GGJ campaign responses referring to demand
1. The Inquiry must examine whether the ethnic and religious background of perpetrators and victims was a causal factor in the abuse, and whether race and so-called community relations played a role in the deliberate cover-up by those in authority.	19,380	79%
2. Where the Inquiry finds evidence of negligence or deliberate cover-ups that may meet the criminal threshold, the matter must be passed to the police for investigation. The Inquiry must also proactively seek out evidence of institutional suppression.	19,912	81%
3. All areas where there is evidence of material abuse must be investigated, including London. No local council must be able to veto a local inquiry.	4,765	19%
4. The Chair must forward any evidence of possible criminality encountered during the Inquiry to the Police or National Crime Agency.	4,995	20%
5. The Inquiry must examine why the judiciary used inappropriate mitigating factors to give grooming gang perpetrators shorter sentences.	2,384	10%
6. The Inquiry must investigate organised crime and trafficking overseas, including to countries like Pakistan and Albania.	1,112	5%
7. Survivors, their families and advocates must be closely engaged by the Inquiry. There must be clear, published processes and safeguarding for those who come forward.	14,839	61%
8. There must be regular progress reports to Parliament and the public throughout the Inquiry.	6,832	28%
9. The Inquiry must have the power to examine cases predating the year 2000, including large-scale networks like the Hussain network in Rotherham.	9,256	38%
10. The Terms of Reference must include a clear working definition of 'grooming gangs', with published criteria for which cases fall within scope and how this focus will be operationalised in practice.	5,551	23%
TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONSES		24,522

Sessions with victims and survivors and wider engagement events

Between 20 February and 18 March, the Chair and Panel hosted five face-to-face sessions with victims and survivors in England and Wales to hear directly their views on the draft ToR. These sessions were held across England and Wales and facilitated by organisations and groups who work with victims and survivors of grooming gangs.

The Chair and Panel also held one-to-one meetings with victims and survivors to provide those who preferred not, or were not able, to take part in the face-to-face sessions.

Separate sessions were held with cross-party parliamentarians and key stakeholders, including from the criminal justice system, children's social work and family services and voluntary or third-sector organisations.

Feedback was manually coded to identify key themes.

The key themes from these elements of the consultation aligned with key themes from the online survey:

- Trust and safety – victim and survivor groups were clear they wanted the Inquiry to include honest, trauma-informed engagement and reassurance that this Inquiry will not repeat past failings
- Clarity of scope – there were strong calls for clear definitions, a justified start date, and transparency on how local areas will be selected for the local investigations
- Accountability for institutions – significant concern about policing, CPS and social care failures, and the need for real accountability
- Ongoing survivor involvement – strong support for continuing involvement of victims and survivors, including through a Victim & Survivor Charter

Narrative responses submitted to the Inquiry consultation inbox

A total of 42 email correspondences commenting on the ToR were received through the consultation inbox, and these responses were manually coded to identify the main areas of focus raised by respondents.

These closely aligned with the themes emerging from both the engagement events and the online survey.

The most prominent issue highlighted was accountability for institutions, with many respondents expressing strong concern about failures within policing, the CPS, and social care, and emphasising the need for the Inquiry to ensure robust, transparent accountability.

Respondents also raised questions about the scope of the Inquiry, particularly around the definitions used, the rationale for the proposed start date and how locations for local investigations would be determined.

Several individuals felt strongly about the role that ethnicity and religion may have played in both the offending and institutional responses and highlighted the need for the Inquiry to consider them carefully.

Overall, the inbox submissions echoed wider consultation feedback about the need for a credible, clear and survivor-focused Inquiry process.

Annex B: Independent Inquiry into Grooming Gangs draft Terms of Reference consultation survey

Independent Inquiry into Grooming Gangs – Introduction

Independent Inquiry into Grooming Gangs

The statutory Independent Inquiry into Grooming Gangs (the Inquiry) is being set up because of the serious and long-lasting harm experienced by victims and survivors of grooming gangs.

The Government established the Inquiry in response to recommendation two of Baroness Louise Casey's National Audit on Group-based Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, published in June 2025.

On 9 December 2025, the Home Secretary confirmed to Parliament that Baroness Anne Longfield CBE will chair the Inquiry, alongside Panel members Zoë Billingham CBE and Eleanor Kelly CBE.

The Inquiry will begin its formal work once the Terms of Reference (ToR) have been published. These will be agreed with government by the end of March 2026. The Inquiry is expected to run for up to three years.

Safeguarding

The Inquiry has a clear safeguarding responsibility to take reasonable steps to keep all members of the public safe and to respond appropriately to any concerns that arise in connection with its work. These steps may include passing information to authorities such as the police or social care. It will only do so when the Inquiry has cause to believe that a person is at risk of serious or significant harm and/or a crime has been or is being committed. The Inquiry will do so with your consent, unless this places you or someone else at further risk. For sources of support please visit: [Victims and survivors of child sexual exploitation and abuse: sources of support - GOV.UK](#).

National Inquiry interface with National Police Operation (Operation Beaconport)

The purpose of the Inquiry is not to directly prosecute individuals or make findings of civil or criminal liability.

The Inquiry is working in parallel to the National Police Operation (Operation Beaconport). Information relating to safeguarding concerns and allegations of criminal activity received by the Inquiry may be passed onto appropriate authorities.

If you are a victim or survivor, you have the right to ask for a review of how the police or Crown Prosecution Service handled your case through their Victims' Right to Review schemes. Further detail of the schemes and eligibility requirements can be found here:

- [Victims' Right to Review \(VRR\) Scheme - Police](#)
- [Victims' Right to Review Scheme | The Crown Prosecution Service - CPS - the contact form is available via this link \[Your reason for contacting us | The Crown Prosecution Service\]\(#\)](#)

If you do not meet the requirement for or have not already been subject to the Victims' Right to Review Scheme, you may request a review of a CPS or police decision through their [Child Sexual Abuse Review Panel](#), which details the panel's eligibility criteria.

The Inquiry and Consultation

What this Inquiry will look at

The Inquiry will focus specifically on group-based child sexual exploitation and abuse carried out by what are commonly known as 'grooming gangs'.

For this Inquiry, this means child sexual exploitation involving two or more people who are linked in some way—formally or informally—and who take part in or enable the exploitation of children.

This can include:

- introducing a child to others for the purpose of exploitation,
- trafficking a child,
- receiving payment for sexual activity with a child, or
- allowing premises to be used for abuse.

About this consultation

The Inquiry is required by government to finalise the Terms of Reference by 31 March 2026, which means the consultation period is focused and time-limited. At this stage, the Inquiry is only seeking comments specifically on the [draft Terms of Reference](#); it is not asking for views on:

- the Government's decision to focus the Inquiry on grooming gangs,
- the potential locations or scope of any local inquiries or case-specific work, or
- how the Inquiry will engage with victims, survivors, professionals, or communities in the future.

These areas will be developed later in the Inquiry's work, and there will be further opportunities to be involved. For example, survivors, families, and professionals will be able to help shape the Victims' Charter, which will set out how the Inquiry will work with and support victims and survivors throughout its three-year programme.

We are especially keen to hear from people with lived experience of grooming gangs, as well as from those with professional experience in this area.

This consultation survey will close at 23:59 on Friday 6th March.

Important information before you take part

- Please do not send any evidence as part of your consultation response. We will explain how to submit evidence safely and confidentially from April 2026.
- Please do not include any identifying or private information (such as names or addresses) in free-text boxes.
- At the end of the survey, you will be asked to provide information about your personal characteristics or, if you are replying on behalf of an organisation, details of the organisation. This information will help us to see whether different people and organisations have different views and experiences. All of these questions are optional and you do not have to provide any of the information if you do not want to.
- The survey should take around 10–15 minutes.
- There are no right or wrong answers. Please share your views in whatever way feels comfortable for you.
- If you require a hard copy of the consultation survey, or a version in Welsh or another language, please contact: contactus@grooming-gangs.independent-inquiry.uk
- Please send press and media enquiries to: pressqueries@grooming-gangs.independent-inquiry.uk

Confirmation of participation

1. The survey is open to those aged 18 and above. Please can you confirm that you are aged 18 or above?

Yes

No - please do not continue the survey

2. Please confirm that you are happy to participate in the survey.

Yes

No - please do not continue the survey

3. Do you have lived or professional experience of grooming gangs? This could include being a victim or survivor yourself, being a family member or close friend of a victim or survivor or having worked with victims or survivors in a professional capacity.

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

4. What type of lived or professional experience do you have?

- I am a victim or survivor of grooming gangs
- I am a family member, or close friend, of a victim or survivor of grooming gangs
- I have professional experience of grooming gangs
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify):

Views on draft Terms of Reference

5. Do you have any views on the [Independent Inquiry into Grooming Gangs draft Terms of Reference](#)?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

6. Please share your views on the [Independent Inquiry into Grooming Gangs draft Terms of Reference](#). Please do not provide any identifying information or confidential information (e.g. names, addresses) in your answer. Please note that your answer must be no longer than 500 words.

Local investigations – services/agencies for inclusion

7. The [Independent Inquiry into Grooming Gangs draft Terms of Reference](#) refer to the following services or agencies for inclusion in the local investigations: local safeguarding partnerships (and their predecessors); community safety partnerships; regional safeguarding boards in Wales; local authorities (including children’s social work and family services); police forces; the wider criminal justice system (including the Crown Prosecution Service); health and sexual health services; education settings; youth and community services, including youth offending teams; and voluntary or third-sector organisations, such as victim support organisations.

Are there any other services or organisations you think should be considered for inclusion in the local investigations?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

8. Please specify which other services or organisations you think should be considered for inclusion in the local investigations. Please do not provide any identifying information or confidential information (e.g. names, addresses) in your answer. Please note that your answer should be no longer than 100 words.

Inquiry – timeline

9. [The draft Terms of Reference](#) state the Inquiry will examine issues arising between 1 January 2000 and the setting-up date of the Inquiry. The Inquiry will operate for no more than three years and we have set this timeline to ensure it remains focused on issues arising in the last 25 years. Do you agree with this timeline?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

10. Please state the year in which the Inquiry window should start (e.g. 1990).

Demographic questions

The following questions ask about your personal characteristics. This information will help us to see whether different people have different views and experiences. All of these questions are optional and you do not have to provide any of the information if you do not want to.

11. Are you responding to this survey as an individual or on behalf of an organisation/charity? Please select one option.

- Individual
- Organisation/Charity
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify):

Individual demographic questions

12. What is your age?

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75-84
- 85+
- Prefer not to say

13. Which of the following describes how you think of yourself?

- Female

- Male
- Non-binary
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify):

14. What is your ethnicity?

White

- English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British
- Irish
- Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- Other White background

Asian or Asian British

- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Any other Asian background

Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups

- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Black African
- White and Asian

Any other mixed background

Black or Black British

Caribbean

African

Any other Black background

Other Ethnic Group

Arab

Any other Ethnic Group

Prefer not to say

Prefer not to say

15. What is your religion?

No religion

Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations)

Buddhist

Hindu

Jewish

Muslim

Sikh

Prefer not to say

Any other religion, please describe:

16. Which of the following describes your sexual orientation?

Heterosexual/Straight

Gay/Lesbian

Bisexual

Other

Prefer not to say

17. Do you have any long-term illness or disability?

Yes

No

Prefer not to say

18. Where do you live?

England

Scotland

Wales

Northern Ireland

Don't know

Prefer not to say

Other (please specify):

Organisation questions

19. Where are you/is your organisation located? Please select all that apply.

England

- Scotland
- Wales
- Northern Ireland
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify):

20. What type of organisation are you responding on behalf of?

- Academia
- Business/Industry
- Central Government/Civil Service
- Law Enforcement
- Legal
- Local Authority (including children's social work and family services)
- Third Sector/Voluntary
- Other Public Service/Public Body
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify):

21. Tell us more about your organisation. How many employees does your organisation have?

- <10

- 10-25
- 26-50
- 51-100
- 101-200
- 201-300
- >300
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

Next steps

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this consultation questionnaire.

The Inquiry Chair and Panel will consider views on the Inquiry's draft Terms of Reference before recommending any changes to the Home Secretary. This will be done in March 2026. It is for the Home Secretary to set a final Terms of Reference for the Independent Inquiry into Grooming Gangs to allow the Inquiry to begin its work.

Sources of support

We understand that child sexual exploitation and abuse, including group-based child sexual exploitation and abuse ('grooming gangs'), can have profound and devastating impacts on victims and survivors, their families, friends and communities. We also recognise that the process of establishing an Inquiry and investigating grooming gangs could cause you to experience distress.

If you are a victim or survivor of child sexual abuse and exploitation, or a concerned family member or friend, you can find information about what support is available here: [Victims and survivors of child sexual exploitation and abuse: sources of support - GOV.UK](#).

If you are in crisis and are unable to keep yourself safe, or are having thoughts of self-harm or suicide that you may act on, please consider the following emergency options:

- go to any hospital or A&E department, or book an emergency appointment with your GP

- call 999 and ask for an ambulance, or for non-emergency health advice call the NHS on 111
- if you need urgent support but don't want to contact the health service, call the Samaritans 24/7 helpline on 116 123

If you are in danger, have any concerns about your safety, or want to report a crime, please contact your local police force:

- call 999 if there is a threat to life or an emergency
- alternatively, you can report to the police on the non-emergency number 101 and online at [Police.UK](https://www.police.uk)

There are several specialist organisations providing free confidential information, advice and support to victims and survivors and their family members or friends. For more information please visit: [Victims and survivors of child sexual exploitation and abuse: sources of support - GOV.UK](#).

The Independent Inquiry into Grooming Gangs will establish its own mechanisms for engaging with and supporting victims and survivors. Further information will be provided once those processes are up and running.

Annex C: Analysis of online consultation responses

Table C1: Demographic breakdown of online survey responses from individuals

Note: the majority of GGJ campaign responses answered “Prefer not to say” to the demographic questions, therefore the numbers for this category are very high)

Demographics	Number of responses
Any lived experience	214
Victim or survivor of grooming gangs	63
Family member, or close friend, of a victim or survivor of grooming gangs	68
Professional experience of grooming gangs	80
Other	23
Prefer not to say	14
Age	
18-24	4
25-34	32
35-44	102
45-54	141
55-64	241
65-74	190
75-84	73
85+	9
Prefer not to say	24,592
Gender	
Female	437
Male	351
Non-binary	3
Other	11
Prefer not to say	24,578
Ethnicity	
White	662
Asian or Asian British	25
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	12
Black or black British	6
Other Ethnic group	5
Prefer not to say	24,602
Religion	
No religion	217
Christian	477
Buddhist	0
Hindu	2
Jewish	1
Muslim	19
Sikh	0
Other religion	12

Prefer not to say	24,646
Sexual orientation	
Heterosexual / Straight	674
Gay / Lesbian	15
Bisexual	9
Other	5
Prefer not to say	24,668
Long-term illness/disability	
Yes	204
No	499
Prefer not to say	25,374
Area	
England	736
Wales	30
Scotland	30
Northern Ireland	3
Other	12
Prefer not to say	24,566

Table C2: Themes identified in analysis of responses to the online consultation from individuals and organisations (excludes GGJ campaign responses which were analysed separately – see Annex A and A1)

Themes	Number of responses referring to theme	Themes	Number of responses referring to theme
Inquiry needed	47	Institution to focus on: Religious institutions	7
Do not need/should not have Inquiry	4	Should focus on individual failures	115
Definition of grooming gangs needed	19	Should assess whether failures amounted to a cover-up	65
Concerns about selection of local areas for investigation and need for transparency	29	Should make recommendations for prosecutions/criminal investigations	136
Inquiry should be national or cover all areas of England and Wales	45	Inquiry should report sooner/be quicker than 3 years	6
Inquiry should be local (i.e. separate local inquiries)	3	Inquiry should report later/take longer than 3 years	3
Specific suggestion of an area to include in local investigations	10	<u>Victims/survivors</u> : more focus on their ethnicity, religion, culture	66
Inquiry should expand to cover all of UK	2	<u>Victims/survivors</u> : less focus on their ethnicity, religion, culture	0
Inquiry should expand to cover Scotland	2	<u>Perpetrators</u> : more focus on their ethnicity, religion, culture	285

Inquiry should expand to cover Northern Ireland	2		<u>Perpetrators</u> : less focus on their ethnicity, religion, culture	5
Inquiry should expand to cover overseas	3		Ensure coverage of all/diverse ethnic groups when considering victims	7
Exploitation that started when victim was over 18 should be included	5		Ensure coverage of all/diverse ethnic groups when considering perpetrators	12
Inquiry should look at organised crime and trafficking overseas	13		Should focus on specific religions	308
Inquiry should be completely separate from Operation Beaconport	1		Should focus on preventing future incidents	27
Inquiry and Operation Beaconport should be joint	0		Contains details of personal experience or testimony	12
Inquiry should focus on systemic failures	28		Importance of engaging and involving victims	64
Inquiry should focus on institutional failures	65		Need for redress for victims needs addressing	8
Institution to focus on: Police	50		Regular progress reports needed (e.g. to Parliament)	9
Institution to focus on: Councils/Local Authorities	38		Disappointment in lack of action from previous reviews/audits/inquiries	8
Institution to focus on: Social Services	30		Concerns about independence of Inquiry from government	54
Institution to focus on: CPS	17		Need for new data collection to assess scale and identify victims and perpetrators	13
Institution to focus on: Government/Parliament	18		Comment related to immigration and deportation of those found guilty	8
TOTAL NUMBER OF NON-CAMPAIGN RESPONSES				956