

2024

ROADSHOW

**Dumfries**

March 2024



The Scottish Women's Convention

# Introduction

On the 28<sup>th</sup> of March 2024, the SWC team travelled to Dumfries, meeting women from the town and the wider region. The purpose of our visit was to understand the issues that these women face, with key themes arising throughout our conversations.

During our visit we heard of a range of issues, with health and social care being of particular focus. Overall, women stated that their experiences were generally positive, with regards to emergency care and GP appointments, however, did highlight the need for an increased focus on mental healthcare and dentistry. Some attendees also believed that there should be increased investment in social care services, with this being of high importance due to an increasingly ageing population.

Furthermore, women also explained that transport options in Dumfries were poor, calling for improved service provision across public transport. Women also went on to state that due to poor opportunities across the region, young people were choosing to live elsewhere, contributing to depopulation and a struggling local economy. Lastly, attendees were concerned about the difficulties facing young women, believing that social media and an increase in school violence was causing high levels of anxiety and isolation.

## The Scottish Women's Convention (SWC):

The SWC is funded to engage with women across Scotland to ensure that their views are represented in policy and decision-making processes. The SWC uses the views of women to respond to a variety of parliamentary, governmental, and organisational consultation papers at Scottish, UK, and international levels.

The SWC gathers information using different methods, including roadshows, thematic conferences, surveys, and both in-person and online roundtable events. This submission presents the views of a range of women, reflecting their opinions, ideas and lived experience. Working together with many other equalities organisations and community groups, we use our broad network to ensure that women from a range of backgrounds are heard and acknowledged. We are continually reviewing innovative ways of engaging with women and developing our trauma-informed and culturally sensitive practice to support vital contributions from as many women as possible.



# Health and Social Care

During our roadshow discussions, it became apparent that primary and emergency healthcare was viewed positively, with many having good experiences when accessing these forms of care.

- “I had a heart attack and in the space of five hours...I was taken to a hospital, had a stent installed and was on the ward”

It was highlighted however, that for some, accessing GP appointments had become increasingly difficult, with telephone consultations becoming common. Some attendees did not feel that these appointments were of value, and instead stated preference for in-person appointments. Difficulties in accessing appointments is complicated further for women who reside in rural communities, with the lack of nearby medical facilities preventing some from seeking vital healthcare. It could be argued that the lack of comprehensive primary healthcare has contributed to the increased death registered in Dumfries and Galloway. The number of female deaths registered in Dumfries and Galloway in 2022 was 12.3% higher than in 2002, whereas the average number of female deaths registered across Scotland was 4.3% higher in 2022 in comparison to 2002<sup>1</sup>. This clearly shows that across Dumfries and Galloway significant change is required to rectify this continued loss of life.

- “...you just get a consultation over the telephone. And sometimes you just think that you need to see someone”
- “I think as well, if you’re in the centre or in one of the bigger towns it’s [booking GP appointments] fine, but I think that some of the smaller villages, it’s more difficult.”

A key point of contention for women who attended, was the worrying lack of dentistry in the area. They explained that since the Covid-19 pandemic, they have struggled to access dentist appointments and general dental care, with NHS offers becoming increasingly scarce. The lack of dentists across Scotland has raised numerous concerns. Public Health Scotland figures show that participation rates continue to fall, with 50.4% of all registered patients having seen a dentist within the last two years, down from 65.1% in 2020. It can also be seen that those attending appointments are more likely to reside in affluent areas, with child participation rates in the least affluent communities standing at 55.9% compared to 73.1%<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, further investment in NHS-funded dentist provision is vital to ensure that all residents of Dumfries receive good quality dental care.

- “...the lack of NHS dentists is a major problem. No dentists are accepting new NHS patients.”
- “...if you say, just moved to the area, you won’t get one [dentist].”

Women also discussed the poor mental health provision across Dumfries, pointing to high waiting times for treatment. Information from the Dumfries and Galloway Integration Joint Board (DGIJB) states that only 69% of people who require mental health treatment start psychological therapy based treatment within 18 weeks of referral, which when compared to the average in Scotland of 81%, showing a clear disparity<sup>3</sup>. It was suggested that young people were being

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<sup>1</sup> National Records of Scotland. (2022). Dumfries and Galloway Council Area Profile. Available at: <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/dumfries-and-galloway-council-profile.html#Deaths>

<sup>2</sup> Dentistry. (2023). Calls for Urgent Action as Dental Inequalities Rise in Scotland. Available at: <https://dentistry.co.uk/2023/01/24/calls-for-urgent-action-as-dental-inequalities-rise-in-scotland/>

<sup>3</sup> Dumfries and Galloway Integration Joint Board. (2023). Annual Performance Report 2022/23. Available at: <https://dghscp.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/20230727-IJB-Annual-Report-22-23-FINAL-DRAFT.pdf>

disproportionately affected, with the distress and disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic to social lives, contributing to feelings of unease and anxiety. Attendees stated that young women were being let down by the current system, and despite good quality work being carried out in some high schools, with a dedicated youth worker assisting with mental healthcare, this was not enough. Instead, women called for an increased focus on mental health and wellbeing across Dumfries, through improved funding and community projects for young people.

- “...for young people it’s the waiting lists to see CAMHS that are through the roof...that puts a strain on mental health services, and so they’re having to go to third sector organisations”
- “...they [young women] were like P6 when Covid hit...and then when they went back, they were right into secondary school...they were totally isolated”

Additionally, we spoke with attendees about the current social care situation in Dumfries. They stated that an increased focus must be made to accommodate the changing needs of an ageing population across the region. It is estimated by the National Records of Scotland that between 2018 and 2028, the 75 years and over age group will increase by 23.7%, compared to the 0 to 15 year age group reducing by 14.2% over the same period<sup>4</sup>. Women felt that despite these trends, there had been a noticeable reduction in care home numbers across the region. Overall, across Scotland there has been a 20% decrease in the number of care homes available between 2011 and 2021<sup>5</sup>, with this being acutely felt by residents of Dumfries. Women also stated that the quality of care varied across Dumfries and Galloway, stating that elderly family members had had to be placed in care homes far away from their homes, worsening a difficult process.

- “I think there is a real lack of care. There are care homes that were in operation maybe five or ten years ago, that have closed down”
- “When my nana...was bedbound...and the first place they could put her in was ages away, like an hour and a half away, my papa was so far away from her, and it’s not a great road.”

Women explained that the reduction in social care provision has had an impact on hospital releases, with ‘bed blocking’ - where an individual is fit for release but cannot leave due to out-of-hospital variables - occurring regularly. According to the aforementioned DGIJB report, there were 783 days spent in hospital by those aged 75 or older, per 1,000 population, despite being ready for discharge. This was a significant jump from the year before, with that figure being just 257. Of our attendees, one woman explained that she had been included within these statistics, finding her experience in hospital distressing. She stated that she felt she was often left by herself and not encouraged to remain active, contributing to her frailty. This experience changed however, when she was eventually released from hospital, and could access quality physiotherapy within her home. It can therefore be said that there are clear links between providing quality, person-centred social care across the community and healthcare, with both contributing to a healthy society.

- “I think there is an issue. When I was in the hospital, because I live on my own, I couldn’t be discharged until they sorted out a care package.”
- “...when I worked at the hospital in the old folks’ ward...you could notice that ‘bed blocking’; they were fit for discharge but there was no care out in the community.”

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<sup>4</sup> National Records of Scotland. (2022). Dumfries and Galloway Council Area Profile. Available at: [https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/dumfries-and-galloway-council-profile.html#life\\_expectancy](https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/dumfries-and-galloway-council-profile.html#life_expectancy)

<sup>5</sup> Public Health Scotland. (2021). Care Home Census for Adults in Scotland 2011-2021. Available at: <https://publichealthscotland.scot/media/10035/2021-11-09-care-home-census-summary.pdf>

# Transport

While consulting with women in Dumfries, the issue of insufficient bus servicing across the area arose. They explained that current bus timetables do not run past certain times, preventing residents from easily travelling throughout Dumfries and Galloway. This has an inevitable impact on women, with women being the majority users of buses in Scotland due to lower economic status societally than men<sup>6</sup>. Women are also more likely to hold part-time work in the hospitality trade, where unsociable hours are more common<sup>7</sup>. With regards to bus availability, women also pointed to a recently saved route to Edinburgh, the 101/102 service now provided by Houston's Coaches. This service was saved as a result of a petition, signed by 10,000 people, and has a very active Facebook community which provides updates for users<sup>8</sup>. However, one attendee did highlight that despite guaranteeing increased mobility for the area, the lack of toilet facilities on the three hour bus journey was not ideal.

- “So, many of the buses don't run past a certain time as well.”
- “The long distance bus to Edinburgh was saved by a private company but it's only a 'service bus' not a proper coach, so it's 3+ hours on a cold bus with no toilet”

Women went on to highlight the positives brought by the 'Under 22s Bus Pass', with the hopes that it would increase socialisation and mobility for young people. However, due to the poor availability of buses, this scheme has had a reduced impact in Dumfries. It can therefore be said that the lack of good quality bus infrastructure disproportionately impacts women in Dumfries, with young women having unequal access to similar opportunities to their counterparts across Scotland.

- “The sad thing is, is that the young people got their free bus passes, but there are no buses running for them.”

Attendees also pointed to poor taxi availability in Dumfries, stating that this has been worsening over recent years. They explained that this has resulted in increased barriers when attending work and social events, with this being of particular concern for disabled women in the region. Disabled women are more likely to use taxis than non-disabled women<sup>9</sup>, with the lack of availability in Dumfries and Galloway creating an additional barrier to participation across their lives. Women stated that the community transport options in Dumfries are good, providing disabled access, however, do not cover the full region. Therefore, considering how to encourage a greater number of taxis would be valuable in Dumfries, as well as increased funding for community transport projects.

- “...even the amount of taxis available in the area has drastically reduced.”
- “Taxis are awful here, I mean, there are very few taxis that someone with a wheelchair can use.”

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<sup>6</sup> Women's Budget Group. (2020). Public Transport and Gender. Available at: <https://wbg.org.uk/analysis/uk-policy-briefings/2019-wbg-briefing-public-transport-and-gender/>

<sup>7</sup> Scottish Government. (2021). Scotland's Labour Market: People, Places and Regions. Available at: Scotland's Labour Market: People, Places and Regions: Annual Population Survey 2020/21 ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>8</sup> Peebleshire News. (2024). Bus Company Welcomes 176,000 Passengers on Saved Rural Route. Available at: Bus company welcomes 176,000 passengers on saved rural route | Peebleshire News

<sup>9</sup> Transport Scotland. (2021). Disability and Transport. Available at: <https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/jzxtw2c/disability-and-transport-2021.pdf>

- “The community transport buses have disabled access, I think. The community transport is pretty good, but it doesn’t cover everywhere.”

In addition, women felt that the train service across Dumfries was not sufficient, making accessing larger towns and cities difficult. They explained that their personal and professional lives had been impacted by the poor service, with trains being regularly cancelled. This was a source of clear frustration, with some attendees also highlighting the lack of direct service between Dumfries and Edinburgh before 9am, potentially preventing commuters from choosing Dumfries as their hometown. Women hoped to see an increase in reliability, alongside improved route options, believing that this would greatly benefit the area.

- “To have a reliable service of trains would be wonderful.”
- “The number of times we have tried to get to the Central Belt, and the trains have been cancelled! That’s our day ruined, if we try and use the bus, it will just trundle along and about three hours later we would maybe make it”
- “We’ve been campaigning for years to have a before nine o’clock [train] service [to Edinburgh].”

Despite issues across public transport offerings in Dumfries, women did state that cycling is promoted and catered for well. They explained that there is a wealth of cycle paths on offer in the region, allowing those who would like to use active travel the opportunity. Dumfries itself is included in the National Cycle Network Route 7, which includes the South East of Scotland, being referred to as a “well-used commuting route” by Sustrans<sup>10</sup>. Continuing to improve the cycling networks in Dumfries will play a role in meeting Scottish Government commitments for net zero emissions by 2045, as well as the introduction of ‘Local Living and 20-Minute Neighbourhoods’, as proposed to support the implementation of National Planning Framework 4<sup>11</sup>. To gain further knowledge on women’s views of the ‘Local Living and 20-Minute Neighbourhoods’ plan, [read our consultation response here](#).

- “Well, I would say that we’re good for bike routes.”
- “...we’re good for cycle routes.”



<sup>10</sup> Sustrans. (2024). National Cycle Network Routes in South West Scotland. Available at: <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/find-a-route-on-the-national-cycle-network/national-cycle-network-routes-in-south-west-scotland/>

<sup>11</sup> Scottish Government. (2023). Local Living and 20-Minute Neighbourhoods. Available at: Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods: Planning Guidance - Draft for Consultation ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))



# Economy and Employment

When asked about the current economic situation in Dumfries, women explained that due to the continued degradation of the high street and businesses, there was a visible negative impact on the local economy. They accepted that this was a UK-wide issue, with high streets up and down the country facing significant challenges, including the move to online shopping and out-of-town centres, and more recently, the Covid-19 pandemic. Increasingly towns and cities across Scotland are seeing a rise in empty buildings, adding to a sense of dilapidation in town centres, with Dumfries being no different.

Women would like to see further investment in the centre, with independent businesses provided with improved support. The recently announced ‘Levelling Up Fund’, which commits £17,698,660 to Dumfries and Galloway Council, is to be used to reinvigorate the local economy across the region. It has also been stated that a portion of this money will be used to convert vacant buildings in the town centre, focusing on attracting visitors and building the local community<sup>12</sup>. However, as an organisation which highly values the usage of lived experience across decision-making, we believe it is vital a lived experience board is included across the consultation process with regards to financial delegation.

- “I don’t know if anyone has been on the high street recently, and I mean it’s so rundown, and I suppose that’s every high street, we’re no different.”
- “And then people online shop a lot, and we have the out of town shopping centres. They can park there and do their shopping, whereas on the high street you’re not going to do a lot of shopping and then go back to your car that’s miles away.”
- “People can’t afford to run small businesses anymore, the costs are too high, and the council seems to do nothing to help...Town centre shops and businesses close as people go to the out of town developments”

In addition to the declining town centre in Dumfries, women stated that there were low levels of opportunities for young people. They explained that there was a lack of investment across the region, which has prevented new businesses from choosing Dumfries and Galloway as an area of operation. The employment rate for women across Dumfries and Galloway is below the Scottish average, 68.8% compared to 73.1%, with salaries also being below the Scottish average for women by approximately £100<sup>13</sup>. This can be partly rationalised by the high levels of part-time work reported by attendees, with women stating that often employment options were low quality and/or seasonal. For both men and women, part-time work in Dumfries and Galloway is more common than in the entirety of Scotland, 36.4% compared to 32.7%<sup>13</sup>. If women are to be encouraged to enter into better quality work, it is vital that increased investment in Dumfries considers improving job opportunities for women, focusing on sustainability and choice.

- “...a lot of people I spoke to, there’s a meat factory up there, and that’s where their destination was heading. That was a big employer in the area that they could fall into...we’re going to end up losing our young folk if we don’t start making more [opportunities].”
- “No, my daughter would like to work up here, but there was only maternity cover and temporary jobs. She didn’t see anything.”

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<sup>12</sup> Dumfries and Galloway Council. (2023). UK Government’s Levelling Up Fund. Available at: <https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/26286/>

<sup>13</sup> Office for National Statistics. (2023). Labour Market Profile – Dumfries and Galloway. Available at: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157410/report.aspx#tabidbr>

- “There are a lot of temporary jobs, nothing really full-time. Things like McDonalds, KFC, they’re always recruiting.”

Further to the poor opportunities in the area, women stated that this was having a significant impact on retaining young people. They explained that it was common for young women to leave Dumfries to attend further education institutions, and then stay where they had studied, rather than return and bring their specialist knowledge. Overall, women believed that the lack of opportunities underwrites the issue of depopulation in Dumfries, with estimations stating that the population in Dumfries and Galloway will reduce by 2.8% between 2018 and 2028, which compares to a 1.8% increase for Scotland as a whole. It can also be seen that the age group with the lowest level of net migration to the area was the 15-19 year old range, sitting at -40, whereas the highest level of total net migration was the 55-59 group at 227<sup>14</sup>. Women went on to state that this had had a negative impact on the region’s public services, with the lack of professional development options and generally poor opportunities, pushing away experts, such as doctors. This then has a detrimental effect on the quality and quantity of care in Dumfries, contributing to the problems highlighted in the previous ‘Health and Social Care’ section.

- “I mean I went there [central belt] to study, granted I did come back, but I know lots of my friends who left and didn’t come back, and they wouldn’t come back.”
- “...my youngest son is at university and looking for a professional job, there’s absolutely nothing. And in my opinion, this area really suffers from ‘brain drain’, you know, everyone is moving away, so what’s going to happen in 20 to 30 years?”
- “And I mean we have the college, and it’s amazing up there. But they have to move away because there’s nothing for them. It’s such a shame that we have all that lovely talent, and it all goes away.”
- “One of the problems we have is keeping doctors and consultants here. They want to work in the Central Belt...because their professional development is better in the bigger hospitals.”

Women also highlighted the large number of housing developments in the area, despite a lack of job opportunities and a failing local economy. Women were unsure as to what was driving this increase in development, stating that the number of houses did not match the current social infrastructure, e.g. schools and GP practices. However, it was suggested that the legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic has been the significant shift in work patterns, with more people working from home. 46% of people in Scotland work from home, with this becoming an increasingly popular option<sup>15</sup>. Therefore, it could be said that those moving to Dumfries live locally but work externally, resulting in an increased strain on services but a reduction in organisations bringing business to the area. This new form of ‘commuter’ may bring benefits to the area; however, it is vital that Dumfries and Galloway Council consider how to ensure increased expenditure across local economies, enabling improved services for all.

- “But you wonder, who is it that’s moving to the area, we have so many housing developments on the go, but who is it that’s buying them?”
- “There’s that working from home element, it’ll be cheaper to live down here, but work in the Central Belt, because they can now work from home.”

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<sup>14</sup> National Records of Scotland. (2022). Dumfries and Galloway Council Area Profile. Available at: <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/dumfries-and-galloway-council-profile.html#Migration>

<sup>15</sup> CIPD. (2023). Working Lives: Scotland 2023. Available at: <https://www.cipd.org/globalassets/media/knowledge/knowledge-hub/reports/2023-pdfs/2023-working-lives-scotland-report-8407-final.pdf>



# Education and Young Women

Women went on to discuss the situation for young women in Dumfries, explaining that they had heard worrying reports from within schools of increased instances of violence. Scottish Government data found that 43% of teachers had observed violence between pupils in classrooms over one week<sup>16</sup>, creating an uncomfortable learning and working environments for all involved. From our [‘Misogyny in Scotland’](#) project, we heard that young women are facing high levels of misogynistic abuse, with this ranging from physical to verbal assaults<sup>17</sup>. Increased focus on this issue across educational institutions is therefore vital to ensure the safety of young women across Scotland.

- “I had a parent on the phone this week, who had a child, 13 years old, who had been really badly attacked at the school...because she had felt that the school had excluded the attacker for a week and that was it...but now her child is afraid to go back to school”
- “I know as well that violence has went up in the schools, they have no respect for the teachers. They don’t really care, it’s very sad really.”

During conversations, women also explained that young women and girls did not feel equal in society, facing misogyny and ageism across their lives. They explained that young women didn’t feel heard, contributing to a sense of isolation. It was also highlighted that due to the rurality of some areas of Dumfries and Galloway, paths were poorly lit and/or secluded, making young women feel unsafe when socialising or travelling to work/school. When this fear is coupled with a total lack of public transport in the evenings, young women are therefore prevented from being active members of their community, worsening mental and physical wellbeing.

- “But from conversations I’ve had with young women...they 100% don’t feel that we’re living in an equal society, and they feel that they’re mistreated”
- “...some of them don’t feel safe going about and walking home at night when it’s dark. There’s a lot of bits of Dumfries that are quite dark, and wooded, and even if they’re walking up the cycle path, it’s scary for anyone to walk up there.”
- “...I think it’s alright if you’ve got a bit of bravado about you and you can stand up for yourself, but there are a lot of young women who are really scared”

An additional issue facing young women in Dumfries raised during our event was addiction, and the growing usage of recreational substances. They explained that the increase in drugs across Dumfries is fuelled by cheap options, as well as a lack of extracurricular and social activities for young women. This was also tied to the long waiting lists for mental health services that young women across the country are facing, with substances acting as a form of treatment. Women in attendance called for an increase in community-based activities for those at high school age, as well as improved mental health services. Some also believed that an increase in local policing could assist in reducing antisocial behaviour. They stated that the police service had been increasingly centralised, resulting in the region not being sufficiently covered by local police units.

- “...I think for a lot of them it’s that the drugs are cheaper than the drink, and it gives them a better buzz.”

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<sup>16</sup> Scottish Government. (2023). Behaviour in Scottish Schools 2023. Available at: [Behaviour in Scottish Schools 2023 \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

<sup>17</sup> The Scottish Women’s Convention. (2023). Misogyny in Scotland. Available at: <https://www.scottishwomensconvention.org/resources/misogyny-report-june-2023-final.pdf>

- “There was a group of lassies I was working with, like 12/13 and they were already out on the streets drinking, drinking like Dragon Soop, they don’t even understand the consequences of it.”
- “Bring the police back. They were all centralised...That is a problem.”

Furthermore, it is difficult to ignore the significant impact social media is having on the lives of young women in Scotland, with those residing in Dumfries being no different. Attendees highlighted the potentially negative effects social media has had on young women in the area, explaining that sites such as Instagram have impacted their body confidence, and TikTok has fuelled the current age of misinformation. Women were also concerned about the impact social media is having on young men, with increasingly misogynistic views being expressed online and in-person. Ultimately, women believed that more education around healthy online behaviours had to be provided in schools, tying with current relationship and sex education.

- “I think probably TikTok has a lot to answer for...it’s really dangerous...they’re on it all the time, they’re posting, they’re comparing, they’re doing stupid challenges that affect their health.”
- “...there are a lot of influences that impact that [views on equality], social media has a huge impact in that...And I’ve done work with young lads, and they’re showing quite unequal views of what their perception of a woman should be”

Despite young women facing significant challenges in Dumfries, attendees pointed to the Youth Worth Service, provided by Dumfries and Galloway Council<sup>18</sup>. They felt that this service gave young women opportunities to become involved in the local community and gain support from specialists. It was highlighted however, that funding cuts and short-term funding agreements prevented third sector organisations from providing increased services for young women. Therefore, women suggested continued improvement of youth services in the area, including long-term funding streams for third sector organisations.

- “...that’s what youth groups are designed for...to help mould them into better adults...I think that the youth work approach is great, I benefited from it myself...they were great, they changed my life”
- “...there could be more [youth services], and that comes down to funding.”



<sup>18</sup> Youth Work Service. (2024). Dumfries and Galloway Council’s Youth Work Service. Available at: <https://youthwork.dumgal.gov.uk/>

## **Conclusion**

Overall, women in Dumfries were proud of their local community, believing that the region continued to provide vital services and support to those in need, but remained hindered by a multitude of issues. Due to the rurality seen in Dumfries and Galloway, primary healthcare is inconsistent, particularly dentistry and mental health support. Also, a reduction in care homes combined with an ageing population, has created undue stress on the health and social care system, worsening health outcomes for locals. Women have also highlighted urgent revisions with regards to the public transport system in Dumfries, stating that there is a lack of buses and trains. These issues have significantly contributed to the continued degradation of the local economy, causing depopulation and the loss of young professionals to larger towns and cities. With the young women who remain feeling isolated and unsafe in their schools and local communities. Therefore, to target these concerns we have made the below recommendations, which we believe align with the wants and needs of the women of Dumfries.

## **8 Key Recommendations**

1. An increase in NHS-funded dentistry is vital to ensure good dental health across Dumfries.
2. Ensure person-centred social care is available for all residents of Dumfries, through an increase in care homes across rural and urban regions.
3. Reassess current bus timetables to cover evenings, facilitating improved mobility for residents.
4. Provide increased funding for community transport options, centring the needs of disabled women across development.
5. Incorporate women's lived experience into town centre rejuvenation planning, with regards to the UK Government's 'Levelling Up Fund'.
6. Consider potential opportunities given by the UK Government's 'Levelling Up Fund' to attract new businesses to the area, providing improved opportunities for local women.
7. The rise in misogyny and the negative impacts of social media must be included in revisions of personal and social education across schools.
8. Offer long-term funding options for third sector organisations providing vital support for young women across the region.

# Thank You!

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We would like to take this opportunity to thank the women and local representatives who joined us in Dumfries to provide their lived experience and views. Our work would be impossible without the continued support of women, and we are forever impressed by the strong roles women carry out across their communities.



For further information or to share your views, please contact:

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