



STAND UP FOR SINGLE-SEX SERVICES



Action guide

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Introduction

A general election has been called for Thursday 4th July and we want to make sure that **every candidate seeking to be an MP** hears that people want them to **STAND UP FOR SINGLE-SEX SERVICES**.

Single-sex services range from everyday spaces like toilets, changing rooms and hospital bays to specialist services like women's refuges. They include clubs, associations like Girlguiding and sports for women and girls at every level. Whether services and spaces are provided by the public, private or voluntary sector, it is the government that has to ensure the rules and laws are clear, so that single-sex services are secured.

Unless the government is clear that women means female and men means male, it is impossible to provide single-sex services consistently.

This general election is an opportunity to make sure that women's rights and child safeguarding are put front and centre of this conversation.

We want to make sure that candidates hear that the people that they seek to represent – both men and women – care about single-sex services and want politicians to use clear sex-based language to protect women's rights, child safeguarding, the rights of lesbians, gay and bisexual people, and the rights of those who identify as transgender. Everyone should be free to live without discrimination. No one should face harassment or violence. This means acknowledging the reality that there are two sexes and managing spaces and services accordingly.

Politicians need to understand that this is not "transphobic". It is not a "political football" or a "culture-war issue" they can hide from. **If they want to be returned to the Westminster Parliament, they have to take a grown-up approach.**

*Sex Matters is not party political and will never take a position on which way you should vote in any election. We are calling on **all political parties to STAND UP FOR SINGLE-SEX SERVICES.***

Our asks

The next government must **STAND UP FOR SINGLE-SEX SERVICES**, and be clear what sex means in language, law and policy.

Every candidate should be clear that when they say “women” they mean women, not men who identify as women.

The law already allows single-sex services and sports, but many organisations are afraid to be clear. They either replace single-sex services with mixed-sex facilities or allow people to choose to self-identify into services for the opposite sex.

This is not what most people want. Confusion makes services less inclusive and less safe. It causes conflict and creates a hostile environment for women and girls. It isn't kind.

All parties should be clear that they will **STAND UP FOR SINGLE-SEX SERVICES**.

1. Ensure clear language, rules and data wherever sex matters.
2. Implement the Cass Review and stop transitioning children in schools.
3. Drop dangerous plans to criminalise so-called “conversion therapy”.
4. Make the Equality Act clear – sex means sex.
5. Guarantee women's right to female-only spaces.
6. Say no to legal gender self-ID.
7. Record sex accurately in healthcare and the criminal justice system.
8. Fix the sex data muddle with modern data systems.
9. Protect women's sports.
10. Make regulators do their job and protect everyone's rights.

For more information, see: [Stand up for single-sex services: campaign asks](#).

The two-minute version



We have boiled this down to five questions we want to ask candidates. These are not “gotcha” questions, but issues they will need to deal with as MPs in this parliament.

Will they stand up for single-sex services, protect children from unevidenced “medicine”, say NO to gender self-ID, drop plans to criminalise so-called “conversion therapy” and make sure people are not hounded out of their jobs for saying that sex is real?



STAND UP FOR SINGLE-SEX SERVICES

Will you?

STAND UP FOR SINGLE-SEX SERVICES AND SPORTS for women and girls?

PROTECT CHILDREN by implementing the Cass Report and finalising guidance for schools?

SAY NO TO GENDER SELF-ID, and get sex recorded clearly and accurately?

DROP DANGEROUS PLANS TO CRIMINALISE so-called “conversion therapy”?

MAKE SURE NO ONE IS HOUNDED OUT OF THEIR JOB for saying that sex is real?

Note: Health and education are devolved matters, so if you are talking to candidates in Scotland and Wales, you should focus on 1, 3 and 5. However, it is still worth mentioning your concerns about childhood transition ([see page 15](#)).

What you can do

- Put up a poster** **Put up a poster** in your window or on a noticeboard
- Tell** **Tell canvassers** who come to your door why this issue matters
- Write** **Write to your candidates**
- Share** **Share the campaign** on social media
- Speak up** **Speak up** and ask a question at a public meeting
- Upload** **Send photos and feedback** to www.StandUpForSingleSexServices.org
- Donate** **Donate to support the campaign** www.sex-matters.org/donate

For more help and advice, see: www.StandUpForSingleSexServices.org.

Put up a poster



Print out the **STAND UP FOR SINGLE-SEX SERVICES** poster (the front cover of this guide) and put it in your window for the election period.

Put it on community notice boards where you have permission.

Tell canvassers who come to your doorstep

Candidates and their representatives will be campaigning in your neighbourhood. If they knock on your door, be ready to ask if they will **STAND UP FOR SINGLE-SEX SERVICES**.

The aim is not to put candidates on the spot or catch them out, but to start a conversation and make sure they know this is a serious concern, and that you will expect them to take responsibility if elected.


What to do

1. Be polite, not antagonistic.
2. Don't expect them to already know what you are talking about.
3. Be ready with two or three key points. You might want to tell them you are concerned about **single-sex services, protecting women's rights and children being transitioned**.
4. If they are supportive, ask to take a photo of them with you or with our sign (or both). Share it on social media using **#StandUpForSingleSexServices**.
5. If you have printed one of our handouts, give it to them to take away.
6. If the person who knocks on your door is a canvasser, not the candidate themselves, ask them to write down your concerns and take them back to the candidate. Ask for the candidate's email address and follow up to say you would like to speak to them directly to help you decide who to vote for.




We have produced handouts that you can print out to have ready to give to any canvassers who come to your door, and to candidates you meet at hustings or who have agreed to meet with you.

- [Download colour handout from www.StandUpForSingleSexServices.org](http://www.StandUpForSingleSexServices.org)
- [Download black and white handout](#)




STAND UP FOR SINGLE-SEX SERVICES


If elected will you **STAND UP FOR SINGLE-SEX SERVICES?**




EVERYDAY PRIVACY



SPORT



CLUBS AND ASSOCIATIONS




SPECIALIST SERVICES

- Most people want some separate spaces for women and girls and men and boys.
- The law allows single-sex services, but they are under attack.
- Children are being told in school that they can “choose their gender”.
- Language has become a battleground and everyone is walking on eggshells.
- Confusion makes services less inclusive and less safe. It creates conflict.

Will you?

- STAND UP FOR SINGLE-SEX SERVICES** and sports for women?
- PROTECT CHILDREN** by implementing the Cass Report and finalising guidance for schools?
- SAY NO TO GENDER SELF-ID**, and get sex recorded clearly and accurately?
- DROP DANGEROUS PLANS TO CRIMINALISE** so-called “conversion therapy”?
- MAKE SURE NO-ONE IS HOUNDED OUT OF THEIR JOB** for saying that sex is real?



StandUpForSingleSexServices.org

Write to your candidates and ask questions

You can find your candidates' details at whocanivotefor.co.uk. Each will have a campaign email address and a campaign office you can write to. Write an email or letter to each candidate in your constituency to explain why you want them to **STAND UP FOR SINGLE-SEX SERVICES**.

- **Include your name and address** to show candidates that you live in their constituency and let them reply.
- **Include personal stories** if you can. Candidates are interested in the experiences of their potential constituents. It is their role to represent you, and sharing how government policy affects you can make a big impact.
- **Keep it short and specific.** Candidates are busy and receive correspondence about all sorts of issues.
- **Follow up.** It may take a while to receive a response, but don't be afraid to reply again and keep the conversation going. You could suggest a meeting to talk in more detail.
- If you get a reply, please forward it to us at PublicAffairs@sex-matters.org.

Template letter



Personalise your letter, explaining why single-sex services matter to you. We have provided a template for inspiration.

Dear [Candidate]

[Say something to introduce yourself, for example if you have had contact before, if you are following up after a conversation on the doorstep, if you have voted for them or their party previously or if you are considering whom to vote for].

While there are many issues of concern in this election, I am particularly concerned about the impact of gender ideology on women's rights and child safeguarding.

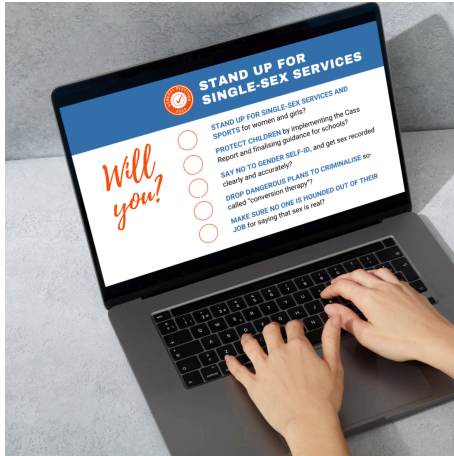
Please can you give me a clear, brief answer to the following questions:

- **Do you recognise that there are two sexes**, male and female, and that being a woman (female) is different from being a "transwoman" (trans-identifying male) and that the law should recognise that there are situations where this difference cannot be ignored?
- **Do you accept the findings of the Cass Review** about the risks of childhood social transition, puberty-blocking drugs and hormones for young people?
- **Will you stand up for single-sex services?** Do you recognise that single-sex spaces and sports are crucial for women and girls and should be protected?
- **Do you recognise the dangers in legislating to "ban conversion therapy"**, which threatens ethical therapists, parents and teachers with criminalisation simply for having conversations with children about why they think they are "trans"?
- Do you agree that the Equality Act should provide clear protection against discrimination based on **sex**?
- Will you commit not to **bring in gender self-ID through the back door, and not to close down freedom of speech about sex and gender**?
- **Will you meet with "gender-critical" groups and constituents** if you are elected to Parliament?

Thank you for reading this and I look forward to hearing from you soon. [I would like to request a meeting.]

If you have like-minded local friends, write a joint letter to each of the leading candidates and ask for a meeting. They could meet you in a café or pub, or at their campaign office. You could also write to your local newspaper.

Share on social media



Follow and share our campaign messages @SexMattersOrg on Twitter/X, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

Use **#StandUpForSingleSexServices**, **#SexMatters** and **#GE2024** to share messages on social media.

Download our header graphics for your social-media profile and share our question card, from the [Take action section at www.StandUpForSingleSexServices.org](#)

Take a selfie with the poster and share that on social media with the hashtag **#StandUpForSingleSexServices**

If you meet your candidates or want to get their attention, tag them using their social-media handles (check carefully to make sure you've got the right person). Be polite, concise and positive.

Sample messages

#GE2024 @ [candidate] Will you #StandUpForSingleSexServices ?
#SexMatters
www.StandUpForSingleSexServices.org

#GE2024 @ [candidate] local [mums, women, people] in [place] want you to
#StandUpForSingleSexServices #SexMatters
www.StandUpForSingleSexServices.org

#GE2024 @ [candidate] #StandUpForSingleSexServices – from women's
refuges and sports to toilets and changing rooms #SexMatters
www.StandUpForSingleSexServices.org

Speak up at a public meeting



In the run-up to the general election, community groups and other organisations in most constituencies will hold open public meetings, called “hustings”, where candidates speak and answer questions. As a constituent this is your chance to ask the candidates whether they will **STAND UP FOR SINGLE-SEX SERVICES**.

Hustings are usually organised by community groups or local organisations or churches. They are advertised in local papers, online and at local libraries and community centres. Each candidate usually gets a set time to speak and then they all answer questions.

- **Work out your question beforehand** (see the next page for examples) and practise it or write it down.
- **Raise your hand as early as possible** – this will give you a better chance of getting called.
- **Keep it short and be specific** – make sure you ask a clear question.
- **Be polite and respectful** – it is easy for a candidate to disregard a question if it is asked in an aggressive or negative manner.

One thing you can do before you go to the hustings is look up how many people in your constituency signed the Sex Matters petition to [make the Equality Act clear](#). You can use that number in your question.

You might want to go with a friend or a group, but don't be afraid to go on your own.



The Women's Rights Network has local groups and is organising street stalls around the country for its “Respect My Sex” campaign www.respectmysexcampaign.co.uk

Questions to ask



Here are some ideas. If you have a specific personal experience, it's a good idea to use that as the basis for a question.

- Last year [X number] of people in this constituency signed a petition to “make the Equality Act clear” about the meaning of the protected characteristic of sex. This would protect the rights of women and girls and protect single-sex services. If you are elected, will you support the government to make sure the law is clear to protect women’s rights?
- If elected, would you make sure that single-sex services such as hospital accommodation and sports for women and girls are provided on the basis of sex and not self-identified gender?
- If elected, will you make sure that the findings of the Cass Review on the treatment of gender-questioning children are followed up and children are not given puberty-blocking drugs that have not been shown to have any benefit and which put children on a pathway to sterilisation?
- As a parent I am concerned about children in school being told that they can choose to be a boy or a girl and that some people are both or neither. This is leaving many children confused and vulnerable. If elected, will you make sure that schools have clear guidance to prevent them creating this problem?
- Many people, from JK Rowling to ordinary women at work, are facing bullying and harassment for expressing the ordinary belief that there are two sexes and that sex matters. Do you stand up for freedom of speech and will you challenge this?

Tweet about the experience and take a picture on the night. Remember to include the hashtag #StandUpForSingleSexServices. Follow up with the candidates by email or letter (see [Write](#) on page 9).

Upload feedback and photos



Send us your pictures with the poster so we can use them in the campaign.

Upload photos and feedback from speaking to your local candidates at

www.StandUpForSingleSexServices.org

Donate to support the campaign

Make a donation to support this campaign at www.StandUpForSingleSexServices.org or set up a regular donation to Sex Matters. We are going to be working hard to make sure the next government cannot dodge this issue, or legislate to further override women's rights. www.sex-matters.org/donate.

What about Scotland and Wales?

The whole country is going to the polls, but health and education are devolved matters, so the questions to discuss are slightly different in Scotland and Wales.

In Scotland, we suggest asking candidates if they will:

- **STAND UP FOR SINGLE-SEX SERVICES** and sports for women?
- **SAY NO TO GENDER SELF-ID**, including by **keeping the Section 35 order** in place to stop self-ID in Scotland?
- **MAKE SURE NO-ONE IS HOUNDED OUT OF THEIR JOB** for saying that sex is real?

For Women Scotland are asking similar questions – see forwomen.scot/.

In Wales, we suggest asking candidates if they will:

- **STAND UP FOR SINGLE-SEX SERVICES** and sports for women?
- **SAY NO TO GENDER SELF-ID**, and get sex recorded clearly and accurately?
- **DROP DANGEROUS PLANS TO CRIMINALISE** so-called “conversion therapy”?
- **MAKE SURE NO-ONE IS HOUNDED OUT OF THEIR JOB** for saying that sex is real?

Can I make a difference?

You may wonder what can be achieved by writing and talking to candidates and canvassers and what response you can hope to receive.

Believe it or not, many people are still barely aware of this issue, or think it affects only trans-identifying people or is “the next gay rights”. Your questions may be the first time a candidate has been asked to consider “trans rights” as an issue affecting women and girls.

Even someone whose position seems entrenched needs to hear that single-sex services matter to voters and that elected representatives cannot just dismiss their concerns.

Even if you get a dismissive or confused reply on the doorstep or at the hustings, or a standard template response or no response at all by email, do not be disheartened. When politicians hear many voices across the UK saying the same thing, it is harder for those voices to be ignored.

Whoever is elected as your MP will go to Westminster to represent their constituents. If they have heard about this issue on doorsteps during the election campaign, they will be more likely to take it seriously when it turns up in their postbag and in debates.

Sex Matters will be writing to MPs, and so will other gender-critical groups. We will be offering briefings, challenging MPs and seeking their support. The more they have heard from constituents about the issues of single-sex services, child safeguarding and freedom of speech, the more they will be willing to listen.

After you have got in touch with a candidate, you can follow up if they get elected as an MP. Write when relevant issues are in the news or debated in Parliament. Ask for a meeting. Reiterate your concerns. Leave them in no doubt that ordinary people want our elected representatives to **STAND UP FOR SINGLE-SEX SERVICES**.

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