



Saint Mary's Centre 23rd Annual Conference 2026

A Shared Vision: Reflecting on 40 Years of SARCs, Responding to Sexual Violence and Shaping the Future Together

Tuesday 21 – Wednesday 22 April 2026

Location: Bridgewater Hall, Manchester

Programme – Tuesday 21 April – Morning

9.30am	Welcome and Introduction Lisa Waters, Head of Operational and Strategic Performance, Saint Mary's Centre & SAFEPlace Merseyside
9.35am	SARCS – Looking Back (Working Title) Dr Michelle Carroll, Clinical Director, Saint Mary's SARC & SAFEPlace Merseyside
Chair:	Kathy Cowell OBE DL, Chairman, Manchester University Foundation Trust
10.00am	Jess Phillips MP Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Safeguarding and Violence Against Women and Girls
10.20am	Claire Waxman OBE Victims Commissioner for England and Wales (from 2026)
10.45am	Title TBC D.Supt Phil Key, Greater Manchester Police
11.10am	Questions
11.20am	BREAK
Chair:	Ursula Martin, Chief Executive, Specialist Hospitals Clinical Group, University of Manchester NHS Foundation Trust
11.50am	Title TBC Lorien Haynes, Actor & Playwright TBC, Refuge Domestic Abuse Organisation
12.15pm	Panel Discussion – The Media's Depiction of Rape and Sexual Violence: Then, Now and Looking Forward
12.50am	Questions
01.00pm	LUNCH



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Programme – Tuesday 21 April – Afternoon

Chair	HHJ Nicholas Dean KC, Hon. Recorder of Manchester
02.00pm	TBC
02.25pm	Reframing Vulnerability: Towards Empowerment and Accessible Support for Women with Learning Disabilities and Neurodivergent Women Penni Charteress, Service Lead: Learning Disabilities and Neurodivergent Women, The Women's Centre Cornwall
02.50pm	The Dutch multidisciplinary Sexual Assault Centres: from research to practice Iva Bicanic PhD, Director Knowledge Building, Sexual Assault Centres, The Netherlands
03.15pm	Questions
3.45 – 5.50pm	Workshops



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Chair: **Janet Potter, Deputy Chief Crown Prosecutor, Crown Prosecution Service**

09.00am **Kate Green OBE, Deputy Mayor for Safer and Stronger Communities, Greater Manchester**

09.25am **Stephen Parkinson, Director of Public Prosecutions, Crown Prosecution Service**

09.50am **TBC**

10.15am **QUESTIONS**

10:30am **BREAK**

Chair: **TBC**

11.00am **Bridging the Gap: Because Healing Can't Wait**
Emily Jacob, Founder, ReConnected Life

11.25am **(Mock) jury decision making in cases of male sexual victimisation**

Dr Siobhan Weare, Reader in Law, Lancaster University

Dr Dominic Willmott, Reader in Legal Psychology, Loughborough University

Madeleine Millar, Research Associate, Lancaster University

11.50pm **Constructive Dialogues with boys and young men (working title)**
Michael Conroy, Founder/Director, Men at Work CIC

12.15pm **Questions**

12.30pm **LUNCH**

Chair:

TBC

01.30pm

Title TBC

Slater and Gordon Lawyers

02.55pm

TBC

2.20pm

Questions

2.30 - 2.35pm

Closing Remarks

Lisa Waters, Head of Operational and Strategic Performance, Saint Mary's Centre & SAFEPlace Merseyside

2.45 - 4.50pm

Workshops