



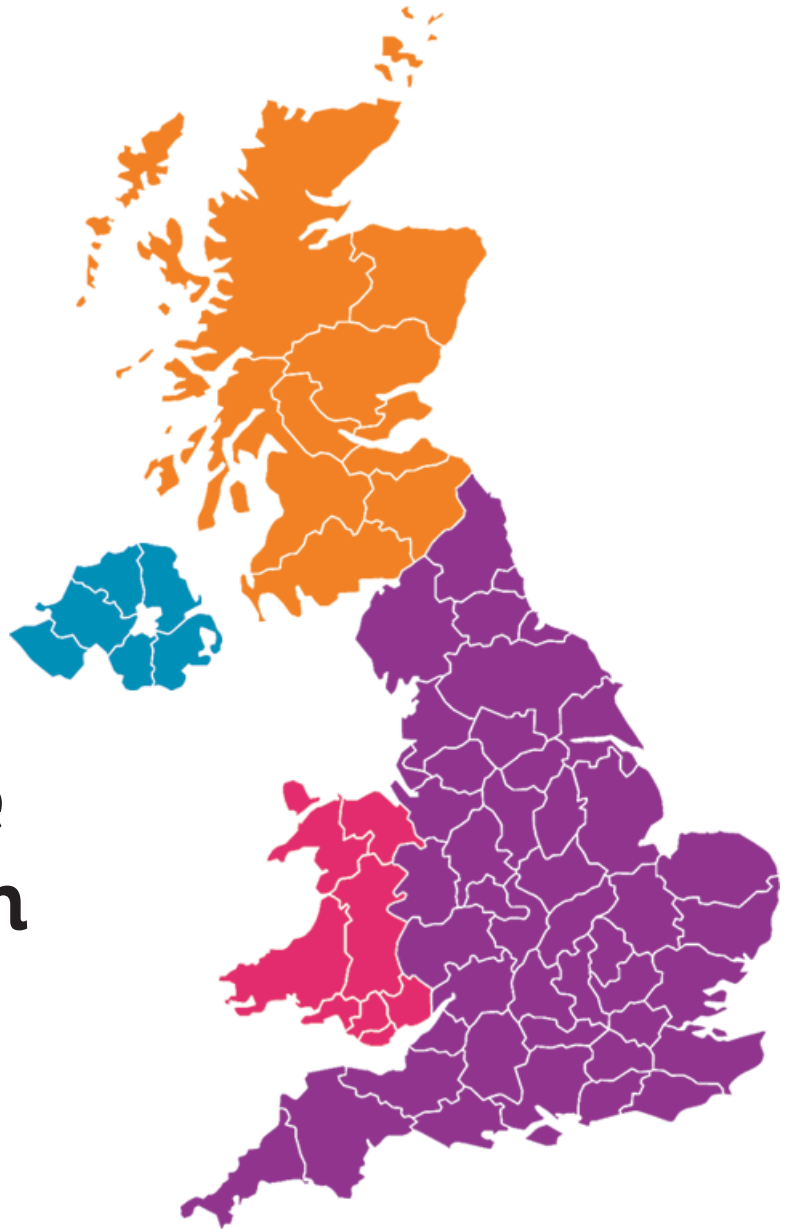
Hourglass

Safer ageing · Stopping abuse

WHAT DOES
GROWING OLD
IN THE UK
LOOK LIKE?



**We are
Hourglass
the only UK-
wide charity
calling time on
the harm, abuse
and exploitation
of older people.**





Richard Robinson CEO

Every year, more than a million older people are physically, emotionally, financially or sexually abused in the UK. This is a truly damning indictment of how our society views and values older people. Sadly, the abuse of older people is not a new issue, but one that has now reached a critical threshold that can no longer be ignored, nor tolerated.

Time is running out for the very people whose remaining years are so precious. Someone has to take a stand and fight for those whose voices are so often ignored or stifled.

We are Hourglass – the only UK-wide charity calling time on the harm, abuse and exploitation of older people.

Driven by our values, we're invested in - and investing in - making a difference. It takes honesty to face up to these challenging issues. It takes a special kind of courage to bear witness to the heart-breaking stories of abuse and neglect we hear every single day. And it takes a dedicated team with nearly 30-years of experience and unique expertise to fight for our most vulnerable, day in and day out.

This will not be an easy journey. Yet with your support, we will work tirelessly to influence, challenge and educate; listen, advise and support; and commit to working in partnership to deliver positive change for vulnerable older people and all those affected throughout the UK. We will create an environment where safer ageing is guaranteed for all.

Now is the time to join us on this journey to end the abuse, harm and exploitation of older people. In doing so, you are helping us build the fairer and safer society that we all want and deserve.

“We will create an environment where safer ageing is guaranteed for all”



Every year over a million older people are abused in the UK.

For many years the general public has dug deep to support national charities that deal with the horrifying levels of child abuse, animal cruelty and rising instances of domestic abuse and sexual violence. However, in the background, one unique charity has been supporting the victims of an under-reported and growing crime. The abuse and neglect of older people.

Hourglass is the only UK charity focused on this horrifying yet preventable form of abuse affecting around one million people over the age of 65 each year. But with numbers on the rise, how does a charity like Hourglass ensure more and more people are aware of the neglect, abuse and exploitation of older people?

Hourglass delivers the UK's only helpline dedicated to supporting victims of elder abuse and their families. Callers to **0808 808 8141** get expert advice and support - as well as signposting to other local and national organisations. It's a bespoke service and has recently been bolstered by a new **instant messaging service on [wearehourglass.org](https://www.wearehourglass.org)** and a **confidential SMS service on 07860 052906**.

What remains staggering however is that the abuse of older people is still hidden and unrecognised by most of society. Yet research produced by Hourglass in 2020 revealed that more than a fifth of the UK public have

personally experienced abuse as an older person (65+) or know someone who has been abused.

So why do we have a blind spot when it comes to the abuse of older people? Is it because we simply value the lives of older people less than we do others? It is an indictment of our complacency on this issue that we currently know far more about the abuse and neglect of animals than we do about older people in the UK

Research from Hourglass reveals that more than 1 in 3 people do not believe that 'acts of domestic violence directed towards an older person' count as abuse.

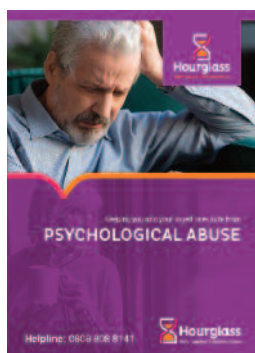
The charity's unique work and analysis illustrates how the abuse of older people is nearing epidemic levels with nearly half of those polled believing that failing to attend to an older person's needs in a timely fashion is not abuse.

If you'd like to support the unique work of Hourglass please head to **[wearehourglass.org/donate](https://www.wearehourglass.org/donate)** or ring on 0208 835 9280. More importantly, if you or someone you know has been affected by abuse please make that call and talk to the Hourglass team on **0808 808 8141**.

What is abuse of an older person?

A single or repeated act or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which causes harm or distress to an older person.

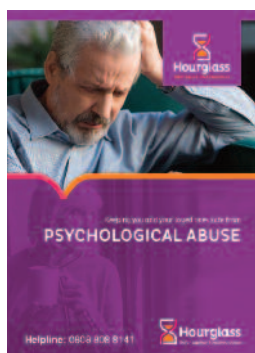
Main types of abuse of an older person



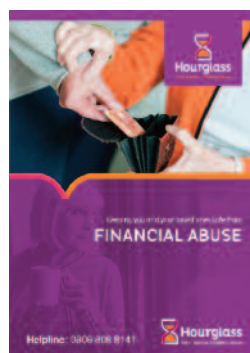
PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE
Psychological or emotional abuse involves threats of harm, bullying and harassment and other behaviours or acts of coercive control which deliberately try to scare, humiliate, isolate or ignore an older person.



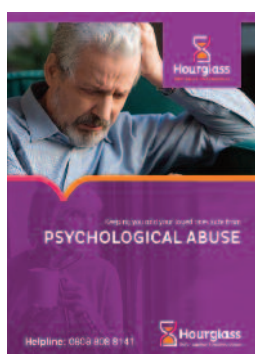
FINANCIAL OR ECONOMIC ABUSE
Financial or economic abuse is where someone in a position of trust interferes in an older person's ability to acquire, use or maintain their finances.



PHYSICAL ABUSE
Physical abuse is any intentional act or behaviour causing injury, trauma or other physical suffering or bodily harm. This includes instances of fabricated or induced illness or causing an older person to become unwell.



NEGLECT
Neglect occurs when a person deliberately withholds, or fails to provide, suitable and adequate care and support needed by an older person.



SEXUAL ABUSE
Sexual abuse involves any non-consensual sexual act or activity perpetrated against an older person



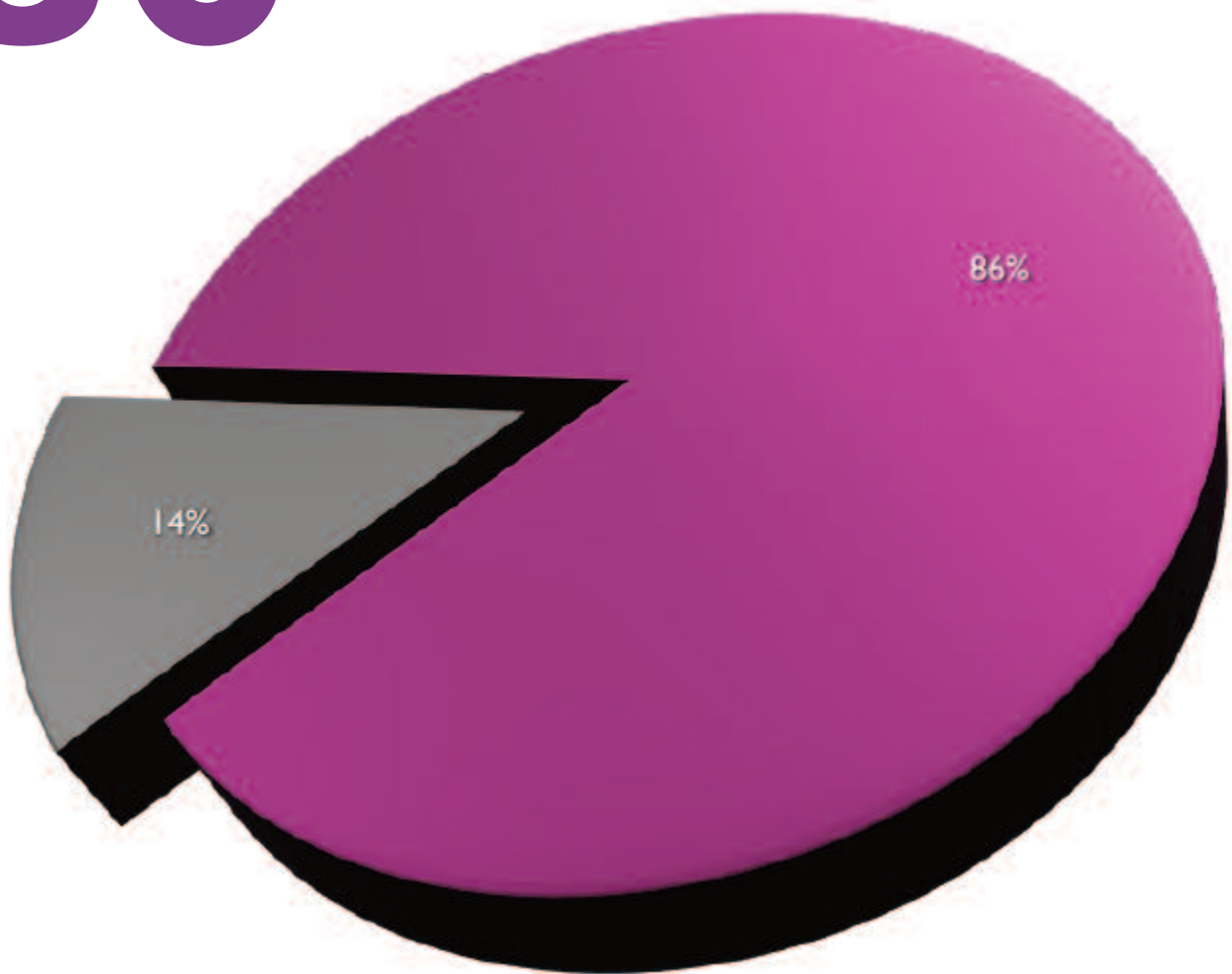
DOMESTIC ABUSE
Domestic abuse can take many forms, it can be subtle and hard to spot. If you or an older person you know are experiencing this you are not alone, Sadly, this type of abuse can affect anyone, regardless of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability or gender identity.

Scan the QR code to see all the Types of Abuse



Abuse of older people in the UK

86%



When asked “Is the abuse of older people a problem today in the UK?” 86% said yes.

Abuse of older people in the UK

1 in 3

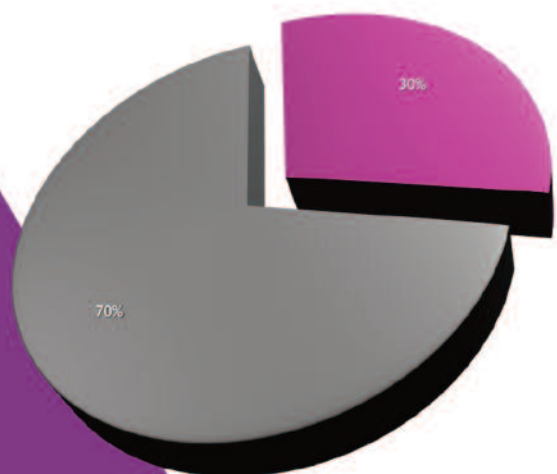
UK residents believe that inappropriate sexual acts directed at older people don't constitute abuse.



Source: Results from Hourglass - 'Growing old in the UK 2020.'

30%

Nearly a third don't view 'pushing, hitting, or beating an older person' as abuse.

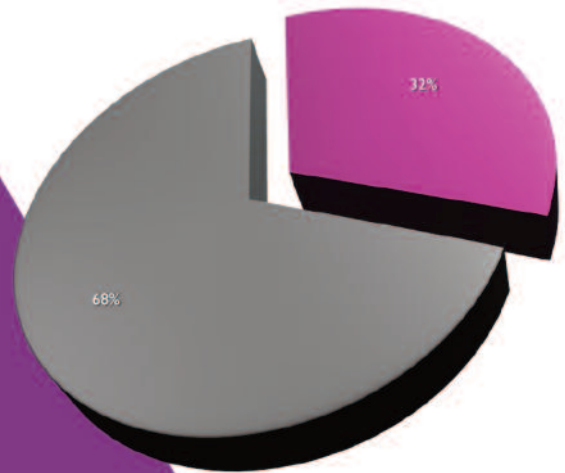


Source: Results from Hourglass - 'Growing old in the UK 2020.'

Abuse of older people in the UK

32%

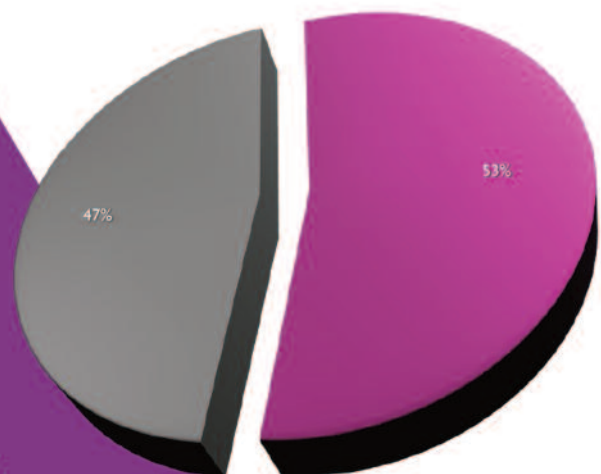
Nearly a third don't see 'taking precious items from an older relative's home without asking' as abuse.



Source: Results from Hourglass - 'Growing old in the UK 2020.'

53%

Over half of those surveyed believe that the abuse and neglect of older people has increased as a result of the lockdown.



Source: Results from Hourglass - 'Growing old in the UK 2020.'

Abuse of older people in the UK

What our supporters say



“I am appalled to see their new polling estimating 2.7m people in the UK have suffered abuse as an older person... I applaud the initiative for Safer Ageing.”

Baroness Gale, Labour Life Peer



“These latest findings by Hourglass are both concerning and unacceptable. The abuse of older people is a significant problem and one that regrettably slips under the radar all too often.”

*Dame Vera Baird QC,
Victims' Commissioner for England and Wales
Charity Patron*



“As a hidden issue it is vital older people experiencing abuse and their families know what support is available to them and that Hourglass is there to help.”

*Peter Dowd MP,
Labour Party*

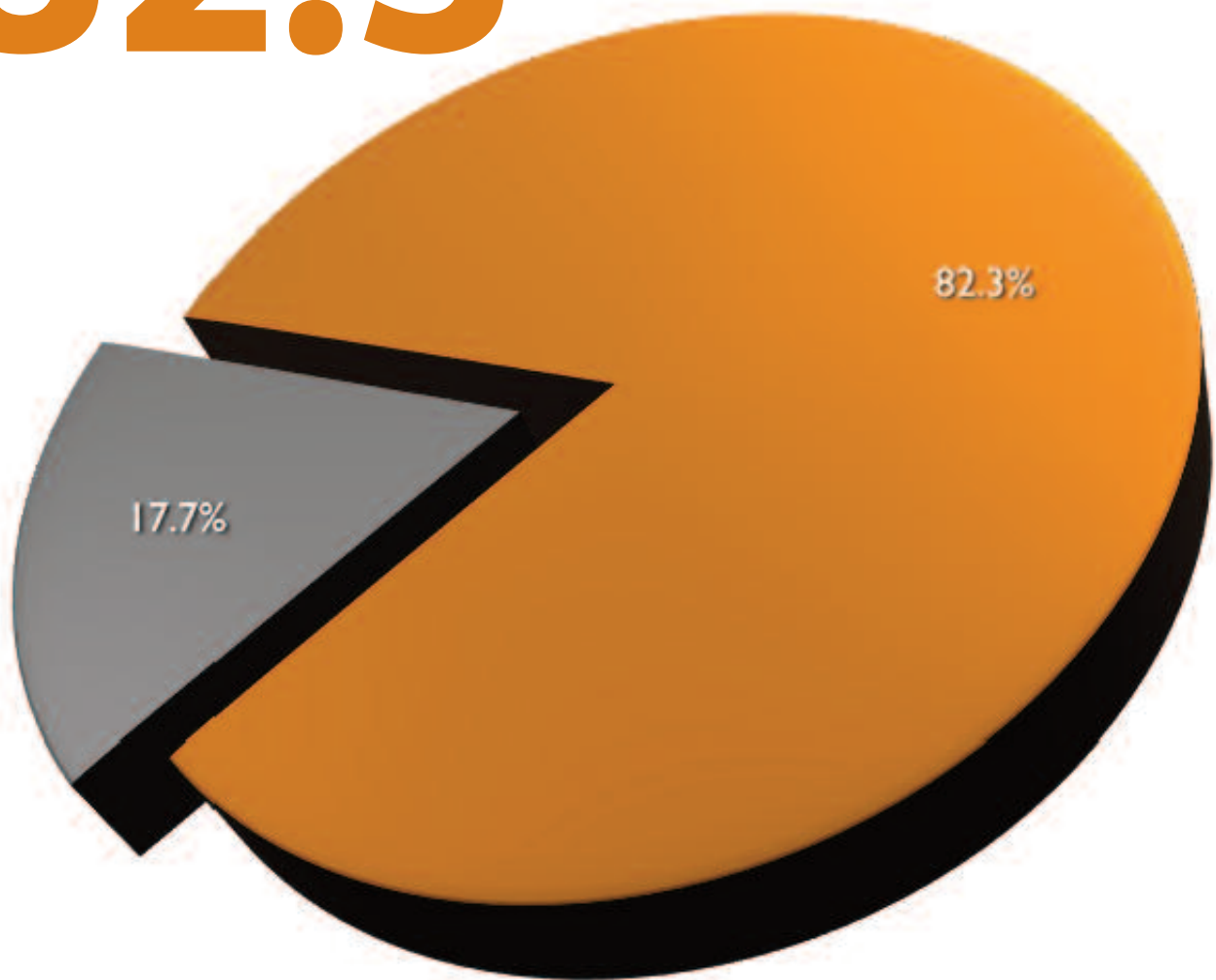


“I fully support Hourglass' call and urge the Home Secretary to respond. Older people need our support during these dark times.”

*Jess Phillips MP
Labour Party, Shadow Minister for
Domestic Violence and Safeguarding*

Abuse of older people in Scotland

82.3%



When asked “Is the abuse of older people a problem today in the UK?” almost 83% said yes.

Abuse of older people in Scotland

1 in 5

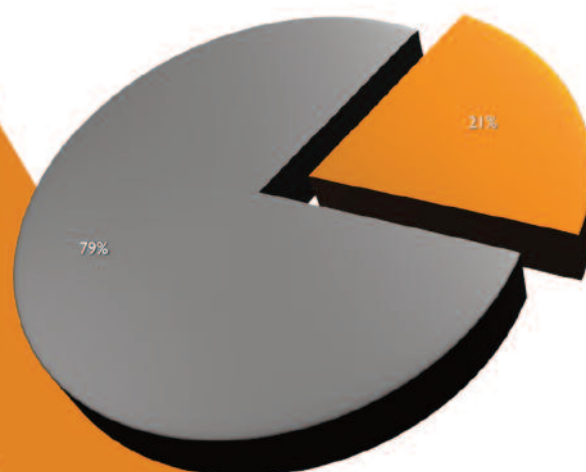
Scots believed that inappropriate sexual acts directed at older people don't constitute abuse.



Source: Results from Hourglass - 'Growing old in the UK 2020.'

21%

Of Scots asked don't view 'pushing, hitting, or beating an older person' as abuse.

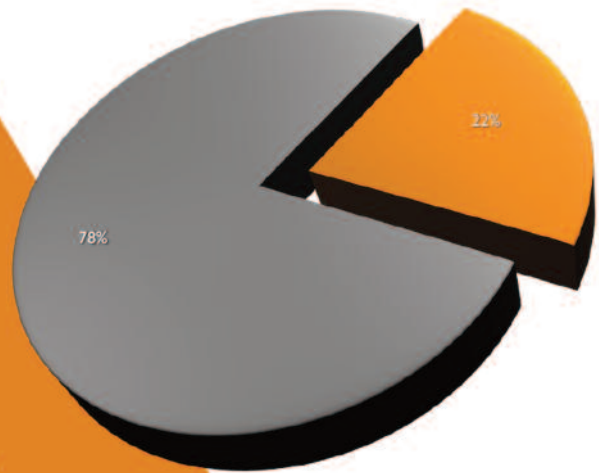


Source: Results from Hourglass - 'Growing old in the UK 2020.'

Abuse of older people in Scotland

22%

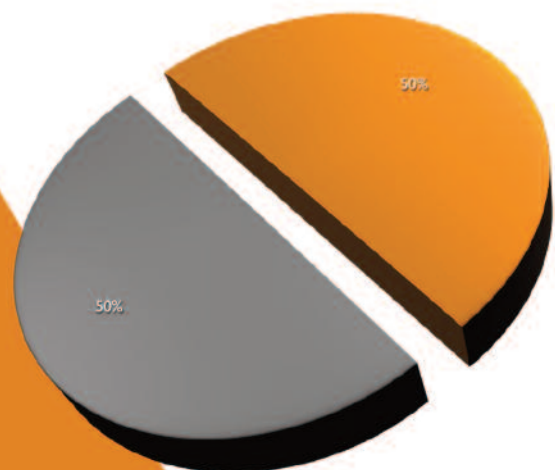
Of Scots don't see 'taking precious items from an older relative's home without asking' as abuse.



Source: Results from Hourglass - 'Growing old in the UK 2020.'

50%

Half of Scots surveyed believe that the abuse and neglect of older people has increased as a result of the lockdown.



Source: Results from Hourglass - 'Growing old in the UK 2020.'

Abuse of older people in Scotland

What our supporters say



“I thank Hourglass for its vital work. Together, we can continue to ensure older people are protected, their voices are heard and their rights are championed.”

Christina McKelvie MSP

Scottish National Party, Minister for Older People and Equalities



“These results suggest public understanding could be better... Older people need to know that their voices can be heard through Hourglass.”

Liam Kerr MSP

Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party



“If these figures do not shock you to the core, I’m not sure what will. This abuse is often silent, behind closed doors but more frightening for it...this research is incredibly important.”

Willie Rennie,

Leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats



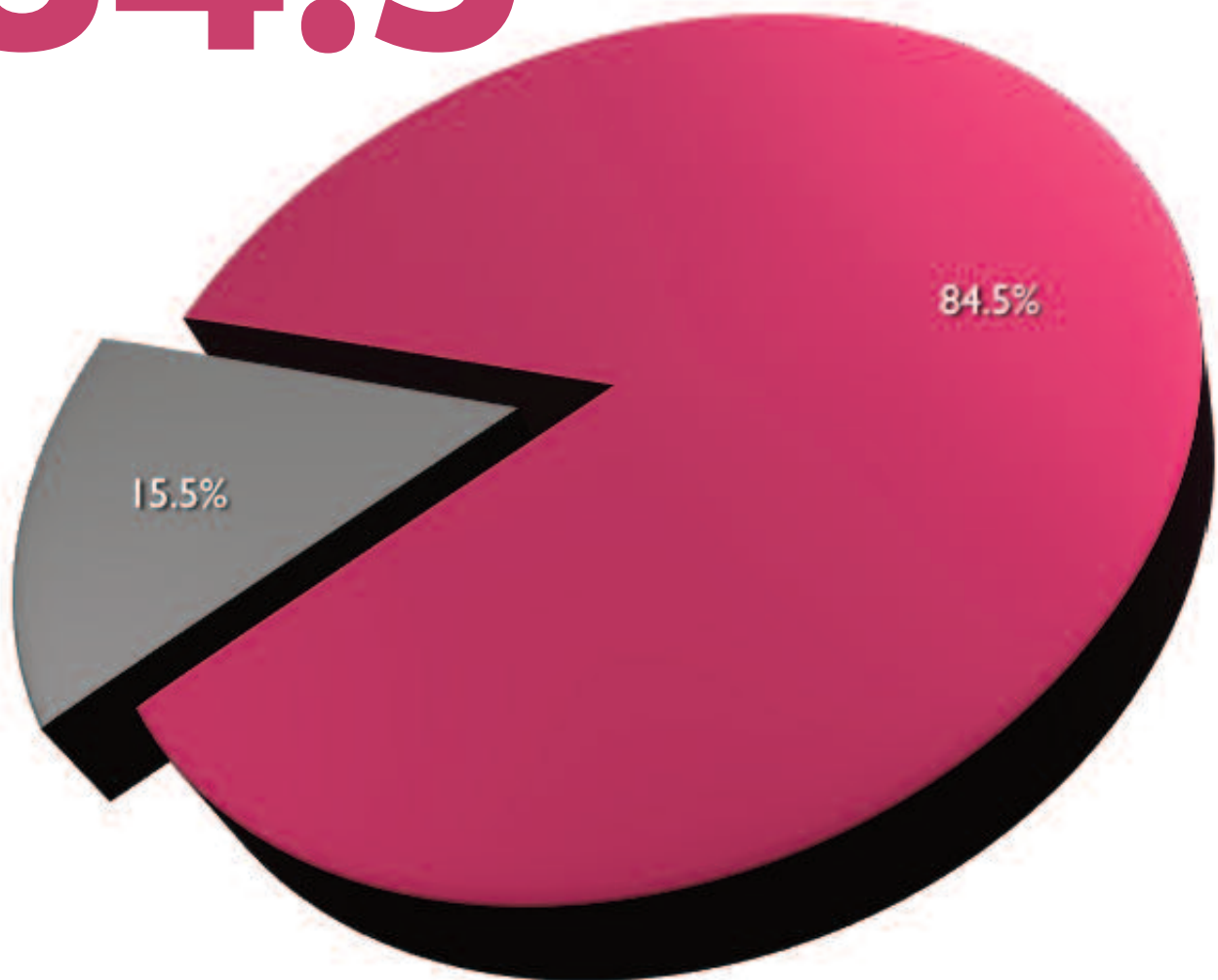
“Abuse of older people is all too often hidden. The government must take action. I’m supporting Safer Ageing Week and the work of Hourglass to help shine a light on this vital cause.”

Baroness Sally Greengross OBE

Charity Patron

Abuse of older people in Wales

84.5%

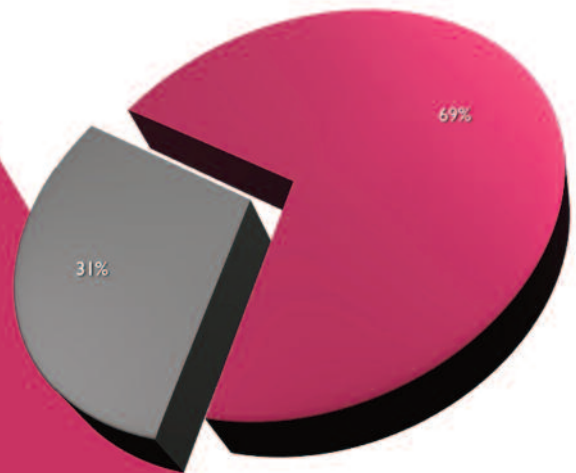


When asked “Is the abuse of older people a problem today in the UK?” almost 85% said yes.

Abuse of older people in Wales

69%

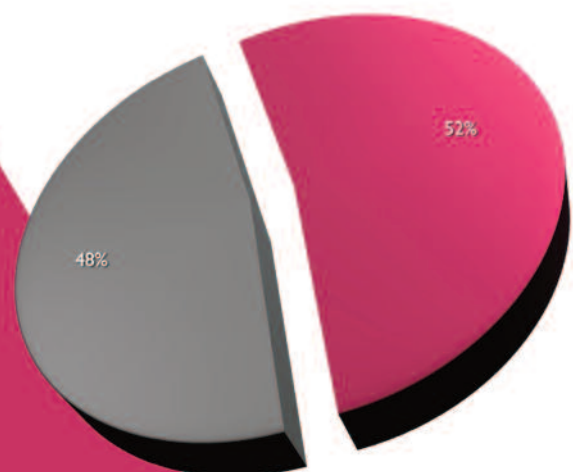
Of respondents in Wales believed that inappropriate sexual acts directed at older people don't constitute abuse.



Source: Results from Hourglass - 'Growing old in the UK 2020.'

52%

Of those surveyed in Wales believe that the abuse and neglect of older people has increased as a result of the lockdown.



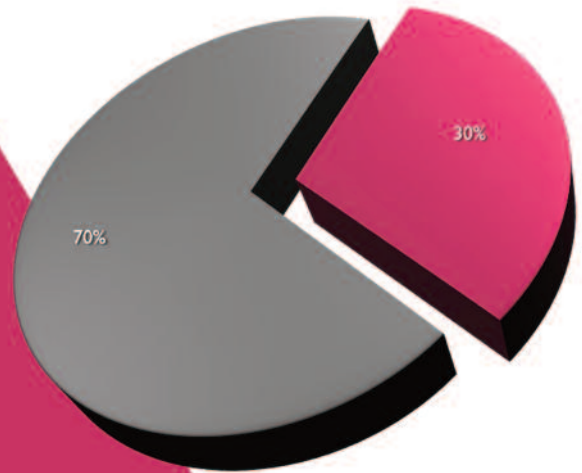
Source: Results from Hourglass - 'Growing old in the UK 2020.'

Abuse of older people in Wales

30%

Of respondents in Wales failed to identify 'taking precious items from an older relative's home without asking' as abuse.

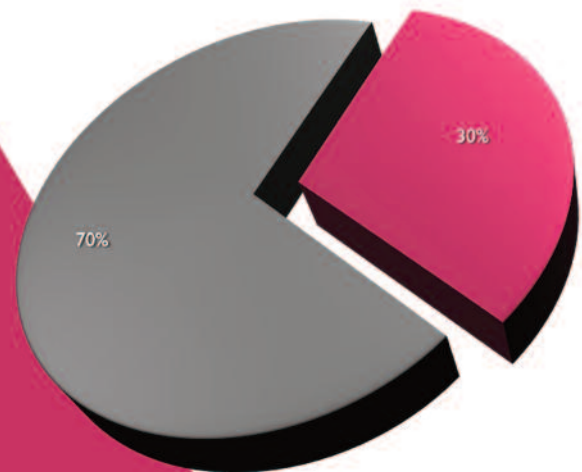
Source: Results from Hourglass - 'Growing old in the UK 2020.'



26%

Of respondents across Wales didn't view 'pushing, hitting, or beating an older person' as abuse.

Source: Results from Hourglass - 'Growing old in the UK 2020.'



Abuse of older people in Wales

What our supporters say



I join Hourglass in calling for the end of harm and abuse in later life. Wales leads the UK in targeted policy to better protect older people but this harm is still all too often hidden from view.”

*Heléna Herklots CBE,
Older People's Commissioner for Wales*



“Let's start a conversation with friends and family about abuse in later life. We need to break down taboos that make this a hidden issue in Wales.”

*Darren Millar MS
Welsh Conservative Party*



“We need a national conversation on the abuse of older people. Hourglass' attitudes and perceptions polling show there is a worrying gap in the prevalence of abuse and public awareness.”

*Janet Finch-Saunders MS
Welsh Conservatives*

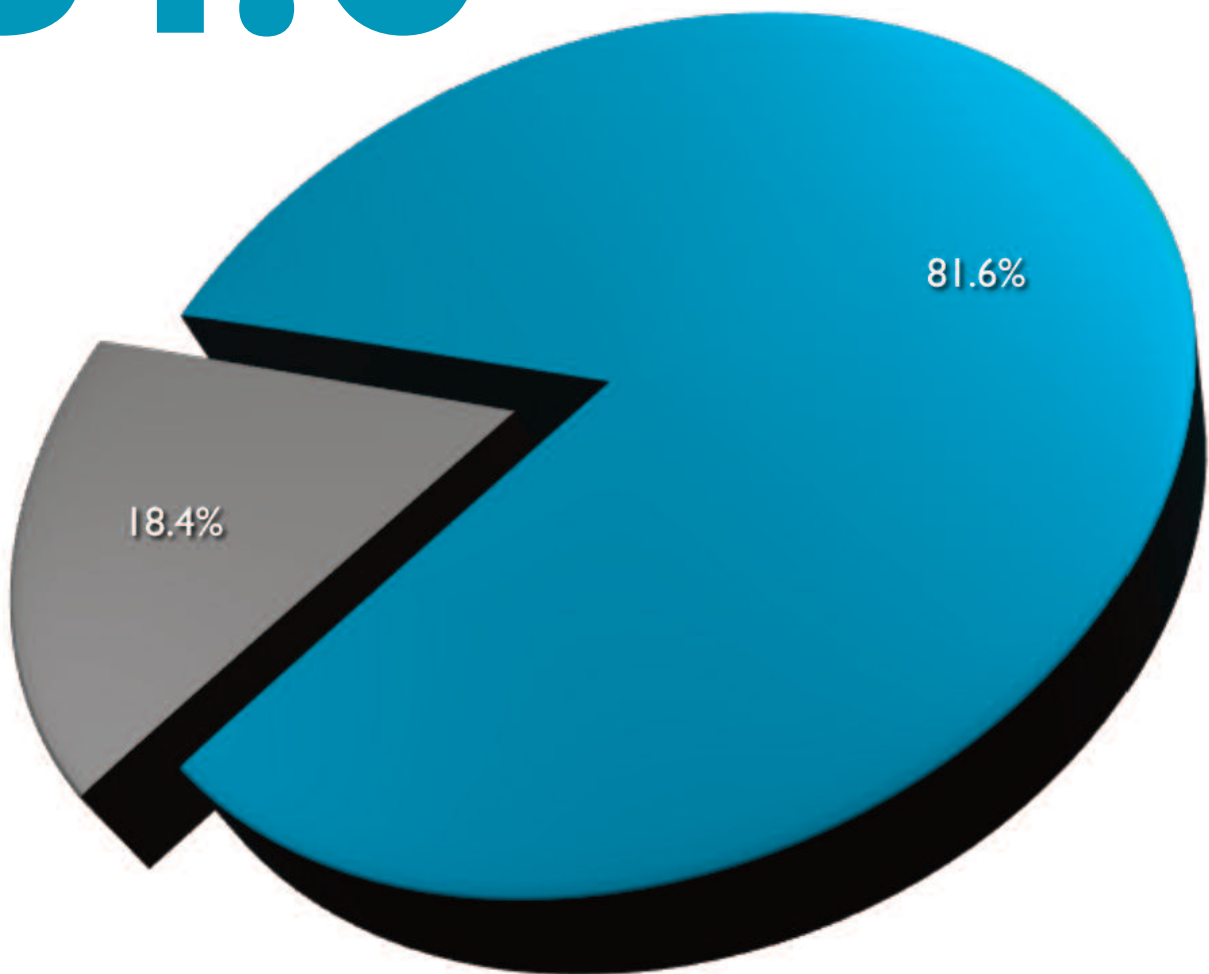


“Ministers should be deeply concerned by Hourglass' new polling. We clearly need urgent action to improve public awareness of the signs and behaviours of abuse of older people.”

*Mark Isherwood MS
Welsh Conservative Party*

Abuse of older people in Northern Ireland

81.6%

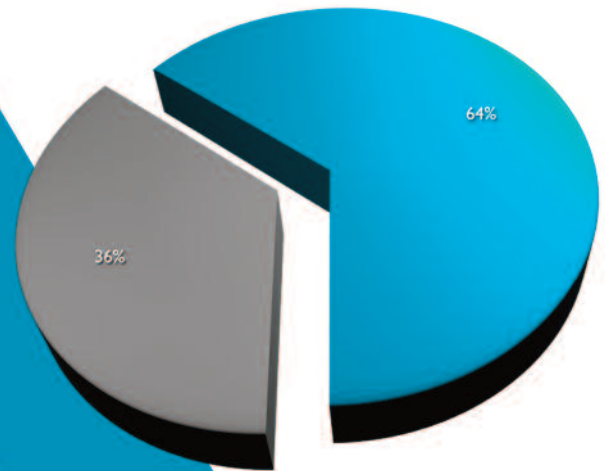


When asked “Is the abuse of older people a problem today in the UK?” almost 82% said yes.

Abuse of older people in Northern Ireland

64%

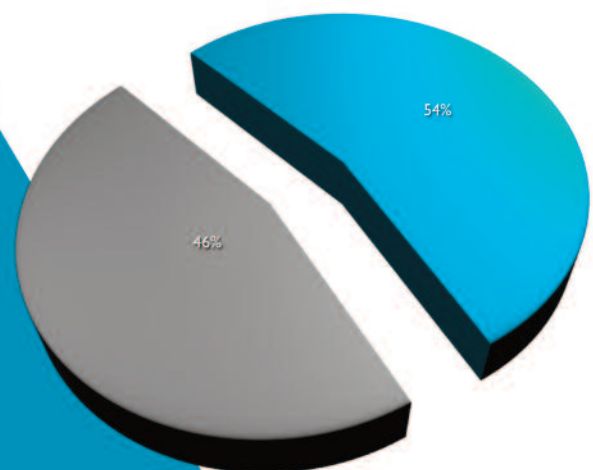
Of Northern Ireland respondents believed that inappropriate sexual acts directed at older people don't constitute abuse.



Source: Results from Hourglass - 'Growing old in the UK 2020.'

54%

Over half of those surveyed in Northern Ireland believe that the abuse and neglect of older people has increased as a result of the lockdown.

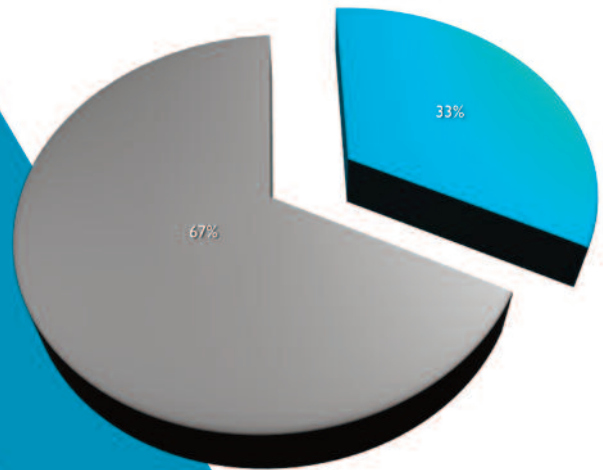


Source: Results from Hourglass - 'Growing old in the UK 2020.'

Abuse of older people in Northern Ireland

33%

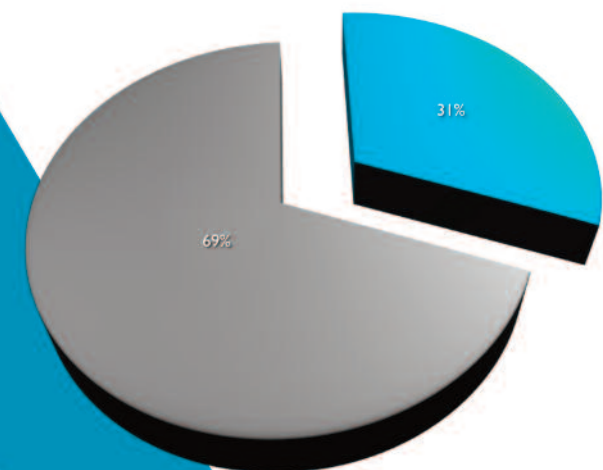
Of respondents in Northern Ireland don't see 'taking precious items from an older relative's home without asking' as abuse



Source: Results from Hourglass - 'Growing old in the UK 2020.'

31%

Of Northern Ireland respondents don't view 'pushing, hitting, or beating an older person' as abuse.



Source: Results from Hourglass - 'Growing old in the UK 2020.'

Abuse of older people in Northern Ireland

What our supporters say



“Hourglass’ findings highlight a concerning and unacceptable issue. The abuse of older people is too often overlooked. These results underscore the efforts needed to address and change attitudes and perceptions.”

Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick



“I can say action to tackle the abuse of older people in the UK is long overdue. The rights of older people need to become a top priority to reduce harm in our older community.”

*Baroness Sally Greengross OBE
Charity Patron*



“World Elder Abuse Awareness Day reminds us of the ongoing abuse of older people in Northern Ireland. More must be done to protect everyone in our society as we move forward into the future.”

Paula Bradley MLA



“Let us always watch out for our elderly neighbours and be alert for signs of abuse or ill-treatment”

*Lord Dodds of Duncairn,
Democratic Unionist Party*

Hourglass policy positions

As well as supporting older victims and their families, Hourglass shapes the debate around the abuse of older people. We want to create and influence policy that change lives and ways of thinking.

This isn't about growing old gracefully. Safer ageing is about creating environments and procedures that allow all of us to stay involved

in our communities as we age and to implement support to prevent isolation, neglect and abuse.

In the policy landscape, safer ageing can help decision makers consider the different needs of older people and identify where changes can reduce the risk of abuse and improve outcomes for victims.

Visit - www.wearehourglass.org/policy

“We want to create and influence policy that changes lives and ways of thinking”



Visit the Hourglass Knowledge Bank

A curated collection of advice, information and data on the abuse and mistreatment of older people, ageism and safer ageing. Organised into helpful categories and free to use.





Hourglass

Safer ageing · Stopping abuse

You can contact us in many ways:

Helpline: 0808 808 8141

Our helpline is entirely confidential and free to call from a landline or mobile, and the number will not appear on your phone bill.

Text message: 07860 052906

Texts from outside the UK will be charged at their standard international rate which will differ depending on location and service charges of your phone provider. The number will appear on your bill and in your phone records but will not be identified as Hourglass.

Instant messaging service: www.wearehourglass.org



Email: helpline@wearehourglass.org

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