

Each time we speak up, we normalise the conversation about the rights of women and girls. It is hard being the people who raise the issues no one wants to hear, but we believe we are finally being heard, and making progress. We have made many new contacts who can help us inform and influence policy-makers. In contrast to the public campaigning of 2018 to raise awareness of the proposed GRA reform, much of the work we did in 2019 was behind the scenes, educating and influencing in a targeted way. Our credibility and trust relies on our discretion as well as our authority and balanced approach. Not all those who listen to Fair Play For Women want it known; we still have a way to go to re-establish women's rights as a legitimate topic.

Throughout the year, we were in contact with journalists in TV, radio, print and online, drawing their attention to the issues and generating media coverage, sometimes with a Fair Play For Women quote, often not. We saw a clear increase in coverage across the year, with more willingness in the media to raise questions about the conflict between the demands of trans activists and women's rights, and how those demands threaten existing women's rights which are already long-established in law. Here are some calendar highlights that we can share.

Prisons

The work begun in 2018 continued. Throughout the year we engaged with the Ministry of Justice and with other stakeholders, pushing for disclosure of information about trans prisoner policy, and for equality impact assessments, proper data recording and monitoring. Later in the year we supported the legal case being brought by a prisoner who was sexually assaulted by a transwoman in a women's prison. Some milestones:

January – We petitioned the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) for answers on the questions we had raised in 2018, and began a year of constructive dialogue, with more direct contact throughout the year.

February – MOJ published response to FPFW e-petition calling for review of trans prisoner policy.

March – MOJ announced there would be revised guidelines for the housing of transwomen, in response to pressure and input from us.

May – Participated in a round-table discussion with the MOJ and other stakeholders to preview new trans prison policy prior to publication.

May – Published an [article in Inside Time](#) asking prisoners and staff to make contact to give their views on transwomen in female prisons

October – Submitted evidence in the [judicial review being sought](#) by a female prisoner who was sexually assaulted in prison as a result of current trans policy in prisons

Sport

Dr Williams is now recognised as a powerful and legitimate voice in women's sport. We attended several women's sport conferences across the year. At every opportunity, we raise the question of how to protect the sex-based rights of women and girls to fairness and safety in sport, and we point out how "inclusion" of transwomen leads to exclusion or self-exclusion of females both on the field and in the changing rooms. We are making progress. Each time, without fail, the temperature in the room drops a few degrees. Those on the stage freeze, recoil, may even shake their heads. But invariably, a few brave souls approach Nicola afterwards, one to one, and ask questions. This has included international athletes, broadcasters and TV producers, coaches and board members at sport national governing bodies. Some have followed up with meetings or introductions. Sports bodies are starting to listen and consult us. By the end of the year, it was apparent that momentum is building for a positive change in sport.



LtoR Victoria Hood, Dr Emma Hilton, Dr Nicola Williams, Sharron Davies MBE, Kiri Tunks

March – We co-ordinated the letter sent to the IOC by British Olympians demanding the suspension of trans inclusion rules.

May – Met with Sport England to raise our concerns about trans inclusion in grass roots female sport.

July – Ground-breaking sport event with WPUK, filling the QEII conference centre at Westminster with 750 people. There were talks from cyclist Victoria Hood, biologist Dr Emma Hilton, Dr Nicola Williams, and an interview with Sharron Davies MBE, plus videos of support from Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson and Dame Kelly Holmes in the UK, and a view from North America by coach Dr Linda Blade in Canada and cyclist Dr Jennifer Assali-Wagner in the USA.

July – Participated in a Sport England round table to review guidance for trans inclusion in sports changing rooms.

October – Dr Williams spoke from the floor at a legal event about trans inclusion in female sport. This led to her being introduced to the international federation for athletics, IAAF (World Athletics).

October – Dr Williams participated in the first meeting of an IAAF-led consultation on trans inclusion rules for sport, held in Switzerland.

December – Dr Williams shortlisted for a sports award. She didn't win, but being nominated was a win for Fair Play For Women, consolidating her position as an important and respected voice in women's sport.

Content and communication

A complete overhaul of the website with new content and improved navigation has made it clearer and easier to use. Useful resources are organised under the key campaigns: prisons, sport, legal reform.

We published new guidance on the website to address the most vexed questions we hear. For example, do transwomen have a legal right to be treated as women in all circumstances, including single-sex spaces? How is this affected by possession of a GRC? What options are there for parents who are worried about their daughters being forced into mixed-sex facilities and mixed sport at school? We developed media guidelines to counter the rise in confusing and misleading reporting of crimes, particularly violent crimes, by “women”. The trans media guide is [here](#).

Changing rooms were a hot topic after a rash of conversion to “gender-neutral”, i.e. mixed-sex, facilities, and complaints from women about the behaviour of some men in these facilities. A large commercial gym provider asked for our advice on their options, and we turned this into a document available to all, which has been read several hundred times since posting in May.

We responded to the furore over the safeguarding failures apparent in draft schools guidance from the EHRC, the Scottish version of which was leaked in August. At the same time we called for clarification of the Equality Act, pointing out the [areas that need attention](#) in a post viewed almost 900 times in five months. During the election campaign, we published a [report on candidates](#) who had dismissed women’s concerns using the derogatory term “terf”.

Our web traffic has grown steadily through 2019. We had 247,725 visitors in the year, up 40% on 2018, and they made 313,859 visits and viewed 534,454 pages. This shows the message is getting out. Since February this year, every month has been higher than the same month last year, with the exception of October due to a peak in web traffic in October 2018 driven by the consultation on proposed GRA Reform.

Our three top-performing articles were:

[Differences between male and female skeletons, heads and muscles](#) (65,527 views), [Pronouns are Rohypnol](#) (17,054 views) and

[In brief: Why does JK Rowling support Maya Forstater and why should you care?](#) (15,128 views).

We had visitors from almost every country in the world. Importantly, we are a source for UK central government departments, many local authorities, UK and international sporting bodies, law firms, universities and schools, and of course UK and international media.

Legal reform

With the proposed GRA Reform on hold awaiting publication of the consultation, which never came, this was not a focus in 2019. However, a second consultation was launched in Scotland in December, so it will be important in 2020. We have continued to promote clear understanding of the law as it stands, to provide guidance based on the Equality Act in response to specific issues and requests, and to engage lawyers and policy-makers in readiness to defend the existing legal rights of women and girls.

Media coverage

Fair Play For Women is becoming the go-to organisation for balanced input in defence of women's rights. We are seeing a steady rise in mainstream media coverage of the issues that threaten the existing legal rights of women and girls, including now-regular coverage in The Times and Sunday Times, Mail on Sunday, discussions on ITV's Good Morning Britain, and coverage on BBC Radio 4's Today programme, BBC Radio 5Live, LBC and Talk Radio, plus many others. Dr Williams was quoted in many of those articles, and interviewed on TV and radio. She's also been on US and Australian radio.

Finances

In 2019 we registered as a limited company, setting Fair Play For Women on a more formal and sustainable footing. Fair Play For Women continues to work on a shoestring. We greatly value our grass roots support, both the time people give to projects and the cash donations which keep us going. Thank you for helping to safeguard the legal rights of women and girls.

<https://fairplayforwomen.com/donate/>



Looking ahead

In 2020 we will continue to seek opportunities to engage constructively with policy makers in government departments and agencies, and in UK and international sport. We will keep a watching brief on UK prison policy for transgender prisoners. While legal reform in England and Wales is not imminent, the proposed changes to the GRA in Scotland present a serious risk to women throughout the UK, so we will be supporting Scottish women's groups in opposing this. We will also step up our efforts to ensure fair and accurate coverage of relevant issues in the UK media, such as ensuring the sex of violent offenders is correctly reported.

Along with the gradual rise in media coverage last year, we believe there was a recognition among policy-makers that women's groups have legitimate concerns, and that it is fair and responsible to engage with us. **In 2020 we expect to see these meetings become more open, so that those in positions of power and influence will not only consult us behind the scenes; they will be proud to say they listened to Fair Play For Women.**