

## Briefing

### Tackling child sexual abuse online: a fire burning in the bedrooms of our Nation's children.



#### Key asks

- To call on the Government to recognise the vital contribution the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) makes to keeping UK hosting space free from child sexual abuse imagery.
- To call on the Government to update the house on when it intends to introduce the Online Harms legislation, given the current increased threat to children in the current Covid-19 crisis.

#### The IWF removes more child sexual abuse content than ever before:

- In 2019, the IWF assessed a record 260,426 reports of webpages suspected to contain child sexual abuse imagery. Of these, **132,676 were confirmed to contain images and videos of child sexual abuse**. An increase of 26% on the 105,047 reports actioned in 2018.
- Only 0.12% of content actioned was hosted within the UK, thanks to the work of the IWF and the unique relationship we have established with industry, law enforcement and the Government.
- However, the National Crime Agency estimates **that 300,000 people in the UK present a sexual threat to children**.
- More needs to be done to protect children from sexual abuse online, and we call on the Government to publish its full response to the Online Harms White Paper to allow the regulation debate to progress with pace.

#### A fire burning in the bedrooms of our Nation's children:

- In 2019, almost **a third of all webpages our analysts actioned (38,424 webpages, 29%) contained self-generated imagery**. In some cases, children are groomed, deceived, or extorted into producing and sharing a sexual image or video of themselves.
- Of these webpages, **76% (29,312) showed a girl aged 11 to 13 years old**. On average, our analysts identified imagery of these girls 118 times every day. **13% (5,026) showed a girl aged 7 to 10**.
- We are working to develop a campaign to highlight this issue. As we all spend more time online, Government must support users to navigate the internet through robust educational programmes.

#### It is critical that eradicating child sexual abuse online remains high on the political agenda throughout the current crisis:

- Social distancing measures are creating a 'perfect storm' as both children and offenders spend more time online.

- We urge you to actively promote online safety advice and tips to your constituents. There are lots of great resources which you can promote to your constituents [here](#)

**Suggested Parliamentary Questions:**

- To ask the Home Secretary what assessment she has made of the scale of child sexual abuse online?
- To ask the Home Secretary what more can be done to stop the spread of child sexual abuse material online?
- To ask the Secretary of State for Digital Culture Media and Sport if he would update the house on when the government intends to publish its full response to the Online Harms White Paper?