



## **Telegraph writes about sexual harassment: implies victim is to blame for being un-married and not a mother**

Poppy Smart, a digital marketing coordinator, raised a complaint with the West Mercia Police after experiencing sexual harassment from staff on a building site run by Fimeca Building and Maintenance. According to [the Telegraph](#), this is the first time the police in England/Wales have investigated "wolf-whistling" as a form of sexual harassment.

We fully support the prosecution of men for engaging in sexual harassment and intimidation on the streets. Numerous construction companies have instituted policies of zero tolerance on this issue, but it is still a common occurrence (and in this case involved a sub-contractor). It is also one not limited to construction companies and the media suggestions that it is reflect their classism and inability to understand power and privilege.

We would like to see more prosecutions of men for street harassment. Wolf-whistling and cat-calling are forms of intimidation telling women that they do not deserve to be in a public space; that their value is only in their appearance. This is victim blaming. -

Whilst we were pleased to see the Telegraph publish an article on the serious nature of street harassment, we weren't overly shocked to see the subtle minimisation of Smart's experience within it:

1. the inclusion of Smart's marital status
2. the inclusion of Smart's status as a non-mother

Neither of these are facts relevant to the article. They serve only as markers for "good women". If Smart were a single mother, it's unlikely she would have gotten this level of press. Equally, if she were a married mother, there is every chance that the article would be stronger on the issue of VAWG.

It doesn't matter how severe the harassment and intimidation, Smart is still reduced to a stereotype by the Telegraph.