



delivering cutting edge services  
to end violence against women and

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**Press release: Embargoed till 16.01 25/6/2019**

**Specialist services supporting women to exit prostitution welcome Conservative Party Human Rights Commission report on prostitution.**

*"We congratulate the Conservative Party Human Rights Commission for their report on prostitution and welcome their recommendations," Karen Ingala Smith, CEO nia.*

nia, a women only charity working on violence against women since 1975, has been supporting women involved in, and exiting, prostitution and trafficking for some years.

nia, who gave written evidence to the Commission, recently produced a [report on the impact of criminal records on women exiting prostitution](#) and supported women bringing a [successful legal challenge](#) to the Disclosure and Barring Services regulations.

Ingala Smith said, *"This is a brave and ground-breaking report. We are particularly pleased that the commission did not allow itself to be bamboozled into going along with any portrayal of prostitution (or "sex work" as it is sometimes called) as work like any other. It is the first time that a Government has recognised that policy responses are directly linked to the perspective you take on the issue of prostitution and that there is an obligation on an accountable government to take a position if it is serious about tackling violence against women and sex inequality. This report recognises that prostitution is inherently exploitative and goes as far as to interrogate the nature of consent. Consent must be freely given, if it is bought then it is not truly consent."*

*"Unusually too, the report directly confronts the role of men who buy sex in facilitating and fuelling prostitution and trafficking. It highlights that prostitution exists because of demand and that without the exchange of money there would be no consent so prostitution inherently undermines the nature of consent. Obvious you'd think, but rare to hear it spelt out."*

She continues, *"Of course, once this is recognised it becomes imperative to challenge demand and it is a welcome conclusion of the report that it insists on an ethical framing to prostitution policy and responses, wishing to be supportive to those exploited in prostitution, not to criminalise those selling sex and to invest in exiting services – things we have long argued for."*

*"We look forward to seeing rapid action on the conclusions of the report which should include funding for exiting services. We especially applaud those women involved in prostitution who have spoken up courageously and fought this battle for many years."*

## **End Notes**

**Spokesperson Karen Ingala Smith CEO nia: 0207 683 1270**

[nia is a charity working on violence against women and girls](#) since 1975. It works predominantly in North and East London though some of its activities are of regional or national reach. It supports 1500 – 2000 women and girls a year across a range of services including supporting women to exit prostitution. Charity number 1037072

**Conservative Party Human Rights Commission report on prostitution** took evidence, oral and written, in Spring 2018

**link to nia** [report on the impact of criminal records on women exiting prostitution](#)

**link to information** on [successful legal challenge](#) to the Disclosure and Barring Services regulations.