

**Written evidence from the Salisbury Branch of the Society for the
Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC) (FOE0057)**

The following submission is presented by the Salisbury Branch of the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC) in response to questions 3 & 7 of the call for evidence.

1. Question 3 asks “Is there a need to review the wording and application of Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) legislation?” The Salisbury Branch of SPUC believe YES for the following reasons.
 - 1.1. Our ability to express our views is becoming increasingly under threat. If Buffer Zones are introduced across the country around Abortion Clinics under the current PSPO legislation, then our ability to help anyone who is having doubts about their decision, will be taken away.
 - 1.2. If praying and offering support is made illegal under a PSPO, then other of our activities such as Pro-Life Chains & promoting Pro-Life issues at a public Charity Stall could also be suppressed.
 - 1.3. We know that under PSPO’s, buffer zones have been imposed in Ealing, Twickenham & Manchester have been made based on unsubstantiated claims of intimidation and wrong-doing by SPUC members.
 - 1.4. Although not personally experienced by Salisbury SPUC, we are aware of women who have accepted last minute pro-life advice and kept their baby. Introduction of buffer zones would make these late minute, lifesaving decisions impossible.
 - 1.5. Pro-Abortion MPs are increasingly trying to outlaw peaceful Pro-Life vigils. Recent examples are:
 - 1.5.1. Rupa Huq MP has introduced a Ten Minute Rule Bill specifically to curtail pro-life vigils.
 - 1.5.2. Priti Patel MP, The Home Secretary, believes that abortion clinics provide “important advice & services” and yet does SPUC not also provide “important advice & education services”. I pose this question, - how can killing unborn babies be “an important service”?
 - 1.6. Finally I would like to point out that anything undertaken by SPUC members is peaceful and un-intrusive. Our aim is to spread awareness of the unborn child and to provide alternative advice.
2. Question 7 asks “Does everyone have equal protection of their right to freedom of expression?” The Salisbury Branch of SPUC believe that currently, NO they don’t, for the following reasons.
 - 2.1. If Pro-Abortion activists shut down Pro-Life vigils they will be removing our Civil Rights. This will result in an imbalance in favour of Pro-Abortionists and cannot be justified.
 - 2.2. Just because having Pro-Life views is taken by some to be unacceptable, it does not give them the right to take aggressive action. We need a balance, and room for both sides to express an educated opinion.
 - 2.3. Although our Salisbury Branch of SPUC has not experienced difficulties or rejections in promoting the Pro-Life cause, we do experience verbal abuse, significantly during our silent Pro-Life Chains. We are however aware that some other Branches have

experienced more significant problems that have led to changes in the way we promote our activities, due to the fear of the possibility that we too could experience the same problems.

- 2.4. We take great care not to antagonise others and remain at all times a peaceful organisation. Everyone who is peaceful should have the right to Freedom of Expression.

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