

Grooming inquiry to investigate London gangs first

From the [Telegraph](#)

London, Bradford and Oldham will be the first three areas subject to public inquiries into [grooming gang scandals](#).

The statutory inquiry, [headed by Baroness Longfield](#), a former children's commissioner, announced that the inquiries, to investigate how children were targeted and exploited, would start by the end of the year.

They will also investigate how institutions including police, councils and other agencies responded and whether they failed to act because of concerns around [the ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds](#) of the perpetrators behind the grooming gangs.

Oldham, selected by the Home Office for an inquiry last year, has been subject to previous investigations that found police and the council shirked their responsibilities to protect children.

It found that a ringleader of a notorious local abuse ring was employed as a welfare rights officer by Oldham council.

Bradford and Keighley have been subject to persistent claims by campaigners that a cover-up of grooming gangs put up to 8,000 children at risk.

A dossier, [revealed by The Telegraph last June](#), alleged that at least 7,975 children in Bradford were at risk of sexual exploitation between 1996 and 2025, putting it on a par with similar scandals in Rochdale, Rotherham and Oldham.

The dossier, drawn up by Robbie Moore, an MP and leading child abuse lawyer, outlined years of alleged systematic failures by Bradford council and partner agencies to protect vulnerable children from Asian grooming gangs operating in the city.

Keighley is a separate town to Bradford with a different history and atmosphere but, much to the residents dismay, it comes under Greater Bradford for local governance. Therefore corruption in Social Services, education, policing etc will all come from the same City Hall in central Bradford.

The inquiry said London was different from the two other areas because of its scale and complexity, with multiple boroughs and overlapping local, regional and national systems.

A spokesman said: "The inquiry will examine how group-based child sexual exploitation and abuse by grooming gangs has been identified and responded to, including London's links with surrounding or connected areas. It will also take account of relevant work under way, including by the London Assembly."

London is odd. And one thing I will say now that an inquiry is imminent. I have a wide circle of friends family and acquaintance, covering most of the east London boroughs. My husband and I reared a daughter who is now a capable adult. We, and two friends also active in patriotic circles and who have children, never heard a whisper about girls known to our circle being dragged into a grooming gang ring. One incident about a particular kebab shop only. I suspect we were lucky, and also vigilant over where our girls went and who they mixed with. And I always suspected that the teachers supervising each group of girls at the bus stop at the school gates were there less to ensure correct and polite queuing and more to deter the undesirable. But I never spotted an 'undesirable'. Only spotty boys of their own age and demographic.

I think I am going to be shocked by London

Sir Sadiq has previously been accused of refusing

to [acknowledge the existence of grooming gang cases](#) in London, which he has argued are “different” to crimes committed in cities in northern England.

Word is that after Oldham, London and the Greater Bradford towns, [Hull will be next.](#)