

## What to do if you experience a consent issue

*A consent issue could be anything that made you feel uncomfortable, trapped, pressured or violated. If you were not asked, or you felt like there was pressure to say yes, and you feel bad about what happened, you don't need to question yourself about it or feel guilty. There is support here.*

1. **Talk to someone you trust about what happened.** You may have a friend already on site or available by phone.
2. **Go to welfare.** The welfareers are not the consent team, but they will be able to support you with your immediate needs. They can support you to feel safe and heard, and will be able to listen and note down your experience if you want.
3. **You may wish to talk to the other person/s involved.** You can set up someone you trust at the burn to be present with you, and ask them to request a meeting with the other person/s involved. The purpose of this meeting is for you to be heard by the person/s involved so that they can understand your experience. The purpose would also be to give them an opportunity to respond and for you to understand their experience.
4. **You may wish to convey your experience to someone else, and then have them talk to the person/s involved.** The purpose of this would be the same as above (in point 3), with some added safe distance.
5. **You may wish to involve the Consent Team.** The consent team is not “on duty” to provide time-contingent care, so they will come to you when possible, after the event, and have a further chat. There will generally be a pair of people working together, who will take on your case. They will want to get as many details as possible from you, and to check what kinds of next steps you are and are not comfortable taking. You can choose to have a buddy with you at this point, for emotional support. You may be offered a few different options:
  - Staying anonymous and not pursuing the issue further
  - Entering mediation (conflict resilience) conversations with the person/s involved
  - Staying ‘semi-anonymous’ (your statement being shared with the person/s involved)
6. **For serious incidents there is the option to report to the legal authorities.** There is no pressure to do so and it is entirely your choice. The first port of call for this is:
  - Rape Crisis
  - 7 Church Street Crescent
  - Dumfries DG1 1DF
  - 01387 253 113 (open every day from 9am to 5pm)

**Consent team's goals and limits:** the consent team's first priority is safeguarding. They will make an assessment of the situation, including talking to the person who has been reported, and decide what next steps need to be taken. They will prioritise learning and reparative justice where it seems possible to do so, but in some cases, where the situation and evidence requires it, they may place restrictions on the reported person to keep the community safe.

The consent team is **not** able to act as detective, judge and jury, and declare anyone's guilt or innocence. They are not there to punish or shame people, either - they are there to make the most reasonable decisions about safeguarding and best practice that they can, and keep the community as safe as they can. They are keen to support and learn from those people willing to take responsibility for one-off, low-level mistakes. If, as a reporter of an issue, you want to seek justice, you will be supported in doing so via the relevant authorities, or you can also choose to disclose to the broader community and open a public discussion.