



Christine Jardine MP
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

10 February 2026

**Re: Your reply of 24 June 2025 (ref. CJ30250) — Abortion
Decriminalisation**

Dear Ms Jardine,

On 24 June 2025, you replied to my letter about your vote for New Clause 1 of the Crime and Policing Bill¹. Your reply opened by telling me that there had been ‘a lot of misinformation’ about the amendment — the clear implication being that I was perpetrating it. You assured me that time limits and regulations remained in place, that no doctor would provide a late abortion outside narrow exceptions, and that sex-selective abortion was not permitted².

I have examined every claim you made. Each one is false — demonstrably so, on the basis of the Government’s own published data, criminal case evidence, and parliamentary proceedings. What you dismissed as my “misinformation” has been validated. What you presented as fact has not survived contact with evidence.

I am writing to demand that you retract your characterisation of my concerns as misinformation. I am writing to place on public record the evidence that your assurances to your constituents were wrong. And I am writing because in May 2026, the electorate of Edinburgh West will have the opportunity to decide whether they wish to continue to be represented by a Member of Parliament who, when confronted with evidence of regulatory failure and the suffering of unborn children, chose to look away — and to tell those who did not that they were misinformed.

This letter, together with your previous reply and any response you choose to make, will be published.

¹Tonia Antoniazzi, *Crime and Policing Bill, New Clause 1 (Now Clause 191)* (2025).

²Christine Jardine, *Reply to Constituent Correspondence* (2025).

1) Claim 1: “The time limits and all other laws and regulations remain in place”

In 2018, essentially no abortions took place at home. By 2023, approximately 75% did³ — a transformation made possible by the permanent legalisation of telemedicine abortion through the Health and Care Act 2022, which you supported⁴. Under this scheme, a woman telephones a provider, states her gestational age, and receives pills by post. No ultrasound. No in-person examination. No identity verification. The clinical pathway you cited in your reply is bypassed entirely.

This is not a theoretical vulnerability. It has been exploited in every documented prosecution. For example:

- **Carla Foster (2023)**: Obtained pills by telemedicine after misrepresenting her gestational age. She was between 32 and 34 weeks pregnant. No in-person assessment took place⁵.
- **Nicola Packer (2025)**: Told Marie Stopes she was six weeks pregnant. She was 26 weeks — two weeks beyond the legal limit and 16 weeks beyond the telemedicine limit. She received pills by post. A post-mortem found the baby was healthy⁶.

An undercover investigation by Kevin Duffy, former Global Director of Clinics Development at Marie Stopes International, found that all eight volunteers acquired mifepristone and misoprostol using false names, false dates of birth, and false gestational dates. A mystery client exercise found BPAS call handlers telling women to “attach” a legal reason to their request — an open admission that the statutory grounds are treated as a formality⁷.

Baroness Foster stated in the Lords on 2 February 2026: “Those cases where women have taken abortion pills beyond the legal limit have involved the women misleading the abortion provider about her gestational age”⁸.

Prior to your vote, two mechanisms enforced the time limit: the clinical pathway (bypassed by self-reporting over the telephone) and the criminal sanction on the woman (removed by Clause 191). With both gone, the 24-week limit exists on paper and nowhere else. Your assurance that “time limits remain in place” is not merely wrong. It is the precise opposite of the truth.

³Department of Health and Social Care, *Abortion Statistics, England and Wales: 2023* (2026).

⁴Parliament of the United Kingdom, *Health and Care Act 2022, Section 178* (2022).

⁵R v Carla Foster, *Stoke-on-Trent Crown Court, Sentencing June 2023* (2023).

⁶R v Nicola Packer, *Isleworth Crown Court, Acquitted May 2025* (2025).

⁷Kevin Duffy, *Written Evidence to Parliamentary Committee* (2020), <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/13640/html>.

⁸Baroness Foster, *Crime and Policing Bill — Committee Stage (14th Day)* (2026).

2) Claim 2: “No doctor will provide an abortion beyond the 24-week limit”

For 75% of abortions, no doctor is involved at any stage. The cases of Foster and Packer demonstrate that women have obtained pills under false pretences and self-administered them at 26 and 32–34 weeks respectively⁹.

Your claim is technically accurate in the narrowest possible sense — and substantively meaningless. The system you voted to make permanent has removed the doctor from the process. The question is not whether a doctor will provide a late abortion. It is whether anything prevents a woman from obtaining one without a doctor. The evidence shows that it does not.

3) Claim 3: “This does not allow sex-selective abortion”

Six months after you wrote those words, the Department of Health and Social Care published its own birth ratio analysis under Section 84 of the Serious Crime Act 2015¹⁰. The Government’s own researchers found a “statistically significant imbalance” in the ratio of boys to girls born to Indian-origin parents in Britain, concluding that approximately 400 baby girls were sex-selectively aborted between 2017 and 2021.

The reports mandated under Section 84 were due in October/November 2024 and 2025. The Labour Government failed to publish them on schedule. The data was therefore unavailable when MPs were being told — including by Stella Creasy during the debate on your amendment — that “nobody can prove that abortion for sex selection reasons has happened.” The Government sat on data that contradicted the case being made for the legislation it was allowing to pass.

Meanwhile, BPAS — the provider through which the majority of abortions are administered — states on its website that sex-selective abortion is “not illegal.” Its former CEO stated publicly that there was “nothing wrong” with the practice¹¹.

Under the system you have supported, a woman obtains pills by telephone without identity verification, without ultrasound, and without scrutiny of her reasons. The sex of a baby can be determined from ten weeks. The “two doctors certifying grounds” — the safeguard you cited — never enter the picture. Under Clause 191, she faces no criminal consequence. The pathway from sex determination to unsupervised, unpunishable termination is structurally complete. 89% of the British public opposes sex-selective abortion¹². At the time of your vote, you held the position of Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for Women and Equalities.

⁹R v Carla Foster, *Stoke-on-Trent Crown Court, Sentencing June 2023*; R v Nicola Packer, *Isleworth Crown Court, Acquitted May 2025*.

¹⁰Department of Health and Social Care, *Birth Ratio Analysis under Section 84, Serious Crime Act 2015* (2025).

¹¹British Pregnancy Advisory Service, “Position on Sex-Selective Abortion,” 2017.

¹²ComRes, *Polling on Sex-Selective Abortion* (2023).

4) The child you have chosen not to acknowledge

Your reply did not contain a single reference to the unborn child. This absence is necessary. If the child were acknowledged, the language of “simply removing criminal liability” would be unsustainable.

Research by Gitau and Fisk demonstrated measurable cortisol and beta-endorphin stress responses to invasive stimuli from 18 to 20 weeks’ gestation¹³. Derbyshire and Bockmann, in the *Journal of Medical Ethics*, argued that pain experience may be possible from 12–13 weeks¹⁴. By the third trimester, the neurological architecture for conscious pain is well established. From approximately 22 weeks, such a child can survive outside the womb.

The physiological effect of mifepristone is to cut the blood supply to the placenta. Misoprostol causes violent uterine contractions. At 32 weeks — the gestational age in the Foster case — the result is progressive oxygen deprivation, compression, and prolonged asphyxiation of a being with an established capacity to suffer. In any other context, we would call this torture.

The legislation you supported creates the conditions under which this torture can occur in a woman’s home, without medical supervision, and without legal consequence. I asked you twice whether you voted to legalise the killing of a child in the moments before delivery. You refused to answer both times. The question is not difficult. The answer is yes.

5) What I require from you

You made three claims¹⁵. Each is contradicted by evidence now in the public domain:

1. “Time limits and regulations remain in place” — 75% of abortions are unsupervised, the system is defeated by a telephone lie, and you voted to remove the last criminal sanction¹⁶.
2. “No doctor will provide an abortion beyond the 24-week limit” — for three quarters of procedures no doctor is involved, and women have self-administered at 26 and 32–34 weeks¹⁷.
3. “This does not allow sex-selective abortion” — the Government’s own data shows approximately 400 missing girls, published after it was suppressed during the parliamentary debate you participated in¹⁸.

¹³R. Gitau and N. M. Fisk, “Fetal Cortisol and Beta-Endorphin Stress Responses to Invasive Stimuli,” *Archives of Disease in Childhood: Fetal and Neonatal Edition*, 2005.

¹⁴Stuart W. G. Derbyshire and John C. Bockmann, “Reconsidering Fetal Pain,” *Journal of Medical Ethics* 46 (2020): 3–6.

¹⁵Jardine, *Reply to Constituent Correspondence*.

¹⁶Department of Health and Social Care, *Abortion Statistics, England and Wales: 2023*; Antoniazzi, *Crime and Policing Bill, New Clause 1 (Now Clause 191)*.

¹⁷R v Carla Foster, *Stoke-on-Trent Crown Court, Sentencing June 2023*; R v Nicola Packer, *Isleworth Crown Court, Acquitted May 2025*.

¹⁸Department of Health and Social Care, *Birth Ratio Analysis under Section 84, Serious Crime Act 2015*.

I require you to:

First, retract your characterisation of my concerns as “misinformation.” Your letter was the misinformation, not mine.

Second, justify each of the three claims above in light of this evidence, or withdraw them.

Third, state whether you continue to support Clause 191 as it proceeds through the House of Lords, and explain how you reconcile that support with the evidence set out here.

A failure to respond substantively will be published as such alongside this letter. Your constituents are entitled to know whether their Member of Parliament, when presented with evidence of institutional failure and the suffering of children, chose to engage — or to remain silent.

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Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R. Lyon', is written over a light grey rectangular background.

Richard Lyon

6) References

- Antoniazzi, Tonia. "Crime and Policing Bill, New Clause 1 (now Clause 191)," 2025. Tabled by Tonia Antoniazzi MP (Labour). Passed 379–137 on 17 June 2025. Disapplies existing criminal law on abortion for women acting in relation to their own pregnancies at any gestation. Christine Jardine voted in favour.
- Baroness Foster. "Crime and Policing Bill — Committee Stage (14th Day)," 2026. Hansard, House of Lords, 2 February 2026. "Those cases where women have taken abortion pills beyond the legal limit have involved the women misleading the abortion provider about her gestational age."
- British Pregnancy Advisory Service. "Position on Sex-Selective Abortion," 2017. Website states sex-selective abortion is "not illegal." Former CEO Ann Furedi stated in 2013 and 2017 that there was "nothing wrong" with the practice.
- ComRes. "Polling on Sex-Selective Abortion," 2023. 89% of the general population and 91% of women agree that sex-selective abortion should be explicitly banned by law.
- Department of Health and Social Care. "Abortion Statistics, England and Wales: 2023," 2026. Published 15 January 2026. Shows approximately 75% of procedures self-managed at home.
- Department of Health and Social Care. "Birth Ratio Analysis under Section 84, Serious Crime Act 2015," 2025. Published December 2025. Found "statistically significant imbalance" in ratio of boys to girls born to Indian-origin parents. Approximately 400 baby girls sex-selectively aborted 2017–2021. Reports due October/November 2024 and 2025 published late.
- Derbyshire, Stuart W. G., and John C. Bockmann. "Reconsidering Fetal Pain." *Journal of Medical Ethics* 46 (2020): 3–6. Argued pain experience may not require cortical involvement and could be mediated by subcortical structures from approximately 12–13 weeks.
- Duffy, Kevin. "Written Evidence to Parliamentary Committee," 2020. <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/13640/html>. Former Global Director of Clinics Development, Marie Stopes International. Undercover investigation found all eight volunteers able to acquire mifepristone and misoprostol using false names, false dates of birth, and false gestational dates. Mystery client exercise found BPAS call handlers advising women to "attach" a legal reason to their request.
- Gitau, R., and N. M. Fisk. "Fetal Cortisol and Beta-Endorphin Stress Responses to Invasive Stimuli." *Archives of Disease in Childhood: Fetal and Neonatal Edition*, 2005. Demonstrated measurable cortisol and beta-endorphin stress responses to invasive stimuli from 18 to 20 weeks' gestation.
- Jardine, Christine. "Reply to Constituent Correspondence," ref. CJ30250, 2025. Dated 24 June 2025.
- Parliament of the United Kingdom. "Health and Care Act 2022, Section 178," 2022. Made permanent the temporary COVID-19 telemedicine abortion ("pills by post") scheme introduced in March 2020. Originated as Lords amendment by Baroness Sugg. Commons vote 30 March 2022. Christine Jardine voted in favour.
- R v Carla Foster*. Stoke-on-Trent Crown Court, June 2023. Convicted of administering abortion pills at 32–34 weeks' gestation. Sentenced to 28 months by Mr Justice Pepperall. Reduced on appeal to 14 months suspended by Dame Victoria Sharp, July 2023. Pills obtained via telemedicine with false gestational age.
- R v Nicola Packer*. Isleworth Crown Court, acquitted 8 May 2025. Told Marie Stopes she was six weeks pregnant; was 26 weeks. No in-person assessment. Received pills by post. Post-mortem found healthy foetus at approximately 26 weeks. Prosecution by Alexandra Felix KC.