

A statement from Urban in response to BBC news article

For immediate release: 12 July 2022

Content warning: References sexual harassment and assault.

An article was published this morning 12 July 2022 by the BBC that includes reference to two reports of sexual assault during bookings made on the Urban app.

As the article states, we take all instances of sexual assault or harassment seriously. In addition to our rigorous vetting process, we have a robust support system which includes both internal and external trust and safety committees that inform our processes and complaints procedures. We work closely with the police and our partnership with The Survivor's Trust provides us with education and guidance on prevention policies. We are a silver-accredited [Trauma Informed Employer](#), which recognises the training we have in place to make sure incidents are handled sensitively and employees are supported.

The article refers to a long delay before a deactivated therapist's profile was removed from the app. While the practitioner's access to the platform was revoked immediately upon receiving the complaint and delivered no further appointments, their profile was still visible if you had their name or unique link. This was our mistake and falls below the high standards we set for ourselves at Urban. On 21 June we revised the app and website so the entire online presence of a practitioner on Urban is removed on deactivation.

As the law currently stands, to work as a massage therapist in the UK you are solely required to prove your right to work. At Urban we go beyond this with additional vetting including DBS checks, requiring proof of a nationally accredited Level 3 qualification as a minimum, as well as verifying identity and right to work.

We echo calls within the wider industry to go further in ensuring the safety of all who deliver and book massages by making steps like these a legal requirement and establishing a governing body.

For mobile massage therapists, we aim to minimise risks of lone working at a technological level using GPS tracking, one-tap emergency support and one-to-one block. We also offer trauma-informed customer support to handle complaints sensitively. To learn more about the safety features we have at Urban, [click here](#).

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