



Supporting victims and witnesses

Supporting victims and witnesses of crime

Outcomes 2021-22

Victim and Witness Hub

- The Constabulary-run **Victim and Witness Hub (The Hub)** received 13,086 referrals – which translates to just over a third of all victim-based crimes.
- Staff will try to contact a victim three times before sending an email or letter, where it is safe to do so. Last year more than 7,102 letters and 5,438 emails were sent ensuring those victims knew how to get help if they needed it. More than 100 people picked up the phone and asked for that help.
- Staff provided emotional and practical support to 4,666 victims (that's 387 people a month). This included 713 victims of domestic abuse and 192 victims of sexual offences. The team works in partnership with specialist services who support many more victims.
- Of the victims who exited the service, 86 per cent said they felt better informed and empowered to act as a result of the support provided.
- The team supported a rolling caseload of 15,650 witnesses. On one high profile murder case the staff co-ordinated 102 different witnesses and ensured 57 people (police officers and members of the public) were at the Old Bailey Court in London on the right day to give their evidence and that they had access to the emotional and practical support they needed.

Restorative Justice Service

- Victims are offered the opportunity to explore whether meeting their offender would aid their recovery from the crime they have experienced. The co-ordinator had detailed conversations with 88 people over the year. Several of those cases will translate into face-to-face restorative justice conferences in the coming year.

Specialist Support Services

- The Bobby Scheme support **elderly victims of property-related crime** by providing advice and fitting security devices (**target hardening**). In 2021/22 they supported 727 elderly victims which included visiting 649 homes – some on the same day they were referred. As a result only 0.31% of these elderly victims became a repeat victim of crime.
- The **Specialist Victim Care Co-ordinators for Migrant Victims of Exploitation** supported 226 victims of crime, many in their first languages of Lithuanian or Romanian. The two staff helped victims into safe housing and advocated on their behalf with a range of agencies. Some victims left dangerous situations with just the clothes they stood in. Victims told the staff that as a result of their help they felt much safer and able to cope and recover with aspects of everyday life. Nine victims went on to report the crime they experienced to police.
- Two mental health nurses who deliver the '**Victim Pathfinders service**' supported 365 victims with their mental ill health. A total of 88 per cent of victims agreed the support provided improved their health and wellbeing.
- **Specialist Young Victim Care Co-ordinators** from Family Action supported more than 400 young people who had been the victim or witness to a crime (three quarters of which were serious violence). The staff worked with the young people (and their families) to address any of their worries or concerns and advocated on their behalf with schools and other agencies. A total of 92 per cent of the young people said they felt better able to recover and cope with aspects of everyday life as a result of the support.
- A locally-based national charity Embrace – Child Victims of Crime, provided 218 young people with **therapeutic support**. Collectively the charity reported an 87 per cent reduction in the number of young people whose thoughts and feelings distressed them and a 77 per cent reduction in young people who had difficulties in sleeping. The charity also provided practical 'cheer up support' through days out and hobbies.
- **Choices Counselling Service**, who provide long-term counselling for survivors of historic childhood sexual abuse, reduced their waiting list by 45 per cent. The charity was funded to increase the number of survivors able to

access their specialist support at any one time. As a result, an additional 111 survivors, who wouldn't have otherwise had a service, attended symptom management sessions and the charity is now developing additional programmes for survivors.

- **The Road Victims Trust** supported 82 people who had been bereaved or seriously affected as a result of a fatal road crash. Volunteers donated 355 counselling hours to help them deal with their experience with people describing this as a 'lifeline' enabling them to get their 'lives back on track'.

Specialist domestic abuse services

- **Peterborough Women's Aid** supported 1,058 victims of domestic abuse, including 80 male victims. The charity reported 936 people needed support with issues such as finances and housing and 112 victims had mental health needs.
- Thanks to additional funding secured by the OPCC five extra **Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVAs)** were recruited by the local authority during the year and provided specialist support to 271 victims of domestic abuse. The staff offered specialist support to men, members of seldom-heard from Black and ethnic minority communities and victims of Stalking. Survivors reported increased feelings of safety as a result of the bespoke help given.
- **Cambridgeshire Deaf Association** provided specialist support to 18 Deaf victims of domestic abuse. A total of 77 per cent of victims said they left the service feeling their health and wellbeing had improved as a result, four went on to report their crime to the police.
- **One Voice 4 Travellers** provide support to victims of domestic abuse within the Gypsy and Traveller community. During this year they supported 121 people including 15 men. Of these people 74 per cent agreed they felt empowered and better able to get help in the future as a result.
- Survivors of domestic abuse were offered the chance to attend a group work recovery programme called Own My Life. Locally-based national charity **Refuge** ran the courses and victims attending said they had learnt valuable information and built "bricks of confidence and knowledge" which they will carry with them for life.
- **Cambridge-based 'The Meadows Children and Family Wing'** provided emotional and practical support to more than 250 female victims of domestic

abuse. Of those, 87 women completed a group called the Freedom programme and 97 per cent of them said they felt much safer and more knowledgeable as a result.

Countywide Support Service for Survivors of Rape and Sexual Violence

- **Cambridge and Peterborough Rape Crisis Partnership (CAPRCP)** are commissioned to provide countywide support services. In 21/22 they helped more than 1,208 survivors through bespoke emotional support services.
- The Independent Sexual Violence Advocates (ISVAs) provided 1-1 support to 671 adult survivors and 261 young people; many of whom remain on their caseloads as the criminal justice service processes the backlog of cases. The staff are working hard to keep survivors engaged with the CJS process.
- Thanks to funding secured by the OPCC the service was able to recruit an additional four ISVAs, including a specialist in supporting men and two posts engaging with seldom-heard from Black and ethnic minority communities.
- An additional award of £78,000 in December 2021 enabled the service to provide 1-1 intensive therapeutic support to 130 survivors. A total of 97 per cent of those attending reported feeling better able to recover and cope as a result and agreed their health and well-being had improved.
- Through additional resources secured from the Male Rape Support Fund the service offered 29 male survivors access to specialist therapeutic support – all men who completed the questionnaires at the end of sessions said they felt empowered and better able to recover and cope with aspects of everyday life.