



Nottinghamshire Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Victims' Strategy 2014 – 2017

Foreword

When our Police and Crime Commissioner Paddy Tipping was elected, he made a pledge to ensure that victims of crime are treated as people, not cases. Since then we have funded additional victims' services, including new support for victims of hate crime and anti-social behaviour, very vulnerable victims and teenage and medium risk survivors of domestic abuse. We have also commissioned *Victims' Views* research to ensure that victims are able to shape - directly - future services.

This strategy is another important step in achieving our vision to support victims in Nottinghamshire to cope and recover from the effects of crime. It has been directly informed by the findings from *Victims' Views*.

We must get it right for victims, and to do that we cannot work in isolation. Other organisations also support victims in some way, such as local authorities, clinical commissioning groups and NHS England. The development of this strategy has been overseen by stakeholders from Nottinghamshire Police and community safety partnerships. We need to work in partnership with these bodies, and others, to ensure we offer integrated services that provide excellent support for victims and make the best possible use of our collective resources.



Chris Cutland
Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner

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About this Strategy

In his Police and Crime Plan 2013-18, the Police and Crime Commissioner (“the Commissioner”) committed to establishing a Victims' Strategy. This document sets out his Strategy and identifies activities to be delivered.

Support for victims is going through major structural change in 2014 as Ministry of Justice (MoJ) steps back from its role of commissioning services for victims of crime; and Police and Crime Commissioners begin to commission their own services. During this transition period it is vital that victims receive the high quality support they need.

This Strategy sets out our vision for victims' services for the next 3 years. It helps to deliver the first of the strategic goals in the 2013-8 Police and Crime Plan, namely: to protect, support and respond to victims, witnesses and vulnerable people. The delivery of the Police and Crime Plan's other strategic goals such as prevention, early intervention and reduction in reoffending, once achieved, will drive down crime and reduce the numbers of victims.

Values

The Commissioner's values are core to his way of working. They are:

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Victims | by listening and taking action to protect and safeguard vulnerable people |
| Openness | by putting victims and the public at the heart of open and transparent decision-making |
| Inclusiveness | by working effectively with communities and businesses to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour |
| Communities | by ensuring fairness, respect and accountability to victims and communities |
| Empowering | by engaging with victims and communities to help shape policing services and build stronger partnerships |

Definitions

Victims

The Ministry of Justice definition of a victim in the *2013 Code of Practice for Victims of Crime* is:

- a person who has suffered harm, including physical, mental or emotional harm or economic loss which was directly caused by criminal conduct;
- a close relative of a person whose death was directly caused by criminal conduct.

This definition excludes the victims of activity, which, although not criminal, can at its worst cause mental and emotional harm and economic loss. Examples of the kinds of activity that sometimes has this impact on victims are anti-social behaviour¹, hate crime incidents, road traffic collisions and identity theft².

A broader definition of victims is provided by the Oxford English Dictionary, which defines a victim as a person:

- harmed, injured, or killed as a result of a crime, accident, or other event or action: *victims of domestic violence earthquake victims*
- who is tricked or duped: *the victim of a hoax*
- who has come to feel helpless and passive in the face of misfortune or ill-treatment.

In this Strategy, we support the people harmed as a direct result of a crime. This includes close relatives³ bereaved by crime. We will also support the people who have suffered the most harm as a result of anti-social behaviour (ASB), identity theft, road traffic collisions and hate incidents. Victims of ASB and hate incidents will be supported based on need, in order to ensure that our limited resources are targeted effectively. Where possible, we will support family members of victims, when they have also been harmed by crime and may be able to help their family member to cope and recover.

We will support victims regardless of whether or not they have reported the crime to the police.

¹ For the purposes of this Strategy anti-social behaviour is defined by the Home Office as: *Acting in a manner that caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household as (the defendant)*

² At the time of writing in 2014, Action Fraud categorises some identity theft as a crime against an organisation rather than the individual. This is under review.

³ Close relatives are defined by the Victims' Code as: "This refers to the spouse, the partner, the relatives in direct line, the siblings and the dependants of the victim. Other family members, including guardians and carers, may be considered close relatives at the discretion of the [Service] Provider."

Vulnerability

The Ministry of Justice in the 2013 Code of Practice for Victims of Crime highlights victims of the most serious crime; persistently targeted victims and vulnerable or intimidated victims as being entitled to an enhanced service. In the Code the enhanced service provides for victims to have immediate access into specialist services if they desire it; receive quicker updates about the progress of their cases; and request special measures within court.

Victims of the most serious crime are close relatives bereaved by criminal conduct, victims of domestic violence, hate crime, terrorism, sexual offences, human trafficking, attempted murder, kidnap, false imprisonment, arson with intent to endanger life and wounding or causing grievous bodily harm with intent.

Persistently targeted victims are those who have been targeted deliberately and repeatedly as a direct victim of crime over a period of time.

Vulnerable or intimidated victims are either under 18 years of age at the time of the offence, or suffer from mental disorder within the meaning of the Mental Health Act 1983; or otherwise have a significant impairment of intelligence and social functioning; or have a physical disability or are suffering from a physical disorder.

On the whole, victims of the most serious crime, persistently targeted victims and vulnerable or intimidated victims need more intensive support to cope and recover from crime. However, this is not universally true: not all victims who are classed by the Code as "vulnerable" may want intensive support; and conversely, some victims who do not fall into the Code's criteria for an enhanced service, may require intensive support.

This Strategy uses the Code's definition of vulnerability as a starting point in defining the support services for victims. However, a victim-centred approach, which allows for flexibility, underpins the strategy and action plan.

Context

National policy

Following a Government consultation in 2012, *Getting it Right for Victims and Witnesses*, the Ministry of Justice confirmed the introduction of a mixed model of national and local commissioning of referral and support services for victims. On 7 July 2012 the Government published its response to the consultation, setting out a wide ranging package of reforms to deliver a more tailored and responsive service for victims and witnesses of crime. This included commitments to:

- increase the spend on victims' services by up to £50 million per year, raised from offenders through the Victim Surcharge and other financial impositions, balancing the reforms to the criminal injuries compensation scheme to ensure the scheme is focused on the most seriously injured victims of crime;
- move to a model of provision of support services for victims of crime where the majority of services are commissioned locally by Police and Crime Commissioners;
- review the Victims' Code and Witness Charter;
- increase the number of victims able to make a fully informed decision as to whether to make a Victim Personal Statement;
- consider extending the scope of police powers under the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 to cover any individual the police consider to be in need of protection.

The changing landscape of victims' service provision is part of a wider strategy to ensure that victims are at the centre of the criminal justice system.

The *Victims' Services Commissioning Framework* was published in May 2013 by Ministry of Justice. It advises commissioners on the different aspects to consider in commissioning victims' support services. It recommends outcome based commissioning as the best method to enable victims to **cope** with the immediate impacts of crime; and **recover** from the harm experienced. Eight categories of victim need are identified, based on national consultation:

- mental and physical health
- shelter and accommodation
- family, friends and children
- education, skills and employment
- drugs and alcohol
- finance and benefits
- outlook and attitudes
- social interactions

The Government has also introduced a national focus on using restorative justice (RJ) as a method to support victims and reduce re-offending. Restorative processes, as defined by the Restorative Justice Council: "bring those harmed by crime or conflict, and those responsible for the harm, into communication, enabling

everyone affected by a particular incident to play a part in repairing the harm and finding a positive way forward”.

Restorative processes give victims of crime the chance to tell offenders the real impact of their crime; get answers to their questions; and receive an apology. Restorative processes hold offenders to account for what they have done, helping them understand the real impact, take responsibility, and make amends.

The *2013 Restorative Justice Action Plan for the Criminal Justice System* sets out national actions and a framework to underpin evolving RJ strategies across police forces, the youth justice system, the voluntary sector and the National Offender Management Service (NOMS).

The MoJ's vision for restorative justice includes victims being able to make informed decisions about participating in RJ at appropriate points in the criminal justice process.

Legal duties

A revised *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime* was published in October 2013 and came into force on 10 December 2013. The Code gives victims a legal right to receive a minimum standard of service from the criminal justice system. As well as regular and timely updates for victims on the progress of their case through the Criminal Justice System, it includes assessment of need, information about victim services and immediate and appropriate referral. Victims of serious crime and vulnerable and intimidated victims receive an enhanced service under the Code.

The EU Directive on the *Rights, Support and Protection of Victims of Crime* Articles 8 and 9 (effective from November 2015) creates minimum standards for victim support services across the EU, and includes provisions for victims to be able to access services regardless of whether they have reported to the police.

The *Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014* introduces simpler, more effective powers to tackle anti-social behaviour that provide better protection for victims and communities. The new Community Trigger and Community Remedy will empower victims and communities, giving them a greater say in how agencies respond to complaints of anti-social behaviour and in out-of-court sanctions for offenders. The Commissioner, with partners, is currently preparing plans to respond to this legislation for autumn 2014.

Local context

The Commissioner's *Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Plan 2013-8* sets out the Commissioner's intentions to achieve safer communities and improve trust and confidence in high quality policing by reducing crime and antisocial behaviour, ensuring fairer treatment of victims and citizens and demonstrating using public resources wisely.

The Plan identifies priority themes supported by activities which will be led by the Commissioner, the Deputy Commissioner, the Chief Constable and community safety and criminal justice partners. The first priority theme is to protect and support victims, witnesses and vulnerable people; and the first activity is to develop a Victims' Strategy, based on evidence of need.

The Plan is delivered through work with a range of partners which include the local government, third sector and criminal justice partners together with health, care agencies and local businesses.

In 2014, the Commissioner publishes his *Social Responsibility Strategy in Action 2014-18*, which aims to achieve sustainable policing; and long term outcomes of a safer Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. The strategy recognises that by managing and improving the social, economic and environmental impacts of the work he commissions, the Commissioner can increase public confidence and satisfaction, prevent and reduce crime, disorder and vulnerability, increase safety and security, improve quality of service, and be efficient and effective.

Also in 2014, the Deputy Commissioner worked in partnership with Nottinghamshire County Council to publish the *Nottinghamshire Domestic Abuse Review, Funding and Commissioning Arrangements*. This document sets out the findings of the domestic abuse service review in Nottinghamshire, which mapped existing services and makes recommendations about strategic alignment of services as well as the shape of future support.

Finally, we are currently developing a Restorative Practice Strategy with partners. The Strategy will provide a common set of standards to improve the effectiveness and quality of restorative practice delivery for victims, families and communities.

Where are we now

Victims in Nottinghamshire⁴

The following tables give a summary of victims of particular crime types.

Concentration of occurrence of crime / victims in Nottinghamshire in 2013/4

| Offence Type | Number of Crimes | % of total | Number of Victims | % of total |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|
| Homicide | 13 | 0.03% | 13 | 0.03% |
| Violence with injury | 8,150 | 16.78% | 7,678 | 16.44% |
| Violence without injury | 5,303 | 10.92% | 5,008 | 10.72% |
| Rape | 383 | 0.79% | 378 | 0.81% |
| Other Sexual Offences | 715 | 1.47% | 698 | 1.49% |
| Burglary | 7,767 | 16.00% | 7,559 | 16.18% |
| Vehicle offences | 6,333 | 13.04% | 6,208 | 13.29% |
| Robbery of personal property | 961 | 1.98% | 953 | 2.04% |
| Theft & Handling | 10,399 | 21.42% | 10,174 | 21.78% |
| Criminal damage & arson | 8,533 | 17.57% | 8,042 | 17.22% |
| Grand Total | 48,557 | - | 46,711 | - |
| Total volume of victims (all) | - | - | 44,310 | - |

There were a total of **48,557** victim-based crimes⁵ recorded by Nottinghamshire Police in 2013/14, with **44,310** individual victims identified across each Home Office crime classification.

Domestic Violence / Sexual offences

Proportion of Crimes marked as 'Domestic'

| H.O Classification | Volume of crimes | % of total Domestic Crimes | % of total Crimes for H.O Classification |
|-------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Violence with injury | 3,139 | 54.35% | 38.52% |
| Violence without injury | 2,518 | 43.60% | 47.48% |
| Rape | 95 | 1.65% | 24.80% |
| Other Sexual Offences | 23 | 0.40% | 3.22% |
| Grand Total | 5,775 | - | 39.69% |

⁴ All data from Nottinghamshire Police June 2014

⁵ Crimes as per the table above which has a named victim, eg excludes crimes against organisations

Hate Crime

Proportion of Crimes marked as 'Hate'

| H.O Classification | Race/Religion | Disability | Homophobic | Gender | Total Hate Crime | % of total Crimes for H.O Classification |
|-------------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|------------------|--|
| Violence with injury | 74 | 12 | 11 | | 97 | 1.2% |
| Violence without injury | 80 | 6 | 20 | 1 | 107 | 2.0% |
| Rape | | 1 | | | 1 | 0.3% |
| Burglary | 3 | 6 | | | 9 | 0.1% |
| Vehicle offences | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 3 | 0.0% |
| Robbery of personal property | 1 | 2 | | | 3 | 0.3% |
| Theft & Handling | 3 | 6 | | | 9 | 0.1% |
| Criminal damage & arson | 59 | 3 | 9 | | 71 | 0.8% |
| Grand Total | 221 | 37 | 40 | 2 | 300 | - |
| % of total Hate Crimes | 73.7% | 12.3% | 13.3% | 0.7% | - | 0.6% |

Number of repeat victims of all crime

| No. of crimes | Number of victims | % of total |
|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | 41,014 | 92.56% |
| 2 | 2,637 | 5.95% |
| 3 | 478 | 1.08% |
| 4 | 121 | 0.27% |
| 5 | 29 | 0.07% |
| 6 | 21 | 0.05% |
| 7 | 5 | 0.01% |
| 8 | 2 | N/A* |
| 9 | 1 | N/A* |
| 10 | 2 | N/A* |
| Grand Total | 44,310 | *% too small to display |

The table above shows the number of victims of crime who have been identified as victim once or more over the course of the 2013/14 performance year.

The majority of victims identified (92.5%) have been the victim of a notifiable offence only once during the previous performance year, with just under six percent a victim twice.

There are two victims identified as being a victim of 10 offences. One victim was a victim of nine domestic violent offences plus a domestic related criminal damage offence. The other was a victim of seven domestic violent offences, two criminal damage offences (one domestic related) and a burglary.

The one victim identified as being a victim nine times relates to nine domestic violent crimes, with two victims identified as being a victim eight times during the 2013/14 performance year. Of those two, one was a victim of eight criminal damage offences,

the other was a victim of seven violent offences, four domestic related, and one serious sexual offence.

Anti-social behaviour (ASB)

Concentration of occurrence of incident / victims

| ASB Description | Number of Incidents | % of total | number of Victims | % of total |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|
| Environmental | 305 | 7.48% | 228 | 11.19% |
| Nuisance | 2,534 | 62.15% | 1,015 | 49.80% |
| Personal | 1,238 | 30.37% | 795 | 39.01% |
| Grand Total | 4,077 | - | 2,038 | - |
| Total volume of victims (all) | - | - | 1,417 | - |

There were a total of **4,077** ASB incidents tagged as ASB Risk/Vulnerable⁶ recorded by the Force in 2013/14, with **1,417** individual victims identified.

The above table also breaks down the individual victims identified in each ASB classification for the 2013/14 performance year.

Number of victims of multiple ASB incidents

| No. of incidents | Number of Victims | % of total |
|--------------------|-------------------|------------|
| 1 | 682 | 48.13% |
| 2 | 270 | 19.05% |
| 3 | 149 | 10.52% |
| 4 | 85 | 6.00% |
| 5 | 62 | 4.38% |
| 6 | 34 | 2.40% |
| 7 | 30 | 2.12% |
| 8 | 25 | 1.76% |
| 9 | 13 | 0.92% |
| 10+ | 67 | 4.73% |
| Grand Total | 1,417 | - |

The majority of referrals for victims' services come from Nottinghamshire Police, with a small minority coming from other police forces as well as self referrals and other police referrals, from Action Fraud and British Transport Police.

⁶ Where an incident has been linked to a victim via Contact Record Management and the victim has been flagged as being a vulnerable victim or has been risk assessed

Analysis of victim figures

The above figures demonstrate that the majority of crime is low level. However, over 27% of victims suffer violent crime. Whilst the crime type does not determine the support required by the victim, it is more likely that those suffering violent crime will require more intensive support from victims' services.

We know from recent HMIC crime inspections that a significant number of crimes are not recorded. This includes hate crime, domestic violence and sexual offences. Some communities do not report crime to the police.

Crime trends which may impact on future victims' services

Whilst crime overall is decreasing, there are some crimes, such as domestic violence and hate crime, that are under-reported and where crime figures do not give an accurate picture of the level of need for support services.

In addition, despite the overall crime reduction, the number of victims referred to the existing general victim support service is largely stable.

We anticipate demand for a general support service to remain at a similar level. However, we expect increased demand for support services from victims of hate crime and domestic violence, and also from sexual violence victims, as more people disclose historical sexual abuse following the continued high media profile of this crime. Repeat victims may require particular support to help build their self esteem and confidence.

There are big differences in the crime rate in different parts of the city and county. Some wards have higher levels of crime. Often these areas also are more deprived and people who live there have lower health and educational outcomes. Support services must be able to meet the needs of victims all over the county, including in areas where victims are more concentrated.

The support needs of victims of cyber crime need to be better understood and the numbers of these victims may increase in future

Victim support services in Nottinghamshire: the picture in 2014

For many years, Victim Support has been commissioned nationally by Government departments to provide support to victims of crime. In addition, some specialist services have also been funded by Ministry of Justice (MoJ). In Nottinghamshire, MoJ has funded court based Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs), sexual violence support services and small projects to provide hate crime reporting and support and peer support for families bereaved by murder and manslaughter.

Almost all of the responsibility for commissioning these services moves to the Commissioner in 2014. However, some services will continue to be commissioned nationally by MoJ on an ongoing basis. These include a homicide support service,

the Witness Service, some rape crisis support and road traffic and hate crime telephone helplines.

Overall, approximately £1.7m of MoJ or the Commissioner's funding goes into victims' services in Nottinghamshire. Some of this is spent on awareness raising activity in relation to domestic abuse and hate crime, so that our communities know how to respond. Local authorities and health agencies such as clinical commissioning groups also fund victims' services.

General victim support services

Currently, almost all the support to victims of "general" crime such as burglary, assault and theft is provided by Victim Support. Victim Support was once a local and is now a national charitable organisation. It has a strong presence in the county and provides a range of informational, practical and emotional support to victims. It is largely funded through its long standing agreement with national Government.

Police referrals to victims support services are electronically transferred daily. This is done through a "Leicestershire Agreement", which allows victims' data to be transferred electronically to Victim Support' regional co-ordination units. Victim Support's regional co-ordination units make the first contact with victims on behalf of the relevant Chief Constable, at which point consent is sought for Victim Support to hold the victim's data if support services are required. The regional co-ordination units assess the needs of victims and provide some immediate practical and signposting support if appropriate. Victims requiring further support are referred from the regional co-ordination unit back to the appropriate divisional (local) office.

This referral model allows different police forces to refer victims to a single national service, so that people who are victims of crime in one area but live in another are easily referred to the correct area for support. Nationally, 8% of victims live in one area but are victims of crime in another. In Nottinghamshire, approximately 300 victims per month are transferred either into or out of Nottinghamshire.

Police referrals to Victim Support 2012-3

| | Referrals | Assessments | Ongoing support | Cost £ |
|-----------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| National | 1,100,000 | 407,000 | 140,000 | 25,000,000 |
| Nottinghamshire | 25,000 | 10,500 | 2,000 | 456,000 |

The above table includes referrals from police forces across the UK, British Transport Police, Action Fraud and self referrals.

Specialist voluntary sector led victim support services

There is a diverse range of local third sector organisations which provide specialist support for victims of the most serious crime and vulnerable victims. Some specialist victim support organisations are funded by MoJ and the community safety partnerships, with Police and Crime Commissioner funding. Whilst some have diverse other funding streams in place that may include clinical commissioning groups, local authorities and fundraising income from trusts and charitable activity, others are small organisations with little sustainable funding in place. With the exception of Victim Support, there are no large national voluntary sector organisations providing victim support services in Nottinghamshire.

Domestic violence

This mature sector includes many community based Women's Aid groups working with survivors of domestic abuse, specialist services located within other service providers as well as other organisations providing prevention, training and campaigning work specifically on domestic violence. The funding profile of these services is complex. Recent service reviews have been conducted by Nottingham City Council (2012) and the Commissioner (2014), working in partnership with Nottinghamshire County Council. The reviews mapped services and made strategic recommendations about aligning provision across multiple funders.

Sexual violence

There are three local sexual violence support organisations in Nottinghamshire, plus an organisation specifically supporting children who have been sexually abused and their families. Again, the funding profile of these organisations is complex. Both Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County Councils have conducted reviews of sexual violence services, mapping provision and seeking to align provision across multiple funders.

Support for relatives bereaved by homicide

MoJ fund a national Homicide Service, delivered by Victim Support until March 2015. The service, which will provide support to relatives bereaved by homicide after 2010, is currently being re-tendered by MoJ. MoJ also fund some organisations, including one in Nottingham, to provide peer support to relatives bereaved by homicide prior to 2010. These services are under review by MoJ.

Witness Service

The Witness Service is funded by MoJ and provides impartial, volunteer based, support in courts for victims and witnesses. It is currently delivered by Victim Support, but due to go to tender for a new delivery model from April 2015.

The Children and Young People's Witness Service, delivered by Victim Support, provides additional specialist support to children and young people attending court as victims and witnesses. It is not yet known what specialist support for children and young people attending court will be included in MoJ's Witness Service tender.

Other specialist services

Other local, charitable, specialist victim support organisations provide specialist peer and advocacy support to vulnerable victims of crime.

Other support services for victims

There are some additional services in Nottinghamshire for victims of crime. These largely relate to the criminal justice process.

The Witness Care Unit, based in Nottinghamshire Police, manages the care of victims and witnesses from the charging of the defendant(s) through to the conclusion of a case. This includes acting as a single point of contact in relation to the case and arranging for special measures in court (such as screens) for identified victims of the most serious crime, persistently targeted victims and vulnerable or intimidated victims.

The National Probation Service supports victims through its victim liaison officers, who contact victims of offenders with a sentence of 12 months or more, to provide information to victims about certain key stages of an offenders' sentence. The officers also liaise with the people managing offenders to ensure that the victims' views are taken into account.

Nottinghamshire Youth Justice Service utilises money it receives from the Youth Justice Board to commission Remedi UK to deliver victim contact and reparation services. The service contacts all eligible victims of youth crime to offer them the opportunity to engage with restorative justice as set out in National Standards for Youth Justice Services and the Victims' Code of Practice 2013. Should a victim require further support they are signposted to other victim services.

The Youth Offending Team in Nottingham provides a victim contact scheme which liaises with victims, providing a listening ear and referring to other support agencies.

Finally, local authorities provide anti-social behaviour services.

Restorative Justice (RJ)

Some restorative justice support for victims and offenders is provided by Rebuild, a partnership between Nottinghamshire Police, Victim Support and the Nottinghamshire Probation Trust (now the Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire and Rutland Community Rehabilitation Company). Other restorative processes for victims are delivered as part of the youth justice agenda (see above).

The Commissioner publishes a Restorative Practice Strategy in 2014.

Future Funding

The funding from victims services is allocated to Police and Crime Commissioners on a population based formula, with Nottinghamshire receiving 1.94% of the MoJ funding available to support victims. The breakdown is as follows:

| Year | Amount £ | Purpose |
|--------|-------------|---|
| 2013-4 | 404,000 | Includes £72,000 for restorative justice Capability and capacity building: getting ready for local commissioning. This funding could be carried forward to 2014-5. |
| 2014-5 | 121,000 | Restorative Justice services (for full year) |
| | 466,000 | Victims' support services (Oct - Mar only) |
| | 25,000 | Domestic and sexual violence support services (Oct – Mar only) |
| 2015-6 | 248,000 | Restorative Justice |
| | 932,000 | Victims' support services |

Victims' Views research

In early 2014 the Commissioner commissioned research to help him understand the views of victims – and the people who work with them – about current services and what future support should look like.

The research, *Victims' Views: the future of support services for victims of crime in Nottinghamshire*, had over 100 responses from victims, and another 25 from providers and stakeholders, fed in via questionnaire, interviews, focus groups and a provider forum.

The work also had a distinct, but complementary strand to seek views about the shape of future services for survivors of domestic abuse in the county. The findings from the survivor research is reported in: *Victims' Views: the future of support services for survivors of domestic abuse in Nottinghamshire, Summary of Findings*. This research had over 50 responses from survivors, fed in via focus groups and interviews. The *Summary of Findings* informed the *2014 Nottinghamshire Domestic Violence Review Funding and Commissioning Arrangements*, published by the Commissioner and led jointly with the Commissioner and Nottinghamshire County Council.

Below is a very brief summary of the key findings from the research. Further detail is in the reports, available from Nottinghamshire Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner's website <http://www.nottinghamshire.pcc.police.uk> .

Victims' Views: the future of support services for victims of crime in Nottinghamshire

The research found that in general there was satisfaction with current services, with many examples of excellent practice from general and specialist voluntary sector services and some good examples of Nottinghamshire Police supporting victims.

However, the research also identified gaps and areas for improvement which need to be met:

General areas for improvement

- there is no clear or consistent way for victims, providers or the Commissioner to understand what outcomes victims achieve through support services
- more consistent, responsive and sensitive support is required from Nottinghamshire Police
- there is a perception amongst providers, victims and stakeholders, including Nottinghamshire Police, that victims of generic, less serious, crime are not getting the focus that they need from police officers
- the 2013 Code of Practice for Victims of Crime, which stipulates the provision of information about a victim's case, and timescales, needs to be fully implemented and compliance with the Code monitored

- better and more co-ordinated information about services for victims of crime and victims of anti-social behaviour is required, easily accessible on and off line to victims, the police and service providers
- victims' needs must be clearly and consistently identified at the beginning of any support process
- young victims are not always having their support needs fully met by people they feel compatible with
- victims from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) communities need culturally competent support
- some victims are receiving telephone support when they would have preferred some personal contact
- some victims need advocacy support to ensure they get the services they need
- victims would like help and support from voluntary sector providers in preparing their Victim Personal Statements
- victims want support for as long as they need it, including after the court case. This could be on a "dip in and out" basis.

Restorative Justice

- victims do not view restorative justice as a process that helps victims to achieve closure but rather as a tool for reducing re-offending.
- victims would like to be offered restorative justice as a matter of course, even if they often do not wish to take it up

Specialist services

- more effective joint working amongst providers is required to ensure that victims of the most serious crime get the expert support they need from specialist services
- there are long waiting lists for sexual violence support services, which causes distress and further harm to victims
- there is a poor understanding within health agencies of the needs of victims of sexual violence, where a lack of understanding of the impact of crime has led to traumatic flashbacks triggered by routine health treatments
- some victims need access to specialist legal, housing, debt and employment support, in order to ensure that the effects of crime are not exacerbated by loss of their job or home
- mainstream mental health services do not provide the specialist counselling victims of the most serious crime need and in some cases victims cannot access any counselling support at all
- peer support needs to be consistently available as part of the cope and recovery process

Victims' Views: the future of support services for survivors in Nottinghamshire, Summary of Findings

The research found that there was almost universal satisfaction with current voluntary sector domestic abuse support services, with many examples of excellent practice, leading to survivors reported increased confidence, self esteem and empowerment. There were also some examples of excellent support from Nottinghamshire Police.

As with the other victims' research, findings have identified gaps and areas for improvement which need to be met:

General areas for improvement

- additional specialist training is required for police officers to ensure they provide more consistent, responsive and sensitive support
- the 2013 Code of Practice for Victims of Crime, needs to be fully implemented and compliance with the Code monitored
- demand for services is outstripping supply
- GPs need to improve their understanding and knowledge of the needs of survivors and avoid an over-reliance on prescribing medication
- victims would like access to informal peer support out of hours
- there is a need for specialist counselling for survivors
- some cultures have a low awareness of domestic abuse. Services need to ensure that culturally appropriate support is available for all survivors, including BME, Eastern European and LGBT.

Where we want to get to

Our vision

Victims and survivors in Nottinghamshire are resilient and less likely to be re-victimised; empowered to cope and recover from crime and anti-social behaviour by timely and effective victim-centred support from local services, families and communities.

Strategic objectives

Our objectives are to:

1. build victims' resilience to cope and recover from crime and anti-social behaviour;
2. reduce re-victimisation;
3. work with public sector partners to commission high quality local victim-centred services that victims from all Nottinghamshire's diverse communities are happy with;
4. ensure a smooth transition from national to local commissioning of victims services;
5. work with victims and local criminal justice partners to govern the effective delivery of victims' services; and
6. work with criminal justice partners to ensure that the 2013 Code of Practice for Victims of Crime is fully implemented.

The activity taken to achieve these objectives will enable victims' cope and recover outcomes.

Implementing the Strategy

Our principles underpin the activity we will take to achieve our objectives. They are:

- **Empowerment:** all support services working with victims will be victim-centred and outcome focussed.
- **Inclusivity:** all support services will be culturally competent, able to support all Nottinghamshire's diverse communities.
- **Integration:** the Commissioner will work with partners to ensure an integrated approach to service development and delivery.
- **Independence:** victim support services will be independent of the police and other criminal justice agencies.
- **Value:** all victim support services should provide value for money.

All the principles above must underpin our activity. It is particularly essential that we work with partners to achieve our goals. This work will range from working together to ensure that victims make full use of other local services which may help them, such as advocacy; to co-commissioning services with partners where common goals can be more effectively achieved by working together.

We will know we have been successful when victims of crime in Nottinghamshire report they have coped and recovered.

Action plan

All activity will be led by Nottinghamshire Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, working with partners, and will contribute to victims' cope and recover outcomes.

| Obj | Activity | Timescale |
|------------------|--|----------------|
| 1 4 | To enter into an agreement with Victim Support, and other victim support services in Nottinghamshire funded by MoJ, to continue to provide existing victim support services until March 2015. A transition period from Jan-Mar 2015 will be built into the agreement with Victim Support. | Jul - Sep 2014 |
| 4 | To continue to work with the Integrated Victims Services Transition Board to oversee and monitor the transition from national to local commissioning, addressing any risks and issues for victims as they arise. | 2014-5 |
| 1 2 3 4 | To commission a new delivery model for a general victims' support service that fits within the Commissioner's Commissioning Framework and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is victim-centred • enables victims to cope and recover • collaborates with specialist services to ensure victims of the most serious crime, persistently targeted victims and vulnerable or intimidated victims receive the specialist services they need • is fully accessible to all Nottinghamshire's diverse communities • integrates with other local services to achieve the best possible victim outcomes • embeds access to RJ within the service | Sep – Dec 2014 |
| 1 2 3 | To commission work to engage with people from equalities groups to identify how commissioned victims' services should support diverse communities | Sep – Dec 2014 |

| Obj | Activity | Timescale |
|-------------|---|---------------------|
| 1 2 3 | To work with city and county local authority and health agencies to align strategic priorities and explore the potential for co-commissioning sexual violence support services. | Sep - Oct 2014 |
| 1 | To work with providers and other stakeholders, including MoJ, to develop test and implement an performance management and outcomes framework for victims' support services | Oct - Dec 2014 |
| 4 | To build capacity in victim support services to respond to future tendering opportunities. | Oct 2014 – Mar 2015 |
| 1 3 | To publish a restorative justice strategy and framework, as agreed with criminal justice partners. | Oct 2014 |
| 1 3 | To work with Nottingham's Crime and Drugs Partnership and the Safer Nottinghamshire Board to commission independent, high quality victim-focussed RJ delivery services. | Sep - Dec 2014 |
| 5 | To work with criminal justice partners to develop and implement a governance mechanism for victims' services. This will include victims. | Jan – Mar 2015 |
| 1 2 3 | To co-commission, with city and county local authorities, (including public health) integrated survivor-centred domestic abuse services, in line with the findings of the Commissioner's Domestic Abuse Review and the Safe From Harm Review in the city. | 2014-5 |
| 1 2 3 | (Co-) Commission sexual violence services. | Oct 2014 – Mar 2015 |
| 1 3 | To assess the need for local commissioning of peer support for families bereaved by murder and manslaughter, once MoJ's national commissioning intentions are known. | Oct 2015 |
| 3 | To influence the design of any new Witness Care Unit to ensure that the service effectively works with victims' support services to provide seamless support for victims. | Jul – Sep 2015 |
| 5 | To review the effectiveness of commissioned services. This will include consultation with victims. | 2015 |
| 6 | To work with partners to oversee the successful implementation of the 2013 Code of Practice for Victims of Crime. | Ongoing |

Equality

As a public body, the Nottinghamshire Office of Police and Crime Commissioner (NOPCC) is subject to the general equality duty. The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate equality and good relations into day-to-day business and for consideration to be given to how the Commissioner can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good community relations, by having due regard to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- foster good relations between such groups.

These are sometimes referred to as the three aims or arms of the general equality duty which involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

Equality Impact Assessment

To date, the action taken so far by NOPCC in relation to victims and equalities is:

- questions relating to whether current services are appropriate for victims from all equality groups were integrated into the victims' research
- the views from victims from different equality groups were actively sought as part of the research
- an equalities impact assessment on this Strategy has been completed and is available from the Nottinghamshire Office of the Police and Commissioner.

The assessment has highlighted that whilst the researchers who spoke to victims spoke to all equalities groups as part of the research, the number of disabled participants and participants from minority ethnic groups and the LGBT community was small.

Future work is planned and included in the action plan.