



Needs assessment for victim services

This needs assessment forms part of the on-going commissioning cycle process for Victims Services in Devon and Cornwall.

Commissioning is not a new concept. It is about securing the best outcomes, at the best value and ensuring continuous review of whether services achieve success in addressing the needs of victims of crime.

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner



**Office of the Police
and Crime Commissioner**

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Introduction from Tony Hogg , Police and Crime Commissioner

The publication of the Needs Assessment marks the beginning of the commissioning journey for victim services in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. It includes an overview of current service provision, analysis of responses from organisations and members of the public and some recommendations for future delivery. A new service will be fully operational from the 1 April 2015.

One of the key priorities within the *Police and Crime Plan* is 'giving victims and witnesses a stronger voice'. I am committed to ensuring that all victims, regardless of whether they have reported the crime or not, receive access to the support they need in order to help them cope and recover from the effects of crime. I welcome the new *Code of Practice for Victims* and the provision of an enhanced service for those most in need.

The publication of the needs assessment does not mean we will stop listening to victims or those that work with victims. There will be further opportunities to feedback via provider and stakeholder engagement events and by contacting the OPCC commissioning team.

I would like to thank all those that contributed to the needs assessment; in particular to the organisations and individuals that took the time to answer questions or complete the survey. I would also like to thank those who provided feedback on the first draft prior to the final publication.



Tony Hogg Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly)

1 Executive summary

This needs assessment forms part of the on-going commissioning cycle process for Victims Services in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. The *Victim Services Commissioning Framework* (May 2013) (**Appendix 1**) outlines what commissioning is as follows:

'Commissioning is not a new concept. It is about securing the best outcomes, at the best value and ensuring continuous review of whether services achieve success in addressing the needs of victims of crime.'

'The widest definition of commissioning is, deciding how to use the total resources available in order to improve users' outcomes in the most efficient, effective and sustainable way. This definition is important as it shifts the focus from measuring success based on the number of users receiving a particular service, to commissioning for improved outcomes based on the ability of victims to return to the life they had before the crime took place.'

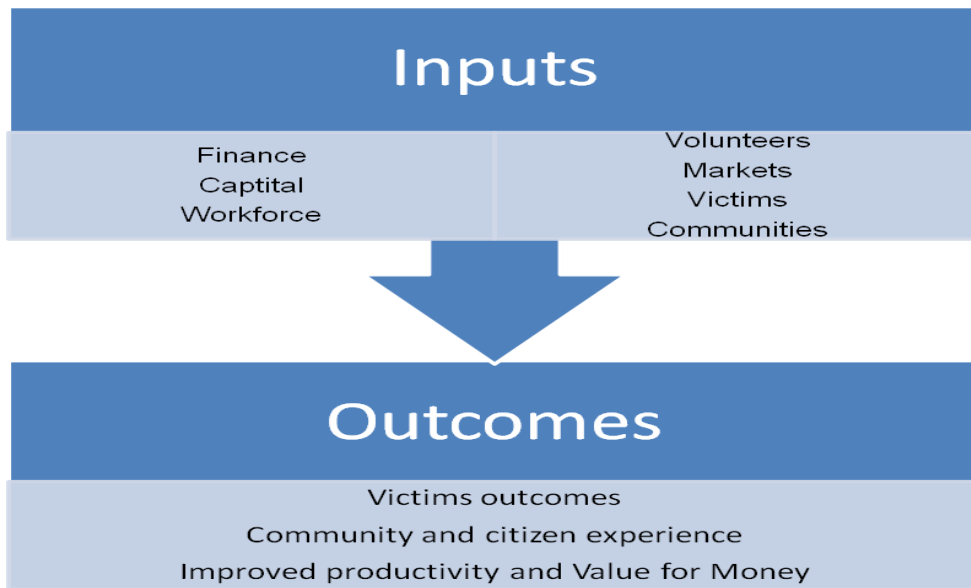
'Successful commissioning is not simply based on how to best optimise the use of money. It encompasses a full range of resources, many different ways of improving outcomes, partnership working and assessing a range of services available to secure better outcomes as well as securing value for money'

The Commissioning Cycle is often described in the following stages:

- **Understand**
- **Plan**
- **Do**
- **Review**

The needs assessment forms part of the 'understand' phase; however understanding the needs of victims and the services that are required is woven throughout all the stages and the needs assessment is by no means definitive. It is there as a starting point and a guide in order to inform and promote discussion on what victims need and as a basis of future market and stakeholder engagement events.

The commission of victim services is designed to improve services by moving from an arrangement that focuses on 'inputs' to 'outcomes':



The role of the police and crime commissioner

The police and crime commissioner (PCC) for Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly recognises the importance of improving the service for victims and witnesses. This is a priority within the *Police and Crime Plan 2013-2017* (**Appendix 2**):

Giving victims and witnesses a stronger voice

- *Being a champion for victims and witnesses through the criminal justice system*
- *Supporting the criminal justice system to deliver a simpler, swifter and more transparent service*
- *Better aligning the help and assistance offered by the police, other agencies and the voluntary and charitable sector*
- *Giving victims a greater say, particularly in how offenders are dealt with through the criminal justice system and restorative justice*
- *Keeping victims better informed as a crime is investigated*

The decision by the Government to provide PCCs with the funds to commission services is part of the journey described in detail in the section '*Background to Commissioning of Victims Services*', however the legislative mechanisms and reach of this commissioning is outlined overleaf:

'Grant funding for the commissioning of services will be provided to PCCs by the Ministry of Justice under powers given to the Secretary of State by section 56 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 (DVCVA 2004). This provides that the Secretary of State may "pay such grants to such persons as he considers appropriate in connection with measures which appear to him to be intended to assist victims, witnesses or other persons affected by offences". The section also allows the grant to be made subject to such conditions as the Secretary of State considers appropriate.

'The Government is currently taking forward legislation to provide PCCs with clear powers to provide or commission a wide range of services for victims, witnesses and others affected by offences. The legislation will enable PCCs to commission via grant or contract or provide services themselves.

'The intention is that service provision by PCCs focus on support services for victims of crime (a person who has suffered harm which was directly caused by a criminal offence, or in relation to a person whose death was directly caused by a criminal offence, a family member who has suffered harm as a result of the person's death, or a family member who has been affected and suffered harm as a result of a criminal offence against the victim) and conditions of the grant will make this clear. It should be immaterial whether a complaint has been made about the offence, or whether the offender has been charged or convicted.

'Victim services currently also provide support to some witnesses if required (for example, to someone who was the witness of a particularly distressing violent crime), and this is not envisaged to change. The main source of support to witnesses will be the court-based witness service that is to be centrally commissioned by the Ministry of Justice. Other persons affected by offences could, for example, include the children of women victims of gender based violence.

'The legislation will also enable PCCs to provide or commission services for victims, witnesses and others affected by anti-social behaviour not directly caused by a criminal offence. However, the funding issued by the Ministry of Justice under s.56 of the DVCVA cannot be used for this purpose - PCCs may wish to use other sources of funding to commission services for these victims.

'How victims' services are to be commissioned and provided in a PCC area is a matter for the local PCC to decide (except where conditions of the grant specify). Locally commissioned services must be able to operate across geographical PCC boundaries and PCCs can join together to commission services. PCCs may wish to collaborate with other agencies (for example Department of Health or Local Authorities) in the provision of support services for victims of crime.'

Timetable for commissioning

The first draft of the needs assessment was produced at the beginning of December 2013, for consultation and then final publication at the end of January 2014. Invites to provide feedback was sent to stakeholders, providers and other relevant forums. There was also the opportunity to leave feedback via a secure link on the PCC website. This feedback informed the final publication.

The police and crime commissioner of Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly will be commissioning a new service to be operational from April 2015. Some areas in the south west will be known as 'early adopter' areas and will be commissioning a new service to be operational from 1 October 2014.

Police and Crime Commissioner, Tony Hogg, has taken the decision to commission for April 2015 for the following reasons. Firstly, it will provide more time to have the necessary conversations with the Force and external partners on how best the service can be improved and to make sure that market engagement gives consideration to minority service providers.

The south west region of PCCs will collaborate on a regional event to be held in the beginning of March 2014. The purpose of this event will be to inform stakeholders and providers about the individual PCCs commissioning intentions and to provide an opportunity for providers to network. The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner will consider holding local market and stakeholder engagement events as required.

In addition, the Ministry of Justice is to deliver skills and information workshops to victims' services providers in the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector. The workshops are free to VCSE organisations and will be delivered in each of the PCC areas across England and Wales. Please see the attached leaflet or visit www.vcseworkshops.co.uk for further information. The workshop for the Devon and Cornwall PCC area is being delivered in Exeter (venue tbc) on Monday 24 March from 9:30am to 4pm.

At the current time, the relative strengths of adopting either a grant or contract approach are being explored, but the specification and completion will commence during April 2014. We want to provide a six month period in order to ease transition and therefore will be working towards awarding funds in October 2014.

Crime trends and priorities in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

We have chosen not to reproduce strategic assessments that already exist. The Community Safety Partnerships *Peninsula Strategic Assessment* (2012/2013) includes comprehensive information about the nature of crime, the trends within the peninsula and the priorities for community safety partnerships. These are as follows:

- Domestic, family and sexual abuse

- Alcohol, violence and the night time economy
- Antisocial Behaviour
- Reducing reoffending

These priorities are mirrored in the Police and Crime Commissioner's *Police and Crime Plan 2013-2017*.

It is important to note that crime is indiscriminate and we can all be victims of crime; however there are pockets of concern in particular areas or types of crime. Organisations that work within communities and communities themselves are best placed to say what they feel is a particular concern in their area; whether it is increases in racially motivated hate crimes in Plymouth or shoplifting food goods for quick resale in Torbay. The *Community Safety Partnerships Peninsula Strategic Assessment* is a thorough report which potential providers should refer to for detailed 'snapshot' of crime and community safety issues within the Peninsula. It can be accessed on:

[Community Safety Partnerships Peninsula Strategic Assessment 2012-2013](#)

Victims and witnesses

There is local, regional and national recognition of the fact that the experience of victims and witnesses through their journey in the criminal justice system needs to be improved. The *Revised Code of Practice for Victims* aims to improve the quality and representation of the victims experience in that journey (**Appendix 5**).

In this needs assessment, we have chosen not to explore the different types of crime and the impact on victims. In part, this is due to the limited amount of time given to undertake this work but mainly because there is a significant research that is currently available that has been used as source material to inform the report and that can be accessed in the appendices. The focus of the needs assessment has been to explain where we are in terms of commissioning, the figures and current system of victim support services, statutory requirements, where there are gaps and what we would recommend in the development of any new model of delivery.

As part of the needs assessment we have used existing research and statistical data. This includes using the mapping of services conducted as part of the report entitled '*Listening and learning; improving support for victims in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly*' (**Appendix 6**) and data from the police and current provider of support services for victims. We have had input from other organisations and professionals; from both the statutory and voluntary sector that work directly and indirectly with victims of crime. We undertook a survey of both adults and young people living within Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly and these responses are analysed in the section '*Needs Assessment Analysis*'

Throughout this engagement it has been clear that all providers and partners that work within the criminal justice system and serve the communities within the peninsula are committed to improving services for victims and witnesses although there are differences in opinion about how this is to be fulfilled.

It is worth noting that victims are all individuals that should not be stereotyped. Any one of us at any time can become a victim of crime; and yet those that are most impacted by crime are often the least involved in the process of receiving justice. An example of this is the under reporting of sexual violence offences. One of the main drivers for the commissioning of victim services was to make sure that individual victims are supported to cope and recover, according to their needs. This is examined in more detail in the section entitled *Background to commissioning of victim services* (Page 11)

Restorative justice

The use of restorative justice when appropriate is recognised as an important element in helping victims cope and recover from the effects of crime. It is stated that in the new *Code of Practice for Victims and Witnesses* (**Appendix 5**) 'that information on restorative justice must be given to victims of adult offenders. It is also recognised that it can have an impact on reducing reoffending. The Youth Offending Service has had considerable success in providing the option of restorative justice and the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) has an important role in promoting the use of restorative justice. (An explanation of the function of the LCJB can be found on page 20). To that end it held a conference with statutory and third sector organisations in April 2013 to map where restorative justice is being used and to promote adherence to the quality standards as outlined by the Restorative Justice Council.

The needs assessment has only touched lightly on restorative justice because the Ministry of Justice will be providing separate funding for restorative justice initiatives. This funding will be open to competition and increase steadily over the next few years. Despite this, we recognise that restorative justice approaches are an important part of enabling some victims to gain 'closure' and start to recover from the effects of the crime and for some offenders to develop empathy for those they have harmed.

Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly has a number of initiatives that plan to provide co-ordination of Restorative Justice in local areas and clearly there is synergy between how these develop alongside support services for victims.

The allocation of funds to restorative justice will need to tie in with the requirements of victims and the commissioning of victim services. The office of the Police Commissioner will allocate funds prior to April 2014.

Commissioning intentions

The intention is to move to a service that puts the individual needs of victims at the heart of service design. The following table does not relate to the

existing provider of victim services but is reproduced to provide an understanding of the general principles of direct victim interaction.

Moving from	⇒	Moving to	⇒	Identifiable risk
A market shaped by historic investments	⇒	A market shaped by choice enabling victims to cope and recover	⇒	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market immaturity "Informed choices" – providing a range of services Additional brokerage requirement to ensure agreed outcome
An offer to clients of generic services that is process heavy and delays local interaction	⇒	A commitment to client led interventions which are unique	⇒	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market immaturity "Informed choices" Balancing client led aspirations against resources Diversity of providers =challenge to contract /performance management
A process that contacts all eligible victims but results in little further engagement. And does not readily signpost to other services or use local knowledge of services to meet victims needs	⇒	An integrated multi-modal approach where core and specified services can be delivered through multi agency coordination and collaboration	⇒	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrastructure and staffing resources Holistic (whole person) commissioning approaches information exchange and working with the force. Senior leader resistance to a whole system approach Meeting requirements of Victims Code and EU Directive
A service user experience in which power and choice are diminished, transferred or absent	⇒	A user centric model through which the service user is empowered and requirements of enhanced service can be met	⇒	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioner/organisational resistance Time limited encounters and building in agreed exit strategies Unrealistic expectations of service users
Commissioning approaches which lead to measure the wrong things – outputs rather than outcomes	⇒	A commissioning approach which captures key milestones and outcomes across the victim pathways of cope and recover	⇒	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measuring/capturing success Limitation of resources Translating the service user's journey into agreed outcomes
Doing things "to" people Removed from local responses	⇒	Doing things "with" people on a local level.	⇒	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioner/organisational resistance Increased need for resources and partnership working Ability to evidence 'distance travelled'

Based on *Active Learning Set approach to personalisation in commissioning* by Rob Fenwick

Specialist provision

We are committed to making sure that vulnerable victims of crime are provided with timely support that meets all their identified needs. This will involve working closely with both established and new local partnerships together with a range of specialist service providers. In order to ensure a comprehensive provision of service across all protected characteristics, we will use a combination of commissioned services, grants and access for victims of crime regardless of whether they report the crime to the Police or not.

2 Background to commissioning of victim services

In January 2012, the Government published the consultation 'Getting it right for victims and services' (**Appendix 3**). It sets out a number of proposals to provide a more coherent service for victims of crime and with the overall effect that the vast majority of decisions about what services are needed at a local level are made by police and crime commissioners. An outcome based framework, moving decision making for services to a local level are the cornerstones of the central strategic drive to improve outcomes for victims and witnesses.

The *Anti Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill* published on 9 May 2013 (anticipated to receive royal assent in Spring 2014) includes provision to expand the police and crime commissioner existing powers to ensure that they '*will be able to commission the widest possible range of services, by the widest possible means*' (Helen Grant MP May 2013)

In May 2013 the *Victim Services for Commissioning Framework* (**Appendix 1**) was published. Although not mandatory, it has a number of purposes, to provide clarity around outcomes for victims and establish performance monitoring so that commissioners are accountable to the public and service providers to commissioners.

Subject to Parliamentary approval, the transition to locally commissioned support services will occur on the 1 October 2014.

The UK has opted into the *EU directive on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime* (**Appendix 4**) (formally adopted on 4 October 2012 with a deadline for implementation of the 16 November 2015.) The obligations need to be taken into account now for police and crime commissioners which intend to enter into arrangements for provision of services which will last more than a year.

Commissioners, potential providers and criminal justice partners need to be aware of the plans to revise the *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime* (*Victims Code*) (**Appendix 5**). This will give victims clearer entitlements from Criminal Justice Agencies and better tailored services to individual need.

The move to local commissioning of victims services

The commissioning of victim services is part of a strategic move towards more personalised services for local people and investment in the voluntary and community sector. From 2014, most of the emotional and practical support services for victims of crime will be commissioned locally by police and crime commissioners.

Central to this change are the principles that underpinned the reforms outlined in the Government consultation '*Getting it right for victims and witnesses*':

- **Practical and emotional support should be given to those who need it most.** We think that funding for support should be directed as a priority to victims of serious crime, those who are persistently targeted and the most vulnerable.
- **Victims should receive help as and when they need it.** Our approach to funding and commissioning victim services will recognise the importance of ensuring that practical and emotional support is on hand immediately after the crime has been committed, and that victim' needs change over time.
- **Services should meet the different needs of communities across the country.** Different localities suffer from different levels and types of crime. While victims must have clear, national expectations about how they will be treated and the support on offer, local services must have the flexibility to meet the different and changing needs.
- **Offenders should make reparation for the impact of their crimes.** We want to see a shift away from compensation funded by the taxpayer to a situation in which more offenders take personal responsibility for the harm they have caused by offering an apology or by making the appropriate financial or practical reparation.

The consultation also outlined why police and crime commissioners are best placed to locally commission services for victims. They are:

- Specifically required to obtain the views of victims of crime on their police and crime plan. This relationship between victim and PCCs would further be strengthened by commissioning local services.
- Required to work collaboratively across the criminal justice partners and community safety partnerships
- It is recognised that victims can have complex needs and to meet those needs a partnership approach is required. The police and crime commissioner is instrumental in developing a local victims strategy that enables the needs of victims to be identified and addressed by agencies to ensure the victims pathway through the criminal justice system runs smoothly and that partners work effectively to meet the personalised needs of victims.

Services that will be nationally commissioned

The Ministry of Justice will continue to directly commission and fund some services. These include commissioning a national court based witness service. The current service provider is Victim Support. They will nationally commission services that work with victims of crime that are recognised as high impact crimes but tend to be low in volume. The list of services that will be nationally commissioned is below:

- **Rape support centres**
- **Services for victims of trafficking**
- **A homicide service**
- **A court based witness service**
- **Some national telephone help lines**
- **Some domestic violence and sexual violence services**

At the time of writing, those local services that were funded by the Victim and Witness General Fund had to apply for a six month extension by the 30 September 2013 in order that there be no hiatus in service provision between the current MOJ funding arrangements ending 31 March 2014 and the commencement of the new national-local model of commissioned services from 1 October 2014.

Nationally, PCCs may individually decide to roll on the existing grant; however, there is no obligation for PCCs to continue to fund. Any decision will be based on performance and on the requirements of victims.

In addition to this, the Government recognises the case for national commissioning of its court based witness service.

Key principles of commissioning victim services

Rather than measure success against factors such as how many victims have been contacted or referred for assessment, success will be measured on how a service has supported a victim and the results of that support. The framework focuses on outcome based commissioning which is far more effective for achieving the overarching outcomes of supporting victims to **cope** with the immediate impacts of crime and **recover** from the harm experienced. That is not to say that output measurements are not useful; however used in conjunction with outcomes it will help give an overall picture as to the effectiveness of interventions and the value they are providing.

Cope and recover are outcomes which support services for victims should aim to achieve and against which they will be monitored. Cope and recover are part of the social values that commissioning of services for victims of crime

seeks to address. Social values success reflects more than just financial success and includes a person's happiness, wellbeing, health, inclusion and empowerment. This focus should encourage victims' service providers, supported by their commissioner, to work in partnership with other organisations to ensure the holistic needs of victims are met.

Eight categories of need have been identified as those areas which support services should aim to help victims with during the course of their intervention. The response to the consultation *Getting it right for victims and witnesses* agreed that those categories of need are:

- 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 Victims Code specifies that services provided to victims should be targeted at those who have suffered the greatest impact from crime. The following sets out in detail those victims who should be a priority for enhanced support:

Victims of serious crime – murder and manslaughter, rape, sexual violence, terrorism, and violent crime such as wounding or causing grievous bodily harm with intent are areas where the impacts of crime can be particularly far reaching for victims. However as a particular crime type does not always reveal the full impact of violent crime on victims, it will be for commissioners to exercise their judgement in assessing needs. Other criteria to determine the seriousness of a crime and therefore eligibility for support may be set by commissioners.

The most persistently targeted – crime, even where seemingly less serious, can have a devastating impact on victims when committed again and again over a period of time, particularly where a victim is deliberately targeted. This should be taken into account as needs are assessed, and support provided.

The most vulnerable and intimidated – these are the people who are most likely to become victims, or who need particular assistance in coping with the consequences of crime or to engage with the criminal justice system. They might include: people who are isolated, or lack social or family support; those who need assistance in managing their own affairs; those who are more likely to be a victim of crime than members of the community generally (for example, by reason of age or medical condition) or less able to cope with the consequences if they do; and those who are able to benefit from additional or special measures in relation to court proceedings.

3 Methodology and approach

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner used a variety of research methods and data to draft the needs assessment. The approach mirrors that of the *Victim Services Commissioning Services (May 2013)*. There have been some challenges (refer to section entitled 'Constraints and challenges') but in essence we have endeavoured to cover the following structure:

- **National, regional and local strategic context** – an understanding of national policies and initiatives relevant to support services of victims of crime plus local issues and how the locality fares in relation to others in terms of social, economic and environmental factors as well as its support services for victims of Crime
- **Quantitative analysis** – the quantitative analysis will describe the local area in demographic and socio economic terms and place this in a national and regional context. Data sets on which to draw include demography, socio-economic and health and well being
- **Qualitative analysis** – While qualitative information may exist; specially instigated qualitative needs analysis may need to be instigated for the purpose of the needs assessment. The project will strive to take a creative and innovative approach to this, working across partnerships to understand the links between different agencies research
- **Analysis of existing provision** – knowledge of what is currently provided and its effectiveness. This will take into account services provided by local authorities, other statutory partners, private sector and the third sector.
- **Gap Analysis** – will examine the balance of supply and demand or need and take account of future scenarios.

We focused on the following areas; using a mixture of existing research and responses to our requests for information:

- Understanding victims within the criminal justice system
- Understanding and analysing the current commissioned services for victims under Victim Support

- Mapping services for victims across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly and identifying groups that directly and indirectly support victims of crime regardless of whether reported or not.

The first exercise we undertook was to liaise with the current provider of victim services and stakeholders to capture a picture of how many victims of crime there were, in what crime types and what level of support they received. We mapped provision in both the statutory and voluntary sector as well as highlighting when relevant strategic partnerships that have an input into the service provided for victims.

We were also keen to consult other organisations in recognition of the fact that some victims do not choose to report the crime to the Police or access support from Victim Support. In 2011, the Home Office commissioned Victim Support produced a report called *'Listening and Learning: Improving Support for Victims in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly'* (**Appendix 6**). This report was researched and written by the victim services' advocates (VSA) project in anticipation of the arrival of the Police and Crime Commissioner. The authors undertook a comprehensive mapping exercise of existing provision for victims and witnesses. We contacted the organisations that are identified in the report as part of our questionnaire for organisations.

The organisations, some with local reach, some operating on a national level, are listed below:

Domestic abuse

- AHIMSA (advice and support, Plymouth)
- Broken Rainbow (LGBT support service)
- CLEAR (therapy for young people aged 3-18 years)
- Devon & Cornwall Police PPU and local Domestic Violence Units
- Devon MALE (male victims)
- ESTEEM (male victims)
- IDVAs (Independent Domestic Violence Advisers – in the community and some courts)
- Men Safe (male victims)
- Plymouth FSS (Family Support Services)
- Probation Service (IDAP programme for perpetrators – includes supporters for victims)
- Refuges (safe accommodation and support for victims)
- Repair (helping men stop their domestic abuse, Devon)
- SAFE (Stop Abuse for Everyone)

- SEEDS (advice and support for survivors)
- Susie Project (support for survivors – managed by Cornwall Women's Refuge Trust)
- Victim Support
- WAVES (counselling therapy & group support for female & male survivors)
- Women's Aid
- WRSAC (Women's Rape & Sexual Abuse Centre) (see below)
- Sexual violence
- CRASAC (Cornwall Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre)
- Devon & Cornwall Police PPU (SOLOs – Sexual Offences Liaison Officers)
- Plymouth BASE (Barnardo's)
- Rape Crisis Line
- SAGE (Devon Partnership NHS Trust – for women with mental health issues who have experienced childhood sexual abuse)
- SAL (Sexual Abuse Line)
- SALT South West (Sexual Abuse Listening Therapy)
- SARCs (Sexual Abuse Referral Centres) (see below)
- Twelve's Company (support for victims of SV – including SARC)
- Victim Support
- WRSAC (Women's Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre)

Murder and manslaughter

- ASSIST (trauma care services)
- CRUSE (bereavement care)
- Escaping Victimhood (residential support/therapy led holistic peer support)
- Winston's Wish (child bereavement)
- Plymouth Bereavement Service
- Balloons (Bereavement and loss looking onwards)
- SAMM (Support after Murder and Manslaughter)
- Child Bereavement Charity
- Cooperative legal services

- CRUSE
- Plymouth Bereavement Service
- RoadPeace
- National Homicide Service (Victim Support)

Hate Crime

- Devon Male
- Devon Sanctuary Scheme
- Devon & Cornwall Police PPU
- Disability Cornwall
- EACH (Educational Action Challenging Homophobia)
- Intercom Trust (LGBT hate crime)
- MENCAP
- NSPCC YW project (young witnesses attending court)
- PDREC (Plymouth & Devon Racial Equality Council)
- Refugee Action
- The Monitoring Group (rural racism group)
- Victim Support

Young victims

- ABC (Anti Bullying Cornwall – Victim Support and young people Cornwall partnership)
- Action for Children (national support for vulnerable children)
- Barnardo's
- Balloons (support for bereaved children)
- Brighter Futures South West (support for young people in abusive relationships)
- CAMMS (Childhood and Adolescent Mental Health Services)
- Childline (national helpline)
- Connexions (safety support)
- Devon & Cornwall Police PPUs
- Devon Family Counselling Group
- Devon Family Solutions (support during family changes)

We sent an introductory letter and questions to the organisations listed. We found that there are a significant number of organisations who are supporting victims directly or indirectly and some of them responded to the request for information and feedback. These responses helped us gather the views of professionals who work with victims that might be harder to reach.

The organisations we asked the following questions:

- Do you work with victims of crime?
- In the last year, how many individuals did you work with that were victims of crime?
- Are you funded to support victims of crime?
- If so, can you break this down into which type of crimes they have been victims of? For example, hate crime.
- What support do you offer them both practical and emotional, and can you give examples of the interventions and support you have offered?
- Do you refer victims of crime onto other organisations? If so, what have been the main areas of need you hoped to meet by the referral process?
- Do most of the victims you work with report the crime to the [police](#)? If they choose not to, can you give some evidence for why this is so?
- Do you feel that services for victims should be tailored to the needs of the individual and the particular crime they have experienced?
- Have members of staff and volunteers in your organisation had any training on the impact of crime and how to work with victims? Can you give examples
- Does your organisation have any recognition for working with victims?
- Do you have any additional comments to make about how you work with victims and any thoughts you would like to share in regards to commissioning victim services?

We had 16 responses from organisations, largely working in the following arenas:

- Sexual violence
- Domestic violence
- Supporting LGBT groups
- Disability groups

We have chosen to weave their responses into the section that examines the needs of victims of particular types of crime.

In July we contacted Victim Support in regards to their planned consultation with victims. We offered to work with them and asked if we could attend the focus groups. Unfortunately these were meant to start at the end of September 2013 but had to be delayed due to unforeseen circumstances. Therefore, the feedback from their survey and groups cannot be included in the first draft of the needs assessment.

We also conducted two surveys. One survey was for adults and the other was differentiated for young people. The purpose of this survey was to understand:

- Public perceptions about the services provided for victims and witnesses
- Levels of awareness and engagement with victims services
- Other types of support that victims and witnesses have found of use
- Whether there are gaps and needs not being met in the current provision for victims and witnesses

Within a six week period, we were able to gather 197 responses from the adult survey.

We also conducted a survey that was differentiated to make it more accessible for young people. We had 128 responses. Young Devon facilitated a focus group with young people. This explored their confidence in reporting crime, their awareness of types of crime, whether they had been a victim of crime and what services they had accessed and how they had helped.

The responses from both surveys are examined in section 11 entitled, *Specials Needs Analysis*.

4 Victims in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

Definition of a victim

A victim is defined as:

A person harmed, injured, or killed as a result of a crime, accident, or other event or action

This definition in terms of commissioning and under the requirements of the EU directive applies to anyone who has been a victim of crime regardless of whether that has been reported to the police or not.

Victims are entitled to information about support services and referral to support based on need.

There is recognition in the needs assessment that a significant group of victims choose not to report the crime they have experienced or choose to access support of different support networks, groups and organizations other than those that are nationally commissioned. This is explored in more depth later in the report.

Victims in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

The Community Safety Partnerships Peninsula Strategic Assessment 2012 - 2013 gives a comprehensive overview of crime within the peninsula and should be referred to in order to understand the overview of crime within the peninsula. As part of the needs assessment we decided to instigate a survey to capture some of the views of both those that had not been victims and those that had been victims of crime. Part 10 of the needs assessment analysis details the feedback from the surveys and the responses of organisations that deal directly and indirectly with victims of crime.

In part 5, present police figures for the number of victims (period from April 2012 to the end of March 2013) can be viewed along with statistics of victim satisfaction from the Police.

The Criminal Justice journey for victims and witnesses

The Criminal Justice System is defined as follows:

'The system of law enforcement that is directly involved in apprehending, prosecuting, defending, sentencing, and punishing those who are suspected or convicted of criminal offences'.

The following statutory agencies are part of the criminal justice system:

- **The Police**
- **The Crown Prosecution Service**
- **Her Majesty's Court and Tribunal Service**
- **Her Majesty's Prison Service**
- **Devon and Cornwall Probation Trust**
- **Youth Offending Services across Devon and Cornwall**

There are also a range of voluntary and community groups and individual volunteers that are providers or work in the criminal justice system.

The Local Criminal Justice Board

The Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) includes members from the statutory criminal justice (CJ) agencies locally and voluntary representation. They work to local and national criminal justice strategy and have a key role to play in driving forwards improvements for victims and witnesses.

The LCJB is the strategic body that works to improve the efficiency of the local criminal justice system. For example, it increased the use of video across the courts with a virtual court pilot, and has instigated changes that make it is easier for witnesses to provide evidence via video link. The LCJB will take responsibility for ensuring the revised victim code of practice is implemented across the local Criminal Justice System (CJS) and will work with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner on implementing the national criminal justice action plan in relation to victims of crime.

There are national plans to support witnesses at risk of dropping out of proceedings. All Criminal Justice agencies will need to improve feedback, complaints and redress for victims as directed by the *Victims Code*.

The needs of victim are a priority for all CJ agencies.

One of the intentions of commissioning services locally is to work in conjunction with the Local Criminal Justice Board to improve the experience and level of support victims and witnesses feel at different points in the journey. This is particularly significant in relation to court proceedings, where the biggest cause of unsuccessful completion rates is because witnesses have not attended. There are many reasons for this but we need to feel confident that the quality of support and preparation for witnesses is available to allay any fears they may have about the process.

Police contact with victims and witnesses

- The police usually have the first contact with victims of crime and conduct a needs assessment in relation to a victims needs.

- Changes to safeguarding and the requirements of the *Victims Code* will result in more in depth assessments such as the ViST safeguarding tool being used when relevant. We have not been able to reproduce the ViST safeguarding tool because it is presently restricted.
- Police forces securely transfer victims' details to a national case management system within Victim Support (1.1million in 2012-2013).
- The police continue to have contact with victims and witnesses, as their case progresses through the criminal justice system. The issues of communication and feedback from the Police to Victims will be explored in the data from the survey and organisation responses
- The police also have sexual offences liaison officers (SOLOs) and family liaison officers (FLO). The role of the SOLOs is outlined below:

The contact by a SOLO with a victim of serious sexual violence varies depending on whether they are dealing with acute victims (within the forensic window) or historic complaints.

Acute victims (This refers to an incident where we have the opportunity to collect forensic evidence from the victim).

Initial contact is usually with uniform officers. The SOLO usually provides advice for the attending officers, as to whether a medical is required and what early evidence samples are required. A priority is to ascertain if the victim has any injuries which require medical treatment. They also ask officers to check if the victim has any learning disabilities, mental health issues, which may affect their ability to consent to a medical.

The SOLO usually has first contact with the victim at the SARC. (sexual abuse referral centre). The SOLO completes the following tasks:

1. Ensures that the victims do not have any injuries, which require urgent medical attention.
2. SOLO to check if the victim has capacity to consent to a medical.
3. SOLO to explain their role.
4. SOLO explains the reason for the medical and the investigation process. We also complete the medical book with the victim.
5. The SARC crisis worker usually completes the referrals to the GU clinic and the referral to the ISVA service (independent sexual violence advocate), in their absence, the SOLO completes these referrals.
6. The medical would be completed with the Forensic Medical Examiner (FME) or SOLO

7. SOLO to discuss and assess safety planning with the victim (requirement of alarms/sig warnings etc).
8. Ensure the victim is informed about the requirement for an achieving best evidence (ABE) interview and include the time scales for the interview.
9. Ensure the victim is updated with a crime number, and if possible a contact number for the OIC/SOLO.
10. SOLO to inform the victim, if the suspect is in custody.
11. Consideration for referrals to partner agencies if required.(for example, social services, housing etc)
12. The SOLO ensures that we have a safe contact number for the victim.

Following the medical the SOLO takes the victim home. The next contact with the victim is to arrange the ABE. The contact they have with a victim follows the same process as that of an historic victim, although the referral to the genitourinary clinic and ISVA service should have been completed.

Historic complaints

- Initial visit with the victim is to ensure they understand the role of the SOLO and explain the investigation procedure.
- Explanation of the ABE process and completion of pre-interview assessment.
- Discussion of Special Measures.
- Discussion re; safety planning- keeping safe- if this is a domestic violence incident, we ensure that DAIT are aware and implement the relevant safety planning and support for the victim.
- If relevant to the victim, the SOLO refers them to the GU clinic or provides the details if they wish to self refer.
- ISVA referral completed by the SOLO.
- The SOLO may also sign post the victim to partner agencies, if required.
- Ascertain who the victim would like contact from, (i.e. SOLO only or OIC) and how often they would like contact. Obtain a safe contact number for victim.
- Arrange ABE date and complete interview. This may involve the SOLO providing transport for the victim to the ABE suite.
- On occasions the SOLO may need to liaise with other departments within the police to ensure others are aware of the victim. (IE: neighbourhood teams/safeguarding adults).

Aftercare

The allocated SOLO remains in contact with the victim throughout the investigation. They liaise with the officer in case (OIC), ISVA service and other

agencies, ensuring the victim is updated on regular bases and at relevant stages of the enquiry.

The police review the victim's needs throughout the investigation. This includes safety planning and welfare issues. When required, we attend safeguarding meetings, or assist with reports for the victims. At the request of the OIC/CPS, we obtain the Victims Personal Statement.

The SOLO liaises with witness care and assists with pre-trial visits and provides support for the victim at Court.

Family liaison officers

Police family liaison officer (FLO) is a role of an officer either of uniformed or plain-clothed. In Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly FLOs work in the crime and traffic departments.. The FLO is assigned to the family by the senior investigative officer (SIO). FLOs are usually assigned to any situation where a point of contact between the family and the police is deemed essential, such as a high profile murder investigation, or a case of a missing child. They play an important role in updating the family on the progress of a case and in supporting and signposting victims to support, for example in the case of road traffic bereavements.

Witness care units

The witness care units provide valuable help and support to victims and witnesses through the criminal justice system.

They are jointly staffed by members of Police and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), whose role is to ensure that witness and victim issues are managed within the criminal justice system. It is worth noting that in our area, the balance of staff is predominantly from the Police. They ensure that witnesses and victims are kept informed regarding the progress of their case and also act as the vehicle for informing the prosecuting authority of witness issues.

The issues can fall into two categories:

1. **Special needs** - This can encompass many things from disabled access to a court area or travel problems.
2. **Special measures** - These are available to certain witnesses dependant on circumstances and can include such things as the witness giving evidence via a TV link, the witness being screened off from the court whilst giving evidence, or even a court being cleared.

The special measures have to be approved by the court after application by the CPS and both police officers and witness care officers will, where appropriate, raise these issues with the CPS.

The work of the witness care officers is vital in retaining links with the victims and witnesses and has had an increasingly positive effect on both the 'brought to justice outcomes' and public confidence in the criminal justice system

The Crown Prosecution Service

Along with the other criminal justice agencies, the Crown Prosecution Service has to adhere to the statutory requirements of the *Victims Code of Practice*. The new code will have implications that the CPS will have to consider, not least that victims have the entitlement to read or have read their personal statement within court. The CPS produces guidelines on how to support young victims and witnesses, those requiring special measures and general victims and witnesses. Some are outlined below:

The CPS is fully committed to taking all practicable steps to help victims and witnesses through the experience of becoming involved with the criminal justice process.

18. Prosecutors will liaise with the Witness Care Unit to ensure that victims and witnesses have the support they need to enable them to give their best evidence. The Witness Care Unit will also keep victims and witnesses informed of the progress of the case and arrange additional support for those who need it. Witness care units will, if required, refer victims and witnesses to national and local specialist support agencies which will provide ongoing support to meet individual needs.

19. Some victims and witnesses may have a number of support needs. This is either because they have been identified as vulnerable or intimidated. The Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999 has introduced a range of measures that can be used to assist these witnesses to give their best evidence. These measures are known as 'special measures'.

20. The prosecutor will consider the views of the victim or witness when deciding whether to make a special measures application to the court. The court makes the final decision about whether a request for special measures will be granted.

21. Some victims and witnesses need additional help to get over what has happened to them. The help may be in the form of therapy or counselling. Prosecutors will not prevent a victim or witness from having therapy or counselling until the trial is over if that treatment would be in the best interests of the victim or witness. Where a victim or witness has had, or needs to have therapy before the trial, the prosecutor will consider any possible impact on the trial.

Her Majesty's Court Tribunal Service

The court service works to the requirements of the *Victims Code of Practice* and will have to ensure that the new code is fully implemented, for example, the new code will mean victims are entitled to read their personal statement in court

The layout of the court buildings in Devon and Cornwall do provide some challenges to how safe witnesses feel for example the difficult of separating witnesses from defendants. This has been highlighted as a case The regional business plan and continuous improvement work of HMCTS includes a strand in relation to customer focused activity and this should drive improvements in how victim and witnesses feel about appearing in court and to improve communication with other agencies so that victims and witnesses are prepared for court.

Her Majesty's Prison Service

Some prison establishments have access for victims through restorative justice programmes. We need further information to establish if these are currently running within the Devon prison establishments.

The Probation Service

The Probation Service has both statutory requirements to victims of certain crime and can be flexible to play a role in non statutory victim liaison if they assess that the victims needs and vulnerability would benefit from their involvement. Currently, Devon and Cornwall Probation Trust is working with approximately 200 victims which fall within the non statutory category.

Devon and Cornwall Probation trust victim liaison officers (VLO) work with victims of serious violent and sexual offences, where the offender is sentenced to 12 months or more imprisonment. They also offer the service when the offender is detained as a mental health patient. They act as a point of contact throughout the sentence, help victims to represent their concerns, make representations for suitable licence conditions and give them information about available support services. Victim liaison officers also keep victims informed of all key stages of the offenders' sentence, including parole hearings and plans about release from prison. The role requires patience and sensitivity whilst maintaining clear role boundaries as a representative of the Probation Service. The work of the VLO is essential to the multi-agency approach to effective risk management and protection of victims.

The Youth Offending Service

The Youth Offending Service has a considerable profile in its application of restorative justice approaches for victim and offender. The aims of restorative justice (RJ) are outline below.

In terms of young offenders, the police pass on the details of a crime and those that have been victimised by it to the youth offending service, who then contact the victim to enable them to share the basic information and arrange a home visit to discuss the current legal status of their case and what options the victim has to participate in any restorative processes. Further meetings are then arranged as required remembering that the victim has the choice to opt in or out at any time.

The aims of Restorative Justice in the context of youth offending

Restorative justice (RJ) is a process which seeks to balance the concerns of the victim and the community with the need to re-integrate the offender back into society. It also seeks to assist the recovery of the victim and enable all parties with roles in the justice process to take part in a positive way. It has

Three major objectives:

1. That the offender accepts responsibility for their past and future actions
2. That there is some restoration or reparation to those affected by the crime
3. That both the victim and offender are re-integrated back into their community

There are many forms of RJ and it can now be found in many different settings such as in resolving conflicts in schools and in employee disputes as well as the more obvious criminal settings. The most common methods that the youth offending service use are victim consultation, Letters of apology and explanation, direct reparation work, community reparation work, mediation and restorative conference.

The key to RJ working is that the participants freely agree to take part. This ensures that what comes out of the process is genuine, for example, offenders do not do direct restorative work as part of their order unless they are genuinely remorseful, and victim participation is always voluntary. They also assess both parties to ensure that they do not get them involved in a process that will cause more harm or upset.

Most victims that take part have felt that they can move on with their lives, that they have a clearer understanding of what happened and why and that the offender has gone some way to repairing the hurt and upset they suffered. Most offenders do not think about the consequences of their actions before committing the offence and so find it hard to be confronted with the often harsh reality of what they have done. They feel better about having apologised and about trying to repair the harm. All of this makes it more difficult for them to commit similar offences again.

5 History and context of victims services

Services for victims have developed significantly in the last half a century with the growth of voluntary organisations for victims and the increased engagement of those services within the criminal justice system. In 1964, the criminal injuries compensation scheme for victims of violence was launched; but little else was provided from Government funded sources. The author recognises that there are many other agencies that have provided past and present support for victims but for the purpose of the background to the needs assessment has included this section to provide some context to the existing provision and main provider.

During the 1970s, Victim Support emerged as a response to the recognition that there were non statutory agencies and a probation service that was responsible or campaigned on the care and rehabilitation of offenders but that there were no '*dedicated services for Victims of Crime in the UK (Holtom and Raynor, 1988, Rock, 1990, Simmonds 2013)*'. Victim Support started as a small scheme in Bristol which was replicated as other national schemes across the country. By 1979, Victim Support created a 'national office' (NAVSS) to act as an 'umbrella body' for local schemes (325 schemes offering support in the community by 2003).

The model that Victim Support adhered to was the 'responsive good neighbour' that saw the use of volunteers as a positive aspect of the scheme because it reiterated a community response and engaged communities in supporting victims of crime. Victim Support has maintained a volunteer base with a shift to a more case managed approach, with greater emphasis on professional staff assessing victims' needs and then filtering the work to volunteers.

Funding for victim services from the state has grown considerably. In 1979, victim support received funding from a mix of private trusts and the Home office to develop the national office. In 1986, the Home Office provided £9 m over three years to establish services in local areas. The aim of this funding was to establish a national, cohesive network for victims of crime; however with increased funding from the state, there was also a shift to more targeted work, such as receiving further funding in the 1990s towards more support for victims of more serious crime. This is illustrated in the table below that highlights the fall in burglary related support with a shift to more serious types of crime:

Year	% of victim support referrals – Burglary
1985	80%
1998	38%
2003	28%

(Data from Victim Support 1999 and 2003)

State funding for Victim Support also increased from 38.6 million in 2009/10 to £45 million provided from the Ministry of Justice in 2010/11. (Victim Support 2011). Part of the funding provided by the Ministry of Justice in 2011 was for the formation of a national homicide service.

During this period, there was also a shift in thinking towards making sure that grants could be monitored in terms of value for money. The Public Accounts Committee 2003 stated:

'Our examination suggests that the Home Office needs to clarify its specification of its priorities for Victim Support and strengthen its arrangements for monitoring the level and quality of service and the financial sustainability of Victim Support'

In 2003, there were the first indications from Government to open up competition within voluntary sector providers to deliver victim services with the intention that the monies would be devolved to the local criminal justice boards and that a bidding process would be undertaken. By 2003, Victim Support had gone through a considerable restructuring, with more paid staff and centralised management and in 2008, the 77 county schemes transferring their assets/liabilities to a national centre, with Victim Support becoming one national charity (Victim Support 2009)

The introduction of the first *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime* under the *Domestic Violence and Victims of Crime Act (2004)* focus was on statutory agencies and what victims should expect from them (see background on *Victims Code of Practice*). It states that the Police are responsible for providing victims with information about local support services within five working days. For victims of more serious crime, their explicit consent must be gained prior to referral. It also states that victims of car crime (theft of or from a motor vehicle) will not be referred unless there are aggravated factors or it is requested by the victim. To this extent, the first *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime* placed victims' rights to have support from victim support on a statutory footing, albeit via the police.

The introduction of the electronic referral system, where details of victims are passed to Victim Support from the police (please refer to the *Leicestershire Agreement*) had a number of consequences. It is a system which has required more management, and has increased the number of referrals, while drawing the Police more clearly into the needs assessment process. It works on the basis of 'opt out' to manage the increased volume and to create a national network of victim services, victim care units (which are alternatively identified as 'regional hubs' in this document) were established in 2011. These centres make initial contact with victims either by phone or standardised letter and a victims care officer undertakes the initial needs assessment to determine if additional help is required. The victim care unit can also offer practical help for example an emergency grant or loan (Office for Criminal Reform 2005) in addition to their existing practical and emotional support. This includes sending out personal alarms, and arranging for locks to be changed. If a victim is facing hardship, they can also provide supermarket vouchers.

The changes that have taken place in the period 2008 onwards have been regarded by Victim Support as having:

'Dramatically improved the quality, consistency and efficiency of the service we provide. These changes include developing a consistent and cost – effective approach to helping all victims across England and Wales, underpinned by effective performance management. This has brought about demonstrable improvements in victim care and a robust, universal support system for all victims (Victim Support 2012)

6 Present structures for victim services in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

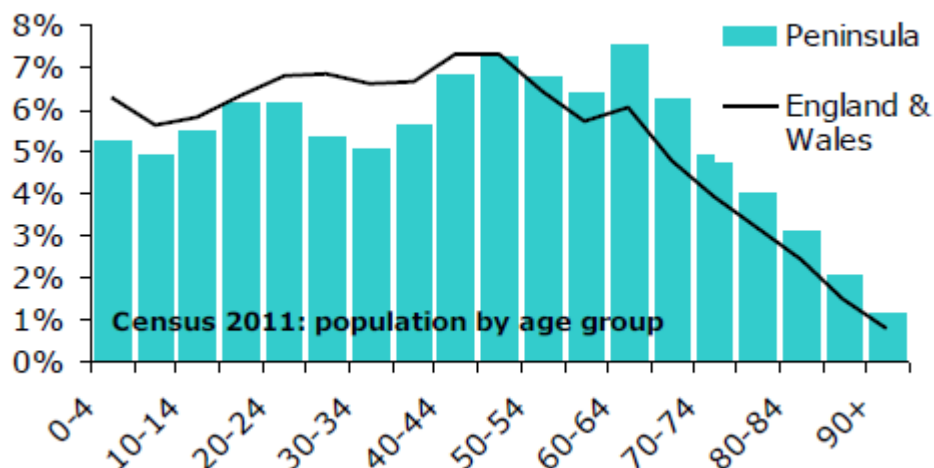
General information about Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

The local context

The Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly peninsula encompasses over 700 miles of coastline, covers 3,961 square miles and incorporates five upper tier/unitary local authorities – Cornwall, Plymouth, Devon, Torbay and the Isles of Scilly – and 8 district/city councils – East Devon, Exeter, Mid-Devon, North Devon, South Hams, Teignbridge, Torridge and West Devon.

Within this large geographic area, we have a population of 1.7 million residents living in 722,300 households.

The population of the peninsula is older than the national profile with more people aged 65 and over (21% compared with 16%) and less people under the age of 25 (28% compared with 31%).



The population significantly increases due to the influx of around 11 million visitors to the area during the average year. This provides much needed income to the local economy but increases the demand on our services and infrastructure.

Over 70,000 students also have an impact on localised demand for services at predictable times within the academic year, and are identified as particularly vulnerable to crime. Whilst the established student population in Exeter (estimated at 22,000) and Plymouth (estimated at 35,000) has grown in size, the student population in Cornwall has seen the most change, more than doubling over the last seven years to approximately 8,000.

In addition to scale, the demographic is changing, with all the universities in the peninsula actively increasing their international intake, and a number of private institutions attracting higher numbers of younger students to the areas.

Non-white ethnic groups make up an estimated 4.5% of the population in the peninsula, which is slightly lower than the south west region (5.9%) but much lower than the average for England and Wales (12.1%).

Plymouth and Exeter are cities of significant size but the majority of the peninsula is described as rural with most of the population resident in smaller urban clusters, market towns and villages. In addition to the usual types of crime and disorder problems associated with urban areas anywhere there is an additional challenge in providing equal access to services for widely dispersed communities.

Generally unemployment is lower than the national average across the peninsula. Just fewer than 55,000 people are estimated to be unemployed, accounting for 5.3% of the working age population. Approximately half are currently claiming job seekers allowance (JSA). This compares with 6.3% and 3.8% respectively for England and Wales. 12,500 people (1% of the population) have been claiming for six months or more. Torbay is the exception with an estimated 6.7% unemployed, 4.3% claiming JSA and 2.1% longer term claimants.

Of those who are employed there is an overdependence on low paid jobs, particularly seasonal and part time work, and there are fewer opportunities for young people.

Housing affordability and availability is a major issue with insufficient social housing and higher than average property costs. This combined with household budgets coming under greater pressure due to increased living costs, benefit reassessments and low wages, has a significant impact on families across the peninsula.

Although Plymouth is the only local authority in the Peninsula described as deprived, there are pockets of significant deprivation across the Peninsula. Typically deprived communities experience multiple social and economic issues, such as lower incomes, higher unemployment rates, poorer health and housing conditions and higher rates of crime and disorder. The health and wellbeing of residents in each local authority area presents a mixed picture (see below) with health inequalities closely linked to deprivation.

Refer to the following key facts map (Devon and Cornwall Police 2012) on the next page for more details.



Crime trends

Overall crime is down in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (Figures as of 15 October 2013) by 4.1% in the last 12 months. According to ONS data released (runs until the end of June 2013) Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly is ranked 12th in England and Wales in terms of the frequency of crime per 1000 of the population.

Crime has fallen across all regions with reductions in dwelling and non-dwelling burglary, robbery, vehicle offences and criminal damage. Violence against the person (includes violence with or without injury) is down by 3.8%

There are types of crime which are increasing in frequency. These are:

- Domestic abuse (including non-crime incidents) – up by 8%
- Sexual offences
- Increases in low level violence. It is worth noting that 47% of violent offences are not related to the night time economy or domestic abuse incidents
- Shoplifting has also increased; up by 3.7%. In the last year there were 8,000 shoplifting offences. Under the new victims code of practice, business crime will be included in those crimes that are eligible for victim referral

Present victim figures

The police force of Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly and IOS recorded from the period of:

19/08/12 to 18/08/13	Total : 101,622 Victims
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The table below shows the percentage of crime in relation to offence group for the period of 1 August 2012 and 31 July 2013. The difference in the total figure for victims in relation to the offence group total is because offences can have more than one victim.

Offence Group	Recorded Crime	%
Homicide	11	0
Violence with Injury	10835	13
Violence without Injury	9178	11
Rape	694	1
Other Sexual Offences	1356	2
Robbery	382	0

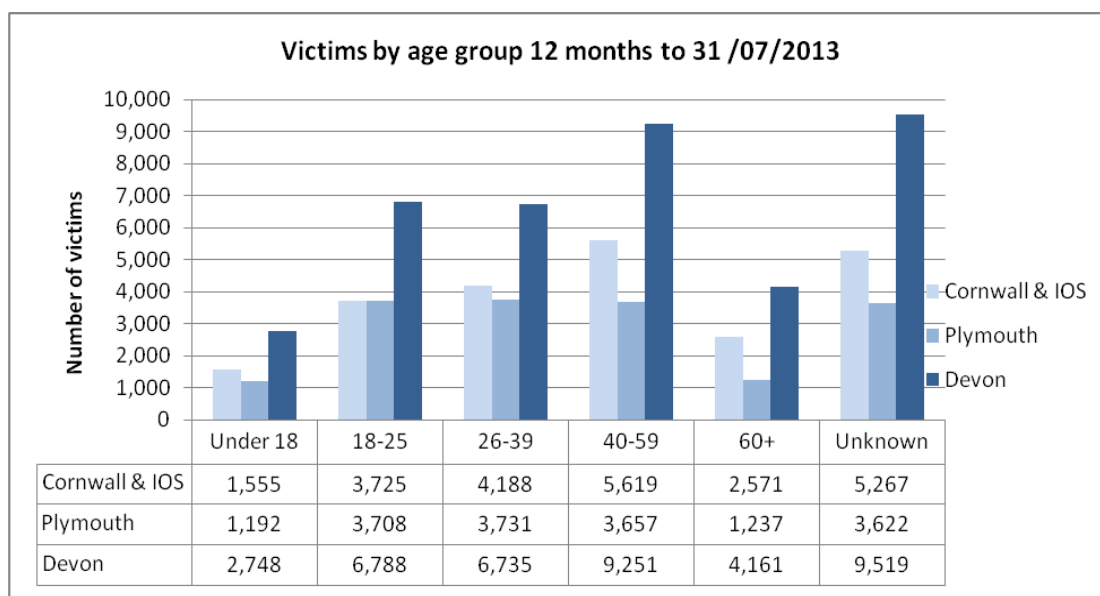
Burglary Dwelling	3269	4
Burglary Non-Dwelling	4629	5
Vehicle Offences	6106	7
Shoplifting	7508	9
Other Theft	14389	17
Criminal Damage	15023	18
Public Order Offences	5646	7
Possession of Weapons	441	1
Trafficking of Drugs	729	1
Possession of Drugs	3713	4
Other Offences	1785	2
Total	85694	100

Victims by age-group

The following data refers to victims recorded on the crimes information system as at 23 September 2013. It was filtered on entered date 1 August 2012 and 31 July 2013 and crimes

- For the period reviewed there were total of 79,274 victims of crime within the Force area. Devon accounted for the majority of victims accounting for 49.5% of all the victims for this period.

Victims by Age Group

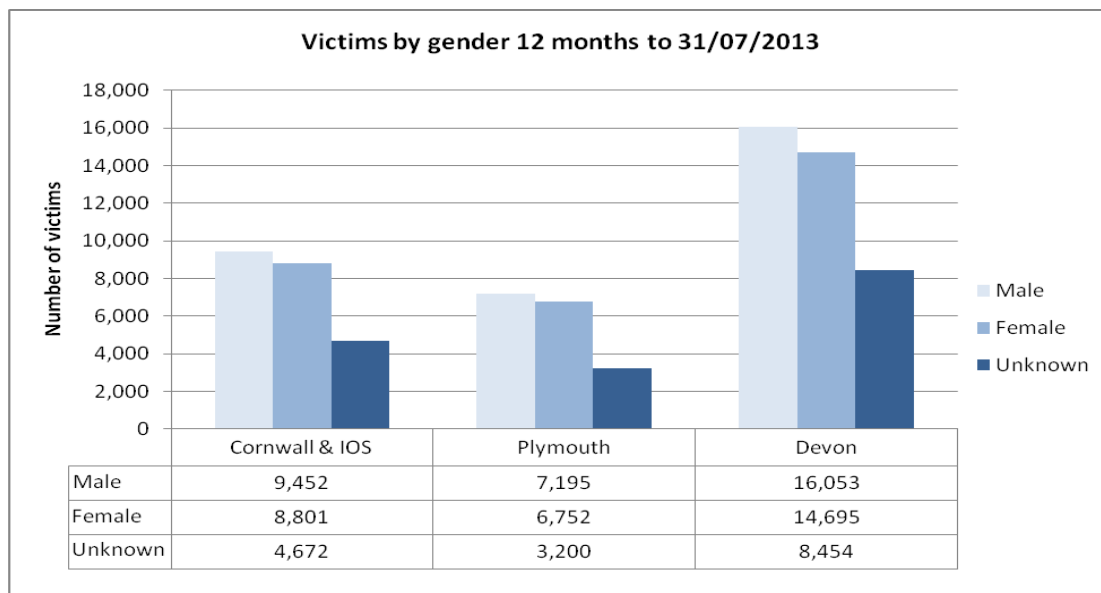


Excludes non-notifiable crimes and non crime incidents

Age group 40-59 recorded the highest number of victims accounting for 30.4% (18,527) victims of all victims were an age is recorded.

Age group under 18's recorded the lowest number of victims accounting for 9.0% (5,495) victims of all victims were an age is recorded

Victims by gender



- The ratio of male to female victims is nearly equal, with males accounting for 53.7% (32,700) victims of all victims were a gender is recorded.

Victims by ethnic group

Age Group	Cornwall & IOS	Plymouth	Devon	Total
British	16,084	11,818	26,510	54,412
Irish	25	20	50	95
Any other white background	302	351	588	1,241
Black	34	100	91	225
Asian	70	122	188	380
Mixed	39	62	103	204
Chinese/Other	38	96	116	250
Unknown/Not Stated	1,685	1,395	3,156	6,236
Not Recorded	4,648	3,183	8,400	16,231
Total	22,925	17,147	39,202	79,274

- The majority of victims recorded an ethnicity of British accounting for 89.3% (54,412) victims of all victims where an ethnicity is recorded:
- Irish accounts for 0.2%
- Any other white background accounts for 2.0%
- Black background accounts for 0.4%
- Asian background accounts for 0.6%
- Mixed background accounts for 0.3%
- Chinese/other accounts for 0.4%
- Unknown/not stated background accounts for 9.9%

Crime by geographical area

The following tables identify the number of offences, by type of offence in Local Policing Areas across the peninsula 1 October 2012 to 1 October 2013.

Recorded crime by offence West Cornwall LPA – 1 October 2012 to 30 September 2013

Offence group	Recorded crime	Recorded crime previous period	Recorded crime % difference
Homicide	0	2	-100.0%
Violence with Injury	1556	1609	-3.3%
Violence without Injury	1375	1209	13.7%
Rape	104	102	2.0%
Other Sexual Offences	194	136	42.6%
Robbery	48	52	-7.7%
Burglary Dwelling	379	490	-22.7%
Burglary Non-Dwelling	722	719	0.4%
Vehicle Offences	666	866	-23.1%
Shoplifting	1058	1196	-11.5%
Other Theft	2167	2045	6.0%
Criminal Damage	2339	2708	-13.6%
Public Order Offences	810	584	38.7%
Possession of Weapons	57	54	5.6%
Trafficking of Drugs	85	85	0.0%
Possession of Drugs	492	429	14.7%
Other Offences	162	368	-56.0%
Total	12214	12654	-3.5%

Recorded crime by offence east Cornwall LPA - 1 October 2012 to 30 September 2013

Offence group	Recorded crime	Recorded crime previous period	Recorded crime % difference
Homicide	1	2	-50.0%
Violence with Injury	1661	1615	2.8%
Violence without Injury	1317	1132	16.3%
Rape	113	90	25.6%
Other Sexual Offences	216	202	6.9%
Robbery	43	45	-4.4%
Burglary Dwelling	506	543	-6.8%
Burglary Non-Dwelling	841	840	0.1%
Vehicle Offences	895	911	-1.8%
Shoplifting	925	906	2.1%
Other Theft	2038	2126	-4.1%
Criminal Damage	2268	2445	-7.2%
Public Order Offences	744	578	28.7%
Possession of Weapons	68	64	6.3%
Trafficking of Drugs	168	123	36.6%
Possession of Drugs	644	578	11.4%
Other Offences	212	415	-48.9%
Total	12660	12615	0.4%

Recorded crime by offence Plymouth LPA - 1 October 2012 to 30 September 2013

Offence group	Recorded crime	Recorded crime previous period	Recorded crime % difference
Homicide	4	1	300.0%
Violence with Injury	2591	2741	-5.5%
Violence without Injury	2188	1937	13.0%
Rape	157	122	28.7%
Other Sexual Offences	297	284	4.6%
Robbery	114	157	-27.4%
Burglary Dwelling	783	939	-16.6%
Burglary Non-Dwelling	558	794	-29.7%
Vehicle Offences	1352	1506	-10.2%
Shoplifting	1833	1619	13.2%
Other Theft	2902	2911	-0.3%
Criminal Damage	3175	3651	-13.0%
Public Order Offences	1639	1372	19.5%
Possession of Weapons	104	97	7.2%
Trafficking of Drugs	159	166	-4.2%
Possession of Drugs	949	1005	-5.6%
Other Offences	293	593	-50.6%
Total	19098	19895	-4.0%

Recorded crime by offence south Devon LPA - 1 October 2012 to 30 September 2013

Offence group	Recorded crime	Recorded crime previous period	Recorded crime % difference
Homicide	7	3	133.3%
Violence with Injury	2181	2218	-1.7%
Violence without Injury	2085	1739	19.9%
Rape	132	125	5.6%
Other Sexual Offences	290	229	26.6%
Robbery	73	88	-17.0%
Burglary Dwelling	664	894	-25.7%
Burglary Non-Dwelling	1022	1158	-11.7%
Vehicle Offences	1396	1544	-9.6%
Shoplifting	1590	1467	8.4%
Other Theft	2923	2975	-1.7%
Criminal Damage	3063	3349	-8.5%
Public Order Offences	1147	895	28.2%
Possession of Weapons	99	64	54.7%
Trafficking of Drugs	143	176	-18.8%
Possession of Drugs	726	922	-21.3%
Other Offences	385	614	-37.3%
Total	17926	18460	-2.9%

Recorded crime by offence Exeter, east and mid Devon - LPA 1 October 2012 to 30 September 2013

Offence group	Recorded crime	Recorded crime previous period	Recorded crime % difference
Homicide	1	2	-50.0%
Violence with Injury	1761	1970	-10.6%
Violence without Injury	1570	1482	5.9%
Rape	124	126	-1.6%
Other Sexual Offences	254	275	-7.6%
Robbery	76	69	10.1%
Burglary Dwelling	701	686	2.2%
Burglary Non-Dwelling	987	1108	-10.9%
Vehicle Offences	1246	1315	-5.2%
Shoplifting	1572	1431	9.9%
Other Theft	3122	3024	3.2%
Criminal Damage	2553	2950	-13.5%
Public Order Offences	1058	1130	-6.4%
Possession of Weapons	94	89	5.6%
Trafficking of Drugs	122	143	-14.7%
Possession of Drugs	517	647	-20.1%
Other Offences	271	530	-48.9%
Total	16029	16977	-5.6%

Recorded crime by offence north and west Devon LPA - 1 October 2012 to 30 September 2013

Offence group	Recorded crime	Recorded crime previous period	Recorded crime % difference
Homicide	1	0	-
Violence with injury	1143	1181	-3.2%
Violence without injury	1023	983	4.1%
Rape	78	69	13.0%
Other sexual offences	124	151	-17.9%
Robbery	21	33	-36.4%
Burglary dwelling	254	278	-8.6%
Burglary non-dwelling	437	621	-29.6%
Vehicle offences	481	560	-14.1%
Shoplifting	704	689	2.2%
Other theft	1380	1493	-7.6%
Criminal damage	1526	1724	-11.5%
Public order offences	626	610	2.6%
Possession of weapons	52	51	2.0%
Trafficking of drugs	76	109	-30.3%
Possession of drugs	372	428	-13.1%
Other offences	137	313	-56.2%
Total	8435	9293	-9.2%

Out of area victims of crime

The population of Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly rises significantly within the summer months and holiday periods. The data below is a snapshot of two different months, February 2013 and August 2013. It shows the number of victims and how many were from out of area. This is an important question in regards to the commissioning of victim services as out of area victims

details must be sent within two days of the crime being reported to support services.

February 2013

Total of 5,856 victims with 254 being from out of our area (4.3%)

The main types of crime were:

- Theft and acquisitive crime 2,406
- Violence with and without injury 1426
- Criminal Damage 1095
- Sexual offences 160
- Vehicle offences. 483
- Other 286

August 2013

Total of 7,746 victims with 743 from out of the area. (9.5%)

The main crime types were:

- Theft and acquisitive crime 3,096
- Violence with and without injury 1936
- Criminal damage 1385
- Public order offences 508
- Sexual offences 173
- Vehicle offences. 595

Police victim satisfaction

The police measure victim satisfaction in three crime types:

- Burglary
- Violent crime
- Vehicle Crime

Trend

For the 12 months to the end of August 2013, overall victim satisfaction is 84.7%. Performance in this area has been in gentle decline for an extended period. Varying trends have been seen in three geographical areas.

Burglary satisfaction remains high and stable above attainment at 90.9%. Violent crime satisfaction is broadly stable at the lower level of 82.3%. Vehicle crime satisfaction has declined from a high of 89.2% in August 2011 to 80.8% currently.

Activity

Police engage in a number of activities in order increase victim satisfaction. These are as follows:

Feedback from the public is provided to officers and their supervisors. In cases where service recovery is required this is undertaken quickly by supervisors.

Supervisors are also expected to undertake victim call backs to understand the level of service their staff are providing and to allow a much faster response to any issues.

PCSOs are being tasked with reassurance visits to victims of crime to support victims and provide details of neighbourhood teams

A focus remains on the use of 'You Matter We Care' booklet for all victims

Work to improve satisfaction links closely to the activity on complaints reductions which has engaged staff in a renewed focus on standards and victim care.

Police enquiry officers and firearms licensing teams are now completing NVQ in customer care

The use of mystery shoppers has been well trialled as part of the diverse communities team review and the method is now ready to be extended following successful use.

The safeguarding vulnerable people review undertaken by the Force means they will be using a new vulnerability screening tool (ViST) . This will be used by officers to identify those individuals that are vulnerable. This tool dovetails into the requirements of the victims code.

7 Present referral figures from the Devon and Cornwall Police to Victim Support

Agreement to have automatic referrals from the Devon and Cornwall Police to Victim Support is governed by the *Leicestershire Agreement*. This has been accepted by ACPO and clearly sets out the data handling requirements for referrals. The process of referral will be examined below.

The following table was supplied by Victim Support. It covers each month from January 2013 to June 2013. It shows the number of referrals that come from Devon and Cornwall Police to the Victim Care Unit.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
VCU	2661	2162	2319	2170	2162	2490
Police	2734	2572	2801	2687	2979	3086
Target	97	84	83	81	73	80
90%						

Victim Support also takes self referrals. These are not included in the table above which relate purely to referrals via the Police. Victim Support state that they take self referrals where the crime has not been reported and if the case is historic for example in some Domestic Violence cases.

Categories of support

Victim Support gives support to victims of crime in the following categories, and there are specific operating instructions for each. The following are drawn from the Home Office categories:

- 105a Assault without injury
- 105b Racially or religiously aggravated assault without injury
- 13 Child abduction
- 17a Sexual assault on a male aged 13 or over
- 19c Rape of a female aged 16 and over
- 19f Rape of a male aged 16 or over
- 2 Attempted murder
- 20a Sexual assault on a female aged 13 and over
- 28 Burglary in a dwelling
- 29 Aggravated burglary in a dwelling
- 3a Conspiracy to murder
- 3b Threats to kill
- 34a Robbery of business property

- 34b Robbery of personal property
- 35 Blackmail
- 36 Kidnapping
- 37/2 Aggravated vehicle taking
- 39 Theft from the person
- 4/6 Causing death by careless driving under the influence of drink or drugs
- 40 Theft in a dwelling other than from an automatic machine or meter
- 5d Assault with intent to cause harm
- 5e Endangering life
- 58a Criminal damage to a dwelling
- 70 Sexual activity etc with a person with a mental disorder
- 8l Harassment
- 8m Racially or religiously aggravated harassment
- 8n Assault with injury
- 8p Racially or religiously aggravated assault with injury
- 9a Public fear, alarm or distress

Referrals will be accepted if they fall into one or more of the following categories:

- **core crime**
- **non-core crime, where there are aggravating factors**
- **a crime or incident type which does not fall into the categories detailed**
- **above, but does come under the remit of a locally funded project**
- **self-referral**

If the referral is assessed as falling into one or more of these categories then it will be accepted. If not, it will be rejected.

The police do not send details of victims under 18 years of age to victim support (unless explicit consent is given) and only low to medium risk domestic violence cases to Victim Support where explicit consent has been given. The police refer to other groups for high risk domestic violence and sexual offences.

Types of crime that are not referred

Below is a list of crimes that are not referred by the police to Victim Support as they are excluded from the eligibility list for referral.

Soon, child victims of certain sexual offences will be added to the list.

Victims of domestic violence offences that are deemed low or medium risk that are referred to Victim Support if explicit consent is given:

Assist apprehension offender in murder case

Attempt to murder

Attempted rape of a female aged under 16

Attempted rape of a male aged 16 or over
Attempted rape of a male under 16
Attempted rape of female aged 16 or over
Attempted rape of female child u13 by a male
Attempted rape of male child u13 by a male
Blackmail
Burglary dwelling with intent to rape
Burglary other building with intent to rape
Cause death by aggravated vehicle taking
Cause death by dangerous driving
Cause death careless driving infl drink/drug
Cause death by careless/inconsiderate driving
Cause death by driving unlic/disq/uninsured
Cause death by gross breach of duty of care
Cause/allow death of child/vulnerable person
Criminal damage to dwelling
Encourage/asst comm of murder believe be commtd
Intent encourage or assist commission of murder
Kidnapping
Murder of a person 1 year or over
Murder of a person under the age of 1 yr
Non crime - breach of bail or tagging order
Non crime - child protection inc - child death
Non crime - child protection inc - neglect
Non crime - child protection inc - op odorous
Non crime - child protection inc - other
Non crime - child protection inc - physical
Non crime - child protection inc - police prot
Non crime - child protection inc - sexual
Non crime - community engagement location
Non crime - cso disclosure
Non crime - death related
Non crime - disablist incident
Non crime - domestic incident
Non crime - homophobic incident
Non crime - juvenile misper intervention
Non crime - prison recall
Non crime - problem solving plans
Non crime - protracted enquiry
Non crime - public protection order
Non crime - racial incident
Non crime - religious incident
Non crime - transphobic incident
Non crime - vulnerable adult
Non crime - vulnerable adult mha detention
Non crime - youth intervention
Rape of a female aged 16 or over
Rape of a female aged under 16

Rape of a female child under 13 by a male
 Rape of a male aged 16 or over
 Rape of a male aged under 16
 Rape of a male child under 13 by a male
 Robbery business property
 Solicit another to commit murder
 Tampering with motor vehicle (road traffic act)
 Theft from motor vehicle
 Theft of motor vehicle
 Theft steal from the person
 Theft steal in dwelling not auto machine/meter

A summary from the divisional manager of Victim Support for Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly is included below. It gives an overview of the process:

Victim support referral pathways

Georgie Constable (Victim Support divisional manager) writes:

'Each day we receive data from the Police which is sent to our Regional Victim Care Unit (VCU) in Bristol through an automatic download system which filters out crimes that we do not deal with such as bicycle theft or damage to commercial premises. We have a system that keeps sensitive information securely

'Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Police have signed an agreement to refer at least 90% of reported crime to VS. The VCU then contacts the victim up to three times over the next two days at different times of the day either by phone or text. If they do not reach the victim then a letter will be generated and sent to the victim's home address.

'The VCU makes the call on behalf of the Chief Constable of Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly using an agreed 'script'. The victim is asked if they would like support from Victim Support. If they say yes then a risk assessment will be made to check that it is safe for a volunteer to make a home visit or whether a neutral venue will be needed. A risk assessment is also made to ensure that if it is a domestic violence case that the case has not changed since it was first reported and has escalated to a 'high risk' in which case we have a peninsula agreement that these will be referred to another DV agency.

'The referral at this point will be sent to an area office either in Devon or Cornwall as appropriate. A member of staff will then review the case and after ensuring that all the information they have is correct about the victim, either arrange a volunteer visit or provide a volunteer to provide practical support such as personal alarms.

'This is done within tight timescales and once the area office has received the referral then we have 24 hours to arrange a volunteer. If this is not possible for whatever reason a 'holding call' will be made explaining the delay and when a volunteer will be available

Present system for referrals

The current system for referrals is shown in the diagram opposite. The system works on both a national, regional and local level.

National referral structure

- Police pass Victim Support details of victims. In February 2012, Devon and Cornwall Police entered into an agreement with Victim Support whereby all victims of crime within the agreed categories would be referred to Victim Support. This is governed by the *Leicestershire Agreement*. Victim Support also receives referrals from helplines and self-referrals. These are sent securely to victim support case management system (CMS). This is owned by Victim Support. This system is also known as automatic data transfer.
- All police forces send the data into this central point. The case management system has recently been updated and is now referred to as CMS2012. The purpose of the CMS is to transfer the data to the relevant regional hub for that victim. Victim Support also state that it performs a quality checking role, returning incomplete data back to the force for completion and provides a secure system for information sharing and protection of data. This system provides a mechanism which allows for 'out of area' victims details to be sent to the regional hub where they live as opposed to where the crime occurred.

Regional

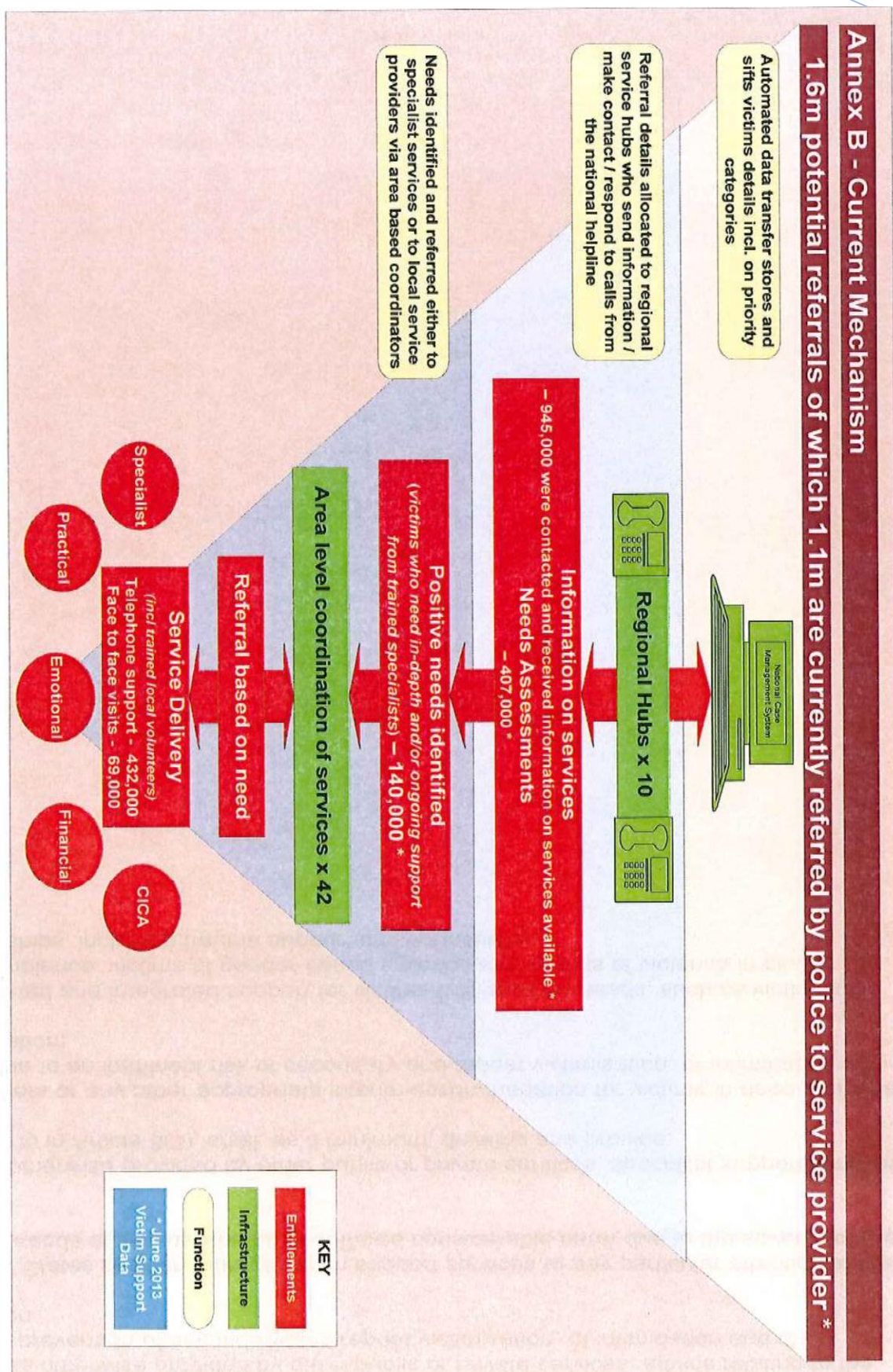
- Referrals are dealt with by Victim Support 'regional hubs'. There are 10 regional hubs across England and Wales. These regional hubs are referred to as victim care units. The hub covering Avon and Somerset, Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire is based at Bishopsworth in Bristol. (Dorset is dealt with by the Shoreham hub, covering the south east and Dorset).
- Victim Support contact victims by letter or phone, assess their needs, and where required, refer on to support services. This letter signposts victims to call the national helpline which then transfers them to the regional hub. This is known as the 'referral mechanism'. Victim Support state that most victims' needs are met at this point and are handled effectively by the regional hub.

Local delivery in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

- Where needs are identified, Victim Support provides a follow up service provided by a local volunteer working in their community to provide support and advice.
- Local Victim Support receives and send referrals between DV and SV organisations and state that they forward refer to Relate and the Samaritans

Additional local support services for victims

- The Ministry of Justice fund a range of specialist support services through the victim and witness general fund such as rape support centres
- It is worth noting that there are other organisations that directly or indirectly work with victims of crime. The police also refer to other organisations particularly in high risk DV and SV cases and these other services will be examined later in the needs assessment.



Referral volume

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) has issued information on Victim Support case volume for the year 2012/13 to assist PCCs in their decision making. However, the MoJ has been unable to provide 2012/13 data for the south West (excluding Dorset) due to the Bishopsworth hub piloting a new data system during that year. Data for the south west is therefore from 2011/12:

	Referrals to VS	Victims contacted by telephone/letter	Victims with needs identified, assessed and where possible met	Victims who need in depth/on-going support requiring onward referral	Follow up telephone support	Face to face visits
Avon & Somerset	8,863	8,297	4,662	2,053	5,631	685
Devon & Cornwall	19,980	18,071	8,584	2,793	7,761	475
Gloucestershire	6,273	5,857	3,078	749	1,322	133
Wiltshire	8,939	8,375	2,726	1,052	2,583	371

Self-referral figures for Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly are 2% of case volume.

Referral information should be transferred from police force to regional hub within two working days. This will be a requirement of the updated Victims Code

Victim Support take up by crime type 15 June 2012-27 July 2013

The following data represents the number of victims in relation to crime type over the period 15/06/12 to 27/07/2013 that have had in depth or on-going support from local Victim Support in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. Victim Support does not identify the victims of crime they can work with. The Ministry of Justice defines these categories.

Actual Bodily Harm and other injury	552
Aggravated burglary in a building other than a dwelling	5
Aggravated burglary in a dwelling	18
Aggravated vehicle taking	
Anti-social behaviour	7
Arson endangering life	10

Arson not endangering life	9
Assault without Injury	172
Attempted burglary in a building other than a dwelling	
Attempted burglary in a dwelling	
Attempted Murder	1
Burglary in a building other than a dwelling	
Burglary in a dwelling	647
Child Abduction	2
Criminal damage to a building other than a dwelling	4
Criminal damage to a dwelling	9
Criminal damage to a vehicle	5
Distraction burglary in a dwelling	2
Exposure and voyeurism	42
Fraud & Forgery	20
Harassment	144
Incest or familial sexual offences	3
Inflicting grievous bodily harm without intent	145
Kidnapping	
Murder	
Other criminal damage	
Other Firearms offences	
Other miscellaneous sexual offences	14
Other non crime	
Other notifiable offences	3
Other theft	1
Perverting the course of justice	
Poisoning or female genital mutilation	4
Public fear alarm or distress	63
Racially or religiously aggravated actual bodily harm and other injury	3
Racially or religiously aggravated assault without injury	5
Racially or religiously aggravated criminal damage to a dwelling	
Racially or religiously aggravated harassment	7
Racially or religiously aggravated inflicting grievous bodily harm without intent	3
Racially or religiously aggravated other criminal damage	
Racially or religiously aggravated public fear, alarm or distress	12
Rape of a female aged 16 and over	18
Rape of a female child under 13	
Rape of a female child under 16	
Rape of a male child under 13	1
Rape of a male child under 16	
Robbery of business property	1
Robbery of personal property	30
Sexual activity etc. with a person with a mental disorder	

Sexual activity involving a child under 13	3
Sexual activity involving a child under 16	3
Sexual assault on a female aged 13 and over	89
Sexual assault on a female child under 13	50
Sexual assault on a male aged 13 and over	3
Sexual assault on a male child under 13	
Theft from a vehicle	
Theft from the person	1
Theft in a dwelling other than from automatic machine or meter	10
Grand total	2121
Female 1124	1124
Male 918	918
(blank) 79	(blank) 79
Grand total	2121

Staffing of regional hub/ victim care unit

The data from the national case management system is transferred to regional hubs. The current staffing levels for Victim Support are as follows:

240 in regional hubs

350 in non VCU, core staff roles

These are paid staff and do not include the number of volunteers that support the service to victims.

Costs of Victim Support by PCC area

In Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, Victim Support receives £622,000 per annum. This is the figure which was supplied as indicative of the cost of the present model and does not relate to future service provision. This is added to through local fundraising efforts which average about £35,000 a year. This does not include the witness service costs. The funds for the witness service are nationally provided in the form of a grant from the Ministry of Justice. This will continue to be nationally commissioned.

8 Structure of current victims' services provider

On Page 55, is a diagram of the organisational structure of Victim Support in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. This area is managed by a divisional manager, and sits within the south west region of the Victim Support national structure. There are two senior service delivery managers that manage the victims and witness service in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly respectively. Devon has four general service delivery managers and has appointed a rural service delivery manager. Cornwall has two service delivery managers.

Volunteers

Victim Support has 176 accredited volunteers in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. As is the nature of volunteering, this number fluctuates for example it goes down in the summer when students who volunteer from Plymouth University return home for the summer months. In July 2013 there were 30 new volunteers being trained locally.

The role of Victim Support volunteers

Volunteers are extremely important to the support that Victim Support gives to victims and witnesses of crime. They outnumber paid staff in the charity by about five to one. It is estimated that volunteers provide services equating to £8.6 million of resource. Victim Support volunteers also work within the Witness Service (this will be nationally commissioned and does not fall into the commissioning of victims services)

Volunteers can fulfill administrative support roles in the organisation and fundraiser but most want to and are involved in working with Victims; working with victims and witnesses in your community largely involves listening to their concerns and addressing their needs

Victim Support Support Line volunteers based in London takes calls from victims, witnesses and other people affected by crime. They are trained to handle all types of calls, from simple enquiries, to giving emotional support on sensitive issues.

Victim Support also trains you to give very specific support to more vulnerable members of the community, such as helping young witnesses at court or victims of domestic violence. These are specialised services that require further training after 6-12 months experience of volunteering.

Core learning for victim service and witness service volunteers includes the following:

- Working for Victim Support
- Assistance Victim Support can offer
- Impact of crime
- Support skills
- Equality and diversity
- Young victims part 1
- Criminal Justice processes

Applicable to victim service volunteers only:

- Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority

Applicable to witness service volunteers only:

- Vulnerable and intimidated witnesses (VIW) and special measures
- Giving evidence by TV link
- Learning disability awareness
- Extended communication
- Young witnesses

Enhanced modules:

- Delivering extended support
- Visiting outside court
- Impact of supporting VIWS

All these courses are normally provided through our core training events. However, some volunteers may bring existing experience and knowledge in these subjects. Managers will discuss with volunteers whether they may be exempt from part of the learning based on prior learning.

Victim Support local strategic partnerships

Victim Support is represented on the Local Criminal Justice Board and works in partnership with the Police, the Crown Prosecution Service, the Witness Care Unit, Devon DV Alliance and Her Majesty's Court and Tribunal Service.

What help does Victim Support offer?

As previously stated, most victims that are referred do not engage with Victim Support services. According to anecdotal evidence from Victim Support, this is primarily because they do not feel they require additional support. Between 20%- 25% of referrals choose to engage with Victim Support.

Where additional needs are identified, most of these are dealt with at a regional hub level. If follow up support or more in depth support is required; then their information is passed to the local delivery units.

Victim Support offers both emotional and practical support. Commissioned services pick up most of these needs for example issuing personal alarms to adults and children, payment for new locks to be fitted, replacement of clothes for adults and children, and vouchers for food where there is an identified need. In addition, Victim support will pay travel costs, removal costs, replaces white goods in the case of arson and financially and emotionally support victims if they have to move suddenly.

In addition, Victim Support in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly raise through their local efforts a hardship fund (around £36,000) to respond to victims needs in the locality; for example replacing bedroom furniture for an abused child.

Which organisations does Victim Support refer or signpost to?

We were unable to get detailed descriptions of what other services or organisations Victim Support signposted either at the regional hub/VCU or at a local delivery level for example in volunteer visits. The following organisations were highlighted by local Victim Support as organisations they refer to:

- Local DV and SV Organisations
- Relate
- Samaritans

If a victim support worker or volunteer thinks that there is an immediate risk of harm then they will call 999 and ask for intervention from the appropriate agency.

Victim Support satisfaction survey

Victim Support conducts victim satisfaction surveys. The process that they use is outlined below:

*'We are aiming to conduct the survey on as many service users as possible. The target agreed by the service delivery leads is that at least **25%** of all victims supported should complete a survey. The pilot results indicated that we successfully completed a survey with just over a third of service users we attempted to contact. Therefore, in order to reach the 25% target, we may need to attempt to contact up to 75% of people we supported.'*

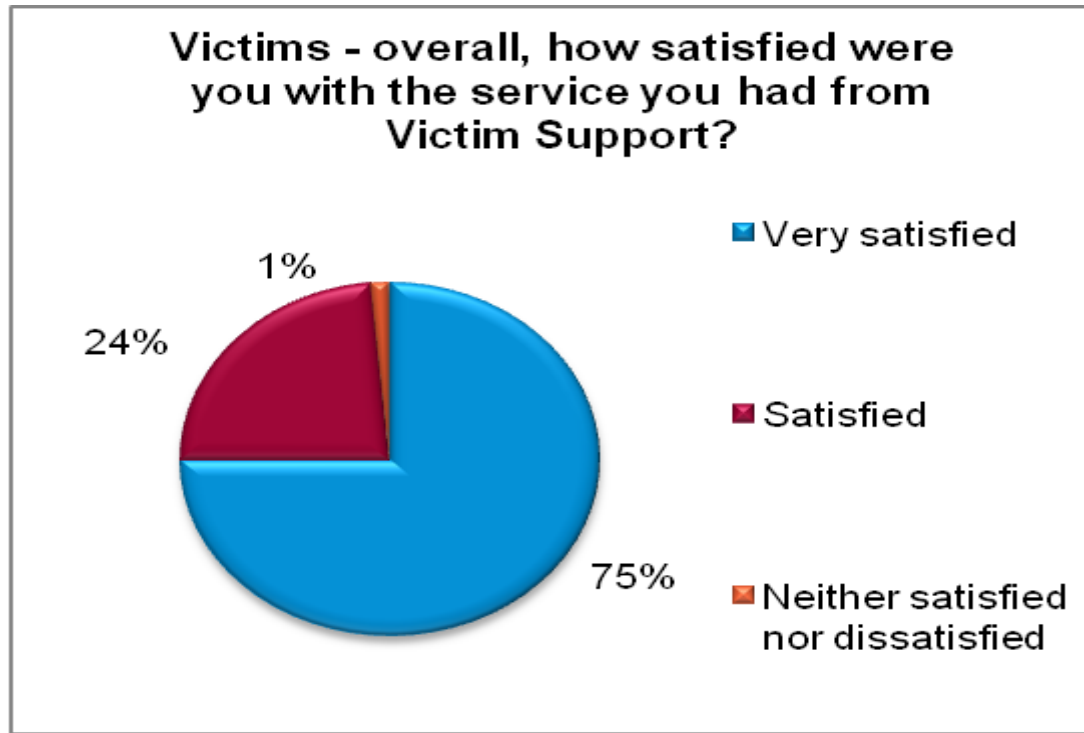
Case selection should be as random as possible. Service users should not be excluded from the survey based on the type of crime they suffered. For example, some of our most intensive work is with victims of sexual and domestic violence (who were previously excluded from the survey) and we need to understand and evidence whether our services helped them. All DV, SV and homophobic cases that are placed in the survey queue should have their safe contact details clearly indicated by the SDM or VCO that was in charge of delivering services. If the safe contact details are not indicated, the case should be returned to the SDM/ VCO.

Cases should also not automatically be excluded based on age - we can apply the survey on children and young people as well. If we delivered a service indirectly through a parent, we can conduct the survey with the parent. If we delivered a direct service to a young person 16 or over, we can conduct the survey directly with them.

Service users can be excluded from the survey queue on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the SDM or VCO that was in charge of delivering services. ..'

Survey User Survey Guide 2012

Below is a chart from September 2013 for victims engaged with Victim Support from Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. It shows the satisfaction rates from those who completed the survey conducted by Victim Support on their service.



9 Summary of responses from organisations

In this section, we have tried to summarise some of the main learning points from the surveys, police data and survey responses 2012/2013, organisational responses and sources of existing reference material. However, it is important to note that all victims are individuals with individual responses and just because one victim has experienced the same type of crime as another it does not mean their response will be the same. In recognition of this fact, the final draft of the Victims Code of Practice has stipulated that all victims of crime should be automatically referred to support services. The categories of crime are also broad reaching and therefore the following paragraphs are based on what we know of most people's experiences of these types of crime.

We have not explored all types of crime, but have concentrated on a few areas where we received the most feedback. This does not mean that we devalue the experience of those that have experienced other types of crime, for example the profound effect that burglary can have on an individual but we want to concentrate on areas where specialist provision is regarded as key to a victim's ability to cope and recover. We have not included young people in this section as we explore their concerns through the responses in the young people's survey and focus group.

At present low to medium risk cases of domestic violence are referred to Victim Support and with explicit consent. More high risk cases are referred to specialist organisations.

The commissioning of domestic violence and sexual violence is within another funding stream; as is the funds for IDVAs (independent domestic violence advocates) that support a victim pre, during and after court.

Victims that choose not to report to the Police

All victims of crime must have access to support services regardless of whether they report the crime to the Police or not. We recognise that many victims choose to engage with Organisations that they feel understand them and the nature of the crime they have suffered. In the recommendations section, we highlight the importance of supporting this diverse network within our commissioning plans.

Victims of antisocial behaviour

It is recognised that the impact of antisocial behaviour (ASB) on those that have experienced it can be monumental; often effecting the sanctuary of someone's home, their wider family and often their mental health. Often victims of ASB have waited for considerable lengths of time before reporting it to the police because most people feel it is too minor to report at first. This reflects a underlying problem that many victims do not know which agencies are responsible for different types of ASB, and although environmental health

have more powers at their disposal to deal with particular types of ASB, they do not offer a service over the weekends and are office hours.

We are aware that victims of ASB are not covered automatically in the revised version of the *Victims Code*. We are keen to provide a service that can support those suffering ASB even if not recorded as a crime. Often they suffer persistently but the actual offences are considered low level offending which sometimes does not result in a crime being recorded. We are keen that the needs of victims of ASB are met and that services cater for all victims regardless of whether they have reported the crime to the Police or not. It is important that they have clear signposting to services that can listen and understand what they are going through and can advise them if they feel the response has been inadequate.

During the period between the publication of the first and final draft of the needs assessment, local Victim Support completed some focus groups with victims. Two case studies in relation to Anti Social Behaviour are reproduced below:

Case Study 1

Ahmet ,Aylin and their five-year-old twin daughters have lived in their housing association property for five years. The couple explained that for a couple of years they were very happy within the block of flats that they live in. Mr and Mrs Bahar explained that they are originally from Turkey, however, they felt that they were widely accepted within their community, and really enjoyed the company of their neighbours.

Ahmet and Aylin have a limited use of the English language but they are able to take part in a conversation, without translation needed.

Mr and Mr Bahar met us today within the Civic centre; the couple were accompanied by DC Louise Steele, for further support and to explain any queries that may occur. Aylin explained that the reason for not wanting a home visit was due to the fact that the Neighbours would potentially hear what we discussed or alternatively cause ASB whilst we were there. Aylin also explained that she is petrified of them and did not want to be at home, to discuss the matter.

Aylin explained that the ASB started from her neighbours next door, this was from their dog continuously barking from 4am onwards.

The Bahars explained that Ahmet works late into the night and has to sleep in the day therefore a dog continuously barking means Ahmet is becoming sleep deprived, and exhausted. The couple felt that they had reached their limit and so reported the neighbours to their housing officer.

Once the neighbours found out that the Bahar's had complained they protested in particular, the son and the mother.

Since the initial complaint regarding the dog barking the Bahars have been subjected to barrages of ASB such as:

- The mother of the neighbour is a drinker and on a regular basis will insult and hurl abusive language at the couple, this can be through the walls or directly at them.
- Both the mother and her son have been racist towards Ahmet calling him a 'f***ing Polish ****'.
- There are constant domestic arguments between the mother, father and son, within next door. This leaves the twin girls very scared and frightened.
- The son of the neighbour is very intimidating hurling abuse and insults to Ahmet whenever he sees him.
- Continuous parties hosted by the son. The parties go on well into the night with loud music and banging which upsets the children and Ahmet.

Since the ASB started, The Bahars agreed with their housing officer to attempt mediation with the neighbours. The mediation went well and for a while the dogs stopped barking and the son moved out as agreed within the mediation process. However, six or seven months later the son moved back in and things rapidly deteriorated leading to a catalyst of ASB since.

Recently Ahmet explained that on route home from work at approximately 12:45pm, as he was parking his car, his phone rang. Ahmet saw that his wife was trying to contact him however as he was parking he felt he would talk to her once inside his property.

Ahmet attempted to walk to enter the communal door on the flats, however before he reached the door he realised that the neighbours were outside the flats talking about him and all most waiting for them. The couple also had their dogs with them. Ahmet soon realised that the couple had been drinking and they became abusive.

Ahmet tried to ignore the couple and pass them to the entrance of the flats however the couple stated they only wanted to talk. Ahmet ignored them and in return the couple sent their dogs to bite him. During the attack Ahmet was hit three times with a dog lead and bitten three times by the dogs.

During the altercation Ahmet states a lot had been said but he didn't understand too much.

The perpetrators have been arrested for 'racially aggravated offence' and bailed to 13 June 2013. There is to be no contact made from perpetrators to Bahars. There will also be a Turkish interpreter.

The ASB team worked with the couple and their children to support them in whatever way possible. As the case was so extreme the team managed to ensure that the family had an emergency move through recommendations with Devon Home Choice.

Second case study

The client lives in her end terrace Devon and Cornwall Housing Association property in Kinterbury Terrace. She has lived there for a year. She lives there with her 15-year-old daughter Tracey.

*** The client disclosed that there is extensive historic DV, and about seven years ago, her case was deemed one of the most extensive DV cases known to the Cotswolds. She explained several incidents which are extremely graphic by detail, and she has never received any formal support for this as she feels this will destroy her by opening up, but she also is forthcoming in talking about incidents she hasn't talked about before, so any contact should have DV/SV awareness. The offender does not know her/ her daughter's location and has been attempting to find this out through a number of different avenues; however she is extremely fearful of him finding out where they live.*

The client explained that there has been ASB starting from the day she and her daughter moved into the property. This was initially from the existing residents who reside in the MOD housing which is situated along the lane they live on. The new houses that have been built belong to D&C housing and some of the residents have experienced the same issues that the client has.

The problems which the client has been suffering from are the following, although this list is not exhaustive:

- Parking issues
- Verbal threats to both the client and her daughter
- Threats of violence to the client
- Barbed wire placed behind the clients back wheels
- Have been watched from the neighbour's windows when she is in the back garden.
- Have had people peering into her property from the front window
- Her daughter has been driven at, at speed whilst walking down the lane
- Has had her car blocked in
- Has had delivery men sent away by neighbours intimidation before packages are dropped
- Threats of criminal damage

This is some of the ASB which the client has been subjected too, although there have been many more incidents.

The client explained that initially she was good friends with the neighbours the other side of her, however she was more so with the female of the property. She had never fully liked the male and on one occasion he got the client's daughter drunk to which she challenged him on and he is no longer permitted in her property, nor her daughter in his.

Apart from this issue, she still got on well with the female until one occasion where they left their dog out all day in the sun with no water. She went next door and asked them if they knew that their dog was out there with no water, and since then relations have soured between them.

Whilst there have been no further incidents from them the client is obviously concerned that should this develop into more ASB from the other side of her property she doesn't know how she will cope.

In terms of support, the client has few people to turn too, as when she fled her address in the Cotswolds; she had to part with her friendships in order to ensure their safety. So she has few people to talk to about her issues. She explained she has never been able to have counselling as she fears opening up about past events, however would like to have someone for emotional support now.

The client disclosed that she also had a second marriage, however this ended badly after her ex-husband had an affair and left her. He does however have contact with her daughter still as he is the nearest father figure she has in her life.

Her daughter is aware of some of the previous DV, however she is cautious about telling her everything, and also wants to ensure she is safeguarded, but is worried about telling her too much it frightens her, especially as her daughter suffers from flash backs of past incidents.

The client has a lot of medical problems, in particular severe back problems due to bulging discs and spinal fusion, which prevents her from leaving the house or being able to do much or walk far, which only intensifies her isolation from the community/ support. She is also on anti-depressants as she suffers from severe depression.

The lady involved has been able to talk to a member of the project team about things she hasn't ever been able to discuss before. She says 'she cannot thank the project staff for being able to talk and says 'you are so easy to talk to and I know I can trust you' about events which were either too traumatic or she was too embarrassed to talk about before.

We were able to obtain multi-agency support for this extremely complicated case to ensure there is adequate safeguarding in place for both her and her daughter both around the DV and the ASB.

***These are not the person's real names**

Victims of hate crime

Hate crime is defined as:

'A crime motivated by racial, sexual, or other prejudice, typically one involving violence'.

Overall the number of hate crimes (recordable crimes) has increased by 18.3% from 885 to 1,047 in the last 12 months. In regards to hate crime types, all types have increased.

Hate crime has a positive outcome rate of 36.6%

For some organisations that work with victims of hate crime, they feel that the phrase 'hate crime' is negative and serves to diminish the victim personally. For example, the Intercom Trust (which supports people in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly who have been affected in different ways by homophobic or transphobic discrimination) feels that the use of 'prejudice related' is preferred.

In regards to sexual prejudice, organisations raised the issue regarding the police being able to identify repeat victims (the IT system Unifi, which Devon and Cornwall Police will begin to use in April 2014, will be able to identify repeat victims) and that people who report the crime do so in order to access personal support for the effects of what has happened and *'not for the sake of reporting'*. It was stated that victims of homophobic crime do not tend to go to Victim Support but want to access community resources that can understand the person they are working with.

It is worth noting that specialist community support groups can not only give long term support and signpost to specialist services but they also can play a fundamental role in encouraging people to report crime to the police. Often these groups are not funded by the Police.

The total number of disability hate crime and incidents has increased from 56 to 123 from October 2012- October 2013. Groups such as Disability Cornwall stated that they have seen disability hate crime as a growing problem but that they are not directly funded to work with victims; however, they often receive *'anecdotal evidence from clients regarding harassment, discrimination and abuse in their communities related to their disability or the disability of the person they care for'*.

There are particular issues cited by organisations that work to support disabled people in regards to under reporting of hate crime to the police:

- Lack of awareness amongst disabled victims of what constitutes a hate incident or crime that should be reported
- A fear of not being taken seriously
- A fear of reprisals , where already vulnerable people could be exposed to greater risk
- The difficulties around 'proximity' where perpetrators may be friends or family and undertaking a caring role. The victim's household, income, and care arrangements could be compromised.

Mate crime and preying on vulnerable people has been an area of concern with some high profile cases within the peninsula. One organisation which works with those with learning disabilities expressed concern about the under reporting of such crimes. The safeguarding ViST assessment should help to make sure that there is increased identification of additional needs. This was highlighted also in the survey responses by comments such as the one below:

'The police should work more effectively with 'at risk' groups such as those with learning disability or mental health problems to ensure support for those people least likely to have the confidence to ask for it'

Victims of race related or faith hate crimes are also crimes that are under reported and for those that do report the positive outcomes figures are relatively low (fewer than 30%). People from BME communities , while reporting satisfactory satisfaction levels once they have reported the crime, tend to get long term support from community based organisations and the true figure of race based hate crime is hard to distinguish.

Victims of sexual violence

It is recognised that a significant number of victims of sexual violence do not report to the police. It is hard to estimate the true figure in relation to the rates of sexual violence within the peninsula; however Gwendolyn Sterk of RCEW sent the following estimates:

The prevalence of sexual violence has been calculated using the calculation from the *Cross Governmental Action Plan*. Overall we can estimate that there are potentially **120,534 women** in Devon and Cornwall at any one time that have been a victim of some form of sexual violence at some point. This is based on the fact that 23% of women will experience sexual assault as an adult according to the British Crime Survey. The following table outlines the estimated numbers of survivors at any one time and the number of incidences

of rape and sexual violence in last 12 months in each area based on population.

Estimated prevalence (stats May 2013)	Female survivors within population at any time		Incidences in last 12 month
	rape	SV	SV (all)
Cornwall	10995	50577	5498
Devon	15208	69957	7604

The organisations that work with victims of sexual violence and the survey results were very clear that there is a need for specialist support for both the victims and families of those individuals who have experienced sexual violence... They felt that *'it is important to have choices around the support they are offered'* but also specialist support with staff that had been intensively trained in the impact of sexual violence. The consequences of such crimes can be catastrophic and organisations and respondents to the survey felt that they needed to engage with workers that had the specific skills and training to support them.

The needs of sexual violence victims can be complex and long term. The organisation respondents emphasised the ripple effect on their callers and clients health and well being, many developing mental health problems, eating disorders and drug and alcohol dependency. These organisations play a key role in accessing other services to support these victims as well as providing long term emotional support via counselling, mentoring and therapeutic interventions.

Some organisations cited that some of the victims they encountered did not want to report to the police because *'it may be historic so they don't feel that it will progress to a court outcome, they don't want to open 'old wounds' or they don't want their family to know'*.

For Twelve's Company 54% of their referrals come from the police; but a sizable group were self referrals in Plymouth as a result of historic childhood sexual abuse. The importance of being victim focused and not being driven by process was seen as particularly important for victims of sexual violence who needed to engage with and feel allowed to participate in the service. There is also evidence that specialist services are able to build their clients confidence to report to the police.

Victims of domestic violence

Victims of domestic violence (DV) can suffer a range of abuse and violence. Some choose to report to the police and some do not, preferring to access specialist support from DV organisations. SAFE report the following statistics:

'Last financial year we had 937 referrals to our organisation the vast majority (approximately 95%) are victims of crime'.

The importance of clear advertising and promotion of support services is vital so that victims can have the confidence to share their story with organisations that can help. The first contact with an organisation or agency is vital. The support DV organisations give is described below:

'We offer short or long term emotional and practical support linked to the effects of domestic abuse. This will include crisis interventions, safety planning, support planning, support through civil or criminal courts, support with injunctions and court orders, safe housing, benefits, safeguarding vulnerable adults and children, advocacy and emotional support and education'.

It is clear from the responses from organisations and survey respondents that having access to long term support is vital to recovery for all family members who have lived with domestic violence. The need also for the first contact to be sensitive and understanding is paramount. There is also a need for continuity of the same individuals so that they do not need to keep repeating their story and relieving traumatic experiences.

The quality of service provided by IDVAs (independent domestic violence advisors) was highlighted a number of times throughout the survey. While funding for IDVAs does not fall into this commissioning, it is noted that they provide much needed support in order that the victim feels they can cope with the journey through the criminal justice system.

10 Statutory requirements

Background on the *Victims' Code Of Practice*

At the point of writing; the revised *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime* was in the process of final draft and will be published in the autumn of 2013.

The *Victims Code of Practice for victims of crime* was introduced under the *Domestic Violence and Crime Act 2004*. The focus of the code was to define what victims could expect from statutory agencies and outlined a complaints procedure. It also meant that support for victims from Victim Support (via the police) was put on a statutory footing.

The code stipulated that:

- The police were responsible for providing victims with information about local services within five working days
- The police must explain clearly the referral procedure and that their details would be sent to Victim Support; unless the victim chooses to opt out
- Explicit consent would need to be given from victims of serious crime for a referral to be made
- Victims of car crime ((theft of and from motor vehicle), minor criminal damage
- And tampering with motor vehicles will not be referred unless there are aggravating factors such as repeat victimization, the victim requests a referral, or the victims are vulnerable or a hate crime has been committed.
- The parliamentary ombudsman would have ultimate responsibility for deciding on whether complaints from victims should be upheld and redressed.

The revised *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*

The final draft of the *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime (Victims' Code)* has been published and will be granted royal assent in spring 2014.

The new code supersedes the 2005 version and intends to rebalance services to support victims with their journey through the criminal justice system. The purpose of the revised code is to give victims clearer entitlements from criminal justice agencies and to better tailor services to individual need. At the point of writing, the intention was to stop automatic referrals of victims to support services and base referrals on need; however this could change in the final draft.

The *Victims' Code* governs services to be provided to victims of crime by criminal justice agencies in England and Wales. This includes a series of duties criminal justice agencies must fulfil to ensure victims receive the right services and information when they need it. The new code outlines that enhanced considerations be given to:

- Victims of serious crime
- Persistently targeted victims
- Vulnerable and intimidated victims

This extends the provision of enhanced service in the 2006 code, which only made additional provision for vulnerable and intimidated victims.

Serious crimes include a number of classes of offences including domestic violence and hate crime; specific grave offences such as kidnapping and false imprisonment; and then any other offences in which the victim was killed or suffered grievous bodily harm, or was likely to do so. This latter group might include offences such as arsons in domestic premises. It should be noted that this definition is still subject to final cabinet committee approval.

Persistently targeted victims may include those who may have been the subjected to stalking behaviour by a single offender and also cases of sustained anti-social behaviour where a victim is targeted repeatedly by a number of individuals.

Vulnerable and intimidated victims continue to be defined under section s 16 and 17 of the *Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999*. Significantly this includes all children and young victims under 18 years of age and all victims of sexual offences.

These categories have been chosen because the victims of these crimes are likely to have the greatest level of need; either because of the severity of injury or trauma they have suffered or because factors involving their personal situations make them particularly vulnerable to offending.

There are other inclusions in the new Victims' Code which are worth noting:

- Ensure enhanced support for victims of the most serious crimes, persistently targeted victims or the most vulnerable/intimidated
- Provide extra support to victims of stalking, domestic abuse, terrorism and families bereaved by violent crime
- Ensure all victims are automatically referred to victims' service by the police so that all victims receive consistent and immediate access to support services
- Give victims a clearer means of redress if they are not given the support they deserve

- Have a section written for young people and their parents or guardians so they can understand and take ownership of their journey through the criminal justice system, and
- For the first time give businesses, who are victims of 9.2million crimes committed each year, will be able to have their say by writing an impact statement to explain to the court how a crime has affected them
- Explicit consent is still to be given by victims of DV or SV. For others that fall within the three categories above; they can opt out of support but choose also to opt back in at any given time through the criminal justice journey
- Currently victim personal statements are undertaken by only 9% of victims. The code makes provision for this to be offered. It also requires information about restorative justice to be given and provide signposting to where and by whom this can be facilitated.
- All victims to be referred to victim support services by the police within two days of their report (subject to cabinet committee approval)

Assessment of victims' needs

Key to this process is the 'needs assessment'. Once a crime is reported and immediate actions have been undertaken to save life, protect property and detain suspects, the relevant agency, normally the police, will conduct an individual needs assessment with every victim to determine the level of support they require. The assessment will consider whether the victim is entitled to receive an enhanced service by establishing whether they fall into one or more of the categories, and it will be critical to ensuring that victims get the right information and support at the right time.

The assessment is repeated by the witness case units before the trial to make sure the victim is fully supported at court. This highlights the need for all staff to have a thorough understanding of the code, its provisions, and the confidence to conduct assessments accurately.

Flexibility is afforded to agencies by allowing them to offer enhanced services at their own discretion to victims who would otherwise fall outside of the three categories. The categories are also deliberately open to interpretation; recognising that definition may not cater for every situation and that the professional judgement of front line staff is equally as important.

The code also empowers victims by allowing them to opt out of some or all of the provisions at any time and opt back in if their needs change. This is important as a proportion of victims, such as professional security staff, may not want or require the services offered in the code and resources could therefore be better spent helping more vulnerable victims. The emphasis is on dialogue between the victim and the relevant agencies from the start of the process.

The code also recognises that a victim's needs may change over time. The full impact of a crime on a victim may not be immediately apparent, either to the service provider or to the victim themselves. Serious crimes may take months or even years to progress to trial and a victim's family situation and support network may change dramatically during that period. As such the code entitles victims to have their status reassessed if their situation changes.

Enhanced service

The needs assessment aims to identify vulnerability at the earliest possible stage possible:

- Reduces time victims must wait to be updated at key stages of the criminal Justice process
- Those victims who fear reprisals or being subject of further offences will be kept informed of what the conditions are and what is being put in place to protect them
- Entitled to information on how they can access pre trial information and services including pre trial therapy and counselling services
- Entitled to make a victim personal statement at the time prior to sentencing, even if they have not given a witness statement
- Bereaved close relatives will also be able to offered advice on accessing victims' services and bereavement form the police. They will also (in most cases) be allocated a family liaison officer to be the point of contact throughout the process and offered meetings with the CPS regarding charging decisions and be offered pre trail visits to the court.

Provision

The aim of all of these provisions is to focus resources onto those victims who are in the most need of support.

The new code clearly places the obligation on agencies to offer and provide services. It obliges agencies to make victims aware of the existence of the code and where they can get information about it.

The layout of the code is designed to assist victims in understanding their entitlements at each stage of the process. The code explicitly sets out the

duties of each service provider to the victim and where they must share information with each other to ensure that the victim receives appropriate updates and support.

Therefore it is important that all services review their processes so that they are able to offer updates and services to the victim at each stage of the process. The code will set expectations that service providers will have to deliver.

Complaints procedure

The code does not introduce an independent office to enforce compliance. It utilises internal complaints procedures of each service provider, with final resort being parliamentary ombudsman

Victims should have internal procedures made available and stipulates the content of a response that a victim should expect.

Service providers to ensure complaints processes are open and actively signpost victims to this information

Victims should be made aware of their means of redress:

- Where a situation cannot be resolved through dialogue between service provider and the victim. The code commits service providers to acknowledge complaints within five working days, providing a standard across the justice system
- Service providers take in the responsibility that they complaint is passed to the relevant agency and that there is an obligation on all providers to offer a 'full and timely response' to victims
- The Parliamentary ombudsman remains the ultimate arbitrator and service providers have to inform victims on how they can escalate their complaint.

Considerations for commissioners and providers

The loss of automatic referrals of victims to support services has been a point of debate and the Minister Helen Grant MP has been open to responses in the final period of consultation.

Depending on the final draft, consideration will have to be given to providing a service that can meet with the demands of automatic referral or a service targeted on the basis of need.

Also, there have been concerns raised around the need for additional training for police to identify victims entitled to enhanced services e.g. mental health disclosure. Victim Support has also raised concerns around categorisation by type of crime; in light of burglary being excluded (unless the police identify the victim as falling into the three categories stipulated) which they argue can be traumatic for the victim and is a significant part of the referrals that they currently process under the existing system.

EU directive establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime

The UK has opted into the EU directive on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime which was formally adopted on 4 October 2012. Member states have until 16 November 2015 to implement the directive.

The directive creates minimum standards on the rights of victims and includes provisions requiring member states to ensure that victims have access to victim support services. Nothing in the directive prevents services being provided for victims which are better than the minimum required.

The practical responsibility for ensuring that victims have access to services in accordance with the directive will be shared between central government, which will commission some specialist support services and PCCs who will be responsible for ensuring that the services they commission are sufficient, together with other available services, to satisfy the requirements of the directive in relation to victims living in their area.

Although the obligations contained in the directive do not have to be complied with until November 2015, PCCs which intend to enter into arrangements for the provision of services which will last for more than a year will need to take the obligations in the directive into account now, so that they can ensure that the arrangements which will be in place in November 2015 will meet the requirements of the directive.

The obligations in the directive

The requirement to provide services for victims are set out in [articles 8 and 9 of the directive](#) are discussed below.

Article 8 provides that victims (and, depending on the degree of harm suffered as a result of the crime against the victim, their families) should have access to support services before, during and for an appropriate time after criminal proceedings. The services must be free and confidential and there should be a mechanism for referring victims to those services. Victim support services should be available irrespective of whether the crime has been reported to the police or another agency.

Article 9 describes what support services must, as a minimum, be provided and these are set out in a list. The list includes:

- information, advice and support relevant to the rights of victims including how to access national compensation schemes and the victim's role in relation to the trial;
- emotional and, where available, psychological support;

- advice on financial and practical matters including, unless available elsewhere, advice relating to the risk and prevention of re-victimisation, intimidation and retaliation.

Article 9 also provides that victim support services should pay particular attention to the needs of victims who have suffered considerable harm from a serious offence.

The responsibility that the obligations of the EU directive are adhered to will rest with the secretary of state.

Specialist support services

Article 8 also says that member states should take measures to establish specialist support services in addition to, or as part of, the more general victim support services which are offered. Services should be available to victims in accordance with their specific needs and to family members in accordance with their specific needs and the degree of harm suffered as a result of the offence committed against the victim. As with general support services, access to specialist support should not depend on whether the crime has been reported.

Article 9 sets out what specialist support services should consist of as a minimum. These include:

- shelters or other interim accommodation for victims at risk of repeat victimisation, intimidation or retaliation;
- targeted support, including trauma support and counselling, for victims with specific needs such as victims of sexual or gender-based violence and victims of violence in close relationships (what might constitute a close relationship is discussed in recital 18 of the Directive).

Recital 38 explains more about who should be provided with specialist support services and the types of support that should be offered. In particular the recital emphasises that specialist support should take into account the specific needs of the victim, the severity of the harm suffered as a result of the offence as well as the relationship between victims, offenders, children and their wider social environment. The type of support that should be offered could include providing shelter and accommodation, immediate medical support, referral for forensic examination (in cases of sexual assault), short and long term counselling, trauma care, legal advice/advocacy and specific services for children either as direct or indirect victims.

It should be remembered that the minimum specialist services can be provided through existing provision (for example on the NHS, by local authorities or in other ways) so long as they are available in accordance with the terms of the directive. This is emphasised in recital 39 which refers to the use of existing professional support to deliver services for victims

General considerations

In many cases it will be obvious who is a victim of crime. In some circumstances this may be more complicated, particularly where the issue relates to an indirect victim of crime or family members. Recital 19 explains the directive's understanding of the term victim and, importantly, provides that member states can establish procedures to limit the number of family members who can benefit from the rights set out in the directive.

It is important to be aware that the rights guaranteed by the directive need to be provided in a non-discriminatory way, whilst taking into account the relevant characteristics of the individual (see recital 9). In particular it needs to be remembered that children who are victims of crime are entitled to the rights set out in the directive (recital 14) and that victims with disabilities should be able to exercise their rights on an equal basis (recital 15). In order to ensure this, recital 61 refers to the need to ensure that those who come into contact with victims, including those who provide victim support, receive appropriate training.

Recital 37 reiterates that support should be available from the moment the authorities become aware of the victims, throughout the criminal proceedings and for an appropriate time afterwards. It should be provided by a variety of means, without excessive formality and through a sufficient geographical distribution to allow all victims the opportunity to access services

Expectations on commissioners of victims' services

Where services are being commissioned for the period after November 2015, commissioners of victims' services, particularly PCCs, should be aware of the obligations of the directive and give consideration to how to meet them when commissioning services for victims of crime. In particular PCCs will want to bear in mind Article 9 which covers the minimum that support services for victims should provide and commission in accordance with this, whilst also being mindful of local priorities and needs.

All commissioners of victims' services should be able to show that they have understood the obligations in the directive, have considered which other services are available to local areas which would help to meet these obligations and then consider which services for victims they should commission in order to comply with the terms of the directive. The grant given to PCCs from the Ministry of Justice will include conditions on commissioning services in accordance with the directive. It is important that the directive is understood and applied when commissioning of victims' services is carried out, particularly when commissioning services in the 2015/16 financial year as the directive comes into force later that year.

11 Needs assessment analysis

In this section we will explore the effect of different crimes on victims and their needs. This will be based on the evidence that we have collated from organisations, criminal justice partner agencies, victims and non victims of recent crime from our survey of adults and young people in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

This survey was open for five weeks and provided 327 responses. (198 adult responses, 128 young people (up to the age of 25))

Victims' needs are clearly relative to the individual rather than being strictly linked to the type of offence suffered. Some will feel they require no support, some will require significant support even though the offence might not be regarded as a serious offence. Burglary, for example is a crime that can illicit very different individual responses from an individual. Others will have experienced offences which will require specialist support and long term intervention for example in the case of rape victims, domestic abuse and other sexual offences.

Relative needs

The individual nature of 'needs' and emotional reaction to crime should be recognised. At present, those that have experienced vehicle crime are not referred to support services but can self refer. This is to change within the new categories in the revised *Victims Code of Practice* in the spring of 2014. In a 2009, a research study of victims by Dr Lesley Simmonds of Plymouth University stated:

'Whilst burglary victims were clearly amongst those experiencing higher levels of more 'debilitating' reactions such as fear, upset and difficulty in sleeping, those whose cars were stolen were on some measures also comparatively badly affected... A high proportion of theft of car victims were 'shocked', slightly more than those from phase two who were burgled, just over one fifth suffered sleep deprivation and slightly under a third were upset. These figures compare to burglary victims in phase two; indicating that victims of car crime were on some measures equally affected.'

Therefore, we cannot assume that the type of crime will indicate the range of emotions a victim might experience or the level of support they will need.

This was born out by the responses to our adult survey. When asked:
'Do you think the level of support you receive should depend on the type of crime you have been victims of:

No, it should be to everyone	54%
Yes, it should focus on those most in need	42%
I do not have an opinion	4%

Although a small margin, it provides an indication that there is support for a service that provides open access regardless of whether you have been a victim of less serious crime.

Victims of crime

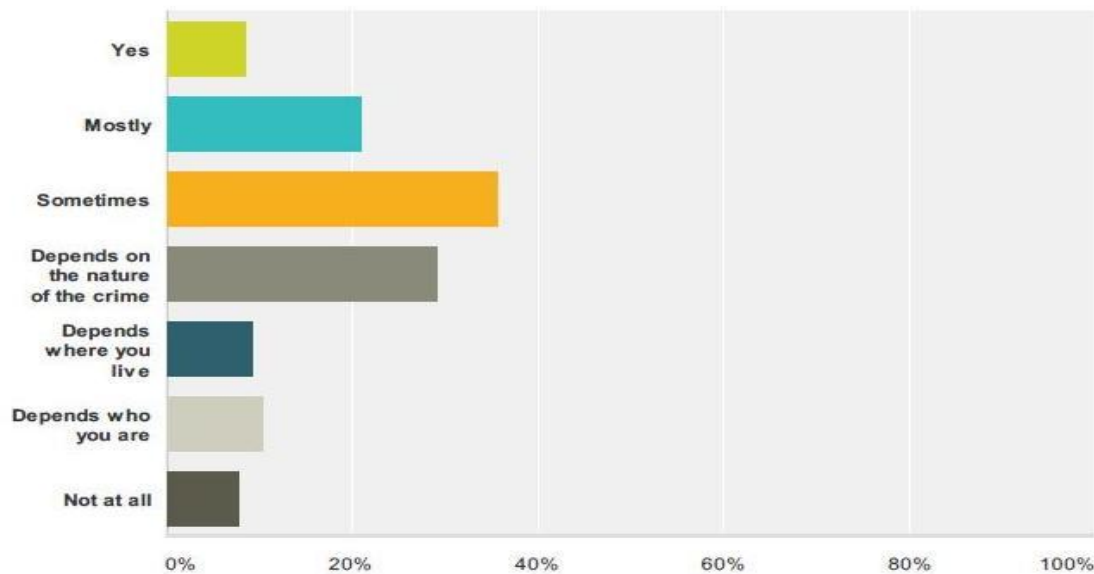
Our adult survey covered the following areas:

- People's views about crime and its impact on victims
- Whether they felt victims were well supported through the criminal justice system
- If they had experience of support services
- Other services they may have accessed for support if a victim of crime
- What needs they identified as important as a victim
- Questions to inform commissioning in regards to national branding, visible local network of services for victims across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly and potential IT tools that could support communication with victims.

Biggest impact on individuals (1 represents the biggest impact)

- 1 Violence against the person
- 2 Sexual offences
- 3 Theft
- 4 Robbery
- 5 Drug offences
- 6 Public order
- 7 Possession of weapons offences

From this, we can evidence that people do feel that crimes that hurt the person and crimes that involve people's belongings and property are areas of concern for people in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly; however, we have to be aware that these categories are very broad and include a number of different offences on a sliding scale of severity.

Are victims well supported through the criminal justice system?

The graph above shows that there is an inconsistency and lack of trust in the experience that victims have throughout the criminal justice system in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. This unease in the responsiveness of the agencies to the needs of victims was nationally recognised in the Government consultation '*Getting it Right for Victims and Witnesses*' (2012) and the commissioning of victims services should help inform wider change within the criminal justice system through the strategy and action plan that states all parts of the criminal justice system should be working towards achieving the same set of outcomes (based on the measurement of cope and recover)

Fewer respondents completed the following question:
'Where do you think victims are least supported in the system?'

Answer Choices	Responses
For those that choose not to report a crime to the Police	41.11% 37
At the point of reporting a crime	21.11% 19
After reporting a crime	24.44% 22
During progress of the case	33.33% 30
After the arrest of the offender	15.56% 14
Pre court for example pre trial visits	21.11% 19
During the court process	22.22% 20
Post sentence of the offender	30% 27
On release of the offender	35.56% 32
Total Respondents: 90	

When we asked the question, '*At what stage do you think improvements should be made in supporting victims of crime,*' there were more respondents.

The following stages were highlighted as the three most in need of improvement:

- During the progress of the case
- On release of the offender
- At the point of reporting the crime

Answer Choices	Responses	
For those that choose not to report a crime to the Police	38.13%	53
At the point of reporting a crime	46.04%	64
After reporting a crime	42.45%	59
During progress of the case	57.55%	80
After the arrest of the offender	30.94%	43
Pre court for example pre trial visits	35.25%	49
During the court process	40.29%	56
Post sentence of the offender	33.09%	46
On release of the offender	48.20%	67
Total Respondents: 139		

The experience of victims as witnesses is an area of concern. We know that the experience of victims can differ greatly between different courts and different times. There have been moves nationally and developments locally (video link/virtual court pilot) to improve the timeliness and quality of special measures. The Crown Prosecution Service has suggested that the use of special measures should be considered in all cases. This would enable victims and witnesses to give evidence without the need to attend court. It is also recognised that the unsuccessful completion rate at court are significantly affected by the lack of witness participation.

The inclusion of the witness statement within the revised code of Practice is welcome and should provide victims and witnesses with the opportunity to have their story listened to within court.

The court based service for witnesses that is currently provided nationally by Victim Support is not within the remit of local commissioning and will remain nationally commissioned.

Victim responses to current provision

Some of the questions asked focused on current service provision for victims. This was asked to assess current awareness of the commissioned service of Victim Support, what contact and support those that had identified themselves as victims had received and also to gauge what other networks of support victims accessed locally.

152 people responded to the following question in regards to whether they had been a victim of crime. The results are below:

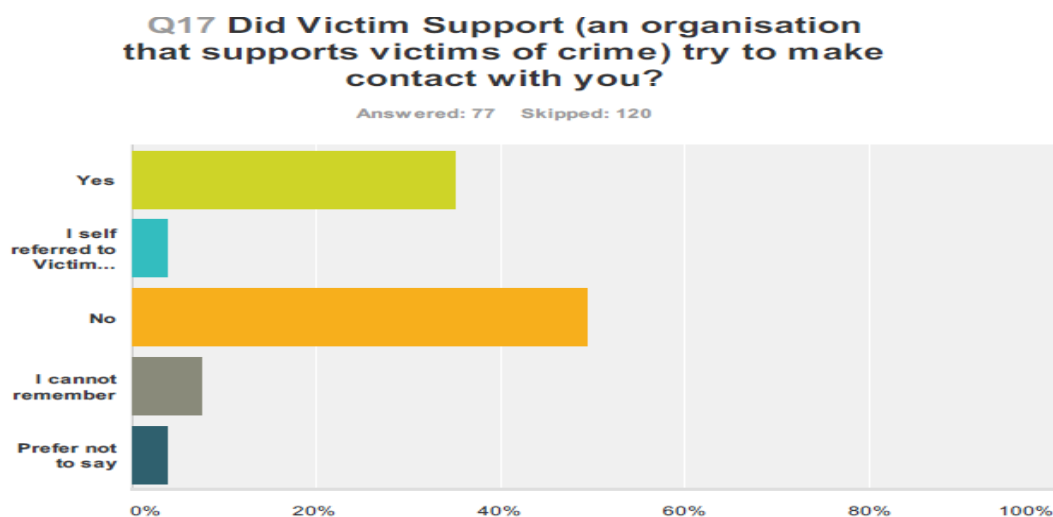
Answer Choices	Responses	
Violence against the Person (homicide, violence with injury, violence without injury)	17.93%	26
Sexual offences (rape, other sexual offences)	9.66%	14
Robbery (of business or personal property)	6.90%	10
Theft offences (including theft from the person, shoplifting, and burglary)	17.24%	25
Criminal damage and arson offences	11.72%	17
Drug offences	1.38%	2
Possession of weapons offences	1.38%	2
Public Order offences (including drunk and disorderly)	7.59%	11
Prefer not to say	2.07%	3
I have not been a victim of crime. PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 25.	48.28%	70

It is worth noting that there were a number of people left comments to say that although they had been the victims of crime they did not report it to the police:

'I did not report the crime as I took the view it was a waste of time'

'I did not report the crime as I was embarrassed'

Victims are victims of crime whether they report it or not and Commissioners have to be mindful to meet their needs and the requirements of the EU directive (see section on statutory requirements) that there is self referral and provision for those that do not want to report to the police. Of those that had been victims of recorded crime, we asked if they had remembered contact with Victim Support:



The argument for automatic referral and a process that supports a regional hub for the south west (VCU) making the calls to victims or sending a letter to victims in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly is that it is the most effective way of making sure that all victims are contacted and know that they can access support. We recognise that such a question is reliant on memory and that this data may reflect that the 'No' respondents fit into a category that is not eligible for referral for example vehicle crime. It is also difficult to assess if a victim of crime receiving some communication is a valuable use of resources but Victim Support are clear that it is important as it means that victims are informed that there is support for them if they choose to access it. However, we have not been able to categorically verify without question that the system of automatic data transfer and secure email download at the VCU at the end of each day from the force is full proof or that the data that triggers the relevant data being transferred is complete in the first instance. This shall be explored in greater depth in the section entitled 'Gaps'.

Of the 28 that responded they had contact with Victim Support, 9 said they received a letter and 19 said they had telephone contact. This letter informs victims of the service and provides a national number to call that then transfers them to the relevant VCU.

In the next question we asked if they chose not to continue to engage with Victim Support what were their reasons. 67.65% (23 respondents out of 34 that did not have further contact, from the 77 respondents that remembered initial contact) said they did not continue with support because they did not need support. 20.59% said they did not understand what help they could give me and 14.71% said they felt more comfortable speaking to other groups or people about it. There were a number of repeat comments along the same theme:

'Their resources would be much better spent on those that need support'

'Because I didn't want to or need to'

'Because I didn't understand what support they could give me'

There were a number of comments from those that had been victims of abuse:

'I didn't feel I could talk to anyone'

'I was not contacted by them and I went to the Women's Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre instead'

'I felt they were insensitive and didn't understand me, the crime or my needs. It felt cold and uncaring'

For those that did receive support from Victim Support, we asked what the needs that they had were. This is a particularly important question for commissioners and providers to remember as we move to an outcome focused model that can demonstrate how the service has been effective in meeting those needs. Of the 17 that continued to have support, the following table demonstrates what they felt they needed support with:

Answer Choices	Responses	
Emotional support e.g having a volunteer listen to your experience	52.94%	9
Signposting to other Organisations or groups that could help me for example counselling services	11.76%	2
Practical Support e.g personal alarms	17.65%	3
Help with the process of appearing in court as a witness	35.29%	6
Peer support e.g meeting other victims	11.76%	2
providing information	23.53%	4
Total Respondents: 17		

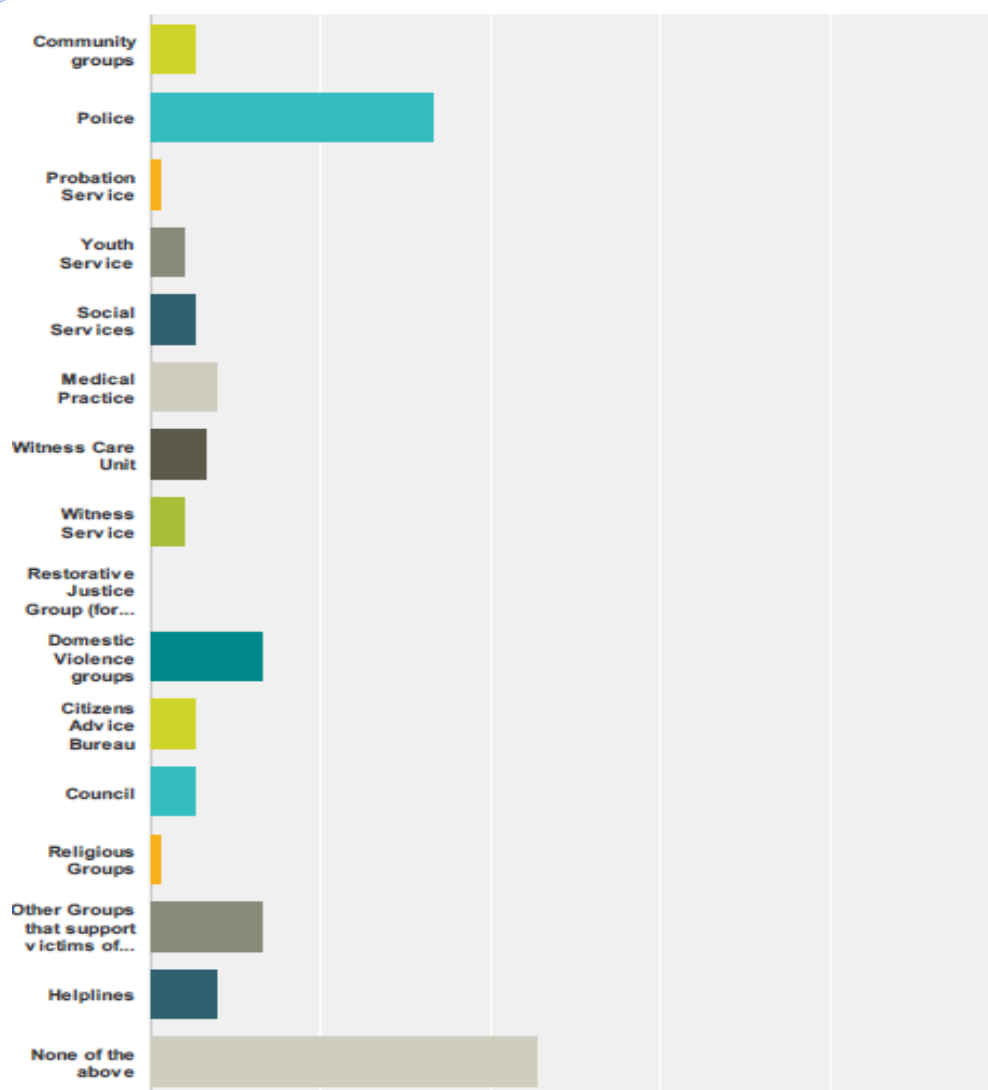
What other groups or networks do people turn to for support?

The survey questioned what other groups both statutory and community based that those who had responded as victims of crime in the last two years had engage with either voluntary or otherwise.

In regards to other groups, respondents specified they had contacted a range of groups including SEEDS, Rape Crisis, SUSIE Project, Road Peace, Plymouth Pride Forum, Housing groups. Community Psychiatric nurse, GPs, Counselling services and Family and Friends.

This supports evidence from the organisational responses that particularly for DV/SV/ hate crime and mental health needs people choose to access other services.

The graph detailing these responses is overleaf:



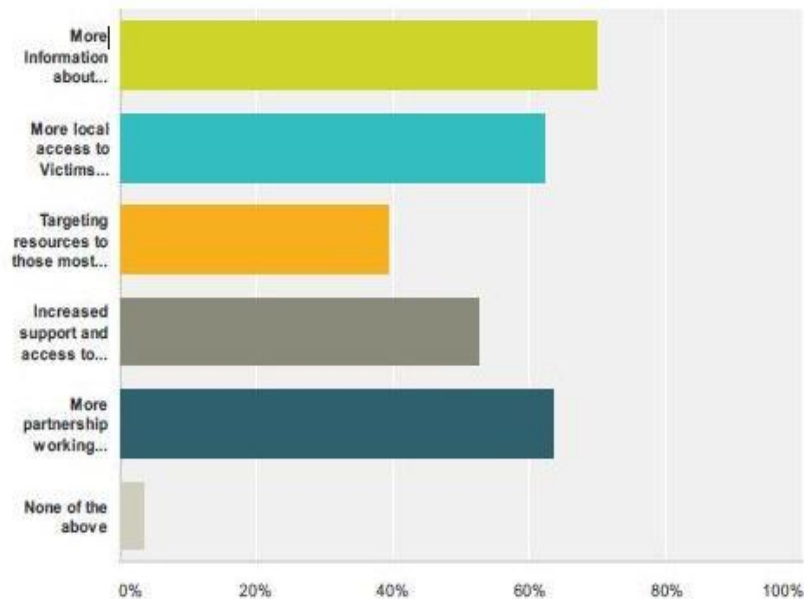
How could victims be better supported?

The survey also asked how victims could be better supported. Respondents could tick more than one or add comments. The three highest ranking were:

- More information about Victim Services to be available
- More partnership working with organisations that work with victims of crime that are under reported
- More local access to Victim Services

Q36 How do you think Victims could be supported more? You can tick more than one answer.

Answered: 145 Skipped: 52

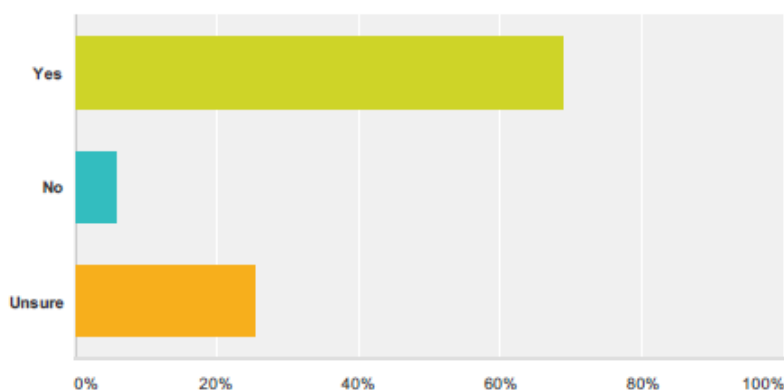


Answer Choices	Responses
More Information about Victims Services to be available	69.66% 101
More local access to Victims Services	62.07% 90
Targeting resources to those most in need	39.31% 57
Increased support and access to restorative justice	52.41% 76
More partnership working between Organisations to work with victims of crime that are under reported e.g hate crime	63.45% 92
None of the above	3.45% 5
Total Respondents: 145	

The adult respondents agreed in significant numbers that they would like to see more visible support for victims through a network of organisations and points of contact.

Q32 Would you like to see more visible support for Victims and to be able to access support through a number of different Organisations and Places?

Answered: 154 Skipped: 43



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	68.83% 106
No	5.84% 9
Unsure	25.32% 39
Total	154

Most of those that responded 'yes' to more visible provision said that they wanted to be able to access support in a variety of different ways, as is summarised in the comments below:

'Housing offices, community centres, on-line, schools'

'High profile directories of local services for victims with GPs and advertised in public places'

'Public buildings such as community and youth centres and libraries'

'Access through Citizens Advice Bureau'

'Knowledge of specialist services in the local area'

Meeting the needs of victims across the victim pathways and being able to measure the quality of service provision in terms of how far it had enabled victims to 'cope' and 'recover' will be an essential part of our commissioning. In the adult survey 75 people responded that they had been victims of crime in the last two years. They were asked to choose which needs they required support with. The full results are on the next page.

44% responded that they needed 'none of the above i.e. that they either did not need or want support. However, 34.67% stated that they wanted information about the progress of their crime. In an additional question 65.18%

of 112 respondents said they would want a secure online IT facility to track their crime. Only 3.57% said no while 16.96% said it would depend on how expensive it was to install.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Mental and physical health e.g helping signpost you to counselling services	29.33%	22
Shelter and accommodation e.g helping you feel safe in your environment	9.33%	7
Family, friends and children e.g helping them cope with the effects of crime	21.33%	16
Education, Skills and employment e.g returning to work	4%	3
Drugs and Alcohol e.g whether consumption increased because of the effect of the crime	0%	0
Finance and benefits e.g if you missed work due to the crime	9.33%	7
Outlook and attitudes e.g if you felt depressed	18.67%	14
Social interactions e.g if you withdrew from social situations	20%	15
Required information about what was happening with the progress of the investigation	34.67%	26

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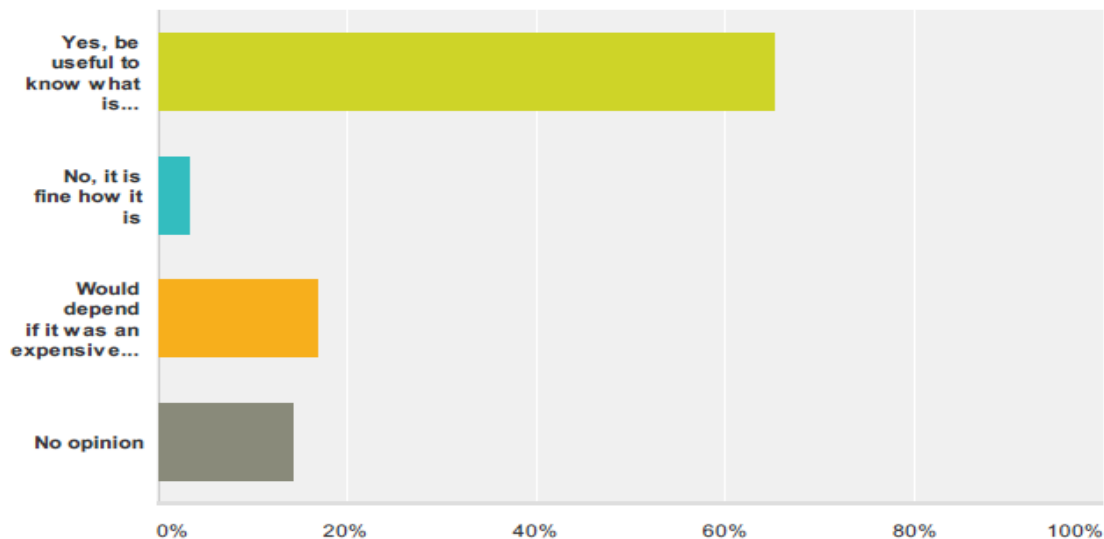
Survey on Victims Services for Devon and Cornwall

Required support as a witness	13.33%	10
None of the above	44%	33
Total Respondents: 75		

The highest ranking need was to be able to get information about the progress of their case and what was happening. Some respondents used the survey to say that they felt dissatisfied with the level of communication between them and the police after being a victim of crime:

'I never had any feedback from the police either - I had to chase up after 3months!!!!'

For many victims, they will not require enhanced support; but they do require clear communication about the progress of their case. We asked both victims and non victims in the survey, would they think a secure online system to be able to 'track my crime' would be useful to them or not. The responses are below



65.18% (73 respondents) said it would be useful to have such a facility.

Enhanced service

The requirements under the Victims Code of Practice and safeguarding means that the police (the first point of contact) will have to conduct a more through needs assessment of needs and vulnerability; in order to determine other than by type of crime whether a victim requires an enhanced service. 66.23% of respondents (100 in number) felt that the Police would require further training and support in order to identify vulnerable victims.

Commissioning

The survey asked questions in regards to commissioning. 55.10% of respondents felt that a national brand for victim services was important with the 29.25% answering they were unsure and 15.65% responding that they felt it was not.

In response to whether services should be designed locally, regionally, or nationally the responses are shown in the table below:

Comments such were logged such as:

'Crime is a national problem so it needs a national service'

'Each area has different diversity and issues. A national formulae but local run'

‘The more local a service can be the better for its community. Local knowledge and networks work best in the support of those who require help’

The table of responses can be seen below

Answer Choices	Responses	
Locally (Devon and Cornwall)?	50.34%	74
Regionally (South West)?	8.84%	13
Nationally?	21.77%	32
I do not mind	19.05%	28
Total		147

Young people’s responses

As part of the needs assessment, we wanted to gather the views of young people and make sure that they could access the questionnaire. Therefore we designed a separate questionnaire that young people. This questionnaire was filled it via VCS organisations including Young Devon, The Youth Offending Service across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, Youth Service and via access to the websites. There were 128 respondents. The age groups are as follows:

Answer Choices	Responses
11 and under	0.79%
12-13	15.75%
14-15	38.58%
16-18	37.01%
19 to 25	7.09%
Prefer not to say	0.79%
Total	

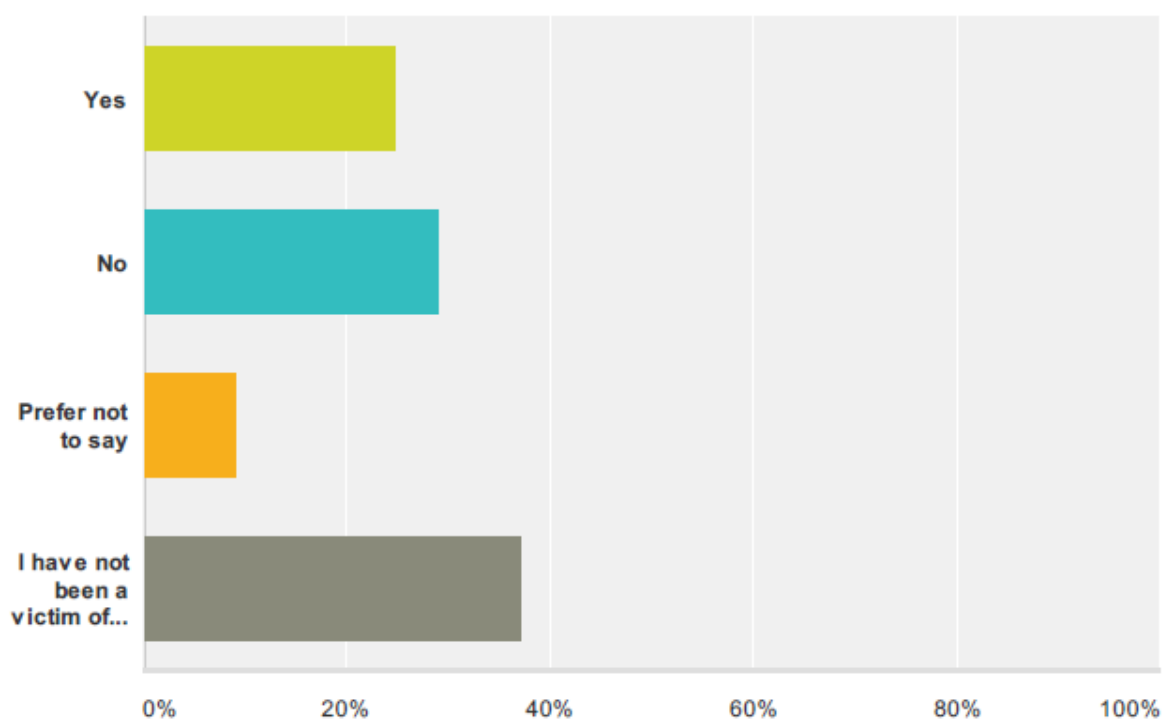
Young people reported that they felt that violence against the person; drug offences and sexual offences were their biggest concerns. On the adult survey, violence and sexual offences were still high concerns but theft and robbery were also in the top three.

The following table shows how many of the respondents had been the victim of crime, how many more than once, and how many were unsure whether they had been a victim of crime or not.

Answer Choices	Responses	
No, I have not been a victim of crime	51.61%	64
Yes I have been a victim of a crime	34.68%	43
Yes, more than once I have been a victim of crime	8.87%	11
I don't know if I have been a victim or not	4.84%	6
Total		124

Q12 If you have been a victim of crime, did you report it to the Police?

Answered: 121 Skipped: 7



When those that had not reported the crime to the Police were asked for reasons why, they choose the following statements:

'Didn't want to cause trouble'

'Because I don't trust the police'

'Because I was scared'

'Because of what others might do if I did'

'Because nothing would happen'

'Because I don't want to go to court as a witness'

'I would turn to others for support'

When asked why some young people do not report crime to the police, the responses that received the highest percentage (36.11%) was that they are fearful of what others might think or do if they did report a crime to the police.

Young victims of crime said that they chose to speak to their family, friends, other adults they trust and organisations that they felt could help them as additional sources of support. The table below also indicates that emotional support and how someone feels is an important need as well as practical support. It is important to note that they do not have to choose any of these statements and for all these questions they could add their own comments. These included comments such as feeling anger and not feeling they knew how to access legal advice:

Answer Choices	Responses	
How I felt afterwards and talking it through with someone.	24.75%	25
Helping you feel safe in where you stay	21.78%	22
Family, friends and children e.g helping them cope with the effects of crime	12.87%	13
Returning to School, college or work	24.75%	25
I had started drinking too much or taking drugs because of how I felt after the crime	6.93%	7
Money help because I had missed work	2.97%	3
How I felt about myself	19.80%	20
How I felt around other people	21.78%	22
Getting information about what was happening in the case	11.88%	12

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Young Peoples' views on support for victims

Required support as a witness	5.94%	6
None of the above	44.55%	45

When asked if they had heard of Victim Support, the commissioned service to support victims of crime, the response out of 118 that answered the question was that 72 had not heard of Victim Support, 33 had heard of Victim Support and 13 were unsure.

Asked what help they required, they responded as follows:

Answer Choices	Responses	
Emotional support , someone listening to me	17.82%	18
Helping to put me in contact with other people who could help me	8.91%	9
Practical Support for example giving me a personal alarm to make me feel safer	4.95%	5
Help with going to court	4.95%	5
Help with talking to other young people who had been victims	6.93%	7
Giving me information on what was going to happen	12.87%	13
Not applicable	70.30%	71
Total Respondents: 101		

Of those that responded they did not further engage with Victim Support, they reasons were as follows:

Answer Choices	Responses	
I did not need support	52.86%	37
I did not want to see a volunteer	4.29%	3
I did not understand what help they could give me	12.86%	9
I did not understand why they had contacted me	5.71%	4
I felt more comfortable speaking to other groups or people I knew about it	32.86%	23
Total Respondents: 70		

The following question asked them to choose what they felt would be the most important thing they would need help with. They could choose more than one statement and add in other comments; some of which are below:

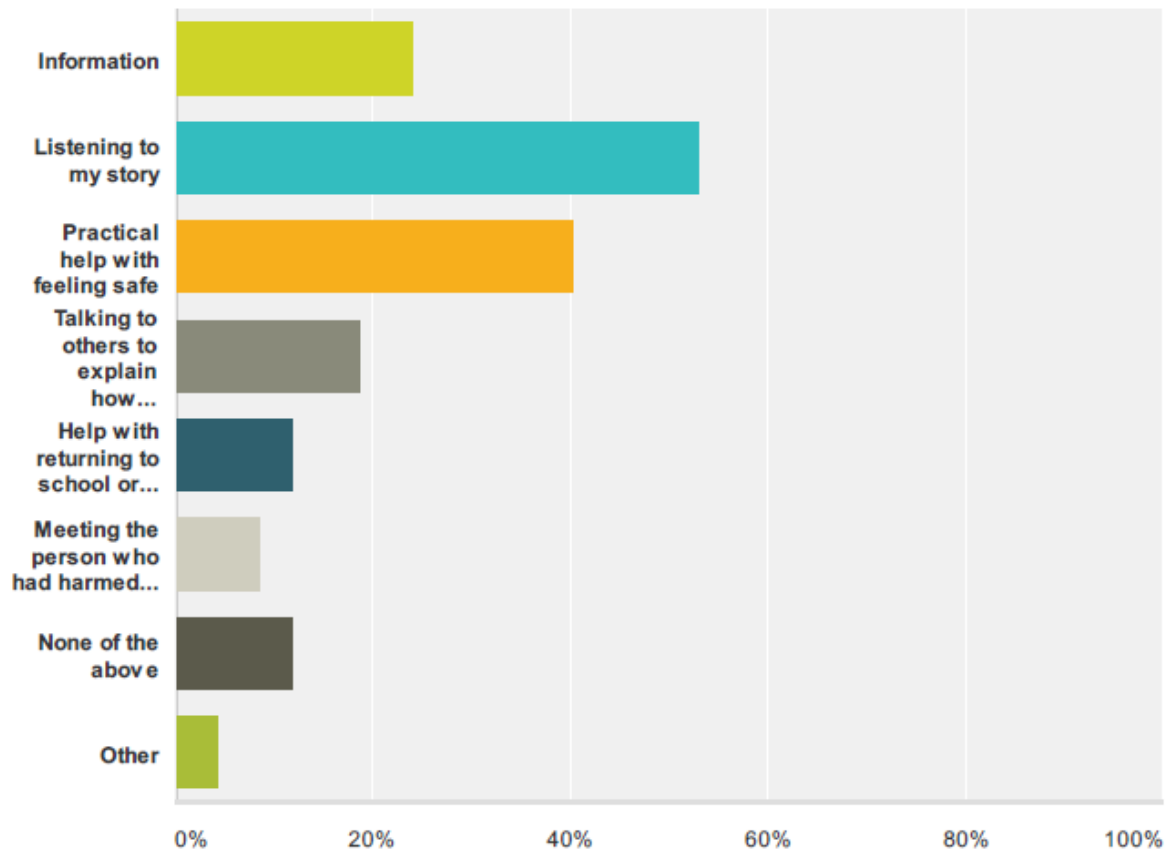
‘Resolving the crime’,
‘Knowing what was going on’
‘Getting legal advice’

What is interesting to note is that just fewer than 10% have chosen ‘meeting the person who harmed me’. This may reflect the use of restorative justice approaches within educational establishments and be a form of intervention

that young people feel more comfortable with. There was reference to restorative justice within the adult questionnaire but largely from those professionally involved.

Q21 What would you think was the most important thing they could do to help you?

Answered: 117 Skipped: 11



The following questions were asked to help us illicit how we could improve the confidence of young people within the criminal justice system. When asked if they thought that enough was taught in schools about what to do if you were a victim of crime, 72.73% responded 'No' with over 10% saying they were undecided and the rest (16.53%) saying that there was. Over half of respondents (54%) also felt that young people were confused about what constituted a crime and what would not be classed as a crime.

Nearly 60% of respondents felt that they would prefer to be supported by a young persons' worker if they were a victim of crime but the remainder stated they felt they 'didn't mind'(25%) with the rest stating they felt it 'made no difference'

Young person's focus group

We were able to ask more in-depth questions to a group of young people with mental health issues that is co-ordinated by Young Devon. The responses confirmed how important family and friends were as support for young people. Most said that they would go to the police but that it was dependent on the *'type of crime they had been a victim of'*. They said that they would report burglary and robbery but they were divided about whether they would report offences categorised as hate crime and rape. They also felt that they would report cyber bullying only if the threats were very serious as they did not feel that the police would *'do anything otherwise'*. The main reason the focus group gave that they would not report harassment online because they felt it would cause more bullying and further repercussions.

Only a quarter of the group had not heard of Victim Support. Of those that had they felt that the most important support they could offer them was to *'help them to understand what was going on and what was happening to their case and to talk to the police'*. While support services can help to explain what to expect for a victim, addressing the need for improved communication falls to the police. The group said that they would like to be able to access support in their local area and young people's centres. They felt that they were not really sure where they would go. Some made reference to Childline and other helplines.

The focus group felt that online support would be a good development if they could make sure it was secure. They said that on Childline you could make an account and that the same could be done but some felt this whole process was too long winded. They felt that this online person could act as an adviser for the young person and help them express what they were feeling. Some young people also said that they would welcome a young person service where they could talk to a policeman online.

The focus group felt that there needed to be more information in schools and young people's centres about which to talk to if they were a victim of crime. They felt that being able to write down what had happened to them before speaking was a good way of telling their story. They said that they found the uniform of the police very intimidating and that they didn't feel that they felt they could see them as supporting victims as they seem unapproachable. There is often a feeling that they would be judged on their age and presumptions made about their involvement in criminal activity; all adding up to a feeling that they might not be taken seriously by the authorities.

12 Constraints and challenges

As stated in the executive summary, we recognise that the needs assessment is a platform for discussion that will be open to revision throughout the commissioning cycle. The timescale provided for victim services to be operational from the 1 October 2014 has meant that the needs assessment has been conducted in a relatively short amount of time.

It is recognised though that Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly is amongst a relatively small amount of PCC areas that have undertaken a needs assessment that has gathered the view of service users and the public as well as the existing provider.

The needs assessment has had to be undertaken and published while we await the new *Code of Practice for Victims*. This is important legislation because it will define the time in which contact has to be made with a victim and the categories for enhanced service provision. The first draft of the revised code removed automatic referral but during the process of Government consultation, we believe that this has been reinstated. How this and the obligations of the EU directive are to be met is vital to both commissioners and prospective providers.

The decision regarding the referral mechanism has caused additional challenges to maintaining our original timetable of completing the needs assessment by the beginning of October 2013.

In order to understand how the system works presently and what service victims receive, we have had to rely on the current service provider, Victim Support and their willingness to operate in sharing data. We have also found it harder than expected to compare the data from the police that is sent via ADT (automatic data transfer system) to Victim Support and vice versa than expected.

We question whether this system does work as effectively as previously presumed by both parties. We have also found incomplete data that appears not to be completed as the victim is contacted by support services.

The majority of the work of Victim Support locally is completed by the Victim Care Unit (VCU) in Bristol. It is there that victims in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly are contacted, risk assessments conducted, needs met and those requiring additional support are notified to local victim support. We had requested to visit the VCU but that had originally been unsuccessful. Since our initial request, the provider has said that we can visit but this has not been in time for the draft of the needs assessment.

We were also unable to find evidence on what information on other services Victim Support volunteers had access to help signpost victims to other services. We requested to be an independent observer of the focus groups and select randomly those for telephone interview as part of the consultation by victim support but due to unforeseen issues with staffing in Victim Support, the timetable for these focus groups moved from the end of September and we were unable to be part of them. However, we will include this data if it is in time for any subsequent revision of the needs assessment.

We were unable to reproduce documentation such as the Leicestershire agreement, service level agreements, risk assessments and other operational documents due to the existing provider refusing publication.

13 Gaps

All victims are victims of crime and entitled to support services whether they report the crime or not. We are acutely aware that there are types of crime that go under reported. We contacted Organisations that were listed as working within the peninsula from the Home Office commissioned report, 'Listening and Learning: improving support for victims in Devon and Cornwall'. We recognise that this may not be all the organisations that work with victims. Therefore while we have tried to bridge this gap through the survey and organisational responses, we accept that the data might not reflect the true nature of victimisation within the peninsula.

We are committed to providing a quality service to all victims. We are aware of the difficult financial situation that a number of organisations that work with victims of reported and non reported crime are facing, particularly victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence. We are currently engaged with statutory partners and providers to understand the landscape of DV and SV provision across the peninsula.

The Government has been persuaded of the value of all victims receiving some initial contact and rapid assessment. This system meets the requirements of the EU Directive; however we have not had evidence to suggest that this is the most effective way of supporting victims. Any provider of support services would have to have mechanisms in place that could meet this requirement but also be able to fulfil the requirements of enhanced service for those most in need.

Presently, most of the support for victims is undertaken over the telephone at the regional hub outside Bristol. We would be interested to explore the experience of victims and whether this regional approach is an effective way of making victims feel that they want to engage with support. We would be interested to examine whether victims feel a more local response would make the figures for self referral, needs assessments and face to face meetings rise or whether this figure would remain low because most victims do not feel they require help. Our survey seems to evidence that there are a group that did not understand what they offered or did not feel that they could provide the support they needed.

The difficulties of providing one point for all victims and one service means that it cannot provide the specialist support that some victims require. We can evidence that there is a gap where there is not the consistent signposting of victims to services that could better support their needs. Victims are individuals and as such they do not fit into one service but need to be supported by that service to find out other sources of support.

We have not been able to establish as much as we would have hoped in regards to what information Victim Support does give to victims about

accessing services in their local area. We were unable to view what local 'market information' Victim Support use to enable their volunteers to signpost victims as we not been able to look through case filed where the information would be stored due to confidentiality. Locally, Victim Support have stated '*that they are not a referral service*' and while we accept this, we do feel that the bespoke needs of individuals could, in some cases be better met. We recognise that there is not a diverse field of volunteers and that this can create delays in facilitating volunteer visits to particular victims. We understand that this is the nature of volunteering but we would welcome more consistency across the quality of volunteers and more diversity of those that represent the organisation.

The witness service will remain nationally commissioned as will arrangements for DV and SV services. We recognise (and the responses to the survey confirm this) that the experience of witnesses both pre, during and after court are a key area where improvements need to be made. There seems to be some issues around 'ownership of witnesses' that does not enable good partnership working between the nationally commissioned witness service and our local police lead witness care units.

We are concerned that victims of ASB that does not result in a crime being recorded are in danger of not receiving the support that they may require and are keen to make sure that any service caters for these victims through being clearly accessible and that they are informed of their rights to access support.

The IT system currently in use by the force does not have the capacity to identify repeat victimisation. We are aware the UNIFI has this and other additional functions. UNIFI will be fully operational from April 2014. The force will also need to record that they have signposted victims to support services and meet the referral timescales in order to be compliant with legislation.

14 Recommendations

The recommendations that are outlined below are broad recommendations; some of which can be met through the commissioning of victim services while others will require a commitment from all agencies involved in the criminal justice system.

We welcome the introduction of the new code of practice and that it will provide victims with an understanding of what they are entitled to at each stage of their journey through the criminal justice system, including their right to redress. We also welcome the inclusion of victims' personal statements, so that they can have 'a voice' in proceedings.

An automatic referral of all victims has been retained within the final version of the code. This will provide consistent and immediate access to support services for all victims but as commissioners we have to make sure that the processes that are created to deal with volume also identify need. The ability of organisations to evidence how they can help victims 'cope' and recover' from the effects of crime and have the monitoring systems in place to evidence 'distance travelled' will be a vital element to successful commissioning.

The requirements of the *Victims Code* will require all criminal justice agencies and providers of support services to review the quality of their victim care and work more effectively together.

Improved communication and information

This was a theme from a significant number of victims who responded to the survey, regardless of types of crime. They felt that they had to chase information on the progress of their case and this added to the stress they were experiencing. For a significant amount of victims that will be referred into support services, they feel this is all that they require. Automatic referral of all victims (other than opt out and explicit consent) will be 'process heavy' but we also need to create a 'gateway' for victims to be updated more regularly on how their case is progressing. Frontline criminal justice agencies and potential providers will need to ensure information on support services is easily accessible to all victims; and online/ other media based solutions will be required.

Our recommendation is for the Force to employ IT based secure solutions such as '*track my crime*' so that people can access this information or are willing to look at other solutions where they can resource more victim contact. There needs to be a system that can satisfy the desire for updated information which will restore confidence in victims and relieve pressures from staff to deal with repeat enquiries.

The Force needs to be open to creative thinking about how it can work with volunteers or more closely with partners to improve communication to victims and the service they provide to victims. There are strict compliance issues around data protection and information sharing but there are procedures that can be put in place to enable better information sharing between partners that enables rather than inhibits improved service for victims.

During the gathering of data for the needs assessment, it was clear that the information on victims that was being transferred automatically was not as complete as we would have hoped. The *Victims Code* will require both criminal justice agencies and providers to become more efficient at performance managing the information on and support they offer to victims.

For crimes such as ASB, it is clear that people feel confused about which service to approach and when. The more agencies can work together to support people suffering ASB, the better. There are examples of good practice such as the ASB project run by Victim Support Services in Plymouth where council (housing) police and support services work together to deal with cases of ASB. We would recommend that providing a single point of contact for reporting of ASB would be beneficial.

There needs to be more awareness within the criminal justice system of local organisations that can support victims and witnesses. In the needs assessment there was a lack of knowledge on different organisations that can support those requiring an enhanced service. There is a need for a directory of local support services for victims to be created and partnerships broadened between VCS providers so that the needs of individuals can be better met through signposting to specialist services. There is also a need to reduce confusion about who to contact and when. As in the case of ASB, a single point of contact for all victims that then conducts needs assessments and passes them to the service that is best suited to meet their particular rather than holding them would be a welcome development.

Delivery model

The considerable geographical area to be covered and the difficulties this poses for example supporting those victims in rural areas needs to be considered carefully by any service provider. The current provider recognises the need for victims in rural areas to have more access to direct services and as such has appointed a rural worker. There are also a significant number of victims in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (101,622 in 2012-2013) in comparison to some of our smaller neighbours. The requirements that all victims will be referred and can opt out and opt back in to services during the journey through the criminal justice system will mean that any provider or providers will have to be able to meet these statutory requirements while having a diverse network of specialists to support those who require an enhanced service.

This might require some creative thinking in regards to how the majority of victims can be signposted to information, and support. We know that for many, communication with the Police is one of their most significant concerns and that there may be online solutions that will fulfil this function and provide a portal of information on services in their locality that they can access for support and national helplines that might fulfil this requirement.

Training and identification of needs

We are aware that there will be improvements in the IT system currently in use that will help police officers identify repeat victimisation. This is particularly important in cases such as hate crime. The police are usually the first point of contact for victims of crime. Our survey should that 66% of respondents to the adult survey felt that the police need more training in identifying those that fall into the three categories for enhanced service provision.

The police have undertaken their safeguarding vulnerable people review in response to a number of high profile cases and the need to improve identification of vulnerability. Part of this is a single process for screening vulnerability and an increased awareness of safeguarding and the voluntary sector services that can help vulnerable people. This review ties in with the requirements of the *Victims Code* for police officers to be able to identify vulnerability of victims by assessment of other factors and not purely by type of crime. We would suggest that the VIST tool could be adapted to include the assessment of victims needs.

There is evidence that many organisations are working with victims of crime and engaging successfully with them; although this is not their primary funding stream. We would recommend that we explore funding sources that can create an accredited network of professionals working within a range of organisations that have been trained in the impact of crime.

Partnership working

It is clear from current research and the analysis that we have undertaken; that specialist support services for domestic violence and sexual violence are viewed as critical for victims of these types of offences. It is important to note that some DV and SV services are not included in the commissioning of victims services but it is clear that referral to the appropriate organisation is vital. The *Victims Code* ensures extra support for victims of stalking and domestic abuse.

These organisations play an important role not only in supporting those that have reported a crime but also in helping victims feel strong enough to report the crime. They have to support victims often for long periods of time in order to help them cope with the emotional damage caused by the offences they have experienced. There needs to be better partnership working between organisations that deal with mainstream victims or low to medium risk DV and SV and the specialist organisations.

It is noted that currently Victim Support and a number of DV organisations within Devon have formed part of a DV Alliance. There is a need for there to be local services but also to reduce duplication that confuses victims. We welcome the commission of DV and SV services together as we believe it will lead to better outcomes for victims.

We know that for victims of some crimes or for some individual victims they choose not to engage with mainstream support services for victims because they want to speak to someone who understands their particular needs. This is particularly true for those that have experienced offences which fall under the umbrella of 'hate crime' such as victims from the LGBT community, BME groups and disability or mental health groups. It is vitally important that we recognise the value that these organisations bring in supporting victims of crime and yet they are often not directly funded to do so. We would encourage better use of signposting and referrals from mainstream victims' services to specialist organisations in order that individuals have a service that is tailored to their needs.

We would recommend that a partnership approach is taken across all sectors. This does require a cultural shift for many. The changing commissioning landscape means that the statutory agencies will need to be increasingly willing to work on 'an equal footing' with the Third and Private Sectors. It will require those that provide victim support services to be more open to working in partnership with other organisations in order to improve the outcomes for those victims most in need.

Meeting the needs of those that choose not to report a crime

We are committed to ensuring that there is access to high quality services for all victims, whether they report a crime or not. We recognise that there are organisations which work with victims of crime and make a considerable contribution to the recovery of victims from the effect of crime, and we are eager to create a system that allows the diversity of that 'network of support services' to be supported and developed.

Visibility of services

In the current system, the details of a victim from Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly are sent securely to a victim support case management system which then transfers it to the Victim Care Unit outside Bristol. The figures for onward referral to the Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly region resulted in 475 face to face meetings or visits within the year 2011-2012.

We understand that some victims will have their needs met at the VCU and will not require additional support. However, our survey results evidence that people in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly do require a range of needs to be met across the pathways, that they do access other services in their

locality for support and that they would like more visible services to support victims in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

The process as it exists via Victim Support and in agreement with the chief constable (via the Leicestershire Agreement) should mean that all eligible victims or those that have given their consent are referred to Victim Support. We would recommend that it would be beneficial for victims to be able to access a network of services that could support their needs as victims. In effect, we know that many organisations are supporting victims of crime without it being directly funded.

The system as it stands means that the bulk of the engagement with victims from Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly is completed within a 'call centre' environment outside Bristol. While we are not questioning the competency and levels of training that staff have in order to make calls and engage with victims, we do question how they can utilise the power of local knowledge that so often can make first interactions turn into successful engagement with a service.

At present, victims in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly do access other services for support or can self refer to a national helpline. We would like to see a service that has a high profile in the local area, that is visible to the people of Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly and that is open to working within a multiagency model in order to improve communication and information sharing for the benefit of victims

Measuring outcomes

It is important that support services can evidence how they have helped victims cope and recover from the effects of crime. A key component to this is effective partnership working and having local knowledge of who is best placed to work with them. It is important that any new service can demonstrate why what they do has made a positive difference and move the focus from inputs to outcomes. In order to do this, any service will need to work in partnership more with others and employ a robust, transparent system of monitoring the quality of the service they provide.

Young people

Young people are often the victims of crime but are sometimes regarded as the main perpetrators of crime. Support services for young people who are victims of crime should be better advertised as it is clear they have little awareness of what is available to them. Young people in the focus group suggested different ways of reporting crime such as a system of online reporting. The force does have a system for online reporting but it looks very institutional and they may be scope for another approach.

These recommendations are fluid and open to change as we move through the commissioning process. We will be engaging in some forms of consultation and will amend the content of the needs assessment according to the evidence provided.

15 Glossary

Criminal Justice System (CJS) -The system of law enforcement that is directly involved in apprehending, prosecuting, defending, sentencing, and punishing those who are suspected or convicted of criminal offences.

Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) elected by the public to hold chief constables and the force to account; effectively making the police answerable to the communities they serve. They have a significant role to play in local commissioning and in enabling partnership working across the local Criminal Justice System

Antisocial behaviour (ASB) - Defined by the *Crime and Disorder Act 1998* as “behaviour that causes, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household as the perpetrator.”
Anti-social behaviour includes conduct that is and is not already covered by existing criminal offences, such as criminal damage and harassment.

Black and minority ethnic (BME) - a term used to describe any minority race, nationality or language and culture in the UK.

Domestic abuse - Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality.

Independent domestic violence adviser (IDVA)- provide proactive independent support to victims; involving the assessment of risk, safety planning and facilitating effective partnership working within multi-agencies throughout the victims engagement with the criminal justice process.

Independent sexual violence adviser (ISVA) - An independent sexual violence adviser offers confidential advice and support to both males and females who have been the victims of sexual violence.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) – an acronym that collectively refers to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

Victim Care Unit (VCU) – the regional hub operated by Victim Support which covers the south west (excluding Dorset)