



Policy at Victim Support: About Victim2012

Giselle Cory, May 2011

Overview of the project

Victim2012 will highlight the experiences of victims and witnesses in the criminal justice system and identify ways in which these could be improved. This is one of several projects carried out by the policy team in partnership with others to **improve the experiences of victims and victims through strengthening their voices.**

Victim2012 has the following aims:

- Audit the criminal justice system and explore victims and witnesses experiences of it;
- Strengthen the voices of victims and witnesses and increase their visibility to change the debate on victims and witnesses rights, needs and services; and
- Improve victims and witnesses' ability and willingness to access and engage with the CJS by increasing their understanding and confidence in it.

We achieve these aims through public campaigns, policy and research reports/events, media coverage and private lobbying. As well as influencing at a national level, we also aim to help Victim Support to influence locally.

Our work programme

Victim2012 is an ongoing. At present, we are working on the following projects:

- **Strategic Audit:** Outlines the current performance of the criminal justice system with respect to victims and witnesses. This can be used both as a reference guide by us and other organisations, as well as a baseline on which to understand change over time for some key indicators.
- **Victim Voice survey:** Asks over 1,000 victims about their needs after victimisation and their experiences and views on the CJS. This will be used to evidence the need for support among victims and witnesses.
- **Impact Assessment:** Assesses the impact of reductions in local authority services on victims and witnesses. This will be used to highlight to impact of funding cuts on victims and witnesses, and form a strong evidence base for the range of locally diverse services offered by Victim Support.
- **Victim profile:** Gives us an insight into who is victimised, and how this varied between different groups in society. This will enable us to better target/design our services to those most in need.
- **Left in the dark:** Analysis highlighting the importance to victims and witnesses of receiving regular information on their case after reporting a crime. This will be used to emphasise to government and others the importance of good information and communication.
- **Victim Support and confidence in the criminal justice system:** Analysis showing that victims who have been supported by Victim Support are more confident in the criminal justice system. This will be used to emphasise to government and others the importance of good information and communication.

Other projects

At present, the policy team are also leading various other projects:

- **Contempt in court:** Our courts project is gathering evidence for a large-scale campaign to raise important issues, influence government and ultimately improve the courts system in England and Wales.
- **Case studies:** Whether discussing the issues associated with shared waiting rooms, the variability of victim personal statement offers or the effectiveness of restorative justice, talking about experiences rather than concepts gives the discussion much more impact. If you would like to tell us your story or you know of

find the strength

someone who would like to tell theirs, please contact us (details below). Please note that case studies can be anonymised if requested.

- **CICA:** This report looks at criminal injuries compensation in practice and is out soon.
- **Restorative Justice:** This report looks at RJ in practice and is out soon.

Getting involved

The policy team are continually seeking the views of victims, witnesses, others that have had an experience with the CJS and our staff. If you would like to get in contact with us, please use the contact details on our “Meet the team” page at www.victimsupport.org.uk/policy