

Listening and learning:

Improving support for victims in Warwickshire



Contents

1. Executive summary
2. Introduction
3. What we learned
4. The service needs of victims of crime
5. Delivering services to victims: issues identified & what can be done to address them
6. Appendices
7. References

“We want two things from the police: an intelligent response when we report an incident and honest information back from them about what they can and can’t do”

(Male victim of anti-social behaviour)

1 Executive summary

This report was researched and written by the victims' services advocates (VSA) project.

The VSA project was commissioned by the former Victims Commissioner in anticipation of the arrival of the police and crime commissioner (PCC) for Warwickshire.

Introduced by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, elected PCCs will replace police authorities across England and Wales from November 2012.

This report aims to:

- summarise current support for victims in Warwickshire
- identify what victims need from local services
- propose a course of action by the PCC to meet these needs

1.1 The report was commissioned to look particularly at the needs of the following groups:

- victims of antisocial behaviour
- victims of domestic abuse
- victims of sexual violence
- victims of hate crime
- people bereaved by murder and manslaughter
- young victims of crime.

1.2 Five sources of information contributed to the findings of this report:

- a mapping exercise to identify current services for victims in Warwickshire (see appendix 6)
- the contribution of local organisations and stakeholders
- focus groups and interviews with victims of crime
- a review of statistical data, mainly from the British Crime Survey
- existing local evidence and research on victims of crime

1.3 This information told us that:

1.3.1 Services for victims of crime in Warwickshire are predominantly organised at a unitary authority level and as such, there is a geographical disparity between the types of services available to victims of crime according to where they live. The economic climate is also having a detrimental effect on statutory and voluntary organisations ability to provide a full and effective service to victims of crime. Service providers are concerned that essential services may be reduced to the point of ineffectuality or disappear altogether.

1.3.2 Across all crime types, victims of crime want the police and other criminal justice agencies to adopt a victim-centric approach that puts the needs of the victim at the heart of the system. Timely, accurate and honest communication between criminal justice agencies and victims is vital to develop and sustain a positive relationship based on trust between the criminal justice system and victims as a whole.

1.3.3 There are significant benefits in adopting a multi-agency approach in supporting victims and addressing the problems that lead to victimisation in the first place. This practice should be extended wherever possible across all relevant crime types.

1.3.4 Crime in Warwickshire is considerably lower than the national average per head of the population. However many crimes are still under-reported, particularly in cases of sexual abuse, domestic abuse and hate crime¹, around two thirds of victims have a general confidence in the police. However, only just over half of victims (54%) in Warwickshire believe that the police do a good job in their area.

¹ Victim Support analysis based on Home Office: Research, Development and Statistics Directorate and BMRB, *Social Research, British Crime Survey; 2010-11*

1.3.5 Support professionals believe that Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA) and Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) services are essential for maintaining victim confidence whilst engaging with the Criminal Justice System. Sufficient funding of these posts should be available in Warwickshire to ensure consistent provision across the area. Early intervention and access to counselling services are essential in reducing the impact crime has on victim's lives. Such services can often help prevent victims reaching crisis point and adopting coping behaviours that are unhelpful or harmful to the victim.



1.4 Looking in more depth at the needs of Warwickshire victims and witnesses in the key crime categories, we further identified that:

1.4.1 Prolonged exposure to anti-social behaviour had a detrimental impact on the quality of lives and can lead to the development of mental health conditions and harmful or unhelpful coping behaviours. There is a lack of support services for victims of anti-social behaviour where such behaviours do not cross the line into criminality.

1.4.2 The multi-agency approach to supporting and protecting victims of domestic abuse and their families has been a real success in Warwickshire. Like the ISVA service, Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVAs) play an important role in supporting victims as they engage with the criminal justice system. Given the high levels of domestic abuse within Warwickshire, these services are essential if victims of domestic abuse are to have faith in the criminal justice system's ability to protect them. In addition to this, the need to provide support for victims of domestic abuse at the earliest opportunity is clear: early support helps many victims understand

their victimisation and begin to identify strategies for escaping it before the abuse reaches crisis point where victims may fear for their lives.

1.4.3 Many cases of sexual violence and abuse are never reported to the police, particularly where this involves historic cases or rapes which occurred longer than a year ago. The need to provide specialist counselling services for all victims of sexual violence or abuse is essential in order to reduce the impact of these crimes on the quality of life of the victim. Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) support services need to retain independence from the police and other agencies involved in the collection of evidence and the processing of the case in order to retain their effectiveness in supporting victims and challenging agencies where their actions are not in the best interests of the health and wellbeing of the victim.

1.4.4 The number of cases of murder and manslaughter in Warwickshire are low. However when they do occur they have a devastating impact on those who are left behind. Those bereaved by homicide need specialist support from specially trained organisations and individuals in the immediate aftermath of the death of a loved one and for as long as it takes for them to rebuild their lives. At present, Victim Support's Homicide Service is the only service providing dedicated support to those bereaved by homicide in Warwickshire. The service works alongside Warwickshire Police's Family Liaison Officers and specialist bereavement counsellors from Cruse Bereavement Care to offer a holistic care and support service.

1.4.5 Hate crime often goes unreported with those affected by it often resigned to the belief that it comes with the territory of being who they are. Representatives from the communities affected by hate crime suggest there are also cultural reasons why many of these incidents go unreported. In an attempt to address this

Warwickshire police are promoting a number of services such as online reporting service which allows victims to report the incident anonymously and a new project named REACH which aims to work with communities affected by hate crime to encourage them to report incidents as they happen. The most prevalent form of hate crime recorded by Warwickshire Police is racially motivated hate crime and the police are working closely with the different communities to identify ways of tackling this issue.

- 1.4.6 Children and young people are more likely to be victims of crime than adults and yet, they are also more likely to be perceived to be the perpetrator of crime and anti-social behaviour. The complex relationship between young people and crime presents a challenge for those seeking to support them – particularly as our research shows that young people are more likely to turn to peer and kinship networks for support rather than a professional agency. What is clear is that young victims need to have equal opportunity to access the same level of support that is currently made available to young perpetrators and not prevented from accessing support simply because of their age.



- 1.5 Taking into account the findings of this report and the duty on PCCs to obtain the views of victims of crime before setting their policing plan, this report proposes the following actions to address the issues identified in this report:

1.6 Proposed actions

- 1.6.1 The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) should work with the police, statutory agencies, GP commissioning groups and third sector providers, to examine ways in which support services can be made available to all victims of crime at the earliest possible opportunity.

Such support should be made available regardless of whether victims have reported incidents to the police.

- 1.6.2 The Commissioner should establish a commissioning framework with supports longer term funding of third sector providers in order to support them to develop strong and resilient services that meet the needs of victims.
- 1.6.3 The Commissioner should explore ways in which the successful multi-agency approaches, already adopted in some parts of Warwickshire, can be applied across crime types, and across the force area as a whole.
- 1.6.4 The Commissioner should look to establish a countywide Warwickshire support service for victims of anti-social behaviour. This could be delivered by extending current victim support services, to include non-crime incidents.
- 1.6.5 The Commissioner should listen to victims of crime, to determine a Warwickshire standard of service which, as a minimum, meets the requirements of the Victims Code, and which pays particular attention to improving communication between the police, criminal justice agencies, victims and the wider public.
- 1.6.6 Building on existing good practice, the commissioner should work to increase the confidence of minority groups within Warwickshire, so that they know they will be treated with dignity and respect by the police and support services.
- 1.6.7 The Commissioner should allow non-police support services, (such as the services offered by IDVAs and ISVAs) to remain independent from the police, criminal justice agencies and other bodies involved in the collection of evidence and prosecution of cases, in order to act as a 'critical friend' to the criminal justice system, to ensure appropriate standards are met.

2 Introduction

2.1. Police and crime commissioners

Introduced by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, elected police and crime commissioners (PCCs) will replace police authorities across England and Wales from November 2012. In London the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime took on this role from January 2012.

PCCs will be elected by the public to hold chief constables and their force(s) to account. PCCs will be responsible for setting the police force's strategic priorities, cutting crime and ensuring that policing is efficient and effective. PCCs will also be responsible for appointing the chief constable.

PCCs will be expected to work with a range of public, private and voluntary partners working in criminal justice, community safety and public protection. It will have a significant role to play in the commissioning of some local services² which may include services for victims of crime³.

PCCs will also have a specific duty to obtain the views of victims of crime⁴ before setting the local policing plan. This gives an unprecedented opportunity for victims to influence the services they get.

2.2. This report

This report was researched and developed by the victims' services advocates (VSA) Project. The project was commissioned by the former commissioner for victims and witnesses in anticipation of the arrival of PCCs, and delivered by Victim Support. Victim Support is the national charity giving free and confidential help to

² Police and Crime Commissioners: Have you got what it takes? Home Office, 2011

³ At the time of writing, the government is consulting on proposals to devolve responsibility for commissioning local services to victims and witnesses to PCCs (Getting it right for victims and witnesses, Ministry of Justice, January 2012)

⁴ Introduced by The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011

victims of crime, witnesses, their family, friends and others affected across England and Wales.

This report was written for Warwickshire and aims to:

- provide a picture of current support for victims in Warwickshire
- identify what victims need from local services
- propose a course of action by the PCC to meet these needs

The report seeks to present the views of victims and service providers in Warwickshire.

While the project took great care to explore the full range of issues concerning victims' services in Warwickshire and to consult a wide range of local stakeholders and partner organisations, it is acknowledged that there may be issues that the report has not been able to cover, given the timescales and scope. It is also acknowledged that, given the complexity of the subject area, in some cases issues are raised which do not have straightforward solutions. These will require close partnership working across systems and agencies to deliver change.

The report was commissioned to look particularly at the needs of the following groups:

- victims of antisocial behaviour
- victims of domestic abuse
- victims of sexual violence
- victims of hate crime
- people bereaved by murder and manslaughter
- young victims of crime

Victims' services advocates were recruited to identify and research the needs of victims of crime, and to identify and research issues of concern to those who provide services to victims.

This is one of 42 local reports, covering every police area in England and Wales.⁵ Delivery of the reports has been overseen by colleagues from the Home Office, which funded the project, and the Ministry of Justice. Ownership of all 42 reports sits with the Home Office.

⁵ Including the Metropolitan Police, but not the City of London Police, which is unaffected by the reforms

3 What we learned

Five sources of information contributed to the findings of this report:

- a mapping exercise to identify the services that currently exist for victims in Warwickshire (see appendix 6)
- consultation with local organisations and stakeholders
- focus groups and interviews with victims of crime
- a review of statistical data from sources including the British Crime Survey
- existing local evidence and research.

This chapter outlines what we learned from these different sources about what victims need from local services.

3.1. Mapping services to victims in Warwickshire

The victims' services advocates (VSA) project undertook a mapping exercise to identify services for victims in Warwickshire. This involved:

- Desk based research into local services
- Discussions with key local organisations – including police, local authority and third sector agencies – about services available
- Feedback from local victims of crime

What was in scope?

This was a time-limited project, spanning a 12 month period. The project focused primarily on services for:

- victims of antisocial behaviour
- victims of domestic abuse
- victims of sexual violence
- victims of hate crime
- people bereaved by murder and manslaughter
- young victims of crime

It also included services for witnesses if offered as part of a combined victim/witness service.

We acknowledged at the outset that a single organisation may provide a range of individual

services, so this exercise set out to map services, not organisations.

What was out of scope?

The research did not include services offering more generic support – for example services offering general support around housing, or drug and alcohol support. It is acknowledged however that some victims may not seek help from specialist victims' services, and therefore that we may not have included the full range of services accessed or required by victims.

Further research would be required to assess the full range of services used by victims, especially those in the most vulnerable circumstances, whom services can find harder to reach.

This mapping exercise should not be seen as comprehensive or exhaustive. It should also be noted that, as with any such exercise, the landscape can change rapidly. To the best of our knowledge, the information contained in this report was correct at the time of writing.



The landscape of services to victims in Warwickshire

Warwickshire Police force is a relatively small area which incorporates the five District Authorities of North Warwick, Nuneaton and Bedworth, Rugby, Stratford and Warwick. The police force area arcs around the northern, eastern and southern flanks of the city of Coventry (which is part of the West Midlands Police Force area) and, in many areas there is a great deal of partnership and co-operation between agencies in Coventry and Warwickshire.

Warwickshire has a population of approximately 536,000⁶ people and has a growing migrant population. Portuguese and Polish communities are established within Warwick, Rugby and Stratford.

⁶ Office of National Statistics, midyear estimate 2010

Politically, many areas of Warwickshire have a predisposition towards Labour however all except two of the local authorities are currently led by the Conservative Party.⁷

Warwickshire Police have recently undertaken a review of service provision and has structured its operations into three key areas:

- Prevention of crime through Neighbourhood Policing Teams
- Responding to crime through Patrol Teams based at strategic locations
- Investigating Crime through local and force investigation teams.

In June 2011, Warwickshire Police entered a strategic alliance with neighbouring West Mercia Police in order to ensure ongoing resilience during the current difficult economic climate. Although retaining their independence with their own Chief and Deputy Chief Constables, the two forces are working to bring their operational structures and practices into alignment with Assistant Chief Constables now having responsibility for strategic planning across both force areas.

Warwickshire County Council works closely with Warwickshire Police in developing strategies for the provision of efficient and effective services for victims of crime. Strong partnership working between unitary and district authorities, police and other statutory and voluntary sector partners has been particularly evident in work to reduce levels of domestic abuse.

Victims Code of Practice

The Victims Code of Practice details the specific obligations to victims of named criminal justice agencies and establishes a process for where these obligations are not met.

Warwickshire Police monitors compliance with the requirements of the code through conducting almost 1400 phone calls to victims of crime each year.

⁷ This is correct at the time of writing although may change following the local elections on May 3 2012.

Satisfaction data for Warwickshire Police shows that around 83% of victims surveyed are satisfied with the way the police dealt with their incident however only 75% of victims were satisfied with the way the police follow up incidents and keep victims informed.⁸

Services for Victims

Services for victims of crime are primarily concentrated in the central and northern districts of Warwickshire. Some services comfortably reach into the southern districts to give a complete cover for the area although victims from the south of the county mostly have to travel to access services.

Voluntary Sector

The voluntary sector provides the majority of support services to victims of crime within Warwickshire with the County Council providing annual funding for many of the services.

Following a recent re-organisation of domestic abuse support services, Warwickshire now has only one Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA) covering the entire force area. There are currently four refuges located across Warwickshire. However one refuge in Stratford-upon-Avon may close in the near future unless additional funds can be found to sustain it.

There are currently three Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs) operating through different organisations providing support for male, female and child victims of sexual abuse, including support for sex workers who are subject to sexual violence.

In 2010/11 Victim Support in Warwickshire supported 9,325 victims of crime.

Statutory Sector

In the current economic climate, many statutory agencies have been forced to review the way they deliver their services. Many of the criminal justice agencies have withdrawn from providing a

⁸ Warwickshire Police Satisfaction Survey 2010/11 Outturn Results

locality based service and have instead opted to regionalise their operations. The Crown Prosecution Service and Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service have all opted for a regional approach however; their individually defined regions are not coterminous with each other, or with police force boundaries.

Partnerships and Structures

There are significant levels of partnership working at a strategic level to address issues that cross district borders. The criminal justice agencies in Warwickshire are serviced by the Warwickshire Criminal Agencies Board (recent successor to the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB)), consisting of high level representatives from criminal justice agencies, unitary authorities and wider statutory and voluntary sector organisations.

In recent years key areas of LCJB work include:

- securing an effective and efficient criminal justice system through the co-location of key criminal justice agencies in two purpose built Justice Centres (in Leamington Spa and Nuneaton)
- delivering a victim focused service through the establishment of the multi-agency Victim Information Partnership (VIP) in Leamington which seeks to provide timely and accurate information to victims and witnesses in all cases where a charge has been made
- reducing domestic violence across Warwickshire and being more responsive to the needs of victims of domestic abuse⁹ which has been recognised as national best practice.

Its success has been stark: 84% of people who engaged with the service reported being satisfied or extremely satisfied with the criminal justice system as a whole and 94% of service users

9

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110222143732/http://lcjb.cjonline.gov.uk/Warwickshire/913.html> accessed 11/04/2012

reported been satisfied or extremely satisfied with the service they received from VIP staff.¹⁰

The work on tackling domestic abuse and supporting those affected by it has also relied upon effective partnership working at a more local level. The MARAC process (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference) has proven to be an effective tool in safeguarding the interests of vulnerable victims and their families.

Other partnerships, such as the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPAs) have worked to reduce the risk of harm posed by sexual and violent offenders. This multi-agency approach will be crucial in ensuring the effectiveness of the newly developed Sexual Abuse Referral Centre (SARC) which is due to open in 2012.



3.2. What victims in Warwickshire told us

From Autumn 2011 we held a series of focus groups and interviews with victims of crime in Warwickshire. Some but not all had also been witnesses; some had had no contact with the criminal justice system at all.

We recruited people to the focus groups and interviews through:

- 'gateway' organisations, i.e. organisations whose services the victims' services advocate had already had contact with through the mapping exercise. Victim Support, as the host organisation for the project, was one such organisation.
- partner organisations in the criminal justice system, especially the police
- advertising using bespoke publicity materials
- publicity in local media

All participants had generally experienced the crime in the last two years. We sought to ensure

10

<http://www.warwickshire.police.uk/inedhelpporadvice/VIPFollower/VIPnews> accessed 11/04/2012

from the outset that their feedback was based on recent experience and relevant to current services. The exception to this was some victims of sexual abuse who had experienced the crime up to five years previously but had received services relating to that experience more recently.

The project did not interview people bereaved by murder and manslaughter. Instead, the project has referred to the 2011 report by the then commissioner for victims and witnesses on the service landscape for people bereaved by murder and manslaughter¹¹.

The project was also asked to consider the needs of young people as victims of crime. In many police force areas, there are very few specialist services for young victims. Evidence also suggests that young people are very reluctant to report crime in the first place, making it more difficult to identify and respond to their needs. To ensure that young people, including young victims, had a voice in this report, the project visited a local Barnardos project to talk to young people about their perspectives on being a victim of crime and the kinds of services they would consider useful.

To avoid singling young people out within focus groups, the VSA did not ask individual young people whether or not they had been victims of crime. This means that it is not possible for us to say that the views expressed apply to young victims *per se*.

Further specialist research would be required in order to determine the specific service needs of young victims of crime.



What we learned from Victims in Warwickshire

Victim experiences are as diverse as the victims themselves. However, there are a number of recurring themes that emerged from the research interviews and focus groups that transcends the specificities of crime types.

¹¹ Louise Casey CB, *Review into the Needs of Families Bereaved by Homicide* (July 2011)

Beliefs about whether victims would be taken seriously and believed if they reported the crime and whether 'something would be done' were cited as two important factors in determining whether victims chose to report the crime or not.

Victims from marginalised socio-cultural groups were particularly concerned that a lack of cultural awareness by police would result in their reports being taken less seriously or even dismissed.

Whilst recognising that criminal justice agencies have specific roles to carry out in terms of identifying the perpetrator and bringing them to justice, victims pointed to the need for agencies to give special consideration to how victims were kept informed and involved in the progress of their case. In particular, they expressed a desire to see criminal justice agencies recognise the victim's personal sense of injustice and the impact that victimisation has on them. Without this, many victims felt they would have disengaged from the process and be left feeling let down and vulnerable.

Victims identified the need for support to be independent of the statutory agencies who had a responsibility to gather evidence in respect of the crime. They believed that the impartiality of the support services they accessed enabled them, and the agency acting on their behalf, to if necessary, challenge actions that were seen as inappropriate, unhelpful or damaging to the victim's health and wellbeing.

However, where victims were given timely and accurate information from the police and other criminal justice agencies they felt able to productively engage with the case and to prepare themselves for the outcome. Many of those we spoke to said that this was an important factor in determining whether they had a positive or negative experience of the criminal justice system.

Despite the criminal justice system being made up of a number of agencies, most victims saw the police as the voice of the system. Those victims who had a named contact within the force, and who were able to contact their named officer with relative ease reported much more positive experiences of the CJS as a whole based upon a

belief that someone within the force had taken ownership of their case.

For other victims, and particularly those of anti-social behaviour, the lack of a named and easily accessible contact left them feeling detached from the criminal justice system and consequently less positive about the work it does:

"We want two things from the police: an intelligent response when we report an incident and honest information back from them about what they can and can't do"

(Male victim of anti-social behaviour)



3.3. What existing evidence and research from Warwickshire tell us

The victims' services advocate in Warwickshire called on local partner organisations to identify any existing research, surveys or other evidence to inform their understanding of the needs of victims.

This local evidence, combined with recent high profile national reports (referenced throughout this report), has told us that there is a growing call for agencies to consider the total impact of a crime has on a victim rather than simply the type of offence that is committed against them. *"Victim needs and impact must be assessed on an individual basis and interventions for victims based on those assessed need"*¹².

Research across all crime types calls for a greater understanding of victim's needs, which cannot be presumed or based on the type of crime they have experienced, or on the characteristics they possess.¹³

¹² Payne, S. (2009) *Redefining Justice: Addressing the individual needs of victims and witnesses*.

¹³ Mencap (2010) *Don't stand by: Hate crime research report*, London, HMIC

HMIC has identified:

*"systemic problems which affect the current strategy for dealing with ASB. These include a lack of understanding of the intensity of harm to communities and vulnerable individuals caused by ASB...and an uncertainty about what priority to give ASB and what the police are seeking to achieve"*¹⁴

Local evidence suggests that agencies have responded positively to calls to adopt a 'harm based' approach of assessing risk to, and needs of, potentially vulnerable people and responding to them in the most appropriate way.

Local evidence also suggests that key agencies have recognised the need for greater partnership working in order to meet the challenges of taking a harm based approach and, whilst recognising the challenging economic climate, they are proactively seeking to protect those services and partnerships which work to support this. Local evidence also points to partnerships that extend beyond the specialist victim support sector to incorporate options such as non-police reporting¹⁵ which may involve other private and voluntary sector organisations.

Finally, there is a growing body of work at a national level that points to the need to provide specific youth orientated services that recognise the particular support needs and vulnerabilities of young people in order to aid the recovery of child and young victims. One example of this is in supporting young victims of sexual assault where it has been shown that they recover more swiftly when provided with specific support from youth advocates.¹⁶

¹⁴ HMIC (2010) *Stop the Rot*, London, HMIC

¹⁵ We use the term 'non-police reporting' throughout this report. Although the term 'third party reporting' is often used, there are conflicted understandings of what is and is not covered by the term (for example whether it includes anonymous reporting options, or organisations that offer non-police reporting only as part of a wider range of victim support)

¹⁶ 2009 Department of Health taskforce: A bitter pill to swallow

Whilst some youth focused services exist, some support service professionals are concerned about the inconsistent provision of child and youth focused services across Warwickshire.

National research also calls for serious youth violence to be recognised as a child protection issue¹⁷ so that the vulnerabilities of both young victims and young perpetrators are recognised and supported. Young people who commit offences need to be assessed and supported as they may have been groomed, influenced or pressured by others to commit the crime and as such, may themselves be at risk.¹⁷



3.4. What the data tells us about victims and witnesses in Warwickshire

A number of sources of data are used throughout this report to give a more comprehensive picture of crime in the Warwickshire Constabulary area. We have drawn on data from The British Crime Survey (BCS) to understand the true extent of personal crime than police recorded statistics because the survey includes crimes that are not reported to, or recorded by, the police.

Police recorded crime is an important indicator of the workload for local police forces and also includes crime categories that are not covered by the BCS, including homicide.

Crime in the Warwickshire Constabulary area

In 2010/11 there were 32,827 reported crimes in Warwickshire, equivalent to around 61 cases per 1,000 of the population. This figure is considerably lower than the national average of 76 crimes per 1,000 people.

The 2010/11 British Crime Survey (BCS),¹⁸ which includes data on unrecorded as well as recorded crime, estimates that there were 49,519 personal

¹⁷ Firmin, C. (2011) *This is it, this is my life: Female Voice in Violence*, London, ROTA

¹⁸ Victim Support analysis based on Home Office: Research, Development and Statistics Directorate and BMRB, *Social Research, British Crime Survey; 2010-11*,

crimes in Warwickshire equivalent to 924 per 10,000 members of the population. This compares to the national average of 837 personal crimes per 10,000 people.

The BCS also estimates that there were 59,500 household crimes in Warwickshire, equivalent to 1,112 crimes per 10,000 of the population. The national average is 2,496 household crimes per 10,000 of the population.

Perceptions of the local police and council in dealing with anti-social behaviour in Warwickshire

According to the BCS, there is a significant level of dissatisfaction with the approach the police and local authorities take in Warwickshire in addressing anti-social behaviour, with less than half of the population believing the police and local authorities are dealing with issues of anti-social behaviour in their area.

Just over one third believe that the police and local authorities are seeking people's views in relation to anti-social behaviour.

These perceptions may be explained by the low level of satisfaction in the way the police and local authorities communicate what they are doing to address anti-social behaviour with only a third of people believing the police and local authorities do enough to tell residents about what they are doing.

Somewhat paradoxically, only 47% of victims expressed some degree of confidence that the authorities in their area were effective at reducing anti-social behaviour.

Satisfaction with the police and the criminal justice system

The BCS shows satisfaction with the police and the CJS:

- Around two thirds of the population of Warwickshire believe the police understand the issues that matter to their community.
- Around half of victims (54%) believe that the police do a good job in their area.
- Around 60% of victims have a general confidence in the police.

- 66% of victims believe that the Criminal Justice System gives victims and witnesses the support they need.
- Around 72% of people believe that the CJS takes the views of victims and witnesses into account.
- Whilst 63% of the people in Warwickshire believe that the CJS is fair, less than half believe that it is effective.

Referrals from Warwickshire Police Force to Victim Support

While there are multiple services supporting victims of crime in Warwickshire, Victim Support is the only organisation to which, under the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime, forces are required to offer victims the opportunity for a referral.

In 2010/11 98% of victims¹⁹ in Warwickshire who reported a crime to the police were referred to Victim Support



3.5. What partner organisations and stakeholders in Warwickshire told us

This report could not have been produced without the generous contribution of service providers throughout the voluntary and statutory sectors in Warwickshire, including criminal justice agencies.

Their contribution has been invaluable in:

- mapping service provision
- recruiting participants for focus groups and interviews
- obtaining evidence and research
- reviewing our findings and recommendations
- publicising the project and helping the victims' services advocates develop their network of contacts.

Feedback from different partner organisations and stakeholders, including service providers,

¹⁹ In comparable crime categories; not including theft of/from a vehicle and some miscellaneous crimes

was diverse. This reflected the different groups of victims they come into contact with, the different crimes those victims have experienced, and the different points in those experiences at which they come into contact with victims.

Many statutory agencies have been forced to re-evaluate their operational practices in light of continuing funding cuts. Many agencies have talked about 'going back to core services', looking at what they have a legal obligation to provide and looking to identify the most efficient way of doing this.

Agencies such as the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Services (HMCTS) have withdrawn from a locality based service in favour of a regional structure that crosses police force and geographic boundaries. However, the new regional structures are not coterminous with one another and some agencies geographic areas are far larger than others. According to specialist support service providers, this lack of alignment between criminal justice agencies has begun to have a negative impact on the quality of service given to victims: the victim is expected to fit in with the reorganisation of the service irrespective of the difficulties that this may bring.

Support services commissioned by the County Council are also under review as they seek to identify and procure services that are more effective and efficient.

Voluntary agencies have also undergone significant reorganisation in the wake of the difficult economic climate. However, many now express concerns that their core (and what they would describe as essential) services may be lost as funding programmes are reviewed and reduced.

Additionally, many recognise that they are only supporting a small minority of victims of crime – particularly true for sexual and domestic abuse support services – leaving many of those assessed as 'less vulnerable' excluded from accessing potentially life changing support. Agencies are concerned that the changing economic climate will, in the future, preclude intervention on all but the most high risk cases.

Some common themes did emerge from our contact with partner organisation and stakeholders, for example:

Statutory and voluntary specialist support agencies agree that there is a need to maintain the existing IDVA and ISVA services in order to provide specialist support to those engaged in the Criminal Justice System – particularly given the regionalisation of services from CPS and HMCTS.

Agencies agree on the need for specialist interventions to provide emotional support to victims of crime, including anti-social behaviour, at the earliest possible opportunity. Research by Victim Support shows the cost of providing early emotional, practical and psychological support is a fraction of the cost needed to support victims who have developed mental health conditions and/or who have turned to drugs, alcohol or self harming as a mechanism for coping with the trauma they have experienced.²⁰

The strategy of providing short term funding for support projects is limiting their success. The awarding of one to two year funding, which at present is the norm, means services are unable to establish and promote themselves effectively and victims who enter into support programmes towards the end of the funding stream are at risk of being left in a more vulnerable position than had they not entered into the programme – especially if the service is removed altogether.



²⁰ Victim Support (2011) Summing up: a strategic audit of the criminal justice system

4 The service needs of victims of crime

This project was initially commissioned to focus on victims of:

- victims of prolonged anti-social behaviour
- victims of domestic abuse
- victims of sexual violence
- people bereaved by murder and manslaughter.

After the initial mapping exercise, it was agreed that the project should also consider:

- victims of hate crime, and
- young victims of crime

This chapter considers all the information gathered over the lifetime of the project and aims to draw some conclusions about the priority service needs of each of these groups of victims in Warwickshire. These conclusions have been informed by existing evidence and research, both national and local.



4.1. Victims of prolonged antisocial behaviour

What is anti-social behaviour?

“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.”²¹

Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) produced the ‘Stop the rot’ report on anti-social behaviour in September 2010.

This stated that, “ASB is a blight on the lives of millions who are directly affected; on the perceptions of millions more for whom it signals neglect in their neighbourhoods and the decline of whole towns and city areas; and the reputation of the police who are often thought to be unconcerned or ineffectual”.

Addressing anti-social behaviour incidents can be a long and drawn out process, requiring a coordinated approach from a range of agencies. Victims can find the process confusing if it is not properly explained, which may result in them losing confidence in the process.



Anti-social behaviour in Warwickshire

Following the tragic death of Fiona Pilkington and her daughter Francecca Hardwick in Leicestershire in 2007, there has been a fundamental shift towards assessing the potential harm to people as a result of their victimisation. This harm based approach seeks to identify potentially vulnerable victims in order to ensure that their needs are understood and supported. In light of this, Warwickshire Police has reviewed its call handling procedures and introduced new questions to be asked when incidents are reported that are designed to assess the vulnerability of the victim.

Across the different Districts within Warwickshire we see a range of methods for reporting incidents of ASB. In Rugby, calls are routed through the Community Safety Wardens where as in Nuneaton and Bedworth, Stratford and Warwick, calls are routed directly to community safety teams. However, information on some District Council websites encourage victims of ASB to report incidents of directly to the local police, environmental protection teams or local housing providers and this can often be confusing for victims.

In addition to the services offered by district authorities, some social housing providers have established ASB teams aimed at dealing with incidents as they occur.

Anti-social behaviour covers a range of incidents and offences. For the purpose of this report, we are using BCS measures of perception of anti-social behaviour and recorded antisocial

²¹ Crime and Disorder Act 1998

behaviour incidents.²² These figures provide an indication of levels of anti-social behaviour. In 2010/11 there were 25,711 recorded incidents of anti-social behaviour in Warwickshire. This represents a 1% fall in the level of incidents from 2009/10, compared with a national change of -8%.

The 2010/11 British Crime Survey indicates that 13% of people in Warwickshire perceived there to be high levels of anti-social behaviour in 2010/11.

The BCS also indicates that in 2010/11 47% of victims have some degree of confidence that the authorities in their area were effective at reducing anti-social behaviour.

What else do we know about anti-social behaviour in Warwickshire

ASB orientated services across the force area are focused on the actions of perpetrator. They work to stop acts of anti-social behaviour through various enforcement processes and to 'clean up and make good' where anti-social acts are committed.

Where anti-social behaviour crosses the line of criminality, victims are offered emotional and practical support through Victim Support. However many behaviours that may be perceived to be anti-social may not contravene any laws. In this situation, victims often find themselves as a source of evidence in cases where agencies are looking to take enforcement

²² Home office Statistical Bulletin: Crime in England and Wales 2010/11, which explains this data as follows: "All police forces currently use the national Standard for Incident Reporting (NSIR) to record incidents which are reported to them. While incidents are recorded under NSIR in accordance with the same 'victim focused' approach that applies for recording crime, these figures are not accredited National Statistics and are not subject to the same level of quality assurance as the main recorded crime collection. Incident counts should be interpreted as calls for service to the police, rather than reflecting the true level of victimisation. Other agencies may also deal with anti-social behaviour incidents (for example, local authorities and social landlords); incidents reported to these agencies will not generally be included in police figures"

action but are often not provided with the emotional and practical support they may need.

It is also acknowledged that some acts of anti-social behaviour may incorporate a 'hate element', where victimisation is determined by a person possessing a protected characteristic.



Support for victims of anti-social behaviour in Warwickshire

Support for victims of anti-social behaviour across Warwickshire is limited. Anti-social behaviour projects are predominantly focused on taking action against the perpetrators and not in supporting victims. However, there are some examples of where agencies have been able to offer a degree of support alongside their enforcement activities.

Warwickshire County Council is currently undertaking a pilot study in Warwick District. This is aimed at taking a more victim-centric and harm based approach via a standard assessment practice. Multi-agency working, co-ordinated through a named individual, has been introduced and is key to the success of this pilot, which closes the end of May 2012 and, following evaluation, is likely to be rolled out across the county.

During our research, the biggest issue for victims of anti-social behaviour was the lack of willingness by agencies to take ownership of a case:

"Nobody wants to know or do anything about it. I just want someone to take it seriously"
(Female victim of anti-social behaviour)

Local authorities, social and private landlords, environmental health and the police all have potential roles in addressing anti-social behaviour. Consequently, the lines of reporting are often unclear, perhaps with the exception of tenants of social landlords who are able to make reports direct to their landlord. However for home owners and those renting privately, finding

the right agency to report to can be hugely problematic and extremely frustrating.

A second common theme was how the police are perceived by victims to be unable or unwilling to respond to anti-social behaviour incidents in an effective and timely manner. Many of those we spoke to talked about the fear and vulnerability they felt when being targeted by anti-social behaviour and their desire for the police to take action in order to offer reassurance to the victim. However in most cases, reports were logged by the police and no further action taken:

"I don't use the 9s (999) unless it's serious. But when I do use them at one in the morning, when it's all kicking off outside my front window and I'm scared, I don't need someone in a call centre questioning whether it really needs a response or whether I am just being dramatic"
(Female victim of anti-social behaviour)

While the police were the focus of criticism, many of the participants recognised that the police did not have the resources to respond to every single incident, nor the responsibility to do so. Despite some considerable negativity towards the police, Community Support Officers were often singled out for their good work in providing reassurance through regular phone calls and visits to the victims.

Victims also praised the work of their local authority anti-social behaviour officers. In the victims opinions, they had made a huge impact through their ability to bring together all agencies through a single named person, who in turn was able to act as the voice of those agencies by communicating back to victims what actions were to be taken (or not as is sometimes the case).

The 2010 HMIC report, *Stop the Rot*,²³ suggests that a prompt response to a report of anti-social behaviour and effective communication back to the victim increases overall victim satisfaction with the agencies concerned. Equally, this approach demonstrates ownership of cases which, according to our research, was the biggest criticism of agencies by victims of anti-social behaviour.

²³ HMIC (2010), *Stop the Rot*, London

In addition to this, our research suggests that where a victim is able to report the incidents to a single person or contact they are more positive about the prospect for a positive resolution:

*"It's just so much better now we have [name]. Before [they] came along I was just being passed around and not taken seriously... [now] it's totally different. I just have one person to call and I know they will do something."*²⁴

Those victims who had been subjected to a criminal act and who were therefore able to access support services from Victim Support talked about the positive impact this had had on their health and wellbeing.

But for many victims, the anti-social behaviour does not cross the line of criminality and as a consequence many victims are left to their own devices to cope with the stress and anguish that prolonged exposure to anti-social behaviour can have on their lives:

"I don't know what to do anymore. I just keep taking the pills but I'm getting worse. I need help before this kills me."
(Female victim of anti-social behaviour)



Case Study

Richard now lives alone in his home of 10 years. When he moved here, he was looking forward to his impending retirement. However his dream of a happy retirement in his new home was shattered almost as soon as he had moved into the house.

A young man who lived alone across the road began to verbally abuse and intimidate Richard. Then members of the same family bought the house next door to Richard and the level and ferocity of the abuse and intimidation rose dramatically.

²⁴ Participant – Anti-social behaviour focus group 2011-12

Not knowing where else to go for help, Richard called the police who seemed initially reluctant to get involved in what they saw as a neighbour dispute. However as time went on and the abuse got worse the police finally intervened and, to Richard's disappointment, 'just had a word with them'.

When Richard discovered that the local authority had a new, dedicated anti-social behaviour worker he got in touch and has been working closely with them to bring an end to his ordeal.

Although little has changed as yet, Richard believes he is less intimidated by the families now he knows he has 'someone on my side': someone who is willing to listen to him, to believe him and most importantly for him, to keep him updated on any progress.



Case Study

In February 2012, Warwickshire County Council initiated a pilot scheme, to run in the Warwick District, aimed at standardising the response to reports of anti-social behaviour, assessing the potential risk of harm to the victim and providing appropriate levels of support to them.

The County Council, District Council, the police and social housing providers now record and assess all reports of anti-social behaviour using a standardised assessment framework and all cases are reported to a central, named individual at the District Council who orchestrates the response to the incident.

Where assessment shows that there is a potentially high risk of harm to the victim, the co-ordinator facilitates the creation of an action plan, shares information with all the relevant agencies for action and cases are reviewed monthly at a multi-agency meeting.

Low to medium cases are also discussed at the monthly meeting, however solutions are sought at a more local level without an action plan being agreed.

In the two months since the pilot began, five new high risk cases have been identified which may previously been missed.



Conclusions

Victims of anti-social behaviour are often critical about the confusing process for reporting incidents of anti-social behaviour, the long, drawn out and confusing processes that lead to action and the lack of ownership from agencies.

A single point of contact and case management for all incidents of anti-social behaviour within a geographical region (such as a county or district), could provide an effective approach that could improve the quality of service to victims of anti-social behaviour.

The pilot project in Warwick should be evaluated in order to identify how effective it has been in encouraging agencies to take a more victim-centric, harm based and multi-agency approach. If the project is successful, it should be seen as best practice and rolled out across the rest of the county.

Linking this to existing anti-social behaviour officers around the county would have a positive impact on the experience of victims.

There is however a lack of emotional and practical support available to victims of anti-social behaviour in cases where no crime has been committed. In these instances, victims are left to find their own way of coping with the stresses caused by repeat victimisation which for many has a detrimental effect on their health and wellbeing.

Opening up access to support to all anti-social behaviour victims at an early stage, irrespective of whether a crime has been committed, would

have a positive impact on victim's quality of life and reduce the risk of victims developing mental health conditions and/or developing potentially unhelpful or dangerous coping strategies, such as alcohol dependency.

4.2. Victims of domestic abuse

What is 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.'²⁵

Domestic abuse is not a type of crime in itself but describes the context in which types of crime can occur. The types of crime most commonly 'flagged' by police as domestic abuse when victims are referred to Victim Support are actual bodily harm, common assault and harassment.

The British Crime Survey 2010/11 includes a self-completion module on intimate violence. This covers emotional, financial and physical abuse by partners or family members, as well as sexual assaults and stalking experienced by 16-59 year-olds.

Women are more likely than men to have experienced all types of intimate violence. Overall, 30 per cent of women and 17 per cent of men had experienced domestic violence since the age of 16. These figures were equivalent to an estimated 4.8 million female and 2.8 million 16-59 year-old male victims of domestic violence in England and Wales.²⁶

In addition 7% cent of women and 5% of men reported having experienced domestic violence in the last year, equivalent to an estimated 1.2 million female and 800,000 male victims in England and Wales.²⁷

Much has changed in how the police and other agencies view victims of domestic abuse. The

creation of multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACs) and independent domestic violence advisors (IDVAs) has led to improvements in the services victims receive.

The domestic abuse charity Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA) estimates that for every £1 spent on MARACs at least £6 of public money can be saved on direct costs to agencies every year.²⁸ This represents potential savings to the public purse of a national MARAC programme are over £740m annually, although it should be acknowledged there have been calls for further research to verify these figures.

The government's Action Plan to End Violence against Women and Girls, published in March 2011, contains 35 wide-ranging proposals, which require partnership working with and between government departments. It is too early to comment on the effectiveness of the action plan, but a review of IDVAs in 2009 estimated that there were less than half the number of trained advisors needed to give adequate coverage for all high risk cases in the UK. Research undertaken for this report indicates that there are still gaps. This is a continuing cause for concern.²⁹

A recurring theme in our conversations with victims of domestic abuse was that their first experiences with a support agency were a key factor in determining whether they would continue with any action that had been initiated, and whether they would report any future incidents.



Domestic abuse in Warwickshire

Tackling Domestic Abuse is a key priority for the police, County Council and other agencies operating in Warwickshire. The domestic abuse support service has been remodelled and re-commissioned and the new providers, Stonham (as part of the Home Group) and Refuge began providing services on the 1 April 2011.

²⁵ Home Office

²⁶ Victim Support analysis based on Home Office: Research, Development and Statistics Directorate and BMRB, *Social Research, British Crime Survey; 2010-11*, Colchester, Essex: UK Data Archive [distributor]. Crown copyright material is reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO and the Queen's Printer for Scotland.

²⁷ Victim Support analysis based on Home Office: Research, Development and Statistics Directorate and BMRB, *Social Research, British Crime Survey; 2010-11*, Colchester, Essex: UK Data Archive [distributor]. Crown copyright material is reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO and the Queen's Printer for Scotland.

²⁸ CAADA, 2010

²⁹ Safety in Numbers – A Multi-site Evaluation of Independent Violence advisor Services, CAADA 2009

The County Council, in partnership with other agencies is undertaking a review of its 2008-11 Domestic Abuse Strategy and the new strategy, which has recently been consulted on and which will build upon the successes of the last strategy, will take a holistic approach to violence against women and girls and will be published later this year.

Rates of Domestic Abuse in Warwickshire

Based on regional data from the British Crime Survey, the estimate for an area the size of Warwickshire is that over 13,000 women and girls aged 16-59 have been a victim of domestic abuse in the past year.³⁰

The number of people being supported through specialist support services suggests that the number of cases in each of the districts is roughly proportional to population levels within them.

What else do we know about domestic abuse in Warwickshire

Stakeholders tell us that whilst there appears to be a correlation between levels of deprivation in an area and the incidences of domestic abuse, it is incorrect to presume that domestic abuse is only prevalent in deprived communities; they suggest that victims from more affluent background may have more options available to them in terms of dealing or coping with the abuse than those from more deprived communities for whom reporting to authorities is their only option.

Agencies also talk about the high level of repeat victimisation in cases that are presented to the MARAC. There is a belief that more needs to be done to support these victims to break free of this cycle of abuse.



³⁰ Violence Against Women and Girls Ready Reckoner.

Support for victims of domestic abuse in Warwickshire

Up until 31 March 2012, domestic abuse services were provided by a number of agencies including Warwickshire Domestic Violence Support Service (WDVSS), Refuge, Coventry and Warwickshire Community Safety Scheme, Warwickshire Police and Warwickshire County Council. The new service brings many of these service strands together under a unified contract. Local Authorities believe this will make the support process more efficient both economically and more importantly, for the victims being supported.

However, the new service sees a halving in the number of IDVAs in Warwickshire and the possible closure of one refuge in Stratford. Conversely, it also introduces a greater level of floating support and introduces specialist support for male and Black & Minority Ethnic victims of domestic abuse. The contract is due to be reviewed in 2014 to assess how well the new systems are working and how they can be modified to improve support to victims of domestic abuse in Warwickshire.

In addition to the locally procured services, emotional and practical support for victims of domestic abuse is provided by Victim Support through its network of specially trained volunteers.

Victims all told us about the positive impact that specialist support had had on their lives; it had given them the opportunity to understand, and begin to accept, their victimisation and to begin their personal journeys of recovery:

“For years I thought it was my fault, I wasn’t good enough a wife. The support I’ve had has helped me see that I was not responsible for what happened to me – he was. I still talk like it’s my fault sometimes but at least now, with the support of [agency] I can start to put my life back together”
(Female Victim of Domestic Abuse)

Victims identified the need for IDVA support to be independent of the statutory agencies which have a responsibility to gather evidence in respect of the crime. They believed that the impartiality of the support services they accessed

enabled them, and the agency acting on their behalf, to challenge actions that were seen as inappropriate, unhelpful or damaging to the victim.

However for many victims, they did not access the services until after they had reached a crisis point and disclosed the ongoing abuse. Many of the victims we spoke to talked about reaching this crisis point when they could not live with the abuse any longer, when there was a risk to children or when they feared for their lives. It was often only at this crisis point that disclosure became a real option and given the severity of this situation, victims felt that it was vital that agencies responded immediately and took the word of the victim as the truth.

Victims also told us that whilst they may have called the police (primarily because they didn't know who else to call or the situation necessitated an emergency response) they were often not emotionally or practically ready to take action against the perpetrator or leave them completely.

Victims talked about wanting help but not wanting to take criminal proceedings against their partner or family member but, because they had reached a crisis point, often involving the police was the only option. However, had an earlier intervention been possible, it is likely that in many cases this crisis point may not have been reached.

One of the problems in making earlier intervention is that many victims talked about how they did not recognise that they were being subject to abusive behaviour from their partners and family members and how they were made to believe that the behaviour was normal. The lack of awareness as to what constitutes abuse, coupled with a lack of knowledge about what support is available and where it can be reported, leaves many victims living in abusive and harmful relationships without the support they so desperately need.

"I just didn't realise what he was doing to me. He controlled everything, what I wear, where I go and who I see. I just didn't think of it as abuse until someone told me"
(Female victim of domestic abuse)

Many victims we spoke to believed that awareness of domestic abuse should be part of the school curriculum although many also cautioned about the risk of making young people aware of what abusive relationships look and feel like, as they believed this could put them at greater risk of harm if they already lived in an abusive household.



Case study

Alison lived with an abusive partner for over five years but never acknowledged that she was the victim of domestic abuse. She had been groomed by her partner to believe that she was responsible for the emotional abuse she was enduring, and that the control of every facet of her life was because she was too 'stupid' to look after herself.

After their first child was born, things got worse and Alison would often find herself in tears but she put this down some form of post-natal depression.

One afternoon, during a meeting with her health visitor, Alison broke down in tears and talked about how difficult her relationship was and how poor she felt she was as both a partner and a mother. The health visitor quickly recognised that Alison was the victim of domestic abuse and suggested that she refer Alison to the local support service.

Two years later Alison has regained much of the confidence she lost during her abusive relationship, both she and her three year old son are now thriving and Alison is looking forward to a happy and positive future.

She also feels lucky – although she had never been physically abused but, looking back in hindsight, she can see that it was just a matter of time. The early intervention, initiated by her health visitor, prevented her situation escalating to a crisis point and protected Alison and her child.

Case Study

The opportunity to talk about, explore and begin to understand experiences is essential part of the recovery process for those subjected to domestic abuse and violence.

Independent counselling services, such as those offered in Warwickshire provides a space in which women are able to receive support, to explore their options and to make informed decisions without the added pressure of the sudden involvement in the police and the perceived consequences that may bring. It also helps prevent women reaching their crisis point, where they and/or their family are at serious risk of harm. It also prevents cases escalating to high risk status that require a more intensive and rapid response.

Early access to counselling support has an impact on not only the quality of life of the victim and their family, but also on the effectiveness of other services such as the IDVA service. Without the counselling support more victims would reach crisis-point, resulting in greater involvement of the police and greater need for IDVA support.



Conclusions

Statutory and voluntary sector agencies agree that the only way to effectively tackle domestic abuse is to work collaboratively, with each agency bringing its skills, knowledge and specialism.

The impact of counselling and IDVA support services are marked, however for many victims, they only become available at the point of crisis.

Awareness is vital if support services are to be effective in reducing the impact on the individual and society of domestic abuse: agencies and victims need to be aware of the context, signs and symptoms of an abusive relationship so that they can recognise abuse for what it is. There also needs to be a widespread awareness of the

availability of support services to victims of domestic abuse so that they can be signposted to them and choose whether or not to access them.

These support services are a vital resource for victims of domestic abuse and where possible, these services should be funded through mainstream funding. Where this is not possible, commissioning bodies should seek to award contracts of three to five years as a minimum. The loss of any of these services will have a detrimental impact on the quality of life for hundreds of victims and their families each year.

4.3. Victims of sexual violence

What is sexual violence?

In this report, 'sexual violence' refers to the full range of sexual offences recorded by the Home Office.³¹

Sexual violence can affect people of all ages, genders, sexual preferences and cultures.

The British Crime Survey 2010/11 includes a self-completion module on intimate violence. This covers emotional, financial and physical abuse by partners or family members, as well as sexual assaults and stalking experienced by adults aged 16 to 59.

Nineteen per cent of women and two per cent of men reported having experienced sexual assault (including attempts) since the age of 16. In addition, around three per cent of women and one per cent of men had experienced some form of sexual assault (including attempts) in the last year.

For a variety of reasons, sexual violence often goes unreported.

The government response to Baroness Stern's 2010 review of how rape complaints are handled by public authorities in England and Wales observed that "despite progress in recent years, it is estimated that up to nine in ten cases of rape go unreported and 38 per cent of serious sexual assault victims tell no one about their experience."³²

Research such as the 2009 Rape Experience Review by then Victims' Champion Sara Payne highlights the importance to victims of the first response they receive when they disclose an offence, whether to the police or anyone else:

"The women I spoke to were clear that if they are not treated with dignity when first reporting rape, it is unlikely they would continue to support a prosecution. Women felt that the attitudes and

³¹ <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/science-research-statistics/research-statistics/crime-research/counting-rules/count-sexual?view=Binary>

³² The Government Response to the Stern Review, March 2011

response of police officers need to change and rape needs to be treated more seriously; they wanted a greater investment in ensuring that the police provide a believing, sensitive and consistent response."³³

Since this review was undertaken, the number of rape crisis centres and sexual assault referral centres in England and Wales has increased. Plans in Warwickshire are based around a central Sexual Abuse Referral Centre (SARC) built at George Eliot Hospital in Nuneaton, on the border of Coventry (West Midlands). A SARC is a victim centred medical centre where victims can go for confidential medical help, testing and advice

Police and criminal justice responses to victims of serious sexual violence have increased considerably.

Nationwide, many forces now have specially trained police officers (STOs) to act as a link between the victim and the investigation team, and to attend court with the victim.

Many areas also have independent sexual violence advisors (ISVAs) who operate in a similar fashion to independent domestic violence advisors (IDVAs), but their numbers are far fewer.

In addition to these changes, all agencies recognise that there is still room for improvement.



Sexual violence in Warwickshire

A number of statutory and voluntary agencies are involved in the provision of support services to victims of sexual violence and abuse. The police, through their Sexual Offences Liaison Officers and Sexual Offences Investigation Team provide a vital service in supporting those who report the incident through the investigation and any subsequent court case. Additionally, there are three Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs) who provide independent support to those engaging with the Criminal Justice process.

³³ Rape: The Victim Experience Review, Sara Payne, November 2009

Each ISVA has a specialist field and between them they provide support for women, men and children. The ISVA employed by the Terrance Higgins Trust provides specialist support to sex workers who are victims of sexual violence.

At a strategic level, stakeholders are currently working on a new Reducing Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy which will incorporate sexual violence. Stakeholders are also working closely to bring plans for a new Sexual Abuse Referral Centre (SARC) into fruition. In 2010/11 there were 472 recorded sexual offences in Warwickshire. This represents an increase of 8% from the previous year compared with an increase of 1% nationally. However, the under reporting of sexual offences is well documented and it can be assumed that recorded crime figures do not offer an accurate indication of the number of victims of sexual violence in Warwickshire.

Based on regional data from the British Crime Survey, the estimate for an area the size of Warwickshire is that over 4,000 women and girls aged 16-59 have been a victim of sexual assault in the past year³⁴.

In 2010/11 all sexual offences reported to the police were referred to Victim Support in Warwickshire. However, Victim Support may not have provided support to all of these victims as many are referred on to specialist sexual violence support agencies across the area.

What else do we know about sexual violence in Warwickshire

There are currently three specialist sexual violence support agencies operating in Warwickshire. The first, Safeline provides practical and emotional support for victims of rape and sexual abuse. Safetalk, an offshoot project of Safeline has a specific youth focus and is for teenagers who have experienced rape or sexual abuse in the past. Warwickshire RoSA and the Terrence Higgins Trust also provide support to victims of sexual violence. The services of Coventry Rape and Sexual Assault Support

³⁴ Violence Against Women and Girls Ready Reckoner

Centre (CRSASC) are also accessed by victims within Warwickshire.

Rape and sexual abuse have a devastating effect on people's lives and many victims go on to develop damaging mental health conditions:

"Psychiatric disorders are more prevalent among victims of sex abuse, with those with a history of being raped having the most occurrences of depression, eating disorders and post traumatic stress disorder...Increased incidents of suicide and attempted suicide, anxiety disorders...and even sleep disorders were closely linked with a history of sexual abuse and rape".³⁵

There is a growing body of evidence that suggests that early intervention can reduce the risk of developing these disorders.



Support for victims of sexual violence in Warwickshire

As part of the research into the needs of victims of sexual violence and abuse in Warwickshire we wanted to speak to victims of abuse about their experience of the police and criminal justice system as well as the support services they received or would have liked to receive. We contacted a number of organisations to try to identify potential participants but unfortunately, despite continued attempts, we were unable to identify anyone willing to participate in the research.

We were, however, able to speak to a number of professionals working with victims of sexual abuse and violence about their experiences in supporting victims of sexual abuse. They told us that sexual violence is both traumatic and dehumanising and that the support they are offered has a positive impact on their quality of life. In particular, they commented on the

³⁵ Bruce, S. (2010) 'Psychiatric Disorders More Prevalent Among Sex Abuse Survivors' at <http://mentalhealthnoews.org.uk/psychiatric-disorders-more-prevelant-among-sex-abuse-survivors/841580> accessed 01/04/2012

positive impact that counselling services have by providing a space in which victims can talk about their experiences; knowing that they are being believed and that they are not being judged because of what happened to them. They told us of the transformation in the lives of many of the victims they supported, and particularly those of historic rape or abuse, were 'simply amazing'.

The ISVA service was also seen as critical in offering independent support to victims who are engaging with the criminal justice system. They felt that one of the reasons why the ISVA service is particularly successful is that it is independent of the statutory agencies that had a responsibility to gather evidence in respect of the crime. They believed that the impartiality of the support services enabled the victim, and the agency acting on their behalf, to challenge actions that were seen as inappropriate, unhelpful or damaging to the victim.

Yet many victims are not aware of the support services available to them and only find out about them after a referral from another agency following disclosure. They would like to be able to promote their services more widely but cannot justify spending the money on promotion when it can, and in their opinion should, be used to support victims.

Yet with sexual abuse, independent specialist support is not the only support victims need. Professionals also suggested that it was important for victims to have a single, and accessible, point of contact within the police who understood what the victim was going through. It is also important that victims are given timely and accurate information from their contacts and not opinion or speculation which could undermine a victim's confidence in the system and ultimately force them to withdraw from it altogether.

Equally, we were told of cases where the victim felt let down and excluded by the various criminal justice agencies. For example in cases where no further action is taken due to lack of evidence victims can often feel discouraged from coming forward again and where plea bargaining between prosecution and defence barristers occurs it can leave the victims feel excluded and their sense of justice diminished.



Case Study

Lisa was one of several family members abused during her childhood. The offender had continued to sexually abuse other children until recent years and was finally convicted in mid 2011.

Until this point, Lisa had received specialist counselling and emotional support from Victim Support, which had enabled her to move on with her life and she was coping well. Twenty four years after the abuse, she was faced the trauma of having to give evidence in court.

She received updates and support prior to the trial by the Victim and Witness Information Partnership (VIP) and was introduced to the Witness Service. When the case came to court Lisa and the other victims were understandably nervous and anxious. They were supported by their caseworkers and provided with a safe environment to wait in to give evidence. This support continued over a period of time as the case was adjourned several times due to the ill health of the defendant. Initially Lisa and her family did not wish to return to court to hear the defendants evidence, the summing up of the case and the verdict, however due to the support they knew they would receive from the Witness Service they felt they would be able to return to hear this part of the case. They knew they would have a safe place to wait, people to talk to about how they were feeling and volunteers to sit with them in the public gallery, Lisa said without this support she would not have returned and looking back would feel she had missed out on part of her recovery and closure of the case.



Case Study

Being a victim of sexual violence or abuse is distressing enough on its own. But having to relive it time and time again as you engage with the different agencies in the criminal justice

system can be enough to discourage a victim from making a report in the first place or agreeing to support criminal proceedings.

The ISVA service plays an important role in supporting victims who have taken the brave step in reporting the incident to the police, helping them understand the processes involved, attending court with them, liaising with all agencies on their behalf and acting as their advocate when the processes do not support the needs of the victim.

The ISVAs in Warwickshire are a vital part of the support and recovery for a victim of sexual violence and would benefit from their funding being committed for a longer term in order for the service providers to plan, develop and continually improve their services.



Conclusions

Sexual violence and abuse happens more than society realises. Many young children find themselves as victims whilst a significant number of adults are also subjected to violence or abuse during their lives. Services that support victims of sexual violence and abuse play an important part in helping victims to put their lives back together.

However, for many of the victims of sexual violence and abuse in Warwickshire, the support is never accessed either through a lack of knowledge about their existence or an unwillingness to report the abuse in the first place.

For those who do report, the police – from the officers who make the first response to the Sexual Offence Liaison Officers who support victims through the Criminal Justice System and beyond must ensure they adopt a victim-centric approach at all times. This entails putting the victim first and at the centre of the case; by treating them with dignity, providing accurate and timely information and working to ensure their unique needs are understood and met.

Support services external to the police and criminal justice system need to maintain their independence to help ensure that the investigating and prosecuting authorities continue to adopt the victim-centric approach.

However, many victims do not disclose the abuse to the police and this must continue to be recognised as a legitimate course of action. More needs to be done collectively by statutory and voluntary agencies to identify ways of promoting services and making them available to victims at the most appropriate time for them – especially for those who do not want to involve criminal justice agencies.

The need to offer support services to those who, for whatever reason, choose not to involve the police is clear: early intervention can, and does have a positive impact on the lives of victims. Wider stakeholders including health agencies need to have clearer information on how to refer victims into the system.

Finally, victims of sexual violence and abuse are not always female. The number of male victims necessitates specialist support services be available across Warwickshire. The same is true for child and younger victims; early support is essential in order to stop them developing harmful coping strategies that will impact on their lives forever.

People bereaved by murder and manslaughter

What are murder and manslaughter?

Murder and manslaughter are defined as:

- murder
- manslaughter and
- infanticide.

This report also considers the needs of those bereaved as a result of culpable road traffic incidents.

The local data available on services for those bereaved by murder and manslaughter, including services for those bereaved as a result of culpable road traffic incidents, has been limited because most services we mapped deliver on a national rather than on a local basis.

For example, the charity Brake is a national provider of emotional support, information, help and advocacy to people bereaved and seriously injured in road crashes. This is delivered through a UK-wide helpline and via partnerships with police family liaison officers, who distribute Brake's support packs for people bereaved in road crashes, *Advice for family and friends following a death on the road*³⁶. Brake's packs and helpline offer emotional comfort, guidance on practical matters, and signpost to further sources of support, including locally available help.

We have tried to include all services accessible to victims in Warwickshire, but may have missed some of them.

We did not hold focus groups or interviews with people bereaved by murder and manslaughter. Instead, the project has referred to the 2011 report by the former Commissioner for Victims and Witnesses, Louise Casey, on services for secondary victims of murder and manslaughter.³⁷ This called for, among other things:

³⁶ These packs are produced by Brake and funded by the Ministry of Justice for use by families bereaved by road crashes in England and Wales. Support literature for bereaved children, serious injury victims, and those affected by road death in other parts of the UK is available from Brake.

³⁷ Review into the Needs of Families Bereaved by Homicide, Louise Casey CB, July 2011

- A dedicated casework service to help [bereaved families] with practical problems and support families in the early weeks and months following a bereavement. Where aspects of a case include complex and specialist areas of law, there should be arrangements in place for families to access additional assistance.
- Trauma and bereavement counselling as necessary.
- An offer of peer support through a national network of peer support/self help.
- Age-appropriate services for children.³⁸



Support for people bereaved by murder and manslaughter in Warwickshire

Victim Support's Homicide Service, along with the national charity Cruise Bereavement Care are the primary support services available to people bereaved by murder or manslaughter within Warwickshire.

Victim Supports Homicide Service is a nationally managed service made up of five teams based in five locations around England and Wales. Each team consists of a team leader, five case workers and a support worker. There is a National Homicide Manger, completing the team of 36. On receiving a referral, a homicide caseworker carries out a needs assessment and work begins to support the bereaved person in a range of ways. Often the help at the start is very practical: help with the funeral, meetings with the police, child care, and benefits, typically reinforced by emotional support as the relationship between the bereaved and the caseworker develops. The caseworker can also commission a number of specialist interventions such as trauma support and support for bereaved children. It also provides information and support about the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme and supports those left behind in attending the police station or Coroner's Court. The Homicide Service was the first service that Victim Support

³⁸ Review into the Needs of Families Bereaved by Homicide, Louise Casey CB, July 2011

developed and rolled out as a national rather than regional service.

Cruse Bereavement Care's counselling service is provided by a team of trained support workers who specialise in supporting the bereaved of homicide and suicide. In respect of those bereaved through road death caused through a criminal activity, Victim Support has specially trained volunteers who are able to provide support to the individual or families affected for as long as necessary. This support can include home visiting and practical help.

There are a number of other national organisations who can also provide support to people bereaved through homicide, providing services such as peer support and trauma care.

Children and young people bereaved by the loss of a significant family member can also access support through Guy's Gift, a small independent charity based in the south of Warwickshire. Although the charity predominantly supports children from the south of the county, it does on occasions offer telephone support and other low level interventions for young people in the north of the county. Victim Support's Homicide Service also commissions Edwards Trust and Winston's Wish to support younger children.



Conclusions

Incidences of murder and manslaughter in Warwickshire are rare; however when they do occur, the impact on those left behind is often devastating. Specialist support services from the police, Victim Support and other agencies play an important part in helping those left behind manage everyday life in the aftermath of tragedy. They are also vital in helping those bereaved by homicide to go some way to put their lives back together and start to face the future.

It is essential that support services to those bereaved by homicide are always available to them and, for as long as they are needed.

4.4. Victims of hate crime

What is hate crime?

*'Any criminal offence which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice based on a personal characteristic.'*³⁹

In 2007, the police, Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), Prison Service (now the National Offender Management Service) and other agencies that make up the criminal justice system agreed a common definition of monitored hate crime to cover five 'strands,' in particular – disability, gender-identity, race, religion/faith and sexual orientation. Primarily, this was to ensure a consistent working definition to allow accurate recording and monitoring.⁴⁰

Hate crime can have a huge impact on victims – not only because of how the incident itself has affected the person, but also because bringing the offenders to justice can involve the victim having to reveal very personal and private aspects of their life.

*"They were calling me the usual names like 'speccy' and I tried to ignore it because it's not worth it. But when they threw the brick – that's too far."*⁴¹

Hate crime does not only affect the targeted individual. It affects victims' families and the wider community, and can lead to further violence and aggressive behaviour.

Hate crime was included in the victims' services advocates project's work when our initial mapping of local services showed that providers across England and Wales were concerned that victims of this crime were still under-recognised and under-supported.

A particular issue that emerged from our focus groups and interviews across England and Wales

was that the boundaries between antisocial behaviour and hate crime can be blurred. It is important that victims are treated according to their individual needs, rather than according to a crime category which they appear to fit into.

It is hoped that some of these issues will be addressed by the Home Office hate crime action plan, 'Challenge it, Report it, Stop it' published in March 2012. This outlines the new national strategy for tackling hate crime by through focussing on prevention, early intervention and improving the response to victims. Aiming, among other things, to achieve better multi agency working to identify and support victims, and to reduce the grey area between ASB and hate crime, the strategy includes the following actions:

- working with police forces, councils and housing providers to improve handling of public calls about anti-social behaviour, to identify possible hate crime and victims at risk
- publishing risk assessment tools that allow police and other call handlers to identify victims of hate crime earlier in the reporting process
- engaging with communities at risk of hate crime to raise awareness of the law on hate crime, and increase reporting
- putting Safeguarding Adults Boards on a statutory footing, to increase the awareness, detection and prevention of abuse and exploitation of adults in vulnerable circumstances.

In 2010, 47, 229 hate crimes were recorded by police forces in England and Wales. Of these:

- 38,670 were racist crimes;
- 4,736 were based on sexual orientation;
- 1,959 were religious hate crimes;
- 1,512 targeted disabled people; and
- 352 targeted transgender people⁴²

³⁹ Challenge it, Report it, Stop it: The Government's Plan to Tackle Hate Crime. HM Government, March 2012

⁴⁰ Challenge it, Report it, Stop it: The Government's Plan to Tackle Hate Crime. HM Government, March 2012

⁴¹ Quote from victim (Equality and Human Rights Commission report, 'Promoting the safety and security of disabled people', 2009).

⁴² ACPO (2011) Recorded Hate Crime Data for 2010 for England, Wales and Northern Ireland: http://www.report-it.org.uk/files/acpo_hate_crime_data_for_2010.pdf

Hate crime in Warwickshire

Warwickshire Police have taken considerable steps to improve the way hate crime is monitored and recorded. Call handlers now ask specific questions to try to determine whether reports constitute a hate crime and officers are trained to identify hate incidents and crimes. The force's Equality and Diversity Team has recently launched the new REACH (Response and Engagement Against Crimes of Hate) project which is encouraging those affected by hate crime to report incidents to the police so that they can support them and their communities and take action against the perpetrators.

Warwickshire police regularly consults members of its Independent Advisory Groups (IAG's) on cases with a hate element as well as more generally about how services can be improved for victims who possess one or more of the nine protected characteristics.



What else do we know about hate crime in Warwickshire

Under-reporting of hate incidents is prevalent in Warwickshire. In particular, there is concern amongst police that the number of disability related hate crimes or incidents are either not reported or not recognised as such by the victim.

Those representing the communities who are subject to hate related incidents or crimes believe that there are many cultural reasons why reporting levels are so low. They also talked about the need for communities to have confidence in the police in respect to the police understanding the specific culture and practices of the local community. This applies to all the different communities including the faith, BME and LGBT communities.

Warwickshire Police have acted proactively to reduce the amount of under reporting by launching the REACH project which aims to work closely with those communities who may be the victim of hate crime, to raise their awareness of the forms it can take and build relationships

between the communities and local neighbourhood policing teams so that individuals and communities have more confidence in reporting incidents to the police.

The force is also actively promoting the use of the anonymous online reporting site – True Vision⁴³, as well as social media in an attempt to raise awareness of hate crimes and encourage people to report incidents to the police.

Support for victims of hate crime in Warwickshire

Our mapping of services found little specific support for victims of hate crime beyond the services of Victim Support. There are a number of organisations and partnerships that focus on the needs of those who have protected characteristics but this did not necessarily incorporate support or advocacy for those who are victims of crime. Similarly, there were a number of other national organisations which provided a voice for people with protected characteristics more generally but this did not translate to specific support in dealing with hate crime.

Victims of hate crime told us that they often did not report hate crime incidents to the police because they believed that the police would not take it seriously; others expressed the opinion that hate crime is just part and parcel of being who they are and that it was better to ignore it than let it affect them. Others considered reporting the incidents but felt that although they believed they were being victimised because of who they were, they could not prove this to be the case.

Some victims were aware of the anonymous online reporting service although none of them had used it to date. Many of the victims we spoke to felt that it was important to be able to report the incident so that police and other agencies could have a better understanding of how many incidents there were and felt that they would consider using the service in the future.

⁴³ www.report-it.org.uk

However, those who had reported incidents to the police were often complimentary about the professional way in which it had been handled:

“The police took it seriously. I’m sure they could have just shrugged it off as something trivial but they realised that it wasn’t trivial to me and took action”

(Male victim of homophobic hate crime)

The need for emotional support was a moot point amongst the victims we spoke to. Many felt that they hadn’t wanted any support because the prejudice against them was simply part and parcel of being who they were. However, they did recognise that other victims, particularly those who had been subjected to ongoing difficulties, could benefit from having the emotional and practical support that was available through organisations such as Victim Support.



Case Study

Marria moved to the UK around four years ago and lives in a small ground floor maisonette with her partner and her two year old daughter. At the back of Marria’s garden is an alleyway which leads to garages. Over the last few years, Marria has found that cigarette ends, dog mess and general rubbish have been thrown into her garden although none of her neighbours, who are all British, have had any problems. One morning, Marria woke up to find that her car had been scratched from bumper to bumper with a key or similar implement.

Marria believes that she is being targeted because she is a foreign national but cannot prove it. She has never reported the incidents to the police because she feels like her complaints are too trivial and can’t be proven and therefore she would be wasting the police’s time.

But the feeling that she is being targeted is taking its toll on her: she no longer feels safe or welcome in her own neighbourhood and she is reluctant to go out of her house.

Case Study:

Warwickshire police launched the REACH project in response to the Equality and Human Rights Commission Report *Hidden in Plain Sight*⁴⁴. The project represents a step change in the approach previously taken by the police to enabling the reporting of hate crime and taking action against it.

The project aims to actively engage with communities who may be at risk of being subjected to hate crime, to build the community’s trust in the police and to reduce and remove barriers to reporting. Warwickshire Police recognises that the first call to them to report incidents of hate crime are crucial to get right and is training its staff to ensure that the quality of service to victims is of the highest possible standard.

All members of the Safer Neighbourhood Teams and Communication Centre staff have been briefed on the issues that communities face, the form that hate crime can take and are now proactively encouraged to recognise and record incidents as hate crime, if they believe they are, even if the victim has not made that association. The Safer Neighbourhood Teams have been tasked with actively engaging with communities and the force is now compiling a database of interactions with communities at risk of hate crime. Since December 2011, 350 such interactions have now been recorded.

As part of the project, Warwickshire police are actively working with Warwickshire Disability Forum to identify ways in which disability hate crime can be reported to the police and how the police can better support victims of disability related hate crime.

Warwickshire police have two equality objectives around hate crime – to see an increase in both reporting levels and levels of satisfaction with their service. Since its launch in December 2011, hate crime reporting has increased by 10%. Warwickshire Police are now looking at how this can be expanded in the future to encompass work in schools to raise awareness of hate crime

⁴⁴ EHRC (2011) *Hidden in Plain Sight*

and to raise public awareness so that they too can play a part in recognising, reporting and reducing hate crime in Warwickshire.



Conclusions

Increasing levels of reporting and tackling hate crime are key priorities for Warwickshire Police. They recognise the need for cultural awareness and a culturally accessible service if they are to be effective in increasing reporting and reducing incidences of hate crime across the force.

The need for a victim-centric approach to hate crime is essential if communities are to have faith in the police's ability and willingness to take incidents seriously and the approach taken by the force with the REACH project represents a real step change in the way police deal with hate crime and support the victims in coming forward.

4.5. Young victims of crime

The British Crime Survey estimated that there were 878,000 crimes affecting 10-15 year-olds in England and Wales in 2010/11. Of these, two-thirds (576,000) were violent crimes (77 per cent of which resulted in injury to the victim, mainly minor bruising or black eyes). Most of the other third (275,000) were thefts of personal property. A much smaller number of children (27,000) experienced vandalism of personal property.

Over a third of all reported rapes (36%) are against children under 16 years old,⁴⁵ and one in six teenage girls reported intimate partner violence.⁴⁶

Indirect victimisation is also common among children and young people. In a recent study, almost one in five young people (22% of girls and 13.5% of boys) said they had experienced cyber bullying.⁴⁷ Given the widespread use of social networking, this type of crime can be especially difficult to police or prevent.

Though many young people are affected by crime, they are less likely than adults to report it, seeing it more 'as a fact of life'⁴⁸.

A 2011 study of young people's experience of the police and criminal justice system by the charity Catch 22 found particular barriers to young people reporting crime, including:

- lack of trust in the police
- tensions between young people and the police
- fear of being perceived as 'a grass' or fear of retaliation.⁴⁹

Crime perpetrated in school can be difficult to identify and to address as teachers are not always trained to deal with issues beyond bullying. Young people can be vulnerable to further abuse

and repeat victimisation if they speak about what has happened to them. Those in same sex relationships are reluctant to report for fear of homophobia from classmates or teachers.⁵⁰

Victim Support's 2007 report, *Hoodie or Goodie*, highlighted the fact that young victims and young offenders are often one and the same. This link is particularly prominent where violence is involved.⁵¹

Without a clear idea of the protection available, young people will often keep quiet.⁵² When they do speak up about their experiences, they are more likely to tell their peers than an adult. Although peer support and counselling schemes have been established in a number of UK schools, their remit does not always extend beyond bullying.⁵³

Catch 22 found⁵⁴ that young victims need help in three main areas:

- feeling unsafe after reporting a crime
- dealing with living around the offender after the crime
- lacking confidence and feeling unable to trust others.

It recommended that a variety of support be made available to young victims, from updates and information from the police to intensive mentoring and counselling.



Children and young people as victims of crime in Warwickshire

Evidence shows that young people are more likely to be victims of crime than adults. For many young people, the chances of being a victim of crime at least once before the age of 16

⁴⁵ Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls, Home Office, November 2010

⁴⁶ NSPCC, 2009

⁴⁷ O'Brien, N., Moules, T. and Walker, S. (2011) *The Impact of Cyber Bullying on Mental Health* London: NSPCC and Anglia Ruskin University

⁴⁸ NSPCC, 2009

⁴⁹ Catch 22 (2001) *What works: Developing a welfare approach to supporting young victims*. London: Catch 22

⁵⁰ NSPCC 2009

⁵¹ *Hoodie or Goodie*, Victim Support, 2007

⁵² Firmin, C. (2011) *This is it, This is my life: Female Voice in Violence* London: ROTA

⁵³ NSPCC 2009

⁵⁴ Catch 22 (2001) *What works: Developing a welfare approach to supporting young victims*. London: Catch 22

is high and for some, victimisation becomes a regular part of life.

The impact on the lives of young people is as variable as young people are unique; many will recover completely from the impact of the crime whilst others may carry the emotional and physical scars of victimisation for much of their life.

Evidence, including Victim Support's report *Hoodie or Goodie*⁵⁵, suggests that an early experience of victimisation increases the likelihood of later offending and so the case for early intervention is an easy one to make.



What else do we know about young victims in Warwickshire

The Children Act (2004) paved the way for the creation of Children's Safeguarding Boards within all unitary authorities across Warwickshire. The primary objectives of Children's Safeguarding Boards are to protect young people, prevent children from harm and promoting their wellbeing.

Within this framework to protect, prevent and promote the interests of the young people is a set of outcomes which neatly captures the challenge agencies face in working with young people, given the blurred boundaries between young victims and young perpetrators. Two of the outcomes listed below, recognise that young people could, without support, be both victim and perpetrator:

Outcome 1: Staying Safe: being protected from harm and neglect

Outcome 2: Making a positive contribution: being involved with the community and society and not engaging in anti-social or offending behaviour.

⁵⁵ Victim Support (2007) *Hoodie or Goodie*

This creates a challenge for agencies working with young people – and in particular for the police – in balancing the need to support and nurture with the need to control their conduct. How this balance is managed ultimately impacts on young people's perceptions of the police and their willingness to engage with them.

Support for young victims in Warwickshire

The Warwickshire Youth Justice Service (YJS) and Victim Support are the primary agencies providing support to young people.

As a multi-agency partnership working across the County, YJS are responsible for prevent offending and re-offending by children and young people. This includes working in partnership with other agencies to prevent anti-social behaviour and working with victims of youth crime and young people to see what can be done to put right the harm caused by crime.

However, the work of Youth Justice Services cannot extend to all young people and, during this difficult economic climate, the services is currently undergoing wholesale reorganisation – the impact of which is as yet unknown.

Outside of the YJS and Victim Support, there were no identifiable support groups who specifically offered support to young victims of crime in Warwickshire. There are, of course, a myriad of youth projects across the area who all provide emotional support to young people as they transition to adulthood and who are well placed to provide some support to child victims of crime. However, the young people we spoke to felt that peer and kinship networks were the most likely source of support for them as victims of crime. Most were unaware of Victim Support as an organisation and were unable to name any organisation outside of their everyday life experiences who could provide support if they were the victim of a crime.

From our research, it is clear that many young people are unaware of how the police and criminal justice agencies operate and their perceptions of how youth focused these agencies are also varied. There was a general feeling that the police responded positively to young people from more affluent communities compared with

those from more deprived communities and that young people from the deprived communities were more likely to be treated as criminals and not victims.

The young people were very clear in their view that any decision to involve the police should be met by an immediate and effective response, irrespective of where they lived. Talking about theft of personal property, the young people were unanimous in their view that they expected the police to act quickly to retrieve the stolen property although their confidence in the police's ability to do so was low:

"The police never get stuff back - I don't think they try to find it either. We're not important enough"
(Male participant, young person's focus group)

Talking more broadly about how the police should respond to offences against young people, many felt that they would expect the police to attend the incident in person, take statements and then take action. Reporting incidents over the phone and being given a crime reference number was not seen as an acceptable approach as many of the young people we spoke to felt that this would feel like they were being 'fobbed off' and not taken seriously.

Some young people suggested that they would like to meet the police in a neutral space, away from the local police station and also away from the prying eyes of their peers and communities.



Case Study:

In order to safeguard the wellbeing of the young people who took part in our research, the decision was taken not to ask them about their own specific experiences of crime but to conduct a focus group to evaluate attitudes towards a hypothetical scenario and a number of statements relating to the police and young people.

This case study sets out the hypothetical scenario the young people were asked to consider and sets out their response to it.

'Alex is standing at a bus stop when a group of youths approach him and knock Alex to the ground causing him to have an injury and then his mobile phone was taken'

Despite saying that they would feel angered in this situation, there were mixed opinions as to whether they would involve the police. For many, it depended on the seriousness of the injury to Alex.

When asked to imagine that they had called the police, the group stated that they would expect a fast response from the police, to be taken seriously and for them to catch the people responsible and get the phone back.

The group also talked about concerns of retribution after involving the police if the perpetrator was known to Alex and this could possibly sway their decision whether to report to the police or not.

Conclusions

Young people believe that they are negatively stereotyped by the police and criminal justice agencies leading to a general distrust in the police and their ability to support them in times of need.

Wider specialist support services for young victims of crime are limited with young people turning instead to peer and kinship networks and organisations they come into contact with as part of everyday life such as youth organisations.

Where young people do report crimes to the police there is a desire for a personal response which takes into consideration the wishes of young people. Furthermore, young people have an expectation that the police should act immediately to catch the perpetrator.

The police and other criminal justice agencies need to balance the need to nurture young people and the need to control their conduct. Over emphasis on control could reinforce young people's negative perspectives of the police and their belief that they are treated like criminals just because of their age.

5 Delivering services to victims

Issues identified and what can be done to address them

Police and crime commissioners (PCCs) have a duty to obtain the views of victims of crime before producing their policing plan.

They also have the potential to play a key role in championing the needs of victims in their local area.

This gives victims an unprecedented opportunity to have a real voice in influencing and shaping the services they receive at local level.

This report builds on the considerable work already done by partner organisations in Warwickshire. It gives a snapshot rather than a forensic examination of the service needs of victims in Warwickshire, and there is room for further research.

We hope that this evidence will encourage the incoming PCC for Warwickshire to understand and respond to the needs of victims, and to prioritise their needs accordingly. We propose the following actions to address the issues identified in this report:



Proposed actions

5.1 The Commissioner should work with the police, statutory agencies, GP commissioning groups and third sector providers to examine ways in which support services can be made available to all victims of crime at the earliest possible opportunity. Such support should be available regardless of whether victims have reported incidents to the police.

5.2 The Commissioner should establish a commissioning framework with supports longer term funding of third sector providers in order to support them to develop strong

and resilient services that meet the needs of victims.

5.3 The Commissioner should look to establish a Warwickshire wide support service for victims of anti-social behaviour. This could be delivered by extending current victim support services to include non crime incidents.

5.4 The Commissioner should explore ways in which the successful local multi-agency approaches can be applied across all crime types and across Warwickshire as a whole to give victims of crime a more effective and efficient service

5.5 The Commissioner should facilitate greater partnership working across Warwickshire, in particular by developing and implementing a Warwickshire Sexual Abuse Strategy and a Warwickshire Domestic Abuse Strategy, incorporating existing best practice from all areas.

5.6 The Commissioner should listen to victims of crime to determine a Warwickshire Standard of service which, as a minimum, meets the requirements of the Victims Code and which pays particular attention to improving communication between the police, criminal justice agencies, victims and the wider public. Building on existing good practice, the Commissioner should work to increase the confidence of minority groups within Warwickshire so that they know they will be treated with dignity and respect by the police and support services.

5.7 The Commissioner should enable non-police support services to remain independent from the police, criminal justice agencies and other bodies involved in the collection of evidence and prosecution of cases, in order to act as a 'critical friend' to the criminal justice system to ensure appropriate standards are met.

6 Appendices

Appendix 1: Methodology

The Warwickshire VSA used a variety of research methods and data to investigate issues explored in this report and address the overall aims of the project. These comprised qualitative and quantitative elements and involved conducting primary research and drawing on existing research (secondary research).

Five methods of enquiry were employed:

1. Mapping victim services in the local police force area

The first exercise we undertook in this project was to 'map' existing services available to victims in Warwickshire. This was done to establish a baseline understanding of the local service landscape and to build a network for the victims' services advocates to draw on throughout the rest of the project.

We mapped provision for victims in each of the crime categories considered by this report, and further separated these into the sub-categories of:

- statutory sector
- voluntary sector
- structures/partnerships (to include representative bodies such as local criminal justice boards or regular meetings of different agencies with a service focus, such as MARACs)

We mapped services rather than organisations, in recognition of the fact that the same organisation can offer a range of services. We only mapped services that explicitly supported victims as victims, rather than those that supported a wider client group in which victims might be highly represented. This was decided in recognition of the limited time and capacity of the project but it is acknowledged that by defining the scope of the exercise in this way, some services may be missed, particularly for those victims who do not report crime. Drugs and alcohol services are a possible example of this. We mapped services for witnesses of crime mainly where witnesses were also victims.

We sought information on services including:

- geographical coverage
- summary of services offered (including who provides support to whom and whether there is a focus on a specific crime type)
- any restrictions on services available (e.g. only offer support to 11-15 year olds)
- client group
- referral routes
- number of clients supported
- local issues of concern
- sustainability (e.g. how long are they are funded for)
- current funding source

Not all the services mapped were willing to provide all the information requested; this was particularly true of questions around funding.

The mapping exercise was conducted by a mixture of phone and desk-based research, with some meetings. It was mainly collected between June and August 2011 and ongoing updating of the maps continued on an ad hoc basis for the remainder of the project period.

Many local stakeholders and organisations requested copies of the maps. The project steering group agreed in January 2012 that the maps could be circulated with the more sensitive pieces of information, such as funding information and 'local issues of concern' removed

All services contained within the map were asked to confirm that the data contained about their services before the maps could be published. The maps are due to be published by the end of May 2012, again, with information on funding or 'local issues of concern' removed.

There were a number of limitations to this element of our research, including:

- time-sensitiveness: the maps were initially baselined in early September 2011, since which time many services will have emerged, developed or reduced their activities, or ceased to operate, therefore the map can only offer a 'snapshot' in time and will quickly become out of date
- representing the full range of services: because completing the maps placed a call on the time of those services we contacted, or relied on information available online, it may have favoured larger organisations with the capacity to assist us or those with an online presence. This may mean that smaller organisations were not mapped.
- significance of apparent 'gaps' in provision: many of the service providers we spoke to talked about gaps in provision, citing that there was no service for a certain group in the local area. We were cautious not to draw conclusions about supply versus demand on the basis of this anecdotal evidence alone, recognising that factors such as the level of need in a local area, provision in neighbouring areas and the specific needs of victims with certain characteristics should be considered in drawing such conclusions

A textual analysis of conclusions from the mapping exercise in Warwickshire can be found at appendix 6.

2. Consultation with stakeholders and organisations

Following the mapping exercise, we consulted stakeholders and colleagues in service delivery organisations to access feedback on the needs and experiences of a wider range of victims. We wanted to talk to representatives from these organisations because, as they work with large numbers of victims every year, they are able to:

- form opinions based on the experiences of a wide range of service users
- note patterns, gaps and needs
- understand the limitations on services' ability to meet these needs – from a service provider's perspective
- explain what has been tried before, and what they would like to see tried in future, based on a realistic understanding of current political trends and financial constraints
- explain what works for victims and what doesn't
- offer strategic proposals for solving the problems experienced by victims

We found it particularly valuable to consult stakeholders and organisations supporting victims we struggled to recruit to focus groups and interviews for qualitative research. Talking to professionals was one way of ensuring that victims we found harder to reach could be represented in the research. Many of these organisations offered additional help in signposting us to others which could provide additional information.

We consulted stakeholders and organisations individually throughout the project, and collectively towards the end, in drafting the proposed actions listed in chapter five of this report. We held a 'roundtable' discussion with The proposals were shared with key stakeholders either through existing meetings and forums or in one on one meetings in order to seek their feedback on the draft text of these and making amendments in response to their feedback. One of the limitations of this approach was that not all stakeholders invited to contribute were willing or able to, and, where a consensus did not appear, not all could have their views represented in the final proposed actions or wider body of the report. Therefore managing expectations was key to this element of our research.

3. Review of existing research and reports

We reviewed a selection of existing literature exploring the experiences of victims and provision of victim services. The aim of this was to gain greater knowledge and understanding of the issues and to identify how the project fits with and compares to the existing body of knowledge.

We generally only considered literature published since 2008 to the present day. Where there was a lack of recent data on certain issues (female genital mutilation, for example), we have referred to the most up to date sources. This decision was taken to ensure that the literature identified remained relevant to the current experiences of and services for victims. The time constraints of the project also meant that we had to limit our review to literature from a relatively short time period. Literature we reviewed included local and national research reports from statutory and voluntary sector agencies, as well as academic bodies; it also included the published strategies, action plans and force plans from government departments and agencies including the Home Office and individual police forces.

The search for literature was completed electronically using online search engines such as Google. In addition organisations identified in the mapping of victim services in each police area were consulted about research or publications they were aware of or had produced themselves. Hard copies were also made available to us by stakeholders.

In total 26 reports were identified and cited in this report.

This review was limited in scope as it did not use a range of search strategies to identify literature. It is therefore likely that many relevant publications were not identified. In particular the review omits empirical research not freely available online e.g. studies published in academic journals requiring subscription.

4. Secondary analysis of the British Crime Survey 2010/11 dataset

We analysed data from the British Crime Survey 2010/11 in order to understand the scale of need and the perceptions of victims and non-victims in Warwickshire.

The data set used was the British Crime Survey 2010/11, non-victim user form.

Access was through the Economic and Social Data Service via special licence⁵⁶ and analysis was completed following the BCS user guide,⁵⁷ using SPSS software.

We extracted data against a selection of questions in the British Crime Survey which would tell us what victims in Warwickshire thought of the police, the criminal justice system, and other services.

⁵⁶ <http://www.esds.ac.uk/government/bcs/>

⁵⁷ <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/science-research-statistics/research-statistics/crime-research/user-guide-crime-statistics/user-guide-crime-statistics?view=Binary>

We analysed the data using the following methods:

- cross-tabulation of public perception data at the police force area level
- calculation of average incidence rates for key crime categories at the police force area level

We did not carry out significance testing of BCS data. Therefore the figures are quoted based on observed difference rather than proven statistical significance.

5. Qualitative semi-structured interviews and focus groups

The aim of the qualitative element of the research was to explore the experiences and perspectives of individuals who had been a victim of one of the crime categories in the last two years. This was done by conducting 1-1 interviews and focus groups with victims of crime in Warwickshire

The focus groups conducted with children and young people differed slightly from the other four crime categories as participants were not required to have been a victim of crime in the past two years. This option was taken firstly because there are very few dedicated services for young victims of crime from which participants could be recruited and secondly because, when talking to groups of young people per se, such as youth groups, we did not want to single young people out as victims. Most importantly, we did not want the lack of dedicated young victims' services to prevent young people having their voices heard in this research.

As a consequence the topic guide was not designed to focus on personal experiences but instead used scenarios to draw out opinions and perspectives in a sensitive and safe way. More detailed information about the part of the project is found in Appendix 2.

Rationale for the approach:

We used a variety of methods of research to enable us to examine the issues through a number of different lenses and achieve a deepening and a widening in understanding. We wanted to ensure that we triangulated our findings from these different research methods and data to give our findings validity.

There were also more pragmatic reasons for using a variety of methods. The project's aims could not be addressed using a single method of inquiry. For example, while qualitative interviews with victims provided information about their individual experiences, opinions and access to services, these did not provide an effective and systematic method for mapping all the existing services in the local police force area. Similarly, consulting professionals about the needs and experiences of victims would provide some information about the needs and experiences of victims, however this would be from the perspective of the professional rather than victims themselves. It is also worth noting that, as is the case with all projects, the research methods were in part shaped by the time and resource constraints of the project.

Appendix 2: Qualitative semi-structured interviews and focus groups with victims

The following provides more detail about the qualitative element of the research which was designed to explore the experiences and perspectives of victims of crime.

The approach:

The aim of the qualitative element of the research was to capture the experiences and opinions of victims in the five crime categories: victims of anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse, sexual violence and hate crime and young people affected by crime – whether or not they had been victims themselves. The use of an in-depth qualitative approach enabled participants to raise issues that were important to them, drawing on their own experiences and using their own words. The data collected through a qualitative approach is useful for understanding individuals' perspectives on particular issues and the meanings that they attach to their experiences and behaviour.

The limitations of qualitative research have been well documented. While qualitative research can provide rich, in-depth data, it can also be small in scale and dependent on context. Because of this, generalisations cannot be made about the experiences of the wider population on the basis of this research. In addition qualitative research can be seen as more subjective than quantitative data both in terms of data collection (researcher influence) and data analysis. We hoped to overcome these limitations to some extent by the use of different methods to explore the issues of concern to this study i.e. consultation with professionals as well as victims, analysis of the 2010/11 British Crime Survey, review of relevant literature and mapping existing services for victims.

Design of research tools:

A semi-structured topic guide was developed in consultation with Victim Support's research manager. This helped to ensure that key issues were explored with each participant and gave interviewers the flexibility both to adapt their style to meet the needs of individual participants and to probe and explore issues in detail and with sensitivity. The topic guide was piloted with five participants initially to test out questions, gain feedback and make appropriate modifications. A copy of the topic guide used is provided at Appendix 4.

Conduct:

Originally the project planned to use focus groups as the sole qualitative method for investigation. This decision was in part influenced by the time constraints of the project, whereby it was envisaged that the use of focus groups would enable the project to reach a greater number of victims in a restricted time period allocated for fieldwork. In addition the use of focus groups was decided upon because the method for recruiting participants was primarily via gateway organisations and it was felt that it would be beneficial to make use of pre-established groups, as these would have the advantage of being able to provide victims with support before and after a focus group should they require it. It was also felt that the group dynamic of a focus group would enable participants collectively to develop creative ideas to put to police and crime commissioners.

Early on in the data collection stage it became clear that the data collection methods needed to be flexible to account for the needs of victims and ensure everyone who wanted to participate could do so. For example many prospective participants were not comfortable taking part in a focus group for a variety of reasons (e.g. nervousness about speaking in groups, not wanting others to hear about their experiences etc) however they were happy to participate in a face to face interview. Others were unable to gather easily in one central location due to the limitations of geography, particularly in rural areas. The needs and requirements of the participants therefore dictated the use of a combination of focus groups and interviews.

For similar reasons, while the majority of interviews were conducted face to face with the interviewer, some were conducted over the telephone in order to meet the needs of the participant and facilitate the participation of those who were unable or unwilling to participate in a face to face interview. For some a telephone interview enables more control over the situation and provides a certain anonymity and privacy not available in a face to face interview.

With the permission of the participants, the interviews/focus groups were recorded using a digital recording device. Where permission was not granted the researcher took notes. The recordings were retained for a maximum of ten days and during this time the interviewer inputted information into the framework developed for sorting the data prior to analysis. The reason for this was to ensure that no data captured on the recording devices that could potentially identify participants was retained unnecessarily. In addition, between recordings being made and the data being entered into the framework analysis, recording devices were kept in locked cabinets so that the data they contained could not be accessed.

Criteria for participation:

Except in the case of children and young people, criteria for participation were that:

- the prospective participant had been a victim of at least one of the crime types in the last two years (except in the case of historic sexual abuse, victims of which often do not access services or report the crime until many years after it took place), and
- the prospective participant was aged over 18 years

We decided to focus on experiences that occurred in the last two years to ensure the relevance of those experiences to the existing provision of services in the local area and to avoid difficulties and inaccuracies in recall. The age restriction was put in place as it was agreed early on in the project to focus on the experiences of children and young people as a distinct part of the project and to reflect the additional ethical, safeguarding and welfare considerations of working with those under the age of 18 (see more information about children and young people below).

Sampling:

The aim was to reach a minimum of five participants in each local police force area in each of the crime categories. Inclusivity of participants across diversity strands was attempted by applying the conclusions of an equality impact assessment conducted at the beginning of the project.

Recruitment of participants:

Participants were recruited primarily through gateway organisations that were already providing or had provided support to the participants. This was partly dictated by pragmatic considerations (e.g. the gateway organisations already had access to the individuals that the project was looking to consult and could identify those who met the participation criteria) and partly due to ethical considerations (e.g. the gateway organisations were there to provide support to the participants after the research was completed and already had an understanding of their needs.) Host organisation Victim Support was also treated as a gateway organisation and trained Victim Support staff and volunteers offered immediate emotional support to participants drawn from both Victim Support networks and beyond. Participants were also recruited through local organisations and stakeholders. The interviews and focus groups took place between October 2011 and March 2012.

Ethical considerations:

The wellbeing and safeguarding of participants were paramount in the conduct of the interviews and focus groups. Key elements of the ethical approach taken included:

- providing prospective participants with the information needed to make an informed decision about whether to take part or not
- recording participants' decisions to take part via a consent form and providing them with the opportunity to withdraw consent
- explaining carefully to participants the steps taken to maintain confidentiality and the limitations to preserving confidentiality in accordance with Victim Support policies
- maintaining participant anonymity by removing all information that could potentially identify an individual
- minimising distress to participants during fieldwork e.g. conducting interviews and focus groups in a private and safe space; researcher sensitivity to the needs of participants, having a trained Victim Support staff member or volunteer available during the fieldwork to provide support if and when required etc.
- making referrals to specialist support services should further support be required by the participants
- recruitment of interviewers (victims' services advocates) with experience of working with victims of crime and/or other vulnerable groups
- the provision of detailed guidelines, briefings and training sessions to all researchers to prepare them for the role and taking into account areas of possible sensitivity (specific training was delivered to prepare VSAs for working with children and young people and victims of sexual violence)
- mandatory safeguarding training and Criminal Records Bureau checking of all interviewers before they could conduct interviews or focus groups

Children and Young People

We took a different approach to researching the experiences of children and young people firstly in recognition of the fact that there are few dedicated services for young victims around the country.

We wanted to make sure that we did capture the views of children and young people but did not consider it to be within the capability of the project to recruit one-off focus groups specifically of young victims of crime outside the support systems that a gateway organisation, such as a youth group, would provide. We therefore contacted existing groups and requested the opportunity to hold a focus group as part of an existing, planned session.

We did not want to ask the young people to talk about their personal experiences or indeed to single young people out as victims in a group environment so we used a fictional character 'Alex' as a point of discussion and asked the young people to explain how Alex might feel as a victim of crime.

An amended topic guide was used for these sessions and can be found at appendix 3. This was developed with the advice of specialist young people's workers within Victim Support. Findings from the research with young people were captured on a separate framework to that used for adult participants and therefore data from the young people cannot be compared with that from the adults in a meaningful way.

Analysis:

The analysis of the interviews and focus groups was undertaken using a framework analysis approach. This approach was chosen as it offered a transparent and systematic method for analysing qualitative data which enables the research to stay focussed on the specific priorities of the study. The transparent procedural approach of framework analysis is valuable as it would allow another researcher to repeat the process in order to verify findings. It is also a relatively straightforward approach which could easily be

explained and adopted by all the researchers working on the project and which did not require the use of complex and expensive computer assisted qualitative data analysis software.

The first stage involved the researchers familiarising themselves with the data (through reading notes and/or listening to recordings) and then systematically sifting, summarising and sorting the data from each interview or focus group into a pre-designed thematic framework. The framework comprises a series of subject charts in Excel. The broad theme headings that made up the thematic framework used for this research were:

- impact of victimisation
- support needs of victims
- experience of the police, experience of other criminal justice system agencies
- experience of other agencies
- barriers and facilitators to accessing support, and
- recommendations

These broad themes were broken down further into sub-themes and there was also space within the framework for researchers to record information that did not fit into these themes but might still be important to the study. This meant that emerging and unexpected themes could be identified and recorded.

Researchers also recorded verbatim quotations from participants in the framework. Basic context information about each interview or focus group was recorded including whether it was a focus group or interview, the number of people participating, the crime type area and basic demographic detail.

Once the data was summarised and sorted in the framework then in depth analysis was conducted. Like all qualitative data analysis this was an iterative process and involved the researcher:

- reviewing the summarised data;
- systematically, comparing and contrasting the different accounts, experiences and perspectives;
- searching for patterns, contradictions or connections within the data;
- seeking explanations for patterns and associations and
- making interpretations grounded in the data.

Each crime type area was analysed separately initially to identify the concerns and issues specific to that victimisation experience. Where time was available all victim crime types were analysed together to identify where there were issues and concerns relevant to all victims interviewed.

Limitations of the qualitative research

As with all research this approach had certain limitations. Some of these were inherent in the methodology and others related to the specific response achieved for this study. Some of the limitations have been considered here:

- Recruitment: this was largely through gateway organisations and therefore may not have reached those victims that had not accessed services at all and may have the greatest needs/most unmet needs
- Diversity of sample: because of the small numbers of victims involved, we aimed to be inclusive rather than fully representative of all victims locally who had experienced each crime type. Generalisations about all victims representing a particular diversity strand cannot therefore be drawn on the basis of this research

- Complexity of hate crime as a crime category: because hate crime can be motivated by hostility on the basis of multiple diversity strands, it was not possible, with the small sample interviewed by this research, to gain the views of people affected by all types of hate crime. In Warwickshire, we spoke to victims affected by homophobic and racially motivated hate crime. We were not able to speak to victims of disability, religiously or transphobic motivated hate crime, so this research can only give a partial picture of the impact of hate crime locally.
- Combination of interviews and focus groups: because, led by the needs of participants, we conducted our research in a combination of group sizes, there is a risk of overstating data captured in interviews as it is more detailed and in depth
- Retrospective views and past experiences: because we were reliant on the recall of victims, there is a risk that this recall can be flawed, especially if events took place some time ago
- Interviewer effect: as with any research captured in person, there is a risk that interviewers will represent victims' views through a filter of their own personal perspective
- Social desirability: particularly in a group setting, there may be a risk of participants saying what they think is socially acceptable rather than what they really think
- Bias of self-selection: those who have had negative experiences with services may have been more motivated to take part, especially if they were likely to feel more strongly or want to have the opportunity for redress. Victims who had had more positive experiences may have felt less inclined to come forward
- Only one part of the story: because we didn't hold focus groups asking the same questions of agencies providing services to victims, we were unable to capture the same level of detail from their perspective about the challenges and difficulties facing agencies or the criminal justice system in meeting the needs of victims, However it was beyond the scope of this project to investigate this in detail as our priority was capturing the voice of victims

Appendix 3: Children and Young People topic guide

Topic Guide – VSA research (CYP)

Materials needed:

- Flipchart and pens
- Flashcards
- Post it notes
- Parental and young people consent forms (distributed by gateway organisations)
- Dictaphone
- Incentives e.g. pizza

o Introduction

The group leader should introduce the VSA to the group, set ground rules and be on hand for any challenges that may arise throughout the session. Ground rules should be provided by the gateway organisation where possible; if they do not already have a list of ground rules then VSAs should use the ground rules document in the CYP toolkit.

“Good Afternoon/Evening. Thank you all for letting me take some of your time. I would like to start by introducing myself and explaining a little about the work I am doing which I hope you will be able to help me with.

My name is [insert name] and I am Victims’ Service’s Advocate for Warwickshire. Part of my role is looking at what help and support there is available for victims and witnesses of crime and looking at ways that things may be improved for those affected by crime. I am here today to get your thoughts and opinions on policing and crime to help feed into this work.

This is connected to a big change that is coming up in how police are run - Police & Crime Commissioners (PCCs), who will be elected in November 2012 in each of the 42 police force areas in England & Wales.

PCCs will be responsible for setting what the police in the local area should focus their efforts and money on. They will also be responsible for deciding whether to start or support other services relating to crime, including services/support for victims of crime.

We want to try and make sure that one of the things they focus on is looking after victims. So part of my job is to write a report in a few months time on what the PCC should do to support victims of crime – including young victims.

Please be aware that I am not here to talk about any experiences personal to yourself, I am just looking at how you feel about some of the issues identified by victims and witnesses of crime. If over the course of the session you do wish to discuss something personal then please do discuss with the group leader after the session [confirm this with group leader].

Finally, anything that we do discuss will be in confidential and we will not be using anyone's names in the report we write. The only time we will break confidentiality will be if we believe you or someone else is in danger of harm. Please also respect the confidentiality of each other and do not disclose what is discussed in this focus group to others. "

- Opening the discussion – 5 minutes
 - Ice breaker: Ask young people to introduce themselves – their name and what they enjoy doing in their spare time (or similar)
N.B. This should be facilitated by the group leader with the VSA as participant
- Support needs – 15 minutes
 - Case Study: Alex
 - This is Alex (VSA draws picture of a boy on flip chart)
 - How old is he? (elicit feedback and write down answer on flip chart)
 - What does he like to do? (elicit feedback and write down answer on flip chart)
 - VSA reads:
 - Alex was out with some friends one evening. Whilst waiting at the bus stop with a friend a group of lads came up to them and demanded their phones and money.
 - Alex refused and when he did one of the lads punched him in the face badly cutting his lip.
 - Alex and his friend handed over all their money and phones and when the lads had gone they ran to a nearby phone box to call the police.

Q. What would they need from the police?

Prompts could include:

- Regular update on progress
- Signposting
- Sensitive to your needs
- Quick Response

Q. What other support might they need?

Prompts could include:

- Emotional support
- Specialist support
- Medical help
- Safer community (lighting, CCTV etc)

Q. Where could they get that support from?

Prompts could include:

- Local organisations
- Family and friends
- GP

Agree/Disagree – 10 mins

- Everyone stands in the centre of the room and Agree and Disagree signs are placed on either side of the room
- The facilitator reads out a specific point of view from the CYP statement flashcards on policing and crime e.g. “There is no point reporting abusive neighbours; nobody does anything about it anyway!”
- Ask people to move according to how far they agree or disagree with the statement; and ask why

What things do you think would help young victims of crime like Alex? - 5 minutes

- Make a list of things the young people think the PCC should do to help victims of crime. Include things such as ‘better communication with the victim’ and ‘provide more funding to local organisations’ etc
- Once the list is compiled split the young people into groups (max of 4 per group) and give each group a few post-it notes, then ask them to put down the three things they personally would like to see the PCC focus on. They can use items from the list or think of their own
- Collect them in, make a definitive list of main priorities on the flipchart and elicit a response from each group as to why these things are important

Conclusion

- Thank young people for their time and contribution
- Ask if there are any final questions or comments
- Ask if the young people are interested in seeing the report / being kept informed of progress – advise this will be available via the gateway organisation
- Communicate that a report will be available from May 2012

Closing the discussion (optional) – 5 minutes

A closedown activity (similar to the opening icebreaker) is recommended to closedown the discussion. N.B. This should be facilitated by the group leader with the VSA as participant

A closedown activity example is as follows:

- Ask everyone to stand in a circle.
- Each person says what they had for breakfast
- The next person then repeats what has already been said and adds their own For example: “This morning I had 1) an apple 2) a bowl of cereal and 3) an xxx for breakfast”
- This continues until everyone has had their go; the VSA should be the last person in the sequence

Appendix 4: Adult focus group topic guide

Materials needed:

- Flipchart and pens
- Consent forms
- Dictaphone
- Change for reimbursing travel

Introduction – 10-15 minutes

Introduce yourself

- Go over VSA project and purpose of focus groups:
- This is connected to a big change that is coming up in how police are run - Police & Crime Commissioners (PCCs), who will be elected in November 2012 in each of the 43 police force areas in England & Wales
- PCCs will be responsible for setting what the police in the local area should focus their efforts and money on. They will also be responsible for deciding whether to start or support other services relating to crime, including services/support for victims of crime
- We want to try and make sure that one of the things they focus on is looking after victims.
- This research is being done as part of a project to identify what victims in each area need in terms of services and support, so that the PCCs can know where they should focus police resources in relation to services and support for victims
- What you tell us in this group will be used to make a briefing paper for the incoming Police & Crime Commissioner for your area, aimed at highlighting what victims most need and influencing them to act to better meet that need

Confidentiality

Explain that:

- All the information provided will be treated confidentially – it will be kept secure and only be seen by members of the VSA research team. It will not be shared with other VS staff, the gateway organisation (if relevant) or anyone else
- They will not be identified in the report – we may cite their experience or views and quote them in the report but we would not use their name, and would change any details which might identify them
- Participants should respect the confidentiality and anonymity of each other and not disclose what is discussed in the focus group to others
- Emphasise the limits of confidentiality i.e. if someone shares something which suggests a vulnerable adult or a child is at risk, or they are at risk, the researcher has an obligation to share this information the relevant Victim Support manager, who may have to inform social services

Practical issues

Explain that:

- The focus group will last around 2 hours
- There will be a 5-10 minute break half-way through
- Travel expenses will be reimbursed at the end
- They do not have to answer questions if they do not want to
- They can leave at any time and for whatever reason

- They will be given information about support services available (where applicable) and the name and contact details of a volunteer who will be available to talk to them about any issues or queries they have. If needed they are also on hand if they should wish to go out and talk to someone
- Ask permission to record the interview
- Housekeeping – fire procedure, toilets etc
- Ask them to give each other a chance to speak, respect each other's views and try not to talk over each other

Consent

- Check if they have understood the above
- Hand out consent forms and ask to sign
- Emphasise that consent can be withdrawn at any point and they would need to inform the researcher if they wanted to do so

1 Opening the discussion – 15 minutes

Icebreaker: ask people to introduce themselves – their name and what they had for breakfast (or similar). Ask participants to each tell a little bit about their experience of being a victim of crime: explain they can share as much or as little as they want but would be useful if they included whether the crime was reported to the police and, if it was, what the outcome of the investigation was (e.g. no-one caught - case dropped, offender charged – sentenced).

2 Support needs for dealing with the police and CJS – 30-40 minutes

First, we want to look at the service that victims of [relevant crime type] get from the police – what do victims need from police and why?

EXERCISE 1: WHAT VICTIMS NEED FROM THE POLICE

Draw line down piece of flipchart with header 'WHAT' on one side and 'WHY' on the other.

We want to find out from you what you think it is most important that police do when dealing with victims of [relevant crime type], and why.

So first, what is most important about how the police deal with victims of [relevant crime type]?

MODERATOR INSTRUCTION: Note in the 'WHAT' column, if participants also say why it is important, note in 'WHY' column.

PROBE:

- Responding to report of crime quickly
- Taking incident seriously
- Taking (quick) action to investigate
- Explaining process / next steps
- Keep victim updated and informed about what they were doing
- Being understanding and responsive to concerns of victim
- Treating victim with consideration and respect
- Linking victim to other support services

Why are these things important?

MODERATOR INSTRUCTION: Note in the 'WHY' column. Ask if the police did do any of these things in their case, and if they did, what was valuable about it for them.

PROBE:

- Reassurance
- Understanding of process / what to expect
- Able to access other support
- 'Closure'

Ask if the police did not do these things in their case and, if they didn't, what effect that had on them.

PROBE:

- Worsens distress
- Felt alone/isolated/unsupported
- Emotional wellbeing deteriorates/self-doubt/stress/possibly ill mental health
- Made fear for safety
- Affected trust/confidence/loss of respect in police
- Made less likely to report crime or engage with police in future

Ask each if they could say which of these things are the most important for victims of [relevant crime type] overall (in their view).

So we now have a list of things that victims of [relevant crime type] want or need from police: how well do you think police in this area meet these needs?

What could they do to improve?

PROBE:

- Manner – more understanding, respectful etc
- Information and communication with victim – updating on progress and outcome, explaining process and next steps etc
- Linking with other services – e.g. referring to information and support services like VS

Independent organisations are sometimes able to help victims deal with the police e.g. by explaining what rights/entitlements they have as victims and how the process works, or by helping to get information from police officers such as updates on their case.

Did you have any independent support to help with the police? Would you have found it useful to have this in your experience of dealing with the police? (or perhaps you did get it?)

PROBE:

- How do you think such support might have helped you in dealing with the police?

Do you think victims of [relevant crime type] generally would benefit from this type of support to help deal with the police and other criminal justice agencies? PROBE:

- Why/why not?

Does anyone have experience or views of other criminal justice agencies that they want to share e.g. CPS, courts?

PROBE:

- Good points
- Bad points

BREAK – 5-10 minutes

3 *Support needs for dealing with impact of crime – 30-40 minutes*

In the next part we want to look beyond the police at what victims of [relevant crime type] need to deal with the impact on their lives. We know that being a victim of crime can have all sorts of effects on your life: it can be traumatic and affect your emotions and confidence; it can affect your employment, your finances, your

health; and, as well as dealing with strictly policing matters, the Police and Crime Commissioners will be able to do something about these things as well, through commissioning services and support for victims.

EXERCISE 2: SUPPORT NEED

On flipchart make 4 columns headed 'WHAT', 'WHY', 'WHEN', 'WHO'.

We want to find out from you what aspects of your life being a victim of [relevant crime type] had the biggest impact on, and what type of help you needed to deal with it.

Ask each person in turn to say what, if anything, they most needed help with in terms of dealing with the impact of the experience on their life. Note in the 'WHAT' column. *NOTE: prompt, using support type list if necessary*

PROBE:

- Why was this needed? – note in the 'WHY' column
- Was there a particular point that it was needed? – note in the 'WHEN' column

Ask each: what forms of help do you think is most important for victims of [relevant crime type] overall? So we have what, why and when. What about 'who'? Who would you want this type of support from?

PROBE:

Is there a certain organisation or type of organisation that's most appropriate or best placed to provide this support?

Which, if any, of the following do you think are important for *these* types of services (services identified by the participants in the previous question):

- To be independent of police or government
- To be specialists in supporting victims
- To be specialists in supporting victims of [relevant crime type]
- To be specialists in supporting people from under represented communities e.g. with disabled people, people with mental health problems, people from an ethnic minority group
- Have legal knowledge/knowledge of how system works

Is this type of help available in this area?

Were you aware it was available?

Would you know how to find out about it?

PROBE if yes:

- How? - leaflet, website, word of mouth etc

Do independent services link up well enough – so if you were supported by an independent service did it link in with other support services to assist you?

Was the quality of the support good enough?

- Why/why not?

4 Overall messages on victim needs – 10-15 minutes

Finally, we want to see if we can distil what we've discussed into some key messages to take to the PCCs.

If you could tell the new PCC one thing about what they should be doing for victims of [specific crime type], what would that be?

If you could tell the new PCC one thing about what they should be doing for victims generally in [name of police force area], what would that be?

5 Conclusion – 5 minutes

- Thank participants for their time and contribution
- Ask if there are any final questions or comments

- Give out information sheet and reiterate that follow-up support is available

Ask if people are interested in seeing the report / being kept informed of progress – take contact details of those who are. Communicate that a report will be available from May 2012

Appendix 5: List of victims consulted

The VSAs consulted the following victims when researching this report

Anti social behaviour

1 x focus group

Hate crime

2 x interviews with LGBT victims

1 x interviews with victims of racially motivated hate crime

Domestic abuse

1 x mixed all female focus group

1 x interview with female victim of same sex domestic abuse

Sexual violence

3 x interviews with providers of services for victims of sexual abuse

Children and young people

1 x focus group with young people

Appendix 6: Summary of local organisations and stakeholders mapped

1. Breakdown

The following is a breakdown of the mapping exercise we undertook and represents the picture of service provision we found across Warwickshire at that time. We endeavoured to map all services providing direct support to victims or witnesses of crime, but we will have missed some.

We also recognise there are many other more general services that would provide support to victims in a less targeted way. Youth services, church groups and general support for older people are examples of services we did not map as their target service users do not explicitly include 'victims of crime'.

Furthermore, the funding climate means many services we mapped will have since changed in scope, been cut or maybe even grown. This should be borne in mind in drawing conclusions on the basis of our mapping.

We mapped eighteen organisations that provide direct support services to victims and witnesses of crime. This includes organisations that provide more than one, so does not correspond to the number of services provided. Similarly Victim Support (although there is further break down below) has also only been counted once.

In addition, we mapped partnerships and/or consortia arrangements that provide support to victims. These include:

- MARAC partnerships across Warwickshire
- Warwickshire Against Domestic Violence
- Warwickshire Victim Information Partnership

Please note that the position of the person we spoke to varied and so the views given were not necessarily the view of the service or organisation. The following tables provide a breakdown of organisations we spoke to.

2. List of organisations mapped

The following is a list of all the organisations we mapped; those in bold we spoke to in more depth either face-to-face or by telephone.

Air Training Corps
Ashram Asia Women's Refuge
Bromford Corinthian Housing Association
Community Safety Partnerships across Warwickshire
Crown Prosecution Service
Domestic Abuse Counselling Service
FCH Housing Association
Guys Gift
Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service
Midland Heart Housing Association
North Warwick District Council
North Warwickshire District Council
Nuneaton and Bedworth District Council
Refuge
RoSA
Rugby Borough Council

Safeline
Stratford-on-Avon District Council
Victim Support
Warwick District Council
Warwickshire County Council
Warwickshire Domestic Violence Support Service
Warwickshire Police
Warwickshire Police Authority
Warwickshire Probation Service
Warwickshire Race Equality Partnership
Warwickshire Rape or Sexual Abuse Support
Warwickshire Victim Information Partnership
Warwickshire Victim Information Partnership
Warwickshire Youth Justice Service

3. Overview of support and services

Overview of support for victims of crime in Warwickshire

Victim Support provides volunteer support to anyone affected by crime, whether or not the crime has been reported; this includes victims and witnesses, their friends, family and other people caught up in the aftermath. Practical and emotional support and information are provided over the phone and in person by a victim care officer.

Support services for victims of anti social behaviour:

Support for victims of anti-social behaviour is fragmented. Each of the District and Borough Councils in Warwickshire provide some degree of support for victims of anti-social behaviour. Housing Associations with properties in Warwickshire also have a responsibility to support victims of anti-social behaviour however the work of all these agencies is predominantly focused on taking action against the perpetrators of the behaviour.

Victim Support provides emotional and practical support to victims in cases where a crime has been committed or where the victim refers themselves believing that they are a victim of crime.

The concerns of anti-social behaviour organisations:

The County Council, District Councils and Victim Support all recognise that there is insufficient emotional support available for victims of non-criminal anti-social behaviour however at present; there is no funding available to remedy this.

Following on from a number of high profile national cases, organisations working with victims of anti-social behaviour are increasingly adopting a 'harm based approach' in which they seek to identify those victims who, for various reasons, are at a greater risk of harm. However, due to the fragmented and decentralised approach to recording incidents of anti-social behaviour and providing support there is the risk that some of those victims in the greatest need of support may be missed.

Support service of victims for domestic abuse:

Support services for victims of domestic abuse have recently been restructured across Warwickshire and, from April 2012, new providers have taken responsibility for their delivery.

The County Council, who commissioned the new services in collaboration with key strategic partners, believe that the new structure will benefit victims of domestic abuse by providing a unified and holistic service.

The concerns of domestic abuse support organisations:

As part of the restructure, some agencies have lost funding and are concerned about their ability to maintain a presence in Warwickshire.

There is also concern about the level of support that is available to those victims assessed as being at low or medium risk of harm. In particular, agencies are concerned that without early intervention, there is a significant risk that these victims will continue to be victimised and put at a greater risk of harm.

Support services for victims of sexual violence:

Service provided by RoSA and Safeline, as well as the additional services offered by Victim Support means that there is a comprehensive range of support services from male, female and child victims of sexual abuse and violence in Warwickshire.

There is also a support service provided by the Terrence Higgins Trust specifically for sex workers who are victims of sexual violence.

Agencies in Warwickshire are working closely to ensure that the new Sexual Abuse Referral Centre (SARC), located in Coventry, will provide even greater support for victims of sexual abuse once it opens in 2012.

The concerns of sexual violence support organisations:

Funding strategies and the threat of funding cuts during these times of austerity are the primary concern for organisations providing support for victims of sexual abuse and violence in Warwickshire. Providers believe that the provision of counselling support is a vital service and fear that cuts in funding would reduce their ability to offer this service.

Support for people bereaved by murder or manslaughter:

Victim Support, through its homicide service, is the main providers of support to families bereaved by murder or manslaughter. Additional services from Cruse Bereavement Services, Winston's Wish and the Edward Trust are predominantly accessed through referral by Victim Support's homicide service.

Support services for victims of hate crime:

Our mapping did not identify any agencies that provide specialist support to victims of hate crime in Warwickshire. There are a number of agencies which support people who have protected characteristics but this did not translate specifically to supporting victims of crime.

Victim Support, as part of its generic service does offer support to all victims of crime, including victims of hate crime.

Support services for young victims of crime:

There are several support services for victims of crime in Warwickshire, particularly those who are victims of sexual abuse. Victim Support offers support to young victims of crime through its specially trained volunteers. There are a number of issues about the competency of a young victim to receive support and

this addressed by obtaining parental consent or, in the case of victims under the age of 14, by supporting parents in supporting their children.

The Youth Justice Service also provides support to young people who are both victims and perpetrators of crime however because of their specific remit; this service is not available to all young victims.

Concerns of organisations working with young people:

Organisations working with young people are predominantly concerned about how future funding cuts could affect their services.

Appendix 7: Glossary

Anti-social 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.

British Crime Survey (BCS) - a systematic victim study, currently carried out by BMRB Limited on behalf of the Home Office. The BCS asks people aged 16 and over living in households in England and Wales about their experiences of crime in the last 12 months. These experiences are used to estimate levels of crime in England and Wales.

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

Criminal Justice System (CJS) - the system of practices and institutions of governments directed at upholding social control, deterring and mitigating crime, or sanctioning those who violate laws with criminal penalties and rehabilitation efforts, includes policing, courts and corrections services.

Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) - the Government Department responsible for prosecuting criminal cases investigated by the police in England and Wales.

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.

Female genital mutilation (FGM) - a collective term for a range of procedures which involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It is sometimes referred to as female circumcision, or female genital cutting.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) – independently assesses police forces and policing across activity from neighbourhood teams to serious crime and the fight against terrorism.

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.

Multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) - meetings where information about high risk domestic abuse victims (those at risk of murder or serious harm) is shared between local agencies. By bringing all agencies together at a MARAC, a risk focused, coordinated safety plan can be drawn up to support the victim.

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. Police and crime

commissioners will ensure community needs are met as effectively as possible, and will improve local relationships through building confidence and restoring trust. They will also work in partnership across a range of agencies at local and national level to ensure there is a unified approach to preventing and reducing crime.

Police force area - the area for which a designated police force has responsibility for providing policing services and enforcing criminal law.

Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 – legislation setting out reform for police accountability and governance, including the creation of the MOPC and replacing police authorities with directly elected Police and Crime Commissioners.

Sexual assault referral centre (SARC) - specialist services for people who have been raped or sexually assaulted. Provides medical care and forensic examination following assault/rape, counseling and in some locations, sexual health services. SARCs are mostly able to assist in the immediate aftermath of an assault but do not offer long term services that are provided by Rape Crisis Centre.

Sexual offences investigation team (SOIT) - specially trained officers, who have to attend a rigorous training course. They ensure that the immediate physical, mental and welfare needs of the victim are met. They will explain the criminal justice process and gather evidence and information from the victim to support the investigation.

The Code of Practice for Victims of Crime (VCOP) – code which governs the services to be provided in England and Wales by organisations in regards to victims of criminal conduct which occurred in England and Wales.

Victims' services advocate (VSA) – individual employed by the victims' services advocates project to research and promote the service needs of victims of crime in preparation for the introduction of elected police and crime commissioners and, in London, the MOPC.

7 References

Local references:

Local references:

Warwickshire Domestic Abuse Strategic Plan 2008-11

Warwickshire Policing Plan 2010-13

Warwickshire Anti-social Behaviour Strategy and Action Plan 2010-11

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110222143732/http://ljb.cjsonline.gov.uk/Warwickshire/913.html> accessed 11/04/2012

<http://www.warwickshire.police.uk/ineedhelporadvice/VIPFolder/VIPnews> accessed 11/04/2012

National references:

Barter, C., McCarry, M., Berridge, D. and Evans, K. (2009) *Partner exploitation and violence in teenage intimate relationships* London: NSPCC

Casey, L. (2011) *Review into the Needs of Families Bereaved by Homicide* London: Home office

CAADA (2009) *Safety in Numbers – A Multi-site Evaluation of Independent Violence Advisor Services* London: CAADA

CAADA (2010) *Saving Lives, Saving Money* London: CAADA

CAADA (2011) *Evaluation of Luton MARAC*, Bristol: CAADA

Catch 22 (2001) *What works: Developing a welfare approach to supporting young victims*. London: Catch 22

Equality and Human Rights Commission (2009) *Promoting the safety and security of disabled people*

Firmin, C. (2011) *This is it, This is my life: Female Voice in Violence, final report* London: ROTA

Home Office (2010) *Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls* London: Home Office

Home Office (2010) *Violence Against Women and Girls Ready Reckoner*. London: Home Office

Home Office (2011) *Crime in England and Wales 2010/11, police force area data tables*. London: Home Office

Home Office (2011) *Crime in England and Wales 2010/11: Findings from the British Crime Survey and police recorded crime (2nd Edition)* London: Home Office

Home Office (2011) *Have you got what it takes?* London: Home Office

Home Office (2011) *Home Office Statistical Bulletin 08/11 Children's experience and attitudes towards the police, personal safety and public spaces: Findings from the 2009/10 British Crime Survey interviews with children aged 10 to 15. Supplementary Volume 3 to Crime in England and Wales 2009/10* London: Home Office

Home Office (2011) *The Government Response to the Stern Review*, London: Home Office

Home Office (2012) *Challenge it, Report it, Stop it: The Government's Plan to Tackle Hate Crime*. London: HM Government

Home Office (2012) *Home Office Statistical Bulletin: Homicides, Firearm Offences and Intimate Violence 2010/11: Supplementary Volume 2 to Crime in England and Wales 2010/11*; London: Home Office

Home Office (2012) *Home Office Counting Rules for Recorded Crime: Sexual Offences* London: Home Office

O'Brien, N., Moules, T. and Walker, S. (2011) *The Impact of Cyber Bullying on Mental Health* London: NSPCC and Anglia Ruskin University

Payne, S. (2009) *Rape: The Victim Experience Review* London: Home Office

Victim Support analysis based on Home Office: Research, Development and Statistics Directorate and BMRB, *Social Research, British Crime Survey; 2010-11*, Colchester, Essex: UK Data Archive [distributor]. Crown copyright material is reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO and the Queen's Printer for Scotland.

Victim Support (2007) *Hoodie or Goodie* London: Victim Support



Commissioned by the independent Victims' Commissioner.

Finalised with support from the Ministry of Justice and funded by the Home Office

www.victimsupport.org.uk

Victim Support registered charity number 298028
Registered address: Victim Support, Hallam House,
56-60 Hallam Street, London W1W 6JL

