

NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF VICTIM SERVICES IN NORTH WALES

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Abbreviations

ASB: Anti-Social Behaviour

BAWSO: Black Association of Women step Out

BCS: British Crime Survey

CAADA: Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse

CISVA: Children's Independent Sexual Violence Advocate

CPS: Crown Prosecution Service

CSP: Community Safety Partnership

CSEW: Crime Survey for England and Wales

DASV: Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence

DAF: Domestic Abuse Forum/Fora

HMCS: Her Majesty's Court Service

IDVA: Independent Domestic Violence Advocate

IOM: Integrated Offender Management

ISVA: Independent Sexual Violence Advocate

MARAC: Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference

MASH: Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub

MOJ: Ministry of Justice NWP:

North Wales Police ONS:

Office National Statistics

PCC: Police and Crime Commissioner

RASA: Rape and Sexual Abuse Service

SARC: Sexual Assault Referral Centre

SDVC: Specialist Domestic Violence Court

SLA: Service Level Agreement

VS: Victim Support

WA: Women's Aid

Executive Summary

This study considers the needs of victims in north Wales drawing on quantitative data collected from a range of agencies and analysed in tandem with qualitative data from a series of interviews with service providers and some victims of crime.

Assessing needs is understood in this report to be a dynamic and iterative process and so is expected to be an ongoing piece of work. The publication of this needs assessment begins the commissioning journey for victim services. It establishes a platform for understanding the needs of victims in north Wales and for further development work as the process of commissioning and meeting victims' services in north Wales is refined.

This report focuses on met and unmet needs. Whilst it scopes the range of existing services and perceptions about them, it does not expressly consider the efficacy of services.

Key findings of the study are:

About Crime and Victimization

1. Over the last few years the chances of becoming a victim of crime in north Wales has appeared to fall dramatically. Nonetheless according to national surveys becoming a victim of crime or anti-social behaviour remains the fate of one in five people per year.
2. Some crimes, because they are invasive physically or psychologically are identified in the literature as being especially likely to harm victims. These are violent and sexual crimes, crimes which are repeated against the same individual and crimes that are against those who are vulnerable or socially marginalised.
3. Crime rates vary across local authorities in north Wales. Unsurprisingly the number of incidents and the likelihood of falling victim to crime seem greater in the east where populations are congregated and indices of social poverty and exclusion tend to be greater.

About Victim Needs

4. Service providers suggest 5 core victim needs exist: The need for safety and protection from future victimisation, for justice, to make sense of their experience, to feel in control, and for practical support which may be associated with help to deal with mental health, substance misuse, accommodation, legal or immigration issues.

About Meeting Needs

5. Victims of core crimes in north Wales are contacted by Victim Support and offered a service, victims of anti-social behaviour and non-core crimes, however, are not automatically contacted and offered a service.
6. Impacting on the 'need for safety and protection from future harm', a clear pathway for service delivery is associated with victims of domestic abuse assessed as high risk of harm. The same clear pathway does not pertain in respect of cases of victims of domestic abuse assessed as medium/low risk
7. Police respondents were unclear how referrals to Victim Support were processed. This raises the possibility that some people who need Victim Support services (but who are not victims of core crimes) will not be referred.
8. Victim Support address issues related to safety planning with many victims of crime. IDVAs provide a similar service to victims of domestic abuse assessed as high risk.
9. In respect of some cases of domestic abuse involving the criminal justice agencies, high risk victims might initially be contacted by Victim Support, staff from the local PPU, the IDVA or Women's Aid. Subsequently Witness Services might contact a victim. There was therefore the potential for duplication and a lack of 'joined-up thinking' in the provision of services to such victims.
10. In all north Wales local authority areas, provisions for target hardening were in place and were considered very valuable in immediate safety planning.
11. Impacting on the need to feel 'justice was being done', service providers indicated victims needed to 'feel believed' by agents of the criminal justice system when they reported a crime and 'not to be blamed' for the situation they found themselves in.
12. Service providers reported that when a person was victimised by a young person or a child, restorative justice options would normally be pursued by the local YOT. The lack of similar provision in relevant cases involving adults was assessed as a gap.
13. Impacting on the need to 'make sense of their experience', Victim Support operated a network of volunteers who could visit victims of crime in their homes or other location. IDVAS and collectives allied to Welsh Women's Aid could provide similar services to victims of domestic abuse.
14. Support services to victims of sexual violence were limited by dint of there being only one part time ISVA for the whole of the north Wales area and significant delays in accessing support services for victims of such crime.
15. Support services for victims of domestic abuse were widespread but did not always provide for male victims.

16. Impacting on the need to 'feel in control', police informed us there were protocols that established when and how often victims of crime would be contacted for an update on progress with their cases. Police officers informed us, however, this task was often accorded a low priority unless there was something to report.
17. A Witness Unit (part of the CPS) operated in north Wales to keep witnesses informed of how matters were progressing through courts.
18. Respondents felt that in some cases of domestic abuse and/or sexual violence not involving an IDVA or an ISVA, the need for information and support through the criminal justice process, more often than not, would go unmet.
19. Impacting on the ability to meet victim's 'practical needs', some victims of crime were understood to have multiple needs and therefore to require a multi-agency response.
20. One stop shops had been established in some areas with the effect that victims could access many services through a single point of contact.
21. Refuge/accommodation services were considered to be well developed along with floating outreach in most areas albeit provision for men was sometimes limited.
22. Whilst substance misuse services were generally described as accessible, mental health services were described as difficult to access without long delays.

About Barriers to meeting Victim Needs

23. Service providers considered that particular challenges existed in providing effective services in rural areas. These challenges were associated with costs and facilitating confidential access to services.
24. In relation to domestic abuse, providers considered that generic services to all victims were more appropriate than a raft of specialist services targeting specific service users. Nonetheless many indicated that more work needed to be done to raise awareness of the "openness" of services to all service users such as gay men who were victims of domestic abuse.
25. The exception in this regard was in relation to some victims of domestic abuse who were from the BME community. The services provided by BAWSO were frequently singled out as important by dint of their specialism with immigration issues and in working with migrant communities.

About Service Evaluation

26. Very little attention was given to robustly evaluating outcomes of interventions with victims.

27. The outcome of the involvement of IDVAs and ISVAs with victims of crime, however, was perceived to be very positive and supportive of successful prosecutions.

About the Future

28. Domestic Abuse Fora (DAF) in north Wales have become irregular and poorly attended. Thus Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (DASV) co-ordinations located within Community Safety Partnerships in Gwynedd/Mon, Conwy/Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham led and monitored strategy on domestic abuse and sexual violence in their respective areas.

29. Growing awareness of domestic abuse and the 'Yew-tree effect' had impacted on the capacity of existing services to meet demand. IDVAs and ISVAs were consistently described as over worked and having to provide a restricted service to manage demand.

30. Most referrals to MARACs were from criminal justice agencies. Although there had been recent improvements, service providers identified more work still needed to be done to encourage health, substance misuse and social care staff to make appropriate referrals.

31. Most services lived with uncertainty around funding arrangements which led to problems with retaining staff and to a lot of time being devoted to fundraising/ completing grant applications.

32. Victims services were financed from a range of disparate sources eg Lottery money, Supporting People, Violence against Women fund, Home Office, MoJ, Equalities and Diversities grant. Because funding decisions were often made without proper reference to local conditions, services in some areas were perceived as being developed on an ad-hoc opportunist basis.

Chapter One: Introduction

1.0 The Study Methods

1.1 Aims of the Study

The project set out to provide a comprehensive needs assessment to identify and explore victim needs in north Wales. The objectives were as follows:

1. To scope existing data and literature about the extent and nature of victimisation in the six counties of north Wales and to explore identify how victimisation might differ according to geography.
2. To scope existing data about service provision linked to meeting victim's needs across the six counties of north Wales and to explore the level and nature of the services provided.
3. To explore with stakeholders the nature of victim need and the adequacy and sustainability of existing provision to meet those needs - including whether and where gaps in provision exists across the six counties of north Wales.
4. To explore with stakeholders how victims of crime currently access victim services and what facilitates or acts as a barrier towards such access.
5. To explore with stakeholders current mechanisms for evaluating service outcomes in terms of helping victims to cope with and to recover from their experiences.
6. To explore with stakeholders their perceptions of how services should be prioritised and developed moving forward and in light of emerging patterns of victimisation cross north Wales.

The assessment was based on quantitative data collected from a range of agencies and analysed alongside qualitative data from a series of interviews with individuals working with victims or who had been victims of crime. The study drew on:

- A review of the literature on victims needs in general and in north Wales in particular
- Statistical data on victimisation in north Wales gathered from statutory agencies and available databases
- Analysis of existing data about local provision for victims (held by statutory agencies)

- Semi-structured interviews with individuals providing a service to victims of crime
- Semi-structured interviews with victims of crime

A sampling and respondent recruitment strategy was developed following discussion with the funders. The OPCC operates within the Participation Cymru 'Ten Principles of Engagement' and so employees and stakeholders in a range of agencies were invited to participate in the study: Staff from North Wales Police (NWP), SARC, the Amethyst team, RASA, Victim Support, Hafan Cymru, Age Concern Wales, Stepping Stones, BAWSO, The Wales Probation Trust, Collectives affiliated to Welsh Women's Aid, IDVAs, ISVA, Community Safety Partnerships (CSP) and the Crown Prosecution Service contributed to the research.

Identification of victims was assisted by stakeholders who enabled access to contexts where users might be recruited to the study. Interviews with all respondents were semi-structured and the discussion was informed by the research aims.

The study involved 33 service providers employed in occupations that brought them into contact with victims and 8 victims of crime (1 of ASB, 1 of arson, 1 of sexual abuse and 5 of domestic abuse).

Interviews with service providers focused on roles and responsibilities vis-à-vis working with victims, perceptions of need, which needs were met and which were not met, which 'service user groups' took up services and which did not, the barriers to meeting victims' needs and what might facilitate service delivery.

Interviews with victims focussed on their experiences and needs following on from their victimisation. Interviews focussed on how well these needs were met and where gaps in service provision existed.

Most interviews were conducted at work venues and all but three were digitally audio recorded with respondent permission. Two interviews were conducted over the phone. Where audio recording was not used, extensive notes were taken.

1.2 Qualitative data analysis

All audio recordings were fully transcribed. Qualitative data interviews were analysed using a constant comparative approach. Transcripts were read by the project team and an analytic framework developed, based on emergent themes. In the body of the report, themes are evidenced with reference to data codes as follows:

Stakeholders coded S1-S33 in data extracts

Victim's contributions are presented as illustrative narratives using the pseudonyms Nia, Michael, Jill, Nancy, Jo, Tina, Natasha and Anna.

All names of people/places in the data extracts have been altered to protect people's anonymity.

1.3 Ethical issues

The project and the ethical dimensions of the research was overseen by a steering group comprising NWP staff and individuals working in the OPCC. The study adhered to required ethical research practice (as set out by the British Sociological Association) and observed the principles of informed voluntary consent and anonymity. Participants were given information about the study and signed or recorded verbal consent was obtained before the interviews.

Access to victims was negotiated with service providers. The nature of the research was explained prior to interviews and informed consent sought. All participation was voluntary. All participants were informed that anonymity was guaranteed unless they disclosed details of crimes unknown to the police, or if child protection concerns arose.

The requirements of the Welsh Language Scheme were observed. While respondents were given the opportunity to be interviewed in the Welsh language only one participant wished to be interviewed in Welsh.

Chapter Two: Background

2.0 Introduction

Terminological sensitivities exist in the field of victimisation. For the purposes of this report we make use of the term 'victim' as opposed to 'survivor' of crime. We use the term 'victim' because the respondents who contributed to this research used this term themselves and were all victims in terms of their status within the Criminal Justice System. We use the term 'domestic abuse' because it better captures the range of behaviours associated with violence in the context of personal relationships and this was the term used by those who mentioned this issue when contributing to this project. Finally we refer to 'hate crime' because it is a term widely recognised by the general public and appeared in most of the policy documents and literature we examined.

Undertaking an analysis of 'needs' in the context of victim services is not an easy task. This is because a 'need' in this context does not lend itself to easy quantification. In the context of victim services 'need' has a subjective dimension which can only be measured in terms of what people say their needs are which might range from the desire for revenge to the desire for justice or to forgive. A further issue is that distinguishing between 'needs' and 'wants' can be problematic. Whilst a 'need' might be understood as that which a person absolutely requires to remain healthy, a 'want' might simply be something that is desired but is not essential. Because defining and legitimising 'needs' is complicated, Maguire (1985) has noted voluntary organisations have been less concerned with exploring what 'needs' are than with the actual practical task of discovering where they can be of most practical help to victims and documenting which services are then taken up¹.

Studies in victimology identify that stereotypes exist in relation to victims of crime which positions them at the either extremes of being passive and helpless, or culpable and responsible in the face of their victimisation. Both representations are problematic, in the former case because individual strength and agency is valued in Western society and being seen as 'in need' may be especially problematic for some groups like males and young people. In the second case, the representation is problematic because it may lead to secondary victimisation which occurs most evidently when victims experience inadequate and insensitive treatment in the criminal justice system.

The existing literature is extensive and identifies being victimised as a complex experience. Different crimes may impact upon victims in a multitude of ways: practically, emotionally, psychologically and physically. On a practical level victimisation can incur losses for the victim which in the absence of insurance or reserve wealth may be impossible to redress. Blaming oneself for the experience is a

¹ Simmonds, L. (2009) "What victims want! Victim support, an objective or relative approach to victims' needs", *Social & Public Policy Review*, 3, 2, pp. 11-29.

common emotional reaction to victimisation. Fear and anxiety over the possibility of repeat victimisation are also common reactions as are lifestyle changes which victims can experience as forced upon them in order to cope with what has happened. The psychological impact of victimisation may shatter a person's sense of control, order and efficacy in the world as well as their trust in other people. In some cases victimisation may have physical effects from which recovery is likely to be difficult if not impossible.

Some crimes, especially those involving sexual or physical violence, are identified in the existing literature as more likely to have severe and lasting repercussions for victims. Because the effects of being victimised may accumulate, repeat victimisation is also understood to be especially harmful in terms of its effects. In addition because an increased sense of vulnerability is a common side effect of victimisation, research finds that those most severely affected by crime tend to have pre-existing vulnerabilities associated with their physical, psychological or social circumstances. Finally because an individual's ability to cope with and recover from victimisation varies in accordance to the kind of support systems they have access to, research finds that those most severely affected by victimisation tends to be socially marginalised or isolated. From these observations it follows that albeit the type of offence suffered may be used to indicate the likely presence of need, victims' needs can be relative to the individual rather than being strictly linked to the type of crime they have experienced.

Over the last few years the chances of becoming a victim of crime has appeared to fall dramatically². Nonetheless according to national surveys becoming a victim of crime or anti-social behaviour remains the fate of one in five people per year. Current provision of services for victims of crime is complex and a wide range of statutory and voluntary organisations provide services to victims and witnesses of crime. Recent decades have seen significant investment in the provision of support for victims of crime involving Government funding of around £151 million per year (Ministry of Justice, 2012)³.

The mechanisms for funding some victim services, however, are set to change. In 2011 The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act abolished police authorities and transferred responsibility to reduce crime and disorder to newly elected Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs). After November 2012 PCCs became responsible for setting the strategic direction of policing in their police force areas. Building on this responsibility, from October 2014⁴ they will become responsible for commissioning a wide range of victim support services in their police force areas. As set out in the Victim's Services Commissioning Framework⁵ this change represents part of a strategic attempt to move towards more local and personalised services for people and investment in the voluntary and community sector.

² Crime Survey England and Wales 2012/13

³ Ministry of Justice (2012) Getting it Right for Victims and Witnesses: The Government Response. London: The Stationery Office

⁴ Early adopters will take over-responsibility in October 2014, followed by other PCCs by April 2015

⁵ Ministry of Justice (2013) Victims' Services Commissioning Framework May 2013

Some services will continue to be commissioned nationally by the Ministry of Justice. The nationally commissioned services will include support for:

- Victims of trafficking
- Those bereaved by homicide
- Victims of rape (through Rape and Sexual Abuse {RASA} Centres)
- Witnesses at Court

The nationally commissioned services may also include national helplines and some other specialist services for victims of sexual and domestic abuse. With the overall aim being to ensure victims of crime and anti-social behaviour are provided with access to services that meet their needs, all other services will be commissioned by PCCs under powers granted by the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

The vision is the creation of a mixed economy of national and local providers of services to support the ability of victims to cope with the immediate impact of crime or anti-social behaviour and to recover from any harm experienced.

A Focus on north Wales

In 2013/2014 and as part of a review of the Police and Crime plan, The north Wales PCC set out the outcomes that he, in consultation with others including victim groups, prioritised for the area. Foregrounded in the plan were outcomes that have specific relevance for victims: reducing victim based crime and working to ensure people feel “safe, secure, and unthreatened by crime, criminals and intimidation from whatever source”. The Police and Crime plan makes specific references to the need for the police to provide effective responses to incidents of domestic abuse. In addition, to the need for support services to be available for victims of such crime. It was highlighted that the police should show continued progress in building victim’s confidence in the police response to reports of sexual offending. The plan recognised that the desired outcomes of safety and security could only be co-produced by the police working in partnership with other state agencies, organisations and communities.

The context within which commissioning will take place is complex. Each PCC is bound by the Equality Duty (covering eight protected characteristics) set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. In addition to this the U.K. has opted into the European Union directive on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime and a new Victim’s Code was published in 2013. It includes a series of duties that

criminal justice agencies must fulfil to ensure victims receive the right services and information when they need it. Finally in Wales, duties arise in relation to the Welsh Language Act 1993 and Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

A Focus on North Wales

In north Wales a commitment to these duties is enshrined in the North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner Joint Strategic Equality Plan 2012-2016. The North Wales OPCC has published its own Welsh Language Scheme giving effect to the principle that the English and Welsh language will be treated on the basis of equality.

As part of developing commissioning arrangements PCCs have been invited to undertake an assessment of victim needs in their police force areas. Concerns have arisen that all too often victims needs have been co-opted by criminal justice agencies for the purpose of developing a more efficient system of criminal prosecution. To address this concern PCCs have been tasked to consider not only the needs of those who report crime, but those who do not. Given the future orientation of commissioning, PCCs have also been invited to focus their needs assessments not just on scoping existing needs but on scoping future needs in light of emerging crime trends.

2.1 The Extent and Nature of Victimisation in England and Wales

Traditionally there are two approaches to gathering statistical data on victims and victimisation. The first approach involves gathering statistics from the police about reported crime and the second involves victimisation surveys of the general population.

The relationship with police recorded crime and victimisation is not clear cut. For a range of reasons many people do not report crimes to the police. It is estimated that only around a third of crime on average is reported to the police with rates varying according to crime type. In this context victim surveys may offer a better guide to victimisation rates but the relationship with victimisation as reported in surveys and actual victimisation is not clear cut either. This is because there may be instances where individuals remain unwilling to report victimisation even in anonymised surveys, and some individuals come from 'hard to survey' communities e.g. travellers.

Crime data submitted to, or gathered by, the ONS is very detailed and the scope of this review precludes any in depth analysis of it. Key issues, however, are highlighted below.

2.1.1 Police Recorded Crime

Since 2009, Police recorded crime figures have been supplied by the 43 territorial police forces of England and Wales, plus the British Transport Police, via the Home Office to the ONS. Following on from this the accuracy of Police recorded crime data has been subject to a number of criticisms. Indeed, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007, statistics based on police recorded crime data have been assessed against the Code of Practice for Official Statistics and found not to meet the required standard for designation as “National Statistics”. That being said, the findings from a ‘crime recording’ interim report carried out by HMIC in March 2014 suggested that North Wales Police have a high compliance rate with the national recording standard.⁶

Notwithstanding this, the data indicates that in the 12 months to September 2013 there were 3,725, 281 offences recorded by the police in England and Wales, the vast majority of which were victim based.

Table 1: Total Police Recorded Crime- number and rate of offences

Recorded Crime England and Wales				
	April 02- Mar 03	April 07- Mar 08	Oct 11- Sept 12	Oct 12- Sept 13
Total recorded crime- (including fraud)	5,974,960	4,952,277	3,838,279	3,725,281
Victim based crime	5,403,458	4,338,485	3,363,463	3,129,841
Other crimes against society	387,821	542,656	424,832	394,405
Total Fraud Offences	183,681	71,135	149,984	201,035
Rate per 1,000 population				
Total recorded crime- (including fraud)	114	92	69	66
Victim based crime	103	80	59	56
Other crimes against society ⁷	7	10	8	7
Total Fraud Offences	4	1	3	

Police recorded crime ONS to September 2013

Property crime is an important driver of overall crime and accounts for 72% of all crime recorded by the police. Around 20% of crime is violence related. Thus there were 601,134 offences of violence against the person recorded by the police in the

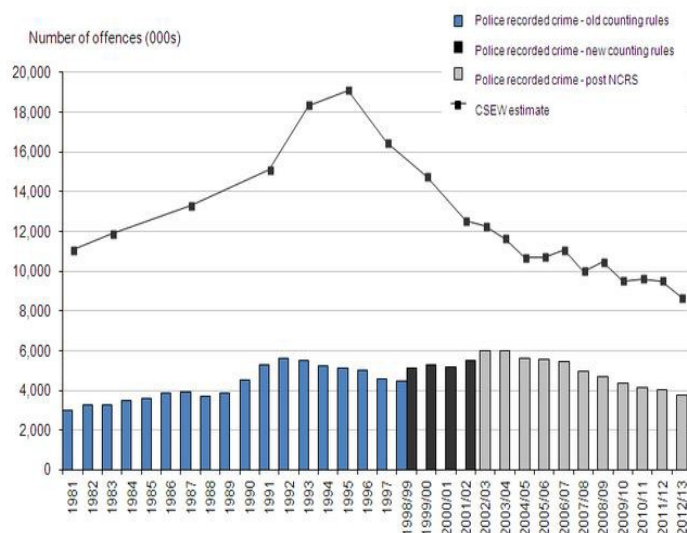
⁶ HMIC (2014) Crime recording: A matter of fact. An interim of the inspection of crime data integrity in police forces in England and Wales.

⁷ (that is, offences where there is no specific identifiable victim, such as drug offences and possession of weapon offences)

12 months to September 2013. During the same period there were 53,700 sexual offences recorded, 71% of which were rape or some other serious sexual assault.⁸

The 3.75 million offences in the year ending September 2013 represent a decrease of 3% compared with the previous year and continues a non-linear trend of crime coming down since 1995.

Figure 1: Trends in police recorded crime and CSEW, 1981 to 2012/13

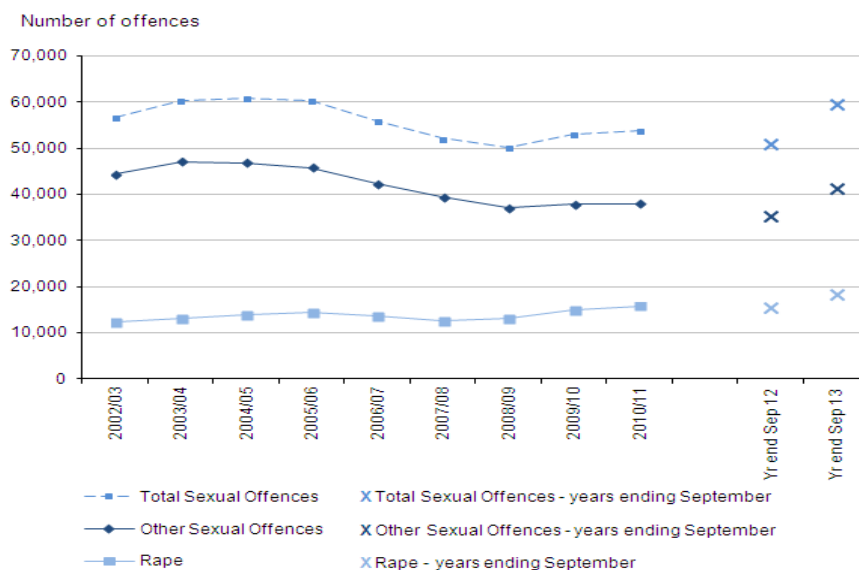


Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales - Office for National Statistics, Police recorded crime - Home Office

Disaggregated data shows that for most crime types, crime has been decreasing since 1995. However, shoplifting showed a 4% increase and theft from the person increased by 7%. The number of sex offences recorded by the police also increased by 17% in the 12 months ending September 2013. Increases in this crime category are understood to be related to the 'Yew-tree' effect - that is to say a greater willingness on the part of victims of sex crime to report such crimes to the police based on publicity surrounding the Jimmy Saville case.

Figure 2: Trends in police recorded sexual offences 2002/03 to year ending Sept 2013

⁸ It is not possible to identify domestic violence cases from the recorded crime figures returned by police forces to the Home Office and published by ONS as these figures are based on counts of crime under the appropriate offence classification and there are no details on the offender-victim relationship.



Data on ASB is especially hard to interpret because there is significant national variation in the classification and recording of ASB incidents across police forces. According to police statistics submitted to the ONS, however, there were 2.2 million incidents of ASB in the year ending December 2013. Figures for the period 2007/08 to 2010/11 also show declines in the number of ASB incidents recorded by the police consistent with recent trends in total police recorded crime.

In police data submissions three types of ASB are noted. 'Nuisance' events include incidents where an act, condition, thing or person causes trouble, annoyance, irritation, inconvenience, offence or suffering to the local community in general rather than to individual victims. 'Personal' events include incidents that are perceived as either deliberately targeted at an individual or group, or having an impact on an individual or group rather than the community at large. 'Environmental' events include incidents where individuals and groups have an impact on their surroundings, including natural, built and social environments.

In the year ending December 2013, 66% of the ASB incidents categorised by the police were identified as 'Nuisance'; 28% as 'Personal'; and 6% as 'Environmental'.

At a national or local level crime data is not always disaggregated with respect to key characteristics of the victim as frequently the type of crime takes precedent over the type of victim in official data gathering processes. The exception here relates to Hate Crime defined by the Association of Chief Officers and the Crown Prosecution Service in England and Wales as

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

The five monitored strands are: race, religion, sexual orientation, disability and gender-identity. The available police recorded data shows that of the 43,748 hate crimes recorded by the police in England and Wales in 2011/12:

- 35,816 (82%) were race hate crimes
- 1,621 (4%) were religious/belief hate crimes
- 4,252 (10%) were sexual orientation hate crimes
- 1,744 (4%) were disability hate crimes
- 315 (1%) were transgender hate crimes.

In that year, there were 1,809 hate crimes recorded in Wales with a broadly similar pattern of offences:

- 1,368 (76%) were race hate crimes
- 54 (3%) were religious/belief hate crimes
- 244 (13%) were sexual orientation hate crimes
- 122 (8%) were disability hate crimes
- 21 (1%) were transgender hate crimes.

2.1.2 Crime Survey England and Wales (CSEW)

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) is a well-established study and one of the largest social research surveys conducted in England and Wales. Prior to April 2012 the survey was known as the British Crime Survey and it was conducted by the Home Office. From April 2012 responsibility for the survey transferred to the Office for National Statistics and the survey became known as the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW). In contrast to data collected by the police, the data produced by the CSEW is primarily about victimisation in which respondents are asked about their experiences.

The survey captures aggregate data on crime victimisation in England and Wales from a nationally representative sample of around 35,000 adults and 3,500 children (aged 10 to 15 years) per year. The response rates for the survey in 2012/13 were 73% and 67% respectively. Whilst potentially this data is very useful, it is not usually disaggregated into sub-national population data and so its usefulness at a local level is limited.

Key points from the survey include the estimate that there were 8.0 million crimes against households and resident adults in England and Wales in the twelve months to September 2013.

It remains the case that the CSEW (to March 2013) suggests younger people are more at risk from crime than any other age group. Indeed as age increases, the percentage of people who report having been the victim of crime decreases. Younger males are at greater risk of falling victim to a crime than young females albeit it is well established that domestic violence and abuse is more a feature of the lives of younger women rather than younger men.

Table 2: Percentage Experiencing Victimisation by Age and Gender (12 months to March 2013)

	All CSEW crime	Personal Crime
All adults	18.7	5.2
16-24	26.4	11.7
25-34	23.0	6.8
35-44	22.4	5.6
45-54	19.6	4.3
55-64	15.6	2.9
65-74	9.8	1.8
75+	6.3	1.3
Men		
16-24	26.7	12.8
25-34	22.8	6.5
35-44	22.6	6.1
45-54	20.0	4.7
55-64	16.5	2.9
65-74	9.7	1.5
75+	6.2	0.7
Women		
16-24	26.1	10.5
25-34	23.1	7.1
35-44	22.1	5.1
45-54	19.3	3.9
55-64	14.7	3.0
65-74	10.0	2.1
75+	6.4	1.9

The risk of victimisation is greater for people from BME communities in England and Wales.

Table 3: Percentage Experiencing Victimisation by Ethnic Group (To March 2013)

Ethnic group	All CSEW Crime	Personal Crime
White	18.4	5.0
Non-White	20.8	6.8
<i>Mixed/Multiple</i>	24.8	11.1
<i>Asian/Asian British</i>	21.8	6.1
<i>Black/African/Caribbean/Black British</i>	18.3	7.2
<i>Other ethnic group</i>	16.0	5.2

The CSEW finds those out of employment more likely to experience victimisation than those in employment with students especially likely to be victimised.

Table 4: Percentage Experiencing Victimization by Employment Status

Respondent's employment status	All Crime	Personal Crime
In employment	21.3	6.0
Unemployed	23.1	9.0
Economically inactive	13.9	3.6
<i>Student</i>	25.7	10.6
<i>Looking after family/home</i>	19.1	3.7
<i>Long-term/temporarily sick/ill</i>	21.9	5.6
<i>Retired</i>	8.9	1.7
<i>Other inactive</i>	17.6	6.3

The CSEW finds a significant difference in terms of the experience of victimisation between respondents living in rural or urban contexts.

Table 5: Percentage Experiencing Victimization by Geography

Area type	All crime	Personal crime	Household crime
Urban	20.1	5.6	15.6
Rural	13.4	3.7	9.8

The 2012/13 CSEW estimated that there were 1.9 million violent incidents against adults in England and Wales. It estimated that 2% of women and 0.5% of men had experienced some form of sexual assault (including attempts) in the last year. 7.1% of women and 4.4% of men were estimated to have experienced any type of domestic abuse in the last year, equivalent to an estimated 1.2 million female victims of domestic abuse and 700,000 male victims. Overall, it was estimated 30.0% of women and 16.3% of men would have experienced any domestic abuse since the age of 16, equivalent to an estimated 4.9 million female victims of domestic abuse and 2.7 million male victims. Women were more likely than men to have experienced intimate violence across all headline types of abuse asked about.

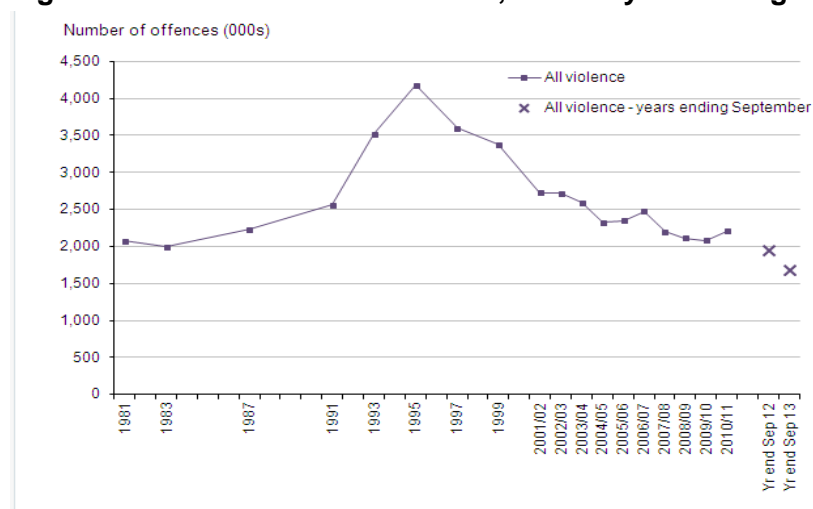
The CSEW estimated there were 278,000 hate crimes on average per year in England and Wales in 2011/12 and 2012/13⁹. The most commonly reported motivating factor in hate crime incidents was likely to have been race, with an average of 154,000 incidents a year according to the 2011/12 and 2012/13 surveys. The second most common motivating factor was likely to have been religion (70,000

⁹ Home Office, Office for National Statistics and Ministry of Justice (2013) An Overview of Hate Crime in England and Wales. Available to view at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/266358/hate-crime-2013.pdf

incidents per year). The majority of hate crime incidents would be accounted for by incidents of assault (with minor injury or no injury) and incidents of vandalism.

Notwithstanding this level of victimisation, reported victimisation was down 10% compared with the previous year's survey, and was the lowest estimate over the history of the survey, which began in 1981. The CSEW showed a fall of 13% in the levels of violence based on interviews in the year ending September 2013 compared with the previous year.

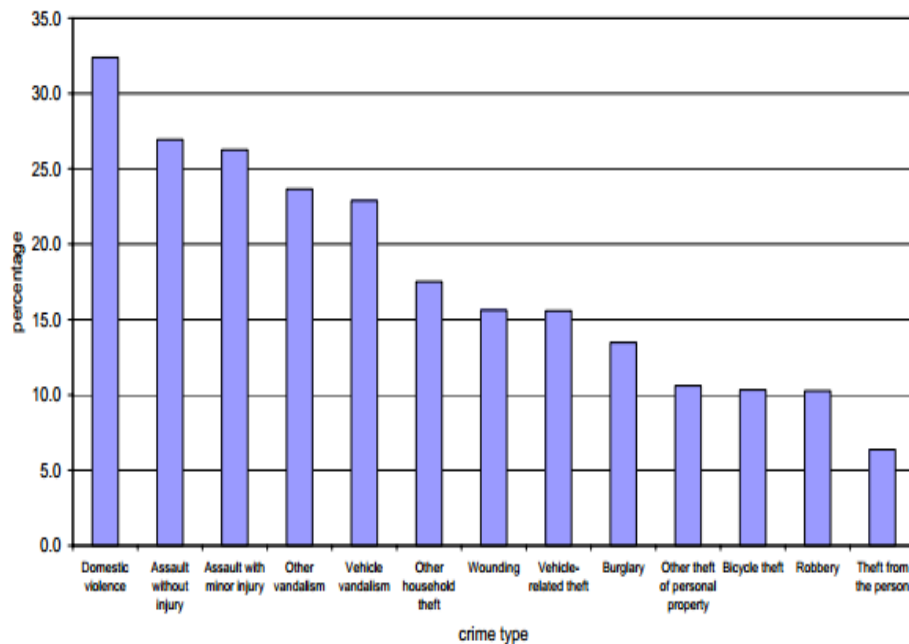
Figure 3: Trends in CSEW Violence, 1981 to year ending September 2013



In 1995 (when crime was at its peak) 5.3% of all adults aged 16 and over were a victim of violent crime. This compares with a rate of 2.6% in the 2012/13 CSEW. A decline in domestic abuse between the 2004/05 and 2012/13 CSEW surveys is also apparent.

Close analysis of the CSEW reveals some interesting national trends in respect of repeat victimisation. Victims of domestic abuse were most likely to report they had been victimised more than once in the preceding 12 months. Theft from the person and robbery were least likely to have been experienced more than once (7%)

Figure 4: Percentage of Victims who were victimised more than once by selected crime types (CSEW, June 2012)



Findings up to September 2013 highlight the importance of repeat victimisation in influencing crime trends downwards. All property crimes have shown a fall in the volume of incidents compared with the 1995 CSEW. With the exception of theft from the person and robbery, the decline has been more marked for repeat incidents than for one-off incidents. Vehicle-related theft has shown the steepest fall in repeat incidents, with an 85% drop between the 1995 and 2012/13 surveys.

Results suggest that across crime types, victims are not being re-victimised to the same extent as they once were. In the 2012/2013 CSEW, for example, the percentage of victims of partner abuse reporting that they had been abused more than once in the last year was significantly less than in 2004/05 (29% in 2012/2013 compared to 34% in 2004/2005).

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) contains questions asking respondents about ASB. In the year ending December 2013 CSEW, 12% of adults perceived there to be a high level of ASB in their local area, a decrease of 2% from the previous year. Compared with the previous year, the year to December 2013 CSEW showed decreases in the proportions of adults perceiving problems in four types of ASB: 'Teenagers hanging around on the streets'; 'People being drunk or rowdy in public places'; 'Vandalism, graffiti, and other deliberate damage to property'; and 'Abandoned or burnt out cars'. The 'Rubbish and litter lying around', 'People using or dealing drugs' and 'Noisy neighbours and loud parties' categories also showed decreases but not such a reduction as to render them statistically significant.

New questions about respondents' actual experiences of ASB in their local area were added to the 2011/12 CSEW. These questions asked whether the respondent had personally experienced or witnessed ASB in their local area and, if so, what types. Twenty-eight per cent of adults in the year ending December 2013 indicated that they had personally experienced or witnessed at least one of the ASB problems asked

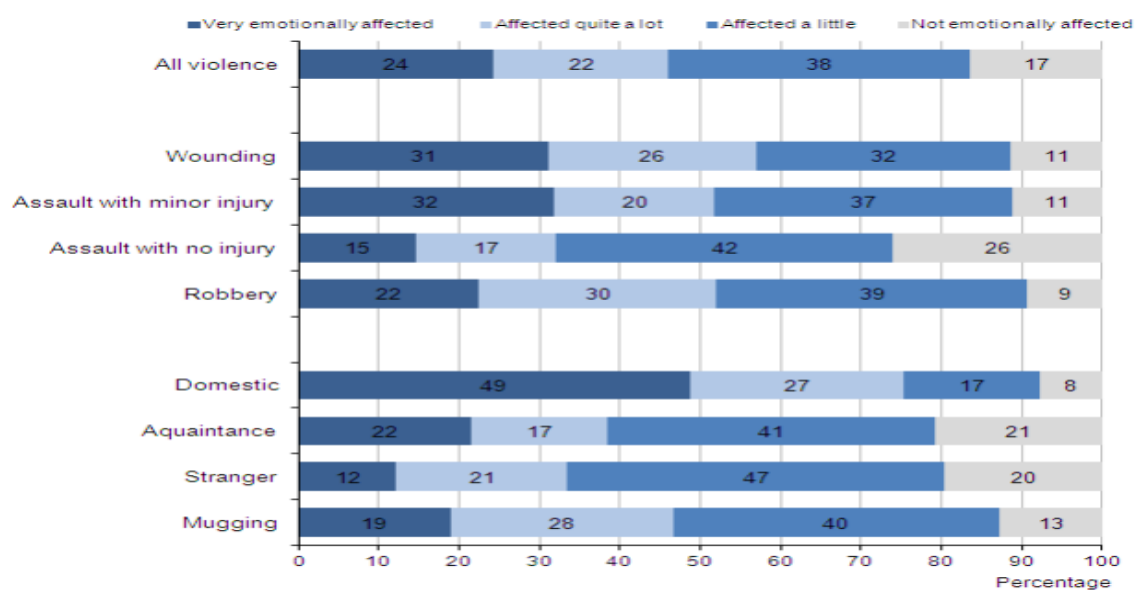
about in their local area in the previous year. This, however, was down from 29% in the year ending December 2012.

2.1.3 CSEW: Victim Characteristics

The Data related to victim experiences and needs from the CSEW (and prior to this the BCS) consistently show that responses to victimisation vary in accordance with the nature of the crime and individual, household and neighbourhood characteristics.

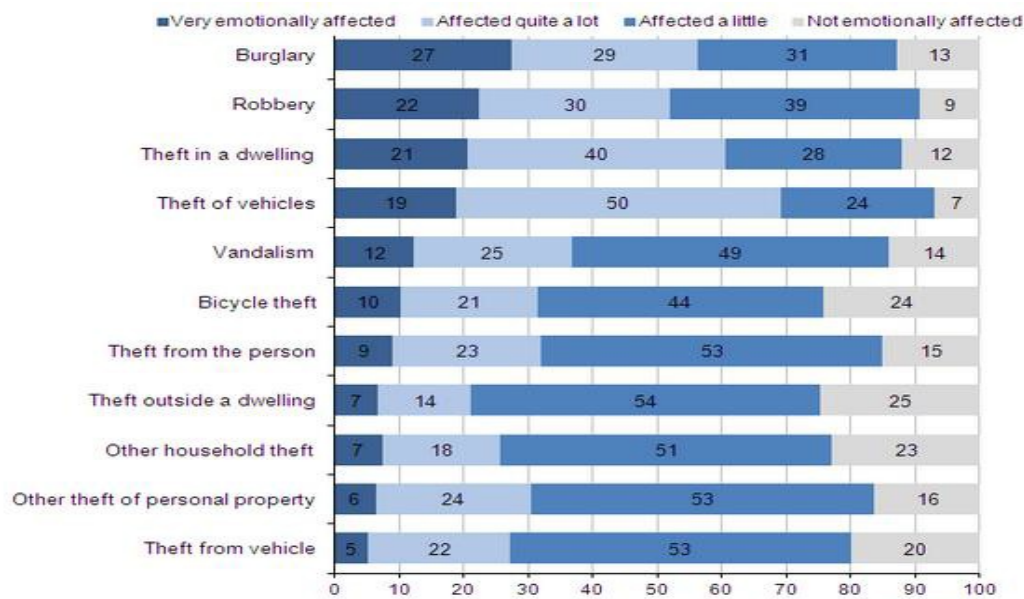
Broadly speaking the more invasive the crime, the more likely it is to impact strongly on the victim. Thus in relation to 83% of violent incidents, the respondent stated they were “emotionally affected” by the incident and 24% that they were ‘affected very much’. The proportion of victims of violent crimes who were ‘affected very much’ is higher than other types of crime (for example, vandalism, at 12%) Victims of domestic abuse experienced the greatest emotional reaction with 92% of victims being ‘emotionally affected’ and 49% ‘affected very much’.

Figure 5: Emotional Response to Violent Victimization, 2012/13 CSEW



In keeping with this, victims of burglary were the most likely to say that they had been ‘affected very much’ by crimes (27% of victims) which could reflect the invasion of personal space. In contrast, 7% of victims of theft outside a dwelling or other household theft said that they had been ‘affected very much’ by the incident. Theft outside a dwelling and other household theft, were mainly theft of garden furniture and items stolen from outside the home and therefore less likely to be perceived as involving an invasion of privacy.

Figure 6: Emotional Response to Property Victimization, 2012/13



2.1.4 Other Victimization Research

The knowledge base around incidence and rates of victimisation is not confined to data obtained from police recorded crime data or the CSEW. Over the last few years the victimisation experiences of a range of groups have been extensively explored in a range of academic and applied research papers and Inspectorate reports. The scope of this project imposes limits on the extent to which this literature can be reviewed but the knowledge base around the incidence of Hate crime, for example, is augmented by research carried out in 2012 by YouGov. On behalf of Stonewall YouGov surveyed more than 2,500 lesbian, gay and bisexual people across Britain to investigate their experiences of homophobic hate crimes¹⁰. The survey painted a picture of lesbian, gay and bisexual people suffering wide-ranging abuse from physical assaults and threats of violence through to harassment, verbal insults and damage to their property. Overall one in 6 lesbian, gay and bisexual people reported experiencing a homophobic hate crime or incident over the last three years. In the year leading up to the research almost 1 in 10 lesbian, gay and bisexual people reported experiencing a homophobic hate crime or incident.

Crime, especially serious crimes and those perpetrated repeatedly against the same individual, can lead the victim to develop mental health difficulties. In addition to this people with mental health problems are often isolated and vulnerable by dint of their condition. It is not surprising therefore to find recent research suggesting that people with mental health problems are a group of victims unlikely to find themselves

¹⁰ Stonewall (2013) Homophobic Hate Crime: The Gay British Crime Survey 2013. Stonewall: London.

identified in police recorded crime and excluded in victimisation studies¹¹. In 2014 a study compared the experiences of those with mental illness against the general population. It found that almost half of people with some form of mental illness had experienced a crime in the last year. People with severe mental illness were five times more likely to experience assault, while severely mentally ill women were 10 times more likely to be assaulted. Six out of 10 women in this group reported being victims of sexual violence as adults.

The way disabled people are treated in the Criminal Justice System has recently been the subject of a joint thematic review by HMI Probation, HMI Constabulary and HMI Crown Prosecution Service.¹² The report identified that under reporting of disability hate crime is a significant concern that needed to be addressed. Whilst recognising that a number of initiatives had recently sought to improve the way disabled people were treated in the Criminal Justice System, the report advocated that further steps needed to be taken to improve the confidence of disabled people to report matters to the police. Moreover it argued victims needed to be better supported, allowed to give their evidence in the most effective manner in courtrooms and more appropriate methods needed to be developed to keep disabled people informed of what was happening in their case.

2.2 Future Crime Trends

As indicated on page 20, given the future orientation of commissioning for victim services it is important to consider emerging crime trends. The number and incidence of crime appears to be falling. Victimisation and repeat victimisation is also falling. More than ever before victims of serious sexual assault are coming forward to report their experiences. These trends are positive but Garside and others have cautioned against complacency.

2.2.1 Violent Victimization

The UK is currently emerging out of a recession. Perhaps surprisingly during the recession crime has not risen but fallen. Exploring violent victimisation, however, Garside finds such crimes rise just after and not during periods of recession - as does property related thefts. Using BCS/CSEW data with 1981 as a base of 100 he tracks trends for three categories of interpersonal violence: domestic, acquaintance and stranger violence from the start of the last recession in 1981 up until 2012.

The exercise, he argues, illustrates some important trends. One is in relation to overall violence which rises during the recession from 1981 to 1995 before declining back to its starting point. 'Stranger violence' stays stable throughout, failing to rise at

¹¹ Pettitt,B., Greenhead,S., Khalifeh,H., Drennan,V. Hart,T.,Hogg,J. Borschmann,R.,Mamo,E. and Moran,P. (2014) At Risk Yet Dismissed The criminal victimisation of people with mental health problems. Victim Support and Mind.

¹² HMIP, HMIC HMICPS (2013) Living in a Different World: Joint Review of Disability Hate Crime

all. Violence by acquaintances and intimate partners, on the other hand, grew particularly sharply towards the end and after the recession of the 1980s- between 1990 and 1999- indicating what he calls a 'long wave' effect.

Garside argues that "recessions and depressions are harmful in all sorts of ways. People lose their jobs; families struggle to get by; individual self-esteem takes a battering; physical and mental health problems increase". He argues it is widely recognised that most people, and in particular women and children, are far more at risk of harm from those they know and love than from strangers. The data, he argues, suggests that the effect of recessions might significantly intensify some types of risks but the effects might only emerge over time¹³.

2.2.2 Sexual Offending

Albeit at present victims of sex crimes seem more emboldened to report experiences of sexual victimisation, this may be a short term phenomenon because in the long run, the recent 'celebrification of sex crime' may do nothing to challenge popular understandings about sex offenders or their victims. The 'celebrification of sex crime' locates the 'danger' to women and children within the world of glitz and glamour rather than where it normally exists - in the home. It associates the problem with unusual people like Saville and the multiple relationships and sexual freedom linked to celebrity culture rather than the more mundane 'two person norm'. The practical difficulties associated with prosecuting historical cases of sexual abuse and the tendency for jurors not to believe well known celebrities can be guilty of serious offending (Chamberlain et al. 2006),¹⁴ sets the scene for a large number of acquittals that will inevitably give rise to further questions about the credibility of victims in sex crime cases.

2.2.3 Rural Crime

In recent times concerns have been voiced about an increase in rural and in particular 'farm' crime involving the theft of livestock and large agricultural machinery. In November 2011, as a result, the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) held an inaugural 'rural crime seminar' called 'Closing the Gate on Rural crime'. At this event it was identified that the policing of rural areas, which tend to be isolated, presents a number of challenges for police forces. Moreover that it requires an approach to policing which is focussed on building and developing informal networks in the agricultural community and thereby 'members of the community already 'in situ' rather than on increasingly stretched formal police responses' (Jones and Phipps 2012)¹⁵. Concerns have been voiced that approaches to policing rural areas that have

¹³ <http://www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/resources/property-crime-violence-and-recessions>

¹⁴ Chamberlain, J., Miller, M.K. and Jehle, A. (2006) 'Celebrities in the courtroom: legal responses, psychological theory and empirical research'. *Vanderbilt Journal of Entertainment and Technology Law*. Vol.8, no. 3, pp. 551-572

¹⁵ Jones, J. and Phipps, J. (2012) Policing farm crime in England and Wales, *Papers from the British Criminology Conference*, Vol. 12: 3-24. Available at: http://www.britisocrim.org/volume12/pbcc_2012_Jones.pdf

built on this strategy have led Police forces to simply offload the problem of policing rural areas onto rural communities. Put another way - the balance between formal and informal policing in rural areas has not been right.

2.2.4 Internet Crime/Fraud

Recent years have seen a rapid growth in internet access, social media and use of mobile internet enabled devices across all socio-demographic groups, but particularly young people. It is estimated nationally that around 4 in every 5 homes now have internet access, with an average of 3 internet enabled devices in every home¹⁶. While technological advances continue to enhance the way organisations and people communicate and engage they also create new opportunities for crime. Thus concerns about 'cybercrime' have emerged and at present appear to be growing.

2.2.5 Disability Hate Crime

The victimisation of people in the community who have learning disabilities has seemed to attract more and more media attention over the last few months. There have been a number of high profile incidents relating to disability hate crime during this period where the Criminal Justice System has seemed to have failed victims with disabilities. Because a significant proportion of offending against people with disabilities involves a breach of trust by an individual purporting to be the victim's friend, a new term has been coined that describes such offending as 'mate crime'.

2.2.6 Human Trafficking

In 2013, there were 581 cases of adults trafficked for purposes of sexual exploitation recorded in the UK (18 cases in Wales). This represented an increase of 53% (80% increase in Wales) compared to 2012, although it is not clear to what extent this increase is due to an increase in reporting, rather than an increased incidence rate.

2.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter addressed itself to the background for the current research project.

- Victimisation is a complex experience but some crime (involving either violence, repeated offending and offending against the vulnerable) is identified in the literature as more likely to have severe and lasting repercussions.

¹⁶ ONS (2013) Internet Access - Households and Individuals, 2013

- The number and incidence of crime appears to be falling in England and Wales.
- A key component of falling crime is a decline in repeat victimisation.
- According to national surveys, however, becoming a victim of crime or anti-social behaviour remains the fate of one in five people per year.
- The extensive literature base on victimisation suggests the victimisation experiences of some groups are under-reported and poorly addressed.
- An awareness of the victimisation experienced by rural, online and disabled communities is emerging.
- Globalisation has given rise to concerns about human trafficking and cybercrime and the long wave effects of the global economic downturn and Operation Yew-tree might not yet be felt.

Chapter Three: Findings - Victim Needs in north Wales

This chapter addresses itself to the first objective of this research project:

To scope existing data and literature about the extent and nature of victimisation in the six counties of north Wales and to explore how victimisation might differ according to geography.

3.0 The Context¹⁷

Figure 7: North Wales local Authority Areas



At the last census north Wales returned a population of 687,800. There are six local authorities (LA) within this region – Isle of Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham. As table 6 below illustrates, Flintshire in the north east has the largest population of 152,500 and Anglesey in the north west has the smallest population, 69,700.

Table 6: Population of the 6 Unitary Authorities that comprise north Wales

Local Authority	Population
Isle of Anglesey	69, 700
Gwynedd	121, 900

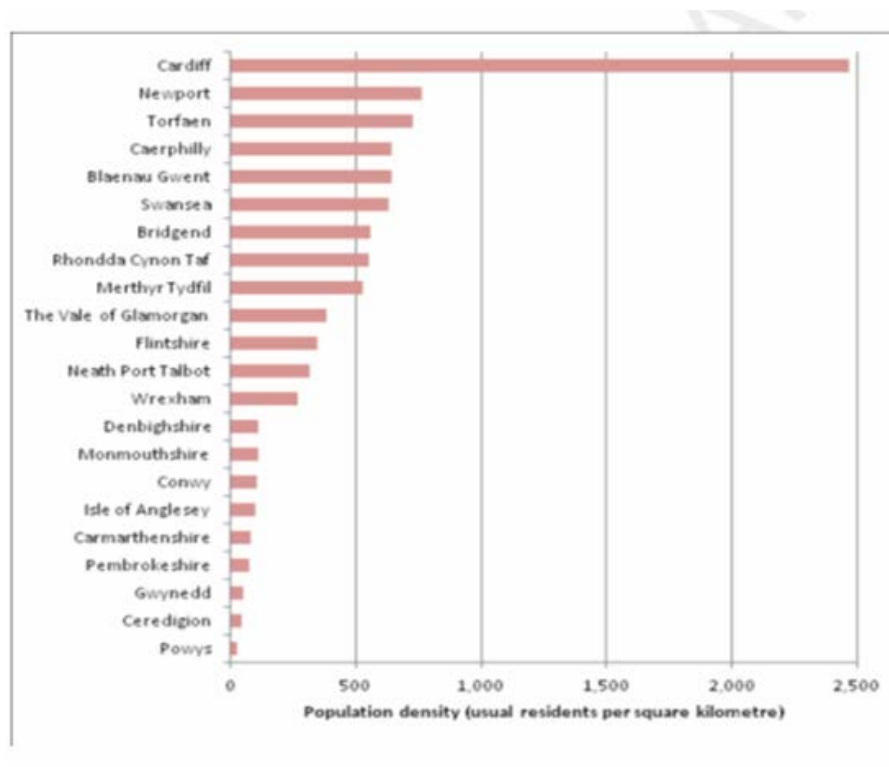
¹⁷Data Source:

[http://www2.nphs.wales.nhs.uk:8080/LPHTeamsDocs.nsf/85c50756737f79ac80256f2700534ea3/1f8cc80f2b5f90d4802579a500550008/\\$FILE/NorthWalesProfileUpdate2011_Final1CJ_x.pdf](http://www2.nphs.wales.nhs.uk:8080/LPHTeamsDocs.nsf/85c50756737f79ac80256f2700534ea3/1f8cc80f2b5f90d4802579a500550008/$FILE/NorthWalesProfileUpdate2011_Final1CJ_x.pdf)

Conwy	115, 200
Denbighshire	93, 700
Flintshire	152, 500
Wrexham	134, 800

As figure 8 illustrates, five of the six counties in north Wales are in the top 10 most sparsely populated counties in Wales.

Figure 8: Population and Density: Wales and Unitary Authorities, 2011



Albeit most counties are designated as being sparsely populated, north Wales has 62 areas which are classed as 'urban' (that is, an area with a minimum population of 1,500). 14 areas have populations of 10,000 people or more (Table 7). As indicated below the main population concentrations are to be found in the eastern areas of north Wales.

Table 7: Main urban areas in North Wales, 2011 census

Area	Local Authority	Resident population
Wrexham	Wrexham	42,576
Colwyn Bay	Conwy	30,269
Rhyl	Denbighshire	25,390

Shotton (inc. Hawarden)	Flintshire	24,751
Prestatyn	Denbighshire	18,496
Buckley	Flintshire	18,268
Brymbo/Gwersyllt	Wrexham	17,912
Abergele	Conwy	17,574
Connah's Quay	Flintshire	16,526
Bangor	Gwynedd	15,280
Llandudno	Conwy	14,872
Rhosllanerchrugog	Wrexham	13,246
Flint	Flintshire	11,936
Holyhead	Anglesey	11,237

Geographical deprivation is a difficult concept to quantify and may be measured with reference to a range of factors including household income, social class, and number of children in receipt of free school meals. A commonly used measure of geographical deprivation is the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD), which record deprivation at what is called Lower Super Output Area (LSOA). Based on this measure and focussing on north Wales, Denbighshire has the biggest number of people living in the most deprived 10% of LSOAs and Wrexham has the biggest number of people living in the most deprived 20%, 30% and 50% of LSOAs.

Notable statistics for north Wales are that the Black and Ethnic Minority population is lower than the average for Wales, 2.4% compared to 4.4%. Table 8 shows that, at Local Authority level, BME population figures range from 1.5% in Flintshire to 3.5% in Gwynedd

Table 8: BME Population by Local Authority Area

Area	White	BME	Mixed
Wales	95.6	4.4	1.0
Anglesey	98.3	1.7	0.6
Gwynedd	96.5	3.5	0.8
Conwy	97.7	2.3	0.7
Denbighshire	97.4	2.6	0.8
Flintshire	98.5	1.5	0.5
Wrexham	96.1	3.1	0.7

There are 88,600 people of working age in north Wales with a disability. The percentage of people of working age with disabilities in north Wales is 21.2%, which is lower than the 24.4% in Wales. As Table 9 below illustrates, Denbighshire has the highest percentage of people with disabilities in north Wales and Gwynedd the fewest

Table 9: People registered as Disabled by Local Authority Area

Area	Number	%
Wales	463,300	24.4
Anglesey	8,900	21.5
Gwynedd	14,100	19.3
Conwy	13,900	21.7
Denbighshire	13,800	23.6
Flintshire	19,300	20.3
Wrexham	18,600	21.7

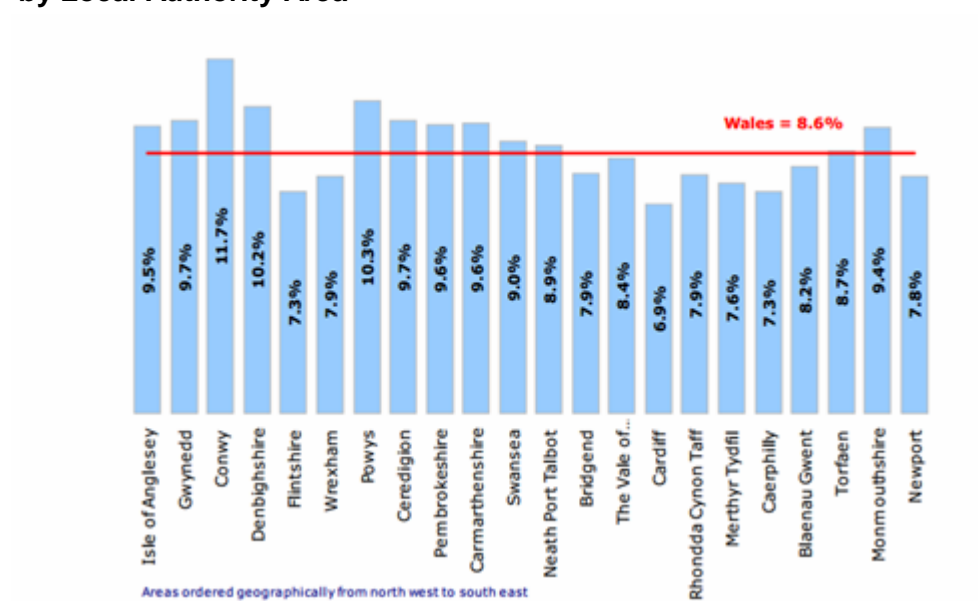
The Integrated Household Survey is the largest social survey produced by the Office for National Statistics. Questions on sexual identity were added to the survey in 2009 and are asked to respondents aged 16 years and over. It is not possible to disaggregate the Wales statistics to north Wales but it seems unlikely the results would differ significantly:

Table 10: Sexual Identity by Gender, Wales, April to March 2009/10 and 2010/11

Orientation	Percentage
Heterosexual/Straight	94.2
Gay/lesbian	0.9
Bisexual	0.3
Other	0.3
Don't know/refusal	2.9
No response	1.4

In north Wales, the proportion of the population aged 75 years and over is 9.3%, which is higher than the proportion in Wales as a whole, at 8.6%. Again, there are variations across north Wales. The highest proportion of people 75 and over, reside in Conwy LA at 11.7% and the lowest proportion in Flintshire LA at 7.3%. Four of the six LAs have higher percentages of the population aged 75 and over reflecting a trend of people retiring to the north Wales area.

Figure 9: Percentage of Population aged over 75 and over by Local Authority Area



Importantly the 65 year old and over age group in north Wales is predicted to increase by 60% by 2033.

The percentage of people, aged over three years, able to speak Welsh ranges from 12.9% in Wrexham to 65.4% in Gwynedd.

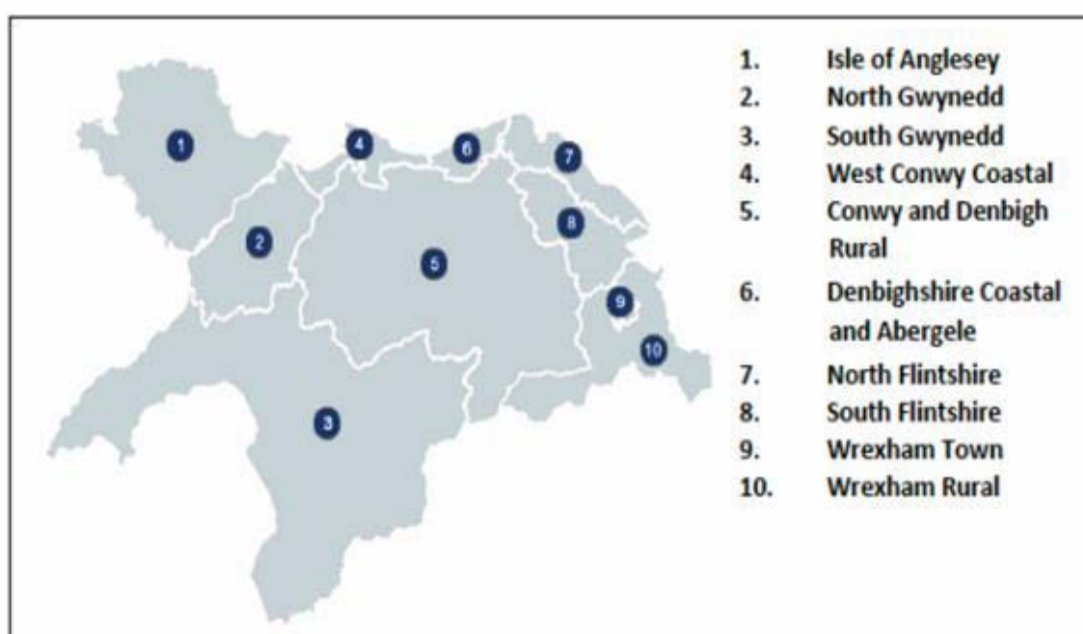
North Wales has experienced an influx of migrant workers, especially from Eastern Europe over recent years (particularly Poland and Portugal).

North Wales is a prime tourist destination, predominantly for visitors from the north west of England who stay in coastal resorts such as Llandudno, Rhyl and Prestatyn. There is a high concentration of caravan sites on the coastal strip of north Wales, predominantly around Kinmel Bay and Towyn.

3.1 North Wales Police

The North Wales Police comprises around 1450 Police Officers and 250 Police Community Support Officers and over 800 support staff. It manages the policing of the six local authority areas of north Wales through central direction for some policing issues, such as managing major incidents and dealing with organised crime, but the bedrock of its policing activities is firmly rooted in the ten local policing areas based in the communities they serve. These are:

Figure 10: North Wales Police Local Policing Area commands



Between April 2013 and February 2014 North Wales Police received 76,243 emergency '999' calls and a total of 297,612 through the non-emergency numbers including '101' (Welsh language line 19,922 and English language line 277,690). In the same period 13,513 arrests were made.¹⁸

There are four Community Safety Partnerships in north Wales. Since 2012/13, Anglesey and Gwynedd have seen changes in their partnership process and the merging of the two areas into one Community Safety Partnership structure. Conwy/Denbighshire also have a joint CSP but Flintshire and Wrexham have separate CSPs.

3.2 Crime and Victimisation in north Wales

Data supplied to the researchers by North Wales Police suggest that in the year ending December 2013 there were 36,448 recorded offences across north Wales

Table 11: Recorded Crime by crime type

Offence	2013	% change 2013 to	2012	% change 2012 to	2011
Violence against person	9603	-4.8%	10085	5.9%	10719
Sexual offence	903	4.2%	867	29.4%	670
Robbery	128	-14.1%	149	-6.3%	159

¹⁸ OPCC supplied data

Burglary	1657	6.1%	1562	-16.6%	1872
Burglary (non dwelling)	2877	-3.8%	2991	-14.5%	3499
Drugs	1789	6.2%	1684	-4.4%	1762
Vehicle theft	1606	-9.3%	1870	-8.4%	20141
UTMV	509	12.4%	581	-18.1%	709
Vehicle interference	163	15.6%	141	-29.1%	199
Theft and handling	9525	4.6%	9107	-15.5%	10776
Arson	290	-14.5%	339	4.3%	325
Criminal damage	6719	-7.9%	7295	-14.0%	8483
Other crime	589	-2.0%	601	-17.4%	728
Summary	36448	-2.2%	37272	-11.1%	41942

As the above dataset suggests, and as is the case at the England and Wales level, property crime and violence against the person are important components of overall crime. In addition crime in north Wales has been falling. Between 2010/11 and 2012/13 in the NWP area recorded crime (excluding fraud) fell by 9%. Over this period victim-based crime fell by 7%¹⁹.

The data illustrates year on year decreases in incidents of most crime types across north Wales, but increases in the twelve months to September 2013 are recorded for sexual offences, burglary, drug offences, some vehicle related crime and theft and handling offences.

Reported Crime data for each local authority area became available from the ONS in April 2014 as this report was in the process of being compiled. The following figures relate to the 12 months ending December 2013

Table 12: North Wales Reported Crime by Local Authority Area (12 months to December 2013)

Offence	Anglesey	Conwy	Denbighshire	Flintshire	Gwynedd	Wrexham
All other theft offences	376	763	671	1064	802	1137
<i>Rate per 1000 population</i>	<i>5.4</i>	<i>6.6</i>	<i>7.1</i>	<i>7.0</i>	<i>6.6</i>	<i>8.4</i>
Bicycle theft	32	103	64	143	67	146
<i>Rate per 1000</i>	<i>0.4</i>	<i>0.5</i>	<i>0.7</i>	<i>0.9</i>	<i>0.5</i>	<i>1.1</i>

¹⁹ All police-recorded crimes where there is a direct victim. This victim could be an individual, an organisation or corporate body. This category includes violent crimes directed at a particular individual or individuals, sexual offences, robbery, theft offences (including burglary and vehicle offences), criminal damage and arson.

<i>population</i>						
Criminal damage and arson	592	1246	917	1412	1114	1788
<i>Rate per 1000 population</i>	<i>8.5</i>	<i>10.8</i>	<i>9.8</i>	<i>9.3</i>	<i>9.1</i>	<i>13.2</i>
Domestic burglary	78	267	228	370	145	629
<i>Rate per 1000 population</i>	<i>1.1</i>	<i>2.3</i>	<i>2.4</i>	<i>2.4</i>	<i>1.2</i>	<i>4.6</i>
Drug offences	182	348	288	261	410	360
<i>Rate per 1000 population</i>	<i>2.6</i>	<i>3.0</i>	<i>3.1</i>	<i>1.7</i>	<i>3.4</i>	<i>2.7</i>
Homicide	0	1	1	1	0	2
<i>Rate per 1000 population</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>
Miscellaneous crimes against society	57	61	57	81	67	114
<i>Rate per 1000 population</i>	<i>0.8</i>	<i>0.5</i>	<i>0.6</i>	<i>0.5</i>	<i>0.5</i>	<i>0.8</i>
Non-domestic burglary	153	455	279	724	392	918
<i>Rate per 1000 population</i>	<i>2.2</i>	<i>3.9</i>	<i>3.0</i>	<i>4.7</i>	<i>3.2</i>	<i>6.8</i>
Possession of weapons offences	17	31	22	19	30	32
<i>Rate per 1000 population</i>	<i>0.2</i>	<i>0.3</i>	<i>0.2</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.2</i>	<i>0.2</i>
Public order offences	130	248	236	214	318	350
<i>Rate per 1000 population</i>	<i>1.9</i>	<i>2.1</i>	<i>2.5</i>	<i>1.4</i>	<i>2.6</i>	<i>2.6</i>
Robbery	12	16	19	17	11	43
<i>Rate per 1000 population</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>
Sexual offences	64	139	149	157	147	226
<i>Rate per 1000 population</i>	<i>0.9</i>	<i>1.2</i>	<i>1.6</i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>1.2</i>	<i>1.7</i>
Shoplifting	292	725	486	639	617	1063
<i>Rate per 1000 population</i>	<i>4.2</i>	<i>6.3</i>	<i>5.2</i>	<i>4.2</i>	<i>5.1</i>	<i>7.9</i>
Theft from the person	17	24	24	26	33	67
<i>Rate per 1000 population</i>	<i>1.7</i>	<i>0.2</i>	<i>0.3</i>	<i>0.2</i>	<i>0.3</i>	<i>0.5</i>
Vehicle	152	372	221	543	355	818

offences						
<i>Rate per 1000 population</i>	2.2	3.2	2.4	3.9	2.9	6.1
Violence with injury	239	653	668	792	632	966
<i>Rate per 1000 population</i>	3.4	5.7	7.1	5.2	5.2	7.2
Violence without injury	432	733	664	680	743	963
<i>Rate per 1000 population</i>	6.2	6.4	7.1	4.5	6.1	7.1
Totals	2817	6160	4973	7122	5862	9598
<i>Rate per 1000 population</i>	40.1	50.4	53.0	46.5	48.0	71.0

Perhaps unsurprisingly given the population data already presented Wrexham, Flintshire and Conwy have higher numbers of reported crime than Gwynedd, Denbighshire and Anglesey.

Rates of Victimization per 1000 of the population, however, suggest falling victim to crime is a more common occurrence in Wrexham and Denbighshire than elsewhere.

Aggregate crime data hides some variations. Whilst for most crime types the amount of crime in north Wales is below the national average, this is not the case for 'criminal damage and arson' and 'violent and sexual offending'. The table below shows crime and anti-social behaviour rates in north Wales (per head of population) compared with the rest of England and Wales.²⁰ It can be seen that in the 12 months to March 2013, the rate of violence against the person was above the national average.

Table 13: Selected Crime rate per 1000 of the Population (12 months to March 2013)

	Rate per 1000 of the population in north Wales	Rate per 1000 of the population in E&W
Crime (exc fraud)	54.0	61.4
Victim based crime	47.9	54.5
Burglary	6.6	8.2

²⁰ HMIC (2013) North Wales Police's response to the funding challenge

Violence against the person	12.1	10.6
ASB incidents	36.6	40.7

Rates of reported rape in north Wales is also above the national average standing in 2013 at a rate of 30.3 as opposed to 22 per 100,000 of the population. Here, of course, interpreting the data becomes problematic. It is widely understood that some crimes are significantly under-reported. Hence high recorded rates of some crime e.g. sexual assaults is more likely to be interpreted as an endorsement of police responsiveness to victims as opposed to higher rates of that particular crime in an area.

3.3 Existing Research on Victim Needs in north Wales

3.3.1 Victim Services Advocate (VSA) project²¹

In 2011, in anticipation of the PCC taking over responsibility for commissioning victim services, the former commissioner for victims and witnesses in England and Wales, tasked Victim Support to enquire into victim needs in England and Wales. The resulting 'Victim's Services Advocate' (VSA) project delivered reports about victims' needs in each of the 42 police and crime areas. The final report produced for north Wales aimed to:

1. Provide a picture of current support for victims in north Wales
2. Identify what victims in north Wales need from local services
3. Proposed a course of action by the PCC to meet those needs.

The 12 month project focussed primarily on services for victims of anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse, sexual violence, hate crime, young victims of crime and those bereaved by murder or manslaughter. It was compiled in consultation with local stakeholders and following focus groups and interviews with victims of crime. Tellingly, much of the VSAs work had to be guided by national findings on victims' needs. This was because it 'proved difficult to find much local research undertaken'

The report found:

²¹ Listening and Learning: Improving Support for Victims in North Wales

- The voluntary sector provides the majority of the support available to victims in the area but the long term sustainability of many services was unclear as they relied on fragile sources of funding.
- A lack of support groups for victims of anti-social behaviour (constituting 47% of people who contact the police in north Wales), children and young people and victims from vulnerable groups.
- Victims were satisfied overall with police contact but although the police were confident that every victim was signposted to Victim Support, victims were less certain this had happened.
- Those reporting repeat incidents of victimisation suggested that Criminal Justice staff they spoke to were frequently unaware of this history.
- Victims of domestic abuse and or sexual assault were positive about their initial contact with the police, but critical that they were not signposted to appropriate support groups, or kept up to date as the investigation continued.
- Young people wanted the same services as other victims but felt that they were frequently treated with suspicion.

Based on their findings the VSA extended the following recommendations with respect to developing victim services:

- Better communication between the CJS and victims should be prioritised. In this regard a single point of contact for victims should be considered.
- A campaign should be launched to publicise the support available to victims of crime and anti-social behaviour, both to the public and to professionals. They should also raise awareness that support is available for non-criminal forms of domestic abuse, such as mental and financial abuse.
- There should be a 'stock take' of all the support services available to victims of crime and anti-social behaviour, and a network should be developed to ensure the groups meet the requirements of the area without unnecessary duplication.
- The need to expand the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) and Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVA) provision should be investigated.
- There should be a review of existing anti-social behaviour services and support to victims and develop a consistent area-wide approach.

This should include developing an interagency performance monitoring process, which links the professional organisations responsible for supporting anti-social behaviour victims across north Wales.

- Agencies should be helped to become aware of available funding streams. To ensure victims' services continue to support those in most need across all crime types and anti-social behaviour, these streams should be run for a minimum of three years and be put up for tender at least three months before commencement of new three-year contracts.

3.3.2 HMIC: Domestic Abuse²²

In September 2013, HMIC was commissioned by the Home Secretary to inspect the police response to domestic abuse. HMIC collected data and reviewed files from the 43 Home Office funded forces, spoke to 70 victims of domestic abuse in focus groups and surveyed over 100 victims online. They also surveyed 200 professionals working with victims of domestic abuse. The report found that, while most forces and PCCs said that domestic abuse was a priority for their areas, this prioritisation had not been translated into operational reality. The HMIC report concluded that despite the progress made in this area over the last decade, not all police leaders were ensuring that domestic abuse was a priority in their force, moreover in some areas it was a poor relation to other policing activity.

In relation to north Wales HMIC found key risks in that there were no robust procedures in place to make sure that repeat and vulnerable victims could be identified consistently. Therefore some victims were at risk of not getting the right level of police response at the earliest opportunity and attending officers were not always in possession of all pertinent information held by the force when assessing and categorising the level of risk to the victim. The majority of domestic abuse cases were dealt with by local officers who have not received any additional specialist investigation or domestic abuse training. Their compliance with some policies (e.g mandatory completion of risk assessments) was not being monitored. As a result HMIC inspectors were not confident that the risk to victims was consistently assessed (using DASH) and reviewed in all cases.

The comprehensive report concluded with ten recommendations:

- The force should implement an appropriate system that will assist in identifying repeat and vulnerable victims at point of initial contact.

²² <http://www.hmic.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/north-wales-approach-to-tackling-domestic-abuse.pdf>

- The force should consider implementing an electronic prompt to assist call handlers in eliciting relevant information at initial contact regarding victims' vulnerability or repeated calls.
- The provision of a specific domestic abuse policy for the force would provide more clarity of the definitions, processes and procedure to be undertaken in response to domestic abuse incidents.
- The force to review its domestic abuse training. The force should identify those staff involved in dealing with domestic abuse and ensure they receive appropriate training.
- The Force should review and clarify the roles of Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator (DAC) and Domestic Violence Officer (DVO).
- The force to review the allocation of investigations against levels of threat, risk and harm to a victim.
- The force to review responsibility and ownership for safety plans and reviews of risk.
- The force to improve supervision of DASH forms and domestic abuse investigation files to provide consistency and accountability.
- The force to review the current MARAC and local domestic abuse forum meeting structures.
- The force to review the identification process for perpetrators using threat, harm and risk to inform assessments.

As part of its inspection of the police response to DV HMIC reviewed the operation of MARACs in north Wales. They found all risk levels for domestic abuse victims were reviewed on a daily basis by specialist officers; however the ongoing safety planning for medium and standard cases was not as consistent and clear as it was for high risk cases. In addition the current capacity of the multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACs) and their ability to discuss all cases where the risk to victims had been identified as high was a concern. Some high risk victims were not being discussed at a MARAC because of limited capacity.

In two areas of the force HMIC found there were local partnership 'Domestic Abuse Panels' which are convened outside of the MARAC process to discuss both high and medium risk cases, and provide dynamic interventions in the period between date of reporting and the date of the MARAC. The high risk cases would still be heard at the MARAC, irrespective of actions undertaken by the panel thereby potentially duplicating activity and creating unnecessary strain on agency resources.

3.3.3 All Wales Hate Crime Research²³

In 2013 the All Wales Hate Crime Research group conducted research into hate crime in Wales (including north Wales). In total, 1810 respondents completed a survey in Wales, of which 564 identified themselves as victims of hate crime. A large proportion of victims highlighted considerable challenges to accessing support and, as a result that they would 'suffer in silence'. In many cases, feelings of isolation and vulnerability were exacerbated by

- Disability;
- Rural living, and
- The absence of a strong family network

Research into hate crime in Wales informed development of the WAG's 'Tackling Hate Crimes and Incidents: A Framework for Action' which outlined the steps that needed to be taken in Wales to address issues associated with Hate Crime. Those steps included:

- Addressing under-reporting as many victims of hate crime do not report incidents or crimes against them, especially migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and Gypsies and Travellers.
- Raising awareness of hate crime as some victims are not aware that the abuse they have suffered is actually a crime.
- Challenging stereotypes to promote greater understanding and tolerance of different cultures, backgrounds, races and lifestyles.
- Promoting awareness of cultural diversity among children in schools.
- Training public and voluntary sector staff to spot the signs of hate when working in the community. This includes the 500 community support officers funded by the Welsh Government.
- Producing clear and direct information on how to report hate incidents and crimes in Wales.
- Making sure all agencies, from the police, councils and other public bodies are joined up to support and protect victims.
- Monitoring tensions in the community to tackle problems before they happen.

²³ <http://www.refweb.org.uk/files/Wales%20Hate%20Crime%20Report.pdf>

3.3.4 Adult Survivors and their Families: A Needs Assessment²⁴

The purpose of this 2012 research by Victim Support and Bangor University was to provide an evidence base to inform future developments in policy, practice and service provision to adult survivors (the term used by the authors and so used here) of childhood sexual abuse. It involved telephone interviews with 30 service providers and face to face interviews with 30 survivors of sexual offending in north Wales carried out during 2010/2011.

The report found that survivors had difficulties forming relationships with others after abusive experiences. They reported that they struggled to trust others and lived with a sense of disconnect from others and isolation. 'Being believed' was most important in aiding disclosure.

The report found that adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse were a 'hard to reach group' because sexual abuse was surrounded with stigma. Services for adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse were limited in north Wales and there was a need to address funding deficits in order for this situation to be rectified. The need for more investment was deemed to be especially acute for young people. Recruiting and retaining specialist staff and volunteer support workers (especially males) was challenging.

Gaps in service provision comprised support for:

- Transgender survivors.
- Survivors serving prison sentences (including those that disclosed prior to their prison sentence and those that disclosed whilst in prison).
- Perpetrators of abuse who were themselves survivors of child sexual abuse.
- Survivors who were experiencing relationship and/or sexual difficulties.
- Making applications for criminal injuries compensation, as well as more general legal advice.
- Families and significant others.

²⁴ <http://www.cfmhas.org.uk/assets/Uploads/Adult-survivors-and-their-families-final-report-17-01-12.pdf>

3.3.5 Welsh Government: An Independent Review of Victim Services in Wales²⁵

In May 2014 The Welsh Government published the findings from an independent review of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence services in Wales.

The review found that available services in Wales (including north Wales) could be classed into five main types:

1. Those focussed on prevention (stopping violence and abuse from occurring in the first place)
2. Identification and referral of those affected
3. Those focussed on safety and protection
4. Those aimed at increasing safety and protection by dealing with perpetrators
5. Those that support recovery and social integration

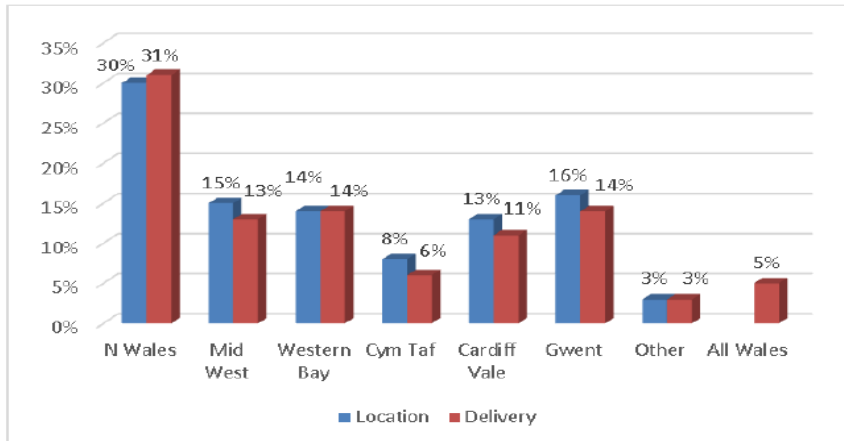
Many agencies in Wales were found to provide more than one of these services and to work with a broad range of experiences i.e. to not just be focussed on domestic abuse but also on sexual violence and to be focussed on men and women. Services for women, however, were more common.

Only very few services undertook prevention work. Work at promoting empowerment, resistance training and assertiveness amongst vulnerable groups was also rarer. Few services said they worked with perpetrators of violence (NB- the research did not consider criminal justice agencies).

Interestingly a mapping exercise of current service provision through a survey exploring the geographical areas covered found one third of the services responding were delivered in north Wales.

Figure 11: Service Location and Delivery by Wales Region

²⁵ <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/caecd/research/2014/140430-violence-against-women-domestic-abuse-sexual-violence-services-en.pdf>



About this the authors state:

this is unexpected, given that the two largest Welsh cities...are in the south, whilst mid-Wales constitutes the largest land mass and included three of the largest local authorities across Wales. It is possible that the survey received better distribution and elicited more interest in north Wales but we have no evidence of this

In relation to the type of 'help' offered by service providers the following list was compiled:

- Advice
- Information on Rights
- Co-ordinating access/referral to other specialists
- Personal safety
- Assessment
- Action planning
- Advocacy
- Practical Assistance
- Education
- Training
- Treatment (including counselling)
- Accommodation
- Financial assistance
- Legal Support
- Recreation
- Befriending
- Care/Tending

In relation to research with victims the review found many women reluctant to approach statutory agencies for fear that information would be shared without their knowledge. "Accessibility, location and stigma" were additional key concerns raised by service users.

Gaps in service provision were identified across Wales, notably in refuge provision and specialist provision for BME women. Stakeholders identified a particular gap in north Wales related to adult survivors of childhood abuse and community based perpetrator's programmes. In general, stakeholders considered the concentration of attention on high risk victims of domestic abuse was often at the expense of medium and low risk cases.

Victim respondents valued 24 hour helpline provision and one-stop shop provisions (especially in rural settings) but commented that accessing alternative affordable housing could be problematic.

Recommendations made by the authors focus on gathering better statistics on victimisation to better inform service delivery. They also include ensuring funding streams for victim services are made more secure, that screening for abuse should be embedded in other service delivery contexts such as hospitals and that prevention programmes focussed on schools might be developed further.

3.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter addressed itself primarily to the first objective of this research project which was:

To scope existing data and literature about the extent and nature of victimisation in the six counties of north Wales and to explore identify how victimisation might differ according to geography.

- Over the last few years the chances of becoming a victim of crime in north Wales has appeared to fall dramatically.
- Whilst for most crime types the amount of crime in north Wales is below the national average this is not the case for 'criminal damage and arson' and 'violent' and sexual offending'.
- Perhaps unsurprisingly given the population demographics and the concentration of urban areas in the east Wrexham, Flintshire and Conwy have higher numbers of reported crime than Gwynedd, Denbighshire and Anglesey.
- Rates of Victimisation per 1000 of the population, however, suggests falling victim to crime is a more common occurrence in Wrexham and Denbighshire than elsewhere.
- Interpreting the data to identify local variations that are 'significant' requires a more in depth quantitative approach than is possible within the remit of this report.

- Existing research into victim services in north Wales is largely positive about the range of service available.
- Gaps are identified, however, in relation to services for victims of anti-social behaviour, services provided to medium/low risk cases of domestic abuse and victims of sex crimes.
- Existing research on victim services in north Wales identifies areas of duplication and some difficulties with regards to joined up working to meet victim needs.
- A lack of capacity to meet demand within existing service provision is also identified.

Chapter Four: Statutory Provision for Victims in north Wales

This chapter and the next address Objective 2 of the research project

To scope existing data about service provision linked to meeting victim's needs across the six counties of north Wales and to explore the level and nature of the services provided.

4.0 Introduction

Whilst it needs to be borne in mind that statutory provision will not form part of any future commissioning process, in this section we describe the statutory services provided to victims of crime to provide as full a description as possible of victim services in the north Wales area.

The following description of statutory provisions for victims and how they are discharged in north Wales is based partly on desk research and on what we were told by those who contributed to this research.

4.1 Statutory Provisions

A new code of practice for victims of crime came into effect in December 2013 (MOJ 2013). In north Wales the provisions of the victim's charter are implemented primarily through the activities of the main agencies that together make up the Criminal Justice System:

4.1.1 North Wales Police

As in most police force areas, the first contact victims of crime have with the criminal justice system is with the police.

As well as a 999 and a 101 phone service North Wales Police maintain a significant online presence and on its main website the names and contact details for neighbourhood policing teams, individual officers, or teams may be found:

http://www.north-Wales.police.uk/your_neighbourhood.aspx

If a crime is reported or interrupted, North Wales Police staff will attend the scene and record the crime. Details of the crime will find its way onto a list which is sent every 24 hours to the Victim Support 'Victim Care Unit' in Cardiff. The information sent to Victim Support includes details about the crime, victim details, address, reporting officer and equality and diversity detail. Victim Support staff at the Victim

Care Unit sift the data and initiate contact with victims of 'core crimes'. These crimes are:

Table 14: Victim Support 'Core Crimes'

Attempted murder	Causing death by aggravated vehicle taking
Causing death by dangerous driving	Infanticide
Manslaughter	Murder
Wounding or carrying out an act endangering life	Use of a substance or object to endanger life
Possession of items to endanger life	Common assault and battery
Inflicting grievous bodily harm without intent	Actual bodily harm and other injury
Poisoning or female genital mutilation	Racially or religiously aggravated common assault
Racially or religiously aggravated wounding	Racially or religiously aggravated actual bodily harm
Racially or religiously aggravated harassment	Racially or religiously aggravated public fear, alarm or distress
Child abduction	Rape of a female aged 16 and over
Rape of a male aged 16 and over	Sexual activity etc. with a person with a mental disorder
Sexual assault on a female aged 13 and over	Sexual assault on a male aged 13 and over
Trafficking for sexual exploitation	Causing sexual activity without consent
Robbery of business property	Robbery of personal property
Aggravated burglary in a building other than a dwelling	Aggravated burglary in a dwelling
Burglary in a dwelling	Theft from the person
Theft in a dwelling other than from automatic machine or meter	Criminal damage to a dwelling
Racially or religiously aggravated criminal damage to a dwelling	Racially or religiously aggravated other criminal damage
Blackmail	Kidnapping

As the above list makes clear, victims of anti-social behaviour and crimes such as car theft or car arson are not contacted and offered a service by Victim Support.

The Victim Support Victim Care Unit is open 6 days a week (not Sunday) and has a target of contacting relevant cases within 48 hours of receiving the transfer of data.

Additional features of how policing is structured in north Wales impact on the victim experience. From 2010 onwards, money from Violence Against Women and Domestic Abuse strategy in Wales, and funding from the Home Office, facilitated the opening of six SARC's across Wales to tackle violence against women, domestic

abuse and sexual violence. The six areas were Cardiff, Colwyn Bay, Merthyr Tydfil, Risca, Swansea and Carmarthen. The north Wales SARC in Colwyn Bay was opened in 2011 and within the boundaries imposed by the need to protect people from serious harm, provides a free and confidential service to victims of sexual assault whether they are reporting matters to the police or not. The centre hosts an Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) who provides victims with independent advice and advocacy.

Specialist staff from across north Wales were brought together in June of 2013 within the SARC to form a team known as Amethyst – dedicated to investigating rape. The team, made up of a detective inspector, three detective sergeants, 12 detective constables, six specially trained officers and an analyst, works alongside the Crown Prosecution Service in Wales, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and third sector colleagues to ensure an investigative response to all reports of rape.

In each of the three policing hubs covering the ten policing areas there are dedicated sex and violence liaison officers (SAVO), family liaison officers (FLO) and domestic abuse co-coordinators (known as DACs in the East and DVOs in the West).

The SAVO provides a range of services including advice to attending officers in cases of sexual assault. If they have first contact with a victim they will direct them towards the SARC and this may lead to them taking up services offered by an ISVA attached to the SARC. The ISVA in north Wales does not provide a service to all victims of a sexual offence—only those where a charge is brought.

Either the SAVO or the ISVA will engage the victim in safety planning and make an assessment regarding the need for any adaptations in the home such as a warning marker, alarms/locks, etc. Either the SAVO, the ISVA or other staff at the SARC will direct the victim towards partner agencies that can provide services such as housing advice. The SAVO or ISVA will normally remain in contact with a victim throughout the investigation phase of an inquiry keeping them updated on progress in the case. The SAVO/ISVA will liaise with Witness Care Unit (see below) and assist in such matters as pre-trial court visits and providing support at court. Where appropriate they will take the lead in obtaining a victim impact assessment.

FLOs provide much the same services in cases where a point of contact between the police and a family is deemed appropriate with a typical example being a missing child investigation.

DVOs/DACs are often based in police Public Protection Units (PPU) and provide advice and support in cases involving domestic abuse.

Until recently practice in respect of child and adult protection concerns had been similar across the six north Wales local authorities. Where safeguarding concerns had arisen and/or a crime had been committed and a vulnerable adult or child was either present or considered to be involved, a report (a CID16) would have been completed by police and sent to the Police PPU. Form CID 16 is an electronic referral form that officers complete after attending domestic abuse, child abuse and

vulnerable adult incidents- with the latter category usually interpreted widely and not only when 'capacity' issues exist. On a weekly basis the CID-16s would then be sifted and referrals made to IDVAs and MARACs in high risk cases or to collectives allied to Welsh Women's Aid in medium and low risk cases.

In Wrexham the sifting process is presently through a MASH (see later). In Flintshire and Conwy it is through a 'Domestic Abuse Panel' The Domestic Abuse Panel comprise staff from statutory agencies and service providers such as Hafan Cymru, Welsh Women's Aid

Increasingly in England and Wales, CID-16 referrals have been addressed to Hubs known as MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs). MASH comprise only statutory agencies (police, health, social care, probation) and they receive, share information about and assess all referrals received involving children or adults deemed to be vulnerable. A MASH was established in Wrexham in March 2014. Its formation in Wrexham led to the area's 'Domestic Abuse Panel' being discontinued.

The police may engage in a range of activates or apply for a range of orders that may potentially meet the needs of victims. This includes such possibilities as imposing bail conditions on offenders or applying for Sex Offender Prevention Orders. A recent innovation is the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS) - known colloquially as Clare's Law. This scheme is intended to provide information to vulnerable victims for example that could protect them from becoming a victim of abuse. The DVDS introduces two types of process for disclosing this information. The first is triggered by a request by a member of the public ('right to ask'). The second is triggered by the police where they make a proactive decision to disclose the information in order to protect a potential victim ('right to know'). Another recent innovation is that the police may now apply for Domestic Violence Prevention Orders. DVPOs were introduced by the Crime and Security Act 2010, and enable the police to put in place protection for the victim in the immediate aftermath of a domestic abuse incident. Under DVPOs, the perpetrator can be prevented from returning to a residence and from having contact with the victim for up to 28 days, allowing the victim a level of breathing space to consider their options. This is intended to provide the victim with immediate protection. If appropriate, the process can be run in tandem with criminal proceedings.

4.1.2 Witness Care Unit

Over the last twenty years and in a succession of strategic plans, North Wales Police have pledged to put victims and witnesses at the forefront of the system. The first main development in the delivery of this pledge was a commitment to support people to attend court to give evidence through creating a Witness Care Unit (WCU) run jointly by the police and CPS. Initially the WCU took responsibility, through a single point of contact in the Unit, for keeping victims and witnesses informed about their case, including details of progress towards any trial. Increasingly in the case of the most serious crimes, these responsibilities are devolved through the Witness Care Unit to the police specialist officers mentioned previously. Presently staff at the WCU in north Wales directly or through specialist police officers, keep witnesses and some

victims informed of the progress of criminal proceedings. They arrange for any special needs to be catered for such as disabled access to courts and for any special measures to be put in place such as screens for witnesses when they are giving evidence in the courtroom.

4.1.3 Witness Service

Victim Support have a presence in each magistrate's court in north Wales under the banner Witness Service.

4.1.4 Youth Justice Teams

The Youth Justice Teams in north Wales are based at Felinheli (Gwynedd & Anglesey LAs), Colwyn Bay (Conwy & Denbighshire LAs), Mold (Flintshire LA) and Wrexham (Wrexham LA). Staff from these teams will routinely contact victims of youth crime who are often young people themselves. They are engaged in signposting them, where appropriate, to support agencies like Victim Support. In addition to this, where it is deemed possible and likely to be beneficial, victims are offered the opportunity to meet with young offenders, make a statement about the impact crime has had upon them, to receive a letter of apology or to have direct reparation of some other sort made to them by the young person.

4.1.5 Wales Probation Trust

The Wales Probation Trust discharges statutory requirements to victims of certain crime and may provide services to any victim if they assess, and the victim agrees, that such involvement would be beneficial or necessary. Statutory duties pertain to victims of violent and sexual offending where the offender is sentenced to over 12 months or more in custody. Victim Liaison Officers within the Trust keep victims informed of an offender's progress after sentence through the criminal justice system offering them the opportunity to comment on any release plans. It is normally the case that individuals sentenced to over 12 months in custody become subject to multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA).

Where offenders are subject to statutory supervision for offences related to domestic abuse 'Women's Safety Workers' and offender managers address safety issues. This may involve visits to, and safety planning with, the victim. Where the offender concerned has a requirement to attend a 'domestic abuse perpetrators programme' as part of the conditions of their statutory order then such contact may be extended.

4.1.6 Domestic Violence Service Level Agreement

A Service Level Agreement exists on the handling of Domestic Abuse cases in the north Wales area between CPS Wales Cymru, North Wales Police, HMCS North Wales and the Wales Probation Trust. It is included in this report as Appendix A

4.2 Multi-Agency Domestic Abuse Arrangements

Increasingly over the last twenty years providing 'better protection and support' for victims of domestic abuse has become a key concern for successive UK Governments and the Welsh Government. Thus from 2003 onwards Domestic Abuse Fora (DAF), Specialist Domestic Violence Courts (SDVC) and Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACS) were established across England and Wales.

The Welsh Government's "Right to be Safe Strategy" was launched in 2010. Pertinent here is that the key priorities of the strategy were raising awareness of domestic abuse, providing support for victims and protecting children and improving the response of criminal justice and other agencies to domestic abuse. In 2012-2013 Welsh Government funding for Violence against Women and Domestic Abuse related activities was £4.336m. Financial contribution was made to provide domestic violence co-ordinations across 22 CSPs in Wales, to employing IDVAS to support the work of BAWSO and for an All Wales Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence helpline.

In June 2014 the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Bill will be introduced in Wales. Its overarching aims are to promote stronger leadership and tackle all forms of violence against women including domestic abuse and sexual violence. Also included are provisions to improve education and public/professional awareness of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence and strengthening and integrating services for victims of such behaviour.

Whilst it is important to note that presently²⁶ neither DAF, SDVC MARACS are required to exist by statute, they do exist in most police force areas and are treated as having statutory status by many service providers.

DAF to which representatives from the police, social services, mental health, criminal justice, housing and voluntary agencies are invited, were created to strategically co-ordinate policy and practice to tackle and respond to domestic abuse. There are four DAF in north Wales with one each in Gwynedd/Mon, Conwy/Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham. They convene some three times a year.

SDVCS, staffed by trained magistrates and prosecutors, are specialist courts that deal only with domestic abuse cases. There are 2 SDVC in north Wales located at Wrexham and Mold.

²⁶ Changes in this regard may follow the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Bill

MARACs, involving many of the same agencies as are involved in Domestic Abuse Fora, provide a multi-agency service to individual victims of domestic abuse who are assessed, (using the Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Harassment and Honour Based Violence Risk Identification checklist-often called DASH) as being at high or very high risk of serious harm. At MARACs a victim's situation is reviewed and actions to protect them, and often their children, are identified. Here it is important to note that referrals to MARAC using DASH come from a range of sources and not just criminal justice agencies. MARACs are convened and co-ordinated by MARAC Co-ordinators who are usually non-uniformed staff employed by the police. There are four MARACs in north Wales located in Anglesey/Gwynedd, Conwy/Denbighshire and Flintshire & Wrexham.

In 2005 and in response to the fragmented and diverse nature of advocacy services that existed at the time, Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA), a national charity, developed practical tools and, later, accredited training to standardise and support the delivery of advocacy services for victims of domestic abuse. This development led to the creation of IDVAs. After making contact with a victim of domestic abuse IDVAs work with them to develop a personal safety plan which will contain details of what actions might be taken and who a victim might contact, in addition to the police, should further abuse occur.

In north Wales there is an IDVA service in each of the six Local Authorities with staff funded and located within collectives affiliated to Welsh Women's Aid (Wrexham Flintshire and Denbighshire), one within Hafan Cymru (Conwy) one in Gorwel (Tai Eryri) (Gwynedd)

As discussed a 'Domestic Abuse Panel' operates in some areas such as Flintshire and Conwy. These mirror MARACs but are for high/medium and lower risk cases. The rationale for their existence is that they ensure information sharing and prompt actions are undertaken in all cases and in-between the monthly MARAC meetings. In effect the Panels perform a similar role to a MASH (see below) in that they seek to ensure that as soon as a referral is received, information about that referral is shared.

4.3 Child Protection and Protection of Vulnerable Adults:

The Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004 provide the main legislative context for the All Wales Child Protection Procedures and place a duty on designated bodies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The procedures reflect the values and principles enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Welsh Assembly Government developed these values and principles in Children and Young People: Rights to Action 2004, and adopted core aims and outcomes through which it is committed to work with all children and young people. The key outcomes for improving the wellbeing of children from conception to adulthood, includes the requirement that children live in a safe environment and be protected from harm. The Welsh Assembly Government guidance, Safeguarding Children; Working Together under the Children Act 2004, has been issued in accordance with the Children Act

2004 and under Section 7 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970, provides the working basis for the procedures.

In addition to this, in north Wales, a Policy and Procedure for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults exists based on a protocol commissioned by the four Wales regional Adult Protection Fora.

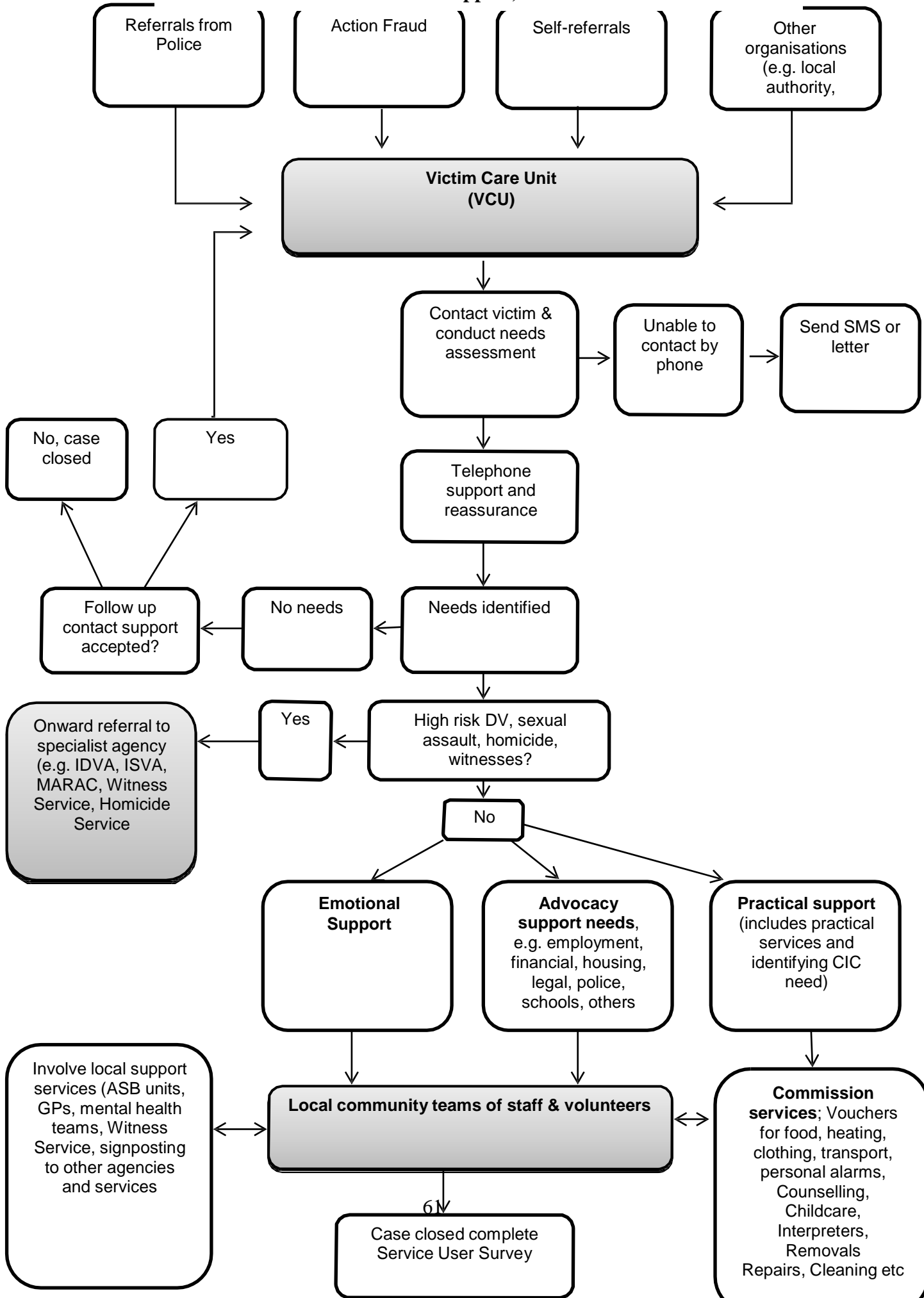
As discussed a recent development in practice which went live in Wrexham in April 2014 are MASH- Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs. They have been developed to improve the sharing of information between agencies to better protect the most vulnerable children and adults from harm, neglect and abuse. Normally personnel from the Police, Health, Probation Trust, Children's Social Care and Adult Safeguarding are co-located in a MASH office.

A MASH receives safeguarding referrals from professionals and where they meet the threshold for Social Care involvement, representatives from the MASH agencies collate information from their respective sources to build up a picture of the circumstances of the case and the associated risks. The intention is that better co-ordination between agencies will lead to an improved service for children and families.

4.4 Community Safety Partnerships

Within each Community Safety Partnership there is a domestic abuse and sexual violence lead officer who guides and strategically direct activities in relation to tackling that form of crime. These individuals take a lead in applying for funding for such diverse activities as prevention projects in schools and for IDVAs. They are responsible for reporting on issues related to the performance and governance of MARACs. We were told by a number of service providers that these workers co-ordinate activities in relation to DASV in their areas. Separate leads exist for anti-social behaviour.

Figure 12 Wales CJ Victim Pathway (kindly provided by Victim Support)



5.0 Chapter Five: Non-Statutory Victim Services

This chapter continues to address Objective 2 of the research project focussing on non-statutory victim services in north Wales:

To scope existing data about service provision linked to meeting victim's needs across the six counties of north Wales and to explore the level and nature of the services provided.

5.1 Introduction

A list of non-statutory providers of victim services may be compiled with reference to different parameters. For example, the 999 emergency call service could be understood as a service which meets the needs of actual and potential victims. The same might be said of local GP services who might tend to people's physical injuries or make referrals for counselling when individuals present to them in need. The Samaritans offer a telephone support service which might be accessed by those who have been victimised, are experiencing difficulties coping with life and need someone to talk to. Finally, local authority housing services are clearly well positioned to provide assistance to some victims of crime especially those fleeing persecution from partners or anti-social behaviour in their neighbourhood.

As important and useful as these services might be for some victims these statutory, voluntary and third sector agencies provide specialist services to individuals without having support and advocacy for victims as their main field of activity. For this reason they are excluded from consideration in this section. Also excluded are a range of internet based self-help groups for victims of crime that have emerged over the last ten years. The support provided by such Facebook groups as north Wales Horse Watch or north Wales Farm Watch is likely to increase over coming years as computer literacy becomes more the norm and access to superfast internet broadband becomes more widespread. However, so as to focus attention on those victim services that are likely to come under the ambit of the OPCC in the future, this section concentrates primarily on services and organisations that are more directly and overtly focussed on meeting victims' needs.

The exceptions in this regard are organisations that provide support to individuals who are defined in Equality legislation as having protected characteristics or who work with other vulnerable groups. The most obvious examples are Stonewall with respect to people who are LGBT or Age Concern who focus on the over-50s. These organisations do not have support and advocacy for victims as their main field of activity. However, they exist largely because the individuals they represent have historically experienced individual or institutional oppression and discrimination (and thereby victimisation) as a regular part of their lives.

The parameters of the review are set by the understanding derived in part from the data presented in chapter one that whilst need can arise from any crime, it is

particularly a function of the seriousness of the crime or anti-social behaviour experienced, the frequency with which it is experienced (some forms of victimisation being more often part of a pattern) or the vulnerability of the person who is victimised.

In relation to the scoping in this section we present our findings with reference to services at the England and Wales level, service provision that is particular to Wales, and then services in each of the 6 Local Authorities: Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham.

5.2. Victim Services in north Wales²⁷

5.2.1 Generalist Service:

❖ Victim Support.

Victim Support Wales, 10 Drake Walk, Atlantic Wharf, Cardiff, CF10 4AN
Victim Support, Ty'r Binwydden, Clayton Road, Mold, CH7 1ST
0845 3030 900
www.victimsupport.org.uk

This charity operates a helpline that provides free and confidential help in England and Wales for victims, witnesses, family, friends, and anyone else affected by crime.

Victim support offers a service to all victims of crimes who self-refer or who are referred by other agencies.

As indicated previously their central Victim Care Unit receives information in relation to all crimes committed in a 24 hour period from North Wales Police and place follow up calls to enquire about needs to victims of 'core crimes' within 48 hours

In all north Wales criminal courts Victim support run a specific 'Witness Service'.

5.2.2 Domestic Abuse

i) All England and Wales Provision

²⁷ It is to be expected that the list is not comprehensive. Individuals or agencies which are not covered should contact the authors or OPCC to be included in any subsequent 'list of providers'.

❖ Refuge

0808 2000

247 www.refuge.org.uk

Provides a Freephone 24-Hour National Domestic abuse Helpline. This is across England and Wales and run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge. As the name suggests, the organisations operates a number of refuges for those seeking to escape domestic abuse. In Wales there are 36 refuges providing 249 bed spaces.

❖ The National Stalking Helpline

0808 802

03000 www.advice@stalkinghelpline.org

This helpline provides free confidential information and guidance to anyone affected by stalking.

❖ The Forced Marriage Unit

020 7008

0151 www.fco.gov.uk/forcedmarriage

This a joint initiative between the Foreign & Commonwealth Office and the Home Office giving advice or support to anyone affected by, or who may encounter, cases of forced marriage. . They maintain a London based Global resource centre and an in and out of hours emergency phone line. An associated online portal lies within the foreign and commonwealth office.

❖ The Man Kind Initiative

01823

334244 www.mankind.org.uk

An initiative that provides support for male victims of Domestic Abuse and Domestic abuse.

ii) Specific Wales Provision

❖ The All-Wales Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence helpline

0808

8010800. <http://www.allWaleshelpline.org.uk/>.

The All Wales Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Helpline provides a 24 hour, bilingual information signposting service, to help and guide people with experience of domestic abuse or sexual violence, who are in need of access to services such as advice, emergency support, safety, and knowledge of their rights and options. The helpline is managed by Welsh Women's Aid.

❖ Welsh Women's Aid

An umbrella organisation for the collectives in Wales who provide direct services for women and children who have experienced, or who are experiencing domestic abuse (see later). The organisation has also, recently, become a provider of services e.g. Wrexham Welsh Women's Aid.

❖ Minority Ethnic Women's Network Wales (MEWN Cymru)

029 20406

4445 www.mewn-cymru.org.uk

A strategic umbrella body representing ethnic minority women in Wales, regardless of their age, religious observance, ethnicity or life choices. It has its base in Cardiff. Telephone:

❖ Safer

Wales www.saferWales.com

This initiative is funded by the Welsh Government and Safer Capital. Albeit it appears to be a largely Cardiff based organisation it is described as working to help people feel safer and improve the life in communities across Wales. Specifically their website suggests they offer support and services to people who are suffering domestic abuse; hate crime or harassment; or who are being forced to do things that they do not wish to do.

❖ Dyn project

0808 801

0321 www.dynWales.org

The Dyn project provides support to men who are experiencing domestic abuse from a partner. That support is through a helpline and an online portal.

❖ The Men's Advice Line.

0808 801

0327. <http://www.mensadvice.org.uk/>

Run by an organisation called RESPECT, The Men's Advice Line helpline provides a range of services aimed primarily at men experiencing domestic abuse from their partner (but also perpetrators in some cases)

iii) Specific north Wales provision

It is important to note that most providers of services to victims of domestic abuse in Wales are independent collectives affiliated to Welsh Women's Aid. An interesting nuance is that this umbrella organisation is also a provider. Hence, in the list below, where a service is described with reference to 'Women's Aid' it is provided by Welsh Women's Aid. When the service is described as 'domestic abuse unit' or 'women's centre' the provider is a local collective (managed by an independent management group) but associated with the umbrella organisation 'Welsh Women's Aid'. Welsh Women's Aid has a 'by women for women' philosophy. Local Collectives not carrying the Women's Aid branding provide a gender neutral service

❖ North Wales Women's Centre

This is located in Rhyl and provides access to information, support and training on issues relating to health wellbeing and work. The centre works to improve their health, confidence, and livelihoods of men and women.

❖ Aberconwy Domestic Abuse Service

Town Hall, Lloyd Street, Llandudno LL30 2YP 01492 872992

Offers a 24 hour telephone response service and an outreach service for men and women. Also it organises sessional play events, after school and holiday club, for present and previous refuge children

❖ Gorwel Anglesey Domestic Abuse Service

Yr Hen Argraffdy, 12 Ffordd Yr Efail, LLangefni, Ynys Môn LL77 7ER Tel: 01286 881588 Tel 2: 01248 750903

Gorwel, part of the Tai Eryri housing service, provides services dealing with domestic abuse in Anglesey. They provide access to two refuges providing emergency accommodation (24 hours a day / 7 days a week) for women and their children escaping from domestic abuse.

They also provide a Floating Support Scheme for women and their families on Ynys Môn. This service also supports men suffering from domestic abuse. Services available include one to one and group sessions for women and men.

The Service hosts the area IDVA who works with individuals and other agencies to assess the risks faced by service users and ensure that an appropriate service is provided in response to the identified level of risk. A premium service is offered to high risk clients and cases are reviewed and monitored as appropriate.

The service offered is described as a ONE STOP SHOP-this description is used to describe a place wherein individuals may receive legal, care and housing advice because representatives from agencies with these responsibilities attend or can be summoned to the premises.

❖ Bangor and District Women's Aid

7 LLys y Fedwen Parc Menai, Bangor or BDWA POBox 873 Bangor Gwynedd LL57 2QN (01248 690077)

24 hour helpline: 01248 690

077 bangorwomensaid@tiscali.co.uk

Information, support and assistance for women and children experiencing domestic abuse. Referrals to refuges and other emergency accommodation. Information and help with related legal issues, e.g. injunctions. Emergency telephone access outside office hours.

Interestingly this project does not provide services to male victims of domestic abuse at the present time but are seeking a change of constitution by the end of 2014 to allow for this provision.

❖ De Gwynedd Domestic Abuse service

Uned 6, Canolfan Glanpwll, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Gwynedd LL41 3NW

Pwllheli Office: Canolfan Felin Fach, Stryd Penlan, Pwllheli, Gwynedd, LL53 5DE

Offers a range of services to men and women and a refuge service for women - houses shared and run by women and children who are all victims of domestic abuse. They provide an outreach service-providing support, information and time to talk, confidential information and help.

❖ Domestic Abuse Safety Unit,

Wrenmore House 104 Chester Road East, Shotton CH5 1QD

This is a one stop shop for victims of domestic crime. The Flintshire Independent Domestic abuse Advocate is based on the premises. The unit has access to accommodation with intensive specialised support for up to four families at any one time. The PROGRESS Outreach Service works from the premises. Interestingly this is a project funded by the Lloyds TSB bank

foundation for three years. A Crisis Intervention Service is provided

comprising immediate response to individuals experiencing domestic abuse. The unit runs The Freedom Programme -a 10 week course for victims of domestic abuse for 2 hours a week - at least 2 or 3 courses a run throughout the year.

❖ CAHA/ Delyn Women's Aid

Provides services to women victims of domestic abuse in the south of Flintshire

❖ North Denbighshire Domestic Abuse Unit (formerly Rhyl and district women's aid)

26B Wellington Road, Rhyl, Denbighshire LL18 1BN 01745 337104

❖ Glyndwr (Denbigh) Women's Aid

❖ Wrexham Women's Aid

6, Temple Row, Wrexham, LL13 8LY 01978 310203

Provides a range of support services and housing solutions to women and children experiencing domestic abuse. The Wrexham IDVAs are hosted by this organisation and provide a range of services to men and women involved in the CJS or MARAC

❖ Hafan Cymru

Provides services across Denbighshire, Wrexham & Flintshire (Head office, Stephen's Way, Pensarn, Carmarthen, SA31 2BG 01267 225555 www.hafancymru.co.uk)

This an organisation that works across Wales providing advice and support as well as outreach and accommodation for women, men and children escaping domestic abuse. This organisation runs the Freedom programme for victim/survivors of domestic abuse in Wrexham.

❖ Black Association of Women Step Out (BAWSO)

33 Grosvenor Road, Wrexham LL11 1BT
01978355818

Delivers specialist services to men and women from black and/or minority ethnic migrant backgrounds who are affected by domestic abuse and other forms of abuse including female genital mutilation, forced marriage, human trafficking and prostitution.

A Children's Worker supports children and young people in the Wrexham refuge and an Outreach Service provides support to women, men, children and young people across north Wales experiencing domestic abuse.

❖ Broken Rainbow

33 Grosvenor Road, Wrexham
LL11 1BT 01978 355818
0300 999 5428
<http://www.broken-rainbow.org.uk/>

Provides Support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people experiencing domestic abuse.

❖ Triangle Wales

Tel: 0808 801 0306
www.triangleWales.co.uk

Providing housing and support for LGB people in Wales

❖ Neighbourhood Wardens

The CSP in Flintshire fund 'neighbourhood wardens'. They provide a safety service, primarily to victims of domestic abuse whereby they can fit window and door alarms and help create a safety/panic room.

❖ Care and Repair Wrexham

Wrexham: the same service as provided by the Flintshire CSP are provided in Wrexham by care and repair but referrals are made to it only through the local MARAC

❖ Age Connects, Wrexham and Flintshire

Provides a service to victims of domestic abuse who are aged over 50 in the Wrexham and Flintshire Service- funded from the WAG Equalities Fund

❖ Choose2Change

01745 345929
choose2change@relatecymru.org.uk

Choose 2 Change is a service that helps men who want to change the way they behave in their relationships and offers support to their partner during

this time. The service is operated by RELATE and operates as a group programme where men can work with others towards changing their behaviour to improve relationships. Relate run a number of child contact centres when (following acceptance of a formal referral) children can have contact with estranged parents in supervised settings.

5.2.3 Sexual assault

i) All England and Wales Service

❖ Rape Crisis

0808 802

9999. www.rapecrisis.org.uk

Provides for Rape and sexual Violence support and independent advocacy for women and girls of all ages who have experienced any form of sexual violence.

❖ The Survivors Trust

01788

550554 www.thesurvivorstrust.org

Survivors Trust operates throughout the UK and Ireland as an umbrella organisation for 132 members providing a range of counselling, therapeutic and support services working with women, men and children who are victims/survivors of rape, sexual violence and childhood sexual abuse.

❖ The National Association for People Abused in Childhood (NAPAC)

0800 085 3330

0808 801

0331. www.napac.org.uk

NAPAC provides a national freephone support line for adults who have suffered any type of abuse in childhood.

ii) Specific Wales provision

iii) Specific north Wales Provision

❖ North Wales Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)

The Public Health Wales (2010, p.3) definition sets out the services that the SARCs should provide:

A SARC is a 'one stop' location where victims of sexual assault can receive medical care and counselling whilst at the same time having the opportunity to assist the Police investigation into alleged offences, including the facilities for a high standard of forensic examination.

The SARC is funded to run as a partnership between Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, North Wales Police and voluntary groups. The centre uses an Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) who provides victims with a service not dissimilar to the IDVA in the cases of sexual violence. The ISVA is employed by the RASA.

❖ Rape and Sexual Abuse Support (RASA) Centre (north Wales).

PO Box 87, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL55 9AA
Helpline: 0808 80 10 800
E mail: info@rasaWales.org.uk
01286
669266. www.rasaWales.org.uk

This centre has been existence since 1984 and is also affiliated to the Survivor's Trust. It employs 4 part time staff, an assistant manager and manger. In addition it hosts 36 volunteer counsellors and 15 support workers who live and cover the whole of north Wales. Services offered include counselling and general support, support groups, information and advice for female and male survivors of rape and sexual abuse and partners of survivors of rape or sexual abuse. The service is available to anyone aged 13+ irrespective of whether they have reported their experiences to the police.

❖ The Beacon Foundation

Beacon Foundation, The C/O 3 Grosvenor Avenue , Rhyl, Denbighshire, LL18 4HA
01745 343600

The foundation offers information and support services to people who suffered abuse in childhood (Not necessarily sexual abuse)

❖ Stepping Stones

PO Box 2, Wrexham LL11 1WY
01978
352717. <http://steppingstonesnorthWales.btck.co.uk/>

This organisation is affiliated to the Survivor's Trust and describes itself as an agency that provides a therapeutic service for adults who have been sexually abused as children. Area covered are to the east: Wrexham, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Conwy.

Services offered:

- Free, confidential counselling.
- Individual counselling and group work sessions in venues across Wrexham, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Conwy.

❖ Standing Ground

Standing Ground: Trinity House, Trinity Street, Wrexham, LL11 1NL
0845 602
3694 <http://dsweb.svc.ops.eu.uu.net/prod/dialspace/town/place/gei19/sq/>

Provides information and support services to people who suffered any abuse in childhood:

They have had a helpline running for survivors of abuse and their families since 2002. They recently launched the Survival Skills course for survivors of abuse.

5.2.4 Hate Crime

i) All England and Wales Services

❖ Stop Hate UK

24 Hour Helpline on : 0800 138
1625 <http://www.stophateuk.org/talk-to-us/>

This organisation provides independent, confidential and accessible reporting (via many platforms) and support for victims, witnesses and third parties.

❖ True Vision:

<http://www.report-it.org.uk/home>

This is an online portal providing support and a report facility in respect of hate crime

ii) Specific Wales Provision

❖ All Wales Hate Crime Reporting and Support Centre

Victim Support Wales, 10 Drake Walk, Atlantic Wharf, Cardiff, CF10 4AN
Victim Support, Ty'r Binwydden, Clayton Road, Mold, CH7 1ST
0845 3030
900 www.victimsupport.org.uk

As of May 8th 2014 Victim Support in Wales will provide a 24 hour helpline/hate crime incident service throughout Wales. The helpline will be backed up by follow up face to face support provided by specialist trained volunteers. The provision is intended to encourage individuals and communities to report hate crime/incidents and to provide support to those affected.

❖ Third Party Reporting Centres

Across Wales, to address this issue a system of Third Party Reporting Centres have been developed. These are community venues for victims of hate incidents and crimes to make a report. The aim of a Third Party Reporting Centre is to support victims to

- make a report;
- help identify agencies that can provide support; and
- to help the Community Safety Partnership
- to co-ordinate support for the victim

Elderly People

❖ Age Cymru

Age Cymru,
Tŷ John Pathy,
13 / 14 Neptune Court,
Vanguard Way,
Cardiff CF24 5PJ
Telephone: 029 20 431555

The new name for the merged charities Help the Aged and Age Concern. Info and advice for the general public, including factsheets about elder abuse and where to get help. This a national charity working to improve the lives of older people in Wales.

❖ Action on elder Abuse

Action on Elder Abuse, PO Box 60001, Streatham, SW16 9BY.
UK Helpline: 080 8808 8141

Action on Elder Abuse (AEA) works to protect, and prevent the abuse of, vulnerable older adults. It operates a national helpline and is an umbrella organisation with the ability to signpost to affiliates across England and Wales.

People with Disabilities

❖ Mencap Cymru

31 Lambourne Crescent, Cardiff Business Park, Llanishen, Cardiff, CF14 5GF 0808 808 1111
www.mencap.org.uk

- runs the Wales Learning Disability Helpline which offers information and support on a range of issues.

LGBT

❖ The LGBT Excellence Centre Wales 0800 023 2201

Social enterprise and a charity that provides free advice and support to people, organisations and businesses on issues concerning sexual orientation and gender identity

iii.)) Specific north Wales services

❖ Stonewall Cymru

The Equality Centre, Bangor Road, Penmaenmawr, Conwy LL34 6LF 01492 622 233 08000
502020 www.stonewall.org.uk/cymru

This is a well-known lesbian, gay and bisexual charity.

❖ North East Wales LGBT Foundation: Ty AVOW, 21 Egerton Street, Wrexham, LL11 1ND

❖ Bi Cymru/Wales

E
Text: 07982 308812

mail: bicymru@yahoo.co.uk

❖ Encompass

Citizen's Advice Bureau Community Cafe, Cable Street, Connah's Quay, CH5
4DZ. www.encompass.btik.com

Encompass is a LGBT group for the north Wales and Cheshire area. It has a social dimension and creates opportunities for members to meet new friends and become part of a supportive group.



Femme [douglasaustin@hotmail](mailto:douglasaustin@hotmail.co.uk)

ail.co.uk

Femme is a group for older lesbian women who meet once a fortnight in Colwyn Bay, for coffee or lunch, trips and events

❖ The Gay Outdoor Club

01244 342066,

Contact: info@goc.org.uk

The Gay Outdoor Club operates throughout Wales and provides a wide range of outdoor and indoor sports and recreational activities for LGBT men and women.

❖ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Friends Dining Club –

Wrexham, north east Wales

07834 776 603.

This is a dining club that has been in existence since 2002 and offers opportunities for LGBT people and their friends to meet on a monthly basis in a Wrexham restaurant.

❖ Mesmac North

Wales www.mesmac.com

Keith Parry, 2 Bryn Difyr, Bangor Gwynedd LL57 1H

01248 363431

Mesmac north Wales provides access to a chat room and a variety of social events in north Wales area.

❖ Viva - LGBT Youth Group (14-25) –

VIVA, West Rhyl Young People's Project, 17 Bedford St, Rhyl, Denbighshire LL18
1SY

01745351293

Viva is a LGBT young people's service at the West Rhyl Young People's Project it holds 1 weekly group meeting (Tuesday 5pm - 8pm) for LGBT people aged 14-25, also a 1-2-1 service available by appointment. Viva has a small resource library and provides awareness raising training and support to local organisations working with young people.

5.2.5 Mental Disorder

iii.) Specific north Wales Services

❖ Hafal

Hafal Denbighshire:
Nina Parsonage, Practice Leader
Bryn Y Wal
Pentre Lane
Rhuddlan
Denbighshire
LL18 6LA.
Tel: 07805665580
E-mail: nina.parsonage@hafal.org

Hafal Wrexham
Karen Edwards, Service Manager
Luke O'Connor House
Barter Court
Barrack Field
Hightown
Wrexham LL14 8QT
Tel: 01978 310936
E-mail: wots@hafal.org

Hafal Gwynedd:
Practice Leader
Arosfa
110 High Street
Porthmadog
Gwynedd LL49 9NW
gwyneddarosfa@hafal.org
Tel: 01766 513800

Hafal Conwy:
Heather Russell-Hughes
Service Manager
Mental Health Resource Centre
Nant y Gamar Road
Craig-y-Don
Llandudno LL30 1YE
Tel: 01492 860926
E-mail: aberconwy@hafal.org

Hafal Flintshire:
Janet Fletcher
Crisis Family Liaison Co-ordinator
Deeside Community Hospital,
Hafal,
Aston House,
Plough Lane,
Shotton,
Deeside.
CH5 1XS Tel: 01244 834 927
Mobile: 07966 017 647
E-mail: flintshire@hafal.org

This an organisation that delivers a range of services to people with serious mental health illness including direct support and advice, support in a crisis, contact with others by phone, advocacy, support in a group setting, introductions for befriending, and employment and training projects.

5.2.6 Offending Against Children

Children can be victims of crime both directly and indirectly. Many victims of crime have children who are effected collaterally by that victimisation. Advice and support for individuals experiencing and living with the effects of crime is available nationally and locally through a number of sources. Although there is significant provision for children through NSPCC and school counselling for young people, GP surgeries and colleges are the main providers of counselling services for young victims of crime.

i) All England and Wales Provision

❖ NSPCC

National helpline 0808 800 5000
Wales 02920
267000. www.nspcc.org

A charity which has local branches that provides services to give children the help, support and environment they need to stay safe from harm.

❖ Childline

0800 1111

A well-known free helpline for children and young people in the UK. Children and young people can call them to talk about any problem.

❖ Parent Line Plus

0808 800 2222

UK wide help line for anyone caring for children and young people

❖ Action for Children

❖ Barnados

ii) Specific Wales provision

❖ Children in Wales

North Wales Office, Children in Wales, Unit 2Victoria Dock, Balaclafa Road, Caernarfon LL55 1TH

This is a registered charity that promotes the interests of children, young people and their families in Wales. It is in effect the national umbrella organisation for a range of voluntary, statutory and professional organisations and individuals who work with children and young people in Wales. It is a membership organisation and whilst it does not provide direct services itself-it provides signposting and opportunities for members to share and exchange skills and expertise, and combine knowledge and experience.

iii) Specific north Wales Provision

Each area has its own Family Information Service that can network families and children into services that enhance social inclusion and /or provide support services

Gwynedd-Ni (Gwynedd Information Service for Children, Young People and Families) Caernarfon Library, Pavilion Hill, Caernarfon, Gwynedd. LL55 1AS

Phone: 01286 675570

E-mail: Gwynedd-Ni@gwynedd.gov.uk

Website: www.Gwynedd-Ni.org.uk

Anglesey Children and Young People's Information Service
Canolfan Plant Llangefni,
Ffordd y Coleg,
Lôn Talwrn,
Llangefni,
Anglesey,
LL77 7LP
Tel: 01248 725800
E-mail: cis@anglesey.gov.uk
Website: www.younganglesey.org.uk

Conwy Family Information Service
The Old School Lane Centre
Church Walks
Llandudno
LL30 2HL
Telephone: 01492 577850
E-mail: plant.children@conwy.gov.uk
Website: www.conwy.gov.uk/children

Denbighshire Family Information Service
Margaret Morris Centre,
Gwaenynog Rd,
Denbigh,
LL16 3RU
01745 815891
E-mail: fis@denbighshire.gov.uk
Website: www.fisdenbighshire.co.uk.

❖ Hafan Cymru Young Persons Project

In Wrexham
01267 225555

Housing for vulnerable young men aged 16 - 25.

5.2.7 Victims of Anti-Social behaviour

❖ Anti-Social behaviour Co-ordinators

Each of the six counties in north Wales has an anti-social behaviour co-ordinator. Each of the large social landlords (housing providers) have staff who can engage with anti-social behaviour. These individuals engage in mediation when problems around anti-social behaviour arise.

Anglesey / Ynys Mon Council
General enquiries: 01248 752820
Housing Enforcement Team: 01248 752836/752835
General Email: ehealth@anglesey.gov.uk

Gwynedd Council
Community Safety Unit
Gwynedd Council, Council Offices, Penrallt, Caernarfon, LL55 1BN
Telephone: 01286 682602
E-mail: communitysafetypartnership@gwynedd.gov.uk

Conwy Council
Contact the Anti-social Behaviour Co-ordinator
Telephone: 01492 575177
E-mail: communitysafety@conwy.gov.uk

Denbighshire Council
Customer Service Centre: 01824 706101
E-mail: community.safety@denbighshire.gov.uk

Flintshire Council
For general enquires, or if you are unsure of who can assist, please contact the ASB Coordinator on 01352 702643.
Council tenants please contact your Estate Management team. Tel 01352 703532

Wrexham Council
Housing - 01978 292029
Email: tenancyenforcement@wrexham.gov.uk
Community Safety
Telephone: 01978 297042
E-mail: communitysafety@wrexham.gov.uk

Housing Associations

Cartefi Conwy
ASB Hotline: 01492 517700
E-mail: antisocialbehaviour@cartreficonwy.org

Catrefi Gwynedd
General Enquiries: 0300 123 8084
E-mail: enquiries@ccgwynedd.org.uk

Clwyd Alyn (Pennaf)
Telephone: 01745 536800 or 0800 1835757
E-mail: enquiries@clwydalyn.co.uk

Wales & West

ASBU on 0800 052 2526
E-mail: asbu@wwha.co.uk

Tai Eryri
Ty Silyn, Y Sgwâr, Penygroes, Gwynedd, LL54 6LY
or
33-35 Stryd Fawr, Llangefni, Ynys Môn, LL77 7NA
Telephone: 01286 881588 (Gwynedd) or 01248 750359 (Ynys Môn)
E-mail: enw@taieryri.co.uk

Tai Clwyd
54 Stryd Y Dyffryn Dinbych LL16 3BW
Telephone: 0345 230 3140
E-mail: taiclwyd@taiclwyd.com

North Wales Housing
Plas Blodwel, Broad Street, Llandudno Junction, Conwy, LL31 9HL
Telephone: 01492 572727
Email: customerservices@nwha.org.uk

❖ Conflict Resolution Service

Denbighshire
Mortha Hall, Bath Street, Rhyl, Denbighshire, LL18 3EB
01745 345502
01978
266626 wrexham.crs@thewa
lich.net

Flintshire
St. John's House, Chester Road, Wrexham, LL12 7AX
01978 355155 / 01978
340914 wrexham.crs@thewalli
ch.net

Wrexham
Richmond House, Grosvenor Road, Wrexham, LL11 1BT
Phone: 01978 340914
Fax: 01978
448289 wrexham.crs@thewa
lich.net

This project is a partnership between The Wallich, Wrexham County Borough Council, Flintshire County Council and Denbighshire County Council and works in Wrexham, Flintshire and Denbighshire Local Authority areas.

The service addresses an underlying cause of homelessness by working primarily with young people in conflicts that threaten their housing. Service uses mediation to seek solutions that are acceptable to everyone.

❖ Housing First Anglesey Project

2-4 Market Street, Holyhead, Anglesey, LL65 1UL

01407 765274
E-mail: hfa@thewallich.net

Main aims are to help homeless people find a permanent home quickly and provide appropriate support to clients. The HFA Project is available to men and women who are homeless and aged 25 and above, who have no immediate access to settled accommodation and have support needs that can be met through housing related support.

❖ St John's

St John's, Chester Road, Wrexham, LL12 7AX
01978 355 155
E-mail st.johns@thewallich.net

Provides accommodation and 24-hour support to homeless men and women aged 18 +

❖ TASS

Richmond House, 31 Grosvenor Road, Wrexham, LL11 1BT
01978 340915
01978 448289
E-mail: mail@thewallich.net

The TASS provides a tenancy support service to people who have been placed in temporary homeless accommodation (including Bed & Breakfast) by Wrexham Local Authority's Homelessness Team.

5.2.8 Victims of Violent Crimes

❖ Support After Murder & Manslaughter (SAMM)

<http://www.samm.org.uk/>

This a national UK Charity supporting families bereaved by Murder and Manslaughter. They provide direct support to the traumatically bereaved. Their services are available through a helpline and an online portal.

5.3 Chapter Findings Summary

This chapter and the preceding one addressed Objective 2 of the research project

To scope existing data about service provision linked to meeting victim's needs across the six counties of north Wales and to explore the level and nature of the services provided

- Victims of core crimes in north Wales are contacted by victim support and offered a service. Victims of ASB and non-core crimes, however, are not automatically contacted and offered a service.
- Victim Support contact victims of core crimes and offer services in accordance with an assessed need.
- A witness service is provided in all north Wales courts and a SLA guides practice in the criminal justice system in relation to victims of domestic abuse.
- A clear pathway for service delivery is associated with cases where victims of domestic abuse are assessed as high risk of harm. This involves referrals to court, MARAC and support provided through an IDVA.
- Domestic Abuse Panels within Public Protection Units in area police stations signpost other victims of domestic abuse to support services (In Wrexham this is now done by the MASH).
- Each Local Authority has an IDVA service in place.
- In Wrexham, Flintshire, Denbighshire and Conwy local authorities provide for target hardening activities.
- A RASA service is available in the East and Western areas of north Wales and a central SARC.
- There is one ISVA for the whole of the north Wales area who deals with victims where charges have been laid against a perpetrator.
- Collectives allied to Welsh Women's Aid provide support services for female and child victims of domestic abuse in each of the six local authority areas.
- In some areas support for male victims is less well developed and support is provided through national providers such as the Dyn project.
- A support and advocacy service for older victims of domestic abuse is available in Wrexham but not elsewhere.
- Domestic abuse service providers are located primarily in urban centres but all provide for an outreach service.
- Whilst specific information and support services for victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence exist, no similar provision for victims of ASB or hate crime were identified.

6.0 Chapter Six: Victim Needs

This chapter presents a thematic analysis of findings from the qualitative interviews with study participants focussing on the remaining four objectives of the research projects.

To explore with stakeholders the nature of victim need and the adequacy of existing provision to meet those needs including whether and where gaps in provision exists across the six counties of north Wales.

To explore with stakeholders how victims of crime currently access victim services and what facilitates or acts as a barrier towards such access.

To explore with stakeholders current mechanisms for evaluating service outcomes in terms of helping victims to cope with and to recover from their experiences.

To explore with stakeholders their perceptions of how services should be prioritised and developed moving forward and in light of emerging patterns of victimisation across north Wales.

6.1 Victim Needs

6.1.1 Safety and Protection from (re) Victimisation

Service provider respondents noted that victim needs varied from case to case and according to the level of harm they had experienced. One need that most victims were said to share, however, was to avoid further victimisation and harm. Such needs could be associated with a search for practical 'safety' solutions such as adaptations to the family home e.g. a house alarm, moving home to avoid anti-social behaviour or an offender being imprisoned for an appreciable length of time:

What they want more than anything is to be safe, to not be living in fear and live their lives in fear that the same thing is going to happen over and over again (SP 5)

Women are often scared and to be honest at the very basic need, safety is required and sometimes nothing else- just for the problem to go away and if it can't or won't to feel protected. (SP3)

Domestic abuse was understood as having the potential to cause longer term psychological and emotional harm not only to the person being directly abused but to those witness to such abuse or who are occasionally caught up in it. Children, as a result, were considered to be in need of protection in circumstances where they were witnessing domestic abuse:

We work with mostly women but the truth of the matter is often more complicated because our primary concern often has to be the welfare of the children. The welfare of women and children can be bound up together but it isn't always the case that it's straightforward, the main victim I'm working with isn't always the one I'm talking to (SP7)

For one group of victims, the issue of preventing re-victimisation was not considered such a priority. This was for victims of historic sexual offending. One respondent highlighted how the needs of victims of historic sexual violence could be different to victims of domestic abuse and how the absence of support groups and specialist counselling might impact significantly on this victim group:

The victims of domestic violence are mostly women and the issues are safety first and then possibly therapeutic. For sexual violence in adult situations there may be safety issues but it is not necessarily the case. Many cases that come forward through the criminal justice system or any other services are historic which requires different support which tends not to be there because it's not seen as an emergency (SP21)

Nia's story

My husband beat me up for eighteen years since I was sixteen. I didn't report it for so long as I was scared ...and then he started hurting the kids but then the verbal and mental abuse started...looking back I'm most cross that the social services were not involved sooner. It's clear now that my children should have been put on the child protection register and the police could have become involved a lot sooner. There were failings in the medical profession too as the flags indicating the signs of abuse were there but nothing happened – they should have reported it and acted upon it. Eventually it was the police who helped me to cope mostly – the PPU I can't fault them ...my life and my children's lives were made safer in their hands.

6.1.2 Justice

Another need identified by service provider respondents was for 'justice'. Justice for victims was understood as being obtained when experiences of victimisation were acknowledged and when offenders were apprehended and held to account for the harm they had caused. Victims who reported their victimisation to the police were

understood by respondents to express this need overtly but victims who did not report their crime to the police were also thought to have this need. In instances where individuals did not report matters to the authorities, however, this was understood to be because they doubted that their victimisation would be acknowledged or that the perpetrator would be apprehended or held to account:

A lot of them don't really have any confidence in the police or courts although they want justice, but because they've reported things and nothing has happened or the man has sort of disappeared for a bit then turned up again and maybe a police officer has been there but hasn't seemed all that interested (SP15)

It makes a big difference what happens in court, it's not the sentence so much as the authorities recognising what's happened, the harm that's been done...to have your pain recognised is very important (SP 18)

Jill's story

What made me most cross was the way things were in court. His solicitor, I know she's got a job to do but there should be limits, she made it all out as if it was me that he was married to some right psycho lunatic saying all sorts of things to me as if I was the one on trial...that wasn't right what happened and the way I was spoke to....what I wanted more than anything was to be treated like the victim but that didn't happen in court and only four police officers ever treated me like a human being, it was more like 'name' address' and 'hmm'...it was never 'are you alright hun?'

6.1.3 Making Sense

In some cases service providers understood that victims had the need to reflect on and make sense of their victimisation in order to regain some normalcy in their lives. In some instances this reflection could be with family and friends but in other cases the presence of individuals with specialist knowledge or psycho-therapeutic skills could be required. The process of 'sense making' was associated in some instances with a need to hear from the offender themselves why it was they were victimised:

Sitting there and listening to the young person's story can be very powerful...victims almost always say it made them feel better and mostly they felt sorry for the young person...I'm not sure if it's fear, the reason is to do with meeting the young person and seeing they're not people to be scared of (SP 28)

At times the need to make sense of their experiences was considered to involve wanting to share experiences of victimisation with others, that is to say to be understood by those who have similar experiences:

What women we speak to say they need more than anything is a place they can come to either talk about what they are experiencing or about the things they have experienced and by doing that come to understand it (SP 5)

The real strength of a place like this is that women can come here to talk to people with the same experiences as them, where they can be with others and understand it's not just me (SP 4)

Overall, finding "commonality" was said to help relieve the guilt that many victims of domestic violence felt:

What helps is not thinking you are alone and knowing you're not the first one to be going through what you're going through...women are at different stages of the healing process and so they can support each other through things (SP20)

Jo's story

I stayed with him for about 7 years, and through all the kicking and hitting and stuff cos I thought that's what relationships were like and it wasn't as if I thought he was actually the problem... it got worse and you get ill, I think there's a name for it like PTSD, I think you get ill because you just like sit there staring into space and just take it all as if its normal but you know it isn't really...Coming here (refuge) has made such a big difference to me, it's a place where you can just be yourself and ok, so there are pressure with living together and so many kids and that but also we've all been through the same experience...we understand each other and what's happened and know we don't have to be worried here that you're going to be blamed and called a bad mother or stupid for staying and all that

6.1.4 Sense of Control

Being a victim of crime was described by service provider respondents as being associated with an experience of powerlessness or loss of control. Getting in touch with an agency that provides a service to victims of domestic abuse or calling the police to an abusive partner, however, was understood as an exercise in power. Following on from this, victims of crime we were told needed to feel in control and informed about how matters involving them were developing. If this did not happen, service providers suggested feelings of powerlessness and victimisation would return:

Once a police officer has been sometimes they are not sure what's going to happen and that's a very bad situation because not knowing can be worse than knowing nothing has happened (SP 18)

There does need to be more effort put into keeping people informed. I think professionals often think they only need to contact people if something has changed but victims need regular updates even if that's to say nothing has changed...it reassures them they are important in the process and of course that nothing has happened which they often wouldn't know (SP 27)

Keeping victims informed is more important because you have to keep in mind there's usually a man, it usually is a man, telling her all sorts of things that aren't true (SP 8)

Victims of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence were identified as needing intensive support to understand and navigate through criminal prosecutions:

Most of the people involved in court have been doing it for years and sometimes they forget I think how for some people the place can be intimidating. They're not used to being the centre of attention for anything let alone something like domestic abuse where you might be blamed and if it's a trial you will be blamed. They can be very brave and to be honest its remarkable how many turn up (SP 3)

People can imagine all sorts and what they need is someone maybe to show them around the court, explain how it works and just to reassure them really that it's not quite how they think (SP 17)

Service providers told us that knowing what was going on was very important because uncertainty increased victims' sense of vulnerability:

If you don't know what's going on half the time and you need to know in case there are things you should do or place you should avoid...is he at his mum's house or coming home? (SP 5)

Anna

What happened to me was that I was being bullied and harassed by people who were living not far...threatening to burn us out and ringing door bells harassment type things that was really getting me down...they weren't the kind of people you could sort of reason with or anything. I was reporting things and making a log like they told me to but you didn't know what was going on, no one come round to explain, the police would turn up and say ok make a note and ring us but no-one seemed to want

to do anything and there really was no end in sight.

6.1.5 Practical needs

Victims of crime, but especially domestic abuse, were understood at times to have a range of more practical needs. An example would be help with accommodation and legal advice with the latter pertaining to property rights and childcare:

Between 50 and 60% of that figure at the moment have substance misuse or mental health issues and in our refuge setting the need is 100% and we have four women there at one time plus however many children they have with them and legal issues going on (SP 20)

Lots of the women we work with have issues with legal aid and childcare, social care issues with social workers and parenting. (SP 4)

You need somewhere to live, your benefits situation changes, some need to sort out a new school for kids cos they've left the area, then there's housing after that's a big problem not getting one but getting a decent one in a good area (SP 13)

Nancy's Story (Part One)

The police rang me that afternoon and said that the IDVA would be in touch with me and within the next week or so she was in touch with me – there was some delay. I didn't need to ask they just offered it to me. The police were lovely and really helpful and (names IDVA) the IDVA was brilliant...she did everything for me she got me alarms put on the windows and she offered to have the locks changed and she contacted social services to help me as I'm disabled. She took me everywhere, she helped me fill forms in and generally helped me to deal with my situation.

(IDVA name) was the main help and she knew what to do – she knew everything. She made phone calls for me, she took me to look at housing options and still texts me. She came to court with me – I couldn't go in at first but she managed to get me in and told me what would happen.

I would have been totally lost without (IDVA name) and she even took me to see a solicitor and a credit reference agency to ensure the mortgage payments continued. In fact if it hadn't been for (IDVA name) we would probably have got back together because I would have had nowhere else to go....If not for her I would have been on my own.

6.2. Meeting Victim needs

6.2.1 Safety and Protection from (re) Victimisation

Some service providers suggested the cumulative impact of anti-social behaviour could be significant. Thus they identified it as problematic that victims of such behaviour received an inferior service compared to victims of other crimes:

And as we all know ASB can be at a low level but where it is constant or personal then the impact of that on vulnerable people can be more devastating than it would with some crimes but they don't get a service (SP 14)

People who experience ASB have pretty much only got the police to respond to and they call and we come but often there's nothing we can do because the issue is resolved when we get there. Then we go away and then they call again, it's very frustrating for victims and us (SP 27)

Encouragingly, however, a police respondent informed us that there were mechanisms in place to provide some support to some victims of Anti-Social Behaviour in north Wales:

If there is an incident of ASB and a hate crime issues the case will be referred to an inspector which includes a risk assessment and if it is graded as high then the case will be referred to the area command team and then discussed at the ASB multi agency tasking group that meets monthly in each area and could result in a community problem solving conference (SP 25)

Victimisation by domestic abuse or sexual violence was understood by most providers as having the greatest potential impact on victims. Service providers were, on the whole, positive about the way North Wales Police approached the task of completing assessments (DASH) and CID-16s and forwarding them through to the PPU when they attended incidents of domestic abuse. However, some of the assessments undertaken by police staff were said to lack sufficient detail to allow for the easy classification of a victim as high/medium or low risk of harm:

they don't do them very well in some cases, that's our experience so we do them again...I think they all get training and the new officers do them well better than you know those that have been

around longer, we're all over-worked and so often filling in the forms is the first to go (SP 4)

In relation to this, one police officer referred to technical difficulties completing a DASH and problems identifying whether a victim had previously called the police:

To be honest I'm a bit like most of us-not sure how the Blackberry works so I can't get the DASH up- there's lots of questions 24 so we all keep them in our heads and ask them - and often deal with the paperwork you know after being out, it's only then I know we've been out to that caller before, the way you find out about stuff isn't that advanced. You might think the police is like all advanced but we still use note books and stuff and so when you're out it isn't always the case you know or have access to the things you want, need to know-so I ask the questions make notes and deal with it at the station (SP 26)

Statutory service providers described how all crimes were reported to the Victim Support Victim Care unit every 24 hours in a 'data dump' from North Wales Police. Victim support then undertook to contact victims of core crimes but not the victims of anti-social behaviour or non-core crimes - albeit that some such occurrences could still inflict considerable distress on a victim.

Our interviews with two serving police officers were instructive in identifying a potential for some victims who needed a service not to receive appropriate safety/support services. Interviews revealed some lack of understanding over how victim support was provided. Asked how Victim Support became involved with a victim one police officer commented:

They get involved because I carry a card around and give it to people, some prefer just to write the number down though so that you know it doesn't say victims support on it, I also give domestic cases a number...all Wales domestic abuse helpline and then they get in touch (SP 27)

When told that crime files for the last 24 hours are sent to Victim Support another officer commented:

I didn't know that happened, didn't know that at all although I'd wondered if I'm honest why some reports had Victim Support contacted on it (SP 26)

One potential implication of this lack of awareness is that officers would be unaware of when an automatic referral would generate a nil response from Victim Support (non-core crimes) and when a victim might therefore need to be more assertively and individually referred by the attending officer. Victim Support staff told us whilst they only provide an automatic response to victims of 'core crimes' (referred to them

through the daily 'data dump') police officers could refer any victim to them at any time for an individualised service.

Service providers told us that whilst some victims faced the possibility of not receiving any service, others faced the possibility of being contacted by a range of agencies. This was most likely to occur in cases involving domestic abuse. By dint of the daily 'data dump' a victim of domestic abuse would come to the attention of Victim Support. At the same time, however, and as a result of a DASH and CID-16 being completed, they would come to the attention of the local PPU Police team and discussed either at a local 'pot sift' or Domestic Abuse Panel (see page 75 for a description of this process). Following on from this a victim might then be contacted by Victim Support and also an IDVA (if the case was assessed as high risk) or local Women's Aid/domestic abuse services (in medium or low risk cases) and staff in the Witness Unit of the CPS:

I see this as a real problem - there's no joined-up services and that looks weak but it's also duplication isn't it...there are also safety issues to think about and is there really any point someone from Cardiff phoning up when they know that somewhere along the line it will be discussed locally as well - it's not as if they are going to offer anything we won't offer (SP 5)

Victim Support take the call over the phone and do a risk assessment but I think there is duplication here and that it would be better if the matter is referred to the PPU and for the police to allocate it to one of the one stop shops in the various areas. I think Victim Support do a brilliant job in other ways but they don't do anything physical or practical things with victims of domestic abuse- it should come straight from the police to us (SP 3)

The same potential for duplication appeared to exist in relation to some incidents of hate crime. Hate crimes might be reported to Victim Support yet we were told by police:

Any hate crime incident is referred to an officer of inspector or above to manage how we deal with the victim and the offence – a whole package really. We identify the third sector groups that we think will be able to help the victim...The diversity department will contact a victim of hate crime in addition to a referral to victim support to add that extra level of support (SP 25)

In relation to the potential for duplication one court based worker commented:

IT lets us down massively in terms of sharing responsibility and although we are better at witness care we can still have three or four people contacting them instead of just one point of contact (SP 16).

In cases involving domestic abuse, creating safety plans with victims was deemed by service providers to go some way to meeting safety needs. Such safety planning was considered routine in High Risk cases where an IDVA was involved with a case at an early point (following the PPU sift/ DA panel meeting). However there was less certainty about such safety planning being undertaken with all medium/low risk cases:

If the case isn't high then it gets referred on to another agency and that could be women's aid but it could also be Dyn if it's a man - it isn't easy to track and follow what happens in those cases, I think they are probably contacted but how that's done and whether people take it up I don't really know (SP 5)

Part of the difference was attributed to the manner in which victims might be contacted. IDVAs were described as offering an "assertive outreach service" to victims and thereby being more determined and persistent in their attempts to engage victims of crime than agencies dealing with medium and low risk cases.

A respondent from a collective affiliated to Welsh Women's Aid commented:

We get referrals from the PPU and we follow them up in as much as we might ring or phone people up to tell them about our service, we never ignore a referral but there are limits to what we can do... We used to have a philosophy that women had to come to us to request services... we're more comfortable with being proactive than we used to be but the volume of work also places limits (SP 13)

In terms of meeting needs to 'feel safer' the contribution made by agencies involved in target hardening activities such as fitting door locks and creating safe rooms was identified as important by service providers. In respect of such a service provided by one agency, one respondent said:

They can do simple things like give you a door wedge - it doesn't seem especially clever but they're clever in keeping someone out, they help turn a room into a panic room or sanctuary if you like and they can do things like move the phone line into the safe room - it buys time (SP 18)

A number of agencies also seemed to be involved in target hardening activities creating further potential for duplication. A police representative told us:

Depending on which local authority area we do target hardening work but some authorities do their own - it's a bit of a mix and match depending on which community safety partnership is involved (SP 25)

Nancy's Story (Part Two)

I became a victim of crime as a victim of domestic violence at the hands of my husband – he broke my wrist... When it happened just before the last time I left him for a week and he begged me to come back and I did but I warned him that if it ever happened again I would get the police and then I went back but it did happen again and I called the police. One reason I did not report it sooner was that I did not realise how good they are with domestic abuse nowadays – I thought it was just like the old days. When I reported it I rang 999 and I expected them to take him away and they did. They contacted me the following morning and asked me if I wanted to pursue it because initially I did not know that I'd broken my wrist but when the policeman took my statement my arm was black and blue and I was in agony. They kept him in custody until the afternoon and then charged him and he was placed on bail conditions with restrictions of access to me which is just what I wanted. I was dealt with properly.

6.2.2 Justice

Some groups of service users were identified by provider respondents as being less likely to report their victimisation and thereby being more likely to have needs for justice unfulfilled. Groups identified included travellers, migrants and younger people. In addition to this some respondents identified that people who may be involved in offending would be reluctant to report their victimisation:

There's a lot of crime which is of the drug dealer on drug dealer variety and some of it can be very nasty indeed but we wouldn't get to hear about it or when we do, the victim won't co-operate (SP 26)

Police respondents understood that they needed to make more efforts with some groups to encourage them to report their victimisation. Albeit some efforts in this regard were identified, more targeted activities were commended:

We attend events like north Wales pride, have school liaison teams and we take like a display where we encourage people to feel confident in the police, there's pockets of work going on all the time ... I think a lot of what is required isn't at the strategic level so much as at the one to one level when each officer comes into contact with someone...it's important every victim feels they are treated fairly (SP 26)

Albeit for many service providers attaining 'justice' was synonymous with securing a conviction against a guilty party in court, others suggested the police response 'on

the ground' was often more central in relation to victim's feelings of whether justice was achieved than the outcome of any criminal justice proceedings.

The most important thing I think is that victims feel they are believed and not blamed for the situation they find themselves in, by the police. They're not stupid and most of the women we deal with understand the system quite well and how hard it is when it's one person's word against another- but to be treated as the victim is important... something that makes it easier to cope (SP 2)

Overall service providers were positive about the police response to domestic abuse. They identified North Wales Police, like many constabularies, had evolved a long way from what one providers called the 'Life on Mars' mentality.

You do get some older officers who are stuck in their ways but it's really changed a lot...the newer officers are a lot more tuned into things and understand victim issues a lot better (SP 13)

IDVAs were identified as crucial in the process of securing justice for victims of domestic abuse. This was not only by dint of their ability to keep victims of domestic abuse informed of progress in the case but also of their ability to explain processes to the victim and help them make decisions. Albeit their role is cast in terms of their independence from the CJS, IDVAs were considered to give the system a human face.

The IDVA is basically the victims own representative - the offender has his solicitor, the crown has the CPS but the victim will have nothing without them (SP 17)

They can explain things to victims and get dialogue going, every now and then we decide to issue a witness summons against a victim but we always discuss that with the IDVA so she can explain why it's happened. Quite often victims are scared and after talking it through with the IDVA they are happy to be summoned that way especially seeing as they can then say - I didn't have any choice to turn up - I had to (SP 3)

Service providers understood that victims' assessments of how they were treated and whether justice had been served would vary according to whether they had received some sort of 'personal' attention rather than been dealt with bureaucratically and administratively antecedent to their experiences. Thus where an IDVA or some other person had been involved with a victim for some considerable length of time, the expectation was that the perception of having been dealt with fairly would prevail:

Michael's Story (Part One)

I was sexually assaulted from the age of 11 to 16 by an older boy...I didn't report it straight away ...it happened years ago and it had always been a secret that I held and didn't tell anyone as I was scared. Then I decided to face the issues as I had been on a roller coaster of trouble for most of my life. I didn't expect anything to happen initially I just needed to tell someone and then I felt relief in myself as it had been hard work to keep it a secret. Once I'd made my mind up I went to the police and they told me what would happen and how the investigation would be conducted. They briefed me and they were brilliant – it was dealt with by the Amethyst team.

The police investigation followed and they told me what would happen. I had no unrealistic expectations as I just wanted to get it off my chest really and get the trauma out of the way.

I have been treated well and couldn't have had more support – I should have done it when I was fifteen as if I'd known then what I know now then I would have reported it sooner – had I known that there was such good support available – but perhaps there wasn't then.

Victims need support and to speak with someone who has empathy with your situation and more than anything you need to be believed.

6.2.3 Making Sense

In relation to adults, service providers identified a gap in service provision in relation to restorative justice initiatives. This, it was considered, denied some victims an intervention that could help with sense making and feeling justice had been served

If it's a youth justice matter then there's restorative stuff going on all the time with the YOT, but with adults there's not much at all and sometimes if its low level stuff that's what needed. Local police, I think, probably do a lot of it off the radar but there isn't anything formal as far as I know (SP 28)

For the most part restorative approaches were not commended by service providers for offences involving domestic abuse or sexual violence but considered to be overlooked as mechanisms for dealing with lower level crime and anti-social behaviour:

Another gap is that of restorative justice where the evidence shows how this can work and that it is valued by the victims – there are pockets of work going on but not across the board (SP 25)

That said, the same police representative told us of their developing involvement in Restorative Conferencing in IOM work:

Recently we have started getting heavily involved in restorative justice conferences ...we are training with partners such as social services and probation and the PCC is involved and their money is used (SP 25)

Our review identified that a range of making sense/support services existed for victims of crime. In the vast majority of cases a fairly light touch prevailed in that Victim Support contacted all victims of core crime either by phone or post to enquire as to their needs and to talk through any issues. In some cases that conversation would be face to face with a Victim Support local volunteer.

Most of the agencies and collectives located in north Wales providing support to victims of domestic abuse are affiliated to the umbrella organisation 'Welsh Women's Aid'. As their website indicates "Welsh Women's Aid want domestic abuse to be recognised as gender based issue" but some collectives do provide a service to men as well as women. IDVAs provide services to men and women but the ability of the IDVA or any other agency to refer a man for further support by a local domestic violence collective affiliated to Welsh Women's Aid was described as dependent on the stance that the local collective took towards 'gender'. Some agencies in north Wales have changed their constitution to allow them to provide a gender neutral service. Whilst they remain affiliated to Welsh Women's Aid they do not use that branding, referring to themselves as a 'domestic abuse service'. Bangor Women's Aid and Welsh Women's Aid Wrexham, however, were two collectives that did not provide services for men. In Bangor we were told:

The fact that we do not deal with men is recognised as a gap and we have a plan in place to address it (SP 20)

In some instances where a gender neutral service was offered providing services for men remained problematic because of the tendency for domestic abuse and organisations providing services to be understood in gendered terms:

I think Women's Aid is now a brand that people are pretty familiar with but one of the issues with that is I think the brand can put people off because they are expecting us all to be men haters and to force women into say leaving their partners and that's not what we are about at all. That message I think is a little slower at getting out in the same way as the message we provide a service to men is slower at getting out (SP 4)

Notwithstanding this, domestic abuse and sexual violence were primarily understood by service providers as perpetrated by men and experienced by women. Consequently proportionate rather than equal services for men tended to be favoured by collectives providing a gender neutral service:

We think it's important to provide a service for men but we don't get as much call for it as for women, we've had three men in the last year I think and we've helped but it wouldn't be good use of our resources say to employ a specialist male worker or reserve a bed space in a hostel, the demand just isn't there (SP 8)

Individual 'listening ear' type counselling and support groups were described by service providers as the foundation for support services with victims of domestic abuse. Support groups were favoured because they were considered to offer important social support and help to break down isolation. In addition it was suggested that by sharing their experiences victims of domestic abuse could regain a sense of worth and confidence in themselves helping them to move on.

Some providers referred to the existence of a more formal group-work programme for victims of domestic abuse. The Freedom Programme has gained prominence in the domestic violence sector in recent years as the 'programme of choice' supporting victims of domestic violence and aiding their transition from victim to survivor. The Freedom Programme is delivered over twelve weeks within a group context, raising awareness of domestic violence, supporting and empowering women, helping them to identify the values and beliefs that their abusive partners hold and how they impact upon themselves and their children. The programme is for women only at present and is delivered by a facilitator who helps guide discussions about the various abusive behaviours that the dominator displays.

'Sense making' support services for victims of sexual violence did not present as being as fulsome as for victims of domestic abuse – volunteers working from the RASA in Caernarfon and Stepping Stones in Wrexham, however, provided some support/listening ear sources of support and in relation to this service a provider told us:

There is the north Wales centre that has two members of staff and volunteer counsellors based in Caernarfon and a unit at Wrexham with one full and one part time member of staff and they all have waiting lists of between six and ten months... In north Wales she (ISVA) only works with somebody when there is a decision to charge and in the interim there is nothing substantial and if something traumatic has happened to someone that is not a good state of affairs where there has been a serious crime committed. (SP 21)

There just isn't enough for victims of sexual abuse - there's one ISVA for the whole of the north Wales and with the best will in the

world you're not going to be able to provide a meaningful service when your stretched that wide (SP 9)

They may be able to visit a sexual health clinic.... however in terms of supporting all victims of sexual offences, there is a very narrow remit we have no CISVA and no bespoke counselling for our young victims ..but there is a need for such service...in the last three-quarters of last year there were 248 sexual offences where the victim was under 18, we have some funding for 12 months for a CISVA but nothing after (SP 23)

'Sense making' provision for victims of historic rape or sexual abuse were described by service providers as especially poor.

If an incident occurred today and the SARC is available for them we would want them to have follow-up services straight away but they are not always available to them. Another role the Independent Sexual Violence Advocate who should support the victim all the way through the process but there is only one of those in the whole of north Wales and she has worked with over 200 people this year. (SP 21)

Michael's Story (Part Two)

The police referred me to RASA and within a week I was there and the counselling started the next morning as I was treated as a priority.

The thing that helped me cope was the support from the police, the counselling and the support from my family. The counselling was so good it has turned my life around and without it I wouldn't be here now.

It was the support network that has also helped as without all of that you'll be alone and you don't stand a chance. The thing that makes the difference is that you have got to take the first steps yourself but if you know the support is there then all the troubles just pour out – out it comes.

6.2.4 Sense of Control

Police officers we spoke to referred to force standards indicating when and how often victims of crime should be updated about progress in their case. However they indicated that the demands of their work was such that they only got in touch with victims when they had something to report. Service providers commented on the way lack of information from police could sometimes leave the victim in limbo:

Customer service satisfaction can fall dramatically once the case has moved on, police officers not keeping victims updated on the progress of their cases. To address this we have started the initiative “Project Undivided” where in conjunction with the police we are mapping the progress of 100 victims through their journey to identify where the confidence levels drop (SP 14)

As discussed, the involvement of an IDVA in a case of domestic abuse was considered to oil the wheels of communication with a victim. Following on from this, a number of provider respondents commented that in cases not involving an IDVA there could be failures in communication and providing support:

When there’s an IDVA involved there’s someone who is at the centre of it all, but when there isn’t, there’s no case management if you like - no one gathering it all together and keeping the victim informed and asking her what she thinks or would like to do (SP 12)

A number of provider respondents identified that in the absence of an IDVA it would be hard to imagine how MARACs could ensure the victim’s views were represented and they, in turn, were informed of what the victim wanted.

In cases of all types, problems arose with keeping victims informed of progress in their cases as they progressed through the criminal justice system:

What doesn’t work well is IT and information sharing and court results in terms of informing victims of updates (SP 16)

Specifically, keeping victims of domestic abuse who were assessed as medium/low risk of harm informed of what was going on in their case was especially challenging:

With medium and low risk victims we’ve referred them on, but we don’t know if anyone is involved with them or even in some cases whether we even should try to keep them informed - whether it’s dangerous to ring them and things like that (SP 31)

Natasha’s Story

I was six months pregnant at the time and we got woke up at night 2am in the morning and there were fire engines all-round the house and I looked out the back, we’ve got conifer trees all-round the back of the garden ...all of that had been burnt down and it just stopped at the fence...We were angry it was a big deal for us having a child in the house we didn’t know whether whoever was going to be doing it again...

The police, the fire brigade told us we would be visited by the police but we never had any contact, no one we had we had to contact them, no-one came round took a

statement or anything - no one seemed interested in us and what had happened. My husband got in touch with the PCSO by email and she responded to say they were looking into it but we had to chase them the whole way even to get things like the number for the insurance thing.

6.2.5 Practical needs

Many victims were described as having multiple needs associated with their victimisation. Thus many service providers argued multi-agency responses were necessary to fully meet victim needs.

We were told that capital (but not revenue) funding had been provided by the Welsh Government to establish 'one stop shops' for victims of domestic violence across north Wales. Often co-located on premises used by collectives affiliated to Welsh Women's Aid, this provision was commended by service providers for making available a number of services under one roof. In a 'one stop shop' visited for this research there was citizen's advice available, a solicitor, a representative from social care and staff from North Wales Police. All attended on a regular basis and appointments could be made to see them or people could just drop in.

Gaps in services were identified and these gaps related to specialist provision to address lower level mental health difficulties antecedent to experiences of victimisation:

Lots of women feel anxious and depressed but there's very little out there because of new 'tiering' which effectively means if your problem isn't the worst, you don't get much of a service I think there are big gaps in meeting mental health issues of victims and issues of substance misuse with victims (SP 7)

Refuge provision for women was assessed as being adequate but rarely needed and so likely to be unavailable in north Wales for men. Recently introduced restrictions in Legal Aid were assessed as having created problems for some service users in accessing legal advice for help with childcare matters and obtaining injunctions:

One of the criteria now for getting legal aid is with MARAC, if you're involved that might help your case but if you're not then you basically don't get any (SP 5)

Tina's story

I had all sorts of problems after I left - no money, I was depressed, a lot of the women in here are anxious and depressed have mental health, I was drinking and had nowhere to live, I was staying with friends.... The staff here take that all off you and help you with filling forms and all those things, they arrange appointments for you to

see people and go with you...I don't think there's enough thing for mental health....you can go to them but when you're depressed you don't want to ... When you go to housing they offer you what they've got and that's usually where people don't want to go - bad areas with drugs and crime, the thing is if you don't take it you're classed as homeless²⁸ and so you don't get anything

6.3. Barriers to accessing services and meeting needs

6.3.1 Rurality

Service providers suggested meeting victim needs was associated with challenges in some contexts. In rural areas it was suggested that there were particular difficulties with implementing an effective victim's strategy. In some areas addressing even basic safety issues were understood as problematic because, for example, there was no local police station or because police response times were longer. In some rural areas, victims were said to be isolated and networking them into appropriate services would be difficult. Moreover in some communities support advocacy and advisory services would be poorly developed or difficult to access.

If you live say in XXXX, then there isn't much there in terms of services - if you don't drive and maybe there's one or two buses a day, you're really going to struggle and a big problem for us is that small communities they're hard to keep people safe, anonymous – it's not like you can drive a bus around (SP 1)

Service providers referred to the need for more proactive approaches to providing services in rural settings. This was considered to involve raising awareness of existing services and bringing those services to local communities:

The service required to provide support might not be in your locality so you might not even recognise that there is a service out there – because you haven't seen it – the lack of visibility of the service available (SP 30)

In such areas providers need to be more proactive in taking services into the communities rather than expect people to travel to seek out services themselves as they are unlikely to do that if they are feeling vulnerable (SP 14)

²⁸ Here, we assume the respondent meant 'intentionally homeless'

Extra costs associated with travelling and the time spent travelling were identified as barriers that service providers had to overcome to provide a meaningful service in rural communities:

It's definitely an issue...we have two workers here...who provide home visits to clients who live in areas where there are poor transport links and that ensures they receive a good service from us...it's a difficult area, we see most people in their own homes, although it's built up in places the centres of population are spread out and time wise there is a lot of time spent travelling to see people and that isn't always factored into equations about time and money spent (SP 12)

In some cases the costs involved were prohibitive. Thus, referring to a particular service one respondent informed us:

If we receive a referral from south Gwynedd, west Anglesey, south Conwy and Denbighshire for example then we have no capacity to work with those people unless they are able to travel (SP 24)

Given the distances between victims in rural communities and victim services based largely in urban contexts collaborative working with community based groups was considered to be essential in meeting some victim needs in rural areas. The potential to engage with groups like young farmers groups or church groups to provide support for victims of some crime was articulated. For victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence, however, more specialised services were identified as being necessary and inevitably involving staff having to travel to provide a service:

There isn't any way round the issue that the more specialist the service the less people will be trained to provide it and the more difficult it is to provide wide coverage - cost per head calculations frequently discriminate against those types of issues services (SP 22)

In relation to services for victims of sex crime the fact that only one SARC operated in north Wales was frequently identified as an issue:

Geographical gaps exist where for example the SARC is in Colwyn Bay but if a medical examination is required we are talking a long way to travel for some people (SP 23)

Overall, rurality was presented as a considerable challenge to service delivery giving rise to significant variance in service availability for victims of sexual violence in particular:

Average waiting time depends on the area depending on where they live and the availability of counsellors so some get it straight away other may have to wait many weeks – it's something of a post

code lottery. If clients have their own transport or can afford to travel then they may receive the service sooner (SP 24)

North Wales Police informed us, however, that they were actively involved in thinking about how best to respond to the issue of rural crime. To that end a specialist crime team had been created:

We have a rural crime team (1 sergeant and 3 PCs) at the request of the PCC which is more about community liaison with the agricultural community and one thing that has come out of that is an issue of domestic violence in a rural community (SP 30)

6.3.2 Exclusion & Experiences of Discrimination and Oppression

Service provider respondents in general were not supportive of the development of specialist services for all client groups such as domestic abuse services specifically for elderly service users or separate services for gay men. One of the reasons for this was that a commitment to such specialist services was understood as having the potential to cut the 'resource cake' too thinly. Another objection, however, focussed more on the commonality of the experience of being a victim which could render other differences less problematic. For example one respondent commented:

In (named area) a specialist service has been funded for older victims and on the one hand I don't have a problem with that because there's enough clients to go around, but it does kind of suggest there's something massively different about the group and they have issues we can't address which isn't true - half our caseload is over 50 and money can be wasted on infrastructure we already had in place to meet needs (SP 5)

Unsurprisingly perhaps individuals working for agencies providing for specific user groups were less sure of the ability of generalist providers to meet some needs. Whilst these respondents acknowledged the good intentions of generalist providers they questioned whether in the context of meeting mainstream needs, a commitment to encouraging service users from hard to reach groups to access services would be prioritised:

If you're busy providing a service then are you really going to devote time and energy to a hard to reach group - when you've got enough service users of your own if I can put it like that (SP 2)

Many service providers suggested they provided a service sufficient to meet the needs of a wide range of service user groups and yet were aware that some groups were under-represented amongst their clientele. Asked about the use made of services by individuals who identify as LGBT one respondent commented:

It's a definite gap we have become more alert to - we don't turn anyone away - that's our policy but we've had one man come to us in the last year and we know there are many more out here so somehow or other we are not seen as there for them so that's something for us (SP 3)

Another respondent commented:

there are particular sensitivities that we need to be aware of in terms of equality that may affect how somebody may access the service for example LGBT issues and some people feel the need for it to be explicitly stated that a service is available and is appropriate for them and I think that's right (SP 4)

In a similar vein another respondent suggested:

I think too often we feel we are there for everyone so there's no need to make a big deal of it. More and more though we've come to think you need to make a point of saying you're there for everyone or people will think you're not so we've started putting a little rainbow on our leaflets to show we welcome people who are LGBT (SP 19)

A number of provider respondents referred to issues related to Welsh language and that victims, especially in statutory contexts were not sufficiently empowered to choose the Welsh language, for example to give evidence in court or statements to the police.

The challenge is countering the impression that many people have that English is the language of the criminal justice system and that they are being awkward then by asking for material or a case to be heard in Welsh (SP 16)

In terms of providing specialist services, skilling up the existing workforce was more often than not preferred as a way of meeting need to diversifying services:

we all need to respond on a broader level that it is not just domestic violence but it's the raft of other issues that come with it and the need to up-skill and acknowledge that domestic violence does not sit alone as in any individual case there will be other significant issues. Only 5% of cases will just be domestic violence the rest will all have related issues such as substance misuse or mental health, they may prefer speaking Welsh, and other issues but as long as we can refer on, there shouldn't be a problem (SP 10)

Notwithstanding the comments above, meeting the emotional and support needs of some members of BME user groups was identified as especially challenging because the needs can be very specialist:

Particular needs can arise if the victim of domestic abuse is from a minority group, does not speak English or is a migrant to the UK and we wouldn't really say we have the infrastructure or expertise to deal with that (SP 5)

Here the service provided by a north Wales wide organisation called BAWSO was mentioned as especially valuable.

6.3.3 Strategic Oversight

Albeit a DAF (see page 54) is responsible for co-ordinating action around Domestic Abuse in the local authority areas, respondents referred to their DAF only when promoted to do so and to suggest it met irregularly and was poorly attended. Whilst one respondent referred to the existence of a Multi-agency Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Partnership in north Wales, most respondents struggled to identify who had strategic responsibility for issues associated with responding to domestic abuse and sexual violence in their local authority area. Asked about this issue one respondent commented:

I don't think there is anyone who really has a handle on all of what is going on, things happen in quite an unco-ordinated fashion (SP 7)

Our inquiries in this area eventually led us to Domestic Abuse Co-ordinators within the four Community Safety Partnerships. During interview they impressed as the invisible hands around a number of initiatives in their local areas they represented and on asking about them we were told by several respondents they worked hard behind the scenes to 'make things happen'. One respondent stated that in their absence:

We wouldn't have the specialist courts in place, we wouldn't have the MARACS up and running, we wouldn't have IDVA, all these developments have been put in place by them, the driving force behind these things and all of them we wouldn't have...responsible for funding these things, the performance and management of MARACS (SP 12)

Notwithstanding their existence, service providers referred to non-statutory services for domestic abuse victims in particular, arising in a patchwork and opportunist fashion leading to some duplication of services:

Funding is available and agencies are looking for it all the time and make the case but you do wonder sometimes whether those people who fund various projects have the overview of what's available, but we are often asked to support bids but the truth is there's plenty of work to go around and the more places clients have to go the better really (SP 4)

There are challenges around the third sector, duplication and a parochial approach with different services vying for the same pot of money to provide the same type of service and they are very silo based (SP 18)

Some of the agencies providing support to victims were described as being quasi-commercial enterprises and keen, like any business, to expand their sphere of influence and responsibilities. One side effect of this, however, was the potential for lack of joined-upness in grant applications:

We are victim focussed but I don't think it's possible to say we're not in competition with each other - we are, every agency thinks it provides a good service or a better one than another and so you have that element of competitionwhich isn't necessarily all bad, because it can drive things forward but you do often find yourself thinking we could have done that or are doing that when you hear about a project or bidding thing going on (SP 1)

6.4 Evaluation Issues

Understanding of the importance of focussing on outcomes in public service provision seemed limited amongst some of the respondent group. Respondents were certain that the services they provided met needs, but focussed primarily on throughput and service delivery issues when discussing what they achieved rather than harder outcome measures. Most service providers evaluated their provision with reference to exit questionnaires with service users citing funding difficulties as a barrier to more robust outcome measures.

Notwithstanding the absence of hard data, respondents were convinced of the value added provided by IDVAs and the north Wales ISVA in terms of keeping victims engaged with the criminal justice system. Their presence was identified as crucial in persuading many victims to keep on with prosecution, to attend court and to give evidence:

They (ISVAs) are hugely influential in gaining convictions in cases...if they bring the victim to court there is a good likelihood that there will be a guilty plea...if they could take on more cases we would have an even better conviction rate (SP 16)

Their contribution is absolutely crucial in terms of getting our high risk victims to court as the attrition rate deteriorates if we don't have that support there (SP 23)

6.5 Moving Forward

6.5.1 Capacity Issues

Respondents identified very few gaps in service delivery in north Wales but very frequently referred to capacity issues around existing services especially in relation to victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence. IDVAs were invariably described as working with more service users than they could cope with and having to scale back their interventions to manage demand.

We get more referrals at the MARAC than we can deal with so some weeks we might get 40 but we can only deal with say 20, it's the same for me, I can only see a certain number of people and that is usually never all the people that are referred (SP 3)

That said it was not always clear that their activities were focussed on their target groups (high risk cases) creating problems for service providers further down the service providing chain:

Since the new IDVA service was established in XXX then all high and medium grades go to that service so we've lost that as it were and that has made it more difficult for us to show the level of need to our funders and the level of support we are required to provide to service users. These services should sit comfortably alongside each other as IDVA is supposed to be focused only on the high risk cases and the immediate action and the long term support should then filter down to groups like us but there is a hiccup in the system here at the minute in that it is not happening. It's a fight for survival within the groups for funding as there is now an element of competition (SP 5)

There was unanimity regarding the problems arising from there only being one ISVA and no C-ISVA in north Wales:

In north Wales she only works with somebody when there is a decision to charge and in the interim there is nothing substantial and if something traumatic has happened to someone that is not a good state of affairs where there has been a serious crime committed (SP 22)

In relation to expanding services to meet the demand, deploying more volunteers was frequently considered an option but their ability to provide specialist support was frequently questioned:

If we look at counselling in order to provide a value for money service, counselling is provided by volunteers and there aren't enough of them and because they are volunteers they move on to other things often to gain paid employment and this has led to a waiting list as I mentioned of between 6 and 9 months and some of those people will be suffering. They may have dwelled on their experience for 20 years or more and then pluck up the courage to report it to be told that there is a waiting list of six to nine months. That's not good (SP 21)

A number of respondents commented that notwithstanding existing problems with meeting demand more victims needed to be referred to MARACs. Concerns were expressed, however, about the ability of MARACs and IDVAs to meet demand if initiatives prompting health and social care professionals to 'ask and tell' about domestic abuse were successful.

6.5.2 Funding uncertainties

Many respondents referred to funding difficulties placing restrictions on service delivery:

Funding is the biggy and it's diabolical I think that there are two workers here who provide crisis support and that their contracts have to be renewed annually and one of them has worked here for years! In my own case my contract is now renewed every three years but that is coming up soon and it does cause angst. The hours spent trying to resolve this issue is a ridiculous waste of time and needs to be resolved (SP 12)

Uncertainties around funding were associated with two undesirable outcomes. Firstly that considerable time was devoted to fundraising activities and secondly that staff were motivated to seek more stable work elsewhere:

She left because of the insecurity of the role, the post was due to end September but we still hadn't heard anything by April and she left, she needed stability and it's bad that because the good staff

find other jobs quite easy and they do that, you know find stability elsewhere and it's a big problem there's never any long termness (SP 18)

Every single year we scabble around to get money for an IDVA and it isn't ever one source, a bit from here, a bit from there and were constantly trying to sustain the services, but funding schemes end all the time so you're always trying to fund services like IDVAS (SP 5)

7.0 Chapter Seven: Findings, Discussion, Housekeeping and Recommendations

7.1 Key findings

Key findings of the study are:

About Crime and Victimization

1. Over the last few years the chances of becoming a victim of crime in north Wales has appeared to fall dramatically. Nonetheless according to national surveys becoming a victim of crime or anti-social behaviour remains the fate of one in five people per year.
2. Some crimes, because they are invasive physically or psychologically are identified in the literature as being especially likely to harm victims. These are violent and sexual crimes, crimes which are repeated against the same individual and crimes that are against those who are vulnerable or socially marginalised.
3. Crime rates vary across local authorities in north Wales. Unsurprisingly the number of incidents and the likelihood of falling victim to crime seem greater in the east where populations are congregated and indices of social poverty and exclusion tend to be greater.

About Victim Needs

4. Service providers suggest 5 core victim needs exist: The need for safety and protection from future victimisation, for justice, to make sense of their experience, to feel in control and for practical support which may be associated with help to deal with mental health, substance misuse, accommodation, legal or immigration issues.

About Meeting Needs

5. Victims of core crimes in north Wales are contacted by Victim Support and offered a service whereas victims of anti-social behaviour and non-core crimes, however, are not automatically contacted and offered a service.
6. Impacting on the 'need for safety and protection from future harm', a clear pathway for service delivery is associated with victims of domestic abuse assessed as high risk of harm. The same clear pathway does not pertain in respect of cases of victims of domestic abuse assessed as medium or low risk of harm.

7. Police respondents were unclear how referrals to Victim Support were processed. This raises the possibility that some people who needed Victim Support services (but who are not victims of core crimes) will not be referred.
8. Victim Support addresses issues related to safety planning with many victims of crime. IDVAs provide a similar service to victims of domestic abuse assessed as high risk of harm.
9. In respect of some cases of domestic abuse involving the criminal justice agencies, high risk of harm victims might initially be contacted by victim support and by staff from the local PPU, the IDVA or Women's Aid. Subsequently the Witness Unit of the CPS might contact a victim. There was therefore the potential for duplication and a lack of joined-up thinking in the provision of services to such victims.
10. The north Wales local authority area provisions for target hardening were in place and were considered very valuable in immediate safety planning.
11. Impacting on the need to feel 'justice was being done', service providers indicated victims needed to 'feel believed' by agents of the criminal justice system when they reported a crime and 'not to be blamed' for the situation they found themselves in.
12. Service providers reported that when a person was victimised by a young person or a child, restorative justice options would normally be pursued by the local YOT. The lack of similar provision in some relevant cases involving adults was assessed as a gap.
13. Impacting on the need to 'make sense of their experience', Victim Support operated a network of volunteers who could visit victims of crime in their homes or at other locations. IDVAs and collectives allied to Welsh Women's Aid could provide similar services to victims of domestic abuse.
14. Support services to victims of sexual violence were limited by dint of there being only one part time ISVA for the whole of the north Wales area and significant delays in accessing support services for victims of such crime.
15. Support Services for victims of domestic abuse were widespread but did not always provide for male victims.
16. Impacting on the need to 'feel in control', police informed us there were protocols that established when and how often victims of crime would be contacted for an update on progress with their cases. Police officers informed us this task was often accorded a low priority unless there was something to report.
17. A Witness Unit operated in north Wales to keep witnesses informed of how prosecutions were progressing through courts.

18. Respondents felt that in some cases of domestic abuse and/or sexual violence not involving an IDVA or an ISVA, the need for information and support through the CJ process, more often than not, would go unmet.
19. Impacting on the ability to meet victims' 'practical needs', some victims of crime were understood to have multiple needs and therefore to require a multi-agency response.
20. One stop shops had been established in most areas with the effect that victims could access many services through a single point of contact.
21. Refuge/accommodation services were considered to be well developed along with floating outreach in most areas albeit provision for men was sometimes limited.
22. Whilst substance misuse services were generally described as accessible, mental health services were described as difficult to access without long delays.

About Barriers to meeting Victim Needs

23. Service providers considered that particular challenges existed in providing effective services in rural areas. These challenges were associated with costs and facilitating confidential access to services.
24. In relation to domestic abuse, generally providers considered that generic services to all victims were more appropriate than a raft of specialist services targeting specific service users. Nonetheless many indicated that more work needed to be done to raise awareness of the 'openness' of services to all service users e.g. to gay men who were victims of domestic abuse.
25. The exception in this regard was in relation to some victims of domestic abuse who were from BME communities. The services provided by BAWSO were frequently singled out as being important by dint of their specialism with immigration issues and in working with migrant communities.

About Service Evaluation

26. Very little attention was given to robustly evaluating outcomes of interventions with victims.
27. The outcome of the involvement of IDVAs and ISVAs with victims of crime, however, was perceived as very positive and supportive of successful prosecutions.

About the Future

28. Domestic Abuse Fora in north Wales have become irregular and poorly attended. Thus Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (DASV) co-ordinators located within Community Safety Partnerships in Gwynedd/Mon, Conwy/Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham led and monitored strategy on domestic abuse and sexual violence in their respective areas.
29. Growing awareness of domestic abuse and the 'Yew-tree effect' had impacted on the capacity of existing services to meet demand. IDVAs and ISVAs were consistently described as over worked and having to provide a restricted service to manage demand.
30. Most referrals to MARAC were from criminal justice agencies. Although there had been recent improvements, service providers identified more work still needed to be done to encourage health, substance misuse and social care staff to make appropriate referrals.
31. Most services lived with uncertainty around funding arrangements which led to problems with retaining staff and to a lot of time being devoted to fundraising and completing grant applications.
32. Victim services were financed from a range of disparate sources such as lottery money, Supporting People, Violence Against Women Fund, Home Office, MoJ, Equalities and Diversities grant. As funding decisions were often made without proper reference to local conditions, services in some areas were developed on an ad-hoc opportunist basis.

7.2 Discussion

Our research supports and develops aspects of the existing literature about victim needs and how they are responded to in the north Wales area. Respondents identify much to commend about work with victims in the area. IDVAs and the ISVA, in particular, are highly regarded for the contribution they make to meeting victims' needs and one stop shops are also valued for the ease of access they provide to a range of services.

That said, our research confirms some gaps in service provision (for victims of ASB and non-core crimes), areas of service duplication (with some high risk victims of domestic abuse), problems with meeting demand (not enough IDVAs and ISVAs) and that problems exist in relation to joined-up working to meet some needs (especially involving victims of domestic abuse assessed as medium/low risk). In addition it identifies that instability and a lack of co-ordination is associated with the funding arrangements that exist at present for some victim services.

A review of our findings in the context of existing literature readily identifies that good practice and outcomes are associated with the kind of end to end case management of victim needs associated with the IDVA and ISVA services. Moreover that service providers valued multi-agency responses to victim needs.

These observations commend exploration of mechanisms for extending the same 'end to end case management' and multi-agency service offered to some victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence to more victims of crime.

It is instructive to note that victim needs assessments from other PCC areas make reference to some of the same themes as those that emerge from this study into victim services in north Wales. In those areas an improving picture as far as the provision of services to victims over the last few years is contrasted with gaps in service provision for some victims, service duplication and enduring problems associated with a lack of joined-upness in practice. Whilst some of the PCC areas which are early adopters of victim commissioning have committed themselves to increasing capacity and improving practices within current arrangements, more radical options are being pursued by other areas. Based on their needs assessment Avon and Somerset, for example, are adopting a police-led approach to victim referral from October 2014 by establishing 3 victim hubs to handle all aspects of referral from victims of crime and ASB. As part of this project Avon and Somerset intend developing a victim care website, common victim needs assessment tool and a constabulary wide training package on victim care which will be shared with partners. Cambridgeshire is also in the process of developing a police-led referral model and Northamptonshire is, at the time of writing, inviting tenders from organisation to coordinate and provide a range of support and information services to victims (incorporating the existing services of the Witness Care Unit within Northamptonshire Police, linking to the nationally commissioned Witness Services in the courts and to the victim liaison services provided by Probation and the Crown Prosecution Service). PCCs in Kent and Devon and Cornwall, albeit not early adopter areas, are also poised to create an integrated victim care unit using police staff, volunteers and the VCSE, to manage referrals. In Kent Local delivery will be through the hub with a focus on co-location to keep services local and cost-effective.

Increased partnership working between organizations tends to be regarded as 'a good thing'. The literature describes the virtues of partnerships, including capability and capacity building, rationalization of resources, a reduction in duplication of effort, less organizational fragmentation, improved communication between agencies, and a better understanding and responsiveness to needs. The evidence base for the superiority of multi-agency working is currently thin but a multi-agency hub based approach to victim needs would be a development that accords with how best practice in the criminal justice system is currently understood. Multi-agency working in the criminal justice system and beyond has been encouraged and made mandatory through a number of legislative Acts such as the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Prolific and Priority Offender schemes, Integrated Offender Management units the establishment of Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPAs), CSPs and the establishment of MASH type arrangements to assess safeguarding needs of children and adults deemed vulnerable to abuse. In these contexts multi-agency

working has promised better communication and information sharing between agencies, understanding of each other's role, less confusion and ineffectiveness and inefficiency in service delivery.

8.0 Appendix A

Service Level Agreement for managing cases of domestic abuse through the CJS

1) **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Scope of the Agreement.

This agreement on the handling of Domestic Abuse cases will be in force within the North Wales area covered by CPS Wales Cymru, North Wales Police, HMCS North Wales and the Prawf Cymru.

1.2 Aim of the Agreement

The aim of the agreement is to improve the conduct of Domestic Abuse cases within the Criminal Justice System ensuring that the victims and witnesses of Domestic Abuse are fully supported and cases referred to Specialist Domestic Violence Courts where in place.

1.3 Commencement

To be arranged.

2) **DEFINITION OF 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”.

3) **IDENTIFYING DOMESTIC ABUSE CASES**

3.1 The Police will ensure all Domestic Abuse cases are clearly identified as such before submission to the CPS on the MG1. It is considered good practice to start the MG5 by identifying the case as one of Domestic Abuse.

3.2 The CPS will upon receipt of the file endorse the front of the file jacket “DV” and flag the file on CMS (Case Management System) as Domestic Violence. All victims of Domestic Abuse are classified as “Vulnerable and Intimidated” and will be flagged as such on CMS.

3.3 Upon first appearance in Court the Clerk will endorse the Court papers identifying the case as one of Domestic Abuse and ensure that all Court files have the “green” monitoring form attached.

3.4 Probation will ensure that all Domestic abuse cases are identified and flag the case on CRAMS (Computer Case Recording System) as Domestic abuse “DA”.

4) **CONDUCT OF DOMESTIC ABUSE CASES**

The Police will ensure that Officers attending the incident are aware of the need to gather and preserve the widest range of evidence and not to focus solely on whether the victim is willing to pursue a complaint.

- The Officers attending an incident should include in their statements;-
 1. Injuries to (or lack of) any party at the scene including the defendant.
 2. Any signs of struggle or damage at the scene.
 3. The condition of the victim and the alleged offender; and any other present at the scene, particularly children.
 4. The identity of any person at the scene or in the vicinity who may have seen or heard anything of evidential value to the investigation.
 5. Any verbal statement made by the victim, or any other witness, whether or not included in a written statement, which could be made the subject of an application under section 114 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 (hearsay evidence).
- Where possible photographs of injuries, damage or disturbance should be taken and must be exhibited by the person who took them. If head cam evidence is available it should also be exhibited by the person operating the equipment.
- A statement or video interview if appropriate should be taken from the victim to cover the facts of the incident. It is possible to take the Victim Personal Statement (VPS) immediately as an addendum to the initial statement, but if the victim's physical or emotional state precludes this, the VPS must be taken at the earliest possible opportunity. It is considered good practice to revisit the victim to document in a further VPS the consequences of the incident upon themselves and their family, particularly if any parties had to give evidence in Court.
- The victim's views on obtaining a restraining order, and the preferred terms thereof, should be sought and included on the MG3 seeking charging advice, and the whole of the MG3, including the CPS section, should be included in the file. It is good practice to flag up on the MG6 a restraining order is requested/not desired.
- Officers attending should endeavour to obtain a signed medical consent form at the earliest possible opportunity. A separate form to facilitate ease of making requests to medical staff is the preferred method but a section within the victim's statement is acceptable.
- Witness statements should be taken from persons present or in the vicinity at the earliest possible opportunity if possible to assist in interviewing the defendant.
- The 999 recording and any CCTV evidence must be preserved and included in the defence advance disclosure bundle prepared for sssj.
- If the pnc check reveals the defendant is on licence, probation must be informed in order that consideration can be given to recall.

- The original evidential copy must be retained in accordance with established seized property procedures.
- Interviews with the defendant should cover the facts of the offence and consideration needs to be given to the structure of the interview anticipating lines of defence and the need to explore previous incidents and convictions for “bad character” applications. Evidence in the form of CCTV or photographic evidence should be put to the defendant.
- Files should include details of civil proceedings both past and current. If breach of a civil injunction or ancillary order (Restraining, SOPO, CRASBO) is alleged as part of the prosecution case, a copy of the order must be included in the file.
- Enquiries should be made with the victims and witnesses prior to seeking charging advice from the CPS as to whether the obtaining of any special measures such as screens or video link would enhance and improve the quality of the evidence they would be able to give and why, to facilitate special measures applications.
- Where applicable the file should include reference to any current support or referral involving the victim such as MARAC, IDVA etc.
- The officer should obtain from the victim a dedicated point of contact through which future contact can be made by any agency and this should be detailed on an MG6.

4.1 The Court will:-

- In multi trial lists, ensure priority is given to Domestic Abuse trials.
- Consider ancillary applications, such as special measures, bad character and hearsay as soon as possible in the Court process, preferably at first hearing.
- Ensure appropriate processes or facilities are in place to prevent contact or intimidation of witness at Court by defendants or their associates.
- Ensure that victims attending Court, whether for trial or not, are identified and given the facility to wait in a separate area.
- Prioritise breach of bail cases to ensure the defendant is brought before the Court within 24 hours.
- Identify DA trials on the Court allocation lists provided to CPS to facilitate the listing of CPS DV specialist lawyers at trials.

5) **CPS REVIEW**

The CPS will:-

- #### 5.1
- Ensure all prosecutors are fully conversant with and adhere to the CPS Domestic Violence policy the Code for Crown Prosecutors, and the Core Quality Standards.

- 5.2 When making a pre charge decision consider ancillary applications such as special measures, hearsay and bad character, imposing action plans to enable timely applications in accordance with Criminal Procedure Rules.
- 5.3 From pre charge decision throughout the case consider whether a restraining order is appropriate and if so take action to ensure supporting evidence is available to the Court, a draft order prepared and any necessary application is made.
- 5.4 Contested DA cases before the Magistrates Court will be reviewed in the PCPT unit. DA cases proceeding to the Crown Court will be allocated to a specialist DV prosecutor.
- 5.5 Allocate specialist Domestic Violence prosecutors to conduct DA trials in the Magistrates Court.
- 5.6 Liaise with IDVAs prior to the Specialist Domestic Violence Courts in accordance with local protocols.
- 5.7 No case will be discontinued within the CPS without reference to a Domestic Violence specialist.
- 5.8 In all cases where the timescales allow, consult with the Officer in the Case or his/her supervisor if consideration is being given to discontinuance, to seek their views before the final decision is made.

6) **BAIL**

The Police will:-

- 6.1 If bail is granted by the Custody Sergeant, the Police will by means of a single point of contact/number and as a priority, notify the victim and any relevant witnesses of any conditions imposed, giving them notice that the defendant is to be released and this information should be recorded on the file.
- 6.2 Ensure that wherever possible, all information the Magistrates/Judge will need to consider is provided to the prosecutor on the remand file, including:-
 - Any potential/actual intimidation of witnesses.
 - Previous history of the relationship/past incidents.
 - Aggravating features, e.g. presence of children, use of weapon etc
 - Views of the victim on possible conditions.
 - Full previous convictions, identifying any for domestic abuse and if in breach of YOI licence
 - Current/past civil proceedings.
 - Any MARAC referral
 - Copy of the CPS charging decision MG3.
- 6.3 On contact by CPS inform the victim of any change in remand status or bail conditions as soon as practical.

- 6.4 If bail is granted/varied by a Court out of the business hours of the WCU (i.e. 08:30 to 17:00 Monday to Friday) the Crown Prosecutor will attempt direct contact with the victim/witness from Court to update them. Where no answer can be obtained and it has not been possible/deemed safe to leave a message the Crown Prosecutor will contact the Intelligence Support Team (IST) at North Wales Police who work 24/7 (tel. 101 or 0845 607 1002) and provide them with the information cited at 6.6 below. The IST will then attempt to contact the victim/witness to update.
- 6.5 Where the IST are unable to obtain an answer from the victim/witness they will pass the task onto the Police Control Room to request a Police Officer be dispatched to personally visit and update the victim/witness as appropriate and as a Grade P1 Priority.
- 6.6 Minimum information to be passed to NWP by the Crown Prosecutor from Court out of WCU business hours is
- a) File URN and reporting officer details
 - b) Victims details i.e. name, age, address and contact numbers if known
 - c) Court location and time and date of bail decision
 - d) Offender details i.e. name, age, address
 - e) Bail conditions if any and date and location of next hearing
- 6.7 On breach of conditions the Police will arrest for and evidence the breach and consider arrest for any other offence if appropriate.
- 6.6 In the event of an application to vary bail conditions, the Police will seek the views of the victim on the proposed amendments and provide the response in good time for the Court hearing. Where this proves impracticable the Police will notify the CPS of the reasons and the time needed to complete the necessary enquiries and the CPS will apply for the appropriate level of adjournment.
- The Court will:-
- 6.7 E-mail the results of any bail application or remand decision in relation to a Domestic Violence case to the PNC, WCU and IDVAs attached to accredited SDVCs at agreed contact addresses as soon as practical and in any event within 1 hour. Outside normal working hours the Court Clerk will ensure PNC is notified of bail conditions and the Prosecutor will contact the Police who will act per 6.3
- The CPS will:-
- 6.8 Apply the provisions of the Bail Act to Domestic Abuse cases as to any other violent offence, considering in particular the likelihood of the commission of further offences and interference with witnesses.
- 6.9 The charging lawyer should canvas with the officer in the case whether the defendant is to be remanded in custody post charge, consider the CPS position with regard to bail and indicate on the MG3 whether grant of bail should be referred to the DCP for appeal.

- 6.10 Where the victim attends Court to retract a complaint or support an application by a defendant to vary bail conditions, the prosecutor will seek an adjournment in order that the procedure detailed below can be completed.
- 6.11 The Court shall require 48 hours notice is given of any case listed for an application to vary bail in order that the views of the victim can be ascertained.
- 6.12 Where there is an application to vary bail and there is no evidence on the file in relation to the view of the victim as to the proposed amendments, the prosecutor shall seek an adjournment for those views to be ascertained.
- 6.13 Ensure that all bail conditions should be concise, clear and enforceable.
- 6.14 Ensure that alleged breaches of bail are prosecuted within the time limit whether or not further offences have been committed to ensure full history of a defendant's attitude to and compliance with bail conditions will be entered on the PNC.
- 6.15 Within working hours of 9a.m. to 5p.m. the WCU general mail box will be monitored and upon receipt of notification from the Court of the bail decision the victim will be notified via their preferred point of contact i.e. WCU or IDVA.
- 6.16 Out of office hours the Prosecutor will contact the victim direct if contact details are provided on file with the result of any bail decision. If unable to do so for any reason the Prosecutor will request IST at North Wales Police to undertake the task as a priority.
- 6.17 In relation to Crown Court cases the PO or PA present at Crown Court when the bail decision is made will e mail the result to the WCU general mailbox and then process per 6.13 and 6.14 above will follow.

Probation

6.13 Probation can complete a bail assessment at the request of the Court. This will include assessments for the Bail Accommodation Support Services (BASS) scheme and the approved premises.

7) **WITHDRAWAL**

Where a victim wishes to withdraw a complaint, the Police will:-

- 7.1 Take the appropriate steps to investigate the decision to withdraw is of their own free will and the witness has not been pressurised into retracting by the perpetrator or a third party acting on the perpetrators behalf.
- 7.2 Once satisfied that the victim is retracting of his/her own free will, to obtain a section 9 statement containing the following information:-
 - A full explanation of the reason for withdrawal.
 - Whether the victim has maintained the truth of the original complaint.

- Whether there has been an element of duress (either directly or indirectly).
- With whom they have discussed the case.
- Whether civil proceedings have been instigated.
- Whether the relationship is continuing.
- Impact of continuing or discontinuing proceedings upon the victim and any children against their wishes.
- Any other relevant information.

7.3 This statement should be forwarded to the CPS with an MG6 containing:-

- Police comments on the veracity of the reasons given.
- Any assessment of the state of fear of the victim.
- A risk assessment of the safety of the victim if the case is to be discontinued/continued against the victims wishes.
- Any Police view on how the case should be dealt with.
- Any other relevant information e.g. how the victim might react to compelled to give evidence.
- Any other impact continuation/discontinuance of proceedings is likely to have on e.g. immigration status.
- If there are any children who have been affected by the violence in the household and who are mature enough to approach for their views, consultation should be considered.

7.4 With appropriate sensitivity, the victim should be told that making withdrawal statement will not necessarily result in the case being dropped nor does it preclude them giving evidence at Court in appropriate cases, as in accordance with the CPS Domestic Violence police, the CPS may consider it is in the public interest to proceed and for the victim to attend Court and give evidence.

7.5 Upon receipt of a withdrawal statement the CPS will:-

- Consider whether there is sufficient evidence to proceed without the evidence of the victim and whether it is in the public interest to do so.
- If there is insufficient evidence without the victim and the public interest dictates the continuation of the case, whether the victim should be compelled to give evidence or whether the victim statement maybe admissible under s116 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003.
- Consider whether any other measures can be put in place to protect the victims safety other than criminal prosecution e.g. application for a Restraining Order

8) **DISCONTINUANCE**

8.1 Any decision to discontinue a Domestic Abuse case must be made by a Domestic Violence specialist.

8.2 A notice of proposed discontinuance will be sent to the Reporting Officer giving the reasons for the proposal and seeking the Police views wherever the timescale allows this to be done. These views should, wherever possible, include those of the Supervisor or the DAC.

- 8.3 The Police will respond in a timely manner to notices of proposed discontinuance.
- 8.4 The CPS will communicate the decision to discontinue with the victim as outlined below.
- 9) **VICTIM AND WITNESS CARE**
- 9.1 Special measures for vulnerable and intimidated witnesses.
- The Police should identify victims and witnesses in appropriate cases who would benefit from special measures and discuss with the Charging Lawyer which measures would be appropriate at the charging stage.
 - The Police and the CPS should hold early special measures meetings in appropriate cases.
 - The CPS should make appropriate and timely applications for special measures in both the Magistrates and the Crown Courts.
- 9.2 Where a case is proceeding to trial the Witness Care Unit will conduct a Witness Needs Assessment which will enquire as to witness needs including:-
- Special measures.
 - Restrictions on witnesses/guardians attending Court.
 - Need for interpreters/assistance to give evidence.
 - Domestic circumstances which preclude attending Court at short notice.
 - Victims/witnesses wish to give evidence in a language other than English.
 - Religious or other beliefs which should be accommodated.
 - Identify the single point of contact requested by the victim such as WCU, IDVA or DAC.
- 9.3 When a charge is dropped or materially altered the CPS will:-
- Contact the victim giving reasons for the decision within 1 working day of the decision being made.
 - Draft any letters in accordance with the Direct Communications with Victims protocol and bear in mind the possibility the defendant may have access to them.
 - Reassure the victim in the letter that retraction does not preclude them from reporting future incidents and give contact details of local help groups.
 - Request the Police, in appropriate cases, to serve the letters personally.
 - In appropriate cases arrange a meeting between the victim and the reviewing lawyer to further explain the reasons for the decision.
- 9.4 All victims of domestic abuse should be given the opportunity to provide a Victim Personal Statement.
- 10) **SENTENCING**

10.1 The CPS will:-

- Inform the defence and the Court, at the earliest possible opportunity, that a restraining order will be sought during the course of the case.
- Draft an order in readiness for the sentencing hearing.
- **Probation will be provided with a full and detailed Information pack.**

10.2 The Probation Service will:-

Probation Court Duty Staff will complete a Pre Sentence Report (PSR), to flag the case as "DA" and to record all victim details. In Crown Court cases a Women Safety Worker form will be completed, Probation will complete a PDR within 15 working days in most cases. Probation will consider completing a PSR within 5 days on DA related cases, where deemed appropriate by Probation.

Probation will complete a risk assessment taking into consideration all of the following documents:

- CPS documentation – Victim statement, witness statements, basis of plea (if any), photographic evidence.
- MARAC notes
- Womens Aid records
- Victim Support
- SSD
- Previous call out information
- Police intelligence
- IDVA
- Previous convictions

Probation will conduct one PDR interview with the perpetrator without the victim being present.

Probation will propose the most suitable and effective sentencing option to reduce the risk of re-offending and serious harm to the victim. Probation's primary purpose of sentence will be the protection of the victims and rehabilitation of the offender will be important but will be secondary.

Probation will utilise protective Requirements such as a Prohibited Activity/exclusion requirement.

Probation will not impose a curfew requirement if the offender is living or returning to live with the victim or another partner.

Probation will refer to Approved Premises at PDR stage, however a period of bail assessment would be necessary.

Probation will assess suitability in all DA cases for the accredited Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme (IDAP) or non-accredited programme, caring Dads, Choose to Change or DA specified Activity.

Enforcement of Court Orders.

Probation will complete a risk assessment and sentence plan within five days (high risk) or fifteen days (med-low risk) of the offender being sentenced.

Probation will ensure robust enforcement procedures, following National standards, are applied in DA cases. Probation will breach cases no later than the second unacceptable failure to comply and within ten working days of the unacceptable absence. Probation will consider utilising Fast Track breaches in applicable cases.

Probation will follow agreed local referral processes for DA MARAC. Probation will assimilate all police intelligence and call out information and will discuss case fully with MARAC partners.

Enforcement of those perpetrators subject to licence conditions.

- Probation will complete a Pre-Release Assessment, three months prior to release, regarding victim issues to formulate Risk Management Plans. For perpetrators assessed as high risk of harm consideration will be given to referral to MAPPA 3 months prior to release and referrals will be made to the Domestic Abuse MARAC where appropriate.
- Probation will follow guidelines in relation to working with the Victim Liaison Unit for any case sentenced to 12 months or more for a domestic assault and the victim report will be considered when proposing licence conditions.
- Additional Licence Conditions must include Protective Requirements as appropriate. A licence condition to *notify your supervising officer of any developing personal relationships with women* will be included.
- Residency in Approved Premises should be considered mandatory for any domestic abuse perpetrator wishing to return to live with the victim.

10.3 The Court will:-

- Ensure Magistrates are advised to follow sentencing guidelines in relation to domestic abuse cases, and if departing from those guidelines to announce the reasons therefore and record the same on the court file.
- Ensure that written basis of plea are retained on the Court file for further information and added to any pack handed to probation.
- That files are endorsed fully as to any orders imposed and the conditions thereof.
- Serve upon the defendant a copy of any restraining order, and e mail a copy to wcu for service upon the victim.
- Upon receipt of any application to vary any sentencing provision in relation to a domestic abuse case notify Probation and CPS for those agencies at DCP/Court Duty Officer level to gather relevant

information and in particular the views of the victim to assist the Court in considering the application.