

**Methodology**

**Meeting the needs of victims in the CJS**

# Introduction

The CJJI Business Plan for 2021-2023 states that the HMICFRS will lead a joint inspection with Her Majesty’s Crown Prosecution Inspectorate and Her Majesty’s Inspectorate Probation into meeting the needs of victims in the CJS – To inspect the quality of communication and support for victims at each stage of the CJS, including the impact of recent increases in court backlogs.

# Background

The current joint inspection business plan[[1]](#footnote-1) describes the quality of victim and witness experience as one of three cross-cutting issues that underpin all joint inspection activity planned for the two years.

There have been a number of reports published by the inspectorates that examine the victim experience through the CJS.

These are included in Annex A.

# Legal and national policy context

The [*Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-code-of-practice-for-victims-of-crime)sets out the services and a minimum standard for these services that must be provided to victims of crime by organisations (referred to as service providers) in England and Wales.

This Code acknowledges that the terms ‘complainant’ and ‘survivor’ are often used in the criminal justice system to describe a person who has made a criminal allegation to the police. However, for the purpose of this Code, the definition of a ‘victim’ is:

* a person who has suffered harm, including physical, mental or emotional harm or economic loss which was directly caused by a criminal offence
* a close relative (or a nominated family spokesperson) of a person whose death was directly caused by a criminal offence.

Rights under this Code also include:

* a parent or guardian of the victim if the victim is under 18 years of age or;
* a nominated family spokesperson if the victim has a mental impairment or has been so badly injured because of a criminal offence that they are unable to communicate or lacks the capacity to do so.

All service providers must have the victim’s best interests as their primary consideration and take the victim’s age, maturity, views, needs and concerns fully into account.

In summary, these rights include:

1. To be able to understand and to be understood
2. To have the details of the crime recorded without unjustified delay
3. To be provided with information when reporting the crime
4. To be referred to services that support victims and have services and support tailored to your needs
5. To be provided with information about compensation
6. To be provided with information about the investigation and prosecution
7. To make a Victim Personal Statement
8. To be given information about the trial, trial process and your role as a witness
9. To be given information about the outcome of the case and any appeals
10. To be paid expenses and have property returned
11. To be given information about the offender following a conviction

12. To make a complaint about your Rights not being met

Rights 1, 4 and 12 apply to all victims. The remaining Rights only apply where a crime has been reported to the police.

All victims have the Right to:

* be treated with respect, dignity, sensitivity, compassion and courtesy;
* make informed choices that are fully respected;
* have their privacy respected by service providers in accordance with their obligations under the relevant privacy and data protection laws; and
* have services provided to assist the victim and their family to understand and engage with the criminal justice process and that these are offered in a professional manner, without discrimination of any kind.

Further explanation of the Code is included in Annex B

**The Delivering Justice for victims consultation**

The Government *Delivering Justice for victims consultation* was launched in December 2021 and closed in February 2022.

The consultation sought to understand how victims can be better supported through and beyond the criminal justice process across England and Wales. The resulting legislation will be a Bill for all victims of crime, building on the foundations provided by the Victims’ Code to substantially improve victims’ experiences of the criminal justice system.

The consultation focused on:

* What victims should expect: how to enshrine the Victims’ Code in law. This includes whether and how to strengthen what victims should expect in key areas – in particular how the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), police and other agencies communicate with victims, how victims might engage with the parole process and how to mainstream the use of Community Impact Statements in appropriate cases
* Performance and accountability: not all victims consistently receive the service to which they are entitled, and there is more to do to ensure that the Victims’ Code is universally applied. The structures to monitor the Victims’ Code are fragmented and insufficient.
* The Victim Surcharge: consultation on further increases to ensure that criminals take greater responsibility for the cost of supporting victims, and to reinforce funding for victims’ services.
* Community-based support services: particularly for victims of traumatic crimes that are often hidden from view such as domestic abuse, sexual violence and other serious violence offences.
* Improved advocacy support: ways to improve support from independent advocates for victims of traumatic and often hidden crimes, to help them recover and stay engaged in the criminal justice system.

**The Draft Victims’ Bill**

Following consultation, the draft Victims’ Bill was presented to Parliament by the Deputy Prime Minister, Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice by Command of Her Majesty on May 25th, 2022

The Justice Select Committee will then undertake pre-legislative scrutiny in June and July with the aim of allowing updates to the bill over summer recess, and potentially beginning its passage through Parliament on the first sitting day in September 2022.

The Bill aims to improve victims’ experiences so that victims feel better supported across the criminal justice process. These measures together will amplify victims’ voices, strengthen transparency and accountability of criminal justice agencies, and improve support for victims. Where these provisions affect the criminal justice system only, they apply to England and Wales. Where they involve policy areas which are devolved to the Welsh Government (such as health and social care bodies) conversations are ongoing with the Welsh Government as to whether these provisions will be extended to Wales, and a legislative consent motion will be sought when the Bill is formally introduced in Parliament, as appropriate.

The Victims’ Bill aims to facilitate a more consolidated framework to better support victims through the following legislative measures:

• placing the overarching principles of the Victims’ Code in primary legislation;

• enhancing local oversight of delivery of the Victims’ Code through better data collection and an enhanced role of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs);

• introducing a duty on PCCs, local authorities and Integrated Care Boards to collaborate locally, to facilitate more holistic and better coordinated victim support services;

• placing Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAS) and Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) on a statutory footing by requiring persons who work with victims of criminal conduct, or any aspect of the criminal justice system to have regard to guidance about how to work with them;

• updating the role of the Victims’ Commissioner, including a requirement for departments and agencies with a responsibility to meet the requirements under the Victims’ Code to respond to relevant annual report recommendations;

• bolstering national oversight through a requirement for regular joint thematic inspections on victims’ experiences, and;

• removing the need for a victim of crime to raise a complaint via an MP before it can be escalated to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO)

The Non-legislative content includes:

* Prosecutors to be required to speak to victims pre-trial in some circumstances;
* Various improvements planned in the consistency and standing of victim impact statements;
* Improvements planned in the running and use of CJ complaints systems, to make it easier for victims to know how to complain/appeal;
* Major increase in the victim surcharge.

**Monitoring the Victims’ Code**

The Bill will place a duty on relevant criminal justice bodies to collect data and keep their compliance with the Victims’ Code under review at a local level. This duty will help ensure there is effective and consistent oversight, providing a clear picture of compliance with the Code for criminal justice bodies to drive up standards on the service to victims. This requirement will apply to the following criminal justice bodies:

• The Police

• The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)

• His Majesty’s Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS)

• His Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS)

• Youth Offending Teams.

**Joint thematic inspections of victims’ issues**

The criminal justice inspectorates all have a responsibility for assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of the criminal justice agencies they have responsibility for overseeing. It is envisaged that the inspectorates will continue to agree and set out their proposed joint inspection programme in a Joint Business Plan, which typically covers a period of two years.

The inspectorates do already work together effectively to undertake joint thematic inspections. However, the Government wants to ensure that their programme of work regularly includes a focus on victims’ issues. Therefore, the Bill will introduce the ability for relevant Ministers to direct joint thematic inspections by criminal justice inspectorates to assess the experiences and treatment of victims throughout the entire criminal justice process.

The policy intention of these joint thematic inspections is to make inspectorates more effective at:

* identifying key issues in relation to victims across the whole system;
* understanding the cause of these issues and the best ways to address them, and:
* making recommendations that will ensure improvements in the service provided to victims.

This requirement will apply to the following inspectorates:

• HMI Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) who hold responsibility for assessing the effectiveness of police forces and fire and rescue services;

• HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (HMCPSI) who hold responsibility for assessing the effectiveness of the CPS and the Serious Fraud Office;

• HMI Probation (HMIP) who inspect probation services and youth offending services;

• HMI Prisons (HMIP) who inspect prisons and young offender institutions.

The MOJ have committed to resourcing any extra demand coming from the bill, within the course of the current spending review period. After this, agencies and departments are ‘expected to agree between themselves the resourcing’.

**The Strategic** **Policing Requirement (SPR) 2021**

This sets out the Home Secretary’s view of the national threats that the police must prepare for and the appropriate national policing capabilities that are required to counter those threats. The SPR respects the operational independence of the police service, advising what, in strategic terms, it needs to achieve, but not how it should achieve it.

**The Police and Crime Plan 2021– 2025**

The Police and Crime Plan sets the strategic direction for crime-related and policing services across forces, including the response to regional and national threats.

**The Beating Crime Plan**

The Beating Crime Plan, published in 2021, aims to increase trust in the criminal justice system as a whole.

The plan focusses on three key areas.

1. Cutting homicide, serious violence and neighbourhood crime

#### 2. Exposing and ending hidden harms and prosecuting perpetrators

#### 3. Building capability and capacity to deal with fraud and online crime

# Emerging Concerns

Key themes identified in recent inspection activity include:

**The HMICFRS PEEL victim service assessment (VSA)**

This considers the victim’s experience from the initial contact, through the police response and investigative process, to the subsequent outcome. Crime data integrity (CDI) is assessed as part of the VSA in some forces.

In March 2022, HMICFRS have completed the VSA in just over half of forces. These audits have identified the following themes that directly affect the level of service provided to victims:

* The number of abandoned calls from members of the public who chose to use the 101 non-emergency telephone exceeds the standards defined within the National Contact Management Strategy. For those forces who operate a switchboard this should be less than 5% and for those without a switchboard it should be less than 10%. This should include all abandonment, including what some may define as `secondary`. Failing to meet these standards may increase unnecessary burden of demand in 999 calls, impact on service delivery and may lead to a loss of confidence in policing.
* During initial contact in the control room, structured triage processes and risk assessments such as THRIVE are not always completed or recorded. This includes checks to establish if the victim is a repeat or vulnerable victim. The lack of an accurate assessment can adversely affect the grading prioritisation for the police response. Equally, safeguarding needs and referrals may not be identified or completed in a timely way.
* Advice regarding the preservation of evidence or crime scene prevention is not always provided to those calling the control room. Failure to provide advice on the preservation of evidence means that opportunities to gather and preserve evidence in line with ‘Golden Hour’ principles may not be taken. This can compromise the effectiveness of an investigation. Not providing advice on crime prevention may mean that victims experience repeat offending and avoidable harm.
* The rights of the victim under the Victims’ Code of Practice are not always being met. Specifically:
* Victims are not always provided with regular and timely updates on the progress of investigations. This can result in victims losing faith and withdrawing their support for investigations and prosecutions.
* Victims Needs Assessments (VNA) are not always completed or are completed to an unsatisfactory standard, lacking detail and with the specific needs of victims not always identified. Forces should ensure that there is a clear understanding of the requirements for the VNA to be completed when a crime is reported and what they should consist of. If VNAs are not completed, or not completed correctly, the provision of enhanced rights, such as the referral of victims to support services or special measures for judicial proceedings, may not happen.
* Victims Personal Statements (VPS) are not always taken where appropriate. Forces should ensure that victims are offered the opportunity to make a VPS, and that opportunities to obtain them are considered by investigators and taken when relevant. Failure to obtain one may deprive victims of the opportunity for their voices to be heard.
* Victims are not always consulted or their views recorded in the use of out of court disposals, such as cautions and community resolutions, and investigations finalised as outcome. Failure to record the victims' views, or the rationale for the use of the outcome, in an auditable format, means that forces may not be able to reassure themselves that the use of the outcome was appropriate, or to understand why a victim does not support a prosecution. Furthermore, when victims withdraw their support, evidence-led prosecutions are not always considered. In 2021, HMICFRS considered the use of evidence led prosecutions, and outcome 16 in the Review of policing domestic abuse in the pandemic and the Police response to violence against women and girls reports. Despite the recommendations in these reports, it is disappointing that many forces have failed to make sufficient progress in these areas.
* Orders designed to protect victims, such as domestic abuse prevention notices or orders or stalking prevention orders, are not always being considered. This means that opportunities to prevent further harm are being missed alongside opportunities to engage victims with specialist support providers.
* In the forces where the VSA has also included CDI, HMICFRS have found the following issues:
* Behavioural crime (harassment, stalking and controlling and coercive behaviour) make up a significant proportion of unrecorded crimes. It is important to ensure that the long-term and pernicious effect of behavioural crime suffered by victims is properly recorded in addition to the individual incidents of crime being committed against them.
* Domestic abuse crimes make up a significant proportion of unrecorded crimes. These are usually behavioural crimes assaults causing harassment alarm or distress (S4a 1986 Public Order Act).
* Cancellation of crimes of rape are usually correct. However, in some cases crimes of rape were cancelled solely on a retraction provided by the victim without a satisfactory explanation or corroborating information which determined that the crime had not occurred.
* Recording of anti-social behaviour crimes is inconsistent. Whilst there have been some improvements in this area and some forces now record anti-social behaviour crimes well, others have not improved the recording of crimes or the service to victims of these crimes.
* Data on the protected characteristics of victims is often not collected and recorded to ensure they receive the service they need, and that service provision is consistent across different groups.

**October 2021 HMCPSI Area inspection reports**

● The quality of letters to victims needs to be improved. In all areas, at least 50% of the letters sent through the Victim Communication Liaison scheme (VCL) did not fully meet the required quality standard

● Some areas were found to lack empathy in their VCLs. Additionally, several areas did not write letters in clear English

● Timeliness of letters needs to be improved. There are some CPS areas in which a high proportion of VCLs are not sent at all

● A more effective response to issues identified could be taken in all areas. A wider offer of training is needed in most areas to improve VCLs

● Consultation and meeting with victims where appropriate was generally good, except in one area

● Community engagement was inconsistent across areas. Community engagement varied from extensive in some areas to non-existent in others

● Good responsiveness to issues identified internally. Where issues were identified internally, action was often taken by senior staff to improve performance and better serve victims.

**A victims’ strategic needs assessment for the Crown Prosecution Service**

In 2021, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) commissioned Crest Advisory to conduct a strategic victims’ needs assessment (SNA) to better understand the needs of victims and where they are not fully met in CPS communications. The aim was to support the improvement of the CPS’ engagement and communication with victims and response to victims’ needs.

The methods used included: quantitative analysis of publicly available and specialised service data; consultation of practitioners both statutory and third sector; and the consultation of victims.

The findings of the assessment highlighted that victims prioritise clear and consistent communication and want more agency and diversity of methods of communication in their interactions with the CPS. This included:

● To have the role of the CPS clearly explained and to have the likely timeframes and steps of the CJS process explained, including the victim’s right to review

● To have communication grounded in personal context and understanding levels of trauma, avoiding victim blaming and treating them as an individual

● To be updated regularly on the progress of the case, even if there is no change

● To have decisions explained through a method of communication that allows human contact and two-way conversation (phone or face to face)

● To have communication directly with the CPS in a timely manner and have a named point of contact for questions, and to be informed when their case is received by the CPS and who is responsible for it

● To be properly prepared for court, receiving an explanation of what the process is and what kind of questions they might face

● To be offered a choice in the methods and of frequency of communication

● To have layered/multi-channels of communication in plain language

● To be heard, recognised and validated as a victim of crime by the CPS, which is an expression of the state and justice, notwithstanding the CJS outcome

● To be able to involve support services and appropriate third parties Victims want to feel a degree of agency rather than feeling powerless during the CJS process particularly for vulnerable victims or victims of serious offences

● Most victims also want communication directly from the CPS, rather than via the police or another intermediary; many described the police not knowing the answers to their questions or providing incorrect information. However, this is not universal: some victims prefer an intermediary

● Sensitive and effective communication with victims may also improve criminal justice outcomes by improving witness retention and reducing ineffective and cracked trials

● Preparation for court felt lacking to many victims. Few knew what to expect in terms of process or questioning and many had no contact from the CPS prior to their court date

● The criminal justice system as a whole is not joined-up and victims and practitioners alike often do not understand the role and responsibilities of the CPS. This can lead to the CPS being blamed for problems outside their control

● Weak partnerships and lack of shared processes and outcomes; partner organisations feel like the approach is disjointed and this can undermine everyone’s engagement with victims. Approaches to partnership working are inconsistent at a regional and local level, which hinders collaboration and information-sharing. Support services find there is a failure to engage with local service providers, which limits the CPS’ understanding of victim needs. Victims and practitioners also reported described a ‘blame game’ between the police and CPS, which can mean victims start off with a poor view of the CPS.

The assessment made a number of recommendations:

* An improved universal service offer, including considering introducing direct communication by CPS:
* Explore identification and prioritisation of specific victim cohorts - define high level of need
* Determine what an enhanced service means with a focus on direct and two-way communications
* Review organisational capacity and capability to deliver an enhanced and differentiated service
* Victims should be educated upstream on the role and responsibilities of the CPS; the CPS taking a leading role in working with partners to manage expectations
* Most victims want communication directly from the CPS, rather than via the police or another intermediary; dependent upon the severity of the case, better integration with an intermediary should be considered
* Enhance the service provided to victims with the greatest need:
* Communication should happen earlier for victims in their journey
* There should be greater diversification and enhanced frequency in the methods of communication from the CPS
* Victims should be provided with more routes for feedback and dialogue prior to formal complaints
* CPS should support their staff to enhance their skills that will enable them to deliver this universal uplift in service
* Innovation and pilot to strengthen victim engagement:
* Ensure a focus on continuous improvement and ambition within the CPS’ approach to enhancing services to victims by testing and evaluating innovative practice
* Learn from current pilots, utilising Operation Soteria ‘pathfinder’ areas to test new ways of working
* Focus on digital solutions and victim led engagement for the most in need victim cohorts
* Build organisation and leadership culture:
* Victim engagement and the implementation of an improved service should become a priority for the CPS
* CPS staff must be provided with the right training and development to support service improvements and held to account through improved internal governance
* The needs of victims and the required service changes must be communicated effectively across the CPS embedding new standards and practice into the culture of the CPS
* Partnership dependency must be recognised and relationships maximised

# Representations from victim groups

The Victims' Commissioner for England and Wales is dedicated to promoting the interests of victims and witnesses.

In the published response to the Victim’s Bill Consultation, although the key principles set out were supported, it was noted that, ‘*the current rights are unknown by the vast majority of victims and that compliance with the Victims’ Code is the exception, not the rule. As such, the principles are meaningless unless the concept of a victim is transformed into that of a participant in the process, rather than a bystander’.*

**Victims’ Experience: Annual Survey September 2021**

Published by the Office of the Victims’ Commissioner, the online survey was posted on the Victims’ Commissioner’s website and social media (28 May to 5 July 2021).

The survey sought to understand victims’ priorities and gain insights into their experiences of the criminal justice system over the past three years, including during the Covid-19 pandemic. Around half of the responses were from victims who reported or had their crime investigated during the pandemic, however, there were few substantive differences in responses compared to those whose cases were dealt with earlier.

The findings included

* just 43% of victims would report a crime again based on their previous experiences of the criminal justice system. Just half would attend court again, down from 67% in 2020.
* Ethnic minorities are less likely to feel like they were treated fairly and respectfully by police.
* 66% of victims told the Commissioner they had to wait too long before their case came to court; only 9% of victims thought the courts dealt with cases promptly.
* just 43% would be likely to report to authorities in the future, with over a third (34%) saying they wouldn’t report a crime again.
* Many victims expressed their disappointment with the criminal justice system, especially the court process and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS): 83% said they didn’t have confidence in the effectiveness of the CPS in prosecuting those accused of a crime.
* Above all, the survey found that victims most want to be ‘treated well’ by the criminal justice system: 48% said that having the crime fully investigated was the most important or second most important factor for them, with 38% saying being treated fairly and with respect by the police was most important or second most important factor to them. Just 24% rated the perpetrator being charged with a crime as the most or second most important factor.
* Only 42% felt they had been treated fairly and with respect by the police, with many feeling their reports hadn’t been taken seriously and there was a lack of action by the police.
* There was an alarming difference in victims’ experiences with the police according to the victim’s ethnicity. Only 33% of those from an ethnic minority background felt the police treated them fairly and with respect, as opposed to 44% among those from a white background. Similarly, only 16% of ethnic minority respondents agreed with the statement, ‘victims are fully supported by the police,’ compared to 26% of those from white backgrounds.
* Many victims said it was difficult to obtain information and updates at various points throughout their criminal justice journey. The impact of Covid-19 on investigation times was noticeable, with 60% of those whose cases were reported or investigated during the pandemic saying the investigation took too long, compared to 47% of those whose cases were dealt with before the pandemic. This was despite an overall drop in reported crime during the pandemic.
* Only 9% of victims thought the courts dealt with cases promptly. Just half (50%) of those who reached court said they would attend again and over a quarter (26%) said they would not. This figure is considerably lower than the 67% who said they would attend court in the Victims’ Commissioner’s 2020 survey.
* Victims said they found the court process challenging. Less than 10% felt they were supported by the courts or by the CPS, with 58% feeling their needs and wishes were not considered. Many said that special measures that had been requested were not put in place.
* There were concerns that victims’ services were under-funded, leading to long waiting lists and difficulties accessing some services.
* Only 29% of victims are aware of the Victims’ Code, suggesting more needs to be done to raise awareness of victims’ entitlements.

# Delays in the criminal justice system

There are numerous reports and surveys the highlight delays at every stage of the CJS.

The Government started to publish scorecards to increase transparency, increase understanding of the CJS and support collaboration, particularly at a local level through Local Criminal Justice Boards (LCJBs) in 2021.

The Criminal Justice System (CJS) scorecards bring together data from partners across the system, presenting data from the police, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and the courts for all crime and for recorded adult rape offences. The aim is to improve in the priority areas of improving timeliness, increasing victim engagement and improving quality of justice.

The data includes:

* Crime recorded to police decision
* Police referral to CPS decision to charge and,
* CPS charge to case completion at court

# Proposed joint thematic inspection

Our initial research on the topic of meeting the needs of victims leads us to identify the following key themes that should be developed further within the scope of the forthcoming inspection:

* the relationship and communication between the police, the CPS and probation service;
* communication with victims throughout their journey through the CJS;
* training and awareness of VCOP for the police, the probation service and the CPS;
* compliance with VCOP and escalation processes:
* understanding and improving victim satisfaction;
* protection for victims;
* Victim attrition and factors that contribute at investigation, prosecution and court stages, including access to advocacy victims support, disclosure and the effects of digital forensics;
* The influence of workloads and current performance indicators on CJS outcomes;
* the impact of the efficiency and effectiveness of the court, including attendance rates, timeliness of offence and attrition rates due to victim and witness issues.

# Out of scope

TACT and cases managed by the National Security Directorate or Central Projects Team.

Mental health managed cases.

Children managed by youth offending teams

# Aims of the inspection

The aims of the inspection are to;

* assess whether there is effective leadership and governance to support the needs of victims through the CJS;
* assess the extent to which the criminal justice agencies meet the needs of every victim as their case progresses through the CJS;
* assess how well the police, the Probation Service and the Crown Prosecution Service comply with the [*Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-code-of-practice-for-victims-of-crime) – and if they breach the code, how this is identified and managed;
* establish how well the criminal justice agencies understand victim satisfaction; assess how effectively criminal justice agencies manage satisfaction levels at each stage of a victim’s journey through the CJS;
* assess the effectiveness of police decision-making when deciding to actively investigate reports of crime, and examine how these decisions are communicated to victims;
* assess how effective forces are at identifying and managing the vulnerability and risk associated with vulnerable victims of crime, including whether they make appropriate referrals to support services and safeguarding;
* assess how effectively the criminal justice agencies work and communicate with one another when it comes to meeting the needs of victims;
* assess how effectively criminal justice agencies communicate with victims at every stage of the CJS;
* assess how effectively the police, the CPS and the Probation Service identify areas of concern and plan to implement changes; and
* identify effective practice and lessons learnt.

# Approach

This inspection was agreed and published in the Criminal Justice Joint Inspection Business Plan 2022/23 and will be run in accordance with programme and project management principles and using joint inspection methodology.

The Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) will be Wendy Williams, Her Majesty’s Inspector of Constabulary (HMI), in conjunction with the HMCPSI lead. The SRO will be updated on progress of this inspection and updates provided to CJCIG.

An Inspection Overview Document (IOD) has been completed; a project plan, risk and issues register, and action log will be produced and maintained by HMICFRS.

# Proposed methodology

HMICFRS will lead this work, supported by HMCPSI and HMI Probation

The inspection will review and assess the victims’ journey through the CJS. The work will be informed by a range of case samples:

**Joint inspectorate case file assessments**

To provide an end-to-end view of the victim’s experience, including post-conviction (Victim Contact Scheme[[2]](#footnote-2)), asample of case files for offences of serious violence (where the perpetrator received 12 months or more in custody) will be jointly reviewed by inspectors from HMICFRS, HMCPSI and HMI Probation.

The six points that will be assessed are:

1. Report to the police

2. Pre-charge (to include out of court disposals)

3. Post charge

4. Conviction and sentence

5. Post- conviction

6. Pre-release/ release from prison.

The rationale for focusing solely on serious violence offence types in the joint case file sample includes:

* There has already been a focus on domestic abuse and sexual violence, and a number of recommendations to improve the victims’ journey through the CJS.
* We have an understanding of victim experience for these groups up to the point of finalisation by the police or the CPS

The joint inspectorate will undertake further work on the selection criteria including how far the inspection sample should go back in time to meet the need to be relevant to contemporary practice and have sufficient work done with victims post-conviction to be inspected meaningfully.

**HMI Probation review of cases eligible for the Victim Contact Scheme (VCS)**

HMI Probation will conduct a deep dive inspection of cases eligible for the probation service VCS. Nationally, the VCS caseload includes 60% specified violent cases and 40% sexual offences. This will allow domestic abuse and sexual violence cases to be scrutinised at the post-conviction stage of the victims journey. HMI Probation will also undertake an assurance exercise to investigate whether *all* relevant cases are referred to the VCS in a timely fashion.

These findings will be reported on as part of this inspection and linked to wider findings from joint work on rape and other vulnerability inspections - which focused on contact with these victims up to the point of charge. This will help provide an end-to-end review of the victim’s experience.

**HMICFRS and HMCPSI serious violence sample**

There is also a risk of prolonged time scales from report to completion, meaning that processes have changed. To mitigate the risk, the HMICFRS and HMCPSI will also review recent cases of serious violence.

**HMICFRS and HMCPSI acquisitive crime and antisocial behaviour sample**

There is a gap in understanding the victim’s journey in other crime types, where reports to the police may not be allocated to investigators and prosecutors working within specialist teams.

To mitigate this gap, the inspection will also assess case files of crimes/ offences;

* Community crime/ anti-social behaviour:
* Serious acquisitive crime (personal robbery, domestic burglary, theft of motor vehicle and theft from motor vehicle):

Inspectors will review:

* cases from the point of report to when the Police have taken No Further Action (not referred the case to the CPS for a charging decision):
* cases from the point of report to the police to finalisation at each of the following points:

1. Report to the police

2. Pre-charge (to include out of court disposals)

3. Post charge

4. Conviction and sentence (also include acquittal/ NOE/ case withdrawn)

# Key activities

These include:

* document/policy review;
* data capture and analysis, and an assessment of data gaps and recording practices;
* case file sampling;
* interviews with national police, probation service and CPS leads;
* interviews with relevant staff within police forces, the probation service and CPS areas, including Local Criminal Justice Boards (LCJB’s) and Witness Care Units;
* focus groups with operational practitioners from police, probation service and the CPS;
* interviews and focus groups with services providing support to victims;
* visits to magistrates court and/ or Crown Court;
* establishing an external reference group of pivotal stakeholders who have knowledge and experience of the subject. This will include academics, and people who are active in providing victim support services. The group will assist with understanding of the issues;
* independent commissioned research with victims of crime through an external agency (in line with other thematic inspections);
* identifying effective practice and lessons learnt and making recommendations for improvement;
* reporting and publishing findings: and,
* consideration and proposals for future inspection activity.

# National interviews

The national interviews will be scheduled to take place following the fieldwork.

For the police, joint national activity will consist of:

* Interview with the NPCC lead
* Interview with College of Policing lead
* Interview with appropriate representative from the Home Office and or Ministry of Justice/ HMCTS
* Interview with representative from the national victim support groups

For the CPS, national activity will consist of:

* Interview with Chief Crown Prosecutor national lead
* Interview with the CPS policy lead
* Interview with CPS Headquarters’ Compliance and Assurance team
* Interview with representative from CPS Direct

For the Probation service, national activity will consist of:

* Interview with probation service national victims lead
* Interview with national lead public protection
* Interview with the victims policy lead
* Interview with Chief Probation Officer

The timings for and location of fieldwork are:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Force** | **CPS Area** | **PDU** |
| 31/10/22- 04/11/22 | Dyfed Powys  | CPS Wales | Dyfed Powys PDU |
| 07/11/22- 11/11/22 | Dorset | CPS Wessex | Dorset PDU |
| 21/11/22-25/11/22 | Cheshire | CPS Merseyside/ Cheshire | West Cheshire PDU |
| 28/11/22-02/12/22 | Cambridgeshire  | CPS East of England | CambridgeshirePDU |
| 12/12/22- 16/12/22 | WYP | CPS Yorkshire and Humberside | Wakefield PDU |

# Assumptions

The key project assumptions are that:

* how the police, probation service and CPS manage victims continues to be of concern to the public and therefore remains high on the political agenda;
* resources (people and finance) will be available to deliver a representative review of forces and CPS areas in England and Wales within the set timeframe;
* the commissioning process to allocate the work to obtain the victim and suspect viewpoint will be successful in finding a suitably experienced bidder; and
* expert technical and procedural advice will be available when required.

# Key dates and milestones

These may be subject to change.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Date**  | **Activity** |
| **Define inspection design** | April-June 2022 |
| **Preparation** | July– end Sept 2022 |
| **Fieldwork** | November- December 2022 |
| **Analysis of case file** | January 2023 |
| **National Interviews** | January 2023 |
| **Report writing** | January 2023- Feb 2023 |
| **Proposed report QA and publication:**  | June 2022 |

# Annex A

* In 2015, the criminal justice inspectorates published[[3]](#footnote-3) a compendium of findings on the quality of services provided to victims by agencies within the criminal justice system. The information was taken from across the full range of individual inspectorate and criminal justice joint inspection reports published during the selected period (April 2014 to July 2015).
* **Evidence-led domestic abuse prosecutions**

Published[[4]](#footnote-4) in January 2020, the report covered the extent to which the police and CPS prepared and built cases with a view to proceeding without the victim if need be, or where the victim had declined to participate. The report included findings concerning the use of special measures to support victims and witnesses, the level of support provided to victims and the management of the risk to their safety.

* **Pre-charge bail and released under investigation**

This report was published[[5]](#footnote-5) in December 2020 alongside a research report exploring victims’ and suspects’ experiences of the changes to bail and remand under investigation. The section relating to looking after victims included findings on risk, recording reasons for decisions and the use of victim personal statements. There were also judgements made on the impact of delays on victims.

* **Impact of the pandemic on the criminal justice system**

Published in January 2021, the report drew on individual inspections undertaken by the inspectorates of the impact of Covid-19 and included a section of the impact on someone reporting a crime and what happened if a prosecution ensued.

* **Rape (phase 1)**

This inspection assessed what happened up to the point of a decision to take no further action in rape cases. The report was published[[6]](#footnote-6) in July 2021 together with a research report evaluating rape survivors’ experience of the police & other criminal justice agencies. The report included specific sections on:

* the response to victims when they report a rape;
* communication with the victim on the progress of investigations and on decisions to take no further action; and
* victim appeals of police and CPS decisions to take no further action (the victim’s right to review).
* **Rape (phase 2)**

The joint rape inspection (HMICFRS and HMCPSI) inspection looked at rape cases that were charged to their conclusion in court or otherwise. The report was published in February 2022.

* **MAPPA**

The joint (HMIP and HMICFRS) inspection to look at the effectiveness of MAPPA. This report is due to be published summer 2022.

Each of the four inspectorates have undertaken a programme of inspections which includes consideration of victim issues as set out above.

**HMICFRS inspections and published reports**

* The PEEL inspection programme is an assessment of the effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy of police forces in England and Wales. It is structured around 12 core questions, the first of which is ‘How good is the force’s service for victims of crime?’. The response to victims is also a main feature of most of the other questions. Force-level reports are published throughout the year.

In 2021, we also introduced to PEEL an assessment focused on the experience of the service provided by forces to victims of crime. This is called a ‘victim service assessment’ (VSA).

The VSA considers the force’s:

* call handling standards;
* initial response to victims;
* crime allocation arrangements;
* investigation standards; and
* suitability of the outcome of its investigations.

**HMICFRS Thematic inspections**

* [**National Child Protection Inspections: 2019 thematic report**](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/national-child-protection-inspections-2019-thematic-report/)

Published 27 February 2020

In early 2014, we began a national programme of child protection inspections. We examine the effectiveness of the decisions made by the police at each stage of their interactions with or for children, from initial contact through to the investigation of offences against them.

In additions, in 2020 and 2021 we have published 16 force-level national child protection inspection programme reports.

* [**A call for help - Police contact management through call handling and control rooms in 2018/19**](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/peel-spotlight-report-a-call-for-help-police-contact-management-through-call-handling-and-control-rooms/)

Published 9 July 2020

The control room is one of the engine rooms of a police force. If it doesn’t have the right systems and processes in place, the force won’t have an accurate picture of demand. This will affect its ability to respond to calls and investigate crimes effectively.

* [**Policing in the pandemic - The police response to the coronavirus pandemic during 2020**](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/the-police-response-to-the-coronavirus-pandemic-during-2020/)

Published 20 April 2021

In July, we announced our intention to inspect the police response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our inspection took a snapshot of policing and assessed what happened from March to November 2020.

* [**Review of policing domestic abuse during the pandemic - 2021**](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/review-of-policing-domestic-abuse-during-pandemic/)

Published 23 June 2021

This review looks at how the police responded to the unique challenges the COVID-19 pandemic placed on preventing and responding to domestic abuse.

* [**Interim report: Inspection into how effectively the police engage with women and girls**](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/interim-report-inspection-into-how-effectively-the-police-engage-with-women-and-girls/)

Published 7 July 2021

* [**A review of 'Fraud: Time to choose'**](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/a-review-of-fraud-time-to-choose/)

Published 5 August 2021

In 2018, the Home Secretary commissioned HMICFRS to carry out a thematic inspection of fraud. This report sets out the findings of our revisit of the 2018 inspection.

* [**Police response to violence against women and girls - Final inspection report**](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/police-response-to-violence-against-women-and-girls/)

Published 17 September 2021

This report sets out findings from our inspection of how effectively the police respond to victims of violence against women and girls (VAWG) offences.

**Super-complaints**

HMICFRS, the College of Policing and the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) are responsible for**assessing, investigating and reporting on police Super-complaints.** This includes collaborating on the investigation and on drawing conclusions, raising complex concerns that may not otherwise have been a focus of combined work.

* [**Liberty and Southall Black Sisters’ super-complaint on policing and immigration status**](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/liberty-and-southall-black-sisters-super-complaint-on-policing-and-immigration-status/)

Published 17 December 2020

On 18 December 2018, Liberty and Southall Black Sisters made a super-complaint to HMICFS. This super-complaint is about the treatment of victims of crime and witnesses with insecure immigration status. It focuses on how information about them is passed to the Home Office for immigration enforcement.

* [**The hidden victims - Report on Hestia’s super-complaint on the police response to victims of modern slavery**](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/report-on-hestias-super-complaint-on-the-police-response-to-victims-of-modern-slavery/)

Published 26 May 2021

On 31 May 2019 Hestia made a super-complaint to HMICFRS. This super-complaint is about the policies and practices of all police forces in England and Wales with respect to the standard of support that victims of modern slavery receive.

* [**A duty to protect: CWJ super-complaint on police use of protective measures in cases involving violence against women and girls**](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/police-super-complaints-police-use-of-protective-measures-in-cases-of-violence-against-women-and-girls/)

Published 24 August 2021

On 19 March 2019, the Centre for Women’s Justice made a super-complaint to HMICFRS.  This super-complaint is about the police’s alleged failure to use protective measures to safeguard women and girls.  It sets out concerns about four tools the police can use/are involved in:  Pre-charge bail Non-Molestation Orders Domestic Violence Protection Notices and Restraining Orders.

**HMCPSI inspections and published reports**

* **Area Inspection Programme 2021-2023** a programme of Area-based inspection, which examines in detail the standard of CPS legal decision-making in volume casework.

HMCPSI have published AIP reports for the first tranche (covering four CPS Areas) and are currently undertaking tranche 2, with tranche 3 expected to begin in February 2022. These three tranches in phase 1 will set a baseline of performance, and a further phase of inspections in 2022–23 will follow up on phase 1 and assess whether the additional resources provided are improving the standard of legal decision-making, value added and grip.

The AIP assesses, in all aspects of volume casework, legal decision-making, the value added by the CPS and the grip it has on cases. Public confidence, staff engagement and management, digital capability and work with stakeholders are examined in the context of how well they support the delivery of quality casework. The casework sections deal specifically with the extent to which the Area addresses victim and witness issues appropriately throughout its casework, and the separate chapter on public confidence includes assessment of key services to victims.

* **Thematic inspections of the CPS and SFO**

The experience of victims has been addressed many times in thematic reports carried out by HMCPSI. The more recent ones (2020 onwards) are:

* **Disclosure of unused material in the Crown Court**. Both the report we published in January 2020[[7]](#footnote-7) and the follow-up in December 2020[[8]](#footnote-8) specifically referenced the service to victims and witnesses, including compliance with the Code for Crown Prosecutors, and disclosure of previous convictions and communications between the victim and defendant or others.
* **Serious youth crime.** Published in March 2020[[9]](#footnote-9), report into serious youth crime reported on the quality of consultation and communication with victims, and the use of custody and bail conditions to protect them. It also considered the dual position of some young people as suspects and victims, particularly trafficked children in county lines drugs operations.
* **Charging** The inspection of charging arrangements, published in September 2020[[10]](#footnote-10), contained judgements on the quality of the service provided to victims (complainants), witnesses and the public. These included the quality and timeliness of decisions, compliance with policies on, for example, hate crime and elder abuse, special measures, and communication with victims.
* Victim communication and liaison scheme Published October 2020. A review of communications with victims, which followed up on a 2018 inspection. The inspection looked at the quality and timeliness of letters, and at the processes in place to support compliance with the scheme.
* **Information management** This inspection, published[[11]](#footnote-11) in November 2020, looked at the controls in place in the CPS to ensure that case information is managed securely and appropriately. This included whether, for example, personal information in victim statements had been properly redacted before they were served on the defence.
* **The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic** HMCPSI have reported twice on this, in June 2020[[12]](#footnote-12) and March 2021[[13]](#footnote-13), and both reports contained a chapter on the impact on victims and witnesses.
* **SFO complaints handling.** Report into the handling of complaints by the SFO published in February 2021. The inspection reviewed 14 complaints, four of which were from victims, and reached judgements on how easy it was to make a complaint, how the complaint was progressed, and the quality of responses to complainants.
* **Witness care unit correspondence** This report[[14]](#footnote-14), published in March 2021, reported on the CPS handling of correspondence from the police witness care units (WCUs). This covered a range of issues raised by WCUs, including the special measures and other support needed by victims and witnesses, and how effectively the CPS progressed and resolved them.

**HMIPPS**

* **Serious Further Offence Reviews**

Published May 2020 , [*Thematic inspection of the serious further offence (SFO) investigation and review process*](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cekv88u%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CMicrosoft%5CWindows%5CINetCache%5CContent.Outlook%5CJPQWU03Y%5CA%20thematic%20inspection%20of%20the%20Serious%20Further%20Offences%20%28SFO%29%20investigation%20and%20review%20process%20%28justiceinspectorates.gov.uk%29).

* **Thematic inspections**

HMIPPS thematic inspections focus on systemic issues that have been raised repeatedly through our core inspections or are considered a wider contextual issue. The programme of thematics are delivered singly, if they are probation only issues, or jointly with other Inspectorates if they are considered cross-CJS issues (these can be with other CJS Inspectorates but increasingly also include Ofsted and/or CQC and their Welsh equivalents). There is greater opportunity to provide a deep dive look at specific issues through our thematic inspections. Previous thematic inspections that have had a victims’ focus include:

Youth restorative justice – 2011

Victims contact scheme – 2013

Referral orders – 2016

Domestic abuse – 2018 (includes specific recommendations around the protection of victims and children)

sexual offenders – 2019 (again includes specific recommendations around the protection of victims and children)

# Annex B

# **Enhanced Rights**

This Code acknowledges that victims who are considered vulnerable or intimidated, are a victim of the most serious crime (including a bereaved close relative) or have been persistently targeted are more likely to require specialised assistance (some victims may fall into one or more of these categories). Such support may include being offered a referral to a specialist support service, being contacted sooner after key decisions and having access to special measures (see Right 4) Within each individual Right this Code highlights where such Enhanced Rights apply.

Once a service provider has identified that you are eligible for Enhanced Rights, they must ensure that this information is passed to other service providers with responsibilities under this Code and, where appropriate, to services that support victims.

* Vulnerable or intimidated victims
* under 18 years of age at the time of the offence, or
* the quality of evidence is likely to be affected due to suffering from a mental disorder within the meaning of the Mental Health Act 1983 or a physical disability or are suffering from a physical disorder.

Enhanced Rights under this Code as an intimidated victim if the service provider considers that the quality of evidence will be affected because of your fear of distress about testifying in court.

When assessing whether a victim is intimidated, the service provider must consider:

* the behaviour towards the victim on the part of the suspect, members of their family or associates, or any other person who is likely to be a suspect or witness in the case
* the victim’s age
* if relevant, the victim’s social and cultural background, religious beliefs or political opinions, ethnic origin, domestic and employment circumstances
* the nature and alleged circumstance of the offence to which the case relates (victims of a sexual offence or human trafficking will be considered to be intimidated), and
* any views expressed by the victim.
* Victims of the most serious crime

You are eligible for Enhanced Rights under this Code as a victim of the most serious crime, if you are a close relative bereaved by a criminal offence, a victim of domestic abuse, hate crime, terrorism, sexual offences, human trafficking, modern slavery, attempted murder, kidnap, false imprisonment, arson with intent to endanger life and wounding or causing grievous bodily harm with intent.

Additional Enhanced Rights that are available for bereaved close relatives are highlighted separately within each individual Right of this Code.

* Persistently targeted victims

You are eligible for Enhanced Rights under this Code as a persistently targeted victim if you have been targeted repeatedly as a direct victim of crime over a period of time, particularly if you have been deliberately targeted or if you are a victim of a campaign of harassment or stalking.

The following organisations are required to deliver the Rights under this Code:

* Police and Crime Commissioners
* All police forces in England and Wales, the British Transport Police and the Ministry of Defence Police
* Police Witness Care Units
* The Crown Prosecution Service
* Her Majesty’s Courts and Tribunals Service
* Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service
* The National Probation Service
* The Parole Board for England and Wales
* The Criminal Cases Review Commission
* The Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority
* The UK Supreme Court
* Youth Offending Teams

Under this Code some victims will receive their Rights through a combination of the service providers listed above and other service providers, including:

* The Competition and Markets Authority
* Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Criminal Enforcement)
* The Environment Agency
* The Financial Conduct Authority
* The Gambling Commission
* The Health and Safety Executive
* Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs
* Home Office (Immigration Enforcement)
* The Information Commissioner’s Office
* Independent Office for Police Conduct
* The National Crime Agency
* The National Health Service
* Natural Resources Wales
* The Office of Rail and Road
* The Serious Fraud Office

Other service providers can also have a role in relation to the investigation and/or prosecution of crimes. However, unlike the police and the Crown Prosecution Service, who have a broad remit to investigate and prosecute crimes, these service providers are limited to investigating and prosecuting specific types of offences committed in certain circumstances. This will determine the way in which, and frequency with which, they come into contact with victims.

#### **Victims’ Right to Review Scheme**

The Victims’ Right to Review Scheme gives victims the Right to ask for a review of a police decision not to prosecute a suspect. This applies to cases in which a suspect has been identified and interviewed under caution, either after an arrest or voluntarily. You have the Right to request a review if the police decide:

* not to bring proceedings in cases where they have authority to charge; or
* the case doesn’t meet the test for referring the matter to the Crown Prosecution Service for a charging decision.

The scheme also gives victims the Right to seek a review of a Crown Prosecution Service decision not to bring charges or to terminate all proceedings. Under the scheme victims can seek a review of the following decisions:

* not to charge;
* to discontinue (or withdraw in the Magistrates’ Court) all charges, thereby ending all proceedings;
* to offer no evidence in all proceedings; or
* to leave all charges in the proceedings to ‘lie on the file’ (this is the term used in circumstances where the Crown Prosecution Service makes a decision not to proceed and requests that the charges be allowed ‘to lie on the file’ marked ‘not to be proceeded with without the leave of this Court or the Court of Appeal’).

**The role of Police and Crime Commissioners**

Police and Crime Commissioners are locally elected to secure efficient and effective policing. They have a legal duty to consult with victims in setting the policing priorities in their area and to hold the Chief Constable of the police in their area to account. They are responsible for commissioning many of the services that support victims outlined in this Code.

**The role of the Commissioner for Victims and Witnesses (Victims’ Commissioner)**

The Victims’ Commissioner has a statutory duty to keep this Code under regular review. It is part of the Commissioner’s role to listen to the views of victims, understand the criminal justice system from the victims’ point of view and try to help improve the services and support available. The Victims’ Commissioner cannot help with individual cases or challenge criminal justice agencies to make different decisions.

**The National Probation Victim Contact Scheme**

Victim (or a bereaved family relative) where the offender was convicted of a specified violent or sexual offence, and sentenced to 12 months or more in prison (or detained in a hospital for treatment under the Mental Health Act 1983 with or without a restriction order), have the Right to be automatically referred within 10 working days of sentencing to the National Probation Service Victim Contact Scheme and be assigned a Victim Liaison Officer. The Victim Liaison Officer will contact the victim within 20 working days of the referral.

The Victim Liaison Officer will provide the following details:

* what the sentence of the court means in terms of the offender’s detention in prison or hospital, and if there are any changes to their sentence;
* when an offender in prison becomes eligible to be considered for a transfer to open conditions;
* if a prisoner moves to open conditions;
* when an offender is being considered for release or for conditional discharge;
* when the offender is released, or discharged from hospital, and if they are recalled to prisoner hospital;
* how to make a Victim Personal Statement where it falls to the Parole Board to decide whether to direct the release of the offender from prison;
* how to apply to read your Victim Personal Statement to the Parole Board, or have it read out on your behalf, or make a pre-recording in those cases where the Parole Board holds an oral hearing;
* how to apply for licence/discharge conditions to reduce the chances of you encountering the offender in the community, or to prohibit them from contacting you;
* about any licence/discharge conditions that relate to you and the date they will end or where a request to change or remove them has been made;
* how to ask for a summary of the Parole Board’s decision and how to seek to make representations where the Parole Board decides the offender is safe to release;
* if the offender escapes or absconds from custody;
* how to ask for information should the offender be convicted of a most serious offence; and
* how to make a reconsideration request (where eligible)

In addition to the statutory offences where the Victims Contact Scheme is offered, the National Probation Service will also offer victims access to the scheme where the offender is sentenced to 12 months or more in prison (or detained in a hospital for treatment under the Mental Health Act 1983 with or without a restriction order) for:

* Causing Death by Careless or Inconsiderate Driving (Road Traffic Act 1988);
* Causing Serious Injury by Dangerous Driving (Road Traffic Act 1988); or
* Controlling or coercive behaviour in an intimate or family relationship (Serious Crime Act 2015).

Sexual offenders who are subject to notification requirements for life can apply to have this reviewed after a set period of time following their first notification, which usually takes place at release from prison. The set period of time is 15 years for adults and 8 years for juveniles. If the offender makes such an application, the police will then carry out a review, including a risk assessment to decide whether the offender’s notification requirements may be stopped. Sex offenders who are assessed as still being a risk will remain subject to notification requirements and will do so for life if necessary.

The victim of an offender who makes such an application has the Right to be contacted by the police to provide their views on the application as part their review.

Victims of crime committed by a foreign national and the offender: - has received a prison sentence of 12 months or more, or a hospital order, and was deportation was recommended by a court have the Right to receive information about the offender’s deportation.

In the event that an offender commits a Serious Further Offence while they are under statutory supervision by the provider of probation services, or shortly after this supervision has ended, the provider of probation services will carry out a Serious Further Offence Review, to investigate how the case was managed and whether or not there are any improvements that need to be made to manage future cases.

In the most serious cases, providers of probation services will offer to share the findings of a Serious Further Offence Review with the victim or their families following conviction of the offender.

**Youth Offending Teams**

If the offender is under the age of 18 the Youth Offending Team may contact you directly. This is in cases where a young offender is sentenced to less than 12 months in custody, 12 months or more for a non-sexual or non-violent offence or a community-based order. A community-based order puts conditions on an offender serving a sentence in the community rather than prison.

The Youth Offending Team may seek your views prior to sentencing and explore whether you want to get involved in any Restorative Justice initiatives (see Right 3), where appropriate and available.

Victims are entitled to receive the following information from the Youth Offending Team:

* information about the progress of the offender’s case upon request; and
* information on appropriate services that support victims if you ask for additional support.
1. https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/cjji/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/06/CJJI\_Joint-inspection-business-plan-2021-23-v1.0.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. a probation service scheme for the victim (or a bereaved family relative) where the offender was convicted of a specified violent or sexual offence, and sentenced to 12 months or more in prison (or detained in a hospital for treatment) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/cjji/inspections/meeting-the-needs-of-victims-in-the-criminal-justice-system/ [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/cjji/inspections/joint-inspection-evidence-led-domestic-abuse-prosecutions/ [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/pre-charge-bail-and-released-under-investigation-striking-a-balance/ [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/cjji/inspections/a-joint-thematic-inspection-of-the-police-and-crown-prosecution-services-response-to-rape/ [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmcpsi/inspections/disclosure-of-unused-material-in-the-crown-court/ [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmcpsi/inspections/disclosure-of-unused-material-in-the-crown-court-a-follow-up/ [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmcpsi/hmcpsi-serious-youth-crime/ [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmcpsi/inspections/charging-inspection-2020/ [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmcpsi/inspections/inspection-of-cps-information-management/ [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmcpsi/inspections/cps-response-to-covid-19-16-march-to-8-may-2020/ [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmcpsi/inspections/cps-response-to-covid-19-dealing-with-backlogs/ [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmcpsi/inspections/the-cpss-handling-of-police-witness-care-correspondence/ [↑](#footnote-ref-14)