

# Making our voices heard

2020–21 Annual Report and Accounts

[victimsupport.org.uk](https://victimsupport.org.uk)

**VICTIM  
SUPPORT**

# Introduction

## Who we are

Victim Support (VS) is an independent charity. We are dedicated to supporting people affected by crime and traumatic incidents in England and Wales, and we put them at the heart of our organisation.

Our purpose is to provide specialist help and services, and to support people to cope and recover until they feel they are back on track with their lives. We work with clients in a way that suits them and ensure their voices are heard throughout their support and beyond.

As an organisation, victims, those close to them and witnesses to the crime are our focus and over the years we have developed unrivalled expertise when it comes to their needs and their journey through the criminal justice system.

## About this report

The theme of this report is ***Making our voices heard***, demonstrating how we – victims, witnesses, survivors, staff, volunteers, and peer supporters – have highlighted the importance of support and spoken out about injustices and inequity.



If you are browsing through this report, please look out for the **voice icon** where we highlight the words and stories of people affected by crime and the people who have supported them.

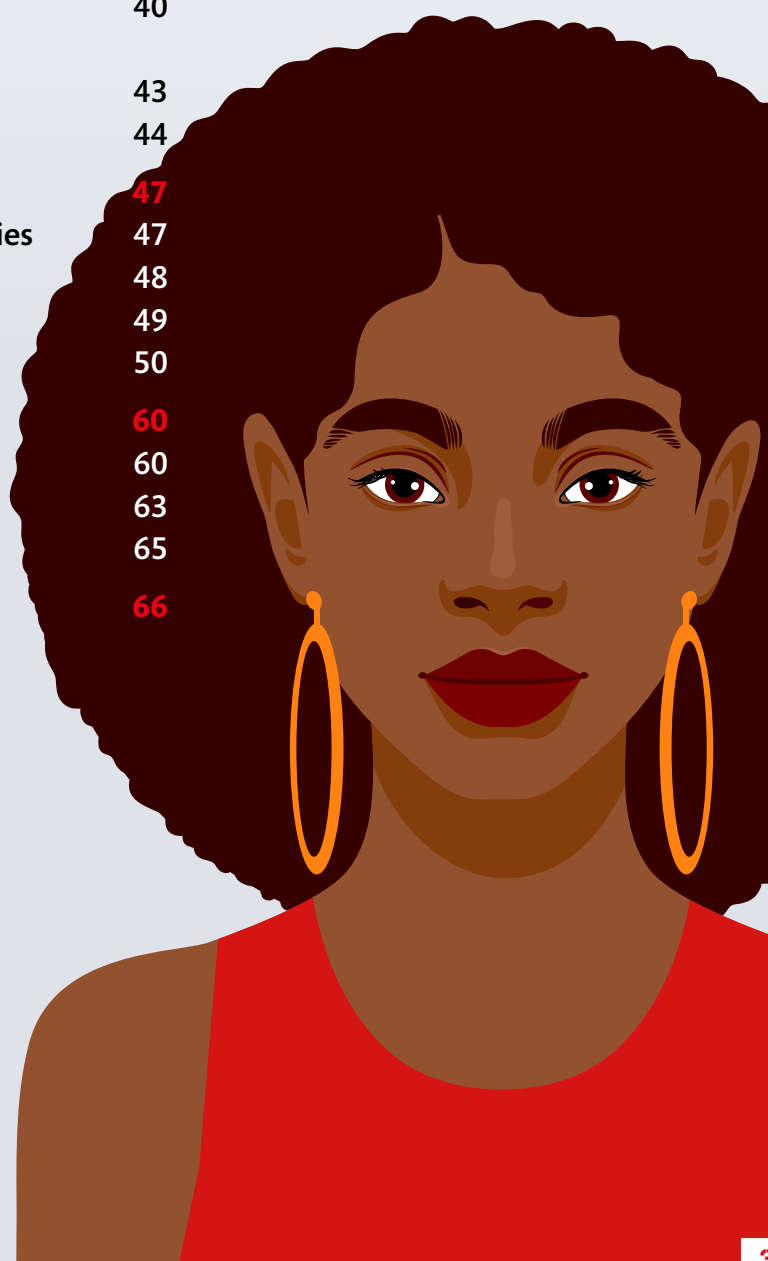


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*'VS helped me get my life back on track.'*

Survivor of domestic abuse



# Welcome

In the year ending March 2021 over 12 million offences<sup>1</sup> were committed – a similar level to the previous year. Yet police recorded crime fell by 10% to 5.4 million crimes<sup>2</sup>. When victims do report crime 22% were not offered a referral to support services and only around 9% of offences are charged or summonsed. We see an ongoing issue of lack of engagement with the criminal justice system.

The numbers of people who contact us directly for support have increased. The number of people we supported overall has increased by 36% since last year and the numbers of people we have supported who have experienced the most harmful of crimes have also increased.

**It is because of this, and the unprecedented year we've had when the impact on those affected by crime has been so great, that the voice of victims needs to be heard louder than ever before.**

The lockdowns and different levels of restrictions imposed by the UK and Welsh Governments in response to the Covid-19 pandemic affected crime and victims' interaction with statutory agencies and victim services in different ways. It also required changes to how support is provided.

Some types of crime have been enabled by the restrictions, while others have reduced as a result. One of the greatest impacts of lockdowns has been where crime occurs in the home – such as domestic abuse, where the frequency and intensity of abuse increased, while also making it harder for the victim or survivor to safely access support.

Referrals for fraud, violence without injury, hate crime and antisocial behaviour also markedly increased, some showing significant increases during periods of lockdown and others increasing when restrictions were eased.

A key concern for VS has been the decrease in the number of children and young people accessing our services, particularly during periods of lockdown. Despite increases when schools re-opened we believe that thousands of children and young people may have missed out on essential support and remain hidden from services.

Regardless of the type of crime experienced, the overall picture has been a bleak one; crime has exacerbated existing feelings of stress and isolation caused by the pandemic, as well as affecting how people have coped.

At the same time, victims have experienced delays in reporting crimes and receiving responses from the police. In some instances they have waited several hours for responses to 999 calls for domestic violence incidents, others have been encouraged to go down a civil rather than criminal route, and many have reported cancelled court dates and delays to trials with some rescheduled to 2023. These, and other findings, were highlighted in our report, *Crime and Covid-19*.

Worldwide events and social justice movements highlighted injustices and inequities in society, left people feeling fearful of crime, distrusting of the criminal justice system, and rethinking and reliving crimes they had previously experienced.

It is against this backdrop and this challenging time for victims that we adapted our services to meet their needs and spoke out to highlight the difficulties they face. We adapted our support, offering services such as video and WhatsApp calls as well as phone calls. Funding from the Ministry of Justice allowed us to expand My Support Space, an interactive self-support platform, and roll out our live chat service to make it available 24/7 for everyone living in England and Wales.

Throughout the year, we have continually spoken out to highlight the voices of people affected by crime and to raise awareness of their needs. We've done this through meetings with politicians and policy officials, our work with partners and communities, and by achieving a substantial increase in our media and social media presence.

1 Crime in England and Wales: year ending March 2021, Office for National Statistics. Released 22 July 2021.

2 Crime in England and Wales: year ending March 2021, Office for National Statistics. Released 22 July 2021.

There are several areas where there has been positive progress for victims. These include the new Domestic Abuse Act, increased short-term funding for domestic and sexual abuse services, the new Victims' Code, and the recent announcement by the Ministry of Justice that the courts will get unlimited funding to reduce the backlog of cases.

This year we have established a number of important partnerships. These include working in London to provide accommodation and support for male victims of domestic abuse, with other national partners to embed seamless referral processes for victims and survivors of terrorism, and with the Association of British Insurers through funding from their Covid-19 relief fund – enabling us to support women who have experienced conflict and abuse.

The theme of this report is Making our voices heard, demonstrating how we – victims, witnesses, survivors, staff, volunteers, and peer supporters – have highlighted the importance of support and spoken out about injustices and inequity.

We would like to thank everyone who has worked with us this year – our staff and volunteers who had to work differently and sometimes in difficult circumstances, our funders and commissioners who make our work possible, and to our service users, who placed their trust in us to support them through really difficult times.



**Diana Fawcett**  
Chief Executive Officer



**Andrew Tivey**  
Chair of Trustees



# About us

## We are LOCAL

Our **skilled local staff and volunteers** are embedded in the communities in which they live and work. This is the basis of the services we provide, and always has been since we were founded in 1974.

The services offered in communities across England and Wales vary according to **local needs and priorities**.

We care about these communities, and we value our **local partnerships and networks with individuals and organisations** that also have a passion for supporting people affected by crime locally.

We create social impact and social value. This includes donating expert resource to other small local organisations (see page 22) and developing social value through commissioning (see page 23).

## We are NATIONAL

We believe that victim services must be equitable and accessible. We provide some **services for people across the whole of England and Wales**. These include the National Homicide Service, our 24/7 free-to-call Supportline, our live chat service and My Support Space<sup>3</sup>.

Our **national infrastructure** allows us to provide secure technology, consistent quality standards and the ability to share insight and best practice.

Our national reach enables us to **research and evaluate what works**, as well as innovating and influencing based on a substantial evidence base.

## We are INDEPENDENT

We are independent of the government, the police, local authorities, immigration services and the criminal justice system. This is hugely important, as we know that **some victims may distrust the criminal justice system** and others – particularly those from some minority and marginalised communities or people with mental health conditions – face barriers when it comes to reporting crimes to the police.

We **work closely** with all these organisations and other specialist partner agencies.

We are  
LOCAL

We are  
NATIONAL

We are  
INDEPENDENT

<sup>3</sup> [www.mysupportspace.org.uk](https://www.mysupportspace.org.uk) is an online resource designed to help people affected by crime manage the impact that crime has had on them. It includes interactive guides that techniques, tips, and activities as well as an online diary.

## We are INCLUSIVE

Over the past year, we have undertaken a significant amount of work to continue to make our services more inclusive. This includes:

- Revising our equality impact assessment process to promote equality, diversity, and inclusion considerations from the earliest stages of service design and organisational change.
- Producing guidance (in collaboration with our LGBT+ staff and volunteer network) to enable our teams to effectively support trans service users.
- Webinars for staff and volunteers highlighting the barriers faced by trans and disabled service users.
- Surveys to understand the views of people from minority and marginalised groups on our digital platform, My Support Space, and an accessibility audit.
- An external statement relating to the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement and the injustices in the criminal justice system making clear our commitment to race equality.
- Internal conversations, webinars and posted blogs relating to BLM and broader conversations about race and race equity.
- Providing more support materials in languages other than English.
- Delivering joint research into language barriers and the criminal justice system.
- Developing our service user involvement programme.

**On average, 913 calls a month to service users were supported by an interpreter.**

We have made significant progress with regards to equality, diversity, and inclusion this year, but we know there is more we can do to improve the experience for everybody involved with VS. Find out what we are doing as an employer (see page 60).

## We make a DIFFERENCE

We ensure the quality of all our services through our Quality Management System which is aligned with ISO 9001 criteria.

Our teams also work to achieve key external accreditations. This year our Cumbria team achieved the Respect<sup>4</sup> accreditation for their perpetrator service, Turning the Spotlight. They were also successful in achieving the LimeCulture<sup>5</sup> accreditation for sexual violence services, as were the Lancashire team and West Yorkshire Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) service. Our West Yorkshire team also achieved the Domestic Violence and Abuse Quality Mark – Level Two, awarded by Leeds City Council. Our Cumbria and Lancashire teams achieved Leading Lights accreditation and our Luton and West Yorkshire Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA) services obtained re-accreditation for Leading Lights<sup>6</sup>.

### Following our help and support:

**75%** felt better able to cope

**72%** felt safer

**74%** said their wellbeing has improved

**86%** felt better informed.

Last year, there was a **95%** satisfaction rate reported by people who have used our services.



4 Respect Accreditation is based on a set of working principles outlined in the [Respect Standard](#).

5 LimeCulture's Independent Accreditation Programme includes a six stage process that incorporates a documentary evidence review, interviews and a site visit. [More about LimeCulture's Independent Accreditation](#).

6 SafeLives Leading Lights accreditation programme offers services, partner agencies and commissioners a set of standards for supporting victims of domestic abuse. [More about Leading Lights accreditation](#).



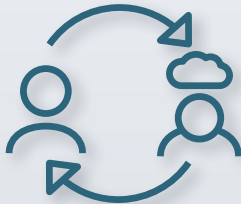
# What we do

## For the individual affected by crime

For many people, crime can be life changing. It may result in trauma, unhealthy coping strategies, issues around safety, sleeplessness, feelings of guilt, anger and shame and loss of confidence. It may also affect relationships with a partner, with family and friends and with work colleagues. It can be hugely challenging to navigate the criminal justice system and know your rights as a victim of crime.



We provide **information and advice**



We provide **emotional support**



We provide **practical support**



We **advocate** on behalf of victims



We help victims **access financial assistance.**

## For all people affected by crime

We are independent of the government, the police, local authorities, and the criminal justice system. This independence allows us to speak out and champion victims' rights for the benefit of everyone affected by crime, both now and in the future.



We speak with an **informed** national voice



We **highlight** the voices of victims



We help **shape** legislation, policy and practice



We **collaborate** with other organisations.



# VS services in England and Wales

## Local and national services

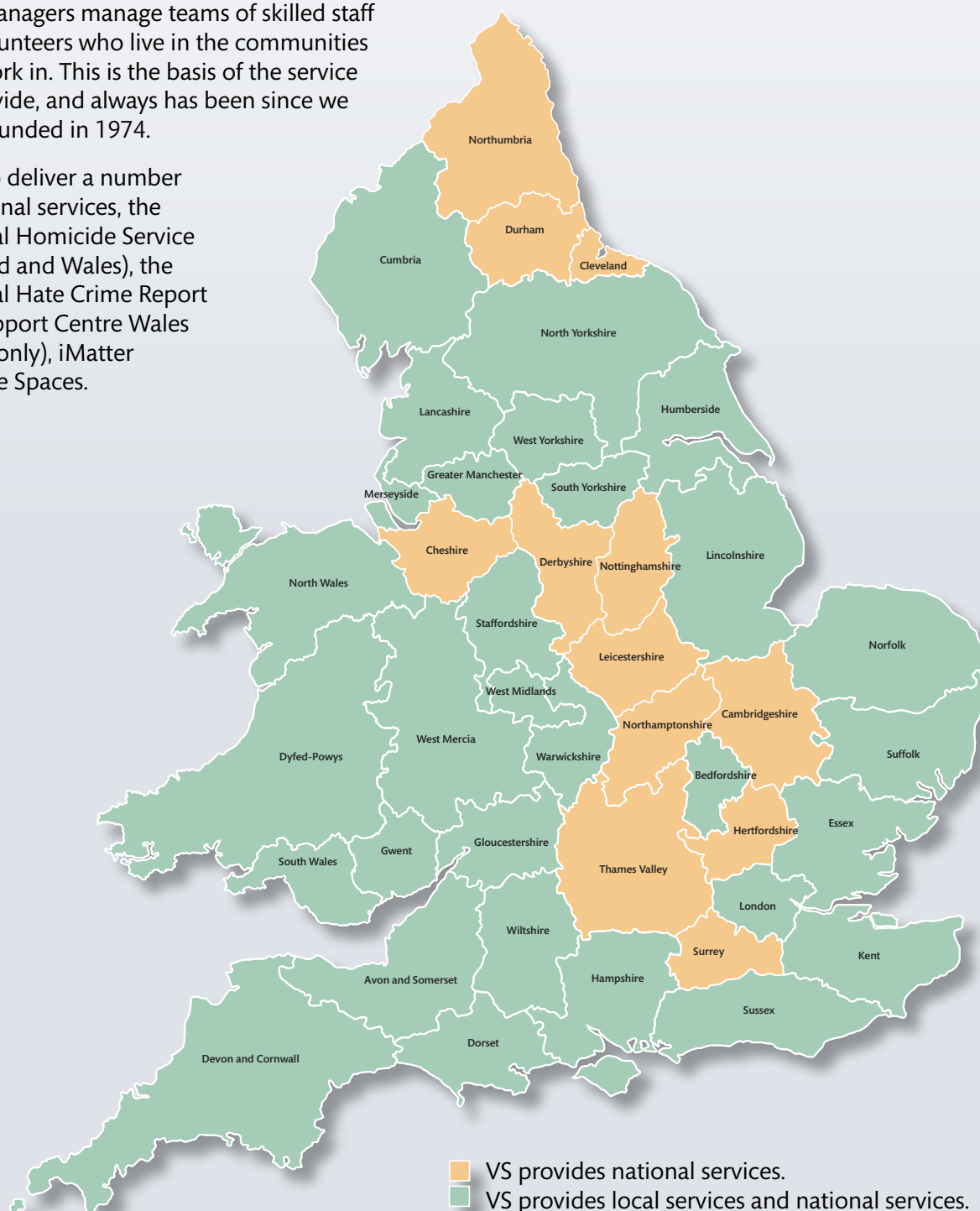
20 Area Managers lead local services in 30 counties throughout England and Wales. They are funded by their local Police and Crime Commissioner/Mayor's Offices, and by other local funders, and ensure the provision of vital victim support services that meet local needs and priorities. Providing out of hours cover and resilience we also offer 24/7 telephone and live chat support and access to online self-help (My Support Space).

Area Managers manage teams of skilled staff and volunteers who live in the communities they work in. This is the basis of the service we provide, and always has been since we were founded in 1974.

We also deliver a number of national services, the National Homicide Service (England and Wales), the National Hate Crime Report and Support Centre Wales (Wales only), iMatter and Safe Spaces.

## Independent victim services

We believe that every person affected by crime should have access to independent victim services. To prevent a postcode lottery for victims, all our national services are available to anyone in need throughout England and Wales, including in the 12 counties where we aren't commissioned to provide a local service.



# Our services

We provide a wide range of crime-specific services and multi-crime services. All our services work closely with partner organisations to reach all communities and ensure those affected get the most appropriate help and support. Some examples include:



## Domestic abuse

We offer a range of services to people who have experienced domestic abuse, including where no report has been made to the police. We recognise that the vast majority of victims are female but we also support males, trans and non-binary people.

Our support is client led and based on what the individual needs. Our Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) and Domestic Abuse caseworkers undertake a detailed risk assessment and then develop an individualised safety and support plan aimed at reducing risk. We advocate with a range of agencies including health, housing, civil and criminal agencies.

In some parts of the country we provide voluntary perpetrator programmes to help people understand what a healthy relationship looks like.



## Sexual violence

Our Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs) help people who have been raped or who have experienced another sexual offence. This includes helping the survivors to take the action that is right for them, supporting them in choosing whether or not to report the crime, coordinating with health and other support services, helping them to navigate the criminal justice system.



## Homicide Service

We provide the National Homicide Service in England and Wales, supporting families bereaved by murder and manslaughter at home and abroad. The service is offered to bereaved families by their police family liaison officer, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office or self-referral. We provide emotional and practical support to bereaved families such as help navigating the criminal justice system; informing agencies of the death; understanding thoughts, behaviours and reactions to bereavement, including referrals for specialist counselling.



## Antisocial behaviour

We advocate for victims by speaking to different agencies on their behalf, helping them understand the process of tackling antisocial behaviour, providing advice on personal safety and home security, equipping victims with the necessary tools to effectively report it, and supporting them through mediation and the court process.



## Fraud

We support those who have been defrauded to deal with the emotional, financial, and practical impact resulting from crime. We help prevent people experiencing further fraud and share information with partners, community organisations and individuals to try to keep people safe.



## Hate crime

We support those who have experienced hate crime. This includes the team running the National Hate Crime Report and Support Centre Wales funded by the Welsh Government. The centre operates a third-party reporting centre where VS can report hate crime to the police on behalf of a victim, or log this with the centre until they feel ready to report.



## Multi-crime

We are commissioned locally to deliver multi-crime services that are broad in scope and open to local people regardless of the crime they have experienced.

Our support is tailored to the individual and includes offering information and advice, providing advocacy (including through the court process), help accessing financial assistance, emotional support, practical support including those related to personal safety, access to restorative justice and referrals to other agencies.

# The impact of Covid-19 and social justice movements on crime

The overall number of referrals of people who were affected by crime who were in contact with VS services and offered support in 2020/21<sup>6</sup> was comparable with the previous year, although there have been some significant differences in the nature of crime and trends during the year.

Despite VS offering support to a similar level of people, the number of people we supported increased by 36%.<sup>7</sup> We believe there were a number of reasons why more people opted to access our services – relating to the type of crime experienced and the impact of lockdown restrictions (see page 13).

After an initial reduction in the number of victims accessing VS services when lockdown began in March 2020, week by week the number of referrals to VS services increased significantly during the summer as restrictions eased and then with the start of the school year. However, we saw a gradual reduction in victims accessing VS services again during the autumn where local lockdowns and restrictions increased, followed by lower levels during the festive period and further lockdown in early 2021. As restrictions eased from March 2021 VS has seen referrals rise, a trend we expect to see continue as further easing takes place.

Referrals for some crimes such as theft and burglary decreased significantly compared to the previous year/pre-pandemic levels (-36% and -49% respectively)<sup>8</sup>.

By contrast fraud referrals increased significantly (59%) and tended to be highest during lockdown

periods. The rise in fraud cases has been driven by increases in fraud relating to online shopping, social media and email hacking, cheques, credit or debit cards, online bank accounts and dating or romance.

Referrals for domestic abuse increased overall by 12%, however levels varied throughout the year with reductions during periods of restrictions followed by increases when these eased. For many people experiencing domestic abuse, lockdowns meant being trapped in close proximity with the perpetrator with limited ability to safely access support services.

Staff supporting people affected by domestic abuse found perpetrators used the fact that people could be penalised for breaching Covid-19 restrictions as a way of controlling victims' choice to leave the home. We found that perpetrators would lie about being in self-isolation and having Covid-19 so that victims would not leave the house. Also incidents of violence were more intensive, increasing in frequency and severity over the lockdown period. Abuse was able to continue unseen.



*'People were stuck in homes with their abusers. There was no reason to be out of the house – eg, pick up children, go to doctor. It was harder to get through to the clients. Counselling sessions were also put on hold.'*

**VS Support worker**

6 In 2020–21 our teams of committed staff and volunteers were in touch with **710,403** people affected by crime.

7 In 2020–21 VS provided support to **153,100** victims of crime, **36%** more than the previous year.

8 The percentage change for all crime type changes is calculated using a baseline as a comparison. The baseline is made up of data from January to February 2020.

Antisocial behaviour referrals have been higher than average levels throughout the pandemic (28%), but tended to be highest during periods when restrictions were eased. Many of our staff and volunteers highlighted an increase in cases involving neighbours when people were in lockdown. For these people the antisocial behaviour felt intense, as they couldn't get away from their home to escape abuse and persecution and struggled to find support or access help from the council.



*'Councils could not move cases forward as County Courts were shut. Cases were left hanging with victims waiting for injunction orders or evictions. Victims found it very hard to live next door to people when they had come so close to obtaining an order to protect them, having to cope with waiting while the perpetrators continue to harass or worse, while everything is at a standstill.'*

#### Support worker

Last year, there were also periods of high referrals for hate crime, in particular race and nationality related hate crime. In June and July 2020 when Black Lives Matter protests began highlighting police violence towards Black people and sparking a much wider conversation about race and racism, referrals were 50% above average.

We issued a statement outlining the discrimination Black people experience within the criminal justice system, and also the fact that many members of Black and minority ethnic communities are targeted, online or in person, because of their race. We used our voice and reach to encourage people who needed or wanted support to come forward.

There were also high levels of hate crime referrals in March 2021 around the time of #StopAsianHate movements relating to the pandemic and coverage relating to the trial of George Floyd's accused murderer. These events helped increase awareness and empowered people to come forward and seek support.

Overall levels of sexual violence referrals did not change significantly. However, there were significant changes throughout the year and, at one point in March 2021 referral levels were 80% above average. This happened after a number of events, campaigns and public discussions including Sexual Abuse and Sexual Violence Awareness Week, the government's sexual violence campaign, Everyone's Invited<sup>8</sup> and news and online discussions about violence against women and girls.

Regardless of the type of crime experienced, the overall picture for victims of crime has been a bleak one; crime has exacerbated existing feelings of stress and isolation caused by the pandemic, as well as affecting how people have coped.



*'Those that were making good progress declined in their resilience and mental health. Those being supported wanted to talk for longer and many were tearful and upset during the call. Some used lockdown as a reason not to go out of their home – they knew that they could go to the shops etc, but because they were scared anyway, they used this as another reason not to.'*

#### Support worker

To respond to this we developed a mental health toolkit to better understand the needs of services users experiencing poor mental health in lockdown. This was created in consultation with our Mental Health and Wellbeing network group.



<sup>7</sup> #StopAsianHate is a campaign responding to a spike in hate against Asian people – thought to be, in part, related to the Covid-19 pandemic and its origins in China.

<sup>8</sup> Everyone's Invited, an online platform where survivors share their stories, highlighted the issue of sexual violence and rape, particularly in settings such as schools, colleges, and universities. Stories include 'upskirting', the non-consensual sharing of intimate photos, sexual harassment, sexual assault, and rape.



## Experience of the criminal justice system

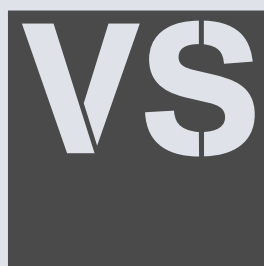
Lockdown created additional barriers to victims' engagement with the criminal justice system. Victims highlighted to staff and volunteers that there have been delays in reporting crime and receiving responses from the police. In some instances they have waited several hours for a response to 999 calls involving domestic violence, others have been encouraged to go down a civil rather than criminal route, for example applying for a non-molestation order, rather than initiating criminal justice proceedings or seeking a prosecution.

Many victims have reported multiple cancelled court dates and delays to trials with some rescheduled to 2023.

## Adapting our services

Our communities of practice, made up of specialist staff working with specific crimes from all over England and Wales, came together to help adapt our services to the changing nature and experience of crime during the Covid-19 lockdown. We produced extensive guidance materials to address the new needs we were seeing from people most impacted by the situation. These included people locked down in abusive relationships, information for individuals and community groups on new types of fraud and Covid-19 related scams, and guidance around rising incidents of antisocial behaviour and hate crime.

We moved the majority of our support online, offering services such as video calls as well as phone calls. Funding from the Ministry of Justice allowed us to expand My Support Space, an interactive self-support platform, and roll out our live chat service to make it available 24/7 for everyone living in England and Wales.<sup>9</sup>



Unprecedented circumstances relating to restrictions to try to address the pandemic has meant that more victims of crime have needed support from VS services.

In 2020–21 VS provided support to 153,100 victims of crime, 36% more than the previous year. This included:

**23% more survivors of sexual violence**  
**33% more survivors of domestic abuse**  
**39% more victims of hate crime**  
**52% more victims of fraud.**

Insight from our services suggest a number of reasons for this increase in victims supported. Some of the changes VS has made to contacting victims during the period, such as an increase in routes to contact services, and victims' availability to pick up the phone and speak has increased the number of people VS staff and volunteers have been able to support. Increases in the proportion of victims accessing VS services for higher harm crime, such as sexual violence, domestic abuse and hate crime, is also a contributing factor. As well as the type of crime experienced, reduced social networks and opportunities to undertake positive activities and increased isolation and struggles with mental health, has led to more victims taking up support from VS.

Despite the challenges posed by lockdown restrictions, local teams continue to engage with grass roots organisations, community groups and partners through virtual events and social media to reach victims and raise awareness that VS services are available and accessible.

<sup>9</sup> In 2020–21 **26,663** live chats were answered and **5,207** users registered on My Support Space.

Reasons why people affected by crime choose to use live chat include:

- They are scared/it is unsafe for them to call
- Live chat is easier for this type of conversation
- They have no privacy to make a call/they can't call
- Online chat is preferable
- They have access to live chat 24/7
- Live chat is more accessible for those with a hearing or speech impairment
- They are unable to call due to having no access to a phone.



*'I can't call any numbers tonight he could walk in any minute – we are just waiting for it to start again.'*

**Survivor of domestic abuse**

In 2020–21, VS answered **26,663** live chats.



## Anna\* used our live chat service to seek support

Anna (15) contacted VS via our live chat service. She explained that a man had taken sexually explicit photos of her, and he was now threatening to post them on social media if she did not follow his instructions. Anna was worried about what people would think of her if these photos were posted online. She was scared by this man and did not know what to do. She had tried to report it by contacting the police on 101, but the line was busy and she was unable to get through.

The VS staff member supported Anna to report the crime online while she was engaged in the live chat conversation. She was also able to assess Anna's safety and explain what to expect from the criminal justice system and what further support was available online and locally.

She was able to spend time listening to Anna and reassuring her that she had taken a positive step in reaching out for support and talking about what was happening.

She was able to assure Anna that she was not to blame, that she had not done anything wrong and that she could contact the live chat service again at any time, day, or night.



\* Name changed to protect identity.

# Trustees' report

## Achievements and performance

**We said we would empower more people to feel safer by providing specialist support and advocacy, and move beyond the impact of the harm they have experienced by:**

**Expanding the range and scale of our services for young people involved in serious violence, gang-related activity, and other high harm crimes.**

### London Domestic Abuse service

The London Domestic Abuse service for children and young people provided support for **159** young people aged 4–17, who had experienced or witnessed domestic abuse.

Funded as a one-year pilot by the Violence Reduction Unit, the aim of the service was to provide wraparound support for the whole family. The service provided each young person with an advocate who understood their needs and supported them to develop knowledge and skills to help them navigate their challenging environment. The advocates delivered specialist one-to-one intervention tailored to the young person's needs with the aim of reducing the emotional impact of witnessing domestic violence.

An evaluation of the pilot project was undertaken. Both the children and young people and safe parents who took part in the evaluation noted how beneficial the service had been and the positive changes they had seen. The evaluation findings will be incorporated into any future developments in this area of work.

### London Youth Advocate Service

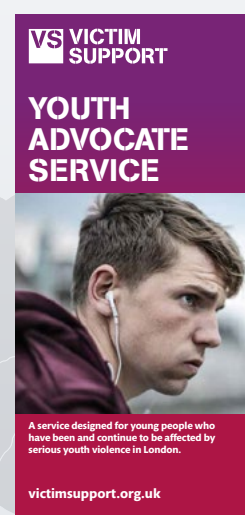
Working in London boroughs that have the highest rates of youth violence rates, our Youth Advocate Service provided confidential support for 67 children and young people aged 10–24, who had witnessed, or had been victims of, serious youth violence.

Youth Advocates are co-located and integrated with local community services, also working with local authority partners to provide a co-ordinated response following a serious youth violence incident.

Young people are directly referred to the service by the police, community services and other agencies, or via self-referrals. Youth Advocates then provide one-to-one support for victims and witnesses of youth violence, carry out group work, awareness raising, group intervention sessions and community engagement.

The aim is to support young people to cope and recover in a way that enables them to build resilience and develop tools to use throughout their lives. Following support, young people noted they had made progress in terms of their feelings and behaviour, confidence and self-esteem, and feeling safe.

In April 2021, the service became pan-London, providing support to young people from all London boroughs bereaved through homicides relating to serious youth violence.





## Nest Lancashire

Our Lancashire team carried out training and initiatives to support children and young people involved in high harm crime. This included delivering educational sessions in partnership with Lancashire Police and the J-J Effect<sup>10</sup> warning about the dangers of knife crime.

Two team members recently completed their Specialist Young Person's Violence Advisor accreditation. This has improved our support to young people at high risk of abuse, including domestic abuse and gang-related activity.

The NEST team work with a wide range of partners including the Criminal Exploitation Team. This year we worked with them to support 15 young people in high harm situations, many of whom did not see themselves as being a victim. The group interventions helped raise awareness of victim services and the Victims Code of Practice.



### Asifa\* was inspired by the support provided and now wants to help others

**Asifa was referred to the Youth Advocate Service by Support Southwark Youth Offending Service after being assaulted outside her school. The incident caused her significant trauma and led to her feeling vulnerable and unsafe. She would not leave her local area, apart from going to school and court, and she would not travel alone.**

Asifa didn't feel able to talk to her family about her emotions. She was lonely and isolated. The youth advocate allowed her to vent her frustrations and express her anxieties, in addition to providing advice on expressing her emotions to her friends and family.

Asifa had a history of experiencing depression, felt anxious and scared following the incident, and had lost some self-confidence. The youth advocate was able to teach her some coping techniques, which encouraged her to take small steps. Together, they also worked on safety planning – providing safety tips on street safety for women and security items.

A trauma-informed approach was used throughout the process alongside motivational interviewing skills. They encouraged Asifa to build on the positive attributes she already possessed for boosting her self-confidence and discussed goals, particularly as she was motivated to do well in her GCSEs and wanted to study A Levels.

The youth advocate provided pre-trial outreach support and was involved in liaising with the Magistrates' Court and the Witness Care Unit to ensure there were special measures in place when she attended court.

Asifa's confidence and self-esteem has grown. She is now able to travel by herself and her relationship with her mum has also improved. Asifa was inspired by the support provided and wants to help others. She is now volunteering as a support worker.



\* Name changed to protect identity.



<sup>10</sup> The J-J Effect was launched by Byron, brother of Jon-Jo Highton who was stabbed to death in 2014. Since the attack Byron has campaigned against knife crime in a bid to spare other families from suffering the trauma he has endured.

## Developing and delivering our specialist services to work with families and perpetrators to prevent further domestic abuse

### Spot and Stop Domestic Abuse programme

In December, we were awarded three year funding from the Association of British Insurers' Covid-19 Support Fund for an integrated programme of work to prevent domestic abuse. The most significant element of the work is the development and delivery of the iMatter programme.

iMatter is a programme for women in an abusive relationship that supports them to bring about positive changes in their relationship. It is designed for groups of up to 12 women and the weekly sessions will be facilitated by specially trained VS staff, who will guide participants through a variety of topics focusing on healthy relationships. The programme is being delivered in English, Welsh, Urdu, Bengali, Polish and Gujarati.

The iMatter programme draws upon similar successfully established programmes delivered by VS in Cumbria and Staffordshire. Delivery of the national programme began in April 2021.

Other elements of the programme include the development of guides for people supporting friends and family who are experiencing domestic abuse on My Support Space (see page 24) and 24/7 live chat for people experiencing domestic abuse.

### Male domestic abuse accommodation programme

In response to increased instances of domestic abuse during lockdown the London service secured emergency response funding to provide accommodation and support for male victims seeking to flee domestic abuse.

The programme began in June 2020 and is a partnership with Respect, Shelter and Nacro, led by VS to support male domestic abuse victims in London. To date, we have supported 38 victims of whom 22 needed to be placed in emergency accommodation.

The funding was the first of its kind in London providing wrap around services, including food and other essentials, physical and mental health support, support to access longer term, settled housing and social care, and legal advice.



**59% of clients were from BAME communities**

**35% of perpetrators were a partner or ex-partner**

**72% of perpetrators were women**

This project has meant that men fleeing domestic abuse have been able to access support that would not otherwise have been available.

## Gabriel was experiencing domestic violence



**Gabriel was referred to VS as part of the male domestic abuse accommodation programme from Respect's advice line. He was fleeing domestic abuse from his father.**

**He had been abused since his childhood which has left him with complex PTSD, anxiety, and depression.**

Following a risk assessment, a safety plan was created, including an application to Nacro for accommodation. We initially placed Gabriel in emergency hotel accommodation over the weekend until his assessment the following week. Gabriel had previously approached the local authority housing department, but was told he was not a priority.

Shelter advocated for Gabriel to be placed in emergency accommodation. We liaised with a tenancy sustainment officer for advice on what private rented properties were possible. Shelter reviewed all correspondence from the local authority and informed Gabriel of his rights, explaining he could appeal and make a new application as his circumstances had changed.

Gabriel viewed many properties and found a flat that he could afford, and we supported him with the rent deposit scheme. Without the support of this project, Gabriel would not have known he was eligible for this assistance and would have accepted that he was not owed a duty of care from the local authority based on their assertions that he was not part of a priority group.

## New Era Domestic Abuse Service

The New Era Domestic Abuse Service for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent (provided by VS) was delighted to welcome our President, HRH The Princess Royal, to see the valuable support provided to local adults and children affected by domestic abuse.

The impact of Covid-19 on local families was discussed as well as the specialist support for women, men, LGBT+ individuals, BAME and refugee communities.

As well as meeting New Era Independent Domestic Abuse Advisors (IDVAs) and other support workers, HRH The Princess Royal also spoke to survivor Rebecca Warrender (see next page), who turned her life around after receiving support from New Era. She bravely became the face of New Era in a recent campaign to raise awareness about the specialist support available and encouraged other victims to come forward.



## Rebecca was viciously attacked and raped by her partner

**Rebecca (29) said:** *"Looking back now, I realise my ex had been mentally abusing and controlling me for many months leading up to the attack..."*

*"He took my car off me, which meant I had to rely on him more. He drove me to work and dropped me off at other places. At the time, I just thought he was being kind, but now I realise it was a way of controlling me."*

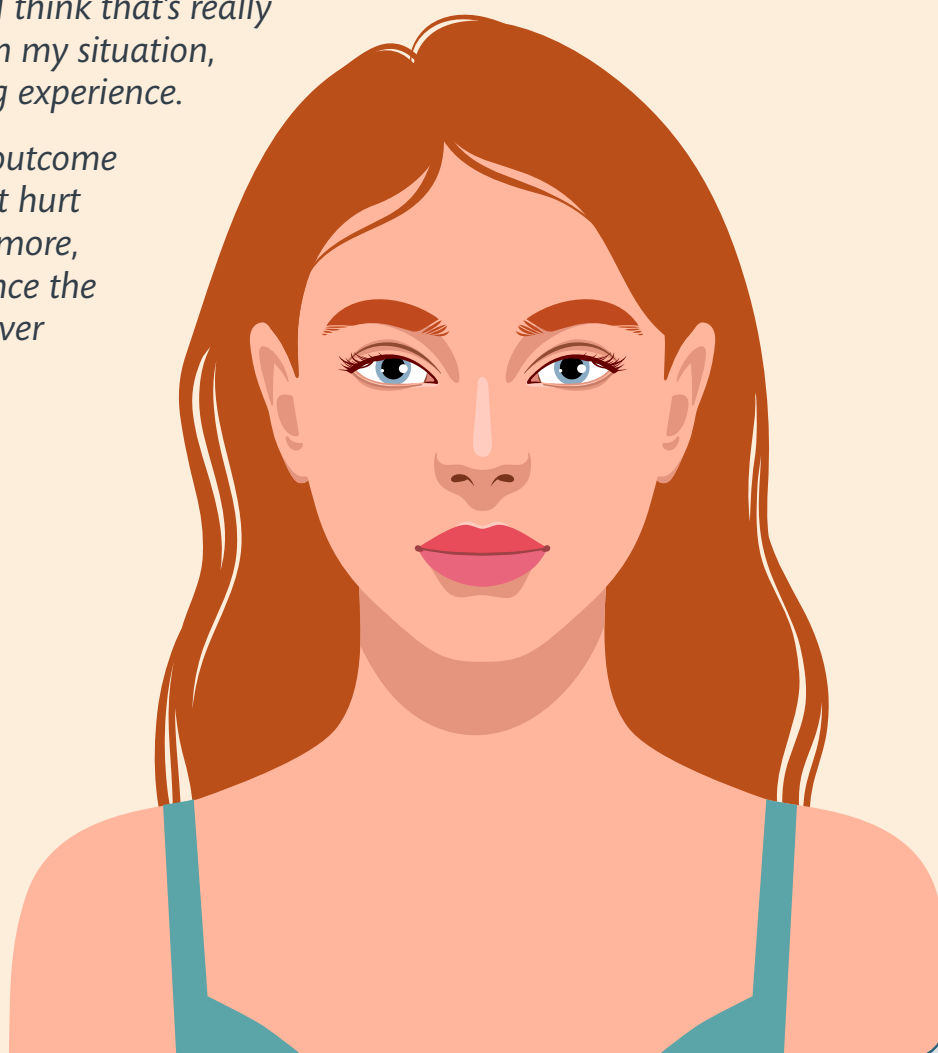
*"He wanted to see me every day and know what I was doing all the time. I thought he was just being nice and taking an interest in me."*

*"Learning to trust again after being abused was one of the hardest things for me. But now I feel I have the knowledge and understanding to recognise the signs of an unhealthy relationship, thanks to the help from my support worker."*

*"I've been so lucky to have the support of family and friends – and my [New Era] IDVA has been my rock. When the case went to court, she was with me throughout. I'll never be able to repay her for the help and support she has given me."*

*"I wouldn't have been able to go to court without her. It also made a difference being able to give evidence from behind a screen. I think that's really important for people in my situation, as it can be a terrifying experience."*

*"Thankfully, I got the outcome I wanted. Now he can't hurt vulnerable people anymore, and I can move on. Since the end of the trial, I've never looked back."*



## Continuing to develop our capability to respond to terror attacks and major incidents and work closely with other partner agencies to ensure a seamless, strategic response

VS was one of four organisations funded by the Home Office Victims of Terrorism Unit to strengthen our immediate support response in the event of a terrorist attack in England and Wales, or for attacks overseas involving British nationals.

The VS element of the service will address the immediate support needs of victims using a trauma-informed needs assessment. This 24/7 support will be provided by caseworkers in our National Contact Centre<sup>11</sup> who will act as a single point of contact for the first four weeks following an incident at which point the victim/survivor will be transferred to the locally PCC commissioned victim service. By offering support from our National Contact Centre, we ensure victims across England and Wales receive the same level of immediate support regardless of their location or the services available locally.

Throughout the year we have been working closely with other organisations to embed seamless referral processes so victims and survivors do not have to keep repeating their experiences each time they require support and to understand the support that can be provided by each organisation.

Towards the end of the financial year a terrorism community of practice was established comprising of expert VS staff focused on developing our internal processes around how we deploy resources when a terrorist incident occurs. The terrorism community of practice also includes external members who have direct lived experience of terrorism. They are actively contributing thoughts and ideas of how we as an organisation can work towards providing the best possible support for people impacted by terrorism.



<sup>11</sup> VS's National Contact Centre is based in Wales. Services include VS's 24/7 Supportline – a free to call service for people in England and Wales affected by crime. In 2020–21 37,895 calls were taken by Supportline.



## Expanding the range and reach of our restorative justice Victim Awareness Courses (VACs) and antisocial behaviour prevention courses

### Restorative justice

We have been working with partners and commissioners to develop our approach to delivering victim-centred restorative justice services that achieve positive outcomes for victims and offenders. We have started the reaccreditation with the Restorative Justice Council and have successfully gained a place in the restorative justice category of the Ministry of Justice Dynamic Framework for probation services.



We have continued successful delivery of our restorative justice service in Warwickshire and West Mercia. The team use a variety of methods including face-to-face conferences, letter exchange and shuttle mediation.

### Antisocial behaviour

In early 2021, we successfully retained our antisocial behaviour service in Islington. Through this long-standing project, our staff and volunteers directly support residents to resolve disputes and recover from the impact of antisocial behaviour. We provide trained mediation, either face-to-face or through a mediator. We also offer specialist support for victims and witnesses attending court. We work with a range of specialist groups that can offer clients support for their individual needs and challenges, and to help them to cope and recover.

Our Antisocial Behaviour Champion in Cardiff observed how the pandemic had a significant impact. Victims reported feelings that were new to them such as isolation, anxiety, and loss of control. The service users we were already supporting needed our help for longer, with frequent engagement and the specialist caseworker providing more emotional support. Common themes we experienced were that existing support networks vanished and victims went from having a lot of support in the community to being confined to their homes without the comfort of family and friends. In 2020–21 the service delivered 882 support services to victims across Cardiff, including emotional support, advocacy, court support and signposting.

### Victim Awareness Course

VS's Victim Awareness Course (VAC) is one option open to the police when they determine that an out-of-court disposal is a suitable resolution to a low-level crime committed by an offender.

Our plan this year was to grow the number of VACs delivered, but as these courses took place in face-to-face group sessions, they were impacted by the pandemic and no courses took place in April and May 2020.

Following a redesign of the course, we were able to make it available online in June 2020 and, as of the end of March, we had received over 700 referrals from 14 police forces. This was a decrease compared to the previous year but, given the circumstances, we were pleased to have been able to continue these important courses highlighting the impact of crime on victims.

**76%** of those that completed the course stated that they would behave differently as a result of completing the course.

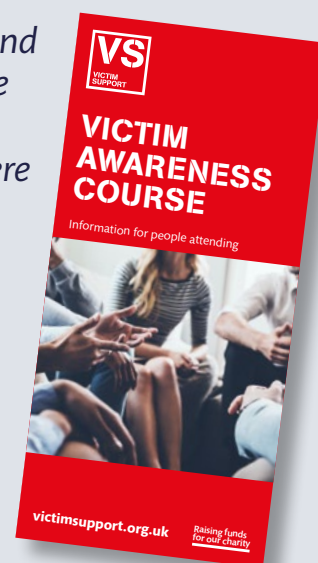
*"It was useful in helping me to think about what I had done and how I could avoid a similar outcome in future. I also thought about the victim more than I had done previously."*

**VAC participant**

*"It helped me understand there were more people affected by my actions than just those who were present at the time of the incident. I know how I would feel if I was the victim of my actions."*

**VAC participant**

We are currently working with four new police forces, so they can refer offenders to VAC in 2021–22.



## Developing our approach to partnership working to enable us to effectively support those most affected by crime and the fear of crime

### The London Victim and Witness Service

The London Victim and Witness Service (commissioned by the Mayor's Office of Policing and Crime [MOPAC]) ensures Londoners who have been affected by crime are supported throughout their journey to recovery.

The VS team works with many partner organisations to ensure that the services can meet the needs of London's diverse communities. These include Stay Safe East and Sistah Space.



#### Stay Safe East

Stay Safe East is a user-led organisation run by disabled people. It provides holistic advocacy and support to disabled people across London

who are victims/survivors of domestic abuse, hate crime or harassment. Stay Safe East is a valuable partner in the London Victim and Witness Service (LVWS) offering. By working with them, we can ensure that disabled and deaf people receive appropriate support, understand their rights and have access to justice. In turn, we have been able to support Stay Safe East by helping them successfully apply for Home Office funding to expand their impact across the country.

By working in partnership, we encouraged more disabled victims to come forward and ensured Stay Safe East had better resources to support them.



#### Sistah Space

Hackney-based Sistah Space was founded in 2015 to bridge the gap in domestic abuse services

for African heritage women and girls. Its mission is to encourage African heritage survivors to report abuse by providing a safe cultural venue for victims to disclose abuse in a confidential environment.

VS have been working in partnership with Sistah Space since 2019 and, over the last year, as part of the LVWS. It has been a challenging year for Sistah Space with both the pandemic and the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement having a significant impact on their client group.

We have extended our partnership with both Sistah Space and Stay Safe East for a further year and look forward to developing an increasingly accessible service for all Londoners.



We were pleased to be able to support Sistah Space with a successful application for grassroots funding and to provide Safelives training for three of their Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs).

### Committed to partnership

People affected by crime are able to achieve better outcomes because we have good relationships with other charities and public bodies.

We recognise the value of working in partnership and continually work to build strong and effective relationships.



## Amy\* was sexually assaulted by another resident

Amy was placed in residential care after experiencing domestic abuse from her husband. While she was in the care home, she then was sexually assaulted by another resident. Stay Safe East received a referral from her sister, reporting that the client did not have a phone, and staff were claiming that the incident had been dealt with.

The Independent Disability and Domestic Violence Advocate (IDDVA) made contact with the client via the landline of the care home which led to a lack of privacy for the client, as staff would ask why the IDDVA was calling. Stay Safe East was able to buy a phone for her to increase her independence and enabled her to engage with her advocate on her own terms.

The client would cry when on the phone to her IDDVA saying that *"he's still here"*. The IDDVA advocated for the client to be moved to alternative accommodation. Initially, the social worker was resistant but, through the hard work of the IDDVA she was placed in an alternative setting, away from abuse. The client was then able to start recovering from both forms of abuse she had experienced.



\* Name changed to protect identity.



## Strategic partner in Devon and Cornwall



In our new role as Strategic Partner to the Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Commissioner, we are responsible for commissioning other victims' services across the region. In our specialist procurement and supply chain management, we will be evaluating services using social value metrics, and developing strong and effective partnerships with providers. We are excited by the opportunity to deliver social value beyond the scope of our own organisation.



**PCC**  
Office of the Police  
and Crime Commissioner  
Devon and Cornwall

## We will develop new services that will meet new and emerging needs by:

### Developing our digital strategy and enhancing delivery of our digital services

#### Digital strategy

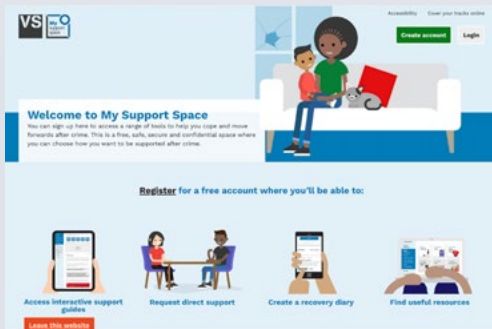
This year we launched our new digital strategy (2020–23). The strategy focuses on digital leadership, developing the digital skills of our workforce, and providing effective, secure digital services to service users.

#### My Support Space

In its first year, over **5,200** people registered on My Support Space<sup>11</sup>, an interactive online platform where users complete self-support guides.

The platform contains over **50** interactive guides for people affected by crime as well as friends and family who wish to support someone who has experienced crime.

The guides have proven to be hugely popular, particularly the ones covering sleep, wellbeing, trauma, difficult emotions, and mental health resources.



*"I have learnt some coping techniques that I have never thought about before, as I normally just try to block negative thinking out my head. This has helped, thank you."*

#### Coping strategies guide



*"When I signpost clients, they really do enjoy it, and felt it really helped them, especially with the sleep guide – also due to Covid-19, they felt it helped them, as they felt isolated."*

#### Support worker, London

Surveys carried out with members of the public suggest that My Support Space is particularly relevant to those aged 18–34, people from a BAME background, those who identify as LGBT+ or those with a disability or communication preference, which makes interacting with a support worker more difficult than accessing the online platform.

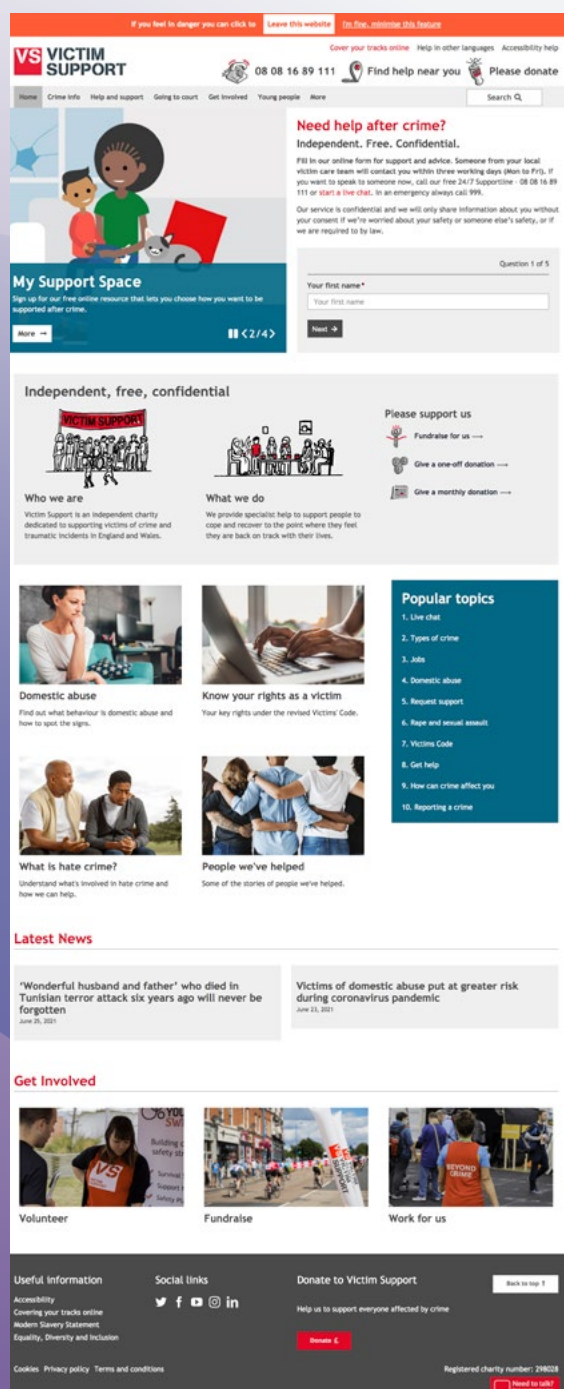


<sup>11</sup> In May 2020 the Ministry of Justice provided funding to roll out My Support Space across all of England and Wales.

## VS website

In March 2020 we refreshed our website to give it a more up-to-date look and feel, and to give us more flexibility in conveying the different elements of our work and the support available to people affected by crime.

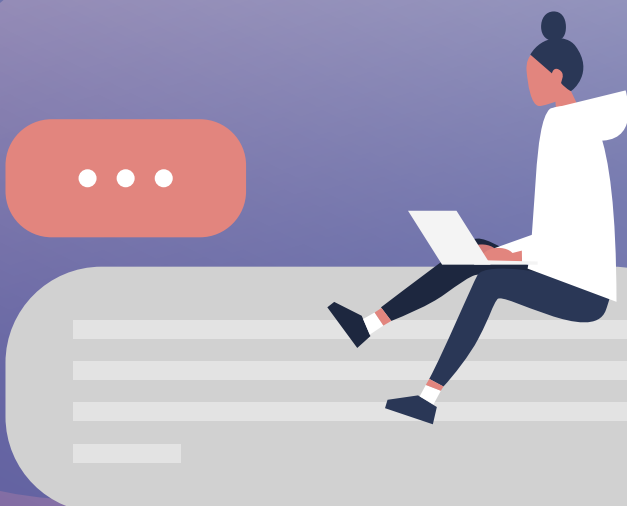
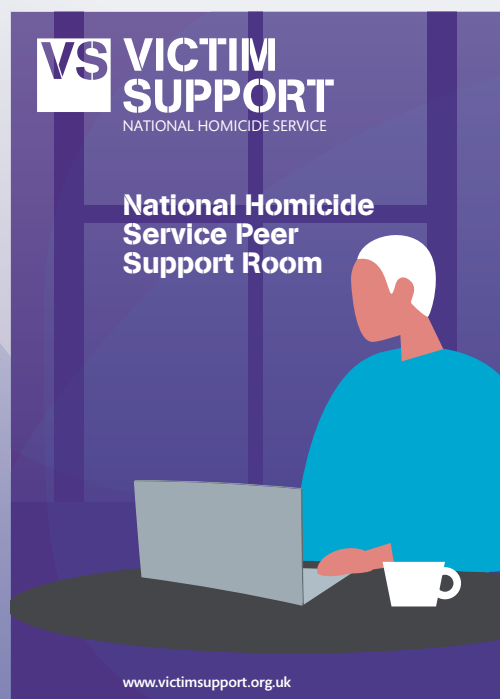
Over **900,000** users visited our website for information and support, a **12% increase** on the previous year.



## The Support Room

We relaunched The Support Room, a peer-to-peer forum for people bereaved by murder or manslaughter. This has resulted in an increase in the number of registered users to **141**, with **37** people contributing regularly.

A library of resources has been developed in the knowledge hub area of the site. This includes webinars and videos on topic areas, such as trauma, sleep, and wellbeing.



## Raising awareness of our services to enable more people to receive support and self-refer

With restrictions and lockdowns in place across the country we worked alongside sector and government organisations to make it clear that support services for victims were still open and available to anyone who needed support. For example, ensuring VS services were promoted on government webpages and taking every opportunity to highlight the support options available to people.

We achieved **6,576** pieces of media across online, print and broadcast formats that mentioned VS (**35% increase** compared to the previous year), allowing us to reach more people with information about our services.

During Hate Crime Awareness Week, we highlighted a **62% rise** in the number of people seeking support after experiencing hate crime as the first lockdown eased over the summer. We made it clear that hate crime is a serious offence and that help and support is available to anyone who needs it.

We worked with national media to raise awareness of domestic abuse services during the lockdown, including a piece focusing on the rise in coercive and controlling behaviour cases that we had seen during the pandemic.

We focused on the rises in fraud seen during the lockdowns and how this was impacting victims, in particular how romance fraud has become more pervasive.



## Mike was a victim of romance fraud

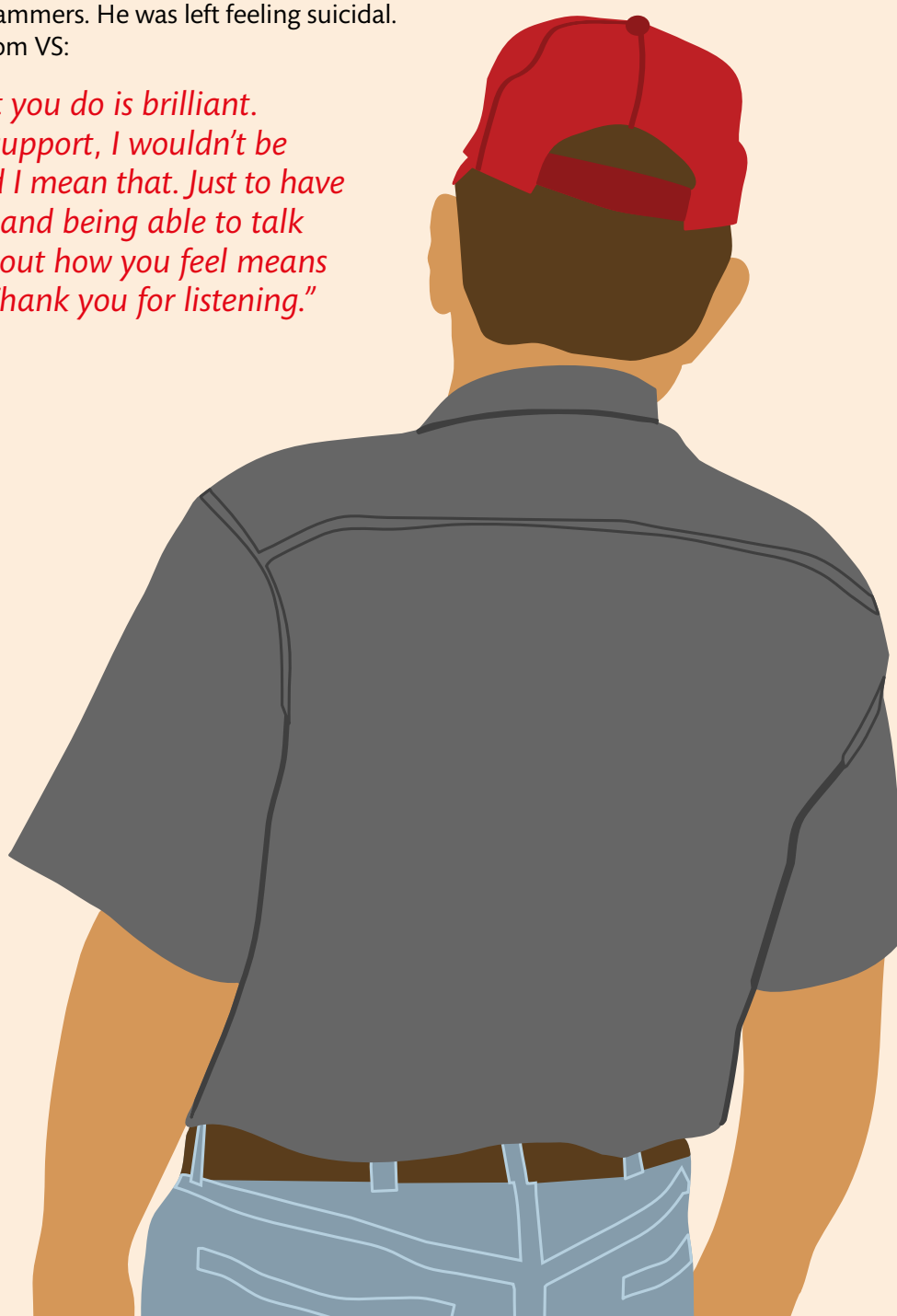
Mike was scammed out of more than £20,000 by a fraudster claiming to be a 36-year-old American woman called Patricia. After exchanging messages for several months on social media, on the telephone and by email, it was agreed that Patricia would fly to the UK to marry Mike. She said she needed help to pay for personal protective equipment and to settle her bills.

He described how lonely he was during lockdown and said that Patricia took advantage of that.

*"I sent her thousands for masks and gloves. She said she needed to stockpile food and look after her mum and 11-year-old son. I loved this woman. I thought I was going to marry her, and I just wanted to protect her."*

Mike reported being scammed to the bank but was too late to stop the scammers. He was left feeling suicidal. He sought help from VS:

*"The work that you do is brilliant. Without your support, I wouldn't be here today, and I mean that. Just to have a listening ear and being able to talk to someone about how you feel means a lot in itself. Thank you for listening."*





## Broadening the range of our services and targeting our resources to meet people most in need of a service

### London Children and Young People Homicide Service

Launched in March 2020, VS's London Children and Young People Homicide Service (commissioned by MOPAC's Violence Reduction Unit) began supporting children and young people (aged 4–21) who were bereaved by, or witness to, homicide.

The service works in partnership to ensure support is provided to the whole family around risks to safety, challenges with criminal investigations, organising funerals and managing wider family relationships. Each caseworker has specialist expertise in areas including serious youth violence, domestic abuse, young person's

mental health support or working with young people who have special educational needs. This enables the team as a whole to provide a comprehensive support package. The Homicide Service works with VS's in-house psychologist as well as liaising with other health professionals. The team is diverse, helping understand the cultural and religious differences following a death, including for example, understanding of different funeral traditions.

The service supports the young person in navigating the criminal justice process and also helps the parent/carer by providing tools and techniques to support their child. If young people are reluctant to engage at first the service works in a trauma-informed way to give the family space, but also providing further opportunities to engage through agreed 'check-ins'.

Support is given over 12 weekly sessions and is planned around the needs of the young person.

### Daniel\* saw a family member being killed in his house

**Daniel (age 15) saw a family member killed in his home. He was scared, angry and upset.**

The service initially contacted Daniel's mum to explain the service, how confidentiality would be maintained and to give them both clear expectations. Due to Covid-19 restrictions initial support was via telephone calls and video conferencing with his mum present. This later changed to face-to-face meetings at school.

Initially, Daniel was reluctant to share his feelings but, after a couple of 'get to know me' and 'games' sessions with the caseworkers, Daniel expressed concerns with regards to feeling unsafe in his new home, as the family were in temporary accommodation after the homicide.

The supporting caseworker and the VS National Homicide caseworker worked holistically in supporting the family with regards to their current accommodation. They also informed both the housing provider and children's services how the situation was impacting Daniel and his family.

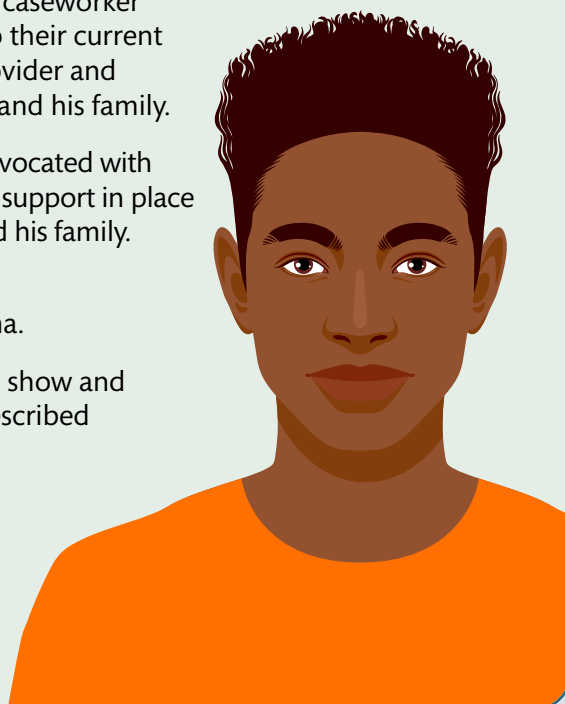
With the consent of Daniel and his mum, the caseworker advocated with his school about his needs. This meant the school could put support in place for Daniel, as well as sharing information to support him and his family.

A much-needed weekend respite break was organised for the family, including Daniel, his brother, mum, and grandma.

Daniel and his mum both said the service helped Daniel to show and understand his feelings, and, after VS's support his mum described her son as 'happy and content'.



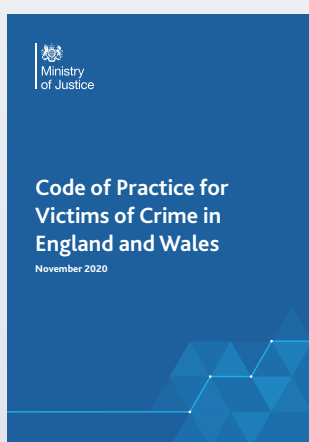
\* Name changed to protect identity.



**We will have effected change by making the case for people to have stronger rights and to feel respected by the criminal justice system by:**

### **Developing our teams' advocacy skills to enhance our advocacy for victims.**

Last year we launched our Independent Victim Advocates (IVA) accreditation, developed and accredited by the Open College Network. This year, we invested to expand the delivery of this 9-12 month programme, so that many more of our staff can begin this course in the coming months.



On 1 April 2021, the Victims' Code came into force. This important document outlines the support that victims and witnesses have the right to receive from police, courts, and other criminal justice agencies. We highlighted this new code through internal

and external channels and launched a new learning workbook for our staff and volunteers, so they can ensure that our clients are aware of their rights under the code and can advocate for them when they do not receive these rights, or where their rights are breached.

### **Advocating for policy solutions that will improve the experience of victims and witnesses.**

We contributed to several high-profile stakeholder meetings and groups, including a Hidden Harms Summit in Downing Street, Covid-19 Silver Command, which focuses on the impact of the pandemic on victims, and the Victim Commissioner's Advisory Group. We had meetings with the Victims Minister and Domestic Abuse Commissioner about the impact of the pandemic and victims' policy relating to the Victims' Law and access to justice.

We submitted evidence to a range of consultations, including on the new Victims' Code, reforming the criminal injuries compensation scheme, new guidance for victims undertaking pre-trial therapy, and the Law Commission's review of hate crime legislation. We also worked alongside other organisations to jointly champion victims' issues; for example, calling for domestic abuse survivors to have better access to legal aid.

A lot of the advocacy work we have done in the last year has focused on highlighting the impact of the pandemic on victims of crime and support services and contributed to the government's action plans to address areas of concern. We have particularly raised concerns about increases in victims and survivors accessing our services due to high harm crimes, issues with accessing mental health services, challenges with delivering safe services to those in close proximity to perpetrators and the impact of court delays.

## Victims' Code

All victims of crime in England and Wales have rights:

- To be able to understand and to be understood
- To have the details of the crime recorded without unjustified delay
- To be provided with information when reporting the crime
- To be referred to services that support victims and have services and support tailored to your needs
- To be provided with information about compensation
- To be provided with information about the investigation and prosecution
- To make a Victim Personal Statement
- To be given information about the trial, trial process and your role as a witness
- To be given information about the outcome of the case and any appeals
- To be paid expenses and have property returned
- To be given information about the offender following a conviction
- To make a complaint about your rights not being met

More information about the Victims' Code and your rights can be found at [www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-code-of-practice-for-victims-of-crime](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-code-of-practice-for-victims-of-crime)

Being a victim of crime can be traumatic. You don't have to deal with it alone. Find out more about the support available at [www.gov.uk/get-support-as-a-victim-of-crime](http://www.gov.uk/get-support-as-a-victim-of-crime)



## Court delays had a huge impact on Gemma's mental health

For people like Gemma, court delays also had a negative impact.

In October 2019, she was assaulted and beaten by her ex-partner. After initially attending court a couple of months later, the case was adjourned because of insufficient court time. Court delays were rising before the pandemic, but Covid-19 exacerbated the situation. Gemma's life was put on hold as the perpetrator's trial was adjourned six times over a 17-month period, sometimes at very short notice. It had a huge impact on her mental health, and she contemplated suicide.

*"I was left with two options – either I end and with it the pain and the misery and not being able to sleep – or I get him to court before it takes me under."*

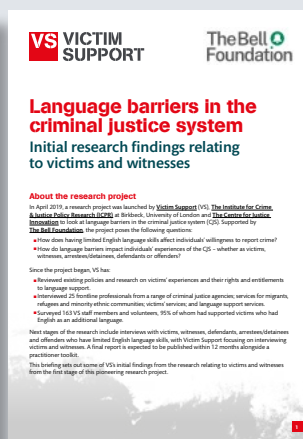
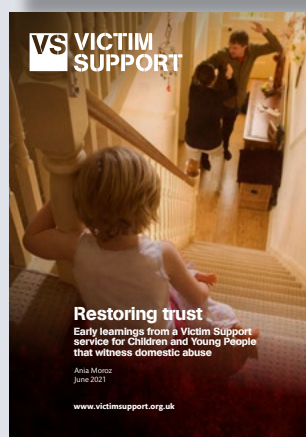


## Producing research with practical recommendations to improve services and influence policy development

We produced a report focusing on the impact of Covid-19 on victims of crime. The research highlighted the impact restrictions have had on victims being able to access VS services, as well as identifying issues affecting victims, such as court delays and challenges in delivering services.

We were able to publish interim findings from a joint research project with the Institute for Crime and Justice Policy Research (ICPR) at Birkbeck, University of London, and The Centre for Justice Innovation, supported by the Bell Foundation. These interim findings focus on language barriers of victims and witnesses with English as an additional language in the criminal justice system.

We have undertaken research across a range of other areas, such as hate crime and children and young people affected by domestic abuse, with plans to publish these research findings early in the 2021–22 financial year.



## Future plans

2021–22 is the second year of our three-year strategy. To help achieve this strategy we have set out the following aims and objectives.

Strategic aim	2021–22 Objectives	How we will meet them
We will empower more people with specialist support and advocacy to feel safer and move beyond the impact of the harm they have experienced.	Building resilience and contributing to people being and feeling safer.	<p>Enhance practice, tools and techniques focused on service delivery for children and young people including develop resources to better understand online harms.</p> <p>Enhance our reach and support for victims of non-recent sexual abuse through development of our service delivery framework.</p> <p>Develop our domestic abuse co-production and perpetrator work.</p> <p>Co-ordinate and develop our specialist fraud practice tools and techniques.</p>
We will develop new services that will meet new and emerging needs.	Reaching more people who do not report a crime or engage with services.	<p>Increase our EDI and social value impact internally and externally.</p> <p>Deliver the VS Digital Strategy and further develop our digital self-help site 'My Support Space'.</p> <p>Maximise victims' ability to reach support through the VS National Contact Centre.</p>
	Delivering effective services in the way people want to receive them.	Adapt our service models in the context of Covid-19 learnings, changes in client needs and expectations, and commissioner policy.
We will effect change by making the case for people to have stronger rights and feel respected by the criminal justice system.	Empowering people to achieve the rights to which they are entitled and to speak out about their experiences to improve the criminal justice system.	<p>Develop our co-production approach and amplify the voice of those with lived experience; Continue to develop our peer support approach.</p> <p>Facilitate a national roll out of VS Independent Victim Advocate training.</p>

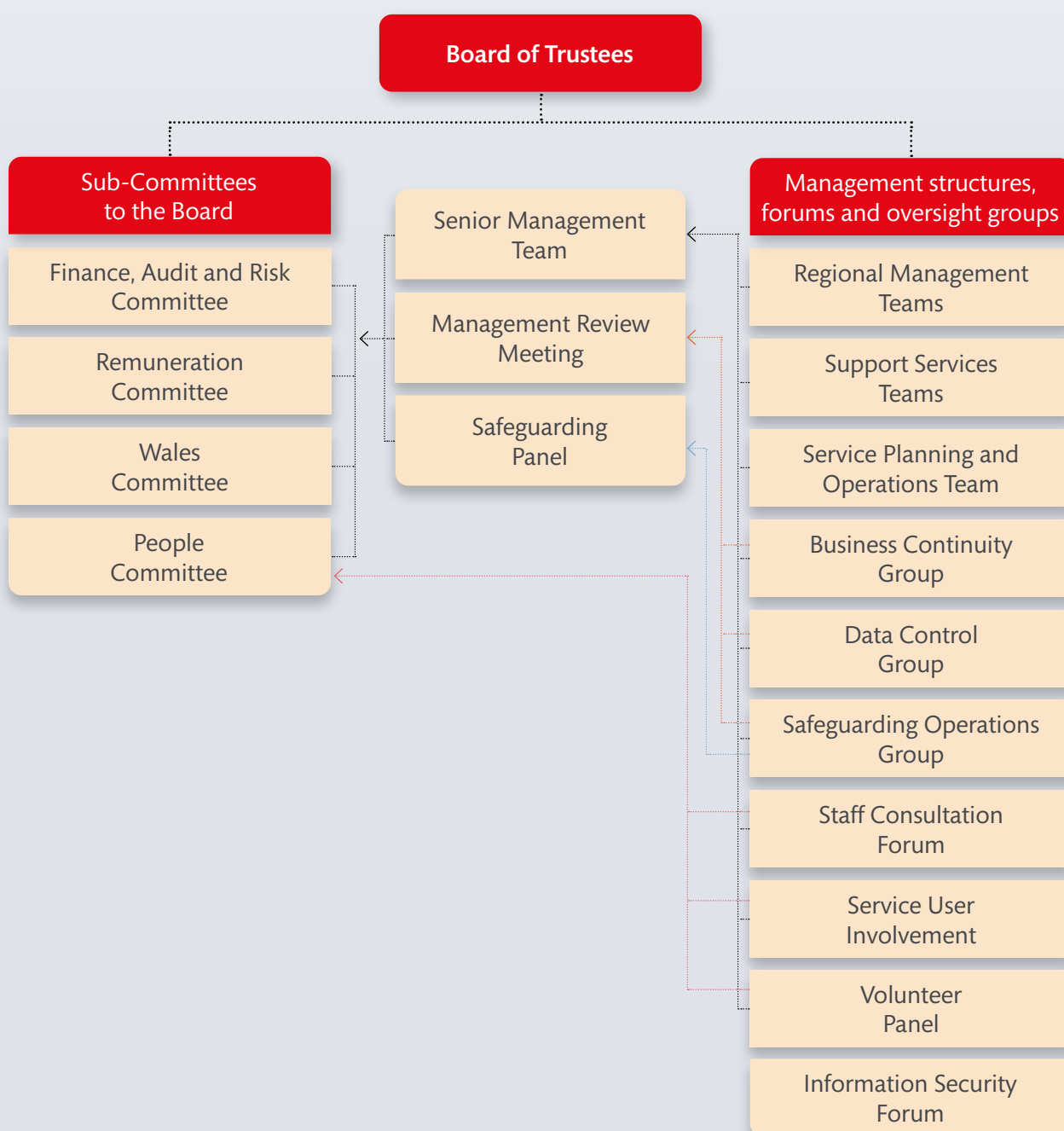


# Strategic report

## Structure, governance, and management

Victim Support (referred to in this document as 'VS') is a company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 28 August 1987, and registered as a charity with the Charity Commission on 17 November 1987. The company is governed according to its articles of association which were amended and agreed by special resolution on 28 February 2020.

## Governance structures



## Organisation

### Board of Trustees

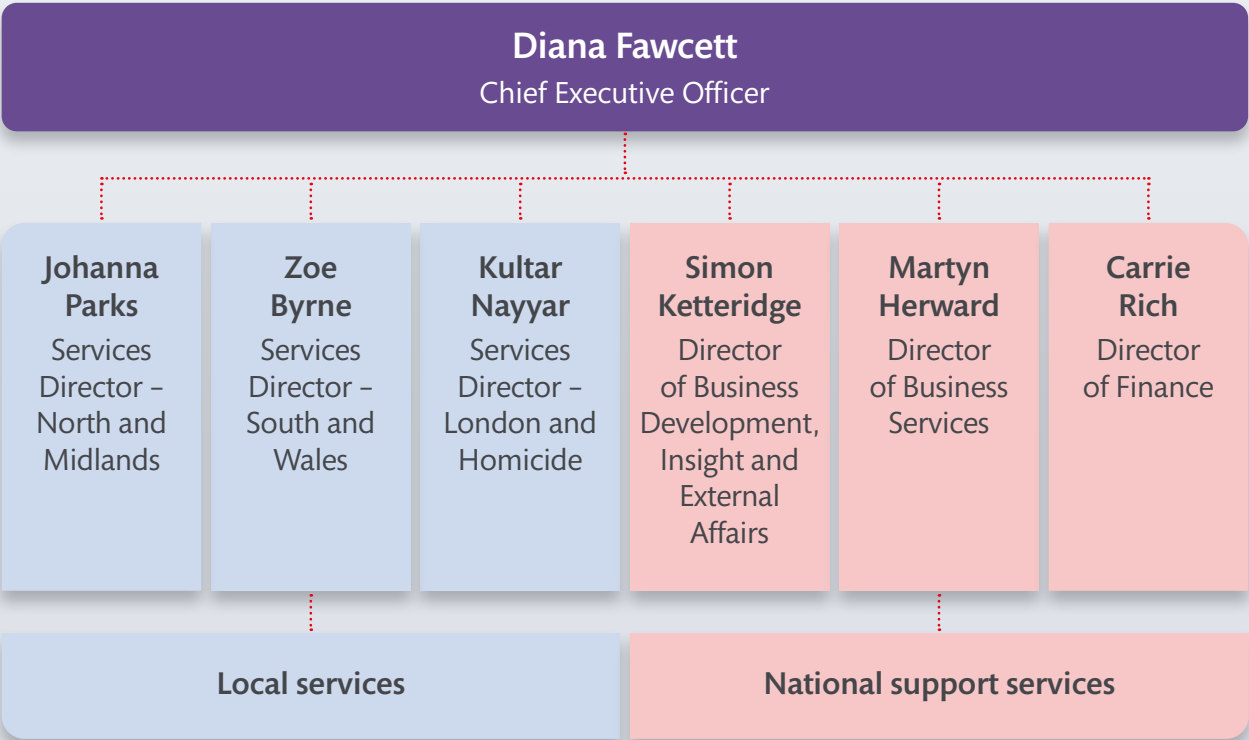
The Board of Trustees is ultimately responsible for setting the strategic direction, management and safeguarding of the charity’s assets, but has delegated most operational decisions to the Chief Executive Officer and members of the Senior Management Team.

The Board approves a Scheme of Delegation that sets out the responsibilities of the Chief Executive Officer and the Senior Management Team. The Board monitors and controls all delegated work through a process of regular reporting.

More information about the trustees can be found on page 66 or on the [VS website](#).

### The Senior Management Team

The Chief Executive Officer and other key members of staff make up the Senior Management Team. Reporting directly to the Board of Trustees, they are responsible for all aspects of the day-to-day running of the charity.



More information about the Senior Management Team can be found on the [VS website](#).

## Subsidiary companies

VS has two wholly owned subsidiary companies: Victims Support Limited (02609147) and VS Trading (Cornwall) Limited (04631310). Victims Support Limited delivers victim awareness courses. VS Trading (Cornwall) Limited raises funds for VS by providing catering services at Truro Magistrates' Court. VS Trading (Cornwall) Limited did not trade during 2020–21 and will be closed down during 2021–22 as it is no longer needed. Further information about both companies can be found in note 10.1 to the financial statements.

## Key management personnel remuneration

The directors, who are the charity's trustees, and the Senior Management Team comprises the charity's key management personnel in charge of managing the organisation on a day-to-day basis. A formal review of the remuneration of the Senior Management Team was undertaken during 2020–21 at the request of the trustees. The purpose was to ensure pay levels remained competitive to maintain stability and quality leadership throughout what has been and inevitably will be a challenging period. The review included a full analysis against comparable director roles across the sector within charities of a similar size.

## Public benefit

The trustees referred to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning future activities. In particular, as required by the Charities Act 2011, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set.

The trustees gave careful consideration to the information contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives, when planning future activities and when setting appropriate policies for the year.

## Good governance

We comply with the Charity Governance Code in all material respects and have a programme to ensure continual improvement and adherence to the code.

## Appointment of trustees

The articles of association determine that the number of trustees shall not be less than five and (unless otherwise determined by ordinary resolution) not more than 12. There are currently 12 trustees on the Board. The trustees are both charity trustees and directors of a company limited by guarantee, which means that their activities are regulated by both charity and company law.

Appointments to the Board are overseen by the People Committee. Trustees are appointed for an initial term of up to three years. They may be re-appointed for a further period of three years, after which the trustee must step down unless exceptional circumstances apply, in which case the Board might allow a trustee to serve for a further term of up to three years.

## Ethical policy

The charity has an ethical policy that sets out a framework for ethical execution of charitable purpose. The policy aims to support VS and its Board of Trustees in recognising and resolving ethical issues and conflicts and making VS a safer place.

## Routes for raising concerns

VS has a whistleblowing policy and procedure in place to enable staff and volunteers to report any matter of concern in addition to other routes such as raising a grievance etc. In addition this year we introduced a third party reporting platform that allows anonymous reporting by staff and volunteers. This ensures there are no barriers to any staff and volunteers raising concerns. All complaints, grievances, and whistleblowing matters, whether these be initiated internally or externally are thoroughly investigated by management and, where appropriate, management or other disciplinary action is taken.

We also run regular surveys to check confidence of our staff and volunteers to report matters of concern, the results of which are reported and discussed through our Staff Consultation Forum. This year and as a direct result of these discussions, our Staff Consultation Forum representatives introduced a Colleague Supporter Scheme. The scheme, recruited to, run and controlled by employees provides further support to empower individuals to raise their concerns through appropriate routes.

## Safeguarding

### We believe that:

- No one should ever experience abuse or harm of any kind.
- We have a responsibility to promote the welfare and best interests of all people to keep them safe and to carry out our work in ways that protect them.

### We are committed to:

- Protecting all service users, including children and young people, who are offered or receive Victim Support's services, from any type of abuse or harm. This includes the children and families of adults who use our services or any vulnerable adult, child or young person that comes to our notice in the course of our work.
- Protecting anyone working for or on behalf of VS, whether they are staff (including sessional or agency staff, secondees or students) or volunteers, from any type of abuse or harm.
- Ensuring that all our activity is undertaken within the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and that those working for VS undergo appropriate checks and continually uphold our commitments to safeguarding.

### Internal governance around safeguarding includes:

#### The Safeguarding Panel

The Safeguarding Panel is chaired by the Chief Executive Officer. Participants include members of the Senior Management Team, a Board representative and we have recently appointed an independent panel member. The Panel oversees safeguarding in VS and is responsible for developing and monitoring policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults who may be in need of safeguarding across the organisation. The Safeguarding Panel updates the Board at each of its meetings and provides an Annual Safeguarding Report to the Board each year.

#### The Safeguarding Operational Group

The Safeguarding Operational Group is a sub-group of the Safeguarding Panel. This group brings together operational experience, sharing good practice as well as co-ordinating and reviewing internal safeguarding case audits.

#### Quality Management System

The VS Quality Management System documents processes, procedures, and responsibilities for achieving quality policies and objectives. It is used to control all policies to ensure that documents are up to date and regularly reviewed. Relevant documents include policies on safeguarding, DBS checks, disciplinaries, complaints and recruitment.

An audit of our safeguarding function will be conducted by an external consultant in 2021–22 in order to review our governance and practice approach.

#### Line management and case review

Staff and volunteers working for VS have regular, formal meetings with their line managers, which include discussions on safeguarding approaches and practices. Regular case reviews also include consideration on safeguarding issues.



## Fundraising

The charity raises funds from individual donors, charitable trusts, companies, and third-party challenge events without using the services of professional fundraisers or commercial participators.

- VS is a member of the Fundraising Regulator.
- VS monitors fundraising activities through its supporter database and by evaluating campaign results.
- In 2020–21 no complaints (2019–20: none) were received about fundraising activity.

VS protects vulnerable people and other members of the public from intrusive or persistent behaviour by ensuring that opt-outs are recorded on the supporter database, monitoring fundraising communications and not asking for donations more than twice in a year.

Fundraising accounts for about 2.7% (2019–20: 2.6%) of our income.

## Brexit

We confirm that we have carried out an assessment of the impact of the United Kingdom leaving the European Union, including the impact of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement, and that the disclosure in the Trustees' Report fairly reflects that assessment.

## Trustees' expenses

There was no trustees' remuneration or benefits for the year ending on 31 March 2021 (2019–20: nil). Expenses reimbursed during the year amounted to £0 (2019–20: £4,392).

## Trustee induction and training

New trustees undergo an induction day, which includes meetings with the Chair, Chief Executive Officer and Senior Management Team members. In addition to being provided with a range of induction materials and visiting our services, they are briefed on their legal obligations under charity and company law as well as on policies specific to VS as an organisation. An annual skills audit of the Board is undertaken. The results provide information on the required approach to training and recruitment.

## Board and Committee membership

### Board membership

A full list of the Board members (trustees) can be found on page 66.

Trustee attendance throughout the year at Board meetings was **95%**.

### Committee membership

#### Finance, Audit & Risk Committee

The Finance, Audit & Risk Committee met six times in 2020–21. Members include Kathryn Adkins (Chair), Andrew Tivey, Les Mosco (until November 2020), Lianne Smith and Moyna Wilkinson.

A sub-committee of the Finance, Audit & Risk Committee comprising the Treasurer, Chair and Les Mosco also met twice during the year to specifically review the financial management of the charity.

#### People Committee

The People Committee met four times in 2020–21. Members include Roger Harding (Chair), Amy Mary Rose Herring, Geoff Pollard (trustee to November 2020 and Independent Member since), Moyna Wilkinson and Derek Burnett (Independent Member).

#### Remuneration Committee

The Remuneration Committee met twice in 2020–21. Members include Andrew Tivey (Chair), Les Mosco (to November 2020), Kathryn Adkins (from February 2021) and Roger Harding.

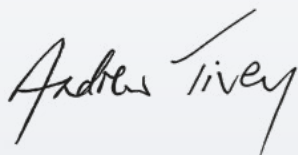
#### Wales Board

The Wales Committee (formerly Wales Board of VS Cymru) consider matters and makes policy recommendations to the VS Board noting whether issues have a particular impact on Wales and whether separate provisions should apply. The Committee is chaired by Andrew Edwards (trustee).

## Chair's report

The trustees are pleased to present their annual directors' report together with the financial statements of the charity for the year ending 31 March 2021 which are also prepared to meet the requirements for a directors' report and accounts for Companies Act purposes.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association, and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102).

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Andrew Tivey'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping 'A' and a long, trailing 'y'.

**Andrew Tivey**  
Chair

## Financial review

2020–21 was a highly unusual year for the Charity. Despite spending the year in lockdown (along with the rest of the country) the Charity won a significant amount of new business for both in year and future delivery, benefiting from one-off Covid funding and as a result has been able to invest in a number of new posts that will enhance future capability. The additional income, when combined with costs savings, delivered a much better than budgeted result.

## Balance sheet

Net assets at 31 March 2021 were £9.1m (2019–20: £8.2m). Of this £9.8m was held in cash (2019–20: £5.9m). The trade debtor balance was £2.9m (2019–20: £2.0m) which represents 28 days outstanding (2019–20: 18 days). The increase in the cash balance was matched by an increase in the level of deferred income to £4.4m (2019–20: £0.7m). One funder paid a three year grant in full in January 2021 which accounts for most of the increase. The balance sheet remains strong due to tight management of working capital.

## Reserves policy

The Board of Trustees and the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee reviewed the reserves policy during 2020–21 and remain of the view that free reserves, defined as unrestricted reserves less the net book value of fixed assets, remains the most appropriate measure of reserves for the charity. Taking into account the business environment in which the charity operates, the board considers that the charity needs to maintain sufficient free reserves to cover: responsive action in the event of a significant financial downturn or setback, contractual commitments, working capital requirements and the development needs of the charity. The Board has estimated that the level of free reserves should be maintained within a range of £3.5m–£5.5m.

## Reserves

Total reserves at 31 March 2021 were £9.1m (2019–20: £8.2m) of which £2.2m (2019–20: £2.1m) was restricted and £6.9m (2019–20: £6.1m) was unrestricted.

The level of free reserves was £6.4m (2019–20: £5.0m) which is above the upper range in the reserves policy. However the Trustees are comfortable with this position; there are plans to invest some of the free reserves in service development and IT system replacement during 2021–22. Reserve levels are monitored regularly and future spending plans will be adjusted if the level of reserves remains above the target range.

## Going concern

The charity secures the significant proportion of its income from service delivery contracts and grants awarded by Police and Crime Commissioners, criminal justice agencies, local authorities and other statutory bodies against specific service requirements.

Contracts and grant income generate a contribution towards the central costs of managing the charity which delivers central HR, IT and Finance systems to support local contract delivery; a technology platform that delivers a highly secure data hosting environment; a case management system with outcome-based reporting capability; GDPR compliance; safeguarding compliance; the delivery of consistent service standards and quality across the regions; continual knowledge sharing; service innovation; research and data gathering on national trends and performance.

The trustees have considered several factors in concluding that the adoption of a going concern basis in the preparation of these financial statements is appropriate. These have included:

- The forward pipeline of secured and prospective contract and grant awards (and sensitivity to historic renewal or win rates) not only for 2021–22 but also for a period of at least one year from the approval of these financial statements
- The rigour of pipeline monitoring and cost controls that are in place to ensure that the charity delivers a balanced budget
- Cash and working capital controls in place to manage the potential risks of late payments by Commissioners and ensure restricted and unrestricted reserves are appropriately managed.

After making such enquiries the trustees are confident that the organisation has adequate resources to operate for the foreseeable future and can adopt the going concern basis in preparing its financial statements.

## Principal risks and uncertainties

The Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring that there are effective and adequate risk management and internal control systems in place to manage the principal risks to which Victim Support is exposed.

Victim Support's governance structure and operating model are designed to ensure that principal risks that might affect Victim Support's ability to deliver its strategic objectives can be managed effectively.

The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of risk management and internal control and reports its findings to the Board of Trustees. This is achieved through:

- Reviewing Victim Support's systems of control, risk management and compliance
- Being provided with assurance on national improvement plans and corrective actions through the work of a Management Review Meeting that takes account of emerging risks and opportunities and reviews the work of quality, performance and compliance review, considering any findings that arise
- Ensuring that appropriate action is taken by management on recommendations coming out of independent review
- Reviewing the nature and scope of external audit. Any matters raised by external audit for the attention of management, significant findings or identified risks are examined so that appropriate action can be taken.

Day-to-day risk management is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer who works closely with and is supported by the Senior Management Team (SMT). The work of the governance committees, the Chief Executive Officer and the SMT is supported by Victim Support's line management structure.

Victim Support's corporate risk strategy was reviewed in the year by the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee and approved by the Board of Trustees.

## The risk management framework

Victim Support recognises that effective risk management relies on sound arrangements combined with a culture of risk management that permeates all levels and operational functions of the organisation. To encourage this, components of the risk management framework include:

- Maintaining risk registers at all appropriate levels in addition to the corporate risk register. Risk review is explicitly linked to the business planning cycle through top down review by the SMT with onwards reporting to the Board of Trustees, and bottom up escalation of risks by individual functions and managers.
- The requirement to assess risk as an integral part of project initiation
- A quality assurance system that meets the criteria of ISO 9001
- Maintaining and testing business continuity arrangements to ensure an effective response in the event of a critical incident, thereby ensuring that the organisation's business continuity management system is robust.

The Board of Trustees ensures that all appropriate steps are taken to mitigate and manage the risks to which the staff, volunteers, assets and reputation of Victim Support are exposed.

The principal risks the Board of Trustees has identified, and plans and strategies to manage them, are set out overleaf:

Risk	Management
Failure to maintain financial viability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Regular review of financial performance, projections, applicable Key Performance Indicators and income and expenditure budgets by the Senior Management Team and the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee, with ongoing reporting to the Board</li> <li>■ Robust financial modelling around income, costs, margins, reserves, cash balances and cash flow</li> <li>■ Management and Board oversight of cash, including ensuring effective control over contract payment terms and effective management of debtors</li> <li>■ Monitoring relationships with commissioners, contract performance and any risks to funding</li> <li>■ Identifying and successfully pursuing new income growth and diversification opportunities</li> <li>■ Assessing lost bids to identify causes and related actions required</li> </ul>
Quality assurance in place is not adequate or appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Quality Management System (QMS) that meets the criteria of ISO 9001</li> <li>■ Management Review Team that has oversight of internal assessment against organisational quality objectives, performance and contractual and legal requirements</li> </ul>
Key projects, such as mobilising innovative digital solutions for key contracts, are not delivered on time, in budget and to agreed scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Regular review by specialist teams of performance against business plans, delivery of key projects and mitigation of risks, with ongoing reporting to the Senior Management Team and the Board</li> </ul>



Risk	Management
Events, such as a serious fraud, data security breach, health and safety incident, safeguarding incident or other compliance failure impact on service quality and reputation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Senior level engagement in policy setting and ongoing improvements to performance management and reporting</li> <li>■ Comprehensive training for staff and volunteers</li> <li>■ Dedicated specialists in safeguarding, health and safety, data protection, information security and quality and performance</li> <li>■ Regular review of, and investment in, IT systems and information reporting</li> <li>■ Review of internal and external safeguarding measures and safeguarding policy to ensure ongoing compliance with best practice</li> <li>■ Compliance monitoring undertaken regularly by Management Review Team</li> <li>■ Governance review to ensure systems are in place that keep the Board informed on key matters</li> </ul>
Physical assets not efficiently and effectively utilised with economy to meet operational needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Regular review, with Senior Management Team and trustee oversight, of property portfolio</li> <li>■ Key asset related transactions reviewed by Senior Management Team and trustees</li> <li>■ Oversight of investment in physical assets, including IT systems, by the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee</li> </ul>
Employees and volunteers with key skills are not attracted, developed and retained to deliver necessary capability, capacity and flexibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Training programmes and eLearning</li> <li>■ Staff and volunteer engagement surveys and follow up action plans</li> </ul>
Financial risk: the charity's principal financial assets are bank balances and receivables which are subject to credit risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Financial policy and procedures</li> <li>■ Regular review of financial risk by the Senior Management Team and the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee, with ongoing reporting to the Board</li> </ul>

## Trustees' responsibilities in relation to the financial statements

The trustees (who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law, the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the group and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable group for that period. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP (FRS102);
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- Prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

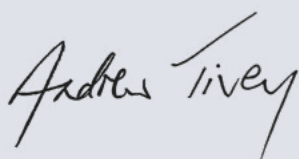
The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions, disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006 and the provisions of the charity's constitution. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and the group and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

### Statement as to disclosure to auditors

Insofar as the trustees are aware at the time of approving their annual report:

- There is no relevant audit information, being information needed by the auditor in connection with preparing their report, of which the group's auditor is unaware; and
- The trustees, having made enquiries of fellow directors and the group's auditor that they ought to have individually taken, have each taken all steps that he/she is obliged to take as a director in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

The Strategic and Trustees' Annual Reports were approved by the trustees on 8 October 2021 and signed on their behalf by:



**Andrew Tivey**  
Chair

## Auditor's report

### Independent auditor's report to the members of Victim Support

#### Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Victim Support ('the parent charity') and its subsidiaries ('the group') for the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities, the Consolidated and Charity Balance Sheets, the Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and the parent charity's affairs as at 31 March 2021 and of the group's income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

#### Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

#### Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the group's or the parent charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

#### Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the Report of the Trustees, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

## Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Report of the Trustees which includes the Directors' Report prepared for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Directors' Report included within the Report of the Trustees has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

## Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Strategic Report or the Directors' Report included within the Report of the Trustees.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate and proper accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

## Responsibilities of Trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 43, the trustees (who are also the directors of the parent charity for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the group's and the parent charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

## Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. Based on our understanding of the charity and its activities, we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to the Charities Act 2011, UK tax legislation, pensions legislation, employment regulation and health and safety regulation, anti-bribery, corruption and fraud, money laundering, non-compliance with implementation of government support schemes relating to Covid-19, and we considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements. We also considered those laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the preparation of the financial statements, such as the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice.

We evaluated the trustees' and management's incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls) and determined that the principal risks were related to posting manual journal entries to manipulate financial performance, management bias through judgements and assumptions in significant accounting estimates, in particular in relation to use of restricted funds, and significant one-off or unusual transactions.

Our audit procedures were designed to respond to those identified risks, including non-compliance with laws and regulations (irregularities) and fraud that are material to the financial statements. Our audit procedures included but were not limited to:

- discussing with the trustees and management their policies and procedures regarding compliance with laws and regulations;
- communicating identified laws and regulations throughout our engagement team and remaining alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout our audit; and
- considering the risk of acts by the group and the parent charity which were contrary to applicable laws and regulations, including fraud.

Our audit procedures in relation to fraud included but were not limited to:

- making enquiries of the trustees and management on whether they had knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud;
- gaining an understanding of the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud;
- discussing amongst the engagement team the risks of fraud; and
- addressing the risks of fraud through management override of controls by performing journal entry testing.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above and the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of irregularities including fraud rests with management. As with any audit, there remained a risk of non-detection of irregularities, as these may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations or the override of internal controls.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

### Use of the audit report

This report is made solely to the charity's members as a body in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's members as a body for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



**Nicola Wakefield**

Senior Statutory Auditor

For and on behalf of Mazars LLP

Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditor

6 Sutton Plaza, Sutton Court Road, Sutton, Surrey SM1 4FS

Date: 11 November 2021



# Financial Statements

## Consolidated statement of financial activities

### Consolidated statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2021

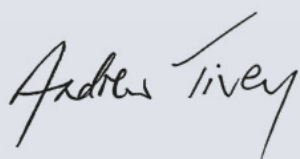
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
		31.03.21	31.03.21	31.03.21	31.03.20	31.03.20	31.03.20
	Notes	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Income from:							
Charitable activities	2.1	26,856	12,917	39,773	25,349	11,001	36,350
Fundraising	2.2	279	449	728	52	667	719
Other trading activities	2.3	210	319	529	281	159	440
Investments	2.4	5	–	5	23	–	23
Other income	2.5	–	–	–	85	–	85
<b>Total income</b>		<b>27,350</b>	<b>13,685</b>	<b>41,035</b>	<b>25,790</b>	<b>11,827</b>	<b>37,617</b>
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	3.1	178	–	178	184	–	184
<b>Charitable activities</b>	3.2						
Service delivery		25,755	13,649	39,404	25,288	11,827	37,115
Victims' voice		600	–	600	510	–	510
Restructuring and development		–	–	–	1	–	1
<b>Total charitable expenditure</b>		<b>26,355</b>	<b>13,649</b>	<b>40,004</b>	<b>25,799</b>	<b>11,827</b>	<b>37,626</b>
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>26,533</b>	<b>13,649</b>	<b>40,182</b>	<b>25,983</b>	<b>11,827</b>	<b>37,810</b>
Net income/(expenditure)		817	36	853	(193)	–	(193)
Transfer between funds	16	(7)	7	–	(2)	2	–
<b>Net movement in funds in the year</b>		<b>810</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>853</b>	<b>(195)</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>(193)</b>
Reconciliation of funds							
Total funds brought forward on 1 April		6,094	2,113	8,207	6,289	2,111	8,400
<b>Total funds carried forward as at 31 March</b>		<b>6,904</b>	<b>2,156</b>	<b>9,060</b>	<b>6,094</b>	<b>2,113</b>	<b>8,207</b>

## Balance sheet as at 31 March 2021

		Consolidated		Charity (2158780)	
		31.03.21	31.03.20	31.03.21	31.03.20
	Notes	£000	£000	£000	£000
Tangible fixed assets					
Property, plant and equipment	8	523	1,070	523	1,070
Investments in subsidiaries	10	–	–	10	10
Total fixed assets		523	1,070	533	1,080
Current assets					
Debtors and prepayments	11	6,555	5,040	6,573	5,033
Cash at bank and in hand		9,786	5,877	9,741	5,866
Total current assets		16,341	10,917	16,314	10,899
Creditors					
Amounts falling due within one year	12	(7,406)	(3,377)	(7,389)	(3,368)
Net current assets		8,935	7,540	8,925	7,531
Provision for liabilities	14	(398)	(403)	(398)	(403)
Net assets		9,060	8,207	9,060	8,208
Funds					
Unrestricted funds	16	6,904	6,094	6,904	6,094
Restricted funds	16	2,156	2,113	2,156	2,114
Total share capital and funds		9,060	8,207	9,060	8,208

The surplus for the year of the parent charity was £853,000 (2019–20: deficit £193,000).

The notes on pages 50 to 59 form part of these financial statements. The financial statements were approved by the Board on 8 October 2021 and were signed on its behalf by:



**Andrew Tivey**  
Chair



**Kathryn Adkins**  
Treasurer

## Consolidated cash flow statement for the year ended 31 March 2021

	Notes	31.03.21 £000	31.03.20 £000
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from operating activities	a	3,909	(784)
Cash flows from investing activities: interest received	b	5	23
Capital expenditure and financial investment	c	-	-
<b>Increase/(Decrease) in cash in the reporting period</b>		<b>3,909</b>	<b>(761)</b>
Reconciliation of net cash flow to movement in net cash			
Increase/(Decrease) in cash in the reporting period		3,909	(761)
Net cash at 1 April		5,877	6,638
<b>Net cash at 31 March</b>		<b>9,786</b>	<b>5,877</b>

The notes on pages 50 to 59 form part of these financial statements.

Notes to the statement of cash flows for the year ended 31 March 2021

### a. Reconciliation of cash flows from operating activities to net incoming resources

	31.03.21 £000	31.03.20 £000
Net income/(expenditure) for the reporting period	853	(193)
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	547	569
Gains on investments	-	-
Interest received	(5)	(23)
Dividends received	-	-
Increase in debtors	(1,515)	(675)
Increase/(Decrease) in creditors	4,024	(462)
<b>Net cash used in operating activities</b>	<b>3,904</b>	<b>(784)</b>

### b. Analysis of cash flows as shown on the cash flow statement

#### Returns on investments and servicing of finance

Interest received	(5)	(23)
<b>Net cash inflow for returns on investment and servicing of finance</b>	<b>(5)</b>	<b>(23)</b>

### c. Capital expenditure and financial investment

Purchase of tangible fixed assets	-	-
Sale of fixed asset investment	-	-
<b>Net cash inflow for capital expenditure and financial investment</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

	01.04.20 £000	Movement £000	31.03.21 £000
<b>Net cash</b>			
Cash at bank and in hand	5,877	3,909	9,786

The notes on pages 50 to 59 form part of these financial statements.

## Notes to the financial statements

The charity is a private limited company (registered number 2158780) which is incorporated and domiciled in the UK and is a public benefit entity. The address of the registered office is 1 Bridge Street, Derby DE1 3HZ.

### 1. Accounting policies

#### Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, with the exception of investments, which are included at market value, and in accordance with applicable United Kingdom Accounting Standards including the charities SORP, FRS102 (*Accounting and Reporting by Charities*) published in 2019 and the Companies Act 2006. Victim Support meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the accounting policy note.

No separate statement of financial activities (SOFA) has been presented as permitted by section 408 of the Companies Act 2006. The charity has taken advantage of the exemptions available in FRS102 from the requirements to present a charity-only cash flow statement and certain disclosures about the charity's financial instruments.

#### Group financial statements

The group financial statements consolidate the financial statements of Victim Support and its subsidiary undertakings, namely Victims Support Limited (registration number 02609147) and VS trading (Cornwall) Limited (registration number 04631310), on a line-by-line basis.

#### Going concern

The Board of Trustees has a reasonable expectation that there are adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future.

The Trustees' Annual Report (page 15) discusses the matters that were considered in reaching that conclusion, specifically the value of the firm order book, the cash and working capital position, reserves and bid activity.

Accordingly, the financial statements have been prepared on the basis that the charity is a going concern.

#### Significant judgements and estimates

The key sources of uncertainty in our estimations that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements are described in the accounting policies and summarised below:

- Dilapidation provision – the charity has provided for its possible liability in relation to its leasehold property, which has been estimated as disclosed in note 14.

#### Income recognition

All income is included in the SOFA when the charity is legally entitled to the income, receipt is probable and the amount can be classified with reasonable accuracy.

Donations and gifts are included in the SOFA when receivable. Income from donated services and goods in kind is recognised as income where the provider has incurred a financial cost and the benefit to the charity is quantifiable.

No amounts are included in the accounts for services donated by volunteers.

Legacy income is included in the accounts when the charity has entitlement, and receipt is probable and can be measured.

Grants are recognised in full in the SOFA in the year in which they are receivable unless the grant agreement specifies that the grant is to be used in a future accounting period in which case the income is deferred. For performance-related grants, income is recognised using the proportion of costs incurred for the work performed to date in comparison to the forecast total costs to completion method.

Revenue from contracts is recognised to the extent that the activity stipulated in the agreement has been completed. This is generally equivalent to the related expenditure incurred in the period and associated overhead costs. Cash received in advance of the revenue being earned is shown as deferred income.

Income from the sale of goods or services is the amount derived from ordinary activities. Income is recognised net of VAT where applicable. Donated goods for resale in the charity shop are shown as income when the sale takes place.

### **Expenditure**

Expenditure is included on an accruals basis and is recognised when there is a legal or constructive obligation to pay. Expenditure is stated net of recoverable VAT where applicable but includes any irrecoverable VAT.

Direct charitable expenditure consists of direct, shared and indirect costs associated with the main activities of the organisation. This includes approved grants and support costs.

Grants payable are charged in the year when the offer is conveyed to the recipient, except in those cases where the offer is conditional. Conditional grants are recognised as expenditure when the conditions are fulfilled. If the conditions have not been met at the year-end, the grants are noted as a commitment but not shown as expenditure.

Expenditure on raising funds consists of direct, shared and indirect costs associated with the income-generating activities of the organisation.

### **Fixed assets**

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £5,000. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of use. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset over its expected useful life: for software and IT infrastructure and fixtures and fittings, this is five years. Leasehold improvements are depreciated over the term of the lease.

### **Funds**

Restricted funds are to be used for the purposes specified by the donor. Relevant expenditure is chargeable to the fund together with a fair allocation of management and support costs where this is allowed by the donor. Locally generated income is normally treated as restricted income as it will be used in the location of the donor; for example, grants donated by local authorities and other statutory bodies will be used to provide services within the boundaries of the local authority.

Unrestricted funds are available for the general object of the charity.

### **Pensions**

Victim Support operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of Victim Support in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable by Victim Support, which has no other liability under the scheme.

### **Operating leases**

Rentals payable under operating leases, where substantially all the risk and rewards of ownership remain with the lessor, are charged to the SOFA on a straight-line basis over the lease duration.

### **Investments**

Investment in a subsidiary is stated at cost less any impairment. Listed investments are included at market value at the balance sheet date.

The SOFA includes gains and losses arising on revaluations and disposals throughout the year.

### **Financial instruments**

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.



## 2. Income

	31.03.21			31.03.20		
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>2.1 Income from charitable activities</b>						
Moj Homicide	–	3,610	3,610	–	3,409	3,409
Local authorities and other statutory bodies	1,569	1,672	3,241	1,573	1,980	3,553
Police and other criminal justice agencies	24,330	6,465	30,795	23,073	4,684	27,757
Other grants and contracts	957	1,170	2,127	703	928	1,631
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,856</b>	<b>12,917</b>	<b>39,773</b>	<b>25,349</b>	<b>11,001</b>	<b>36,350</b>
<b>2.2 Income from fundraising</b>						
Donations	71	6	77	36	18	54
Legacies	33	6	39	16	162	178
Grants	–	437	437	–	487	487
Donated services	175	–	175	–	–	–
<b>Total</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>449</b>	<b>728</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>667</b>	<b>719</b>
<b>2.3 Other trading activities</b>						
Fundraising events	73	319	392	119	154	273
Trading operations	137	–	137	162	5	167
<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>440</b>
<b>2.4 Interest received</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>2.5 Other income</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>Total income</b>	<b>27,350</b>	<b>13,685</b>	<b>41,035</b>	<b>25,790</b>	<b>11,827</b>	<b>37,617</b>

## 3. Expenditure

	31.03.21			31.03.20		
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>3.1 Cost of raising funds</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>184</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>184</b>
<b>3.2 Charitable activities</b>						
Service delivery	25,755	13,649	39,404	25,288	11,287	37,115
Victims' voice	600	–	600	510	–	510
Restructuring and development	–	–	–	1	–	1
Total charitable expenditure	26,355	13,649	40,004	25,799	11,287	37,626
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>26,533</b>	<b>13,649</b>	<b>40,182</b>	<b>25,983</b>	<b>11,287</b>	<b>37,810</b>

#### 4. Total expenditure includes charges for:

	31.03.21			31.03.20		
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Depreciation	547	–	547	569	–	569
Trustees' reimbursed expenses	–	–	–	4	–	4
Audit fees	28	–	28	37	–	37
Operating lease rentals	1,090	–	1,090	1,022	–	1,022
Audit fees for the year were £28,000 (2019–20: £37,000)						

#### 5. Support costs

	Raising funds	Service delivery	Victims' Voice	Total 31.03.21	Total 31.03.20	Basis of allocation
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
Governance	–	28	–	28	41	No. of staff
Finance	3	769	7	779	812	No. of staff
Information technology	7	1,961	18	1,986	2,264	No. of staff
People services	3	809	7	819	718	No. of staff
Other Corporate Services	2	670	6	678	501	No. of staff
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>4,237</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>4,290</b>	<b>4,336</b>	

Support services include central HR, IT and Finance systems to support local contract delivery; a technology platform that delivers a highly secure hosting environment; a case management system with outcomes based reporting capability; GDPR compliance; safeguarding compliance; the delivery of consistent service standards and quality across the regions; continual knowledge sharing; national service innovation; research and data gathering on national trends and performance.

#### 6. Trustees'/members' remuneration and benefits

None of the trustees have been paid any remuneration or received any other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2021 (2019–20: £nil). No expenses were reimbursed to trustees (2019–20: £4,394) relating to travel and subsistence costs for attending trustee meetings and other sub-committees of the Board of Trustees in the year as all meetings were held remotely.

## 7. Staff costs

### 7.1 Analysis of staff costs

	31.03.21	31.03.20
	£000	£000
Wages and salaries	26,461	24,131
Social security costs	2,352	2,088
Pension costs	1,177	1,124
<b>Total</b>	<b>29,990</b>	<b>27,343</b>
<b>Other staff costs</b>		
External consultancy	470	278
Redundancy and termination	79	117
Agency staff	427	230
<b>Total</b>	<b>976</b>	<b>625</b>
<b>Total staff costs</b>	<b>30,966</b>	<b>27,968</b>

Redundancy costs paid in the year were £0.08m (2019–20: £0.12m). Agency staff comprises staff to provide long-term illness and vacancy cover.

### 7.2 Key management personnel

	31.03.21	31.03.20
	£000	£000
Remuneration to key management personnel	558	484

The key management personnel are listed on page 66.

### 7.3 The number of employees paid more than £60,000 was:

	31.03.21	31.03.20
	£000	£000
£60,001–£70,000	5	2
£70,001–£80,000	5	4
£80,001–£90,000	–	–
£90,001–£100,000	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>

The total pension contributions for the above higher paid staff were £40,827 (2019–20: £28,922).

### 7.4 Number of employees

The average number of employees is split as follows:

	31.03.21	31.03.20
	£000	£000
Support and management	79	71
Service delivery	840	777
National Homicide Service	56	47
<b>Total</b>	<b>975</b>	<b>895</b>

Annual leave carry over at 31 March 2021 was calculated at £355,472 (2019–20: £308,773) which is 0.9% (2019–20: 0.8%) of total expenditure. No provision has been made for this amount as it is not material.

### 7.5 Volunteers

A total of 879 (2019–20: 1,245) volunteers generously gave 42,540 (2019–20: 77,177) hours of their time to Victim Support in 2020–21.

## 8. Property, plant and equipment

	Long leasehold £000	Fixtures & fittings £000	Office equipment £000	Software & IT infrastructure £000	Total £000
<b>Cost</b>					
At 1 April 2020	287	45	49	4,884	5,265
Additions	–	–	–	–	–
Disposals	–	–	–	–	–
<b>At 31 March 2021</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>4,884</b>	<b>5,265</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>					
At 1 April 2020	(242)	(45)	(49)	(3,859)	(4,195)
Charge for the year	(21)	–	–	(526)	(547)
Disposals	–	–	–	–	–
<b>At 31 March 2021</b>	<b>(263)</b>	<b>(45)</b>	<b>(49)</b>	<b>(4,385)</b>	<b>(4,742)</b>
<b>Net book value at 31 March 2021</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>499</b>	<b>523</b>
<b>Net book value at 31 March 2020</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>1,025</b>	<b>1,070</b>

## 9. Operating lease commitments

Total commitments under operating leases were as follows:

	31.03.21 £000	31.03.20 £000
Payable within one year	1,151	1,242
Payable between two and five years	830	1,623
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,981</b>	<b>2,865</b>

## 10. Investments

### 10.1 Investments in subsidiaries

Victims Support Limited (02609147), a company incorporated in the UK, is wholly owned by the charitable company. Audited accounts are filed with the Registrar of Companies. The cost of this investment is £10,000. A summary of the results for the year and the financial position at 31 March 2021 are shown in the table below.

VS Trading (Cornwall) Limited (04630210) is wholly owned by the charitable company. Audited accounts are filed with the Registrar of Companies. The cost of this investment is £1. The company raised funds for Victim Support by providing catering services at Truro Magistrates Court. A summary of the results for the year and the financial position at 31 March 2021 are shown in the table below. This company will be wound up during 2021–22.

	Victims Support Limited		VS Trading (Cornwall) Limited	
	31.03.21	31.03.20	31.03.21	31.03.20
	£	£	£	£
Turnover	42,128	68,343	–	7,528
Cost of sales	(1,638)	(23,920)	–	(283)
<b>Gross profit</b>	40,490	44,423	–	7,245
Administrative expenses	(33,753)	(41,528)	–	(2,702)
<b>Operating profit/(loss)</b>	6,737	2,895	–	4,543
Donation to VS	(6,737)	(2,145)	–	(4,543)
Reported profit/(loss)	–	750	–	–
<b>Statement of financial position</b>				
Debtors	4,775	7,895	–	–
Cash at bank	45,749	10,987	1	1
Creditors	(40,524)	(8,882)	–	–
Net assets	10,000	10,000	1	1

## 11. Debtors

	Consolidated		Charity	
	31.03.21	31.03.20	31.03.21	31.03.20
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Trade debtors	2,945	1,982	2,941	1,975
Inter-company debtors	–	–	23	–
Other debtors	36	51	36	51
Prepayments	695	827	695	827
Accrued income	2,879	2,180	2,878	2,180
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,555</b>	<b>5,040</b>	<b>6,573</b>	<b>5,033</b>

## 12. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Consolidated		Charity	
	31.03.21	31.03.20	31.03.21	31.03.20
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Trade creditors	1,081	593	1,081	593
Inter-company creditors	–	–	–	3
Taxation and social security	1,382	1,352	1,369	1,344
Other creditors	189	174	189	174
Accruals	342	547	342	547
Deferred income	4,412	711	4,408	707
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,406</b>	<b>3,377</b>	<b>7,389</b>	<b>3,368</b>



### 13. Deferred income

	At 01.04.20	Deferred in the year	Released in the year	Balance at 31.03.21
	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Total</b>	<b>711</b>	<b>4,412</b>	<b>(711)</b>	<b>4,412</b>

### 14. Provisions for liabilities

	Balance at 01.04.20	Movement in provision	Balance at 31.03.21
	£000	£000	£000
<b>Total</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>(5)</b>	<b>398</b>

The provision relates to dilapidations on leasehold properties where Victim Support has a contractual obligation to bear such costs. The dilapidations will become payable on lease terminations.

### 15. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	31.03.21 Total funds	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	31.03.20 Total funds
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Fixed assets	523	–	523	1,070	–	1,070
Current assets	10,385	5,956	16,341	8,013	2,904	10,917
Current liabilities	(3,606)	(3,800)	(7,406)	(2,586)	(791)	(3,377)
Provision for liabilities	(398)	–	(398)	(403)	–	(403)
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,904</b>	<b>2,156</b>	<b>9,060</b>	<b>6,094</b>	<b>2,113</b>	<b>8,207</b>

## 16. Movement in funds

	At 01.04.20	Incoming resources	Outgoing resources	Transfer between funds	At 31.03.21
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>16.1 Restricted funds</b>					
National Homicide Service – MoJ	45	2,907	(2,951)	–	1
National Homicide Service – non MoJ	63	761	(767)	–	57
Other central restricted	79	–	–	–	79
<b>Total – central</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>3,668</b>	<b>(3,718)</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>137</b>
Restricted by location					
Wales and West	406	3,367	(3,319)	–	454
London	802	3,935	(3,974)	–	763
Northern England and East Midlands	600	1,582	(1,528)	(2)	652
South East	118	1,133	(1,110)	9	150
<b>Total – locality</b>	<b>1,926</b>	<b>10,017</b>	<b>(9,931)</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2,019</b>
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>2,113</b>	<b>13,685</b>	<b>(13,649)</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2,156</b>
<b>16.2 Unrestricted funds</b>	<b>6,094</b>	<b>27,350</b>	<b>(26,533)</b>	<b>(7)</b>	<b>6,904</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>8,207</b>	<b>41,035</b>	<b>(40,182)</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>9,060</b>

	At 01.04.19	Incoming resources	Outgoing resources	Transfer between funds	At 31.03.20
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>16.1 Restricted funds</b>					
National Homicide Service – MoJ	–	3,409	(3,364)	–	45
National Homicide Service – non MoJ	41	291	(269)	–	63
Other central restricted	83	–	(4)	–	79
<b>Total – central</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>3,700</b>	<b>(3,637)</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>187</b>
Restricted by location					
Wales and West	256	2,647	(2,502)	5	406
London	799	3,231	(3,222)	(6)	802
Northern England and East Midlands	725	754	(865)	(14)	600
South East	207	1,495	(1,601)	17	118
<b>Total – locality</b>	<b>1,987</b>	<b>8,127</b>	<b>(8,190)</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1,926</b>
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>2,111</b>	<b>11,827</b>	<b>(11,827)</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2,113</b>
<b>16.2 Unrestricted funds</b>	<b>6,289</b>	<b>25,790</b>	<b>(25,983)</b>	<b>(2)</b>	<b>6,094</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>8,400</b>	<b>37,617</b>	<b>(37,810)</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>8,207</b>

**Moj grants:** during the year the charity received £2.9m (2019–20: £3.4m) in grant-in-aid restricted for the National Homicide Service.

**Funds restricted by purpose and location:** The locality reserves restricted by purpose and location will be spent on services as specified by the donors or funders.

**Unrestricted funds:** These are available for the general objectives of the charity.

**Other restricted funds:** These are funds set aside to support small projects such as Supportline and Safer Schools.

## 17. Related party transactions

Other than transactions with the subsidiary company (Victims Support Limited) there were no related party transactions during the year (2019–20: nil). Transactions with the Victim Support charity in the year totalled £33,753 (2019–20: £41,528) which related to costs incurred by the trading company on victim awareness courses, paid by the charity on behalf of the subsidiary. At 31 March 2021 Victim Support owed £23,430 to Victims Support Limited (2019–20: Victim Support owed £2,998 to Victims Support Limited).

# Thank you

## Our people

In what has been an unprecedented year we would like to say a huge thank you to our frontline staff and volunteers for the way they have risen to the challenge and continue to support our clients in challenging circumstances.

A huge thanks also goes to our support services staff who ensured that we were able to adapt quickly to keep our services running and to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our clients, staff and volunteers.

## Equality, diversity, and inclusion

Several social justice movements and news stories have brought issues of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) to the forefront this year. We take pride in being a diverse organisation that is committed to supporting and promoting equality and inclusion in the services we provide, but also in our employee and volunteer practices.

Key activities with staff and volunteers undertaken this year include:

- Race Matters training for our Senior Management Team and Board of Trustees.
- An EDI recruitment audit to identify potential barriers to external applicants applying for roles and to embed EDI further within our recruitment practices. As a result of this audit, we updated our EDI statement on job adverts. We have expanded the information provided on our website regarding our commitment to EDI and have trialled the use of diversity-specific platforms to address areas of underrepresentation.
- Publishing our ethnicity and disability pay gap alongside supporting actions we will take to address these gaps (see page 62).
- The development of two new EDI networks: Mental Health and Wellbeing, and Faith and Belief. These networks have worked alongside our other networks (BAME, Disability, Gender Empowerment and LGBT+) to raise awareness of the barriers faced by specific identities and communities, and to act as a critical ally to VS consulting on policies and procedures.
- Internal conversations, webinars and blogs relating to the Black Lives Matter movement and broader internal conversations about race. This work helped to provide a better understanding of the lived experience of people who have experienced racism and what we can do as individuals to be allies.
- The introduction of Work Well @ VS by our People team, a campaign that aims to raise awareness of the importance of taking steps to care for our own and others mental health and wellbeing. This has included sharing resources and tools in relation to a range of wellbeing topics, the delivery of wellbeing sessions, monthly calendars of wellbeing activities and ideas and open forum dial-ins where people can discuss wellbeing related challenges or resources.

*“Please pass on my thanks to the whole team for the fabulous content in the wellbeing newsletters this year. They have given me inspiration and warmed my heart during this difficult year, so I hugely appreciated the effort even though I haven’t always responded to them!”*

## Volunteer, Avon and Somerset

We were delighted to be named the winner of the PinkNews Third Sector Equality Award 2020 in recognition for our work to further embed LGBT+ inclusion and equality across the organisation for staff, volunteers, and service users.

**PinkNews**

## Composition of the VS staff

**85%** Female

**15%** Male

**65%** White

**6%** Asian

**5%** Black

**0.2%** Mixed Ethnicity

**0.5%** Other Ethnic Group

**21%** Didn't declare their ethnicity

**0.5%** Preferred not to respond

**63%** Identify as not being disabled

**9%** Identify as being disabled

**26%** Didn't declare as being disabled or not

**2%** Preferred not to respond

**69%** Identify as heterosexual

**6%** Identify as LGBT+

**22%** Didn't declare their sexual orientation

**1%** Preferred not to respond

**35%** Do not have a religion

**30%** Christian

**4%** Muslim

**3%** Prefer to self-describe

**1%** Sikh

**0.5%** Buddhist

**0.5%** Jewish

**0.1%** Hindu

**21%** Didn't declare their religion

**4%** Preferred not to respond

## Pay gap analysis

VS has been publishing its gender pay gap since 2017 in line with regulatory requirements.

Ethnicity and disability pay gap reporting is not yet a legal requirement but as part of VS's commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) and in line with our EDI strategy we published our ethnicity and disability pay gap data for 2020-21 on our website and will continue to do so each year to show our progress.

## Gender pay gap

For the financial year 2019–2020, women's mean pay was 13.2% lower than men's, while women's median pay was 3.3% lower than men's. No employee received a bonus at VS.

There is no evidence that our gender pay gap is caused by differences in pay for men and women working in the same role or position.

The gap arises because the ratio of women to men at VS decreases at higher levels of the organisation – meaning there is a higher percentage of men in managerial positions when we compare this to the percentage of men and women in more junior roles. This influences both the mean and median gaps.

### Find out what action VS is taking to address the gender pay gap.

## Ethnicity pay gap

For the financial year 2020–2021, BAME<sup>12</sup> staff's mean pay was 0.5% lower than White staff's pay, while BAME staff's median pay was 3.4% higher than White staff's pay.

There is no evidence that our ethnicity pay gap is caused by differences in pay for BAME staff and White staff working in the same role or position.

The mean ethnicity pay gap arises because of a lower representation of BAME staff within the most senior roles within VS. Quartile 4 spans a wide variety of roles and pay bands and although BAME staff represent 17% of this quartile BAME staff are less represented at the top end of this quartile, eg Senior Management Team and wider management roles.

The median pay for BAME staff is higher than for White staff, resulting in a positive ethnicity pay gap. However, we are mindful of the difference in staff regional ethnicity demographics and the subsequent impact of London weighting on these figures, as a high proportion of the BAME staff within VS receive London weighting. We are committed to ensuring that our pay gap reporting and subsequent actions are proportionate and reflective of the diverse staff population of VS across England and Wales. As such going forward we will continue to monitor the proportion of BAME and White staff that receive London weighting within our pay gap analysis and factor this into any regionally specific actions to address pay gaps accordingly.

### Find out what action VS is taking to address the BAME pay gap.

## Disability pay gap

VS is a Disability Confident Employer and undertakes all of the core actions to satisfy the requirements of the scheme. We offer a guaranteed interview to disabled people who meet our minimum requirements and actively welcome applications for staff and volunteer roles from disabled people. We also continue to make, consider, and implement reasonable adjustments to allow all our staff and volunteers who are disabled or have long term health conditions to continue to participate and have opportunities to fulfil their potential and realise their aspirations.

For the financial year 2020–2021, disabled staff's mean pay was 12.95% lower than non-disabled staff's pay, while disabled staff's median pay was 3.39% lower than non-disabled staff's pay.

There is no evidence that our disability pay gap is caused by differences in pay for disabled and non-disabled staff working in the same role or position.

The disability pay gap arose because the ratio of disabled staff to non-disabled staff at VS decreases at higher levels of the organisation – meaning there is a higher percentage of non-disabled staff in managerial positions when we compare this to the percentage of non-disabled and disabled staff in more junior roles. This influences both the mean and median gaps.

### Find out what action VS is taking to address the disability pay gap.

<sup>12</sup> Within our ethnicity pay gap analysis VS uses the term BAME to describe all ethnic groups other than the White ethnic group. However, we know that the experiences of those from different ethnic groups are not the same and that scrutiny of the experiences of specific ethnic groups is needed in order to identify the individual barriers faced by specific groups. Where data sets have allowed we have carried out this analysis, eg, separate analysis for Black, Asian, and mixed ethnicity staff compared with White staff.



## Our funders

We are thankful to all those who have supported us in 2020–21. We would particularly like to recognise the following organisations:

Bank of Ireland (UK) plc	London Borough of Haringey
Barclays Bank UK plc	London Borough of Islington
Barclays Foundation	London Borough of Lewisham
BBC Children in Need	London Borough of Merton
Bedford Borough Council	London Borough of Tower Hamlets
Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation	London Borough of Waltham Forest
Bishops Cleeve Parish Council	London Borough of Wandsworth
Brewin Dolphin	Luton Borough Council
Bristol City Council	Maresfield Parish Council
Bury Metropolitan Borough Council	Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (London)
Bury Voluntary, Community and Faith Alliance	Ministry of Justice
Cannock Chase District Council	National Westminster Bank plc
Cardiff City Council	Newcastle City Council
Central Bedfordshire Council	NHS South East London Clinical Commissioning Group
City of London Corporation/ City of London Police	North Horsham Parish Council
Co-op	Nursing and Midwifery Council
Corsham Masonic Lodge	Patricia Routledge Charitable Trust
Covid-19 Support Fund (Association of British Insurers)	Police and Crime Commissioner for Avon and Somerset
Devizes Town Council	Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire
Dudley Community Cohesion Project	Police and Crime Commissioner for Cumbria
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council	Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon and Cornwall
General Medical Council	Police and Crime Commissioner for Dorset
General Osteopathic Council	Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex
Grand Lodge of Wiltshire	Police and Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire
Greater Manchester Combined Authority	Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent
Home Office	Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire and the IoW
Hull City Council	Police and Crime Commissioner for Humberside
Koestler Trust	Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent
Lancing Parish Council	
Leeds Community Safety	
Lincolnshire Community Foundation	
London Borough of Bexley	
London Borough of Camden	
London Borough of Ealing	

Police and Crime Commissioner  
for Lancashire

Police and Crime Commissioner  
for Lincolnshire

Police and Crime Commissioner  
for Merseyside

Police and Crime Commissioner  
for Norfolk

Police and Crime Commissioner  
for North Wales

Police and Crime Commissioner  
for North Yorkshire

Police and Crime Commissioner  
for Northumbria

Police and Crime Commissioner  
for South Wales

Police and Crime Commissioner  
for South Yorkshire

Police and Crime Commissioner  
for Staffordshire

Police and Crime Commissioner  
for Suffolk

Police and Crime Commissioner  
for Sussex

Police and Crime Commissioner  
for Warwickshire

Police and Crime Commissioner  
for West Mercia

Police and Crime Commissioner  
for West Midlands

Police and Crime Commissioner  
for West Yorkshire

Police and Crime Commissioner  
for Wiltshire

Potton Consolidated Charity

Public Services Ombudsman  
for Wales

Reading Borough Council

Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council

Rossendale Borough Council

Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea

Safe Spaces England and Wales

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

Sir Charles Jessel

Smile For Joel

Sophie Tea Art

South Gloucestershire Council

South Staffordshire Council

Staffordshire County Council

Stoke-on-Trent City Council

Stonewall Park Charitable Trust

Tesco

Thatcham Methodist Church

The Bell Foundation

The Moira Fund

The National Lottery Community Fund

The Red Arrows Trust

The Swaythling Housing Society Limited  
(trading as Radian)

The Zochonis Charitable Trust

TK Maxx

UK Parliament

Vivid Housing Association

Waitrose

Wakefield Council

Wakefield District Housing

Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council

Welsh Government

West Sussex County Council

Wiltshire Provincial Grand Chapter  
of Royal Arch Masons

Winchester City Council

## Our supporters and fundraisers

We are thankful to all those who fundraised and supported us in 2020–21.

### A walk in memory of Brandon



On 31 January 2021 Syd completed a 25 mile walking challenge to mark what would have been her brother's 25th birthday.

Last year Syd lost her big brother Brandon after a violent crime. VS supported her through this loss and she decided to raise money for VS to help other people in a similar situation.

She said:

*"Although no amount of money will ever bring my brother back, it will help VS continue to provide the services they do. I hope the money raised can further help victims/family of victims move beyond the effects of crime."*

After completing the mammoth challenge in some testing conditions Syd said:

*"Thanks for the good luck wishes, I needed it! It certainly wasn't the best weather for it, cold, snow and wind but worth it for such a fantastic charity! Had my brother in my thoughts all the way, only hope I did him proud :)"*

**Thank you for all your support, Syd.**

*Syd raised a fantastic £1,402 for VS. This money will be used to support victims of crime and their families.*



## Reference and administrative details

**Charity number:** 298028 Registered as a charity in England and Wales  
**Company number:** 2158780 Registered as a company limited by guarantee in England and Wales  
**Registered office:** 1 Bridge Street, Derby DE1 3HZ  
**Company Secretary:** Pauline Mouskis

### Advisers

**Auditor:** Mazars LLP, 6 Sutton Plaza, Sutton Court Road, Sutton, Surrey SM1 4FS  
**Bankers:** Lloyds Banking Group plc, 25 Gresham Street, London EC2V 7HN  
**Solicitors:** Bates Wells Braithwaite, 10 Queen Street Place, London EC4R 1BE

## Directors and trustees

The directors of the charitable company (the Charity) are its trustees for the purpose of company law. The Trustees and officers serving during the year and since year end were as follows:

## Key management personnel

**President** HRH, The Princess Royal  
**Chair** Andrew Tivey  
**Vice-chair** Les Mosco (to 13 November 2020), Roger Harding (from 13 November 2020)  
**Treasurer** Kathryn Adkins  
**Trustees** Imran Ahmed  
 Christopher Digby-Bell (to 13 November 2020)  
 Andrew Edwards  
 Helen Evans (Co-opted from 5 May 2021)  
 Richard Goodenough-Bayly  
 Amy Mary Rose Herring  
 Rachel Onikosi (Co-opted from 28 May 2021)  
 Geoff Pollard (to 13 November 2020)  
 Lianne Smith  
 Amanda Stanley-Hamilton (Co-opted from 5 May 2021)  
 Moyna Wilkinson

More information about the trustees can be found on the [VS website](#).

## Senior Management Team

Diana Fawcett, Chief Executive Officer  
 Zoe Byrne, Services Director – South of England and Wales (from 6 April 2020)  
 Martyn Herward, Director – Director of Business Services  
 Simon Ketteridge, Director – Director of Business Development, Insight and External Affairs (from 27 April 2020)  
 Ellen Miller, Service Director – Northern England and East Midlands (to 6 September 2020)  
 Pauline Mouskis, Interim Director of Finance (from 24 August 2021)  
 Kultar Nayyar, Service Director – London and Homicide  
 Johanna Parks, Service Director – Northern England and Midlands (from 1 September 2020)  
 Tony Silcock, Director of Finance and People (to 24 August 2021)

More information about the Senior Management Team can be found on the [VS website](#).



**Join us in making  
a difference**

Help us to support and empower people  
affected by crime and traumatic events.

[www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)

# VICTIM SUPPORT

We are an independent charity offering free, confidential support to people affected by crime and traumatic incidents. For information and support, contact us by:

- calling: Supportline **08 08 16 89 111**
- using Next Generation Text (add **18001** before any of our phone numbers)
- online: **victimsupport.org.uk**

To find out how you can help us, visit **victimsupport.org.uk/get-involved**

**victimsupport.org.uk**

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President, HRH, The Princess Royal

Victim Support, 1 Bridge Street, Derby, DE1 3HZ  
Telephone: 020 7268 0200

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Registered office as above.

