



August 2023

VICTIM CARE NEWSLETTER

VCOP SPECIAL

What is the Victim's Code of Practice?

“The new Bill will preserve the principles of the Victims’ Code in legislation – whereas up until recently, this has only existed to provide guidance to criminal justice agencies on how to meet the minimum level of service victims should receive in England and Wales.

The four overarching principles, which will be put into primary legislation, are that victims:

- 1. Should be provided with information to help them understand the criminal justice process.**
 - 2. Should be able to access support services(including, where appropriate, specialist services)**
 - 3. Should have the opportunity to have their views heard within the criminal justice process; and**
 - 4. Should be able to challenge decisions which have a direct impact on them.**
- The Justice Secretary will be required to issue a full Code of Practice for criminal justice agencies to ensure they are aligned with these four standard principles.**



The Victim CARE Team with Notts Fire and Rescue

The Victims and Prisoners Bill

“Delivering justice for victims”.

At the end of March 2023, following a public consultation on improving victims’ overall experiences of the justice system, the government published the ‘Victims and Prisoners Bill’ – a culmination of ‘Delivering justice for victims: A consultation on improving victims’ experiences of the justice system’ (published May 2022), and the ‘Root and Branch Review of the Parole System’ (published March 2022).

The new Bill will introduce a host of reforms relating to victims of criminal conduct, victims of major incidents, reforms to the parole system, and restrictions on marriage for prisoners who are imprisoned under whole life orders. The bill also legislates a statutory duty on PCCs, local authorities and health bodies to collaborate when commissioning support services (excluding accommodation-based support) for victims of domestic abuse, sexual violence and other serious violent crimes.

Take a look at this article in **The Justice Gap** by Catch22 Strategic Director of Justice and Education, Lisa Smitherman
www.thejusticegap.com/victims-and-prisoners-bill-are-we-heading-in-the-right-direction/

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A real life example: A VCOP journey



Victim CARE & Commissioner Henry

How does it start?

Steven* was referred to Notts Victim CARE directly through Nottinghamshire police. Whilst at work he had been stabbed by an unknown person, leaving him confused and anxious to return to work. Steven acted on his right to support and requested a referral be made to Notts Victim CARE so he could receive some emotional support and advice about the criminal justice process.

What happens next?

Our caseworker took on Steven's referral and reached out to him. He was given a space to talk openly about how the crime had affected him. He spoke about his fears going back to work and the effect the crime had on his young children. Steven was given information on the court process and what he should expect as a victim. He was also supported in applying for Criminal Injuries Compensation.



Knife Crime Awareness week logo from Ben Kinsella Trust

So, what now?

Steven's support with us is ongoing. He recently had a visit from our Restorative Justice team to discuss the possibility of this taking place after the trial. Steven is eager to use this to get answers to his questions. Steven awaits the start of his trial and has given positive feedback on the support he has been given, he said "I feel more confident knowing what happens with the courts, and I cant thank you enough".

* The name of this person has been changed



Scan the QR code to
take a look at the full
VCOP Bill!

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