



Victim First

Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland

Victim First Newsletter

Welcome to our newsletter.

It's been a busy and yet strange quarter at Victim First, with most of it being spent in lockdown and adapting to the 'new normal' way of working from home and still delivering a service across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

We are continuing to engage with our stakeholders and service users. Due to the COVID-19 situation, we have not been able to get out into the community in person, but you might have noticed an increased Victim First virtual presence, with an increase in blogs written by the team on our website and increased engagement on our social media platforms.

I'm pleased to inform you that Victim First has secured additional funding through the Ministry of Justice extraordinary grant fund for domestic and sexual abuse victims. This funding will be used to offer digital counselling support for victims of domestic and sexual violence across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. More about this in the newsletter.

I do hope you enjoy flicking through our newsletter. We've shared some of the highlights from the past few months, including how we have adapted during COVID-19. As always, thank you to everyone who works alongside us to provide the best possible support for victims.

Please don't hesitate to give us a call if you'd like to find out more about Victim First. Stay safe!

Manjeeta Sunnar

Head of Service, Victim First



Our Service in Numbers

Between April and June 2020:

We offered support to **3,349** new referrals

We provided enhanced support to **560** victims

We provided emotional support via phone to **343** victims

We provided advocacy to **86** victims

We also provided standard support to **1,372** victims including information via post, signposting to our website

Service User Feedback (February 2020):

100%

of victims were satisfied with their overall Victim First experience

"The people I have been in contact with have been brilliant..."

"They have been very good. I was distressed the [Caseworker] was ringing me and speaking to me..."

Victim First | 0800 953 95 95 | office@victimfirst.pnn.gov.uk | www.victimfirst.org | @Victim1st



What have we been up to?



Jas Purewal
*Specialist Restorative
Justice Caseworker*

We are excited and proud to announce the launch of the **East Midlands Restorative Justice Directory**.

The EMRJ Directory was launched on the 15 June 2020.

Victim First worked with De Montfort University and a host of local providers such as Leicestershire Police, Youth Offending Services and Probation to highlight the work we do in working with and supporting victims of crime.

This highlights statutory and voluntary sector partners providing Restorative Justice across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland and surrounding areas to enable the development of a high quality, coordinated RJ service for people affected by crime.

It offers an opportunity to meet and greet other service providers and care services, and provides a platform to share information, to develop new ideas for the service, and to obtain support for more complex cases. The Forum also offers an opportunity to share the knowledge and the experience required to provide the best possible support for people affected by crime.

We will be highlighting the excellent work being done in our region and the support victims of crime can look to find out more about.

More information can be found on the [EMRJ Website](#)

[EMRJ Twitter](#)
[EMRJ Facebook](#)
[EMRJ LinkedIn](#)



Introducing Xenzone to Victim First

We have secured additional funding through the Ministry of Justice extraordinary grant fund for domestic and sexual abuse victims. This funding will be used to offer digital counselling support for victims of domestic and sexual violence across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. We will be using the mental health platform Xenzone to deliver this service, which went live from 1st August.

With the increase in domestic and sexual abuse cases during this pandemic, the strain is felt by victims and so digital services are needed more than ever to address the demand. There is a huge gap in counselling services.

By offering alternative types of support like digital counselling, we can address the significant gap of counselling services for domestic and sexual violence victims.

Read more on our website [here](#)

Qwell
Community support means everything to us
Explore our supportive and anonymous mental wellbeing community for adults.

- Chat online to qualified counsellors
- Read and write articles
- Get online support from the Qwell community
- Set personal goals and record how you feel

qwell.io

kooth
For ages: 10-18
Kooth is an online mental wellbeing community for young people
Here are some of the features young people can access on Kooth:

- Magazine**
The Kooth magazine shares personal experiences and tips from young people and our Kooth team
- Discussion Boards**
Young people can start or join a conversation with our friendly Kooth community, with lots of topics to choose from
- Chat**
Young people can chat with our helpful team about anything that's on their mind
- Daily Journal**
Young people can view their daily journal to track feelings or emotions and reflect on how they're doing

Sign up for free at [Kooth.com](#)

About XenZone: Xenzone operates online platform Kooth, a counselling platform for 10 to 18 year olds, and Qwell, a similar platform for adults. Both Kooth and Qwell are accredited [British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy](#) services.

Victim First | 0800 953 95 95 | office@victimfirst.pnn.gov.uk | www.victimfirst.org | @Victim1st

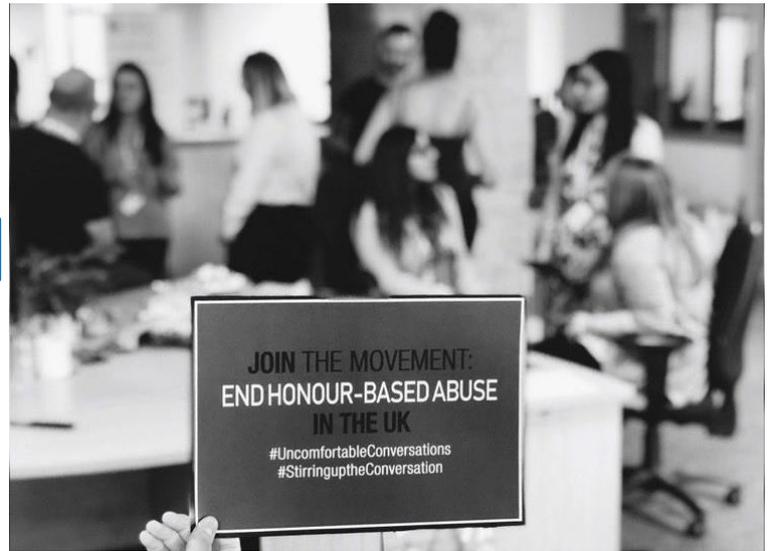
What have we been up to?



The East Midlands Restorative Justice Directory was established as a professional network, welcoming professionals, academics, students & members of the community who are interested in the delivery of restorative justice.



We raised awareness for **Deaf Awareness Week**



It was a pleasure listening to key speakers at the 6th **Day of Memory** webinar. We remember those who lost their lives to **honour based abuse** and will continue to raise awareness



Today is the start of **Mental Health Awareness Week**. Here at Victim First, we raised awareness on social media and in our team – we reflected on an act of kindness during lockdown.

“I have really enjoyed being a victim support volunteer. The role has been immensely interesting. Being able to emotionally support individuals in times of distress has been a very rewarding experience.”

- Ashika



At Victim First we have amazing volunteers who work hard to provide support to victims and witnesses of crime. Here is a quote from one about her experience with us so far **#VolunteersWeek**

Good News Story

We supported a victim of an armed robbery which took place at that the victim's place of work – two males had entered wearing masks and threatened the victim and other members of staff repeatedly with a knife and hammer. The victim was left feeling scared, upset, violated and overwhelmed with what had happened and the incident impacted on the service user's personal safety, mental and physical health, employment, confidence and their general attitudes and beliefs. The service user was also experiencing suicidal thoughts and was using self-harm to manage emotions.

The support plan for the service user focused on consistent emotional support through community visits and telephone calls. We also provided the service user with a supporting letter that could be sent to their manager on recommendations of coming back to work, we made a referral to our mental health nurse and we advocated with the OIC and also worked with the service user to develop a safety plan. We supported the service user for 6 months.

The service user is now able to cope with their emotions around the incident a lot better and is able to move forward. The service user has since received specialist support from their employers. The service user is no longer experiencing suicidal thoughts and is able to look forward towards university.

Keep on referring:

Anybody can self-refer by simply calling our Freephone number **0800 953 95 95** or emailing us at support@victimfirst.pnn.gov.uk

Police colleagues can refer to us via the **Victim and Witness Contact Management report page on Niche (VCOP)**

Other professionals can refer a service user to Victim First via the website or by contacting us directly on **0800 953 95 95** or emailing office@victimfirst.pnn.gov.uk

Remember we have a live chat feature. Here you can chat anonymously without calling into our service!

What's coming up:

16th – 22nd September: Sexual Health Week
10th October: World Mental Health Day
10th – 7th October: National Hate Awareness Week

Please note that due to COVID-19, we have suspended community engagement events and visits.

Check out our [twitter page](#) and [website](#) for updates.

Victim First | 0800 953 95 95 | office@victimfirst.pnn.gov.uk | www.victimfirst.org | @Victim1st