



Victim First Newsletter

Welcome to our newsletter...

This quarter, our county has gone through several tier changes and another national lockdown. However, our service provision has remained throughout the entire period. At Victim First, we understand that being a victim of crime is challenging and the added impact that the lockdown can have on vulnerable people's mental wellbeing, so we are doing our utmost to ensure that victims of crime can still access the service.

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 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 October and December 2020:

We offered support to **3,151** new referrals

We provided enhanced support to **622** victims

We provided emotional support via phone to **440** victims

We provided advocacy to **100** victims

We also provided standard support to **1,761** victims including information via post, signposting to our website

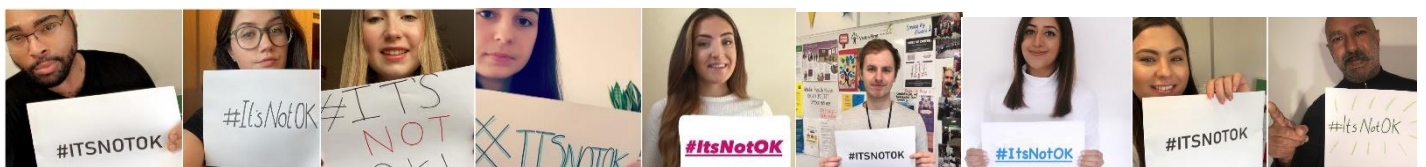
Service User Feedback (October – December 2020):

85.7%

of victims were satisfied with their overall Victim First experience

"They contacted me and that made a difference to me and that enabled me to let go and talk about it"

"I felt it was helpful and I felt at ease with them and I was able to open up with them"



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Good News Stories & Feedback

The service user had been a victim of assault whereby there had been an altercation in the street with a known person to the victim. This made the service user feel very unsafe in their home as the perpetrator knew where the victim lived and was nervous as they thought reporting the offence would make the perpetrator want to take revenge. This meant that the service user stopped going outside as much and felt less confident to do day to day things.

The service user stressed that they did not feel safe and comfortable in their home and wanted something to make them feel safer. I advised on a free service called 24/7 locks and explained that this would involve a risk assessment of their home and safety measures to be put in place such as window alarms, letter box restrictors and spy holes. We also looked at exploring positivity and making the service user feel empowered by goal setting and emotional support to cope and recover with the incident.

The service user agreed to having 24/7 locks to help them feel safer in their home. We set small steps for building their resilience back up such as looking at specific coping strategies and taking small steps to going back outside, which firstly involved standing outside their door then gradually working towards walking to the shop like they used to feel comfortable to do. We spoke about how they would achieve these steps in their own time and when they felt comfortable to move to the next goal.

After 24/7 locks was put in place the service user felt completely safe in their home. The service user also felt like their confidence had gradually returned over time recognising that recovery would happen at their own pace. The service user was able to talk positively about the incident and walk to the shop with someone else, which they had not been able to do since the incident. After feedback from this service user they have stated that 'Victim first seemed to care' and that 'The support has really helped me to feel better about the offence.' The service user was extremely satisfied with their progress and felt that they could cope in future times when they felt that they may have a 'step back'.



An elderly female self-referred after being the victim of an online romance fraud. The victim had been coerced into believing she was in a relationship with this male and manipulated into transferring large amounts of money to him, the victim was also planning to leave her husband as she believed she was going to be in a relationship with this man.

The victim was left feeling distraught and stated she could not speak to anybody about 'what she had done', she was blaming herself and described herself as being extremely low and depressed and was no longer able to enjoy the things she used to enjoy.

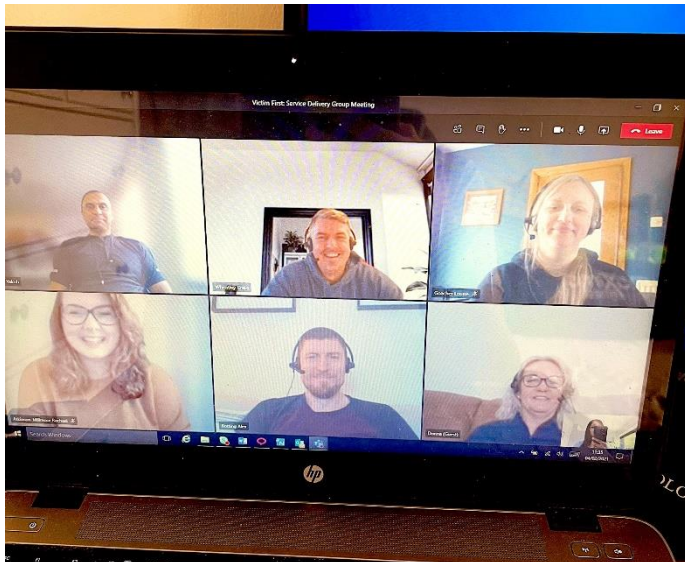
Emotional support was provided to help the victim recognise that it was not her fault and focussing on how she could move forward. After speaking with Victim First, the victim felt she was gaining confidence and courage to deal with the incidents. She began engaging with her daughter and a counsellor to address some of the issues and Victim First organised a visit from a fraud vulnerability officer. Advice and support was provided about actions which could be taken to get the money refunded by the bank.

The victim has now started to move away from self-blame and is recognising that it was not her fault. As a result, she has felt more confident engaging with the police and is also in the process of contacting the banks to look into getting some of her money back. The victim now states being able to do things she previously enjoyed such as baking, walking and arts and crafts again.

The victim noted that she saw a significant improvement in herself since engaging with Victim First and was grateful for the support from Victim First in helping her to achieve this.

What have we been up to?

We supported the #ItsNotOK campaign for Sexual Abuse and Sexual Violence Awareness Week 2021.



We held our quarterly Service Delivery Group meeting with Leicestershire Police to continue our collaborative working in supporting victims of crime & improving access to services.

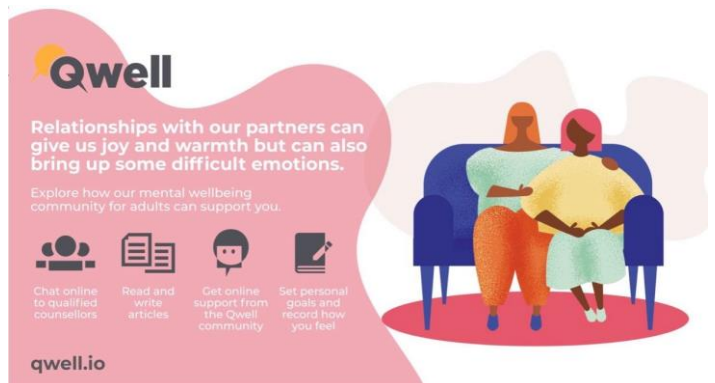
SELF HELP TIPS FOR BLUE MONDAY

- Go for a walk
- Call a friend or family member and catch up
- Watch your favourite film/show
- Get creative! Try something new
 - Do your favourite exercise
 - Read a book
- Do something nice for someone
- List three things you are grateful for
 - Bake a cake
- Listen to a song you love

With the recent lockdown, we have been trying to focus on mental health and so we created some tips for Blue Monday.



At Victim First we supported Children's Mental Health Week.



We continue to deliver the Kooth and Qwell online counselling provision for victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence.

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Restorative Justice

Restorative justice is a voluntary process which offers you the opportunity to potentially communicate with the offender. This can happen either directly, face to face, or indirectly.

It is an opportunity where you can talk about the incident and the harm caused, the impact of actions along with an opportunity to ask any questions you may have, in the hope of providing a means of closure and the chance to move forward with your life.

Victim First provide a safe environment for restorative justice to take place. We listen to what has happened and how it has affected your life and what is needed for the next stage.

You can access our service and find out more about what is involved by talking to the Specialist Restorative Justice Caseworker.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AT VICTIM FIRST

A voluntary process which offers you the opportunity to look at communicating with the person who committed the crime and addressing the harm caused



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

Putting Victims First

A free, independent and confidential service supporting victims and witnesses of crime across **Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland**

Live Chat

Hi Anonymous, welcome to Victim First WebChat.

Before we start, it is important to let you know that we are a confidential service and that anything you do say will be kept confidential unless we are concerned for your or anyone else's safety.

How may I help you?

Your message...

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