



Victim First Newsletter



Welcome to our newsletter...

This quarter has been busy with an increase in new referrals into the service. Thank you to everyone who has been referring into our 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.

In August 2020 we launched the online counselling platform, in partnership with Xenzone (now known as Kooth). This platform is available for children, young people and adults who have been victims of domestic and sexual abuse. There are two platforms; Qwell is available for adults and Kooth is available for children aged 10 and over. More about this on page 4.

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 July and September 2020:

We offered support to **3,799** new referrals

We provided enhanced support to **660** victims

We provided emotional support via phone to **459** victims

We provided advocacy to **103** victims

We also provided standard support to **1,933** victims including information via post, signposting to our website

Service User Feedback (July - September 2020):



"Just because it did what I needed it was somebody to talk to"

"Because people care and they care and there service that was given through the phone was excellent and I couldn't fault it and people out there do care"

Good News Stories & Feedback

Feedback from a service user:

"I have had a 5* service from Indi, feel that the support improved massively, and has consistently hit a 5* star service, pleasantly spoken, very friendly, accommodating. And ticks all of the boxes! And really made a difference with the support and maintained that level throughout."



Feedback from a service user:

"I would like to give my feedback regarding the service from Lauren Deacon. She has provided the BEST service I have ever had supporting my mental health. Lauren has arguably saved my life no words can express how amazing she is at her job! Before speaking to Lauren I was in a dark place but Lauren has empowered me to gain control of my life and chase my dreams. Thank you Lauren and Victim First for your amazing service".

We supported two victims after they were burgled by their neighbour and purposely targeted due to their sexual orientation. Both of these victims were persistently targeted by the same neighbour and would be verbally abused, harassed and intimidated whenever they would see them. One of the victims would always try and video record the incidents and then report these to Leicestershire Police and their housing provider. Despite this, the victim was advised by the CPS that it was not in the public's interest to take the issue to court. Due to this the housing provider were not able to evict the suspects nor move the tenants.

The service users were both afraid and frustrated and did not feel as though their case was being taken seriously. They requested the support of the Victim First caseworker to assist them with their issue by advocating to the police and their housing officer.

The caseworker advocated on the service user's behalf to the housing provider and provided a supporting letter which stated that the Victim First caseworker supported their wishes with requesting a move. The service users were also advised about the Victim's code and the right to review and also were advised to continue reporting incidents to the police as the harassment and abuse was still a daily occurrence. The service user's eventually filed a formal complaint with the police as they were not happy with the way the incidents were dealt with. After this making this complaint, both service users were brought into the police station and 11 statements were taken. The police then advocated to the housing provider that they did not believe it was safe for the victims to reside in their current address.

Since Victim First's involvement, both service services have engaged with their GP and gained the necessary support they needed for their mental and physical health. The service users have also since moved into a new property after been given an emergency move by their local authority. Both service user are now a lot happier in their new home and no longer feel in fear.

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

What have we been up to?

As part of Hate Crime Awareness Week we pledge to continue supporting and championing victims and witnesses of hate crime across LLR.



We raised awareness for Anti Bullying Week. Here is a throwback photo when the team was together last year celebrating what makes us unique by wearing odd socks.

I am supporting National Hate Crime Awareness Week

We pledge to continue to support and champion all victims and witnesses of Hate Crime within Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.



www.nationalhcauw.uk

#NationalHCAW



www.stamp-it-out.co.uk

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

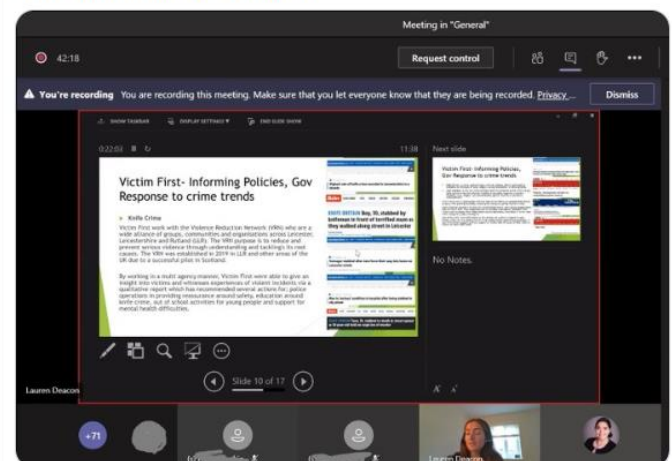


Raised awareness of RJ Week through our social media platforms, delivered a talk at the annual RJC Conference and hosted the EMRJ Forum Meeting.



Laura Valadez @lauravaladezmtz

Insightful talk about the work of @Victim1st. Thank you!! Our @LboroSPS students really enjoying Crime and Social Welfare module.



11:43 AM · Oct 30, 2020 · Twitter Web App

Delivered a lecture to Criminology & Social Policy students at Loughborough University.

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



Online Counselling Offer

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](#)



kooth

Kooth is an online **mental wellbeing** community for young people

For ages: **10-18**

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](https://www.kooth.com)



Qwell

Community support means everything to us

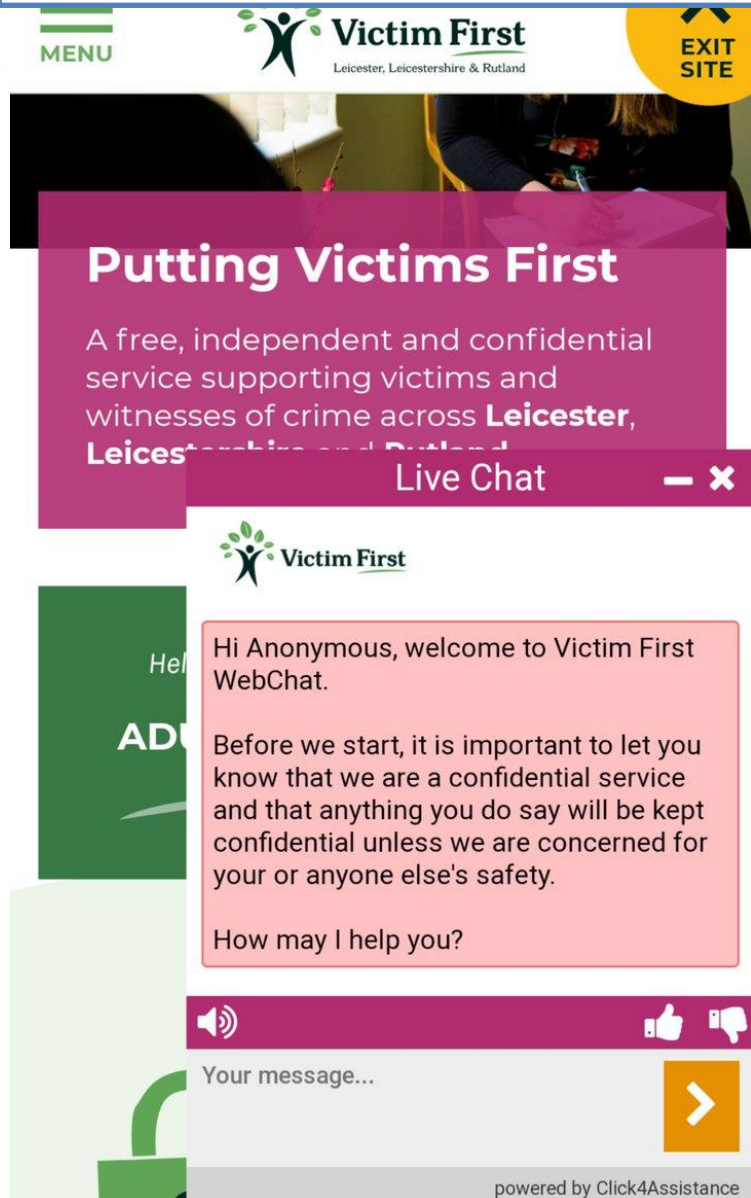
Explore our supportive and anonymous mental wellbeing community for adults.

- 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](https://www.qwell.io)

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.

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



Victim First
Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland

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...

powered by Click4Assistance

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