



APCC Report: Perpetrator Intervention Programmes

07.03.2025

A review of domestic abuse and stalking perpetrator intervention programmes commissioned by Police and Crime Commissioners in England and Wales, exploring the provision, funding, monitoring, and evaluation processes, with recommendations.

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Executive summary

Police and Crime Commissioners, Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners, and Mayoral Authorities with responsibility for crime and policing (PCCs) and their offices commission and co-commission intervention programmes for perpetrators of both domestic abuse (DA) and stalking as part of a range of approaches to tackle violence against women and girls (VAWG). These programmes aim to disrupt abusive behaviour by raising awareness of healthy relationships, consent, and equality, while also helping perpetrators recognise and understand their abusive behaviour.

PCCs use a variety of funding streams to commission interventions, including the Home Office's Domestic Abuse and Stalking Perpetrator Intervention Fund (23-25), policing budget, and other sources, including match funding from key partners, and commission supportive victims' services through the Ministry of Justice's (MoJ) Core Victims' Grant.

Our analysis found that PCCs are committed to commissioning DA and stalking perpetrator programmes. They emphasise the importance of strong monitoring, governance, and evaluation processes to maintain a robust evidence base for these initiatives. This commitment is further reinforced through the use of accreditations for DA perpetrator programmes, ensuring quality and adherence to national standards.

However, PCCs face significant challenges due to constraints in long-term funding, which limit their ability to guarantee consistent availability of services across all areas. This is particularly evident in the provision of stalking perpetrator programmes and early interventions. Some PCCs also indicated that, without continued funding, they would be forced to downscale or decommission their programmes, while others highlighted difficulties in ensuring effective co-commissioning with partners.

The availability of funding also affects the quality of evaluations. While some evaluations demonstrate positive impacts, there is significant variation in their depth and rigour – from high-level overviews to comprehensive external assessments. The lack of thorough evaluations limits the ability to draw reliable conclusions about the programmes' effectiveness.

The APCC has drafted recommendations to address these challenges, focusing on funding constraints, service availability, evaluation processes, and other key areas.

The APCC will work with the Home Office, National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) and the College of Policing (CoP) to develop these recommendations and utilise the findings. We will also engage our sector partners to ensure the recommendations are in line with wider work.

Recommendations

Funding

1. To support the Home Office's commitment to halving VAWG in 10 years the department should provide needs-based funding to all PCCs to support the commissioning of perpetrator interventions for domestic abuse and stalking. This funding should be long term and multi-year.
2. The APCC should work with partners including the Local Government Association, Probation and Health to develop co-commissioning opportunities, share learning and develop collaborative approaches.

Availability of services

3. The APCC welcomes the Home Office's commitment to develop national standards for stalking perpetrator intervention programmes and will continue to work collaboratively on their development.
4. The APCC supports further recommendations within recommendation 26 in the report on the super-complaint on stalking: *further research should be undertaken by the Home Office to inform the commissioning and delivery of stalking intervention programmes.*
5. The APCC will continue to support good commissioning practice by identifying and sharing notable practice to build the evidence base across DA and stalking perpetrator interventions.

Victims' support

6. PCCs will improve engagement and outcomes by evaluating how their victims' services are joined up with their perpetrator interventions, and ensure the correct pathways are in place so that victims are supported.

Governance and accountability

7. To build on the practice and/or issues identified by recommendation 25 in the super-complaint on stalking, PCCs may engage their chief constables to review their strategic and operational governance arrangements.

Evaluation

8. The Home Office should introduce an evaluative requirement into future funding agreements and undertake evaluative activity across the 2023-2025 funded projects.
9. PCCs are encouraged to utilise the CoP Practice Bank to share evaluated interventions and contribute to the sharing of notable practice.
10. The APCC will facilitate approaches to sharing evaluated interventions and will identify tools and good practice to support PCCs in evaluating approaches to commissioned services, working with the Home Office, MoJ and other partners.

Landscape review

Background

PCCs commission a number of perpetrator intervention programmes aimed at challenging the beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours of perpetrators committing domestic abuse and stalking. These programmes focus on fostering understanding of abusive behaviour and promoting healthy relationships.

Methodology

The APCC mapped availability of these programmes, types of approaches, and the funding landscape. We wanted to both build our understanding of how these interventions are delivered and ensure the evidence base for these approaches is developing strongly.

The APCC engaged a number of key stakeholders across the offices of Police and Crime Commissioners (OPCCs) and the wider sector in a scoping exercise to understand the issues and identify areas to explore in depth. We developed a survey in collaboration with the NPCC, CoP and Home Office, and shared the call for evidence across all PCCs and their offices.

We received a total of 33 responses from across England and Wales. In addition, we undertook in-person engagement with two areas and online meetings with six areas, enabling us to explore their work on perpetrator intervention programmes in greater depth. These discussions also allowed us to refine our understanding of common patterns and trends across different areas.

Responses were limited to those PCCs who currently commission perpetrator intervention programmes. We did not receive responses from areas who do not currently commission such programmes. However, we engaged with two PCC areas who do not currently commission perpetrator programmes but had done so in the past, to gain a rounded perspective.

Findings

The following is an analysis of the findings of the survey and the wider engagement with PCCs and OPCCs.

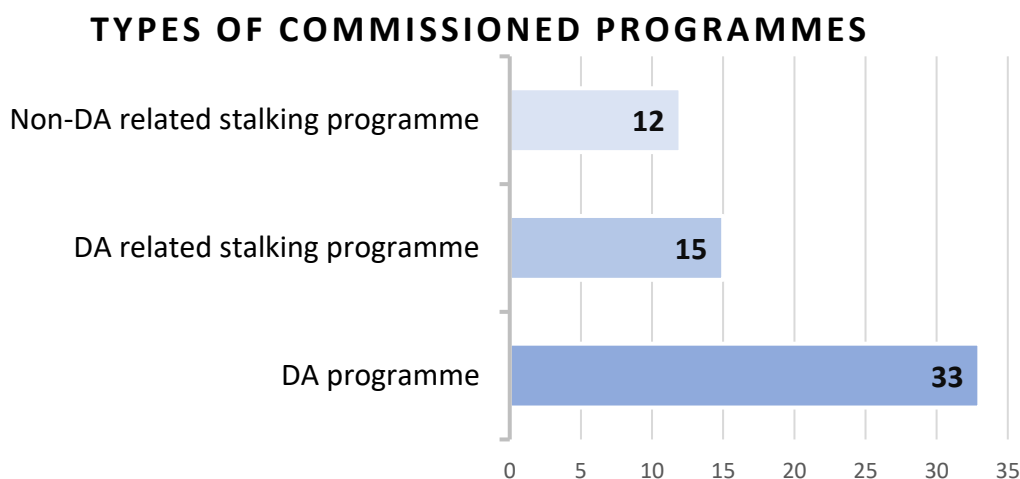
We have presented the findings from the evidence gathering exercise, which provides an in-depth analysis of the data we received on available perpetrator programmes. This includes insights into referral mechanisms, monitoring and governance structures and processes, programme evaluations, the current funding landscape, accreditation standards, and other critical aspects of service delivery. The review is followed by a conclusion that synthesises the key findings, highlighting gaps and challenges within the provision of services, and provides actionable

recommendations to strengthen the provision of perpetrator interventions across England and Wales.

Availability of services

PCCs are commissioning a variety of perpetrator interventions. All 33 responding areas commissioned or co-commissioned DA perpetrator intervention programmes.

The survey results indicate that interventions for DA are more widely available and supported than those for stalking. Out of the 33 areas that reported commissioning DA perpetrator programmes, 15 commissioned services for DA-related stalking, and 12 commissioned programmes for stalking unrelated to DA. However, of those 15 who commissioned DA-related stalking perpetrator interventions, a number of PCCs reported that these interventions formed part of their existing DA perpetrator provision and were not commissioned as a specialist or separate service.



Co-commissioning services

PCCs engage in co-commissioning of services, including perpetrator programmes, working with partners to deliver approaches. We found that 52% of the areas reported co-commissioning perpetrator intervention programmes.

The majority of co-commissioned programmes are delivered in partnership with local authorities, either commissioned by the PCC with support from local authorities and partners, or local authorities led with funding contributions from the PCC.

A small number of PCCs also co-commission programmes in collaboration with other PCCs, such as Gwent and South Wales who co-commission Project CARA (Cautioning and Relationship Abuse).

Other funded areas

While PCCs commission and co-commission a significant number of interventions, we recognise that there are a number of approaches commissioned by partners that support the criminal justice system and support victims. 21 PCCs reported that, in addition to their own commissioned programmes, a number of perpetrator interventions are also commissioned or provided by partners, including:

- Local authorities
- Forces
- The Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector
- Probation

For example, in Lancashire, both the Lancashire County Council and Blackburn with Darwen Council commission 'Make the Change', a Respect-accredited perpetrator programme. In Northumbria, the Probation Service, the local mental health trust (CNTW), and the Violence Reduction Unit fund and deliver a Northumbria Stalking Intervention Programme.

Funding

PCCs reported spending to fund perpetrator interventions. Due to local variations in overall allocation of budgets we were unable to directly compare funding amounts.

PCCs report funding from a variety of sources. The majority, 25 areas,¹ reported receiving funding from the Home Office [Domestic Abuse and Stalking Perpetrator Intervention Fund \(23-25\)](#). This fund provided up to £19 million in FY23-24 and up to £20.5 million in FY24-25, totalling up to £39 million over two years.

We found that PCCs used their policing grant to provide match funding and address funding shortfalls. Areas who received the Domestic Abuse and Stalking Perpetrator Intervention Fund (23-25) have to meet the Home Office's match-funding requirements for the fund. For the 23-25 fund, the Home Office stipulated that at least 25% of the funding allocated had to be matched by the PCC or delivery partners with a minimum bid value of £300,000 per annum.

PCCs also reported utilising funding from their MoJ core victims funding. The MoJ core victims funding may be used to fund the victim support services integrated into commissioned perpetrator programmes.

¹ A total of 27 areas were recipients of the Home Office Domestic Abuse and Stalking Perpetrator Intervention Fund, but only 25 areas responded to the survey.

While most PCCs (27) reported they planned to continue to fund their commissioned perpetrator programmes after the financial year 24-25, they emphasised that this is subject to continued funding from the Home Office and MoJ. Without the continuation of funding, several areas warned they would need to significantly downscale or decommission their perpetrator programmes.

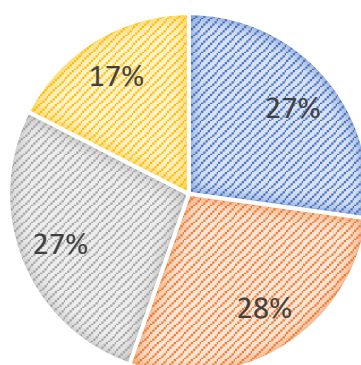
Eligibility criteria and referral mechanism

Referral pathways differ across commissioned programmes but often involve multi-agency collaboration, allowing stakeholders such as the probation service, health sector, children's services, and police to refer perpetrators to services.

Referrals may also occur through self-referral, or through required attendance via Stalking Protection Orders (SPOs) and Out of Court Resolutions (OOCR). The referrals are then directed to programmes offering interventions to perpetrators based on different risk levels:

% OF TOTAL OF NUMBER PCC COMMISSIONED SERVICES BY RISK LEVELS

■ High Risk ■ Medium Risk ■ Standard Risk ■ Early Intervention



Assessments are undertaken to evaluate the risk posed by perpetrators and make appropriate referrals. A number of assessment types were highlighted across responses, including:

- Domestic Abuse, Stalking, Harassment and Honour-Based Violence Assessment (DASH), including the Severity of Abuse Grid (SOAG)
- Domestic Abuse Risk Assessment (DARA)
- Multi Agency Risk Reduction and Assessment Conference (MARAC)
- Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Panel (DAPP)
- Service-led assessments

However, unless participation is mandated through required attendance, these referrals depend on the perpetrator's voluntary commitment and agreement to engage in the programme.

PCCs commission perpetrator intervention programmes, with a focus on high risk/high harm perpetrators. Programme provisions vary across areas, with examples including Transform, DRIVE, the Change Project, Prevent and Change, They Matter, Respect Young Persons Programme, and Glow.

Several areas also offer programmes accessible through OOCR for standard risk and medium risk individuals aged 18 and older, such as Project CARA delivered by Hampton Trust. Other commissioned conditional caution programmes, include Project PIPA, Cranstoun Domestic Abuse Interventions and Resolutions (C-DAIR), Prevent, and ReFocus.

Some PCCs provide early intervention schemes for young people in form of educational programmes in schools focused on healthy relationships.

Essex PCC – The Good Man Project and Sisters in Strength

Essex PCC commissions Essex Youth Service, who deliver The Good Man Project (for boys) and Sisters in Strength (for girls) to children and young people who are either presenting or experiencing problematic behaviour within a relationship. The relationship does not have to be romantic, for example it could be an unhealthy friendship. This early intervention is aimed at educating young people on healthy and unhealthy relationships, as well as providing them with the soft skills to listen and communicate effectively. Both programmes are delivered in educational settings across five weeks, either in groups or on a one-to-one basis depending on individual circumstances.

Graduates often report a positive increase in their confidence, self-esteem, mental health and wellbeing, as well as an increase in their communication skills and problem-solving skills. One young person said: “The part I liked best was talking about my emotions, because it helped me deal with stuff in my personal life.”

Others commission specialised programmes for children and young people who exhibit unhealthy beliefs and behaviours. For example, the PCCs for Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Hertfordshire, and Staffordshire commission interventions for families where children and young people exhibit abusive or violent behaviour towards those close to them, particularly parents or carers. This behaviour is referred to as Child/Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse (CAPVA). The providers of CAPVA programmes vary and include RISE, the Change Project, You Matter, the Chrysalis Centre, and the Respect Young People Programme.

PCCs also commission stalking perpetrator intervention programmes, some of which utilise Compulsive Obsessive Behaviour Intervention (COBI). This therapy employs a treatment model

called Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT), aiming to help individuals acknowledge, accept, and understand the difficult emotions and thoughts that lead to harmful behaviours towards others.

Sussex PCC – Compulsive Obsessive Behaviour Intervention

The High Harm Perpetrator Programme in Sussex provides tailored interventions for persistent domestic abuse and stalking offenders with complex needs. By supporting perpetrators to recognise and address their abusive behaviours, the programme aims to reduce re-offending and enhance victim safety.

A key component of this initiative is COBI, delivered by Intervention Alliance. COBI specifically targets individuals in Sussex with court-ordered Stalking Protection Orders (SPOs), ensuring that each person issued an SPO is considered for intervention. COBI is grounded in proven psychological therapy, involving twelve intensive one-to-one sessions. Participants undergo a detailed analysis of their behaviours and work towards maintaining non-offending patterns. While voluntary, Sussex Police implements alternative disruption measures for those who refuse to engage.

As of November 2024, 10 perpetrators have completed the COBI programme, 12 are currently undertaking it, and seven are awaiting their first session. In the six months prior to starting the programme, the 22 perpetrators who have either completed or are currently in the programme were responsible for a total of 31 recorded offences. Notably, there have been no recorded stalking-related offences following the completion of the COBI programme.

Some PCCs also established 'hubs' that facilitate closer collaboration between different partners. These hubs are designed to promote a more integrated, whole-system approach to supporting victims and to those affected, including children and families. They also focus on managing and addressing perpetrators' harmful behaviours through targeted domestic abuse and stalking intervention programmes. By fostering coordinated partnerships between local authorities, social services, police forces, and other relevant organisations, these hubs aim to deliver multi-agency support while tackling the root causes of domestic abuse and stalking.

Surrey PCC – Steps to Change Hub

In Surrey, the PCC and partners launched the Steps to Change Hub to tackle domestic abuse and stalking. This initiative was created by the OPCC for Surrey, Surrey County Council, Surrey Police, and domestic abuse survivor and perpetrator services to improve collaboration and break down siloed efforts. By working together, agencies can better identify hidden victims in a family unit or outside of it and implement effective support and risk management strategies.

The Hub has a dedicated coordinator who triages referrals and delivers specialist perpetrator interventions, including Healthy Relationships (HR) and Challenging Unhealthy Relationship Beliefs and Behaviours (CURBB), delivered by Interventions Alliance for adults. Children and young people (11-18) using abusive behaviours receive support through YUVA, delivered by Waythrough, while survivors receive trauma-informed support from the Surrey Domestic Abuse Partnership.

Early findings indicate reduced re-arrest rates and positive behavioural changes among participants. Stronger collaboration between agencies has helped identify and support more victims and perpetrators. So far, 162 referrals have resulted in 322 individuals being triaged and 343 services allocated. A small cohort study found that five of seven HR and seven of eight CURBB participants had no further police contact after completing the programme. Self-reports also show greater awareness of harmful behaviour and improved emotional regulation.

While most commissioned perpetrator programmes offer interventions that are available to all demographics, PCCs noted that the majority of programmes tend to work predominantly with male perpetrators.

Only a small number of PCCs reported commissioning perpetrator programmes specifically tailored to LGBTQ+ (9%) or racialised and minoritised communities (3%).

Support for victims

PCCs are commissioning victim support services alongside their perpetrator intervention programmes. The delivery of these services varies across areas but can be grouped into five main approaches, and PCCs may deliver them in combination.

Integrated victim support

Victim services are integrated as part of perpetrator intervention programmes. These services support partners, ex-partners, children, and others affected by the perpetrator's offences. The specific services differ but often include needs assessments, safeguarding measures, initial safety

calls, DASH risk assessments, regular check-ins, individual trauma therapy, and/or recovery support groups.

While integrated support may offer comprehensive victim support, the findings indicate that Out of Court Resolution programmes, such as CARA, provide a more limited service. These programmes primarily engage with victims to discuss the immediate risks posed by the perpetrator and provide updates on the progress of the intervention. They also ensure victims are connected to available services through signposting.

Signposting

Where there are no integrated victim support services, perpetrator programmes are connected to victim support services. In these cases, dedicated staff from the programmes assist with signposting victims to relevant support services.

Independent Domestic Violence Advisors

Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) may be commissioned. IDVAs provide emotional and practical advice, guidance and support victims in working with other partners in the system. They support victims alongside the perpetrator's participation in the programme.

Independent Stalking Advocates Caseworkers

Several PCCs reported commissioning Independent Stalking Advocates Caseworkers (ISACs) or supporting the upskilling of existing IDVAs to become accredited ISACs to support victims of stalking. These roles are integrated into their specialist support services for stalking victims, DA support services, and/or stalking perpetrator intervention programmes.

West Midlands PCC – Integrated victim support and ISACs

The West Midlands PCC commissions Pathways2Change (P2C), an in-custody domestic abuse perpetrator intervention pilot for standard risk and medium risk offenders in Sandwell and Dudley. The programme targets individuals who would otherwise face 'no further action' (NFA) during police investigations.

P2C provides parallel support for victims while the perpetrator undergoes intervention. However, perpetrators will not be accepted into the programme without the victim's consent. Victims who wish to engage, even if the perpetrator refuses, can still receive support through Black Country Women's Aid (BCWA). BCWA is an experienced stalking and DA service, as well as a member of the National Stalking Consortium. Their dedicated ISACs use specialist tools such as SASH (Screening Assessment for Stalking and Harassment) and SRP (Stalking Risk Profile) to assess and monitor risk. Victims also receive safety planning, ongoing safety monitoring, wellbeing support, and direct referrals to counselling. Any concerns or escalation are immediately shared with West Midlands Police.

Multi-agency risk assessment panels

To ensure the effective safeguarding of victims and wrap-around support, areas may utilise multi-agency panels, such as Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) or Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordination (MATAC), to assess the risks posed by perpetrators and implement measures to protect victims' safety and stop further offending.

Accreditation of services

Domestic abuse

Providing a service to perpetrators of domestic abuse carries significant responsibility. It is essential to ensure this work is both safe and effective, without causing further harm to survivors or escalating the risk they face. To support this, the [Home Office has developed standards for DA perpetrator intervention programmes](#), which set out overarching principles and practice guidelines for commissioning and delivering interventions for perpetrators of domestic abuse.

While the Home Office standards are not a form of accreditation, they outline that interventions should demonstrate adherence to up to date best practice by seeking accreditation. Additionally, compliance with these standards was a requirement for receiving the Domestic Abuse and Stalking Perpetrator Intervention Fund.

Accreditations or quality-assured framework compliance can be obtained through:

- [Correctional Services Advice and Accreditation \(CSAAP\)](#)
- [RESPECT Standards](#)
- [National Framework for Intervention \(NFI\) process](#)

We found that of the programmes commissioned or co-commissioned by PCCs, 88% are accredited, with the majority holding [RESPECT accreditation](#). RESPECT is a quality assurance certification that evaluates services working with perpetrators against the Respect Standard. This standard is closely aligned with the Home Office's DA Perpetrator Standards and represents the nationally agreed principles and guidelines.

A small number of PCCs (three) emphasised that some of their commissioned perpetrator programmes are not accredited, as they do not fit within the RESPECT accreditation standards. They explored alternative options to secure accreditation but did not specify what options were considered.

Some programmes have also achieved, or are in the process of achieving, quality-assured framework compliance (not formal accreditation) through the NFI process, overseen by HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS).

In addition, areas reported receiving accreditation for their victim support services through Women's Aid and SafeLives.

Women's Aid applies the Women's Aid [National Quality Standards \(NQS\)](#), which are part of a wider framework for the VAWG and Inter-Personal Violence (IPV) sectors. This framework was developed by the Sector Sustainability Group, which includes Imkaan, Rape Crisis England and Wales, Respect, SafeLives, and Women's Aid.

SafeLives uses its [Leading Lights](#) accreditation programme for frontline domestic abuse services. Leading Lights is a mark of quality for domestic abuse services, recognised by commissioners and funders across the UK.

Stalking

A consistent and evidence-based approach to stalking perpetrator intervention programmes is critical for effectively addressing stalking, providing support to victims, and addressing the perpetrators' obsessive behaviours.

There are currently no accreditation processes or national standards for stalking perpetrator intervention programmes. Most areas (26) expressed that national standards for stalking

perpetrator intervention programmes (in a DA and non-DA context) would support them in the delivery of these interventions locally.

Some areas highlighted the importance of establishing a minimum benchmark for delivery to maintain consistency and ensure safe practices. This may include guidelines on training, monitoring and evaluation, recommended risk assessment processes, partnership working, the use of Stalking Protection Orders (SPOs), and referral mechanisms. They also suggested that the development of these national standards should be informed by the expertise of specialist services that support stalking victims. Additionally, areas stressed the need to retain local flexibility in implementing these standards.

Monitoring processes and structures

An effective performance monitoring process is essential for ensuring the success and accountability of commissioned perpetrator programmes. The majority of PCCs conduct quarterly performance monitoring of their commissioned perpetrator programmes. This typically involves providers submitting quarterly reports addressing the key performance indicators (KPIs) outlined in their contracts. These reports are reviewed during quarterly meetings, which may take the form of steering groups, working groups, or governance boards, involving local authorities and other key partners. The provider may also meet with the OPCC to discuss the report and review outcomes. These meetings serve to evaluate performance, address challenges, and enable OPCCs to respond swiftly to emerging issues.

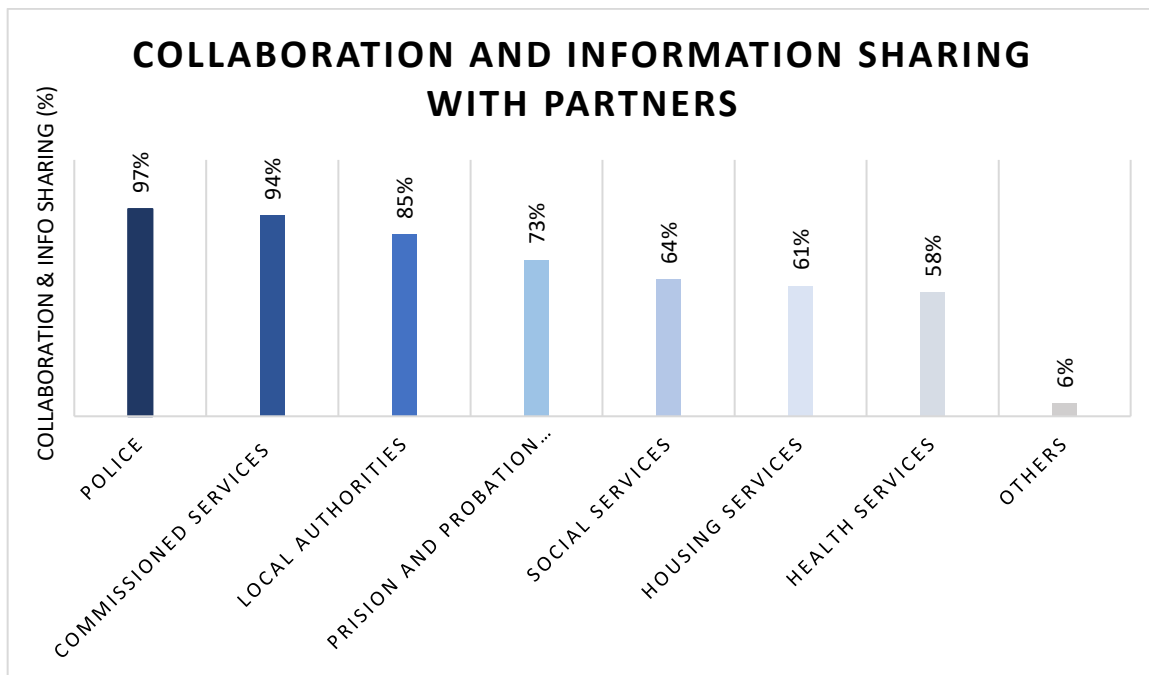
For those receiving the Home Office Domestic Abuse and Stalking Perpetrator Intervention Fund, deliverables are measured in line with the Home Office grant requirements, with quarterly reports also submitted to the Home Office.

The KPIs used across areas are broadly consistent and include the following:

- Reduction in the frequency and severity of abuse
- Reduction in the risk posed by perpetrators
- Number of referrals
- High engagement and low attrition rates among perpetrators
- A sustainable, trained, and qualified workforce
- Reduction in (re-)offending rates
- Improved safety and well-being of victims and their families.
- Enhanced wellbeing of perpetrators
- Increased awareness and improved attitudes/behaviours towards violence against women and girls

Governance processes and structures

The majority of areas established governance processes and structures that fall into two categories: (1) operational forums, boards, and panels that focus on assessing and managing risks posed by perpetrators while safeguarding victims, and (2) strategic boards that oversee performance, address challenges, share successes, and improve partner responsiveness. These structures and processes are used by areas to embed collaborative working and information sharing with their key partners, including:



Operational risk management

We found that the majority of areas use MARAC (61%), MATAAC (30%), and/or DAPP (21%) to assess and manage the risks posed by perpetrators while safeguarding victims.

Strategic boards

Most areas also reported having established forums that operate at a strategic level, focusing on long-term objectives, system-wide improvements, and ensuring accountability among all partners. Their aim is to develop a coordinated and effective approach to perpetrator management, victim safety, and preventative measures.

Greater Manchester Combined Authority – Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Board

Greater Manchester Combined Authority has robust governance structures in place through its GBV Strategy. The GBV Board, a multi-agency forum led by the Deputy Mayor, provides strategic leadership and direction, supported by the GBV Executive.

An operational group (DA Coordinators) ensures collaborative delivery of the strategy. It includes representatives from criminal justice agencies, Greater Manchester Police, health, housing, VCSE, Greater Manchester Probation Service, victim services, and all ten local authorities.

DA perpetrator interventions and the development of a perpetrator strategy are integral parts of the GBV strategy for Greater Manchester. While each local authority commissions its own interventions, they align with a common Greater Manchester approach. Greater Manchester has also developed the MATAC Model, a whole-system approach to managing serial and high-risk domestic abuse perpetrators. This model enables police and partners to work together to reduce risk, harm, and re-victimisation, with a MATAC process now established across all local authority areas.

Additionally, the Lived Experience Panel contributes to the planning and design of GBV initiatives, ensuring survivor voices shape Greater Manchester's response.

Evaluation

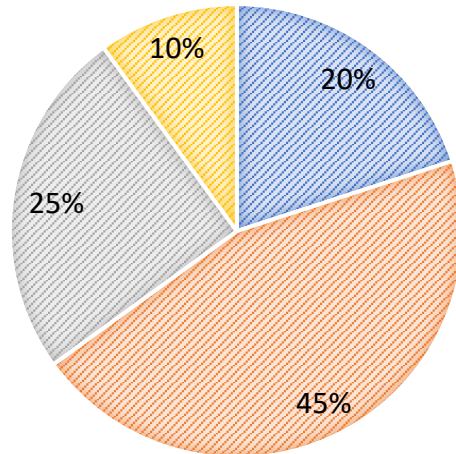
PCCs are undertaking evaluation of their commissioned programmes. 76% (26) reported having undertaken evaluations, or planning evaluation for their commissioned programmes. Evaluative activity falls into a number of categories:

1. In-house: interventions are evaluated by OPCCs internally.
2. External: evaluation is commissioned to be delivered by an external provider
3. Literature review: PCCs review national evaluations of commissioned programmes funded by partners such as CARA, funded by the Home Office, or evaluations conducted by external programme providers. They may also review cost-benefit analysis conducted by partners
4. None: PCCs have undertaken no evaluation and have no planned evaluation

PCCs who have commissioned multiple programmes may employ different evaluation methods for each approach.

TYPES OF EVALUATION CONDUCTED

■ In-House ■ External ■ Literature Review ■ None



Evaluation methodology and measures

We received a total of 10 evaluations/interim reports from five areas. Most areas employed a range of methodologies, including mix-method, quantitative data, qualitative data, and case studies, to evaluate their perpetrator programmes. These methodologies are typically not used in isolation but are often combined to provide a more comprehensive evaluation of their commissioned programmes.

Variations in the delivery of perpetrator programmes and the differing levels of available funding influence the methodologies employed and the key measures applied.

In areas that completed evaluations or produced interim reports, the following key measures were used:

- Number of referrals and the overall effectiveness of the referral process in providing perpetrators access to the programme(s)
- Effectiveness of data sharing practices and the types of data collected
- Perpetrator engagement and attrition rates
- Demographic data on perpetrators, including gender, ethnicity, and age
- Measure re-offending rates over various timeframes, such as three, six, or 12 months
- Evaluation of multi-agency collaboration among key partners and providers to ensure effective case risk management and referral pathways
- Feedback from perpetrators on:
 - Decrease in the risk posed by the perpetrator

- Increased awareness and improved attitudes/behaviours toward violence against women and girls
- Feedback from programme providers on:
 - Effectiveness of multi-agency collaboration
 - Quality of training and staff preparedness to support perpetrators
 - Workload and staffing levels

Evaluation findings

Of the 10 evaluations/interim reports received, the findings highlighted a positive impact overall. Key outcomes included reduced re-offending rates, increased awareness of unhealthy behaviours, and a better understanding of healthy relationships among perpetrators.

Some evaluations also indicated that perpetrator programmes fostered stronger partnership working between agencies, leading to more coordinated and effective responses. Additionally, some evaluations noted improvements in referral mechanisms, resulting in higher referral rates into perpetrator intervention programmes.

Although areas recognised the importance of incorporating victim feedback, only one interim report included such feedback, and it lacked sufficient supporting data.

Evaluations often provide recommendations for improvement, identifying areas that require further attention or development.

Conclusions and recommendations

Funding

PCCs consistently raised issues around the funding landscape

PCCs recognise the potential of addressing perpetrators' behaviour through interventions to prevent the escalation of harmful actions, reducing the number of victims of domestic abuse and stalking, and minimising re-victimisation. However, despite significant investment from many PCCs and partners to safeguard victims, areas reported limited opportunities to challenge and divert offending behaviour beyond arrest. PCCs noted that inconsistency in offender management may lead to a 'postcode lottery' in how perpetrators of domestic abuse and stalking are managed, including the provision of perpetrator intervention programmes.

Sustainable and long-term funding is critical to commissioning these approaches. PCCs are currently operating under huge uncertainty regarding the future funding opportunities available for

perpetrator interventions. The Domestic Abuse and Stalking Perpetrator Intervention Fund is ending in March 2025. While the majority of PCCs intend to continue funding programmes, without additional funding many would be forced to scale back approaches or decommission their programmes. Equally, the Domestic Abuse and Stalking Perpetrator Intervention Fund 2023-25 required PCCs to provide match funding. This provided a significant barrier for a number of areas, with PCCs reporting challenges in providing the match amount, resorting to dipping into reserves and in an inability to access the grant. Match funding should not be a barrier to accessing funding to commission these crucial interventions.

Shorter-term funding also presents significant challenges to the effective implementation of perpetrator intervention programmes. Interventions take a significant time to fully embed and mobilise locally. To successfully implement interventions PCCs must successfully engage partner agencies and the local community and challenge concerns regarding their impact, risks of exposing victims to perpetrators, and the perception that these programmes divert funding from essential victim support services. Recruiting qualified staff, tailoring interventions to address the complex needs of perpetrators, and refining programme delivery, take time. Early-stage obstacles often manifest as low referral and engagement rates. As the programme matures, awareness grows, and multi-agency collaboration strengthens, areas typically see an increase in referral and engagement rates. As interventions gain momentum, the instability of short-term funding cycles forces areas to consider exit strategies, making the long-term continuity of these initiatives uncertain. This issue is further intensified by late notification of funding, which places pressure on PCCs' ability to strategically plan service delivery, make financial decisions, and complete procurement processes. Procurement requires a significant investment of time and resources – both for the PCC to conduct and for potential providers to respond to. Due to late notice of funding, PCCs may be into the next funding period before a service may be contracted and implemented or an existing contract extended. This constant cycle of ramping up and winding down services prevents areas from focusing on complex, long-term systemic change and limits the ability of PCCs to build on their initial successes. PCCs are working with partners to explore opportunities for co-commissioning both new and existing perpetrator intervention programmes. However, like PCCs, partners are also under significant financial pressures and are considering where to prioritise funding. PCCs emphasised these challenges hinder their ability to co-commission, as financial constraints and competing priorities make it difficult to allocate resources effectively.

Funding for victims' services is also at a challenging point, with the uncertainty around the MoJ victims' services grant and funding cuts to the core funding for 2025/26. While PCCs fund perpetrator interventions and victims support services from different grants, it is critical that victims support services are in place to provide wrap-around support for those victims whose perpetrators are engaging with interventions.

Recommendations

1. To support the Home Office's commitment to halving VAWG in 10 years, the department should provide needs-based funding to all PCCs to support the commissioning of perpetrator interventions for domestic abuse and stalking. This funding should be long term and multi-year.
2. The APCC should work with partners including the Local Government Association, Probation and Health to develop co-commissioning opportunities, share learning and develop collaborative approaches.

Availability of services

A key concern raised by PCCs is the lack of consistency in offender management, including the provision of perpetrator intervention programmes.

This review has demonstrated a significant gap in the targeted interventions for stalking perpetrators unrelated to DA. This finding is supported by the report on the [super-complaint on stalking](#), published in September 2024, which also found few forces with specific interventions. It is crucial to ensure that perpetrator interventions and integrated support for stalking victims are delivered consistently across all areas in England and Wales.

The report's findings show that stalking behaviour may be addressed through the DA perpetrator programmes or through other measures, however, it is important that targeted interventions are available where appropriate. It is critical that the obsessive behaviours of stalking perpetrators are not left unaddressed.

Lack of provision may be due to a number of factors including a limited evidence base for targeted interventions and the potentially higher costs involved in delivering programmes. Fewer interventions result in a lack of strong evidence base, and more limited opportunity to develop one. PCCs must be assured that they can commission programmes that will provide positive results.

Unlike DA perpetrator programmes, stalking interventions do not have national standards or accreditation to guarantee their quality and effectiveness. To address this, the Home Office has recently announced national standards on stalking perpetrator programmes to ensure that interventions properly address an offender's stalking behaviour in a consistent and evidence-based way across England and Wales.² PCCs welcomed the Home Office's announcement, the majority of PCCs who responded supported the need for national standards noting it would greatly support their local delivery of these interventions. They highlighted the need for clear benchmarks to

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/victims-to-be-given-more-protection-in-stalking-crackdown>

ensure consistent, safe, and effective practices. They suggested standards could provide guidance on key aspects such as training, evaluation processes, and a clear definition of stalking.

The analysis also demonstrated a challenge in the provision of early interventions; 17% cent of the services that areas reported commissioning were early intervention programmes, fewer than other approaches in higher risk categories. These include initiatives that provide sessions in schools on healthy relationships, as well as programmes for children and young people exhibiting unhealthy behaviours towards parents, carers, or others including peers. PCCs emphasised the importance of early intervention and prevention, which focus on rehabilitation instead of punishment, tackle the root cause of the problem rather than just addressing its symptoms. This closely aligns with the government's commitment to prevention, including initiatives to address sexism in schools. Addressing unhealthy behaviours also reduces future risk and future costs to the system, so it is crucial that PCCs and partners are able to provide early interventions.

Recommendations

3. The APCC welcomes the Home Office's commitment to develop national standards for stalking perpetrator intervention programmes and will continue to work collaboratively on their development.
4. The APCC supports further recommendations within recommendation 26 in the report on the super-complaint on stalking: *further research should be undertaken by the Home Office to inform the commissioning and delivery of stalking intervention programmes.*
5. The APCC will continue to support good commissioning practice by identifying and sharing notable practice to build the evidence base across DA and stalking perpetrator interventions.

Victims' support

It is critical that victims receive the right support.

While this report focused on perpetrator interventions, it is clear that PCCs are focused on delivering their role to commission support services for victims. The delivery of support for victims of perpetrators engaging in perpetrator intervention programmes varies depending on the available services locally. PCCs fund victims' advocates, including independent domestic abuse advocates, and independent stalking advocacy caseworkers, and they may offer an integrated support service with their perpetrator service or signposting to their wider victims' support.

It is important that there is local flexibility to commission and deliver services, but it is critical that there are effective mechanisms for engaging and supporting victims through the process.

Perpetrator programmes and victims support services should have effective lines of communication to ensure victims are informed, engaged and supported.

Recommendations

6. PCCs will improve engagement and outcomes by evaluating how their victims' services are joined up with their perpetrator interventions, and ensure the correct pathways are in place so that victims are supported.

Governance and accountability

Strong governance is critical to managing risks effectively and delivering a coordinated response to perpetrator management.

PCCs have established governance structures and processes to address both operational and strategic risks.

At the operational level, most PCCs utilise governance frameworks such as MARAC (61%), MATAAC (30%), and DAPP (21%). However, at the strategic level, we found that the structures and processes vary across areas, and it is unclear how these are being organised. In responding to the super-complaint recommendations the APCC found that some PCCs reported that they would be reviewing their multi-agency arrangements to ensure perpetrators were effectively managed and recognised by such forums.

This variation risks creating inconsistencies that could undermine the quality of risk management, accountability, and the effectiveness of responses to perpetrator management across areas. It is important that governance and monitoring are undertaken effectively to ensure PCCs and partners understand risks and progress.

Recommendations

7. To build on the practice and/or issues identified by recommendations 25 in the super-complaint on stalking, PCCs may engage their chief constables to review their strategic and operational governance arrangements.

Evaluation

PCCs are undertaking evaluations to build a strong evidence base for commissioning perpetrator intervention programmes.

Existing evaluations have demonstrated positive impacts on re-offending rates, partnership working, and referral mechanisms, and have contributed to the continuous improvement of programmes through tailored recommendations.

However, PCCs emphasised that the lack of sustainable funding limits their ability to conduct thorough evaluations of perpetrator intervention programmes. Programmes may close prematurely, resulting in missed opportunities to fully implement and measure their long-term effectiveness. The lack of adequate funding also affects the quality of evaluations. Current evaluations may only offer a high-level overview, typically focusing on re-offending rates and feedback from perpetrators, rather than providing in-depth evaluation. Additionally, a small number of areas reported not conducting evaluations for their commissioned programmes. This limitation is largely due to the financial constraints, which prevent PCCs from commissioning independent evaluations that offer more comprehensive assessments.

Lack of thorough evaluation undermines the ability to draw reliable conclusions about programme effectiveness, risking the misallocation of resources and hindering the development of best practices.

It also presents a challenge for PCCs in justifying and demonstrating the success of their programmes to central government, the public, and partner agencies, at a time when the government is undertaking a spending review and looking at value for money.

Recommendations

8. The Home Office should introduce an evaluative requirement into future funding agreements and undertake evaluative activity across the 2023-2025 funded projects.
9. PCCs are encouraged to utilise the CoP Practice Bank to share evaluated interventions and contribute to the sharing of notable practice.
10. The APCC will facilitate approaches to sharing evaluated interventions and will identify tools and good practice to support PCCs in evaluating approaches to commissioned services, working with the Home Office, MoJ and other partners.

APPENDIX

List of respondents

The following is the list of PCCs who responded to the survey and contributed to the findings of this report:

- Avon and Somerset PCC
- Cambridgeshire PCC
- Cheshire PCC
- Cleveland PCC
- Cumbria PFCC
- Derbyshire PCC
- Durham PCC
- Dyfed Powys PCC
- Essex PFCC
- Gloucestershire PCC
- Greater Manchester Combined Authority
- Gwent PCC
- Hampshire and Isle of Wight PCC
- Hertfordshire PCC
- Humberside PCC
- Kent PCC
- Lancashire PCC
- Merseyside PCC
- Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)
- Norfolk PCC
- Northamptonshire PFCC
- Northumbria PCC
- Nottinghamshire PCC
- South Wales PCC
- Staffordshire PFCC
- Suffolk PCC
- Surrey PCC
- Sussex PCC
- Thames Valley PCC
- Warwickshire PCC
- West Mercia PCC
- West Midlands PCC
- West Yorkshire Combined Authority

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