



Ministry
of Justice



Making sure that victims of crime are treated fairly

A victim is a person who has had a crime committed against them.



Easy Read version of:
“Delivering Justice for Victims”
The introduction of the Government’s
consultation response

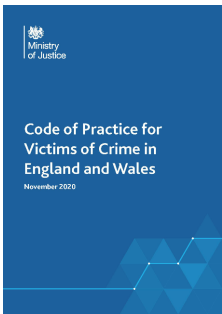


Ministry
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We are the Ministry of Justice 1



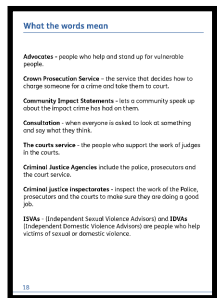
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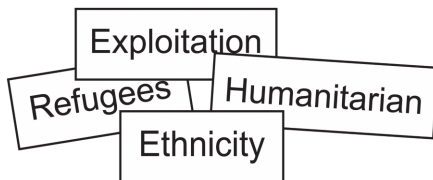


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We are the Ministry of Justice



This is an Easy Read version of the introduction of “Delivering Justice for Victims”. It says what the Government plans to do to help make things better for victims of crime.



Some more difficult words are in **bold**. These are explained at the back.



The Ministry of Justice is responsible for running the **court service** and prisons, as well as helping victims.

The **court service** are the people who support the work of judges in the courts.



Decisions about what we do are made by Dominic Raab, the Secretary of State for Justice. He is a member of the Government and a Member of Parliament.



In December 2021, we said we want to make a new law to make things better for victims of crime.



We said we want victims to:

- have their say and the chance to tell their story.
- get the help they need, no matter if they have reported their crime to the police or not.
- know where to go and who to tell if they do not get the help they need.





We also said:

- we want offenders to pay more money to help victims.
- we want to make sure that police, **prosecutors**, and the **court service** are better checked on how well they treat victims.



A **prosecutor's** job is to try to show someone did a crime.

What we have done already to help

We have made lots of changes to make things better for victims already. Things like:



1. We have made changes to the **Victims' Code**.

The **Victims' Code** says how victims should be supported by the police, **prosecutors**, the court service and other support services.



We made the Victims' Code easier to understand for both victims and the people who support them.



2. We have given more money to services that help victims and will give £440 million more in the next 3 years. More money means services can help even more victims.



3. We have made a Rape Review Action Plan, which says how the Government will help people who have been raped. We promised to make sure rape victims can get help 24 hours a day. We want to make sure more cases of rape can go to a **trial** in court.



4. We have helped victims tell their story in **trials**. We have made it possible for some victims to answer some questions on a video recording, instead of being in front of people.



5. We have reduced the amount of time victims have to wait for a **trial**. To do this, we have rolled out video technology so people can attend 'virtual' **trials**. We also opened extra courtrooms to make sure the courts could stay open during the COVID-19 pandemic.



6. We have made new laws with tougher punishments for the most serious crimes.



7. We have had adverts helping people understand what abuse is and what support there is. These have been on television, radio and the internet.

The Victims Consultation



Earlier this year, we had a **consultation**.

A **consultation** is when we ask everyone to look at our ideas and tell us what they think.

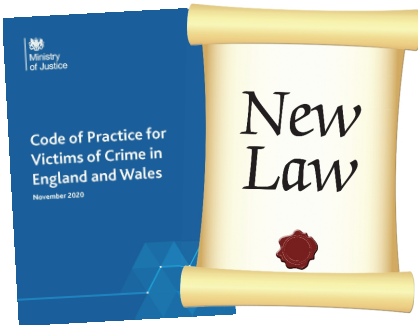


We wanted to find out how to make things better for **victims** of crime.



We wrote a paper and asked some questions.

The **consultation** asked questions about how we can:



- Make the **Victims' Code** a part of a new **victims** law.

The **Victims' Code** explains how **victims** should be supported by the police, **prosecutors**, the court service and other support services.



- Make things better for **victims** when they report a crime. For example, we asked about:



- making changes to the ways victims speak to and get information from the **Crown Prosecution Service**.



- make sure that police, **prosecutors**, and the court service give **victims** the support which they are promised to have in the **Victims' Code**.



- Make sure that people who organise support services for victims in their local area work well together.



- Make offenders pay more money to help pay for victims.



- Make it easier for **ISVAs** and **IDVAs** to help victims. For example, we asked if it would help if we made it clearer what their job is and what training they need.

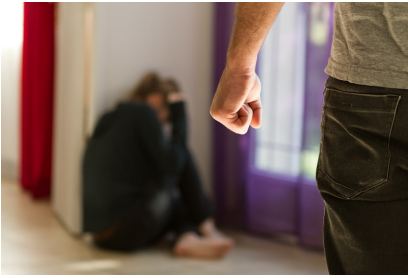
ISVAs (Independent Sexual Violence Advisors) and **IDVAs** (Independent Domestic Violence Advisors) are people who help victims of sexual or domestic violence.



We gave people 8 weeks to tell us what they thought.



More than 600 people told us what they thought.



As well as asking questions we also held meetings with:

- victims of crime.



- services that help victims.



- police, **prosecutors** and court staff.



- people who work for health services that support victims.



- people who work for **Police and Crime Commissioners**.

A **Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)** is a person the local community votes for in England and Wales to make sure the police work well in their area.



These meetings made sure victims and the people who support them had a chance to have their say.

What we are going to do



We thought carefully about what people told us. We decided to make several changes to make things better for victims.



The biggest thing we will do is make a new law for victims. We will also make lots of other changes.



1. Make a new law for victims

We will make a new law to make things better for victims of crime. This will be called the Victims Bill. A new law starts as a Bill. It will be talked about in Parliament and voted on before it becomes the law.

In the Victims Bill:



- We will turn the main ideas in the **Victims' Code** into law. The **Code** explains which services must support victims. This includes the police, **prosecutors**, the court service and other support services. Turning the Victims' Code into law makes it more certain for victims that important parts of the Code cannot be changed.



- We will ask **criminal justice agencies** and **Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs)** to listen to what happened to victims and regularly look at how well they are supporting victims.

Criminal justice agencies include the police, **prosecutors** and the court service.



- We will make it a rule that the **criminal justice inspectorates** will regularly check **criminal justice agencies** to see if victims are treated well.

Criminal justice inspectorates work for the Government and inspect the work of the police, **prosecutors**, court service, prisons and the probation system to make sure they are doing a good job.



- We will ask the **Victims' Commissioner** to write a report for Parliament each year about how well victims are being supported. This report will say what else could be done to make things better for victims. The police, **prosecutors**, the court service and others will have to pay attention and answer questions.

The **Victims' Commissioner**, is a person chosen by the Government who campaigns to make things better for victims.



- We will make it easier for victims to make a complaint if they do not get the help they need.



- We will make **Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs)**, local government and health services work together to help victims of serious crimes.



- We will make the job **ISVAs** and **IDVAs** do to help victims a part of the law. We will give helpful new information about:



- what training they need to help victims.

- what type of help they should give victims.

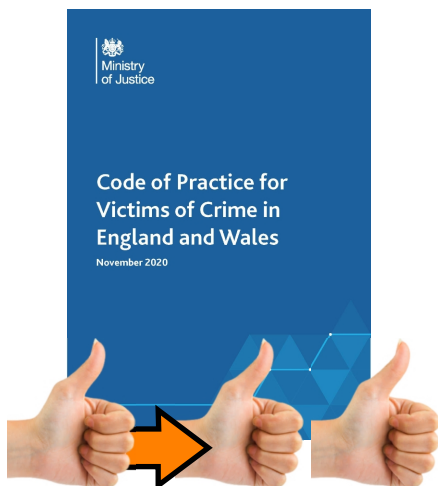


- how others like the police, **prosecutors**, court service and health services can work with them to help victims.



ISVAs (Independent Sexual Violence Advisors) and **IDVAs** (Independent Domestic Violence Advisors) are people who help victims of sexual or domestic violence.

2. Other things we will do to help victims

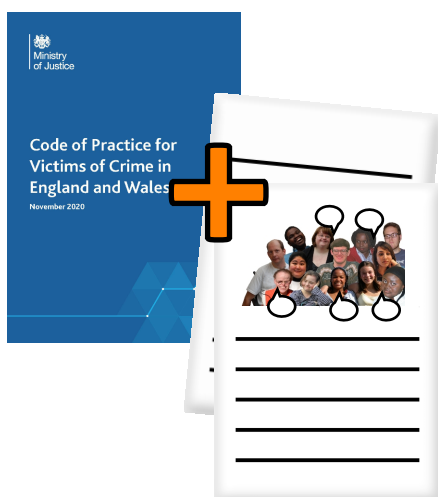


We will do lots of other things to help make things better, like changing the **Victims' Code**.

The **Victims' Code** explains how victims should be supported by the police, **prosecutors**, the court service and other support services.

We will make sure:

- **Victims** will get more support:
 - some victims will be offered a meeting with **prosecutors** before going to **trial**, if that is what they want.



- we will add extra information to the **Victims' Code** to explain what **Community Impact Statements** are and how they are used.

Community Impact Statements let a community speak up about the effect crime has had on them.



- victims will be able to go to a **parole hearing** if this is what they want to do and if the Parole Board agrees. We will also let victims ask questions.

A **parole hearing** decides if a prisoner is safe to leave prison.



- we will work with court judges to decide how we could give victims the opportunity to tell their stories in **Mental Health Tribunals** like they already can in courts.



Mental Health Tribunals look at what should happen to offenders who might have a mental illness, personality disorder or learning difficulty.



A learning difficulty is different to a learning disability. **Mental Health Tribunals** decide if it is safe for an offender to leave hospital.



- Offenders will pay a higher **Victim Surcharge**.

The **Victim Surcharge** is money that offenders have to pay when the court finds them guilty of a crime. The money helps to pay for support services for **victims** and witnesses.



- We will tell more people about **ISVAs**, **IDVAs** and **advocates** and how they can help victims. We will make a list of **ISVAs** and **IDVAs** and have meetings for the people who give this support. We will write a report every year about the help given by **ISVAs** and **IDVAs**.

What the words mean

Advocates - people who help and stand up for vulnerable people.

Crown Prosecution Service – the service that decides how to charge someone for a crime and take them to court.

Community Impact Statement - lets a community speak up about the impact crime has had on them.

Consultation - when everyone is asked to look at something and say what they think.

The court service - the people who support the work of judges in the courts.

Criminal justice agencies include the police, prosecutors and the court service.

Criminal justice inspectorates - inspect the work of the police, prosecutors and the courts to make sure they are doing a good job.

ISVAs - (Independent Sexual Violence Advisors) and **IDVAs** (Independent Domestic Violence Advisors) are people who help victims of sexual or domestic violence.

Mental Health Tribunals – think about what should happen to offenders who may also have mental illnesses, personality disorders or learning difficulties. They decide when it is safe for an offender to leave hospital. Not all offenders have a Mental Health Tribunal.

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Parole hearing - decides if a prisoner is safe to leave prison. Not all prisoners have a parole hearing.

Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) - are elected by people in their local area. They check that local police meet the needs of the community and are in charge of helping **victims**.

Prosecutors - lawyers who try to show someone did a crime.

Trial – a hearing that usually takes place in a court.

Victim - a person who has had a crime committed against them.

Victims' Code – this explains which services must support victims.

Victims' Commissioner - a person chosen by the Government who campaigns to make things better for victims.

Victim Surcharge - money that offenders have to pay when the court finds them guilty of a crime. The money helps to pay for support services for victims and witnesses.

Credits



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