

www.victims-first.org.uk

'Victims First' launches to support victims of crime

The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Thames Valley, Anthony Stansfeld, has today launched his 'Victims First' brand and website.

Victims First is the new overarching title for the PCCs work in providing support, increasing accessibility and improving services for victims of crime across Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire.

The first initiative under 'Victims First' is a new online resource which has advice on what to do and how to get help if you've been a victim of crime, including information on what you should expect from the police and other criminal justice agencies if you report the crime.

The focal point of the website is a directory which allows victims to find relevant support to help them cope and recover from the impact of the crime. Members of the public will be able to use the website to refer themselves directly to the PCCs own support services, using the online form, or find information and contact details for other organisations. This support is available regardless of whether or not the victim has reported the crime to the police.

The website has information and advice to help people to recognise hidden crimes such as modern slavery, domestic abuse, including coercive control, and hate crime. Victims First also provides a third party reporting mechanism for hate crime so that those who don't want to report directly to the police can either complete a reporting form on the website or call 0300 1234 148.

The PCC has undertaken extensive work to improve support for victims of crime, including commissioning new services for young victims, victims of sexual violence, a victim-led restorative justice service and a local support service to assist other victims.

Victims First encompasses all of this work and will expand over the coming year, with the PCC reviewing his services to ensure that victims continue to have appropriate support in place, are able to easily access it and that agencies, including the police, are victim-focussed.

Anthony Stansfeld, Police and Crime Commissioner said: "I recently launched my new Police and Crime Plan which reaffirmed my commitment to making sure that victims have access to the support they need to cope and recover from the impact of crime. The launch of Victims First and the website is a key milestone in my work in this area and will allow victims to easily find information and support in one place.

“I believe it will be a valuable resource not just for victims but also for people and organisations that come into contact with victims of crime who can now use the website to find and refer people to an appropriate service.

“Victims First will continue to develop over the next year with plans to create a single referral doorway, a specialist counselling service and community signposting points with the aim of simplifying access and improving support for victims.”

Editors Notes

The website is www.victims-first.org.uk

The Police and Crime Commissioner will be available for interview. If you would like to arrange an interview please email opcc.comms@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk or call 01865 541950