



# Putting Victims First



**Putting Victims First**

Incident number: .....

Incident type: .....

Attending officer: .....

Officer's email address: .....@cumbria.police.uk

Officer's phone number: .....

Call 101, option 2, extension: .....

Date: .....

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# Information For Victims Of Crime

Becoming a victim of crime can be a distressing and upsetting experience. This leaflet explains what happens next and gives you information about organisations that provide support and advice. It also offers some practical tips on how you can protect your home and your property.

## What happens when you report a crime?

Now that you have reported a crime, you will be asked for details of what happened.

### **Please give the officer as much information as possible about what happened and tell them:**

- If you are worried about the safety of yourself and/or others.
- If you have recently suffered from any similar crimes(s).
- If the crime was made worse because of abuse relating to race, faith, disability, sexual orientation, or any other factor.
- If you have any specific needs, for example a health problem.
- If you remember anything else about the offence after the initial report.
- If you change your contact details.

We are committed to doing our best for you.

At the back of this booklet, there is a page for you to record things that you have remembered, or questions you may wish to ask the next time we contact you.

The officer will carry out an initial investigation that may include statement taking, house-to-house enquiries and scene examinations. They will tell you if a crime investigation will take place and they will keep you updated on progress. If an investigation cannot be progressed, they will give you a reason why.

If your crime involves injury, loss, or damage, please retain any receipts, as you may be eligible for compensation.

**Please click here for further information and how to apply.**

# Dealing With Your Crime

## Dealing with your crime

If a suspect is identified, they will be questioned, and a decision will be made about what will happen to them. Depending on the type and severity of the offence, the police or the Crown Prosecution Service could make this decision.

The police will keep you informed if there is an investigation and will let you know what the outcome is.

### **Outcomes could include:**

- No further action
- Undertaking a community remedy
- Being subject of an out of court resolution such as a caution
- Receiving a penalty notice
- Being charged or summonsed to court

If the suspect is charged to appear before a court, the Witness Care Unit will contact you. They will inform you about the progress of the case and inform you if you are required to attend to give evidence.

# Community Remedy And Restorative Justice

## Community Remedy

Community Remedy is a process that gives victims of certain types of crime the opportunity to have a say in how the offender is dealt with. If the offender accepts responsibility for their behaviour, you can consider the options under three headings -

- **Reparation:** Asking the offender to pay for, or repair damage to property, clean graffiti, or undertake a community-based activity like litter picking.
- **Restoration:** A facilitated, face-to-face meeting between the victim and the offender (restorative justice), allowing those affected to have an opportunity to explain the impact of crime, get answers to questions they may have, and/or obtain an explanation from the offender.
- **Rehabilitation:** Referral to an intervention programme (such as an alcohol diversion scheme or domestic violence abuse programme).

With youths, an intervention facilitated by the Youth Justice Service involving the youth and parent/guardian or a referral to pathways for adult offenders. All interventions aim to address the cause/s of the behaviour and reduce the risk of re-offending.

The police officer will tell you if your chosen options are enforceable, or voluntary arrangement. If any of the chosen options are unsuitable, the police officer will guide you and make the final decision.

## Restorative Justice

Restorative justice is all about helping people to communicate following a crime or incident. It provides victims with a chance to explain the impact of the offence and ask questions. It helps offenders to explain their actions and offer an apology.

Involvement is voluntary, confidential, and free for those taking part.

If you would like to know more about restorative justice, then speak to a police officer for advice or contact Victim Support and ask for restorative justice.

# Code Of Practice For Victims Of Crime

## Summary Of Victims' Rights

The code of practice for victims of crime sets out the services that the police and other organisations must provide to victims of crime in England and Wales.

For the purposes of this code, a “victim” is:

- A person who has suffered harm, (including physical, or mental/emotional), or economic loss which was directly caused by a criminal offence
- A close relative of a person whose death was directly caused by a criminal offence

Please note: legal persons and businesses are not included within the definition of a victim.

Cumbria Police are committed to ensuring you have all the relevant rights provided.

### Summary of victims' rights

#### **1. To be able to understand and to be understood**

You have the right to be given information in a way that is easy to understand and to be provided with help to be understood, including, where necessary, access to interpretation and translation services.

#### **2. To have the details of the crime recorded without unjustified delay**

You have the right to have details of the crime recorded by the police as soon as possible after the incident. If you are required to provide a witness statement or be interviewed, you have the right to be provided with additional support to assist you through this process.

#### **3. To be provided with information when reporting the crime**

You have the right to receive written confirmation when reporting a crime, to be provided with information about the criminal justice process and to be told about programmes or services for victims. This might include services where you can meet with the suspect or offender, which is known as restorative justice.

# Code Of Practice For Victims Of Crime

## Summary Of Victims' Rights

### **4. To be referred to services that support victims and have services and support tailored to your needs**

You have the right to be referred to services that support victims, which includes the right to contact them directly, and to have your needs assessed so services and support can be tailored to meet your needs. If eligible, you have the right to be offered a referral to specialist support services and to be told about additional support available at court, for example special measures.

### **5. To be provided with information about compensation**

Where eligible, you have the right to be told about how to claim compensation for any loss, damage or injury caused as a result of crime.

### **6. To be provided with information about the investigation and prosecution**

You have the right to be provided with updates on your case and to be told when important decisions are taken. You also have the right, at certain stages of the justice process, to ask for decisions to be looked at again by the relevant service provider.

### **7. To make a victim personal statement**

You have the right to make a victim personal statement, which tells the court how the crime has affected you and is considered when sentencing the offender. You will be given information about the process.

### **8. To be given information about the trial, trial process and your role as a witness**

If your case goes to court, you have the right to be told the time, date and location of any hearing and the outcome of those hearings in a timely way. If you are required to give evidence, you have the right to be offered appropriate help before the trial and, where possible, if the court allows, to meet with the prosecutor before giving evidence.



# Code Of Practice For Victims Of Crime

## Summary Of Victims' Rights

### **9. To be given information about the outcome of the case and any appeals**

You have the right to be told the outcome of the case and, if the defendant is convicted, to be given an explanation of the sentence. If the offender appeals against their conviction or sentence, you have the right to be told about the appeal and its outcome.

### **10. To be paid expenses and have property returned**

If you are required to attend court and give evidence, you have the right to claim certain expenses. If any of your property was taken as evidence, you have the right to get it back as soon as possible.

### **11. To be given information about the offender following a conviction**

Where eligible, you have the right to be automatically referred to the victim contact scheme, which will provide you with information about the offender and their progress in prison, and if/when they become eligible for consideration of parole or release. Where applicable, you also have the right to make a new victim personal statement, in which you can say how the crime continues to affect you.

### **12. To make a complaint about your rights not being met if you believe that you have not received your rights**

You have the right to make a complaint to the relevant service provider. If you remain unhappy, you can contact the parliamentary and health service ombudsman.

**Please click [here](#) for the Victims Code.**

# Code Of Practice For Victims Of Crime

## Summary Of Victims' Rights

Enhanced entitlements are provided to victims of the most serious crime, persistently targeted victims, and vulnerable or intimidated victims. These three categories are explained below:

### **Easy Read Victims Code**

This is an easy read guide to the code of practice for victims of crime, which may be useful for victims who have learning or reading difficulties.

**Please click here for Easy Read Victims Code.**

### **Registered Intermediaries**

Registered intermediaries are specialists who help vulnerable victims and witnesses with an assessed communication difficulty to give their best evidence in court. They can also assist in the interview of victims to help them communicate their evidence to the police. The intermediary is approved by the court and can help to explain the questions and answers so far as necessary to help the witness, but without changing the substance of the evidence.

### **Victim Personal Statement (VPS)**

A VPS is a statement that victims can give to the police (or any agency/organisation assigned by the police to take the VPS on their behalf) if they have been a victim of crime. It is the victim's way of telling the criminal justice system about the physical, emotional, psychological, financial impact of the crime.

A VPS is important; it gives victims a voice in the criminal justice process and helps others to understand how the crime has affected them. A VPS is different from a witness statement which mainly focuses on the crime. Questions may be asked at court about the content of your VPS and can be reported on by the media.

### **Impact Statement for Business (ISB)**

The Impact Statement for Business (ISB) gives you the opportunity to say what impact that a crime has had on the business.

# Attending Court - Witness Care Services

## **Witness Charter**

The Witness Charter sets out the standards of care victims and witnesses can expect if they are a witness to a crime or incident in England and Wales and are required to attend court. This charter applies to all witnesses of a crime, and to character witnesses, but not expert witnesses.

## **Easy Read Witness Charter**

This is an easy read guide to the witness charter; it explains what to expect if you are going to court to talk about something you saw or that happened to you. It tells you about the support you will get and how you should be treated from first telling the police about a crime, to after it has gone to court. These are called standards.

**[Read the Witness Charter here.](#)**

## **Witness Care Unit**

If you are a victim of crime or a witness for the prosecution and are required to attend court a witness care officer will let you know the date of the trial. Witness care officers work for the police. They can assist with travel arrangements and advise re support available. Victims and witnesses can feel anxious about attending court; therefore, you can self-refer to Witness Service or contact the Witness Care Unit to do a referral on your behalf. The Witness Service provide an enhanced support and can arrange pre-trial court visits.

**[Claim your expenses here.](#)**

# Attending Court - Witness Care Services

Special measures is the term used to describe the measures a court can order to assist vulnerable or intimidated witnesses to give their best evidence. The court can order the following special measures to be available:

- Screens/curtains in the courtroom so the witness does not have to see the defendant, and, in some cases, the public gallery.
- A live video link allowing a witness to give evidence away from the courtroom.

This could be from a separate room within the court, or from a dedicated live- link site outside the court building.

**Further information including the full list of what is available can be found by [here](#).**

Cumbria Police will endeavour to get you the appropriate special measures you are eligible for.

# Attending Court - Witness Care Services

## Witness Service

People can feel anxious about giving evidence in court.

Before and during the trial victims and witnesses can get free help and support from the Citizens Advice Witness Service, which is separate from the police, the Witness Care Unit and the Crown Prosecution Service.

They have trained volunteers who can help. Victims and witnesses can talk to the Witness Service in confidence; they will make sure that information and support is available, either from them or from other organisations.

The Witness Service can arrange for victims and witnesses to visit the court before the trial, so they know what to expect on the day and have an opportunity to ask any questions.

If a family member or friend will be coming to the court with you, we can give them support too. There will be a volunteer at the court to offer support on the day of the trial. They will also keep them updated and help with any problems. If required, the Witness Service can go into the court with victims and witnesses.

**Further information can be found [here](#).**

# Other Agencies/Support

## The Victims Hub

There are organisations in Cumbria that can help and support you or someone you know who have been a victim of crime.

The Victims Hub on the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's website provides information on services that are available for those affected by crime whether the victim has reported the crime to the police or not.

The website is not a reporting mechanism and if anyone wishes to report a crime, they should visit [www.cumbria.police.uk](http://www.cumbria.police.uk) to report a crime online or call 101 or 999 in an emergency.

### **Visit Cumbria PFCC - Victims Hub**

## Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority (CICA)

CICA pays compensation to people physically or mentally injured because of a violent crime in England, Scotland or Wales, or in an act of terror abroad.

**Full details and how to apply for compensation is available through [here](#).**

## The Bridgeway

The Bridgeway is a Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) offering confidential support to anyone who has experienced rape or sexual assault - including women, men, children, young people, transgender and non-binary people, and those with disabilities, learning differences, or mental health needs.

Our service is available to all, whether or not they choose to involve the police.

# Other Agencies/Support

## The Bridgeway

We provide a safe, trauma-informed, and non-judgemental environment. Support is tailored to each individual and delivered at their own pace. Services include:

- Medical examination and forensic evidence collection (with full consent and explanation)
- Support in making a police report, if the individual chooses to do so
- Emergency contraception and access to screening and treatment for sexually transmitted infections
- Emotional and practical support
- Referral to counselling and other specialist services
- Follow-up support based on individual needs
- 24-hour confidential helpline: 0330 223 0099

**For more information please visit [this link](#).**

## Accessibility and Individual Needs

We understand that every person has different needs - and that attending a SARC can feel overwhelming. We aim to reduce barriers and make the experience as safe and supportive as possible. We offer:

- Risk assessments prior to appointments, to ensure the right adjustments are in place
- Longer or quieter appointments where needed
- Written or visual explanations of what to expect
- A calm, sensory-considerate environment
- Communication support, or the option to bring someone along
- A clear explanation that people can pause or stop at any time
- Please let us know if someone has specific needs or preferences - we'll always do our best to accommodate them.

# Other Agencies/Support

## What to expect

To help reduce anxiety and support those with communication or processing needs, we can provide clear information in advance, including:

- Who the person will meet
- What the rooms and environment are like
- What will happen, step-by-step
- Approximate time each stage may take

## Anonymous intelligence sharing

If someone chooses not to report to the police, Bridgeway staff can still share limited information anonymously, such as location or a description of the perpetrator. This can help identify patterns and support wider safeguarding.

## Victims' right to anonymity

For victims of sexual abuse who wish to make a complaint to the police and seek justice through the criminal justice system, then under the Sexual Offences (Amendments) Act 1976 and 1992, as amended by Section 6 Sexual Offences Act 2003, there are two levels of anonymity for victims of rape and other sexual offences:

- From the outset of the report, the publication or broadcast of the victim's name, address or likeness is prohibited in England and Wales during that person's lifetime.
- From the time a person is charged with the offence, the publication or broadcasting of any material that might lead a member of the public to identify the victim is prohibited. This protection lasts for the lifetime of the victim, even if the proceedings are abandoned. The protections can be removed by a court.



# Victim Support

## Victim Support

Victim Support gives emotional and practical help to people who have been affected by crime in Cumbria and can advocate on their behalf.

Their support is free, confidential and they can support all victims of crime. If you contact your Victim Support team, they will make sure you get the information and support you need.

If you have been affected by crime, one of the ways they can help you is by giving you the support you need to cope with emotional stress. Their staff and volunteers are trained to listen, give information, and offer feedback. They can help you to make sense of what you have been through, discuss your options, and help you to feel like you are getting your life under control again.

They can help with simple tasks like filling out forms, getting broken doors and windows fixed, and installing burglar alarms. They can also assist with bigger issues such as getting medical treatment, being rehoused, or dealing with the criminal justice system. They give you the information you need to understand your options and next steps.

They can be contacted for support regardless of whether you have contacted the police, and no matter how long ago the crime took place. They will help you for as long as it takes to overcome the impact of crime.

**Victim Support** – 08 08 16 89 111

**Online** – [www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)

Cumbria Constabulary may provide Victim Support with limited details about a victim of crime, in order that contact can be made to offer the support services described above. If the offer of support is declined Victim Support will not retain those details.

# Victim Support

## **Independent domestic and sexual violence advisors (IDSVA)**

IDSVA's provide practical and emotional support to high-risk victims of Domestic Abuse, and to victims of Rape and Serious Sexual Assault. They are independent of the police but can help you understand the police and court process. They can also act as your voice with other agencies, on your behalf.

They work for Victim Support and can be contacted on 0300 303 0157.

# Victims Of Fraud

## Fraud

Fraud is where somebody lies, or deceives you, in order to cause harm, usually by stealing your money.

## Action Fraud

Action Fraud is the national reporting centre for all fraud and cyber-crime. Reports can be made online or via the telephone. You will be given a reference number, and you will receive an update within 28 days.

Action Fraud record the crime and assess it. If further action is needed it will be sent to the relevant law enforcement agency to investigate. It is important that crimes are reported to Action Fraud, so they are able to gain a clear picture of the scale and types of fraud happening across the country to identify patterns and trends and communicate this which is vital in providing preventative measures to stop frauds happening. By reporting to Action Fraud, you will enable law enforcement to understand how these criminals operate and help to catch and stop them.

Action Fraud can refer victims to Victim Support, and they will offer this referral once they have taken your fraud report.

Contact Action Fraud at **[www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk)**

(24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

**Telephone:** - 0300 123 2040

# Victims Of Stalking And Harassment

Information will be provided advising of the steps you can take in conjunction with Cumbria Police to protect yourself from harm.

You can also visit the Constabulary's website to find further links to the Paladin National Stalking Advocacy Service and to the National Stalking Helpline.

## **Visit support for victims and witnesses of stalking or harassment.**

There are some practical steps that you can take to identify any sources of personal information that could be used by a suspect. These could include mailing lists, the electoral roll, school or work records, internet sites and wastepaper and refuse bins. You should never dispose of personal information via a refuse bin. Such items should be shredded, burnt or disposed of by some other means, which are not accessible to a suspect.

You should consider changing your passwords for gaining access to personal information via the telephone or internet. In particular, the use of your mother's maiden name and pet names as verification codes for access to personal details should be discouraged. Anonymous voter registration is available for people at risk.

Please visit: **[www.electoralcommission.org.uk](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk)** for more information.

There are also facilities to restrict the more general availability of your personal information.

To find out more visit the Information Commissioner's website: **[www.whatdotheyknow.com](http://www.whatdotheyknow.com)**

# Protecting Your Home And Property

Cumbria is one of the safest places to live and work. At Cumbria Constabulary we aim to keep it that way. There are steps we would advise that you can take to protect your personal safety, your home, and your property:

**Visit for further information here.**

# Have We?

- ☐ Explained what is going to happen and why?
- ☐ Given practical help?
- ☐ Offered advice?
- ☐ Explained what further contact you should expect - when, how, and by whom?
- ☐ Explained that your details may be given to Victim Support and why?
- ☐ Checked if you had any further questions?
- ☐ Left an incident reference number?
- ☐ Provided details of the name and phone number of the officer dealing with your case?

# How Did We Do?

Cumbria Constabulary is committed to giving the best possible service to people in our communities.

In Cumbria we want to do our best for you. By working with external agencies and gathering and sharing information we are able to be pro-active in our approach, prevent crime and anti-social behaviour from happening, protect you, your family and property and bring criminals to justice. By providing this service we are helping to keep Cumbria safe.

We would welcome your feedback on the way we provide our service to you and your community. We believe it is essential that you and others have confidence in the police and are satisfied with the service we give you. With this in mind, we would like to hear from you. How did we do?

You can feedback your comments by using the methods below.

**Letter:**

Police Headquarters,  
Carleton Hall,  
Penrith,  
Cumbria.  
CA10 2AU

# The Media

We want to do our best for you and your feedback is important to us. We may contact you in due course in relation to the service you have received. We respect your right to privacy. The information you provide will only be used for policing purposes.

You can also follow us on Facebook and Instagram.

We also have a newsletter - visit **[www.cumbria.police.uk](http://www.cumbria.police.uk)** to sign up.

Cumbria Constabulary is required to conduct customer satisfaction surveys to evaluate our performance and effectiveness.

We may contact individuals, such as victims of crime or those reporting incidents, and ask them to give us their opinion of the service we are providing to the public. We use the information given to improve our service wherever we can.

Cumbria Constabulary, like many police forces use a private company to undertake such surveys on our behalf with strict controls to protect the personal data of those involved.

We may release details of crime and anti-social behaviour incidents to local media and on force social media such as:



**[www.cumbria.police.uk](http://www.cumbria.police.uk)**

This may be to seek further information on the issue, identify witnesses and deter further activity.

We will not disclose your name or full address unless we have your permission.



# Victims right to review

The Victim Right to Review scheme allows you to challenge decisions where the Police or Crown Prosecution Service have decided to take No Further Action against the suspect.

It only applies to cases in which a suspect has been identified and interviewed under caution, either following an arrest or by voluntary arrangement.

Who can apply under the scheme?

Any victim in a qualifying case where a decision is made not to prosecute is entitled to seek a review of that decision.

Time limits - Victims will be allowed to request a review within 3 months of being notified of the No Further Action decision.

**You can visit the Constabulary's website [here](#).**

# Other Useful Information

**Citizens Advice Bureau:**

[www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

**Neighbourhood Watch:**

<https://www.ourwatch.org.uk/>

**Crimestoppers:** 0800 555 111

[www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org)

**Victims of Crime:**

Understanding the support you can expect

## Digital device information for victims

If your phone or other digital device contains information which the investigating officer feels may assist in progressing the investigation, they may ask you to volunteer your device so the relevant evidence can be captured through a device extraction. Device extraction will be the last report and will only be undertaken if the evidence cannot be reliably captured any other way. Where possible, the device extraction will be completed at your convenience, so you are without your device for the shortest possible time.

The officer will explain what data they need to access on your device and ask for your agreement for the extraction. They will explain what will happen to any data which is extracted but is not relevant to the investigation.

You will be provided with a form called a Digital Processing Notice which will cover any questions you may have around device extraction.

# For Your Use

Use the space below to keep a record of any additional thoughts you may have or to maintain a diary.

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