

Victims deserve highest standards from police

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We are concerned some victims are not confident that reporting a crime will lead to justice

News 2 mins read

Work to improve investigations is underway so more victims of crime can get justice.

Our efforts to boost the standard of police investigations from the initial report through to court will mean that all reasonable lines of inquiry will be followed when officers are dealing with a crime.

A new report by the Victims' Commissioner has found that almost three in four victims are not confident that reporting a crime will lead to justice and almost half of those questioned said they were not kept regularly informed by police about their investigation.

Responding to the report, our Assistant Chief Constable, Tom Harding, said the findings were concerning and disappointing.

Baroness Newlove, the Victims' Commissioner, said the report was released as "the justice system is grappling with record Crown Court backlogs, lengthy waits for justice and overcrowded prisons."

I'm disappointed to see many people tell the Victims' Commissioner that they don't feel confident reporting a crime will lead to justice. I share Baroness Newlove's concern and I'm clear that all victims deserve the highest standard of service from policing and across the criminal justice system.

Being a victim of crime can be traumatic and it's really important that the police, often as the first responders, are able to reassure and support people.

At the College of Policing we are working to improve the standard of police investigations from the initial report through to court, so we can get justice for more people. The College's guidance sets out that officers must follow all reasonable lines of inquiry and adhere to the Victims' Code. This means officers are clear on what they need to do to deliver the best possible service to the public, even when we don't have

the evidence to take a case forward.

We're also working with partners across the criminal justice system to consider and address issues elsewhere, which I know cause a huge amount of frustration for victims and officers alike.

Police officers want to give the best possible service to everyone but they are trying to do this in a time pressured and increasingly complex environment. The College of Policing will continue to support them by enhancing leadership capability, ensuring high standards and elevating performance.

Assistant Chief Constable Tom Harding, Director of Operational Standards

Our Investigations APP explains what officers and staff need to do in practice when investigating crimes and incidents. It instructs officers to follow all reasonable lines of enquiry when investigating an offence, meaning all material and potential evidence should be considered when there's information to suggest the offender could be identified. For example:

- where there is clear recorded CCTV (or other) footage, police will recover that and seek to present it as evidence
- when there is clear eyewitness evidence, that person will be interviewed
- where there is strong evidence and forensic opportunities, police will seek to present these
- where property is stolen with unique features, such as a serial number, police will seek to recover it and obtain evidence

We also provide **[resources to support officers adhering to the Victims' Code](#)**.

Tags

Victim care Investigation