

Evaluation of a forensic marking intervention for domestic abuse – extension project

Extension of an evaluation of a forensic marking intervention for domestic abuse, aiming to prevent repeated unwanted contact and support detection of crimes.

Key details

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Police region	North East
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Level of research	Professional/work based
Project start date	June 2026
Date due for completion	September 2026

Research context

The forensic marking intervention provides forensic marking products to victims of domestic abuse with the aim of reducing the harms from domestic abuse, through increasing feelings of safety and freedom for victims, increasing trust and confidence in the police, deterring repeat offending and

supporting the detection of crimes.

The police also warn the perpetrator that the victim has been given these products, to deter further offending.

This evaluation is funded by the Cabinet Office Evaluation Accelerator Fund (EAF), and builds on an [initial evaluation also funded by the EAF](#), which looked at the impact of the intervention by comparing repeat offending for those who received the forensic marking products to a matched comparison group. We also conducted a longitudinal survey of victims, interviews with victims and police officers and case studies of activations.

The outcomes from the initial evaluation showed that:

- the intervention was associated with a reduction in repeat incidents over a six-month follow-on period for the intervention group, compared to the matched comparison group, although this was not statistically significant
- the intervention was cost effective, meaning that for every pound spent, there was an estimated economic benefit of between £37.70 and £81.80
- survey and interview data showed a consistent increase in terms of feelings of safety and freedom for victims who had received the intervention, which was maintained over time and most victims said this was to some or a great extent due to the forensic marking device
- the victim survey and interview data showed an initial increase in terms of trusting the police to respond appropriately, but this was not maintained over time

This evaluation builds on this initial evaluation, looking at the outcomes for a larger number of cases, to provide a more robust understanding of the impact of the intervention.

Research methodology

A quasi-experimental design will be used to compare outcomes between the intervention group and a matched comparison group. The additional data collected will be added to the data collected during the initial evaluation to provide a larger, more robust data set. The initial evaluation included data from three forces, giving 232 cases in the intervention group. The extension to the evaluation will include data from a further seven months of the intervention.

For the intervention group, police forces will provide data about which victims received forensic marking and products they received along with details of the offence leading to the intervention being provided, and also details of crimes and incidents committed by the perpetrator over the previous 12 months.

Data will also be gathered about whether protection orders or bail conditions were put in place following the incident, to understand other potential deterrence factors that might influence further offending by the perpetrator.

The comparison group will be generated from all intimate partner domestic abuse cases that were recorded during a short period in each force when the intervention was not running, using probability sampling.

A negative binomial regression model will be used to analyse the impact of the intervention and model probability of recorded incidents in terms of victim, suspect and incident characteristics.

A brief case study of activation cases will be prepared, covering the background to the case, details about the incident where the forensic marking products were activated, the police response and the outcome. Interviews with the victim and police officers and staff will be conducted to understand the process and outcome of each case.

Interim reports or publications

The reports from the first phase of the evaluation can be viewed via the [National Police Library](#).

[Summary report](#)

[Technical report](#)

Research participation

The study included victims of domestic abuse and police officers and staff.

Related research map projects

[Forensic marking for domestic abuse](#)