Journey Mapping Study of Domestic Violence Survivors in the Royal Borough of Kingston

Jane Lindsay, Michelle Proyer, Florence Walters

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Summary of Findings and Recommendations

This study was commissioned by the Public Health Department of the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames (RBK). It received ethical clearance from the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education of Kingston University and St. George’s University of London.

Invitations to participate were distributed by Victim Support, Fresh Fridays, Probation Women Safety Workers, and Hestia. Eight women (aged between 25 and 54) interviewed between 10th February 2015 and 6th March 2015.

Women traced their journey through services. None of the women’s journeys was exactly the same. They rated their experience of the services which they used on a 10 point scale (where 10 was excellent and 1 was poor). Women were asked if the services treated them with dignity, fairness and respect, believed them; prioritised their safety; helped them understand their options and empowered them to make their own choices. Women gave some suggestions for improving services.

Each woman’s individual journey was mapped. Their key comments on each of the services are represented on their own map. An overview "map" was produced based on average scores women gave to services.
Common Themes

Support services (Hestia, Victim Support, Fresh Fridays) are generally rated highly ("Brilliant").

Justice services (Police, Courts, Legal, Probation) generally seen as effective.

Being believed and taken seriously is valued by women.

Being clear about risk and the actions women need to take to keep themselves and their children safe is appreciated. It is all right to be demanding of women sometimes.

Rating of Services

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Summary of Journey Mapping Project

Main Recommendations

A single keyworker coordinating a number of services might be helpful. Some respondents were contacted by a number of people by phone and found this confusing.

“Call back when you say you call back. Don’t leave it too long.”

Close the gap. When referring a woman to a different service be sure that this service is able to act on her behalf.

No information is better than the wrong information.

Feedback from MARAC would be helpful.

Support across boundaries (county and borough). Could this be coordinated better?

Access to interpreters in standard services (e.g. Job Centre Plus) is needed.
Overview

Introduction & Aims of the Study

The Public Health Department of the Royal Borough of Kingston (RBK) is currently undertaking a scale needs assessment on Violence against Women to estimate the scale of the issue in Kingston Borough and the need for service development. RBK seeks to

1) To understand more the issues around Domestic Violence (DV) and learn from the experiences of survivors of DV in Kingston to support future service provision.
2) To develop services suitable for the needs of those experiencing DV locally.
3) To identify certain service areas where professionals need more training/information to support DV victims better in the future.
4) To gain a better understanding of DV victims’ journeys though the police, health and social services and identify critical points where resources need to be focused on in the future.

RBK commissioned the School of Social Work of the Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education of Kingston University and St George’s University of London to undertake in-depth “journey mapping” of the experiences of 8 women survivors of domestic abuse of using the range of domestic abuse services provided by the borough as part of the larger assessment.

Journey Mapping

Journey mapping is becoming increasingly used as a method to evaluate how services and professionals impact on the people they serve. Evaluations which focus on solely on counting numbers who use services have been criticised for failing to capture the lived experience of those who use services (Kibel, 1999). Journey mapping seeks overcome this by recording and displaying service users’ practical and emotional experiences as they encounter a service or set of services. Findings are recorded as maps or charts in order to make these experiences vivid and accessible to policy makers and service developers.

The journey mapping approach has previously been deployed successfully to examine women survivors of domestic abuse’s experience and access to services. Studies vary in scale and approach. The examples listed below have been selected to show the diversity in methods of data collection and because they have resonance for the findings of this study and the purposes for which RBK intends the findings to be used to improve and develop services.

- Coy et al (2011)’s national study mapped journeys of women fleeing domestic violence using Geographic Information Systems technology (GIS) conceptualizing such movement as a process of forced migration. A picture emerged from this study of “a multitude of individual escapes…. underscoring the need for equitable service provision in all areas of the country” (p.421) and the distance travelled by women to achieve safety.
- Tony Lloyd (Police and Crime Commissioner of Greater Manchester) used journey mapping as a method of live evidence gathering (2013) to inform transparent and accountable public scrutiny of service provision. Victims, survivors and representatives of domestic abuse agencies were invited to share their experiences of criminal justice agencies and council support services by adding comments to a ‘Victim’s Journey Map’. This was subsequently presented to a public forum on domestic violence. Agencies were presented with feedback which was seen to be “current and powerful” and asked to provide responses as to how issued raised will be addressed. (www.gmpcc.org.uk)
- Viridian Housing/ ESRO (2013) undertook journey mapping in their in-depth study based on in-depth individual interviews with 19 of their tenants who were domestic abuse survivors (London, Sussex and Birmingham) in order to improve and innovate its domestic violence policy and service provision. Individual maps were created showing survivors’ personal journeys from the start of their relationship with the perpetrators to the present and locating “service touch points”. These journey maps provide a focus on a more personal chronology and less on service evaluation but seem useful in educating a service provider about service users’ perspectives and lived experiences (Nash et al, 2013)
- The Customer Led Transformation Programme (Violence against Women and Girls) (2010-11) in the London Borough of Lambeth undertook a case study using multiple customer insight and social media tools and techniques. 21 women survivors completed a customer journey map in focus groups with the objective for the Council to gain a detailed understanding of women’s help seeking processes, including the order in which they approached services and whether each contact resulted is a positive or negative experience. Findings were merged with other data collected, led to recommendations and a published action plan. (Lambeth, 2011)
- The Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunal Service (NICTS) (2011) commissioned a customer journey map exercise to detail the experiences of victims of domestic violence throughout their involvement with the criminal (and civil and family) justice system. Data from 28 women survivors was collected by questionnaire. Respondents were asked to scale their experience of a service on a 1 – 10 scale with 1 being negative or disagreement and 10 being positive or agreement. Participants were also invited to explain their response or to make comments on their experiences at each stage. Direct quotations are also included on individual charts to add detail and impact. The aggregate of all respondents was shown on a single chart. Average scores for each question or statement were calculated and the results plotted on a simple line graph. Representative statements or comments were added to the chart at appropriate points in the journey (NICTS, 2011)

Methodology

RBK required that Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunal Service (NICTS) questionnaire and method of journey mapping was used in this study. RBK specified that face to face interviews be conducted with 7-9 female survivors of domestic violence. The inclusion criteria for the study were that participants were:

- Female
- Had experienced domestic violence in the past but were currently not at immediate risk of harm as a result of domestic violence
- Kingston resident or have accessed services within the Royal Borough of Kingston in relation to domestic violence
- Have given consent to participate in study
- Participating in the study will not increase the individual’s risk of domestic violence

RBK is specifically interested in domestic violence against women and women’s journeys and are not, at this stage, interested in domestic violence against men. Though they are interested in finding out the experiences of both
hetero-sexual and lesbian women, it was acknowledged that it was possible that lesbian and bi-sexual women might not be recruited and form part of the sample. This may form part of a future study.

Following ethical approval by the Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education of Kingston University and St George’s University of London were granted, participants were recruited by RBK in liaison with Hestia, the Police and Victim Support. Each organisation was asked to contact 10 service users to tell them about the study. Service users were asked to return a consent form to the university if they wished to participate. The researchers also visited the One Stop Shop and Fresh Fridays to let service providers and women know about the study. In order to secure enough numbers, probation/RISE Women's Safety Service was also asked to send out 3 questionnaires to former service users of their service.

- 8 women agreed to participate in the study.
- 7 face to face interviews were undertaken.
- Face to face interviews were conducted at a venue chosen by the participants (namely Norbiton Children’s Centre, Kingston University and the Guildhall). One woman preferred to be interviewed by telephone.
- 3 interviews were conducted with an interpreter present (who had signed a confidentiality agreement).
- 7 women consented to the interview being recorded by a digital recorder. Interviews were transcribed.
- All travel expenses were reimbursed and women were given a £10 Sainsbury voucher for taking part in the study.

Interviews and journey mapping

The interview guide was developed and based on the NICTS questionnaire and is reproduced below.

Opening question: Thinking from the first time you encountered domestic violence, which service(s) did you use first?

Mapping journey of service for example: Police – one stop – Hestia refuge/social services/IDVA (ask appropriate questions in order of service use LINK: What happened next?). Participants were asked to use a 1-10 scale to rate their experience of services and to provide a message for the service provider

2. Discussing specific services
   If police involvement:
   3. The police responded very quickly (if that was necessary)
   4. You were content that police dealt with the charges and the perpetrator appropriately
   5. The officer completed a risk assessment form (CAADA DASH) at the time of the incident
   6. If your case was assessed as high risk, you were referred to the MARAC
   7. When you first reported the incidents to the police you were referred to the One Stop Shop and/or Victim Support and other specialist domestic abuse agency
   8. During the police investigation you felt that you were kept fully informed
   9. You were content with the response from the police (Probe for more information: What happened here?)
   Prompt: Could the police do more? How good do you think the support you received was? Would you like to make any recommendations?

   If One Stop Shop involved: (Questioning could apply to Community Safety Unit/Butterfly Group/Hestia Domestic Abuse Services)
   When were you referred?
   What was your experience at the One Stop Shop?
   What did they do to make you feel safe – explain
   What did you feel about the support you received/advice given? Your opinion on this...
   Did you feel pressured to take the advice?
   Tell me about the services you received?

   If health involvement:
   10. You were asked appropriate questions about the violence and offered access to other services (if yes, which services)
   11. You were willing to accept this support (if no, why not)
   12. You were content with the response from health services

   If housing involvement:
   13. You were interviewed in a private area
   14. You were asked appropriate questions about the violence and offered access to other services (if yes, which services)
   15. You were offered safe accommodation (if necessary)
   16. You were content with the response from housing services

   If children’s services involvement:
   17. You felt that your safety was given due consideration
   18. You felt that children’s services worked in your children’s best interests
   19. You were asked appropriate questions about the violence and offered access to other services (if yes, which services)
   20. You were content with the response from children’s services
   21. You and your children understood your safety plan

   If you were supported by local Domestic violence services (Refugee Services: Hestia, Police Community Unit, Job Centre, Welfare Benefits)
   22. The services were accessible
   23. You were content with the support you received; you understood their advice and did not feel pressurised or rushed into making decisions
   24. You were content with the response from other services

   Non-molestation Application or Occupation Order (Can represent self in court – help with IDVA)
   25. You received advice on the process for non-molestation or occupation orders and what is involved in this process (if yes, who gave you that information)

   If your case went to court:
   26. You received advice or assistance with finding a solicitor
   27. You were content with the legal representation you received; you understood their advice and did not feel pressurised or rushed into making decisions
   28. You received support (other than from your solicitor) with the application process e.g. help with affidavits etc (if yes, from whom)
   29. You were kept informed about your case. You were provided with an estimated time for the case to reach court and if there were delays they explained the reasons
   30. Before the case came to court you were given information on what to expect at court
   31. You were content with your experiences of the court process

   Are there any more services that you would like to add?

   Your overall experience:
   32. You were treated with dignity, fairness and respect by all agencies with whom you have been in contact
   33. You were believed
   34. Your safety was prioritised
   35. You understand your options and felt empowered to make your own choices
   36. Redesigning: based on your experience, what would you change?
Key Findings

Great caution must be exercised in generalising from the findings of this study given the size of the sample. Results shown are illustrative and indicative of areas which may merit further investigation.

Is there a typical pattern of access to services?

Each woman’s journey is unique. There is not a “typical” pathway to access services.

For women who move to Kingston to access service provision (Refuge services) a clearer pattern may be detected. These women are assisted by a single provider (the Refuge) to access a range of local services. For these specific women, key concerns are accessing financial support through Job Centre Plus (Department of Work and Pensions) and accessing move-on housing.

What is the level of satisfaction with services?

Support services specifically for women survivors are generally rated highly (Hestia, Victim Support, Fresh Fridays). Justice Services (police, courts, legal services and probation/RISE) are generally seen as effective and acting on their behalf.

Social Service, Health Services and Housing received a more varied and individualised rating. Social Services received more positive endorsement than in other similar studies (e.g. Lambeth). There was an indication that general practitioners may not be all aware of domestic abuse services or the needs of survivors.

Services were seen to be clear about risk and the actions women need to take to protect themselves and their children safe. Women were not clear though about what was the role of MARAC. They did not get feedback about how services were being coordinated to manage risk.

Women appreciated service providers providing professional support and “holding the line” – such as being clear about protecting their children (social services) and about the need to prosecute (police).

Common themes and issues

Service provision improved. Some women were not satisfied with the first response(s) they had from services. As they reported repeat victimisation, they obtained support which satisfied them better. This may be because the risk assessment undertaken by professionals then placed them in a “more serious” category.

Who is providing services can be confusing – especially if contacted by phone. Some women reported being contacted by a number of service providers by phone. They were not sure who was providing what service.

After flurry of activity at the start, support drops off. Some women reported that service providers promised to call back or to set up a service and then did not contact them after this. They did not know what had been done on their behalf – or if nothing had been done. “Call back when you say you will call back”.

Close the gap. A recurring message was when referring a woman to a different service, be sure that this service is able and willing to act on her behalf. Follow up referrals and see if that service is able to help. Women heard about services which could be provided and then were not provided.

No information is better than the wrong information. Women would prefer accurate information or the service provided saying that they do not know or cannot help.

Working across local boundaries. Some women commented that services working across boundaries could be better (for example if she is a Kingston resident who flees out of borough but whose centre of life is in Kingston and intends to return to Kingston).

Access to interpreters for counselling or other services may be an issue.

Emerging Recommendations

A keyworker coordinating a number of services might be helpful (pre-and post-prosecution or first help seeking incident).

Women survivors appreciate those who kept in contact with them. Service providers should ensure they fulfill the undertakings they give women to keep in touch – or not give such undertakings.

Consider a system to provide routine feedback from MARAC.

When a provider refers a woman to another service, follow this up with the provider and the women.

Awareness training for professionals (e.g. GPs) may be needed. Ensure general service providers have information about local services and know how to refer. Ensure professionals know about the “Support Services for Victims of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Online Guidance for Professionals in Kingston” and the Council website.

Journey mapping is a potentially useful tool which might be used both within agencies and in cross-borough policy development. Some of the other ways which this tool have been used (see references) might be considered to involve women more fully in service planning and development.
### Services used by respondents

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agencies</th>
<th>Fresh Fridays</th>
<th>Legal Services</th>
<th>Hestia</th>
<th>Victim Support</th>
<th>Court</th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>Children's Services</th>
<th>One Stop Shop</th>
<th>Police</th>
<th>Dept of Work and Pensions</th>
<th>Adult Services</th>
<th>Housing</th>
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They protected me and did their procedure properly. They were acting on my behalf.

The One Stop Shop is a brilliant service with all the right services there, including housing and other services.

I have a roof over my head and I can start my life fresh.

Solicitor at One Stop Shop provided information about child contact on one occasion. I have never heard from her since. She was going to phone me... but that never happened.

I was told I needed a "mandatory consideration letter/notice". I had no idea what that was. What was I meant to do? Job Centre Plus does not take domestic abuse into consideration.

They are rude and arrogant. I want to make a homelessness application; it is going to be hard because I am single.

The One Stop Shop is a brilliant service with all the right services there, including housing and other services.

When something has happened they have stepped in and just said "are you okay? Do you need our support? They've just, left me know that they're available.

It feels nice to sit with a group of women who are all in the same situation. I walk out of Fresh Fridays and feel I can fight the world.

The social worker was stern. I thought my life was acceptable but it wasn't... they are showing me the right path to go down rather than going backwards. The children's safety is the main concern.

"Brilliant. She was very clued up about how my ex operates so she understood what I was saying. She has been in regular contact."

"It feels nice to sit with a group of women who are all in the same situation I walk out of Fresh Fridays and feel I can fight the world".

"I have a roof over my head and I can start my life fresh.

Sitting in the group makes me feel powerful.

"I was never promised emails, phone calls but nothing. But eventually..."

"I have never heard from her since. She was going to phone me... but that never happened"

She's really pushy. She's done unlimited work and unlimited support. She's literally just been holding my hand all the way. She's done a blinding job.

"Rubbish. I spent a lot of time there initially going through everything only for nothing to happen. Nothing was followed up. I didn't make any progress at all. I just felt really let down. It wasn't at all what I expected."
**One Stop Shop**

The One Stop Shop “is a brilliant service with all the right services there, including housing and other services”. (score 10)

I met a solicitor [at OSS] who gave me some legal advice because I couldn’t afford a solicitor. He showed me that I had options... I only went once so I mean it didn’t really change anything for me... I didn’t proceed that any further but he... told me about restraining orders and non-molestation orders, [and] parental orders, things like that, so at least I had some options. (score 5)

“Rubbish. I spent a lot of time there initially going through everything only for nothing to happen. Nothing to be followed up. I spoke to somebody that was going to refer me to Hestia and other services and I spoke to a solicitor and I spoke to a police officer but nothing got kind of resolved. I didn’t make any progress at all. I just felt really let down. It wasn’t at all what I expected.” (score 2)

**Fresh Fridays**

“It took me a long time to realise that I needed services... Sitting in the group makes me feel powerful. It’s brilliant. The group leader is like a friend” (score 10)

“A warm place....It feels nice to sit with a group of women who are all in the same situation...You can let your hair down and have a giggle....I know my daughter’s safe... I walk out of Fresh Fridays and feel I can fight the world. It is brilliant” (score 10)

**Police**

“They responded quickly, they kept me informed”. (Score 10)

“They dealt very well with me. She [the officer] said look, people have died behind closed doors. I can’t drop the charges. This is domestic violence... they protected me and did their procedure properly. They were acting on my behalf” (Score 8)

I think [at first] it was treated just as a kind of another domestic and I was told that I would be referred to various agencies like Victim Support and Refuge and stuff but that never transpired. The last episode has just been brilliant, the police have been completely on-board and I’ve been fully supported by them and they said “right, you know, this has got to stop, you know, he’s causing problems” (score 8)

“It has taken 2 years for them to actually do something. He has non-stop harassed me and stalked me for the last 2 and half years ever since I finished the relationship. I don’t think they take it seriously enough. I was promised emails, I was promised phone calls but nothing. But eventually...[the police took action] (score 3)

“The police treated me like shit”. The service user thinks the police respond to her in a particular way because of her history. (score 1)

“There is a lot of fear involved in dealing with the police. Are you going to be believed? I haven’t had a very good experience with the police. But they were not listening [but] I am supported by the police at the moment.” (not scored)
**Children's Services**

[The] social worker was completely satisfied that the children were being cared for properly. ... They got the gist of it quite quickly. They weren't intrusive, they weren't in any way rude, they didn't disbelieve me. You hear horrors about social workers but I didn't have that experience. They didn't make me feel like I had done anything wrong.” (score 10)

“Social Services ... were happy that I was doing the right job and that I was keeping him away from the children. But when something has happened they have stepped in and just said “are you okay? Do you need our support?” and I've said “not at the moment” and they've just let me know that they're available.” (score 8)

The social worker was "very stern ... I thought my life was acceptable but it wasn't and ... they are.....showing me the right path to go down rather than going backwards. Children's safety is their main concern” (Score 7)

"I feel controlled” [by social services] ... "I keep having to tell my story again. I just want to make everyone happy. Social services do not want to hear good news and focus on what is draining a person” (score 1)

**Hestia**

"They are helping and let me do anything I want to. I feel safe” Score 10)

"I was very depressed but I feel happy now.... They are very good, ...it feels like my own home” (Score 10)

They helped her with a refuge place, benefits, to access counselling, ESOL classes to learn English. She appreciated the secret location ... so she felt safe. At Hestia "she has a roof over her head and she can start her life fresh” [Interpreter]. Score 10)

Floating support "The first time round very little to be honest because they kept saying they'd contact me every two weeks and they never did ..... there was a lot of "we're going to get you through this, we're going to help you, we're going to do this" but there wasn't much follow-up and eventually I just kind of stopped talking to them and they stopped phoning.

The next time round I had a woman [who was] on board 100%. She's really pushy, she literally phoned me once a week to check on how I'm doing, she's done unlimited work and unlimited support ....she kept pushing the police to get all the information that I wasn't getting. So she's literally just been holding my hand all the way. She's done a blinding job. She's been amazing.” (score 9)
**Victim Support**

"Brilliant. She immediately offered to get in touch with the Centre for Domestic Violence and she gave me a number for the National Domestic Violence hotline. She basically suggested to me anything she thought might be useful to me...She was very clued up about how my ex operates so she understood what I was saying... She has been in regular contact" (score 10)

"They helped me get indefinite right to remain because after what happened to me. [I had] 3 months to get my residency here, I was on a spouse visa, so they helped me a lot. When he was released after 6 months, they helped me find a refuge space out of danger" (score 10)

"A wonderful lady put counselling in place. Victim support provides good liaison between the police and myself" (score 10)

"She undertook a risk assessment. She liaised with police. She kept me at a normal pace. Victim Support have been there the whole way and are really supportive" (Score 7)

"I can't remember what happened with Victim Support. I think they called me a couple of times... then I think I might have had a follow-up call just checking that everything was alright and that she didn't need to check in again." (not scored)

**Health**

"My experience was good and fast ...The GP experience is good. However the negative thing is it is difficult to get an appointment. It takes time to get medical records"(score 10)

"I went to the doctor and she was very sympathetic. They didn't give me any other support but they gave me appropriate medicine " (score 10)

"Looking back, I feel let down really [by the GP]. I think now I have learnt ...how a doctor should respond. It was sort of like "here take these [anti-depressants]. You have only got a 10 minute appointment" The GP "should have explained to me there was a domestic violence person I could have talked to rather than rushing me on to anti-depressants that did not help anyway” (Score 3)

"I felt that the GP should have referred me or put me on the stepladder" to services (not scored)

After being referred to Kingston Well Being Services: "There were people rocking and talking about mental health. I thought I did not need to be there because I am not in that state" (not scored)
Women’s individual journey maps through services
### Case 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of service</th>
<th>Police</th>
<th>Victim Support</th>
<th>One Stop Shop</th>
<th>Legal services</th>
<th>Court</th>
<th>Church</th>
<th>AA group</th>
<th>Fresh Fridays</th>
<th>Adults/ well-being services</th>
<th>Children’s Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Police dealt with a number of incidents</td>
<td>Referred her to OSS</td>
<td>Accessed a range of services</td>
<td>Assistance with NMO</td>
<td>NMO</td>
<td>Personal Support Help in accessing services</td>
<td>Attends weekly</td>
<td>Attends weekly</td>
<td>Attends group for depression</td>
<td>Involved in child protection and in care</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Comments on the services provided

**Police (score 1)**
In interview she appeared to be indicating that she feels that she is a victim of the police and she said that she thinks the police respond to her in a particular way because of her history. She said that he thought the police did not tell the truth. She said that the majority of the police are not “nice”. She said that the police “treated me like shit”.

**Victim Support (not scored)**
She was referred to Victim support from the police who in turn referred her to the One Stop Shop.

**One Stop Shop (score 10)**
In Case 1’s view, the OSS is a brilliant service with “all the right services there, including housing and other services”. She said “One might feel supported”.

**Legal services (score 10)**
Accessed support to get an injunction. Had to go to Clapham Junction and was accompanied by a friend from church.

**Court services (not scored)**
She said that this was a “great experience”.

**Fresh Fridays (score 10)**
“Friday is my day”. Fresh Fridays prepares her for the weekend which is usually terrible. She feels that she is getting a voice and is being supported. The group leader “knows the right way and words how to say things... She is there for me and knows my story. It took me a long time to realise that I needed services” “Sitting in the group makes me feel powerful” “It’s brilliant”. The group leader is “like a friend” and “was there for her over Christmas”.

**Adults/ Well-Being Services (not scored)**
“I do not need to go there but it might help in getting my daughter back” [from social services]

**Children’s Services (score 1)**
“I feel controlled” [by social services] “do not like” “being told by others what to do”. They make quick notes only “Their files are old” “I keep having to tell my story again” “I need to show the court I am making an effort” “I just want to make everyone happy” “Social services do not want to hear good news and focus on what is draining a person”

**Overall comment**
“I am a strong person now”

### Comments on how services might be improved

**Support group**
Case 1 suggested a support group for women whose children have been taken into care.

---

**Diagram:**
- **Church**
- **Police**
- **Social Services**
- **OSS**
- **FFG**
- **Treated me like shit because of my history**
- **Brilliant!**
- **Getting a voice and being supported**
- **Hard to get rid of them**
- **Their files are old**
- **Being told by others what to do**

The system is backward.
Case 2

“They [the police] were acting on my behalf.”

“I know my daughter’s safe [during Fresh Fridays Group].”

“She [the housing estate manager] is just sitting there watching my rent arrears go up and wondering why I am not living in the property.”

“Looking back, I feel let down really [by the GP].”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agencies Involved</th>
<th>Police</th>
<th>Victim Support</th>
<th>Legal Services</th>
<th>One Stop Shop (OSS)</th>
<th>Health</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of service</td>
<td>Charging of perpetrator</td>
<td>Referred by police</td>
<td>Accessed via OSS</td>
<td>Referral and access to services</td>
<td>GP Health Visitor Wellbeing Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drug and Alcohol Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Drug and Alcohol Services Mental Health Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fresh Fridays</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Attend group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children’s Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CIN and then CP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Housing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Arrears on property</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Inter-agency / MARAC**

Case 2 described a process of being referred on to different agencies. “I think things could be done a bit quicker but then it all goes back to the MARAC in how high your risk is”

**Comments on the services provided**

**Police (Score 8)**

When pressured by ex-partner to drop the charges, Case 2 went to the police. “They dealt very well with me. She [the officer] said look, people have died behind closed doors. I can’t drop the charges. This is domestic violence… they protected me and did their procedure properly. They were acting on my behalf. The provision of an alarm [unclear from which service] I felt quite at risk”

**Victim Support (Score 7)**

Under took a Risk assessment. Listed with police. “kept me at a normal pace - they have been there the whole way and are really supportive”

**Legal Services (Score 9)**

Solicitor at One Stop Shop provided information about child contact on one occasion. “I have never heard from her since. She was phone me… but that never happened”

**One Stop (not scored)**

OSS seems to have acted to signpost Case 2 to services and facilitate this

**Health (Score 3)**

GP: “Looking back, I feel let down. I think now I have learnt what services are available and how a doctor should respond. It was sort of like ‘here take these [anti-depressants],’ you have only got a 10 minute appointment. I can’t really take any more information”. The GP “should have explained to me there was a domestic violence person I could have talked to rather than rushing me on to anti-depressants that did not help anyway”. Also had health visitor who referred her child to speech and language therapy - not specific to domestic abuse

**Kingston Well Being Services**

“There were people rocking and talking about mental health. I though I did not need to be there because I am not in that state” [Was then offered one to one support via drug and alcohol services]

**Adult Services (Score 8)**

Drug and Alcohol Service – Did not deal with DV. “I sat with a bloke for about 2 hours going through how much I drank – Units”. Then built a ‘relationship’ with mental health social worker who referred her to Fresh Fridays

**Fresh Fridays (Score 10)**

A warm place. “No one will talk behind your back”. “Amazing”. “It feels nice to sit with a group of women who are all in the same situation”. “You can let your hair down and have a giggle”. “I know my daughter’s safe” I walk out of Fresh Fridays and feel I can fight the world. It is brilliant

**Children’s Services (Score 7)**

Saw several social workers. Case 2 felt that the first Social Worker was “wissy wissy” like those teachers at school where you think you can get away with everything…. She was always late when she turned up at my house. I think I needed someone a bit more on it”. Case 2 preferred 2nd social worker who was “very stern and more on it”. “I thought my life was acceptable but it wasn’t and the questions and the things they are telling me is showing me the right path to go down rather than going backwards”. Children’s safety is the main concern.

**Housing (Score 3)**

Housing estate manager: “She is just sitting there watching my rent arrears go up and wondering why I am not living in the property” [House damaged because of domestic abuse – Case 2 living with her parent. Housing officer now being integrated to CP Planning]

**Overall**

I feel there were gaps [in services] where I had been left… It was like where all the services were in and out, I’m not going to blame the services because it was my choice to drink… I think maybe I needed a little more consistency, like I have now. I see a social worker once a week, I see Drug and Alcohol once a week, I see Fresh Fridays every week. I needed a bit more of a kick up the backside [at the start – when she left the perpetrator]. Yeah it was a bit of a wobble… I need to keep putting in my mind I’m doing this for us, my daughter; I can’t think about myself like I was. Been a bumpy ride but we’ll get there…. I felt a lot of the time I was doing the work rather than someone else. I was attending the meetings and was talking to the right people but I could change something, no gaps, probably listened to the right services rather than listening to him [perpetrator] and maybe have a more firm consistent social worker at the beginning.”
Case 3 had her case worker from Hestia who was providing interpretation. She has accessed services both in Kingston and other areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agencies Involved</th>
<th>Police</th>
<th>Victim Support / IDVA</th>
<th>Legal Services and court processes</th>
<th>Dept of Work and Pensions</th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>Hestia</th>
<th>Counselling</th>
<th>Housing</th>
<th>One Stop Shop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of service</td>
<td>Police referral to Victim Support IDVA</td>
<td>Prosecution of perpetrator; leave to remain</td>
<td>Job seeker’s Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance</td>
<td>A &amp; E: Physiotherapy; Audiology GP</td>
<td>Refuge place</td>
<td>Kingston Children’s Centre</td>
<td>In another London borough</td>
<td>Legal Advice, help with NMO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Excellent** (9-10)

**Good** (7-8)

**Mid-Range** (4-6)

**Poor** (1-3)

**Inter-agency** MARAC

Case 3 first accessed services via Victim Support (IDVA) outside Kingston. This case was assessed as high risk and referred to MARAC.

**Police** (Score 10)

“They helped with the process and everything like that. I hope in every Borough they do it in the same way, like how they responded quickly, they kept me informed”.

**Victim Support** (Score 10)

“They helped me get indefinite right to remain because after what happened to me. I had 3 months to get my residency here, nothing was done, I was on a spouse visa, so they helped me a lot. When he was released after 6 months, they helped me find a refuge space out of my danger area.

**Legal Services, court processes** (Score 10)

“It was really quick and dealt with and he was sentenced”. She was kept informed throughout the process. He was sentenced in 26 days.

**Dept of Work and Pensions** (Score 1)

Case 3 was badly assaulted with severe injuries. She had to flee to a specialist refugee in Kingston outside her home area. She requires interpreter services. She was sanctioned by the DWP for failing to look for work. She was not entitled to any benefits, as there was no proof of income. She was told she needed a “mandatory consideration letter/notice” because she had moved to the refuge. She had no idea what that was. If a person does not know what a mandatory consideration notice is, what is she meant to do? Job Centre Plus do not take domestic abuse into consideration. They not understand this situation [Information given by interpreter].

**Health** (Score 10)

“My experience was good and fast with whatever support they provided, specialist wise”. The GP experience is good, they help her out whenever she seeks medical help, however the negative thing is it is difficult to get an appointment. The appointment is five minutes. It takes time to get the medical records from PCT [Interpreter].

**Hestia** (Score 10)

They helped with a refuge place, benefits, to access counselling, ESOL classes to learn English. She appreciated the secret location … so she felt safe. They helped her a lot as she has no family members in this country except an aunt. At Hestia “she has a roof over her head and she can start her life fresh at the refuge” [Interpreter].

**Counselling** (Score 5)

She had a bad experience with the counselling service. The first time she met it was just “what happened to you and everything like that”. Then the counsellor spoke to her GP and retrieved the information about her past. She had only one counselling session. She understood there would be two/three sessions. The counsellor did not contact her again. She did not understand the counselling as there was no interpretation provided [Interpreter].

**Housing** (Score 1)

They are rude and arrogant. They wants to make a homelessness application but you see with Kingston, it is going to be hard because she is single so even though she does the homelessness application, they might put her into a b&b and tell her private rented accommodation, no social housing [Interpreter].

**One Stop Shop** (Score 10)

Legal assistance with NMO.

**Comments on how services might be improved**

**Overall**

Main issues are a) Benefits (Dept of Work and Pensions) for women fleeing domestic abuse; interpreter services re counselling and DWP and access to housing for single women in refuges.
**Hestia**

“They are helping and let me do anything I want to and do the housing, therefore I don't need to do any of the processing.”

**Legal**

“...feel that there is a very kind service. But I haven’t got any sort of structure of this.”

**Support**

“...move. They are happy. They have been referred by Hestia. They have not accessed criminal justice services.”

**Housing**

“I have heard of the doctor and who they are very sympathetic.”

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**Case 4**

**Type of Service**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agencies Involved</th>
<th>Hestia</th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>Dept of Work and Pensions</th>
<th>Counselling Services</th>
<th>Legal Services</th>
<th>Kingston College</th>
<th>Housing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Excellent (9-10)</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Good (7-8)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mid-Range (5-6)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Poor (1-3)</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Comments on the services provided**

**Hestia** (score 10)

Case 4 accessed Hestia directly with the support of a friend. She comments on the support she has received from Hestia including safety planning, support with accessing benefit and health services – “They are helping and let me do anything I want to and do the housing, therefore I don't need to do any of the processing.”

**Health** (score 10)

I went to the doctor and she was very sympathetic. They didn’t give me any other support but they gave me appropriate medicine and they are advising me of whatever illnesses I have.

**Dept of Work and Pensions** (score 5)

“Hestia helped me [to] go to the job centre to get employment support allowance. I gave them a sick note from the doctor. They haven’t done any kind of pressure on me because I am not very well. … The amount of money I have is not enough. So I am hoping from them if there is anything else they can do. …I am just hoping if they had another service or help so that I can have more money”.

**Counselling Services**

Case 4 was referred to this service from Hestia. She attended once without an interpreter. Her opinion was that they were “nice”. She was not able to attend a subsequent appointment on health grounds and did not offer another appointment. Case 4 commented “I don’t know that much. They didn’t give me any support or service. I heard that they are a very good service, but I haven’t got any first-hand experience of this”. She appears to have scored them on what she has heard of their reputation.

**Legal Services** (not scored)

Case 4 was referred to legal services in Clapham Junction regarding divorce proceedings. She appears satisfied with this service.

**Kingston college** (not scored)

Case 4 was encouraged to take an English language course at Kingston College by Hestia – not scored

**Not accessed**

**One Stop Shop**

“Hestia, … told me that I could go to the One Stop Shop to have some advice from them about housing and benefits but I do not know where it is and I haven’t been in touch with them yet.”

**Housing**

“I applied and registered for Housing but I haven’t been to the housing office. I want to move because I am nearly one year at Hestia so I have to move on myself. I want to live in Kingston. I want to move from Hestia and make a homeless application. I have only registered myself. They have sent me a letter and I am bidding for the housing. I am hoping if I get the bid, I will be able to move”.

**Overall**

When asked “Do you feel like you were treated with dignity, fairness and respect by all agencies with whom you have been in contact?” Case 4 commented “They have all been good with me, they have been alright. My overall experience is 10. Kingston is good and I like it.”
### Case 5

Case 5 has been supported by Hestia to access services. She comes from outside the Kingston area originally. She had no police involvement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agencies Involved</th>
<th>Domestic Violence Helpline</th>
<th>Housing</th>
<th>Dept of Work and Pensions</th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>Kingston College</th>
<th>Legal Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of service</td>
<td>First point of contact.</td>
<td>Provided Refuge number</td>
<td>Intends to make a homeless</td>
<td>Job Centre Plus – Employment and Support Allowance</td>
<td>GP</td>
<td>English language course (not scored)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(not scored)</td>
<td></td>
<td>person application. Housing benefit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Referred by Hestia (not scored)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inter-agency/ MARAC</th>
<th>Comments on the services provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Violence Helpline</td>
<td>I tried to phone them but I couldn’t get through … my friends also tried to phone quite a few times. We got in touch after one week. They gave me the number of the refuge [Case 5 stayed with an aunt and a friend for 4 weeks after leaving her home].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hestia (score 10)</td>
<td>They phoned the doctors for me, sorted out my job seekers’ allowance and housing with me. On behalf of me they are also talking to the solicitor for my divorce procedure. They ask me if I feel safe in the Kingston area and if not then I have to let them know. Also any problem they will be with me, anything I can let them know. I was very depressed but I feel happy now…. They are very good, it feels like my own home*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing (score 10)</td>
<td>They saw my letters and agreement from Hestia and this was it… after one year they will give me a letter and I will make a homeless application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dept of Work and Pensions</td>
<td>When I went to the job centre, I told them everything and the advisor I saw… said I would have to go to the doctors as long as I am not feeling fit for job, I can get employment support allowance. If she [the job centre advisor] didn’t tell me that I could have employment support allowance benefit, I wouldn’t know so I am very happy for that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health (score 10)</td>
<td>When I went to see the doctor, they were very sympathetic with me and asked me “have I got any bruises or anything and is there any spot I can show him”. I told him that I didn’t have any bruises or sign of domestic violence but I am depressed. Very depressed. The doctor gave me medicine”. Experience of GP “Good, every time I phone them I have got an appointment very soon and very quickly so I am very happy”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Services</td>
<td>Referred to legal services by caseworker at Hestia “I am not happy about the progress of the solicitor. It is a very slow process. I haven’t seen the solicitor but they took my bank statement, my marriage certificate and all this but I haven’t met the solicitor yet. I want my divorce very quickly and I do not feel very happy because of this”. Do you understand what the legal process is? “No”.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Comments on services in Kingston

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>One Stop Shop</th>
<th>Comments on services in Kingston</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have heard of the One Stop Shop but I haven’t been to see them.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Counselling Services</th>
<th>Comments on services in Kingston</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My old caseworker signed me up to counselling services but the lady didn’t phone me yet. I am still waiting for someone to phone me</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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*“I didn’t know there was a service where people can help me”

*“I was very depressed but I feel happy now”

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**Case 5** has an independent interpreter present.
Case 6 was referred to the One Stop Shop from a local charity which she decided not to name.

Good liaison between the police and myself through police matrix.

I was put in contact with Victim Support after an incident of abuse. A wonderful lady put counselling in place. I felt that the GP should have referred me or put me on the stepladder to services.

They set up various things for me. I think the crucial thing was they signed me up with a counselling course with a specialist person. I think with any kind of trauma you do need to talk about it in a safe environment and not feel judged so if you are going to ask me what I actually got out of that counselling, it was a number of things. First of all, don’t feel so isolated and you come to realise you are not the only one suffering severe abuse problems, that there are resources out there that can help you through it. Though it is not an easy journey. I would say they are like a strong hold...they stopped me from having a nervous breakdown because they were always there.

That was a kind of involvement that didn’t do me any favours. Part of that was down to me because there is a lot of fear involved in dealing with the police. Are you going to be believed? I haven’t had a very good experience with the police...I actually ended up in hospital from the stress of it all and they [police] turned round and said it is a civil matter, we shouldn’t have got involved...they were not listening [but] I am supported by the police at the moment.

Case 6 was referred by the police to an out of borough refuge. That experience was so vile that it put me off ever going anywhere near women’s refuges again to the point where I ended up homeless because I felt more comfortable being in control...and [having] some sense of autonomy. When you are in a refuge it is just like a hell house and you can’t even sleep there. You don’t need all of those problems.

Case 6 accessed a list of specialist solicitors from Citizens’ Advice Bureau. She felt let down by her legal advisors and eventually ended up representing herself and educating herself about relevant legislation and feels “as if I have a university degree in law”. There was still financial and emotional abuse.

Case 6 described being in suicidal and depressive state because of her experience of abuse. Her GP referred her to CMHT. “I used to look at this psychiatrist and think he was the one who needed help not me. I got so fed up but it blurred everything that I am coping with and he just laughed. The opinion I got was he thought I am making all this up. I was meant to be supported down that route – then the...psychiatrist...put me down as bipolar which horrified me. If you get labelled in your medical notes everyone else starts labelling you......There is nothing bi-polar about me. I am rational stable person. I think it is horrific to have a label put on me. I am not a depressive but I have suffered reactive depression based on what this man had put me through”

I was put in contact with Victim Support after an incident of abuse. A wonderful lady put counselling in place. Victim support provides good liaison between the police and myself.

Case 6 was referred to the One Stop Shop from a local charity which she decided not to name.

What is so hard about the policing system you giving you a unique reference number like you have given me a case number? Why not have a system where they can pull up your unique reference number and the entire background of what you have been dealing with, irrespective of whether it is in the Met borough or Surrey, it should be there for all to see... It is so soul destroying as an abused person... to go in and start from scratch and explain it for the thousandth time.
Case 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agencies Involved</th>
<th>Police</th>
<th>One Stop Shop</th>
<th>Court Services</th>
<th>Refugee/Media</th>
<th>Probation and Women’s Safety Services (RISE)</th>
<th>Children’s Services</th>
<th>Victim Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of Service</td>
<td>599 responses on a number of occasions</td>
<td>Legal information provided</td>
<td>Legal information provided</td>
<td>Floating support services</td>
<td>Perpetrator on probation. Probation officer contact and linked Women’s Safety Services</td>
<td>Checking on child safety and offering support</td>
<td>Telephone contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-agency/MARAC</td>
<td>“I know what happens in these incidents it triggers, you know, if you have a police incident it will trigger Social Services because you’ve got children, it will trigger, you know, it will flag up various other agencies. I was referred twice to MARAC but I can’t remember what happened. But then I had no contact with them whatsoever, there wasn’t anything that came through.”</td>
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Comments on the services provided:

**Police** (score 8): Case 7 has contacted the police on a number of occasions. Her experience of the service offered by the police has improved. “I think at first it was treated just as a kind of another domestic and I was told that I would be referred to various agencies like Victim Support and Refuge and stuff but that never came through. So the first instance or the few instances I just felt the police were just responding as they should do anyway but because the episodes kept coming, making it just less brilliant, the officers have been completely on-board and I’ve been fully supported by them and … there’s a couple of officers that have gone really out of their way to protect me and to make sure that this isn’t going to happen again.” One of the CID officers working on Case 7 said “I actually wasn’t behaving in a very striking, dangerous manner and I don’t do anything, you know, it could end up being a hell of a lot more dangerous”. There’s been about four police incidents in the last 3 years, the officers, you know, came here and they said “we recognise you, you know your partner has been here before, they said right, you know, this has got to stop, you know, he’s causing problems” and that was quite nice to know that after a year and a half they kind of still remembered your situation.

**One Stop Shop** (score 6): I didn’t go to go and then there’s one of the CID officers and Refugee (floating support worker) said “we’ll be there every step of the way and I did actually have a member of Refuge with me. And when I got there all the clerks and everyone were really, really supportive. I was going to give evidence behind a screen.

**Court Services** (score 8): I had a solicitor or OSS and gave me some legal advice because I couldn’t afford a solicitor. He showed me that I had options. I only went once so I made it didn’t really change anything for me. I didn’t proceed that any further but he said about restraining orders and non-molestation orders, and parental orders, things like that. At least I had some options.

**Refuge/Media** (score 5): Case 7 has been referred to Refuge floating support on a number of occasions. Her experience of the service offered has improved. “The first line response very little to be honest because they kept saying they’d contact me every two weeks and they never did and then they checked in with me like a month later just sort of updating the situation and there’d already been another incident in that time. And there was a lot of ‘we’re going to get you through this, we’re going to help you, we’re going to do this’ but there wasn’t much follow-up and eventually I just kind of stopped talking to them and they stopped phoning. I just didn’t seem to be getting any help … they kept sort of saying things by the book and not actually telling me where to get the help.

**Probation/Women’s Safety Services** (score 7): “His probation officer has called me and said that … if I need any information I can call her or if she finds anything significant that she thinks is a development then she’ll call me. So I’ve got her number but I haven’t spoken to her since but it was good that she called me” (The first Women’s Safety Officer said) “… and update me on how things were going but again she only called me twice I think, and then when she called me the third time to find out how I was doing she was unaware that she’d been referred for something and then I didn’t hear from her again. There was a second woman who called me once since he was arrested this time round. She said that she’d keep me updated and I’ve never heard from her since.

**Children’s Services** (score 6): “Social Services were involved after the first couple of incidents but then they stepped down about a year ago because they were happy that I was doing the right job and that I was keeping him away from the children. We have had a couple of calls from them every time there’s been an incident but then they have written to me to say ‘we’re still happy’ because I’ve always called the police if there’s been a problem they said that they were happy that I was always doing the right thing and they wouldn’t raise any further action. But when something has happened they’ve stopped in and just said ‘are you okay? Do you need our support?’ and ‘we’re not at the moment’ and they’ve just sort of let me know that they’re available.”

**Victim Support** (not scored): “I can’t remember what happened with Victim Support. I think they called me a couple of times but then I think there’s the ones that actually recommended Refuge and put Refuge back on to me. And then I think I might have had a follow-up call just from a lady from Victim Support just checking that everything was alright and that she didn’t need to check in again.”

**Confusion about who is providing services**: on to me and then I couldn’t quite understand which one was responsible for what. Because when the incidents have happened, you don’t really take it on board what people say sometimes.

**Co-ordination of services**: Maybe having a single person, who coordinates services might be helpful. I think it’s often kind of a bit all over the place and can be snowballed, I know everyone’s trying to help but I’d keep getting calls like a week later from someone else and then a lot of people saying that they would call and then they didn’t. You suddenly feel supported and then you’re not heard anything.

**Accurate information**: I had been told that he was in Wandsworth, that he’d been remanded in custody and I actually met him and I had my children with me. I’d rather have had more information than the wrong information.
Case 8

Agencies Involved

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of service</th>
<th>One Stop Shop</th>
<th>Police</th>
<th>Victim Support</th>
<th>National Centre for Domestic Violence</th>
<th>Court Services</th>
<th>Housing</th>
<th>Children’s Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent (9-10)</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Good (7-8)</td>
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<td>Mid-Range (4-6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poor (1-3)</td>
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Inter-agency and MARAC

Was supposed to have been [referred to MARAC] but I didn't hear anything back from them.

A service provider told case 8 that she was “warned” by another service provider “to be careful what to offer you because you've got back with your ex”. And I said what, no I haven't. They got me completely muddled up with someone else, completely muddled up with someone else.

Comments on the services provided

One Stop Shop (score 2)

What was your experience at the One Stop Shop? “Rubbish. I spent a lot of time there initially going through everything only for nothing to happen. Nothing to be followed up. I spoke to somebody that was going to refer me to Hestia and other services and I spoke to a solicitor and I spoke to a police officer but nothing got kind of resolved. I didn't make any progress at all. I just felt really let down, it wasn't at all what I expected.”

Police (score 3)

“It has taken 2 years for them to actually do something. He has non-stop harassed me and stalked me for the last 2 and half years ever since I finished the relationship. I don't think they take it seriously enough. I didn't feel they prioritised it at all ... even though I explained it to them. I was promised emails, I was promised phone calls but nothing. But eventually”... [the police took action]

Victim Support (score 10)

Brilliant. She immediately offered to get in touch with the centre for Domestic Violence and she gave me a number for the National Domestic Violence hotline. She also offered to write letters for me to help me get moved which she did. She basically suggested to me anything she thought might be useful to me... She was very clued up about how my ex operates so she understood what I was saying... She has been in regular contact.

National Centre for Domestic Violence (score 10)

“They fixed a court date [for NMO] within 24 hours so I can’t complain it was brilliant. It was short notice but it was worth it... she explained everything clearly.

Court Service (score 10)

Serving NMO [The Serveri/ bailiff] rang me and introduced himself and said I'm letting you know that I am going to be serving him. He kept me totally informed about when and where it was going to happen ... he persevered and he managed to serve him so it has been a big relief.

Housing (score 1)

I had a social worker come round, they spoke to me, and they spoke to my children and spoke to both my ... children's schools. She was completely satisfied that they were being cared for properly. The only issue they had was that I had to take steps to get a non-molestation order and if I didn't, then I wouldn't be being a responsible parent. That was the only thing they said to me was that if I don't take proceedings against him, then we will have to keep coming back. It did that, ... and they were completely satisfied that I had started the process... they got the gist of it quite quickly. After about 6 weeks they closed the case... I wasn't funny about getting involved... They weren't intrusive, they weren't in any way rude, they didn't dissuade me. You hear horrors about social workers but I didn't have that experience. They didn't make me feel like I had done anything wrong.”

Children’s Services (score 10)

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Overall experience?

Victim Support were by far the best and I would say the police were probably the worst and the One Stop Shop are somewhere very close to the police

Do you feel your safety has been prioritised? No. Only recently ... we have made progress ... It just feels like at times, you just [want] ... somebody to do something and at one point nobody was doing anything. There was no communication, there was nothing.

Comments on how services be might improved

Police

I think the police need the most [change] because without the back-up of the police what can anyone else really do. The police is initially who your instincts are telling you to go to because they can do something but ... they just don’t seem to take it on board or take it seriously. The opinion I got from them was like wait for something to happen and then dial 999. I don’t want to do that.
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