

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) PCC Performance and Delivery Board Paper

On 7th July 2021 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies, Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) published an [Interim Report on Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls \(VAWG\)](#), principally concentrating on Rape and Domestic Abuse (DA). It made three key detailed recommendations aimed at

- a) strengthening the whole-system approach through government policy, legislation, and statutory responsibility
- b) taking a stronger offender focussed approach, and
- c) Improving victim support

Following the Rape and Murder of Sarah Everard in March 2021 and the subsequent public conversation on the safety of women and girls, the Home Secretary reopened the Government's 'Call for Evidence' on tackling crimes that disproportionately affect women. The Home Office received an unprecedented 160,000 further responses over two weeks, taking the total to over 180,000 responses which have helped shape the new strategy. On 21st July 2021 the Home Secretary, Priti Patel, published the Government's new strategy to ensure women and girls are safe everywhere - at home, online and on the streets. The [Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy](#) can be broadly broken down into four key areas

- Prioritising Prevention
- Supporting Victims
- Pursuing Perpetrators
- A Stronger System

Furthermore, the revelations from survivor testimonies on "Everyone's Invited" website showed that many girls suffer, often in silence, sexual abuse and harassment on a regular basis and that there is a need to robustly deal with perpetrators so that misogynistic and abusive attitudes can be challenged and changed.

Kent Police has a clear Mission, Vision, Values and Priorities statement in which the Chief Constable states that Kent Police will

"Provide a First Class Service protecting and serving the People of Kent"

The Kent Police Priorities include

- Put victims and witnesses first.
- Protect the public from harm and ensure an effective response to those who are most vulnerable in our communities.

Under the Headings of the Safer in Kent Plan, this report seeks to articulate how Kent Police with Partners agencies tackles violence against women and girls, and in particular:

- Domestic Abuse (DA)
- Stalking
- Female Genital Mutilation, Force Marriage and So-called Honour Based Abuse (HBA)
- Rape and Serious Sexual Offences
- Exploitation (Often termed CE, or CSE in respect of children)
- Public Space Safety

1) **Putting Victims First**

Kent Police have launched the new Victim and Witness Service Strategy. This strategy provides the Force with permanent direction and focus to ensure victims and witnesses get the best possible service. It reinforces the status of victims of Sexual crime and Domestic Violence as requiring an enhanced service and thus highlighting the availability of Special Measures, imposing much stricter timescales on contact with the victim and the requirement for referrals to specialist support services.

In November 2020, Kent Police launched the Domestic Abuse Improvement Strategy. This strategy is in step with HM Governments Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy (2016, 2019 and is fully consistent with the July 2021 release), the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy (2020 - 2023) and the provisions of the impending Domestic Abuse Act 2021. The strategy is owned by the ACC (Crime), it is accompanied by a Tactical Delivery Plan (TDP) which builds upon the structure of the four pillars that underpin and drive the national 4P approach of Preventing Abuse, Provision of Services, Partnership Working and the Pursuit of Perpetrators.

The Strategy is closely aligned to the multi-agency strategic priorities as set out in the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy 2020-2023, governed by the Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence Executive Group (DASVEG) and chaired by the same Assistant Chief Constable to ensure that the work of both groups where possible is complementary.

In the last 12 months Kent Police have developed and implemented the use of a supportive and informative video across the County which can be shown at an incident of domestic abuse, to a victim by attending patrols (if safe to do so). This video has information for victims from Police and other agencies, such as the Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) service, explaining what is going to happen next and what they can expect in terms of support. The video itself is also available on You Tube, so the victim can be provided with a link to watch in their own time. A 'victim sheet' is under development to compliment the video and takes victim through all the stages of the criminal justice system, from report to court, instilling confidence in the policing approach and keeping the support of victims through the investigation by helping them understand the process and managing their expectations.

Working within the Vulnerability Hubs, Early Victim Engagement Officers make early contact through telephone where safe to do so, and provide prompt safeguarding advice, commence risk management and investigations into domestic abuse related crimes and incidents. Kent Police are just concluding a pioneering trial of Rapid Video Response to enhance this contact with the use of video calling. For non-crime incidents, callers asking for advice, and where the perpetrator is not at the scene, this has proven a highly effective way of engaging with survivors of abuse, and giving them the support they need quickly, and progressing enquiries and safeguarding referrals with greater immediacy as opposed to patrol attendance. Satisfaction levels are above 90% for those receiving this service.

Kent Police use specialist Domestic Abuse PCSOs whose role is to raise awareness around DA. The role has several functions including co-ordination of welfare calls to the victim to support and work with police, assisting with finding the victim refuge if they wish to leave their home address and attend MARAC meetings to provide agencies with an update of what the police have done regarding the victim's crime investigations.

Kent Police introduced Hidden Harm Visits which are proactive visits to victims and families most at risk of Domestic Abuse incidents. Initially these were conducted as a response to Covid-19 Lockdowns and concerns regarding a potential increase in DA due to lack of other

available support networks. The cohorts for these visits were identified through business analysis and coordinated by the DA & Stalking Manager in Strategic PVP. This work was repeated in Dec 2020, where over 130 couples or victims were seen, and their welfare established. Due to feedback from victims these visits have been integrated into our business-as-usual approach

Victims of High Risk Domestic Abuse cases are referred into the IDVA service, which is commissioned through the OPCC and Kent County Council. IDVAs will attempt contact with all high risk victims, offering them specialist support and additional safeguarding. Where the risk is lower victims are referred into Victim Support, who themselves can signpost victims on to support agencies, but who offer support and safeguarding themselves, too. Victim Support have this year launched a specialist stalking service also. Stalking victims can now be referred to Independent Specialist Stalking Advocates (ISACs) who have had in-depth stalking training with Paladin and can give victims essential support.

Each month the Kent Police Research Bureau carry out victim satisfaction surveys. The last quarter returns were very favourable; 90% reported they would feel confident to report DA to Kent Police again, and 87% overall felt satisfied with the service they received from Kent Police. Feedback from the victim satisfaction surveys is passed on to officers and staff, ensuring continuous learning throughout the organisation which enhances the first class service provided to the public.

In March 2021, Kent Police launched the Rape Improvement Strategy. This strategy is in step with the NPCC National Vulnerability Action Plan 2020-2022 v2, the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Children Procedures, Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adult Procedures, HM Governments Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy (2016, 2019 and is fully consistent with the July 2021 release) and CPS Rape and serious sexual offences strategy July 2020. It is accompanied by a Tactical Delivery Plan (TDP).

The Rape Improvement Group has been commissioned to conduct an "end-to-end" review of how rape cases are progressed into and through the Criminal Justice System. The Group will actively seek to increase the volume of Code-compliant rape referrals from the police to the CPS for a charging decision and improve the timeliness of both police investigations and prosecutions, with the aim of achieving appropriate justice outcomes thereby improving public confidence. Membership of this group is Kent, Surrey and Sussex Police and South East CPS. Kent Police has established a joint NFA (No Further Action) scrutiny panel with the Crown Prosecution Services (CPS) which quality assure decision making on a sample of rape reports that have been filed NFA.

NFA panels have shown that, in the main, Police decision making has been supported by the panel with just 1 or 2 cases that have required further research/investigation but have usefully helped us understand areas to improve which have been briefed to our staff and incorporated into our training.

When investigating sexual offences Kent Police refer victims to the Sexual Assault Referral Clinic (SARC). NHS England has held the lead commissioning responsibility for SARCs since 1 April 2013, but collaborate with the OPCC for the commissioning process. The SARC is an all age facility and is based at Beech House, in Maidstone.

The key functions of the SARC are to:

- Assess and deliver the healthcare and support needs of the service user and, where appropriate, offer and provide a forensic medical examination.

- Where service users are unsure as to whether they wish to take up a criminal justice action, provide the opportunity for service users to agree to evidence being stored in case they decide to report to the police at a later date.
- Any medical consultation should include immediate health assessment e.g. assessment of injuries, and a risk assessment for self-harm, vulnerability and sexual health. Therefore, there should be immediate access to emergency contraception, PEPSE or referral to other acute, mental health or other health services, as required.
- Address safeguarding, care and support issues for all service users.
- Ensure service users are informed about psychological therapies and independent advocacy services.

A key part of supporting victims of rape and serious sexual offences is referrals to the Independent Sexual Violence Advisory Service. Currently this service is commissioned to Family Matters in Kent and Medway by the OPCC. The Standard expected of the service is clearly laid out:

- Delivery of a free, confidential independent, impartial, responsive and flexible service, tailored to an individual's needs, risk and circumstances - which enables informed choices
- Ensure those using the service are treated in a respectful, sensitive and professional manner and the service is available to all, including vulnerable and hard to access communities
- Support is available and appropriate for specific groups such as male victims, LGBT+, ethnic minorities and those with learning disabilities and mental health needs.
- Provide impartial support so individuals can make informed choices, including reporting to police or pursuing a criminal justice outcome.

The commissioning of this service is currently being reviewed and a robust challenge process is in place whereby Protecting Vulnerable People Command are supporting the OPCC commissioning process to ensure the best quality SARC for the next seven years. It is anticipated that a decision will be made about future provider at the end of this year.

Kent Police introduced the Sexual Offences Liaison Officers (SOLOs) for victims of Rape and Serious Sexual Offences in 2019. Across the county there are 37 SOLOs based in the operational Phoenix Teams. Where other forces have decided to either not introduce this role or have discontinued it, Kent Police remain dedicated to providing this vital role to help victims. The role of the SOLO is to ensure victims receive the highest standard of care and there is a single point of contact for any victim of rape entering the Criminal justice system. They effectively become the end-to-end support for the survivor, taking the initial account, accompanying the survivor to the SARC, attending court hearings with the victim, working together with partner agencies, supporting them before, by conducting pre-trial visits and remain with them for the duration of their attendance at court.

This enhanced service has led to 87.5% of victims reporting that they are satisfied with the service received in the last Victim Satisfaction Survey conducted by Kent Police and 95.8% respondents said they felt they were treated with Dignity and Respect by Kent Police.

2) Fighting Crime

Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Rape specialism and advice is spread across several positions to ensure that DA (and vulnerability) is at the heart of both investigative and safeguarding considerations. These roles include:

- Domestic Abuse and Stalking Strategic Manager whose role is to provide innovative, co-ordinated and effective responses to the threat, risk and harm

posed to the Force and public from Domestic Abuse, Harmful Practises and Stalking, managing policy functions, in order to prevent DA, HBV, FGM, Forced Marriage and Stalking, reduce crime and the fear of crime, bring offenders to justice, keep communities safe and deliver the Control Strategy and mission, vision, values and priorities for Kent Police.

- Dedicated DA and Rape DCI's on each division. This allows for specific tactical focus around Domestic Abuse and Rape, but complementary to the wider vulnerability investigations of Child and Adult protection.
- DA SPOCs on each division who are operational Detective Inspectors. They can offer guidance and advice to officers. Each SPOC also offers updates to the Local PVP Boards around new developments, identified good practice or lessons learned.
- Dedicated Domestic Abuse Vulnerability Investigation Teams including Detective Sergeants & Detective Inspectors. The role of the DS is to lead and support dedicated investigators and oversee investigations ensuring they are in accordance with Investigation Policy (N26). These reviews should also contain specific reference to suitability of evidence led prosecutions where the victim will not provide a statement or support police action.
- Proactive Domestic Abuse Teams. These units (currently in trial) aim to reduce repeat victimisation by targeting repeat DA suspects, identify hidden harm, and proactively support repeat victims, improving confidence and gaining their trust and support. We are able to identify high harm perpetrators through an algorithm, which ranks them based on number of victims and number and severity of incidents.
- Dedicated Phoenix (Rape Investigation) Teams comprised of investigators and SOLOs (Sexual Offence Liaison Officers) dedicated to the investigative process for reports of rape. Across the county Operation Phoenix teams consist of 52 Detective Constables Roles, 12 Detective Sergeants Roles and 4 Detective inspector Roles. These teams work alongside the Major Crime Unit in the rare instances of a rape committed by a stranger
- Vulnerability Hub – The role of the vulnerability hub is to review DA incidents and to set the initial action in accordance with the golden hour principles. This early capture of immediately available evidence is the key to any future evidence led prosecution. The Early Victim Engagement officers also work within the Vulnerability hub
- MARAC - Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) co-ordinators work across Kent and Medway, acting as the force professional expert/specialist and single point of contact for multi- agency management, ensuring effective co-ordination, management and oversight of the Public Protection interaction with partner agencies. Identify and exploit opportunities for working in partnership with key stakeholders as well as training opportunities, thereby ensuring a co-ordinated approach to the management of High Risk victims of Domestic Abuse, Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriages.

In September 2020 Kent Police launched a dedicated Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Evidence Led Prosecutions (N26b). This allows for consideration of prosecution in cases where the victim may feel unable or unwilling to provide a statement. This SOP highlights

the need for consideration of ELP at all times and in a wide variety of cases it mandates the consideration of ELP. The ongoing scrutiny, the identification and sharing of best practice and improvements in respect of ELPs is governed within the Crime Management and Investigative Quality Board chaired by the ACC (Crime).

There still exists inherent problems with bringing offenders to justice in the criminal courts for the offences that disproportionately affect Women and Girls. The nature of the offences often means there are no independent witnesses and victims are frequently unable or unwilling to support a prosecution from the outset or withdraw support before the case gets to court.

Currently Kent Police charge rates for Domestic Abuse stands at 5%, with victims not supporting in 59.8% of investigations over the past 12 months and evidential difficulty in 18.5% of investigations. Increasing victims' confidence to support is a key aim, and statistics do show an improving picture with decreases in victims not supporting seen on a month by month basis. In June, victims were not supporting in 44.6% of investigations, down from 64.9% in December 2020.

Regarding Rape and Serious Sexual Offences, Kent Police has been working closely with the CPS to introduce an Early Advice Protocol. This process allows for submission of Rape Investigation to CPS within 28-48 days of the complaint being made. This initial submission needs to include the victim and suspect's evidential account and a summary of the lines of enquiry. CPS then set up a 90-minute appointment to discuss the case with the investigating officer and will agree a joint strategy to ensure any evidential concerns are dealt with. The terms of reference place clear obligation on both Kent Police and CPS to ensure this process is supported and that actions are carried out in an expeditious manner.

Kent Police with Essex have also succeeded in a competitive bid to secure funding from the HM Government's Transforming Forensics Programme. This will secure digital devices and software that will increase the speed and quality of downloaded digital evidence available for Rape and sexual assault cases, working towards our clear ambition that no rape victim will be left without their phone for longer than 24 hours.

Currently Kent Police charge rates for rape and serious sexual offences stands at 8.2%, (FY 2021/22) with victims not supporting in 29.7% of investigations over the past 12 months and evidential difficulty in 16.5% of investigations. Increasing victims' confidence to support is a key aim, and statistics do show an improving picture with decreases in victims not supporting seen on a month by month basis. In June, victims were not supporting in 26.9% of investigations, down from 34.8% in December 2020.

3) Tackling Abuse, Exploitation and Violence

It is recognised that to tackle Violence against women and girls Kent Police need to work closely with partners and there are a number of multiagency working practices in place.

- Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) is the multi-agency approach to the management of high risk victims of Domestic Abuse in Kent, including Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriages. This promotes a co-ordinated approach to the risk assessment of victims and the implementation of appropriate safety plans, in order to reduce the likelihood of homicides occurring. There were over 2500 cases heard at MARAC in 2020.
- Multi Agency Stalking Intervention Panel (MASIP) has been running in Kent since July 2020. It is a monthly multiagency meeting where all high risk stalking cases and any cases where we are considering a Stalking Protection Order are discussed.

The MASIP meeting considers safeguarding and other intervention measures. Independent Specialist Stalking Advocates (ISACs), who have had in-depth stalking training with Paladin and can give victims essential support, attend and participate in MASIP meetings.

- Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA). These meetings are held for Violent and Sexual Offenders who are managed at Level 2 & 3 of the MAPPA process. These meetings review the risk that the individual poses to the victims of their crimes and the public in general. Clear actions are given and reviewed at each meeting.
- Multi Agency Tasking And Co-ordination (MATAC) and Perpetrator Programmes. A successful bid has been made to the Home Office by the OPCC supported by Kent Police for funding to support a DA and Stalking Perpetrator Programme, and additional staff to develop a MATAC. MATAC is a multi-agency meeting in which perpetrators that need active multiagency management, referral to a perpetrator programme, or in the case of non-engaging perpetrators, intensive disruption and/or enforcement action to be taken, can be referred. This significant award of £379 000 will see Kent Police working with a commissioned service to provide a range of groupwork and 1:1 approaches for domestic abuse perpetrators and stalking offenders appropriate to their risk level, starting from September 2021.
- PREVENT Channel Panel. Kent Police have representatives from both community policing and PVP safeguarding. Counter Terrorism Policing South East (CTPSE) are also present. With an increase in Incel (Involuntary Celibacy) or misogynistic ideology this multiagency panel looks to offer intervention and counter narratives to individual who may become radicalised and carry out offences against women and girls.
- The Sexual Violence Network is a multiagency tactical group chaired by Kent Police PVP. This group supports the DASVEG Delivery Plan with a keen focus on the multiagency tactical delivery of Preventing Sexual Abuse, provision of services to support victims and justice outcomes. An example of the ongoing work is to improve and increase work with schools and colleges to tackle attitudes and misogyny as a response to the "Everyone's Invited" Website.
- Kent Police have worked with the Independent Police Advisory Group (IPAG) throughout this year to improve our services to hard-to-reach groups. We held a Community meeting in May, attended by over 100 people. The opportunity was used to raise the profile and understanding of Domestic Abuse, and this has led to the establishment of the DA Independent Police Advisory Group. This is an important forum which allows the public to learn more about domestic abuse and the ongoing work to tackle it, but also to allow them the opportunity to speak with Kent Police about concerns and issues. Such meetings allow Police to dispel misconceptions and will seek to gain the confidence of more victims to report domestic abuse, especially from within minority communities.
- White Ribbon Champions. Kent police fully support the international White Ribbon movement encouraging organisations and individuals to raise awareness of violence against women and girls. White Ribbon's mission is to end male violence against women, once and for all. They work with men to challenge male cultures that lead to harassment, abuse and violence against women and girls. There are a number of White Ribbon champions in Kent Police.

- Domestic Abuse Support Messaging on Prescription Bags was introduced at the beginning of the first lockdown when many other services were closed and focused on crimes that people may be more vulnerable to due to the pandemic. It was a joint project with Public Health England. This advice included guidance how to seek help for Domestic Abuse victims.
- The 'Ask for Ani' scheme allows victims of domestic abuse to access support from their local pharmacy. The scheme runs alongside the existing Safe Spaces scheme. Pharmacies have been invited to sign up to the scheme and display promotional material on the premises. On approaching pharmacy staff and using the codeword 'Ani', victims will be taken to a consultation room where they will be supported to contact Police, a support service or have this done on their behalf. Kent Police fully support this initiative and the briefing has been shared with FCR staff with clear direction about how to respond to such requests This Scheme has been live since 14 January 2021.
- The 'Ask for Angela' scheme provides a way for women to discreetly alert staff at licensed premises that they need assistance. Kent Police local CSUs encourage licensed premises to advertise and operate this safety campaign for women and girls throughout Kent.

Kent Police employ a number of preventative measures to prevent Violence against Women and Girls from happening or escalating:

- Stalking Prevention Orders. These are court orders that place restrictions on Stalking offenders and breaches are a criminal offence. Kent Police have successfully obtained 34 (as of 1st Aug) SPOs since they came into law in 2020, 29 of which have been obtained in 2021. These orders give victims significant and lasting protection against stalkers (usually a minimum 10-year duration)
- Domestic Violence Prevention Notices/Orders. These are notices served by police until the order is then subsequently granted at court. They prohibit the offender from contacting the victim and breaches are a criminal Offence. Kent Police has obtained 98 DVPOs in the first 6 months of 2021

Kent Police have clear policy in place around the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS). This gives women the "right to ask about their partner or perspective partner to establish if there is any history of domestic abuse which places her at risk". It also gives women the "right to know" where police or partner agency become aware that a domestic abuse perpetrator moves on to a new relationship with them and ensures that the new partner is informed of any identified risk. Recent scrutiny shows a robust multiagency decision-making process is in place however timeliness of the process needs to be improved. This improvement is now underway with a review of the delays with clear direction from PVP SLT that this must improve.

Forced Marriage, HBA and FGM are key VAWG issues. Kent Police have trained many officers in all three areas over the last six months. Kent Police participated in a pilot scheme being run by the Ministry of Justice in regard to FM and FGM orders, as it was found nationally many of these orders were not being provided to Police and were therefore not enforced. This system of receipt of orders has now gone live nationally, and guidance has been drawn up by the Central Referral Unit to know what to do on receipt of orders. PVP Command produced an HBA and FM information sheet for officers recently which has gone out through the Quality Policing Managers, and The DA manager is actively reviewing HBA, FGM and FM crime reports coming into the force on a weekly basis.

4) Combatting Organised Crime and Gangs

There are two key areas where Organised Crime can impact disproportionately on Women and Girls. The first is when women and Girls become involved as offenders and the other is linked to being victims of Child Sexual Exploitation.

The Violence Reduction Unit has set actions in their strategic needs' assessment from January this year to analyse and understand how girls and young women up to the age of 25 are affected by public place violence including County Lines.

Nationally we have seen that women offenders frequently have disproportionate criminal justice outcomes and often offend within following because of mental health issues, as a Domestic Abuse victim facing coercion or poverty. Therefore, the Kent Criminal Justice Board (KCJB) chaired by the PCC has approved a project to develop a Women's Justice process. This will create a multi-agency holistic approach to Women's offending and embed a women-centred approach to offending in line with national strategy. Ultimately, this is to divert vulnerable women offenders from the criminal justice system through a range of restorative justice and rehabilitation options, recognising the often victim based reasoning for their offending including pressure and or violence linked to gang culture.

The County Lines and Gangs Team (CLGT) has launched and provides a proactive and preventative capability to reduce the harm caused to Kent communities from the criminality connected to 'County Line' Class A drug supply. They focus not only on combatting the supply of drug (and therefore the vulnerabilities due to drug abuse) but also on identifying adults who are being exploited or maybe victims of cuckooing. Proactive visits on those believed to be at most risk of cuckooing are completed by Community Policing Teams to offer intervention and support of those at risk of abuse.

Most recent Kent Police statistics for Child Sexual Exploitation show that 73% of victims are girls. Whilst not all CSE is organised crime it is important to have specialist consideration when looking at this crime type. Recognising the link between missing episodes and vulnerability to exploitation, Kent police have implemented specialist Missing & Child Exploitation Teams (MCET) who proactively investigate and safeguard children and young people vulnerable to Child Exploitation, and engage in multi-agency work to reduce the risk to victims of and those vulnerable to exploitation.

There is also a Child Exploitation and Missing Co-ordinator who provides coordination of the multi-agency approach to the management of Child Exploitation, Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing Children. This person is currently the national project lead for Sexual Exploitation of children (mostly girls) through the hospitality industry.

Kent Police will be relaunching Op Willow as Op Wisdom. The success and format of Op Willow is to be rebranded and delivered across all identified Child exploitation. The Op Wisdom working group will support the intelligence and operational aims of the Kent Police Strategic Intelligence Requirement and Children & Young People Strategy. This will also involve relaunching the Intel ePortal for partner agencies to refer concerns to directly to Kent Police. This is a "Soft Intelligence" portal to allow professionals to share concerns around Child Exploitation based on observations of vulnerability.

5) **Provide Visible Neighbourhood Policing**

Kent Police co-ordinates much of its prevention and deterrence functions through District Community Safety Units (CSUs). These include ward officers and licensing and ASB specialists who use an OSARA problem-solving approach to tackle offenders and locations, or safeguard victims. The CSUs work with relevant partners and their Community Safety Partnerships to deliver activity.

Each town has dedicated officers in the form of Town Centre PCs and PCSOs who work closely with Business Crime Reduction Partnerships (BCRPs) and Local Authority CCTV operators to identify and tackle issues or individuals impacting negatively on their town centres. Where local authorities have implemented Public Space Protection Orders, Community Safety Unit officers enforce on behalf of the local authorities. District Licensing officers plan joint operations with partners including the local authority, CCTV and Street Pastors to carry out checks on licensed premises and improve safety in the night-time economy.

There are a number of Community projects ongoing that Kent Police are supporting that will impact on issues that impact on VAWG such as alcohol and night-time economy risks. Examples include (not comprehensive):

- The OPCC, in conjunction with Thanet and Canterbury Community Safety Partnerships, were recently successful in securing Safer Streets 2 funding. Although the funding bids were to tackle serious acquisitive crime, both will also address improving safety in public spaces and help prevent violence against Women and Girls. For example, funding the purchase of new CCTV cameras, additional street lighting, alley gating, personal attack alarms and training community caretakers.
- A number of Districts have submitted bids to the OPCC for Safer Streets 3 which is specifically to bid for funding to tackle violence against women and girls. Bids were invited by the OPCC from Ashford, Gravesham and Medway. Example of initiatives included in these bids are
 - "Active bystander" training,
 - Harm prevention equipment (e.g. bag alarms, anti-drink spiking Stop Tops)
 - Equipment to support partners, (e.g. radios for the Business Crime Reduction Partnerships and patrol equipment for Street Pastors).
- District CSU's are working with the charity SOS Global to deliver refresher training sessions to all door/bar staff for licensed premises which will include a video from SOS global on drink spiking.
- Swanley CSU are supporting locally run Women Safety Workshops.
- Thanet Community Shield pilot where local businesses sign up through the Business Crime Reduction Partnership to provide a 'safe space' for victims/vulnerable people in need of help. Provide a space for them to make a call, help the person contact Police or appropriate person.
- Maidstone CSU had led the development of the DA Guardian campaign in Maidstone alongside the Maidstone Crime Reduction Partnership (MaidSAFE). This will train door staff, pub and club employees and venue managers / owners to identify domestic abuse victims and persons at risk and offer appropriate support and signposting.

- In Canterbury, Kent Police chair a partnership VAWG Project Group implementing activity including a "Zero Tolerance Project" to safeguard victims and tackle offenders, support schemes such as Refuge Points, Canterbury Nightline and the SafeZone App.
- Op Sark (Dover) – Community engagement in Aylesham and surrounding rural villages following the murder of PCSO Julia James. Providing hi-visibility support and reassurance to the community, supported by the Problem Solving Task Force, including community engagement days with partner agencies.
- Op Madrid (Medway) – CSU, Phoenix and VIT officers conduct night-time economy shifts in plain clothes and uniform, working with CCTV to identify & safeguard vulnerable females and disrupt potential offenders.
- Op Eye (Ashford) – Patrolling around schools at key times with partners. Distribution of Personal Attack Alarms through Violence Reduction Unit funding of personal attack alarms. Briefings to partners for awareness and to maximise visible guardians.
- Op Island (Thanet) – Highly visible multi-agency presence within the community throughout the peak season. Command posts have been identified at various high-footfall locations to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Op Heart (West Division) - Phoenix teams providing training, Ask for Angela, joint patrols between police, street pastors and the local authority at weekends & key events (such as the Euros and local entertainment events).
- Op Nest (Dartford) - Funding used to provide extra visible presence in town centres to promote safety to young persons and lone females. PCSOs have been engaging and advising on the 'Hollyguard' App.
- Op Sentry (Folkestone) – Specifically focused on the concern for public safety and the safety of women and girls. Identifies hot spot locations for joint patrolling with local authority and coastguard, proactive use of social media and relentless pursuit of offenders.

6) Deliver an Efficient and Accessible Service

Many of the aforementioned operations and partnership initiatives are aimed at promoting a more efficient and accessible service. Kent Police continue to work in partnerships with other agencies to ensure that victims and survivors feel they can access the support they need. Kent Police are key partners in the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Executive Group, Kent Community Safety Partnership, Kent Criminal Justice Board, Kent Safeguarding Children Multiagency Partnership, Medway Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board.

Results from the Victim Satisfaction Surveys within some of the most challenging arenas validate that we provide a good service to those that call upon us. Work continues in communities to ensure that all victims feel safe to report matters to the police.

Supplementary Section: Continually improving the culture of Kent Police

Professional Standards Department have produced a video to demonstrate how Sexual Harassment or sexualised behaviour in the workplace is identified, challenged and reported. It draws the link between violence against women and girls and recognising the

need for wider cultural change in relation to attitudes towards Women and Girls. To support this messaging a new Standard Operating Procedure around Abuse of Position for Sexual Purpose (P02i) has been published. The policy and messaging around these concerns highlight the role of PSD Counter Corruption Unit and the anonymous e-mail system that is available for officers and staff to share concerns. To ensure this message is heard and understood the DCC had instructed that supervisors are to discuss these issues with all officers and staff and to record that this discussion has taken place.

Furthermore, in response to the super-complaint made by the Centre for Women's Justice around Police Perpetrated Domestic Abuse, all forces were asked to review practices in relation to domestic abuse where the perpetrator was a member of staff. After this review Kent Police took the decision to remove Police Perpetrated Domestic Abuse from the overarching DA policy and have written a standalone policy specifically for this issue. The Policy sets out how the force will investigate such allegations impartially and fairly. It also offers clear guidance around how victims will be supported in line with the early NPCC recommendations from the super-complaint.

The Kent Network of Women raise awareness and understanding of issues affecting women within Kent Police and give women a voice that will be listened to. There is a standing agenda item of culture, policies and language which include a response VAWG

KNOW are working with PSD to support the launch of the Abuse of Position for Sexual Purpose SOP and to enable staff to have the confidence to report concerns and to offer investigative support if required. The next steps with PSD are to understand how the policy launch can be used as a platform to reinforce what is acceptable and what isn't and also to outline the support mechanisms in place.

KNOW have invited the organisation 'Everyday Sexism' to the annual conference. This organisation provides an opportunity for people to share their experiences where perhaps they have normalised so called 'lower level' or 'everyday' sexist commentary/behaviour or indeed the unseen or subliminal sexism which often goes unnoticed. A breakout session is planned to develop a 'what works well, what could be better' style feedback for the organisation based on experiences of overt and innate sexism which links to the NPCC VAWG action plan.

The KNOW also sit on the Regional Gender Action Group which considers regional policies around gender issues such as VAWG based on national guidelines. The group disseminated to partner agencies the results of the 'Call it Out' survey undertaken in Cumbria, Durham and Surrey which engaged with female members of the public in the counties to assess how safe they felt.

KNOW have also pledged to support the international HeForShe agenda. HeForShe is an invitation for men and people of all genders to stand in solidarity with women to create a bold, visible and united force for gender equality.

Kent Police have established a Men's Forum Support Group which looks to tackle issues which affect Men. Amongst the many topics considered, the group looks at issues that may impact on VAWG such as mental health and anger management and seeks to support those needing help. The Men's Forum has also pledged to support the international HeForShe agenda.