



Department of
Justice

An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt

Männystrie O tha Laa

www.justice-ni.gov.uk

Helping victims and witnesses of crimes

Tell us what you think



**Easy
Read**

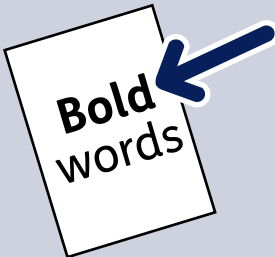
Easy Read



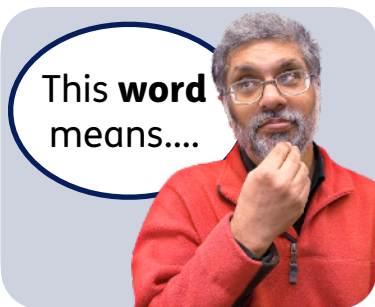
This is an Easy Read version of some information. It may not include all of the information but it will tell you about the important parts.



This Easy Read booklet uses easier words and pictures. Some people may still want help to read it.



Some words are in **bold** - this means the writing is thicker and darker. These are important words in the booklet.



Sometimes if a bold word is hard to understand, we will explain what it means.



Blue and underlined words show links to websites and email addresses. You can click on these links on a computer.

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About this booklet



This booklet is from the Department of Justice of Northern Ireland.



We are part of the government of Northern Ireland.



We are writing a new plan to help **victims** and **witnesses** of crimes.

A **victim** is someone who is harmed or injured because of a crime.

A **witness** is someone who saw a crime, or has information about a crime.



Our plan will help victims and witnesses get the help they need, when they need it.



We want to know what you think when we write our plan.

We want to hear from:



- People who have been victims or witnesses of crime.



- The public.



- Groups who work with victims and witnesses.



Please answer the questions in this booklet to tell us what you think.



You do not have to answer all the questions if you do not want to.



You should tell us what you think by Friday 29 November 2024.



You can find out how to tell us what you think on page 38.

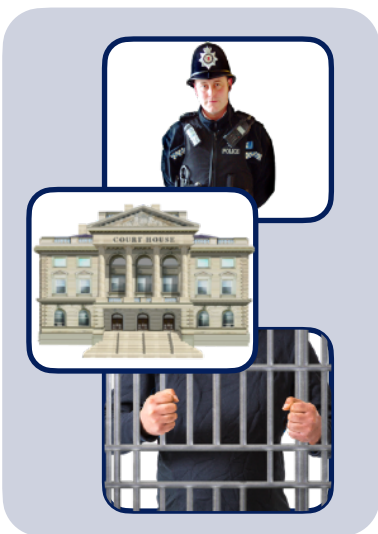
Why we need a plan



There were nearly 90,000 crimes with victims in Northern Ireland from May 2023 to April 2024.



Crime can have a bad effect on victims.



People who have been affected by a crime can also find it hard to take part in the **criminal justice system**.

The **criminal justice system** is all the different organisations involved in dealing with people who have broken the law, like the police, courts and prisons.



Every victim of crime is different.

It is important for organisations in the criminal justice system to:



- Be caring and treat people with respect.



- Tell victims and witnesses what is happening about the crime.



- Explain important decisions.



- Make sure victims and witnesses get their **rights**.

Rights are things that every person should have by law. Like the right to be safe, the right to education, the right to be respected.



It is important that the criminal justice system helps everyone.



We want to do more of what we know worked well in the past, and look at what we can do better.



We will listen to people who help victims and witnesses.



Being a victim or witness can affect other parts of your life, like where you live, go to school, or your health.



So we will work with lots of different groups to help victims and witnesses.



We will also make sure that our plans fit in with other plans from the government.

What we have done so far

Our last plan helped us make lots of changes, like:



- Making a job for someone called the **Commissioner Designate for Victims of Crime**, who can speak for crime victims.



- Supporting victims and witnesses by giving money to services like:
 - Victim Support Northern Ireland.
 - The NSPCC Young Witness Service.



- Choosing special leaders who will make sure the plan is working.

Our last plan also helped us make changes, like:



- Starting a group to make sure we think about what victims and witnesses need.



- Telling more people about the **Charters** for victims and witnesses.

The **Charters** tell victims and witnesses about their rights.

You can read the charters on the website:

www.nidirect.gov.uk/charters

About the new plan



We still think that the ideas in our old plan are good ideas.



But we need to think more about what victims of crime need.



We have not been able to do everything we wanted in the past.



We have a set amount of money to spend on our work. We have to do what we can without going over this amount.



We want to know what you think is most important for us to do.



Question 1: What do you think is the best way for us to learn from the experiences of victims and witnesses of crimes?

A large, empty rounded rectangular box with a dark blue border, intended for the user to write their answer to the question.

Our vision and mission statement



A **vision** is how we want things to be in the future.



A **Mission Statement** is how we are going to make our vision happen.

For 2025 to 2030, we think our **Vision** should be:



- Supporting all victims and witnesses.



- Helping people trust the criminal justice system more.

We think our **Mission Statement** for 2025 to 2030 should be:



- Working to make the criminal justice system more fair.



We plan to do this by making sure that victims and witnesses are the most important people in every part of the criminal justice system.



Question 2a: Do you agree with our Vision and Mission Statement?

Yes

No



Question 2b: Please write any other ideas about our vision or mission statement here:

A large, empty rectangular box with rounded corners and a dark blue border, intended for the user to write their response to Question 2b.

Our priorities



Priorities are what is most important and should be done first.



We think that the priorities in our old plan are still important.



We want to make the biggest difference we can with the time and money we have.

Our 4 priorities are:



1. Understand more about what victims and witnesses need.



2. Make sure that victims and witnesses get the help they need.



3. Make sure organisations think about victims and witnesses.



4. Help victims and witnesses get the information they need.



Question a3: Do you agree with our ideas about our priorities?

Yes

No



Question 3b: Please write any other ideas about our priorities here:

A large, empty rectangular box with rounded corners and a dark blue border, intended for writing answers to the question above.

Our objectives



Our **objectives** are how we will make our priorities happen.

Objectives for Priority 1



Remember, Priority 1 is: Understand more about what victims and witnesses need.

Our objectives for Priority 1 are:



- Understand what victims and witnesses need.



- Think about and help with any problems that come up.

Other objectives for Priority 1 are:



- Learn from other places that are working well.

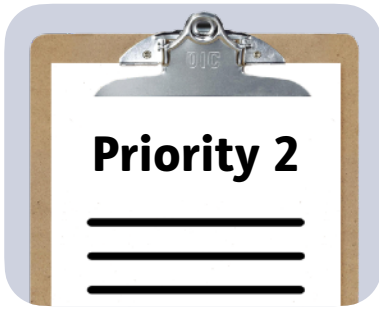


- Make sure victims are getting the help they need if they find it hard to get support.



- Learn about what victims need in the long term.

Objectives for Priority 2



Remember, Priority 2 is: Make sure that victims and witnesses get the help they need.

Our objectives for Priority 2 are:



- Understand what support victims and witnesses need, so that we can help them better.



- Make sure that victims and witnesses get the help they need for their feelings.

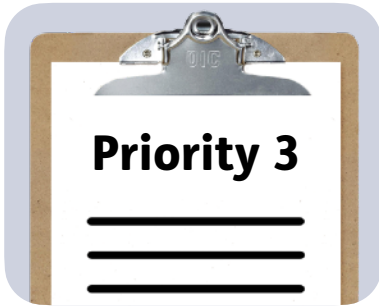


- Make sure that victims and witnesses get help to tell the police or court about what happened.



- Talking to the police and courts should not make the bad effects of crime worse for victims.

Objectives for Priority 3



Remember, Priority 3 is: Make sure organisations think about victims and witnesses.

Our objectives for Priority 3 are to make sure that:



- All organisations in the criminal justice system think about the needs of victims and witnesses.

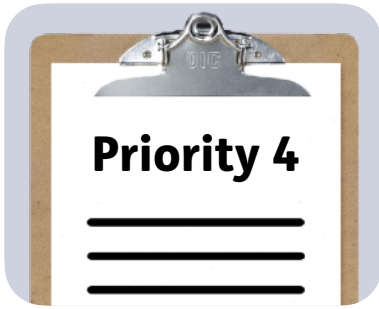


- Everyone follows the rules about helping victims and witnesses.



- All organisations in the criminal justice system do their best to help victims and witnesses.

Objectives for Priority 4



Remember, Priority 4 is: Victims and witnesses get the information they need.

Our objectives for this are to make sure that victims and witnesses:



- Get information about their rights.



- Get the information they need about their case in good time.



- Know how to complain if they are not happy with something that has happened.



Question 4a: Do you agree with our objectives?

Yes

No



Question 4b: Please write any other ideas about our objectives here:

Victim journey



One of our ideas is to think about what happens after a crime is reported as a journey.

Like a journey, a victim of crime will go through different stages, like when:



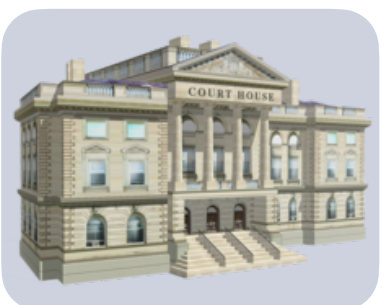
- The victim reports the crime to the police.



- The police look into the crime.



- The police and other organisations decide whether to take the case to court.



- The case goes to court.



The last stage of the journey is when the court makes a decision about the case.



We know that every victim takes a different route on this journey.



We need to support victims and witnesses at every stage of the journey.



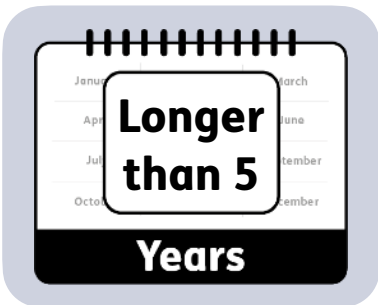
Question 5: What do you think about the idea of a victim journey? Do you have any ideas about the different stages? Do you have any other ideas?

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Next steps



This is the first part of writing a new plan for victims and witnesses.



We know it will take longer than 5 years to fix all the problems.



We are asking what people think to help us decide what is most important in our plan.



This is important because we have less money than in the past.



You should tell us what you think by Friday 29 November 2024.

After you share your ideas, we will:



- Look at what everyone told us.



- Write a plan.



- Ask people what they think about the plan in January 2025.



- Look at what people say.



- Change the plan to add ideas from other people, and tell everyone about the plan.

More questions



About you

Question 6: I am answering the questions:

For myself.

As part of an organisation.

Please write the name of the organisation and their email address in the box below.

About the plan

Please answer these questions about the whole plan.

We want to make sure we support different people who are victims or witnesses of crimes, like:



- Women.
- Men.
- People who are **LGBTQIA+**.

LGBTQI+ means lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (or questioning), intersex + others.

- People from **ethnic minorities**.

An **ethnic minority** is a small group of people of the same race, in a place where most other people are a different race.

- Children and young people.
- Older people.
- Disabled people.



Question 7: How can we make sure we support different groups of people?

A large, empty rectangular box with rounded corners and a dark blue border, intended for a response to the question above.



Question 8: We know that our work is connected to other government plans and policies. How do you think we can work well with them?

If you are talking about specific plans or policies, please tell us what they are.

A large, empty rectangular box with rounded corners and a dark blue border, intended for the respondent to provide their answer to the question.



Question 9: Please tell us about any ways that we can make our service or support better for victims and witnesses.

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Question 10: What do you think are the biggest problems for victims and witnesses? Do you think our plan will help with these problems?

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Question 11: What do you think we should do to make the important parts of the new plan work?

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How to tell us what you think



If you can, please answer the questions on our website:

consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/doj/victim-and-witness-strategy-call-for-views

Or you can send your answers by:



- Post:
Victims and Witnesses Branch
Victims Support Division
Department of Justice
Massey House
Stormont Estate
Belfast BT4 3SX



- Email:
dojvictimswitnesses@justice-ni.gov.uk

You can also use this email address if you need any more information about our work supporting victims and witnesses.

Find out more



For more information about our plan and the information and questions in this booklet you can look our website:

www.justice-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-victim-and-witness-strategy-2025-2030

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