

Force' Police Stalking Action Plan': in response to the Super Complaint submitted by Suzy Lamplugh Trust on behalf of the National Stalking Consortium

Force:		West Midlands Police					
Executive Lead:		ACC Mattinson					
Operational Lead:		Detective Superintendent Jobson					
Rec. No.	Recommendation:		Evidence requirements of progress/completion:	Recommendation Owner:	Force Update:	Date	Status
7	By 27 March 2025, where required, seek changes to their crime recording systems to enable staff and officers to document and search for crimes not recorded as the principal crime, as included classifications on crime records.	7.1	Processes should be put in place to make sure this system capability is effectively used by officers and staff.	Chief Constables	The force has recognised that where stalking is not a principal crime there is a requirement to understand the offending patterns of perpetrators. There has been significant awareness training and communications to the force to ensure that where stalking is not the principal crime that there is a consideration to seek to identify stalking behaviours behind other criminality and identify stalking at the earliest opportunity and record it correctly. Dip samples are conducted on a monthly basis by the Rreview and Allocation(R and A) team within the Public Protection Unit (PPU), to identify any stalking offences that are crimed as harassment. Action – Stalking lead to consult with the Force Crime Registrar (FCR) and the CONNECT (System) Subject Matter Expert to explore further technological support	09/10/2024	In Progress 75%
		7.2	While any necessary system changes are pending, Chief Constables should put alternative measures in place to make sure stalking and related offences are fully searchable. This could, for example, be the submission of intelligence reports	Chief Constables	On a daily basis (Mon-Fri) the Early Awareness Stalking Intervention (EASI) Team are utilising a specific set of stalking search parameters within the case management system- CONNECT - to identify all stalking reports. Each case is reviewed for suitability for the Bi-weekly Stalking Triage Clinic, which is a multi-agency meeting chaired by the Tactical Stalking Lead with representatives from Legal Services, Black Country Women's Aid for Independent Stalking Advocacy Caseworker support(ISAC), Digital Media Investigators (DMIs), representation from the Cyber Stalking Helpline, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), a Forensic Psychologist and the Probation Service. Action – Stalking lead to ensure identification of other crimes that can be attributed to stalking to be part of the work with the FCR and CONNECT SME	03/10/2024	In Progress 75%
10	By 27 March 2025, review and update their learning and training provision relating to stalking. Chief constables should also make sure that their policies and practice are reviewed and updated in accordance with the findings in the super-complaint investigation report.	10.1	Meets the learning outcomes on stalking within the public protection national policing curriculum	Chief Constables	Stalking training has been delivered and a programme to continue this over the coming months is already in place. Questions are being asked as to whether the learning outcomes as identified within the Public Protection national policing Curriculum are being met. Action – Stalking lead to ensure that training is in line with the curriculum.	23/10/2024	In Progress
		10.2	Makes appropriate use of the stalking or harassment e-learning product developed by the College of Policing.	Chief Constables	The e-Learning product has been reviewed by the EASI Team. Support has been given for the force to agree this as mandatory learning for the required teams and business areas (awaiting L&D Sign off meeting) Action - Stalking lead to ensure compliance rates of mandatory training once authorised	03/10/2024	In Progress 25%
		10.3	Uses the skills and knowledge of local victim advocates or others from outside policing with relevant expertise.	Chief Constables	Black Country Women's Aid (BCWA) are the Force's commissioned stalking advocacy agency. They are embedded and a key partner within the stalking triage meeting. They are also an active partner within the Stalking Working Group Meetings. BCWA- provide training as part of the commissioned service. They are delivering an input on Stalking Awareness half day sessions bringing the victim's voice and a victim centred approach into the heart of investigations. In addition, they are also delivering an input on the Stalking Screening Tool implementation training. Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid are working with the DA Desk (Rapid Video Response to DA calls) and have an Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) available on calls. Callers reporting domestic abuse via the DA Desk are given the opportunity to speak directly to an IDVA after reporting in addition to a referral to specialist support agencies.	03/10/2024	Action Complete
		10.4	Includes information on relevant local policies and practice where necessary	Chief Constables	The force has a Domestic Abuse Policy which contains a procedural guidance document focused on stalking. The policy and procedural guidance are reviewed bi-annually. This was last completed in Summer 2024. The stalking portal located on the front page of the PPU Intranet webpage provides information on the EASI Team, the purpose of the EASI Project , stalking triage clinic details and joining details, a Stalking Protection Order toolkit, Victim's Personal Statement advice, a referral hub, further resources and FAQs.	03/10/2024	Action Complete
		10.5	Provide to the officers and staff who will most benefit from the learning.	Chief Constables	The force is committed to delivering training and Continuous Professional Development within the area of stalking. Dedicated training days on stalking have been delivered to: Officers who are responsible for responding to incidents, Force Contact Officers and Staff, Local Policing Areas(LPAs) and PPU Investigation Officers and staff. In total between January 2023 to July 2024, approximately 1700 officers have received this in person training. A further three half day stalking training and awareness sessions will be delivered during November and December 2024. This is a partner led approach with inputs from policing, legal services, CPS, BCWA and the Digital Search Dog Team. Further DA training is being planned for early 2025. This will include inputs on DA, stalking, including the super complaint findings. The target audience will be all officers/staff involved in the reporting, recording and investigation of stalking. All stalking training is delivered by external training providers, who are experts in the stalking arena. Action - Stalking lead to ensure the training as planned for 2025 is completed	03/10/2024	In Progress 75%
11	By 27 March 2025, make sure that appropriate mechanisms are in place to fully understand the scale and types of stalking behaviour within their force and the effectiveness of their response. This should align with the VAWG national delivery framework.	11.1	Problem profiles using police data and intelligence and other sources of information to ensure that the full extent of stalking is well understood. This could include information sharing with local victims' services and other public services, and national and local statistics.	Chief Constables	The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) have commissioned the stalking problem profile work from Victim Focus. In September 2024 a draft copy has been shared with the OPCC and WMP which needs to be finalised. Action – Stalking lead to agree sign off of problem profile.	03/10/2024	In Progress 75%
		11.2	Regular assurance work such as audits to better understand the force response and make improvements where appropriate, including monitoring the use of SPOs, investigation outcomes and the quality of investigations.	Chief Constables	Operation Vanguard is a force wide operation to improve the West Midlands Police response to investigations. As part of this activity all Inspector ranks and above (Up to and including the Deputy Chief Constable) carry out monthly audits of crimes. The learning from this is picked up locally and through force Silver and Gold meetings. Within the Public Protection Unit, Inspectors dip sample a number of OC15 and OC16 crime investigations. Consideration is to be given to explore the implementation of a Stalking specific Scrutiny Panel reviewing a number of DA and non-DA stalking offences on a monthly basis. This activity is to include reviewing the initial call recording, body worn video, interview recordings and all paperwork – to provide a holistic review of officer attitudes towards stalking. Stalking Protection Orders (SPOs) are discussed at the monthly Stalking Triage Meeting as to the suitability of an SPO and the application requirements. Through the PPU DA performance meeting the number of SPOs is monitored to highlight improvements, any blockages and the improving number of applications being gained. An external academic study has been commissioned by WMP to understand the impact of officer attitudes on victims when investigations are finalised as OC16. Action - Stalking lead to look at the necessity of stalking specific audit activity.		In Progress 75%
		11.3	Ways to regularly receive feedback from victims, such as victim surveys.	Chief Constables	The force does not currently undertake victim feedback specific to stalking. Any victim reporting stalking offences via the DA Desk and conducted via a Rapid Video Response (RVR) will be sent a feedback survey at the end of the call – the data to which is monitored and reviewed for improvement opportunities. The force is developing a victim satisfaction survey generated from within the investigations case management system and Force Contact command and control system. These will be sent to victims reporting stalking offences where appropriate and safe to do so. Action - Stalking lead to work with Corporate Development to ensuring stalking victims are included in survey activity	03/10/2024	In Progress 75%
		11.4	Force Management Statements which reflect current and future demand from stalking.	Chief Constables	Completed for current year		Action Complete

12	By 27 March 2025, take steps to make sure that risk identification, assessment and management is effective in all stalking and breaches of orders cases.	12.1	Considering implementing the stalking screening tool to support the identification of stalking and the risks associated with stalking.	Chief Constables	The force will be implementing the Stalking Screening Tool in early 2025 for non-DA stalking offences in the first instance as there is currently no risk assessment tool in place for these crimes. In the first instance it will be piloted on one Local Policing Area (LPA) ahead of force wide rollout. Action - Stalking lead to continue with rollout of the SST Policy and Procedure guidance is up to date and completed.	03/10/2024	In Progress 75%
		12.2	Having clear policies and procedures in place for assessing and managing risk in all cases. And where appropriate, embedding recognised risk assessment tools in force systems so that it is easy for officers to access, use and document their consideration of risk and safeguarding.	Chief Constables	For all reported stalking offences, a THRIVE (Threat, Risk Harm) assessment is conducted at the point of recording and recorded on both the ControlWorks logs and CONNECT. DA stalking offences would also have the Domestic Abuse Risk Assessment (DARA) completed and recorded on CONNECT. For non-DA stalking the SST will be used and recorded on CONNECT The EASI Stalking Team utilise the Screening Assessment for Stalking and Harassment (SASH) for DA stalking incidents to assist assessment and management of risk for cases that come through the stalking triage clinic. Action - As per above action, full roll out of SST to be completed.	06/11/2024	In Progress 75%
		12.3	Recognising (in policies, guidance and training) the heightened risk associated with breaches of protective orders and measures.	Chief Constables	The heightened risk of breaches and the processes for applying for SPOs is identified in the Protection for Witnesses Procedural Guidance document of the DA policy. The force response to protective orders is being captured under the HMICFRS improvement activity whereby a management tool is now in place which will be expanded to include police bail, SPOs, DVPN/Os and Non-Molestation Orders.. Training that has been given to date and in the future highlights how offenders who breach protective orders put in place are at a greater risk to victims for their non-compliance of legal powers. Action – Stalking lead to continue to monitor the use of SPOs and to escalate any concerns across the Force.	06/11/2024	In Progress 75%
		12.4	Implementing screening and checking processes to support the early identification, assessment and management of high-risk cases. This may require stalking and breach of order cases to be considered at daily management meetings.	Chief Constables	As detailed above - on a daily basis (Mon-Fri) the Early Awareness Stalking Intervention (EASI) Team are utilising a specific set of stalking search parameters within CONNECT to identify all stalking reports. Each case is reviewed for suitability for the Bi Weekly Stalking Triage Clinic where high risk cases are provided for further review. As part of the daily search, the THRIVE and DARA would have already been conducted at point of recording. PPU has a team who will then further review all cases which are recorded as high risk, they will be further reviewed by the force safeguarding team and will only got the PPU DA teams for investigation. The EASI Team utilise SASH on cases referred to the stalking triage clinic For high risk stalking cases the team will escalate these all to the dedicated stalking Sergeant. If activity outside of the bi weekly stalking meeting is required then they will make those contacts. High risk cases with outstanding suspects are managed through local LPA TRM processes for arrest activity. Action - Stalking lead to validate/ dip sample active stalking cases to ensure that daily management meetings are scrutinising this activity.	06/11/2024	In Progress 75%
13	By 27 March 2025, take steps to make sure that force strategies, structures and processes are in place so that police consider an SPO in every stalking case, and apply for an SPO where relevant and appropriate to prevent harm and further offending. To achieve this, chief constables should review, and revise policy, guidance and supporting processes where necessary:	13.1	Local training and guidance on SPOs, including training and guidance for supervisors.	Chief Constables	The force is delivering two training and awareness days in November and December 2024. The content is delivered by force stalking SMEs, legal services, CPS and Black Country Women's Aid. From the daily screening of stalking incidents, suitable cases are identified and officers are requested to attend the stalking triage clinic. Operational tactics and investigative support mechanisms are discussed and offered to the investigative officer. The EASI Team will then apply for SPOs where suitable alongside the investigation. There is an SPO toolkit available to all officers on the stalking portal on the Public Protection Intranet Page, available to all investigators to support their investigations	06/11/2024	Action Complete
		13.2	Mechanisms for supporting investigating officers to identify cases where SPOs would be appropriate and assisting them with SPO applications. This could be through dedicated teams or roles and/or through daily management meetings considering risk and safeguarding.	Chief Constables	As above - the force has a dedicated Stalking team who will provide support for officers in applying for SPOs. There is an SPO toolkit available to all officers on the stalking portal on the PPU intranet page.	06/11/2024	Action Complete
14	By 27 March 2025, take steps to make sure stalking victims receive the rights they are entitled to under the victim's code and have access to support services.	14.1	Victim needs assessments are always completed	Chief Constables	Victims Code compliance is monitored through a Business Insights dashboard which is in place force wide and accountability provided through local and force wide performance meetings. There is no single repository on CONNECT for the victims needs assessment and the various elements of the assessment sit across a number of sections within CONNECT. Oversight on compliance to the VNA is given through the monthly audits on investigations against the investigative standards and principles implemented by the force. Action - Stalking lead to work with Operation Vanguard to improve VNA completions	06/11/2024	In Progress 50%
		14.2	The force has appropriate processes to make sure all stalking victims are told about their rights under the victims' code.	Chief Constables	At the point of recording a text message is sent to all victims of crime which contains a hyperlink to the victim's code and the 12 rights.	06/11/2024	Action Complete
		14.3	Information about the national and specialist stalking support services available in their force area is easily available to police officers and staff, victims and the general public.	Chief Constables	All officers have been made aware of the specialist support available to support victims of stalking from force wide communication campaigns. Details are available on the PCC website - No excuse for abuse and via the Stalking portal on the PPU home page. There is a specialist stalking service which is a locally commissioned service provided by BCWA. The stalking portal includes information on BCWA, referral forms and support, the Hollie guard app, cyber helpline and PCC impact pathways- no excuse for abuse page. It also includes information relating to national stalking support agencies. The support available is reinforced through both DA training and awareness days and the upcoming stalking and HBA training and awareness days.	06/11/2024	Action Complete
		14.4	Victims who would like to receive support are referred to an appropriate service in a timely manner.	Chief Constables	At the point of recording all victims are offered a referral to victim's support, consent based, under right four of the victim's code. This is recorded within CONNECT and performance monitored through Qlik. Specialist support offered in the secondary investigation space to BCWA- the specialist stalking support provision BCWA attend the monthly stalking delivery board and report on the number of referrals made during the last month. The EASI Team do ensure during their daily searches that a referral has been made and pick this up if it hasn't already been made.	06/11/2024	Action Complete
		14.5	They monitor the number of stalking victims who are referred to specialist support services and take action when referral numbers are low.	Chief Constables	BCWA attend monthly stalking working meeting and referrals are part of an agenda item so that performance is able to be monitored. When referrals are low the EASI stalking team revisit complex cases, high risk of escalation of violence, victim psychological impact high and reoffer or offer if it hadn't been made previously.	06/11/2024	Action Complete
16	By 27 March 2025, work together to review commissioning arrangements and make changes as soon as possible to ensure they embed collaborative working and information sharing between policing and services providing victim support to stalking victims.	16.1		CCs, PCCs and their mayor equivalents	An Information sharing agreement is in place between West Midlands Police and BCWA BCWA is an integral part of the stalking triage clinic, and attend as a contributing member to the stalking working group There is a strong working relationship between WMP and the OPPC – this includes funding of the stalking problem profile, dedicated victim services and funding contribution to EASI.	06/11/2024	Action Complete
17	27 March 2025, make sure the new College of Policing investigations APP content on case allocation is reflected in the relevant policies relating to the allocation of stalking and breach of order cases for investigation.	17.1	Force policies should support the allocation of stalking cases to officers with the right skills and experience, taking into account the potential risk and complexity involved in stalking and breach of order cases.	Chief Constables	The Domestic Abuse Policy, and consequential procedural guidance for stalking sets out the allocation principles. Non-DA related stalking is allocated to LPAs and DA related stalking is allocated to the DA specialists within PPU for investigation. The EASI team also monitor and provide investigative support to stalking cases as detailed above.	06/11/2024	Action Complete

18	By 27 March 2025, take steps to improve the quality of stalking investigations by taking a victim centred, suspect focussed and context led approach.	18.1	Their workforce has the capacity and capability to undertake effective stalking investigations and can apply new and innovative investigation techniques to pursue digital lines of enquiry.	Chief Constables	Stalking awareness training encompasses a wide variety of tactical options available to the investigator and signposting to specialist teams. Operation Vanguard has provided investigative support not just for stalking but for all aspects of improving innovation and digital awareness within investigations. Dedicated DMI training has taken place and dedicated DMI officers are able to cascade opportunities for new techniques.	06/11/2024	Action Complete
		18.2	All reasonable lines of enquiry are pursued, supported by good supervision.	Chief Constables	Operation Vanguard is leading the programme of activity of how investigations in their totality are improving within WMP. A Bronze, Silver, Gold structure is in place to monitor and improve effectiveness and efficiency of investigations. Their own training programme is in place to help the use of CONNECT, to use EVOLVES, to improve DMI submissions and a range of activity to which stalking cases will feel the positive influence of. Action - Stalking lead to work with Operation Vanguard in support of improvements of stalking investigation standards.	06/11/2024	In Progress 50%
		18.3	Arrest and search powers are used to gather evidence from and about suspects.	Chief Constables	Arrest rates for all offences, especially for DA related offences are increasing month on month within WMP. Search powers are not always used effectively other than digital device seizure. Training is being delivered to increase awareness of material and evidence which could help with evidential opportunities in stalking. Action – Stalking lead to work with Operation Vanguard on stalking specific search powers.	06/11/2024	In Progress 50%
		18.4	The impact on victims is evidenced in witness statements, so it can be used to inform charging decisions and improve the likelihood of successful investigation outcomes.	Chief Constables	The EASI Stalking Team have created a victim’s personal statement toolkit which is available on the PPU intranet, this includes a victim’s voice video, messaging from CPS on the importance, together with two examples of a VPS DA and non-DA stalking for officers to use as guidance. This website includes a hyperlink to impact pathway referrals, and further learning on the psychological impact of stalking.	06/11/2024	Action Complete
20	By 27 March 2025, take steps to improve how their force effectively recognises and responds to online elements of stalking.	20.1	The scale and nature of online stalking behaviours informs their strategic understanding of, and the response to, stalking.	Chief Constables	The Stalking Problem Profile has been commissioned by the OPCC and a draft is to be available for November 2024. This will include online stalking behaviours and help to inform next steps tackle this particular type of stalking. Action – Stalking lead to consider how the problem profile will inform WMP response to this type of stalking behaviour.	06/11/2024	In Progress 50%
		20.2	Examples of online stalking are included in locally produced training and guidance material about stalking.	Chief Constables	Online stalking will feature in the upcoming stalking training days being delivered across the force.	06/11/2024	Action Complete
		20.3	Clear online safety advice is available to officers and staff, drawing on the College of Policing APP on stalking or harassment when it is developed.	Chief Constables	The stalking portal on the PPU intranet page provides links to the stalking cyber helpline. Additional information is also provided detailing what is cyberstalking, cyber advice, and victim evidence collation advice.	06/11/2024	Action Complete
		20.4	Appropriate tools, technologies and support services to digitally safeguard victims are procured and officers and staff use these resources when appropriate.	Chief Constables	The DA policy links to the APP to ensure it is up to date. To support investigations Asset Recovery funding has provided a number of tactical options, this includes a dedicated stalking triage SPOC from the Cyber helpline, 100 Hollie guard apps and cameras which can be given to help safeguard victims. The EASI Project has funded an ISAC to support victims of stalking and attendance of an ISAC to stalking triage to provide a victim centred approach to investigations as well as giving direct victim support alongside BCWA.	06/11/2024	Action Complete
22	By 27 September 2025, using the information collated by the NPCC lead under recommendation 21, to consider whether and how dedicated stalking officers and staff, or other subject matter experts, can be used to add value and support the force response to stalking.	22.1		Chief Constables	West Midlands Police have implemented the Early Stalking Awareness Intervention Team through Home office funding. The business model is to provide a cost and time efficient, targeted and evidence informed intervention for those engaged in stalking behaviours. The positive intervention utilises Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT). Within WMP this equates to a dedicated Inspector, Sergeant and Police Staff Investigating officers as a specialist stalking function.	06/11/2024	Action Complete
23	By 27 March 2025, implement a mechanism for early screening of crimes to improve the identification, recording and management of all stalking cases.	23.1	Forces should consider screening crimes similar to stalking or where stalking behaviours may be present as part of a course of conduct, like harassment, malicious communications and breaches of orders.	Chief Constables	The current stalking search parameters used on the daily searches include: S2 & S4 harassment, S2 & S4 stalking, racially aggravated harassment and stalking, breach of SPO, breach of Non-mol and breach of restraining order. The parameters could be expanded to cover malicious communications and breach of DVPO – all of which would help to show course of conduct. Action – Stalking lead to consider widening of search parameters.	06/11/2024	In Progress 75%
25	By 27 March 2025, explore opportunities to improve how their force works with partners to contribute to a multi-agency response to stalking. This should include considering:	25.1	How the force works in partnership with healthcare, the CPS, probation services and other criminal justice partners to manage stalking perpetrators and address their behaviour.	CCs, PCCs and their mayor equivalents	The current stalking search parameters used on the daily searches include: S2 & S4 harassment, S2 & S4 stalking, racially aggravated harassment and stalking, breach of SPO, breach of Non-mol and breach of restraining order. Stalking Triage Meeting attendees are from both internal and external partners as described previously. Work is ongoing with the probation service, currently sharing all live and spent SPOs to help improve stalking perpetrator management within the community. Details of cases being presented at stalking triage clinics are shared with Probation to understand what value they could add. CPS are part of these meetings already to provide a holistic view of cases. The OPCC are also in attendance who have links to health and the wider CJ landscape.	06/11/2024	Action Complete
		25.2	Whether and how they should collaborate with other forces to effectively and efficiently contribute to multi-agency partnerships on stalking.	CCs, PCCs and their mayor equivalents	There is a regional meeting which brings together force leads for domestic abuse and stalking. WMP are the regional Chair and also the national representative for these areas of work. There is continuous discussion on better working together opportunities.	06/11/2024	Action Complete
		25.3	How multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) are being used to effectively manage stalking offenders.	CCs, PCCs and their mayor equivalents	DA offenders will include stalking offenders. Probation are included in the stalking triage to understand and monitor offenders. MAPPA specifically does not discuss pure stalking. Action - Stalking lead to discuss with MAPPA Chairs about how stalking could become an agenda item	06/11/2024	In Progress 50%
27	By 22 November 2024 (56 days from publication), write to HMICFRS, the IOPC and the College of Policing setting out their response to the recommendations made to them. Chief constables should direct their response to the NPCC which should provide a collective response on behalf of all police forces. PCCs and their mayor equivalents should direct their response to the APCC which should provide a collective response on their behalf.	27.1	To write to the NPCC providing a copy of this action plan.	All bodies subject to recommendations	Correspondence sent to DCC Mills (NPCC lead) with copy of this action plan.	22/11/2024	Action Complete
28	By 22 November 2024 (56 days from publication), publish on their force website an action plan which explains what their force will do in response to each of the recommendations made to them and send the NPCC a link to where this action plan can be found. By 27 March 2025 (six months from publication) provide an update to the NPCC describing the progress they have made against their action plans.	28.1	To publish action plan on external website, to send NPCC a link for where this can be located. To further update NPCC on progress in March 2025.	Chief Constables	Action plan has been published on external website and NPCC lead provided with link. Action - Stalking Lead to ensure update to NPCC in March 2025.	27/03/2025	In Progress 50%