



VictimServices

Supporting Victims of Crime

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A Collection of Case Studies and Reflections

By **REMEDI: Restorative Services**

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Remedi

The Circle, Rockingham Lane, Sheffield, S1 4FW

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This young person was referred due to his general abusive and aggressive attitude towards others, his own SEN and him previously being a victim of hate crime

TM completed three Hate Crime awareness sessions with me over three consecutive days. His short attention span, low ability and confrontational attitude made the sessions initially very difficult.

TM was accompanied to the sessions by his mother who played an active part in facilitating the sessions and controlling his confrontational behaviour.

As we progressed and built a good rapport, she was less involved in the sessions and became more of an observer. She was delighted to see how much he had engaged with me during the process and informed me that he had retained a lot of what we had discussed, as he had been quoting aspects of the sessions to her at home.

On completion of the sessions, TMs feedback was
“It was good, nothing to worry about. A good thing to remember”

Feedback from his mother was

“That was really good, he’s taken in loads from this and has been quoting it to me at home. Are there any other sessions that Remedi do?”

Neil Humphreys

The service user was a victim of racial harassment in Wolverhampton

Communicating with his housing officer and the ASB team to re-engage them with the victim

Providing a dummy CCTV camera for a sense of security and to work as a deterrent for the offender

Weekly check-ins to provide emotional support

Re-engaging the victim with her housing officer and ASB team was a pivotal point in the case as it allowed the victim to move closer to her end goal of having the racial abuse dealt with. Once I had made the initial call, the victim and I had worked together to build her confidence to continue the communication on her own.

The mental health of the victim had improved, alongside her sense of security. Having weekly check-ins allowed the victim to release all of her emotions. The victim stated this had benefited her mental health as she was in the pattern of bottling up her emotions.

The Feedback received was “thank you so much for your support, you have been amazing”

Sabaa Fiaz

My client was referred to me in November 2021. My client was a victim of a race Hate Crime. The offender is a neighbour who would often make racist chants and name calling to ip late at night and early hours of the morning by banging on walls and windows.

Fortnightly emotional support by telephone

Monthly emotional support by telephone as feelings improved

Supported ip with building confidence ip to keep notes and report new incidents to the police

Provided ip with caseworker email address to arrange support so offender couldn't hear the calls

My client was feeling targeted and felt the threats were very much real. My client was feeling on edge and too scared to leave their property; they would only leave their home in the early morning when they knew offender would be sleeping.

Supported focused on feeling heard and supported as they felt this is something they have not had before. My client would not report incidents to the police as they felt it would make things worse. We completed a safety plan and my client felt feeling safe would be to report incidents; we worked together to build trust in logging new incidents.

Over time everything has calmed down and offender had apologised to my client however my client still feels weary and tries to avoid offender where possible. Throughout support my client has provided feedback and has said that they are happy that by speaking with me it has helped the situation be dealt with the right way otherwise they could have been hurt or in a lot of trouble. My client has also said without talking it through things could have escalated and ruined their life.

Linda Hogg

- Victim is living in a ground floor flat and has been threatened by a local beggar, that 'this life will be over'. The beggars congregate in front of victim's house on daily basis. victim is disabled and did not feel confident going out to the shop and GP.
- Victim asked whether I could help him retrieve a copy of his birth certificate, which was needed for the housing department as they wanted to moved out of the property. As victim could not access a computer, ZH supported them in accessing this information to support the house move.

As one of my first cases, this case was very friendly, the victim was talking to me openly about struggles that he faces in everyday life as a disabled person. They were very happy that he has someone to talk to and someone who listens. Victim was really frustrated with the situation and how this had left them feeling. I advised him to talk to his GP to ensure he is getting support with his mental health. Victim said himself that the situation would be only resolved if he moved. This is where I said that this is going to be our primary aim to get things moving. Victim is very happy to have someone to help him with things like, searching for information about housing, administration and other services where he can refer himself to as this was not something he could do himself but needed this to happen in order for him to feel safer and be able to move forward from the crime. Victim says, 'this is like working on the project, but I could not do this without your help'.

Zuzana Hribova

S was referred to DVS by the police following her reporting stalking by an ex-partner of her current-partner. The incidents involved messaging and turning up at her house.

Emotional support around thoughts, feelings and safety planning

Signposting to the National Stalking Helpline

Signposting to local counselling services

Liaising with the Detective for her case

Providing a personal alarm

Advising on Personal Statement

Emotional and practical support was provided over the phone for 18 months with self-care strategies being a regular part of the calls. S had thought about her safety planning should the lady turn up in her community and I suggested further ideas and sent her a personal alarm.

She contacted the National Stalking Helpline who provided her with advice on how to communicate with the police.

Due to feeling anxious I signposted her to counselling and she attended sessions which helped her cope. Along with the counselling we talked about strategies. She identified daily walks helped her feel calmer and she also started working back in the office rather than at home which improved her mental health.

Once S found out that the CPS were not taking her case we discussed moving forward and how she wanted to feel and be. She knew she could report to the police if the lady started stalking again and felt more informed about what language to use and what her rights are. She was seeing a benefit engaging with the counsellor and implementing self-care techniques. The support from DVS had helped her to feel more confident and aware of her needs.

Tanya

My client was allocated to me in September 2022 for harassment by a known Male. My client's best friend was also a victim of the same crime- this left my client feeling further impacted as this was leaving her best friend feeling isolated, scared and alone.

Weekly emotional support by telephone to support my clients needs of feeling heard and supported. My support with my client also supported her best friend indirectly. Support focused on accessing mental health services, feeling listened to and putting together safety plans to support them moving forward.

My client suffers with depression and anxiety and this crime was having an impact of this, my client was not accessing GP services as she thought they could not help. Together an appointment was made and GP support was provided.

My client and her friend spent time between each other's houses as they were too scared to be alone- they felt let down and felt the police were not doing enough to protect them. The offender was arrested and released on bail, bail conditions made my client and friend feel much safer as she knew she could contact the police if he was to breach these. We spoke about goals and my client wanted to get back to her old life where she would go on a night out. We put together a safety plan for her and this included having a personal alarm. My client and her friend have now been able to go on nights out and resume their lives. They felt safer again and felt she had moved forward- she thanked me for listening and said the support had really helped and that it was nice to be able to talk and not be judged.

Linda Hogg

When my client was a teenager, they were accused of a sexual crime. This was reported to the police and my client was found to be innocent. My client had trouble for many years due to people in the local area believing they had committed the crime.

AN provided coping mechanism for when my client was feeling low

AN provided a safe place for client to explore their feelings around what had happened to them and how it had affected them in their life

AN supported client to get access to mental health services and counselling

When I first contacted my client, they were having regular suicidal thoughts and very low moods. My client struggled with talking about the things that had happened to them and struggled with naming emotions. Through the work we did together, my client had learnt how to reflect how they were feeling, try to figure out where it was coming from and learned techniques to help self soothe and to bring them back down from a panic attack.

After building their confidence with me and the support we provide as a service, my client felt comfortable in accessing counselling support and has feels this is helping them greatly and the feelings of judgement has decreased.

My client said that they were very thankful for all the work I had done with me and feedback 'Thank you for enabling me to see change is possible'.

Alix Needham

- Anti-social behaviour. Neighbour has spent two years verbally abusing Mrs X and her family in their own home
- Perpetrator has damaged property weekly for several years
- Perpetrator continues to spread rumours regarding Mrs X family
- Negative impact on family mental and physical health

- Reduce some of the stress for the family by leasing with police and other agencies involved for updates and to discuss action that can be taken
- Signposting to mental health support agencies for the family
- Referrals completed for other family members to DVS who need support

The whole family were impacted very negatively by the ongoing incidents of anti-social behaviour from the neighbour. Although DVS was unable to provide an immediate solution for the family, we were able to relieve some of the pressure and stress by being the link between themselves, the police and other agencies to ensure regular updates were provided and all incidents were documented. DVS were able to signpost to other agencies to build a support network for them and provide details for agencies they can access 24 hours a day so they never felt alone. The family felt their voices were finally being heard and for the first time in over 2 years action was being taken to help keep them safe and prevent any further incidents occurring. The family gave feedback that DVS support helped them safer in their home, feel listened to and feel supported- this helped know that actions would be taken if incidents were to continue.

Daryl Foran

My client was referred to DVS support after they were a victim of a burglary whilst she was alone in her property.

Through telephone support. we discussed how they could start to feel safer in her own home and explored ways for her to relocate. I also signposted the client to relevant services regarding a serious historic sexual abuse offence but was receiving no support for.

Together we decided that it would be good for the client to get some cameras for them to feel safer, and I also sent her a personal alarm for when she was out of the home. I liaised with her Housing Association as her front door had been damaged following the burglary. The HA refused to fix the door and so the client decided she'd have to relocate in order to feel safer; she felt the HA was not supporting this. Initially, she wanted to stay in Derbyshire (where she had relocated after the SA), but after an in-depth discussion she concluded that she wanted to move back to her home county where her family lived. I provided emotional support throughout the housing process which and was able to find a bungalow close to her family home. I initially signposted them to SV2 but once we knew she was going to move counties I found her local SA services and provided them with their contact details and list of services. During our last call, she had told me they had moved and was settling in and had contacted her local SA service and was waiting for an initial assessment.

EW

My client was a victim of repeatedly unwanted and threatening contact from known suspect causing harassment

Provided emotional support

Referred client to CEASE for 1-2-1 mentoring support

Supported client in making reports to the police and encouraged this moving forward to support the investigation.

Encouraged client to get support from GP with her mental health

The incidents that occurred have had a big impact on my client thoughts and feelings. My client was feeling harassed by her ex-partners sister and was receiving unwanted contact and threatening messages from her. They informed me that she had been a victim of domestic abuse by her ex-partner and had received no support for this. My client had not been reporting the incidents to the police as she felt there was nothing they could do. With support, my client started reporting incidents to support the police investigation. The police acted on these reports and arrested the perpetrator which immediately made the client feel safer. Bail conditions were in place which helped support ip as the harassment stopped. For the historic DA, I explained the CEASE programme and how this helps support victims moving forward- my client felt she would benefit from this. I referred them to CEASE and they started having regular sessions from CEASE to support with her needs and support plan. With DVS and CEASE support my client had started to feel more confident and felt she was able to move forward and felt safe in doing so.

Hollie Orton

My client was allocated to me in October 2022 after they were a victim of harassment by her daughter's ex friend. My client had multiple threats made to her and her family over the phone leaving them feeling unsafe.

Weekly support by telephone, however before I called the client, I sent them a SMS informing them I was calling- this helped with feelings of anxiety. On assessment, my client felt she needed GP and counselling support and together we worked together to ensure this support was put in place.

On the initial support call, my client was feeling anxious and said she had been having 'mood swings', she said she was always feeling irritable and was 'raging at people' close to her. My client felt she needed to speak to someone about this and we spoke about the GP and how they could potentially help. With support, my client visited the GP to talk about her mental health and how this had been impacted.

My client said this crime had brought up historic traumas and was feeling triggered; they were having nightmares. We spoke about counselling to address these thoughts and feeling and they were open to that but felt overwhelmed by making a referral so we did the referral to Trent PTS whilst on the phone. To help the needs of safety, they had installed CCTV- this helped them feel in control again. After assessing the support plan, the client was happy to close the case with DVS and continue support face to face with Trent PTS. They thanked me for all the help and said talking to me had really helped her not only in the present but also facing historic traumas she had not dealt with.

Linda Hogg

Couple impacted by ASB from neighbour. The victims felt they were being intimidated the neighbour by watching them, swearing over the fence, spreading lies about them and making false allegations.

Fortnightly support calls provided to both clients as individuals to allow them to offload their feelings without adding to each other worries. I also completed multi agency work with the local SNT and the housing provider to build a support network for them. Referral completed with clients for therapy services.

Before DVS involvement, the couple felt alone with no one to support them and felt their voices were unheard. They felt there was no support around them and the neighbour was allowed to do what they were doing without any consequences. With support from DVS, Derbyshire Constabulary and the housing provider and counselling services, the couple now have a support network which they can contact at different times of day. This has helped the couple safer knowing they can report the incidents and they will be listened to and acted upon. The couple feel with the wrap around support, their voices will never go unheard. With the couple feeling supported, they have reported incidents as encouraged to do so and action has been taken and things put in place to protect this couple from any further issues with the neighbour. Since the support was put in place, the couple have had no incidents from the neighbour for 4 weeks, this has left them feeling safer in their home and which has helped them cope with the incidents they had experienced.

DF

S&C – emotional and practical support provided to 2 adults in Derbyshire referred into the service by the Victim Care Unit. Unsolicited criminal activity in their neighbours adjoining property resulted in the loss of life of one of their neighbours and life-changing injuries for the other, who is now also deceased.

- Emotional support is being provided focusing on the mental health and welfare of the individuals following a traumatic event in their lives, and the impact of this on their daily thoughts, feelings and emotions.
- Other support provided has included signposting to additional agencies and guidance around police and CPS procedures.

Intense emotional care has been provided to support the service users on their own personal journey to come to terms with the trauma of both losing a beloved friend and neighbour, and the grief and guilt which they felt around the outcome for the then surviving neighbour. The impact of the event has affected every part of their daily lives, including relationships with family and friends and has led them to question their own faith and place in the community.

The caseworker has developed a safe and compassionate relationship with the service users in order for them to be able to discuss, question, rationalise, and process their thoughts and feelings, and to allow for wider context and perspective to be considered around being able to manage emotional reactions through coping strategies, and by introducing new routines.

The empathic work which has been completed with the service users to date, has enabled them to move forward into a positive place of acceptance, and where new values and renewed commitments are being contemplated, as they continue to realign and strengthen their lives with their family, their beliefs, their jobs, and their goals for the future. Caseworker support is ongoing at this time.

Julie Gregory-Bateman

Racially or religiously aggravated intentional harassment :
Birmingham

Communicated with victim's inspector and line manager outlined the support the victims needs.

I was supporting a victim who is a custody officer. He was getting racially verbally abused by the offenders in the custody suite whilst he was on duty. This was happening on most the shifts he was on.

The victim was new at the custody suite and though he would get the same support he had received previously. The victim didn't feel supported so wanted further assistance from the service. I emailed his line managers outlining the concerns and some recommendations. The email led to improvements making made the same day as the victim was abused that day. Improved support was implemented by the victim's work right away.

The victim thanked me and said "you kick started the support that I needed, I really appreciate it".

Dilnura Aisaeva

Racial harassment and previously physically assaulted by the same offender in the shared accommodation in Birmingham. Victim was scared to leave the house and did not feel safe at home. He didn't know he was suffering from PTSD.

Needs assessment completed, with MH being the priority. Victim was informed about him having potential signs of PTSD. Victim was signposted to the GP. The victim received compensation from the offender. I worked on steps to make the victim feel safe at home and to go out.

The victim was very proactive in his own recovery, but speaking to the service really helped. He was provided with a personal alarm by the service which helped him feel safer when he went out.

The work done by us allowed a man who was feeling unsafe at home and unsafe to go out, finally feel safe again. A man who was unaware of him suffering from PTSD, was finally made aware of it by us.

The victim wanted at least some form of justice for being wronged, and so he finally received some compensation.

The victim emotionally said: "Thank you for helping me. I really appreciate your time."

Usman Qureshi

My victim was receiving multiple messages and voicemails that was causing alarm and distress from people in college. The victim was contacting 999 daily as she felt scared and threatened. Part of the support was working with the police to help the needs of safety.

Together we worked with the college to ensure the victim felt safe to enable her to complete her studies. This included me contacting the local SNT to do a talk in college around reporting to the police and when to and not to call 999.

The victim felt harassed by people in college as they were constantly ringing and texting her. When we looked at how they would like to feel, their answer was 'to feel safer'. I liaised with college and had a meeting with the victim to discuss support altogether, who can help and what this looks like.

The victim felt confused by the harassment as this had come out of the blue and wanted to understand why this was happening. We explored Restorative Justice and my client wanted to be referred for this process.

With the daily messages, the victim would contact 999 after receiving each one. They explained they did this because they felt unsafe. I spoke with the SNT in the college area to ask if they could do a talk to the students around reporting crimes, when to and not to call 999 and how they can help- this was greatly appreciated by the victim and also the college as they too felt supported by the police. The victim feels extremely supported by all the services working with her and she feels they are working well together to ensure not only she feels safe, but all the students.

PRACTIONER/S: Hollie Orton

Burglary- Nothing was stolen from the house, but they have been distressed and worried since as she lives alone on the farm. The police have been involved in securing the house. They secured the windows, the garage and installed new locks, as the victim also has mobility issues.

During the period of support, the victim and I spoke about how to keep safe, in both ways, to keep her safe from her thoughts and negative feelings, and to keep herself safe from others by locking her door. With support my client reconnected with their family for ongoing support.

On the first call my client seemed very anxious about living by herself and the crime had left her feeling unsafe- something she had never felt before. However, they said the police officers were really supportive and were going to help secure her house to support her safety needs. When I call a week later, my client seemed more confident, saying that the police officers done a really good job and that she is glad that she called them and reported the crime. My client said that she does not talk to her family that often, but would like to. We spoke about this and is there anything stopping her and she felt there was not. I suggested she could give them a call when she feels ready to (not necessarily about the crime). On my next call, they informed me that they are now speaking to their family every day, and that they are celebrating Christmas together. My client said that she was so happy with police officer Davis who helped with everything and with support from the Police and DVS she was feeling safer and reconnected with her family.

Zuzana Hribova

The victim was racially abused by his next-door neighbour. There had been an ongoing dispute between the victim and his neighbour which resulted in the verbal abuse.

We went through grounding techniques to help with anxiety. In addition, I signposted them to Trent PTS to get some more specialised and professional mental health support.

I liaised with housing to get more background on the issues so I could better advise the victim to help them move forward.

On reflection of the need's assessment, the victim was struggling with their mental health and in particular anxiety. I talked the victim through some grounding techniques, they said they found it easier to manage their anxiety especially when he was about to leave the house. He is currently seeing a professional at Trent PTS and he said it has given him lots of tools to deal with the ongoing issues. After speaking to the HA, it became clear that they were not going to evict the neighbour as the issues were not severe enough. From this, I had discussions with the victim around how to 'live with' the noise and although he still gets frustrated now and then, he said he finds it a lot easier to manage and live his life alongside. The victim feels able to move forward after they have been listened to and their needs of their mental health being supported.

EW

B was referred to DVS by the police following him being assaulted by men in balaclavas at the park he walks through to get to work.

Emotional support around thoughts and feelings

Signposting to local counselling services

Providing a personal alarm

Exploring coping strategies for feelings around anger

Liaising with the police officer for B's case

Emotional and practical support was provided following the incident. B felt anxious when out and was not sleeping although he said he had always been an anxious person. We explored whether counselling would be a good option and I gave him the website details for his local service while he thought about self-referring. In the meantime we discussed possible coping strategies he could implement to help him cope and recover from the crime.

When he found out the police were not taking his case further due to lack of evidence he felt frustrated and was concerned about his feelings of anger which started to affect other aspects of his life. As with the anxiety feelings we explored possible strategies. He enjoyed exercise and dancing especially with friends so this was a good way to increase 'feel good' chemicals and release the anger.

At the end of support he was able to walk through the park without feeling anxious and was sleeping better and the exercise was helping release frustration. He felt the support from DVS had met his needs and he wouldn't self-refer to counselling at the present time as he was able to move forward with his life again.

Tanya

Homophobic abuse to victim from students at school.

Worked with the school to ensure that a safety plan was put in place. Including passes to leave lessons earlier and for teachers to work together to support the child. Advocated for the parent as they have learning disabilities and found it hard to communicate with the school.

This piece of work should be celebrated due to the practical support demonstrated throughout the case. At the start of the case the victim felt extremely down, after working with them they have now got a healthier relationship with the school. The victim now has teachers he can go to. Another reason to celebrate this case is the victim is back at school and feels safe and happy.

“I just want to say thank you to Victoria helping us and for listening, we wouldn't have got through to the school about the bullying that was happening to my son without her. Victoria is amazing and how she dealt with it, with me having learning disabilities. I can't thank Victoria enough”.

Victoria Anderson

S self-referred to DVS after witnessing a friend being stabbed

Emotional support around thoughts and feelings

Encouraging her to continue with counselling which she had self-referred to at same time as contacting DVS

Explaining the criminal justice system process

Referring with consent to Witness Services for support in court and a pre-trial visit

S got in contact with us once she knew she was going to be a witness in court. Emotional and practical support was provided. S had also self-referred to counselling and I encouraged her to continue with that support.

The main aspect of my support was around the court process and delay frustrations due to covid and strikes. She had never had any contact with police or courts before this happened so I went through the process with her and answered any questions. As the months passed she was able to offload her frustrations about time delays to me to enable her to release emotions which were impacting her coping with the situation.

She consented to a referral to Witness Service so she could go on a pre-trial court visit to familiarise herself, ask questions and feel less anxious on the day she spent giving evidence.

At the end of support she thanked me for my continued calls over many months while there were multiple re-listings and adjournments. This consistency of support helped her to feel heard during sometimes overwhelming times. She was pleased to be able to move forward with her life again and put it all behind her.

Tanya

My client was allocated to me in October 2022 after they were punched in the head by an unknown offender who was being removed from a pub

Fortnightly emotional support by telephone

Advised to discuss the impact of the crime with his GP for ongoing mental health support

Application for CICA

Before the incident, my victim was struggling with their mental health and suffered from memory loss, after the assault they were struggling with flashbacks and would wake up sweating and dreaming about different endings of what happened. My client became unsure of what was real and what was not and decided he would not be able to attend court if needed as he felt he would be 'pulled apart'; my client felt they were not 'strong enough' to deal with this. With support, my client made a claim for CICA as he had bruises, a scar on his forehead and an indentation on his head. The victim spoke about the possibility of RJ and said, If the offender pleaded guilty, he would be willing to shake the offender's hand. The offender pleaded guilty and will be sentenced in April 2023- this meant my client did not need to attend court. My client said since offender went to court, he is sleeping better, and the flashbacks are less often. My client feels he will continue to improve over time and thanked me for the support to help him move forward.

Linda Hogg

ASB personal – emotional and practical support was provided to Mrs X who self-referred into the service after finding our details online. She is in the Dales area and the victim of harassment via bullying from known neighbourhood perpetrators, and also a young male whom she alleges to be a ‘voyeur’.

- Emotional support was provided, together with signposting for additional help and awareness of professional counselling opportunities
- Practical help involved supporting the client through discussion, to approach her need to take action in a different way, and to seek to clarify how positive and appropriate action would offer a different outcome.

The SU felt overwhelmed with thoughts that she had been branded a ‘liar and a fantasist’ by neighbours in her immediate community, and felt ‘bullied and humiliated’ by the actions of one young male and his family.

The caseworker worked with the SU to provide a listening ear around all concerns, and gave reassurance that we would work together to achieve a positive way forward. The caseworker encouraged the client to consider what outcome she would like, and introduced and discussed a range of potential options to empower her to do so. This gave the client the opportunity to reflect on the facts of the case and for further clarity around possible appropriate and proportional responses.

The SU has been resident in the community for little over a year and felt that her actions needed to be honest, fair, and without fear of repercussions or further confrontations. With the guidance of the case worker, the client concluded that her way forward was to be in the spirit of a restorative approach and to use letter writing as her resolution.

The feedback from the client on closing the case was: “All is sorted. Thank you for all your help - much appreciated.

Julie Gregory-Bateman

Thank you to all of our colleagues and service users

