



Public Accountability Meeting

STALKING

August 2022



WHY STALKING MATTERS

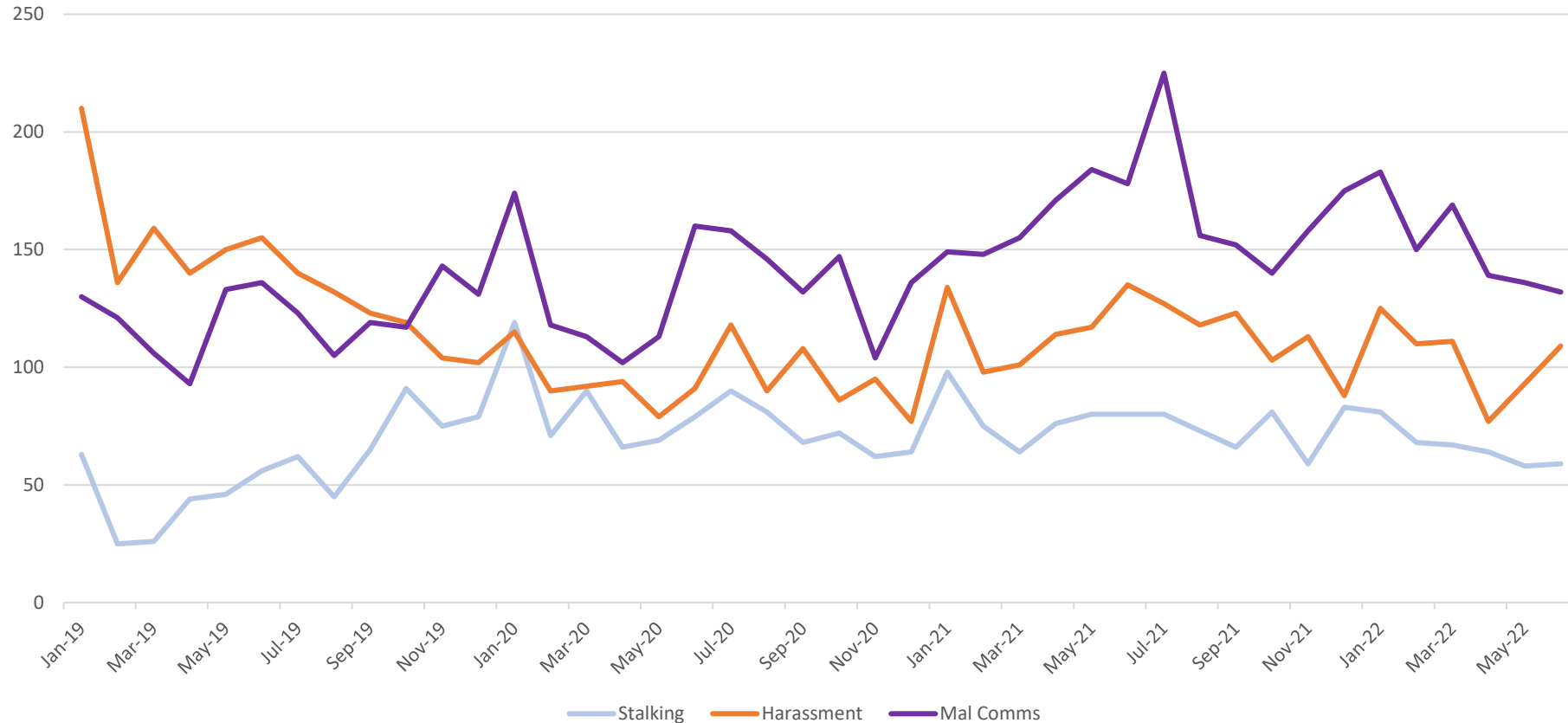
Some key statistics:

- Overall 2.3 million people experience stalking in a calendar year in the UK.
- Victims can be stalked for years with the average case lasting 15 months.
- Many victims suffer up to 100 incidents before talking to the police.
- Violence is estimated to occur in 30% of stalking cases and 5% of stalkers physically attack third parties.
- Stalking is considered a high risk factor in domestic homicides with 75% of victims having reported being stalked or harassed prior to their murder.
- 91% of persons following reports of experiencing stalking developed mental health problems.



CURRENT NORTH YORKSHIRE DEMAND

Crime Demand per Month (Jan 2019-Jun 2022)



STALKING ACTION PLAN 2022

Impact of the 2021 Audit ...

- Knowledge – understand what is working and what is not going so well.
- Challenge – how can we overcome the problems to provide a better response.
- Opportunity – what can we do to ensure stalking victims receive an excellent service from us.

A number of actions were set as a result of the Stalking Audit 2021, with the aim of:

- Increasing knowledge and awareness of legalisation and approved practice.
- Improving initial response and assessment in the Force Control Room. (FCR)
- Improving the quality of investigation, including supervision of cases.
- Ensuring victims are safeguarded and signposted to appropriate support services.



ASSESSING THE RESULTS: STRENGTHS

STALKING AUDIT 2022: a further audit has been conducted to assess the impact of the work undertaken as part of the Stalking Action Plan.

FCR:

- Positive increases seen in almost all areas.
- Abandonment rate of stalking and harassment question sets is now one of the lowest in the department.

INVESTIGATIONS:

- The use of investigative plans has improved in a high percentage of stalking cases.
- Supervisor and officers have improved in identifying stalking offences.
- Supervisor and PIP 2 reviews have increased.
- Whilst words of advice were still given on occasion, there is an overall improvement in officers identifying that this is against force policy. The Stalking Team continue to monitor this, taking the opportunity to feedback to officer/supervisors if identified
- Although there was an increase in positive action being taken, there are further opportunities to work with officers to secure evidence at the earliest opportunity.
- Dedicated office managers now ensure the most appropriate resource is allocated to investigate stalking offences.
- Stalking clinics are provided by the Stalking Team for high-risk or complex cases, or when contacted by officers for one-to-one advice.



CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED VIA 2022 AUDIT

IDENTIFIED AREAS THAT STILL REQUIRE IMPROVEMENT:

- Not all Stalking and Harassment reports are reviewed by an FCR Supervisor.
- Although improved, NICHE and PNC checks are not routinely completed within the FCR.
- Officers are not always using body worn footage to advantage when dealing with complainants of stalking and associated perpetrators.
- Evidence Based Prosecutions (EBP) are not always being considered and rationale not provided.
- Supervisor reviews are not always being documented when a crime is transferred to another force area. A supervisor's review would ensure that the OIC has gathered any early evidence for transfer and that safeguarding has been put in place.
- Some incidents are being dealt with in isolation and finalised based on the one report rather than taking into consideration the wider offending and previous reports.
- The lack of detectives is impacting investigations of stalking. Although all high risk and stranger stalking cases are reviewed by the Stalking Team, medium and low risk investigations are not routinely reviewed by the specialist team and many investigations are not sitting with a PIP2 detective.



OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE

WHAT CAN WE DO TO IMPROVE?

- An automatic tag to be created and added for any incidents opened as stalking and harassment, prompting an FCR supervisor to review the grading of an incident.
- Training to continue to be delivered to FCR staff regarding the importance of conducting PNC and NICHE checks on every occurrence opened as stalking and harassment.
- The use of BWV when attending an incident – the updated force policy making the use of BWV mandatory will increase opportunities to strengthen investigations.
- Ongoing training with officers and supervisors will ensure EBP is considered prior to the finalisation of a report. Small changes to the NICHE template will prompt them to document that they have considered EBP and outline their rationale for not proceeding.
- Ongoing supervisor and officer training/feedback from the Stalking Team to highlight this is a requirement.
- Ongoing supervisor and officer training/feedback from the Stalking Team to highlight the need to identify the wider offending.



FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

AIMS AND ANTICIPATED RESULTS:

- Area based 'stalking champions' have been identified to further improve our response to stalking and a discussion for implementation will follow – this will lead to greater awareness overall.
- Discussions are taking place with the Prosecution Team court staff to devise a procedure for direct court result updates to victims of the most high-risk stalking cases – resulting in a better service to victims.
- Links have been made between the Stalking Team and the CPS Stalking Lead for the most high-risk stalking cases – which should lead to improved investigations and more positive outcomes.
- Procedures and policies are being created for the implementation of Stalking Protection Orders (SPO's) – which will lead to efficient processes to support implementation and increase our opportunities to apply successfully for SPO's.
- Student officer, FCR and supervisor stalking and harassment training continues. There is scope to roll this out to PSCOs, front office staff and specials should resource allow. Further training will result in increased understanding, leading to improved standards and service to victims.



STALKING PROTECTION ORDERS

- Civil Order, the breach of which is a separate criminal offence punishable by up to five years' custody.
- Provide not only the potential to have restrictive prohibitions, but also positive requirements to help address potential underlying issues and prevent reoffending.
- Upon application there is an emphasis to make positive requirements, thus avoiding potential duplication with Restraining Orders, Non-Molestation Orders etc, which solely deal with restrictive prohibitions.
- Two types of SPO: Interim (Decided on the balance of probabilities, up to two years in length) and Full Orders (Decided on the criminal standard of beyond all reasonable doubt, which can be made until further Order).
- **One** full SPO successfully applied for by NYP.
- **Seven** further potential SPOs referred for formal advice to NYP Legal Services.
- Financial impact is not a barrier to application.



DEDICATED STALKING TEAM

- Small team of three – 1 x Detective and 2 x Stalking Support Officers established in January 2021, with scope for future growth.
- Training inputs delivered to a number of officers and staff, most particularly within the FCR and those in front line policing roles, leading to a significant improvement to the Force's response to Stalking as evidenced in the 2022 audit.
- Stalking clinics are being run for high risk complex crimes, which has been very well received by those who have attended.
- The dedicated PIP2 detective is able to support investigations with specialist knowledge on an ongoing basis.
- Stalking inbox created for advice/support with live investigations.
- The two Stalking Support officers provide dedicated support to stalking victims from the outset and provide regular updates throughout.
- Ongoing quality assurance including weekly reviews of NYP's response both in the FCR and local policing response.



SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS

- Referrals to IDAS if domestic related
- Referrals to Suzy Lamplugh and Paladin
- Digital safety planning
- Electronic alarms
- Fully digitalised search using Digi Dog (TSU)
- The Stalking Team also provide bespoke local support
- Stalking Pilot continues in Scarborough



SUPPORT SERVICES

- **National Stalking Helping - 0808 802 0300** advice@stalkinghelpline.org

Operated by the Suzy Lamplugh Trust. Gives practical information, support, and advice on risk, safety planning and legislation to victims of stalking, their friends, family, and professionals working with victims.

- **Paladin – 020 3866 4107** info@paladinservice.co.uk

Paladin provides support, advice and advocacy to high-risk victims of stalking. For young persons (16-25 years old), Paladin have a specialist young person's ISAC (Independent Stalking Advocate).

- **Cyber Helpline –** <https://www.thecyberhelpline.com/gethelp>

The Cyber Helpline is a free, confidential helpline for individuals who have been a victim of cybercrime.

- **IDAS – 03000 110 110** info@idas.org.uk

IDAS provide support and advice to victims of stalking where domestic abuse is or has been a feature. They also provide a Live Chat service on their website.

- **Am I Being Stalked?** <https://www.suzylamplugh.org/am-i-being-stalked-tool>

Run by the Suzy Lamplugh Trust, operates as an assessment tool for professionals and victims dealing with potential stalking. It also provides details of the law relating to stalking and harassment, details of support services, as well as safety planning and advice surrounding evidence gathering and risk reduction.



ANY QUESTIONS?

