

# Stalking in London: a deep dive

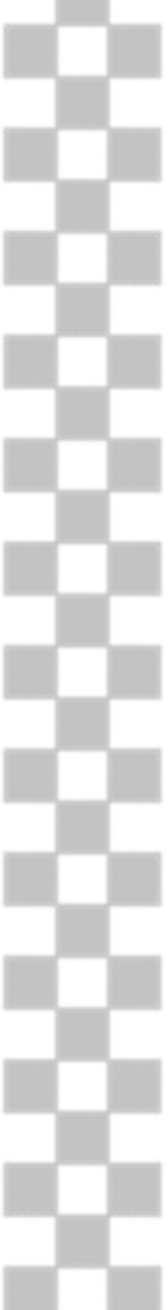
**MOPAC Evidence & Insight**

July 2024



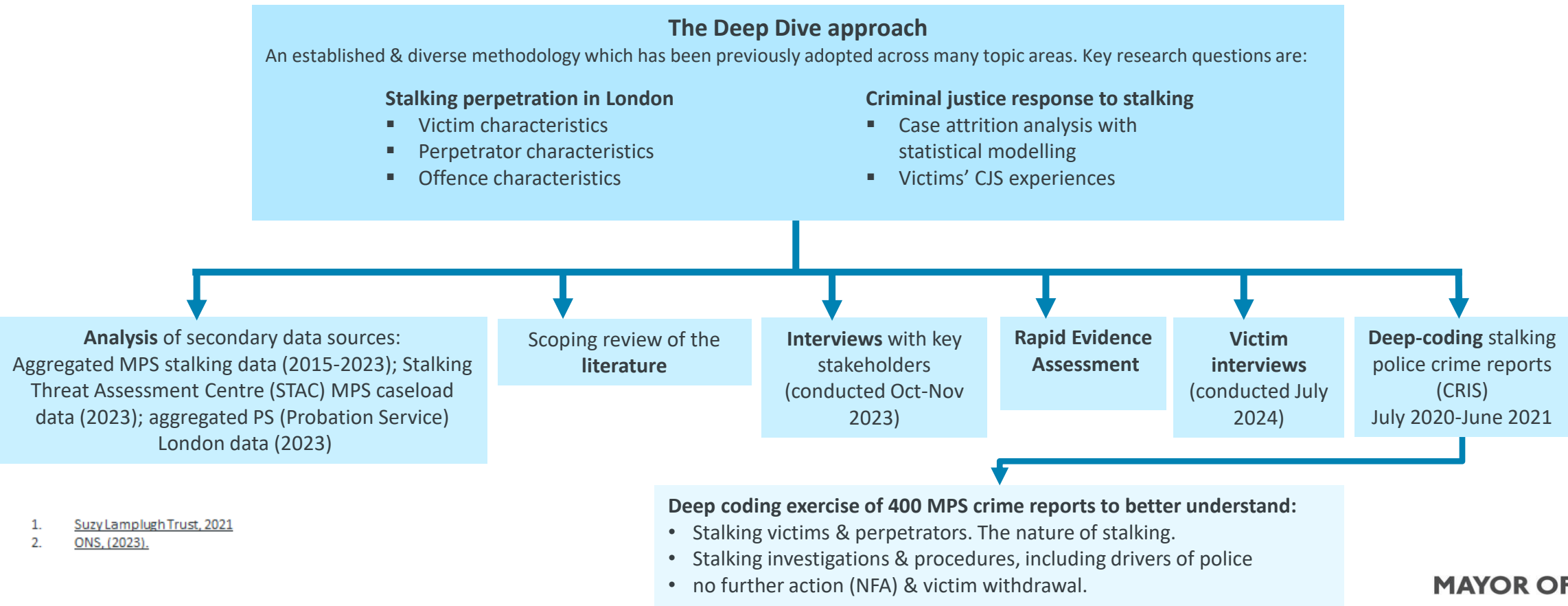
**MAYOR OF LONDON**

OFFICE FOR POLICING AND CRIME

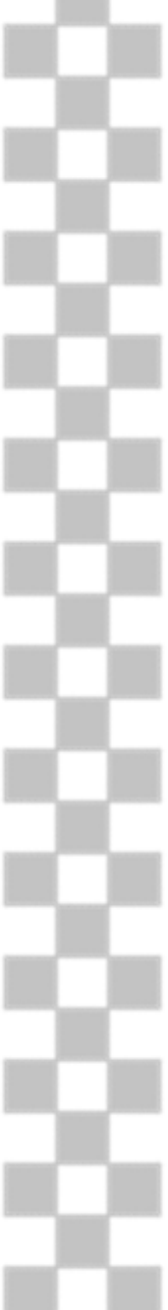


# Background and methodology to the Stalking Deep Dive

- Stalking is fixated, obsessive, unwanted & repeated behaviour, which causes fear of violence or engenders alarm & distress in the victim. A national priority.
- High prevalence in England & Wales - **1 in 5 women & 1 in 10 men** have experienced stalking in their lifetime.<sup>1,2</sup>
- Other recent research highlights a strong correlation between stalking & homicide, suggesting the need to effectively respond to allegations.
- National Stalking Consortium (including stalking experts, frontline services & victims) launched a super-complaint against police in England & Wales in 2022 highlighting systemic failings in the police response, resulting in poor victim outcomes & putting victims at risk. Super-complaint currently being investigated by HMICFRS, IOPC & College of Policing - preliminary findings expected mid/late 2024.
- In London, better supporting stalking victims is a priority in the Mayor's Police & Crime Plan 2022-25 (MOPAC, 2022a). In response, the London Victims Commissioner requested MOPAC's Evidence & Insight (E&I) to conduct 'deep dive' research into stalking.
- Data used in this report largely runs **until 2023**. Since this time there have been some changes in practice, but the main themes should be consistent.



1. [Suzy Lamplugh Trust, 2021](#)  
2. [ONS, \(2023\)](#).



# Key learning from the Deep Dive

## An increasing prevalence

- In London, an 11-fold increase in cases since 2016/17, in part due to reclassifying domestic harassment cases in 2019.
- Estimated that **1 in 5** women & **1 in 10** men have experienced stalking in their lifetime.
- Per 1000 population police recorded stalking is lower in London (6.98) than E&W (11.71) or most similar forces (17.89).
- 11,721 recorded stalking cases in London in 22/23 with considerable Borough variation.

## Victims

- Since 2016/17, around 80% of Police recorded stalking victims in London each year have been female.
- Younger people more likely to be victims of a more serious stalking offence (s4A).
- In the coded cases, half of stalking victims (n=189) have previously been a victim of any crime. With a quarter (n=100) being victim of stalking/harassment previously.
- **Only a minority** of coded victims were recorded by police to have mental health issues (10%) or be vulnerable (14%), & the proportion identified as being vulnerable has been declining in recent years. This likely indicates investigation gaps in data recording on victim vulnerabilities.

## Victim voice

- The victims we spoke to were impacted negatively by the CJS process, lacked confidence in police investigations, & experienced poor advice & communication from police & CPS. These interviews, interviews with victim advocates, & wider literature also indicated a lack of public awareness of stalking behaviour.
- No current robust capture or feedback loop of victim voice.

## Suspects

- The majority of stalking perpetrators male.
- Coded cases indicate **62%** of suspects had previous *allegations* of a crime & **16%** had been previously *convicted* of an offence.
- Just over a third of suspects (n=131) were reported to have mental health issues. **29%** of suspects were reported to have substance misuse issues. **53%** of stalkers on probation in London have psychological problems.

## The offence

- Stalking behaviour is varied. **66%** of cases involved phone calls/text; **38%** surveillance/spying. **34%** unwanted face to face contact.
- Most stalkers engaged in at least 2 different types of stalking behaviour. S4a cases included more types & more serious behaviour.
- Escalation was noted in half of cases (n=195). However, in a quarter of these the victim stated escalation whereas the police did not.
- In a quarter of coded cases, stalking behaviour continued after the initial report.
- Majority of stalking offences (82%) in London flagged as DA related.
- Victim-suspect relationship was only recorded for 9% of MPS dataset.

## The criminal justice system

Overall, the increase in stalking cases in London has not been matched by increase in charge/summons, caution or community resolution.

### Of the coded cases - *victims withdrew* in **45% (n=169)** of cases.

- 89% of these described as 'not willing to prosecute or want a CJS outcome'.
- 36% withdrew in the first week indicating a narrow window to engage.

### Police decided to close **41% (n=155)** with '*no further action*' (NFA).

- Lack of evidence cited by police in 57% coded NFA'd cases.
- 42% of those cases NFA'd were within the first 4 weeks.

### Investigation characteristics are the strongest predictors of victim withdrawal & NFA.

- Victim withdrawal **less likely**: suspect arrested/interviewed or witness present.
- Victim withdrawal **more likely** for s4a, when special schemes put on victims' address, & when victims offered/provided support.

- Cases with victim technology **less likely** to be NFA'd.
- Repeat victims of stalking were **less likely** to be NFA'd.
- Vulnerable victims and DA victims **more likely** to be NFA'd.

### Stalking not consistently identified

- **Stalking offence reclassification appears frequent** (in MPS & CPS). 8 in 10 offences not initially identified as stalking. CPS changed charge in 25/33 coded cases.

### Gaps in investigations

- S-DASH risk assessments completed in only **7%** (n=27) of coded cases.
- Victim impact in Victim Personal Statement recorded in less than 10 coded cases.
- Evidence of engagement between OICs & STAC officers in coded cases was limited.
- Potential technology evidence referenced in 40% of coded cases, suspect & victim technology retrieved in minority of cases.
- Other MOPAC research found stalking had highest proportion of cases NFA'd due to '*victim supports, evidential difficulties*' compared to other VAWG groups.

### SPO use

- MPS target of issuing SPOs in 2% of stalking cases, SPOs obtained in **1.4%** of stalking offences in London in 2022. In terms of volume, MPS issued more SPOs than other forces, and there have been recent positive efforts MPS to support officers.

# Recommendations from the Deep Dive

## Establish and monitor minimum standards for the CJS stalking response

1. **Clearly defined minimum standards for stalking investigations** - incorporate best practice & produce guidance tools: appropriate personal safety advice for victims, risk assessment for all stalking cases, monitoring SPOs, routinely collecting victim impact statements, use of evidence in stalking investigations, creating crime reports for further offending & consider that criminal justice routes should not be abandoned in favour of civil or mental health routes.
2. **Monitor delivery of minimum standards across MPS/BCUs** to assure application as intended, performance reporting and a clear feedback loop into learning; improve investigations & victim response. MPS wide SPO enforcement procedures & resource.
3. **Fold partners into application of minimum standards** - include victim communication guidance (with why investigations, legal proceedings or prosecutions are not continued). Address downgrading of stalking charges to harassment, & lack of stalking charges for breach of protective order cases.

## The need for a strategic approach to managing high-harm offenders

In 2023 MOPAC E&I explored the management of High Harm offenders in the MPS. This work identified a lack of central strategy and definitions, and consideration needed of resourcing, multi-agency response and monitoring/enforcement of orders.

The management of stalking should be viewed within this wider organisational perspective ensuring a strategic and joined up response to the management of high harm offenders.

## Increase evidence-based working, training & resourcing

1. **Provide and evaluate specialist stalking training for relevant CJS agencies** - particularly CPS & frontline police officers. Training may include definition, legislation & offence classification, the nature of stalking, stalking risk assessments & victim impact & responses. This report notes recent delivery of stalking awareness training with 782 MPS & London probation officers, and CPS lawyers, and the MPS e-learning stalking awareness package in final stages of development. Monitor and measure impact of these initiatives.
2. **Systematically capture victim voice & feedback.** There are current surveys available that could be utilised to better capture this group's victim voice. This should happen and then be used to optimise provision of support and advocacy for victims.
3. **Given the overlap between DA and stalking, there should be consideration to building in stalking components within these wider DA programmes** (i.e., Drive & probation accredited programmes) and STAC may have a role to play here.
4. **Attend and develop the evidence base in respect to Stalking.** This would include incorporating offender need into design and ensuring robust evaluation. At the intervention level, the deep dive highlights a potential gap in picking up lower risk perpetrators (i.e., those not meeting STAC NHS level) and the wider literature identified certain approaches with better results (i.e., Dialectical Behaviour Therapy). This report notes the new multiagency early stalking intervention programme (ESIP), evaluation of ESIP is opportunity to develop evidence base.
5. **Create public awareness campaigns:** raise awareness of stalking behaviour & legal sanctions, particularly ex-partner & online stalking behaviours.
6. **Make resources for victims available** to aid understanding stalking legislation, investigations, court processes & their rights.
7. Ensure front line officers receive and engage with key learning from this research.

## Support partnership working

1. **Promote cross-BCU working of stalking SPOCs** - to share & disseminate best practice & common issues from across London.
2. **OICs to collaborate more with victim advocates & STAC** - acknowledge advocates as a resource to support better investigations, facilitating communication with victims.
3. Build on existing collaboration between CPS & MPS on stalking outcomes.

## Improve data

1. **Improve MPS data recording** to better support stalking responses, especially capturing vulnerability, ethnicity & victim-suspect relationship.
2. **Improve linking data** for quicker access to background information on victims/suspects, linking previous incidents, and to support identification of stalking (as a behaviour offence). Assess extent that Connect system addresses this.



# Background & methodology

1. Stalking is a London & national priority
2. E&I approach to the Deep Dive



# Stalking is a London & national priority

- In London supporting **stalking** victims is a **key priority** in the Mayor's Police & Crime Plan (PCP) 2022-25:

*'Improving the service & support that victims receive from the MPS, support services & the CJS... Victims receiving a better criminal justice response & outcome, reducing the number of repeat victims of domestic abuse, sexual violence & **stalking**.'*

- PCP outlines: *'MOPAC will continue to work alongside the MPS, Probation, the CPS, & victims & survivor services to ensure the identification & response to stalking in London is improved & that all agencies meet the needs of Londoners resulting from increases in stalking reports to police.'*
- **Response - London Victims Commissioner commissioned MOPAC's Evidence & Insight Unit to conduct 'deep dive' research into stalking victims & perpetrators in London.**



Crossbow-armed man shot by Met police had stalking conviction | UK news | The Guardian  
*On 30<sup>th</sup> January 2024, a man was shot dead by the MPS dead in South London after forcing his way into a woman's property wearing a gas mask & carrying a crossbow, sword & knife. He had previously been convicted of stalking the woman & was subject to a restraining order which prevented him from going near her address. However, he had been given a suspended sentence due to what the court described as his 'previous good character'.*

## A lot is already known:

- High prevalence in England & Wales - **1 in 5 women & 1 in 10 men** have experienced stalking in their lifetime.<sup>2</sup>
- An estimated 2.4% of men & 4.4% of women over 16 years were victims of stalking in the UK in 2022/23.
- Research highlights importance of effectively responding to stalking. Stalking behaviour is found to have significant detrimental impacts on victims' psychological wellbeing.<sup>3</sup> Research highlights a strong correlation between some stalking behaviours & homicide.<sup>4</sup>
- National Stalking Consortium (including stalking experts, frontline services & victims) launched super-complaint against police in England & Wales in 2022: Highlighted systemic failings in police response to stalking, resulting in poor victim outcomes & putting victims at risk.<sup>5</sup>
- Super-complaint currently being investigated by HMICFRS, IOPC & College of Policing - preliminary findings expected late 2024.

1. [MOPAC, 2022a](#)
2. [Suzy Lamplugh Trust, 2021](#)
3. [Storey et al., 2023](#)
4. [Monckton-Smith et al., 2017](#)
5. [Suzy Lamplugh Trust, 2022a](#)

*'Stalking is a highly impactful crime, which leaves victims fearful of what their stalker may do next.'*  
**NPCC's Lead for Stalking & Harassment,  
Deputy Chief Constable Paul Mills**

*'Stalking is a complex form of abuse, & it can have a devastating impact on the lives of victims & their families. Sadly, it can end in the most tragic circumstances.'*  
**Minister for Victims & Safeguarding, Laura Farris**



# E&I approach to the Deep Dive







1. Defining stalking
  - Background information on stalking definitions & legislation.
2. Stalking in London
  - Describes prevalence & characteristics of stalking in London:
    - MPS, PS London, & STAC data.
    - Learning from the E&I coding exercise.
3. Criminal justice response to stalking
  - Regression analysis looking at drivers of police ‘no further action’ (NFA) & victim withdrawal within stalking.
  - Reclassification of stalking cases
  - Use of Stalking Protection Orders
  - STAC
  - Stalking victims’ experience of the CJS
4. Appendices
  1. Deep coding method
  2. Criminal justice journey
  3. University of West London (UWL) systematic literature review
  4. Perpetrator intervention programmes across London
  5. Victim support services across London
  6. STAC CJS input
  7. Definitive assessment on disproportionality not possible
  8. 2023 strategic review of MPS High Harm Offender Management
  9. References

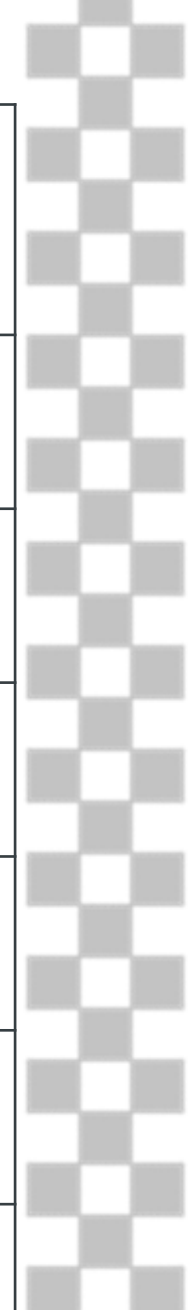
**Data used in this report is largely from 2023 & earlier. As such, there may have been some changes in practice since.**

This problem profile is linked to a wider series of analytics exploring vulnerability across London (i.e., victim withdrawal, Child Sexual Abuse, VAWG perpetrators) due for completion 2024.



E&I followed an established & mixed-method approach to the research:

|   |  |
|---|--|
|    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Aggregated MPS data</b> on all stalking offences, victims &amp; perpetrators between July 2015 &amp; March 2023.</li> <li>• <b>MPS data from Stalking Threat Assessment Centre (STAC)</b> caseload (2023).</li> <li>• <b>Aggregated PS (Probation Service) London data</b> of stalking offenders ('snapshot' of live cases extracted in November 2023).</li> </ul> |
|    | <p>Scoping <b>review of literature</b> - review of academic literature, including 20 studies &amp; 7 data sources.</p>   |
|    | <p><b>Semi-structured Interviews</b> with 17 key stakeholders (conducted Oct-Nov 2023), including: central MPS, STAC leads (MPS, NHS, PS London, &amp; Suzy Lamplugh Trust) &amp; VAWG local authority leads.</p>  |
|    | <p><b>Deep-coding</b> of a random selection of 400 stalking police crime reports (out of a total of 10,436 offences between July 2020-June 2021).</p> <p><a href="#">See methodology here.</a></p>   |
|   | <p><b>Rapid evidence assessment</b> of perpetrator interventions.</p>  |
|  | <p><b>Victim voice:</b> E&amp;I researchers observed one focus group &amp; 3 interviews with stalking victims chaired by the London Victims Commissioner (conducted July 2024).</p>  |
| <p><b>Research Limitations</b></p>  | <p>Police data (and London PS) &amp; crime reports are not research specific tools, have data error and they only document <i>reported</i> cases and we know stalking in an underreported crime. It is however an organisational record of demand and response and so remains highly valuable.</p>   |



# Defining stalking

1. The basics - what is stalking?
2. Stalking typology
3. Stalking legislation





# The basics - what is stalking?

- Echoing definitions in wider academic literature<sup>1</sup>, the Suzy Lamplugh Trust (national charity for victims of stalking) defines stalking as:

*“A pattern of fixated & obsessive behaviour which is repeated, persistent, intrusive & causes fear of violence or engenders alarm & distress in the victim”<sup>2</sup>*

- Key to this definition is ‘pattern’ or ‘repeated’: stalking is a ‘behaviour’ or ‘course of conduct’ offence – behaviour conducted over time.

## Stalking is difficult to define because:

### 1. It incorporates a wide range of behaviours. It might include:

- Following, spying, loitering

#### *Can also include:*

- Unwanted phone calls, messages, emails, gifts/flowers (love bombing)
- Verbal abuse
- Befriending victim’s friends & family
- Blackmail
- Criminal damage
- Cyberstalking: signalling a recent shift in stalking perpetration through digital technology, especially since Covid-19<sup>3</sup>.
- Identity theft & account hacking
- Physical & sexual violence

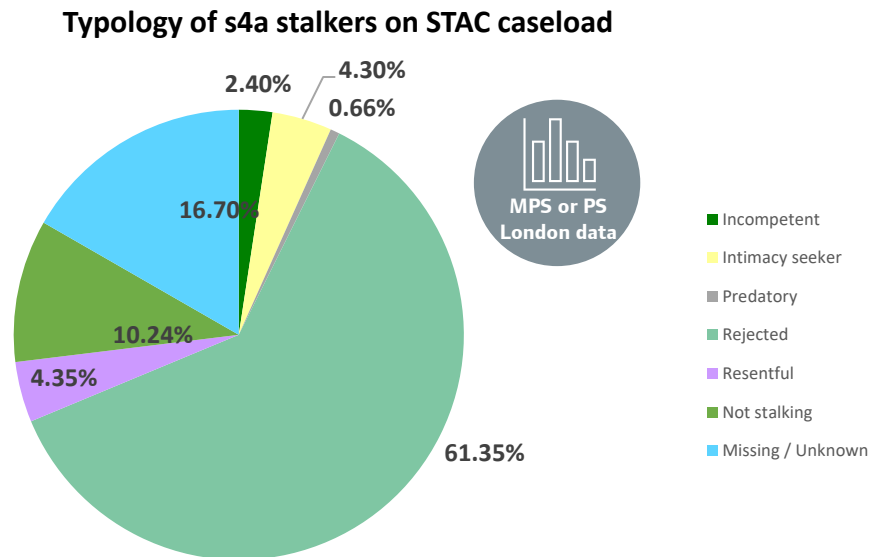
### 2. Victim’s perceptions are integral to stalking behaviour, *not just intentions & behaviour of perpetrator.*

1. [Scott, 2020](#)  
2. [Suzy Lamplugh Trust, 2022b](#)  
3. [Suzy Lamplugh Trust, 2021](#)



# The dominant typology of stalkers identifies five key types

- Stalking perpetrators are **not a homogenous group** - behaviour is often influenced by several factors, e.g., perpetrators **needs, psychological characteristics, motivations, & victim relationship**.
- Several stalker typologies/classifications are based on a combination of these factors. Mullen et al.'s<sup>1</sup> typology is the most widely cited typology & used by STAC – the Stalking Threat Assessment Centre - in London<sup>2</sup>. The typology was originally developed on a small-scale clinical sample of serious & frequent stalkers.
- Pie chart - 2023 suspect data for STAC reviewed MPS s4a stalking cases. Majority of STAC assessed **s4A stalking** perpetrators were '**Rejected**' stalkers (n=2,781, 61%).



## Mullen et al.'s (1999) stalking typology:

### Incompetent stalker

Usually lacking in social skills, often recognise their affections are not reciprocated, but still pursue victim with aim of securing a date /sexual encounter. High rates of 'intellectual disabilities'.

### Intimacy seekers

Motivated by infatuated desire for a relationship with victim, often suffering from erotomaniac delusions & mistaken belief their desire is mutual. High rates of delusional disorders.

### Predatory stalker

Driven by sexually sadistic fantasies, making meticulous plans to launch a sexual attack on their victim, who is often a stranger.

### Rejected stalker

Ex-intimate partner of victim, striving for reconciliation or revenge following relationship breakdown. High prevalence of personality disorders.

### Resentful stalker

Behaviour is driven by feelings of revenge & the wish to instil fear & distress in the victim.

1. [Mullen et al. \(1999\)](#)  
2. A multiagency service in London (MPS, PS London, NHS, Suzy Lamplugh Trust) that assesses risk/threat to identify the appropriate intervention based on the stalking behaviour.

# Stalking legislation is unclear

- There is **no UK legal definition** of stalking<sup>1</sup>. Stalking became a criminal offence in England & Wales in 2012 - following an Independent Parliamentary Inquiry into Stalking Law Reform<sup>2</sup>.
- The Protection of Freedoms Act<sup>3</sup> amended the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 to introduce two types of stalking offence (2A & 4A);
- In 2019 the Home Office changed the threshold between harassment & stalking. All domestic harassment is now classified as 2a.
- The Stalking Protection Act<sup>4</sup> introduced **Stalking Protection Orders** (SPOs) - civil order applications made by police to the magistrate's placing restrictions (e.g. no victim contact) &/or perpetrator requirements (e.g., attend a perpetrator programme) to protect victims from risk. SPOs can be requested where:
  - Threshold to charge has not yet / will not be met, to allow early police intervention, or
  - Where suspect has been charged, to complement stalking offence prosecution.

## Harassment v stalking?

- For *non*-domestic stalking, the difference between harassment & stalking can be thought of on a sliding scale<sup>5</sup>. The National Police Chief Council guidelines advise officers to consider the FOUR mnemonic:

**Fixated**  
**Obsessive**  
**Unwanted**  
**Repeated**

Stalking is fixated, obsessive, unwanted & repeated. Harassment is unwanted & repeated.

- Academic literature separates harassment from stalking as being more serious, occurs for longer & causes mental or physical harm to the victim; involves 1) multiple intrusions & 2) fear-provoking behaviours with significant long-term victim consequences<sup>6</sup>.

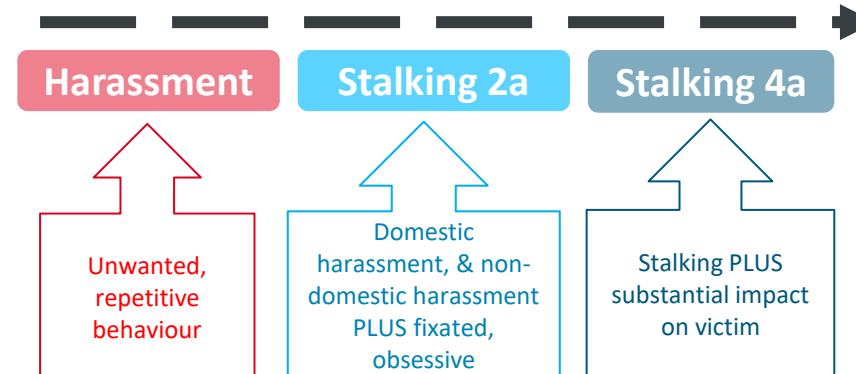
### Section 2A – behaviour that amounts to stalking

- Six months max. prison sentence.
- Non-exhaustive list of behaviours including; following, contacting, publishing victim-related material, monitoring, loitering, interfering with property & watching/spying.

### Section 4A - stalking that has additionally caused fear of violence (i) or serious alarm or distress (ii).

- Serious distress - behaviour with 'substantial adverse effect' on the victim's day to day activities.
- Ten years max. prison sentence.
- Note: key difference between 2A & 4A is *victim* impact.
- Note: experts want a single offence due to police classification difficulties.

The operational difference between harassment, 2a & 4a stalking for the Met can be considered on a sliding scale, depending on victim impact:



1. [Scott, 2020](#)

2. [Richards et al., 2012](#)

3. [The Protection of Freedoms Act \(2012\)](#)

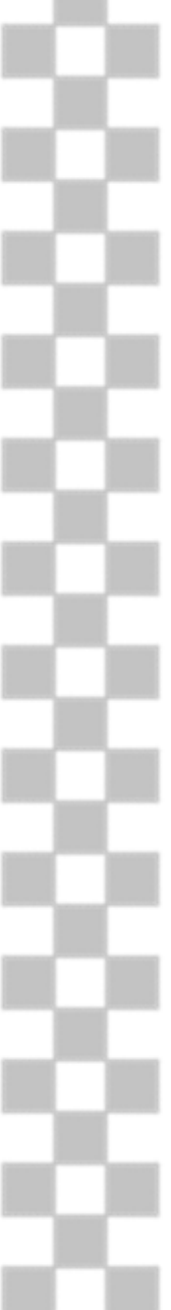
4. [The Stalking Protection Act \(2019\)](#)

5. [College of Policing, 2020](#)

6. [Mullen et al., 2001; Scott, 2020](#)

# Stalking in London

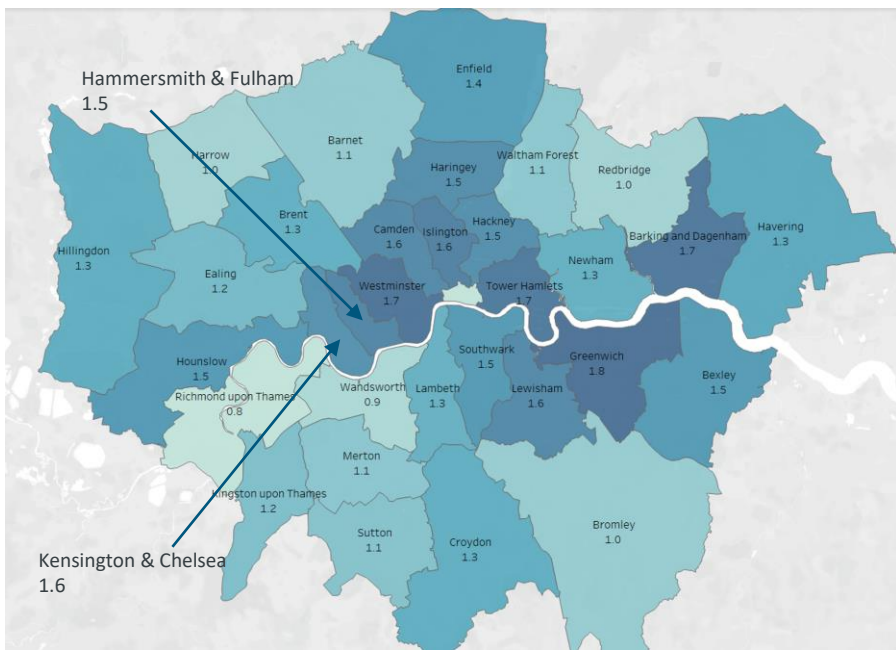
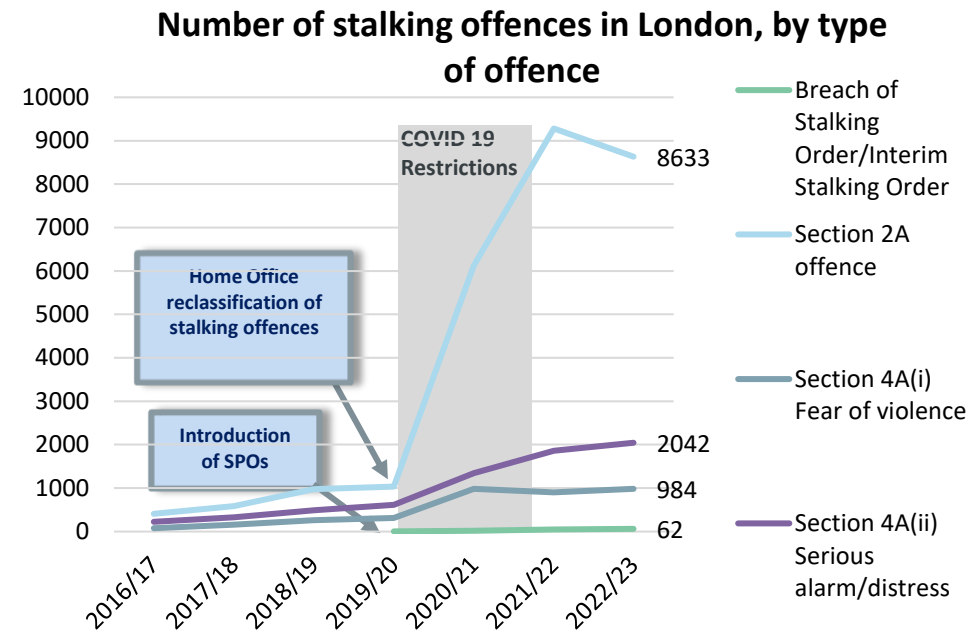
1. Overall trends
2. Victim-suspect relationship
3. Stalking victim demographics
4. Previous victimisation & victim vulnerability
5. Stalking perpetrator demographics
6. Repeat offending & offending history
7. Perpetrator vulnerability
8. Stalking behaviours
9. Duration of stalking





# Recorded stalking in London has soared in recent years, largely explained by guideline changes

- From MPS data - the number of recorded stalking offences **increased 11-fold** between 2016/17 & 2022/23.
- This can largely be explained by the change in Home Office classification of domestic harassment to s2a stalking in 2019. However, MPS recorded s4a offences also increased in this period.
- Of 11,721 MPS recorded stalking offences in 2022/23:
  - 74% section 2A stalking (n=8633)
  - 26% section 4A (i) or (ii) – stalking with fear of violence or serious alarm distress (n=3026)
  - 0.5% breaches of SPOs (n=62)
- Greenwich had the highest number** of stalking offences per 1000 population (1.8 per 1000) in 2022/23, while **Richmond upon Thames had the smallest** (0.8 per 1000).



## How does London compare to the rest of England & Wales?

- Latest data from the Office for National Statistics (data for 12 months ending December 2023) shows the MPS are ranked 35<sup>th</sup> for Stalking & harassment offences across E&W.
  - MPS: 6.98 offences per 1,000 population.
  - E&W (excluding MPS): 11.71 offences per 1,000 population.
  - Most Similar forces: 17.89 offences per 1,000 population.
- It is not clear why numbers are lower for London. It could be linked to differences in police interpretation, police recording, lower prevalence or differences in victim reporting.

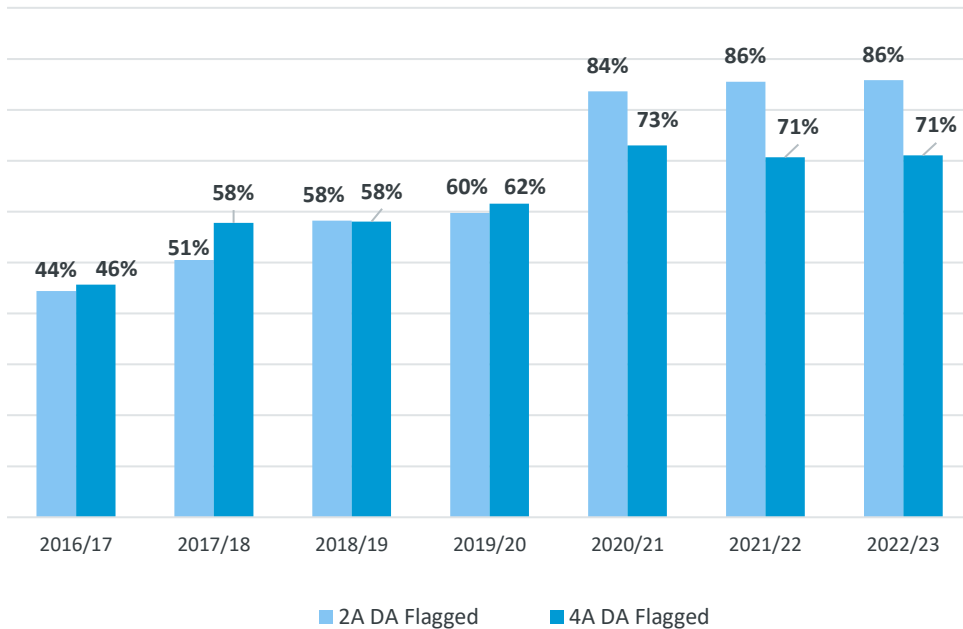
# Majority of stalking offences in London flagged as domestic abuse related by MPS. E&I deep coding finds victim & suspect were ex-partners 7 in 10 coded cases

- Majority of stalking offences (82%, n=9593) in London flagged by MPS as domestic abuse (DA) related in 2022/23:
  - 86% (n=7409) of s2A offences
  - 71% (n=2150) of s4A offences



MPS or PS  
London data

MPS recorded stalking cases flagged as domestic abuse related 2016/17 to 2022/23



Victim-suspect relationship was only recorded for 9% of MPS dataset.

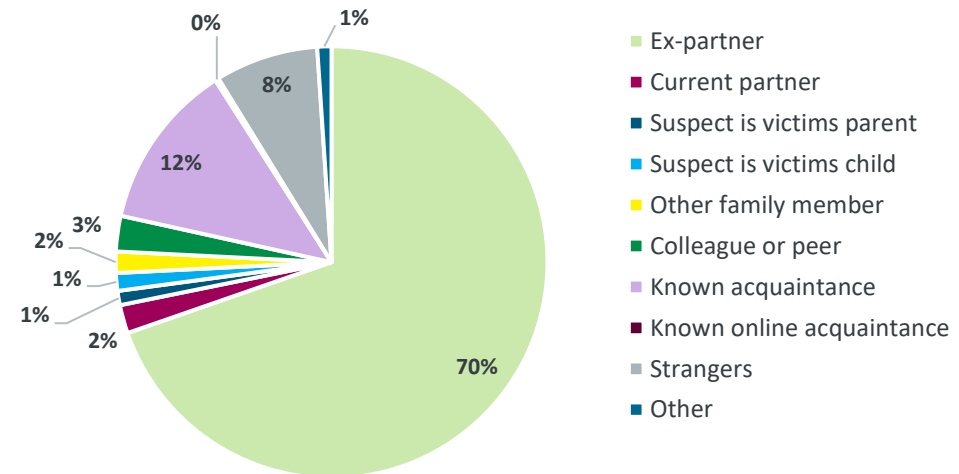
Deep coded cases provide more on victim-suspect relationship.

- In **7 in 10 coded cases - the victim & suspect were ex-partners.**
  - In 12% of cases (n=47) the victim & suspect were known acquaintances, e.g., friend.
  - In 8% of cases (n=29) the suspect was a stranger.
  - Male suspects more likely to be ex-partners than female suspects (71% to 61%).**
  - Male suspects more likely to be a stranger (9% to 3%) & less likely to be a known acquaintance/colleague (13% to 20%) than female suspects.**
  - Three quarters of cases (n=285) were coded as **DA-related**, which nearly matches MPS flagging of DA cases in the dataset.



Coded cases

Victim - suspect relationship in coded cases

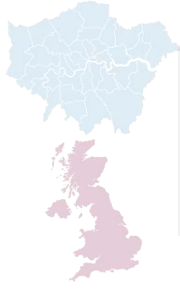




# London's victims of stalking are predominantly female. Younger people are more likely to be victims of a more serious stalking offence

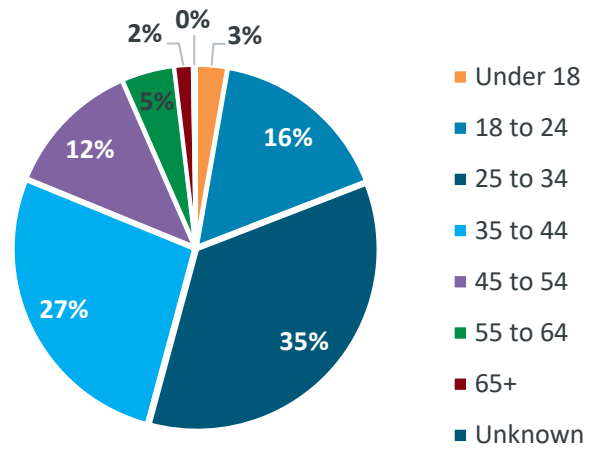


MPS recorded stalking offences data 2022/23



- Since 2016/17, around 80% of stalking victims recorded by MPS in London each year have been female. This is different to the CSEW expected levels & likely illustrates an issue with underreporting.
- London police data indicates a higher proportion of female victims compared to the rest of England & Wales - where 66% of stalking victims are estimated to be female<sup>1</sup>.

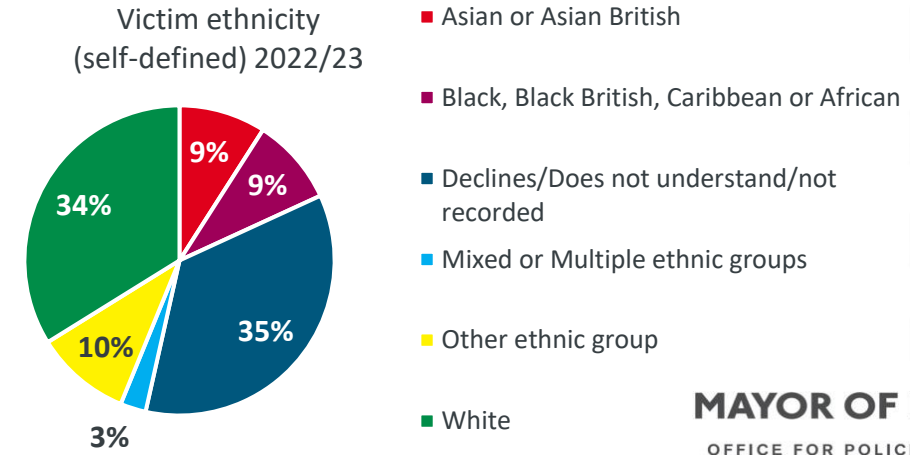
Victim age groups 2022/23



- Majority of stalking victims are aged between 25 - 44 (62%) in 2022/23. A third are aged 25 to 34 years old (35%, n=2,885). Age breakdown has remained consistent over time.
- Younger people more likely to be victims of a more serious stalking offence (s4A) than older age groups.
  - In 2022/23, the victim age group with the largest proportion of S4A offences was under 18 (39% n=88), followed by 18–24-year-olds (34% n=451).
- In England & Wales, the highest estimated victimisation rates were for those aged 16-19 years at 9.7%, followed by 20-24 years at 8%<sup>1</sup>.
- The CSEW finds that nationally 14% of stalking victims were stalked by a partner or ex-partner, 8% by a family member, 20% domestic stalking, 44% cyberstalking<sup>1</sup>.

- Self-defined ethnicity in MPS data was **not recorded for 35% (n=2908) of victims** due to victim declining, not understanding, or no ethnicity recorded.
- A third of stalking victims self-defined as **white** (34%, n=2782).
- **Highest** estimated victimisation rates in England & Wales were amongst those of **mixed** ethnicity, at **12.1%**, followed by those who were **white** at **3.4%**<sup>1</sup>.
- Victim ethnicity is not that different to the population of London, however any findings on ethnicity are skewed by the high proportion of missing ethnicities.

Victim ethnicity (self-defined) 2022/23



1. ONS, 2023



# Coded cases highlight victims' previous victimisation & apparent gaps in recording vulnerability

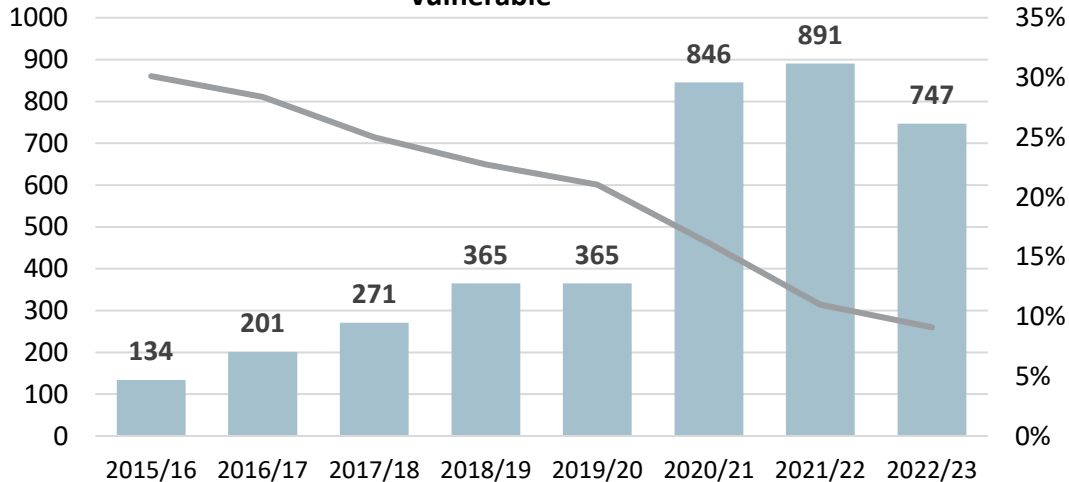


Coded cases

- **Half of victims** (n=189) within the coding exercise have previously been a **victim of any crime**.
- This is higher than overall repeat victim proportion in MPS data, which was 37% (n=3,074) in 2022/23.
- **A quarter** (26%, n=100) have **previously been a victim of stalking or harassment-offences**. Of these, nearly all (n=92) have been victims of stalking/harassment from same suspect.
- 32% of victims have previously been a victim of domestic abuse.
- In 29% of coded cases (n=109), the victim & suspect have children together.
- 2 in 10 victims (n=86) have previously had allegations against them for any crime.
  - 5% have previous convictions (n=19).
  - 4% (n=15) have previously stalked or harassed the suspect, for instance the suspect has a SPO, RO or NMO against victim.

- **Just 10% of victims (n=38) were reported by police to have mental health issues – this is markedly lower than the 41% in the 2019 Rape Review research, & similar to the 12% in the DA Deep Dive research in 2022.**
  - 2019 survey of 96 stalking victims - 24% reported having mental health problems prior to being stalked, & 91% reported suffering mental health issues *after* being stalked.
  - In 8 cases - the victims' severe mental health was considered to undermine allegations of the case.
- **E&I coded cases - only 14% of victims (n=54) recorded by the police as vulnerable. Considered underreported as victim emotional distress or fear was recorded in 54% of cases, & previous victimisation in 50% of cases.** Deep coded cases also found 19 victims were reported to have mental health issues but not recorded as vulnerable by the police, 8 with physical health issues (including disability), & 8 known to police for safeguarding reasons but not recorded as vulnerable.
- Overall, this likely illustrates the difficulty & inconsistency in the police capturing this sensitive information & is consistent with the declining trend in MPS recording victim vulnerability.

MPS data: number & % of stalking victims recorded as 'vulnerable'



MPS data shows downward trend in recording of stalking victims as vulnerable



MPS or PS London data

- % of victims recorded vulnerable
- Number of victims

1. Taylor-Dunn et al., 2018

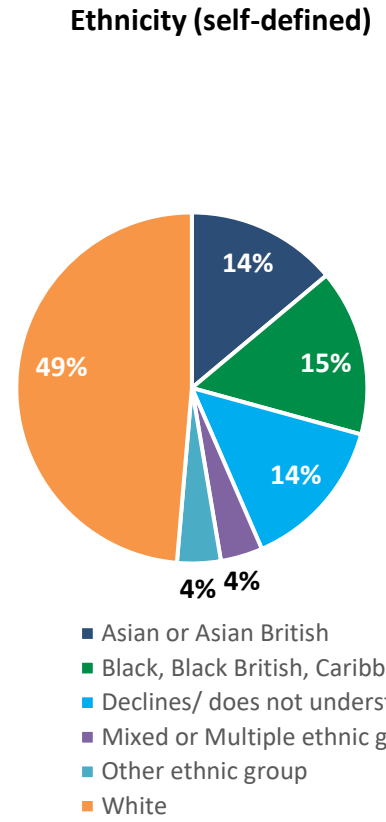
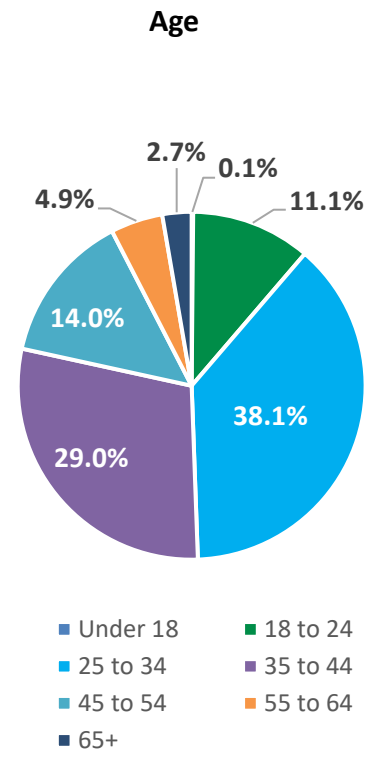
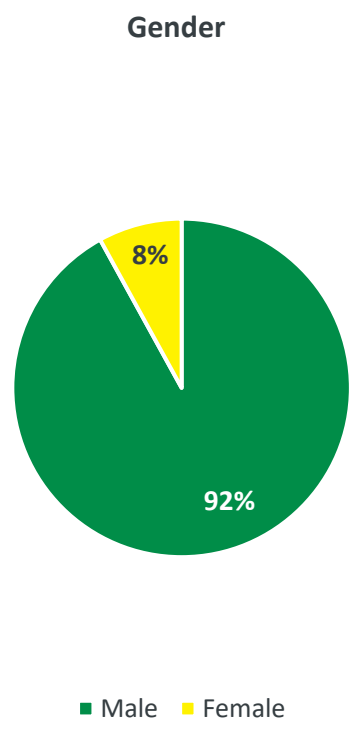


# In London, 9 in 10 charged or cautioned stalking perpetrators are male, two thirds are 25-44 & half are white

MPS stalking offences data 2022/23:

- In London - **9 in 10 stalking perpetrators charged/cautioned are male.** This has remained consistent over time & consistent literature which finds stalking perpetrators are predominantly male<sup>1 2 3 4</sup>.
- Half of those proceeded against were **white** (49%, n=339). This has remained consistent since 2016/17.
- Ethnicity is not recorded for 14% (n=99) - recording of self-defined ethnicity recording has slightly improved over time. Data there is suggests suspects are broadly proportionate of London.
- Just over half (54%,n=381) were charged/cautioned for s2a stalking. The other 46% were charged with s4a stalking.
- Perpetrators are most likely to be **aged 25-44** (65%, n=1,818) - with 38% aged 25 to 34 years old. These patterns have remained the same since 2016/17 & are similar to victim profiles.

Demographics of people proceeded against by MPS for stalking offences in 2022/23



The E&I deep coded dataset includes *all* suspects of stalking – not just those that are proceeded against.

- Of these, nearly a quarter (n=90) of suspects are female. This suggests that male perpetrators are more likely to be proceeded against.
- Suspect* ethnicity is under-reported: Ethnicity not recorded for 43% of suspects in coded dataset.

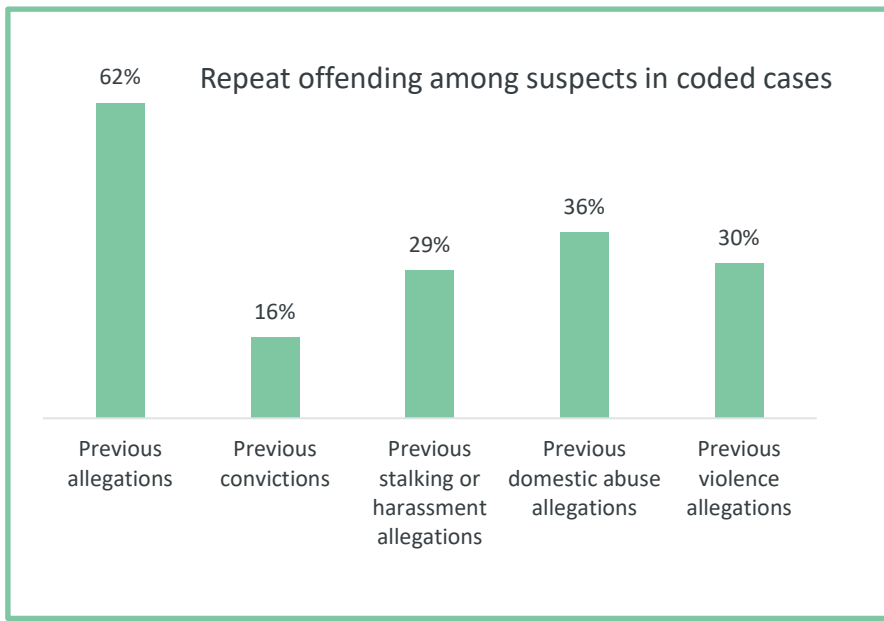


- [Meloy, et al., 2000](#)
- [Mullen et al., 1999](#)
- [Purcell et al., 2001](#)
- [Sheridan et al., 2001](#)

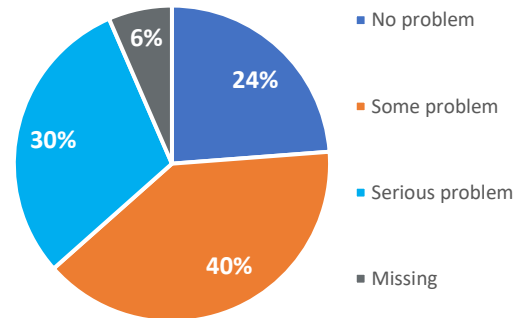
# The suspects are generally known to the police through previous allegations or convictions

## Deep coded cases show repeat offending among stalking suspects:

- 62% have previous **allegations of another crime** (n=234)
- 16% (n=60) have been **previously convicted of another crime**
- Prevalence of **previous DA & violence (including sexual violence) allegations was substantial** (36% & 30% of suspects respectively).
- **3 in 10 suspects (29% n=110) had previous stalking or harassment-related allegations** (including malicious communications). Of these:
  - 81% (n=89) had previous **same victim** stalking or harassment allegations.
  - 19% (n=21) had previous stalking or harassment allegations from a **different victim**.
- **28% of deep coded cases had a suspect with a PNC ID. 104 suspects in the deep coded dataset had a PNC ID – analysis of these suspects' criminal histories (charges) show:**
  - Average of 9 previous charges in their background (range from 1 - 61).
  - Average of 1.6 charges for a stalking or harassment related offence, ranging from 0 to 28 charges. 61% had at least one charge for a stalking or harassment-related offence & 33% had at least previous 2 charges, & 7% had 5 or more charges for stalking or harassment.



## History of aggressive/controlling behaviour – PS London data (n=353)



## PS London data shows DA offences prevalent among stalking perpetrators on probation:

- Nearly two thirds (61%, n=217) were recorded as perpetrators of DA.
- Similarly, 7 out of 10 stalking perpetrators on probation (n=246) had some recorded problem or a serious problem with aggressive & controlling behaviour.
- 3 out of 10 had a serious problem (n=106).



# Stalking perpetrators present considerable vulnerability

- In the deep coding - **just over a third of suspects (n=131) were reported to have mental health issues.** 29% of suspects were reported to have **substance misuse issues.** This likely underreports the issue given police recording. In 8 cases, suspect was sectioned/being treated at a mental health hospital on case closure.

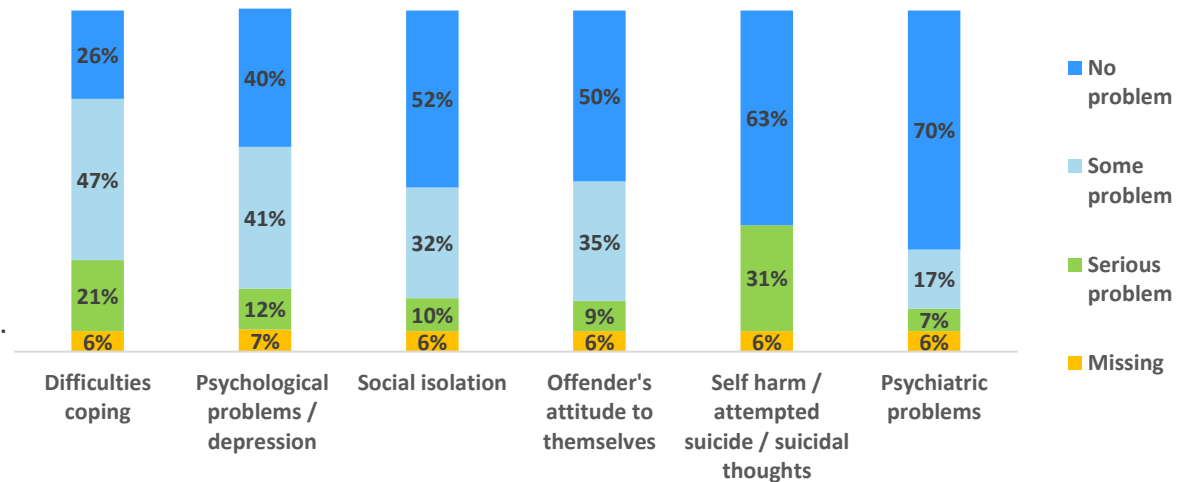
## PS London data reveals more detail as to suspect needs.

Note: PS London data refers to 353 active PS London cases in November 2023. This data therefore refers only to convicted stalking perpetrators.

### Stalking perpetrators on probation display a **wide range of vulnerability:**

- 28%** of stalking perpetrators on probation (n=100) were on **medication for mental health problems.**
- 16%** (n=56) have received, are currently receiving, or will **receive psychiatric treatment.**
- Over two thirds (68%, n=239) had either some problem, or a serious problem, relating to difficulties coping.
- 53% had some or a serious psychological problem or depression.** Nearly one third (31%, n=109) had a serious problem relating to having either self-harmed, attempted suicide, or had suicidal thoughts.
- Three quarters (78%, n=277) had an identified need around relationships.

### PS London identified mental health needs of stalking perpetrators



### **Risk of serious harm (RoSH) for offenders on probation**

#### **3 in 10 stalkers on probation have a high or very high risk of serious harm:**

- Majority of stalking offenders (70%, n=246) on probation classified as at 'medium' risk of serious harm (calculated using the Risk of Serious Harm Assessment (RoSH)).
- Majority of stalking offenders were assessed as being at 'low' risk of re-offending generally (71%, n=251) (according to the [OGRS](#)) & committing non-sexual violence offences specifically, (64%, n=225) two years post-probation (according to the [OVP](#)).



Coded cases

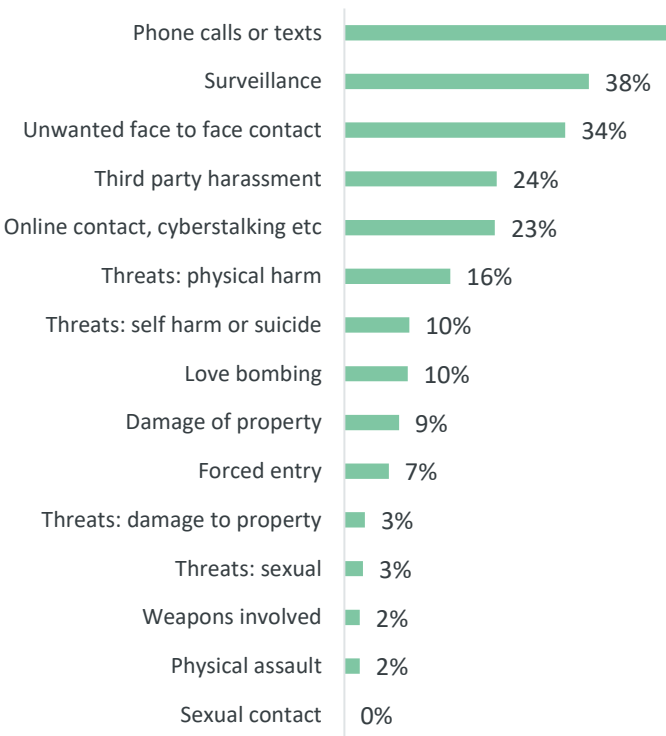


MPS or PS London data



# Deep coding shows that behaviours included within stalking vary & depend on relationships

## Types of stalking behaviour in coded cases

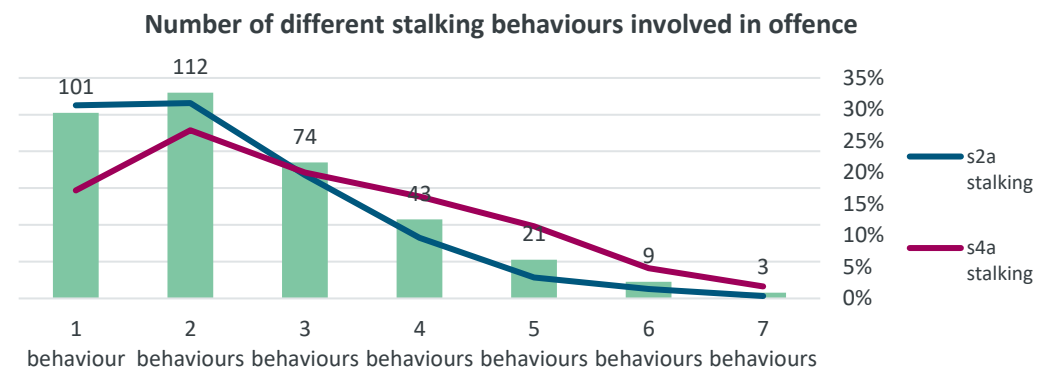


**Coded cases involved a range of stalking behaviour types:**

- 66% of cases (n=249) involved phone calls or text.
- 38% (n=143) surveillance, spying, following or loitering, & 34% (n=129) unwanted face to face contact.
- **Online contact observed less than expected – one quarter of cases (n=88).** [CSEW](#) statistics suggest nearly half of stalking victims (44%) have experienced cyberstalking.<sup>1</sup>
- **S4a cases were more likely to include third party harassment, surveillance, unwanted face to face contact & any threats.**

## Number of stalking behaviour types:

- Most cases (70%, n=262) involved at least two stalking behaviour types.
- Average of 2.4 stalking behaviour types per case, ranging from 0 to 7 behaviours.
- **S4a stalking cases included significantly more types of stalking behaviour on average: 2.9 types compared to 2.2 types for s2a cases.**
- Suspects with previous allegations engaged in significantly more stalking behaviours on average (2.5 to 2.2 types).



## Physical locations involved in offence:

- Just under a third (n=114) of coded cases involved **no physical location – involving only phone calls, texts or online contact.**
- Nearly half of cases (n=182) included offending at victim's home, 12% at victims' school or workplace, & 21% in other public locations, e.g. street, public transport.

## Breaking down types of behaviour by victim-suspect relationship:

- **Current or ex-partners** were most likely to perpetrate **third party harassment** (27%, n=74) or **threaten self-harm** (13%, n=35) than family members, other acquaintances or strangers.
- There was no statistically significant difference between the number of stalking behaviour types for DA & non-DA related cases.
- This contrasts slightly to previous research that found ex-intimate stalkers presented *more* types of behaviours, & with more severity than acquaintance or stranger stalkers.<sup>3</sup>
- **Strangers** most likely to do **surveillance** (67%, n=20) & **love-bombing** (23%, n=7).

1. [ONS, 2023](#)  
 2. [Stevens et al., 2021](#)  
 3. [White et al., 2020](#)



Coded cases

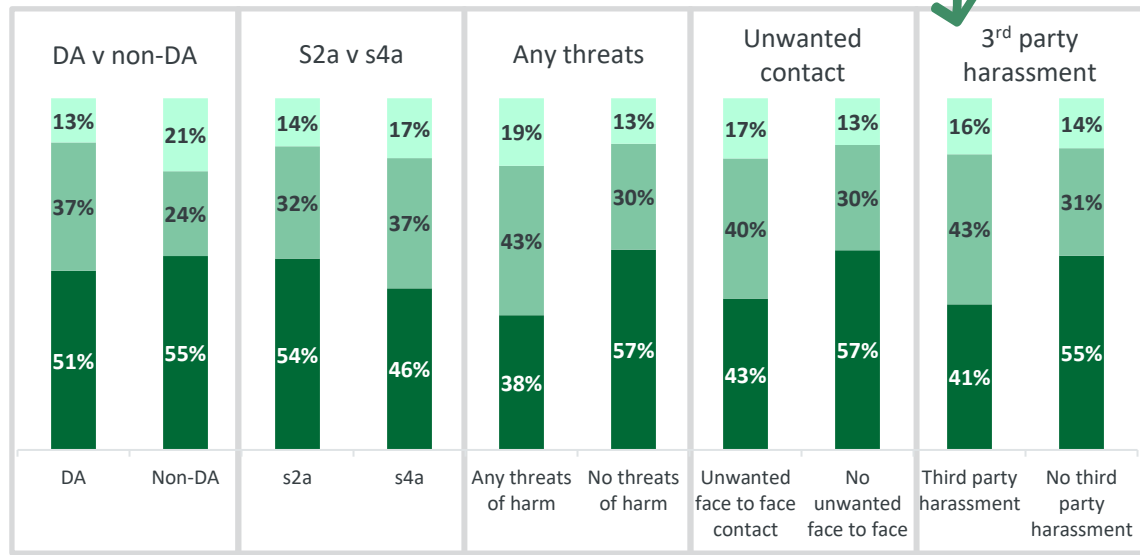
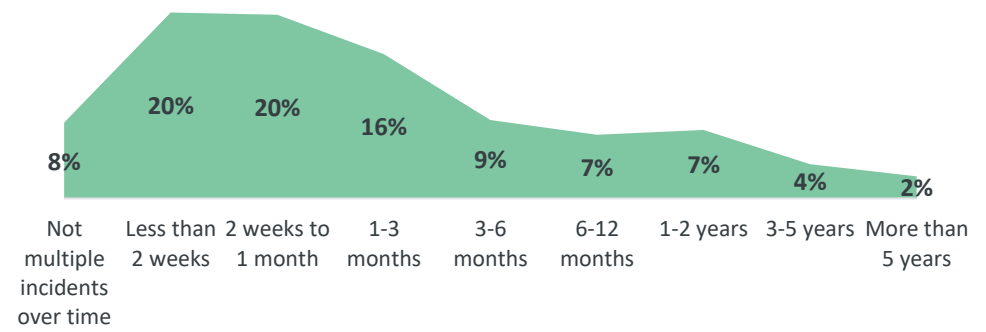


# Duration of stalking from time of report varies - longer duration linked to certain behaviours

**Deep coded cases provide insight into length of time stalking behaviours occur:**

- In two thirds of cases reported stalking **occurred for 3 or less months** (n=241).
- Stalking behaviour occurred for **more than a year in 14% of cases** (n=51).
- S4a cases were more likely to involve longer term offending.
- As were cases in which any threats were made, unwanted face to face contact, & third-party harassment:

Length of time stalking behaviour occurred



## Length of time stalking behaviour occurred, by types of stalking & behaviour

- Long: more than a year
- Medium: 1 month to a year
- Short: less than a month

## Reported escalation of behaviour:

- Escalation of behaviour – either severity or frequency – was reported in half of cases (n=195).** This includes cases in which the victim states that behaviour has escalated and/or the officer reports behaviour has escalated in the report details.
- In a quarter of these (n=53), the victim stated escalation, whereas the police did not report any escalation.
- Previous research suggests stalking behaviour occurring over shorter periods of time with quick escalation is an indicator of higher levels of violence<sup>1</sup>.

## Continuation of stalking behaviour:

- In a quarter of cases (n=93) stalking behaviour was reported as **ongoing**, with further offending reported during the investigation after initial reporting.
- Over a third (n=141) were linked to other CRIS reports.**

1. James & Farnham, 2003

# Criminal justice response to stalking

1. Reclassification of cases
2. Top level view of police recorded case outcomes
3. Case attrition detail
4. Drivers of withdrawal
5. Drivers of police NFA
6. Stalking Protection Orders
7. Role of Stalking Threat Assessment Centre (STAC)
8. Stalking victims' experience of the CJS

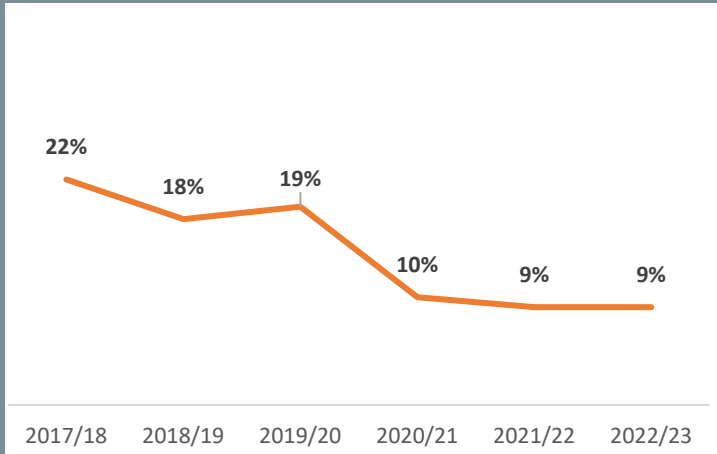






# The number of stalking offences in London with a charge /summons, caution or community resolution has decreased over time, & there is high victim withdrawal & police NFA in investigations

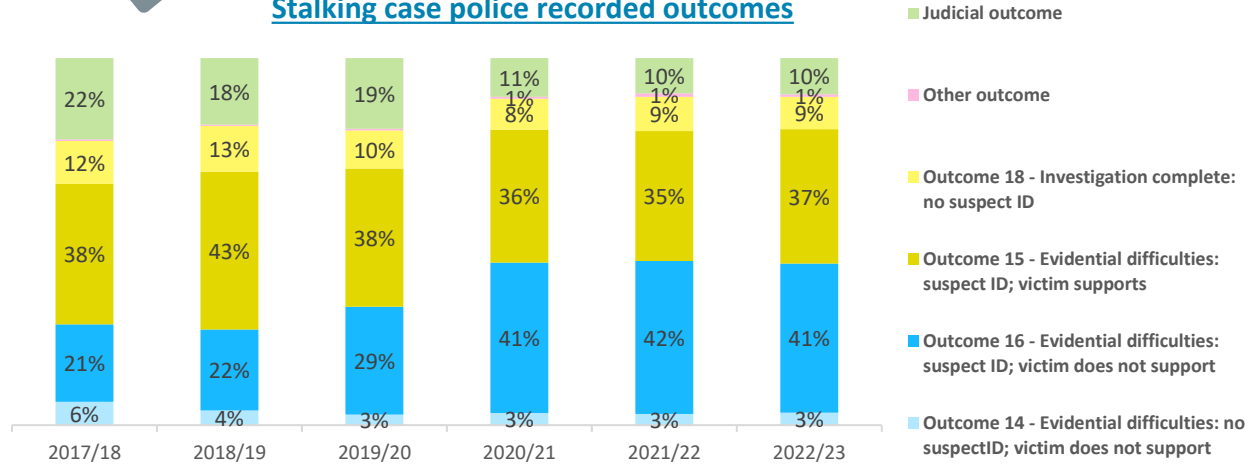
- Proportion of reported stalking offences in London resulting in a charge /summons, caution or community resolution **has decreased**.



- MPS data from 2022/23 - only **9% of stalking cases resulted in a charge /summons, caution or community resolution**.
- In England & Wales - **rate of stalking cases resulting in a charge /summons, caution or community resolution is lower than London**.
- According to Home Office data - in England & Wales 6.6% of stalking reported to police 2021/22 resulted in a CPS charge<sup>1</sup>.
- A smaller proportion results in conviction - 1.4% in England & Wales 2021/22 resulted in a conviction<sup>1</sup>.

- In 2022/23 – most stalking cases were either NFA'd by police (47%), or NFA'd after victim withdrawal (44%).
- Majority of cases are NFA'd due to evidential difficulties.
- Consistent with England & Wales<sup>1</sup>.
- Proportion of **stalking cases NFA'd due to victim not supporting further action increased** between 2019/20 & 2020/21 & has remained consistent in last three years.

**Stalking case police recorded outcomes**



The E&I Victim Withdrawal research compared outcomes across crime types using a bespoke data set from police recorded data (April 2021 – March 2022 reporting outcomes varied by offence type).

In that research, the stalking offence type had the highest proportion of cases NFA'd by police during the investigation due to **'victim supports, evidential difficulties'** - 35% of cases - compared to other VAWG offences.

1. [Home Office, 2023a](#)

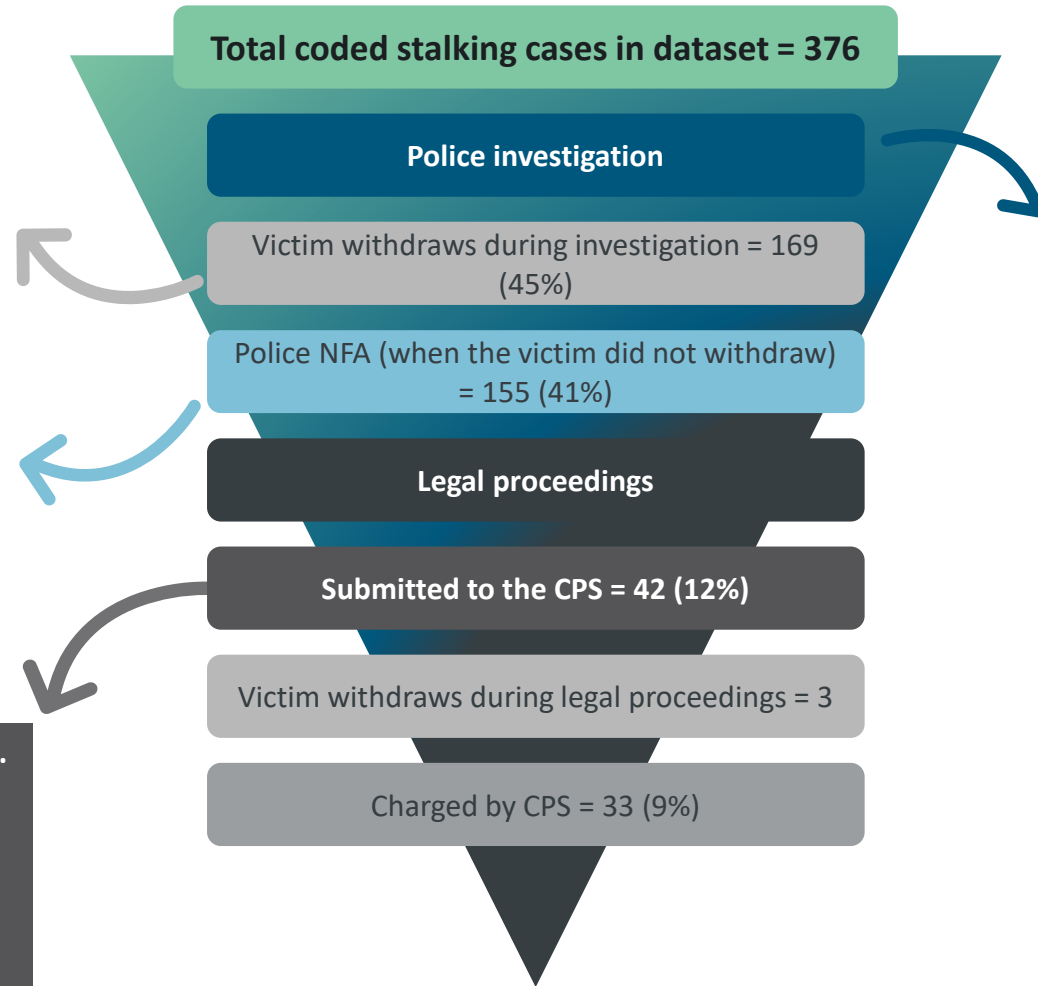


# The deep coding allows us to explore case attrition in more detail

- **Victims withdrew** during police investigation in **45% of cases**. A further **10%** of victims did not explicitly withdraw but stopped cooperating with/responding to police during investigation.
- Only 8% (n=15) of coded cases which had victim withdrawal statements taken.

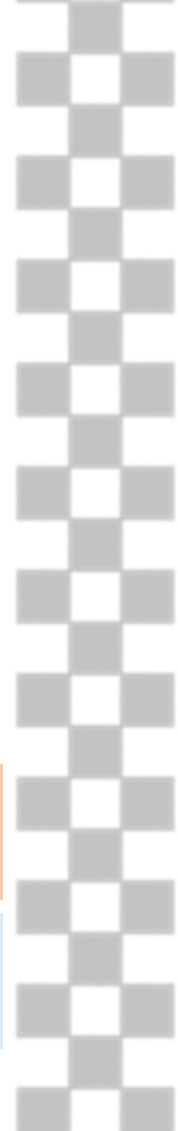
- Police decided to close **41% (n=155)** of investigations with **'no further action' (NFA)**. Of these - the suspect was not identified in 19% (n=29) of cases.

- Just **12%** of cases were **submitted to the CPS**.
- Only **10** CPS charges were for stalking – 4 s2a & 6 s4a, despite police classification being stalking for all 33 cases.
- Approximately **half** of CPS charges were for harassment (17/33).
- Suspect sectioned or placed in a hospital for mental health reasons in 8 coded cases without charge or caution.



- Suspect arrested or interviewed in 28% (n=106): arrested in 26% (n=98) & interviewed in 26% (n=97) of cases.
- Potential technology evidence was referenced in 40% of cases, but:
  - **Suspect technology seized in 13%** of cases (n=50)
  - **Victim technology provided in 17% of cases (n=62)**
- Of the suspects arrested/interviewed half were bailed (52%, n=55).
- S-DASH risk assessments completed in only **7% (n=27)** of coded cases, against best practice.
- Recording of victim impact in the Victim Personal Statement was referred to in **less than 10 cases**.
- 38% (n=141) of coded cases linked to other reports.
- Of the 97 interviewed:
  - 25% (n=24) gave no comment.
  - 74% (n=72) denied or minimised offence.
  - 26% (n=25) made counter allegations.

[See Appendix for more detail](#)



# Predictors of victim withdrawal

Statistical modelling allows the Deep dive to explore what the significant predictors are of victim withdrawal...

Overall aspects of the investigation were the strongest predictors of withdrawal.

- S4a cases were **more likely** to withdraw (2x more likely).
- When the suspect was arrested/interviewed – victim **less likely** to withdraw (8x).
- Cases with witnesses were **less likely** to withdraw (7x less likely).
- Where police report victim was frightened - lower likelihood (5x **less likely**).
- Police special schemes (x3 time **more likely**) & police offer any other victim support (x2 times **more likely**) to withdraw.

- Older victims (**35-44 or 45-54**) were **less likely** to withdraw (5x & 6x less likely)
- Repeat victims of stalking (&/or harassment) were **5x less likely** to withdraw.
- Victims with previous allegations were **less likely** to withdraw.

- Victim withdrawal **less likely** (9x less) when suspect was a stranger.
- Withdrawal **less likely** when the offence only included one incident (x8 times).

- VW 6x **less likely** where suspects aged **35-44** (compared to aged 25-34).
- VW 5x **less likely** when suspects have **previous convictions** - potentially linked to suspects risk level.

| Block   | Explanatory variable  | Influence on likelihood for victim to withdraw from case during investigation (odds ratios, holding all other model variables constant) |
|---|---|---|
| Victim characteristics  | Victim is aged 35-44 compared to 25-34                              | 5 times less likely   |
|   | Victim is aged 45-54 compared to 25-34                              | 6 times less likely   |
|   | Victim is a previous victim of stalking                             | 5 times less likely   |
|   | Victim has previous allegations                                     | 7 times less likely   |
| <i>Model fit for block specific model</i>                         |   | 0.1001068   |
| <i>Other, non-significant variables included in overall model</i> |   | Victim sex, victim ethnicity, victim reported to have mental health issues  |
| Suspect characteristics   | Suspect is aged 35 to 44 compared to 25-34                          | 6 times less likely   |
|   | Suspect has previous convictions                                    | 6 times less likely   |
| <i>Model fit for block specific model</i>                         |   | 0.1102639   |
| <i>Other, non-significant variables included in overall model</i> |   | Suspect sex, suspect has mental health issues, suspect was previously a victim  |
| Offence characteristics   | Offence included only one incident                                  | 8 times less likely   |
|   | Victim & suspect are strangers (compared to current or ex partners) | 9 times less likely   |
| <i>Model fit for block specific model</i>                         |   | 0.0667473   |
| <i>Other, non-significant variables included in overall model</i> |   | Offence involved a physical location, offence involved threats of harm, offence involved third party harassment                         |
| Investigation characteristics                                     | Case classified as s4a  | 2 times more likely   |
|   | Suspect was arrested or interviewed                                 | 8 times less likely   |
|   | Case had witnesses  | 7 times less likely   |
|   | Police report victim feared for safety or was frightened            | 5 times less likely   |
|   | Police placed special schemes on victim's address                   | 3 times more likely   |
|   | Police offer or provide any victim support to victim                | 2 times more likely   |
| <i>Model fit for block specific model</i>                         |   | 0.304959  |
| <i>Other, non-significant variables included in overall model</i> |   | Police make reference to potential technology evidence, suspect was identified, SASH completed, case had linked CRIS reports            |
| <b>Overall model fit</b>  | <b>0.4147998 (n=334)</b>  |   |

# Other captured details allows the deep dive to go further - not wanting a CJS outcome or unwilling to prosecute a common reason for victim withdrawal

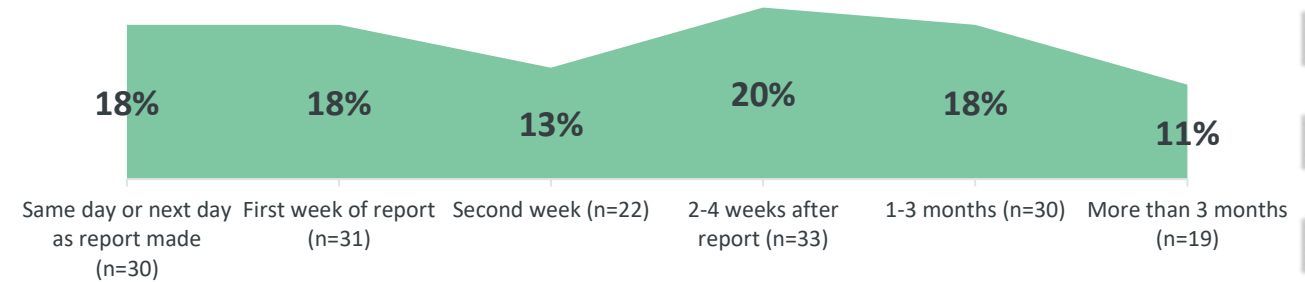


Victim withdraws during investigation = 169 (45%)

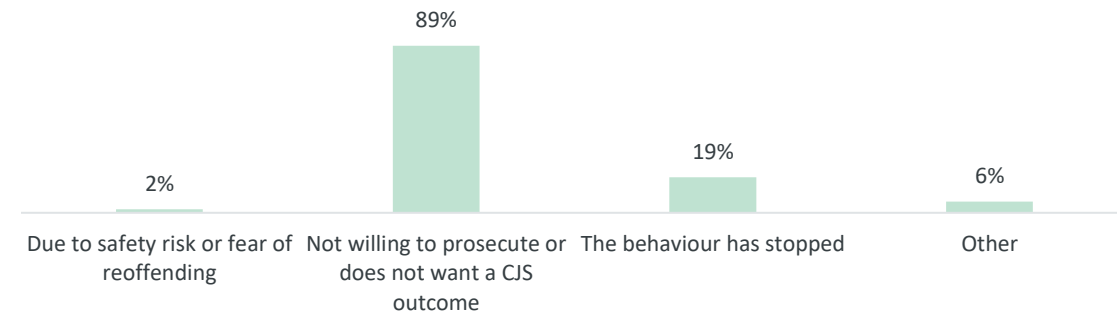
E&I coded data for amount of victim withdrawal matched trends in MPS data:

- **18% withdrew within one day of reporting** (n=30) – explicitly not wishing to prosecute at the time of reporting.
- Withdrawal statements **only obtained for 8%** (n=14) victims who withdrew (n=169).
- **In 89% of cases where victim withdrew, police recorded it was due to the victim not wanting a CJS outcome or was unwilling to prosecute.**
- Victim advocates report that the victims often just want the behaviour to stop & to feel safe, rather than wanting to secure a prosecution.
- Victim advocates highlighted a lack of trust in criminal justice agencies & processes; involvement in police investigations & legal proceedings can also be traumatising.

% of victim withdrawals at different time periods

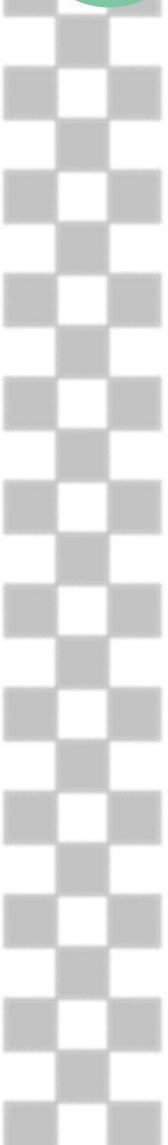


Reasons for victim withdrawal





Coded cases



# Predictors of police No Further Action

Statistical modelling allows the Deep dive to explore what the significant predictors are of NFA...

## Investigation factors again the strongest factors to predict NFA.

- When victim technology was provided & cases have witnesses - police **less likely** to be NFA (both 10x less).
- Suspect denying or minimising the offence was **less likely** to NFA (8x less).
- Cases where special schemes set up on victims' addresses were 7x less likely to be NFA.
- Repeat victims of **stalking** (&/or harassment-related offences) **less likely** to be NFA'd (x7 times).
- Consistent with other projects - victim recorded by police as vulnerable or perceived to have mental health issues is linked to **higher** (x7 times) likelihood of police NFA. Note: poor data collection is likely here - only 10% of victims reported to have mental health issues, & 14% recorded as vulnerable.
- DA related cases **more likely** to be NFA'd (x10 times) compared to non-DA related cases. Notably, no offence behaviours came up as statistically significant drivers of police NFA in the model.
- **Male** suspects 9x less likely to be NFA'd by police.
- Suspect ethnicity unknown/not recorded is 11x more likely to be NFA'd by police.

| Block  | Explanatory variable   | Influence on likelihood for NFA during investigation (odds ratios, holding all other model variables constant)   |
|--|--|--|
| Victim characteristics                                     | Victim aged 45 & over, compared to 25 to 34                                | 10 times less likely   |
|  | Victim ethnicity is Asian or Arab, compared to white                       | 9 times less likely  |
|  | Victim reported to be vulnerable or perceived to have mental health issues | 7 times more likely  |
|  | Previous stalking victim   | 7 times less likely  |
| Model fit for block specific model                         |  | 0.1471446  |
| Other, non-significant variables included in overall model |  | Victim sex, victim was previously a stalking victim  |
| Suspect characteristics                                    | Suspect aged 45 & over, compared to 25 to 34                               | 17 times more likely   |
|  | Suspect is male, compared to female  | 9 times less likely  |
|  | Suspect ethnicity is unknown, compared to white                            | 11 times more likely   |
| Model fit for block specific model                         |  | 0.3439571  |
| Other, non-significant variables included in overall model |  | Suspect has mental health issues, suspect has previous domestic abuse allegations, suspect has previous convictions                                    |
| Offence characteristics                                    | DA related   | 10 times more likely   |
| Model fit for block specific model                         |  | 0.1300463  |
| Other, non-significant variables included in overall model |  | Offence involved unwanted face to face contact, offence involved third party harassment, offence involved surveillance, spying, following or loitering |
| Investigation characteristics                              | Suspect denies or minimises offence  | 8 times less likely  |
|  | Victim technology provided to police                                       | 10 times less likely   |
|  | Case had witnesses   | 10 times less likely   |
|  | Special schemes set up on victims address                                  | 7 times less likely  |
| Model fit for block specific model                         |  | 0.4061332  |
| Other, non-significant variables included in overall model |  | Offence classified as 2a or 4a, any police delays recorded   |
| Overall model fit  | 0.5997239 (n=196)  |  |

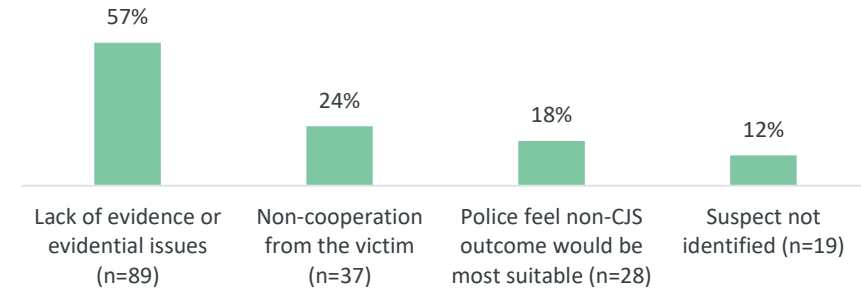
# Availability of evidence affects NFA



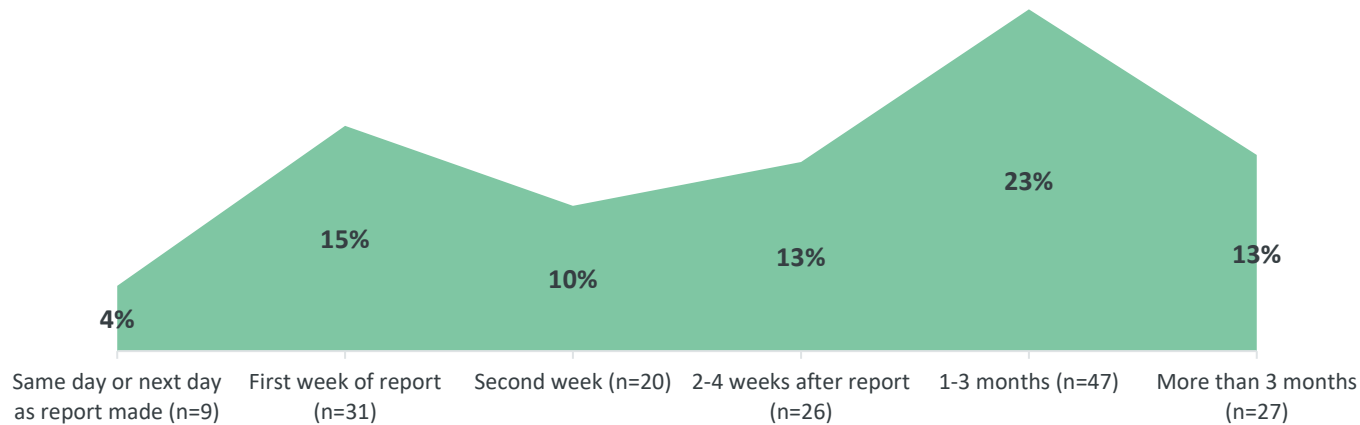
Police closed a further 41% (n=155) of investigations with 'no further action' (NFA).

- Police cited **lack of evidence** as a reason for NFA in 57% (n=89) of coded reports.
- In 24% of these - non-cooperation from victims cited as NFA reason. In practice, key stakeholder interviews indicate victimless prosecutions are not possible in stalking cases as evidencing victim impact is key to offence.
- In 18% of NFA cases - police noted a non-criminal justice outcome would be more suitable for the case, in 5 of these cases, MPS gave suspect a warning or 'strong words'. In 4 cases suspect was sectioned.
- **42%** of investigations where the victim didn't withdraw were **NFA'd in first four weeks** of reporting, with **19% in first week of reporting**.

**Reasons for police NFA**  
(excluding victim withdrawal) (n=155)



% of police NFAs (excluding victim withdrawal) at **over time** (n=155)







Coded cases

“Unless it was... traditional stalking behaviours in a 2A ... such as following & spying, CPS would probably rather go for basic harassment, because of trying to get through to a jury that this is stalking”  
Key stakeholder



# Reclassification of cases after reporting & at charge is common

Inspection of police & Crown Prosecution Service found stalking was misunderstood by police & CPS, & often improperly recorded (HMIC & HMCPSI, 2017).

**8 in 10 coded** stalking offences were not initially identified as stalking by responding officers. 42% were initially classified as harassment. Our key stakeholders highlighted several reasons:

- **National stalking legislation is very similar to harassment** & awareness of 2019 Home Office changes is insufficient.
- **Police case recording systems make** identifying stalking offences by linking cases harder.
- **Understanding of stalking may vary across police teams.**

### Potential uncertainty around stalking definitions in deep coded cases.

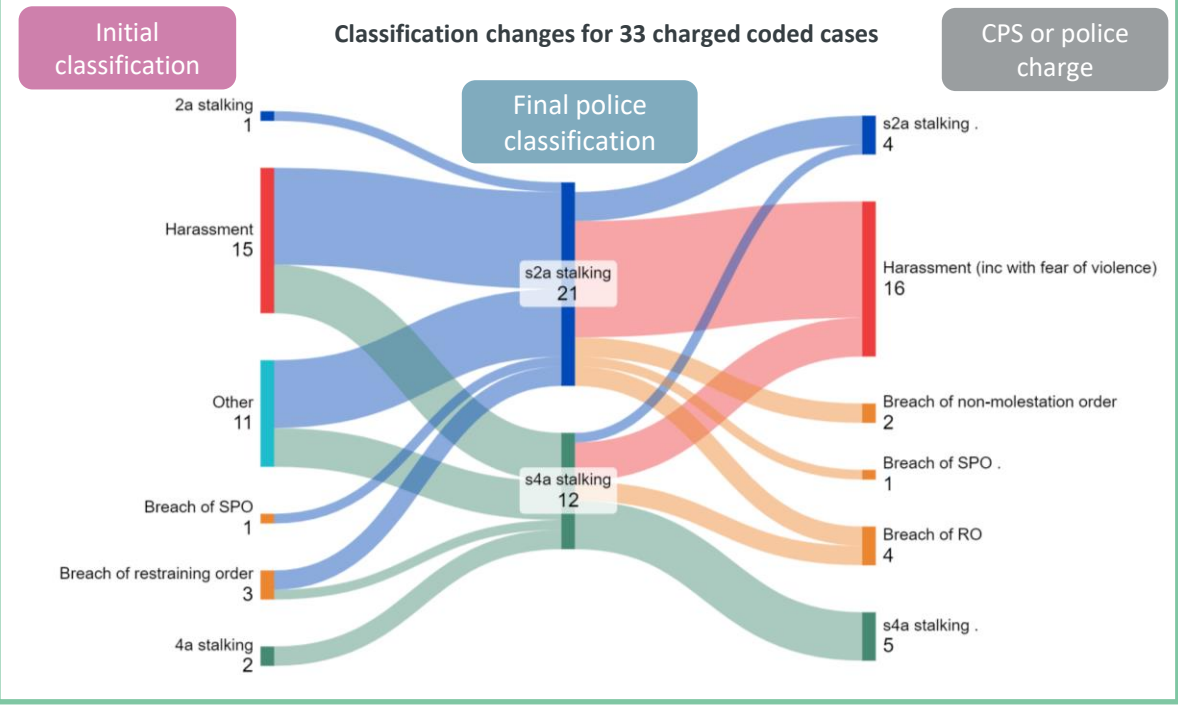
- One or more OICs stated either no crime or no stalking had occurred in at least 20% of coded cases (n=73). A recent Suzy Lamplugh Trust survey of stalking advocates found lack of police understanding of stalking behaviours was either common (55%) or extremely common (45%)<sub>1</sub>.

### 2a or 4a offence is based on officer’s judgement of victim impact, but officers often unable to distinguish.

- Experts feel 4a classifications are ‘underused’ with consequences for risk management.
- **Victim impact often not referred to in deep coded cases:** police reported victims experiencing emotional distress/mental toll, frightened or fearing for safety, due to offence in 54% of coded cases. Rates higher for DA-related offences (56%), compared to non-DA related (46%).
- Interviewed stalking advocate & experts & the National Stalking Consortium super complaint in 2022 argued for a single stalking offence as *all* stalking engenders victim fear, alarm, & distress & the current two-tier framework fails to protect victims<sub>2</sub>.

### CPS changed charge to non-stalking offence in 25 of 33 charged deep coded cases.

- Key stakeholder interviews suggested CPS favour prosecuting for harassment due to misunderstanding some stalking behaviours & perceived difficulties in prosecuting 2a stalking at court.
- 2023 survey of victim advocates - 77% did *not* believe CPS had adequate understanding of stalking, linked to victim withdrawal<sub>1</sub>.
- Key stakeholders noted CPS charge for breaches of orders without charging for stalking. **Occurred in 7 of our coded cases.**
- MPS STAC officers meet with CPS North & South monthly to joint review cases & determine whether charges correct, this helps highlight issues.



1. [Suzy Lamplugh Trust, 2023](#)
2. [Suzy Lamplugh Trust, 2022a](#).

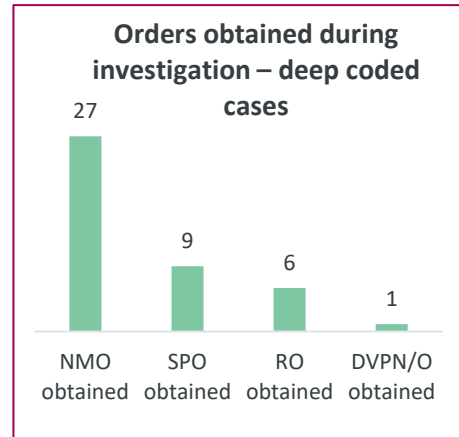


# Gaps in monitoring & enforcement of Stalking Protection Orders (SPOs) observed despite some recent improvements in SPO process



## Obtaining orders

- The MPS have a key performance target of issuing stalking protection orders in 2% of stalking cases.
- **SPOs were obtained in 1.3% of MPS recorded stalking offences in 2021<sub>1</sub> & 1.4% of stalking offences (s2a & s4a) in 2022 (n=164)** (according to MPS data). Data was not available for 2023.
- Though SPOs in London are low, they are higher than elsewhere. In 2021, 87 SPOs were issued in the Greater London area, more than twice the next highest area, Kent (32 SPOs issued).<sub>3</sub>
- In our coded cases from 2020-2021, SPOs were obtained in 2% of cases, while non-molestation orders were obtained in 7%.



Victims reported: difficulties obtaining SPOs, mis-information about SPOs from police, concern perpetrators will breach them.

'Every officer in a stalking case should be saying why they are not applying for one – this isn't happening – some officers don't know what they are.'

Key stakeholder

## Recent improvements to SPO process:

- Key stakeholder interviews indicate the MPS has:
  - escalated issues with granting SPOs to HMCTS/judiciary (courts rarely grant both SPOs & restraining orders, Breach of bail conditions does not have same repercussions as SPOs or ROs).
  - improved ability to obtain SPOs, with new support for applications through Risk Management Units & dedicated SPO SPOCs in BCUs.
- New Home Office guidelines for SPOs<sub>2</sub> have lowered criminal standard required to obtain SPOs.
- In practice, victim cooperation needed to obtain SPO: technically SPO applications can be victimless, but not in practice, which can be a barrier. Recent guideline changes may help this.
- **Early stalking intervention programme:** multiagency intervention delivered by Police, NHS and Suzy Lamplugh Trust to those on SPOs to address stalking behaviours early:
- Police applications and monitoring of SPOs.
- Specialist Independent Stalking advocacy to ensure that victims' needs are understood throughout the criminal justice journey.
- Low-intensity mental health interventions for perpetrators.

## Enforcing orders

Often not clear who is monitoring SPOs. Key stakeholder interviews highlighted:

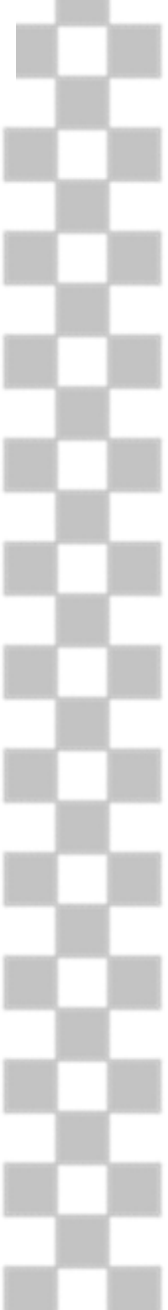
- Different procedures across BCUs.
- Examples of proactive enforcement of orders exist, e.g., East BCU POU calling victims to monitor SPOs, but perceived under-resourcing limits active monitoring.
- Every SPO *should* have an allocated officer – this is under review.
- Perceptions of a lack of proactive enforcement by the MPS means enforcing breaches often falls to the victim.
- However, victims might not be able to identify some aspects, e.g., mobile phone usage.
- Police often only reactively enforce SPOs, when victims report breaches – highlighted as national problem.
- Victim court attendance required for SPO breach convictions.
- SPOs are victim specific so victims will be involved in policing it to a degree, but it should not be victim's priority.

## STAC have a role in reviewing breach cases, & can offer OIC support

- STAC reviewed 906 breach of orders reports in 2023. 15% (n=137) of these were breaches of SPOs, while the majority (70%, n= 634) of these were breaches of ROs.
- However, in only 6% (n=52) of coded cases did STAC offer advice to BCU SPOC.

1. [MOPAC, 2022b](#)  
2. [Home Office, 2024](#)  
3. [Home Office, 2023b](#)

# STAC is a leading stalking resource, but knowledge may not be reaching OICs & the CPS



STAC experts highlighted role of STAC in creating system changes within various agencies, upskilling & building capacity through advice, consultations, & training. Evidence of engagement between OICs & STAC officers in deep coded cases was limited, though this engagement may not have been routinely recorded on CRIS.

- In coded dataset, 91% of police reports (n=343) had evidence of input from STAC MPS officers. Yet, input mostly involved copying & pasting information about stalking, advice on handling stalking cases e.g. use of SASH risk assessment, & how to access support from STAC. Evidence of OICs following this advice in CRIS reports was limited, e.g., S-DASH's were completed in **7%** of cases.
- Little evidence of OICs actively engaging with STAC MPS officers: only in **6%** of cases (n=24). Evidence of OICs engaging with other STAC partners e.g. the NHS or PS London in only **1%** (n=5) of cases.

*Note: coded case sample comes from June 2020-2021, & there may have been changes since this time.*

**Key stakeholder interviews highlighted front-line MPS & PS London officers are under-resourced with high workloads.**

- PS London reliant on services approaching them for advice & consultations – meaning there may be MPS officers who would benefit from this but not asking.

## **STAC case study: benefits of multi-agency working**

Individual had a delusional fixation & paranoid beliefs about a neighbour who he thought he was in a relationship with, presenting as both a resentful stalker & intimacy seeker (according to the stalking typologies). STAC discussed ongoing case for 6 months at multi-agency meetings. STAC professionals attended multi-agency public protection arrangement (MAPPA) & other meetings and supported him into a secure hospital through liaison diversion. STAC supported an SPO for victim who was referred to a Suzy Lamplugh Trust advocate. STAC PS London supported perpetrator's probation officer with PSR. Made sure case wasn't closed to ensure criminal justice route & mental health route taken at same time – best practice response.

**STAC stakeholders felt that their multi-agency working helps all agencies better respond to stalking, through quick information sharing, & drawing on each-other's resources.**

- Daily management meetings & co-location of all agencies allow for efficient multi-agency working, sharing of expert advice, including victim perspective through Suzy Lamplugh Trust.

## **Challenges at STAC**

- **Perceived mismatch in resources between agencies at STAC.** STAC police officers are looking into increasing (doubling) their resource, but the perception is that other agencies are already at top capacity.
- **Sense of power mismatch by victim advocates vs. other (perpetrator-focused) partners.** Suzy Lamplugh Trust excluded from some (Operation Griffin) meetings due to being a 3<sup>rd</sup> sector agency.
- **STAC MPS officers' daily review of cases difficult due to poor information systems & data collection.** Requires many manual searches to highlight & find risk that is possibly missed elsewhere. Currently considering alternative models for case reviews due to increased demand from change in HO guidelines & increased reporting of stalking, e.g., localised BCU 'clinics', like Hampshire/Cambridgeshire.

See the [appendix](#) for a description of how STAC inputs into each stage of the criminal justice journey.



# Stalking victims' experience of the CJS was poor

Victims who took part in victim commissioner interviews highlighted negative experiences of the CJS:

## The overall impact of the CJS process on victims:

- Experience with both the MPS & CPS mentally draining: the CJS process can be as traumatic as the stalking itself.
- Lack of communication about cases from CJS agencies & delays due to court adjournments highlighted as key factors contributing to a poor experience.

## Lack of understanding about stalking as an offence & CJS processes among victims:

- Some participants did not realise they were experiencing stalking at first.
- Gaps in understanding of police investigations, CPS processes & rights as a victim.
- Lack of understanding exacerbated by lack of updates & responses from agencies.
- Some participants felt victim advocates could do *more* to explain CJS processes.

Victim advocates highlighted a lack of awareness of stalking among victims, perpetrators & wider public, particularly for non-traditional stalking behaviours. Previous research on public perceptions of stalking also found lack of understanding & stereotypes around stalking behaviours<sup>1</sup>.

## Victims doubt the ability of the CJS to tackle stalking:

- Some participants felt that legal sanctions – including bail conditions, orders & prison sentences – are not enough to deter or stop stalking behaviour. One participant stated: 'there will never be justice' for them.

STAC stakeholders told us that unless underlying causes of stalking are addressed – e.g., fixation & obsession – stalking behaviour may continue even with a judicial outcome, meaning victims do not feel safe at case closure.

Stakeholders maintained that the criminal justice process is key aspect of addressing stalking, in part, as services can input to support victims & address underlying causes of stalking, in particular mental health or behaviour interventions.

Poor communication from investigating officers & courts a significant issue for victims – highlighted as linked to lack of trust, frustration & upset:

- Lack of continuity of police officers on cases.
- Some participants did not know if their suspect was charged or not. Court adjournments not communicated in a timely manner is frustrating.
- Victims do not get to speak to the prosecuting barrister, and so worry that important information may be missed as a result.

## Victims reported instances of poor advice from police:

- For some participants, responding officers did not identify stalking behaviour, or were told that an incident did not amount to a crime, with patterns in behaviour not identified. It is 'lucky' to get an officer who understands & responds.
- Victims belittled or not taken seriously by police, told to simply 'let it go' or ignore the perpetrator. Some feel the threshold for police to act is too high.
- Sometimes given advice that they felt put them in more danger.
- Mis-information about SPOs.

Examples of poor advice - that goes against College of Policing best practice & may undermine investigations or increase risk - also found in deep coded cases. E.g., change phone number, block perpetrator on social media or ignore behaviour.

Victim advocates told us victim blaming in stalking is common. From the literature, many stalking victims feel blamed, not taken seriously by police, & reported inappropriate police response<sup>2</sup>. OICs recorded doubting victim reliability in 7% of deep coded cases (n=26) which is lower than previous MOPAC deep dive products. Ex-partner stalkers often viewed as less dangerous than stranger/acquaintance stalkers<sup>3</sup>.

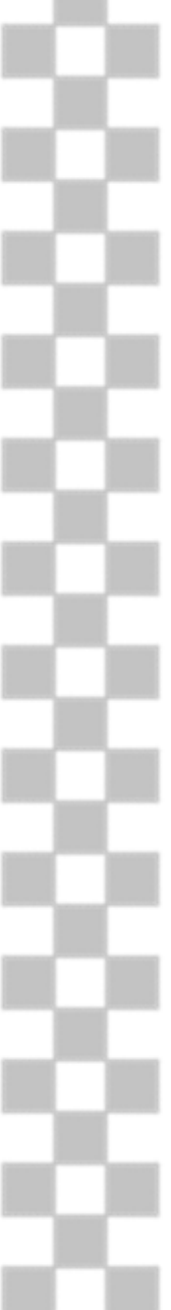
## Victims lack confidence in police investigations, due to poor experiences:

- Feeling that police do not prioritise stalking cases. Victims feel like they must push for action in cases: 'victim as their own policeman'.
- Concerns that when police have not initially identified stalking correctly, case is not investigated properly, e.g., correct statements not taken.
- Concerns that police have missed things or haven't logged or linked offences properly, & this will undermine a court case.

1. [Weller et al., 2013](#)  
2. [Taylor-Dunn et al., 2018](#)  
3. [Chung & Sheridan, 2021](#)

# Appendices

1. Deep coding method
2. Criminal justice journey
3. University of West London (UWL) systematic literature review
4. Perpetrator intervention programmes across London
5. Victim support services across London
6. STAC CJS input
7. Definitive assessment on disproportionality not possible
8. 2023 strategic review of MPS High Harm Offender Management
9. References





# Appendix 1: E&I deep coding of MPS crime reports

- Due to poor or limited MPS data recording - E&I conducted a **deep coding exercise of 400 MPS crime reports**, to better understand:
  - Stalking victims
  - Perpetrators
  - The nature of stalking offences
  - Stalking investigations & procedures
  - Drivers of police no further action (NFA) & victim withdrawal.

This replicates methodology from MOPAC research in the London Rape Review (2019) & DA deep dive (2022)

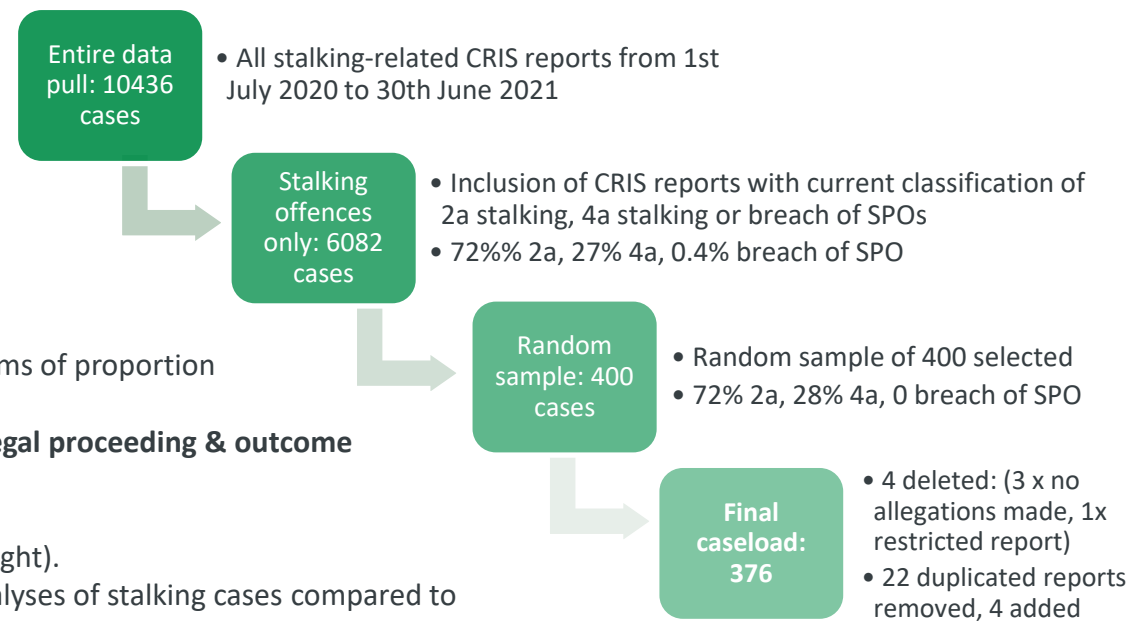
- Extracted from the MPS Crime Recording & Information System (CRIS): 10,436 stalking-related cases from July 2020 - June 2021.
- These extraction dates ensured enough time had elapsed for case conclusion.

- 6,082 CRIS reports were isolated:
  - Section 2a stalking offences (72%)
  - Section 4a stalking offences (27%)
  - Breach of stalking protection order (SPO) (0.4%).

- Random sample of 400 cases were selected, representative of the full dataset in terms of proportion of different stalking offences.
- E&I researchers coded 400 reports for key **victim, suspect, offence, investigation, legal proceeding & outcome characteristics**.

- Final caseload was 376 cases, after removing unsuitable cases (see diagram to the right).
- Coding exercise produced a rich coded dataset, allowing more detailed & robust analyses of stalking cases compared to using MPS data alone.
- It is not something the MPS can standardly run for ongoing oversight - this is crucial to address, as without a process for monitoring victim engagement, any improvements will be hard to measure.

- The following slides mainly draw on findings from the coded dataset to give a richer understanding of stalking in London.
- The next section - 'Understanding criminal justice journeys' - presents results from analysis of the stalking dataset to understand the main drivers of 1) stalking victim withdrawal, & 2) police NFA.



# Appendix 2: Criminal justice journey (Part 1)



## Police investigations & legal sanctions

### Initial police response

Of the 18% (n= 69) cases *initially identified as stalking*, 7 cases reclassified in seriousness of offence: 4 from 2a to 4a, & 3 from 4a to 2a.

8 in 10 stalking offences (n=307) not initially identified as stalking by responding officers in coded dataset. Same trend found in MPS data.

Majority of reclassified cases initially classified as harassment (41%) or domestic incident (24%).

Victims made a report in 88% of coded cases.

2022/23 MPS data - majority of reports made by phone call (69%, n=7950), 13% in person & 7% online.

### Police investigation

Suspect arrested or interviewed in 28% (n=106) of cases: arrested in 26% (n=98) of cases & interviewed in 26% (n=97) of cases

Of the 106 suspects arrested or interviewed: 52% (n=55) bailed & 15% (n=16) remanded.

Of the 97 interviewed:

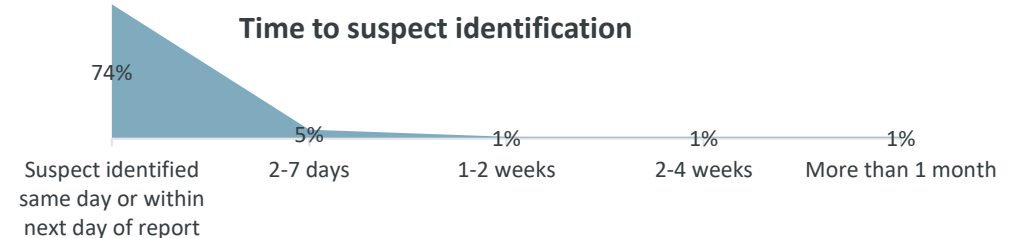
25% (n=24) gave no comment interview

74% (n=72) denied or minimised offence

26% (n=25) made counter allegations of stalking

38% (n=141) of coded cases linked to other reports; 25% reported further offending - third of which had official crime report.

Suspect not identified in 13% of cases (n=49)





# Appendix 2: Criminal justice journey (Part 2)



## Police investigations & legal sanctions

### Police investigation cont...

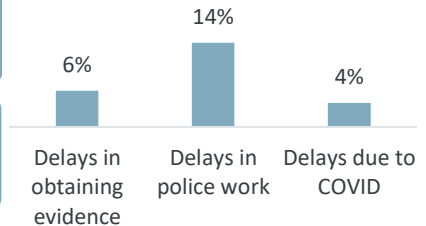
In 40% of cases potential technology evidence was referenced, but....

**Suspect technology seized in 13%** (n=50) of cases –nearly always at arrest. On average suspect technology seized 37 days after crime report initiated (n=50).

**Victim technology provided in 17%** of cases (n=62) – most often screenshots of text messages or emails. On average victim technology provided 23 days after crime report initiated (n=62).

**Third party evidence** (including CCTV) was seized in 9% (n=33) of cases.

Recorded police delays



In 16 cases - MPS requested evidence from victim & **victim did not provide**. In 6 of these - victim refused to provide requested technology evidence, e.g., because of the time they would be without a mobile phone.

24% (n=91) of cases had a **witness** recorded.

SPOCs instated a few years ago - aim to disseminate specialised stalking knowledge to BCU officers on stalking cases. Many SPOCs sit within RMUs & are SPO coordinators - supporting OICs with SPO applications.

Evidence of BCU SPOC for stalking input in 30% of reports (n=114).

SPOC input >50% of cases only evident in two BCUs: West BCU (68%, n= 27) & North BCU (57%, n=20).

Little evidence of OICs actively engaging with STAC MPS officers: only in 6% of cases (n=24). Evidence of OICs engaging with STAC partners e.g. NHS / PS London in 1% (n=5) of cases.

91% of police reports (n=343) had evidence of input from MPS STAC officers.



# Appendix 2: Criminal justice journey (Part 3)



## Police investigations & legal sanctions

### Police investigation cont...

No victim distress or fear reported in 46% (173) of cases.  
Victim emotional distress or mental toll recorded in 31% (n=118).  
Victim frightened or fearing safety recorded in 42% (n=161).

Recording of victim impact in the Victim Personal Statement was referred to in less than 10 cases.

Police offered or provided some kind of victim support to 56% of victims.

S-DASH risk assessments completed in a minority of coded cases (7%, n=27).

In 9% of cases, victim or suspect was rehoused – in 7% of cases this was the victim. Note: in many more cases, victims rehoused themselves

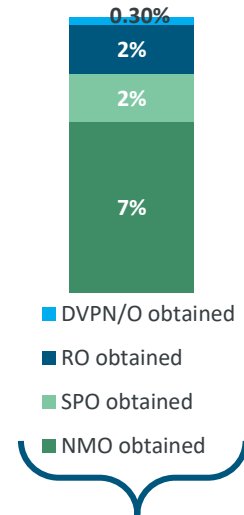
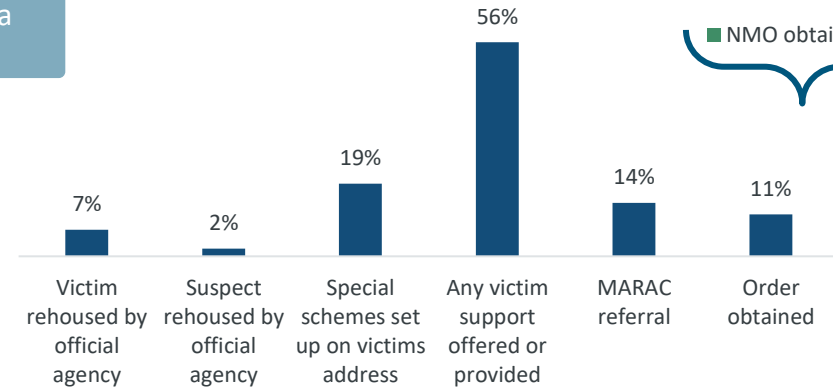
Special schemes, e.g., panic alarms, set up on victim addresses in 19% (n=) of cases.

Victims declined victim support in 35% of cases (this includes victims already receiving support from another service).

Protective orders obtained in 11% of coded cases.

- SPOs obtained in 2% (n=9) of cases.
- Non-molestation orders more frequently obtained (7%, n=27) – usually with external support e.g. National Centre for Domestic Violence (NCDV).

### Police response to victims



- The User Satisfaction Survey does not capture detail from stalking victims. However, there is a wider survey designed to capture this feedback. However, dissemination & completion is low.
- Victim dissatisfaction with police was recorded in just 6% (n=23) of coded police reports, potentially underreported.
- Victim advocate interviews highlighted several **reasons for stalking victim CJS dissatisfaction**:
  - Victims report poor responses from agencies e.g. police not taking seriously. Leads to low CJS confidence.
  - Lack of updates on investigation - partially due to resourcing: OICs may have up to 60 cases.
  - Communication during court process - reported as poor & confusing for victims<sub>1</sub>.
  - Traumatizing experiences - facing perpetrators in court & being cross-examined.
  - Victims feeling unprotected & demoralised when stalkers receive just a fine or suspended sentence.
  - Length of time until trial means remanded perpetrators may have serviced enough time & are released.
  - Victims do not feel supported by criminal justice agencies. Support services don't seek victim input.

1. [Suzy Lamplugh Trust, 2023](#)

# Appendix 2: Criminal justice journey (Part 4)



## Police investigations & legal sanctions

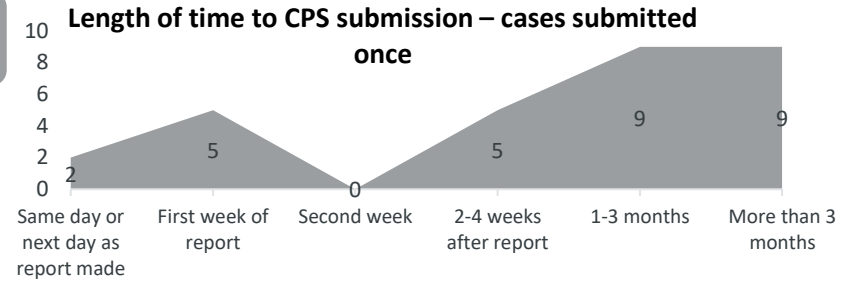
### Legal proceedings

Just 42 cases (12%) submitted to CPS:  
30 submitted once, & 12 submitted at least twice (missing for 2).

On average it took 71 days from initial reporting to final CPS submission (missing for 12).

The CPS decided to charge in 33 cases.

In the 6 cases where CPS decided not to charge, 2 were classified by police as s2a & 4 as s4a.



In addition to CPS charges, **4 cases received a police charge, & 3 a police caution.** One charge was for breach of non-molestation order, & one for s2a stalking.

# Appendix 3: Evidence base for early intervention limited. Evidence of effectiveness found for some post hoc interventions



The Evidence and Insight unit commissioned an academic team led by the University of West London (UWL) to conduct a systematic literature review of best evidence on interventions, services, tactics, and partnerships aimed at reducing or stopping offending across a range of VAWG offence types, including stalking.

Sources included:

- Peer-reviewed systematic literature reviews, meta-analyses, randomised control trials, rapid evidence assessments and VAWG related violence risk assessment manuals.
- Publication written in English.
- Articles published between 2012 and 2023.

The stalking category included:

- 4 reviews exploring perpetrator risk factors (3 systematic reviews and 1 meta-analysis), all of which rated high-quality by the authors of the report.
- 4 articles investigating stalking interventions (1 systematic review, 2 rapid evidence assessments, 1 randomised controlled trial).

## The UWL literature review finds

- Prior stalking is one of a range of offending behaviours that make the odds of relationship aggression more likely<sup>1</sup>.
- The most evidenced risk factors that make individuals more likely to engage in stalking are:
  - mental health problems and addiction,
  - Relationship problems,
  - trauma or childhood victimisation.
- Those who stalk a stranger or an acquaintance are more likely to present with mental health problems than those who stalk ex-partners<sup>2</sup>.

## Stalking interventions evidence base

The UWL literature review found a gap in the evidence base for protective factors against stalking, which suggests a holistic understanding of the underlying factors in stalking and therefore informed opportunities for early intervention is limited.

The review found some evidence for the impact of:

- **Protection orders (PO)**<sup>3,4</sup>
  - Reduce the severity of re-victimisation (not prevalence).
  - Increase likelihood of arrest and charge of intimate partner stalkers when PO already in place.
  - More effective when victims do not have ongoing contact with perpetrator.
- **Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) and anger management-based CBT**
  - Found as the most robustly evaluated intervention for stalking perpetrators, though evidence base is still limited.
  - Evidence of effectiveness compared to standard intermate partner violence interventions.<sup>2,4</sup>
- **Acceptance and Commitment Therapy**
  - Evidence of effectiveness compared to the 'Duluth approach' where stalking behaviours occur within romantic relationships.<sup>5</sup>



1. [Clemmow et al., 2023](#)  
2. [Leigh and Davies, 2022](#)  
3. [Dowling et al., 2018](#)

4. [Johnson et al., 2020](#)  
5. [Zarling & Russell, 2022](#)

# Appendix 4: Monitoring high-risk perpetrators: STAC, Operation Griffin & the PS London

STAC data used in this report is a snapshot of the caseload in 2023, a later period to the sample of coded cases

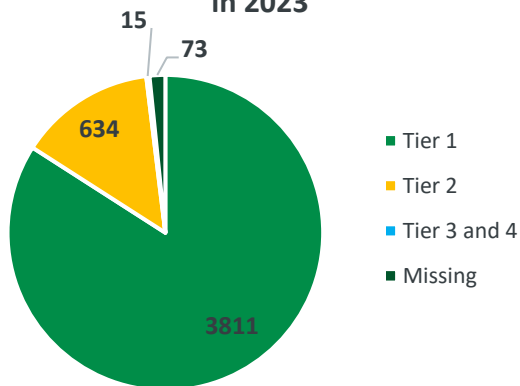
- According to [STAC data](#) – In 2023 MPS officers reviewed 4,533 s4A stalking reports.
- Cases discussed in multi-agency Daily Management Meetings, with different expertise brought by different partners.
- See the appendix for more information on STAC partners' roles.

Three-tier system for STAC's response to stalking cases. Depends on level of STAC input, perpetrator risk & need:

1. Tier 1: case reviewed & advice given to MPS officer in command or probation officer.
2. Tier 2: multi-agency work undertaken by one STAC partner, e.g., specialist consultation with OIC or risk assessment etc.
3. Tier 3: (previously divided into 3 & 4) more intensive multi-agency working by multiple STAC partners, e.g. attending MAPPA meetings, perpetrator interventions etc.

- **Higher risk Tier 3 nominals placed on STAC database Operation Griffin** (list of highest harm/risk/repeat stalkers). Can include non-convicted or *potentially dangerous* perpetrators, perpetrators on probation or managed by MAPPA, perpetrators nearing release. Reoffending is tracked through Operation Griffin.
- Operation Griffin nominals have PNC marker, alerting STAC to any activity. Monitored by police, PS London & NHS at STAC in Operation Griffin meetings. Approx. 300 individuals on Operation Griffin database at any time (according to STAC information provided in 2022).
- Operation Griffin meetings:
  - Attended by MPS, NHS & PS London only, involve intensive multi-agency management.
  - Like 'mini-MAPPAs'.
  - Allow early intervention - prevent reoffending/re-victimisation.
  - Exclude victim advocates – for confidentiality reasons. Suzy Lamplugh Trust note this decision excludes victim voice, which can benefit & improve cases.
  - Impact: positive reduction of 50-60% of harm in 18-month window.

STAC tier level - reviewed 4a cases in 2023



## Monitoring of convicted stalking perpetrators on probation

- From PS London 'snapshot' data, in November 2023 there were 353 offenders on probation for stalking offences.
  - Almost two thirds (63%, n=221) convicted of section 4A stalking offence.
  - A third (32%, n=114) convicted of section 2A offence.
  - Only 5% (n=18) convicted of SPO breach.
- Key stakeholder interviews highlighted Probation resourcing, Probation Practitioner knowledge, & availability of stalking specific structured or accredited interventions as points for consideration.
- PS London at STAC support frontline probation officers.

# Appendix 4: Perpetrator interventions: psychological/ behaviour change programmes

Research suggests psychological interventions that address underlying stalking causes are critical for preventing reoffending<sup>1</sup>.

- Legal sanctions alone do not address underlying causes & may *exacerbate* problem.
- Perpetrator interventions need to be multi-disciplinary & tailored, given differences in stalkers' motivations, behaviours, psychological characteristics & need<sup>2</sup>.

## STAC provide stalking perpetrator interventions on a pan-London basis, delivered by Barnet, Enfield & Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust

- In 2023, 172 / 4,533 STAC suspects of s4a stalking were referred to NHS support.

### Perpetrator interventions at STAC involve:

- **In-depth perpetrator assessments**, including clinically-focused Stalking Risk Profile which assesses risk, considers violence, recurrence & persistence.
- Assessment driven tailored perpetrator interventions.
- **Intervention models such as** CBT, acceptance therapy, distress tolerance, emotional regulation, interpersonal relationships, scheme therapy, ENDR.
- **Clinical supervision** to discuss/review cases, intervention plans, psychological assessments.
- **Formulation of a relapse plan** – emphasis on perpetrator as expert to identify warning signs of return to problematic thinking/behaviour.
- NHS monitor STAC perpetrator outcomes on wellbeing, functioning, mood, reductions in rumination, & reoffending, working with PS London & MPS e.g. breaches of orders.

## Challenges to provision of stalking perpetrator interventions in London:

- **Lack of stalking interventions *outside* of STAC.** PS London does not have specific stalking behaviour programme. DA-related stalkers referred to Building Better Relationships DA accredited programme.
- **Lack of collaboration between STAC & DA perpetrator interventions, including pan-London DRIVE - missed opportunity.**
- **Lack of earlier intervention programmes:** STAC attempt to secure Home Office funding for psychoeducational programme (for lower-risk perpetrators receiving SPOs) was unsuccessful.

## Stalking perpetrator interventions are under-researched & lack robust studies assessing their effectiveness<sup>2</sup>.

2020 evaluation of MASIP pilot interventions (including STAC) found<sup>3</sup>:

- Proportion of stalking cases ending in charge/summons higher for each police force with MASIP sites.
- Not possible to determine if interventions provided by London STAC led to reduced re-offending due to how crime recorded & low number of perpetrator interventions provided.
- Stakeholder interviews - multi-agency approach key to effective perpetrator interventions & perpetrators felt confident they had tools required to manage obsessive & fixated behaviours.
- Economic analysis found a cost-beneficial effect for STAC when institutional costs (such as prison and secure hospital) are excluded.

1. [Ostermeyer et al., 2016](#)

2. [Leigh & Davies, 2022](#)

3. [Tompson et al., 2020](#)

# Appendix 5: Victim support services

Victim support services are under-researched. Limited evidence suggests that victim advocates support victims to continue with cases & self-manage risks:

- Victims supported by stalking advocates are more likely to see stalkers charged & convicted<sup>1</sup>.
- A small-scale study found victims believed advocacy services aided their ability to cope with the realities of stalking, made the victims' journey through the justice system easier to navigate, provided them with the necessary emotional support & practical advice needed for their personal safety & to feel in control of their risk management<sup>2</sup>.



## London stalking victim support services include:

- STAC victim advocacy service – provided by Suzy Lamplugh Trust – highest risk cases
- London Stalking Support Service (LSSS) – provided by Suzy Lamplugh Trust – lower risk cases
- National Stalking Advocacy Service – provided by Paladin
- National Stalking Helpline – provided by Suzy Lamplugh Trust
- DA support services for DA-related stalking.

## DA support services for DA-related stalking.

- Multi-agency support from MARACs – VAWG leads noted stalking related DA cases often discussed at MARACs
- Stalking behaviour viewed as risk factor in DASH assessments.
- **Coded dataset - MARAC referrals made in 14% of cases.**
- Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs)
- National Centre for Domestic Violence (NCDV) – support applications for non-molestation orders.
- Lambeth's Gaia centre (provided by Refuge) – supports gender-based violence victims, including stalking.

## STAC victim advocacy service:

- Referrals mainly from STAC partners, also from national helplines & London Stalking Support Service
  - 2023 STAC data – 766 (17%) of 4,533 s4a stalking cases reviewed by STAC MPS officers referred to Suzy Lamplugh Trust for victim advocacy support.
- Triaged using SASH assessment / professional judgement of risk & need.
- For highest risk cases.
- Risk indicators include; level of violence, involvement of children, current court case, stalking related break ins.
- High proportion of vulnerable service users.
- Two levels of support:
  - 'Brief' intervention – one off support, e.g. signposting services.
  - 'Advocacy' – long term support (max. caseload of 20).
    - Safety plans
    - Stalking legislation education.
    - Specialist services referrals, housing support, attending MARAC/MAPPA meetings.
    - Police advocacy & court support.
- Advocates provide victim's voice in CJS – raise concerns, obtain responses & information – helps victims cope with, & have better experience of, CJS & its process.
- Advocates training in emotional & wellbeing support is important – due to impact of stalking.
- Issues faced by the STAC victim advocacy service:
  - Not taken seriously by perpetrator focused STAC partners.
  - OICs not responding.
  - Court cancellations.

1. [Suzy Lamplugh Trust, 2022c](#)

2. [Jerath et al., 2022](#)



# Appendix 6: STAC can input into all parts of the criminal justice journey

|                      | MPS   | PS London  | NHS  | Suzy Lamplugh Trust  |
|----------------------|---|--|--|--|
| Initial response     | MPS officers at STAC review overnight stalking reports on CRIS, starting with 4A cases.   |  |  |  |
| Police investigation | <p>STAC officers can contact relevant officer to advise &amp; give specialist stalking advice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>According to STAC data of 4533 4a stalking suspects reviewed by STAC in 2023, STAC advised the BCU SPOC on 16% of cases (n=744).</li> </ul> <p>BCU officers &amp; SPOCs can also contact STAC MPS for advice.</p> | In daily management meetings, PS London share relevant information on perpetrators if known to probation, which can support risk assessments.  | <p>Liaise with police custody suites: could involve diversion, provision of an appropriate adult, advocating for the Mental Health Act assessment if suspect is in crisis.</p> <p>Support police in how to adapt interviews for suspects with mental health needs.</p> <p>Provide psychological assessments to support risk assessments.</p> <p>For suspects on remand, support prison in reach teams with mental health provisions in custody – might involve a hospital transfer, or care in the prison itself. If individual is in hospital, will liaise with hospital itself, e.g. provide info on risk elements like SPO &amp; Restraining orders, concerns about ongoing contact etc, &amp; nature of behaviour that has led them to where they are.</p> | <p>Bridge the gap between client &amp; police, liaising with OICs to find out about police actions &amp; case progression.</p> <p>Help victims write their victim personal statement – emphasis to take back control by stating what impact the perpetrator has had on their lives.</p> <p>Can advise police on restraining order or SPO conditions.</p> <p>Make sure special measures are in place &amp; make referrals to victim support services.</p> |
| Legal proceedings    |   | <p>Conduct consultations with probation officers to help draft pre-sentence reports (PSR), when judges or magistrates feel they need advice on what sentence to pass. They would review CPS papers &amp; accused's history &amp; needs with the probation officer to make sure recommendations are suitable &amp; take into account stalking behaviours.</p> <p>If not at custody threshold, STAC probation officer would advise a referral to a probation accredited intervention.</p>                            | <p>NHS can consult PSR court reporters.</p> <p>Provide psychiatric reports &amp; give opinions at court.</p> <p>Liaison with team and support of officer when able to be interviewed.</p>  | <p>Keep the victim updated throughout the process, &amp; support expectations, especially as court cases can be heavily delayed.</p> <p>Talk victims through the court process to ensure they know how proceedings work. Pre-trial visits to familiarise with the court, including entrances &amp; exits. Connect victims with court victim liaison officers.</p> <p>Can also attend court with victim.</p>  |
| (Post) conviction    | <p>Police can assist with monitoring licence conditions – these might include monitoring use of phones &amp; computers.</p>   | <p>Support community probation officers with stalking clients. They offer consultations to POs on typologies, concerns &amp; risks, allowing a deeper reflection time on the specificities of supporting that individual &amp; feed into risk management plans. If suitable, consultations can be multi-agency with other partners from STAC, especially NHS when mental health issues. They can also refer to behaviour change interventions at STAC, delivered by the NHS.</p> <p>May attend MAPPA meetings.</p> | <p>Provide behaviour change interventions for perpetrators.</p> <p>Consultation with Probation staff, MAPPA attendance.</p> <p>Risk management advice, referral support, case assist and co-working with those in MH settings (e.g hospital order) with stalking behaviour or conviction.</p>  |  |

# Appendix 7: Definitive assessment on disproportionality in the CJS not possible from data available but victim & suspect ethnicity broadly proportionate with census data

## Suspects/accused

Although not directly comparable as recorded differently and from different time periods, there is some indication of differences between perpetrator groups:

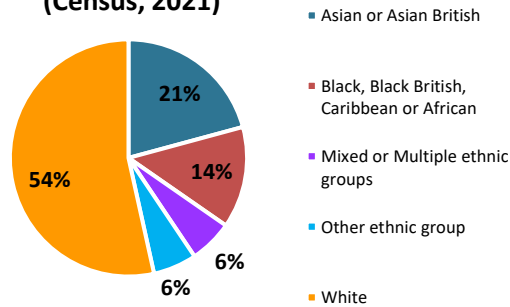
- **Female suspects appear to be less likely to be accused or convicted than male.**
- **Asian & mixed or multiple ethnic heritage perpetrators appear to be more likely to be convicted.**
- **Suspects under 24 appear to be less likely to be proceeded against.**

According to MPS data on 2699 stalking suspects who were proceeded against (received a caution or charge):

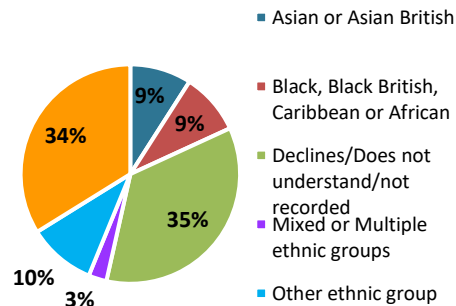
- Females more likely to be proceeded against for s2A offence (57%, n=125) & males more likely to be proceeded against for s4A offence (53%, n=1,313).
- Perpetrators of Asian or Asian British ethnicity more likely to be proceeded against for a s4A offence (47%, n=214).
- In 2022/23 female perpetrators more likely to receive a caution (30%) compared to male perpetrators (11%) & less likely to receive a charge or summons (70% female vs. 89% male).
- Between 2016/17 & 2022/23, 18-to-24-year-olds were age group most likely to receive a caution (20%, n=68).
- White people proceeded against were most likely to receive a caution (16%, n=206) compared other ethnic groups.

| Coded dataset sample of n=380<br>July 2020- June 2021   | MPS data (n=700)<br>2022/23  | PS London data (n=353)<br>Live cases extracted in November 2023   |
|---|--|---|
| 24% Female (n=90)<br>76% Male (n=289)   | 8% Female (n=56)<br>91% Male (n=639)   | 5% female (n=19)<br>95% male (n=334)  |
| 12% Asian (n=46)<br>15% black (n=58)<br>26% white (n=100)<br>3% other (n=10)<br>Missing for 44% (N=166)   | 14% Asian (n=97)<br>15% black (n=107)<br>4% mixed/multiple ethnic groups (n=27)<br>48% white (n=339)<br>4% other (n=28)<br>Not stated/refused: 15% (n=102) of cases  | 18% Asian (n=63)<br>16% black (n=55)<br>10% mixed/multiple ethnic groups:<br>(n=35)<br>47% white (n=165)<br>5% other (n=17)<br>Not stated/refused: 5% (n=18) of cases |
| Under 18 years: 3.2% (N=12)<br>18-24 years: 19.1% (N=72)<br>25-34 years: 37.2% (N=140)<br>35-44 years: 24.5% (N=92)<br>45-54 years: 11.2% (N=42)<br>55-64 years: 3.5% (N=13)<br>65+ years: 0.8% (N=3)<br>Over 35 years: 39.9% (N=150) | Under 18 years: 0.1% (N=1)<br>18-24 years: 11.1% (N=78)<br>25-34 years: 38.1% (N=267)<br>35-44 years: 29.0% (N=203)<br>45-54 years: 14.0% (N=98)<br>55-64 years: 4.9% (N=34)<br>65+ years: 2.7% (N=19)<br>Over 35 years: 50.6% (N=354) | 18-25 years: 10% (N=35)<br>26-35 years: 40% (N=141)<br>Over 35 years: 50% (N=176)   |

**Ethnicity of London Residents  
(Census, 2021)**



**Victim ethnicity (self-defined)  
2022/23 (MPS data)**



- Victim ethnicity in MPS data has substantial missing data.
- Victim ethnicity in coded data is broadly in line with ethnicity of victims found in the 2019 MOPAC Rape Review & 2022 DA Deep dive, & with 2021 census data on ethnicity in London.

|              | Rape review 2019 | DA Deep Dive 2022 | Stalking Deep Dive 2024 |
|--------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
|              | N=501            | N=277             | N=378                   |
|              | April 2016       | 2019              | July 2020-June 2021     |
| <b>White</b> | 66%              | 56%               | 60%                     |
| <b>Black</b> | 24%              | 22%               | 22%                     |
| <b>Asian</b> | 7%               | 19%               | 14%                     |

\* Note there is no mixed or multiple ethnic group in the coded dataset.



# Appendix 8: 2023 strategic review of MPS High Harm Offender Management

MOPAC conducted a strategic review into MPS High Harm Offender (HHO) Management in 2023 & most findings are highly relevant to stalking, the table below sets out these overlaps.

| HHO strategic review finding theme | Summary of 2023 HHO strategic review recommendations  | Where relevant to Stalking Deep Dive   |
|------------------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Governance &amp; structure</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a central strategy &amp; oversight framework to enable central overview of all groups of offenders who pose the highest harm.</li> <li>Establish mechanisms for cross-strand/team working centrally &amp; locally.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overcoming siloed working crucial for monitoring delivery of minimum standards across MPS/BCUs for stalking investigations to assure application; improving investigations &amp; victim response.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Defining harm</b>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(Re)define 'high harm' for the MPS.</li> <li>Establish a central strategy for the prioritisation of high harm offenders.</li> <li>Holistic view of offenders should be a priority.</li> <li>Review registers, nominals lists &amp; matrices of HHO used by MPS.</li> </ul>   | <p>For stalking offence types, success partly rests on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly defined minimum standards for recording victim impact (S-DASH &amp; Victim Personal Statements).</li> <li>Improved linking of data for quicker access to background information on victims/suspects, linking to previous incidents, to support identification of stalking (as a behaviour offence).</li> <li>Clear understanding of any overlap between STAC nominal cohort &amp; other HHO cohorts needed.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Demand &amp; resourcing</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish an organisation-wide approach to talent management.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This research also identifies need to identify knowledge gaps &amp; provide specialist stalking training for relevant CJS agencies.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Systems &amp; databases</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a strategic review of all systems &amp; databases relating to high harm offender management. Consider any blockages.</li> <li>Update systems to ensure systems talk to one another &amp; data can be easily extracted for performance monitoring purposes.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved linking of data important for stalking offences for quicker access to victim/suspect information, linking previous incidents, identifying stalking (as a behaviour offence).</li> <li>Seek to understanding if new systems (e.g. Connect+) are addressing this.</li> <li>Success of HHO recommendations for stalking rests on this research for improved MPS data recording, especially vulnerability, ethnicity &amp; victim-suspect relationship.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Intelligence</b>                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in intelligence functions (Esp. local level) to support identification.</li> <li>Learn from best practice &amp; innovations in intelligence tools across MPS.</li> <li>Improve use of intelligence from partners &amp; other police forces.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Important for recommendation on improved linking of data.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Partnership working</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnership working should be a priority for high harm offender management for effective identification, prioritisation, &amp; management.</li> <li>Address patchwork coverage of multi-agency arrangements to ensure that high harm offender management is consistent across London.</li> <li>Continue exploration of multi-agency arrangements which go beyond crime-type siloes to address gaps.</li> <li>Establish strategy for information sharing with external partners &amp; police forces.</li> </ul> | <p>Partnership working is a key area of focus from this deep dive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue cross-BCU working of stalking SPOCs to share &amp; disseminate best practice &amp; common issues.</li> <li>Patchwork coverage of multi-agency arrangements not necessarily an issue in this stalking research as STAC generally available but improving use of this resource is seen as a priority by this research.</li> <li>Continue efforts of collaboration between CPS &amp; MPS on stalking outcomes.</li> <li>Folding partners into application of minimum standards around victim communication.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Judicial orders</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish an organisation-wide strategy around the monitoring &amp; enforcement of judicial orders. Roles &amp; responsibilities around orders must be defined.</li> <li>Review &amp; evaluate the current MPS approach for use of orders. Ensure that appropriate scrutiny &amp; oversight is in place.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This stalking research identifies gaps in the MPS obtaining, monitoring &amp; enforcing SPOs &amp; recommends minimum standards for this.</li> </ul>  |

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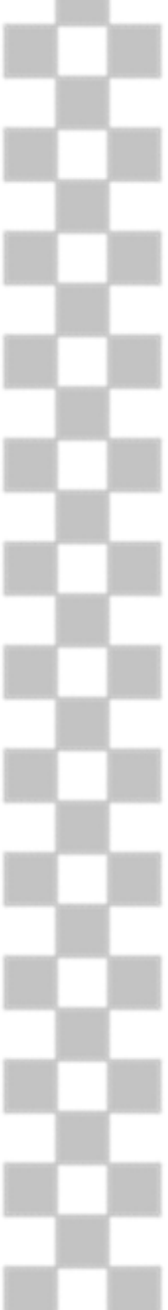
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# Notes

- MPS stalking perpetrator data refers to those charged or cautioned **only**. Coded data refers to **all** suspects (including those not charged or cautioned). This is significant as only a small proportion of stalking suspects are charged or cautioned. In our coded dataset, only 12% of suspects (n=46) were proceeded against.
- OASys (Offender Assessment System) Violence Predictor (OVP) estimates the likelihood of non-sexual violent re-offending (e.g., homicide & assault, violent acquisitive & weapon possession offences etc.) over a 24-month period using static (provided by the OGRS) & dynamic risk factors. [Offender Management & sentence planning | Prison Reform Trust](#).
- Offender Group Reconviction Scale (OGRS) is a risk assessment tool used to estimate likelihood of re-offending. It uses static factors such as age, gender & criminal history. It gives a score, which shows the likelihood of someone re-offending within a 12 & 24 month period. [Offender Management & sentence planning | Prison Reform Trust](#).
- ONS data referred to in the report are not designated as National Statistics & in addition, an error in the survey for year ending March 2023 resulted in missing data for some respondents from October to January 2023. Estimates for stalking victimisation are therefore based on just eight months of interviews.
- Police recorded outcomes data referred to here is based on offences that were recorded in the given period. It excludes cases where an outcome was 'not yet assigned'.
- Risk of Serious Harm Assessment (RoSH) is a risk assessment used to assess the risk of 'serious harm' to others. The prison and probation services define risk of 'serious harm' as 'a risk which is life-threatening and/or traumatic, & from which recovery, whether physical or psychological, can be expected to be difficult or impossible'. The RoSH assessment includes a variety of risks (risk of serious harm to others, risk of harm to children, risk to self & other risks such as escape & breach of trust) & provides a risk rating ranging from low to very high.
- STAC Case data relates to Section 4A stalking reports (from the MPS) reviewed by STAC during the period 03/01/2023 to 31/12/2023. There were 4,558 cases in the original dataset. 25 cases were excluded (3 fell outside the date range & 22 cases contained no data). This left a final sample of 4,533 cases.

