

**Derbyshire Police response to
Suzy Lamplugh Trust's super-complaint:
The police response to stalking**

Progress update - April 2026



Background

In November 2022, a super-complaint was submitted to the government by the Suzy Lamplugh Trust, on behalf of the National Stalking Consortium (NSC). In January 2023, this super-complaint was subsequently confirmed as eligible for investigation by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS), the College of Policing and the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC).

The super-complaint was comprehensively investigated, considering the concerns raised by the NSC to understand both the barriers to, and facilitators of, the police providing an effective response to stalking.

On 27 September 2024, the three bodies published a report of their findings. This detailed clear evidence supporting the concerns raised and called for change and improvements, building on examples of innovative and promising practice within forces across England and Wales.

Within the report, 29 recommendations were made to Chief Constables, the Home Office, the Crown Prosecution Service, the Ministry of Justice, the National Police Chiefs' Council, and Police and Crime Commissioners. They were categorised into three themes:

- Providing a better foundation for policing to create a good service for stalking victims.
- Meeting expected standards now and doing the fundamentals well
- Implementing what works, spreading promising practice and encouraging innovation.

In 2024, Derbyshire Police published its first response to the super-complaint, in the form of an action plan to explain what we were doing to address each of the recommendations made to our Chief Constable, and what our plans were to improve further. The recommendations were sent to all Chief Constables in England and Wales.

This document is the forces 2026 update to outline progress that has been made against each of the relevant recommendations, and our plan for continual improvement.

Introduction

Derbyshire Constabulary remain committed to improving its response to stalking, with a sustained focus on protecting victims, managing risk and preventing further harm. Since publishing our 2024 action plan, the force has continued to strengthen its approach, embedding improvements across leadership, capability, investigation quality and partnership working.

Clear governance and accountability arrangements remain in place to ensure stalking is treated as a priority at both strategic and operational levels. Alongside this, targeted investment has been made in workforce skills, analytical capability and specialist functions to better identify stalking behaviours, assess risk and respond to high harm perpetrators.

While progress has been made, we recognise that stalking is a complex and evolving crime type. This update sets out how the force has responded to the relevant recommendations of the super complaint, the impact of those improvements, and how we will continue to build on this work to deliver a consistent, victim focused and effective service.

Derbyshire's Response

Recommendation 7

By 27 March 2025, where required, [forces should] seek changes to their crime recording systems to enable staff and officers to document and search for crimes not recorded as the principal crime, as included classifications on crime records. Processes should be put in place to make sure this system capability is effectively used by officers and staff. While any necessary system changes are pending, chief constables should put alternative measures in place to make sure stalking, and related offences are fully searchable. This could, for example, be the submission of intelligence reports.

Update

The force has enhanced its crime recording system so that officers and staff can record and search for additional offences linked to an incident that are not captured as the principal crime. This improves the visibility and accuracy of crime data.

This enhanced functionality is now being used for stalking offences, ensuring these crimes are clearly recorded and fully searchable. The force recognises the additional time required to complete this process and has put appropriate support measures in place.

Compliance with the new recording requirements for stalking is actively monitored through the Crime Data Integrity Board, which provides ongoing oversight and assurance.

Recommendation 10

By 27 March 2025, [forces will] review and update their learning and training provision relating to stalking so it:

- *Meet the learning outcomes on stalking within the public protection national policing curriculum.*
- *Makes appropriate use of the stalking or harassment e-learning product developed by the College of Policing.*
- *Uses the skills and knowledge of local victim advocates or others from outside policing with relevant expertise.*
- *Includes information on relevant local policies and practice where necessary.*
- *Is provided to the officers and staff who will most benefit from the learning.*
- *Chief Constables should also make sure their policies and practice are reviewed and updated in accordance with the findings in the super-complaint investigation report.*

Update

The force has strengthened its approach to stalking by updating all training and learning materials to meet current national standards. A mandatory stalking and harassment e learning module has been introduced for all staff, with progress monitored across divisions to ensure full completion. Training now includes lived experience content and input from specialist organisations to improve officers' understanding of victims' experiences. Stalking is also covered in recruit training, investigator development, and continuing professional development. All materials include up to date policy and guidance links, ensuring officers and staff have easy access to the latest information. This approach ensures the workforce receives consistent, current, and victim focused training to support an improved response to stalking.

Recommendation 11

By 27 March 2025, [forces should] make sure that appropriate mechanisms are in place to fully understand the scale and types of stalking behaviour within their force and the effectiveness of their response. This should align with the VAWG national delivery framework. Mechanisms should include:

- Problem profiles using police data and intelligence and other sources of information to ensure that the full extent of stalking is well understood. This could include information sharing with local victim's services and other public services, and national and local statistics.*
- Regular assurance work such as audits to better understand the force response and make improvements where appropriate, including monitoring the use of SPOs, investigation outcomes and the quality of investigations.*
- Ways to regularly receive feedback from victims, such as victim surveys.*
- Force management statements which reflect current and future demand from stalking.*

Update

The force is strengthening its understanding of stalking demand and its effectiveness in responding to it, in line with the national Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) delivery framework. Analytical work is underway to build a clearer picture of stalking behaviours using police data, intelligence, national benchmarking and information from independent stalking advocates. Priority areas of focus include Stalking Protection Orders, risk levels, and insight provided by victim support services. Early analysis shows year on year increases in recorded stalking offences, with further work planned to identify stalking behaviours within other serious crime types.

Governance and scrutiny arrangements have been strengthened to improve oversight of stalking. A newly established Harm Reduction Unit undertakes all non-DA high risk stalking investigations and manages all offenders subject to Stalking Protection Orders, ensuring consistent oversight and robust safeguarding. Divisional tasking processes continue to provide additional local scrutiny and support effective operational delivery. Quality assurance mechanisms, including thematic reviews and force wide audits, are in place to test investigation quality and drive improvements. An action plan arising from a force audit has been approved by senior leadership and is now being implemented through established assurance structures.

Victim experience continues to be central to this work. Surveys gather feedback from victims of stalking and harassment, with results used to strengthen service delivery. Findings feed into force performance systems, and concerns raised by victims are followed up directly by local leadership. An annual thematic report on victim satisfaction provides further insight to shape improvements.

To support long term planning, stalking is now included within the Force Management Statement (FMS), ensuring current and future demand is recognised and reflected in the force's resourcing and capability planning. This strengthens the force's ability to anticipate emerging risks and maintain a robust, informed response to stalking.

Recommendation 12

By 27 March 2025, take steps to make sure that risk identification, assessment and management is effective in all stalking and breaches of orders cases, including by:

- Considering implementing the stalking screening tool to support the identification of stalking and the risks associated with stalking.*
- Having clear policies and procedures in place for assessing and managing risk in all cases. And where appropriate, embedding recognised risk assessment tools in force systems so that it is easy for officers to access, use and document their consideration of risk and safeguarding.*
- Recognising (in policies, guidance and training) the heightened risk associated with breaches of protective orders and measures.*
- Implementing screening and checking processes to support early identification, assessment and management of high risk cases. This may require stalking and breach of order cases to be considered at daily management meetings.*

Update

The force has strengthened how it identifies and manages risk in stalking cases. Consideration has been given to embedding the national Stalking Screening Tool within existing systems; however, current risk assessment processes already capture the majority of the required questions. The Domestic Abuse Review Team continues to complete secondary risk assessments, and clear guidance is available to officers to support effective identification and management of stalking related risk. This ensures the intent of the national tool is met through established processes.

All domestic abuse related and non domestic stalking cases are risk assessed using recognised models, and all secondary assessments are now managed by the Domestic Abuse Review Team following completion of specialist SASH training. This provides a consistent, resilient approach and removes single points of failure.

Policies, procedures and officer guidance highlight the heightened risks associated with stalking and breaches of protective orders. Priority breaches and high risk stalking cases are reviewed daily through established tasking processes, with additional scrutiny and oversight provided by the Harm Reduction Unit, which leads on all high risk stalking investigations and manages offenders subject to Stalking Protection Orders.

Divisional and daily tasking arrangements support early identification and escalation of high risk cases, ensuring timely safeguarding and a consistent, structured response across the force.

Recommendation 13

By 27 March 2025, [chief constables will] take steps to make sure that force strategies, structures and processes are in place so that police consider an SPO in every stalking case and apply for an SPO where relevant and appropriate to prevent harm and further offending.

To achieve this, chief constables should review, and revise where necessary:

- Local training and guidance on SPOs, including training and guidance for supervisors.*
- Mechanisms for supporting investigating officers to identify cases where SPOs would be appropriate and assisting them with SPO applications. This could be through dedicated teams or roles and/or through daily management meetings considering risk and safeguarding.*

Update

The force has taken significant steps to make sure Stalking Protection Orders (SPOs) are properly considered in every stalking case. Officers and supervisors across the organisation have received updated training on when and how SPOs should be used, and detailed guidance is now available on the force intranet to support decision making.

Specialist staff, including the Stalking Coordinator and the High Harm Team, provide advice and practical support to officers dealing with stalking cases.

Training on stalking and SPOs has also been built into development pathways for new recruits, including future “Phase 4” training for PCEP and DCEP entry routes. Further briefings for Inspectors and Sergeants continue to reinforce the need to consider SPOs consistently and at the earliest opportunity.

These actions are helping ensure that SPOs are used effectively to protect victims, manage risk, and prevent further harm.

Recommendation 14

By 27 March 2025, [forces should] take steps to make sure stalking victims receive the rights they are entitled to under the victims’ code and have access to support services. Chief constables should make sure:

- *Victim needs assessments are always completed.*
- *Their force has appropriate processes to make sure all stalking victims are told about their rights and under the victims’ code.*
- *Information about the national and specialist stalking support services available in their force area is easily available to police officers and staff, victims and the general public.*
- *Victims who would like to receive support are referred to an appropriate service in a timely manner.*
- *They monitor the number of stalking victims who are referred to specialist support services and take action when referral numbers are low.*

Update

The force has made strong progress in improving the support provided to stalking victims and ensuring they receive their full rights under the Victims’ Code. Victim Needs Assessments (VNAs) are now routinely completed in stalking cases, with officers able to complete these digitally and share them safely with victims. Comprehensive guidance, examples and step-by-step instructions have been published on the force intranet, alongside new resources such as a training video and practical tools to help officers ask VNA questions confidently.

Training on VNAs has been delivered across most departments, including frontline teams, Contact Management and specialist units, with remaining areas scheduled for upcoming sessions. Corporate Communications have also supported this work by improving visibility of VNA materials and publishing updates for officers and staff.

Stalking advocates are now in place and have met operational teams to raise awareness of their role and provide additional support to victims. The referral pathway has been strengthened, with the Stalking Coordinator overseeing referrals and meeting regularly with specialist services. High-risk non-domestic abuse victims receive automatic referrals, and other appropriate cases are referred promptly.

A recent review of victim satisfaction shows high rates of victims being offered support compared with other crime types, and this review will now take place annually. Continued auditing of stalking cases will ensure compliance remains strong.

These improvements mean stalking victims are better supported, better informed, and more consistently referred to the specialist help they are entitled to.

Recommendation 16

By 27 March 2025, chief constables and police and crime commissioners and their mayor equivalents [should] work together to review commissioning arrangements and make changes as soon as possible to ensure they embed collaborative working and information sharing between policing and services providing victim support to stalking victims.

Update

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) has carried out a review of specialist stalking support available across both the City and County. The findings show that commissioned services continue to perform strongly and provide appropriate support to victims of both domestic-abuse-related and non-domestic-abuse stalking. Strong working relationships between these services and the Force Stalking Coordinator ensure effective communication and coordinated support for victims.

As part of wider changes within the force's DART team, work is underway to maintain clear and efficient referral pathways to stalking advocates, with a continued focus on prioritising high-risk victims. In response to increasing demand, the OPCC has also reviewed service capacity and will fund an additional stalking advocate for the County from the next financial year.

Advocates are contributing actively to broader partnership efforts, delivering joint training with the force, and working with regional partners to share good practice and improve outcomes for victims.

Overall, these actions reflect a coordinated and proactive approach to commissioning, ensuring policing and victim support services work closely together to provide safe, timely and effective support for those affected by stalking.

Recommendation 17

By 27 March 2025, [forces should] make sure the new College of Policing investigations APP content on case allocation is reflected in the relevant policies relating to the allocation of stalking and breach of order cases for investigation. Force policies should support the allocation of stalking cases to officers with the right skills and experience, taking into account the potential risk and complexity involved in stalking and breach of order cases.

Update

The force has updated its Crime Management Policy and procedures to reflect national guidance on case allocation, ensuring stalking and breach-of-order investigations are assigned to officers with the right skills and experience. The revised policy was approved in 2025 and now provides clear direction on allocating cases based on risk and complexity. The Stalking and Harassment Policy remains in place, with a scheduled review by November 2026 to ensure ongoing alignment with national standards.

Recommendation 18

By 27 March 2025, [forces should] take steps to improve the quality of stalking investigations by taking a victim centred, suspect focused and context-led approach. Chief constables should make sure:

- Their workforce has the capacity and capability to undertake effective stalking investigations and can apply new and innovative investigation techniques to pursue digital lines of enquiry.*
- All reasonable lines of enquiry are pursued, supported by good supervision.*
- Arrest and search powers are used to gather evidence from and about suspects.*
- The impact on victims is evidenced in witness statements, so it can be used to inform charging decision and improve and likelihood of successful investigation outcomes.*

Update

The force is improving the quality of stalking investigations through the Investigative Standards Project, which focuses on strengthening investigative practice across all stages of a case. A structured training programme is being delivered to frontline officers and supervisors, using a stalking related scenario to develop skills in digital enquiries, evidence gathering, witness interview quality, and casefile preparation. Further modules will enhance skills in suspect management, arrest and search powers, and court processes.

Alongside this, work is underway to improve investigator capability through a new PIP accreditation process, updated guidance, and strengthened supervision supported by regular performance monitoring and quality assurance.

These improvements support a victim centred, suspect focused and context led approach, ensuring all reasonable lines of enquiry are completed and that evidence - including the impact on victims - supports stronger charging decisions and improved outcomes.

Recommendation 20

By 27 March 2025, [forces should] take steps to improve how their force effectively recognises and responds to online elements of stalking. This should include making sure:

- The scale and nature of online stalking behaviours informs their strategic understanding of the response to, stalking.*
- Examples of online stalking behaviours informs their strategic understanding of, and the response to, stalking.*
- Clear online safety advice is available to officers and staff, drawing on the College of Policing APP on stalking or harassment when it is developed.*
- Appropriate tools, technologies and support services to digitally safeguard victims are procured and officers and staff use these resources when appropriate.*

Update

The force has made steady progress in improving how it recognises and responds to online elements of stalking.

A comprehensive Strategic Stalking Profile has been produced and shared internally, giving the organisation a clearer understanding of stalking behaviours, including those carried out online. Online related stalking examples have also been incorporated into local learning and development materials to support staff awareness and improve operational responses.

Although the force continues to await the national publication of the College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice (APP) on stalking, it has taken interim steps to strengthen digital safeguarding for victims. This includes providing clear online safety advice and making use of digital protection tools already available. The force's Cyber Protect Officer plays an active role in offering tailored support to victims of cyber enabled threats and delivering wider preventative guidance to the community.

Work will continue once the national APP is released, ensuring full alignment with forthcoming national standards and allowing further enhancement of local training, strategic analysis, and digital safeguarding resources.

Recommendation 22

By 27 September 2025, [forces] using the information collated by the NPCC lead under recommendation 21, [are] to consider whether and how dedicated stalking officers and staff, or other subject matter experts, can be used to add value and support the force response to stalking.

Update

The force is reviewing how specialist expertise can further strengthen its response to stalking, drawing on national work being developed by the NPCC under Recommendation 21. Derbyshire already has well-established specialist arrangements that enhance both investigative quality and victim safeguarding. The High Harm Team investigates all high-risk non-domestic abuse stalking cases and also manages all offenders subject to Stalking Protection Orders, allowing breaches to be identified and addressed more efficiently. High Risk Domestic Abuse Teams oversee high-risk domestic-abuse-related stalking, ensuring a joined-up approach to safeguarding and investigation. In addition, a dedicated Stalking Coordinator acts as the force's subject matter expert, providing guidance to officers, supporting complex investigations and delivering training across the organisation. As national guidance becomes available, the force will continue to consider how these structures can be further developed to ensure a consistent, expert-led response to stalking and improved protection for victims.

Recommendation 23

By 27 March 2025, [forces should] implement a mechanism for early screening of crimes to improve the identification, recording and management of all stalking cases. Forces should consider screening crimes similar to stalking or where stalking behaviours may be present as part of a course of conduct, like harassment, malicious communications and breaches of orders.

Update

The Crime Management Support Unit (CMSU) now screens all reported crimes through dedicated Crime Management Sergeants. Each report is reviewed and assigned a low, medium or high-risk grading, ensuring higher-risk cases are prioritised for action.

Staff within the CMSU have received enhanced training in stalking and domestic abuse, enabling them to recognise stalking behaviours even when they appear within related offences such as harassment, malicious communications or breaches of protective orders. This strengthens early identification and improves the safeguarding response for victims.

Recommendation 25

By 27 March 2025, [forces should] explore opportunities to improve how their force works with partners to contribute to a multi-agency response to stalking. This should include considering:

- How the force works in partnership with healthcare, the CPS, probation services and other criminal justice partners to manage stalking perpetrators and address their behaviour.*
- Whether and how they should collaborate with other forces to effectively and efficiently contribute to multi-agency partnerships on stalking.*
- How Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) are being used to effectively manage stalking offenders.*

Update

The force is developing Multi-Agency Stalking Clinics to strengthen how stalking cases are managed in partnership with other organisations. These clinics will bring together key agencies to assess risk, coordinate safeguarding, and ensure actions are allocated to reduce harm, protect victims and address offender behaviour. The first clinic is planned for April, with final agreement on information-sharing arrangements expected shortly.

The force continues to work closely with regional and national partners. This includes active participation in the East Midlands regional stalking group, chaired by the force's regional lead, where police forces, CPS and other partners share good practice and improve consistency in how stalking is managed. The Stalking Coordinator also attends national meetings to ensure local practice reflects national learning and standards.

Once partner sign-off is completed, the Multi-Agency Stalking Clinics will begin, providing a more coordinated and effective response to stalking across the force area.

Conclusion

Derbyshire Constabulary has made substantive progress in responding to the findings and recommendations of the Suzy Lamplugh Trust super-complaint, strengthening both our strategic oversight and operational delivery in relation to stalking. Significant improvements have been made across governance, training, investigation quality, risk management, victim support and partnership working, underpinned by clearer accountability and an increased focus on high-harm perpetrators.

We recognise that stalking remains a complex and evolving crime type, requiring sustained attention, continual learning and close collaboration with partners. While good progress has been achieved, the force is clear that further work is required to embed consistency, respond to emerging risks, and incorporate forthcoming national guidance and best practice. Ongoing assurance, scrutiny and victim feedback will continue to shape our approach.

Our commitment remains unwavering: to protect victims, prevent further harm, pursue offenders robustly, and deliver a professional, compassionate and effective service that the public can trust. Continuous improvement in our response to stalking will remain a priority for Derbyshire Constabulary.

OUR PRIORITIES Prevent · Respond · Safeguard · Investigate



One Derbyshire