

Ten years on: stalking in Kirklees, policing and support for survivors

Introductory Information

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Background

Stalking offences were introduced into law in England and Wales over ten years ago in 2012. There has been a large increase in reports of stalking across West Yorkshire between 2020 and 2022, including in the Kirklees district, but convictions for stalking offences are low. There is no recent research on stalking in West Yorkshire nor have there been any specialist support provision for victims in Kirklees.

What is stalking?

Stalking is defined by The Suzy Lamplugh Trust as; 'a pattern of fixated and obsessive behaviour which is repeated, persistent, intrusive and causes fear of violence or engenders alarm and distress in the victim'. The behaviours can be offline (such as visiting the victim's home or place of work, following the victim or leaving gifts), or online (such as unwanted social media communication, calls, texts, emails, hacking and spyware). www.suzylamplugh.org/faqs/what-is-stalking'

Who has funded the research and who will carry it out?

The Secure Societies Institute, University of Huddersfield have been awarded a grant from the Economic and Social Research Council's program 'Partner with the police to tackle violence against

women and girls' to carry out an action research project entitled 'Ten years on: stalking in Kirklees policing and support for victims'.



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Dr Rosie Campbell OBE is the Principal investigator on the project, working with Professor Jason Roach the Co-Investigator. They hope the project will bring the issue of stalking from the margins to the centre in policy and practice addressing violence against women and girls in Kirklees.



When is the project taking place?

The project started in early September 2022 and will be completed by the end of September 2023.

What does the project aim to do?

Overall the project aims to establish a clearer picture of stalking in Kirklees, including how West Yorkshire Police are currently policing stalking and identifying gaps in support for survivors, so they can get the protection and support they need, as early as possible to ensure their safety and reduce trauma. The project specifically aims to;

- Set up a new stalking research, prevention and practice hub linked to the Secure Societies Institute: this will be a forum through which practice and academic learning from the project will be shared across West Yorkshire and beyond.
- Review police data on stalking and investigative decision making in stalking investigations.
- Identify current support for victims of stalking in Kirklees and reviewing best practice for stalking victims/survivors.
- Consult women who have been survivors/victims of stalking about their experiences of support, getting their views on improving support and policing.

 Produce a codesigned model for a stalking support provision, produced with victims of stalking, their advocates, domestic and sexual abuse services, women's and girls services and other organisations.

Partners

The project was developed with a range of partners who will continue to be involved throughout the project, these are West Yorkshire Police, West Yorkshire Violence Reduction Unit (West Yorkshire Combined Mayoral Authority), Safer Kirklees and Pennine Domestic Abuse Partnership.















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Methods

We will be using the following methods;

- Scoping current specialist support for stalking survivors/victims in Kirklees.
- Reviewing international research and practice literature on stalking, including best practice for support and policing.
- Consulting survivors, hosting a number of inclusion and co design events, working closely with Pennine Domestic Abuse Partnership, other partners and stakeholders.
- Analysing police stalking data.
- Carrying out interviews with survivors of stalking to seek their views on improving support and policing.
- Carrying out interviews with police officers.

The project will adopt a trauma informed approach to research and is informed by the principles of participatory action research.



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Support contacts

If you are experiencing stalking, or have in the past, and want to access support or information contact;

- Pennine Domestic Abuse Partnership: on their 24 hour free helpline 0800 052 7222
- West Yorkshire Independent Stalking
 Advocacy Service (West Yorkshire
 Victim Support): 0300 3730978 or email
 WY_ISAC_Service@victimsupport.org.
 uk. Or contact the charity's national 24/7
 support line on 0808 168 9111.
- National Stalking helpline: call on 0808 802 0300 during opening hours (Weekdays 9.30-16.00 (untill 20.00 on Wednesdays). The Suzy Lamplugh Trust who run the help line have a lot of information about Stalking on their website: hud.ac/nas
- <u>Paladin</u> National Stalking Advocacy
 Service: <u>hud.ac/nar</u>

More information

- Follow **SecureSocieties** on Twitter: hud.ac/nat
- Look for updates on the SSI website: hud.ac/nc3
- Email **Dr Rosie Campbell** at r.campbell@hud.ac.uk



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