



First-of-its-kind resource helps victims through the criminal justice process



An innovative new online product which aims to transform the experience of victims and witnesses in the criminal justice system in Devon and Cornwall has been hailed as an “invaluable asset” by Victims Minister Laura Farris.

Criminal Justice and You, launched yesterday (Monday, March 4, 2024), is a first-of-its-kind multimedia resource developed by victims for victims, bringing all aspects of the criminal justice system into one place, with the aim of demystifying every step of the process.

The interactive resource has been created by the Devon and Cornwall Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) in conjunction with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) for Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

The project features videos of partners working in their own area of expertise from across the criminal justice arena, speaking directly to victims and witnesses to

explain what to expect at each stage, from reporting a crime through to the conclusion of a case.

There is also information about accessing victim services and restorative justice, as well as what happens if a case doesn't go to court or if the perpetrator is under the age of 18. Details are also provided of how to make a complaint if a victim or witness is unhappy with the service they have been provided.

To ensure accessibility, the videos feature a British Sign Language translator, and transcripts are viewable as a plain text document for anyone who experiences difficulty with a video format, or who wishes to view the information in another language.

Police and Crime Commissioner Alison Hernandez said the new resource would prove invaluable to anyone who feels they need support or clarity, and will be an important tool in ensuring transparency around the criminal justice system.

She said: "By working with victims we have ensured that their voice has been heard throughout the development of this piece of work, and I am hopeful that these videos, alongside links to further useful information, will help to give victims and witnesses back control over their experience, allowing them to understand what is happening at a time that suits them and at their own pace.

"At a time when confidence in policing and criminal justice is in the spotlight, this tool will help to ensure transparency in relation not only to our police force but also to all our partner agencies, who are here for you and want the best possible outcome for you."

Criminal Justice and You features videos from the Commissioner, Devon and Cornwall Police, Victim Support, the Crown Prosecution Service, Citizen's Advice, His Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service, National Probation Service, the Parole Board, and the Youth Justice Service.

Deputy Chief Constable of Devon and Cornwall Police David Thorne said: "Dealing with the criminal justice system can be a daunting prospect for victims and this tool will give them valuable help and advice.

"I'm sure our police officers and staff will also find it useful, and we will be encouraging them to share it with the people and communities we serve."

Minister for Victims & Safeguarding Laura Farris said it was important that victims felt supported on every step of their way through the criminal justice process.

She said: "Criminal Justice & You will be an invaluable asset to anyone who needs it in Devon and Cornwall.

"We want all victims of crime to come forward and feel supported through the criminal justice process. This is why we have launched the Victim's Code Campaign to ensure that they are aware of their rights and the support available to them, whatever the crime."

Criminal Justice and You is hosted on the OPCC's Victim Care Devon & Cornwall website, which helps victims to access specialist support services at any time, even if a crime hasn't been reported to police.

The resource can be viewed [here](#).

