UK Consultation on Stalking

REPORT MAY 2015

Commissioned by:

Network for Surviving Stalking in partnership with Women’s Aid, End Male Violence Against Women (White Ribbon Campaign), and Action Scotland Against Stalking

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This report is meant to assist victims and service providers. Anyone reproducing any part of the report, or referring to it, is asked to credit Network for Surviving Stalking.
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1 Introduction:

Circumstances that led to the Commissioning of this UK wide Consultation

Description of project brief written by NSS and endorsed by partners:
1.1 The intended outcome of this nationwide consultation project is improving internal communications within the third sector and external communications with the public about the crime of stalking.

1.2 There are many individuals and organisations working to break down ignorance and raise awareness about stalking. It is a relatively young sector and many of the individuals within it have had direct experience of stalking.

1.3 Currently this work is largely uncoordinated and communications between stakeholders is poor; especially between domestic abuse organisations and those focussing purely on stalking.

1.4 The current fragmented situation leads to duplication, unnecessary competition and unclear messages for the public. The situation is putting lives at risk.

1.5 Clearly defined key messages are vital if we want to encourage early identification of stalking behaviour, which is the ideal for all cases. It is especially important where issues of domestic abuse and stalking cross over; victims targeted by ex-partners are most at risk of serious violence.

1.6 A strategic solution is needed and this project is intended to be the crucial first step. It is an opportunity for those raising awareness about stalking and domestic abuse/violence to express their ideas about what the key messages should be and how we can improve communication to the public and also amongst ourselves, within the third sector.

1.7 The Consultants selected to carry out this task are experienced in carrying out consultations of this size, with excellent people skills, and high levels of professionalism and independence.

1.8 They report to a small management team comprising representatives of some or all of the five key charities in the stalking/domestic violence sector. It will be the first time that domestic violence organisations have collaborated with stalking charities on a communications project.

1.9 The management team will collaborate, support and advise the consultants on the framework and question areas.

1.10 The consultation may involve telephone interviews, focus groups and workshops with third sector stakeholders, stalking victims, key opinion formers, various professionals and members of the media.

1.11 Finally the consultants will provide the management team with a comprehensive report which will be circulated throughout the sector.

1.12 As well as containing a summary of their findings, the report will include recommendations about steps that should be taken to improve internal and external communications on stalking. We also expect this report to be used as the foundation of the next step for the third sector - a comprehensive media strategy on stalking.
1.13 Funding has been secured for the project from Awards for All and The Allen Lane Foundation. The total budget for the project is £15,630; £3,980 of which has been calculated as Consultant’s Fees, with the remainder allocated to running costs including expenses for those participating in the consultation.

1.14 This project began in October 2014 with a completion date of May 31st 2015. Correspondence, questions and queries were all addressed to the NSS and answered by Jane Harvey or Peter Patrick via stalkingcomms@gmail.com

2 Terms of Reference written by NSS and endorsed by partners

2.1 Network for Surviving Stalking in partnership with Action Scotland Against Stalking, the White Ribbon Campaign and Women’s Aid Terms of reference to carry out a national consultation project around communications on stalking.

2.2 Appointed Consultant/s will work with representatives of the named organisations to draft a consultation document to explore the key messages surrounding stalking.

2.3 This document will then form the basis of a consultation that the appointed consultants will carry out with all stakeholders, including domestic abuse and internet safety organisations.

2.4 Following the consultation the Consultants will produce a comprehensive report setting out a framework for co-ordinated working and improved communication on stalking internally and externally.

2.5 The project is being funded mainly by Awards for All and the Allen Lane Foundation. The estimated overall cost of the project is in the region of £16,000 of which £13,000 has been secured.
2.6 The consultation is to be carried out between October 2014 and March 2015 followed by a further two month reporting period to a management team comprising partner organisations.

2.7 The project is to be led by the Network for Surviving stalking who will feedback during the process to the key partners and to the Consortium for Stalking

2.8 The other Partners in the project are ASAS Action Scotland Against Stalking, White Ribbon Campaign, and Women’s Aid

3 Methodology:

3.1 The consultation process had two parts. The first was a public questionnaire that would try to establish how much the general public knew about stalking; how many people had been a victim of stalking, possibly without realising what was happening; where and how they obtained help.

3.2 The second part took the form of a questionnaire sent to specific agencies, asking them how many victims of Stalking they dealt with in a 12 month period; how they were able to help; if they made referrals to other agencies; what ideas they had about service improvement and what were the barriers.

3.3 The Public questionnaire was to be made available online by way of an inclusive website called www.scaredofsomeone.org which explained what Stalking actually was; how victims might try to keep safe; how to collect the right evidence for agencies such as the Police. When presented, this evidence would enable the agency to do a risk assessment and have a positive impact on the victim’s experience of seeking help.

3.4 The website also featured videos about stalking that emphasised the impact of different types of stalking behaviour. It was hoped the website would provide a variety of ways in which people could learn about stalking – by reading the information, writing down responses and by watching videos.

3.5 It was thought that the public would be able to use the website both to respond to the questionnaire, and importantly as a resource - for self-help and to find contact details for specific agencies that could support and advise them.

3.6 The Consultants spent two months building the website and contacting agencies to ask them if they would like to be included on the site’s contact list of agencies. This then formed the basis of a helpful resource list for victims. Over 80 agencies are now listed on the website. Victims can browse the list
and then choose the type of advice or support that they feel is appropriate to their situation, their levels of risk and danger.

3.7 The website was brought to the attention of the general public by way of various social media channels, such as: a Facebook page, a Twitter feed and a LinkedIn page. Posts were sent out at least twice a day, every day, directing people to the website with a live link. They were offered general advice, safety advice and a form of risk assessment that was downloadable in PDF to be completed with easy ‘ticks’ and taken to their chosen support agency, or completed in Word online, and emailed to the agency they were in contact with.

3.8 Not all of this process was recordable or possible to count, but we do have some partial information about how many people have made use of it since it went live on Christmas Eve 2014. We have Google Analytics that record all visits to the site and page visits data, Facebook stats and Twitter engagement information.

3.9 The Questionnaire was easy to complete online with a selection of yes or no answers, along with spaces where people had an opportunity to tell us of their fears, experiences, and hopes for further or more effective services.

3.10 All of this was then captured by an automatic process, giving us the data and opinions that have been recorded in this report. We have no information of who the respondents were, or where in the UK they live – unless they chose to tell us in their responses. This was deliberate, to enable them to feel free to express their thoughts, unencumbered by any possibility of being contacted directly.

3.11 The Agency questionnaire used a more ‘professional’ language than the public questionnaire, using terms that agencies use in their everyday work. Examples of this are ‘Risk Assessment’ in the Agency questionnaire, whereas we used ‘Safety Planning’ in the public version. We used ‘Victim’ in the agency questionnaire, and avoided that word as much as possible in the public questionnaire.

3.12 The reason for this was to make the information on the website readily accessible to the public. We did not want to make them uneasy by using impersonal official-sounding words. We wanted to engage them in thinking about how stalking behaviour might present itself and to encourage them to complete the questionnaire. We were aware too that the term ‘victim’ carries emotive overtones that would be unacceptable to some people who may well have experienced being targeted by a stalker but still reject the term ‘victim’.

3.13 Social Media posts were sent out twice a day on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn, at different times of the day. Readers were given many reasons and encouraged to visit the website.

3.14 These reasons included: find out about stalking; get advice about safety planning; find out if their situation might be high risk/dangerous; find contact details of specialist stalking organisations across the UK; find contact details of other related help organisations, such as sexual or physical abuse specialists;
watch videos; how to collect evidence; and of course to answer the online questionnaire.

3.15 Every response or reply to us was answered, usually within 2 hours, even when this happened late in the evening or in the early hours. This was felt to be important because we had no idea when the person might be online again, or feeling able to reach out for support on their specific issue.

3.16 The agency questionnaire was sent out by personal email to over 600 different agencies and to specific people in organisations wherever we had individual email addresses, these included:

3.17 Police Forces and specific Police Officers, Churches, Samaritans, Victim Support, Adult and Children Safeguarding Boards, Local Authorities Health and Social Care, Adult Services, Women’s abuse and sexual abuse support groups, charities, and organisations, Men’s abuse support groups, charities and organisations, Football Clubs, Rugby Clubs and other sports related charities and organisations, Schools, Universities and Colleges, Solicitors, Citizen’s Advice Bureaux, charities,

3.18 All responses to the public and agency questionnaires were collected and analysed to provide the percentages and numbers contained in this report

4 The Facts about Stalking:

4.1 A simple definition of stalking was chosen, to make it easy to understand even when under pressure or stress, as victims are likely to be, when seeking help.

4.2 The definition chosen was:

‘Stalking is repeated acts which are unwanted, intrusive and can be reasonably expected to cause distress, alarm or fear’.

4.3 The website was used to explain that the repeated acts could be phone calls, texts, emails, sending unwanted gifts, following, watching, stealing, using the internet to unnerv damage or disadvantage someone.
4.4 Stalking is not a uniform behaviour with a singular motivation and so it is a complex task to try formulate a framework that will help victims assess their situation and plan for safety. On the website we used five categories of stalking behaviour and described in detail specific ways for the victim to respond to each. These categories are widely accepted and are:

- The Suitor who builds a fantasy or delusional relationship around the victim, the fantasy sustains the behaviour and can last for years. Is usually a stranger or brief acquaintance. Feels entitled to the relationship.
- The Rejected Ex-partner who wants reconciliation or revenge; stalking substitutes for lost intimacy. Can last for years. Often involves threats and violence. Feels justified. (Mullen, Pathe Pullen found 90% were males)
- The Resentful who wants to right a perceived injustice or humiliation; stalking gives sense of power and control; wants to frighten and distress
- The Unwanted Admirer who is lonely or lustful; makes incompetent attempts at building a relationship and is blind to rebuffs. Can be intense and short term. Wants closeness not the fantasy of closeness.
- The Predator who has deviant sexual desires; stalking sustained by pleasure of voyeurism and sense of power whilst watching the victim and rehearsing in fantasy the planned attack. Usually male. Makes up a small percentage of stalkers

4.5 Dr Lorraine Sheridan uses 4 stalker typologies. She presents a succinct and informative summary at: http://www.nss.org.uk/about/stalking-facts-figures/stalker-types/

4.6 The majority of stalkers are known to their victims – as ex-partners, colleagues or acquaintances.

4.7 The overwhelming majority of stalkers are male but stalkers and their victims can be of either gender.

4.8 Stalking is not legally defined in England and Wales but the Protection from Harassment Act (PHA) 1997 (amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012) Section 2A (3) lists a number of examples of behaviours that constitute stalking. Two new Sections, 2A and 4A, were inserted into the PHA 1997 and two new offences of stalking were introduced on 25th November 2012. In Scotland the Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2010 (see http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2010/13/section/39/enacted) in which Stalking is dealt with in its own right and not nested under harassment.
4.9 This means that in order to take action under the legislation outside Scotland, it is necessary to show that the behaviour amounts to harassment and then more specifically to stalking (Section 2A) or stalking causing serious alarm or distress (Section 4A) which has a substantial adverse effect on the victim’s usual day to day activities which the perpetrator knows or ought to know amounts to harassment or stalking or fear of violence.

4.10 The PHA 1997 was amended to give the Police the power of entry, search and seizure when investigating the new summary only offence of stalking (Section 2A).

4.11 Following the introduction of the PHA in the UK in 1997 the Home Office added questions about stalking to the British Crime Survey in 1998 when 9988 adults aged 16-59 were surveyed. 11.8% revealed that they had been subjected to persistent and unwanted behaviour since the age of sixteen. 16.1% females and 6.8% males. Age and gender were important predictors with females making up 73% of the victims and 16-19 year old women reporting the highest rates of unwanted attention (17%).

4.12 The British Crime Survey 2001 used different criteria, narrowing down stalking behaviours to only three methods of harassment. In spite of this constraint the lifetime rates of stalking of women rose from 16.1 to 19% and of men from 6.8% to 12% (almost doubled).

4.13 The British Crime Survey 2011-12 suggests that 20% women and 10% men have experienced stalking.


4.15 In the report the government refers to publication of another consultation ‘Getting it right for Victims and Witnesses’ July 2012 in which there is a pledge to embark on ‘wide ranging reforms to ensure victims of the most serious crimes, the most persistently targeted, and the most vulnerable will have access to the support they need and when they need it’. They expect that the majority of support services will be commissioned at local level by elected Police and Crime Commissioners.

4.16 The Code of Practice for Victims of Crime (the Victims’ code) was introduced in 2006. It sets out the minimum standard of services that victims of crime should receive from the criminal justice agencies.

4.17 In February 2013 there was an Independent Parliamentary Inquiry into Stalking Law Reform. Chair: Rt.Hon. Elfyn Llwyd. A range of Recommendations were made. (More of this later)
4.18 In Scotland there is the Victim and Witnesses Scotland Act 2014 which sets out the framework of a national lead on stalking; specialist Crown Office staff; training for all Crown Office staff. The Police are required to refer all stalking cases to Domestic Abuse teams. All Police are to receive training on stalking.

5 The Consultation Process:

5.1 The public questionnaire went live on 24th December 2014, and was promoted online until March 31st 2015, for a total period of three months. It is currently still available online; and will continue to collect information for analysis at a later date.

5.2 The Agency questionnaire was sent out at the end of January 2015 by email to over 600 agencies across the UK with a request that they complete and return it by 21st March 2015. We asked them to share the questionnaire with colleagues and encourage them to complete it too.

5.3 The Agency questionnaire also contained information about the website, the Facebook page and the twitter feed, with a request that agencies would share these details with their service users.

5.4 From October 2014 until the website launch on 24th December 2014, we were also asking on social media channels, for agencies to let us know if they would like to be included in the consultation, and a list of over 100 agencies was formed from responses to this on Twitter.

5.5 A database of agencies was built from the information received from social media, from research into relevant organisations and from the consultants’ own databases of contacts within the Social Care, Safeguarding and Domestic Abuse fields from previous work experiences.

5.6 The Twitter feed was used to build followers of the interested general public, as well as relevant and interested agencies. This was very successful in finding smaller local support groups and organisations that do not have their own website, or are not listed in any other national databases.

5.7 Twitter brought us into contact with many international and European organisations who, by following our tweets, showed a level of interest in this agenda and the issues involved with it, worldwide.

5.8 The Facebook page was found to be useful by members of the public, and we had many ‘shares’ of our posts, showing that this issue affects many more people than might be known from current statistics.

5.9 The partners in this project were contacted and asked to send out the agency questionnaire to all their staff, and to make all their service users aware of the
public questionnaire and the advice available on the Scared of Someone website.

6 The Analysis

6.1 This is in two parts- the Public questionnaire (see Section 7) and the Agency questionnaire (see Section 8). The goal was to discover how the public view the issue of stalking; what services were available for victims; and how agencies currently work with victims who approach them. Crucially we wanted to find out how victims and people close to them AND agencies think services could be improved.

6.2 Section 7 of this report presents every question posed on the Public Questionnaire (111); the analysed response to that question and comments that interpret the significance of the response.

The public questionnaire was completed by 171 respondents
155 were female, 15 were male and 1 chose not to respond.
137 said they were direct victims of stalking behaviour
124 were female, 12 male, 1 unspecified.
66 respondents said that they were close to a victim of stalking
59 were female, 7 male.
52 respondents said that they were both victims and close to victims
45 were female, 7 male.
19 said that they were neither a victim nor close to a victim but simply interested in the subject.
16 were female, 3 male.
This forms the cohort on which the report has been written.

6.3 Section 8 of this report presents the seventeen questions of the Agency Questionnaire, followed by the analysed responses and a comment about the significance of the response. We were particularly keen to find out if agencies worked together and how they communicated with each other – if at all. We sought their views on how their services might be made more effective and what they saw as the barriers to service improvement.

6.4 Agencies who participated were, according to the category they selected for themselves:
5 x Local Authority
2 x Church
1 x Probation
1 x Campaigning Org
3 x Police
6.5 The number of agencies that participated was very disappointing, with only 23 responses from well over 600 contacts – 95% of whom were contacted at least twice. This is a very clear indication that Stalking still has not made it onto the national agency agenda in any way.

That some key agencies chose not to respond at all – e.g. Women’s Aid, one of the partners who endorsed this project - brings home the glaring reality of the current levels of communication and joint working in this field and helps to explain why victims feel unsupported and stalking is so under reported. There have been years of research that connect dangerous stalking with ex-partner abuse and yet the very agencies who should be living this reality do not respond.

6.6 Key others who did not respond were: CAADA- the agency that provides training for IDVAs and is said to include training on stalking did not respond. The Minister for Women did not respond. The Nation Union of Students did not respond. Unison did not respond. Refuge did not respond. Not a single Citizens Advice Bureau responded and 262 were contacted, twice. Not one Local Safeguarding Board responded and we tried to reach every LSCB or equivalent in England, Scotland and Wales. We sent 190 requests, twice. Not one firm of solicitors responded. Not one newspaper, radio programme or radio station responded.

6.7 Clearly then there was something about the questionnaires/ the subject / or other external factors in Phase 1 that resulted in the lack of responses. We look forward to engaging with these crucial agencies in Phase 2 and long term. We will try to find out why key agencies did not respond and then try again. There are parts of the UK where partnership working is clearly more advanced than others - e.g. parts of Scotland and Hampshire.’

6.8 Section 9 of this report presents conclusions drawn from the analysis of both the Public and Agency questionnaires. The conclusions have been grouped into key themes: Voice of the Victim, Awareness, Information, Training, Joint Working, Improving Practice and Where is the elephant

6.9 Section 9 also presents our recommendations which relate to the conclusions drawn from our research. There is an additional ‘in-house’ recommendation for NSS, the commissioning agency of this independent report. The additional recommendation is intended to assist NSS in their planning for the future. A
future in which NSS may drive the changes that achieve more positive outcomes for victims of stalking.

7 The Public Questionnaire

The questions posed in the public questionnaire are reproduced here, followed by the analysed response to each question. A comment has been added to each one giving an interpretation of the response.

The first set of questions was designed to find out what people generally knew about stalking. The next set of questions was designed for victims and people close to them. They would establish the nature of the relationship with the stalker, the stalking behaviours used and information about their experience of being stalked. These were followed by questions about looking for support and their experience of that process.

Some questions were open questions giving victims the opportunity to describe their experience of being stalked; the impact it had on their lives and the lives of people close to them. For example, we asked if there was a tipping point at which they decided to seek help and what it was. The 620+ responses to the open questions are what have made this project so worthwhile. They give amazing and generous insights into what victims want and need when going through the harrowing and often terrifying experience of being stalked.

The responses are an incredible resource for any agency that really wants to understand the impact of stalking and to improve services for victims.
7.1: General Awareness about Stalking

**Question 1: What is your gender?**
Responses were received from 15 Males, 155 Females and 1 Unspecified.

This gave us percentages of 9% male and 91% female. It was expected that the majority would be female, although an almost 10% response by men clearly demonstrates that stalking is not simply a women’s issue. This compares well with a large one year research project on stalking conducted by Dr Lorraine Sheridan for the Network for Surviving Stalking in which 86% of respondents were female, 14% were male.

7.2: Defining all aspects of Stalking behaviour

**Question 2: Would you consider any of these things to be Stalking: Making unwanted, repeated phone calls or sending faxes?**
Responses were Yes 154 (90%), No 14 (8%) Blank 3.

This shows quite a good general level of understanding of these behaviours as Stalking behaviour, but a worrying 8% who did not recognise this.

**Question 3: Would you consider any of these things to be Stalking: Sending repeated unwanted text messages, emails, social network messages?**
Responses were Yes 159 (93%), No 10 (6%) Blank 2.

Again a good level of knowledge about the high level Stalking behaviours.

**Question 4: Would you consider any of these things to be Stalking: Sending repeated unwanted letters, gifts?**
Responses were Yes 146 (85%), No 19 (11%) Blank 6.

Still a good level of understanding of one of the common Stalking behaviours.

**Question 5: Would you consider any of these things to be Stalking: Repeatedly watching or spying on you?**
Responses were Yes 168 (98%), No 1 Blank 2.

This is probably one of the most widely recognised forms of Stalking behaviour, so these responses were not unexpected.

**Question 6: Would you consider any of these things to be Stalking: Repeatedly monitoring your use of the Internet?**
Responses were Yes 150 (88%), No 16 (9%), Blank 5.

Another of the more well-known Stalking behaviours, and an unsurprising result.
Question 7: Would you consider any of these things to be Stalking: Repeatedly publishing anything about you?
Responses were Yes 134 (78%), No 29 (17%), and Blank 8.

We can see a marked decrease in public knowledge here. This is of particular concern as the increase in use of social media channels such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and You-Tube with their huge audiences, ease of access, and relative anonymity makes Internet stalking a very powerful and potent destructive force.
Cyberstalking is raised in the Home Office publication ‘Review of the PHA 1997 Improving Protection for Victims of Stalking’ and a commitment made to continue to work to ensure online activities do not circumvent the law.

Question 8: Would you consider any of these things to be Stalking: Pretending something was written by you?
Responses were Yes 108 (63%), No 55 (32%) Blank 8.

This suggests that possibly one third of the general public may not recognise this as one of the behaviours of Stalking nor understand the implications on life online.

Question 9: Would you consider any of these things to be Stalking: Repeatedly following you, waiting for you?
Responses were Yes 162 (95%), No 6 (3%), Blank 3.

This is another well-known stalking behaviour, so this response is not surprising.

Question 10: Would you consider any of these things to be Stalking: Repeatedly going to your home or place of work?
Responses were Yes 162 (95%), No 6 (3%) Blank 3

There is a clear expression here that unwanted repeated visits to home or workplace cause alarm bells to ring and people realise there is reason to be concerned. Mullen Pathe and Pullen’s experience is that nearly half of all stalkers will turn up at their victim’s workplace. (‘Stalkers and Their Victims Mullen, Pathe and Pullen)

Question 11: Would you consider any of these things to be Stalking: Repeatedly ordering or cancelling goods in your name?
Responses were Yes 123 (72%), No 40 (23%) Blank 8 (5%)

A surprising level of understanding about this behaviour, which leads us to conjecture that it may be much more prevalent than was expected.

Question 12: Would you consider any of these things to be Stalking: Repeatedly damaging your possessions, or breaking into your house?
Responses were Yes 140 (82%), No 27 (16%) Blank 4
Again behaviour that should not be seen as normal, but 16% did not recognise the importance of the repeated behaviour constituting Harassment or Stalking.

If asked the question outside the context of a questionnaire on stalking it would be interesting to see how many of those who responded ‘Yes’ would have identified the behaviour as potentially stalking? It is likely that the behaviour would be classified as repeated breaking and entering with criminal damage and that the concept of stalking would not be considered.

**Question 13: Would you consider any of these things to be Stalking:**
*Repeatedly making threats to hurt you or anyone close to you?*
Responses were  
Yes 145 (85%),  
No 22 (13%)  
Blank 4

Here we see from 13% of respondents that repeated threats to them would not been interpreted as Harassment and Stalking behaviour. For many people living with threats is just part of their ‘normal’ existence especially those living with domestic abuse (and 59% of our stalkers were ex-partners). This information could be used by agencies in their future awareness raising campaigns so that they challenge the acceptance of living with threats of violence.

**Question 14: Would you consider any of these things to be Stalking:**
*Repeatedly asking for personal details about you?*
Responses were  
Yes 154 (90%),  
No 14 (8%)  
Blank 3

A good overall understanding of this aspect of Stalking.

There is a huge challenge associated with the giving of information to stalkers – whether willingly or unintentionally - that could be covered in training and awareness raising.

**Question 15: Would you consider any of these things to be Stalking:**
*Repeatedly stealing your personal property?*
Responses were  
Yes 132 (77%),  
No 34 (20%)  
Blank 5

Similar comments to the above points in Questions 12 and 13 above, with 20% of the public not connecting this behaviour with the Stalking agenda. It may be that, as with many aspects of stalking, agencies in particular view the stalking activity one event at a time and fall back on categories that are familiar to them – so this might be ‘X burgled the house AGAIN’/stole washing AGAIN’ rather than harassment and stalking behaviour. Often the victim is all too aware of the build of fear and tension linked to the repeated intrusions and thefts but may not be able to label the behaviour in such a way as to obtain an appropriate response. NB The victim should not have to do this, as agencies should be able to assess and provide appropriate support.

**Question 16: Would you consider any of these things to be Stalking:**
*Repeatedly threatening that they will commit suicide if you do not do what they want*
Responses were  
Yes 126 (74%),  
No 40 (23%)  
Blank 5
Here we can see the growing lack of knowledge about the less talked about behaviours, and the beginnings of the blurred lines between the Domestic Abuse arenas. This result demonstrates that agencies need to be alert to the possibility that almost a quarter of victims will not recognise repeated threats to commit suicide as stalking. Agencies too need to consider whether dealing with these threats under the umbrella of stalking might achieve a better outcome for victims than simply viewing it as one of the commonly used tactics in cases of Domestic Abuse.

Dr Lorraine Sheridan’s research project found that threats to commit suicide were the third most common stalking behaviour (62%) (Phone calls and spying being the first and second respectively)

**Question 18: Would you consider any of these things to be Stalking**
*Repeatedly contacting people connected to you?*
Responses were Yes 159 (93%), No 9 (5%) Blank 3

This response shows a good level of understanding in the general public about this aspect of Stalking.

**Question 19: Would you consider any of these things to be Stalking**
*Repeatedly sending obscene or sexually explicit communications?*
Responses were Yes 149 (87%), No 18 (10%) Blank 4

Here we see a concerning 10% of people who would not recognise this as a Stalking behaviour.
This suggests that agencies could raise awareness that this behaviour is unacceptable and stress they are used to dealing with explicit emails/communications - and understand that sharing embarrassing content is very difficult.
This is an area of increasing concern as stalkers become more adept at using social media in the 24hour a day arena of the Internet.
The Government in its ‘Review of the PHA 1997 Improving Protection for Victims of Stalking’ commits to tackle sexual bullying and harassing practices such as ‘sexting’

**Question 20: Are you or have you been: The target of repeated unwanted pestering behaviour**
Responses were Yes 137 (80%), No 33 (20%) Blank 1
124 were female, 12 male and 1 unknown gender

This shows that 80% of our respondents considered themselves to be the targeted victims of stalking. Clearly they were drawn to the website and questionnaire because the subject meant something to them and they were willing to share their experiences.

**Question 21: Are you or have you been close to someone who was/is suffering from this**
Responses were  Yes 66 (39%),  No 99 (58%)  Blank 6.

59 were female and 7 were male.  
52 of the 66 described themselves as both victims and close to victims, and of these: 45 were female, and 7 were male. 
Research shows that on average 21 people in the primary victim’s network of family or friends will be directly affected by the stalking. It is possible that this is a factor in these figures.

**Question 22: Are you or have you been none of these, but just interested in participating in the consultation?**
Responses were  Yes 19 (11%)

11% of our answers are coming from members of the public with no personal experience of this issue, so their responses should indicate which areas of knowledge need to be built on in the public domain.

The questionnaire then asked: If you have been stalked yourself or been close to someone who has been stalked, please would you try to answer the following questions:

19 respondents said that they had not been stalked and/ or were not close to someone who had been stalked so the figures and % that follow are now based upon 152 respondents who had personal experience of stalking or were close to the victims

**Question 23: Had you heard about stalking before it happened to you or someone close to you?**
Responses were  Yes 122 (80%)  No 28 (18%)  Blank 2 (1%)

Here we see that a general level of understanding exists in the public domain, although we can now evidence a very real lack of information about some of the specific risk factors.

**Question 24: Did you think stalking only happened to celebrities?**
Responses were  Yes 31 (20%),  No 119 (78%),  and Blank 2 (1%)

We can see that 20% of respondents thought that stalking did not happen to ‘ordinary’ people until it came into their lives. Addressing this misconception should be a key task for agencies in this field PARTICULARLY as research consistently demonstrates that more than 50% of victims of stalking are stalked by an ex-partner.

**Question 25: Did you think stalking was not serious /would stop if the victim took no notice?**
Responses were  Yes 65 (43%),  No 85 (56%)  Blank 2 (1%)

This is a worrying statistic. Almost half (43%) of respondents thought that it would just go away. This may be a factor in why Stalking is so underreported in the mainstream. This point alone could be used in future campaigns about
publicising the dangers of this mind-set especially when research demonstrates that the longer stalking is allowed to continue the greater the damage to the victim and the more habitual the behaviour becomes for the stalker.

**Question 26: Did you think that the victim probably invited the attention in some way?**
Responses were  Yes 25 (16%), No 125 (82%), and Blank 2 (1%)

This is an interesting outcome and demonstrates the falling back to victim blaming that can so easily happen if unchallenged. The whole point about harassment and stalking is that it is **unwanted behaviour**.

**Question 27: Did you think stalking was not dangerous?**
Responses were  Yes 25 (16%), No 125 (82%), and Blank 2 (1%)

These responses show that the majority of respondents were aware of the potential dangerousness of stalking. Clearly though agencies have more work to do to raise awareness that stalking is dangerous and not simply wait for the next high profile murder to do the job for them.

**Question 28: Did you think victims just needed to ‘get a grip’ and put things in perspective – ‘it’s only a few phone calls’?**
Responses were  Yes 19 (12%), No 130 (85%), and Blank 3 (2%)

This may suggest that some respondents think that victims over-react. However, having analysed the questionnaires in detail this response is more likely to reflect how people thought about stalking until they learned from experience that this was not so. Some respondents made precisely this comment.

**Question 29: Do you think that victims should have been flattered by the attention?**
Responses were  Yes 5 (3%), No 144 (95%)  Blank 3 (2%)

A good level of understanding here.

**Question 30: was the stalker an ex-partner?**
Responses were  Yes 89 (59%), No 61 (40%)  Blank 2 (1%)

This result shows that almost 60% of Stalkers were either seeking to regain a lost relationship, or more worryingly, seeking revenge or to upset/destroy the new life of the ex-partner. This outcome is closely in line with other research findings e.g. Dr Lorraine Sheridan’s excellent work for NSS in which she reports that 50% of victims were stalked by ex-partners. Approximately 40% callers to the National Stalking Helpline report that they are being stalked by ex-partners.

The 89 Ex-partners engaged in the following stalking behaviours:

- 82 used repeated texts emails social network messages 92%
- 78 used repeated phoning 88%
75 used repeatedly contacting people connected to victim 84%
74 used repeated watching and spying 83%
74 repeatedly visited the victim’s home or place of work 83%
61 used repeated following or waiting 69%
60 used repeated threats to hurt victim or person close to victim 67%
53 used repeated threats to commit suicide 60%
49 used repeatedly asking for personal details 55%
46 used repeated letters and gifts 52%
42 used repeatedly sending obscene communications 47%
42 used monitoring the victim’s use of the Internet 47%
41 used repeatedly damaging victim’s possessions 46%
35 used repeatedly publishing information about the victim 39%
33 used repeatedly stealing the victim’s personal property 37%
15 used repeatedly ordering or cancelling goods 17%

It is easy to see why the victims felt under siege from this barrage of abusive and intrusive behaviour. What is shocking is that this is typical stalker behaviour – our findings are in line with Dr Lorraine Sheridan’s results which were phoning (72%), spying (67%), and threats to commit suicide (62%)

Question 31: If yes (to Q 30 above: was the stalker an ex-partner?) - was there abuse in the relationship before it ended?
Responses were Yes 71 (80% of yes replies to Q30 above)

A worryingly high response here 80% of stalking victims who were stalked by an ex-partner had suffered abuse whilst in that relationship.

Every agency dealing with relationship breakdown and every agency dealing with domestic abuse for victims or perpetrators should be aware of how separation can lead to Stalking, once the relationship has been terminated by the abused partner.

They will all be aware that the risk to the victim increases dramatically at the point of separation and in the period following it. They should be alert to the possibility that the perpetrators’ subsequent, often anticipated, behaviours may be covered by stalking legislation. This should lead to additional avenues of support for victims, and to a greater level of information, safeguarding and joint working from the abuse and stalking specialist agencies.

Question 32: Was the stalker an acquaintance – e.g. from work, a neighbour?
Responses were Yes 54 (35%), No 92 (60%), and Blank 6 (4%)

The 54 acquaintance stalkers engaged in the following stalking behaviours:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behaviour</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Watching and spying</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sent texts, emails social network messages</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contacted people connected to victim</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Went to victim’s home or place of work</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Following or waiting</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

UK Stalking Consultation 2015
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33 were phoning 61%
30 were asking for personal details 56%
23 used threats to hurt victim or person close 43%
21 were monitoring internet 39%
19 were publishing false or hurtful information 35%
18 sent letters and gifts 33%
18 were sending obscene communications 33%
17 were damaging possessions 31%
14 were threatening to commit suicide 26%
12 were stealing personal property 22%
6 were ordering or cancelling goods 11%

**Question 33: Did the stalker want an intimate relationship with you that they would never achieve; does not really know you?**
Responses were Yes 54 (35%), No 87 (57%), Blank 11 (7%)

This question is looking for evidence of the Suitor or Unwanted Admirer – one may want the fantasy of loving the victim, the other has a hopeless wish for a relationship that they will never achieve. Responses indicate that one third of the respondents were faced with stalking behaviour from someone they did not want a relationship with; someone who appeared to want an intimate relationship with them. A truly frightening prospect.

**Question 34: Was the stalker a predatory stranger?**
Responses were Yes 30 (20%), No 114 (75%), and Blank 8 (5%)

This again evidences the prevalence of the ex-partner as Stalker, but also displays a 20% of perpetrators as predatory strangers. A terrifying prospect for the victims.

The responses to questions have been recorded as they were presented but clearly some respondents may have been confused in their descriptions – we have 59% ex-partner, 35% acquaintance or work colleague, 20% predatory stranger. i.e. 114%.

In trying to understand this, it seems that 14 (9%) respondents chose to emphasise how little they knew their work colleague or how brief was the acquaintanceship by also ticking the predatory stranger.

9 (6%) respondents describe their stalker as an ex-partner and a predatory stranger which is harder to comprehend.

**Question 35: Was the stalker using the internet and technology to disrupt your life?**
Responses were Yes 98 (64%), No 49 (32%), and Blank 5 (3%)

This shows that internet based stalking is used by almost two thirds of Stalkers. This is not a surprising finding since most people now have smartphones, and have a range of platforms in which to cause distress to their victim, as well as the telephone itself and text messaging. Some respondents wrote of sophisticated cyberstalking that recorded every key stroke on their computer and of the use tracking devices on their cars.
Question 36: Do you know that there only have to be three incidents of unwanted behaviour that cause you to feel frightened for you to be able to consider taking action?
Responses were Yes 34 (22%), No 116 (76%), and Blank 2 (1%)

This may be another reason why Stalking is an under reported crime, as three quarters of respondents were not aware that any action could be taken at this early stage. This is very clearly another message that agencies need to publicise. Early intervention may help to prevent the victim from suffering for extended periods of time and prevent an escalation of risk.

Question 37: Did you know that on average victims will have suffered 100 incidents before they report it to the police?
Responses were Yes 27 (18%), No 123 (81%), and Blank 2 (1%)

Again this is information that agencies should be using in order to urge earlier reporting. There is overwhelming evidence that early intervention reduces harm to victims. The challenge for agencies is that they will need to demonstrate that they are willing to take seriously the early stalking behaviours. The challenge for victims is to recognise stalking behaviours and to gather evidence in a format that can be used. The 18% who responded yes, includes people working in the fields of domestic abuse and stalking.

Next was a set of questions designed to find out exactly what the stalking behaviours were that people had experienced, which were the most prevalent.

7.3: How many of these behaviours are Stalkers using?

The following questions should reveal the stalking behaviours that were used to target the victims and assist agencies to plan their interventions.

Question 38: Making unwanted, repeated phone calls or faxes?
Responses were Yes 110 (72%), No 39 (26%), and Blank 3 (2%)

This outcome replicates precisely Dr Lorraine Sheridan’s research in which she also found 72% of her victim cohort had received unwanted repeat pestering phone calls. With almost three quarters of victims suffering from unwanted repeat phone calls, the phone providers should be approached and asked to suggest ways in which they might intervene to support the victims e.g. easily available and responsive call barring, call filtering, clear advice about nuisance calls, speedy action taken to disable accounts of nuisance callers, speedy responses to requests to change telephone numbers, transparent and available protocols to protect victims and enable sharing of information with relevant agencies and victims.
Question 39: Sending unwanted text messages, emails, social network messages?
Responses were Yes 120 (79%), No 27 (18%) Blank 5 (3%)

More than three quarters of the respondents had been stalked using texts, emails or social network messages. Clearly this needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency.
Social networks, internet service providers and phone companies should be encouraged to have transparent policies that can be implemented if their services are being used by a stalker. The goals should be to protect victims and disrupt the stalking behaviour.
Acceptance of clear guidelines that state: “social media must not be used to victimise another person”, should be an integral part of being allowed to set up an account. Accounts should be terminated if a breach occurs.

Internet service providers and social media already have a legal obligation to co-operate with the police during investigations of harassment and stalking.

In the ‘Review of the PHA 1997 Improving Protection for Victims of Stalking’ July 2012, the Home Office committed to 'continue work with internet service providers and social media to identify effective practices to improve the response to online harassment and stalking’. They certainly need to.

Question 40: Sending unwanted letters, gifts?
Responses were Yes 64 (42%), No 83 (55%) Blank 5 (3%)

Almost half of our cohort had experienced unwanted letters and gifts being sent to them. The sending of gifts is one of the typical controlling behaviours of domestic abuse, designed to make the victim feel that they are behaving unreasonably towards the perpetrator, and further confusing the victim’s ability to complain about the behaviour by being seen as ungrateful by their friends and family.

Question 41: Watching or spying on you?
Responses were Yes 124 (82%), No 25 (16%) Blank 3 (2%)

Dr Lorraine Sheridan’s research listed this as the second most prevalent behaviour with an incidence of 67%. The response above suggests an increase in our cohort that may be linked to the increasing ease with which spying can now be undertaken –for example with web cams, tracker devices and spyware.

Question 42: Monitoring your use of the internet?
Responses were Yes 62 (41%), No 81 (53%) Blank 9 (6%)

The fact that Internet access was monitored may help to contribute to an explanation of why so few victims used the Internet to search for support. It will be far from the complete answer.

Question 43: Publishing anything about you or pretending something was written by you?
We wonder if the recent upsurge in ‘porn abuse’ where ex partners publish explicit pictures of victims, is being seen as Stalking by agencies and whether action is being taken under the stalking criteria, or under the sexual abuse agenda. This will have a big impact on the under reporting of Stalking. Perhaps an opportunity for training for all agencies and certainly an added pressure on Internet service providers to tackle both porn and stalking.

Question 44: Following, waiting for you?
Responses were  Yes 99 (65%),  No 48 (32%)  Blank 5 (3%)

Almost three quarters of victims have experienced this. This behaviour does create fear and enormous stress for victims experiencing it. Never knowing if the stalker will be there, or where they might appear without warning. It has a huge impact on daily life, and causes victims to take extreme measures to use other routes and times. Some victims experiencing this as a part of domestic abuse say they wait around in toilets for 2 hours before daring to go home or go to their cars in a carpark.

Question 45: Going to your home or place of work?
Responses were  Yes 108 (71%),  No 39 (26%)  Blank 5 (3%)

71% of our respondents endured the stalker visiting them at home or at work. A number of respondents wrote that employers should receive training, leaflets, and publicity about stalking so that they can protect their employees from stalkers who are internal or external to the workplace.

Work: Employers will probably already have policies about Bullying in the Workplace, Protection from Harassment, Anti-Oppressive Practice, and Whistle Blowing. If they could be alerted to the concept of stalking, it would not be difficult to incorporate stalking into their policies. 27% of stalkers obtain information about the victim from the victim’s workplace. (Sheridan)

Home: If there was a campaign to raise public awareness of the prevalence of stalking; the importance of intervention and risk assessment, possibly whole communities would take action to thwart the stalker. For example they might initiate ‘cocoon’ watches in which neighbours rally to cocoon the victim by undertaking a range of supportive activities – keeping a look-out for the stalker, photographing him/her, his/her car, keeping written dated accounts of when and what they see, emailing or phoning a warning to the victim, agreeing signals to alert each other e.g. blue vase in bedroom window means call the police.

Research has shown the significance of a stalker who is blatant enough to visit the victim’s home or workplace. Stalkers who visit the home/workplace/other place visited by the victim more than three times in a week are those who are most likely to attack. It is crucial to gather this information and to understand its significance.

Question 46: Ordering or cancelling goods?
Responses were  Yes 20 (13%), No 125 (82%) Blank 7 (5%)

13% had experienced this from a Stalker and would add to the general confusion and disorientation of the victim, thereby giving control and power to the stalker.

**Question 47: Damaging your possessions?**
Responses were  Yes 54 (35%), No 90 (59%) Blank 8 (5%)

It is important to raise awareness in victims and all agencies that they should look for patterns in behaviour and repetitious behaviour – our respondents have made the point that events are often dealt with individually rather than anyone seeing the impact and meaning of the repeated events. So it is likely that repeated damage to possessions would be logged as repeated criminal damage rather than stalking

**Question 48: Making threats to hurt you or anyone close to you?**
Responses were  Yes 84 (55%), No 62 (41%) Blank 6 (4%)

The responses to question 66 ‘Was there a tipping moment that prompted you to seek help?’ Revealed stark chilling and horrifying evidence of the brutality of the threats made by stalkers. They describe threats to kill parents of the victim, rape, abduction of children. It is dreadful reading.

Please read the comments and then consider that we have, in our cohort:

- 59% victims who have been stalked by their ex-partner,
- 80% of these relationships were abusive before the relationship ended

Then consider that research has shown that 50% of ex-partner stalkers will act on any threat that they make. This is not time limited, and victims will probably spend the rest of their lives expecting one of these threats to be carried out.

**Question 49: Asking for your personal details?**
Responses were  Yes 78 (51%), No 67 (44%) Blank 7 (4%)

Over half of the cohort had experienced this. Stalkers thrive on getting all sorts of information about their victim and thwarting the victim’s attempts to with-hold information. The victim may change phone numbers, address, email address or even place of work to avoid the stalker. It becomes a challenge to the stalker to find the information, many boast of how quickly they found the new address/phone number etc. They will try an unsuspecting neighbour, work colleague, or friend – anyone and then taunt the victim. This really is an area of stress and worry every day for someone who is trying to remain ‘hidden’ from their stalker.

**Question 50: Stealing your personal property?**
Responses were  Yes 41 (27%), No 102 (67%) Blank 9 (6%)
We wonder how many of these incidents have been recorded as simple theft, and not stalking. It would be a useful exercise to study Police records of Stalking and compare the perpetrators names with any recorded offences of theft. If Police were able to isolate records of stalking offences – which it appears may not be so!

**Question 51: Threatening to commit suicide?**
Responses were Yes 62 (41%), No 82 (54%) Blank 8 (5%)

These threats prompted some of our respondents to seek help (see Comments Q66 in Section 10). Dr Lorraine Sheridan’s research found that threats to commit suicide (62%) were the third most common stalking behaviour (Phone calls and spying being the first and second respectively)

**Question 52: Contacting people connected to you?**
Responses were Yes 113 (74%), No 33 (22%) Blank 6 (4%)

This result is a very important one. It shows that although there is a primary victim others become involved. Typically they will be family - parents, siblings, children of the victim, work colleagues and friends. This involvement can bring risks to each of them.

It is crucial that the victim alert potential secondary victims so that they can avoid inadvertently giving information to the stalker and so that they can be alert to their own safety. 40% stalkers obtain information from the victim's family or friends. (Sheridan)

Research suggests that on average there will be 21 other people pulled into the stalking arena with every primary victim. (Sheridan)

**Question 53: Sending obscene or sexually explicit communications?**
Responses were Yes 56 (37%), No 89 (59%) Blank 7 (5%)

This seems to be a growing problem and again highlights the need to put pressure on service providers to respond to the situation and to devise ways of protecting victims and disrupting the stalking behaviour.

**Question 54: Anything else?**
Responses were Yes 76 (50%), No 65 (43%) Blank 11 (7%)

We have clearly missed some significant behaviours used by stalkers and we looked forward to reading in the comments what they were but there was not a single mention of behaviours we had not listed so we cannot shed any light on this. All we can do is to recommend an amendment to the questionnaire that says – ‘please tell us what it was’. Initially this prompt was included in the questionnaire but it was omitted in error.

7.4: Levels of Fear and Impact on Daily Life
Question 55: If this happened to you or someone close to you, how scared were you?
There were 147 responses to this question

- 52 said 10/10 (35%)
- 25 said 9/10 (17%)
- 25 said 8/10 (17%)
- 14 said 7/10 (10%)
- 6 said 6/10 (4%)
- 8 said 5/10 (5%)
- 4 said 4/10 (3%)
- 1 said 3/10 (1%)
- 6 said 2/10 (4%)
- 6 said 1/10 (4%)

Over 72% answered with 7, 8, 9, or 10; which means they experienced very significant fear.

Question 56: How did it affect your daily life?
There were 147 responses to this question

- 68 said 10/10 (46%)
- 20 said 9/10 (14%)
- 20 said 8/10 (14%)
- 12 said 7/10 (8%)
- 5 said 6/10 (3%)
- 9 said 5/10 (6%)
- 4 said 4/10 (3%)
- 2 said 3/10 (1%)
- 4 said 2/10 (3%)
- 3 said 1/10 (2%)

Over 82% answered with 7, 8, 9, or 10. This shows an incredible number of victims who tell us that this had a very significant effect on their lives. In fact, the comments in section 10 will reveal that some lost jobs, partners, homes, in an attempt to get away from their stalkers.

7.5: The tipping point that made victims seek help or support

We asked separate questions here to try and identify what triggers victims to report to agencies for help or advice. This could be useful to establish the key behaviour of victims and to find out why stalking is so under reported.

Question 57: When you were frightened for your own physical safety?
Responses were Yes 99 (65%), No 44 (29%) Blank 9 (6%)
Fear for their own personal safety prompted 65% of respondents to seek help. See Comments 66 in Section 10 and the responses to Q 48 above

**Question 58: When you were frightened for the safety of people close to you?**  
Responses were Yes 85 (56%), No 56 (37%) Blank 11 (8%)

Threats made by stalkers gave respondents good reason to fear for the safety of people who were close to them. It was this fear for others that prompted 56% of them to decide to seek help. See Comments 66 in Section 10 and the responses to Q 48 and Q 52.

**Question 59: When threats of violence were made?**  
Responses were Yes 62 (41%), No 73 (48%) Blank 17 (11%)

Respondents indicated that fear for their own safety and for the safety of others prompted many of them to seek help. They do not respond in quite the same way to the question about threats, possibly they have heard them many times before but at some stage have picked up other signs that the risk to themselves and others was increasing.

**Question 60: When you found out who was doing it?**  
Responses were Yes 52 (34%), No 83 (55%) Blank 17 (11%)

59% of stalkers were ex-partners 80% of whom had been abusive. Retaliation could be anticipated from this group and so one would not expect their identity as perpetrators of intrusive abusive behaviour to come as a surprise to the victims. However 27 responses linked learning that the stalker was their ex-partner prompted them to seek help. Respondents indicated that learning the identity of the acquaintance stalker propelled a further 22 to seek help.

**Question 61: When you realised that it just kept getting worse and happening more often?**  
Responses were Yes 104 (68%) No 34 (22%) Blank 14 (9%)

A high response to this question, perhaps showing that until this point, victims thought or hoped that the stalker would not continue with this behaviour indefinitely. Also, the responses to Q109 demonstrate that many victims took a long time to identify the unwanted behaviour as stalking and so had already given it a long time in which to escalate.

**Question 62: When you realised it was not going to stop?**  
Responses were Yes 107 (70%) No 31 (20%) Blank 14 (9%)

This response reinforces the previous question as the point victims chose to seek help. Many victims wrote about trying to hold tight until it stopped.
**Question 63: Have been too scared to do anything yet?**
Responses were  Yes 31 (20%),  No 105 (69%)  Blank 16 (10%)

It may be that the fear of the 20% is so great that they dare not do anything – ‘I will kill your child if you say anything….’
Many victims disclose that they are frightened of not being taken seriously, (57%) of not being believed and of breaking down when they speak of the stalking. This fear is clearly a preoccupation for victims (see Section 10 Q106) It seems wise for victims of abusive ex partners to be fearful. They may be reluctant to take action and to define their ex’s behaviour as ‘stalking’. They may interpret the stalking behaviour as revenge or familiar power and control tactics; they may hope it will just die down when the ex finds a new relationship; they may fear making the situation worse – especially if there are children/residency and contact issues. They may not realise that there are sanctions available and doubt their efficacy if they do know of them.

Awareness raising is needed in agencies and for the public at large in order that the 20% of victims who are too frightened to act can be encouraged to seek help and be received with courtesy when they do. (See Section 10 Q106)

**Question 64: Did not think there was anyone who could help?**
Responses were  Yes 75 (49%)  No 63 (41%)  Blank 14 (9%)

This shows that almost half of victims had no idea where to turn for help. Clearly a communications and awareness issue for all agencies to enable the public to be more aware of where to find appropriate help.

**Question 65: Was there a tipping moment or event that made you decide to find help?**
Responses were  Yes 101 (66%),  No 37 (24%)  Blank 14 (9%)

This question tells us that victims do experience an event or a peak of emotion that leads them to seek help. The 78 separate comments we received explain in detail what that was. They are all contained in section 10 of this report, and this could form the basis of a really good training programme for professionals from all agencies. They make horrifying reading.

**Question 66: Would you be happy to tell us what it was and how you decided?**

We received 78 responses which have been included in Section 10 Public Questionnaire Comments Received – Question 66. It was a huge number of responses to this question, and clearly tells us that victims want their experiences to be known and understood by the agencies working on this agenda. We hope that everyone who reads these comments will gain a greater awareness and understanding of the complexity of this crime.

The comments have been grouped into themes of
- Threats (20)
- Impact on family (12)
Links to other family members (2)
Internet (4)
Phone calls and text messages (8)
Long term (5)
Tracking devices (2)
Various and varied (28)

7.6: Where did you go to find help?

This was to find out which agencies were approached by victims and whether these were specific agencies working with stalking, or were more generic agencies.

Question 67: The Internet
Responses were Yes 52 (34%), No 88 (58%) Blank 12 (8%)
17 of the 52 who used the internet for help feel safe now. (32%) We cannot consider this to be significant as victims indicate that they contacted many agencies.
11 of the 52 said that this was their first choice of provider and that it provided the support that they needed (21%)
34% using the Internet seems a very low number from our cohort, especially since they were online filling in this questionnaire. However 41% of respondents said that their Internet use was monitored, so this may have been one factor. Another might be that they did not know what to search for. This was a factor in our choice of Scared of Someone as the name of our website. People recognize being scared and may not recognize the term stalking as being appropriate to them. It may also be that their fear and distress was so great that their problem solving was impaired.

Question 68: Internet support forums
Responses were Yes 22 (14%), No 113 (74%) Blank 17 (11%)
7 of the 22 responded that they feel safe now (32%) We cannot consider this to be significant as victims indicate that they contacted many agencies.
An even lower number here, indicating that support groups using Facebook, Twitter and websites, are only reaching a very small percentage of victims. 86% of them are not using this method of accessing support.

Question 69: A family member or close friend
Responses were Yes 79 (52%), No 59 (39%) Blank 14 (9%)
38 of the 79 report that they feel safe now (48%) We cannot consider this to be significant as victims indicate that they contacted many agencies.
52% of victims are speaking to family and friends before they seek help from elsewhere. It seems imperative that family and friends are empowered to give
informed and supportive input. This can only really be achieved by a focused campaign to bring stalking onto the public agenda. The responses of family and friends can be very significant in limiting the damage –or indeed exacerbating, the damage to victims. Research has shown that supportive family or friends is hugely beneficial to the long term emotional well-being of the victim – being believed, having someone to turn to, to call upon for help and somewhere to go when needed.

**Question 70: Citizens' Advice Bureau or Library**

Responses were  
- Yes 11 (7%)  
- No 24 (82%)  
- Blank 17 (11%)

4 of the 11 who went to the CAB feel safe now (36%) We cannot consider this to be significant as victims indicate that they contacted many agencies.

**Question 71: The Police**

Responses were  
- Yes 93 (61%)  
- No 48 (32%)  
- Blank 11 (7%)

61% are choosing to go straight to the Police the first time they seek help. This does put a lot of responsibility on the Police to be able to recognise and identify stalking at the front desk, and connect victims with the Police specialists in this agenda.  
38 of the 93 who went to the police for help responded ‘Yes’ to the question about whether they felt safe now. (41%) We cannot consider this to be significant as victims indicate that they contacted many agencies.

The Home Office ‘Review of the PHA 1997 Improving Protection for Victims of Stalking’ revealed that there is little confidence (outside the Police that is) in Police Information Notices, Restraining Orders or Civil Injunctions as useful interventions in cases of stalking.  
However since February 2010, every Police force in England and Wales now has a nominated Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to deal with cases of Stalking and Harassment. The Home Office Review states that the National Stalking Helpline has an ‘open dialogue’ with these officers. Victims can request to talk to this officer, who should be very well appraised of issues surrounding stalking.

**Question 72: Your Doctor**

Responses were  
- Yes 26 (17%)  
- No 110 (72%)  
- Blank 16 (10%)

8 of the 26 who went to their doctor feel safe now (31%) We cannot consider this to be significant as victims indicate that they contacted many agencies. Health agencies are not seen as a first port of call in 72%.

**Question 73: A Solicitor**

Responses were  
- Yes 38 (25%)  
- No 100 (66%)  
- Blank 14 (9%)
14 of the 38 who went to a solicitor say that they feel safe now (37%) We cannot consider this to be significant as victims indicate that they contacted many agencies. Perhaps the 25% considered that a Solicitors letter or action would contain or resolve the issue. 66% have not thought this an appropriate first action.

7.7: Did you contact any of these specialist agencies?

**Question 74: National Stalking Helpline**
Responses were Yes 19 (12%), No 124 (82%) Blank 9 (6%)

5 of the 19 who contacted the National Stalking Helpline say that they feel safe now (26%) We cannot consider this to be significant as victims indicate that they contacted many agencies, though this is a specialist agency. A very low 12% of respondents knew about and used this facility. Worryingly a massive 82% did not.

**Question 75: Network for Surviving Stalking NSS**
Responses were Yes 4 (3%), No 136 (89%) Blank 12 (8%)

1 of the 4 who contacted NSS says that they feel safe now (25%). We cannot consider this to be significant as victims indicate that they contacted many agencies, although this is a specialist agency.

**Question 76: Protection against Stalking PAS**
Responses were Yes 3 (2%), No 136 (89%) Blank 12 (8%)

2 of the 3 who contacted PAS feel safe now (67%) We cannot consider this to be significant as victims indicate that they contacted many agencies, though we are aware that PAS works with an excellent partnership of statutory organisations that provides an organised focused service to victims of stalking.

**Question 77: Action Scotland against Stalking ASAS**
Responses were Yes 5 (3%), No 133 (87%) Blank 14 (9%)

1 of the 5 who contacted ASAS says that they feel safe now. We cannot consider this to be significant as victims indicate that they contacted many agencies.

**Question 78: Paladin National Stalking Advocacy Service**
Responses were Yes 9 (6%), No 131 (86%) Blank 12 (8%)
2 of the 9 who contacted Paladin say that they feel safe now. We cannot consider this to be significant as victims indicate that they contacted many agencies, though this is a specialist agency.

**Question 79: Did you contact another specialist stalking agency?**

Responses were  Yes 6

**Question 80: Which one?**

Details of which ones are included in section 10 of this report.

In addition 8 comments were received which are included in section 10 of this report. The comments have been redacted and anonymised to safeguard respondents.

**Question 81: Did you contact any other agency i.e. a non-stalking specialist agency**

Responses were  Yes 40 (26%),  No 96 (63%)  Blank 16 (10%)

See responses to Q82 below for details of which ones.

**Question 82: Which one?**

Responses: contacts were made with

- Victim Support (4),
- Women’s Aid (9),
- Work counselling service,
- Gwent DV Services,
- All Wales DA and SV,
- Rape Crisis Scotland,
- Samaritans,
- Police DVU,
- Suzi Lamplugh,
- DV unit Surrey,
- Rape Crisis,
- Mankind,
- School staff,
- Counselling (2),
- University counselling,
- Web Sheriff,
- IDVA,
- Your Sanctuary,
- BT,
- Next Link,
- RISE,
- Talk To Us,
This shows a diverse range of support agencies and provides an opportunity for the Stalking agencies to build links with them, perhaps with a view to some joint working procedures. **Comments received about this choice of agency have been included in Section 10.9.**

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**7.8: Did you get the support/information you needed?**

**Question 83:** Did you get the support or information you needed, from your first choice of support / information provider?

Responses were  
Yes 60 (39%)  
No 76 (50%)  
Blank 16 (10%)

This question seemed to cause great confusion, with people answering ‘yes’ that they received the support and information they needed from the first choice of agency but then going on to write numbers larger than 1 when asked to say how many providers they had needed to contact to find the support or information they needed.

**Question 84:** How many support providers did you approach before getting support that helped or was useful to you?

We received 101 responses:  
44 said one (44%)  
14 said two (14%)  
17 said three (17%)  
5 said four (5%)  
7 said five (7%)  
3 said six (3%)  
1 said seven (1%)  
4 said eight (4%)  
1 said nine (1%)  
5 said ten (5%)

Almost half the respondents report that they received appropriate support from just one agency. The rest contacted up to ten agencies. This could mean that there were more issues going on that needed other specialist help to resolve – this would not be unusual – Police for Stalking, Solicitor for court, GP for stress, CAB re child contact issues and so on. Another indicator that Stalking can present alongside issues such as: domestic abuse, sexual abuse and theft.

The written responses (Section 10) and the fact that 47% of our respondents do not feel safe now suggests that getting the support and information is currently a tortuous process.
We had hoped to be able to analyse this section in detail and find which providers managed to provide a service that met the victim’s needs but many respondents indicated that they had contacted lots of support providers and then that they received what they needed from the first one. We are not able to tell which the first one was. It may be that they received really useful signposting and then went on to the relevant agencies but we have no way of finding that out from the current data.

**Question 85: How many support providers did you approach before getting information that helped or was useful to you?**

We had 95 responses to this:

- 42 said 1 (44%)
- 17 said 2 (18%)
- 18 said 3 (19%)
- 5 said 4 (5%)
- 3 said 5 (3%)
- 2 said 6 (2%)
- 1 said 7 (1%)
- 2 said 8 (2%)
- 2 said 9 (2%)
- 3 said 10 (3%)

81% received useful information by contacting up to three different agencies. The remainder of the cohort appeared to have gone from one agency to another. This could be because their support needs were complex and required different expertise, or that they had to go from one agency to another, and yet more, before finding the support and information they needed.

7.9: **What did you want from the support organisation?**

Please look at Section 10 Q106 – messages to the agencies, where victims make 80 comments to agencies.

**Question 86: Understanding and recognition of what was happening to me**

Responses were  Yes 112 (74%),  No 18 (12%)  Blank 22 (14%)

A high response of 74% who wanted their chosen agency to believe them and recognise that they were dealing with a real problem; that it was not their fault; that they were not imagining the events; that it was stressful; difficult to live with; that for example whilst one or two phone calls is normal and not a cause for terror, 200 anonymous calls in one day is not normal and is very frightening. Please look at the comments to Q106 in Section10.
Question 87: Practical information about stopping the stalking

Responses were  Yes 112 (74%), No 16 (10%)  Blank 24 (16%)

Three quarters of respondents wanted practical advice on how to stop the stalking. It may seem strange but when we began this project one thing we noticed was the lack of clear advice for victims. This was the driving force behind the content and layout of the website www.scaredofsomeone.org that we set up.

It may seem surprising that 10% did not want practical advice on how to stop the stalking but some respondents indicated that they were professionals working in this field and others had academic knowledge of stalking and related behaviours. It is interesting how many professionals in the Health Service and other support services become victims of stalkers. (See Mullen, Pathe and Pullen ‘Stalkers and their Victims’)

Question 88: Legal advice

Responses were  Yes 93 (61%), No 35 (23%)  Blank 24 (16%)

Further detail about what respondents wanted can be found in section 10, where respondents told their stories and shared their difficulties. We have not edited them as the insight they provide into the complex nature of stalking will be useful for agencies.

Question 89: Help with assessing the risk to me and those close to me

Responses were  Yes 98 (64%), No 28 (18%)  Blank 26 (17%)

A surprising number of as many as 18% (and possibly 35% if you include the blank answers) were not interested in risk assessment. But perhaps the next question explains this. Many of the victims were terrified and probably thought that they did not need anyone to tell them that they were in danger, they already knew this.

Question 90: Suggestions about keeping safe

Responses were  Yes 100 (66%), No 29 (19%)  Blank 23 (15%)

Here we have 66% who are concerned with keeping safe. Perhaps victims do not perceive that assessing the risk is the ‘professional’ way of helping them to keep safe. This could be a language barrier between professional terminology and the public understanding, which is why the www.scaredofsomeone.org website avoided as much use of professional terminology as was possible. The Risk Assessment page was purposely called ‘Staying Safe’.

Question 91: Emotional support

Responses were  Yes 100 (66%), No 29 (19%)  Blank 23 (15%)
The emotional support needed by 66% shows that practical help alone will not completely resolve the issue for victims. Although the way in which a victim is received, treated, shown that they are believed, were right in coming to the agency for support, is not wasting agency time, is not to blame for the stalking etc. can all be tremendously emotionally supportive and reassuring.

57% victims do not seek help because they fear not being believed. Research could be carried out on the availability of such support in different areas of the UK, who might provide it and who is it funded by.

Please read the comments in Section 10 – 80 responses for agencies of which 17 made reference to needing to be believed and treated with courtesy

7.10: What helped the most?

**Question 92: That they were used to dealing with stalking**

Responses were  
Yes 48 (32%),  
No 63 (41%)  
Blank 41 (27%)

32% of the victims found it most useful that the agency they approached was used to dealing with stalking. This suggests that victims were looking for more than just specialist information about stalking.

**Question 93: The general information about stalking**

Responses were  
Yes 57 (37%),  
No 51 (34%)  
Blank 44 (29%)

This question gave us a completely divided response with an almost equal number of yes, no, and blank responses. Perhaps victims had already done some research by this stage, and others just wanted specialist advice to resolve their specific case. General information may not be useful if the victim is looking for a personalised response. Information has to be pitched at a manageable level in terms of quantity and complexity particularly when someone is stressed and anxious.

Good clear straightforward written information that people can take away, read slowly, and refer back to is enormously useful. Again this underpinned our work on the www.scaredofsomeone.org website

We can only surmise about the quality of ‘general information’ that is provided to victims about stalking but from the responses that you will find on Section 10 much of it is not considered useful by the victims. Significantly too it seems that information that could be useful is not provided. (see Qus 98-102 below)

**Question 94: The agencies they told me about**

Responses were  
Yes 33 (22%)  
No 72 (47%)  
Blank 47 (31%)
The very low yes response may suggest silos or lack of knowledge – or both. More communication between agencies; knowledge about other agencies; and some joint working might address this.

One respondent urges agencies to stop being isolated and concerned only with keeping their client numbers up in order to keep their funding streams, she urges that appropriate referrals are made and for the well-being of the victim to be the focus.

**Question 95: Risk assessment**
Responses were  Yes 36 (24%),  No 67 (44%)  Blank 49 (32%)

Risk Assessment in itself is not seen as a practical help for 44% of respondents. The message victims are sending out is that they know they are at risk, their difficulty is often getting agencies to understand this, show concern and respond helpfully.

**Question 96: The safety tips they gave to me**
Responses were  Yes 55 (36%),  No 51 (34%)  Blank 46 (30%)

Another three way equal split for this question suggests that there were other areas of help that were considered of more use to victims. Respondents have described with disbelief some of the advice they have been given e.g. ‘then stay off the Internet’ for example.

**Question 97: The emotional support they gave to me**
Responses were  Yes 60 (39%),  No 47 (31%)  Blank 45 (30%)

More respondents valued the emotional support than any other aspect of the services they received. It is clear that victims need clear informed practical advice and emotional support – but this is not news. See Section 10 Qu 106

7.11: What Action was taken by agencies to help you?

**Question 98: Were you helped to develop your own safety plan?**
Responses were  Yes 35 (23%),  No 86 (57%)  Blank 31 (20%)

This might suggest an agency lack of understanding about the specific dangers to a victim of stalking, or it could mean that safety plans were made by the agency working with the victim but they did not use this term.

116 victims rated themselves as being very scared (7, 8, 9 and 10 out of 10) see Question 55. They were probably the most at risk.

Only 32 (28%) of them were helped to develop a safety plan. 72% were not.
Question 99: Was the risk assessment framework used by police and other agencies explained to you?

Responses were  
Yes 32 (21%), No 87 (57%)  Blank 33 (22%)

The use of a standard risk assessment tool DASH is common practice for all agencies when dealing with cases of domestic abuse. It would be useful to be able to incorporate the use of a standard risk assessment into the practice of all agencies who deal with cases of stalking. There will be those who protest that the extension to DASH is precisely this …..but the point is that it has to be used to be useful.

116 victims rated themselves as being very scared (7, 8, 9 and 10 out of 10) see Question 55. They were probably the most at risk.

Only 28 (24%) of them had the risk assessment framework explained to them, 76% did not.

Question 100: Were you told how to gather evidence in case you decided to take action in the courts?

Responses were  
Yes 60 (39%), No 60 (39%)  Blank 32 (21%)

It is obvious that victims should be told how to gather and store evidence. Yet it seems that for 60% of our cohort this was not done. This may be poor practice, poor procedures or simple lack of knowledge in some agencies.

116 victims rated themselves as being very scared (7, 8, 9 and 10 out of 10) see Question 55. They were probably the most at risk.

Only 55 (47%) of them were told how to gather evidence. 45% were not told.

Question 101: Were you advised to write a Victim Personal Statement or Victim Impact Statement?

Responses were  
Yes 37 (24%), No 82 (54%)  Blank 33 (22%)

116 victims rated themselves as being very scared (7, 8, 9 and 10 out of 10) see Question 55. They were probably the most at risk.

Only 36 (31%) were advised to write a Victim Personal Statement. 69% were not. This is quite a new initiative and perhaps has not filtered out to all agencies front line services yet.

Question 102: Did you use the Court system to try regain your personal safety?

Responses were  
Yes 30 (20%), No 88 (58%)  Blank 34 (22%)
A very low number of Court actions appear to have been taken. This may be because inadequate evidence has been gathered to ensure a good possibility of prosecution. (see Qu 100 above)

116 victims rated themselves as being very scared (7, 8, 9 and 10 out of 10) see Question 55. They were probably the most at risk

29 (25%) of them used the court system, 75% did not. It is at least reassuring that the 29 most scared did actually get to be 29 of the 30 who made it to court. However only 14 of this 29 feel safe now.

**Question 103: Did you find that Agencies worked together to help you?**
Responses were Yes 23 (15%), No 93 (61%) Blank 36 (24%)

Perhaps more ways of working together across agendas and between agencies may help the numbers of incidents being reported. But methods of good communication would need to be found to do this.

116 victims rated themselves as being very scared (7, 8, 9 and 10 out of 10) see Question 55. They were probably the most at risk

18 (16%) of them felt agencies worked together to help them. 84% did not

**7.12: Do you feel safe now?**

**Question 104: Do you feel safe now?**
Responses were Yes 70 (46%), No 72 (47%) Blank 10 (10%)

Almost half of respondents are not feeling safe after taking whatever action they decided on. Does this mean current services are not effective, or that victims are left with emotional concerns that have not been addressed.

116 victims rated themselves as being very scared (7, 8, 9 and 10 out of 10) see Question 55. They were probably the most at risk, however only 43 of this 116 (37%) say that they feel safe now

**7.13: What advice would you give to others?**

**Question 105: What advice would you give to others with the same issues?**

93 responses were received to this question. They have been included in section 10, to enable agencies to benefit from this full and frank feedback. All identifying data has been removed from the comments.
It is truly heartening to see that victims who may have struggled for many months and years taking time to offer advice and support to others. You will see that they urge victims to **ACT QUICKLY** and to **GO TO THE POLICE** in a tremendous show of faith in the ability of the police to assist. (There are of course some responses giving a very different view)

The 93 comments have been grouped into six themes which are accessible from the live index. Unsurprisingly this section is full of good advice and ideas

**There were 6 clear themes:**

- Act Quickly (32);
- Go to the Police (19);
- Retain Evidence (13);
- Tell Someone (6);
- General Advice (30);
- Miscellaneous (4)

7.14: **What message would you give to agencies supporting victims?**

**Question 106: What message would you give to agencies who are trying to support victims?**

80 responses were received and these have been included in section 10. The comments contain a great deal of information that will be invaluable for any agency that is concerned about its service users. It is astonishing that so many victims felt that they had to write that they wished to be treated with basic courtesy by agencies they approached for help

**There are 80 responses that have been grouped into 7 themes**

- Take it seriously (10);
- Raise your profile (8);
- Emotional Support and Courtesy (17);
- Joint Working (11);
- Practical Suggestions (22);
- Police (7);
- Others (5)
7.15: What advice would you give to relatives & friends of victims?

**Question 107: What advice would you give to relatives and friends of victims?**

78 responses received from victims may be a useful resource for any agency dealing with any stalking cases and possibly supporting family and friends of victims. On average for every stalking victim 21 other people – usually in their network of friends or family are pulled into the stalking net – either as secondary victims or targeted directly themselves.

Research also shows that the long term psychological damage caused by stalking is reduced if family and friends believe the victim and are supportive. This is evident when you read the comments.

There were 78 responses that have three key themes:

- Help victims to report it and seek help
- Practical Support
- Emotional Support

7.16: What made you identify it as Stalking?

**Question 108: What made you IDENTIFY that WHAT WAS HAPPENING was stalking?**

86 responses in Section 10 Comments 108

This contains compelling data from the victims’ point of view that will be a useful resource to agencies seeking to find out why stalking is currently under reported.

There were 86 responses that fell into seven key themes:

- Phones and Texts (12);
- Online (14);
- Following (6);
- Already in the field and had knowledge (6);
- Did not realise (10);
- Research (7);
- Anxiety from unreasonable behaviour (32)

7.17: How long did it take to realise you were being stalked?
Question 109: How long did it take you to IDENTIFY/REALISE you were being stalked?

The 82 responses are all included in section 10, and provide useful data that will enable more targeted information campaigns going out to the public domain. All comments have been grouped into themes as follows:

- Under 2 weeks: 14 of 151 (9%)
- Between 2 weeks and 2 months: 15 of 151 (10%)
- Between 2 months and 6 months: 12 of 151 (8%)
- Longer than 6 months: 16 of 151 (11%)
- 25 gave responses that were not specific about time. (17%)

The responses in Section 10 are interesting and illuminating.

7.18: How can we help people to identify stalking?

Question 110: Drawing on your experience, how can we help others to identify stalking?

78 responses were received. This was an important question. The things they told us are all from personal experience and will make useful reading for all agencies who are seeking to improve their services for victims of stalking.

The responses fell into themes and form a valuable collection of insights and messages for agencies and other victims:

- Recognise that you have the right to choose who is in your life (13).
- Recognize the signs and ask for help (10).
- Publish information, educate people about stalking, raise the profile (21).
- Provide Internet forums, videos and signposting (3).
- Multi message comments (21).
- Training and skills of professionals (6).

7.19: What else do agencies need to know?
Question 111: Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

43 responses in Comments that have been grouped into 5 main headings and added to Section 10 of this report. See Section 10 Question 111' to the conclusions on Awareness Raising, Information - there were 21 comments in support of this

Please read these comments, some are so positive and others like this one show how much more there is yet to do:
“I feel that a major publicity campaign is needed to tackle this - I didn't know the early signs of stalking, I didn't know how weird it could be, how crazy making it can be, how it freezes one in disbelief as to what is happening and I didn't know that I needed to speak with people experienced in this field because I didn't know how to deal with this; I didn't go to the internet; I didn't even know there were stalking help lines ‘

The comments have been grouped into themes:

- Online (2)
- Publicity (2)
- Impact (15)
- Police (10)
- More support and national awareness (15)

8 The Agency Questionnaire

8.1: Which category most closely describes your service?

We received 23 responses from agencies that categorised themselves in this way:
5 x Local Authority includes Criminal Justice and Children and Families
4 x Other – 2 x Church, 1 x Probation, 1 x Campaigning Org
3 x Police
3 x Independent Advisors/Consultants
2 x Victim Support
2 x Specialist + Domestic Abuse
1 x Local Authority + Domestic Abuse
1x Specialist
1 x Domestic Abuse
1 x CJS (Procurator Fiscal) sent a letter which is reproduced in full in Section

We have used the categories that agencies selected for themselves *in italics* throughout this analysis to link them to their comments and suggestions and to safeguard their anonymity.

8.2: The Number of victims of stalking per agency per year

- 0 to 50
- 51-100
- 101-200
- 201-400
- 401-600
- More than 600? Please specify:

**More than 600:** 1 specialist organisation dealing with Cyberstalking records receiving over 200 visitors per day. This is an indication of the scale of the issue and makes it even more shocking that more victims are not visible/identified in the systems of other agencies.

**Between 401 and 600:** None

**Between 201 and 400:** 2 agencies report that they support between 201 and 400 victims of stalking each year. They were Police Hampshire Constabulary** and a victim support agency covering Scotland.

** We intended not to name any of the respondents but decided that we want to celebrate the work going on in Hampshire. Their stats show that what they are doing is working.

**Between 101 and 200:** 2 agencies report that they support between 101 and 200 victims of stalking each year. They were a Local Authority and Domestic Abuse service and an Independent Specialist in domestic abuse and stalking who provides supervision to a specialist stalking agency.

**Between 51 and 100:** 3 responses report that they support between 51 and 100 victims each year. They were Police Victim Liaison and a Specialist plus Domestic Abuse agency (there were two responses from this agency)
Between 0 and 50: 12 agencies selected this category. An Other-Probation Victim Liaison wrote: ‘0-50 on my caseload alone. There are 5 other VLOs covering the rest of the region’. This service of course is a response to victims whose stalkers have already been apprehended. It is heartening to see that this does happen – sometimes. However this would still be a maximum of 250 victims in an enormous geographical area.

One Police respondent added ‘estimate’ to the response 0-50, which may suggest that the force does not keep stats on stalking.

A Local Authority wrote: Data not known/collected

No responses from 3

These responses caused great concern as we wonder if our assumption that agencies would actually collect stats on the number of stalking victims that they support was erroneous and could have contributed to the low response rate. The agency questionnaire appears to have started with a simple question that they could not answer.

8.3: The number of people close to victims per agency per year

- 0 to 50
- 51-100
- 101-200
- 201-400
- 401-600
- More than 600

More than 400: None

Between 201 and 400: three agencies reported that they are in contact with friends and families of stalking victims. They were Police Hampshire Constabulary; another Police area and Other-Campaigning Organisation service.

Between 101 and 200, 51 and 100: None

Between 0 and 50: 17 agencies report that they support between 0 and 50 friends or family members of victims

One Local Authority wrote: ‘Data not known/collected’
No responses from 3 respondents.

Responses to the Public Questionnaire show that more victims turn to family and friends (52%) than to any other form of support other than the Police.
Research also demonstrates that on average 21 members of the victim’s network of family and friends will be drawn into the stalking net and can become secondary victims or, indeed, targeted by the stalker directly.

Research shows too, that informed positive support from family and friends who believe the victims’ accounts is significant in reducing the long term psychological impact of stalking.

So family and friends need information and support too

8.4: How do people usually contact you?

- Email
- Phone
- Letter
- Referral only
- Twitter
- Facebook
- LinkedIn
- Other (please specify)

Some agencies selected more than one category in their responses:

Email was selected by 7 respondents
Phone was selected by 10 respondents
Referral only was selected by 7 respondents i.e. 32% of the respondents
Twitter was selected by 2 respondents
Facebook was selected by 2 respondents
3 respondents did not specify

Three agencies selected the ‘other’ category. One specialist independent advisor did not specify; one specialist indicated that referrals come from their specialist website; the other, a local authority Children and Families Child Protection team indicated that stalking was identified in their casework with domestic abuse.

The importance of the Internet as a method of communication is demonstrated here.

8.5: What does your agency do for victims of stalking?

- Provide information about stalking
- Provide signposting to specialist services
- Provide legal advice or action
- Provide safety or protection services
- Provide emotional & practical support for legal action
- Provide emotional support regardless of legal action
Two respondents chose to reply in letters rather than by completing the questionnaire. They provided no statistics. Two responses were received from the same agency and so the stats that follow are based upon 20 agencies.

13 (65%) report providing information
16 (80%) report providing signposting to specialist services
8 (40%) report providing legal advice or action
9 (45%) report providing safety or protection services
9 (45%) report providing emotional & practical support for legal action
10 (50%) report providing emotional support regardless of legal action
7 (35%) report that their primary work is with other issues.

The Other - probation victim liaison service clarified its role by adding: ‘We are the primary agency for organising victim licence conditions on offenders. We attend MAPPA to represent victim issues and co-ordinate protection plans for victims.’

8.6: What does your agency do best for victims of stalking?

- Provide information about stalking
- Provide signposting to specialist services
- Provide legal advice or action
- Provide safety or protection services
- Provide emotional support
- Not our primary remit
- We feel uncomfortable about dealing with stalking

Two respondents chose to reply in letters rather than by completing the questionnaire. They provided no statistics. Two responses were received from the same agency and so the stats that follow are based upon 20 agencies.

The agencies report that what they do best is:

- 11 (55%) report that they provide information about stalking
- 11 (55%) report that they provide signposting to specialist services
- 6 (30%) report that they provide legal advice or action
- 6 (30%) report that they provide safety or protection services
- 7 (35%) report that they provide emotional support
- 4 (20%) report that intervention in stalking is not their primary remit
- 0 report that they feel uncomfortable dealing with stalking

8.7: Is there a gap between what you provide and what victims want?

- Would welcome some specialist training on stalking
• Require more access to practical advice from specialists
• Require clear advice for victims of stalking e.g. leaflets
  Contact details for specialist agencies
• More access to online support networks for stalking victims
• More access to one to one sessions for victims
• More access to group work for victims
• More access to support for friends and family of victims
• More access to support for children in families of victims
• Other? Please tell us:

Two respondents chose to reply in letters rather than by completing the questionnaire. They provided no statistics. Two responses were received from the same agency and so the stats that follow are based upon 20 agencies

8 (40%) indicate they would welcome specialist training on stalking
3 (15%) indicate they would not welcome specialist training (they are the specialists)
6 (30%) indicate they need more access to practical advice from specialists
5 (25%) indicate that they do not need access to advice from specialists
9 (45%) indicate they need access to clear advice for victims of stalking e.g. leaflets/ contact details for specialist agencies.
4 (20%) indicate they do not need leaflets or contact details for specialist agencies
8 (40%) indicate wanting more access to online support for stalking victims
3 (15%) do not want more access to online support for stalking victims
5 (25%) indicate they want more access to one to one sessions for victims
3 (15%) do not want more access to one to one sessions for victims
6 (30%) indicate that they want more access to group work for victims
3 (15%) do not want more access to group work for victims
8 (40%) want more access to more access to group work for victims
1 (5%) did not want more access to more access to group work for victims
7 (35%) want more access to support for children in families of victims
1 (5%) did not want more access to support for children in families of victims

Other? Please tell us:
The comments that were made are reproduced in full here:

**Other-Probation Victim Liaison** We provide practical help with regards to safety planning. We struggle in keeping ahead on cyberstalking and how victims can best protect themselves.

**Specialist:** We would like to provide telephone support as well as e-learning and more visual advice via videos

**Local authority and domestic abuse:** We only have funding for one Stalking Advocate for the whole of XX and YY

**Victim Support:** More support and resources to help those affected by stalking is always welcome.
**Local Authority:** Not known – not our primary or even secondary remit but would signpost if raised and have good safeguarding policies, training and positive links with other key agencies.

**Other-Campaigning Organisation:** More materials on bystander intervention to prevent

**Local Authority Child Protection Committee:** Cannot comment

8.8: Which organisations do you signpost to?

- Police
- National Stalking Helpline
- Network for Surviving Stalking NSS
- Action Scotland Against Stalking ASAS
- Women’s Aid
- End Violence Against Women
- Protection Against Stalking PAS
- Paladin
- No-one
- Others? Please tell us:

16 (80%) report that they refer to Police
9 (45%) report that they refer to the Stalking Helpline
4 (20%) report that they refer to Network for Surviving Stalking
2 (10%) report that they refer to Action Scotland Against Stalking ASAS
8 (40%) report that they refer to Women’s Aid
1 (5%) report that they refer to End Violence Against Women
4 (20%) report that they refer to Protection Against Stalking PAS
9 (45%) report that they refer to Paladin
1 (5%) reports that they refer to no-one
6 (30%) report that they refer elsewhere. 1 specified the Agency they refer to as Aurora New Dawn

3 Respondents wrote comments:

**Independent Advisor / Consultant** wrote: We rarely need to unless it is stranger-related stalking as we do one to one support, advocacy and advice around stalking

**Specialist+Domestic Abuse Agency** wrote that they refer to the Hampshire Stalking Clinic (partnership between police, probation, health and ourselves – we provide the Independent Stalking Advocate for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.) and to Specialist Solicitors – for appropriate legal advice

**Local Authority** wrote that they refer to local refuge service, CAB and rape crisis services
It is heartening that 80% agencies refer to the Police and that 45% refer to the National Stalking Helpline.

8.9: What sets you apart from other stalking services?

Tell us about your unique or particular services:

The response from Hampshire Constabulary is an example of good practice that is giving victims the confidence to come forward and so it is reproduced here as an identified agency.

Police Hampshire Constabulary The primary function of the police service is to protect victims of crime, and to investigate criminal acts. We therefore ensure that when stalking offences are reported to us, we safeguard the victim, including signposting to support agencies and gather evidence of the offence.

In Hampshire, we also are the lead agency for the Hampshire Stalking Clinic, which is a multi-agency panel that meets on a monthly basis in order to review stalking cases from throughout Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. Its purpose is to provide a multi-agency forum for the identification, referral, consultation, case formation, signposting and risk assessment of stalking cases within Hampshire.

The agencies involved are Hampshire Police, National Probation Service, Southern Health NHS Foundation, IDVA services and Aurora New Dawn. Referrals are received from a wide range of agencies, and are triaged by staff trained in Stalking Risk Profile Assessment. Those that are assessed to be high risk are discussed at the clinic where the type of stalking behaviour is identified. This informs a robust multiagency risk management plan, tailored to each case. The aims are to safeguard and support victims, reduce reoffending and support agencies in dealing with stalking cases.

Hampshire Specialist and Domestic abuse service is linked to this work, and their response was:

We introduced the first Independent Stalking Advocate outside of London in October 2013. We work on a one-to-one basis (face to face and telephone) with victims of stalking across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, working with our partners at the Hampshire Stalking clinic to identify perpetrators and manage the risk they pose. Our Stalking advocate is accredited by Paladin and we are affiliated with them for our stalking advocacy service. The organisation also delivers training around risk assessment – both the operations manager and CEO are accredited to deliver a DASH risk assessment masterclass, which includes input on staking, stalking risk and risk management.
Here follows the remaining responses which have been redacted to avoid disclosure of any specific agency:

**Specialist:** We address the digital abuse and provide technical support

**Other – Probation Victim Liaison** wrote: organise licence conditions for victims. Attend MAPPA to represent their concerns. Inform parole boards/governors and other professionals about stalking and the risks concerned. Liaise with prisons/hostels/offender managers in management of risk after sentencing. Often act as the link person to all the other services the victim needs.

**Independent Advisor /Consultant** wrote: Our IDVA’s have specialist training in domestic, sexual and honour based violence, stalking and forced marriage. All IDVA’s are CAADA IDVA qualified and have undertaken accredited stalking training. We are the key agency in XXXX that works directly with stalking victims and link with police, CPS, courts, probation, prison, MARAC etc. We do telephone and face to face support, and have expert knowledge of the criminal and civil legal systems and can help victims obtain family law protection orders as well as support through the criminal system.

We have managed to get police to re investigate numerous stalking cases after inappropriate action which has resulted in additional charges and custodial sentences. Training of other support services in the relevant of the CAADA DASH and the S-DASH.

**Police:** Prosecute offenders. Implement practical risk management

**Police – victim support role:** I work in a civilian post with XXX Police, providing victims of domestic abuse/stalking with practical and emotional support following a police report. The idea is to keep them supported and engaged throughout the criminal justice process

**Other- Campaigning Organisation** work with Men to raise awareness and prevent stalking and other male violence against women
We have some limited leaflets and posters re Stalking prevention.

**Victim Support:** A strength of Victim Support is that we are available across the whole of XXXX, and provide services to all victims of crime irrespective of the crime type or the victim’s characteristics. We provide information on the criminal justice system and can provide emotional and practical support for other kinds of victimisation experienced by the service user; this is helpful in providing holistic support to the victim.

8.10: How would you like to improve your services if you possibly could?
There were 19 responses to this question. This is a crucial question and so we have included all the responses here and grouped them into themes:

Improving Practice

**Other – Probation Victim Liaison:** A specialist stalking public protection meeting as they do in Hampshire which meets once a month.

**Independent Advisor/Consultant:** Scrutiny of all stalking cases with the police to review police and CPS action

**Police:** Increase in successful prosecutions for stalking offences.

**Specialist + Domestic Abuse:** National network of stalking advocates

Information

**Other – Church:** Having better access to information that could help signpost a victim to get the right help and to feel that they were being taken seriously.

**Local Authority:** Information, leaflets etc.

**Other – Campaigning Organisation:** A wider range of messages- ability to work with more groups to present more diverse messages – e.g. Play on at Southward re Revenge Porn – we have produced leaflets to hand out after each of the run of performances, plus after show discussions. We would like to work with more arts providers’ film makers etc. to produce educational materials.

**Other- Probation Victim Liaison:** More support services for victims to link them in with e.g. face to face. *This comment is included here and in Resources below.*

Training

**Independent Advisor/ Consultant:** Gain further knowledge of services to signpost victims to.

**Police-victim support role:** I feel some of our officers could benefit from further training, particularly in recognising the signs of stalking. Occasionally I feel I am ‘making up’ for the response victims feel they have had from our officers, particularly those who do not feel they were taken seriously.

**Police:** Greater understanding by staff of types of stalkers and the risk posed by stalkers

**Local Authority:** To better advise victims of stalking in terms of appropriate action and supports available to them.
Local Authority: More information and training on how to be supportive and key helpline details

Other- Probation Victim Liaison: More training on assessment of risk eg SAM

Other- Probation Victim Liaison: A means of keeping up to date on Cyberstalking

Resources

Specialist: More resources, advice, e-learning, videos, interactive action plans, tools and software, mobile apps recommendation on product and services

Independent Advisor/ Consultant: More resources to work with more clients

Specialist + Domestic Abuse: Funding for more stalking advocates in order to reach a higher number of clients and ensure that support is consistently promoted

Specialist + Domestic Abuse: Availability of support for family members/ children (advocates with more resources would be able to undertake safety work with family members as required)

Local Authority + Domestic Abuse wrote: Increase in capacity for IDVA provision so as to offer our services to those not just at high risk.

Victim Support: We would always welcome additional resources to enable us to maximise the impact of our work with victims of crime.

Other- Probation Victim Liaison: More support services for victims to link them in with e.g. face to face. This comment is included here and in Resources below.

Miscellaneous

Local Authority Criminal Justice wrote: ‘Again don’t feel this is applicable in this context’.
This is an interesting response from such a key agency to a question about how services to victims of stalking might be improved.

Local Authority Children and Families wrote: We could not take this on as well – our focus is on the ‘statutory’ work with children.
Another interesting response that is understandable at one level but the reality will be that they are already dealing with the fall-out from problems linked to stalking but possibly missing the root cause. The last two responses may indicate why nothing changes very much – ‘it is nothing to do with me’ and ‘don’t rock the boat, it is too full already.’

8.11: What would you need in order to achieve this?

Improving Practice

**Specialist + Domestic Abuse:** Look to ‘mainstream’ the availability of specific stalking support in the same way as IDVA/ISVA provision – maintaining the perspective that stalking advocacy is different to the work of an IDVA and requires specialist training & processes.

**Specialist + Domestic Abuse:** Awareness raising amongst commissioners

**Other - Campaigning Organisation:** Organisational recognition of what could be achieved

Information and Awareness

**Independent Advisor/ Consultant:** Just to know about what’s out there and raise the profile of local organisations and what they do.

**Police:** Increased awareness amongst officers of stalking legislation.

**Local Authority:** Signposting to resources

**Specialist + Domestic Abuse:** National publicity campaign

**Other – Campaigning Organisation:** Better distribution of our materials. Awareness of local authorities that we have this broader remit- some see us as merely anti DV and Sexual Assault organisation. Better information about what works to convince men not to take up these behaviours.

**Other – Church:** This is about providing information and access to expert advice and resources.

Training

**Police Victim Support:** Training from a specialist organisation would be useful. As part of my training, I met with a previous stalking victim and found that really helped my understanding
**Local Authority:** Further information and training in relation to stalking from specialist support agencies and The Police.

**Police:** More training of specialist staff

**Resources**

**Specialist:** Funding. More resources, advice, e-learning, videos, interactive action plans, tools and software, mobile apps recommendation on product and services

**Specialist + Domestic Abuse:** National/specific funding streams

**Independent Advisor/ Consultant:** More resources

**Domestic Abuse:** funding

**Miscellaneous**

**Local Authority child protection Committee** wrote: Not applicable

8.12: How should agencies improve their services for victims?

**Improving Practice**

**Specialist:** Provide much more in-depth practical advice too much of the information is vague. Provide action plans, worksheets, use more technology to deliver a better service to more people.

**Independent Advisor/ Consultant:** Improved understanding of the effects of stalking and about how each individual incident affects victims and to view stalking as a concerted pattern of behaviour. Many agencies, particularly police and CPS view incidents in isolation, and often many incidents are minor and are hence assessed as standard or medium risk, rather than viewed as a history of the abuse and stalking.

**Local Authority Criminal Justice:** I think Police recording and monitoring also needs to improve to ensure incidents are being recorded as such – particularly if it is one individual with several victims so that patterns can be identified to keep people safe.

**Independent Advisor/ Consultant:** Greater realisation that we have to work on Prevention and culture change
**Other-Probation Victim Liaison:** Our main concern is the lack of training in prisons which means a lot of stalking behaviour can continue unchallenged and without recognition at key stages e.g. parole hearings. A stalking register would identify these prisoners to staff and I feel there should be a specialist management plan for stalkers in prison.

**Police:** Greater access to emotional support

Information and Awareness

**Local Authority Criminal Justice:** I think there needs to be a higher profile given to discussion about stalking and actually what all constitutes stalking. Then with a public awareness campaign then advertisement of services to assist.

**Local Authority + Domestic Abuse:** Recognise that stalking may be an issue. Understanding of stalking behaviour

Training

**Independent Advisor/ Consultant:** Sentencers (i.e. magistrates and judges) to have training around appropriate and inappropriate sentences for stalkers – i.e. not to sentence to group domestic violence work for obsessive stalker

**Specialist + Domestic Abuse:** Be able to identify stalking behaviour & to refer appropriately. The availability of services is no use if clients are disclosing to other, more universal agencies who are not recognising the behaviour as stalking. DV will often be identified but for those who are not experiencing DV – would professionals be able to identify & signpost?

**Specialist + Domestic Abuse:** More training for other services on Stalking and its impacts

Joint Working

**Other – Church:** A co-ordinated approach always seems to work best. Too many times victims are pushed from one agency to another and this is disheartening.

**Police Victim Liaison:** I feel the agencies I refer to will always take claims seriously, which is the most important thing to me. However, it would be great if more agencies communicated with the police (dependent on their own confidentiality policies of course), and made sure victims were encouraged to come forward to us
**Local Authority Children and families’ team:** Better liaison and information sharing with our service to improve outcomes for victims to ensure that victims are made aware and are signposted to appropriate support agencies.

**Miscellaneous**

**Victim Support:** We are not in a position to comment on the service provided by other agencies

**Local Authority:** Cannot Comment

8.13: How could/might this be achieved?

**Improving Practice**

**Specialist:** It would need to be a new organisation with vision and business skills to create sustainable funding plan. Current agencies are technophobic, old fashion approach and to insular.

**Specialist:** Provide much more in-depth practical advice too much of the information is vague. Provide action plans, worksheets, use more technology to deliver a better service to more people.

**Other – Campaigning Organisation:** Round table meetings to discuss the success levels we have achieved with our local authority campaigns re Domestic Abuse

**Independent Advisor:** Police and CPS training

**Information and Awareness**

**Police Victim Support:** I think more awareness of my role would be useful, however as I am in a pilot role covering only part of XXXX this might be difficult. As I am not an officer, I find victims will often feel more comfortable making disclosures to me, and I can fully inform them what will happen next. I also think more of an awareness about how the criminal justice process works would be useful for victims

**Local Authority:** Information provided to our service by partner agencies and The Police in terms of the availability of appropriate support agencies and networks. This could be provided by formal training days or attendance by professionals from these agencies at Team Meetings
Local Authority Criminal justice: Media work

Specialist and Domestic Abuse: National publicity campaigns & a co-ordinated approach to raise awareness.

Training

Local Authority Criminal Justice: Police training

Specialist and Domestic Abuse: Training available for universal services to be able to identify stalking and signpost to specialist organisations.

Local Authority and Domestic Abuse: Training

Joint Working

Independent Advisor: Additional resources to offer multi-agency stalking training

Independent Advisor: The service needs to be joined up with agencies working together.

Resources

Independent Advisor: Additional resources to offer multi-agency stalking training

Specialist and Domestic Abuse: Central Government funding

Miscellaneous

Local Authority: Cannot Comment

Police: Specialist provision by outside agencies e.g. IDVAs

8.14: How should Stalking Services work with DA agencies?
Ex-partners are known to commit a high % of stalking offences. Therefore should stalking specialists and domestic abuse agencies:

• Work closely together on all cases of stalking
• Work closely only on stalking cases known to involve ex partners
• Develop protocols to share expertise but continue to work separately
• Strengthen the stalking network and ensure membership of MASH (Multi-Agency Support Hubs) and equivalent meetings
• be encouraged to raise the profile of stalking
• receive training and support from specialist Stalking agencies

12 (60%) indicate that stalking specialists and domestic abuse agencies (DA) should work closely on ALL cases of stalking
(20%) indicated that they did not think this

10 (50%) indicate that stalking specialists and DA agencies should work closely ONLY on cases known to involve ex-partners
5 (25%) indicate that they do not think this

11 (55%) indicate that stalking specialists should develop joint protocols but continue to work separately
15 (5%) indicated that they did not think this

15 (75%) indicate agencies should strengthen the stalking network and ensure membership of MASH (Multi Agency Support Hubs) and equivalents
2 (10%) indicate that they did not agree with this

19 (95%) agreed that the profile of stalking should be raised
0 indicated disagreement

17 (85%) that people working with stalking and in domestic abuse receive training and support from specialist Stalking agencies
0 indicated disagreement

Independent Advisor commented: However it is important to mention that some domestic abuse agencies (particularly IDVA’s) are specialists in stalking as well, so it is not always appropriate to think that someone needs a ‘specialist’ stalking agency if there is a domestic abuse agency involved who have experience of stalking. Sometimes referrals are made to numerous agencies and there is duplication. Local specialist agencies offering advocacy and support are in our view more appropriate for High Risk victims of stalking than national agencies due to the ongoing risks.

Victim Support: commented that expertise should be shared in general. It may not be necessary for stalking specialists to work closely with domestic abuse agencies in all cases, but it would be advantageous for cases that are known to involve ex-partners.
8.15: Do other agencies need to know more about Stalking?

16 (80%) responded indicating that agencies do need to know more about stalking.

1 Local Authority children and Families responded with No

6 chose not to respond to this question

Victim Support: commented ‘We are not in a position to comment on the knowledge of other agencies, although it is always a good idea to increase awareness of the impact of specific crimes.’

8.16: Which Agencies/Orgs could be included and why?

14 agencies responded. Their responses provided a comprehensive list. The numbers in brackets indicate how many agencies made this response.

All frontline care staff (2)
All universal services
All agencies dealing with victims
Most agencies providing support to victims of domestic abuse
Employers
Police (6)
Probation
IDVAs
Victim Support
CAB
CPS (2)
Courts and Family Courts (2)
Magistrates (2)
Judges (2)
Prison Services (2)
Scottish Social Services Council – to add info to newsletter
Social Workers (2)

Adult Services – Mental Health, Drugs and Alcohol, Housing staff

Children’s Services including schools

Medics and GPs (2)

Women’s Aid and equivalents

Immigration Tribunals

1. **Specialist**: All criminal justice agencies including police, cps, magistrates and judges.
2. **Independent Advisor**: Police, CPS Judges/magistrates
3. **Police Victim Liaison**: The police! Specifically, response officers as they will attend domestic incidents the vast majority of the time
4. **Local Authority CPC**: possibly via Scottish Social Services Council who could put into newsletters etc.
5. **Local Authority Children and Families**: Social Workers, Medical Professionals, Frontline Care staff
6. **Local Authority Criminal Justice**: Police
7. **Specialist + Domestic Abuse**: GP’s, CPS – still think the CPS could do with more input, frontline police officers.
8. **Specialist + Domestic Abuse**: All universal services
9. **Police**: All agencies who work with victims, particularly Domestic Abuse victims, need to increase their awareness and specialist knowledge of Stalking e.g. Women’s Aid & equivalent, IDVAs, Victim Support Service, Citizens Advice, Social Services
10. **Other- Campaigning Organisation**: Employers, so that they provide a safe environment for their staff.
11. **Local Authority**: Any agency that works with the public/has staff
12. **Local Authority + Domestic abuse**: Children’s Services – including schools, police / probation / prison services
   Adult Services – mental health workers, drugs and alcohol services
   Local housing officers
13. **Independent Advisor**: Most domestic violence support services; immigration tribunals; family courts
14. **Other-Probation Victim Liaison**: Courts, Prisons

It is clear that the agencies understand the reach of stalking and consider that ALL agencies should be aware of the signs and how to signpost effectively.

**The challenge remains as to how such a level of awareness, inclusion and trust can be achieved. Possibly a good start would be for areas to replicate the approach that Hampshire is so clearly using to such good effect?**
8.17: What headline advice would you give to victims of stalking?

Overwhelmingly the advice is consistent: seek help - preferably from a specialist agency; record everything; do not communicate with the stalker; tell people close to you; report it early to the police and persevere. There is absolutely nothing new or surprising here – so the next challenge is to make this process actually work - a task we all need to take some responsibility for.

The responses are provided in full below.

Advice:

**Independent Advisor:** Do not think you can mediate with them (*the stalker*) and try to get them to understand your point of view, they are stalking you because they want to and because they can

**Local Authority:** Inform friends and neighbours of your concerns, carry a mobile phone and never communicate with the stalker

**Victim Support:** We would also suggest making no response to the stalker or their actions.

**Police:** If a victim, the Stalking is unlikely to stop. It is more likely to escalate.

**Other-Campaigning Organisation:** Report it earlier

**Other-Probation Victim Liaison:** Learn how to stay safe
Persevere until you get the help you need as there are services out there.

**Victim Support:** Report – Share – Disclose

**Independent Advisor:** You have the right to live without fear

Report it, get help

**Independent Advisor:** Get help to report to the police but get an IDVA, or other specialist on board to monitor police action and be your advocate.

**Police:** Don’t be afraid to report to police, and stay engaged with us. You will be listened to.

**Independent Advisor:** Don’t suffer in silence – report it and be persistent so that something is done.
Independent Advisor: Talk to someone experienced

Local Authority: Report your concerns immediately to The Police

Local Authority: Seek support

Specialist + Domestic Abuse: Stalking is a crime and you do not have to put up with it. There is specialist support available – if you are at all concerned about someone’s behaviour get in touch with someone for help as soon as possible.

Specialist + Domestic Abuse: Seek specialist support from an agency that understands Stalking and the complexities of it.

Local Authority: Take it seriously and seek specialist advice early

Record everything

Independent Advisor: Log every incident

Local Authority and Domestic Abuse: Record everything

Other – Probation Victim Liaison: Record everything

Victim Support: We would advise victims to keep a record of the incidents, and to report each incident (if they feel comfortable doing so).

8.18: Have you sent this questionnaire to all your fellow workers?

10 respondents indicated that they had shared the questionnaire with colleagues.
9 indicated that they had not.

This was a disappointing response. We had hoped recipients would be enthused by the website and want to share with colleagues and service users the fact that this consultation was taking place.

This raises the question of how to motivate agencies to be part of making progress on an important subject if the key worker or head of department is unwilling to cascade useful information to staff and colleagues by simply forwarding an email.

8.19: Is www.scaredofsomeone.org useful for your clients?
15 responses to this question saw 12 indicate that it would be useful. Three agencies thought that it would not. The three were Local Authority Criminal Justice, Other- Campaigning Organisation and a Local Authority

8.20: Agencies requesting a copy of the final Report

Of the 23 agency responses received, just 20 agencies took up on the offer to receive a full copy of the final report. Three agencies were happy to reply, but had no interest in the final outcome.

Over 600 different agencies were contacted and given the opportunity to complete a questionnaire and to receive a copy of the final report. All of them had the opportunity to respond, or just request a copy of the report; either in full, or in executive summary. It is disappointing to have to note that only 23 agencies took up this offer. A small number of agencies (12) registered online via the website to receive a copy of the report.

There was an expectation that most of the 600 agencies would be interested in finding out what the final report contained, but this was sadly not the case.

This report has been funded wholly by the Network for Surviving Stalking. NSS has offered to provide a copy of the report to anyone who requests one. This is in order to assist with awareness raising and to enhance knowledge about stalking. It seems that the take up of this generous offer is a huge indicator of the view that the stalking agenda ‘belongs’ to someone else.

8.21: Agencies requesting the Executive Summary

21 Agencies have requested a copy of the Executive Summary.

9 Conclusions:

What are the conclusions to be drawn from the consultation both for agencies and support groups, and for the general public; and how should these be translated into recommendations for action, who would be best placed to achieve them; and how would this improve the support of victims across the UK.
Conclusion 1: The Victim’s Voice

The voices of the victims of stalking are not really being heard. They are saying now what they have been saying for years.

9.1 Our results show that victims want to be taken seriously and treated with courtesy (see Section 10 106). They want to be believed (74%). They want emotional support (66%)

They want practical information (74%), legal advice (61%), risk assessment (64%) and suggestions about keeping safe (66%)

They made 80 comments about what they want from agencies (Section 10 Question 106) – the key themes were that:

Victims want agencies to be informed and have training about stalking
They want agencies to work together to support them
They want stalking agencies to raise their profile
They want a national awareness campaign to raise the profile of stalking in the UK

They also made 22 practical suggestions that they felt would help. These are in Section 10 Question 106

Our results suggest that very little has changed for victims as the data we have presented correlates closely with that produced by Dr Lorraine Sheridan in 2005 but ours indicates (unsurprisingly) an increase in cyber-stalking.

This means that victims’ responses STILL continue to highlight:

- A lack of public awareness about stalking
- A view that there is a lack of agency awareness and agency knowledge about how to respond to stalking
- That the majority of victims are still being stalked by ex-partners, yet key support agencies do not engage with them
- That many of them still experience very significant fear (72%) and tremendous disruption to their lives (82%) over long periods of time (see Section 10 Qu 109)
- That many still do not know where to go for help (49%)
- That victims still need clear information AND emotional support and are finding it difficult to access either one

The very large number of typed comments (over 620) received by this consultation has shown that victims have nowhere to make their views known to the agencies supposed to be supporting them. In any survey, it is comparatively rare for respondents to bother to add personal comments after
completing all the questions, so the hundreds of comments received by this consultation should be seen as a significant cry from victims to be taken more seriously and listened to.

But not only that: their comments should also be taken note of and acted on.

**From the 2015 NSS Consultation results, It is startlingly evident that VICTIMS AND AGENCIES AGREE on the ways forward:**

**Conclusion 2: Awareness**

This project shows that victims and agencies are in total agreement that the UK needs to have a national publicity campaign to raise **awareness** of stalking with 95% agencies indicating that the profile of stalking should be raised.

The need for awareness raising was acknowledged in recommendation number 13 of the Parliamentary Inquiry in 2013 and was in fact the only recommendation that is specifically focused on the victims, and not on the offenders:

*“Recommendation 13. It should be the duty of the Secretary of State to raise awareness of the reality of stalking behaviour amongst the public and in schools in line with the government’s policy on Bullying and Violence against Women and Girls.”*

Almost three years after this recommendation, there does not appear to be any raising of public awareness of stalking nor preventative work in schools.

The lack of awareness of stalking in agencies – even those familiar with Risk Assessment is a problem. The Independent Parliamentary Inquiry into Stalking Law Reform in February 2013, page 17 states:

’If stalking is found to be present, the DASH is a gateway through to a further 11 questions.’

*This means: do the DASH form and then the additional 11 questions when stalking is a feature.*

(The risk assessment checklist, known as DASH, is the accredited toolkit in use across all Police forces and agencies in the UK since 2009. A further 11 risk factors were developed by Drs Lorraine Sheridan and Karl Roberts, both internationally recognised experts in stalking, which has been added to the current DASH checklist, since April 2014, to assess the risk levels of any stalking behaviours.)

This is a catch 22 scenario – once you have identified that stalking is happening, ask the questions to assess the risk in that situation. BUT the current situation is that cases of stalking are NOT being identified – as our cohort have
evidenced with their replies and comments, so the questions will rarely be asked.

The fact is that some of the eleven questions could be very usefully used to assist with the **recognition** of stalking. We therefore suggest that a better use of the forgotten 11 would be during initial information gathering. The relevant questions are:

1. Does x make you very frightened?
2. Is there any history of DA and stalking?
3. Has x ever vandalised or destroyed your property?
4. Has x turned up unannounced more than 3 times in the last week?
5. Has x been following you or loitering around the area you happen to be in?
6. Has x ever threatened you with physical or sexual violence?
7. Are you aware of any form of technology used to monitor your movements?
8. Has x been harassing or violent to any 3rd party since starting to harass you?
9. Does x have a drug problem?
10. Does x have alcohol problems?
11. Has x engaged anyone else to assist him/her?

They give the victim a framework within which they can describe what is happening to them and can trigger a victim into understanding and talking about the relevance of some behaviours. The comments received in this consultation have shown that in many cases victims have become used to behaviour such as repeated phone calls or Facebook messages, and before reading the www.scaredofsomeone.org website; did not realise that this was an escalating and dangerous behaviour of stalking.

This consultation has discovered victims who had not realised that what was happening to them WAS stalking and victims who did not know what was relevant to share. Some of them had been living with this for so long that it had almost become ‘normal’ behaviour, and they only reported when things escalated to the next level of threat or danger.

4. Our project discovered that many agencies do not keep statistics on stalking. One quick and easy way of introducing the message that stalking is important - affects 20% women and 10% men in the UK at some time in their lives - is for the government to require all statutory agencies to keep statistics on stalking and have financial penalties for those who do not comply.

**See Section 10.3, comment number 65:**
“victims need more awareness of where to go to get help - I didn't know of any (support agencies) ‘till doing this questionnaire”

Conclusion 3: Training

Victims have written that Agencies need to be more informed about stalking and about signposting to other agencies. See Section 10 Qu 106 and 111
Agencies agree that they want training on stalking*:
  40% said they want training from specialists,
  35% wanted access to specialists for practical advice
  45% wanted access to clear advice that they could share with victims
  40% want access to more information online about stalking
  85% said that agencies working with DA and stalking should receive training
  and support from specialist stalking agencies.
  80% said that agencies need to know more about stalking.

*(Some of the agencies in our cohort were the specialists)

Clearly the lack of response from agencies to our project suggests that most of them do not relate to stalking. If you do not know what something looks like, you will not recognise it. If you do not recognise it, you cannot really offer or ask for help. You can, in short, be dangerous.

Agencies that did respond were very clear that, for the most part, they needed training. The chances are then, that agencies who did not respond would also benefit from training.

A combination of awareness raising and training would make a difference to the recognition and intervention options.

The government has committed to training criminal justice professionals in anti-stalking legislation. That is fine and evidences good practice, but unless and until stalking training is delivered to front line staff in all agencies, the possibility of it being identified and presented to the CJS by other agencies is remote. Someone has to recognise and name the behaviour before it reaches the CJS.

All frontline agencies need training in all the different stalking behaviours and accessible diagnostic tools. We should then see an increase in the numbers of perpetrators of stalking going through the judicial system.

Conclusion 4: Information

Victims and Agencies were in agreement that more information is needed in as wide a range of formats as possible. 45% agencies indicated that they need more clear information – online, videos, leaflets for themselves and for their
service users. The information should back up the awareness raising campaign and be available on an ongoing basis after that.

Information on cyberstalking and use of technology was a source of anxiety to agencies and victims who did not feel competent in dealing with this issue.

One Specialist wrote: Provide much more in-depth practical advice too much of the information is vague. Provide action plans, worksheets, use more technology to deliver a better service to more people.

**Other-Probation Victim Liaison:** Our main concern is the lack of training in prisons which means a lot of stalking behaviour can continue unchallenged and without recognition at key stages e.g. parole hearings. A stalking register would identify these prisoners to staff and I feel there should be a specialist management plan for stalkers in prison.

**Police:** Greater access to emotional support

Good clear information can act as potent prevention – if we can alert people to the potential dangers of stalking behaviours and how to respond, they will be in a safer position.

We are building a stronger picture now of agencies who are aware, trained, and in possession of information, offering services to victims. The victims and people close to them would have benefitted from the awareness program and refer themselves early…………

**BUT THERE IS ANOTHER CRUCIAL ELEMENT:**

**Conclusion 5: Joint Working**

84% of our high risk respondents report that agencies did not work together to support them. 61% of the whole group felt this way. In their comments (see Section 10 106) victims urge agencies to work together.

Agencies too indicate that stalking representatives should be included in the Multi Agency Support Hubs – i.e. joint working. 60% believed that DA and stalking specialist should work closely together.

When agencies work together for the benefit of clients all sorts of benefits accrue – they learn about each other and can make referrals with confidence. **Clear pathways of referral develop** for targeted and specialist help and support. Shared risk assessment becomes the norm.
Almost inevitably this leads to the ultimate goals of early recognition and effective intervention.

Earlier identification and intervention can help to prevent the more serious stalking behaviours from developing, and lessen the trauma for victims and their networks.

There are some excellent examples of current partnerships and systems that are already in existence that could be used to achieve efficient joint working, without any complex new processes or additional expense. All agencies are already engaging with: Safeguarding Children Boards, Adult Safeguarding Boards, Health and Wellbeing Partnerships, MASHs, MAPPAs, and Community Safety Partnerships. It would be a fairly simple matter to add the Stalking agenda to their remits.

The fact that joint working produces results can be seen in the stats presented by the Hampshire Constabulary (see Agency questionnaire 8.2)

Conclusion 6: Improving Practice.

Victims contributed many ideas about improving practice (see Section 10.3 Qu106 and 10.4 Qu 110 and 111

Agencies too identified changes that they felt would improve the service for victims. See 8.12 these included:

Provide much more in-depth practical advice too much of the information is vague. Provide action plans, worksheets, use more technology to deliver a better service to more people.

Improved understanding of the effects of stalking and about how each individual incident affects victims and to view stalking as a concerted pattern of behaviour. Many agencies, particularly police and CPS view incidents in isolation, and often many incidents are minor and are hence assessed as standard or medium risk, rather than viewed as a history of the abuse and stalking.

Police recording and monitoring also needs to improve to ensure incidents are being recorded as such – particularly if it is one individual with several victims so that patterns can be identified to keep people safe.

Greater realisation that we have to work on Prevention and culture change

The main concern is the lack of training in prisons which means a lot of stalking behaviour can continue unchallenged and without recognition at key stages e.g. parole hearings.
A stalking register would identify these prisoners to staff and there should be a specialist management plan for stalkers in prison.
Cyberstalking is clearly increasing and the Home Office is requested to honour the commitment they made in 2012 to ‘work’ on it. The Victims Commissioner would be a good advocate for this task.

Conclusion 7: Where is the elephant?

There seems to be a lot of discussion at one level and some understanding of what is needed in terms of framework but little sign of change on the ground. Why is this? It may be that no-one has ‘ownership’ of stalking. It is tucked away as a subsection of harassment, it is tucked away as a subsection of domestic abuse, it is hidden as repeat ‘other’ offences without being recognised as Stalking. So there are attempts to intervene that just go no-where or are so vague as to give no-one responsibility, or are not publicised so that, for example, no-one on the ground understands that the law has changed, that there are new sanctions that can be used against stalkers.

Somehow it seems as if an elephant gets in the way. Examples of this could be:

Following the Home Office Review in 2012 A one year pilot on Police disclosure of previous violent offending was set up in the summer of 2012 in Greater Manchester, Gwent, Nottinghamshire and Wiltshire following the Home Office Review in 2012, to trial a process of disclosing previous stalking behaviour to their new partners, but the outcomes of this are currently unknown.

The 2013 findings of the Independent Parliamentary Inquiry asked for support to be made available to victims of stalking and their children “as appropriate”, but how this might happen and who was to take responsibility, was not specified, so not unexpectedly, nothing has yet happened. The responses that we have received are almost identical to those of Dr Lorraine Sheridan almost 10 years ago. The responses are clear that the appropriate services for victims would provide them with opportunities to obtain emotional and practical support from well informed agencies that worked together to stop the stalking and deal with the offender. See Section 10 Comments 105,106, 110 and 111 and responses to Question 98 to 102 in section 7.

The recommendations of the Inquiry asked for “consideration” to be given to producing a national register of stalkers, for known serial perpetrators, and this too has not yet happened. Some comments received in this consultation asked for a national register, others showed awareness that the person who stalked them had stalked others too. The existence of the Police National Database (PND) at least makes this a viable possibility, as the Register of Sex Offenders has shown.

The Inquiry recommended that restrictions be placed on offenders’ use of phones, IT (by which we assume to include social media use) and letters, but only while offenders are carrying out a prison sentence. There has been
no suggestion of imposing this sanction on offenders who have not been given a custodial sentence. Perhaps this could be explored.

A commitment to developing treatment programmes for those convicted of stalking has not yet been fulfilled. The suggestion that stalkers would receive psychological analysis and possible treatment during the Court process is also not yet happening.

“Paladin” was set up in 2013 following the Stalking Law Reform campaign to provide a National Stalking Advisory Service. But Paladin supports only high risk victims. See section 10 105, 111

This means that in practical terms, the majority of victims are not ‘eligible’ for their specialist assistance, until their situation worsens.

This also flies in the face of all that agencies and victims advise other victims to do. See Section 10 Qu 105 advice from victims for victims – there were 93 responses and the overwhelming message was ‘Act quickly, get help’. Also See: 8.17 in which agencies urge victims to seek specialist help early.

The National Stalking helpline has a forum where logged-in ‘members’ can share their experiences and ask for help or advice from other ‘members’ of the group. As part of this consultation process, we did monitor the forum for a period of time. Currently, this forum has been suspended, and is not now available. We have no idea why it was revoked. This is another avenue closed.

The Home Office published ‘Getting it Right for Victims and Witnesses’ in July 2011 and ‘Review of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 Improving Protection for Victims of Stalking’ in July 2012, but it is difficult to identify what has changed substantially on the ground.

The process of achieving positive meaningful change to the status quo on stalking, will need the involvement of many agencies. Each one acting within its own capabilities and relevant remit. NSS is committed to bringing about that change and could be the catalyst by bringing the conclusions of this project to the attention of relevant agencies and organisations and encouraging a focussed response. In the words of one of the contributing agencies – we simply need:

Organisational recognition of what could be achieved

AND THIS IS THE ELEPHANT – when agencies recognise that they can succeed and decide to work together –as they have in Hampshire then positive change will follow.
9.1 Recommendations

There was such harmony between the views of the victims and agencies that we can confidently make the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1: Raise Awareness

There should be a national campaign to raise awareness of stalking. This should be aimed at the general public – in the knowledge that it will reach victims, family and friends, stalkers, professionals and agencies.

The campaign should provide clear information about the different types of stalking and how each might be addressed. It should be clear that sanctions exist and just as clear about how to access them.

The campaign should highlight the growing use of the Internet and technology by stalkers.

Recommendation 2: Information

Information should be produced, in a wide range of formats, to enhance the awareness campaign and be flexible enough to be used after the campaign has ended. The wider the range of formats the better. Victims and agencies listed videos, DVDs, leaflets and online tools. There should be information for the public and information for agencies, employers, schools and professions likely to be targeted by stalkers – e.g., the medical profession.

There should be clear signposting information to specialist agencies.

Recommendation 3: Training

There should be training on stalking for all frontline services. As the level of understanding is currently woeful a start would be a clear internet program supported by videos. This could have downloadable risk assessment forms; forms on which information can be entered and evidence can be collated.
If Specialist input on this Internet package could be organised, the package could be updated with the most current guidance on cyberstalking and ways of keeping safe.

This could be enhanced by the provision of multi-disciplinary training days in regional centres that are open to all agencies that are committed to joint work on stalking.

**Recommendation 4: Joint Working**

The Hampshire multi-disciplinary model works. Police in other areas could consider replicating it. Initially they could do this simply by adding stalking cases onto their MASH agenda (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub).

75% of the agencies who participated in this survey were in favour of this.

**Recommendation 5: Improving Practice**

That a culture of responsibility for dealing with stalking be nurtured so that:

- All statutory agencies keep statistics on the incidence and outcomes of stalking
- Employers have policies that clarify their approach to stalking in and outside the workplace.
- Commissioners who fund domestic abuse services require them to provide a service to victims who are stalked by their ex-partners – this would be over 50% stalking victims (59% in our survey)
- All Internet Service providers and social media have robust policies and practices that support victims of stalking and disrupt stalking activities online.
- All phone providers cooperate to devise ways of supporting victims of stalking and disrupting stalking activities.
Prisons flag stalkers’ files, work with them to address the behaviour and are mindful of the impact of stalking so that appropriate actions can be taken at key points to safeguard the victim.

Agencies should ensure that there are ways in which they can be contacted using the Internet - in particular email.

Agencies would understand that having a direct route to sending an email address like being linked Outlook Express is unsettling as the victim does not feel in control of the message and does not know if an automatic reply will be sent. This is vital where the victim’s emails are being monitored by the stalker.

The Home Office will be able to deal effectively with cyberstalking and support agencies who are trying to tackle it.

10 Public Questionnaire Comments Received

The comments we received have been transposed to this report in their entirety, this includes any places where the victim has chosen to write in in capitals, or in some other way that might reinforce their opinions.

We consider it a privilege to receive these heartfelt and emotional thoughts and pleas, and we hope that they may be used by relevant agencies to influence their decisions about future provision of services for victims of Stalking.
10.1 The tipping moment or event. Question: 66

COMMENTS QUESTION 66:

Question 65: Was there a tipping moment or event that made you decide to find help? Those that answered yes to this, were invited to provide information about this in more detail. The size of the response was unrestricted to allow people to share as much or as little information as they felt necessary.

Question 66: Would you be happy to tell us what it was and how you decided? The responses have been grouped into eight key themes:

Threats:

1. Threat to life
2. Threatening me and my children
3. I decided one he turned up outside threatening to kill me after 2 months of unwanted behaviour. Got a non-molestation order and he breached within a week by getting the neighbours to set up camera to watch people going in and out my house
4. After he had broken into my house, physically threatened myself, toddler son, barricaded us in with him and said he would kill himself and us, he then went on to show up at my mother's and attempted a similar thing there. Tried to get help from police at the time but he had disconnected phone. Torment went on for a year, despite a court case. We still live in fear, despite moving, changing job, numbers, car, everything!
5. Fear
6. I was stalked for 7 months before taking any action. I called the police on a night when I'd received nearly 200 text messages including threats to kill me and threats to publish personal photographs that he had obtained by hacking into my computer.
7. Threat to kill
8. He wrote a letter to my father threatening to kill my family and then rape me.
9. Threat to repeat the rapes he did when together when doing child handovers telling me details of my home that I have moved 5 times in 4 years and he uses kids or self to find me
10. I was traced for the 13th time by my abusive family. I had death threats made and so I contacted a refuge and moved 300 miles away as my life was just abuse moving being found and I had had enough
11. Threat to my children
12. A suicide threat that seemed very plausible and when he mistreated our pets to punish me.
13. He threatened to kill himself and sent me printed photos of his wrists with cuts all over them.
14. I decided to call the police when he was ready to threaten me and my property.
15. When there was a threat in a text message about wanting to hurt us.
16. Someone claiming to be me to a friend to get photos of myself and get them to take photos of me, I contacted the police when they then started to ask for photos of my nude and threatening to hurt my friend.
17. When my ex-partner made threats to kill against my new partner
18. I agreed to meet him and be assaulted me
19. When he invited me over on pretence of just being friends and understood I was not wanting anything else then wouldn't let me leave. I had to wait til he fell asleep then was able to leave
20. When I realised they were getting others involved to cause my friends distress and threatening to harm my family.

Impact on family

1. When my partner threatened the offender
2. Contacting my family via internet
3. Didn't want my son growing up to be like his dad
4. Yes. Stalked for 4 years. When I ended the relationship to protect my Family from further Domestic Violence he regularly turned up to see my neighbour and was deliberately upsetting my son. I contacted NCDV after seeing a poster at Acorns and asked for help. I took my son for counselling as he was most affected by my ex partners violent and unpredictable behaviour. NCDV took a statement and arranged a hearing at Newcastle Crown Court to ask for Protection and a Non Molestation Order. Police ignored me, allowed Stalking to progress and failed to follow Non Molestation with devastating consequences. Serious damage has occurred due to failings causing severe emotional trauma to my children. I had to relocate to XXXX from XXXX
5. Texts began to increase in frequency and I could no longer shield their existence from my partner.
6. My daughter was coming home from her dad's house more and more upset every time. I decided to cut contact with him and I reported his behaviour to social services and the police so it would be taken seriously if his behaviour became worse or he carried out any of the threats he was making.
7. Trying to pick up a child from school without parents knowledge.
8. When a stranger knew my daughter's name and where she lived
9. After weeks of following me around and sending me abusive text messages and voicemails after I ended our relationship (which his level of abuse escalated throughout) he then threatened to kidnap me and break every bone in my body
I didn't get the support I needed at all & was still very scared. 5 years later I am still scared of him & have moved houses several times. He went on to do the same thing to another woman & I know she won't be the last.

10. I recently had a baby and was scared for her well being

11. When my stalker started spying on and following my sister and making suggestive remarks. Saying he would leave me alone if my sister slept with him. He then vandalised her vehicle as well as mine

12. Seeing holes in my walls and more people talking of what I do in my house and the worry of pictures of my niece and boys

Links to other family members – who could foresee this?

1. The woman had a relationship with my husband. She started texting me, offering to meet me etc.

2. The lady that has been stalking me and harassing me was an ex-partner of my father. He ended the relationship the harassment became intense. She contacted my place of work (I work in domestic abuse and sexual violence including stalking, and she made derogatory statements about me to my manager) She also parked outside my home and when questioned about this she denied this, then told me that she was cleaning the school where my children work.

Internet

1. I was stalked by someone online who I then met socially, after the evening they obtained my personal details and plastered them all over social media, together with lurid allegations. They also contacted my place of work regarding my alleged "criminal activities" (these are complete fabrications), their complaints led to me being investigated and despite being told I was exonerated their false claims and malicious complaints continue. The matter is now in police hands.

2. I was with my partner for 4.5 years, he was physically, emotionally, financially and sexually abusive for the majority of our relationship. He used to monitor my online activities and follow me everywhere, even to the bathroom on nights out. When I finally broke up with him, he followed me and hounded me by text and online until I took him back. I only stayed with him for 2 weeks after that, in which he was even more possessive (if possible). I got the confidence to leave him again. We lived apart but he often stayed with me. I kicked him out when
we broke up. He constantly harassed me by text and online for roughly 6 months after the relationship ended, with him even showing up at my parents’ house to look for me on days when he knew I would be home (for example, birthdays). Luckily my parents neighbour had been alerted to it, so if she saw him she would ring me to tell me to stay away until he had gone. Since the relationship ended 4 years ago I have accessed numerous counselling courses and been in therapy. I have clinical depression, have suffered with agoraphobia and nyctophobia (fear of the dark). I also suffer with night terrors. I deleted him from all of my social media and blocked his number from my phone. Last year however, he attempted to add me on Facebook. I have not accepted it and reported the action, but it still terrified me to know that he was there. I was horrifying to see that he is still around, and though he has not attempted any further contact, the small action made me feel as scared as when we first broke up.

3. Online abusers stalking, defaming, cloning me. Made death, rape and violence threats to me on the internet. They found and published my home address online - the threats and hatred shown towards me, took a sinister turn. I received hate mail posted to my home. Police say there is nothing they can do, as they cannot identify the stalker from the internet. The IP’s used are fakes, they are hiding behind fake accounts on the net that cannot be technically traced. Police also could not get any fingerprints off the 3 hate mail/cards sent to my home, they think the suspect is wearing gloves to prevent leaving fingerprints. I have named the stalker to police, but police won’t take action without technical. Forensic evidence that links alleged stalker to me. It’s been going on for over 3 years

4. Abusive emails were disappearing and being deleted.

Phone calls and text messages

1. It was only when my partner admitted he’d being receiving lengthy, anonymous texts for about two weeks and supposedly from 'a friend' that I realised there was a serious problem. By this point my partner was completely confused and though he was going crazy. Until that point I had not understood his distress and inability to get rid of this 'silly little girl' When the anonymous texts surfaced I realised there something was very wrong but it took something tangible for me to realise there was a problem; I had not understood the early symptoms of stalking.

2. Receiving 23 obscene phone calls in the space of 12 hours, pretty much every 1/2 hour right through one night. The caller knew what I was wearing down to
my underwear (even though I have muslin curtains), was highly lewd and offensive.

3. I haven't done anything yet. He just keeps phoning house phone and sending emails. I've blocked him on Facebook and now - I hope - my email. I hardly ever answer my home phone. I don't know what car he drives now, so don't know if he's still watching me. I'm just ignoring him.

4. This all happened in the mid-80s, so before caller ID, and before BT or police took this sort of thing seriously, so we had no help from them, as no threats had been made. I started getting silent phone calls when my husband was at work. If he took a day off, they didn't happen, if he worked late, they did. He tried going in and out of the house and work without being seen, but only ever once did it happen when he was home. He worked in a secure establishment where people had to log in and out, so we are quite sure it was someone at work. It was a very large site, with many companies, so impossible to track down who it was. He also had multiple drawing pins stuck in his cycle tyres a few times. This behaviour frightened me a great deal, especially when I became pregnant, so I felt very vulnerable. When our baby was nearly one we moved 200 miles away (still working for the same company), and expected it to stop, but after a while started up again; which really freaked me. Then someone suggested I blow a whistle down the phone when it happened. I tried that, and it stopped after several weeks.

5. My daughter was being constantly phoned and texted by a pupil at her school. My daughter was suffering from anxiety and depression and was finding the constant texting and phone calls too overwhelming to deal with. I contacted the school for help. The form tutor spoke to the person concerned and brought it to their attention that if their actions didn't cease, we would be within our rights to report them to the police. However, on the flip side, we were also informed by the same tutor that in the pupils defence, my daughter was most probably receiving this attention because she was "from a more privileged background" than the pupil that was texting her.

6. My phone and internet line was cut

7. Sick of him using his job to spy on me. He was a xxxx operator for the local council. Also when my phone line was ripped out

8. Anxiety attack after missing 3 calls within a 10 minute period

**Long term**

1. Because it had been going on for 3 years straight
2. Offender previously bound over for harassment but continued when the court order expired - 14 years+ of behaviours, contacted ASB team believing they would help (how wrong we were to think they would help - they are only helping
the offender) the offender uses a vehicle as a weapon with intent, makes threats, attempts to cause deliberate crashes, and does get violent with a male family member, the councils response is: will not act as they do not want to affect his income as he is a licenced taxi driver, he uses his job to hide behind the stalking and following - despite using two vehicles one licensed one not licensed, ASB team give excuses for what he does his constant horning at us inside our home and outside our home is "taxi culture" and we are told there is no law for the constant over use of his horn!!! ASB team manager has influenced police "Do not act" - we continue to live in fear of our safety. The offender even targets us outside the ASB offices!!

3. I have had one stalker for over 25 years he is now locked up for a long time for another matter. My female stalker is different I met her through my church many years ago and we were friends. It all started when I was seeing a psychologist for help reg the other one and I was on probation through drinking because of the other stalker no one helped me with him because the law did not recognise stalking even when he held me at gun point and knife point stabbed be beat me no help. So I took her to the meeting with me and quickly realised something was not right I asked her to leave. Later I was told she accused the Dr of assaulting her in the car park which I knew to me untrue. Things escalated from there she started to write to him send sex toys to him and blame me. So many times the police lifted me on her word finger printed me DNA tested a lot more. In 2012 once again I was arrested on her word she accused me of setting up blogs on the Internet in her name. My life was in bits my college was over my p.c was taken I was a mess. Last year after a two year wait the crown dropped all charges again as nothing was found on my P.C. During this time I already knew XXXXX (agency name and agency workers name) who supported me through this although my stalker targeted her as well. Even though I understand stalking I do not think she is done with me. My stepdad passed in 2011 and she targets his obituary page I have control of that page so I have to give consent for anything to go on it. I have had photos of her put in my door a letter sent to me by her and so much more. When I go to the police it’s a joke he said I cannot complain about her as its historical but so was hers complaint against me. Even the letters photos last year the police said just put them in a drawer and forget them there is nothing we can do as it’s not stalking to send your photo to someone only if she makes threats might be able to do something then nothing can be done about phone calls or about sending people to my house or about putting my name on yell. Com with the address saying we are immigration or a massage house. My 88 year old mum is scared but the Police in XXX do nothing. How can I get someone to listen? I could go on but all my stuff is on my website. www.katehall.org I am grateful to XXX for what she had done but if the police do not listen or act what then. We get no help just now because they will not help we are scared right now and never know what is coming next with her. Thanks for reading this.
4. Ex-brief partnership, became obsessed, had spurned me from the media, papers, after my fiancé, a well-known local figure, and had died of cancer. The man inveigled his way into my life at my most vulnerable time. He stalked me for 3 years. The police could do nothing, arrested twice, breach of peace etc., but nothing stopped. All in 1992.1995 before the act.

5. Peeping tom/stalker was a neighbour who I didn't associate with. Caught at my house with nose against my bedroom window late at night. Had him arrested 8 times over a period of 7 years.

Tracking devices

1. I felt that I could cope with the phone calls, texts, gifts etc. by just ignoring them. It wasn't until I found a portable tracking device on my car that I thought it was 'serious' and contacted the police. I subsequently found two further tracking devices over a period of 6 months.

2. This is an excellent stalking awareness tool - great job. Great informational website too!! I love how you talk about listening to your instincts, and the aspects of stalking and the internet! This is the type of website that needs to be in great circulation to inform everyone! As for me, a girl I knew came forward and told me my friend was stalking me, had gone so far as to put a GPS tracker on my car; there were more things that happened and things he said that were frightening, but the was the big clincher, if you will. This was a few years back, at this point, but certainly I still think about it today, and it affected my life greatly, on many different levels (left town, left job, couldn't go back to my XXXX (named further Educational programme), disciplinary hearings for him that I had to attend because he was in school, court hearings etc.). I am now back in school finishing my XXXXX (named qualification) as a XXXXX (named professional career), and have a great interest in stalking education and prevention, as well as how I can keep sharing my story to educate and protect others.

Various:

1. NOTHING ASKED FOR HELP WHICH WAS REJECTED AND IT CONTINUES TO THIS VERY DAY

2. Ex broke into my house and made malicious complaints to try to get me sacked, also had me followed, etc., etc.

6. I contacted the police straight away and they acted immediately and took me seriously

7. Actually I was lucky it just started about 3 weeks before I move house and country. There had been 1 meeting (I was selling my car, they were a potential
buyer, or so I thought...although they didn't actually want to drive the car which was a bit odd!), and then a hand written letter inviting me to start a relationship with him (he was 70+ and I didn't even know his name. I was 27 and thankfully about to leave the country forever. I didn't write back and managed to sell car to nice couple but there was definitely the potential for something more sinister there.) At university I spent a year in Sicily. One of my friends was tall and blond - exactly the opposite of an Italian there. She'd frequently get followed home from supermarket...by pretty much a different bloke every time. At the time being young and unafraid, we joked about it. In Sicily I was stalked I guess in the 'halls' by someone or people who would call my room in the middle of the night to talk (I was asleep and not interested in 'making friends' at 2am), or to heavy breath at me. What was scary was that they were in the same building and knew which room I was in but I had no way of knowing who they were. Luckily my roommate was in a lot. I complained about it but it was laughed off by guard and management. I suspected the guard as well because the calls would often begin just as I got back to my room. I'll never know. Later I moved rooms and it stopped. Other foreign students had the same thing. I didn't think of this as stalking, but harassment yes!

8. realised that I could not find a way out

9. My partner's cousin has been harassing my partner and his family for years on and off, she made a false allegations about him to the police in 2012 which resulted in a court case, luckily my partner was found to be not guilty. She was not happy about this and has started to stalk us ever since. She found out we moved back into our home. (Our home was attacked by thugs which I still believe she was connected but we have no proof in 2013 when it was put into the paper) this whole thing start to finish from 2012 lasted 18 months. She came down our drive at 10;30pm thinking we would be going on holiday with my in laws in the morning (She got wind of it from another family member)and then she turned to leave our drive when I came out of our house to confront her, she got in her car and drove off. We already had a panic alarm so we pressed and the police came and took a statement as we had it caught on both our CCTV cameras and another witness who saw the whole thing, when she was questioned by the police about it she denied it until they said she was caught on camera, she has been warned to stay away. Since then she has parked at the top of our road watching us as she knows she won't be seen on camera now up there, and it unnerves me as I feel I can't allow my 11 old year son out to play with his friends because of her being there as she appears to be mentally unstable. Last Sunday she got her partner to ring my mother in law pretending to be from the CPS to speak to my partner’s brother who is disabled and considered a vulnerable adult. The number was withheld and it was reported to the police but they didn’t seem to want to follow it up and now we don’t know what to do. My mother in law is her aunt and none of us want anything to do with her or entire family as they all have criminals with criminal records and only seem happy unless they can cause trouble for people. We
don't know what we can do as we already note everything down and the police
don't seem bothered!

10. My friend made me see it was really serious.

11. I had an ex, left him, and lived in women’s aid. He would wait outside a friend’s house, text me saying about getting another woman to beat me up. When he met a new woman he stopped, 4 months.
A guy I met up with after chatting on a chat site, I didn't want to see him anymore, he would turn up at my house, say he was going to come round, ring, text me lots of times a day, I told him I would ring the police if he contacted me again, he carried on ringing me begging me to meet him again, my male friend was in my friend’s house one day and was wondering why my phone was ringing, he took the phone off me and threatened the guy, 5 months. A guy I met out in my local club, we started dating, but was not telling me much about himself, he turned up one night at my house with a friend, late about 1am, I felt uneasy about inviting them in, but I did, I went upstairs with him while his friend was downstairs, I was scared to say no. His friend came upstairs and knocked the door, I felt this was wrong and asked them to leave, his friend had asked to join us, I thought I was going to be raped. They left, his friend had gone around my house and stolen things. I rang my friend, she rang the police, nothing they could do as I couldn't give them much. He would come back knocking my door in the nights asking to come in, this went on for weeks, I would say I was going to phone the police but felt it wasn't serious enough, it carried on, I took an overdose. He came back again, I told him if he ever came back I would kill him. He didn't come back

12. I repeatedly reported ex partner’s stalking to police and was not supported at all. It was only when he started stalking a police officer acquaintance of mine that he was arrested, no charges, no conviction though and it persisted for almost two years until he got new relationship and moved away. Police were not supportive and even referred to it as just a domestic even though it was running into the 100's of incidents all corroborated by neighbours and friends.

13. Followed, phoned and someone waited outside my home all night in a car or van, Diesel engine which had a hiccup in engine. Told family member and they didn't believe me.

14. I was going to kill myself but went to the police instead

15. After I broke up with my boyfriend, he asked if he could come to my house to retrieve items he left here. I asked him which items and he told me a list. When he arrived in the morning, I brought a bag of clothing, a dvd, a previous birthday gift, etc. He went through the bag, doubting everything was there. Then he demanded for me to return a gift he gave me for Christmas -- a blanket. I argued about it belonging to me and not wanting to return it, but I felt threatened into returning it. His voice became strained and desperate and he would not leave without it. As soon as I returned with the blanket, he began yelling “F-- You Bitch! You are nothing to me! Your mother was right about you! You are a horrible person!” I turned around and walked back inside, locking the door. I
was shaking and fearful. Would he drive away? Would he be back? Would he accept our break-up? Would he contact my friends? Would he come to my work? I realized that just having these fearful thoughts, itself, constituted emotional abuse, and realized I needed help from friends to process my abuse.

16. I hoped that I might be able to get evidence of him watching me on the local council CCTV cameras

17. I ended up leaving my job as other male staff members started discussing my physical appearance while working. Even when I wasn’t around. Was very uncomfortable

18. When he stated that God had appeared to him told him I needed "healed" and how to heal me. When he stated that Gods laws are higher than mans and he would not stop, God had instructed him. I was too afraid to leave for my mail route knowing he was working on the route next to mine and he was very angry that morning I wouldn't have weekly meetings with him to hear the messages he was to give me from God. I had a panic attack and refused to go on my route without my supervisor it sounds crazy but I knew in my heart he was going to snap that day and I felt so strongly that I was going to die. I begged for help that day that was the first day I asked for help.

19. Finding out friends names and addresses and sitting outside their houses

20. I was fired from my job because of their nonstop actions; They've alienated me from all family and continue to make me look like I'm the guilty party by using: paying lawyers, and investigators to say so.

21. Eventually i confronted this person & threatened exposure

22. Some random bloke knew where I lived and where my children went 2 school when they went with their dad. Used 2 txt me saying he was coming to my house.

23. I found my former husband seemingly dead on our kitchen floor, tried to rouse him and he came to saying I should have left him for dead and that it was my fault he had tried to end his life. I developed what I thought was a trusting relationship with a male healer for over 3 years, in the fourth year I broke my arm and was very vulnerable due to that and the death of my brother, at that point in time he began to brush himself against me during healing sessions, I felt trapped, he often used the tactic of being negative around me, 9 months on he tried to sabotage a project I have worked very hard to establish and we were both involved in. That was enough for me. I asked him to leave the project. He got really hostile but has left. There have been many other incidents throughout my life

24. The police had already spoken to my stalker verbally & given them a verbal warning to stop their unwanted behaviour but it continued, it was then I realised it would never stop
25. Disrupting my sleep and work. Felt anxious constantly and upset. Thought about killing myself so I rang the cops.
26. My stalkers are the police using RIPA 2002 laws. IPCC completely useless and under PACE police do not have to investigate repetitious complaints.
27. I am keeping away from my family and friends as I am very ashamed this is happening to me. I contacted Jeremy Kyle's show if they could help me. I have to dress up under the duvet in my bed every day. I bathed in the dark at different times at night even though my stalker proved to me they can still see me. They stamp their feet or flush their toilet to let me know they are in the bathroom at the same time with me. This is every day and regardless of how many times in a day I enter to use the bathroom. One evening, as I was putting up a wall paper, thru the ceilings this individual shouted "I like to see you in the bathroom" This apart from jumping up and down to the extent that I develop constant headache. I will call the Noise and Nuisance office to my disappointment, they told me there is nothing they can do about this. I felt defeated and disappointed again. No one to turn to for help.
28. Hi there, I have reported criminal damage to my car by the stalker but have no proof or evidence that this particular person did this. However i haven’t reported her yet for stalking because i had hoped she would get bored and lose interest.

10.2 What advice would you give to others? Question 105

There were 92 responses to this question. Some contained lots of different and useful ideas. There were 6 clear themes:

- Act Quickly (32);
- Go to the Police (19);
- Retain Evidence (13);
- Tell Someone (6);
- Advice (30);
- Miscellaneous (4)

Act Quickly

1. As soon as anyone makes you feel uncomfortable, tell everyone you know, call a stalking helpline and get out of the stalkers way at any cost. If you don’t act at the start, there’s a real danger that you get sucked in at which point you won't be able to
2. Record & report it early & don’t feel embarrassed to report it. Ask for emotional support & take practical tips to help yourself & to stop the stalker slowly taking over your life & mental health. Stay strong
3. 18f Act on the very first signs of stalking: - Act on the slightest sign of disrespect for another person’s wishes, on the slightest sign of petulance,
persistence, childishness, lack of grace or sulkiness. - Act on the slightest and briefest sensation of concern, discomfort, negativity, dislike, distrust, confusion or unpleasantness - this is your gut instinct talking - listen to it. If someone close to you is behaving oddly because of someone else, believe the person close to you, they are in too deep to see clearly, they need your help. Act immediately and speak with an experienced stalking help line first - unfortunately friends, family and colleagues might not understand unless they've been through this themselves.

4. Report it as soon as possible, don't put up with any unwanted behaviours
5. Just not wait too long
6. Contact someone as soon as you start to doubt that something is wrong. Don't let it go on for as long as I did. it will make you ill
7. Take immediate action
8. Don't wait get support early - tell someone
9. As soon as you feel unsafe contact the police
10. Seek help immediately and keep a record of all contact.
11. Get help as soon as possible. It can be surprising those that will support you and those that don't. The police are not always on the same page and often can only put safeguards in place once something major has happened. In my case, despite the perpetrator pleading guilty in court to stalking, we were still not protected. Get legal assistance and stay strong!
12. At the soonest inkling, talk to someone, if it persists take action & engage with appropriate agencies.
13. Don't hesitate to act quickly. Don't become a victim.
14. Don't wait to get help. Speak to the police and/or organisations who support victims of stalking.
15. Get help straight away, don't wait for it to escalate. Be vigilant
16. Not to blame themselves and to take what is happening to them seriously. To keep as much evidence as possible and to seek help from the police as soon as possible.
17. Go quickly to police and create a nuisance of yourself until they possibly eventually do something to help, before you get so ground down you haven't the energy to fight against your abuser.
18. Don't let it go on and on....
19. Tell someone the minute it starts. Trust no-one involved or with a personal or professional link to the issue. Believe and trust your instincts. You and you alone are responsible for your own safety.
20. Always be vigilant. Tell other people. Gather evidence. Talk to specialists. Have no contact whatsoever with the stalker. Never reply to emails, messages etc. Get a safety plan. Make sure your house is secure. Let people know where you are. To the police ASAP.
21. Get help straight away as I was and am always too afraid.
22. Seek advice immediately. Tell as many people as you know of this persons behaviour towards you. go to court and don't be afraid. There are specific laws now to help you. In my time there were not.
23. Take action straight away. Let them know you mean business and get professional advice
24. Call police straight away X trust your instinct
25. Act quickly; approach stalking agencies, approach phone provider - there is more realisation, support and technical help these days.
26. Go and get help now, even if you’re not sure it is stalking go and found out as it can get serious very fast.
27. Seek help as soon as you can.
28. Go straight to the police to report the incident so that it is on record and ask their advice going forward on how to deal with the attention.
29. Get help immediately, speak to family and friends, and don’t cut yourself off.
30. Don’t wait before reporting it to the police. Don’t think that it will stop if you ignore it, it doesn’t. Keep a diary of every incident no matter how trivial you think it is. Don’t think you are over reacting or that people will think you are being silly. Where possible take photos and gain video evidence. Tell family and friends what is happening to you so they can help in any way they can. DO NOT think you are to blame in any way. If your children are old enough let them know what is happening, even if it is their dad and keep them safe too. Your ex-partner will use your children to gain access to you and your movements.

Go to the Police

31. go to the police but keep a diary of incidents as they will take it more seriously if they see you have made some effort to document the events
32. Record & report it early &don’t feel embarrassed to report it. Ask for emotional support & take practical tips to help yourself & to stop the stalker slowly taking over your life & mental health. Stay strong.
33. contact the police
34. The soon as you feel unsafe contact the police
35. Report everything logged to police 101 number. Know u don't deserve to live like that
36. Never give up. Ask for a MARAC. There is always a way out and even if giving up your home is the only option it’s worth it if it means you are safe
37. Not to blame themselves and to take what is happening to them seriously. To keep as much evidence as possible and to seek help from the police as soon as possible.
38. Keep a diary, get cameras set up around the house, spy cameras on your door, cameras on outside walls facing your doors, front and back. Phone the police
39. Go to the police, keep a diary, ask for help from friends
40. Go to the police
41. Take stalking very seriously. Contact the stalking helpline, collate evidence, and contact police. Take precautions.
42. Report to the police Keep all evidence
43. If you feel scared or threatened don't sit back and think no one can help or no one will listen approach the police for advice and support and they will put you in touch with the correct bodies for your situation, I thought I was alone and dealt with things alone for 9 months because I feared no one could or would take things serious but after my first initial contact with the police I felt a weight was lifted off my shoulders, I only wish I had contacted them sooner.
44. Definitely contact the police and tell people your situation nothing to be ashamed of its not u that is causing the problem
45. Seek help, remove yourself from the stalker, find a safe listening service, report the stalker to the police, take support, and make yourself safe.
46. Contact the police. The charities are not as supportive as they make out. Would not help me as it needed to be my daughter who contacted. The most help were the police. Offender had been arrested and being investigated for multiple offences against various girls

47. inform the police

48. Don’t wait before reporting it to the police. Don’t think that it will stop if you ignore it, it doesn’t. Keep a diary of every incident no matter how trivial you think it is. Don’t think you are over reacting or that people will think you are being silly. Where possible take photos and gain video evidence. Tell family and friends what is happening to you so they can help in any way they can. DO NOT think you are to blame in any way. If your children are old enough let them know what is happening, even if it is their dad and keep them safe too. Your ex-partner will use your children to gain access to you and your movements.

49. go to the police

Retain evidence

50. retain evidence & forward to relevant person, in my case, woman’s husband

51. Screen cap, keep a diary, do not respond on social media, report it, see advice Remember you aren’t alone.

52. Try to get help but always keep a stalking record. Record all phone calls never talk to your stalker or try to reason with them. Find an organisation like Action Scotland against stalking or the national stalking helpline who can advise you who to contact, take care outside on your own just be aware and be safe.

53. To log all incidents. Trust your Instincts!! Install an IP Camera in your home. Never Give Up!!

54. Keep a diary, get cameras set up around the house, spy cameras on your door, cameras on outside walls facing your doors, front and back. Phone the police

55. document everything

56. Collect all the evidence you can, dates of Phone calls, messages, and anything unusual from your normal everyday chores, and any Phone numbers you receive calls from.

57. Record everything. Keep a detailed record, diary of events and incidents. Add to the timeline all relevant evidence. If the police are not working for you, taking your concerns and case into account - make a complaint and re-report the offences committed against you. Contact agencies to see how the generic advice they offer can be applied in your case, also to find out how best to report the crimes to ignorant uneducated police. And tell others about what is happening to you. The more people understand, are aware of the threat to your privacy, safety and wellbeing, it can help with some of the stress and anxiety

58. Document. Do not let the person make you feel crazy. Be articulate when asking for help. Vent your feelings through a journal if you vent to people to much they will not take you seriously. Call a help line that has dealt with stalking issues. Do not go to your boss first if they are not aware of stalking issues they will make you feel like you have sent the man wrong signals and are one of "those women". Keep your pets in, do not post your life on social media. Know that you are not alone. Other people you might not expect are
looking over their shoulders too. When it is over for everyone else it won’t be for you. After a couple months of no incidents people will say good he hasn’t done anything for a while he has moved on. Don’t expect to ever be the same. My horse stall was open, I wondered did I leave it open or is he letting me know he is back.

59. Keep a diary and record events

60. Tell someone as soon as you start to feel insecure, however silly it may seem. I had been suffering for weeks before I even told my husband. Get help from the specialist agencies. The Police are not properly equipped to provide all the support you need. Keep an evidence log of everything that happens, no matter how small.

61. Don’t wait before reporting it to the police. Don’t think that it will stop if you ignore it, it doesn’t. Keep a diary of every incident no matter how trivial you think it is. Don’t think you are over reacting or that people will think you are being silly. Where possible take photos and gain video evidence. Tell family and friends what is happening to you so they can help in any way they can. DO NOT think you are to blame in any way. If your children are old enough let them know what is happening, even if it is their dad and keep them safe too. Your ex-partner will use your children to gain access to you and your movements.

62. Report it, document everything and persist with the police. The stalking was to drive me crazy, the technology used I have never witnessed before. I was involved with a child residency battle and there were many other factors that the police and social services chose to ignore. Albeit I am disappointed and thoroughly hurt. The D.V organisations have been very understanding and I am not the first but legislation and understanding of cyber stalking, gas lighting etc. needs to be readdressed by the former organisations mentioned. As perpetrators will continue to use whatever means as long as the focus is kept on the victim, the perpetrator gets away with murder.

Tell someone

63. keep talking to friends

64. Speak to someone! Don't be ashamed, it's them that has a problem not you!

65. TRUST THOSE INSTINCTS. Don't think anyone's action is innocent, harmless, they're just kidding if it makes you uncomfortable or makes you think twice, or makes you feel like something is not okay! I'd also say SHARE with friends, family and others you trust if there are actions that someone is taking that are making you uncomfortable, even if you're unsure.

66. Record everything. Keep a detailed record, diary of events and incidents. Add to the timeline all relevant evidence. If the police are not working for you, taking your concerns and case into account - make a complaint and re-report the offences committed against you. Contact agencies to see how the generic advice they offer can be applied in your case, also to find out how best to report the crimes to ignorant uneducated police. And tell others about what is happening to you. The more people understand, are aware of the threat to your privacy, safety and wellbeing, it can help with some of the stress and anxiety.
67. Tell someone communicate as much as you can. Let people know your whereabouts etc.
68. Don't let it take over your life if they are threatening you and know a lot about you. u don't have to go to the police straight away tell a sibling / close friend someone you can trust

Advice

69. Don't think it'll go away. Change email/phone numbers etc. change jobs if you have to but make sure you are safe.
70. Only you and your actions can really help your safety, but get emotional support and safety advice
71. NOT TO IGNORE THE PROBLEM, AND NOT TO THINK THAT IT'S FUNNY, THAT IT'S NOT SERIOUS AND THAT THE OBSESSION AND INTENSITY WILL FIZZLE OUT....AND NOT TO THINK THAT THE STALKER OR PERPETRATOR IS HARMLESS.
72. Find support, demand help. Admit it's a problem and not your fault
73. To listen to support that's out there for them
74. Report everything logged to police 101 number. Know u don't deserve to live like that
75. Keep contacting all community agencies for advice and practical assistance.
76. To take it seriously and don't assume it will just go away
77. Get help
78. It is not "fine", it won't just stop
79. Go to the police, keep a diary, ask for help from friends
80. At the time I was stalked was no help. There is help now take it.Dont put up with it
81. Don't be afraid to seek help. Love is respect. Nobody who disrespects you can tell you they love you. You can get through this. Seek help from police, legal aid and counsellors - they can help you cut through well-meaning but sometimes confusing advice from friends.
82. It's not your fault. There's a way out. It's not your job to understand, sympathize, or help this person. Only they can help themselves. Your job is to take care of yourself, not be isolated, and be supported.
83. Always be vigilant. Tell other people. Gather evidence. Talk to specialists. Have no contact whatsoever with the stalker. Never reply to emails, messages etc. Get a safety plan. Make sure your house is secure. Let people know where you are. To the police ASAP.
84. Don't bother with the police, they are useless
85. Talk to a stalking helpline before you talk to the police. In my experience, the police were less than helpful, but after talking to the National Stalking Helpline I felt I had enough information on how to get the police to take me seriously
86. don't trust anyone
87. Stay strong and contact as many people with experience of dealing with this
88. don't be afraid to get help, the stalker cannot control you or your life
89. Document. Do not let the person make you feel crazy. Be articulate when asking for help. Vent your feelings through a journal if you vent to people to much they will not take you seriously. Call a helpline that has dealt with stalking issues. Do not go to your boss first if they are not aware of stalking
issues they will make you feel like you have sent the man wrong signals and are one of "those women". Keep your pets in, do not post your life on social media. Know that you are not alone. Other people you might not expect are looking over their shoulders too. When it is over for everyone else it won't be for you. After a couple months of no incidents people will say good he hasn't done anything for a while he has moved on. Don't expect to ever be the same. My horse stall was open, I wondered did I leave it open or is he letting me know he is back.

90. Don't be ashamed to seek advice or support, it is never your fault!! Always put yourself first! Don't try to ignore it in hope that it will stop or go away!

91. Have a contact in the Russian Mafia. Cultivate out-of-band contacts with the police - since their official channels don't seem to really take this seriously.

92. Have lots of money because that's how it works in order To get any help

93. Contact charities/organisations who can advocate for you and advise you e.g. in interactions with the police.

94. You are not alone, people are there to help you, trust your gut feeling. NEVER think it's your own fault or you brought this on yourself.

95. To recognise that different types of stalkers can exist and that all stalkers are not "romantic" stalkers. 2. be aware that stalkers can be family, and people who seem to be your "friends". 3. be aware that the Police are useless, they are NO help at all, and do NOT take stalking seriously. 4. Keep a diary of incidents and try to get as much evidence as possible, because otherwise the organizations (especially the Police) who claim to help, do NOT help. 5. DO NOT have any faith in most of the organizations that claim to help stalking victims - they DO NOT take reports seriously, and DO NOT actively assist (they best they do is advise you to make your own plans to keep safe). These include the Police, Samaritans, Family Lives Helpline, Relate, and Victim Support

96. To seek help either through specialised stalking agencies or the police

97. Don't give up and allow yourself to become isolated. Remember that it is not YOU who caused this to happen...decent people do not do these things.

98. The law needs real change. If police don't like. You. They can stalk and harass with impunity

Miscellaneous

99. I have not find solution to my problem so I don't know how to help others

100. Web links forum to safely look at, signpost and support in reaching professional and specialist help, listening to them and believing them as an important start point

101. Similar to those asked in the questionnaire

102. DON'T GET INTO A RELATIONSHIP WITH A PSYCHO

10.3 Messages to agencies supporting victims
Comments received about QUESTION 106: What message would you give to agencies who are trying to support victims?

There are 80 responses that have been grouped into seven themes

Take it seriously (10); Raise your profile (8); Emotional Support and Courtesy (17); Joint Working (11); Practical Suggestions (22); Police (7); Others (5)

Take it seriously:

1. Please listen to what, to you, may seem low level and unimportant. My daughter’s stalker has turned out to be a serial sexual offender
2. If you have a focus and understanding take it seriously
3. Listen and take it seriously, just because it's on twitter or Facebook or whatever it doesn't mean that it's trivial, it has a real emotional impact that is debilitating. Don’t simply advise "stop using social media" because that removes the symptom not the cause and makes the victim feel they deserved it. Take it seriously.
4. Take them seriously, don't wait for physical contact.
5. Take it seriously.
6. If someone tells you they have a concern take the time to listen to them and don't pass it off as someone being overly sensitive or anxiety without a strong basis for it.
7. Don't think of it as trivial
8. Listen! Don't judge. Always safety plan and always take it seriously, even if it seems like the actions are "harmless" - if someone is coming to you with issues that don't include violence - stalking is SUCH a subtle crime that other things can be going on in the background that you don't know about even if there is no clear violence, theft, threats etc.
9. Understanding. Support. ..This is real and should be taken seriously not fob the person off
10. LISTEN to what the victim is saying, don't minimise the impact the stalking is having on the victim. Take it seriously

Raise your profile:

1. No knowledge of support agencies
2. Victims need more awareness of where to go to get help - I didn't know of any till doing this questionnaire
3. Increase your profile...nobody really knows where you are.
4. Get the word out more that the agencies exist.
5. I don't know enough about agencies
6. Be larger in the public arena
7. I feel that there is not enough awareness that these agencies are there to support the victims. If the victims do not know that there are people out there to support them they may not seek the help that they need. Agencies need to advertise themselves and be visible in order for the victims to seek advice, help and support.

8. Market the helpline more, make people aware there’s a helpline like this

**Emotional Support and courtesy**

1. Be understanding
2. Answer the phone. Couldn't get through to anyone. When I did - they couldn't deal with cyber stalking.
3. LISTEN AND DONT JUDGE
4. Listen, more emotional support is needed especially when it happens after a very violent relationship.
5. Helping victims get out of their role and not feeling as victims
6. Try and understand how frightening it is, and remember that everyone is different. One thing may terrify one person whilst another may not find that aspect an issue.
7. Don't be judgemental & don’t minimise the activities that is causing the victims fear. Remember the stats and realities of victims murdered by stalkers.
9. Listening to them not listening and writing down notes at the same time
10. Be kind and respectful, this is very hard for someone to come forward for help
11. Not to jump to conclusions about victims or blame them for being responsible for their perpetrators actions or to accuse them of having a mental health issue.
12. Building confidence in them that they are not wasting people's time and how serious the situation is
13. Believe them!
14. Provide emotional and non-judgemental support
15. Every situation is different, just because externally the person is strong it doesn't mean that inside a frightened child doesn't cower in the corner when they are alone!
16. The main thing I wanted was someone to advise me on how to protect myself and my family and someone to provide emotional support.
17. Don't blame the victim. Don't further isolate the victim by advising them to come off Facebook. Don't belittle the victim regarding response to phone calls/harassment/people hanging around.

**Joint Working**

1. To be in contact with multi agencies to have multi-faceted support. Think more about victim being helped by more agencies than just you not about being able to secure funding if u have most clients.
2. Please work better together so that protection orders are communicated faster and victims can feel safer. I live in XXXXX and the courts still used fax
machines to send my protection order to the police!! It took days for the order to be served on my abuser & therefore to be enforceable. Better communication also means victims won't have to retell their story over and over.

3. Offer advocacy. Work with other agencies. Ex-partner stalking and domestic abuse are linked. Ask about children’s safety. They are often manipulated into giving information to ex partners.

4. Work with the police

5. Have local support numbers to contact for the person. Also get the crime prevention officer to help the victim in their area

6. Encouragement and put them in contact with the support agencies

7. Give recognition and emotional support along with very practical help and referral to other agencies

8. Listen, believe, act in cohesive joined up way looking at the whole history and sequence and escalation in the chronology. Research the perp well. Info share effectively

9. Report to the police Keep all evidence

10. Keep going, keep listening to the service users, talk to one another, make it so that victims don’t have to keep telling the story over and over by sharing information Thank you for being there

11. Joined up thinking please! A set of national protocols developed with the Police Single pathway to care package Single point of contact for whole case management

Practical Suggestions

1. Online access to their programme is essential

2. Recognise the signs

3. Help quickly, before the stalker feels they are winning, before things have a chance to escalate

4. Make sure you don't put too much pressure on the victim but let them know you'll do whatever you can to help.

5. Be better informed: legal advice, other agencies that can offer assistance: safety for self, children, animals; practical: money to buy equipment to make house safe; Assistance to speak to schools about the situation and formulate safety procedures for children;

6. More info needed on employers responsibilities re: workplace stalking

7. It is difficult for victims to assess the risk they may be facing while they are facing it. Stalkers will commonly use strategies to assign guilt on their victims such as threatening to commit suicide. It's important to help the victim understand that it's not their fault, that these strategies are extremely common and that they are in need of help. I was never offered information about available stalking helplines when I contacted the police even though I was very clearly stalked. I did not realise I was being stalked until a long time after the risk had passed. Provide information, emotional support and follow up with the victim even if they don't follow up with you. Practical information including finding safe accommodation and speaking to the victim's employer is also extremely important, as well as dealing with financial stress that the victim may be experiencing.
8. Keep us informed, please. It's almost as scary not knowing what's going on once you actually have the courage to report it.

9. Go to employers ask if you can give information to them on stalking.

10. Don't talk to a victim/target like they are only one of hundreds of cases they are advising on. By the time a victim contacts an agency for advice, support they will be aware of the size and seriousness of the problem. Victim may already be following the generic umbrella advice given, already taken steps to maximise their safety. The problems stem from there is no accessible, quick and effective legal or investigative route available direct to the public/victims that specifically deals with stalking crimes on or offline. The formal processes/policies we have to go through are lengthy, complicated and blurred, and in the meantime the damage is done. All the victim/target wants is the offender to be found and stopped. Currently that does not work, agencies can only offer advice and support while cases are being filed pending further evidence or whitewashed over with a token investigation by police/the authorities. Agencies need to be more realistic in the advice, information they offer to victims/targets.

11. Providing ongoing communication and support is crucial to feeling safe.


13. Overlook legal constraints and guidelines when dealing with those still suffering from PTSD. A guarantee of confidentiality is required in order to get people to talk.

14. Listen more and help those who come to you, regardless of their backgrounds.

15. Help them get the law to actually work for them. Police do deal with nonsense daily but just because stalking is something hard to produce evidence for, does not mean the police can dismiss you or send you away as if it's your fault or a minor drama.

16. Speak with the victim and with those close to them offering them all emotional and practical support. Follow through until the situation has ended. Explain why it is a serious situation i.e. from risk of being sucked into an abusive relationship to being.

17. That they express absolutely no doubt that there is a problem - the assumption has to be that there is if someone calls them. That they ask to speak with those close to the victim so that they can advise and support the victims support group - this is vital as the stalking can get to the victims support group. That they offer to speak to a person's workplace if the stalking involves a co-worker or anyone associated with the workplace or coming to the workplace.

18. To HIGHLIGHT THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTACTING THE POLICE TO START ACTION, AND ALSO TO KEEP A PERSONAL LOG.

19. Please realise that men to can be victims.

20. Help them to understand the seriousness and the impact. If it has been happening for a while it somehow becomes normalised.

21. Even practical help is as good as theoretical help.

22. To get off their fat, lazy backsides and DO something to proactively help stalking victims. To actually BELIEVE stalking victims, and to BELIEVE that stalking IS serious. To BELIEVE what the victim is saying, and not just dismiss it as "oh, it's not too bad". A person would NOT phone the Police for help if it was not serious. To stop using the excuse that "you don't have much
evidence" as a reason not to investigate. I have heard this far too often. In my experience, when you are being stalked, you are hardly keeping a report of it! At the time it is happening you are scared and just want it to stop. You may not even realise then that it is stalking. The agencies need to be able to act on a report of stalking even if it's a long time after it happened, because some people are SO scared that they cannot immediately report it. These agencies need to ACT, not just talk. Talk helps a little, but it does NOT protect people from stalkers - it only allows a victim to "let off steam". Telling a victim to make their own plans to keep safe is USELESS. This DOES NOT stop stalkers. What IS needed is a TOUGH LAW that can be IMMEDIATELY activated. The agencies HAVE to be able to ACT as soon as a complaint is made. They need to interview the victim, take a report, collect evidence, investigate, and take the matter to court. LEGAL proceedings that are rigidly enforced are the ONLY way I can see of stopping stalkers. Stalkers NEED to be investigated, arrested and put behind bars. They should NOT get fines of community service as this does NOT stop them stalking. They NEED to be locked up for many YEARS. They ONLY way to get the message to stalkers that stalking is BAD and a SERIOUS CRIME, is to make sentencing much heavier.

Police:

1. Well the police need to train in stalking because they do not listen or help in my area. Action Scotland against stalking needs no advice they do it right. XXXX XXXX is very experienced and knowledgeable to give advice I'm sure the English organisation is just as good. My only message is for the Police help people who are going through this don't say I have to wait until I get physically hurt before action can be taken. I'm emotionally hurt and physiologically hurt I don't want to be physically hurt again. I cannot afford to take it to court as an interdict has no standing in law as I would not get a power of arrest as I have not stayed with her. So who and what helps me?

2. All Agencies helped but it was the Police who let me down. I realised there was a real lack of Stalking Awareness within the force who had a duty of care to enforce to Family Court Order obtained to protect us. I even sent links to Police telling them how to deal with Stalking. I sent responses to the Questionnaire and was ignored.

3. AND TO POLICE - don't brush off people, again, just because there haven't been any threats or violence - everyone needs to be listened to, before it's too late!

4. I had a great experience with the police and social services. They made sure that I knew they believed me and was taken seriously. They listened when I said that I didn't want him arrested, I just wanted the information logged in case the situation escalated and I needed help quickly.

5. Support is welcome but action from the Police would be more beneficial. The law needs to support victims of stalking

6. Consider if it's an ex the victim could already have PTSD, Police need to believe victims and not blame them - it's still happening, as training is a tick box exercise only and not even across all depts. or including supervisors

7. WAKE UP. Stop burying your heads in. Sand re corrupt cops
Others:

1. Buy a book called 'Why does he do that?' By Lundy Bancroft and Women's Aid and the police especially plus the Freedom Program have a deeper understanding of crazy making/ discrediting of D.V victims. I've feel very let down as I was not taken seriously and the perpetrator has managed to get away scot free. The children are damaged emotionally through the courts and social services have been terrible in taking emotional abuse of both mother and child seriously. My children suffer and they don't care.

2. Not sure

3. You are doing a good job

4. They do a great job already

5. Do a hell of a lot more!

10.4 What advice would you give to relatives & friends?

Question 107: There were 78 responses that have 6 themes:

Believe, listen and support – stick with them (37); Be informed (5);

Take it seriously (10); Action (18); Keep Yourselves Safe (5); Miscellaneous (3)

Believe, listen and support – stick with them

1. Listen, and don't judge. Provide emotional and practical support. Help the victim to feel safe. Encourage the victim to log what is happening. Encourage the victim to report it. It is truly terrifying to be targeted. It makes you feel incredibly vulnerable.

2. Listen and be there

3. Just be there for the victim, particularly for a man to admit you are being harassed is embarrassing.

4. To give support when needed and not be judgemental

5. Listen, believe, act, keep records safely, encourage to formally log concerns, consider right to know/ ask approach

6. Support as much as possible

7. Don't judge, don't make silly comments like I told you so, why did you stay so long etc.

8. Keep in regular contact so they know they can contact you/go to you anytime
9. Listen, believe and support don't judge

10. Listen and believe what is being told to you by the victim and always be supportive

11. Be patient. You will have your friend/relative back, but be supportive. If they are frightened to go out alone, go with them. If they need to call you in the middle of the night, be kind! Remember it is not their fault, but equally, getting aggressive towards the perpetrator doesn't help - it can just upset your friend/relative who will worry you will get in trouble!

12. Sympathise

13. Be of support

14. Just continue to be there for the person and don't get tired of hearing about it as it's very confusing for the victim with the effects being very similar to those of domestic abuse

15. Tell them that it wasn't their fault, I was lucky enough to KNOW I did nothing wrong, but others who may be dealing with guilt, or feeling like they did something wrong can set their healing back big time! No one deserves to be stalking, no one deserves unwanted behaviour.

16. Trust them

17. Just support and love

18. Listen without judgement. Believe your loved one when they tell you about their experience. If you don't know what to tell them, at least gently suggest they approach police or counsellors.

19. Listen and support and believe them, particularly if they are a very honest and generally down to earth person.

20. Believe her!!! Do not engage with the stalker. Support her. Go with her to the police.


22. To make the victim realise it's not their fault

23. Talk about it no matter how often they say the same just listen and talk don't say leave it forget it don't worry font talk about it

24. Believe their stories, as some stories will seem incredible and farfetched, as stalkers are devious and wily.

25. Always support the victim and offer to help if they need to talk

26. listen to them, but don't judge them

27. Be aware of the incidents that happen, and understanding to the very real fear, worry, anger and frustration that the person being stalked, abused is going through.

28. Let them vent, let them work through things how they need to.

29. Listen, and don't churn out platitudes!

30. Believe us and don't abandon us,

31. Be supportive

32. Sometimes just an ear to listen, a hand to hold and words of comfort is enough, always keep your eyes open because if something looks wrong to a loved one it usually is!
33. just be there to listen and be there for any help they need
34. BELIEVE the victim. Do not doubt them - people do NOT just make up accusations of stalking for no reason. Try to be supportive. Acting like you don't believe a person is being stalked is NOT supportive. Also, DO NOT be tricked by stalkers into revealing any personal information about the victim to them. Be very aware that stalkers will use ANY method to try to collect information about a victim - and this includes approaching, and "befriending" the victim's family, friends and work colleagues in order to spy on them too, or to use them as information sources
35. Don't minimise the effect it is having on the victim. Believe the victim & offer emotional support
36. Be supportive of victim
37. Believe the complainant

Be informed

1 3 Stick by them. Speak with a stalking helpline and read up on the impact of stalking.
2 2 Keep close to the victim. Take no nonsense (but don't exacerbate the situation). Seek the same advice & practical tips so you know the steps the victim has to think about & help them with the legal/police side: the police may not understand it but there are ways to enlighten them on the law & get it to kick into motion to protect a victim as it's meant to.
3 3 Speak to a stalking helpline yourself so that you understand how to look after yourself through what can be a very disturbing time and believe your victims distress - it's real
4 4 Not to encourage victims to wait
5 5 Listen be patient as the victim will be scared and not know how to process what is going on. Learn all you can about stalking as it will take over every part of your life. Support the victim and let them talk in their own time. But take care be safe and get advice on how to deal with this.

Take it seriously

1 1 Take it serious, don't make the victim feel unable to talk to you about it - as they may then choose to stay silent & take no action.
2 2 Don't dismiss their fears; encourage them to seek assistance from agencies or support networks.
3 3 Believe the victim and take this issue seriously. Support victim with getting help.
4 Don't pass it off as nothing, it could escalate quickly
5 Listen and take seriously
6 Just be there for them, don't tell them to get over it or that they are overreacting.
7 support, listen, take it seriously, don't simply advise "stop using social media" because that removes the symptom not the cause and makes the victim feel they deserved it
8 Take victim seriously
9 Take it seriously and encourage them to go to the police.
10 Just be there. Take it seriously. Help your friend to feel safe, whether that is by offering them somewhere to stay or always being at the end of the phone if they're scared. Don't dismiss something as being a tiny incident on its own because when it's added to all of the other tiny incidents it's actually huge to the person experiencing it.

Action

1 If you are concerned about anything or anyone - please report it whether it be large or small concerns. Don't let it get to the serious stage.
2 Always believe the Victim. Contact Police on their behalf if no action is taken.
3 To support the victim keep logs of incidents
4 Believe the victim is telling the truth and not just playing out a fantasy or making it up. Offer practical support: putting locks on doors, building bigger fences etc.; let them cry on your shoulder and be respectful of their right to stop the stalking.
5 Don't dismiss what is happening to them. Offer practical help; a room to stay in, a ride to work, advice, follow up with them frequently. They may be too embarrassed to ask for help. That doesn’t mean they don't need it. Keep evidence of what is happening to them because they may not be keeping it themselves. Provide them information about available support services. Make sure to tell them that what they're going through is very common. Help them see that they are not responsible - they may tell you they know, but that doesn't mean they actually believe it.
6 Help victims fight-they don't have the emotional energy after years of abuse
7 Encouragement and put them in contact with the support agencies
8 The victim will not see the issue until they are ready, therefore you should be there to support them but not push them as they may back away. Be there for them when they need you and let them come to terms with it. There are things that can help you along with the victim. Don’t be afraid to seek help for the victim or for yourself.
9 Believe the victim. Help her to make safety plans. Help her in dealing with the police
10 Avoid accidentally displacing your anger: don't ask questions that are victim-blaming "why have you let this go on for so long?" (!). Raise your emotional intelligence levels. Read up on the subject; be aware of general feminist issues (since victim blaming tends to be a subject that's common in those circles). Offer unconditional support. Seek multiple avenues of advice. Call the fucking police.

11 Report to the police Keep all evidence

12 Use police

13 Periodically ask the right questions (I felt like I was being a nuisance and stopped telling anyone how I actually felt. I still feel scared/terrified and freeze at times) to check they are ok e.g. How do you feel about (person/incidents) now? Have (they/the person) left you alone now?

14 Be supportive, do not judge, believe what you are told, help by being a witness if you can. Be vigilant.

15 Believe her/him. No one goes out to make themselves look crazy. Sometimes the abusers will recruit friends and family to isolate the target.

16 Be there for support it’s a frightening time

17 Help them and do not reject them as if they are having a sort of incurable depression

18 Don't ask to many questions they're not in the best place and don't want that just give them emotional support and support their decision on what to do

Keep yourselves safe

1 keep yourselves safe also

2 Contact agencies should involve all safe relatives as they need to know how to support and how to keep themselves safe as well

3 Ignore and keep safe

4 I was the friend giving support, and I felt guilty/self-centred for being very anxious about my own safety (I was harassed by the stalker for information about my friend). I wish I'd educated myself more at the time about how to take care of my own needs/safety too, so I could have been more supportive

5 Believe what you are told, encourage the victim to take further help, get support for yourself, hearing this stuff can be very harrowing, be kind, be careful who you tell, only take on what you can, ask for help

Miscellaneous

1 Not sure as I did not tell family or friends other than my partner who got angry
2. You have no idea how life changing and damaging this can be
3. It's never the victim's fault. The victim can't control this

10.5 What made you identify it as Stalking?

These are the comments received for Question 108: What made you identify that what was happening was stalking?

Responses have been divided into seven themes: Phone and text, Online, Following, Already aware or had professional knowledge, Did not realise, Research, Anxiety from unreasonable behaviour.

Phones, texts:

1. I didn’t until it was far too late. Initially I thought it was just a silly little girl who wouldn’t take no for an answer but who would soon get the message. It wasn’t until streams of anonymous texts showed up that I realised there was a serious problem
2. Constant texts, phone messages, turning up where I work
3. It wasn't until there was something tangible that it really hit home, in this case anonymous texts.
4. Due to the nature of the onset of phone calls
5. It was obvious by the frequency. Up to 1000 phone calls a day. this was the start
6. I would receive messages from my ex-partner saying he knew where I was, and would tell me who I was with and what I was doing to make me frightened.
7. Repeated calls at all hours
8. Constant barrage of texts and phone calls and the emotional pressure that my daughter was being put under.
9. As soon as some 1 I didn't know kept texting me
10. The initial calls just seemed a bit kooky, and over familiar - then they started getting dirty, then filthy. Calls escalated quickly from one every few days when my husband was at work, to several times a day, to many times, including all night when my husband was home.
11. I knew I was being harassed/stalked when phone calls and texts became repetitive/frequent.
12. It has continued now for 8 weeks calls txt gifts coming to my home when it has been made clear on numerous occasions we are over
Online:

1. MY EX PRETENDED TO BE DIFFERENT PPL ONLINE TO TRICK ME INTO TALKING TO THEM
2. The persistence, the spitefulness, the scale of it-fake accounts, my pictures being used, constant unwanted contact, the lies published, family being contacted...nothing would make the person stop.
3. Because she plastered photos of my husband and details of their affair all over the internet. Then followed all of our family, friends and their friends. My children, their friends, their teachers, their schools, etc. She sent threatening tweets.
4. When I was receiving messages that I looked nice in an outfit I was wearing and I didn't know where he was.
5. When I realised that the emails I got to my office account were not spam but sent by somebody who must know me and see me probably daily
6. It fit the criteria online
7. I know about stalking and with the help of Action Scotland Against Stalking I quickly understood it was stalking because it had never happened to me by a woman and online I was not sure at first. The woman has mental health issues and has been the subject of a criminal case that was dropped as she was not mentally fit to stand trial but that does not stop her doing what she does to me
8. I have studied criminology for many years, even before my degrees I was interested in the subject, so knew a lot about it. But the ultimate event that prompted me to realise the danger was when I found him reading messages that I had sent to others, as he had placed spyware on my PC to monitor whether I was telling anyone about the abuse.
9. Ex-partner rang to organise contact with his son regularly phoned saying 'oh you're back' or 'where have you been' just as I was walking in the house for around a year after I ended the relationship. Property damage. Sent message via Facebook saying 'Nice Photo's' when I wasn't even his friend. (Very creepy and I had shivers down my spine after reading that). Threatened to blow up my car and house, destroy me, put my kids in care, disappear with my son and that I didn't have to breath. Police turned up at my house with following false allegations. 3 weeks after obtaining the Order, my car was stolen and burnt out. I was arrested a week later after an allegation made to Police that I had organised the theft of my car to fraudulently claim the insurance. I was extremely frightened then as I was 'grounded' for 9 months while Police investigated my stalkers allegation. This situation that was created in an attempt to divert attention away from his own behaviour. He was allowed to regain control over me.
10. The computer, I was desperate to find even online someone who was having the same crazy issue with their co-worker so I literally googled one of things he said to me and an article on different types of stalkers popped up. I was shocked
creepy stalker dude was a phrase we would laugh about when describing some of our odd customers.

11. To many strange coincidences such as being followed, property damage, home broken into, recording of private conversations played within earshot whilst in garden or in a public place, pebbles thrown against Windows and external walls when dark that followed a pattern, silent calls, hacked emails etc.

12. Because it simply went on, and on, and on. Also, because the behaviour of the stalker(s) got stranger and stranger. When somebody (a relative in this case) posts photos on Facebook of themselves trying to wear the same clothes as you, then you just KNOW they are creepy and their behaviour is weird. Look out for "warning signs" like this. Or for signs that a person is obsessed with you, or what you do, or look like - maybe asking lots of questions about you, or always making odd remarks about you when you are around.

13. When I realised all my accounts and everything I did cyber wise was being hacked. People calling into certain services impersonating me etc.

14. They knew loads about me personal things no one knew and they threatened me and it carried on getting worse for a while.

Following:

1. Being followed as I walked with a friend and a car following me home.
2. When the stalker hid behind cars and followed my friend and her young son to his school.
3. The constant messaging and phone calls & he turned up at my house and my parents’ house uninvited several times and outside my work twice. I didn't really see it as stalking until he was following me.
4. Everywhere I went my ex-partner appeared so he must have been spying on me to know where I was. Then he blatantly followed me everywhere.
5. It's obvious when you are being followed and constant noise is been made by the stalker to get your attention in a way.
6. Following me at home and friends x

Already aware or had professional knowledge:

1. Professional training
2. I WAS AWARE FROM THE CAADA-DASH FORMS THAT WE UTILISE IN MY WORK
3. Because domestic abuse is my field & I see the enormity of the issue daily.
4. I work within the industry and recognised it immediately
5. Already had awareness
6. Professional knowledge

Did not realise:

1. Friends
2. I didn't, it was those that I work with that did
3. When the acquaintance of mine came forward and told me the stalker had been talking to her for months ABOUT me...as well as the GPS tracker that I found on my car that the stalker told the acquaintance he had put on my car.
4. I didn't really see it as stalking, just that I had been found again
5. Other people's reaction
6. Someone else told me and I read about ex-partner stalking.
7. I didn't. Not really. I knew he was obsessed with me, but it did not occur to me that his behaviour was harassment (this was pre- UK stalking laws came into effect). It took the police /five years/ to act.
8. I didn't, it was pointed out to me, by agencies
9. Talking to an agency & informing them what was happening, they helped me to identify it as stalking
10. I hadn't really considered recent events as such (I was answering this questionnaire originally because of stalking I endured years ago) until looking at this...made me feel foolish to have just let it drop and let them get away with it.

Research:

1. This article.
2. Read in the paper of similar
3. Publicity material
4. This questionnaire
5. Ongoing unwanted contact and pestering, and reading an article about stalking
6. When I read definitions and others told me.
7. Awareness campaigns in recent years

Anxiety from unreasonable behaviour:
1. It was kind of obvious based on their behaviour
2. My own distress
3. Attacks on property, job, tracker on car, knowledge of phone calls, appointments.
4. Any unwanted repeat attention
5. The obsessive behaviours the offender demonstrates - his presence is very strong, he wants us to know he is near us, we cannot even attend our Doctors surgery without him putting in an appearance outside the premises, he waits in locations near our home where he can watch our property from, he follows us - us being all family members and has even followed a child with a grandparent to the local park - driving up and down the road alongside the park sounding his horn and shouting, also follows the same child out on bike rides with his grandparent crawling alongside them passing un-wanted communications/swearing
6. Irrational expectations
7. Repeatedly doing the same thing over and over again
8. When he repeatedly found where I live despite a court saying he didn't need to know.
9. The consistency of the stalker. Running into someone a couple of days running is not unusual but after the tenth time you know something bigger is going on!
10. Time and distance. It was difficult to have clarity of the situation while I was going through it.
11. Repeated incidents
12. They wouldn’t go away
13. When it wouldn’t stop no matter what action I took
14. The repeated and persistent nature of his behaviour and actions.
15. When I was held against my will
16. Obvious
17. My experience was probably closer to being emotionally abused than stalked.
18. When he arrived outside my house late at night and kept ringing and texting. It started to scare me
19. All the talk of what I do and neighbour knowing when I'm up Sat in room or bedroom
20. Constant watching of me leaving and coming back home 24/7 and coming to my house to peer into my windows late at night.
21. I already knew the strange, unwarranted, sociopathic attention was stalking. It was relentless from day one. Not normal.
22. It took me a very long time however when I was ready I was able to see it the same as people outside of the situation.
23. The repetition
24. To many strange coincidences such as being followed, property damage, home broken into, recording of private conversations played within earshot whilst in garden or in a public place pebbles thrown against Windows and external walls when dark that followed a pattern, silent calls, hacked emails etc.
25. Pretty obvious.

26. They keep contacting people I know, trying to ruin all relationships, my house
    bring broken into repeatedly, my personal information being fished for,

27. Thinking about my ex-partner more than anything else in my life. Being unable
    to focus at work in case he turned up even though he only did once as he was
    passing when getting some lunch. Being constantly afraid.

28. It was unwanted and I felt unsafe in my own home, for 8 weeks I was too scared
    to sleep in my bed for fear of not hearing a noise downstairs.

29. It was many years after I was raped that I realised I had been stalked It took a
    threat to my business/project to make me wake up to the personal threats I was
    undergoing every week

30. My phone was stolen in work, so i looked into the stress the person was causing
    me, having my phone stolen made me look into this gut feeling I had.

31. It was causing me such anxiety over a period of a year and my stalker was
    relentless

32. Constant harassment

10.6 How long it took to realise you were being stalked?

These are the comments received from question number 109 which have been
grouped into: Quickly or under 2 weeks, 2 weeks to 2 months, 2 months to 6
months, longer than 6 months, and unclear about time

How long did it take you to realise/identify that you were being stalked?

Quickly or under 2 weeks:

1. 4-5 emails
2. Almost immediately
3. Days after separation
4. 2 hours of strange calls, hanging up and recalling
5. AS SOON AS I SAW HER CAR PARKED OUTSIDE MY HOME.
6. Two days
7. A few hours.
8. Not long
9. Identified it in the first half hour they singled me out online. And it escalated incredibly quickly, and has now come off the net, threatening my safety at home.

10. Identified it in the first half hour they singled me out online. And it escalated incredibly quickly, and has now come off the net, threatening my safety at home.

11. Very quickly - maybe a week or two. Initially it was a nuisance, but then the frequency of phone calls and him turning up at all hours of the day or night, brought home to me the fact that this behaviour was far from normal. Threats to my safety and towards friends and family then made me realise that I needed to confide in somebody (my best friend) and she helped me to deal with the situation and to a degree, completely took the reins from me by stepping in and facing him on his doorstep.

12. Immediately

13. About a week.

14. Not long at all I was scared from the start and still am now

14 of 151 recognised the stalking behaviours in under two weeks.

Between 2 weeks and 2 months:

1. 8 weeks
2. After a few weeks I knew but did not take it seriously. after 3 months or so I started to become more concerned.
3. AROUND 3 WEEKS WHEN THEY TOLD ME SOME CONFLICTING INFO AND I REALISED WHO IT REALLY WAS
4. A couple of weeks-they contacted me & that alerted me to the fact they were copying me, checking up on me-cyberstalking was easy to discover but oddly hard to convince the police is still stalking & harassment.
5. Six weeks.
6. I joked about it but after a few weeks the joke ran thin.
7. 10-14 days.
8. 1 month, lasted 7 years.
9. A few weeks
10. Several weeks
11. Few weeks
12. About a month.
13. A few weeks
14. Around 3 weeks
15. 7 weeks

a. 15 of 151 realised between 2 weeks and 2 months
b. 29 realised within 2 months
Between 2 months and 6 months:

1. 6 months
2. 2 and a half months
3. Approx. 6 months
4. Months
5. A few months
6. 3 months
7. Over 2 months
8. 6 months
9. 6 months
10. About 6 months of break ins and police inactivity
11. Approximately 3 months
12. I might have taken me some months

a. 12 of 151 realised between 2 and 6 months
b. 41 of 151 realised within 6 months

Longer than 6 months

1. Months
2. 4~5 years
3. Four and a half years. I lived through physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, but when I realised that he was watching my every move it made me think I would never get out alive, and it was then I had to take action.
4. Several months
5. 12 months
6. A year after I was stalked. I went to the police to deal with the threats rather than the stalking. Before that, I did not understand that the behaviour of my stalker was abusive even though it had a profound emotional impact on me. While he was following me and threatening to kill himself I was blaming myself. It was only when he started threatening me that I realised he was being abusive.
7. Quite a long time because it was a continuation of domestic abuse.
8. About a year.
9. Maybe a year
10. Probably about a year. I think it was a bit more complicated due to having a child together so he was already partially in my life.
11. Many years
12. Around 2.5 years
13. In my case, quite some time (i.e. years). At first it was hard to believe as these people are my IN-LAWS. Also, I was aware they were being unpleasant face-to-face but just hoped it might stop. It is VERY difficult to tackle unpleasant family members, because they ARE family, and you don't want to "make waves". Initially, their behaviour just seemed "petty" - however, it has continued to escalate.

14. 2 years
15. A year
16. June 2013 and into April 2015

**Sixteen took longer than 6 months to realise they were targets of stalking behaviours**

**Unclear about time:**

15. 1f months when I was made ill
16. today
17. My boss mentioned it
18. As soon as I became aware of the affair. She had contacted my son to tell him all about it.
19. NOT LONG ITS SUPPORT, POLICE TAKING IT SERIOUSLY AND ACTING ON THE INFORMATION AND OVERALIT IS JUSTICE THAT TAKES TIME
20. A real fear of the danger I was in
21. When I was arrested for a crime I did not commit again by the same woman 3 times and questioned over 6 times while held in police custody
22. He was bound-over in 2002 after admitting he was harassing the family, harassing & stalking are very much the same behaviours
23. When my 4 car tyres were slashed, exhaust yanked off car, window wipers mangled, property damage, eggs thrown at windows, false allegations made to Police. Seriously harassing and frightening my son. Regularly being in my cul-de-sac and phoning to say he knew I had just got back.
24. The nature of the content of the texts and the lack of respect for my wish to be left alone
25. 15
26. Was scared he would not let me go when left domestic abuse relationship. We have children and he kept kids saying to social services until he knows where I am he won't give kids back but put it across that what if something happened to kids when with me he should know where to go to keep them ok. Made it look like caring. Had to go court as social workers couldn't get him to return kids.
27. The stalking came in dribs and drabs but when text messages from the ex-gloated that he was responsible for the damage to property action had to be taken.

28. By the end of the conversation with the acquaintance I knew it was stalking for sure.

29. The day she kept causing trouble in our lives for her to get attention from it, and even now she is still doing it!

30. A while

31. A while as the person hid behind good intentions

32. No-one took me seriously, so how was I supposed to? It wasn't until he told me he 'wasn't in love with me, but wanted to own me, like an object or possession' that I realised something was really messed up and I couldn't do this on my own. (I was 17, btw.)

33. Unknown as he was doing it long before I caught him. Things in garden kept going missing and gate at back of house being left open

34. Being spoken to by professionals

35. A while because it was my ex-husband

36. I didn't realise until it was pointed out to me by friends

37. When he would txt me saying he knew I was on my own

38. Second incident

39. A long time

25 gave responses that were not specific in terms of time scale. Reference is made to the difficulty of recognising stalking behaviours in ex-partners.

10.7 How can we help people to identify stalking?

Question 110 asked: Drawing on your experience how can we help others to identify stalking? There were a lot of very sensible ideas here, and they have been grouped into themes as far as possible:

13 x comments about having the right to choose who is part of your life
10 x comments encouraging people to seek help
21 x messages about increasing publicity and education
3x messages about Internet forums, videos and signposting re use of advanced technologies used in cyberstalking
21 x clear messages for victims and agencies
6 x clear messages about training of professionals
Recognising you have the right to choose who is in your life.

1. I think people need to know that they can be stalked by somebody that they are already involved with. Any continued unwanted attention shouldn’t be dismissed for any reason. If you are not comfortable with the way somebody is treating you then that is a key indicator.

2. When you clearly say no to whatever they want and ask them to contact you but they still don’t stop (even if the emails they sent are friendly) take action

3. You will know if someone is phoning you or following you or sending you unwanted gifts it does not matter what it is if you feel anything is not right contact Action Scotland Against Stalking if in Scotland and even if not all the information you need will be on the website. The national Stalking helpline is also on the website so please get help and be safe if you feel this is happening to you even if you’re not sure get advice anyway.

4. If they contact you after you have asked them to stop it is stalking

5. Just that if someone is making them feel uncomfortable and isn’t taking the hint. .they may not be violent but they have no right to impact ur life

6. Any unwanted attention from anybody , if you have made yourself clear, that you do not want that attention is potentially stalking

7. When you have to tell the person on numerous occasions to stop contacting you and they refuse to listen, unwanted shows of affection after you have made things clear

8. Anything that makes you feel as if your privacy is being invaded, or makes you feel uncomfortable, by whatever channel, constitutes stalking.

9. If it feels wrong it probably is

10. If they feel uncomfortable or scared at all and feel confused and worried about how they knew things

11. Unwanted attention from someone who does not take no for an answer. Someone whose behaviour scares you or makes you feel uncomfortable and he knows it but keeps doing it.

12. You know when something is not right with some individual around you.

13. A constant presence of an un-wanted person, demonstrating obsessive interest in you, any behaviours that cause or are intended to cause you distress

13 comments about having the right to choose who is part of your life

Recognise the signs and ask for help

13. If it’s ruining your life and ruling it ask for help

14. The moment anyone is the slightest bit pushy or won’t take no for an answer or makes you feel the slightest bit uncomfortable (all signs of disrespect), you need to get well away.

15. If someone feels uncomfortable with someone else's behaviour they should be encouraged to do something about it and nip it in the bud
16. Ask trusted friends to check on anything you feel unsure about. See if the scale & means of contact are really within stalker bracket. If known think of the person's motivation. My stalker was resentful/revengeful type & I was the scapegoat.
17. Make sure they know the signs
18. If you are concerned about anything minor or major - please report it. The police are still not trained to deal with cyber stalking and there are not many agencies that will help you but persevere.
19. Recognise the slightest sign of disrespect for another person's wishes, on the slightest sign of petulance, persistence, childishness, lack of grace or sulkiness as stalking. Recognise the slightest and briefest sensation of concern, discomfort, negativity, dislike, distrust, confusion or unpleasantness as a sign of stalking - this is your gut instinct talking - listen to it. If someone close to you is behaving oddly because of someone else, believe the person close to you, they are in too deep to see clearly, they need your help. Speak with an experienced stalking help line first - they will understand - unfortunately friends, family and colleagues might not understand unless they've been through this themselves.
20. If it feels wrong and makes you uncomfortable then it probably is, talk to the helplines and support available.
21. Any action that is unwelcome and repeated could be stalking. If it doesn't feel right, tell someone.
22. If your gut instinct tells you something isn't right, listen to it and go ask questions. better to ask than not

**10 comments encouraging people to seek help**

Publish information, educate people about stalking, raise the profile

23. Continual messaging for stalkers that they will be dealt with vigorously, general public messaging, survivor messaging, professional messaging, family/worried others messaging
24. Publicise it more and publicise help for those to get help
25. By educating more, also for it to be taken seriously. I never realised how bad stalking was until it happened to me. I thought that it was over exaggerated by people. It's a very hard thing to leave with.
26. Awareness campaign so becomes common knowledge
27. Keep campaigns up about what it is and help available
28. Publicise this issue, many people don't know what constitutes stalking and that something can be done about it.
29. Leaflets support groups
30. Make posters with clear sentences that state what stalking is to be distributed to schools (primary & secondary), colleges, TAFE and universities; community centres; hold workshops that include what it is, how it presents, practical advice on protection and who to turn to etc.
31. Agencies need more press coverage, more reach.
32. Provide more information in public spaces, e.g. GP surgeries, shops, TV advertising. I'm not sure stalkers always realise their actions are stalking. Xx
33. Recognise the signs
34. Put out a list of behaviours that a victim might do while being stalked. Withdrawing, Jumpy...Etc. then put out an informational brochure saying something like your friend may not just scare easily maybe they are the victim of stalking. Ask.
35. Make the warning signs known to the public know what to look out for.
36. Awareness, education, a few well publicised prosecutions
37. Campaigning. Raise the level in social media. Get contacts with local press. Run stories regularly that communicate how this is an utterly unacceptable behaviour
38. Raise awareness
39. Talk about and advertise stalking more. The more we all know about it the more vigilant we can be.
40. Be informative
41. Talk more about it. be open I have 1 son 3 daughters and we talk all the time about different subjects even things that I don't want to talk about but need to be said
42. Diverse case studies
43. Make people aware of what constitutes stalking. People also need to be aware what constitutes abuse - many people don't seem to realise it doesn't have to be physical - campaigns always focus on black eyes & damage you can see

21 messages about increasing publicity and education

Provide Internet forums, videos and signposting

44. Publish this article worldwide (the website www.scaredofsomeone.org)
45. Establish forums where individuals talk about their experiences, there are many different types of stalking and not all are discussed, sometimes they are kept quite as it can sometimes feel embarrassing to admit you are being stalked
46. Real life examples - perhaps demonstrated by use of video and actors - and available on the Internet. Signpost those suffering to contact agencies and obtain access to technology that can gather the required supporting evidence and for extreme risk scenarios, use the technologies to assist to keep them safe

3 messages about Internet forums, videos and signposting re use of advanced technologies used in cyberstalking

Clear / multi messages

47. Many people just think stalking is the physical act of following someone, and think it is only strangers who you have never met before. People need to understand that stalkers can be people who are very close to you, who you
already think rule your life. This is especially important with social media and
the internet being used more and more - now there is more than being followed
down a street - you can be watched with spyware, threatened with hacks,
threatened with revenge porn and sent abusive messages that will make you
frightened even in your own home.

48. Any unwanted attention is stalking
49. Expect stalking if any abuse in relationship especially if children involved
50. If you feel under pressure or stressed about it or uncomfortable going about
your daily life. If you find yourself trying to appease the stalker at your own
expense time wise or emotionally

51. I haven't had a chance to delve into the website in its entirety, but it seems like
you do a really great job here on site in terms of the detailed information you
give. Keeping a log of actions taken by the stalker is a big help - I know that's
what I was told to do as well. I think the instincts piece is big, and the piece on
keeping yourself safe on the internet - that's SO big, keeping social media
private if you have it, only connecting with people you know in real life on
Facebook, for example. If you're on dating sites, really talking with someone for
an extended amount of time before you meet them, and then meeting in public
etc. I think there is validity to also discussing red flag in
relationships/friendships, a lot of the stuff you already cover in terms of people
controlling where you go, who you see, keeping tabs on you, sending unwanted
messages etc. - whether they're a boyfriend, girlfriend or just a friend, none of
that is okay. I believe we need to start educating middle schoolers and high
schoolers of these behaviours that are unacceptable, so they can know the
signs and also know how to control themselves and what is and is not okay.
Sorry, went on a rant there!

52. The police officers I spoke to were nice but did not tell me I was being stalked.
They only responded to the incident I'd called them for, i.e. the 200 or so text
messages and the threats of violence. They didn't tell me I was being stalked
and did not offer any information on available support services. They told me to
change my locks when the property I lived in was extremely unsafe and I knew
my ex could come in from the garden if he wanted to. I urgently needed a safe
space to stay but I didn't think that option existed. I still don't. I got into great
debt renting a second home before my contract had expired because I had
nowhere safe to go to and I was too embarrassed to ask for help from friends.
So, come prepared with information, tell the victims that what they are
experiencing is very common, and offer practical and emotional support.

53. People can identify it. Authorities choose not to fight it
54. Trust your instincts. If something feels wrong, it is wrong. Don't let denial get
the better of protecting yourself.

55. Stalking is seen in mainstream media as something that happens to pretty
blondes by middle-aged overweight strangers, but I think stalking is far more
common than that. Basically, stalking is another word for sexual harassment in
the real world, akin to rape culture. In rape culture, men assume they have
access to and control over women. In stalking, men single out a single woman
to target for sexual attention or any attention, not realizing it is unwanted.
Having good boundaries would be a way of explaining the difference between
normal behaviour and stalking.

Safety plans. Emotional support.
57. Listen to the damn victim.
58. Keep alert to what is going on around you. Never think you imagined something if it continually happens.
59. Obsessive, repetitive pattern of behaviour. That gets more frequent and intense the longer it is left unchallenged.
60. Take all strange coincidences into account and to keep a record and identify any patterns of behaviour that are unusual. Take a look at the victimology and try to identify if the harassment/stalking is done by someone known to the victim or a stranger.
61. Be watchful and careful who you give information to.
62. Record everything so that you can see how many incidents there are. Talk to the stalking helpline. Follow your gut instinct.
63. If something/somebody is making you feel uncomfortable trust your instincts and do something as soon as you can. Do not allow yourself to feel like it is your overreaction...decent people do not go around intimidating/scaring others. I wish I had thought to look to other agencies for help...so, my advice would be to keep looking until you find someone who listens and assists you to do something.
64. Simple guidelines
65. Change OACE and RIP0A.
66. Know that a stalker can be ANYONE - family, boyfriend/husband/partner, friends, ex-friends, in-laws, work colleagues, fellow students, neighbours... ANYONE can be a stalker. 2. Know that different types of stalkers exist - they are not all "romantic". Some may seek a relationship with you. Others may stalk you because they are jealous of you, hate you and want to hurt you. Some may stalk you because they want to control your life, dominate you and "keep you down". 3. Be aware that stalking may seem "trivial" at first and that you may not initially notice it - however, it can escalate over time. 4. Be VERY aware that stalkers are creepy, psycho and manipulative - they may pretend to be nice to you, to keep you "off guard". Some may be openly nasty to you, but nice to everyone around you, so that they isolate you from support and ensure that nobody believes you. They are VERY good "fakers" and can easily pretend to be something they are not (i.e. nice). They will use lies, pretend to "forget", two-faced behaviour... ANYTHING to avoid detection. 5. Be VERY aware that once you become conscious that you are being stalked, and try to stop it, the stalker may get even more agitated and vengeful. They may try to hide their activity, or make out they are "innocent and not stalking you". They may spread lies about you to ensure you are not believed. They may try to threaten you if you seek to expose them. 6. Be VERY aware that stalkers will use ANY method they can to stalk you. These may include spying on you (standing outside your home or workplace). Getting other people to spy on you. Tapping your phone or mobile. Hacking your computer, or using malware and spyware. Gossiping about you and spreading rumours. Listening to gossip about you. Looking for personal information about you, maybe at Libraries, Public Record Offices, online, in the Phone Book. Talking to people who know you to try to get information about you. Pretending to be your "friend" so they can get to know you. Searching through your rubbish/trash. Searching through your desk at work. Reading your private diary. Using GPS to track you via your mobile.
67. By taking them seriously. Who wants to be stalked, isolated and victimised?
21 clear messages for victims and agencies

Training and skills of professionals

68. How frightened is the Victim. Can you detect distress or alarm?
69. Book professionals on my training, so they can impart the tools to those who they support
70. Repetitive patterns, planned and prepared excuses. They do not look/talk to the eyes.
71. Understand y they think it. All the possible ways of being stalked
72. I Don't know
73. In my life stalking has arrived in many forms, in all of the cases there were common bonds The stalker seemed to be taking close personal interest in me, they observed my habits, they waited till I was alone &/vulnerable before attacking me, almost all of them used verbal abuse, demeaning negative personal comments

6 clear messages about training of professionals

10.8 What else do agencies need to know?

These comments were received for Question 111: Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

Online

1. We are still enduring this hell. She has been stalking now for 5 months. She was issued with a PIN by the police but still telephones us. She posts abusive tweets hourly and also on Facebook. She includes everyone she can in her posts. It’s a constant stress and unfortunately the police point of view is ……unfortunately this message was truncated. It was the first response to the questionnaire. We realised the box was not big enough and so made the change. No other messages were truncated by the website.
2. Just because it’s not an ex-partner, or offline, it doesn't mean it isn’t stalking. Even when its two women without an intimate relationship, it is still stalking when someone reads and reposts your timeline, makes unnecessary
comments about your posts, jumps into your conversations with others unasked to make derogatory comments, comments about you personally and reveals information that they should not be aware of unless they had spoken to friends/colleagues of yours. Report it. You do not have to be a victim to someone else’s ego. Stalking, harassment, bullying... are all closely connected and deserve to be taken seriously whenever they happen and no matter who the people concerned are. Those are my views.

Publicity

3. I feel that a major publicity campaign is needed to tackle this - I didn’t know the early signs of stalking, I didn’t know how weird it could be, how crazy making it can be, how it freezes one in disbelief as to what is happening and I didn’t know that I needed to speak with people experienced in this field because I didn’t know how to deal with this; I didn’t go to the internet; I didn’t even know there were stalking help lines

4. More people need to be made aware of the agencies available, and the signs of stalking to look out for

Impact

5. I was being watched by my neighbour from above my flat in a block of flats. This is why it become a difficult matter to explain to the authority and especially the Police. I am very down that I have lost my job over the years. I am in a financial, emotional and mental difficulty, a situation makes me very sad. I am ashamed that sometimes, I just want to go to sleep and never see the day again.

6. I am happy to relive my issue. It was a long time ago and there is more support now but I can highlight how a simple telephone call can lead to 1 month of terror, especially when you have 2 young children at home and are being threatened by someone you don’t know if you know or don’t know.

7. Yes, our whole family is targeted by this offender, yet we are not taken seriously by police or ASB team, this adds to the distress the offender causes, as my child is targeted I have on 3 occasions asked for help from social services - we are constantly denied help! Trying to find a solicitor for assistance on stalking is difficult and despite the seriousness of stalkers the fees are too costly for many people to get legal assistance. Victims need more easily available help to protect themselves, we fear our own situation will be one of a "missed opportunity" as we are not getting support from the police or the ASB team or
social services! whereby the offender has been involved in previous action with the victim - there needs to be an easier system to address the offender again, more often than not stalkers will continue regardless of the warnings or advice, - our solicitor wrote to the offender, it had no impact what so ever, and in the past has had many visits from the police and on each occasion of being advised "control your behaviour“ he has ignored and continued. Every log & statement for stalking should also follow visit or arrest from police, my own recent statement for stalking me at my Doctors was declined an arrest, despite being told he would be

8. I was stalked from 2010 - 2014. By the time it became law in England all damage had already occurred. Paladin launched and when referred I realised this Service was too late for me and all the damage had been done. Agencies didn't let me down. Police response and negligence did. All threats made by my stalking ex-partner have been carried out with only 2 remaining. 1. That he is going to disappear with my son abroad and I will never see him again. 2. He wished me dead and that I don't have long to breathe. North Tyneside Council have recently given him permission to take my son abroad for a holiday in March 2015. I am still fighting for Police to take action against my ex-partner.

9. I wish I could have had support from the police, in full, and other organizations 23 years ago. The man ruined my life, career, social standing, relationships with friends, terrorised my family,

10. The police in XXXX need training my family are living in hell just now because of what this woman is doing to us but we cannot get help at all. Just put the photos in a drawer and forget them after he had his hands all over them. We lifted everything with gloves the police ruined that and made us feel like nothing. My mum is 88 never had any dealings with the police but she was made to feel stupid by them. What do we do now

11. I nearly killed myself because of stalking

12. It cost me my home. Job, three years of my life, kid's hobbies had to stop and about £6000 in solicitors and barrister fees to stop an abusive bully from driving me to suicide. I shouldn't have had to fight his behaviour. It's the role of the police to protect me and my family.

13. Stalking dominates your life. Even when the stalker has been convicted you still look over your shoulder. Psychological support is sorely lacking and victims/survivors often develop PTSD or similar emotional turmoil when trying to rebuild their lives.

14. My case was really not simple. When it started the UK didn't have a harassment act, so the police couldn't act until that was passed through Parliament, he had five years of stalking, sending me letters, hang-up calls, emails and turning up at my house because the police acted. It went through the courts in 1998 and he was jailed and I was granted a restraining order. Then, almost 20 years later, he started up again, trying to get the restraining order lifted and writing about me online. The restraining order was made before the advent of the internet, really. So we had to prove the internet postings were a breach of the order. The
judge found in my favour, but the stalker appealed and we had to go through
the case again. Thankfully, the crown court judge agreed with us, but it was a
HORRIFIC period that lasted almost two years.

15. I feel victims are too afraid to speak out
16. I want to die because of being so isolated in this.
17. I am now getting help from the DAWN project...too late for me to do anything
   about the people who made my life a misery, but starting to feel better and less
terrified walking to and from home. I should have told other people what was
happening and ignored the ones who belittled what was going on.
18. I have found the police to be of no help at all. I am told I cannot go around
   accusing people without witnesses or evidence. My stalker is not daft, he’s not
going to do anything in front of witnesses so how am I supposed to get
witnesses. They suggest restraining orders but what use are they if I still need
an independent witness to confirm my reports. My experience of going to a
solicitor to get a restraining order was very negative and did not happen
because moneywise it was not worth the solicitors time taking on my case as I
would be entitled to some legal aid. Not the kind of thing you want to be told
when you are in a very emotional state of mind and feeling very isolated.
19. The police and social services fail victims and really should be dealing with this
kind of abuse. Like psychological warfare as that is what it is. An attack on our
minds.

   This has been added twice - here and 29 below as the description of
   psychological warfare is so concise and describes the victim experience so
   well)

Police

20. That there is lots of support, the police have taken it very seriously and
   supported me through the whole of this ordeal.
21. The stats around women murdered by their former partner has been around for
decades. Would be really good if protocol and practice changed to
acknowledged that & would be really good if police officers who share the
beliefs of the Dominator are sacked. Only within the last 6mths have I heard of
victims reporting harassment to the police & the officers retort being, "its coz he
misses you - he's pining" Until these beliefs are out of the minds of
professionals, women will continue to be left vulnerable and be murdered.
22. If someone reports being stalked to the police, they need to be taken seriously
   and know that something will be done about it. People may not report stalking
   out of fear that incidents will get worse if stalker knows that a report was made.
23. How much has she got to do before the police will do something
24. Disgusting behaviour from the police. I was arrested 5 times for calling them when having my door kicked in by a female stalker who then said I had punched her giving me 5 nights in the cells for nothing. Eventually I just gave up & accepted the abuse, it was easier than being arrested again. BTW I was never charged with anything. Don't need abuse from the police as well.

25. From my experience the police were not in the least helpful or cared. There is not much help available for victims especially women or girls. Just need to look how victims are treated in Rotherham and Oxfordshire cases as a prime example of how the police and councils treat victims.

26. Yes - THE LAW AND AGENCIES LIKE THE POLICE DO NOT DO ENOUGH TO HELP VICTIMS OF STALKING AND DO NOT SEEM TO TAKE IT SERIOUSLY. THIS IS A HUGE PROBLEM! It leaves victims still vulnerable, and stalkers still able to stalk.

27. When I first notified police it wasn't taken seriously, I was told it was just "a concerned friend". The police listened more to the stalker than to me & minimised what had been happening. It was only after other agencies became involved that the police finally took it seriously.

28. I have found the police to be of no help at all. I am told I cannot go around accusing people without witnesses or evidence. My stalker is not daft, he's not going to do anything in front of witnesses so how am I supposed to get witnesses. They suggest restraining orders but what use are they if I still need an independent witness to confirm my reports. My experience of going to a solicitor to get a restraining order was very negative and did not happen because moneywise it was not worth the solicitors time taking on my case as I would be entitled to some legal aid. Not the kind of thing you want to be told when you are in a very emotional state of mind and feeling very isolated.

29. The police and social services fail victims and really should be dealing with this kind of abuse. Like psychological warfare as that is what it is. An attack on our minds.

More support and national awareness

30. Get victim support and DV agencies social workers etc. even judges solicitors extra training on domestic abuse and stalking.

31. Thanks for bringing this vital but relatively unspoken about issue to the forefront.

32. :) 

33. It wasn't just me, he did the same with his new girlfriend, she had the police out and took him to court in the end, had injunction against him.

34. Thank for the opportunity to provide feedback.

35. Ireland is ten to fifteen years behind the UK in this area. When will men stop abusing and terrorising women? When will it not be okay for this to happen and
for the police, guards and everyone to be sufficiently resourced that people can live their lives without being terrorised that they will disappear or be found dead in a ditch

36. Just that any support on this subject is invaluable and that in this age of technology - internet access / social media etc., people are so vulnerable to others finding out their personal and intimate details. It's so easy to track somebody’s movements ...... there needs to be better security measures, but more importantly, the younger generation needs to be more aware of the risks they take when posting photos and statuses online about themselves which could lead to unwanted attention

37. My problem is still going on the month I reported it wasn't investigated police never went round there council didn't June last year now they say. I did holes

38. After many trips to court I managed to get a non-harassment order for 50 years. Victims should be given this after 2-3 convictions!

39. Good Luck with your work in this area of law. I look forward to reading your questionnaire results report when it is published.

40. I was also a victim of domestic and abuse from this man.

41. I have suffered another totally different type of stalking; there seems to be no way of integrating this, so I may well do the questionnaire again, focusing on that episode.

42. I was not expecting to see or take this questionnaire but I am really glad that I have, I can only hope my answers will help you do your work

43. So very glad to see this survey happening. With the rise of social media, stalking is going digital and viral. Young people are particularly vulnerable. We need to raise national awareness, teach people how to spot it, put in place prevention and protection strategies, support mechanisms, and appropriate punishments for the perpetrators. Unchecked Stalking ruins lives

44. Contact me at XXXX@XXXXX

10.9  Which other non-stalking agencies did you contact for help?

Question 82 asked which other non-stalking agencies the respondents made contact with and the responses were surprisingly varied, which evidences the need for front-line training and awareness in all agencies. Here are the agencies they chose:

10.9.1  SCHOOL: Because I was in school and the stalker was in school, much disciplinary action was taken by the school and school's security. Also, the local police, as I mentioned. I had contacts with local victim's
assistance as well. I attempted to go to Vera House (a domestic violence shelter in my local area) and after I was interviewed/assessed they later called me back and said they essentially couldn't offer me any support....I think because there hadn't been any actual violence. I thought this was very unfortunate and I was very disheartened.

10.9.2 **NEXT LINK:** Next Link - located via national domestic abuse helpline.

10.9.3 **TALK TO US:** I spoke with 'Talk to us' for under 25year olds told them my situation & they advised me to talk with 'National Stalking Helpline'

10.9.4 **WOMEN’S AID:** Women's Aid, Advanced and Asian Women’s Resource

10.9.5 **CRIMESTOPPER:** Crime Stopper through the internet but not heard from them yet.

10.10 **Agency Comments:**

Letters received instead of completed questionnaires

Here are two letters that were received in place of the completed questionnaire, which have made it impossible to include these agencies in any of the statistics in this report, since their letters did not contain any formal answers to any of the questions, but did contain a useful insight into how these agencies view and deal with, the issue of stalking.

All identifying information has been redacted in the first letter from an LSCB member, however, the second letter is from a high level agency and needs to be identified to have its impact known and understood.

**Letter 1 from an LSCB Member representing a Church:**

“Having only recently joined the XXX LSCB, I did not feel that it was appropriate to complete the survey.

However, Ministers of Religion and prominent members of congregations are routinely exposed to ‘odd’ and/or needy people. Sometimes attempts to provide care, shelter or other material items are misinterpreted or taken advantage of. I am aware of at least two instances where this has developed into stalking scenarios and victims have had to resort to the judicial process. This form of
harassment knows no boundaries and can affect both genders. Of course the trauma experienced by victims is exacerbated by the fact that they were trying to help because of their faith.

I do not know whether you are already aware of this aspect of Ministry but I believe that all Christian Denominations are subject to it.

These are my own views and are not necessarily those of Methodism.”

Safeguarding Officer
XXXX Methodist Districts

Letter 2 from the Scottish Procurator Fiscal Service

Procurator Fiscal Service
Crown Office, Edinburgh,
Policy Division
www.copfs.gov.uk

“The Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS), the prosecution service for Scotland, supports the efforts of the various groups involved in this consultation to draw attention to what is a very serious and damaging crime. In reply to the consultation COPFS would submit the following;

COPFS recognises the devastating impact that stalking can have on victims and their families across Scotland and in order to help tackle this type of offending, work has been carried out with criminal justice partners and other key stakeholders to ensure that our approach is informed, robust and fit for purpose.

In Scotland it is clear that there has been a steady but significant increase in the number of stalking offences since the introduction of the specific stalking offence under section 39 of the Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2010. It is clear that this offending is taken seriously by those involved in the criminal justice system in Scotland and victims are at the heart of our policy in relation to this.

For example in July of 2014 Maroun Kohri was sentenced to 21 months imprisonment and was given a 10 year non-harassment order for stalking his estranged wife.

There are a number of measures COPFS have taken which should be highlighted:

- A National Lead Prosecutor has been appointed to be available as an expert resource for prosecutors who are considering and prosecuting stalking offences. The National Lead Prosecutor will liaise with staff and with external stakeholders to ensure the approach and actions taken are appropriate.
To support the National Lead a number of Stalking Specialists have also been appointed.

- Specialist training in relation to stalking is available for COPFS staff and prosecutors conducting stalking cases will be specially trained in this area. This training places an emphasis on the dynamics behind stalking helping staff to understand the particular circumstances applicable to those who have been subjected to stalking.

- Prosecutors will assess the level of risk to a victim in any given case and will take in account all circumstances in a case. Prosecutors will also ask the court to impose any necessary measures to protect the victim as the case proceeds, this can include asking for the accused to be remanded in custody, asking for the accused to be subject to special bail conditions including restrictions on movement or prohibition of contact with the victim and/or requesting special measures such as a CCTV link to be used whilst the victim is giving evidence. In addition where an accused is being sentenced after a conviction all information will be put in front of the judge to ensure that an appropriate disposal is granted, including, for example, a non-harassment order.

- COPFS has its own dedicated Victim Information and Advice Service (VIA) who will be involved in all cases of this nature from the very outset. They will proactively provide information about the case directly to the victim to ensure they are properly informed about appearances by the accused in Court and any bail conditions which are in place.

- VIA will additionally act as a point of contact to make sure victims feel as comfortable as possible throughout the Court process and particularly when being called to give evidence.

I hope this information is of assistance in reply to the consultation regarding victims of stalking. COPFS would be happy to provide further information should it be required and can be contacted at xxxx”

Yours sincerely

xxxxx