

A young woman with long brown hair, wearing a green military-style jacket over a light blue zip-up hoodie, looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with a chain-link fence and a building.

# Victim Support strategy

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2015 to 2020

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“We will strive to put victims at the heart of the criminal justice system to ensure they are treated with the respect they deserve.”

## Our message to you

Started as a movement over 40 years ago, Victim Support has successfully adapted over the years to continue to help people cope and recover after experiencing crime. While our previous strategy accurately reflected the operating landscape of that time, the situation has now changed, which requires us to adapt. A combination of austerity and localism has led to a more complex environment, within which we must compete to continue to deliver our services. This strategy is our answer to dealing with these changes; it is a roadmap to ensure that we remain relevant and fit for purpose from 2015 to 2020.

If we are to ensure that victims and witnesses are given the support they need, we must work closely with those bodies responsible for commissioning victims' services. In this competitive environment, we must convince them that by commissioning us, victims and witnesses will benefit from the unique blend of experience and commitment provided by our volunteers and staff and that they will receive a local service that draws on national support to offer best value.

We must also be innovative and proactive in identifying need and acquiring the resources to provide support. To do this, we will increase our investment in research and evidence gathering, which will enable us to publish insightful reports that shape the perceptions of the public and decision makers on victims' issues. To ensure that we can continue to provide a range of innovative services, we will seek to raise our profile among donors and the public to increase our unrestricted income from fundraising.

We have listened to what victims are telling us; only 16 per cent feel that their views are taken into account in the criminal justice system so we will work even harder to ensure their voices are heard. In a survey conducted by the National Probation Service, 94 per cent of victims said that their priority was for the offending to stop; so we will increase our work in the areas of crime prevention and reducing reoffending. Victims want to have their say on how the crime has affected them, so we will work to increase the use and effectiveness of victims' statements. In the same study, 84 per cent of victims said that they would prefer effective rather than harsh sentences; we will strive to ensure that sentencing guidelines consider their views and that restorative justice and community-sentencing programmes become victim-focussed. Finally, victims tell us that they want to be kept informed. We will strive to act as a friend and advocate for them to monitor adherence to the Victims' Code and to put victims truly at the heart of the criminal justice system, to ensure that they are treated with the respect they deserve.



**Catherine Dugmore**  
Chair



**Mark Castle**  
Chief Executive

# Achieving our objectives from 2015 to 2020

This strategy sets out our ambitions for the next five years. We are operating in a more competitive environment than ever before and this document explains how we will make the most of our opportunities over this next period, building our funding streams and providing innovative and effective services designed to win contracts.

This strategy redefines Victim Support as an agile and effective organisation that can support and advocate for victims and witnesses of crime more effectively than ever before.

## Our vision

A world where victims and witnesses are given the support they need and the respect they deserve.

**We are working to ensure that victims and witnesses are given the support they need and the respect they deserve.**

## Our mission – making our vision a reality

To realise our vision, Victim Support's mission comprises three interlocking elements:

1. To provide victims and witnesses with high-quality practical and emotional support



2. To champion the interests of victims and witnesses



3. To construct a sustainable operating model utilising high-quality staff and volunteers.

## Our values – our passion

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Our new strategy takes us in a different direction and we need values that can reflect and shape our ambitions for the future.

### **Compassionate**

We work tirelessly to empower victims and witnesses to recover after crime.

### **Accessible**

Working inclusively with victims, witnesses and their communities.

### **Resolute**

Uncompromising in our desire to champion the cause of victims and witnesses.

### **Effective**

Delivering results through high-quality services, providing the best value for our clients.

## Our objectives

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During the life of this strategy, we will measure our progress towards achieving our vision against six clear objectives. Under our first mission statement – to provide victims and witnesses with high quality practical and emotional support – we will:

**Secure the mandate from commissioners to ensure victims and witnesses get the help that they need by:**

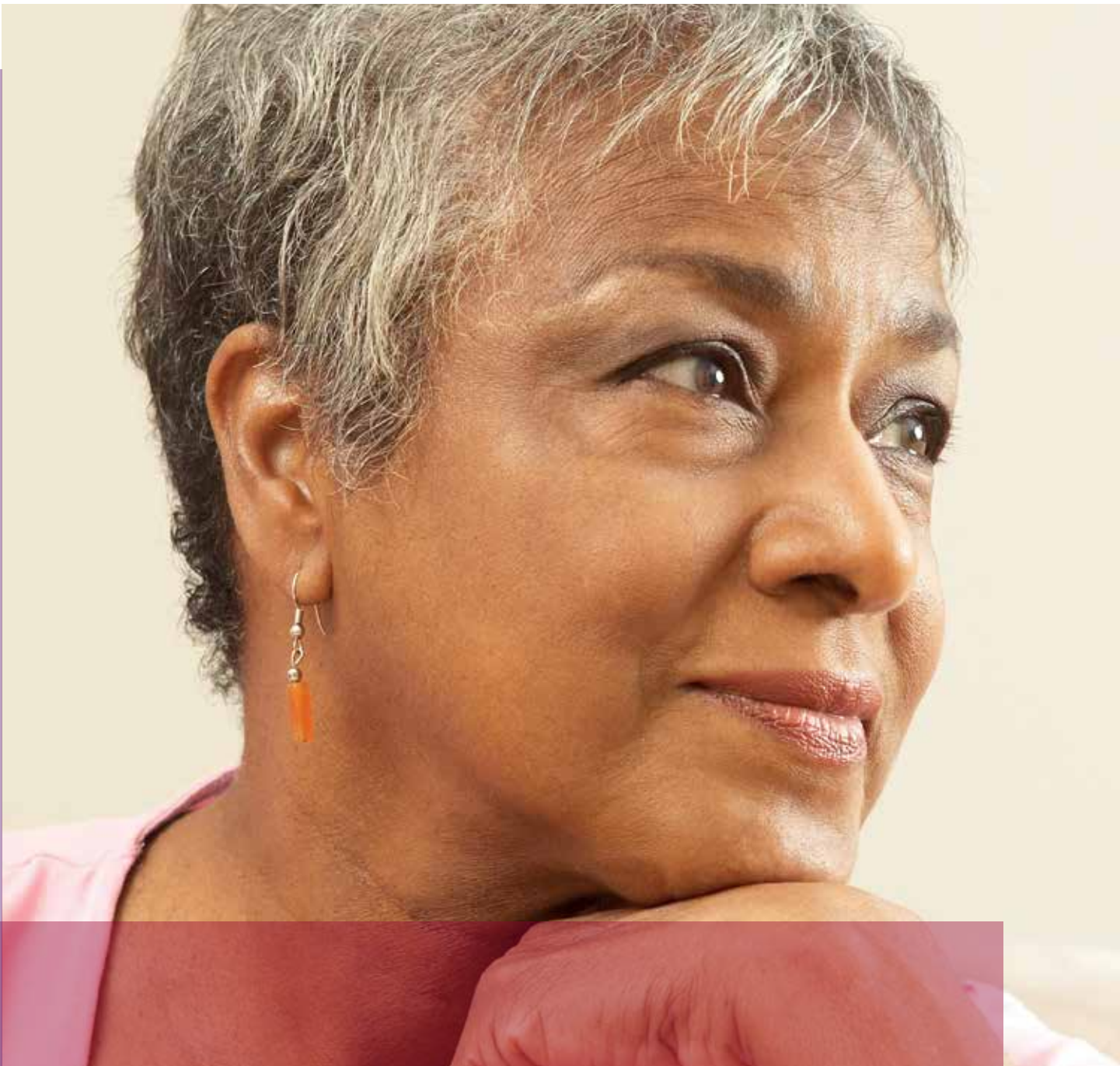
- ✦ Anticipating the upcoming requirements by improving our insight and understanding of the operating environment
- ✦ Preparing compelling and convincing bids for tenders that are innovative and cost effective
- ✦ Developing a decision-making architecture and business infrastructure that ensures success in this competitive environment
- ✦ Winning contracts and establishing ourselves as the first choice service provider.



# 2

**Demonstrate that we are a provider of efficient, high-quality services by:**

- ✦ Delivering high-quality customer-led services that set the standard for excellence in provision
- ✦ Ensuring we manage our resources efficiently and effectively
- ✦ Developing a performance and lessons-learned culture that embeds rigour and constant improvement in our operating model
- ✦ Influencing customer decision-making through effective marketing and customer relations.



## To champion the interests of victims and witnesses – we will:

# 3

### **Establish an authoritative and respected voice on issues of importance to victims and witnesses by:**

- ✦ Capturing and sharing the victim and witness experience through robust, evidence-based research
- ✦ Collaborating with academia and other groups to produce insightful and authoritative articles and reports, which shape public attitudes and influence decision makers
- ✦ Anticipating emerging trends to ensure that we proactively meet the needs of victims and witnesses
- ✦ Developing our use of social media and technology to reach all sections of the community
- ✦ Shaping the views of decision-makers through evidence and strong positioning.

# 4

### **Effect change in the criminal justice system for the benefit of victims and witnesses by:**

- ✦ Advocating for national and local solutions that advance the interests of victims and witnesses
- ✦ Convincing the public to support us and championing the interests of victims and witnesses
- ✦ Participating in forums and groups to effect change in the criminal justice system and which will directly benefit victims and witnesses.





To construct a sustainable operating model in order to deliver support for victims and witnesses in the future – we will:

5

**Invest in collaboration and partnerships locally, nationally and internationally by:**

- ✦ Seeking out opportunities to work in partnerships which provide better support for victims and witnesses
- ✦ Developing networks to share good practice and learning
- ✦ Developing our ability to operate as a partner.

6

**Create financial resilience together with a confident and skilled workforce by:**

- ✦ Diversifying our income streams to enable us to be resilient to change
- ✦ Increasing our market share by increasing our specialist capabilities
- ✦ Driving down our costs to ensure we retain a competitive advantage
- ✦ Attracting donors
- ✦ Recruiting and retaining high-quality volunteers and staff
- ✦ Accrediting our training to attract and retain high-quality volunteers and staff
- ✦ Creating an innovative employment model that is responsive to change.



## Case study

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### **Michael\* was a happy and popular teenager who played football, cricket and basketball, until a notorious gang tried to recruit him.**

When he refused, Michael became a target for intimidation and violent threats on his way to and from school. On one occasion he was confronted by dozens of masked youths at the school gates.

Despite having an escort, the intimidation continued and Michael soon became too afraid to attend school. His days were spent at home, growing angry and confused, and he stopped eating.

His education suffered but, because he was a victim not an offender, Michael was unable to access help from police and social workers who tackle gang issues. His parents and siblings suffered too, worried for each other and struggling to cope with the situation.

That is when Victim Support stepped in.

Our caseworker provided a range of practical and emotional support to Michael and his family.

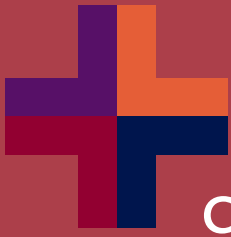
She helped rehouse them away from the neighbourhood where the gang was based and found Michael a new school. She helped rebuild Michael's confidence, taking him out of his home onto the streets gradually so he could feel secure once more. And we helped his family claim compensation from his old school for failing to ensure he could receive an education for nearly two years.

Michael has since completed his education, regularly attends a local youth club and hopes to join the Army. He also sits on a safeguarding panel, helping a local authority understand the needs of gang victims.



\*Name has been changed for anonymity

“We finally had someone to give us the support and advice we so desperately needed and deserved. We trusted her and she has never let us down. I really don’t know where we would be without her and Victim Support.”



**Compassionate  
Accessible  
Resolute  
Effective**

**Victim Support:**

We provide support for all victims of crime, on the telephone and face-to-face.

Our supportline number is  
**08 08 16 89 111.**

We also provide specialist support for those who have experienced:

Antisocial behaviour  
Domestic violence  
Hate crime  
Restorative justice  
Sexual violence  
Young victims and witnesses.

We champion victims and witnesses through:

Consultation responses  
Events  
Reports.

**[www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)**

**Registered charity number 298028**

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