



Support that saves

The wider economic benefits
of victims' services

victimsupport.org.uk

Summary

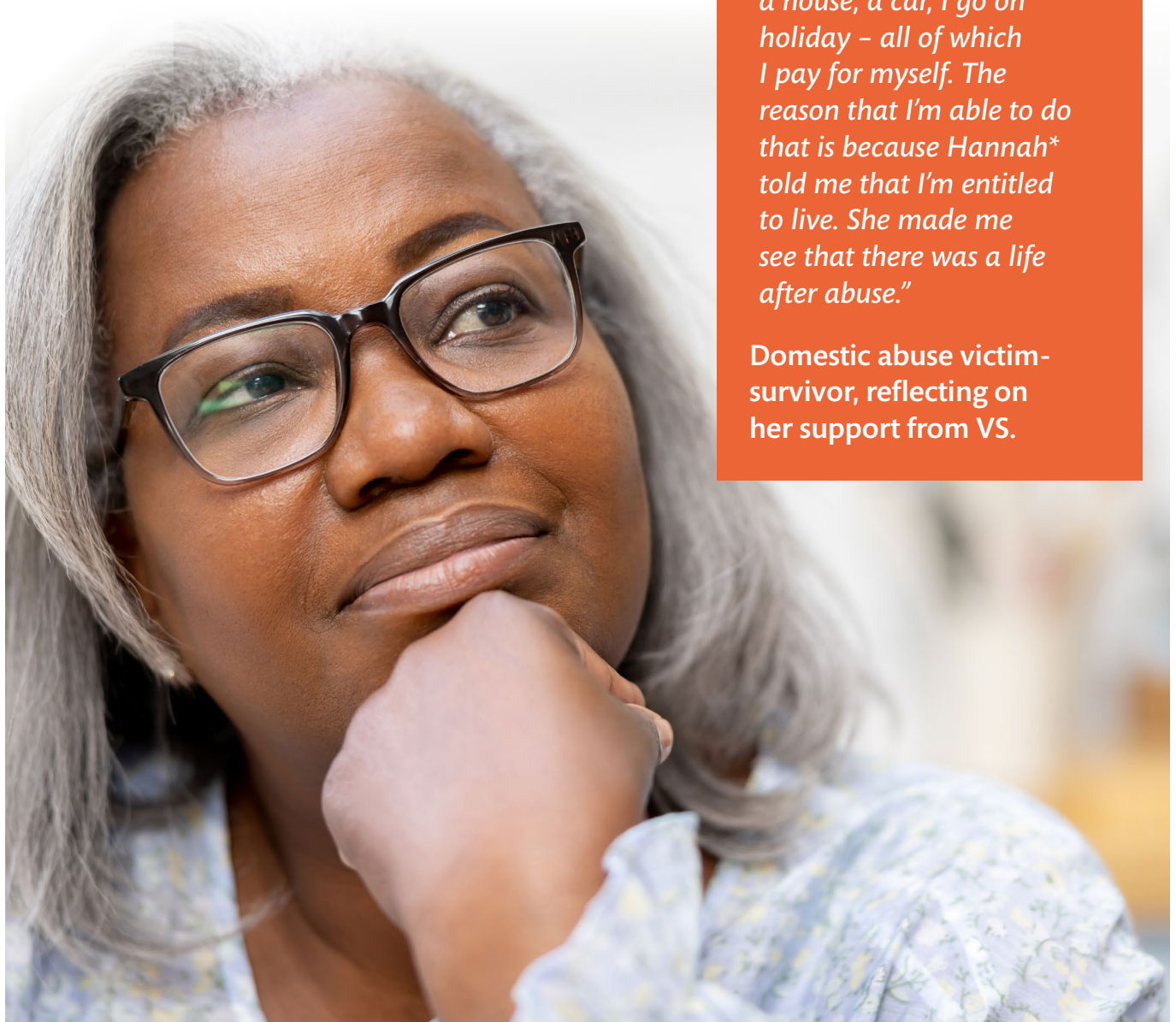
New analysis from Victim Support finds that every £1 invested in our services delivers an economic return of up to £10.80 – proving that the recent funding cuts to victims' services are a false economy.

This paper shows that cutting funding for victims' services costs the public purse more than it saves. Investing in victims' services is not just a moral imperative for the Government – it makes economic sense too.

With less funding, Victim Support can deliver less support to those who need it, and fewer savings for the public purse. We urgently need sustained, long-term funding so that every victim can access the vital support services they need and have a right to.

"I don't think I'd have a life if she hadn't got hold of me and put me back together. I wouldn't be in a full-time job, supporting myself. I have a house, a car, I go on holiday – all of which I pay for myself. The reason that I'm able to do that is because Hannah told me that I'm entitled to live. She made me see that there was a life after abuse."*

Domestic abuse victim-survivor, reflecting on her support from VS.



*Name changed to protect person's identity and confidentiality. Image posed by model.

Introduction

Victims' services help victims navigate a complex, and often intimidating, criminal justice process. They are essential to fulfilling the Government's mission to halve serious violence and violence against women and girls.

With the Crown Court backlog sitting at a record high, they are also more vital now than ever; they provide a lifeline to victims facing lengthy delays, preventing them from dropping out of the criminal justice process altogether.¹

They are also effective and highly valued by victims, with evidence showing that they help them feel safer and more empowered.² Victim Support's analysis shows that victims feel more informed, more able to cope, and safer after receiving support from one of our services.³

Access to support services is also a fundamental right for all victims of crime. It is enshrined in law that the Victims' Code must reflect the principle that victims require this access, while Right 4 of the Code itself makes clear that victims have the right to be referred to, and access, support services.^{4,5}

Crisis point

Despite this, victims' services have long faced major funding challenges, due to ever-increasing demand, stagnant budgets, rising costs driven by inflation, and short notice periods for future funding. The sector is now at crisis point.

In the 2024 Autumn Budget, the Government announced an increase to employers' National Insurance Contributions. Then, in December, the Ministry of Justice announced a 4.2% cut to the 'core' budget allocated to Police and Crime Commissioners to commission victims' services, and a freeze to ring-fenced domestic abuse and sexual violence funding.⁶

Fewer victims will receive support this financial year as a result of these decisions.

The Government has pointed to the "black hole in the nation's finances" to justify these choices.⁷ However, our new analysis shows that this argument is a false economy, and that investing in victims' services yields significant benefits for the wider economy.

¹ Criminal court statistics quarterly: April to June 2025 – GOV.UK

² Eg Victims' Commissioner (2024), *Going above and beyond: Mapping the provision and impact of Victim Advocacy in the Criminal Justice System*.

³ Based on a representative sample of 4,495 Victim Support service users (2023).

⁴ Section 2(3)(b), *Victims and Prisoners Act 2024*.

⁵ Ministry of Justice (2021), *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime in England and Wales: Right 4*.

⁶ Lawrie, E. (2024), *Victim-support cut to be devastating, charity says*, BBC News.

⁷ Badshah, N. (2024), *Charities warn funding cuts will have 'dire' effect on domestic abuse victims | Domestic violence | The Guardian*, The Guardian.

A moral duty – and a smart investment

Using Home Office research into the costs of crime, along with impact research gathering insights from a representative sample of more than 4,400 Victim Support service users, **our analysis shows that, for every £1 invested in victims' services, there is an economic return of up to £10.80.**

The state has a responsibility to fund services to ensure victims can access the support they need after experiencing crime. This is both a moral duty and one required to ensure victims' rights under the Victims' Code can be met.⁸

But, beyond the moral imperative, our findings show that investing in victims' services also provides substantial value for Government money. It significantly reduces the costs associated with victims' physical and emotional harm, lost productivity, and health service use.

For this reason, the recent funding cuts levelled at victims' services do not make sense on their own terms.

Reducing funding for victims' services is a false economy: not only does it leave victims at risk of being unable to access the support to which they are entitled, it also costs the public money.

Put simply, with less funding, Victim Support can deliver less support to those that need it, and fewer savings for the public purse. Cutting funding to victims' services costs more than it saves.

We urgently need sustained, long-term funding of victims' services so that every victim of crime can access the vital services they need and deserve. This isn't simply a moral imperative for the Government – it's a smart investment for the public purse.



⁸ Ministry of Justice (2021), *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime in England and Wales: Right 4.*

⁹ Home Office (2018), *The economic and social costs of crime second edition.*

The power of support – Gemma's story

Gemma*, 57, is a victim-survivor of domestic abuse.

Just before the start of the coronavirus pandemic, Gemma began a new relationship with someone at work who presented himself as the perfect match. However, after just a few months, he became abusive and used the national lockdowns to drug, manipulate, and isolate her from friends and family.

Gemma ended the relationship in the summer of 2020, but months of mental and physical abuse left her traumatised. She was terrified of returning to work and having to spend every day in the same building as her abuser.

She contacted Victim Support and we set her up with a specialist domestic abuse caseworker, Hannah.

On returning to work, Gemma reported her experience but was met with a complete lack of support and even victim blaming from her employer.

"I remained professional at work but inside I was absolutely falling to pieces.

"Nobody realised the impact on my mental health seeing him four to five times a day and him acting like nothing ever happened."

Gemma wanted to move jobs but couldn't afford to quit and look for a new one.



*Name changed to protect person's identity and confidentiality. Image posed by model.

"She was my rock"

"I had to apply for jobs while continuing to work because I could not afford to leave.

"Hannah, my Victim Support caseworker, gave me the strength to stay in the job that I was in. I worked five days a week in the office, and she would call me most days.

"She knew that the minute I went to lunch was when he'd come around to intimidate me, so every lunch she would call me and talk to me. She gave me the courage to carry on.

"I was desperate to get another job and get away. She would call me, she would focus on my strengths – she would say, "Look how far you've come".

"I had an interview for one job and I got it, but then the funding was withdrawn. I was devastated because I had thought I was going to get away from him. Hannah had to support me through picking myself back up and looking for another job.

"She was like a life raft. When I got the interview for my current job, we spent two hours on self-empowerment. She got me to go over everything that I'd achieved that year and repeat that I was worthy.

"I feel deeply traumatised that it happened to me. But I feel lucky that I had Hannah. I wouldn't be here today if it hadn't have been for Hannah.

"I don't think I would have been able to move on in my life without Hannah's help and guidance. She was my rock – the only person who truly understood what I was going through. What he did doesn't define me but it has changed my outlook on life. Hannah helped define the new me.

"I don't think I'd have a life if she hadn't got hold of me and put me back together. I wouldn't be in a full-time job, supporting myself. I have a house, a car, I go on holiday – all of which I pay for myself. The reason that I'm able to do that is because Hannah told me that I'm entitled to live. She made me see that there was a life after abuse.

"When I'm having good days, I think about how grateful I am to Hannah and Victim Support for getting me to where I am now."

From cuts to commitments: our recommendations

**Investing in victims' support services makes moral and economic sense.
We are calling on the Government to urgently:**

- Provide an uplift in future funding for victims' services, reversing this year's 4.2% cut to the core budget provided to Police and Crime Commissioners, and covering the rising costs for service providers as a result of the increase in employers' National Insurance Contributions.
- Provide secure, multi-year funding, as pledged in the Ministry of Justice's 2022 Victims Funding Strategy.¹⁰

By increasing funding to victims' services, the Government can significantly reduce the costs of crime.

¹⁰ Ministry of Justice (2022), [Victims Funding Strategy](#).

Appendix

Our method

1. We calculated the estimated costs generated by the **108,195** cases supported by Victim Support in 2024/25, using the Home Office's research report, '*The economic and social costs of crime*'.⁹

These costs totalled **£1.1 billion** (£905 million for 'physical and emotional harm', **£161 million** for 'lost output', and **£36.3 million** for 'health services' – three categories identified by the Home Office's report).

2. We calculated the average percentage improvements experienced by a representative sample of **4,495** Victim Support service users in 2023, associated with the three categories above: **47.9%** for 'physical and emotional harm', **49%** for 'lost output', and **49%** for 'health services'.

3. We applied these average percentage improvements to the estimated costs generated by the **108,195** cases supported by Victim Support in 2024/25, to calculate the savings generated by our services.

These totalled up to **£529.9 million** (£433.3 million for 'physical and emotional harm', **£78.9 million** for 'lost output', and **£17.8 million** for 'health services').

4. We divided the total savings generated by Victim Support's services by the total annual income for our services (**£49 million**) to work out the cost-to-benefit ratio of investing in Victim Support's services: up to **£1: £10.80**.

For further information on how we reached this figure, a full methodology can be found at victimsupport.org.uk.