

South Yorkshire Police response
to Suzy Lamplugh Trust's
super-complaint:

The police response to stalking

Progress update March 2026



South Yorkshire

POLICE

Background

In November 2022, a super-complaint was submitted to the government by the Suzy Lamplugh Trust, on behalf of the National Stalking Consortium (NSC). In January 2023, this super-complaint was subsequently confirmed as eligible for investigation by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS), the College of Policing and the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC).

The super-complaint was comprehensively investigated, considering the concerns raised by the NSC to understand both the barriers to, and facilitators of, the police providing an effective response to stalking.

On 27 September 2024, the three bodies **published a report of their findings**. This detailed clear evidence supporting the concerns raised and called for change and improvements, building on examples of innovative and promising practice within forces across England and Wales.

Within the report, 29 recommendations were made to Chief Constables, the Home Office, the Crown Prosecution Service, the Ministry of Justice, the National Police Chiefs' Council, and Police and Crime Commissioners. They were categorised into three themes:

- Providing a better foundation for policing to create a good service for stalking victims
- Meeting expected standards now and doing the fundamentals well
- Implementing what works, spreading promising practice and encouraging innovation

In 2025, South Yorkshire Police (SYP) published **its first response to the super-complaint**, to explain what we were doing to address each of the recommendations made to our Chief Constable, and what our plans were to improve further. The recommendations were sent to all Chief Constables in England and Wales.

This document is the force's 2026 update to outline the further progress that has been made against each of the relevant recommendations, and our plans for continual improvement.

Introduction

As a force we remain steadfastly committed to improving the way we identify, investigate and prevent stalking, and to ensuring that victims receive a consistently high standard of care and protection.

Over the past year, we have continued to build upon the foundations set out in **our 2025 response**, considering and strengthening our approach across governance, training, digital capability, safeguarding and multi-agency partnership working.

We have continued to invest in our governance structures, ensuring clear leadership and accountability for our response to stalking. A chief officer remains the executive lead for Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), supported by a dedicated strategic lead and thematic lead for stalking. This structure ensures that stalking remains a priority within our wider VAWG approach, and that improvements are driven consistently across the organisation.

We have strengthened the training and support provided to officers and staff, particularly in relation to identifying stalking behaviours, recognising patterns of harm and responding effectively to technology-facilitated offending. Our regular stalking clinics continue to provide enhanced oversight of high-risk cases, ensuring victim impact, safeguarding and investigative quality remain central to our approach.

We have also expanded our analytical capability, with dashboards and screening processes that help us identify stalking behaviours earlier, understand patterns of offending and target the most harmful perpetrators. Our collaborative work with other forces continues to bolster our response; regular regional meetings ensure good practice and learning is disseminated between forces and adopted in order to continually improve our response to victims and best target those causing harm.

While we recognise the progress made, we know there is more to do. Stalking is a complex and high-impact crime, and we will continue to learn, adapt and invest in our response. Our focus remains clear: protecting victims, holding perpetrators to account and delivering a service that the public can trust.

Below we demonstrate our ongoing commitment to delivering a high quality, victim-centred response to stalking, and to working with partners and communities to reduce harm and keep people safe.

We will subsequently continue to build on this work in the year ahead, ensuring our response to stalking is strong, consistent and centred on the safety and wellbeing of those we serve.

Local response

Recommendation 7

By 27 March 2025, where required, [forces should] seek changes to their crime recording systems to enable staff and officers to document and search for crimes not recorded as the principal crime, as included classifications on crime records. Processes should be put in place to make sure this system capability is effectively used by officers and staff. While any necessary system changes are pending, chief constables should put alternative measures in place to make sure stalking and related offences are fully searchable. This could, for example, be the submission of intelligence reports.

Further progress update

In last year's response, we confirmed that our crime recording system, Connect, already met the requirements of this recommendation.

Throughout 2025/26, included classifications remain fully searchable within Connect, supporting accurate identification, monitoring and analysis of stalking behaviours, even where stalking is not the principal recorded offence.

In preparation for the transition to our new crime recording system, Niche, in November 2026, we have ensured that the ability to record and search included classifications will be retained within the new system. This forward planning ensures continuity in how stalking-related behaviours are identified and tracked across crime types.

Searchable analytical tools, including a VAWG dashboard, stalking dashboard and crime manager dashboard, continue to support supervisors, investigators and strategic leads in identifying patterns, trends and emerging risks. A dedicated audit of stalking and harassment is scheduled for autumn/winter 2026 to further strengthen assurance and data quality.

Next steps

We will continue to prepare for the transition to Niche, ensuring all stalking-related classifications remain searchable and that officers and staff are supported through the change. The forthcoming stalking and harassment audit will inform future improvements in recording accuracy and system use. We will maintain our commitment to robust data quality, ensuring stalking behaviours are consistently identified and searchable across all crime types.

Recommendation 10

By 27 March 2025, [forces will] review and update their learning and training provision relating to stalking so it:

- Meets the learning outcomes on stalking within the public protection national policing curriculum.*
- Makes appropriate use of the stalking or harassment e-learning product developed by the College of Policing.*
- Uses the skills and knowledge of local victim advocates or others from outside policing with relevant expertise.*
- Includes information on relevant local policies and practice where necessary.*
- Is provided to the officers and staff who will most benefit from the learning.*
- Chief Constables should also make sure that their policies and practice are reviewed and updated in accordance with the findings in the super-complaint investigation report.*

Further progress update

We have continued to strengthen and refine our training provision to ensure officers and staff maintain the specialist skills required to respond effectively to stalking. A comprehensive review of our stalking training provision has been completed, confirming that stalking-related inputs are embedded across a wide range of internal courses, including PIP2 (Professionalising Investigations Programme – serious and complex investigation), DDHEP (Detective Degree Holder Entry Programme), the Investigating Officer training course, and within SCAIDP (Specialist Child Abuse Investigators Development Programme) and SSAIDP (Serious Sexual Assault Investigators' Development Programme) where offending theories are explored in depth.

We are exploring additional external training from specialist stalking organisations, reflecting our commitment to continuous professional development. In addition, our training department continues to deliver bespoke inputs, which are supported by signposting to the College of Policing e-learning module, with strong engagement demonstrated by 3,037 staff completing the module as of March 2026.

To further support officers and staff, we have developed a suite of investigative tools, including a stalking first-response booklet for frontline staff (with specific reference to cyberstalking), a stalking investigation plan to support the pursuit of reasonable lines of enquiry, a victim stalking journal to help document patterns of behaviour, and a stalking suspect leaflet designed to help individuals recognise their behaviours and the impact on victims.

Delivery of technology-facilitated abuse training has also taken place for both police staff and partners, increasing awareness of cyber-enabled stalking and the associated legislation, and improving recognition and reporting of online offending. Regular communication with stalking advocacy services continues to shape training content, policy development and operational practice, ensuring lived experience and specialist expertise inform our approach.

The internal investigation knowledge hub section on stalking and harassment on the force intranet remains a key resource for officers and staff.

Next steps

We will continue to enhance our training provision by securing specialist external inputs and ensuring all relevant staff have access to refreshed learning. We will continue to work closely with advocacy partners to ensure training remains current, relevant and informed by victim experience.

Recommendation 11

By 27 March 2025, [forces should] make sure that appropriate mechanisms are in place to fully understand the scale and types of stalking behaviour within their force and the effectiveness of their response. This should align with the VAWG national delivery framework. Mechanisms should include:

- *Problem profiles using police data and intelligence and other sources of information to ensure that the full extent of stalking is well understood. This could include information sharing with local victim's services and other public services, and national and local statistics.*
- *Regular assurance work such as audits to better understand the force response and make improvements where appropriate, including monitoring the use of SPOs, investigation outcomes and the quality of investigations.*
- *Ways to regularly receive feedback from victims, such as victim surveys.*
- *Force management statements which reflect current and future demand from stalking.*

Further progress update

We have continued to strengthen our understanding of stalking demand, risk and victim experience.

Demand is expected to increase, particularly in relation to cyber-enabled stalking, and analytical products continue to inform strategic decision-making around responding to threats and meeting demand.

We recognise several key intelligence requirements in relation to stalking, including understanding the motivators behind non-domestic stalking, levels of under-reporting within certain communities, and the scale and nature of online stalking. This work is currently being progressed by force analysts to build a clearer picture of online offending and risk within the non-domestic stalking space.

The VAWG Independent Advisory Group (IAG) remains a valuable source of survivor insight, supporting a strong feedback loop between the Stalking and VAWG thematic leads and the strategic and executive theme leads.

Stalking Protection Order (SPO) audits will take place in 2026 and will be embedded as business-as-usual practice, reviewing application quality, success rates and order management, with oversight maintained through monthly performance and governance structures.

Victim satisfaction has improved significantly. Between September 2025 and February 2026, overall satisfaction rose from 71 per cent to 82 per cent, with first-response satisfaction at 93 per cent and follow-up satisfaction increasing to 65 per cent, from 53 per cent. All stalking out-of-court disposal (OOC) cases have been reviewed by the OOC inspector, ensuring satisfaction with the quality of decision-making.

Further stalking analysis has been commissioned through the Strategic Tasking and Coordination Group, focusing on online offending and non-domestic stalking. Victim survey work continues, including targeted engagement with seldom-heard communities and victims of cyberstalking.

Next steps

We will continue to develop our analytical understanding of stalking, with further work planned to assess emerging trends, particularly in cyber-enabled offending. SPO audits will remain embedded within the assurance framework, and we will continue to strengthen victim feedback mechanisms through the IAG, Youth Councils and targeted survey work. Insights from the Strategic Tasking and Coordination Group will inform future action plans and resource considerations.

Recommendation 13

By 27 March 2025, [chief constables will] take steps to make sure that force strategies, structures and processes are in place so that police consider an SPO in every stalking case and apply for an SPO where relevant and appropriate to prevent harm and further offending.

To achieve this, chief constables should review, and revise where necessary:

- *Local training and guidance on SPOs, including training and guidance for supervisors.*
- *Mechanisms for supporting investigating officers to identify cases where SPOs would be appropriate and assisting them with SPO applications. This could be through dedicated teams or roles and/or through daily management meetings considering risk and safeguarding.*

Further progress update

Our use of SPOs has continued to strengthen over the past year. Regular reviews with legal services and district SPOCs (Single Points of Contact) support consistent decision making, shared learning and the identification of good practice. The Domestic Abuse Risk Assessment (DARA) team continues to identify high-risk stalking cases daily, ensuring opportunities for early safeguarding and protective orders are not missed.

To further enhance oversight, we are exploring the introduction of a regular multi-agency stalking panel to support discussion of cases across all risk levels. This would complement existing structures and provide a broader forum for reviewing risk, safeguarding options and investigative opportunities.

We are also working on the introduction of a SPO triage form for frontline officers. This would support early identification of cases where an SPO may be appropriate and ensure timely referral to district SPOCs for specialist advice and progression.

Next steps

We will continue to strengthen our SPO processes through ongoing reviews, enhanced oversight and improved frontline identification. The proposed stalking panel and SPO triage form will support earlier identification, more consistent decision making and ensure that protective orders are considered in every relevant case. We will continue to work closely with legal services and district SPOCs to maintain high standards of application quality and safeguarding practice. We will also continue to explore options for more effective ongoing management of civil orders, and SPOs will form part of any enhanced arrangements that are implemented.

Recommendation 14

By 27 March 2025, [forces should] take steps to make sure stalking victims receive the rights they are entitled to under the victims' code and have access to support services. Chief constables should make sure:

- *Victim needs assessments are always completed.*
- *Their force has appropriate processes to make sure all stalking victims are told about their rights and under the victims' code.*
- *Information about the national and specialist stalking support services available in their force area is easily available to police officers and staff, victims and the general public.*
- *Victims who would like to receive support are referred to an appropriate service in a timely manner.*
- *They monitor the number of stalking victims who are referred to specialist support services and take action when referral numbers are low.*

Further progress update

Compliance with the victims' code remains a priority. Monthly completion and quality audits of VNA (victim needs assessment) continue. Any non-compliance is addressed through established command and governance structures, and findings are considered at the force Investigations Governance Board.

Officers are regularly reminded of their responsibilities, supported by the stalking first responder investigative support booklet, which reinforces key actions and entitlements for victims.

We continue to work closely with SYMCA (South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority), the public body which commissions stalking advocacy service provision, to monitor referral volumes and timeliness to specialist stalking support services. This partnership ensures victims who wish to receive support are referred promptly, and that any emerging issues in referral pathways are identified and addressed.

Next steps

We will continue to strengthen our approach to victims' code compliance through ongoing audit activity, improved officer guidance and close partnership working with SYMCA. We will maintain our focus on ensuring VNAs (Victim Needs Assessment) are completed to a high standard and that victims are consistently informed of their rights and offered timely access to specialist support.

Recommendation 16

By 27 March 2025, chief constables and police and crime commissioners and their mayor equivalents [should] work together to review commissioning arrangements and make changes as soon as possible to ensure they embed collaborative working and information sharing between policing and services providing victim support to stalking victims.

Further progress update

We continue to work closely with SYMCA to ensure commissioned services for stalking victims remain effective and responsive. Commissioned support provision is kept under regular review, with a clear focus on ensuring victims have timely access to specialist advocacy.

The force maintains strong relationships with commissioned providers, ensuring referral pathways remain accessible and that information sharing continues to support victims throughout their journey. Ongoing engagement with SYMCA enables us to monitor service delivery and identify opportunities to strengthen support.

Next steps

We are exploring funding opportunities with SYMCA to enhance existing services and commission additional support where needed. We will continue to review commissioned services to ensure they meet the needs of stalking victims and reflect emerging demand.

Recommendation 17

By 27 March 2025, [forces should] make sure the new College of Policing investigations APP content on case allocation is reflected in the relevant policies relating to the allocation of stalking and breach of order cases for investigation. Force policies should support the allocation of stalking cases to officers with the right skills and experience, taking into account the potential risk and complexity involved in stalking and breach of order cases.

Further progress update

We continue to ensure stalking cases are allocated in line with risk, complexity and investigator capability. High risk cases remain allocated to appropriately trained detectives, and this approach continues to be reviewed to ensure it reflects best practice and operational demand.

We are considering audit work to assess adherence to allocation policy, ensuring cases consistently reach the right investigators. We continue to use FR-DARA (First Responder Domestic Abuse, Stalking and 'Honour'-Based Violence) and SDASH (Stalking-Domestic Abuse, Stalking, Harassment and Honour-Based Violence screening) as our risk assessment tools and will consider adopting the College of Policing Stalking Screening Tool once Niche is implemented in November 2026.

Next steps

We will continue to review allocation processes, and a new crime allocation policy for the force will be implemented in 2026, to ensure the processes reflect national guidance and support effective investigation of stalking cases. Planned audit work will help assess compliance with our allocation policy, and we will explore the adoption of the Stalking Screening Tool following the implementation of Niche.

Recommendation 18

By 27 March 2025, [forces should] take steps to improve the quality of stalking investigations by taking a victim centred, suspect focused and context-led approach. Chief constables should make sure:

- *Their workforce has the capacity and capability to undertake effective stalking investigations and can apply new and innovative investigation techniques to pursue digital lines of enquiry.*
- *All reasonable lines of enquiry are pursued, supported by good supervision.*
- *Arrest and search powers are used to gather evidence from and about suspects.*
- *The impact on victims is evidenced in witness statements, so it can be used to inform charging decisions and improve the likelihood of successful investigation outcomes.*

Further progress update

Our Investigation Governance Board continues to drive learning and oversight, supported by thematic audits and the IQR (Investigation Quality Review) process. These structures ensure investigative quality, supervisory oversight and adherence to reasonable lines of enquiry remain central to the force's approach.

We also continue to ensure we are equipping officers with the tools and knowledge they need in the growing area of cyber-enabled offending. Training on technology facilitated VAWG has been expanded, with additional inputs delivered by the Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU). 'VAWG Matters' training was also delivered to 865 frontline staff between July and September 2025.

Our first responder booklet continues to guide frontline staff on digital opportunities and safeguarding, supporting early identification of digital evidence and risk. Technology or cyber-enabled investigations are routinely supported by specialist Digital Media Investigators (DMIs).

Supervisors continue to review investigations to ensure appropriate use of powers, with ongoing work to increase the use of search powers in summary harassment offences. High-risk stalking cases continue to be reviewed by a detective inspector prior to finalisation, ensuring robust oversight of the most complex and harmful cases.

Victim impact remains central to our approach. The bi-weekly stalking clinic continues to review victim personal statements, with learning shared across the force to improve understanding of harm and inform investigative practice.

Next steps

We will continue to strengthen investigative quality through the Investigation Improvement Board, thematic audits and the IQR process.

A stalking standard operating procedure is to be adopted in the Force Control Room to assist in the identification of stalking offences at an early stage, so appropriate responses can be ensured.

We will further develop our digital capability, expand training on technology facilitated offending and continue work to ensure appropriate use of search powers. Learning from the stalking clinic will remain a key mechanism for improving understanding of victim impact and informing practice.

Recommendation 20

By, 27 March 2025, [forces should] take steps to improve how their force effectively recognises and responds to online elements of stalking. This should include making sure:

- *The scale and nature of online stalking behaviours informs their strategic understanding of, and the response to, stalking.*
- *Examples of online stalking are included in locally produced training and guidance material about stalking.*
- *Clear online safety advice is available to officers and staff, drawing on the College of Policing APP on stalking or harassment when it is developed.*
- *Appropriate tools, technologies and support services to digitally safeguard victims are procured and officers and staff use these resources when appropriate.*

Further progress update

We have made significant progress in strengthening our response to online elements of stalking. Completion of the College of Policing stalking and harassment e-learning has been widely promoted, with over 3,000 staff now trained, improving forcewide understanding of online offending behaviours.

The force Strategic Intelligence Assessment now includes detailed analysis of stalking trends, risks and intelligence requirements, structured around the 4P approach (Prevent, Pursue, Protect, Prepare). This provides a clearer strategic picture of online stalking and informs operational and partnership activity.

VAWG remains a central organisational priority, supported by a dedicated VAWG thematic lead who ensures stalking, including online-enabled behaviours, is consistently addressed across governance, training and performance activity.

The 'Know More' campaign has been delivered, raising awareness of new offences under the Online Safety Act and improving officer and staff understanding of cyberstalking, cyberflashing, false information sharing and online threats.

Finally, the introduction of Niche is expected to enhance the force's ability to capture and search information relating to online and online-enabled stalking, supporting improved analysis and safeguarding.

Next steps

We will continue to embed the College of Policing APP on stalking once published, ensuring online behaviours remain fully reflected in local guidance and training. We will also continue to refine how online stalking information is captured and analysed within Niche, supporting a more accurate understanding of risk and offending patterns. Ongoing governance through the tactical VAWG lead and strategic intelligence processes will ensure online stalking remains a core focus of our wider VAWG response.

Recommendation 22

By 27 September 2025, [forces] using the information collated by the NPCC lead under recommendation 21, [are] to consider whether and how dedicated stalking officers and staff, or other subject matter experts, can be used to add value and support the force response to stalking.

Further progress update

Dedicated stalking SPOCs continue to be embedded across all districts and now act as subject matter experts for investigations where a SPO may be appropriate. Their close links with Integrated Offender Management and Legal Services ensure stalking-related risks, safeguarding needs and enforcement opportunities are consistently identified and acted upon.

These SPOCs also complement existing partnership structures, maintaining strong connections with perpetrator disruption and offender managements structures MATAAC (Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordination), MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences), and MAPPA (Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements) to support multi-agency management of victims and perpetrators.

Funding for a stalking-specific perpetrator programme has been unavailable during 2025/26, creating a gap in offender management provision. However, we continue to work with SYMCA to explore future funding opportunities.

Next steps

We will continue to review the role and impact of stalking SPOCs as national learning develops, ensuring they remain central to improving investigative quality and safeguarding.

We will also work with partners to identify sustainable options for perpetrator interventions, recognising the importance of addressing stalking behaviour early and effectively. Opportunities for additional resources or specialist capability will continue to be explored as part of wider VAWG and vulnerability planning.

Recommendation 23

By 27 March 2025, [forces should] implement a mechanism for early screening of crimes to improve the identification, recording and management of all stalking cases. Forces should consider screening crimes similar to stalking or where stalking behaviours may be present as part of a course of conduct, like harassment, malicious communications and breaches of orders.

Further progress update

We continue to strengthen early identification of stalking through the use of FR-DARA and S-DASH as the standard risk assessment tools for all stalking cases. Secondary assessments by a specialist team remain in place for high and medium risk domestic abuse cases and high risk stalking cases, ensuring consistent scrutiny of stalking behaviours and effective risk management.

A protective orders dashboard is now in use, enabling staff to monitor existing orders and supporting ongoing work to ensure consistent processes across districts.

Early identification has been further enhanced through the introduction of a Standard Operating Procedure within call handling, helping frontline staff recognise potential stalking behaviours at first contact. Work is also underway to develop a stalking triage form, which will support early identification of cases suitable for SPOs.

We have now developed and implemented both a VAWG performance dashboard and a specific stalking and harassment dashboard. Both are used to identify stalking perpetrators and inform risk prioritisation and offender management. Stalking and VAWG dashboards remain central tools for identifying patterns and supporting early screening.

Screening processes are being strengthened ahead of the introduction of Niche, with SDASH functionality scheduled for Pronto between October 2025 and spring 2026, which will further support accurate recording and identification of stalking behaviours.

Next steps

We will continue to refine early screening processes as Niche and associated SDASH functionality in Pronto are implemented, ensuring stalking behaviours are consistently identified across all crime types. We will progress development of the stalking triage form and continue reviewing protective order processes to ensure consistency and effectiveness. Work will also continue to enhance the stalking dashboard and ensure risk assessment tools remain aligned with national guidance and best practice.

Recommendation 25

By 27 March 2025, [forces should] explore opportunities to improve how their force works with partners to contribute to a multi-agency response to stalking. This should include considering:

- *How the force works in partnership with healthcare, the CPS, probation services and other criminal justice partners to manage stalking perpetrators and address their behaviour.*
- *Whether and how they should collaborate with other forces to effectively and efficiently contribute to multi-agency partnerships on stalking.*
- *How Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) are being used to effectively manage stalking offenders.*

Further progress update

We have continued to strengthen our multi-agency response to stalking. Although SYMCA funding for the stalking behaviour-change programme has ended, we are actively exploring alternative perpetrator disruption and management models with SYMCA and wider partners.

Partnership working has expanded, with a stalking intelligence meeting set to be trialled. This will bring together health, probation, social care, housing and psychology services to share information and coordinate risk management. This work will inform wider development and potential implementation across the force area.

We have also worked with the CPS (Crown Prosecution Service) through a scrutiny panel to review stalking cases, identify learning and promote good practice. We remain an active member of the regional North East stalking working group, supporting cross-force collaboration and shared learning.

MAPPA continues to be used to manage stalking perpetrators where appropriate, ensuring risk is jointly assessed and managed across agencies.

Next steps

We will continue to explore sustainable models for perpetrator management, disruption and prevention, including options for future delivery of behaviour-change interventions. Work will progress on the development of stalking panels and intelligence meetings, ensuring consistent multi-agency attendance and shared ownership of risk. We will also continue to strengthen our partnership with the CPS and maintain active involvement in regional collaboration to support a consistent and effective response to stalking.