

FOI 2025-072

I write in connection with your request for information 17th January 2025, concerning resources for neurodiverse victims / suspects.

I am required by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to handle all requests in a manner that is blind as to the identity and motives of the requestor. Any information released as a response to a request is regarded as being published and therefore in the public domain without caveat.

Following receipt of your request, research was conducted by the Crime Standards & Justice and Victim Services departments at Wiltshire Police.

You Wrote:

Please note: The majority of the below information has come from our Victim Services, with some additional information coming from Crime Standards & Justice.

- 1) Are you using any adapted or neurodivergence-friendly practical tools/resources/assets/materials for neurodivergent individuals who are likely to come into contact with the Criminal Justice System (CJS).
 - Of the above, what is the intended audience for each adapted tool/resource/asset/material (e.g. directly for neurodivergent young adults (up to 25 years), directly for neurodivergent adults (25 years+), carers, parents, peers, professionals)?
 - Do you have separate practical tools/resources/assets/materials for victims and perpetrators?
- 2) What are these practical tools/resources/assets/materials called and are they publicly available?
- 3) How long have you been using these tools/resources/assets/materials within your service/PCC area?
- 4) If you are not using any adapted practical tools/resources/assets/materials, do you intend on implementing any in the future? If so – please provide details, if you can.
- 5) Please provide copies and/or links to any available tools/resources/assets/materials that you are using.

Response:

- 1) Victim Services

Within the Horizon victim service, those identified within the VIPS (vulnerable, intimidated, persistently targeted or of serious offences) category are allocated a Victim liaison officer within the team who will triage an individuals need (related to reported offences) and put in place a referral pathway* bespoke to needs. This is a pre-charge service that is triggered by reporting a crime. Any other victims identified as in need by officers, will also be allocated to the Horizon team for triage and support – this can include individuals with neurodiversity's.

*Referral pathway includes access to one of the commissioned support services who are contracted to meet the needs/provide tools to those individuals they are working with, these include: Victim Support, First Light, the Bridge, Splash, Paragon DA services, Bobby Van, Fear

free and Witness service. The Victim service, Horizon has an 'in house' advocate, who is able to provide one to one support for a victim and witness with differing needs throughout the CJ journey.

All leaflets and guidance provided to victims and witnesses are from HMCTS & GOV websites, and directly from individual support services.

Crime Standards & Justice - Custody

From a Custody perspective:

We have painted some of our cells in 'neurodivergent friendly' colours. This is particularly aimed at autistic detainees as the colours are designed to be more calming.

We can provide easier to read copies of PACE – Codes of Practice. The language used is easier to understand than normal law text, and it includes pictures as well.

We can supply fidget toys, and we have painted goalposts on the walls in the exercise yard and can supply a foam football.

For juveniles in custody where possible they are not put in a cell but instead remain in an appropriate adult room which is not as imposing and confined. This is particularly beneficial for juveniles with neurodivergent needs.

Crime Standards & Justice - Justice Crime

We have the use of an intermediary for any victim or witness identified during the course of the investigation as requiring their assistance to give evidence, but we only see the final report and send it to the CPS and don't have any involvement in the process itself. This is all done by an officer in the case.

For dyslexic members of staff there is software and equipment available in force, assists our officers when building their case files.

There is a host of information on our intranet site for any guidance for support for our officers and support staff.

2) Victim Services

Some of the information shared is publicly available, and specific support service information is available per service.

[Home - Victim Support](#)

[Youth Action Wiltshire | Splash Wiltshire](#)

[Wiltshire - FearFree](#)

[Swindon - Paragon Team - SPIDAS - Integrated Domestic Abuse Service](#)

[Swindon & Wiltshire - First Light](#)

[Latest Scam Alerts In Wiltshire](#)

[The Bridge - Help after rape and sexual assault](#)

[Horizon](#) - Witness care support. Providing access for victims and witnesses to Special measures, transport, accommodation, witness services and intermediaries to assist with

attending court. All persons attending court are offered a needs assessment to provide opportunity to outline additional needs when attending court.

[Ministry of Justice Witness Intermediary Scheme - GOV.UK](#)

[About the Witness Service - Citizens Advice](#)

[Special Measures | The Crown Prosecution Service](#)

[Going to court | Wiltshire Police](#) - Wiltshire Police website information relating to attending court and what is available.

[The Code of Practice for Victims of Crime in England and Wales and supporting public information materials - GOV.UK](#) – VCOP Gov.UK online access.

Easy to read VCOP guidance - due to be phased out/awaiting updated info from MOJ following Victims Bill.

[Swindon Combined Court - Find a Court or Tribunal - GOV.UK](#) - Example of court information that is shared via letter and/or online link.

3) Victim Services

The material/links have been utilised since the Horizon victim service opened in 2015.

The Victim advocate was introduced to the service in 2023 in recognition that a telephone service was not meeting all needs for those within the criminal justice system.

4) Victim Services

The services are always adapting to public need utilising tools/guidance subject to availability and release.

5) Links provided throughout by Victim Services.