

# Criminal justice and you

An essential guide for victims and witnesses

## Introduction

**By Alison Hernandez**

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Hello, I'm Alison Hernandez, Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. I know that being a victim of crime can be a frightening, upsetting and sometimes frustrating experience, and I am pleased that you've taken the time to look at this online resource, which I hope will help you to navigate what can be a difficult and confusing landscape of what might happen next.

This piece of work has been developed on behalf of the Local Criminal Justice Board, in partnership with my office to help you to understand every part of the process from reporting a crime all the way through to the conclusion of the case and what that means for you. There is information about accessing victim services as well as what happens if a case doesn't go to court or if the perpetrator is under the age of 18.

Someone from each of our partner agencies will talk you through their part in the process, speaking to you as a professional who is directly involved and working in that area. We have also included some of our partners' own resources and useful links for contacting the right person and for further reading around each step. I am grateful for everyone who has taken the time to be involved, to help you to stay informed and in control.

All of these individuals and agencies are here for you and want the best possible outcome for you, working in partnership as a criminal justice system. I hope that having all of this information in one place, in an easy to access and easy to understand format will be helpful to you. There's a lot to take in, so please watch and read in your own time and at your own pace and don't feel you have to watch it all at once.

You may feel overwhelmed and taking it step by step can help you to manage the process. Finally, if you think this might be useful for someone you know, please do share it with them. And if you have any frustrations about the way in which your crime has been handled, feel free to contact me directly as your elected representative overseeing policing and crime on the details shown here.

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## Useful links

[Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner website](#)

[Contact the Commissioner](#)

## Glossary

**Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)** - The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) is supported by a team of staff employed by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC).

**The OPCC** is a non-political, impartial organisation and its head of paid service is the chief executive officer. The OPCC is a separate organisation to Devon and Cornwall Police.

**Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB)** – this is a forum in which the local criminal justice organisations at police force area (PFA) level come together to work in the common interest to improve the criminal justice system (CJS).

**Criminal Justice Partner** – these include the Police, Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), Courts (HMCTS), Prisons and Probation Service (HMPPS), Youth Justice Service (YJS), and support services

**Perpetrator** – a person who carries out harmful, illegal or immoral act.