



Ministry
of Justice

Alex Davies-Jones MP
Parliamentary Under-
Secretary of State

Gweinyddiaeth
Cyfiawnder

Baroness Newlove of Warrington
Victims' Commissioner for England and Wales

MoJ ref: ADR125328

14 July 2025

By Email: victims.commissioner@victimscommissioner.org.uk

Dear Helen,

RE: VICTIMS AND COURTS BILL: VICTIM NOTIFICATION SCHEME

Thank you for your letter of 26 June regarding the Victim Notification Scheme. I was pleased to hear your support for the measures we are introducing through the Victims and Courts Bill at Committee stage. I look forward to working together to ensure the updated Victim Contact Scheme and new dedicated Victim Helpline provide a valuable service to victims. My officials stand ready to engage with you and your office on the points you have raised and to provide an update on implementation planning.

Your letter has raised several important points that we will be carefully considering through implementation. Firstly, I would like to reassure you that the impact assessment we published along with the Victims and Courts Bill is not a final position. We continue to work through the detail of how the new Victim Contact Scheme and the Helpline will work in practice, refining the resource implications alongside other important considerations such as how to ensure that Victim Liaison Officers (VLOs) and Helpline staff have access to the systems they need to provide reliable and timely updates.

I also recognise how important it is for victims to be referred quickly, especially for victims of stalking, harassment and coercive control. In bringing the Victim Notification Scheme into the Victim Contact Scheme we are looking closely at how the referral process could work for all eligible victims. Currently, under the Victims' Code, police Witness Care Units are required to refer eligible victims to the Probation Service, and I understand that in the early stages of the Victim Notification Scheme the role of Victim Liaison Units in reaching out was key to make sure Witness Care Units were referring the newly eligible cohorts of victims. However, permanently changing the responsibility for making the referral for all victims eligible for the Victim Contact and Victim Notification Schemes would create a new resource burden for Victim Liaison Units.

I also appreciate that for victims of stalking, harassment and coercive control knowing the exact day of release in advance will be important to help them to feel safe. As you rightly note the date of release can be given where it is necessary and proportionate to do so. HMPPS are providing this information presently in such cases, where it is appropriate to do so. HMPPS can also, where appropriate, provide information about the location of the offender but this can only be provided in general terms. Similarly, information can be provided in general terms about offender management programmes but specific information about an offender's attendance and progress on a course cannot be provided.

I understand that for many victims knowing that they can move freely without the risk of encountering the offender will be hugely important. We will look to introduce a power to impose restriction zones through upcoming legislation. These zones would restrict particularly concerning offenders to specific areas where appropriate. As you know we will need to provide the detail of this proposal to parliament first, but I look forward to engaging with you on the substance of this measure in due course.

Once again, I am grateful for your engagement on these key issues, and I know my officials will be engaging directly with your office shortly.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Alex Davies-Jones". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

ALEX DAVIES-JONES MP
Minister for Victims and Violence Against Women and Girls