

Victim Transformation Programme Evaluation

End of Year Two: Technical Report

September 2026

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Introduction

Since April 2024, Crest Advisory has worked with the CPS to design and implement an evaluation of the Victim Transformation Programme (VTP). The aim of the evaluation is to understand how effectively the VTP has been implemented, and the impact and value for money it delivers for the CPS, victims, and the wider criminal justice system (CJS).

The VTP has three core services: the Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot; the Enhanced Service for victims of rape and serious sexual offences (hereafter, the Enhanced Service [RASSO]); and the Victim Centre of Excellence (VCE). Together they deliver a needs-led differentiated service to victims. All three services are within the scope of the evaluation. Please refer to the Summary Report for additional background information on the VTP.

This Technical Report supports the Summary Report, providing additional detail on the data sources and analytical approach used across two years of evaluation activity. This report covers:

- Sampling and recruitment for stakeholder, staff, and victim engagement
- Sampling for and dissemination of victim and staff surveys
- Qualitative data analysis
- Quantitative data cleaning and analysis
- Quality assurance
- Ethical considerations.

Evaluation Design

In the first year of the evaluation (April 2024 - March 2025), Crest designed the evaluation framework and sought to understand the VTP's implementation. As part of this work, we created a theory of change (ToC) and outcomes framework; established data collection systems and processes; built relationships with strategic and operational staff; and engaged with Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot and Enhanced Service (RASSO) delivery staff to understand processes, enablers, and barriers to delivery. We produced an internal End of Year report setting out early findings and recommendations.

In the second year of the evaluation (April 2025 - March 2026), we transitioned to thematic reporting, drawing together qualitative and quantitative data from the process and impact evaluation to answer agreed research questions and inform strategic decision making. These internal thematic reports covered the:

- **Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot:** The aim of this report was to support the CPS' decision making around the continued delivery and potential expansion of the Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot. The report considered three key areas: process, impact, and value for money:

- The process evaluation explored how the Pilot Service had been implemented and considered barriers and enablers to delivery. It drew on insights from the CPS staff survey, a dip sample analysis of VTP communications (specifically ‘no further action’ [NFA] and ‘victim communication and liaison scheme’ [VCL] letters), monitoring and performance data collected by the Pilot Service, and qualitative engagement with CPS delivery staff and wider partners (victim advocates and police).
 - The impact evaluation explored the impact of the Pilot Service on the VTP’s short, medium, and long-term outcomes, namely victim experience, victim confidence and wellbeing, victim attrition, and service efficiency. It drew on victim survey data as well as OPRA data¹ (feedback and complaints data, Victim Right to Review [VRR] scheme data, and caseload data).
 - The value for money assessment estimated the overall costs and benefits of the Pilot Service based on annualised costs and benefits given the pilots have only been working at full implementation for a relatively short period of time. The assessment was based on Task Time Recording (TTR) data, OPRA data, victim survey data, and VTP cost data.
- **Enhanced Service (RASSO):** This evaluation assessed the implementation and impact of the Enhanced Service (RASSO). It used a mixed methods approach, combining qualitative insights from interviews and written feedback from victims, and focus groups with CPS staff and wider partners; with quantitative insights from victim surveys, OPRA data, and monitoring and performance data.
 - **Universal Service Pilot Training (Victim Centre of Excellence):** This evaluation explored the design, delivery, and impact of the Universal Service Pilot induction package. It used a mixed methods approach, drawing on qualitative evidence from a document review, focus groups with Universal Service Pilot staff, and interviews with VTP leads, alongside quantitative findings from a survey of Universal Service Pilot staff.
 - **Victim Service Standards (Victim Centre of Excellence):** This evaluation explored how the Victim Service Standards (VSS) were developed and communicated, and the extent to which they supported staff to deliver high-quality services to victims. It employed a mixed methods approach, combining qualitative insight from focus groups with CPS staff and external stakeholders, and quantitative insights from staff and surveys run by Victim Support.

As well as the thematic reports, we also developed:

¹ Operational Performance and Analysis (OPRA) is a CPS team responsible for data collation and analysis on the performance of the CPS.

- **Outcomes data reports:** Produced quarterly, these reports quantified the performance of the VTP across agreed metrics and identified gaps in data availability and/or quality. The reports were aligned to the theory of change and outcomes framework, and assessed the extent to which short, medium, and long-term outcomes (a) could be measured and (b) were being met.
- **Insight updates:** These short update reports were produced as required and were designed to help the CPS quickly identify strengths and weaknesses in service delivery and inform changes to VTP processes. They included emails and meetings, where Crest provided case studies of good practice or specific barriers and enablers for service delivery; and an insight report on CPS communication with child victims of rape and serious sexual offences.

The **Summary Report**, published alongside the Technical Report, brings together insights from two years of evaluation activity, including insights across the outputs described above. The report covers:

- How effectively the VTP has been implemented, considering the processes and structures involved in implementation and delivery, staff capacity and capability, and internal and external barriers and enablers (e.g. relationships with partners and technological capability).
- The impact of the VTP on victims' experiences including the quality of service they receive, their trust and confidence in the CPS, and their wellbeing.
- The impact of the VTP on the wider CJS, including efficiency and victim attrition.
- Whether the VTP is delivering value for money for the CPS. This builds on earlier analysis to provide an estimate of the programme benefits brought by improved victim wellbeing and improved internal efficiencies, and the total resource cost on cases that collapse due to victim attrition and the potential saving from reducing this.

Methodological limitations

- **Low victim survey response rates:** Response rates to victim surveys have been limited. Some surveys received no or very few responses, and only the Universal Service Pilot decision to charge survey and the VCL survey to local areas² received more than 30 responses. The low response rates limited our ability to analyse the data and derive meaningful insight from it. For example, we could not conduct inferential analysis or compare findings between different victim cohorts (e.g. male victims, female victims, etc) and communication touchpoints.
- **Limited direct engagement with victims:** Between February 2025 and January 2026, Crest engaged with 13 victims, including one victim who received the Enhanced Service Pilot and 12 victims who received the Enhanced Service (RASSO). As we only engaged

² The VCL survey to local areas was sent by Victim Liaison Units (VLUs) outside the scope of the VTP. This survey was intended to offer a baseline for VCL communications prior to delivery under the VTP.

with one victim who received the Pilot Service, we were unable to conduct detailed analysis or include findings about their experience in the Summary Report, as doing so would risk compromising their anonymity. The Summary Report is therefore limited in the extent of direct victim insight from those who had received the Pilot Service.

- **Poor quality of monitoring data:** The quality of data captured by service trackers varied significantly due to differences in recording practices between CPS areas and teams. Incomplete data and a lack of standardisation in recording practices limited the scope and robustness of our analysis. As a result, we used redacted, aggregated CPS analysis of the data to inform our reporting.
- **Pilot delivery phasing and long timeframes for cases to finalise:** The Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot were implemented gradually, with different contact points launching at various dates between late 2024 and mid-2025. For example, the Universal Service Pilot started sending decision to charge communications in late 2024, and NFA and VCL decisions in early 2025, whilst the Enhanced Service Pilot started sending decision to charge communications in early 2025, and VCL decisions by mid-2025. This gradual implementation had two implications for the evaluation data. First, it limited the quantity of data, as data from the Pilot Service operating at full scope was only available from mid-2025. Secondly, it affected the quality of data available as data recording processes were inconsistent over this period. Victim attrition is particularly challenging to analyse because cases can only be included once they are finalised, which often takes months or even years, especially for RASSO or domestic abuse cases. Basing conclusions on cases that have been finalised would give an inaccurate picture of impact.

Evaluation Framework

The evaluation framework is based on a comprehensive ToC and outcomes framework. The evaluation framework underpins all evaluation activities, including the outcomes measured, the data sources used, and the analytical methods applied.

Theory of Change

In the first year of the evaluation, Crest worked closely with service delivery leads and the wider VTP to develop a comprehensive ToC. The ToC details the short, medium, and long-term outcomes the VTP is expected to achieve, and clearly articulates how and why specific activities should lead to desired outcomes. It is a critical component for understanding what success looks like for the VTP.

Service-level theories of change

Crest collaborated with the VTP team to develop service-level ToCs, aligned to the three core services making up the VTP: the Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot, the Enhanced Service

(RASSO), and the Victim Centre of Excellence (VCE). As the figures below show, each service is working towards the same long-term outcomes:

- **Improving victim wellbeing and confidence in the CPS:** Ensuring victims receive a consistent, high-quality service from the CPS.
- **Improving victim attrition:** An improved experience and better understood process reduces the likelihood that victims withdraw from the criminal justice process because of avoidable issues. A better understood process enables victims to make the right decisions for them, even if that leads to them withdrawing from the process sooner.
- **Efficiently delivering a high-quality service:** Ensuring staff deliver a high-quality service efficiently by having the right tools and training, are supported by a culture that prioritises victims, and are satisfied in their roles.

Figure 1: Summary of the Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot ToC

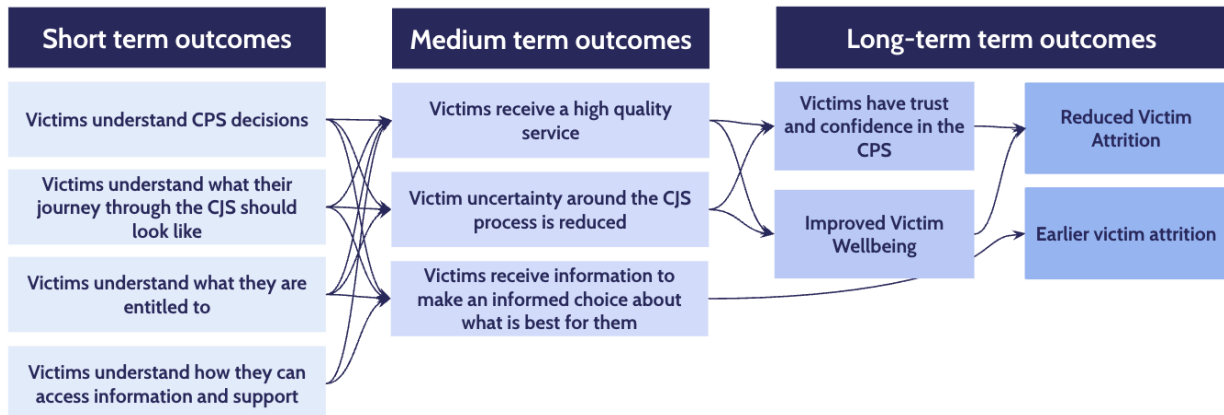


Figure 2: Summary of the Enhanced Service (RASSO) ToC

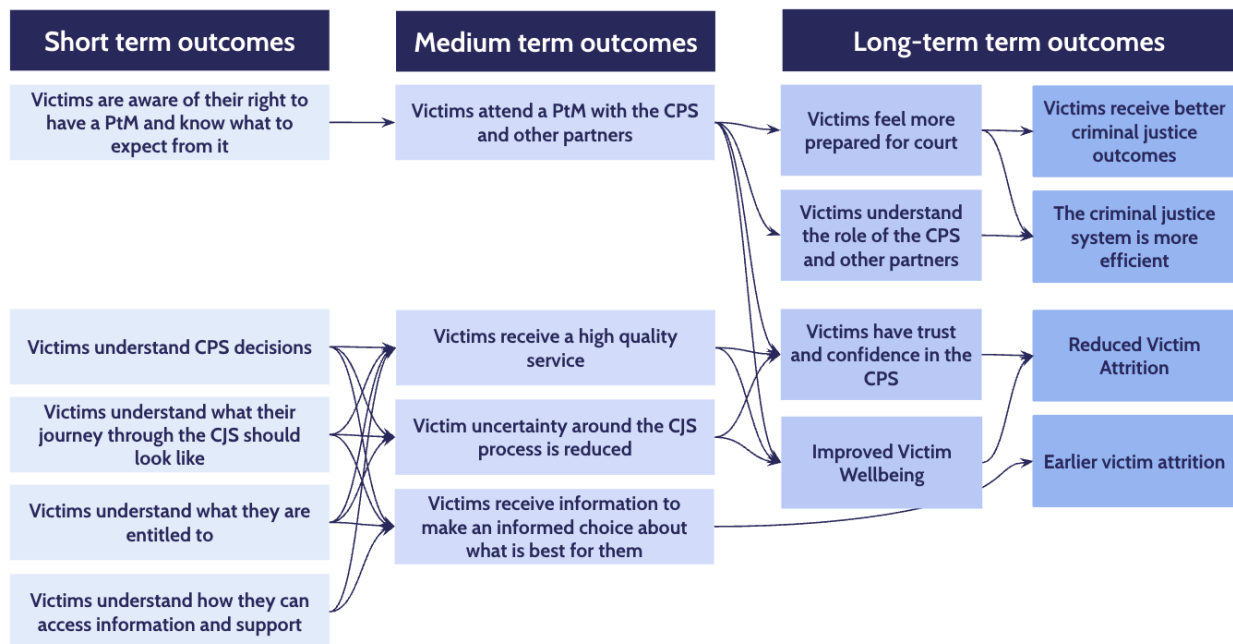
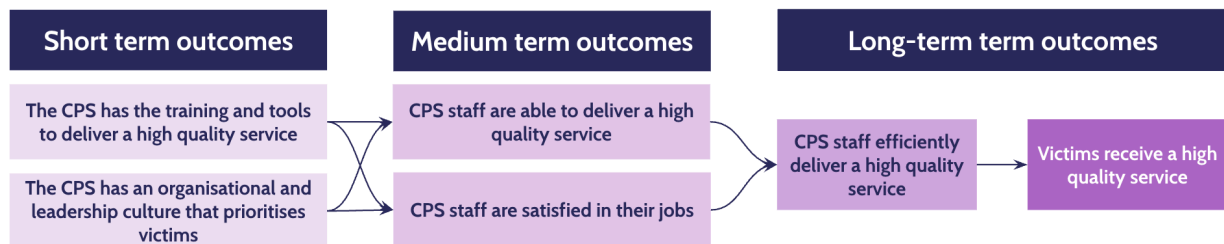


Figure 3: Summary of the VCE ToC

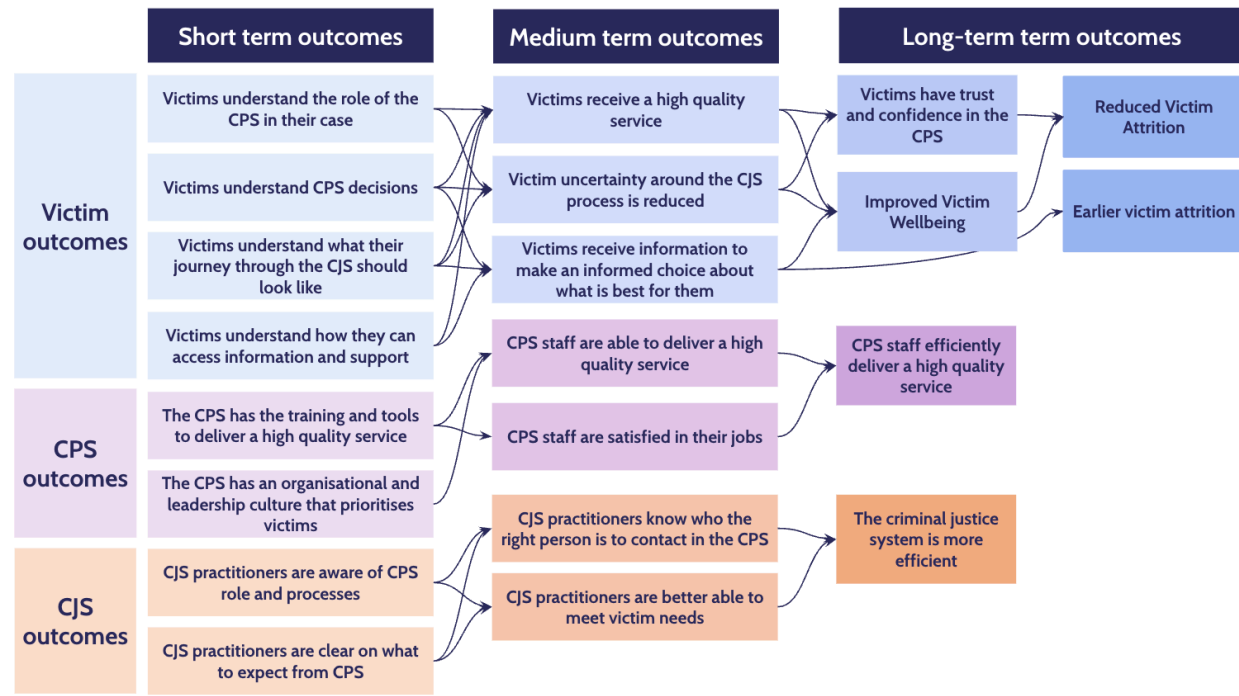


Programme-level theory of change

As well as service-level ToCs, we developed an overarching programme-level ToC. This is aligned to the CPS 2030 strategic priorities, and maps the VTP's intended outcomes for victims, the CPS, and wider CJS.

1. **Victim Outcomes:** Victim outcomes focus on how the VTP improves victims' experiences and wellbeing. This is shaped by victims receiving a high-quality service from the CPS, defined by clear and empathetic communication to support informed decision-making. These victim-centred VTP outcomes link to the following [CPS 2030 Strategy](#) principles:
 - "Victims and witnesses experience a supportive service"
 - "We are fair in how we approach our work"
 - "We progress cases on time"
 - "The public understands what we do".
2. **CPS Outcomes:** The CPS outcomes seek to ensure that, through the VCE and internal CPS culture, CPS staff have the necessary tools, knowledge, and motivation to consistently provide an excellent service to victims. These CPS-centred VTP outcomes link to the following CPS 2030 Strategy principles:
 - "We have the people we need to succeed"
 - "Our people feel valued"
 - "Our people are productive and professional"
 - "Our people are enabled to work effectively"
 - "Our people apply high legal standards"
 - "We progress cases on time"
 - "We are fair in how we approach our work".
3. **CJS Outcomes:** The CJS outcomes are aimed at enhancing the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the CJS by streamlining processes, reducing delays, and improving coordination across agencies. A key focus is on reducing victim attrition by ensuring victims are supported and therefore remain engaged throughout their journey where appropriate. Ultimately, these outcomes contribute to creating a more equitable system where justice is delivered fairly and consistently. These CJS-centred VTP outcomes link to the following CPS 2030 Strategy principles:
 - "We promote and support a CJS that is collaborative"
 - "We are fair in how we approach our work"
 - "The public understands what we do".

Figure 4: Summary of the programme-level ToC



Outcomes Framework

The service and programme level ToCs are complemented by an outcomes framework which outlines the key performance indicators, primary and secondary data sources, and analytical approaches required to monitor the progress of the VTP and evaluate long-term impact.

It is worth noting that the ToCs and outcomes framework were 'live documents' that evolved as VTP implementation progressed and practical challenges (around data collection, volume, and quality) emerged. Crest continually liaised with key stakeholders within the CPS to ensure that the outcomes being measured were clear and relevant.

Crest also worked closely with CPS leads to ensure that benefits tracking and realisation (for the cost benefit analysis) were closely aligned to the logic and outcomes defined in the ToC and outcomes framework.

Research questions

In the second year of evaluation, we used the ToC and outcomes framework to assess whether the VTP is delivering its expected outcomes. These align to the following key research questions:

Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot:

- Is the Pilot being implemented in a way that enables it to achieve its aims (as measured through the short-, medium- and long-term outcomes outlined in the ToC)?
 - If so, what lessons can be drawn out to ensure a wider roll out proceeds effectively? What are the necessary conditions and enablers to success?
 - If not, what can be done to implement the service effectively? What barriers need to be overcome?
- Is the Pilot achieving the intended impact?
 - If so, how can that impact be maximised?
- Does or could the Pilot represent value for money?
 - What parts of the service are delivering value and where could greater value be derived?

Enhanced Service (RASSO):

- Is the newly implemented Enhanced Service (RASSO) delivering the expected short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes as defined through the ToC?
 - If so, how can impact be maximised?
 - If not, what are the barriers to success?
 - Are there any assumptions that need to be revisited or findings that suggest the premise of the service needs to be re-examined?
- Does the Enhanced Service (RASSO) represent value for money in terms of achieving the CPS Strategic Priorities it aims to address?
 - Where can the service be improved to provide better value for money?

Victim Centre of Excellence:

- Is the VCE achieving its intended short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes as defined through the ToC?
 - If so, what is the process for ensuring it continues to iterate and improve the culture of the CPS?
 - If not, what are the barriers to success?
- Where does the VCE have the greatest impact on achieving its overall aims, and are there any areas which require greater focus to deliver change?

Methodology summary

Crest used a mixed methods approach to evaluate the VTP. This approach used quantitative methods to analyse larger samples of data and qualitative methods to build an in-depth understanding of experiences of the VTP service, and involved:

- **Practitioner engagement** including focus groups with CPS staff and external partners in policing and victims' services; observational studies of VTP delivery teams; and CPS surveys.
- **Victim engagement** including interviews with victims who have experienced VTP services and surveys at specific VTP contact points.
- **Dip sample analysis** of letters sent by VTP delivery teams to understand the quality of communications.
- **OPRA data analysis** including data on attrition, VRRs, and complaints to understand the impact of the VTP on wider organisational efficiencies.
- **CPS monitoring data analysis** including service-level data on demand to contextualise findings.

These methods are set out in detail in the following sections, alongside an overview of the methods used for cost-benefit analysis, and ethical considerations across all methods.

1. Practitioner Engagement

1a. Interviews and focus groups

Data collection design

Crest undertook a series of semi-structured interviews and focus groups with CPS staff and external stakeholders, including police officers, Witness Care Officers (WCOs), Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs), Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs), and policymaking professionals in the voluntary and community sector relevant to the delivery of the VTP.

Interviews were used to capture practitioners' detailed descriptions of their experiences of service delivery and any barriers to implementation. Focus groups were used to capture a breadth of perspectives and identify variations in service delivery across CPS areas.

Qualitative engagement materials were designed with reference to the aims of the process and impact evaluations. This included discussion guides for both the interview and focus group engagement as well as participant information and informed consent documentation in line with the evaluation's ethical framework.

Sampling and recruitment

Crest was reliant upon the VTP team identifying participants using a nonprobability, purposive sampling design. This approach was used to select participants based on specific characteristics and expertise relevant to the requirements of the evaluation, rather than selecting them at random.

Once participants were identified, Crest sent emails inviting staff to the focus group or interview, and shared information about the project, the focus group or interview, their right to withdraw, confidentiality and anonymity, and how Crest would use and store their personal and project-related data. An invitation being accepted was taken as a form of consent to participate in the project, and participants were also asked if they consented to the engagement being recorded. During the second year of the evaluation, a focus group with Police OICs with experience supporting victims who received the Universal Service Pilot was unable to be held due to low responsiveness and uptake.

Enhanced Service (RASSO) sampling approach

With VTP leads, Crest identified six CPS areas for engagement for the Enhanced Service (RASSO) evaluation. The areas were selected based on specific inclusion criteria to ensure they reflected a broad range of service delivery approaches. Six CPS areas (out of a total of fourteen) were chosen to balance the resources available for engagement with the collection of detailed insights.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The inclusion and exclusion criteria were developed to identify and select areas that implement the Enhanced Service (RASSO) in different ways. We reviewed CPS RASSO area-level data to understand variations in implementation, and agreed with the CPS VTP Evaluation Manager to concentrate our engagement on six CPS areas. More information about the areas' differences in implementation is available in Table 1.

Table 1: CPS areas engaged in the Enhanced Service (RASSO) evaluation and their implementation differences

CPS Area	Decision to Charge letter	PtM uptake since implementation (earliest August 2024)	PtM format	PtM lead	Partner relationships
East Midlands	Drafted by VLO	55% (highest)	100% virtual	Prosecutor-led	Positive, proactive
East of England	Drafted by prosecutor	20%	67% face-to-face	Mostly paralegal led	Unknown
North West	Not currently delivered	7% (lowest)	46% face-to-face	Prosecutor-led, no paralegal	Positive with OICs

				attendance	
Pan-London	Drafted by VLO	23%	15% face-to-face	Prosecutor-led	Positive, with PtM arranged via OIC
Wessex	Drafted by VLO	8%	23% face-to-face	Prosecutor-led	Unknown
Wales	Drafted by VLO	13%	86% face-to-face	Prosecutor-led	Positive with external partners

Summary of engagement

Table 2 includes a summary of practitioner engagement across both years of the evaluation.

Table 2: Summary of practitioner engagement

Engagement	Details	Date Held	Inclusion Criteria	Intended vs achieved sample
Workshop with Universal Service Pilot staff	A two-part workshop with four members of the Universal Service Pilot delivery and management team	August 2024	Frontline and managerial staff involved in the Universal Service Pilot.	N/A
Focus groups with Universal Service Pilot staff and partners	Focus group with seven Witness Care Unit Staff in Cheshire, Merseyside, and South Yorkshire in November 2024	November 2024	Police forces currently working with the CPS to coordinate the communication of positive charge decisions to victims.	Seven Witness Care Officers were invited and agreed to participate in the focus group.
	Focus group with four police Officers in Charge (OICs) in Cheshire, Merseyside, and South Yorkshire in December 2024	December 2024	Police forces currently working with the CPS to coordinate the communication of positive charge decisions to victims.	Six Police OICs were invited and four agreed to participate in the focus group.
	Focus group with eight members of the Universal Service Pilot delivery team, including two B2s, two B1s, and three A2s in February 2025	February 2025	Staff at varying levels of seniority involved in the delivery of the service.	Eight members of Universal Service Pilot staff were invited and agreed to participate in the focus group.
Focus groups on the Introductory Letter Deep Dive	Focus group with three RASSO VLOs from London North and Thames and Chiltern	September 2024	Experience drafting the introductory letters as part of Operation Soteria.	RASSO VLOs were requested from six CPS areas.
	Focus group with five Police OICs	September 2024	Practitioners from CPS areas where the CPS was identified as trialling introductory letters as part of Operation Soteria.	Police OICs were requested from five CPS areas.

	Focus group with six ISVAs from Derbyshire, Leicestershire, London, and Nottinghamshire	September 2024	Practitioners from CPS areas where the CPS was identified as trialling introductory letters as part of Operation Soteria.	ISVAs were requested from six CPS areas.
Focus groups on pre-trial meeting learnings with Enhanced Service (RASSO)	Focus groups (x2) 14 RASSO VLOs from Wales, East of England, Mersey-Cheshire, North East, South East, Wessex, and West Midlands	February 2025	CPS staff and partners from nine CPS areas (East of England; Mersey Cheshire; North East; South East; South West; Wales; Wessex; West Midlands; and Yorkshire and Humberside) with experience coordinating, delivering, or supporting pre-trial meetings.	We sought contact details for 18 RASSO VLOs across the nine CPS areas and 14 participated in the focus group.
	Focus groups (x2) Nine VLMs/Business Managers from Wales, East of England, Mersey-Cheshire, North East, South East, South West, Wessex, and West Midlands	February 2025		We sought contact details for 18 RASSO VLOs across the nine CPS areas and nine participated in the focus group.
	Focus group with four reviewing lawyers from Wales, South East, Wessex, and West Midlands	February 2025		We sought contact details for nine reviewing lawyers across the nine CPS areas and four participated in the focus group.
	Focus group with two paralegal officers from Wales and Mersey-Cheshire	February 2025		We sought contact details for nine paralegal officers or assistants across the nine CPS areas and two participated in the focus group. Limitations in the number of paralegal officers having attended a pre-trial meeting reduced participation.
	Focus group with seven ISVAs from the East of England, Mersey-Cheshire, South East, and Wales	February 2025		We sought contact details for 18 ISVAs across the nine CPS areas and seven participated in the focus group.
	Focus group with four Police OICs from the East of England,	February 2025		We sought contact details for 18 Police OICs across the nine CPS areas and four

	Mersey-Cheshire, and South West			participated in the focus group. Limitations in the number of Police OICs having attended a pre-trial meeting reduced participation.
Focus Groups on the Enhanced Service (RASSO) Early Adopters	Focus group with six Enhanced Service (RASSO) staff from 'Early Adopter' areas in Mersey-Cheshire and Yorkshire and Humberside	September 2024	CPS staff involved in the pilot of the RASSO Enhanced Service, including RASSO VLOs, PBMs, and legal staff.	We sought contact details for six to eight staff across the two CPS areas and six participated in the focus group.
Focus Group on VCE letter templates and guidance	Focus group with four CPS prosecutors from the East of England, London, Wessex, and Yorkshire and Humberside	March 2025	Prosecutors who demonstrated an interest in sharing their views on the process for preparing and managing VCL communications which inform victims of a change of charge (e.g. discontinuance, substantial alteration, or offered no evidence). Identified by the CPS HQ Digital and Information Directorate (DID) team through the Weekly HQ Comms for Magistrates, Crown, and RASSO prosecutors and Crown Advocates.	We sought contact details for the prosecutors identified by the CPS DID team. We received four contacts and all four participated in the focus group.
Interviews on a VLO adjournment case study	Interview with one CPS VLO	September 2024	Their experience trialling communication with RASSO victims at the point of a significant adjournment in the case	N/A
	Interview with one WCU staff member	October 2024	Identified as having supporting victims who had received contact from the VLO at the point of adjournment	N/A
Focus groups and interviews with Universal and	Focus group with five Universal Service Pilot staff ³	July 2025	Frontline and managerial staff involved in the Universal Service Pilot.	Two A2s, three B1s, two B1s, and one B3 were invited to the focus group.

³ Covering different grades within the CPS (two A2s and three B1s)

Enhanced Service Pilot staff and partners (Pilot Report)	Interview with one lawyer supporting the Universal Service Pilot	July 2025	Lawyer involved in supporting the Universal Service Pilot to deliver NFA and VCL letters.	One lawyer was invited to the interview.
	Focus group with five Enhanced Service Pilot VLOs	July 2025	VLOs involved in the Enhanced Service Pilot.	Nine Enhanced Service Pilot VLOs were invited to the focus group.
	Focus group with three Enhanced Service Pilot VLMs	July 2025	VLMs involved in the Enhanced Service Pilot.	Four Enhanced Service Pilot VLMs were invited to the focus group.
	Focus group with three Enhanced Service Pilot staff, including two VLOs and one VLM	July 2025	Enhanced Service Pilot staff from the Wessex area.	Two VLOs and one VLM were invited to the focus group.
	Focus group with four lawyers that worked with the Enhanced Service Pilot	July 2025	Lawyers with experience drafting letters in coordination with the Enhanced Service Pilot.	Eight lawyers were invited to the focus group.
	Focus group with four IDVAs	July 2025	IDVAs with experience supporting victims who received the Enhanced Service Pilot.	Seven IDVAs were invited to the engagement.
	Interview with one IDVA	July 2025	IDVAs with experience supporting victims who received the Enhanced Service Pilot.	
	Focus group with six WCOs	July 2025	WCOs with experience supporting victims who received the Universal or Enhanced Service Pilot.	24 Witness Care Officers were invited to the focus group.
	Focus group with nine WCOs	July 2025	WCOs with experience supporting victims who received the Universal or Enhanced Service Pilot.	
	Six interviews with VTP senior programme and policy leads	August and September 2025	Senior programme and policy leads across the CPS involved in the VTP Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot.	Six senior programme and policy leads were invited to interview.
Interviews with CPS RASSO staff	Five interviews with RASSO staff, including four RASSO VLOs and one	August 2025	CPS staff with experience engaging with child RASSO victims.	One Paralegal Business Manager, two paralegal officers, eight VLOs, and three

(Engagement with Child Victims: Evaluation Insights Report)	Senior Prosecutor			Senior Prosecutors were invited to interview.
Focus groups with CPS RASSO staff and partners (Enhanced Service [RASSO] Report)	Focus group with six RASSO VLOs and four RASSO VLMs	November 2025	VLOs and VLMs from six selected CPS areas (described above in section ' <u>Enhanced Service [RASSO] sampling approach</u> ') involved in the pilot of the Enhanced Service (RASSO).	Ten RASSO VLOs and five VLMs were invited to the focus group.
	Focus group with five lawyers	November 2025	Reviewing and prosecuting lawyers from six selected CPS areas (described above in section ' <u>Enhanced Service [RASSO] sampling approach</u> ') with experience coordinating with the Enhanced Service (RASSO).	Twelve reviewing and prosecuting lawyers were invited to the focus group.
	Focus group with seven paralegal officers/assistants	November 2025	Paralegal officers and assistants from six selected CPS areas (described above in section ' <u>Enhanced Service [RASSO] sampling approach</u> ') with experience coordinating with the Enhanced Service (RASSO).	Twelve paralegal officers and assistants were invited to the focus group.
	Focus group with seven Police OICs	November 2025	Police OICs from six selected CPS areas (described above in section ' <u>Enhanced Service [RASSO] sampling approach</u> ') with experience of attending pre-trial meetings (or engaging with the RASSO Service if there is a lack of OICs attending PTMs in the Area).	Nineteen Police OICs were invited to the focus group.
	Focus group with ten WCOs	November 2025	WCOs from six selected CPS areas (described above in section ' <u>Enhanced Service [RASSO] sampling approach</u> ') with experience coordinating with the Enhanced Service (RASSO).	Fifteen WCOs were invited to the focus group.
	Focus group with five ISVAs	November	ISVAs from six selected CPS areas (described	Fifteen ISVAs were invited to the focus

		2025	above in section ' <u>Enhanced Service [RASSO] sampling approach</u> ') with experience attending pre-trial meetings (or engaging with the Enhanced Service [RASSO] if there are a lack of ISVAs attending PTMs in the Area).	group.
Focus groups with CPS staff and external partners (VCE Victim Service Standards Report)	Focus group with three VLMs, four VLOs, and two lawyers	November 2025	VLMs and VLOs from five selected CPS areas (North East, South East, South West, Thames and Chiltern, and West Midlands). The CPS areas were selected based on their limited engagement to-date with the evaluation and agreed with the CPS VTP Evaluation Manager.	Four VLMs, five VLOs, and two lawyers were invited to the focus group.
	Focus group with four lawyers and six paralegal officers and assistants	November 2025	Lawyers and paralegal officers and assistants from five selected CPS areas (North East, South East, South West, Thames and Chiltern, and West Midlands). The CPS areas were selected based on their limited engagement to-date with the evaluation and agreed with the CPS VTP Evaluation Manager.	Five lawyers and six paralegal officers and assistants were invited to the focus group.
	Focus group with eight Victim Advocates	November 2025	External stakeholders in policymaking roles in the voluntary and criminal justice sector. Initial contacts were identified and chosen by the CPS Policy Directorate.	Ten Victim Advocates were invited to the focus group.
	Focus group with five policymakers	November 2025	External stakeholders working in victim-facing roles as ISVAs and IDVAs. Initial contacts were identified and chosen by the CPS Policy Directorate.	Nine policymakers were invited to the focus group.
Focus groups with CPS staff (VCE Universal Service Pilot Induction and Training Package)	Focus group with two VLOs and VSOs	November 2025	Non-managerial staff within the Universal Service Pilot who completed some or all of the Universal Service Induction and Training Package, including VLOs, VSOs, and VSAs.	Two VLOs, three VSOs, and five VSAs were invited to the focus group.

Evaluation Report)	Focus group with three VSMs	November 2025	Managerial staff within the Universal Service Pilot who completed some or all of the Universal Service Induction and Training Package, including VSMs.	Four VSMs were invited to the focus group.
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Data collection design

Crest recorded and transcribed each interview and focus group for analysis. We took a hybrid approach to qualitative analysis of practitioner focus groups to answer the evaluation questions. This involved incorporating both an inductive and deductive approach to coding and theme generation. Deductive coding involved reviewing the data through the lens of existing knowledge about the VTP, and inductive coding allowed new, unexpected insights to be identified within the data. We coded and analysed the focus group and interview data using Google Sheets and NVivo 15 software.

Quality Assurance

Prior to engagement, the discussion guides were piloted internally within the Crest team and shared with the central VTP for review and sign-off. All discussion guides were shared with the CPS service leads in advance to ensure questions accurately reflected processes, terminology and service delivery. Finalised discussion guides were shared with the CPS via Sharepoint. Following this review, any feedback was incorporated into the discussion guides as appropriate.

Quality assurance of analysis has been provided throughout by Crest's Project Manager and Senior Responsible Officer, including adherence to the principles outlined in our ethical framework. In our reporting, insight from practitioner focus groups is triangulated with other data (including survey data) to provide insight on delivery and impact at a service-level.

1b. Observational studies

Crest shadowed CPS staff in the Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot in Liverpool on three occasions throughout the evaluation. This involved observing staff as they carried out typical tasks and activities, including composing emails, making telephone calls, and logging details on case management systems. The activity aimed to improve our understanding of the typical daily caseload and tasks of staff delivering the pilots, and to clarify processes to ensure accuracy in our analysis and reporting.

Prior to the visits, the Crest team drafted an observation plan outlining key aims of the observational visit, including collecting information on the daily activities of staff, experiences with victim contact, time spent across tasks, workload and capacity, and tools used to deliver their activities.

Crest drafted notes on the activities observed throughout the visit to contextualise the core qualitative and quantitative analysis of the evaluation and to inform practitioner engagement.

1c. Whole staff survey

Data collection design

Crest developed the staff survey in partnership with VTP strategic and operational leads. It was scripted by analysts from Crest and hosted on Walr, an ISO27001-certified online survey platform. The survey was updated after year 1 in agreement with the CPS VTP Manager to align with the most up-to-date evaluation priorities.

Most survey questions were multiple choice with a small number of optional open text questions to gather qualitative insights. The survey also included several demographic and role-based questions, such as role, age, ethnicity, gender, and CPS area. These questions were designed to help us understand differences in staff perspectives and experiences across the CPS. All questions apart from demographic questions required a response.

Screening questions were created to ensure that staff were asked questions relevant to their role. The main question we used to screen respondents was based on victim engagement, with respondents that do not engage with victims in their role (in any capacity) receiving fewer questions than those that do.

To ensure that staff felt confident in responding to the survey, and providing accurate responses, we took the following steps to maintain anonymity and confidentiality:

- In the introduction we affirmed our commitment to ensure that individual responses to the survey were kept confidential, with only aggregate findings and anonymous quotes—nothing personally identifiable—shared with the CPS.
- Role and demographic-based questions were optional.

We validated the survey script internally with the Crest team to confirm duration, followed by external usability and content validation with the VTP team.

Dissemination and sampling

The survey used a non-random voluntary response sampling, where participants self-selected to opt-in to complete the survey.

To obtain consent, CPS staff were asked if they would like to participate in the survey via internal communication channels such as emails and Intranet posts. Once staff had entered the survey, they were informed at the beginning that their completion would be taken as their consent. To

ensure consent to participate in the survey was informed, the survey included a short information section that covered the following:

- The purpose of the research
- The importance of participants' consent, including that this can be withdrawn at any time prior to submitting the survey by exiting the survey and leaving it incomplete
- That survey responses will be anonymous and that participants will not be identifiable
- What will happen with the data collected

The CPS also circulated a privacy notice attached to the survey. This outlined to participants how Crest would use and process their data, and included the following information:

- The type of information Crest is collecting
- Crest's lawful basis for processing this data and the legal rights of participants surrounding this data
- Who will have access to this information
- How Crest will use this data.

While the survey was live, we worked with the CPS to monitor the responses and promote the survey in areas where response rates were low. This was important to improve response rates from key areas of interest (i.e. from certain staff roles and CPS areas).

Final sample

The year 1 staff survey went live on 27/01/25 and was open for three weeks, closing on 14/02/25. It was open to all CPS staff, including those that do not have victim-facing roles. Overall, the survey had a response rate of 10%, with 775 responses out of a total CPS population of 7,664.

The year 2 staff survey went live on 19th January 2026 and was open for four weeks, closing on the 14th February. It was open to all CPS staff, including those that do not have victim-facing roles. Overall, the survey had a response rate of 8%, with 631 responses out of a total CPS population of 7,664.

Whilst survey response rates were at the high end of expected response rates for voluntary staff surveys (5-10%), due to a lack of staff demographic data available from the CPS, we are unable to confirm how representative the survey was of all staff across the CPS.

Detail on data cleaning

Once the survey was closed, the raw survey data was exported and cleaned through the following steps:

- **Re-coding incorrectly input responses:** Responses for role-based and demographic questions were re-coded in cases where they appeared to be incorrectly input - for instance, where respondents selected 'Other (please specify)' and provided a response that was covered by other answer options.
- **Reviewing and removing 'speed-lining' responses.** These are responses that were deemed to have been completed too quickly to have accurately responded to each question. Responses completed in less than three minutes were reviewed, and where the responses appeared invalid or of poor quality, these were excluded from the analyses. In total, one response was removed in year 1.

Partial responses were included in our analysis.

[Detail on data analysis](#)

Year 1 survey analysis

Once the data was cleaned it was processed to produce data tables with cross breaks for analysis. For year 1, the following cross breaks were used:

- Victim engagement:
 - Those who directly engage with victims;
 - Indirectly engage with victims (or support victim engagement); or
 - have no victim engagement at all.
- CPS role:
 - Prosecutors and legal managers: Defined as those who coded M1 / DCP (level D), LM2 / SDCP (Level E), Senior Specialist Prosecutor, Specialist Prosecutor, Senior Crown Prosecutor, Crown Prosecutor, Associate Prosecutor (1 & 2)
 - VLOs: Defined as people who coded as Victim Liaison Officers and RASSO Victim Liaison Officers
 - Senior leadership: Defined as people who coded CCP, DCCP, or ABM.
- CPS area:
 - Pilot areas (Mersey-Cheshire and Yorkshire and Humber)
 - Non-pilot areas (all other areas).

To analyse the survey, we used a range of methods including:

- **Descriptive analysis** to summarise and visualise overall response patterns
- **Inferential analysis** to explore differences between groups and identify significant trends. As the data did not follow a normal distribution, we used non-parametric tests (specifically, the Mann-Whitney U Test and the Kruskal-Wallis test). These tests provide a p-value; a

p-value of 0.05 or below suggests the observed difference between the two samples is unlikely to be observed by chance and thus that the difference is real.

- **Two regression analyses** to examine associations between staff perceptions and particular factors. We developed two statistical models using logistic regression analyses, which incorporated five confounding variables identified through correlation analysis.

Year 2 survey analysis

Once the data was cleaned, it was processed to produce data tables with cross breaks for analysis. For year 2, the following cross breaks were used:

- Victim engagement:
 - Those who directly engage with victims;
 - Indirectly engage with victims (or support victim engagement); or
 - have no victim engagement at all.
- VLO/VLM in each service:
 - **Universal Service Pilot:** Victim Service Assistant / Officer (Universal Service) and Victim Service Manager (Universal Service)
 - **Enhanced Service Pilot:** Enhanced DA Victim Liaison Officer and Enhanced DA Victim Liaison Manager
 - **Enhanced Service (RASSO):** RASSO Victim Liaison Officer and RASSO Victim Liaison Manager
 - **BAU VLU:** Victim Liaison Officer and Victim Liaison Unit Manager
- CPS role:
 - **Prosecutors and legal managers**
 - **VLOs**
 - **Headquarters**
- CPS areas: Headquarters, Cymru/Wales, East Midlands, Eastern, London North, London South, Mersey Cheshire, North East, North West, South East, South West, Thames and Chiltern, Wessex, West Midlands (including British Transport Police), Yorkshire and Humberside, CPS Direct, Serious Economic, Organised Crime and International Directorate (SEOCID), Special Crime and Counter Terrorism Division (SCCTD).

We used descriptive analysis to summarise and visualise overall response patterns to all survey questions.

1d. Universal Service Pilot staff training and induction survey

Data collection design

Crest conducted a survey of the Universal Service Pilot team as part of the evaluation of the Universal Service Induction and Training package. The survey was co-designed with the VTP evaluation, VCE, and learning services teams to quantify key measures of success in relation to quality and impact.

Dissemination and sampling

The survey used non-random voluntary response sampling, where participants self-selected to opt-in to complete the survey. It was shared with the entire Universal Service Pilot team in November 2025, after most staff had completed the training. A 'pre-training' survey was not feasible due to the staggered delivery of the training and the timing of the evaluation. This limited the accuracy and reliability of findings relating to staff perceptions of their knowledge and skills prior to the training. In total, the survey received 19 responses (out of a possible 21).

Detail on data analysis

Crest conducted descriptive analysis of this data to understand trends in the overall quality and impact of the training.

1e. Crown Court staff training survey

Data collection design

The CPS identified a strategic need to enhance staff capability in victim engagement and communication. In response, they developed and delivered targeted training for operational delivery staff. This formed part of a broader upskilling initiative and was structured across different modules, with an eLearning module (Module 2) and the 'Empathy in Action' Module 3 learning. Crest evaluated the 'Empathy in Action' Module 3 training pilot, which was delivered as a half-day session testing two potential modes of delivery.

Crest disseminated two surveys to assess the quality and delivery format of the training being piloted. The purpose of the surveys was two-fold:

- To assess the quality of the training and whether it delivered the learning objectives of the module.

- To evaluate whether there was a significant difference in outcomes based on the mode of delivery - specifically whether face-to-face (F2F) or virtual instructor-led training (VILT) modes led to differing levels of engagement and learning outcomes.

The evaluation used a pre-post design with a stratified random sampling approach used to assign training delegates into either the F2F or VILT cohort. The strata consisted of:

- Role (Crown Court Manager, Paralegal Assistant, Paralegal Officer)
- Gender (Male, Female)
- Length of time in Role (Up to one year, one to five years, over five years).

The full cohort consisted of 66 delegates, but some had already been pre-allocated into specific delivery modes by the CPS areas. As a result, of the 66 delegates, only 41 were allocated based on the random stratification. A small number (under five) of delegates changed delivery mode during the course of the experiment due to practical reasons (e.g. illness, availability due to competing needs). The same tutors provided both the F2F and VILT training to minimise bias in results.

Two surveys were created, to be disseminated to both cohorts - one before the training was completed, and one after. The 'pre' survey created a baseline for delegates' understanding of the topics being covered, their confidence in completing the tasks covered in the Module 3 training, whether they had completed the prerequisite training, and their expectation for the Module 3 training. The 'post' survey included the same questions regarding confidence and understanding so that changes in these perceptions could be measured before and after the training was completed. The 'post' survey also included detailed questions about delegate perceptions of the training—such as satisfaction with the training, how engaging it was, the clarity of the explanations/examples, the trainers, as well as area of strength and further development. The intention was to identify any differences in quality due to delivery method as well as the overall quality of the training. Surveys were scripted by Crest and hosted on the WALR survey platform.

Dissemination and sampling

Crest disseminated pre-surveys to delegates the week before they were due to complete the training. To maximise response rates, Crest worked in close collaboration with the CPS to send reminder emails throughout the survey period, helping to maintain consistent participation across both training formats. The post-survey was disseminated one week after delegates had completed the training and again, the CPS and Crest worked collaboratively to remind delegates to complete their surveys. Delegates received unique survey links via email for both the pre- and post-training surveys, allowing for accurate tracking of individual responses and supporting both Crest and the CPS to chase only relevant individuals.

All surveys were completed between February 28th and March 19th, 2025. The exact dates for each individual varied based on when their training session was scheduled.

[Final sample](#)

The surveys achieved a high response rate, and the two cohorts were well matched across key demographic and professional variables, providing confidence that the findings are robust and unlikely to be biased. Of the 66 delegates originally selected to participate in the training, 77% responded to the pre-training survey, and 72% completed the post-training survey.

Pre-Training Survey:

- **Total responses:** 51 delegates
- **Gender:** 71% female, 29% male
- **Length of service:** 39% had been with the CPS for 1–2 years
- **Role:** 49% were Paralegal Assistants.

Post-Training Survey:

- **Total responses:** 48 delegates
- **Gender:** 79% female, 21% male
- **Length of service:** 35% had been with the CPS for 1–2 years
- **Role:** 48% were Paralegal Assistants.

To assess individual-level change between the pre- and post-training surveys, a paired-sample of 43 delegates was used. Within this matched sample:

- 77% were female
- 51% were Paralegal Assistants
- 37% had been in the CPS for 1–2 years.

Within the matched group, 54% had taken part in the F2F training and 46% had taken part in the VILT training.

[Detail on data cleaning](#)

Only fully completed surveys were included in the descriptive analysis to ensure the reliability and consistency of the findings. Given the brevity of the survey, the duration of response time was not used as a filtering criterion. All data were exported from WALR on March 18th 2025, and any submissions received after this date were excluded from analysis.

During the pre-training survey phase, it was identified that one participant submitted two responses. Upon review, the first response was retained for analysis, as the second showed a

notable and abrupt shift—from reporting low confidence to high confidence—suggesting the possibility of response bias or inconsistency.

[Detail on data analysis](#)

The survey analysis used descriptive and inferential statistics:

- **Descriptive analysis** to summarise and visualise overall response patterns across both surveys
- **Inferential analysis** to explore differences between groups and identify significant trends. Given that the data was not normally distributed, we conducted a Mann-Whitney U test.

[2. Victim engagement](#)

2a. Lived experience codesign group

In the first year of the VTP evaluation, we met quarterly with a group of seven individuals who had personal and professional experience of the CPS. This co-design group provided valuable insight and feedback which we incorporated into our design and delivery of the evaluation, particularly around the following topics:

- Understanding victim needs;
- Our approach to engagement;
- Accessibility of research materials;
- Ways to engage the voluntary community sector.

In the second year of the evaluation, we assembled a victim advocate codesign group enabling us to learn from frontline experience of working with victims. This group of five individuals (mostly in ISVA and IDVA roles) met twice to provide input and constructive challenge on the following evaluation methods and research tools:

- Reviewing and strength-testing accessibility adjustments and pathways for victim engagement (based on experience of diverse victims' needs);
- Discussing contextual/safeguarding risks for victims (including different contextual risks for different cohorts);
- Exploring options to strengthen and expand ISVA and IDVA collaboration with the evaluation to improve victim participation in surveys and interviews.

An honorarium payment or donation was made to all codesign members (or to their organisation) to recognise their time and express our thanks for their input.

In addition to these codesign groups, we attended sessions with two lived experience victim groups run by Victim Support and The Survivors' Trust on behalf of the CPS. We sought input on the evaluation methods and approach from both groups to inform ongoing refinement to victim engagement.

2b. Victim interviews

Data collection design

Crest offered semi-structured interviews to victims eligible for the Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot and the Enhanced Service (RASSO) to understand their experiences and perspectives on the communication and support that they received from the CPS. Interviews were offered online or in-person at a time and location convenient to each participant. Information sheets and consent forms were shared with each participant ahead of the interview.

Interviews were trauma-informed, taking a victim-led approach. Crest facilitators explained that all questions were optional and they could take a break or end the interview at any point. Pre-meets with each participant allowed Crest facilitators to build rapport, explain the purpose of the interview and evaluation, and answer any questions about the interview. This was also an opportunity for victims to share any information about topics to avoid, triggers, or accessibility requirements. Participants could invite their support worker (for example, their ISVA) or a trusted adult to support them during the interview as required.

A voucher was shared with each participant following the interview to recognise their time and to express thanks for their taking part. Please see '[Ethical Considerations](#)' for more information about our approach.

Sampling and recruitment

We used a convenience sampling design to identify victims who were interested and available to take part in an interview. Crest produced an information sheet for VLOs and victim services to share directly with victims who had received a service under the VTP. The information sheet included a link and QR code for victims to sign-up to take part in an interview. Victims could also consent for their contact information to be shared by the VLO or support worker directly with Crest via secure email. Crest facilitators contacted all victims who expressed an interest in participating to

share more information about the interview and evaluation, and to offer a pre-meet to answer any questions and arrange the interview.

Between February and December 2025, we conducted 12 interviews with adult victims who received the Enhanced Service (RASSO).

There were significant challenges to recruiting victims for interview, which is likely to be a result of the difficult circumstances that victims are in while the case is live, with participation in research being a lower priority for many victims. The process for engaging with victims was continuously reviewed with the VTP evaluation team and victim and survivor codesign groups to ensure that our approach and research materials were accessible.

[Detail on analysis](#)

Interviews were analysed using a combined inductive and deductive thematic approach in NVivo Version 15 to identify key themes.

2c. Victim focus groups

In October 2024, the Survivors Trust facilitated four remote focus groups on behalf of the evaluation with ten victims of rape and serious sexual offences to understand their views and experiences of introductory letter communications from the CPS. One of the ten participants had received an introductory letter; while nine participants had not received, or did not remember receiving, a letter. The insight from these focus groups was thematically analysed and informed an interim report on the use of introductory letters.

In January 2026, Crest facilitated a focus group with victims supported by Galop to inform our understanding of victims' needs and requirements for CPS support. This insight was used in the Summary Report to consolidate and contextualise our understanding of a high-quality service.

2d. Feedback forms

Crest created an online form for victims who received a service under the VTP to share anonymous written feedback on their experience, including how communication from the CPS made them feel. Between June and December 2025, we received feedback from two victims who received the Enhanced Service (RASSO) via the online form. This feedback was thematically analysed and included in the Summary Report alongside insight from interviews with victims.

2e. Crest Victim surveys

Overview of victim surveys

There are 14 victim surveys currently live. Table 3 'Responses to all victim surveys as of the 4th February 2026' in the [Dissemination and sampling section](#) below outlines all victim surveys, the date that they went live, and current responses.

Data collection design

Each victim survey is connected to a specific contact point and service, allowing us to better understand victim experiences at different stages of the criminal justice process and compare victim cohorts.

The surveys were designed in consultation with VTP service leads and programme staff. Fieldwork for all surveys is continuous, and survey links are sent to victims by VLOs alongside regular CPS communications.

To ensure victims felt confident sharing their experiences without risk of identification, Crest implemented the following measures:

- The survey introduction and accompanying information sheet clearly stated our commitment to maintaining respondents' anonymity and confidentiality.
- We highlighted the survey's independence in the information sheet, stating that the survey is being administered by an independent evaluator, and not the CPS. The survey's independence was further reinforced through careful branding and formatting of survey materials.
- Respondents were asked not to include any personal or identifiable information in their open-text responses.
- Findings were reported only in aggregate, and any quotes included were anonymised to ensure that no identifiable information was shared with the CPS.

The CPS is responsible for ensuring links to the survey are included in existing communications to reduce the risk of negatively impacting victim well-being by sending them additional communications from Crest or the CPS.

Dissemination and sampling

Victim surveys were designed to measure the impact of communications that the CPS is sending to victims. To maximise our confidence in measuring any impact from the communication (without

other factors confounding the measurement), surveys were disseminated by the CPS along with those communications, to get an immediate reaction to how the communication has been received by victims. This was preferable to disseminating victim surveys on a set schedule (e.g. quarterly) as it measures the intended effects at the time they are expected to occur (as specified in the theory of change and outcomes framework) and does not just capture general victims' perceptions and experiences.

A consistent set of questions is included in each survey to allow comparability of communication points and address the key long-term outcomes identified in the theory of change. Survey responses are anonymous and so survey results cannot be linked back to known case details, though some demographic data is collected.

Surveying victims at each key touchpoint provided the most robust measurement of each interaction and enabled us to ask targeted questions. Disseminating the survey link to all victims ensured that every victim had the opportunity to provide their view. By attaching the survey link to existing CPS communications, we could ensure the survey was delivered at an appropriate time, compared to a quarterly survey which would reach victims at different points in the process and potentially arrive at an inappropriate time.

Each victim survey employed non-random voluntary response sampling, with all victims within our scope being given the option to participate in completing the survey. This is a form of self-selection.

To improve the accessibility of these surveys, victims could request a paper copy which would be sent with a pre-paid envelope. In the second year of the evaluation, victims were given the option to complete the survey over the phone with a Crest facilitator, instead of online.

Table 3: Responses to all victim surveys as of 4th February 2026

Survey type	Date launched	Number of completions
Universal Service Pilot – decision to charge	17th October 2024	89 ⁴
Universal Service Pilot – VCL	18th December 2024	2
Universal Service Pilot – no further action	10th February 2025	5 ⁵

⁴ 1 of these completions was a phone version of the survey which had a smaller and altered question set.

⁵ 4 of these completions were phone versions of the survey which had a smaller and altered question set.

Universal Service Pilot – decision to charge and no further action	9th May 2025	0
Enhanced Service Pilot – decision to charge	18th February 2025	2
Enhanced Service Pilot – VCL	24th April 2025	0
Enhanced Service Pilot – no further action	24th April 2025	2
Enhanced Service Pilot – decision to charge and no further action	9th May 2025	0
Enhanced Service Pilot – post-hearing communications	31st October 2025	0
Enhanced Service (RASSO) – decision to charge	18th February 2025	0
Enhanced Service (RASSO) – no further action	24th April 2025	1
Enhanced Service (RASSO) – pre trial meeting invite	5th February 2025	6
Enhanced Service (RASSO) – pre-trial meeting declined	17th October 2025	0
Enhanced Service (RASSO) – post-pre trial meeting communications	17th October 2025	0

It remains unclear as to why the response rates for most surveys are low, although this is likely to be a result of the difficult circumstances that victims are in while the case is live, with participation in research being a lower priority for many victims. The language of the surveys has been adjusted over time to encourage victims to complete them and there has been an effort to make the details of the survey more prominent within communications with victims.

Final sample

All victim survey data was exported on 4th February 2026. As of this date, 107 responses across all surveys had been received. Most responses came from the Universal Service Pilot Decision to Charge survey, meaning that findings are not generalisable to all services and contact points.

[Detail on data cleaning](#)

Crest cleaned the survey data in Excel. Due to a low number of responses across most of the victim surveys, responses from all surveys and all contact points were aggregated to provide more robust insights. To create this combined dataset, common questions asked across different surveys were linked together. In some cases, this meant linking questions that were similar in content, except for phrasing differences. For example, several surveys ask about whether the victim agrees or disagrees that the CPS cared about the case. Depending on the contact point, this is either asked in past tense (“the CPS cared about the case”) or present tense (“the CPS cares about the case”).

[Detail on data analysis](#)

Descriptive analysis was conducted on the aggregated dataset to summarise overall response patterns across the surveys. Alongside this, the Universal Service Pilot Decision to Charge survey was analysed in isolation due to the higher number of responses.

2e. Victim Support surveys

Two additional surveys were run in partnership with individuals who were currently or formerly supported by the independent charity, Victim Support. The surveys were hosted through Victim Support’s mobile application.

The surveys were designed in partnership with Victim Support, and were shared with the VTP evaluation team for review and sign-off. The purpose of these surveys was to gather lived experience perspectives on how the CPS should communicate with and support victims, as well as views on the CPS Victim Service Standards.

Crest conducted a descriptive analysis of both surveys. The first survey received 44 responses and the second survey received 39 responses.

3. Dip Sample Analysis

Crest reviewed Victim Communication and Liaison (VCL) scheme and No Further Action (NFA) letters as part of the evaluation of the VTP, including letters sent by the Pilot Service and non-VTP Victim Liaison Units (VLUs). Letters were analysed according to the broader themes taken from the CPS’ Template Letter Guidance (2024) documents which were used as success criteria. This approach allowed us to assess the quality of VCL and NFA letters.

Table 4 outlines the sample of letters that were requested and reviewed as part of the NFA and VCL dip samples.

Table 4: Count of NFA and VCL dip sampled letters

Letter information	Letters reviewed
VCL dip sample (year 1)	
VLU, all CPS areas prior to the introduction of the refreshed VCL letter templates (June 2022–March 2024)	125
VLU, all CPS areas following the introduction of the refreshed VCL letter templates (May–September 2024)	90
NFA dip sample (year 2)	
Enhanced Service Pilot, Mersey-Cheshire (May–July 2025)	10
Enhanced Service Pilot, Yorkshire-Humberside (May–June 2025)	12
Universal Service Pilot (March–July 2025)	16
VCL dip sample (year 2)	
VLU (Pre-Pilot Service) ⁶ , Mersey-Cheshire (March–April 2025)	10
VLU (Pre-Pilot Service) ⁷ , Yorkshire and Humberside (June–August 2024)	9
Universal Service Pilot (June–July 2025)	10
Enhanced Service Pilot, Yorkshire and Humberside (June 2025)	5
Enhanced Service Pilot, Mersey-Cheshire (June–July 2025)	5

Analytical approach

The NFA and VCL dip samples focused on understanding whether the relevant CPS area or service was consistently sending high-quality letters. The VCL dip sample analysis conducted in the second year of the evaluation also explored whether there were any differences in the quality of letters sent by the Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot compared to letters sent by the regional VLUs prior to the VTP. High-quality letters are defined as:

⁶ The Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot took over responsibility for sending Victim Communication and Liaison (VCL) scheme letters from the regional Victim Liaison Units (VLUs) in June 2025.

⁷ Ibid.

- **Clear and concise:** The NFA letter should clearly convey the CPS decision to the victim.
- **Empathetic and trauma-informed:** The letter should recognise what the victim has gone through, the impact of the crime, and the impact of the CPS decision on the victim. It should be considerate, and not victim-blame.
- **Tailored:** The letter should not appear generic, and should be tailored to the victim and the case.

The success criteria and how they were measured are detailed in Table 5.

Table 5: NFA and VCL dip sample success criteria

No	Success criteria	How this was measured
1	Empathetic communication: ● Sensitivity and empathy ● No inappropriate or insensitive language	Sensitivity and empathy: ● Does the writer recognise the physical, emotional, or psychological impact the crime or court process has had on the victim? ● Does the writer show recognition of the victim's specific circumstances? ● Does the writer use empathetic language? ● What is the quality of this empathy? Quality in this analysis is defined as the inclusion of empathy that was clear, consistent, and was tailored to the victim and their circumstances. ● Does empathy go beyond scripted or templated phrases? Inappropriate or insensitive language: ● Does the writer use any inappropriate or insensitive language?
2	Tailored communication: ● Victim-specific details ● Appropriate and bespoke thank you ● Acknowledgement of who has reported the crime to the police ● Signposting to relevant	Victim-specific details ● Does the writer refer to details that are unique to that victim, their relation to the case, or their circumstances? E.g. acknowledging feelings towards the case or injuries sustained. Appropriate and bespoke thank you ● Does the writer thank the victim in any way within

	support services	the letter? Acknowledgment of who has reported the crime to the police: - Does the writer acknowledge who has reported the crime to the police in the introduction? Signposting to relevant support services - Does the letter include the 'Further Support and Further Information' box? - Is there evidence that support services have been recommended to victims and tailored to their circumstances? - Is there a reference to the attached Victim's leaflet and what it contains?
3	Clear communication: - Alternative format offered - Avoiding unnecessary jargon or abbreviations - No left-over template text or inaccuracies - Victim's Right to Review scheme is offered and sufficiently explained	Alternative format offered - Are victims offered an alternative version of the letter for accessibility purposes? Avoiding unnecessary jargon or abbreviations - Is legal jargon explained where it is used? No leftover template text or inaccuracies - Are there any clear spelling, grammar or punctuation errors present? - Is there any left-over template text that is intended to be removed or edited before sending to the victim? VRR scheme is offered and sufficiently explained - Is the Victim's Right to Review scheme offered and sufficiently explained?

Our analysis included an overall coding of the quality of the empathy included throughout each letter. Defining the quality and use of empathy and sensitivity within a legal letter can be particularly subjective, in part because of the need to balance fairness, factual accuracy, and empathy. To create our initial coding framework, we used feedback received by the CPS from victims and staff on what VCL letters should and should not contain. This initial framework was applied to a random sample of ten letters. The framework was then further refined to reflect how letters are currently

expressing empathy and sensitivity, before being applied to the rest of the sample. The final coding framework gave letters a score ranging from zero to three depending on their use of scripted and unscripted empathetic language in Table 6.

Table 6: VCL and NFA dip sample empathetic language coding framework

Score	Explanation of Score
0	Letters are scored 0 when there is no empathetic language included within the letter. This score should only be given to letters that <u>do not include</u> scripted language from the template or guidance.
1	Letters are scored 1 when the empathy shown within the letter is based on scripted language from the template / guidance. Scripted language includes: <i>“I was sorry to learn about what you have been through”</i> <i>“I understand that this may have been a difficult time for you, and I hope that this explanation has helped you understand more about how I have reached my decision”</i> Where these examples are used alone, a score of 1 is given.
2	Letters are scored 2 when there is one additional unscripted sentence using empathetic language that recognises the impact of the crime on the victim. This is in addition to any scripted language contained in the template / guidance.
3	Letters are scored 3 when there is more than one additional unscripted sentence using empathetic language that recognises the impact of the crime on the victim. This is in addition to any scripted language contained in the template / guidance. These letters show clear and consistent empathy, where the unscripted language used is tailored to the circumstances of the victim. At a minimum, there is unscripted language in the introduction and closing sections of the letter.

4. [OPRA data](#)

4a. Victim attrition

Description of the data shared with Crest

The VTP shared case-level data relating to all cases registered on CPS systems which resulted in a pre-charge decision or a conviction or non-conviction outcome (post-charge attrition) between April 2023 and October 2025. The VTP also shared data relating to all receipts received into the Magistrates and Crown Courts between April 2023 and October 2025 for finalised and ongoing cases. The table below outlines all the data columns contained in the three datasets:

Table 7: List of all data columns and the dataset(s) they were held in

Column description	Pre-charge attrition	Post-charge attrition	Receipts
Date of case registration	Y	Y	Y
Date of case finalisation	Y	Y	Y
Name of CPS area	Y	Y	Y
Name of police area	Y	Y	Y
What was the casework type (CC, MC, or RASSO)	Y	Y	Y
Principal offence category	Y	Y	Y
Did the case have a domestic abuse flag?	Y	Y	Y
Did the case have a rape flag?	Y	Y	Y
Did the case have a child abuse flag?	Y	Y	Y
Did the case have a vulnerable or intimidated victim flag?	Y	Y	Y
Was the case charged by the CPS?	Y	Y	Y
Has the suspect in the case been finalised pending response?	Y	Y	N
Was an early advice review completed for the suspect in the case?	Y	Y	N
How many legal pre-charge reviews were conducted in the case?	Y	Y	N
How many instances had the suspect in the case been finalised pending response?	Y	Y	N
What was the result in the case?	Y (i.e. did it proceed to prosecution or not?)	Y (i.e. did the case result in conviction or non-conviction?)	N

What was the reason for pre-charge decision result?	Y	N	N
How many days were there between initial receipt of the case and the final pre-charge decision?	Y	N	N
How many days were there between the first legal review of the case and the final pre-charge decision?	Y	N	N
How many days were there between the first non-early advice legal review and the final pre-charge decision?	Y	N	N
What was the court type (CC or MC)?	N	Y	N
How many days were there between completion of the first legal review and the charging decision?	N	Y	N
How many days were there between completion of the first non-early advice legal review and the charging decision?	N	Y	N
How many days were there between the charging decision and the case finalisation?	N	Y	N
What was the type of conviction or non-conviction outcome?	N	Y	N
What was the stage at which the conviction or non-conviction outcome was received?	N	Y	N
What was the category of and reason for the non-conviction outcome?	N	Y	N

These datasets were shared securely with Crest via the CPS Sharepoint. They were uploaded to Crest's secure, shared drive which is only accessible to individuals who are working on the project. All subsequent analysis was conducted in R.

[Detail on analysis](#)

Analysis was conducted for the Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot only. This is because of the long period of time (often years⁸) between a RASSO case being registered with the CPS and the outcome being finalised. This means that any analysis of victim attrition for RASSO cases that have been finalised in the 12 months since the service launched is likely to mis-represent the actual impact of the service, as it accounts for slightly fewer than half of all cases that started since the service was launched. An analysis of the impact of the Enhanced Service (RASSO) on victim attrition is expected to require at least two years of service data before credible findings can begin to be drawn, we expect this to be possible in summer 2026.

Prior to the analysis, cases were defined as eligible for the Universal or Enhanced Service if they met certain criteria, outlined in Table 8. Due to data limitations, the criteria applied are a proxy for actual eligibility and engagement. Based on data recorded by each service on the number of eligible victims and number of victims communicated with, we know that these criteria over-estimate who is eligible for the Universal Service Pilot by between 10% and 15%. Before any of the analysis was conducted, it was agreed that this proxy approach provided an acceptable level of accuracy given the lack of alternatives. Following the application of these filters, 34,161 cases remained which were eligible for the Universal Service Pilot and 13,911 cases which were eligible for the Enhanced Service Pilot.

Table 8: Criteria for selecting eligible cases for the Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot

Universal Service Pilot	Enhanced Service Pilot
Case was registered on or after 1st December 2024	Case was registered on or after 1st April 2025
Case was registered in Merseyside & Cheshire or Yorkshire & Humberside	Case was registered in Merseyside & Cheshire or Yorkshire & Humberside
Case does not have a DA flag	Case does have a DA flag
Case does not have a rape flag	Case does not have a rape flag
Case does not have a child abuse flag	Case does not have a child abuse flag
Case was not assigned to CCU or RASSO	Case was not assigned to CCU or RASSO
Principal offence category is not homicide	Principal offence category is not homicide
Case was charged by the CPS	Case was charged by the CPS

⁸ The mean time from charge decision to finalisation was 444 days for cases finalised in July to October 2025

Crest conducted descriptive and inferential analysis of this data. Descriptive analysis was used to understand whether the observed trends in pre-charge attrition noticeably differed between pilot and non-pilot areas. For post-charge attrition data, descriptive analysis was used to:

- Determine the total number and proportion of cases which resulted in a non-conviction post-charge outcome due to victim attrition in pilot and non-pilot areas; and
- Understand the time between a decision to charge and case finalisation for cases that close due to victim attrition in pilot and non-pilot areas.

The main focus of our analysis was on post-charge attrition data, which was joined with general information on case receipts. Using the raw data, an aggregated cases dataset was created based on CPS area and month to summarise:

- The total number of cases – defined as the sum of cases registered that month and in that CPS area
- The number of attrition cases – defined as the post-charge reason for non-conviction being “V82 Victim fails to attend/refuses to give evidence/inappropriate to compel” per registration month and CPS area
- The proportion of cases that fell within each principal offence category – defined as the number of cases within each category divided by the total number of cases per registered month and CPS area.

The filters described in Table 8 were also applied to define which case receipts were in scope for each service. The receipts data was aggregated to produce the count of receipts per month and CPS area, which was joined with the aggregated cases dataset based on CPS area and month variables. An additional variable was then created to define whether the row related to a treatment period, which enables us to capture the impact of the Universal or Enhanced Service Pilot on victim attrition.

It is important to highlight that our analysis was conducted based on the month a case was *registered* with the CPS. This was necessary to ensure that cases were allocated as accurately as possible into intervention and control groups for the Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot as charge decision dates were not available. CPS data is predominantly analysed internally by case finalisation month and so this distinction is an important one and should be considered when comparing any analysis conducted as part of the evaluation against other CPS metrics.

For the Universal Service Pilot dataset, a variable ‘universal_pilot’ was created and defined as “1” (i.e. True) if:

- the month was equal to or after December 2024; and
- the CPS area was Merseyside & Cheshire or Yorkshire & Humberside.

For the Enhanced Service Pilot dataset, a variable 'enhanced_pilot' was created and defined as "1" (i.e. True) if:

- the month was equal to or after April 2025; and
- the CPS area was Merseyside & Cheshire or Yorkshire & Humberside.

Moving beyond the descriptive analysis, the *gsynth* package in R was used to create a generalised synthetic control model of attrition, with the overall volume of attrition as our outcome variable, and the volume of receipts and the proportion of each principal offence category as covariates. The function requires the following information – the only difference between the models for the Universal Service Pilot and Enhanced Service Pilot are the inclusion of "universal_pilot" or "enhanced_pilot" respectively in the model formula. Table 9 provides an overview of the results and descriptive information provided by this method.

- **The name of the dataset for analysis** – in this instance, our aggregated dataset above.
- **Formula** – a symbolic description of the model to be fitted in the form of:
 - Outcome ~ Treatment + Covariates. In our specific model, this was:
 - attrition_cases ~ universal_pilot OR enhanced_pilot + receipts + violence_prop + sexual_prop + burglary_prop + robbery_prop + theft_prop + fraud_prop + crim_dam_prop + drugs_prop + public_order_prop + other_crime_prop
- **Index** – specifying the unit and time indicators. These are the CPS area and month of case registration respectively.
- **SE** – a flag for whether uncertainty estimates should be produced. This was set to TRUE.
- **Inference** – a flag for whether parametric or non-parametric inferential methods should be used. This was set to parametric which is recommended when the number of treatment units is small.
- **EM** – a flag for whether the Expectation Maximisation algorithm should be used. This was set to TRUE.
- **Force** – a string indicating whether unit or time-fixed effects will be calculated. This was set to "two-way" to ensure the model attempted to account for both time-based and unit-based effects.
- **CV** – a flag indicating whether cross-validation should be performed to identify the optimal number of factors to find the best fitting model. This was set to TRUE.
- **R** – this specifies the number of factors that should be tested. This was set to test from 0 to 3 factors.
- **nboots** – this specifies how many bootstrap runs should be performed. Bootstrapping involves re-running the modelling by resampling the data (often selecting 80% of datapoints at random) and re-running the modelling to test for variation in results. The number of bootstraps was set to 1000.

- **Seed** – this ensures that each time the code is re-run the boot strapping follows the same process and re-samples the same data each time. This was set to 1729.

Table 9: Overview of the results or information provided by generalised synthetic control models

Type of result or information	Explanation
ATT - Estimate	This value represents the Average Treatment Effect on the Treated (ATT). The ATT is a measure of the average, estimated impact of the Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot on a particular outcome per CPS area, per month. A negative estimate suggests that a particular outcome has gone down (e.g. fewer cases resulting in victim attrition). A positive estimate suggests a particular outcome has gone up (e.g. more cases resulting in victim attrition).
ATT - S.E (Standard Error)	This value represents the precision of the ATT estimate. A large S.E, relative to the ATT estimate, suggests that estimate is less precise. A small S.E, relative to the ATT estimate, suggests that estimate is more precise.
ATT - CI.lower & CI.upper (Confidence Interval)	These values provide a range with the lower bound and upper bound limits of a difference or association (the ATT estimate) that would be plausible for a population. A CI of 95% (which is used here) indicates that if a study were to be carried out 100 times, the range would contain the true value 95 times.
ATT - p.value	This value represents the probability that the observed effect (the ATT estimate) would have occurred by chance if, in reality, there was no true effect. Data yielding a p-value of 0.05 or below is considered statistically significant.
ATT - individual pre- and post-treatment periods	These values show the ATT estimate (including all other descriptive information like standard error, confidence intervals and

	p-values) at each time period relative to the treatment.
Covariates - beta	This value represents an estimate of how much an outcome changes when a particular covariate increases by one unit, holding all others constant. Descriptive information, including standard error, confidence intervals, and p-values, are also provided for covariates. This information relates to the beta estimate (whereas above it relates to the ATT estimate).

Determining when to report on victim attrition

Due to data limitations, victim attrition can only be measured once the case has been finalised. This presents a challenge for the evaluation as the timeframes for cases - from case registration to finalisation - can be years. As our analysis is based on the month the case is registered, the amount of missing data increases the closer each month is to the present time and could have an impact on the validity of our analysis. This is demonstrated in Chart 1 below for the Universal Service Pilot and shows that, compared to our baseline in the first half of 2023, the number of finalised cases for a given month declines steadily over the 10 months prior to the end of our data period.

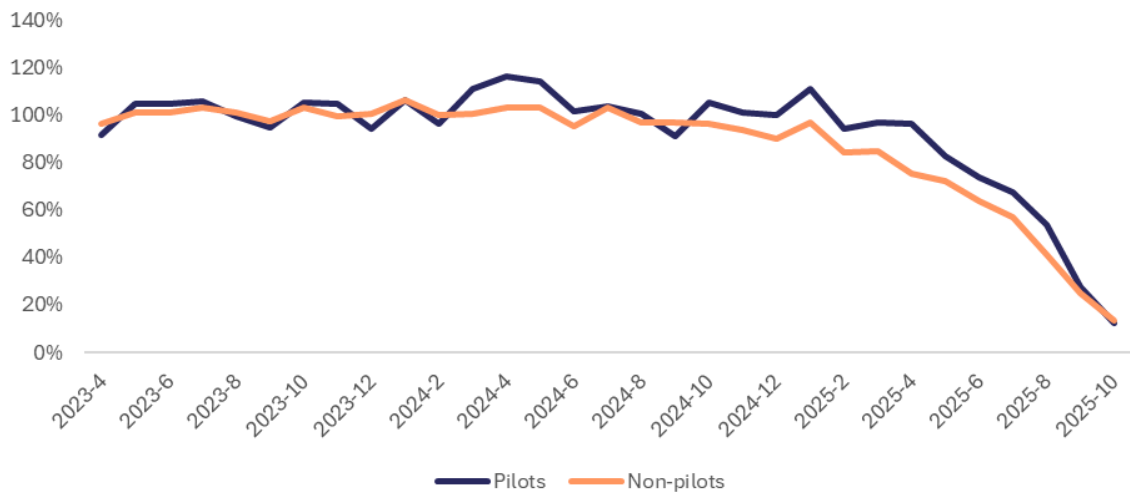
This is not ideal for the analysis, but for the Universal Service Pilot, the fact that the proportion of missing data is almost the same in pilot areas as non-pilot areas gives us confidence that our synthetic control method can account for the missing data. As the synthetic control is made up of what is actually happening in non-pilot areas, and the general trend in these areas is the same as the pilot areas, our model should largely account for the decline and remain valid.

Chart 1: Case finalisations by month registered for cases eligible for the Universal Service Pilot - indexed to H1 2023



Unfortunately, the same is not true for the Enhanced Service Pilot. Although there is a close relationship between the pilot and non-pilot areas up to October 2024, the proportion of cases that have not been finalised after that point differs significantly between the pilot and non-pilot areas - with non-pilot areas having substantially fewer cases finalised in each month after this point, as demonstrated in Chart 2 below. Our GSC model approach is unlikely to fully account for this.

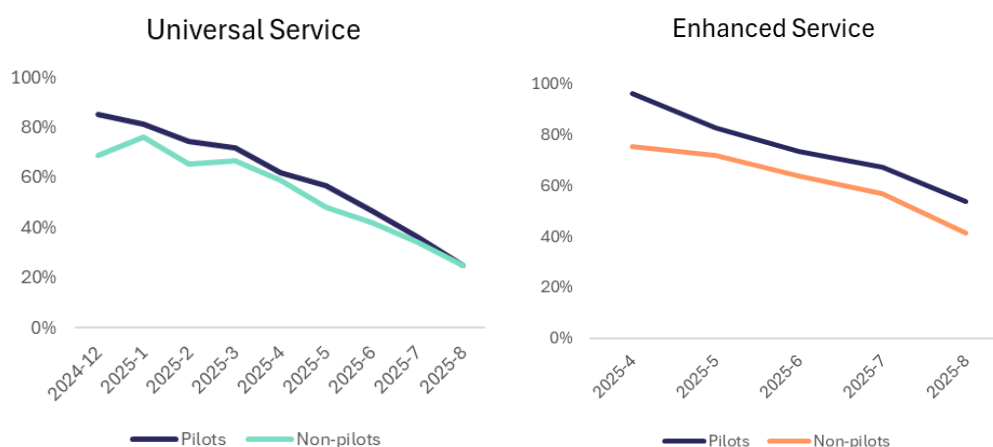
Chart 2: Case finalisations by month registered for cases eligible for the Enhanced Service Pilot - indexed to H1 2023



Focusing on the period when the Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot were operational (Chart 3), we see that the Universal Service Pilot has a much better match between pilot and non-pilot areas in this period, averaging a less than 5% divergence between the two cohorts over the period since

the service went live. In comparison, the Enhanced Service Pilot has an average divergence of 13%, and the synthetic control models showed substantial volatility in the results.

Chart 3: Index case finalisations by month registered for both Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot since service launch up to the cut-off used for modelling



This means that any differences identified when analysing attrition rates in pilot and non-pilot areas could be an artefact of the different rates of finalising cases, rather than a true reflection of the impact of the service. For this reason, the evaluation team decided not to report findings relating to attrition in the Enhanced Service Pilot at this time. Based on the analysis conducted on the proportion of cases which have not been finalised, a 12-month period post-registration is the minimum timeframe before results stabilise and can be confidently reported on. In other words, data for cases registered in April 2025 (the first month of the Enhanced Service Pilot implementation) would only be valid for analysis from the end of April 2026 (and at that point would be the only data suitable for analysis).

The evaluation team anticipates that reporting on the Enhanced Service Pilot impact on victim attrition will be reportable from October 2026 based on cases registered in April to September 2025—the first six months of the service’s operation.

4b. Victim Right to Review Requests (VRRs)

Description of the data shared with Crest

The VTP shared data from the CPS Contact App relating to all VRRs that have been submitted to the CPS between April 2021 and October 2025. The dataset contained the following columns:

- Reason for the VRR

- Date of the original CPS decision
- Date that the VRR request was received by the CPS
- Status of the VRR
- Name of the CPS area responsible for the VRR
- Name of the unit responsible for the VRR
- Who made the decision on the VRR
- Who requested the VRR
- Stage 1 decision outcome
- Date of the Stage 1 decision
- Stage 2 decision outcome
- Date of the Stage 2 decision
- Did the case for which the VRR was raised have a domestic violence flag?
- Did the case for which the VRR was raised have a rape flag?
- Did the case for which the VRR was raised have a child abuse flag?
- Principal offence category.

This data was shared securely with Crest via the CPS Sharepoint. They were uploaded to Crest's secure, shared drive which is only accessible to individuals who are working on the project. All subsequent analysis was conducted in R.

Detail on analysis

Crest conducted descriptive and inferential analysis of this data. Descriptive analysis was used to understand the volumes of VRRs being submitted in pilot and non-pilot areas, before and after the VTP was introduced.

Prior to the analysis, VRRs were defined as eligible for the Universal Service Pilot, Enhanced Service Pilot or Enhanced Service (RASSO) if they met certain criteria, outlined in Table 10. Following the application of these filters:

- 2,326 VRRs were eligible for the Universal Service Pilot
- 447 VRRs were eligible for the Enhanced Service Pilot
- 1,191 VRRs were eligible for the Enhanced Service (RASSO).

Table 10: Criteria for selecting eligible VRRs for the Universal Service Pilot, Enhanced Service Pilot and the Enhanced Service (RASSO)

Universal Service Pilot	Enhanced Service Pilot	Enhanced Service (RASSO)
VRR was submitted on or after 1st December 2024	VRR was submitted on or after 1st April 2025	VRR was submitted on or after particular dates of implementation per region

VRR was submitted in Merseyside & Cheshire or Yorkshire & Humberside	VRR was submitted in Merseyside & Cheshire or Yorkshire & Humberside	The case for which the VRR was raised was assigned to RASSO
The case for which the VRR was raised does not have a DA flag	The case for which the VRR was raised does have a DA flag	Principal offence category is not homicide
The case for which the VRR was raised does not have a rape flag	The case for which the VRR was raised does not have a rape flag	VRR was not cancelled, rejected or a duplicate
The case for which the VRR was raised does not have a child abuse flag	The case for which the VRR was raised does not have a child abuse flag	
The case for which the VRR was raised was not assigned to CCU or RASSO	The case for which the VRR was raised was not assigned to CCU or RASSO	
Principal offence category is not homicide	Principal offence category is not homicide	
VRR was not cancelled, rejected or a duplicate	VRR was not cancelled, rejected or a duplicate	

Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot

Using the raw data, an aggregated VRRs dataset was created to summarise the total number of VRRs submitted each month in each CPS area. An additional variable was then created to define whether the row related to a treatment period, which enables us to capture the impact of the Universal or Enhanced Service Pilot on VRRs.

For the Universal Service Pilot dataset, a variable was created and defined as “1” (i.e. True) if:

- the month was equal to or after December 2024; and
- the CPS area was Merseyside & Cheshire or Yorkshire & Humberside.

For the Enhanced Service Pilot dataset, a variable was created and defined as “1” (i.e. True) if:

- the month was equal to or after April 2025; and
- the CPS area was Merseyside & Cheshire or Yorkshire & Humberside.

Similar to victim attrition, the *gsynth* package in R was used to create a generalised synthetic control model of VRRs, with the overall volume of VRRs as our outcome variable. The function requires the following information – the only difference between the models for the Universal

Service Pilot and Enhanced Service Pilot are the inclusion of “universal_pilot” or “enhanced_pilot” respectively in the model formula.

- **The name of the dataset for analysis** – in this instance, our aggregated dataset above.
- **Formula** – a symbolic description of the model to be fitted in the form of:
 - Outcome ~ Treatment. In our specific model, this was:
 - `vrr_count ~ universal_pilot OR enhanced_pilot`
- **Index** – specifying the unit and time indicators. These are the CPS area responsible for the VRR and the month when the VRR was submitted respectively.
- **SE, Inference, EM, Force, CV, R, nboots, Seed** – each element of these functions were set identically as they were in the attrition model in Section 4a.

Enhanced Service (RASSO)

The analytical approach undertaken for VRRs submitted under the Enhanced Service (RASSO) was different to what was used for the Universal or Enhanced Service Pilot. This is because all areas had implemented the Enhanced Service (RASSO) at some point during the data period, meaning after a particular point there is no control group to form a counterfactual which is the basis of a generalised synthetic control model.

Instead, a negative binomial generalised linear mixed model was used. This was conducted using the *glmmTMB* package in R. This method is appropriate for interrupted time series data where outcome data is collected before and after an intervention (i.e. implementation of the Enhanced Service [RASSO]). It aims to answer whether the level or trend of VRRs changed after the introduction of the Enhanced Service (RASSO) and whether that varied across CPS areas.

As a starting point, using the raw data, an aggregated VRRs dataset was created to summarise the total number of VRRs submitted each month in each CPS area that were eligible for the Enhanced Service (RASSO). An additional variable was then created to define whether the row related to a treatment period.

For the Enhanced Service (RASSO) dataset, a variable was created and defined as “1” (i.e. True) if:

- the month was equal to or after September 2024; and
 - the CPS area was Merseyside & Cheshire
- the month was equal to or after October 2024; and
 - the CPS area was Yorkshire & Humberside
- the month was equal to or after November 2024; and
 - the CPS area was East Midlands, Wessex, East of England, London South, London North, West Midlands, Cymru Wales, Thames and Chiltern, South West, South East and North West
- the month was equal to or after December 2024; and

- the CPS area was North East.

The function requires the following information:

- **The name of the dataset for analysis** – in this instance, our aggregated dataset above.
- **Formula** – a symbolic description of the model to be fitted in the form of:
 - Outcome ~ months_since_treatment + post_treatment + post_treatment_slope + (1 + months_since_t | review_area)
 - This formula controls for fixed effects, which are predictors that are estimated and generalised across the population. In this model, “months_since_treatment”, “post_treatment” and “post_treatment_slope” are fixed effects as the aim is to measure, on average, what the impact of the treatment (implementation of the Enhanced Service [RASSO]) is on the number of VRRs.
 - It also controls for random effects, which are predictors that capture the variation across different groups. In this model, those are CPS areas which may have different trends and volumes of VRRs. Each area receives their own intercept (baseline count of VRRs) and a specific underlying trend in the volume of VRRs over time is modelled (months_since_treatment).
- **Family** – this defines how the mean of the outcome is modelled and what kind of data it is taken from. This was set to *n_binom2* on account of the outcome being count data and that there was evidence of overdispersion (variance of the data larger than the mean).
- **Dispformula** – this allows for the modelling of the dispersion parameter which controls how variance relates to the mean. This was kept to the default setting of “~1” which assumes dispersion is constant across all observations in the data.

Table 11: Overview of the results or information provided by a negative binomial linear mixed model

Type of result or information	Explanation
Intercept	This value represents the expected log-count when all other predictors are zero. In order to interpret this result in relation to our data, the log-count must be exponentiated. Once that has been done, the result tells us the baseline expected count of VRRs recorded in a month per area, before the implementation of the Enhanced Service (RASSO).
Months_since_treatment	This value captures the underlying trend in log-counts over time, regardless of treatment. A positive result suggests that counts of VRRs increase with each additional month, from the intercept baseline.

Post_treatment	This value measures the shift in log-counts at the point of treatment, holding the underlying trend (months_since_treatment) constant. A positive result suggests that the introduction of the treatment had an immediate impact on the outcome.
Post_treatment_slope	This value represents the change in the underlying trend in log-counts after the point of treatment, relative to the pre-treatment slope. Any positive or negative result, therefore, must be viewed in relation to the months_since_treatment value.

4c. Complaints

Description of the data shared with Crest

The VTP shared data from the CPS Contact App relating to all complaints that were submitted to the CPS between April 2021 and October 2025. The dataset contained the following columns:

- Date when complaint was received
- Date of original incident
- Name of the CPS area responsible for the complaint
- Name of the unit responsible for the VRR
- Type of complaint
- Status of the complaint and reason for status
- Stage at which the complaint was resolved
- Outcome of the complaint
- Date when the complaint was resolved
- Principal offence category
- Type of complainant
- Numerous categories (n=25) describing the specific nature of the complaint.

This data was shared securely with Crest via the CPS Sharepoint. It was uploaded to Crest's secure, shared drive which is only accessible to individuals who are working on the project. All subsequent analysis was conducted in R.

Detail on analysis

Crest conducted descriptive and inferential analysis of this data. Descriptive analysis was used to understand the volumes of complaints being submitted in pilot and non-pilot areas, before and after the VTP was introduced.

Unlike for VRRs, identifying complaints that would have been eligible for the Universal or Enhanced Service Pilot was more difficult. This data did not include flags indicating whether the case involved domestic abuse, rape, child abuse, or a vulnerable individual. As a result, a looser definition was applied (as outlined in Table 12) which likely resulted in an overestimation of the number of complaints that were submitted in relation to cases that were handled under the Universal or Enhanced Service Pilot. Upon application of those filters, 1,647 complaints were included as having been eligible for the Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot. 247 of those complaints were recorded within the two pilot areas.

Table 12: Criteria for selecting eligible complaints for the Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot

Criteria
The complaint was submitted on or after 1st December 2024
The responsible CPS area for the complaint was Merseyside and Cheshire OR Yorkshire and Humberside
The case for which the complaint was associated was not assigned to CCU or RASSO
The principal offence category for the case for which the complaint was associated was not homicide
The status of the complaint was not “cancelled”, “rejected” or “duplicate”
The complainant was a victim

Using the raw data, an aggregated complaints dataset was created to summarise the total number of complaints submitted each month in each CPS area. An additional variable was then created to define whether the row related to a treatment period.

For the complaints dataset, a variable was created and defined as “1” (i.e. True) if:

- the month was equal to or after December 2024; and
- the CPS area was Merseyside & Cheshire or Yorkshire & Humberside.

Moving beyond the descriptive analysis, the *gsynth* package in R was used to create a generalised synthetic control model of complaints, with the overall volume of complaints submitted as our outcome variable. The function requires the following information, outlined below. Unlike the approach to attrition or VRRs, there is only one version of the model for complaints as complaints associated with the Universal or Enhanced Service Pilot could not be separated out.

- **The name of the dataset for analysis** – in this instance, our aggregated dataset above.
- **Formula** – a symbolic description of the model to be fitted in the form of:
 - Outcome ~ Treatment. In our specific model, this was:
 - complaints ~ pilot
- **Index** – specifying the unit and time indicators. These are the CPS area responsible for the complaint and month of complaint registration respectively.
- **SE, Inference, EM, Force, CV, R, nboots, Seed** – each element of these functions were set identically as they were in attrition and VRR models in Section 4a and 4b respectively.

5. CPS monitoring data

Several datasets relating to VTP activity were shared with Crest. An overview of key datasets shared that have been analysed as part of our reporting are outlined below.

- **Governance data** – this data provided volumes of victims that were in scope and that were successfully contacted by the Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot between June 2025 and January 2026. This data also contained monitoring information, relating to a victim's preferred method of contact and success rate of phone calls to victims.
- **RASSO monthly data** – this data provided the volumes of victims that had been offered (as well as accepted) pre-trial meetings as part of delivering the Enhanced Service (RASSO) between May 2025 and January 2026. Descriptive information about those meetings, including the proportion of those meetings that were held in-person or led by the CPS prosecutor, are also included.
- **Incoming and outgoing communications logs** – this data provided the volume of incoming and outgoing communications sent to victims in the Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot.

Data cleaning and analytical approach

Minimal data cleaning was conducted on these datasets. The analysis conducted was descriptive and covered several areas. Governance data and the RASSO monthly data was used to understand the total number of victims who received either the Universal Service Pilot, Enhanced Service Pilot or Enhanced Service (RASSO). The RASSO monthly data was also used to provide descriptive information on pre-trial meetings conducted for victims under the Enhanced Service (RASSO). Incoming and outgoing communications data was also used to help describe the nature of demand being received by the Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot.

CBA methods

1. Introduction

1a. CBA purpose and aims

One of the key evaluation questions was to assess value for money, specifically:

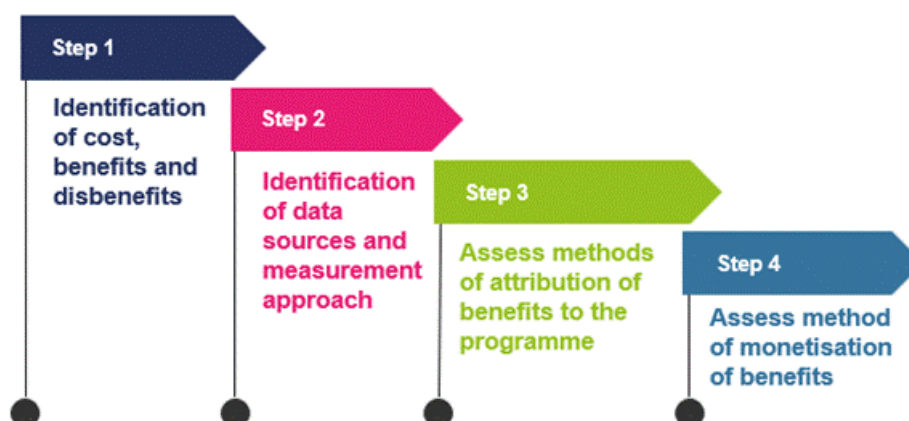
- Does or could the VTP represent value for money?
 - What parts of the services are delivering value and where could greater value be derived?

Value for money was measured using cost-benefit analysis (CBA) to assess the monetisable costs and benefits of the programme. CBA was conducted at both the programme and service-level (Universal Service Pilot, Enhanced Service Pilot, Enhanced Service [RASSO]) for the VTP. Conducting CBA at both the programme and service-level ensures the CPS has an overall assessment of the value for money of the programme and the ability to assess which parts of the programme contribute most value for money. CBA can also be used to provide an indication of how the value for money of the programme may change as it is expanded or changed in future years.

1b. Summary of approach

The CBA was assessed through a four-step approach, as summarised in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Summary of methodology



The CBA was informed by:

- **A document review** – Fortia Insight researchers reviewed programme documentation, including the CPS’s internal costing model, used to estimate and forecast the costs of the programme;
- **Theory of Change (ToC) and Outcomes Framework** – Crest, with the involvement of Fortia Insight, developed a ToC and outcomes framework as part of the overall VTP evaluation to inform the impact evaluation;
- **Stakeholder engagement** – Fortia Insight researchers led a series of workshops and presentations with CPS staff and other stakeholders, including engagement with CPS finance staff and the CPS Victim Attrition Working Group;
- **A Rapid Evidence Review (RER)** – Fortia Insight conducted a RER on monetisation approaches used in similar evaluations in the public sector in the UK and other relevant countries; and
- **Task Time Recording (TTR)** to collect data on the time taken to perform communication and non-communication tasks for both the Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot⁹.

The CPS Cost Benefit Analysis Working Group helped identify the data sources for the Summary Report. The identified costs include staff costs (incl. pay costs and accommodation costs), venue costs, travel costs, and printing costs.

The identified benefits were grouped together under three broad benefit categories:

- **Efficiency benefits**, which provide a non-cash-releasing benefit to the CPS through reduced resource required on communication and non-communication activities.
- **Victim outcomes**, which provide non-cash-releasing benefits to victims, such as improved trust, fairness, and wellbeing.
- **Reduced victim attrition**, which provides non-cash-releasing benefits from reducing ‘wasted’ resource spent on cases that do not result in a trial as well as productive time spent on cases that would otherwise have been closed due to victim attrition. Note these benefits are not necessarily cost savings, since the same or more resource is used in cases resulting in a trial¹⁰.

All costs were cash-releasing. All benefits were non-cash-releasing, meaning that a shadow price was introduced to turn them into monetary values. The specific approach used is provided in the following sub-sections.

⁹ Note that it was not feasible to collect this data with TTR for the Enhanced Service (RASSO).

¹⁰ Reducing victim attrition may have further benefits through securing justice through the successful prosecution of cases, and potentially further knock-on benefits of reducing reoffending. This highlights the long-term value of the VTP, but was not captured at this stage of the programme.

2. Cost Benefit Analysis Framework

2a. Overview

Identifying the potential costs, benefits, and disbenefits of a programme is the cornerstone of a value for money assessment. CBA includes the direct¹¹ costs of the programme to the CPS. This CBA includes the direct, indirect, and wider cash-releasing and non-cash-releasing benefits (e.g. victim wellbeing) to the CPS, victims, and the wider CJS.

In CBA, as outlined in the HM Treasury Green Book¹² and Magenta Book¹³ guidance, costs are the use of an input to carry out a programme/intervention, which may be a financial cost. Benefits represent the positive outcomes or advantages resulting from an intervention, such as economic growth, improved wellbeing, enhanced efficiency, and environmental gains. In contrast, disbenefits refer to the negative outcomes or disadvantages directly associated with an intervention. These may include adverse effects on health, the environment, or social and economic wellbeing.

For the VTP, given that the costs were actual and forecast costs based on confirmed vacancies, no optimism bias was applied to costs. The costs and benefits were identified against the ToC and Outcomes Framework to ensure attribution to the VTP.

2b. Approach

A clear scope of the anticipated costs, benefits, and disbenefits to be considered in the CBA was defined using the following steps.

1. An initial longlist of costs, benefits, and disbenefits was identified through development of the programme and service-level ToCs. A series of ToC and Outcome Measurement workshops were conducted for each service, led by Crest, to inform the overall evaluation. Through these workshops, Fortia Insight ensured that all relevant costs and benefits were reflected in the ToCs.
2. An initial longlist of anticipated costs, benefits and disbenefits based on the Outcomes Framework and the programme and intervention-level ToCs was developed. Costs were aligned with ToC inputs. Benefits were aligned with ToC outputs and impacts. Anticipated potential negative outcomes were recorded as disbenefits.

¹¹ Direct costs and benefits are to the originating organisation, indirect costs and benefits are to other public sector organisations, and wider costs and benefits to UK society are to individuals.

¹² HM Treasury (2026). THE GREEN BOOK UK GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE ON APPRAISAL. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/698dbcd17da91680ad7f4308/The_Green_Book_2026.pdf.

¹³ HM Treasury (2020). Magenta Book: Central Government guidance on evaluation. [online] Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/879438/HMT_Magenta_Book.pdf.

3. Benefits were identified for CPS, wider CJS, and victims. Three types of benefits and disbenefits were identified: efficiency, victim outcome, and victim attrition.
4. The longlist was narrowed down to a core set of costs and benefits for the CBA based on feasibility of monetisation and data availability.

As shown in CBA Section 2c, benefits were non-cash-releasing, meaning that a shadow price was estimated to monetise the benefits. To estimate the unit cost of resources, HM Treasury's Green Book recommends using market prices where available. Otherwise, a shadow price is assumed to estimate the value of a good or service where market prices are not available or would not reflect total costs and benefits. Therefore, each benefit incurred a three-step monetisation approach:

Step 1: Identify and measure impact

Determine where the programme creates measurable change, such as time saved (efficiency), improved victim wellbeing (victim outcome), or reduction of cases finalising because of victim attrition. This involves collecting data from surveys, administrative records, and statistical models.

Step 2: Quantify the change

Use appropriate methods to estimate the scale of the impact:

- Time savings are calculated using TTR (see the CBA method note at the end of this section for details) and staff cost data.
- Victim wellbeing is assessed through regression analysis linking service experience to life satisfaction.
- Victim attrition impacts are measured by estimating the number of cases impacted by the VTP.

Step 3: Monetise the benefit

Convert the quantified changes into monetary values:

- Multiply time saved by hourly staff costs to produce a value of efficiency.
- Apply HM Treasury's WELLBY method to translate wellbeing improvements into financial terms.
- Use cost estimates to the CJS to value avoided wasted resources due to reduced victim attrition.

For both appraisal and evaluation, it is essential that conducting CBA follows the best practice methods detailed in the HM Treasury Green Book¹⁴.

¹⁴ *ibid.*

2c. Costs and Benefits of VTP

Costs of VTP

The cost data requested from the CPS is in Table 13.

Table 13: VTP Costs (2025/26)

Data Category	Description
Actual staff costs	Average total staff remuneration (salary plus NICs plus pension plus any other financial/ non-financial remuneration) by grade.
Actual staff numbers	Number of Full Time Equivalent staff in each service and programme management team per grade.
Actual non-staff costs	Larger items of spending, including: • Estate • Printing/postage • IT • Venue hire/travel for meetings • Digital costs • Training costs.
Programme financial spending records/ accounts	Financial statements of spending, ideally for each service and programme management.

The actual costs and assumptions for the forecast costs (e.g. number of vacancies, grade, and salary) were provided by the CPS. The period for the analysis is 2025/26. The granularity for the Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot was not consistently available (e.g. for non-staff costs); thus, total costs were calculated. The forecast costs were estimated by the CPS and combined with the actual costs to form total VTP costs for 2025/26. All costs were cash-releasing. No further adjustments were made.

The staff costs data detailed in the table were also used to estimate the value of time savings to monetise efficiency savings.

Benefits of VTP

The benefits from the Outcomes Framework can be found in Table 14, Table 15, and Table 16.

Table 14: Efficiency by VTP service

US pilot benefits/disbenefits	ES pilot and RASSO benefits/disbenefits
Increased volume of victims that contact the CPS US for more information	Increased proportion of relevant enquiries received by the OIC/WCU/VLOs'
Increased volume/frequency of victims who contact the CPS asking why charge decision was made on their case	Increased volume and frequency of victims and victim advocates contacting VLOs
Reduced proportion of emails/ letters/ phone calls received by the Universal Team that were redirected to them by another CPS team or the WCU	Increased volume of victims that contact the CPS/OIC/WCU for more information
Reduced volume of complaints and use of Victim's Right to Review (VRR) scheme from victims due to inaccurate or incomplete information	Increased volume/frequency of victims who contact the CPS asking why charge decision was made on their case
Reduced volume of victims that contact the CPS/OIC/WCU for more information	Reduced number of questions that VLOs receive about the trial process
Reduced time spent by OIC communicating the CPS charging decision	Reduced number of questions victim advocates (ISVAs, IDVAs) receive about the trial process
Reduced volume/ frequency of victims contacting the CPS asking for an update on their case	Reduced time spent by courts (on the day) looking for victims/witnesses
Reduced volume/ frequency of victims who contact the CPS asking for an update on their case (after a VCL letter was sent)	Reduced volume and frequency of pre-trial related queries received by the OIC, following a PtM with a victim
Reduced volume/ frequency of victims who contact the CPS asking why the CPS decided not to prosecute/ discontinue/ substantially alter a charge	Reduced time spent by OIC communicating the CPS charging decision
Reduced volume/frequency of victims who contact the CPS asking about how the decision to charge was made	Reduced volume and frequency of pre-trial related queries received by the WCU, following a PtM with a victim
Reduced volume/frequency of victims who contact the CPS asking what the charging decision on their case was	Reduced volume and frequency of victims contacting police officers about the PtM meeting
Reduced volume/frequency of victims who contact the police asking what the charging decision on their case was	Reduced volume and frequency of victims contacting victim advocates (ISVAs/IDVAs) about the PtM meeting

	Reduced volume of complaints and use of Victim's Right to Review (VRR) scheme from victims due to inaccurate or incomplete information
	Reduced volume of victims that contact the CPS/OIC/WCU for more information
	Reduced volume/ frequency of victims who contact the CPS asking about how the decision to charge was made
	Reduced volume/ frequency of victims who contact the CPS asking for an update on their case
	Reduced volume/ frequency of victims who contact the CPS asking for an update on their case (after a VCL letter was sent)
	Reduced volume/ frequency of victims who contact the CPS asking why the CPS decided not to prosecute/ discontinue/ substantially alter a charge
	Reduced volume/frequency of victims who contact the CPS asking what the charging decision on their case was

Table 15: Victim Outcome by VTP service

US pilot benefits/disbenefits	ES pilot and RASSO benefits/disbenefits
Increased proportion of victims that report that the service they received from the CPS improved their confidence in the CPS and the CJS	Increased proportion of victims that report that the service they received from the CPS improved their confidence in the CPS and the CJS
Increased proportion of victims that report that the service they received from the CPS had a positive impact on their wellbeing	Increased proportion of victims that report that the service they received from the CPS had a positive impact on their wellbeing

Table 16: Victim Attrition by VTP service

US pilot benefits/disbenefits	ES pilot and RASSO benefits/disbenefits
Reduced proportion of cases stopped after a defendant has been charged because a victim no longer supports the prosecution	Increased proportion of victims attending court

Reduced proportion of cases where prosecution offers no evidence because the victim no longer supports prosecution	Reduced proportion of ineffective trials due to victim withdrawal
Reduced proportion of ineffective trials due to victim withdrawal	Reduced proportion of vacated trials due to victim withdrawal
Greater proportion of victims leave the system from before court to post-charge	Reduced volume of people dropping out of the system following their PtM
	Shift in the proportion of victims that leave the system from before court, to post-PtM meeting

Monetisable Benefits

Based on the available data, the following benefits that were monetised for this report are in Table 17.

Table 17: VTP Monetisable Benefits

Type of Benefit	Monetisable Benefit	Service	Data Source
Efficiency	Reduced proportion of time on VCL communication activities	US Pilot	- TTR - Weighted hourly staff cost (Grades B1 and B2¹⁵)
		ES Pilot	
	Reduced volume of complaints from victims due to inaccurate or incomplete information	US Pilot	- Crest (synthetic control method using complaints data) - TTR - Weighted hourly staff cost (Grades B1 and B2)
		ES Pilot	
	Reduced volume of VRR requests from victims due to inaccurate or incomplete information	US Pilot	- Crest (synthetic control method using complaints data) - TTR - Weighted hourly staff cost (Grades B1 and B2)
		ES Pilot	
Victim Outcome	Increased proportion of victims that report that the service they received from the CPS had a positive impact on their wellbeing	US	- Crest (Decision to charge survey, NFA survey, Pre-PtM survey) - HM Treasury WELLBY - Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW)
		ES Pilot	
		RASSO	

¹⁵ Only staff at Grades B1 and B2 recorded their time using the TTR form.

Victim Attrition	Reduced proportion of ineffective/vacated trials due to victim withdrawal	US	• Crest (synthetic control method using CPS victim attrition data) • Heeks et al. (2018) from RER
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All benefits were non-cash-releasing, meaning that a shadow price was introduced to turn them into monetary values.

2d. Data sources

The data sources used to estimate the monetisable benefits were:

- 1) TTR surveys with the Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot teams
- 2) The TTR was undertaken for both the Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot to capture: (i) a set of questions to be added to the CPS victim communication tracker to track the time spent on victim communication activities, and (ii) a non-communications activity tracker to track the time spent on other activities, such as meetings or training. These tools were designed to capture information on the length of time taken to perform specific tasks. More information about the TTR can be found in the CBA method note at the end of this chapter.
- 3) Analysis from the synthetic control method using complaints and VRR data from Crest
- 4) Staff costs data from the CPS
- 5) The victim outcome survey responses from Crest
- 6) Data on fairness, respect, and wellbeing from the CSEW
- 7) WELLBY values¹⁶ from HM Treasury
- 8) Analysis from the synthetic control method using CPS victim attrition data from Crest
- 9) Academic research from the rapid evidence review
- 10) Data gathering workshop and interviews with CPS data and delivery teams to build assumptions.

2e. Counterfactuals

Measuring and attributing benefits is closely related to the impact evaluation. Attribution, also known as additionality, is the process of identifying the amount of any benefit realised that could be attributed to the programme. In other words, it reflects the real change in social value that would not have occurred in the absence of the programme. This is closely linked to quantitative approaches used in the impact evaluation that attempt to identify the causal impact of the programme on outcomes.

¹⁶ HM Treasury (2021). *Wellbeing Guidance for Appraisal: Supplementary Green Book Guidance*. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/60fa9169d3bf7f0448719daf/Wellbeing_guidance_for_appraisal_-_supplementary_Green_Book_guidance.pdf.

For each benefit, counterfactual approaches were assessed based on the impact of the programme according to the Maryland Scientific Methods Scale (MSMS)¹⁷, ranging from level five for experimental methods to level one for before and after comparisons without use of a control group. Based on the methods available for each benefit, potential comparators that could be used to identify a counterfactual scenario were considered. Where a control group was not available, we considered ‘assumption-based’ counterfactuals. These are presented in Table 18.

Table 18: Counterfactual measure and MSMS¹⁸

Type of Benefit	Monetisable Benefit	Service	Counterfactual Measure	MSMS
Efficiency	Reduced proportion of time on VCL communication activities	US Pilot	Difference in costs between legal roles and Victim Liaison Officers (VLOs).	3
		ES Pilot and RASSO	Difference in costs between legal roles and VLOs.	3
	Reduced volume of complaints from victims due to inaccurate or incomplete information	US Pilot	Synthetic control method using complaints data.	3
		ES Pilot and RASSO	Synthetic control method using complaints data.	3
	Reduced volume of VRR requests from victims due to inaccurate or incomplete information	US Pilot	Synthetic control method using VRR data.	3
		ES Pilot and RASSO	Synthetic control method using VRR data.	3
Victim Outcome	Increased proportion of victims that report that the service they received from the CPS had a positive impact on their wellbeing	US Pilot	Comparison of VTP surveys to national survey (e.g. Victim Commissioners survey).	3
		ES Pilot and RASSO	Comparison of VTP surveys to national survey (e.g. Victim Commissioners survey).	3

¹⁷ Farrington, D., Gottfredson, D., Sherman, L. and Welsh, B. (2002). *Maryland Scientific Methods Scale (From Evidence-Based Crime Prevention, P 13-21, 2002, Lawrence W. Sherman, David P. Farrington, et al, eds., -- See NCJ-198648)*. U.S. Department of Justice - Office of Justice Programs. Available at: <https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/maryland-scientific-methods-scale-evidence-based-crime-prevention->

¹⁸ What works centre for local economic growth (2015). *The Maryland Scientific Methods Scale (SMS)*. Available at: <https://whatworksgrowth.org/resource-library/the-maryland-scientific-methods-scale-sms/>.

Victim Attrition	Reduced proportion of ineffective/vacated trials due to victim withdrawal	US Pilot	Synthetic control method using CPS victim attrition data.	4
		ES Pilot and RASSO	Synthetic control method using CPS victim attrition data.	4

Using the counterfactual allows the monetisable benefit to be isolated to the VTP.

2f. Optimism bias

Optimism bias is the tendency for appraisers to be over-optimistic about key project parameters, including capital costs, operating costs, project duration and benefits delivery. Applying optimism bias decreases the estimated nominal benefits and increases the nominal costs. As the costs provided for the CBA were actual and confirmed forecast, no optimism bias was applied to costs. Given the assumption-driven nature of the benefits, an optimism bias of 15%, based on HM Treasury Green Book guidance on optimism bias¹⁹, was applied to all benefits to turn nominal values into nominal economic values.

2g. Discounting and adjusting for the inflation rate

As the current financial year, 2025/26, was used as the base year in which all costs and benefits occurred, all values were expressed in present terms. Therefore, no discounting or inflation adjustments were applied in the annualised CBA.

2h. Estimating value for money

There are two key metrics used to assess value for money through CBA, the benefit-cost ratio (BCR) and net present value (NPV), defined as:

$$\text{Benefit Cost Ratio} = \frac{\text{Total present value of all benefits}}{\text{Total present value of all costs}}$$

$$\text{Net Present Value} = \text{Total present value of all benefits} - \text{Total present value of all costs}$$

The present value of benefits is also known as real, discounted economic benefits. The present value of costs is also known as real, discounted economic costs.

¹⁹ HM Treasury (2013). *Green Book supplementary guidance: optimism bias*. GOV.UK. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/green-book-supplementary-guidance-optimism-bias>.

2i. Sensitivity analysis

Conducting CBA, either for appraisal or evaluation, typically involves many assumptions about which costs and benefits to include, and what the evidence implies is a reasonable estimate of the size of benefits and their monetary value. This means that there is uncertainty about the BCR and NPV estimates. Sensitivity analysis involves exploring the sensitivity of expected outcomes of the VTP to potential changes in key input variables. It can be used to test the impact of changes in assumptions by estimating the best- and worst-case scenarios for each benefit. The BCR and NPV should then be estimated in both scenarios to provide a range within which it can be expected that the true BCR and NPV of the programme will lie, given the best available evidence.

3. Costs

3a. Overview

This chapter outlines the key monetisable costs for the CBA of the VTP. Monetisation refers to the process of assigning a monetary value to benefits, enabling their inclusion in key metrics used to assess value for money, using the BCR and NPV. As mentioned in CBA Section 2c, the CPS provided the following costs:

1. Actual staff costs – this was provided as salary by grade and accommodation unit costs
2. Actual non-staff costs – these include programme management, digital AI letter drafter development, and evaluation spend
3. Programme financial spending records or accounts – this was provided for 2025/26.

Actual staff numbers were also requested from the CPS to calculate the total cost of staff. In the annualised CBA, the costs covered 2025/26.

3b. Monetisable Costs in the annualised CBA

The staff figures used in the CBA include a combination of actual and forecast data. As a result, the total staff costs reported comprise both actual and projected expenditure. At the time the CBA was undertaken, actual cost data was available only up to November 2025. Costs for the period December 2025 to March 2026 have therefore been forecast and shared by the CPS. In addition, the analysis indicates that VRR efficiency represents a disbenefit rather than a benefit because the increase in VRR requests (due to better awareness of the right) increase CPS costs through the resources needed to respond to them. It was therefore treated as an additional cost within the CBA (see CBA Section 4b). The total costs to the VTP for this report are presented in Table 19 below.

Table 19: VTP Cost - Nominal

Category	2025/26 – VTP Costs
Programme staffing	£5.0M
General Annual Expenditure (GAE) & Capital	£3.5M
RASSO	£4.7M
VRPs efficiency disbenefits	£0.8K
Total	£13.2M

After adjusting for inflation and discounting, the real, discounted economic costs became £13.2M, as shown in Table 20 below.

Table 20: VTP Cost – Real, Discounted

Category	2025/26 – VTP Costs
Total Nominal Cost	£13.2M
Total Real, Discounted Cost	£13.2M

These are also known as the present value of costs. These costs were used in the CBA for the value for money assessment.

4. Benefits

4a. Overview

This chapter outlines the key monetisable benefits for the CBA of the VTP. Monetisation refers to the process of assigning a monetary value to benefits, enabling their inclusion in key metrics used to assess value for money, using the BCR and NPV.

While monetisation is an essential step in the evaluation process, not all benefits can be readily quantified in monetary terms. These non-monetisable benefits form the value for money assessment, and will be included in conjunction with the CBA framework. Note that, as these benefits are non-monetisable (i.e. not measured as a monetary value), they cannot be factored into the calculation of the BCR and NPV.

The CBA will include the following three key types of benefits:

1. Efficiency
2. Victim outcome
3. Victim attrition.

The methods draw on the Rapid Evidence Review (RER), thus are known in research. It is important to note that estimating monetised benefits relies on the ability to effectively measure the

benefits and attribute them to the VTP. Since all benefits and disbenefits identified stem from the ToC, all were included in the Outcomes Framework. Priority was given to outcomes where data to estimate the benefits and disbenefits were available as well as attribution to the VTP was possible.

4b. Efficiency

Efficiency benefits are typically measured as a reduction in the resources required to complete a task or produce a given level of output. Within the VTP, these benefits are primarily associated with reductions in staff salary due to changes in staff composition, but the benefit is measured in time.

Monetisation of efficiency benefits follows a straightforward calculation, provided that both the amount of resource saved, and its associated cost are known or can be reliably estimated. The monetary value of efficiency benefits can be determined using the following equation:

$$\text{Monetary value of efficiency benefit} = \text{Units of resource saved} \times \text{Unit cost of resource}$$

In the case of reductions in staff salary due to shifting communication and non-communication activities from the legal teams to VLOs, efficiency benefits can be calculated by multiplying the number of hours spent by the changes in average hourly staff cost (the shadow price). The hourly cost reflects the total cost to the employer, encompassing gross salary, employer National Insurance Contributions, and pension contributions. As the tasks were performed by staff at different pay grades, a weighted average of staff costs was applied. This was based on the proportion of total time spent on the task by staff at different grades to ensure an accurate reflection of the overall efficiency gain. This method also incorporates the counterfactual.

Counterfactual for Efficiency

As described in CBA Section 2e, the counterfactual for the Efficiency benefit was from before the VTP and the assumption that the staff performing the communication and non-communication activities shift from the legal teams to VLOs, whose salaries are lower than those in the legal teams. This is also based on the assumption that both the legal teams and VLOs take the same amount of time to complete communication and non-communication activities.

Additionality was calculated by taking the difference between the costs after and before the VTP, assuming that the share of activities (or tasks) that are completed by the legal teams decrease by the same share of activities that are completed by VLOs increase.

Calculating Efficiency

As described in CBA Section 2c, the value of Efficiency benefits is presented in Table 21. The time was converted into hours to ensure consistent units for the calculation.

Table 21: Efficiency Benefits

Monetisable Benefit	Service	Data Source	Value
Reduced proportion of time on VCL communication activities	US Pilot	TTR.	298.12 hours per month.
		Weighted hourly staff cost.	£69.14 for legal; £29.47 for VLO.
	ES Pilot and RASSO	TTR.	0.78 hours per month.
		Weighted hourly staff cost.	£69.14 for legal; £29.47 for VLO.
Reduced volume of complaints from victims due to inaccurate or incomplete information	US Pilot	Crest (synthetic control method using complaints data).	-0.51 complaints ²⁰ .
		TTR.	0.54 hours per month.
		Weighted hourly staff cost.	£29.47 for VLO.
	ES Pilot and RASSO	Crest (synthetic control method using complaints data).	-0.51 complaints ²¹ .
		TTR.	0.54 hours per month.
		Weighted hourly staff cost.	£29.47 for VLO.
Reduced volume of VRR requests from victims due to inaccurate or incomplete information	US Pilot	Crest (synthetic control method using VRR data).	+1.72 VRRs ²²
		TTR.	0.43 hours per month.
		Weighted hourly staff cost.	£29.47 for VLO.
	ES Pilot and RASSO	Crest (synthetic control method using VRR data).	+0.33 VRRs ²³
		TTR.	0.43 hours per month.
		Weighted hourly staff cost.	£29.47for VLO.

Note: 1) Staff costs are in 2025/26 prices. 2) As the analysis indicates that VRR efficiency represents a disbenefit rather than a benefit, it was treated as an additional cost within the CBA (see CBA Section 3c).

The data used for this preliminary analysis includes time spent on the communication activities presented in Table 22.

Table 22: US and ES Communication Activities

²⁰ p-value = 0.08. 95% CI [-2.12, 0.10].

²¹ As above.

²² p-value = 0.27. 95% CI [-1.37, 4.82]

²³ p-value = 0.44. 95% CI [-0.50, 1.15]

US	ES
Time spent on calls (incl. first, second & third attempt of contact, incoming and outgoing communications)	Time spent reviewing case details on case management system (CMS)
Time spent on emails (incl. drafting, reviewing & sending the email, incoming and outgoing communications)	Time spent on calls (incl. initial call & attempts, follow-up calls, incoming calls)
Time spent on letters (incl. drafting, reviewing, printing & sending the letter)	Time spent sending information pack
Time spent updating CMS following communication (incl. first, second & third attempt of contact)	Time spent updating CMS following communication
Time spent reviewing case details on CMS (incl. first, second & third attempt of contact)	Time spent on IDVA support
Time taken for the case to be completed (from the case was allocated until the letter was sent)	

The data used for this preliminary analysis includes time spent on the non-communication activities presented in Table 23.

Table 23: US and ES Non-Communication Activities

US	ES
Induction or training activities	Activities related to management
Non-communication activities related to victim responsibilities	Induction or training activities
Digital testing activity	Non-communication activities related to victim responsibilities
General day-to day activities (previously named as "corporate responsibilities")	Digital testing activity
Other activities	Activities related to complaints
	Activities related to VRR
	General day-to day activities
	Other activities

For the Universal Service, 'Other activities' included bot runs, writing and drafting No Further Action (NFA) letters, and watching recordings of meetings. For the Enhanced Service Pilot, 'Other activities' included calls to the CPS IT help desk and drafting VCL letters.

The TTR was completed several times by the same individuals. It is currently unclear how many reports were completed per individual; the effective sample size is smaller than the raw number of

observations. The number of observations by data points are presented in Table 24 for the Universal Service and in Table 25 for the Enhanced Service.

Table 24: US number of observations (i.e. each recorded task entry) by data points

Observations	19/03/25	26/03/25	26/06/25	05/08/25	31/10/25	26/01/26
Communication Activities	273	204	208	376	233	192
Non-Communication Activities	65	110	88	147	45	51

Across data points, the number of observations ranged between 192 and 376 for communication activities, and between 45 and 147 for non-communication activities.

Table 25: ES number of observations by data points

Observations	Area	08/07/25	05/08/25	31/10/25	26/01/26
Communication	London	0	0	0	15
	Yorkshire and Humberside	145	260	265	36
	Wessex	0	52	221	13
	Mersey-Cheshire	213	296	547	93
Non-Communication	-	109	104	184	156

The number of observations ranged between 0 and 15 for London (owing to the fact that they only took part in one data point), between 36 and 265 for Yorkshire and Humberside, between 0 and 221 for Wessex (owing to the fact that they did not take part in the first data point), and between 93 and 547 in Mersey-Cheshire for communication activities. The number of observations for non-communication activities ranged between 104 and 184.

Notably, some responses for the Universal Service Pilot included handling complaints, yet a unique question for handling complaints was not included in the pilot version of the TTR sent to respondents. Also, for the Enhanced Service, the unique question on complaints also included VRR. The preliminary analysis assumed that an individual either spent their time on a complaint or a VRR, not both. Adjustments were made on the TTR prior to the final round of TTR data collection.

Additionally, the TTR is conditional on accurate recording and reporting of time spent during the individual's workday. It is acknowledged that some individuals may under- or over-estimate their time or provide estimates at the end of their working week as opposed to each workday. This means that the time recorded may include inaccuracies and, therefore, may not be replicable.

There are important caveats regarding how this data was collected and interpreted:

1. **Repeated entries by individuals:** The TTR was completed multiple times by the same individuals, but it is currently unclear how many entries each person submitted within each data collection phase. This introduces uncertainty around the independence of observations and may affect the reliability of average time estimates.
2. **Observation-based analysis:** The analysis was conducted using individual observations (i.e. each recorded task entry), rather than unique individuals. This means the data reflects task-level frequency, not necessarily person-level behaviour.

However, descriptive analysis was performed to assess dispersion; the variance was close to the mean for the results of each unique question. This means that dispersion from the centre was low. Individuals recorded a similar amount of time. Although, using the interquartile range to estimate lower and upper limits, there were outliers (above the upper limit) for the time spent on calls and post-communication updates on CMS.

4c. Victim Wellbeing

Victim outcomes were measured using the well-being approach proposed by HM Treasury. The approach assigns a monetary value to changes in wellbeing outcomes. The approach has been extended to other wellbeing-related outcomes. For example, Peytrignet et al. (2020) ²⁴applied the method to monetise changes in self-reported loneliness by:

1. Estimating the marginal impact of changes in loneliness on life-satisfaction, using data from the Community Life Survey; and
2. Drawing on the impact of changes in income on life-satisfaction to establish a monetary value associated with changes in life satisfaction, using the method developed by Fujiwara (2013).

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However, although the victim survey data collected as part of this evaluation captured the effect of the VTP (i.e., perceived fairness and respect), it did not include direct measures of wellbeing as it would be challenging to isolate the impact of the service from the communication (which could be positive or negative). As a result, it was not possible to directly estimate the victim's wellbeing benefit (i.e., change in wellbeing attributable to the VTP) using the survey data alone. To address this, additional regression analysis was undertaken using the external data to estimate how changes in victim experience are likely to translate into changes in wellbeing.

²⁴ [Peytrignet et al. \(2020\)](#)

²⁵ [Fujiwara \(2013\)](#)

Wellbeing is commonly measured using the Office for National Statistics (ONS) personal well-being measures ONS4²⁶. These measures capture four key aspects of wellbeing, including life satisfaction, worthwhile, happiness, and anxiety. The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) Secure Research Service (SRS) dataset included both of these ONS4 wellbeing indicators and questions relating to victims' experiences of the CJS. In addition, the two CSEW questions relating to victims' experiences of the CJS closely aligned with those used in the Crest victim surveys, as shown in Table 26. Together, this made the CSEW SRS dataset well suited to estimating the relationship between perceived treatment and wellbeing.

Table 26: Alignment between CSEW and Crest victim outcome survey questions

CSEW code	CSEW question	Crest victim outcome survey question
CJSINF1	Do you think [the CPS] treated you fairly?	The CPS handled the case fairly
CJSINF2	Did [the CPS] treat you with respect?	The CPS treated me with respect

It is important to note that the wellbeing approach has potential biases, relating to establishing relationships between perceived fairness and respect and victim wellbeing. Potential sources of bias include omitted variable bias, where an unobserved variable causes changes in both perceived fairness or respect and victim wellbeing, or reverse causation, where victims with higher wellbeing may answer questions on perceived fairness or respect more favourably than those with lower wellbeing.

A regression analysis was used to estimate the relationship between perceived fairness/respect and wellbeing, controlling for other victim characteristics and crime-related factors. As perceptions of fairness and respect are closely related, and their estimated effects may therefore influence one another when included jointly, two separate model specifications were estimated to assess their association with wellbeing individually. The following specifications were applied:

$$ONS4 = \beta_0 + \beta_1 CJSINF1 + \delta X + \varepsilon$$

$$ONS4 = \beta_0 + \beta_2 CJSINF2 + \delta X + \varepsilon$$

Where:

- **CJSINF1** and **CJSINF2** represent perceived fairness and respect, respectively.
- **X** includes a broad set of control variables for victim characteristics and crime outcomes.
- β_1 and β_2 estimate the marginal impact of fairness and respect on well-being.

²⁶ Office for National Statistics (2018). *Personal well-being user guidance* - ONS. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/methodologies/personalwellbeingsurveyuserguide>.

The control variables included victim characteristics (e.g., age, sex, and marital status) and relevant geographic and temporal controls (e.g., survey year), subject to data availability within the SRS dataset and sample size. The wellbeing data were transformed prior to analysis to ensure consistency with the wellbeing scale used in Crest's survey. This alignment was undertaken to support comparability between datasets and to ensure that the estimated coefficients could be appropriately applied to the wellbeing data used to derive the VTP's impact.

The estimated coefficients on perceived fairness and respect indicated limited evidence of a statistically significant association with wellbeing outcomes. A one-point decrease in perceived fairness or respect was associated with small changes across all four wellbeing measures. The only statistically significant result was for anxiety: a one-point decrease in perceived respect was associated with a 2.23-point increase in reported anxiety ($p = 0.04$). The remaining estimates were not statistically significant at a 95% confidence level. Thus, these results provide an indicative estimate of the relationship between victim experience and victim wellbeing, reflecting the best available evidence to inform the assessment of wellbeing benefits within the CBA. Table 27 presents the estimated marginal effects.

Table 27: Estimated association between perceived treatment and wellbeing²⁷

ONS4 measures	One-point decrease in perceived fairness		One-point decrease in perceived respect	
	Coefficient	P-value	Coefficient	P-value
Life satisfaction	-0.18 (-0.97, 0.61)	0.65	+0.15 (-1.47, 1.77)	0.85
Worthwhile	-0.07 (-0.73, 0.59)	0.83	+0.32 (-1.44, 2.09)	0.71
Happiness	-0.14 (-0.85, 0.56)	0.68	+0.11 (-1.36, 1.58)	0.88
Anxiety	+0.10 (-1.42, 1.61)	0.90	+2.23 (0.09, 4.36)	0.04

Based on communications tracking logs recorded by VTP delivery teams, between July 2025 and January 2026, the Universal Service Pilot communicated with 3,303 victims²⁸. Data was not robustly captured before July 2025. To estimate the total number of victims engaged during the full financial year for the annualised CBA, the recorded count for the first month of robust data collection for the Universal Service Pilot (361 victims) was used as a proxy for each month prior to

²⁷ Note: The numbers in brackets under each coefficient show the 95% confidence interval. This gives a range within which the true value is likely to fall based on the data.

²⁸ Because of how the data is collected, there is likely some double counting of victims that are engaged with at different contact points within that data period.

July 2025, back to the start of the financial year. For the remaining months of the financial year following January 2026, the average monthly number of victims engaged by the Universal Service Pilot was applied. Combining the observed data with these estimates provides an estimate of the total number of victims engaged by the Universal Service Pilot during the financial year. The same approach was applied to the Enhanced Service Pilot.

Similarly, the Enhanced Service (RASSO) conducted pre-trial meetings with an estimated 1,402 victims between the start of the financial year and January 2026. This is an estimated figure, based on monitoring data that has been collected since May 2025. For the remaining months of the financial year following January 2026, the average monthly number of victims engaged by the Enhanced Service (RASSO) was applied to estimate engagement to the end of the financial year.

Table 28. Estimated number of victims per year successfully engaged by each service

	Number of victims successfully engaged (recorded by VTP delivery teams)	Recorded count for the first month	Estimated annual number of victims that have been successfully engaged with
US	3,303 (July 2025 – January 2026)	361 (July 2025)	5,328
ES	3,608 (June 2025 – January 2026)	212 (June 2025)	4,934
RASSO	1,802 (September 2024 – January 2026)	n/a	1646

Calculating Victim Outcomes

As described in CBA Section 2c, the values of Victim Outcome benefits are presented in Table 29 below.

Table 29: Victim Outcome benefits

Monetisable Benefit	Service	Data Source
Increased proportion of victims that report that the service they received from the CPS had a positive impact on their wellbeing	US	4.43 for fairness; 4.52 for respect.
		£13,000 (2019 prices).
		5,328 victims.
		See estimated association between perceived treatment and wellbeing in Table 27.
	ES Pilot	3.00 for fairness; 2.80 for respect.
		£13,000 (2019 prices).

		4,934 victims.
		See estimated association between perceived treatment and wellbeing in Table 27.
	RASSO	4.20 for fairness; 4.00 for respect.
		£13,000 (2019 prices).
		1,646 victims.
		See estimated association between perceived treatment and wellbeing in Table 27.

Note: Unit cost is in 2019 prices.

The baseline was created using the Victims Commissioners Victim Survey 2021²⁹. The findings revealed low confidence in the system. Many victims felt disappointed with how they were treated, particularly by the CPS. Victims often felt like bystanders rather than actively involved in the process, because the CPS was frequently described as inconsiderate of victims' needs. In addition, 29% of victims reported being treated fairly and with respect by lawyers. Based on this information, a baseline score of 1.45 out of 5 for fairness and respect was assumed as a proxy for pre-VTP conditions.

Post-VTP, victims supported through the Universal Service Pilot report higher perceptions of fairness and respect compared to the baseline. In contrast, those supported through the Enhanced Service Pilot report lower scores compared to the baseline, suggesting either lower satisfaction or possible data limitations (e.g. small sample size, timing of the survey).

4d. Victim Attrition

Victim attrition in this evaluation refers to cases where victims disengage from the criminal justice process before their case reaches trial, post-charge. Monetising changes in victim attrition follows a similar approach to efficiency benefits, as it is based on estimating the reduction in wasted resources. By reducing victim attrition, the VTP may generate resource savings in two ways:

- If a victim who would have disengaged at a later stage does so earlier due to VTP communications, reducing the resources spent on the case before the victim drops out; and
- If a victim who would have disengaged remains engaged, leading to the case proceeding to trial. While the CPS would still allocate resources to the case, these resources would no longer be considered wasted.

²⁹ Victims Commissioner (2021). *Victims' Experience: Annual Survey*. Available at: https://cdn.websitebuilder.service.justice.gov.uk/uploads/sites/6/2021/12/VC-2021-survey-of-victims- amended-27_9_21-1.pdf.

This is based on the assumption that victims who are supported are better able to navigate the justice system, understand the process, and are heard³⁰. This section outlines the approach for monetising these benefits with the available data, key data sources and gaps, and requirements for additional data collection.

The monetisation approach is based on estimating the average cost of CPS resources used in cases where victim attrition occurs. This follows the standard formula used for efficiency benefits:

$$\text{Monetary value of reduced victim attrition} = \text{Units of resource saved} \times \text{Unit cost of resource}$$

Where:

- **Units of wasted resource saved** refers to the CPS resources that would have been spent on cases where victims disengage from the process. This could include staff time, administrative costs, and other prosecution-related expenses.
- **Unit cost of resource** represents the average cost per case incurred by the CPS in cases where victim attrition occurs.

Calculating Victim Attrition

As described in CBA Section 2c, the values of Victim Attrition benefits are presented in Table 30.

Table 30: Victim Attrition benefits

Monetisable Benefit	Data Source	Value
Reduced proportion of ineffective/vacated trials due to victim withdrawal – US	Crest (synthetic control method using CPS victim attrition data).	-0.23 cases ³¹ .
	Heeks et al. (2018) from RER.	£2,917

Note: Unit cost is in 2015/16 prices.

Heeks et al. (2018) provide estimates of unit costs for different areas of the CJS, including sexual offences, using data collected from the MoJ. The approach from this research serves as a basis for estimating the average cost of CPS resources associated with victim attrition.

³⁰ Victims Commissioner (2025). *Troubling number of London victims are walking away from justice process, new report finds* - Victims Commissioner. Available at: <https://victimscommissioner.org.uk/news/london-victim-attrition-report-troubling-sign-victims-continue-being-let-down-victims-commissioner/>.

³¹ p-value = 0.92. 95% CI [-4.58, 4.11].

There are several considerations that need to be made when building on the Heeks et al. (2018) approach to estimate the average cost of CPS resources on cases where there is victim attrition, including:

- Heeks et al. (2018) estimate unit costs per crime, which are substantially lower than average cost of cases processed by the CPS (since there are fewer cases than crimes). Per crime unit costs would need to be scaled up to the average cost of cases processed by the CPS. A crime-to-case ratio was assumed at 0.2, based on the assumption that 1 out of 5 crimes leads to a case being sent to the CPS (this is detailed in the CBA methodological note at the end of this section).
- The analysis in Heeks et al. (2018) was based on data from 2013/14 (which was also partly based on data from 2005/06). Ideally, the analysis would be replicated using more recent data. However, as this data is not yet publicly available, costs were uprated to reflect public sector wage inflation.
- The Heeks et al. (2018) costs are based on all cases processed by the CPS, including both those that do and do not make it to trial. They include a wide range of costs that are not incurred in cases of victim attrition (e.g. jury service, legal aid). The average cost of Universal Service Pilot cases to other CJS services for the crimes below were estimated:
 - Cases dealt with by Magistrate Court or Crown Court case types
 - NOT flagged as Domestic Abuse
 - NOT flagged as Rape
 - NOT flagged as Child Victim
 - Excluding Homicide from Principal Offence Category.

4e. Overview of annualised BCR

Table 31 presents the results of the annualised CBA. The analysis compares the PVB generated by the VTP in a year against the PVC related to its delivery. The VTP is estimated to produce a net present value (NPV) in the range of £87.0 million to £167.3 million. This represents the net economic benefits once programme costs have been taken into account.

Table 31: Annualised CBA assessment

PVB	£128.7M
PVC	£13.2M
NPV (PVB – PVC)	£80.0M - £154.6M
BCR (PVB / PVC)	7.1 - 12.7

The corresponding BCR is estimated to lie between 7.1 and 12.7. This means that for every £1 invested in the VTP, between £7.1 and £12.7 of the economic benefits are expected to be generated. This suggests that the VTP is expected to deliver good value for money.

Limitations and risks - CBA methods

Although the CSEW enabled estimation of the relationship between CJS fairness and respect and victim wellbeing at a national level, most associations were not statistically significant. This is likely to reflect limited statistical power, primarily due to the relatively small sample of victims in the CSEW who both reported contact with the CJS and completed the relevant wellbeing questions. Victims, as a vulnerable group, may have been less likely to participate in or complete surveys following their experience of crime. This issue has been identified by the ONS as a persistent and challenging aspect of CSEW data collection³². In addition, some victims may not report offences to the police and therefore do not engage with the CJS³³, reducing the number of respondents eligible to answer questions on perceived fairness and respect. Consequently, the analysis was based on a restricted sample, which may have limited the precision of the estimated effects.

It is also important to note that the wellbeing approach was subject to potential sources of bias. These included omitted variable bias, where unobserved factors may have influenced both perceived treatment and wellbeing, and reverse causation, whereby individuals with higher underlying wellbeing may have reported more positive perceptions of fairness or respect. The regression specification mitigated, but did not eliminate, these risks through the inclusion of observable controls.

CBA Methodology Note - Crime-to-Case Ratio

The Crime-to-Case Ratio is the scaling factor that was created to uplift the shadow price from Heeks et al. (2018), which uses unit cost per crime, for the Victim Attrition benefit. It was estimated using MoJ data from 2024 and based on successful prosecutions.

Based on the MoJ Criminal Court Statistics for October to December 2024³⁴:

- Police recorded crimes = 6.6 million; and
- Defendants proceeded against (i.e. prosecuted) = 1,305,863.

The conversion rate, or ratio, was calculated by dividing the latter by the former:

$$\text{Crime – to – Case Ratio} = \frac{\text{Defendants prosecuted}}{\text{Police – recorded crimes}}$$

³² ONS Centre for Crime and Justice (2025). *Evaluating a new measure of domestic abuse*. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/methodologies/evaluatinganewmeasureofdomesticabuse>.

³³ Office for National Statistics (2025). *Crime in England and Wales QMI - Office for National Statistics*. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/methodologies/crimeinenglandandwalesqmi>.

³⁴ Ministry of Justice (2025). *Criminal court statistics quarterly: October to December 2024*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-court-statistics-quarterly-october-to-december-2024>.

Inputting the figures above, the crime-to-case ratio becomes 0.1986, or 19.9%. This was rounded up to 0.2 for the CBA. This implies that 1 of every 5 crimes leads to a case.

Note, however, that this may be an underestimate because it assumes a successful outcome (cases can proceed to court and be unsuccessful).

CBA Methodology Note - Time Task Recording

Additional data collection

Based on the assessment of the VTP cost model and the stakeholder interviews, it was determined that additional data collection would be required to collect actual staff costs involved in VTP. Gathering actual data on the time taken to perform tasks would then enable more accurate task-based costing, which is essential for understanding the actual cost of the VTP delivery, identifying efficiency improvements, and informing estimates of future costs.

In discussion with CPS staff, it was decided that REMs would not be the most appropriate platform for data collection, as it was felt this would create an undue burden for service staff. Instead, it was felt that questions on the time taken to perform victim communication activities would be best added to a victim communication log that was already being developed and piloted for use by the Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot teams. Since staff were familiar with filling in Microsoft Forms, an additional non-victim communications form could be created to capture activities not directly related to victim communication.

Data required

Fortia Insight worked with the CPS to identify a set of staff activities included in job roles for the Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot.

Victim communication activities

This process identified the specific victim communication activities, listed in Table 32, for which time-task data (the time taken to perform specific tasks) was required to be gathered. While time-task data was already included in the victim communication tracker for some activities, additional questions were added to capture data on activities not included. Fortia Insight designed additional questions to be added to the victim communication tracker to capture this data. The refined victim communication tracker provided Fortia Insight with an estimate of the total time spent on incoming and outgoing communication with victims.

Table 32: Victim communication TTR data required

Time data already included in victim communication tracker	Time data not included in victim communication tracker
· Victim phone calls; · Written correspondence; · Answer incoming communications; · Follow up phone calls with information packs sent via email/letter.	· Reviewing case details with relevant documentation; · Finding victim PMOC; · Completing tracking form; · Responding to inbox; · Printing and putting letters in envelopes and sending; · Updating CMS following communications.

Non-communication activities

It would not be possible to collect data on non-communication activities within the victim communication tracker. Fortia Insight, in collaboration with the CPS, therefore developed a separate monitoring tool for non-communication activities³⁵, aiming to track staff's time on:

1. Training;
2. Corporate responsibilities;
3. Victim responsibilities;
4. Complaints;
5. VRR; and
6. Digital development/user testing.

Through the refined victim communication tracker and the newly developed non-communication activity form, Fortia Insight captured data on the time spent on both victim communication activities and non-communication activities.

Pilot of victim communication and non-victim communication tracker forms

The additional questions added to the victim communications log and the non-victim-communications tracker form were piloted by members of the Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot for a period of two weeks, to assess the time burden they placed on staff, any issues staff faced in completing the forms, identify areas for improvement and to assess the quality of data

³⁵ Having two separate forms for time-task recording does open the possibility of inconsistent time recording, whereby staff may under or overcount the number of hours they have worked in a week. Fortia Insight considered whether it would be possible to link the two forms, such that the forms could ensure staff had recorded the right number of hours across the week. However, this approach was found to be too burdensome on the CPS, as it would require considerable digital resources to set up.

gathered. Based on data from this pilot shared with Fortia Insight by the CPS, collecting task-time data via these two tracker forms was feasible. Fortia Insight was able to provide initial estimates of the average (mean and median) time taken to perform activities, which was refined through feedback to the CPS.

User feedback

Fortia Insight conducted interviews with four members of Universal Service Pilot staff that had participated in the pilot to collect user feedback. Key findings included:

- **Time taken to complete the trackers** – staff reported that completing the trackers was manageable and fitted with their daily activities. The victim communication tracker had been embedded as a process to be completed following each victim communication activity and the additional time taken questions had not noticeably added to the length of time taken to complete the trackers. Some staff did report that they found completing the non-victim communication tracker slightly more burdensome, as this involved them reflecting at the end of the day on the length of time specific activities took.
- **Activity categories** – some staff reported finding that the categories of activity in the non-victim communication form did not seem to reflect the main activities that they wanted to record. For some, this led to them recording a lot of activities as ‘other’ and then adding further details. It was recommended that some of the categories were relabelled and expanded to include the activities that were being recorded as ‘other’. On this basis, the TTR form was revised during the pilot to reflect the main activities undertaken and to include several examples to clarify each activity.

Data quality

Fortia Insight reviewed data from the first week of the pilot to check for missing data and consistency. This identified the following issues:

- **Recording of time** – for some activities in the non-communication tracker, some staff appeared to record the number of hours they spent on an activity when the question asked for the number of minutes. The confusion may have been caused by the tracker including some questions requesting time data in hours and others in minutes. It was recommended that the tracker was edited to include all questions in minutes rather than hours.
- **Use of ‘other’ activities box** – in the non-communications form, a large number of ‘other’ activities were recorded (as would be expected given the staff feedback gathered above). Fortia Insight provided recommendations to the CPS on edits to categories when the pilot was complete.

Minimum sample sizes

The TTR was implemented from early 2025/26 to enable more accurate estimates of the time taken to perform activities. Given the number of staff in the Universal and Enhanced Service Pilot teams, we recommended all staff involved in delivery of communication activities complete the forms³⁶.

Frequency of data collection

Data was collected by the CPS and shared with Fortia Insight in Excel format. Fortia Insight undertook quality assurance of the dataset, including checks for missing data, identification of outliers and potential recording errors (for example, time recorded in hours rather than minutes), and analysis of the average time spent on different activities.

The data batches received and analysed are described in CBA Section 4b.

³⁶ For programme management staff not directly involved in victim communication activities, TTR data collection will not be required.

Ethical considerations

All methods are underpinned by an ethical framework. This framework is informed by Crest's own risk assessment process and the ethical guidelines published by the British Society of Criminology and the British Sociological Association, and reflects our commitment to the Government Social Research Guidance. The framework was internally approved through Crest's ethical framework processes on June 4th 2024 and amended throughout the project based on CPS feedback and an expanded understanding of processes for engaging with victims. The framework is structured by six principles which were developed by Crest's Ethics Lead with reference to guideline documents authored by the aforementioned sources:

1. Research should have a clear and defined public benefit
2. Research should be based on sound research methods and protect against bias in the interpretation of findings
3. Research should enable participation of the groups it seeks to represent
4. Research should be conducted in a manner that minimises personal and social harm
5. Participation in research should be based on specific and informed consent
6. Research should adhere to data protection regulations and secure handling of personal data.

This section of the report sets out how we implemented these principles in practice proactively identifying and mitigating risks.

Purpose of the research

Principle 1: Research should have a clear and defined public benefit.

This project focuses on evaluating the VTP by:

- Using timely evidence and insight to support the CPS in effective implementation of the VTP
- Supporting the CPS to show the impact of the VTP on key outcomes which benefit stakeholders and service users
- Ensuring the VTP is victim-led and trauma-informed to understand how it can learn and adapt to meet the needs of its users.

Ethical risk and approach to mitigation

It is possible that the risks of conducting the research outweigh the benefits of doing so. To mitigate this, we sought to anticipate the potential risks and harms that could be experienced by participants and the public throughout our ethical framework. Against these risks, we proposed how each risk would be mitigated, to ensure the research had a beneficial impact overall.

We also considered how the dissemination of findings could curtail the potential benefits of the research if findings were not presented in a manner that was accessible to all relevant audiences. To mitigate this, we used language and phrasing appropriate for the intended audience and implemented government accessibility standards where appropriate, such as using minimum font sizes and avoiding colours that are difficult to distinguish.

Research and engagement processes

Principle 2: Research should be based on sound research methods and protect against bias in the interpretation of findings.

Ethical risk and approach to mitigation

To provide a sound evaluation of the VTP, a suitable research design was essential. Engagement methods had to be appropriate to engage with professional stakeholders (including CPS staff and wider CJS partners like policing and Victim Advocates) and victims of crime. If poorly designed, engagement methods could fail to adequately capture the experiences of relevant stakeholders. To mitigate this, the research design drew on tried and tested approaches to qualitative engagement and used quantitative data sources where this would clarify the findings. These research methods were refined with the CPS throughout the evaluation, adjusting for new or missing data to ensure the evaluation was sound. We worked closely with the CPS to identify relevant stakeholders and to maximise our reach with victim engagement.

Biases in reporting and in analysis were another identified risk which could affect the soundness of the evaluation. Negativity bias could skew participants' perspectives of their experience, which analysis may fail to contextualise and correct for, leading to inaccurate reporting. To mitigate these risks, we carefully designed discussion guides to ensure our researchers prompted participants for balanced reflections on their experiences. We also stress-tested research findings with internal and external experts who provided rigorous challenge and critique, supporting the soundness of our findings and recommendations. When measuring impact, we identified and mitigated potential biases in quantitative data by following government guidance as outlined in the Magenta Book.

Principles 3 and 4: Research should enable participation of the groups it seeks to represent. Research should be conducted in a manner that minimises personal and social harm.

Ethical risk and approach to mitigation

Related to the above, sound research should enable individuals from a wide range of demographic groups to participate so that the perspectives of individuals with diverse needs can be understood. This was highly relevant to our engagement with victims. In particular, we proactively anticipated and accounted for the needs of seldom heard groups to maximise opportunities for them to

engage with this research. In practice, this meant making it easier for people from all backgrounds to participate in the research. By reducing barriers to participation, we were able to maximise the personal and social benefits of the research. The barriers to participation that we identified included but were not limited to:

- Language barriers and information processing needs
- Time constraints
- Financial constraints
- Suspicion of the research.

Language barriers and information processing needs

Participation materials for the research were produced in English with options for Welsh translation where requested. To mitigate the barrier to participation presented by language and information processing needs, we used plain English, avoiding jargon and complex phrasing in all research materials. We also worked with the CPS to ensure surveys and interview documentation were sent to participants in an accessible format. Notably, we adapted the victims' survey from its initial online format to allow for the survey to also be completed via telephone and on paper. By delivering the survey by telephone, we made it accessible to a wider range of individuals and gathered five additional survey responses. This also supported those with time constraints to complete the survey in a timely manner.

Time constraints

We ensured that all engagement was of reasonable length to reduce the time burden on participants. Participants were fully informed about the length of the engagement so that they could make an informed decision about their participation. The upper time limit for each method of engagement was as follows:

- Victim surveys were estimated to take no more than 10 minutes when completed online and 15 minutes when completed by telephone.
- We suggested to participants that interviews were limited to one hour, although victim interviews were participant-led to accommodate their preferred pace.
- Stakeholder interviews were limited to one hour.
- Stakeholder focus groups were limited to 90 minutes.

We also created a feedback form for victims to share written responses about their experience in their own time. This enabled those with limited time to provide as much or as little feedback as they wished.

Financial constraints

To minimise the financial burden of participation, all engagement was offered online, removing travel costs. For victims who indicated a preference for a face-to-face interview, interviews were held at a location that was convenient for them. We also reimbursed travel expenses for participants and anyone attending the interview to support the participant. We shared a voucher with each participant following the interview to thank them for participating in the research.

Suspicion of the research

To foster trust and support understanding of the evaluation, we partnered with CPS VLOs and Victim Advocates, including Independent Sexual Violence Advocates (ISVAs) and Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs), to recruit participants for victim interviews. We worked with these gatekeepers to disseminate information to victims about the evaluation and how they could participate. By disseminating this information through a trusted individual who could answer their questions about participating, we were able to hear the perspectives of victims with broad-ranging experiences across varied geographic locations. We also aimed to mitigate research suspicion by enabling victims to bring a trusted individual to support them at the interview.

We collected demographic data on all victim interview participants who consented to share this information so that we could analyse how representative our sample was. We did not report this data due to the small sample size, which, if reported, risked compromising participant confidentiality.

Principle 5: Participation in research should be based on specific and informed consent.

Ethical risk and approach to mitigation

Participant information sheets and privacy notices were shared with all research participants in advance of participation. For victim interviews, these included detailed information in plain English to explain:

- The purpose of the research
- The benefits of the research and what they will/will not get from participating. Participants received incentives in the form of vouchers to thank them for their time and for sharing their experiences.³⁷ Beyond the voucher, participants were made aware that whilst they may not

³⁷ It is standard practice to provide financial incentives for research participants. However, this also incurs a risk since it may affect the principle of voluntary participation and freely-given informed consent. To mitigate this risk, we followed Oxford University Guidance - participant recruitment information and information sheets stated that recompense will be made, but the value of the recompense will not be advertised in recruitment materials.

directly benefit from engaging in the project, this was an opportunity to have their voices heard on a topic that is of relevance to them/their peers and were contributing to the body of research in this area

- Why their informed consent is important
- Their right to withdraw and how this can be done (including limitations imposed by timelines for analysis and reporting on their ability to retroactively withdraw from the research)
- Confidentiality and anonymity
- How and where the interview will take place (including an overview of what will be discussed)
- How we will deal with any disclosures of criminal behaviour or safeguarding concerns
- What will happen with the data collected.

This was coupled with a written consent form which victims signed to confirm that they understood this information and consented to participate in the interview on that basis. At the start of interviews, focus groups, and telephone surveys, the facilitator ran through the key points of the information sheet again to ensure that all participants understood the research and consented to participate. Participants were given the opportunity to ask questions. They were reminded that their participation was entirely voluntary and that they could withdraw without reason during or after the engagement.

Compliance with data security requirements

Principle 6: Research should adhere to data protection regulations and secure handling of personal data

We conducted this research ensuring:

- Adherence to the GDPR, Data Protection Act (2018) and other government data security requirements
- Confidentiality in data collection, with particular attention to protect participant confidentiality when working with gatekeepers
- Confidentiality in all analysis and reporting.

Ethical risk and approach to mitigation

To ensure that research participants understood how their personal data would be used and the steps that we took to protect their confidentiality against the risk of breaches, loss and corruption, we provided all research participants with a privacy notice. This explained our compliance with data protection legislation as it pertained to their personal data, including restricted access to raw data and stringent internal process to ensure all personal data is destroyed no later than six months after the project is completed. The participant information sheet which was provided to participants also

set out Crest's privacy policy around collecting, storing, processing and using data, and outlined their corresponding rights.

Mitigation processes per participant group

- Professional stakeholders who participated in focus groups gave verbal consent to participate at the outset of the engagement.
- Victims who participated in interviews signed a written consent form to confirm that they understood and accepted these conditions.
- Victims who completed surveys were informed at the outset that their participation was voluntary and anonymous.