



***Domestic Violence Court &
Victim / Witness Support Service***

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*Association Concerning Sexual
Violence Against Woman*

Safety and Justice

- ⇒ Addressed the issues of
- ⇒ Prevention
- ⇒ Protection
- ⇒ Support

Narrowing the Justice Gap

- ⇒ Speeding up the process (stayed with the process on average until about one month after the charging date)
- ⇒ Victim's withdrawal (build case using evidence other than that from the victim)
- ⇒ Sentencing practice (not reflecting adequately the seriousness of the offences)

Bringing the Perpetrator to Justice

- ⇒ Effective evidence gathering
- ⇒ Provide timely and comprehensive support to victims
- ⇒ Realisation by perpetrators that case will be taken seriously by criminal justice and wider community

Improving Victim Satisfaction

- ⇒ Supporting victim(link between supported victims and their participation in the criminal justice process)
- ⇒ Consulting Victims(make contact with every victim to seek her input)
- ⇒ Equality and Diversity(to ethnicity and disability)

Achieving Value for Money

- ⇒ Costs: the main cost incurred for advocacy, training allocation of police to courts and monitoring of cases. (all courts showed value in reducing repeat victimisation)
- ⇒ Benefits: significant financial savings to be made if domestic violence is tackled effectively early. (to avoid the severity and frequency of DV)



Specialist Domestic Violence Court & Fast Track System

in England and Wales

Aims

- ⇒ Increase effectiveness and efficiency
- ⇒ Improve co-ordination
- ⇒ Increase victim and witness participation
- ⇒ Reduce attrition rates
- ⇒ Reduce repeat victimisation
- ⇒ Costs and benefits

Court	Date Commenced and Key Features	Partners
Leeds Domestic Violence Cluster Court)	<p>1999, the first DV “Cluster Court” in England</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Pre-trial hearings only *3 DV courts run concurrently on Mondays *Police DV officer and a HALT representative available at court(s) *multi-agency, partnership approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Leeds Inter Agency project *Help, Advice and Law Team (HALT) *STOP(Stop Terrorizing and Oppressing Partners) *Crown Prosecution Service(CPS) Police Probation Magistrates Magistrates Court Law Society

Court	Date Commenced and Key Features	Partners
Cardiff	<p>Women's Safety Unit (Nov/2001)</p> <p>Fast Track System (FTS)</p> <p>Jan2002</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Special FT court *Thursday PTR court and prioritized "1 in 4 slots" for DV hearing. *FTS applies to pre-trial hearings and trials *WSU attends PTR courts as victims advocate *all 19 prosecutors and all 80 Magistrates trained in DV FTS. FTS protocol extends to Crown Court *FTS processes reviewed by WSU and CPS 	<p>Women's Safety Unit</p> <p>CPS</p> <p>Police</p> <p>Magistrates Court</p> <p>Crown Court</p>

Court	Date Commenced & Key Features	Partners
Wolverhampton	<p>SDVC piloted from July 2002</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">*Specialist court sits Tuesday mornings*Pre-hearings only*Police DV Officer and the Criminal Justice Support Services Coordinator available at court <p>Court process reviewed by multi-agency SDVC Steering Group</p>	<p>Magistrates' Court CPS Police Victims support and Witness Service Housing Dept University</p>

Court	Date Commenced & Key Features	Partners
West London SDVC	<p>00October 2002, First SDV to hear PTRs and trials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *DV court deals with pre-trial hearings on Thursday (PTR morning, further hearings including trials afternoon) *Presence of ADVANCE and Eaves advocates *Presence of a police officer *Specially trained *four district judges regularly sit in the court 	<p>Standing Together against domestic violence</p> <p>Magistrates Court Police CPS Probation ASVANCE Women's Aid Witness service Victim Support</p>

Court	Date Commenced & Key Features	Partners
Derby	May 2003 Dedicated DV Court *Pre-trial hearings only *Court sits half-day on Wednesday *Partnership approach	City Partnership CPS Police Magistrates' Courts

Similarities Across Sites


- ⇒ Focus on Magistrates' Courts proceedings
- ⇒ Mainly deal with pre-trial hearings
- ⇒ Dealing with criminal(not civil) matters
- ⇒ Identifying DV cases and clustering or fast tracking all DV cases
- ⇒ Advocacy support/ police DV officers present at court to advise/ support victim
- ⇒ Multi-agency working
- ⇒ Training is a priority

Advocacy support

- ⇒ Reporting progress to victim
- ⇒ Informing courts on behalf of victims
- ⇒ Supporting victims
- ⇒ Coordinating information-sharing and the development of protocols
- ⇒ Engaging in outreach in the community

Core Components of SDVC

- ⇒ Access to advocacy service
- ⇒ Coordination of partners
- ⇒ Victim and child friendly court
- ⇒ Specialist personnel
- ⇒ Even handed treatment
- ⇒ Integrated information systems
- ⇒ Protocols for risk assessment
- ⇒ Compliance monitoring



The set up of SDVC is Enabling domestic violence to be tackled within a multi-agency framework designed with the specific needs of domestic violence victims in mind

Thank You

Notable & positive benefits of SDVC/FTS

- ⇒ Enhances the effectiveness of court and support service for victims
- ⇒ Make advocacy and information sharing easier to accomplish
- ⇒ Victim participation & satisfaction is improved and thus public confidence in the Criminal Justice System is increased