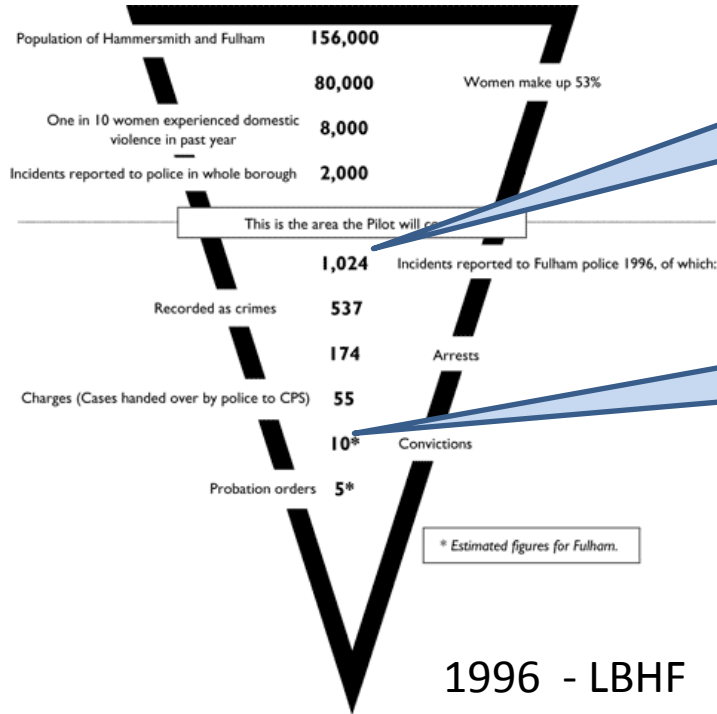




Her Story, Her Justice

Domestic abuse survivors and the criminal justice system

Seeking Justice for Survivors...



1,024
Domestic
Abuse
incidents
reported

55 charges
5%
10 convictions
18%

1996 - LBHF

Seeking Justice for Survivors...

1998

Partners set
up **Advance**
& **Standing**
Together



2002

First
"SDAC"
Court in
LBHF

2011

Minerva
model
by
Advance

2000

Strategic &
Operational
Response **"CCR"**
by Standing
Together



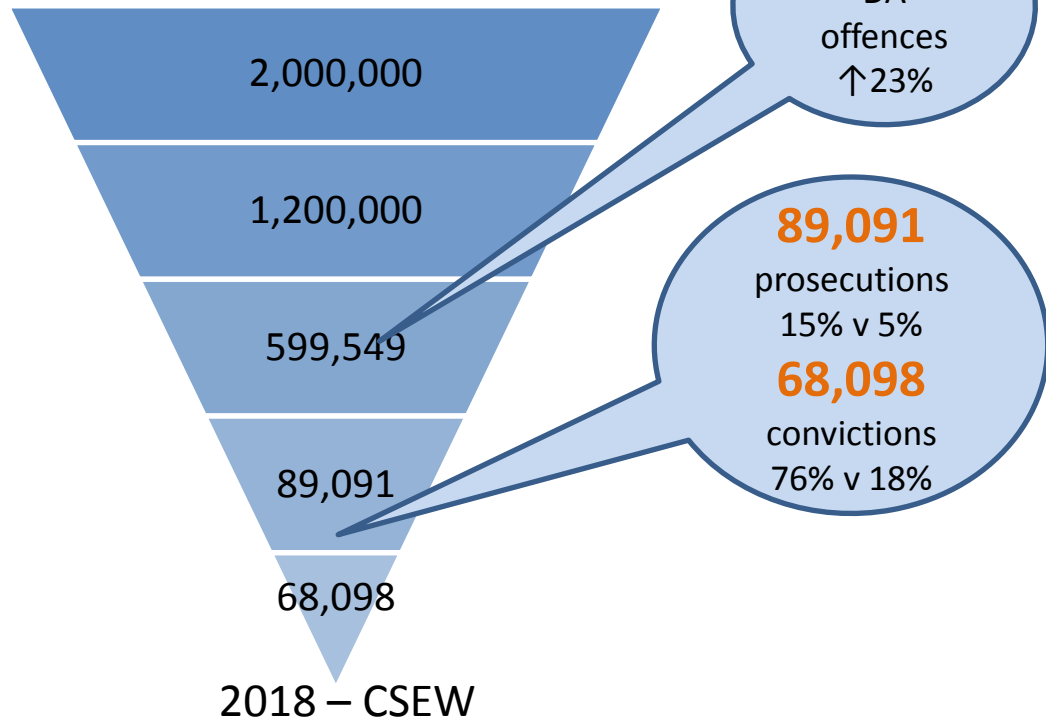
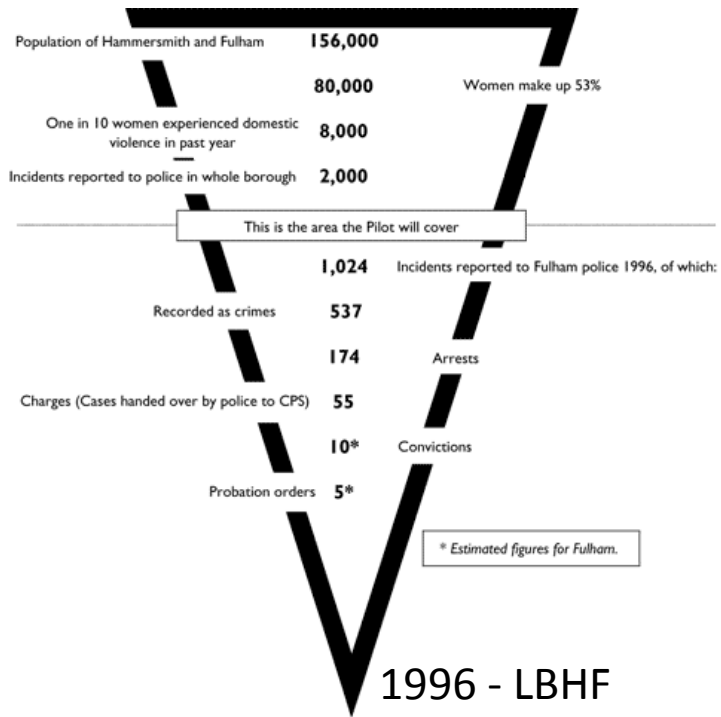
2005

"IDVA" model
and co-locations
by Advance

2013

Impact
model

Seeking Justice for Survivors...



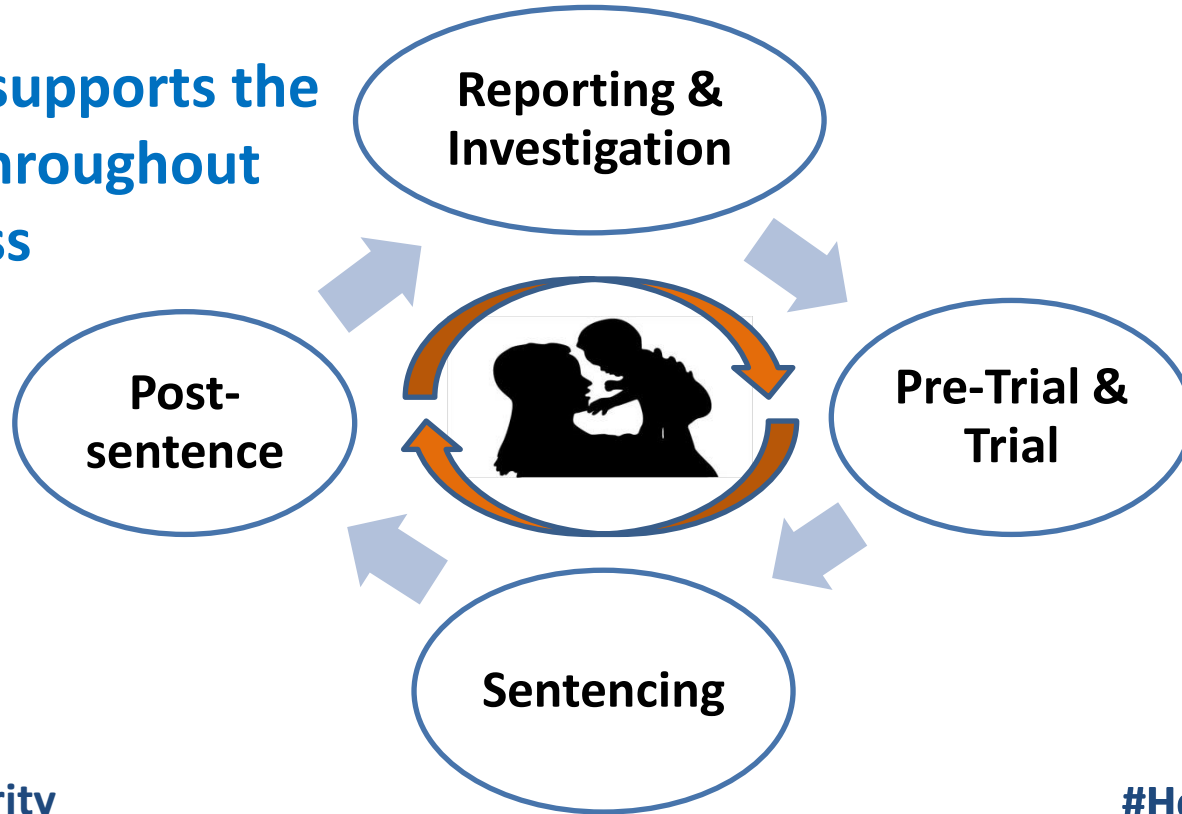
Seeking Justice for Survivors...

In 2018, Domestic Abuse is highest in five years

- **85,000** DA incidents reported in London
- **173** DA related homicides in the UK; **29** in London
- Survivors call the police every **30 seconds** for help
- Survivors wait **3 years**(50+ incidents) for effective help

Survivor's Journey for Justice ...

Advance supports the survivor throughout the process



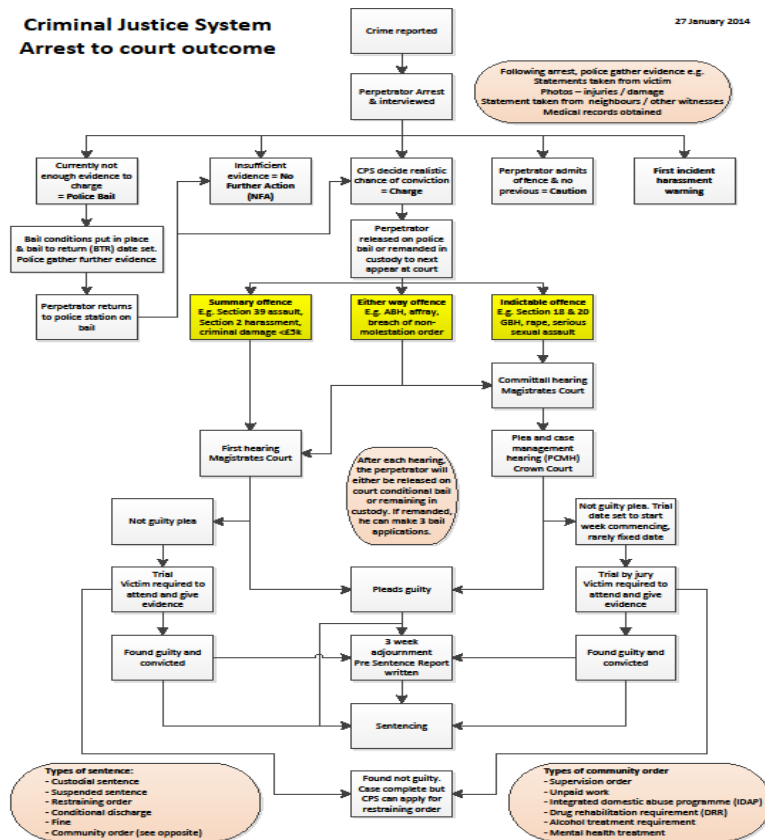
Survivor's Journey for Justice ...

The journey from reporting to sentencing is complex



Criminal Justice System Arrest to court outcome

27 January 2014



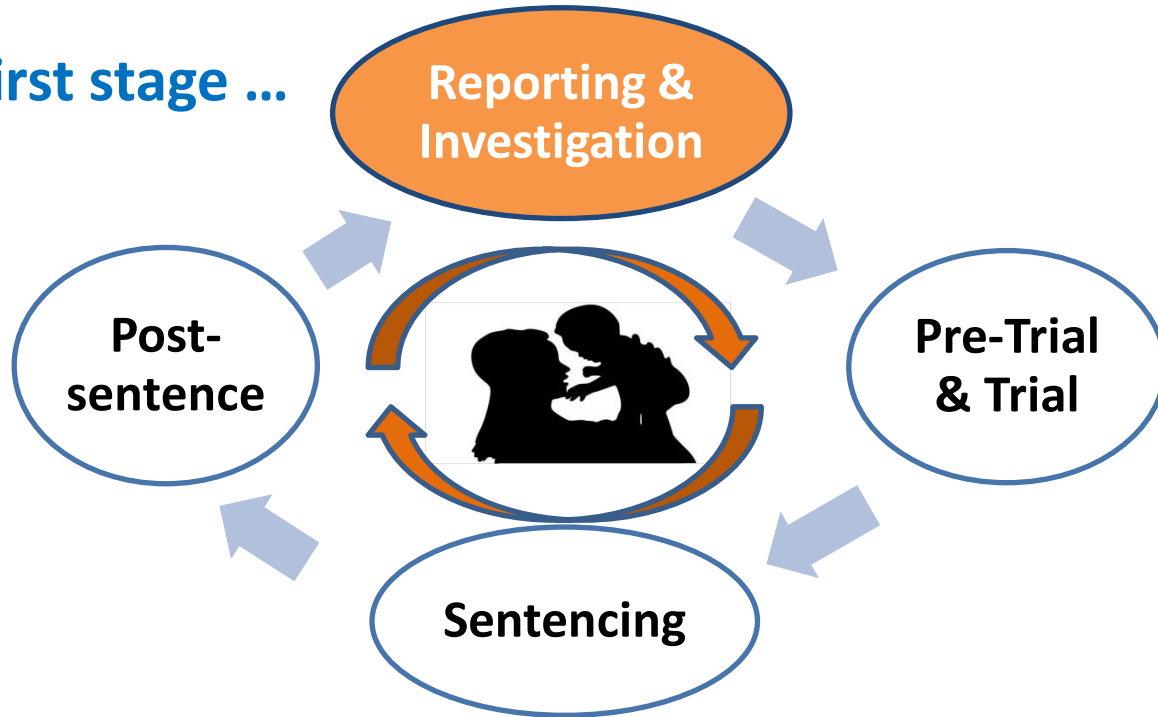
Survivor's Journey for Justice ...

What survivors want from this journey

- **To be safe** and protected
- The abuse to stop
- To feel empowered
- To access support so they can rebuild their lives

Survivor's Journey for Justice ...

The first stage ...



Reporting and Investigation

Survivors need **consistent responses**



*“The first police officer who talked to me convinced me to make a statement so the police could tell him his behaviour wasn’t okay. **She made me feel safe** and that it would be okay. She then had a week off and another officer took over.*

*He listened but said things to me like “not that I’m supporting the perpetrator, but I do that with my kids”. It seemed that (he) had been charmed by the perpetrator and **seemed to be convincing me to make peace with him.** I thought the police were on my side but they weren’t.”*

Reporting and Investigation

Survivors need to **feel understood**

*“They were very nice to me but they just don’t know what domestic violence is. **You don’t feel you can open up to them** as I don’t feel they are very interested.”*

*“I don’t think they are used to dealing with anything other than thugs. Domestic abuse perpetrators are not thugs; **they are manipulators**”*

Reporting and Investigation

Survivors **need to trust** before disclosing



*“...Reporting the Threat to Kill was kind of
testing the water as it were,
you know if they’d decided to charge him for
that and I felt believed and supported on that,
then I probably would have told them
everything...”*

Reporting and Investigation

Survivors can feel **blamed and not believed**

*“Every time I go to the police I just get ignored –
to be honest I just stopped going there.”*

*I also feel like I’ve been blamed, for example
they would said ‘why didn’t you say before’,
and the reason is because I am never believed.”*

Reporting and Investigation

Survivors can find **the process problematic**



“Myself and Advance had to chase the police quite a lot for information.... and everything felt very last minute.”

Bail lacking protection “feels like
a broken promise”

“There was always not enough evidence, it was very frustrating.”

#HerStoryHerJustice

Reporting and Investigation

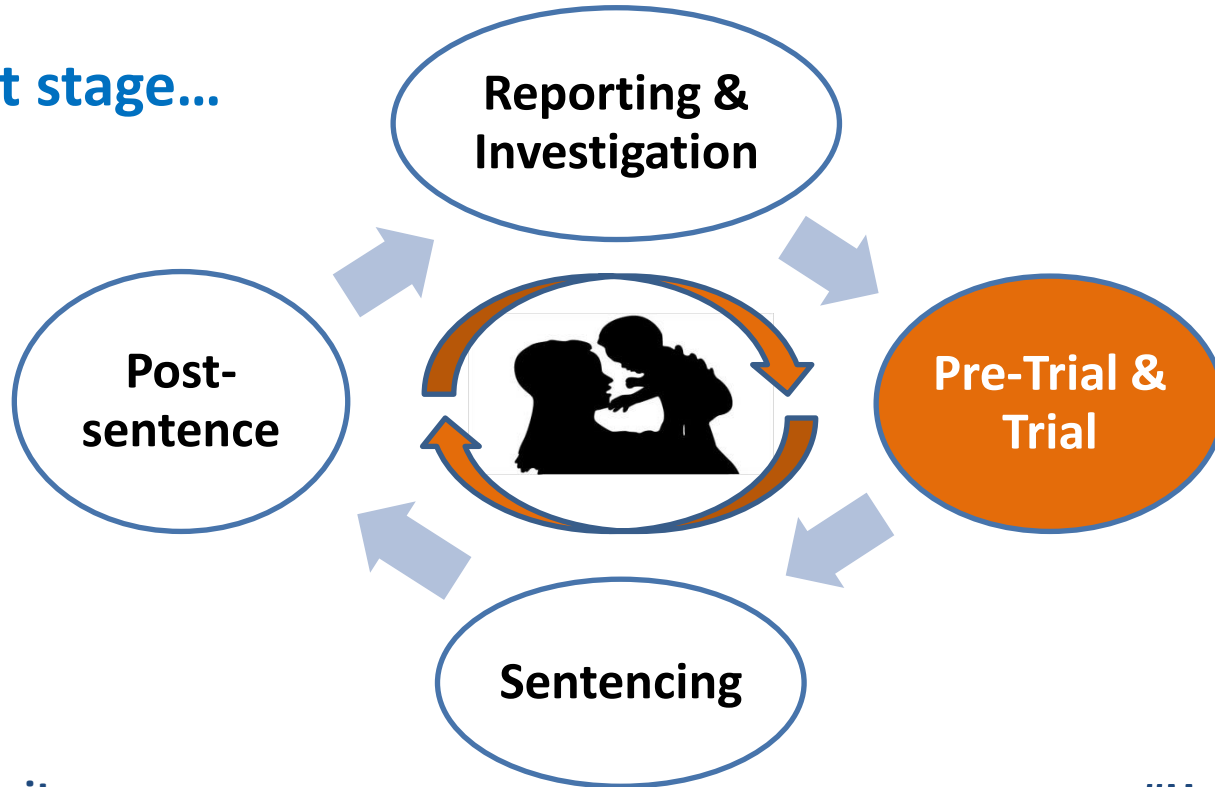
Police feedback and Justice Inspectorate Report 2019

- Limited understanding of Domestic Abuse
- Limited resources
- Limited tools



Survivor's Journey for Justice ...

The next stage...



Pre-Trial and Trial

Survivors need to feel **they are heard**



*“[The Prosecution is] faceless, it’s not like when you see the police officers face and the judge; but the CPS, when making charging decisions, **make this huge decision with a life changing impact** and they are completely faceless, and something feels very wrong about that. I would have really liked to....**understand why**”*

Pre-Trial and Trial

Survivors need to be a **vital part of the process**



*“it’s your case but **it’s like you’re not at all important in this**...you’re terrified and shaking and then he [Prosecutor] walks in ‘hi and how are you’ and walks out again. And I thought ‘do you not want to know what he was like this strange man’.”*

Pre-Trial and Trial

Survivors can find the **process problematic**



*“It’s been one of the longest cases. The police **submitted evidence late**, on day of trial, so judge couldn’t accept it. It was a voice recording of him [perpetrator] admitting the offence.”*

*“**My child has given evidence multiple times**, lots of other evidence, and nothing has ever come of it”*

#HerStoryHerJustice

Pre-Trial and Trial

Survivors can find it stressful and re-traumatising



*It can feel like “replacing a bully for a bully....the defence lawyer is replacing the bully that you’ve got away from, and he is in your face, and because he is the lawyer and you are cornered - **you’ve lived that life, and now you’ve got an official doing it, and that is hideous. It should not be allowed.**”*

Pre-Trial and Trial

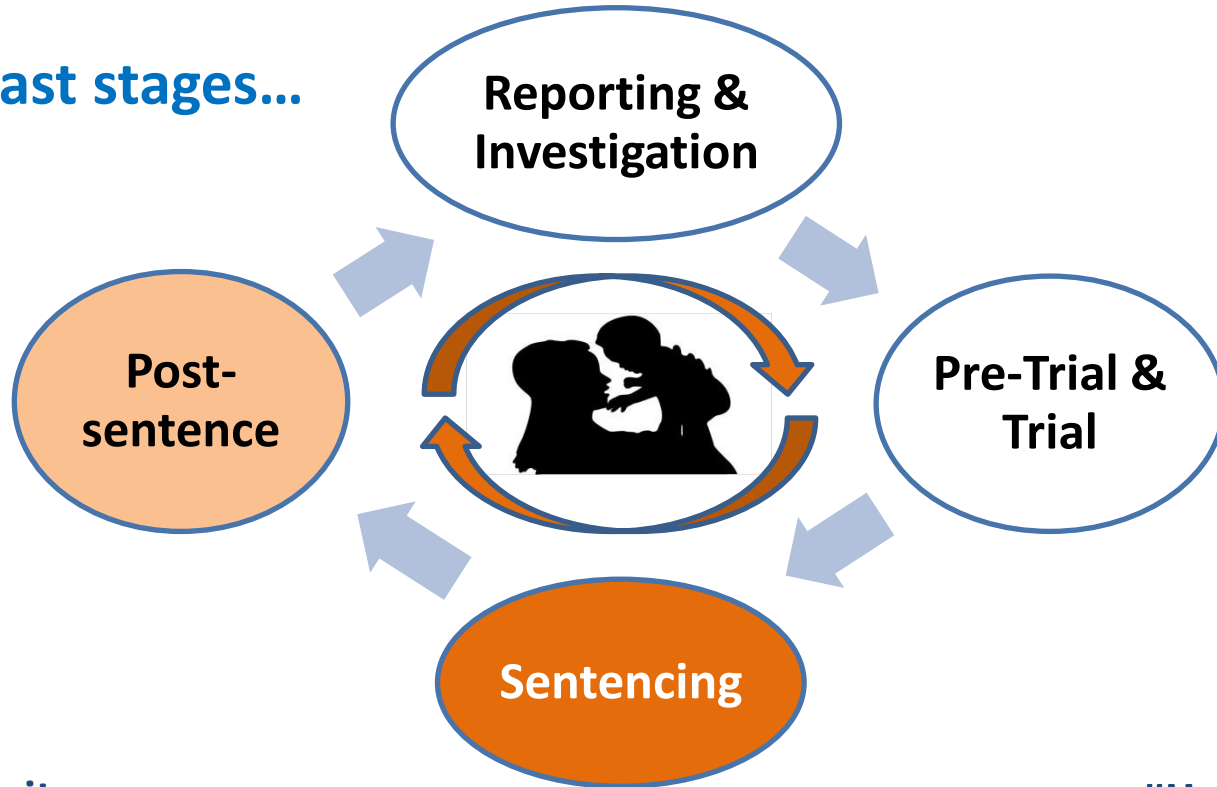
Crown Prosecution feedback

- Limited specialisation of Domestic Abuse
 - Limited resources
 - Limited use of tools
- Coercive Control not routinely charged



Survivor's Journey for Justice ...

At the last stages...



Sentencing

Survivors need the **gravity of the abuse reflected**



*“...I made a four page personal statement and it never made it to court which was **disheartening.**”*

*“His sentence was very lenient – it was a real disappointment - so many women are too scared to press charges, and then you see someone getting 3 months for ABH, **it just isn't going to deter him from doing it again.**”*

#HerStoryHerJustice

Post-sentence

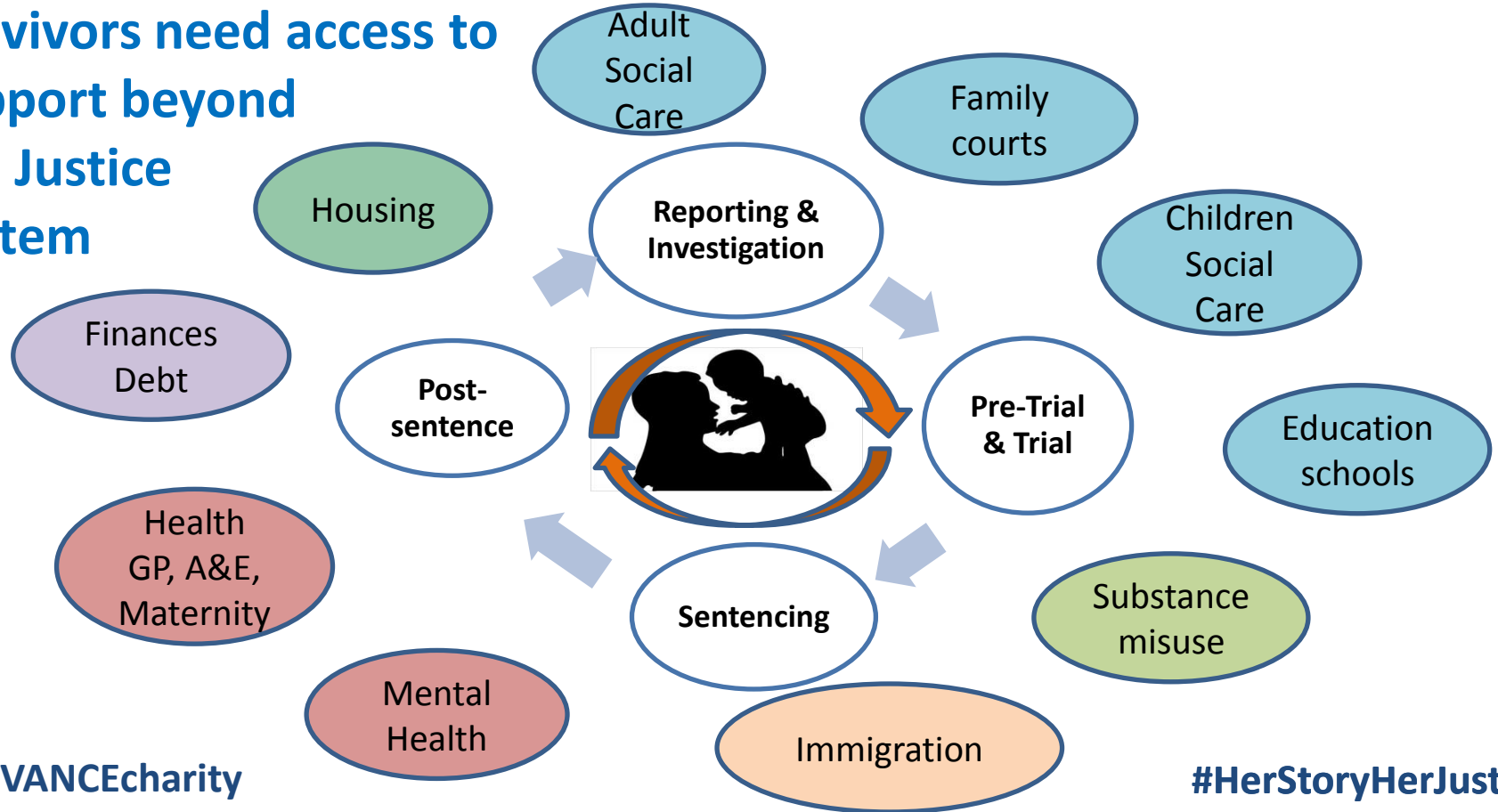
Survivors need to be kept **safe after his release**

- Disjointed communication by professionals
- Limited information or warning by Probation
- Limited safety plans

“I knew he was released from prison when I saw him walking down my road”

Survivor's Journey for Justice ...

Survivors need access to support beyond the Justice System



Survivor's Journey for Justice...



She tells us that it is

**Her Story
But
Not Her Justice**

#HerStoryHerJustice

The 'Whole Justice' Approach

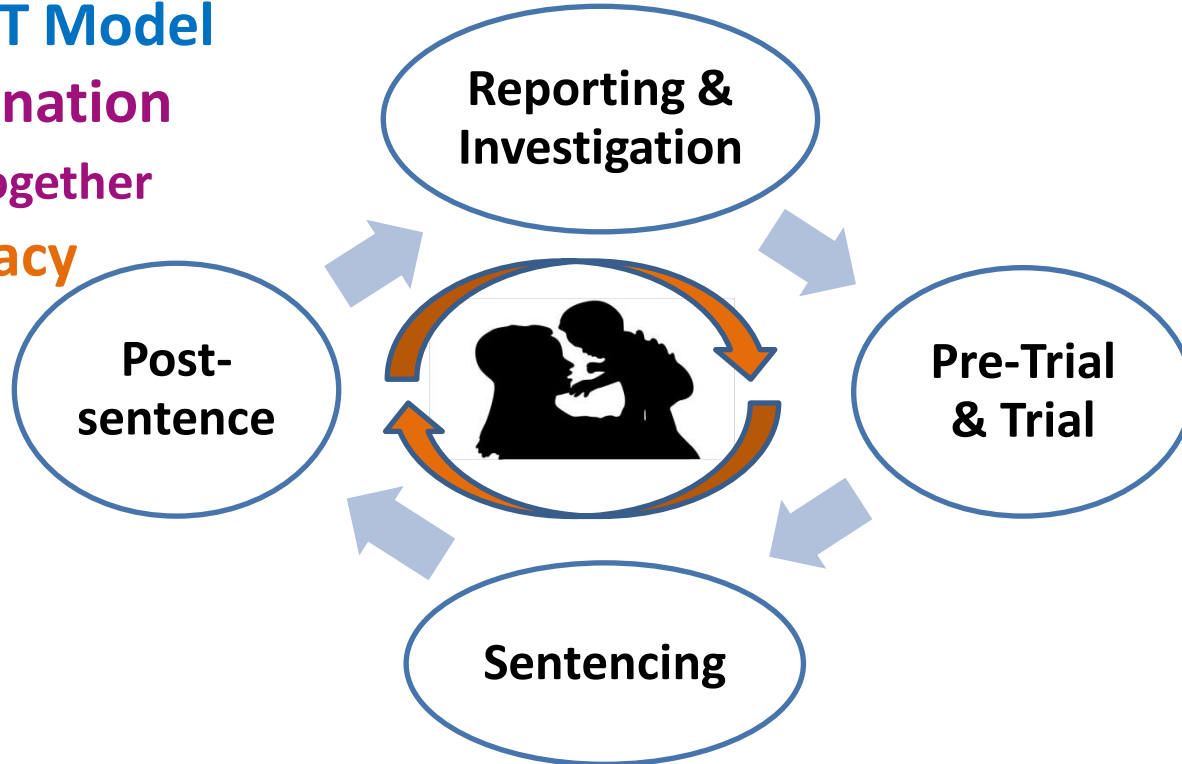
The IMPACT Model

> **CJ Coordination**

Standing Together

> **CJ Advocacy**

Advance



Coordinated Community Response

Every agency who has a responsibility for safely supporting victims of violence against women and girls and their children within their own agency

AND

with all the other agencies who also have that responsibility in order to secure the safety of the victim and their children and hold perpetrators to account.

CCR = integrated and managed process

The Way Forward: The CCR

Empowering rather than Disempowering

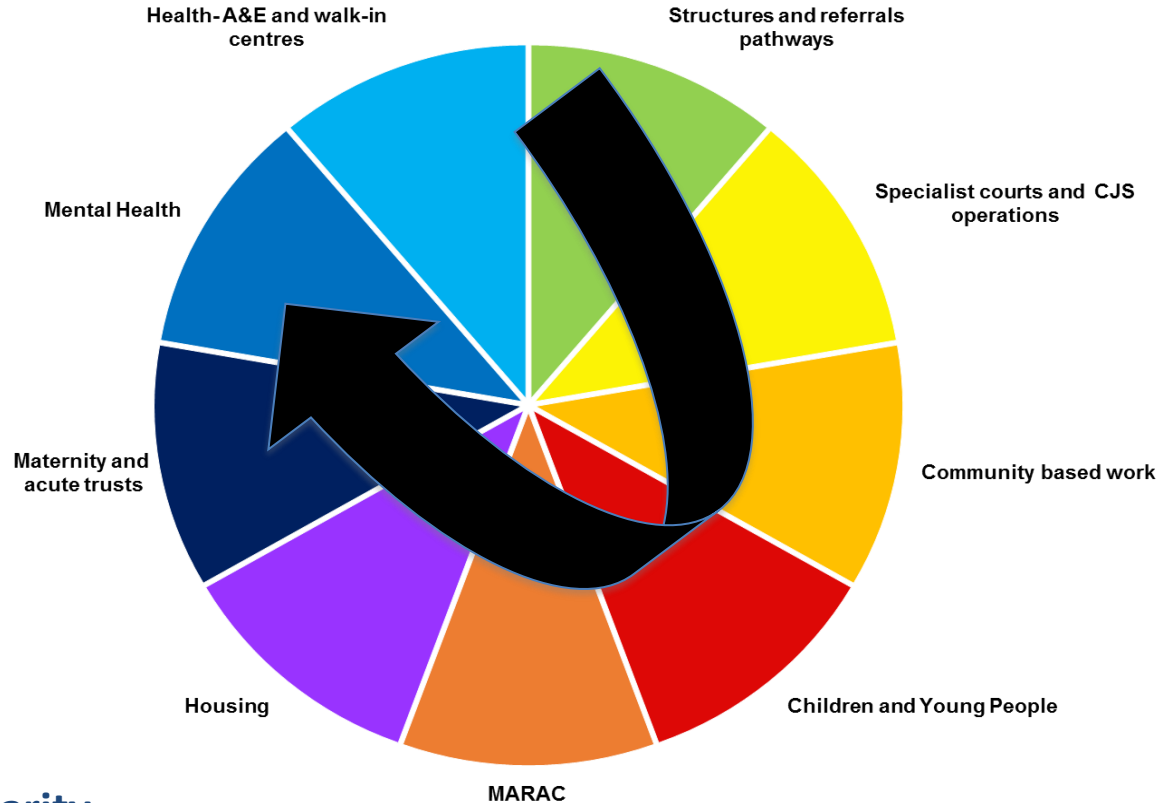


*"Activists and advocates need to be **continually reflective** about how institutions, such as the criminal justice system, reproduce relations of domination in society, whether gendered, racialized, or classes. And the workings of power are often far more visible to women on the margins of society, or those situated in the intersections of different relations of inequality, than to those nearer the center."*

Ellen Pence



Standing Together: Building the CCR



The SDVC Coordinator

A day in the life at court:

- Presence in the court
- Case enquires resolved prior to court start
- Record case results
- Collate files for hearings; identify repeat victim/ witnesses
- Liaise with victim/ witness support services
- Maintain case files
- Note court practice

The SDVC Coordinator

A day in the life at court (cont'd):

- ID people attending court
- Coordinate observers/visitors
- Give guidance re the protocol
- Ensure support and information/
administrative supplies
- Feedback forms for victims/ witnesses

CCR: Criminal Justice Response

What can be achieved?

SDVC conviction rate

year 1 - 36%

year 9 - 52%



@ADVANCEcharity

Case files contain details of special measures	63%	37%
Restraining orders address on file	71%	58%
Restraining orders imposed	Twice as likely	
Early guilty pleas	Twice as likely	
Breaches of bail dealt with at court	100% failure to 100% success	
Referral to IDVA from Police	125% from year 1 to year 2	
Higher conviction rate	77%	66- 69%
Reduction in unsuccessful court cases where the primary reason with V/W evidential issues	64% to 54%	
Increase on arrest leading to charge	28% to 43%	
Prosecutions which did not require the V/S statement	1 in 6 months to 6 in the following 6 months	

Turning Points 2013

Turning Point >> the moment during the survivor's journey **when she believes her situation will improve.**

Participants contacted 4 agencies (average) before reaching a 'Turning Point'

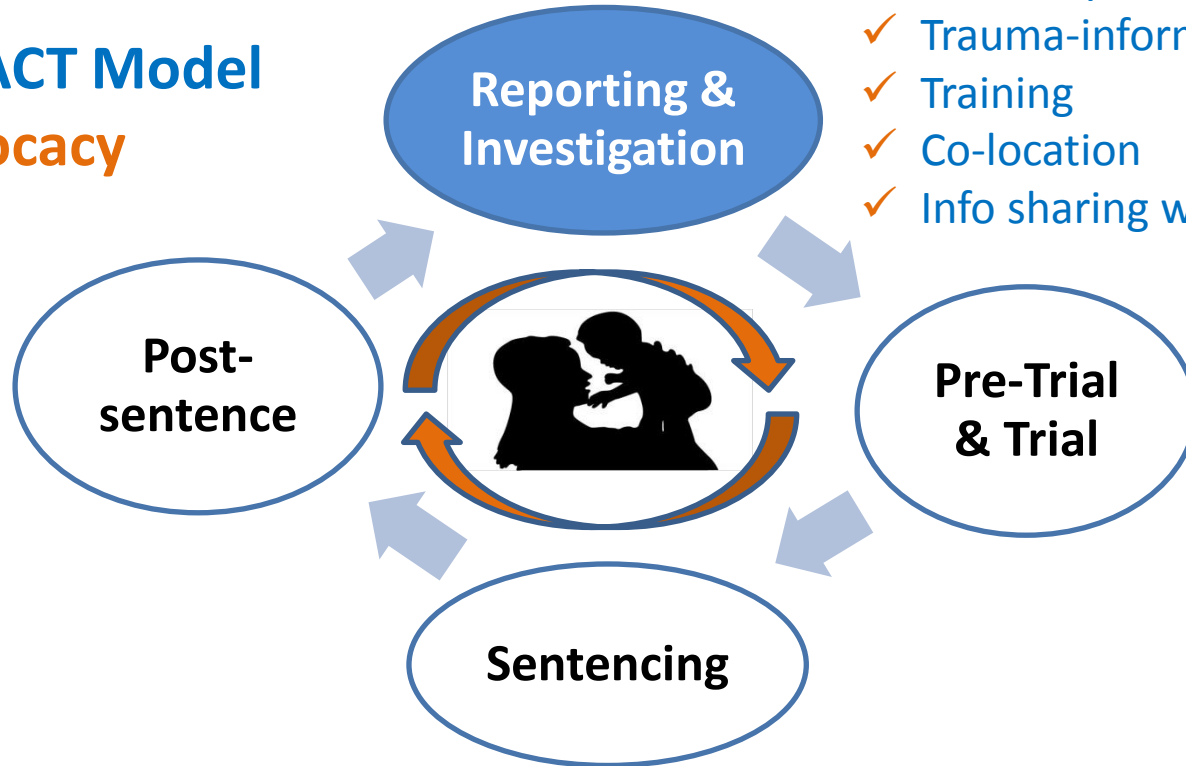
Almost all survivors specifically **cited a DA specialist service as instrumental in their Turning Point**

Shortest path to Turning Point when Police worked with **Advance**:
24% survivors reached Turning Point contacting just 2 agencies.

The Whole Justice Approach

The IMPACT Model
> CJ Advocacy
Advance

- ✓ Advocacy
- ✓ Trauma-informed support
- ✓ Training
- ✓ Co-location
- ✓ Info sharing with agencies

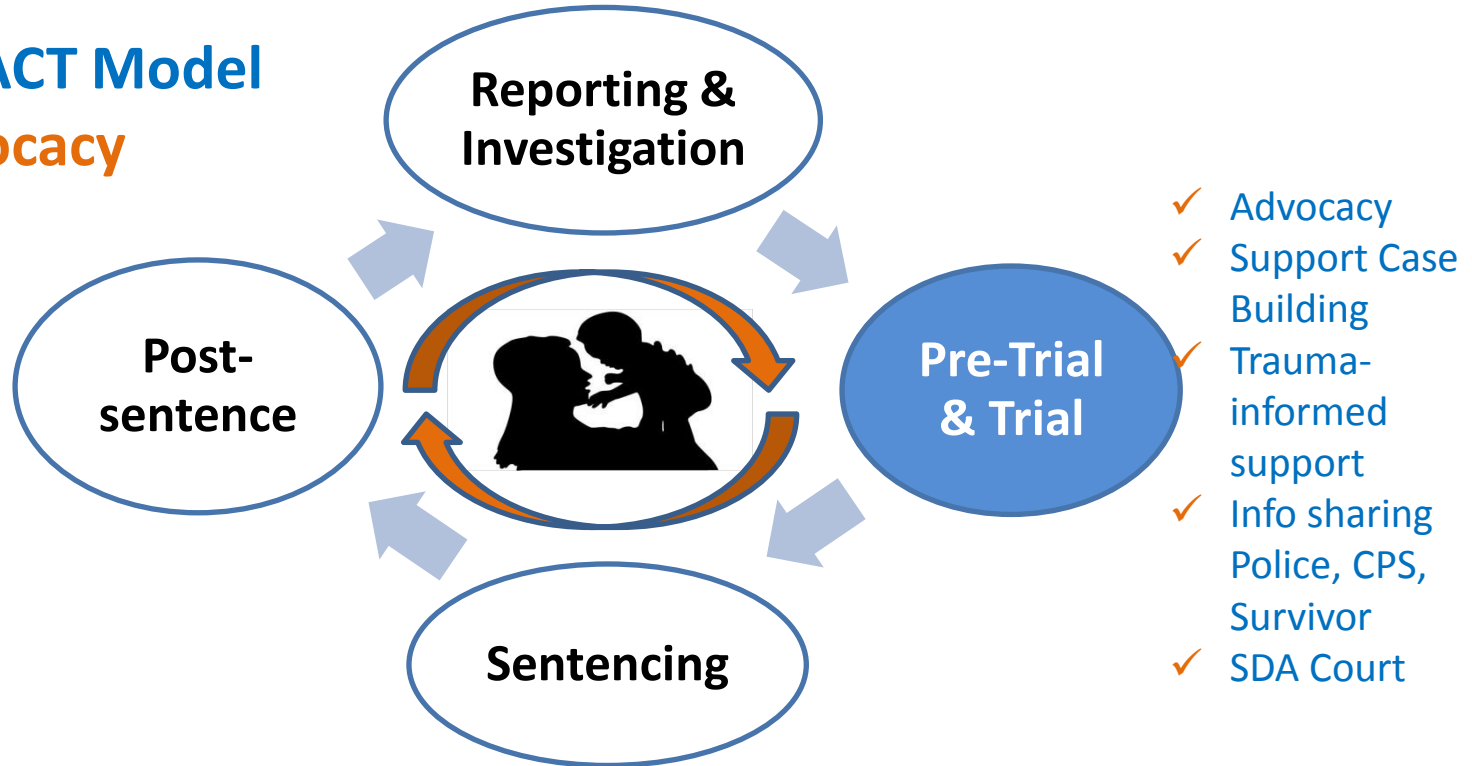


The Whole Justice Approach

The IMPACT Model

> CJ Advocacy

Advance



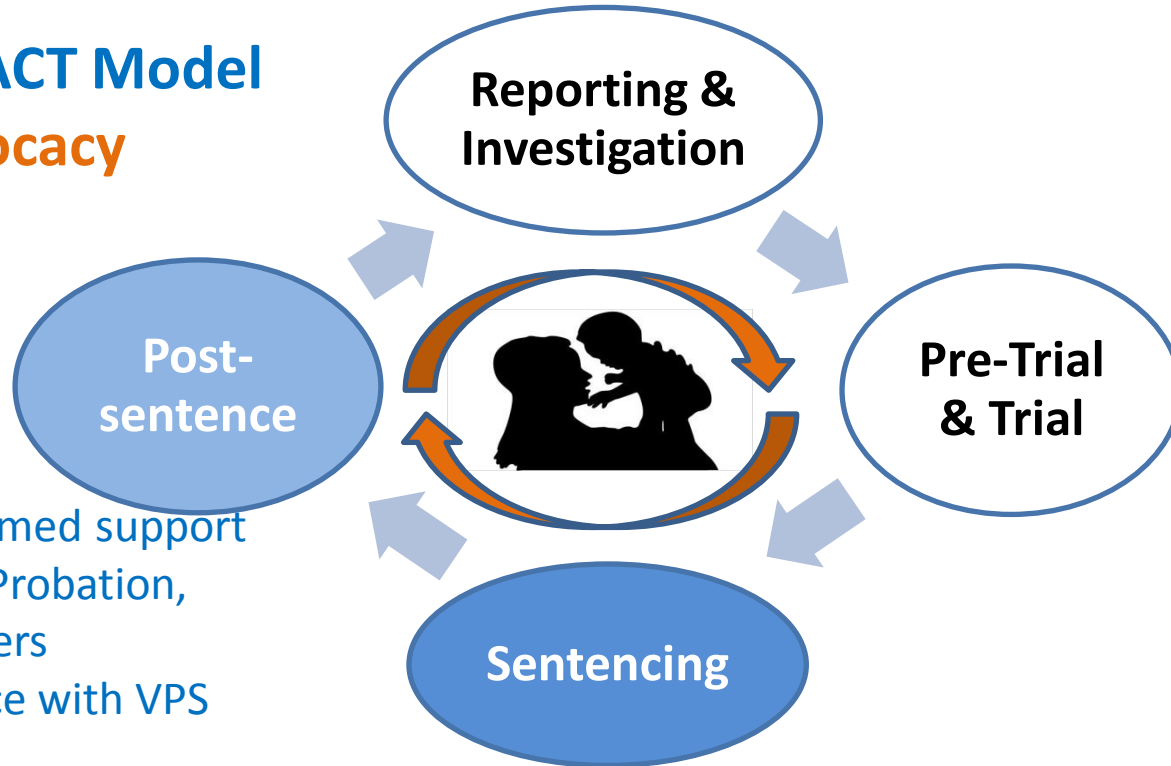
The Whole Justice Approach

The IMPACT Model

> CJ Advocacy

Advance

- ✓ Advocacy
- ✓ Trauma-informed support
- ✓ Info sharing Probation, Survivor, others
- ✓ Support Police with VPS



The Whole Justice Approach

The IMPACT Model

- > CJ Coordination
Standing Together
- > CJ Advocacy
Advance



Survivors **at the centre** of the CJ response
ensuring they are **safe, informed** and **supported**
through the CJ journey

IMPACT: Survivor feedback



“ [Advance] changed my life.”

*“She [Advance] kept in contact, provided information (explained the language) and never made me feel like a burden. This is the third domestic violence service I’ve worked with and it is definitely **the best I ever worked with** – [Advance] was amazing.”*

IMPACT: Survivor feedback



*“If it hadn’t been for Advance I wouldn’t have gone through the court case. Now I feel really **confident that I can trust the police**”*

*“They were very supportive; Advance was the one guiding me and the police. Advance reminded them about screens. Considering how few their (police) resources are, **they did an excellent job on my case.**”*

#HerStoryHerJustice

Impact of Advance model

Survivors tell us that with the support of our Advocates

- ✓ 94% feel improved **confidence in reporting**
- ✓ 90% have improved **safety**
- ✓ 96% have a reduction in **abuse**

Evaluation of IMPACT model

- ✓ Survivors stay **engaged** with CJS
- ✓ Better **trained** and **informed** Professionals
- ✓ Improved **information-sharing** by all Professionals
- ✓ Improved **safeguarding** measures

Evaluation of IMPACT model

	LBHF	Similar Borough
✓ restraining orders on file	71%	58%
✓ DA history on file	94%	76%
✓ early guilty plea	52%	29%
✓ Arrests to charges +54% from 28% to 43%		
✓ Convictions	78%	66% (London)

Improving the Justice response

Recommendations: Legal framework



- ✓ **Domestic abuse Bill** DA definition / an offence
- ✓ **Statutory duty** for full DA services for all survivors
- ✓ **Code of conduct** towards survivors throughout
- ✓ Review DA attrition and **bail** breaches/ penalties

Improving the Justice response

Recommendations:

Reporting and investigation - Police

- ✓ Resources for investigation and evidence gathering
- ✓ Charging for Coercive control
- ✓ Pre-charge bail: no unconditional 'released under investigation'

Pre trial and Trial – Prosecution and Courts

- ✓ Consistency and DA specialisation: case building to prosecuting
- ✓ Resources for Prosecution to review case pre-trial
- ✓ Proportionate sentencing reflecting the gravity of the abuse

Post sentencing – Prisons and Probation

- ✓ Prisons and Probation in a joint-up multi-agency approach
- ✓ Probation work on survivor safety plans and pre-sentence reviews

Improving the Justice response

‘Whole Justice Approach’ framework



- ✓ **Trauma-informed practices:** impact of trauma on survivor response
- ✓ Improve **understanding of DA** by CJ professionals
- ✓ **Hold the perpetrator to account;** not survivor
- ✓ Justice system **for and about the victims,** not despite them



“The welfare of the people is the supreme law”

Cicero, De Legibus– Inscription from The Old Bailey

Contact:

Niki Scordi, CEO Advance Niki.S@advancecharity.org.uk

Melissa Altman, Director of VAWG Services Melissa.A@advancecharity.org.uk