

# Police Procedures

The following is a description of the process you can expect to experience if you decide to report to the police

## **Initial Report to Police**

If you are in immediate danger then call 999. If you are safe and not in immediate risk of harm, then dial 101. The call taker will take initial details from you and arrange for an officer to meet you at a safe place to take your report.

## **First Police Attendance**

The first officer attending will be a specially trained uniformed officer, who will take a report from you to understand: what has happened, who is responsible, where and when did the offence happen? This officer will deal with the initial part of the investigation. Each report is unique and the police investigation will reflect the circumstances of the individual case.

Depending upon when the offence occurred, you may be asked to consent to a medical examination, to assist with the gathering of evidence. It is entirely your decision whether you agree to this or not. If you do agree, the police will arrange this for you.

## **The Suspect**

If the police can identify and locate the offender, they will usually arrest them. The decision to arrest will be based on your wishes and the wider public interest. If the police assess there is a continuing threat to you, or to others, they will act as they cannot risk another person being hurt.

## **Allocation of An Investigating Officer**

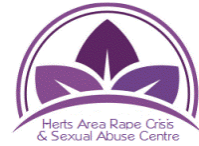
Your case will be allocated to an officer from the Sexual Offences Investigation Team (SOIT), who will visit you at a safe location. They will explain the process of the investigation to you, the support available to you, assist you with any measures required to help keep you safe and explain the prosecution process.

## **Giving Your Evidence**

Your SOIT officer will talk to you about how you wish to give your evidence of what has happened – the police can take a written statement from you or can complete a visually recorded interview with you.

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Your officer will fully explain both methods of obtaining your evidence and what would happen if the case was to go to court.



## **Further Investigation**

The police will fully investigate your case. The enquiries will differ for every case, depending upon the circumstances.

## **Charging the Offender**

Once the police have finished their investigation, they will assess whether there is sufficient evidence to refer the case to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) for consideration of charging. If this is the case, the CPS will examine the evidence obtained and make a decision about whether criminal charges can be laid. The CPS apply a two-stage test in making this decision: is there sufficient evidence for a realistic prospect of conviction and if there is, is it in the public interest to prosecute? The officer in your case will update you with the outcome of this decision and the reasons for it.

## **Going to Court**

If you are required to attend court to give evidence, you will be supported in this process. The officer in your case will discuss with you Special Measures to assist you in giving your best evidence at court and will explain all options available to support you in attending court.

## **Keeping You Safe**

From the first point at which you contact the police, keeping you safe will be a police priority. The police will conduct a risk assessment of your circumstances and discuss with you what safeguarding measures can be provided to help protect you from further harm.

## **What If I Want to Stop The Investigation?**

If at any point during the investigation process you decide to withdraw your support for the investigation, the officer dealing with your case will come and discuss this with you. The police will make a decision about whether to continue with any enquiries or to close the case depending on the circumstances of your case, and their assessment of the risk posed by the offender to you and others. You can ask for the case to be re-opened at any time by contacting the police again.