

Police Scotland launch Online Reporting Form



Police Scotland today launched an Online Reporting Form to encourage victims of stalking to come forward and report abuse.

The form has been designed to encourage people who may be either unable to or hesitant about attending a police station to report concerns about stalking and ensure their concerns are registered and investigated.

The facility also enables concerned third parties, including family, friends or colleagues, to contact police on the victim's behalf.

By completing the form, a police enquiry will be launched to fully investigate the circumstances of the allegation.

Deputy Chief Constable Johnny Gwynne said, "Stalking is a serious and often terrifying form of abuse as well as a potentially dangerous crime. Police Scotland officers are trained to ensure vulnerable individuals are treated in a considerate and professional manner.

"We are committed to exploring new ways to support victims of stalking. The development of this form is part of that commitment and enables victims from all communities to report abuse. We hope this will make police more accessible to people who many not wish to – or may not be able to – visit a police station in person, in the first instance.

"Police Scotland is committed to providing a robust response to stalking, to supporting victims, their families and friends, and using the full force of the law and all means

available to us to pursue perpetrators.”

The new form has been supported by charities, including Action against Stalking. Its founder and CEO Ann Moulds said, “The early identification of stalking cases is critical to victim safety and to prevent the behaviours from escalating to more serious harm.

“While many early staking cases do come to the attention of the police, triggering an affirmative response, victims can often feel reluctant to phone their local police station in the early stages for fear they may not be believed or purely because they are unsure how to report it.

“Not only should the online stalking form make it easier for victims to take that first step in asking for help, the fact it exists delivers a strong message that Police Scotland is reaching out to victims of stalking to encourage them to come forward.”