

# A MESSAGE FROM BCU COMMANDER, CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT HELEN HARPER



Dear all,

## **Hidden harms – Domestic Abuse**

Yesterday the Government held a virtual hidden harms summit to discuss how to support victims of crimes such as domestic abuse, sexual violence and modern slavery. One of the things discussed was the potential implementation of a codeword scheme, championed by the Victims Commissioner, to support victims of domestic abuse which could be used, for example to alert shop workers that someone needed help.

As you know, the Met prioritises keeping people safe and takes a zero-tolerance approach to domestic abuse. With people socially distancing and self-isolating due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we know that this puts potential victims at greater risk.

Domestic abuse is historically an under-reported crime and victims may feel more isolated, and like they have less opportunity to access help and support.

Officers are continuing to prioritise and respond to domestic abuse calls, and we continue to work closely with a range of partners to ensure victims receive the support and service they need.

If you are experiencing domestic abuse or you know a friend, relative or neighbour who you think is at risk, call police right away. In an emergency, always call 999 – high harm domestic abuse calls will continue to be prioritised.

The 24/7 National Domestic Abuse helpline, which offers support to victims and people affected by domestic abuse, is free to call on 0808 2000 247.

The Respect Phonenumber provides confidential advice and support to help perpetrators stop being violent and abusive, and is free to call 0808 8024040

Men's Advice Line: 0808 801 0327 a confidential helpline for male victims of domestic violence and those supporting them [www.mensadvice.org.uk](http://www.mensadvice.org.uk)

Karma Nirvana: 0800 5999 247 Mon to Fri 9am–5pm supporting victims of honour based abuse and forced marriage [www.karmanirvana.org.uk](http://www.karmanirvana.org.uk)

Hour Glass: 0808 808 8141 challenging the abuse of older people in all its forms [www.wearehourglass.org](http://www.wearehourglass.org)

Galop LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline: 0800 999 5428 [www.galop.org.uk](http://www.galop.org.uk)

Childline: 0800 1111 If you're a child or young person and domestic abuse is happening in your home or relationship.

For more information and advice, go to <https://www.met.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/daa/domestic-abuse/>

## **Violence Suppression Units**

Last week, Commissioner Cressida Dick announced the launch of our new Violence Suppression Units (VSU) – a new team of more than 620 officers who will spearhead suppression activity at a local and neighbourhood level.

Commander Alex Murray, from our Specialist Crime Command was interviewed on LBC this morning (09:20hrs) about the role of VSU officers and how they will help us to focus on the Met priority – reducing violent crime.

You can also read about the VSU here: <http://news.met.police.uk/news/commissioner-sets-out-plans-to-continue-to-tackle-violent-crime-402325>

## **Policing approach this weekend**

Throughout the weekend, officers will continue to be on their usual patrols. You will see us as usual engaging with people and explaining the regulations. We are grateful to our communities who are following the regulations.

We would like to send our very best wishes to you all this Bank Holiday weekend and to those in our community who will be looking forward to celebrating Eid al-Fitr this weekend.

Thank you for your continued support.

Kindest regards



Helen

BCU Commander Central West BCU and Royal Parks