



## Beacon Newsletter August 2024

### Welcome to our Beacon Newsletter for August 2024!

It's been an exciting few months at Beacon.

In June, we held our second annual Beacon Awareness Conference, which was a great success. Thank you to everyone who contributed and attended the event. The conference hosted our first ever Beacon Award congratulations to all those nominated and to the well deserved winners.



In June, our ASB specialist spoke at a national webinar for the Public Policy Exchange, focusing on the work being done to support those undergoing the ASB Case Review process (formerly Community Trigger). The presentation highlighted the benefits of the Case Review process and the importance of including an independent victim's voice.

On a personal note, this will be my final newsletter as Head of Service before I resume my role as Deputy Head of Service. Rebecca Bayley will be returning from her maternity leave in August. There will be a transitional period in August as Becky settles back into the service, and I will officially step down in September. We are very excited to welcome Becky back, as she has been greatly missed. It has been a great pleasure working with you all in this capacity.

Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to seeing you at upcoming events!

Kelly Brown, Head of Service

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## Spotlight: Beacon Victim's Awareness Conference and Award Ceremony

In June we held our second annual Beacon Victims Awareness Conference. This year's theme, "Meeting the needs of victims today and tomorrow" resonated throughout the day's presentations, panel discussions, and lived experience speakers.

The conference brought together key agencies from across Hertfordshire including the Police, council, Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), and various organisations who provide support to victims: all of whom work together to guide and support victims of crime through the Criminal Justice System (CJS).

The conference hosted a range of speakers who touched on the varying and often complex needs of victims as they navigate through the criminal justice system.

The conference opened with a talk from a lived experience speaker about her journey as a victim of romance fraud and the numerous touch points she had with the system.

'It was a fantastic and Inspiring day'

We heard from Trauma Recovery CIC on the importance of taking a trauma-informed approach when supporting victims, wherever they are in their journey. There was a talk to demonstrate the future of evidence collection for victims, particularly those who have suffered domestic abuse, through the introduction of a digital enabler that works to limit attrition or disengagement from the criminal justice process.

The conference also delved into the recently passed 'Victims and Prisoners Law', with both a talk and panel session considering what its provisions will mean for the various agencies to which it applies, and how different agencies can collaborate more closely to ensure that victims' rights are met.

In the afternoon, Beacon hosted an awards ceremony which recognised individuals and organisations for their outstanding contributions to victims services. It was a touching glimpse at the inspiring work

"the lived experience speaker was an excellent example of how victims can be floored by the system"

which is carried out on behalf of and for victims across Hertfordshire. Next year we welcome more varied nominations and would like to see more of you to nominate.

Finally, attendees were invited to make a pledge: "Together, we pledge to advocate for victims' rights", which encouraged closer working between organisations to better champion victims' needs. Those who signed up to the pledge now sit on a list of individuals ready and willing to push the victims agenda forward this could be through contributing to events such as this or joining victim strategy meetings.

The event provided valuable insights, gave space for important discussions, and celebrated the extraordinary contributions of those dedicated to supporting victims. While significant progress has been made, the journey to fully meeting the needs of victims is ongoing. We therefore look forward to seeing the continued collaboration that will undoubtedly stem from the connections and knowledge shared at this year's conference.

We look forward to seeing you all at next years conference.

"the awards were a great way to recognise excellent support and were inspiring to hear"

## Key Stats



We received **931** new cases this quarter.




We received **107** self-referrals



We have provided **518** instances of emotional support.



We received **21** referrals into the Family Hub



We received **188** referrals for children and young people

**NEXT STEPS...**

Thank you, I really appreciate the help I have received from my Beacon Support Worker, she has been a godsend. She was so lovely, helpful and supportive."

## Case Study

Offence Summary: Anti-Social Behaviour and Hate Crime taking the form of Criminal Damage and Harassment.

Background: Victim had initially been referred to Beacon for a separate stalking case whilst in support the victim disclosed issues with her neighbour of harassment, racial slurs directed to her children and criminal damage.

## Support Provided

Safety: Victim was provided with a personal alarm and information on the Holyguard app. Advice was provided about Ring doorbells. Beacon sent a request to the police to put a marker allowing police to understand increased risk should a new incident be reported.

Emotional: Beacon provided emotional support around the impact of crime and referred the victim for trauma therapy.

Multi-Agency work: The victim has a support worker due to her disabilities. With consent Beacon liaised with the Support Worker to ensure a holistic approach was taken.





## Outcome

**Housing:** Beacon have advocated with housing and sent a supporting letter to them regarding the benefit of a housing move. Beacon signposted to a specialist housing agency for more in-depth advice.

**CJS:** Beacon advised the victim to report the racial slurs and harassment as a Hate Crime. Beacon offered police advocacy but this was declined. Beacon provided the victim with ASB and non molestation order information

- The police have added a marker on the address and recorded the crimes as Hate Crimes.
- The police have spoken to the neighbours.
- The victim found emotional support beneficial and has now started trauma therapy.
- Housing are offering the victim alternative homes.
- The victim has purchased a Ring doorbell allowing for evidence collection
- No further incidents have occurred.
- The whole family have been supported by Beacon around the impact of the crime.

**Client Feedback:** “ you are excellent, supportive, caring and empathic. I cant open up to many people but you always phone when you say you will, I feel I can tell you everything and you never judge.”

## What's next for Beacon Community Cafe's

In the next few months we are looking to hold a couple of Community Cafes and would like to invite partners to join us at these events. The aim is to get out into the Community and ensure that we are raising awareness of our services and providing members of the public a different way to engage, learn more and refer into our services. It will also be an opportunity for existing service users to feedback on the services they receive. We would like as many of our partners to join us at these events to allow Hertfordshire residents to learn more about the support on offer to them. And of course there will be cake and a cuppa! If you are interested in joining us at one of these events please email [info.hertfordshirebeacon@catch-22.org.uk](mailto:info.hertfordshirebeacon@catch-22.org.uk)

## Victim Advisory Board

We will be holding our second Victims Advisory Board in the coming months. The focus of this topic will be Restorative Justice. If you would like to be invited to attend or contribute to this meeting please reach out to us as [victimsadvisoryboard@catch22uk.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:victimsadvisoryboard@catch22uk.onmicrosoft.com)

## Recruitment

We're recruiting... Our team is growing! We have some exciting opportunities to join our team supporting victims and witnesses of crime. Check out the vacancies in Welwyn Garden City [here](https://www.catch-22.org.uk).

[Current vacancies | Catch22 \(catch-22.org.uk\)](https://www.catch-22.org.uk)

“Thank you so much for your help and support we were really shaken by the situation and appreciate your time and understanding. You have helped us to get a quick response from the bank and we have received a refund of the amount lost.

“My Beacon Support Worker was superb it was a long case and she was very helpful and proactive. I wish there were more people like her in the world.