

# Domestic Violence Protection Notices and Orders

Giving victims the time, space and support to plan a safer future... by keeping the perpetrator away

Wiltshire Police news release

Thursday 30 June 2011

## Wiltshire Police launch pilot to improve safety of victims of domestic abuse

Wiltshire Police is one of three forces which will tomorrow (1 July 2011) begin a pilot which involves a radical new way of tackling domestic abuse (DA).

When there is not enough evidence to bring a charge, but there is concern that a partner is at risk, a 48-hour Domestic Violence Protection Notice (DVPN) can be authorised by a superintendent before a suspect leaves custody.

The suspect can be banned from returning to the victim's address (which might also be the suspect's home), or the area around it, and from molesting the victim. The decision must then be referred to magistrates who could decide to turn the notice into an order (DVPO) lasting between 14 and 28 days.

The pilot, which also involves Greater Manchester Police and West Mercia Police, will last 12 months and will then be assessed by the Home Office.

In Wiltshire, the pilot involves Wiltshire Police and the Swindon and Wiltshire Community Safety Partnerships.

The Chief Constable, Brian Moore, said: "In 2009, as the Association of Chief Police Officers lead for domestic abuse, I was asked by the Home Secretary to review the laws in respect of perpetrators of violence against women and girls.

"Currently perpetrators are released with no restrictions upon their behaviour at a time when we know that risk is heightened for the victim.

"Protection for the victim in the immediate aftermath of a domestic violence incident is not currently available and often the only option is for the victim and children to be removed from the home. In my view that is a grotesque situation.

Keeping Swindon



Swindon Community Safety Partnership  
Swindon Borough Council, Wiltshire Police, Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service,  
MPS Swindon, Wiltshire Probation Area, Wiltshire Police Authority



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"Arguably, there is a gap between the criminal and civil law and that is not right. People should enjoy seamless safety, at all times protected, and I wanted to do something about this problem.

"I had in mind that the police should be given a power to keep the suspect away from the victim for a limited period so that the victim had time to think, to receive advice and to consider options. In other words, some protected time, space and support to break free, if they want to.

"I learned about 'Go Orders' which have been in place in a number of European countries for the last 15 years, where police could require the suspect to leave premises and not return.

"We developed our thinking which was subsequently accepted as law under the Crime and Security Act 2010 and hence this pilot.

"We will test whether the law that Parliament has provided is operationally effective and cost-effective in keeping domestic abuse victims safer. If it is, we will recommend that it is adopted across the land. If it is not, then we must say so. We should not support a law that won't keep people safe or is too costly.

"Domestic Violence Protection Notices and Orders are aimed at perpetrators who present a continuing risk of violence to the victim.

"The objective is to secure a co-ordinated approach across agencies for the protection of victims and the management of perpetrators. I am very pleased that we are working closely with our two Community Safety Partnerships and with a number of other stakeholders to help keep victims of domestic abuse safer."

**Maggie Rae, Chairman of the Wiltshire Community Safety Partnership, said:**

"We are pleased to be supporting the police on this very important scheme which will potentially help people who are the victims of domestic abuse in Wiltshire.

"Last year alone there were 2,058 domestic abuse incidents reported in our county to the police and 1,290 arrests made.

"With these new protection notices and orders, we are now able to seek from the court a breathing space for victims from their abusers and provide those victims with the opportunity to decide their futures with less fear and intimidation.

"We also hope these new powers encourage more victims to come forward and report what is happening to them.

Keeping Swindon **Safe**

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"If you are the victim of domestic abuse and your partner receives a protection notice and order, you will receive our fullest support.

"We will provide high risk victims the service of an independent domestic violence advisor to give specialist support.

"Victims will also be offered one-to-one support, group work and support for children through local specialist services.

"We would urge all victims of domestic abuse to come forward. These new powers will make it easier for you to get help and support and space from being abused."

## Campaign information and sources of help and information

Posters aimed at perpetrators and at the friends, relatives and workmates of victims are being distributed across Swindon and Wiltshire for display in pubs, clubs, council offices and police stations.

Perpetrators who want to change their abusive behaviour can seek help by visiting [www.respectphonenumber.org.uk](http://www.respectphonenumber.org.uk) or by calling 0808 802 4040 (free from landlines and mobiles). There is information about the voluntary Turnaround programme for male perpetrators at [www.splitz.org](http://www.splitz.org)

People who think someone they know is a victim of domestic abuse can get more information from [www.speakoutwiltshire.com](http://www.speakoutwiltshire.com) or [www.swindon-csp.org.uk](http://www.swindon-csp.org.uk)

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