



# Young people tackle domestic abuse in powerful comic book

## Story told entirely through the eyes of local teenagers

Derry and Strabane PCSP is proud to have supported the creation of an innovative comic book that tackles domestic abuse entirely through the eyes of young people.

Created by teenagers from across the district, it is set to spark vital conversations in local schools and youth clubs about unhealthy relationships, coercive control, and where to turn for help.

PCSP Chair, Alderman Keith Kerrigan said the project was one that the partnership was particularly proud to have been part of. "The young people who produced this comic have tackled a sensitive and complex issue with maturity, insight and creativity well beyond their years.

"Domestic abuse, whether physical, emotional, psychological or digital, remains a serious concern within our community, and this resource will help young people understand that support is available and that they should never hesitate to seek help.

"I want to congratulate every participant and partner organisation involved - their combined effort has produced something truly powerful."



Alderman Keith Kerrigan, Chair of Derry and Strabane PCSP, pictured at the launch of 'Our Modern Troubles - The Storm Before The Calm' in the Guildhall, He is joined by Chief Inspector Cherith Craig; Danny McLaughlin from Revolve Comics who designed the comic with the teenagers; Deputy Chief Constable Bobby Singleton; and Constable Josie Crawford.

'Our Modern Troubles - The Storm Before The Calm' was developed by teenagers aged 14 to 17 from schools across the district, working through a series of evening workshops to craft the storyline and design the comic.

It follows two fictional young people who experience domestic abuse across its many forms - physical, verbal, psychological, emotional and sexual - and how, with the support of family, friends and police, they find a way through.

The project was funded by the NI Executive's Programme on Paramilitarism and Organised Crime and Derry and Strabane PCSP, and was launched at a ceremony in the Guildhall, attended by Justice Minister Naomi Long, Junior Minister Joanne Bunting, Deputy Chief Constable Bobby Singleton, and Mayor of Derry City and Strabane, Councillor Ruairí McHugh, among many others.



The front cover of the new comic book entitled 'Our Modern Troubles - The Storm Before The Calm'

Chief Inspector Cherith Craig, who was involved with the project from the outset, praised the young creators. "They've developed a story about domestic abuse and how it impacts people their age, which

is why it was so important the story is told the way they want it. This book raises awareness of domestic abuse and sends a message that help and support is available - and that if you experience domestic abuse, it is never your fault; you are not alone."

The students themselves reflected on why the project mattered. One said the comic "uses modern language for younger readers to help them understand and relate to the themes within."

Another added: "This comic book really highlights the stuff we need to talk about."

• 6,000 copies have been printed for distribution across local schools and youth clubs, and the comic is also available online at [revolvecomics.com/our-modern-troubles](http://revolvecomics.com/our-modern-troubles)

## Derry Strabane PCSP supporting local initiatives



PCSP funded the performance of 'I Love You, Mum - I Promise I Won't Die', by The Daniel Spargo-Mabbs Foundation at a number of local schools. PCSP Chair, Keith Kerrigan is pictured with cast members of the thought-provoking play which tells the true story of Daniel Spargo-Mabbs, a 16-year-old who died from an accidental overdose of ecstasy in 2014. Its title comes from the last words Dan said to his mum before leaving home for the very last time.



Alderman Keith Kerrigan, PCSP Chair; Vanessa Russell, PCSP Manager; and Karl Duncan, PCSP Vice-Chair, pictured at the Problem Solving in Partnership Awards in Belfast, where Derry and Strabane PCSP won the PCSP Category for its innovative Consensual Grant Making Model. The model empowers Local Growth Partnerships across the district to identify local needs and design their own solutions - delivering real results for community safety and now being used across multiple Council departments to enhance the lives of hundreds of residents every day.



Alderman Keith Kerrigan, PCSP Chair, pictured with Community Safety Wardens Matt and James at an information event focused on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls, held at the Fir Trees Hotel. The event, organised by Melmount Community Forum and supported by the PCSP's Consensual Grant Aid Programme, brought together government departments, policing, specialist support services and survivors with lived experience, in a powerful show of solidarity with victims of domestic abuse across the district.

# Tips to protect your home this Summer

With the summer holiday season approaching, householders are being urged to take a fresh look at their home security, and make sure they're not leaving the door open for opportunistic criminals.

The PSNI is asking residents to make home security part of their daily routine, with simple habits that can make a real difference in deterring burglars while properties are unoccupied.

Chief Inspector Cherith Craig said, "By getting into the habit of doing things every day, the less chance you have of being targeted by opportunistic burglars. Make sure you lock all doors and windows, ensure alarms are working and store valuables out of sight."

Garages, sheds and outbuildings are frequently overlooked, but can be an easy target.

Chief Inspector Craig added: "Check they have working locks and alarms and that valuable items are secured away and appropriately marked. And if you see something in your neighbourhood that doesn't look right, don't wait - pick up the phone and tell us.

"We've caught burglars in the act because someone called us straightaway. The sooner we know, the faster we can respond and the safer your neighbourhood will be."

PCSP Chair, Alderman Keith Kerrigan echoed the message and encouraged residents to see security as a shared community responsibility.

He said, "It is important that we don't make it easy for criminals to take advantage. A few simple steps before you leave home can make all the difference - and looking out for your neighbours while they are away is exactly the kind of community spirit that makes our district a harder target for burglars. PCSP will continue to work closely with the Police and our community partners to keep homes safe right across Derry and Strabane."

• *For more advice on securing your home, visit [www.psni.police.uk](http://www.psni.police.uk). You can also arrange to speak to your local PSNI Crime Prevention Officer by calling the non-emergency number 101.*

There are signs to spot in domestic abuse.

If you know someone affected, tell us.



**CrimeStoppers.**  
0800 555 111  
100% anonymous. Always.

[crimestoppers-uk.org](http://crimestoppers-uk.org)

## Follow the #5StepRule to contact Police

Did you know there are several ways to contact the PSNI if you need them?

By following the #5StepRule, you can choose which way best suits your needs, whether it's during the day, or during the weekend.

• **Step 1** - Ask yourself, is this a police issue? Or, is another service better suited to dealing with it? If you believe the issue is a police matter, then look at the ways you can contact the PSNI.

• **Step 2** - Perhaps the information you need is on the Police Service's website [www.psni.police.uk](http://www.psni.police.uk). If not, you may want to contact police directly.

• **Step 3** - If a crime has already happened, the easiest way to report it is via the Online Incident Reporting Form at <http://www.psni.police.uk/makeareport/>. This service is available 24/7, and allows you to report the crime straight away without any delays

• **Step 4** - Do you wish to speak to someone specifically about a particular issue, obtain information about an investigation which is ongoing, speak to police about a recent appeal, or make a report about an incident via the phone, you can do so by calling 101.

• **Step 5** - Is your issue an emergency requiring immediate action with life or property potentially at risk? If so, you should contact 999 straight away.

# Speeding drivers face the Kids' Court

A powerful road safety initiative came to Artigarvan Primary School recently when the 'Kids' Court' scheme saw nine speeding motorists brought before a panel of Primary 7 pupils to account for their behaviour.

The initiative gave drivers caught exceeding the 30mph limit on Berryhill Road a stark choice: accept three penalty points and a fine, or come into the school and face questions from the children whose safety they put at risk.

Within the space of roughly half an hour, all nine drivers who appeared before the young judges were asked why they had been speeding — and what they thought the consequences could have been.

PCSP Chair, Alderman Keith Kerrigan said the event demonstrated just how effective creative partnership working can be when it comes to road safety. "Speeding outside schools is something our communities feel very strongly about, and the Kids' Court at Artigarvan Primary School brought that message home in a really powerful way," he said.

"When a driver has to sit before a panel of children and explain why they were



Children from Artigarvan Primary School who acted as judges during the recent Kids' Court. They are pictured with Aileen Murphy, Derry and Strabane PCSP; Strabane Neighbourhood Constable John McAuley, Superintendent John Wilson; Ethna Wiley, Artigarvan PS Board of Governors; Constable Cassells and Constable Lorraine Bull.

speeding past their school gates, it creates an impact that no fixed penalty notice ever could.

"Children have every right to feel safe in and around their school, and it is entirely unacceptable that speeding puts that safety at risk.

"Road safety has consistently been raised as a top priority by residents across Derry and Strabane, and initiatives like the Kids' Court show we are committed to tackling this issue in creative and effective ways.

"I want to thank all the pupils involved for their courage and their questions - they were a

credit to their school - and I would encourage every driver to reflect on their behaviour behind the wheel, particularly near schools and in residential areas." Acting Principal Rachel Kane said the session had left a lasting impression on everyone in the room.

"This event has had a huge impact on the children. We also saw the impact it had on the drivers emotionally.

"Hopefully awareness will spread and people will slow down, take care and be patient to keep the children at our school safe."

Superintendent John Wilson explained that the scheme is about lasting behaviour change.

"Speeding is not a low-level crime. It's dangerous because with speed there are no second chances and lives can be lost. Our aim through Kids' Court is to change the mindset and attitudes about speeding."

• *The Kids' Court initiative has been established since 2017 and continues to be supported by PCSP as part of its ongoing commitment to road safety across the district.*

## Watch out for rogue traders during the long summer days

Longer, brighter evenings mean people taking the opportunity to do work around their homes.

It also brings the opportunity for cold callers and rogue traders to take advantage of people.

Locally Police are urging people to report any suspicious activity of strangers offering unsolicited

services or trying to gain access to homes.

"The sooner this information is reported, even if it is on behalf of others, the better our chances are of catching a potential criminal," says Chief Inspector Cherith Craig from Derry City and Strabane PSNI.

"When it comes to cold callers, remember, it's your home and, if you have any concerns, it

is perfectly okay not to open the door.

"You can speak to the person through the door or window, without actually opening the door to them.

"Not all cold callers are rogue traders, but some of them are and if you feel that something isn't quite right, it usually isn't," Chief Inspector Craig continued.

"Please report any activity

that raises suspicion to police immediately. This is a good way to alert us so we can investigate - and will help deter criminals and reduce crime in your area."

• *You can call police on the non-emergency number 101 or report a crime online via [www.psni.police.uk/report](http://www.psni.police.uk/report) Always 999 in an emergency.*



## City and Rural Team

### Contact Details

#### TRIAX/Waterside Wardens

(Bogside, Brandywell, Fountain Estate, Creggan and Waterside urban areas)

Telephone: **07709 457690**

#### Outer North/Outer West Wardens

(Shantallow, Galliagh, Ballyarnett, Culmore, Rosemount, Glen, Ballymagroarty, Hazelbank areas)

Telephone: **07736 213140**

#### Rural Wardens

(Strathfoyle, Eglinton, Claudy, Park, Maydown, Newbuildings, Strabane, Sion Mills, Newtownstewart, Castlederg, Donemana, Artigarvan, Ballymagorry and Clady areas)

Telephone: **07736 213152**

#### Hours of Service City and Rural Team

Thursday.....	5.30pm-3am
Friday.....	5.30pm-3am
Saturday.....	5.30pm-3am
Sunday.....	5.30pm-3am
Monday.....	12noon-5pm
Tuesday.....	12noon-5pm
Wednesday.....	12noon-5pm

## Northland Team

### Contact Details

University Sector, Student Housing Areas, Rosemount, Duncreggan and Lower Strand

Telephone: **07738 916208**  
**07734 580489**

#### Hours of Service (Northland Team)

Sunday.....	8pm-3am
Monday.....	8pm-3am
Tuesday.....	8pm-3am
Wednesday.....	8pm-3am
Thursday.....	8pm-3am

# Useful contact numbers



PCSP Office: 028 7125 3253.

Email [pcsp@derrystrabane.com](mailto:pcsp@derrystrabane.com)

Always call **999** in an emergency

- **Police: 101** is the non-emergency number
- **Lifeline (24 hours) - 0808 8088000**
- **Samaritans (24 hours) - 116 123**
- **HURT (Mon-Fri 9am-4:30pm) - 028 7136 9696**
- **Domestic and Sexual Abuse Helpline 0808 802 1414**
- **Zest (9am-5pm) - 028 7126 6999**
- **CAMHS - 028 7186 5238**
- **Childline (24 hours) - 0800 1111**
- **CRUSE - 028 7186 5238**
- **StepChange Debt Charity (Helpline) 0800 138 1111**
- **Altnagelvin Hospital (24 hours) 028 7134 5171**
- **Foyle Search and Rescue - 028 7131 3800**
- **Elder Abuse Response Helpline - 080 8808 8141**
- **Action Fraud - 0300 123 2040**
- **Victim Support - 028 7137 0086**
- **Flooding Incident Line - 0300 2000 100**
- **NI Electricity Networks - 03457 643643**
- **NI Gas Emergency Service - 0800 002 001**
- **NI Water - 03457 440 088**
- **Housing Executive - 03448 920901**
- **Roads Service - 0300 200 7899**

This document is available upon request in a number of formats including large print, Braille, PDF, audiocassette and minority ethnic languages.

For further information on alternative formats please email: [equality@derrystrabane.com](mailto:equality@derrystrabane.com)

