



Domestic Homicide Review Report

Under s9 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004

Review into the death of Katie
in November 2016

Review Chair: Gary Goose MBE
Report Author: Christine Graham
July 2023

Katie by her mother

Katie is the youngest of my four children. She is my only blonde-haired, blue-eyed baby and from the moment I saw those blue eyes I fell in love with her. She was such a happy child, full of love, laughter, cuddles and giggles. She followed her sisters around all of the time, much to their annoyance. She was quite shy but blossomed at school making lots of friends. She played the marimbas (African xylophone) with the rest of her class and the hammers used to strike the keys were bigger than she was when she played the bass notes! She was always the smallest in her class, but her laugh could fill a room. Katie loved to cook, and her slow cooked lamb shanks were simply the best. Her favourite meal of the week was a Sunday roast and some of my favourite family memories are of us all sat around the table catching up on what was going on in their lives.

Katie was an amazing hairdresser, winning awards even whilst she was still training at college. She took great pride in her appearance which also involved covering her beautiful freckles which she hated but I absolutely loved. She loved pretty clothes, especially shoes. She had more shoes than she could ever wear but she kept adding to her collection.

As a young adult she adored her nephews and nieces. Some of her friends had babies and Katie loved to spend time with them. Katie had so much love to give and if she cared for you, she loved you dearly. She was kind, caring and loved life. She travelled to Australia and planned on more travelling with her sister, Emma. Katie had her whole life in front of her and had so many dreams and plans.

I miss her more than I can describe. She has left a huge hole in all our lives but, as her mother, I can only try and explain the absolute devastation that I relive, every single morning, even now, almost 7 years on. I dream about her every night without fail. She is always my blond-haired little girl, but the dreams can be sunshine and delight one night and dark and horrifying the next. I wake up and for a few minutes my world is calm and then I remember. The world crushes down on me again as I remember my baby is dead. I paint my smile on, hold my head high and carry on living to remind the world that Katie existed, knowing that she would want us all to be happy. I talk to her every day and tell her things that I know she would laugh at. What I would give to hear that laugh again.

Katie by her sister, Emma

To my little sister Katie. There aren't enough words to describe how much I miss you. Growing up with three sisters wasn't always easy, but our bond was unbreakable. As children, we created a secret language so that we could communicate in secret. We would create dances and laugh until our bellies hurt. You had so many ambitions in life and worked hard to achieve them. I am so proud to call you my sister, and there isn't a day that goes by that I don't think about you. Your smile and laugh would light up the room, and you adored our nieces and nephews as much as they adored you. We will forever keep your memory alive; you will never be forgotten. I still can't say goodbye or comprehend that you are gone. I hope you know how loved you were by so many people. One day, somehow, I hope I will see you again.

Preface

The Safer Torbay Partnership and the Review Panel wish at the outset to express their deepest sympathy to Katie's family and friends. This review has been undertaken in order that lessons can be learned.

This review has been undertaken in an open and constructive manner, with all agencies, both voluntary and statutory, engaging positively. This has ensured that we have been able to consider the circumstances of this incident in a meaningful way and address, with candour, the issues that it has raised.

The review was commissioned by the Safer Torbay Partnership under the statutory guidance that supports Section 9(3)(a) of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004.

The overview report has been compiled as follows:

Section 1 begins with an **introduction to the circumstances** that led to the commission of this review, and the **process and timescales** of the review.

Section 2 **sets out the facts in this case**, including a chronology to assist the reader in understanding how events unfolded that led to Katie's death.

Section 3 summarises the **involvement of agencies** with both Katie and Damian.

Section 4 looks for the **trail of domestic abuse** within the relationship and explores what is known about the **end of Katie's life**.

Section 5 is where the **pertinent issues** to this review are analysed.

The **lessons identified** within the review are summarised in **Section 6**, with the **recommendations** following in **Section 7**.

The **conclusions** of the Review Panel are set out in **Section 8**.

Appendix One sets out the **Terms of Reference** of this review.

Appendix Two provides details of the **ongoing professional development** of the Chair and Report Author.

Examples of good practice are highlighted in blue italics. Where the review has identified that there was an opportunity to respond differently, this has been noted in a text box.

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Section One – Introduction

1.1 Summary of Circumstances Leading to the Review

- 1.1.1 This report of a Domestic Homicide Review examines agency responses and support given to Katie, a resident of Safer Torbay Partnership (the CSP), prior to her death in November 2016.
- 1.1.2 In addition to agency involvement, the review will examine the past to identify any background or trail of domestic abuse before Katie's death, whether support was accessed within the community, and whether there were any barriers to accessing support. By taking a holistic approach, the review seeks to identify appropriate solutions to make the future safer.
- 1.1.3 Katie was a 21-year-old young woman. She had been in a relationship with Damian for around 18 months. He was 33 years old. There is clear evidence to suggest that she was subject to a variety of forms of abuse at his hands for much of their relationship.
- 1.1.4 After pleading guilty to two charges of assault against Katie, Damian was on conditional bail. His bail conditions were as follows: not to contact Katie directly or indirectly, and not to attend a number of addresses. He had been released on bail from the court on 15th October 2016 and was awaiting sentence for the assaults. Katie had been considered a high-risk MARAC case, and a range of safeguarding measures had been put in place to protect her from Damian: these included alarms at her flat, referral to the IDVA service, and other measures.
- 1.1.5 On the evening of 14th November 2016, Damian's mother was concerned because she had not heard from him all day, but the lights were on in his flat. She called round and found Katie and Damian deceased. They were lying in their underwear in his bed. She subsequently told the police that whilst the flat was chaotic, there was no sign of a disturbance that would have indicated a struggle having taken place. The police were contacted, and following an investigation into both deaths, the matter moved to HM Coroner for the purpose of inquest.
- 1.1.6 Following an inquest in February 2018, the coroner recorded a narrative finding of death through *'combined drugs toxicity after ingesting a fatal combination of Morphine and Cocaine, where the circumstances surrounding the mechanism and intent remain unclear'*.
- 1.1.7 It is within this context that this review is set.
- 1.1.8 The review has considered in detail, agency contact and involvement with Katie, Damian, and other relevant people, from 1st January 2014 to the time of her death. This date was agreed upon to be able to show what is considered the duration of their relationship and a period of information before they met. It has also drawn upon and referenced other relevant incidents and life events prior to these dates.
- 1.1.9 The key purpose for undertaking a DHR is to enable lessons to be learned from homicides or other deaths where the person dies. For these lessons to be learned as widely and thoroughly as possible, professionals need to understand fully what happened in each

homicide, and most importantly, what needs to change in order to reduce the risk of such tragedies happening again in the future.

1.2 Reasons for Conducting the Review

- 1.2.1 This Domestic Homicide Review is carried out in accordance with the statutory requirement set out in Section 9 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004.
- 1.2.2 The review must, according to the Act, be a review 'of the circumstances in which the death of a person aged 16 or over has, or appears to have, resulted from violence, abuse or neglect by:
- (a) A person to whom he was related or with whom he was or had been in an intimate personal relationship, or
 - (b) A member of the same household as himself, held with a view to identifying the lessons to be learnt from the death'.
- 1.2.3 In this case, Katie died as a result of ingesting a fatal combination of morphine and cocaine. The circumstances surrounding this remain unclear. Katie had been a victim of domestic abuse; therefore, the criteria for a Domestic Homicide Review have been met.
- 1.2.4 The purpose of the DHR is to:
- Establish what lessons are to be learned from the domestic homicide regarding the way in which local professionals and organisations work individually and together to safeguard victims.
 - Identify clearly what those lessons are, both within and between agencies, how and within what timescales they will be acted on, and what is expected to change as a result.
 - Apply these lessons to service responses, including changes to policies and procedures as appropriate.
 - Prevent domestic violence and homicide and improve service responses to all domestic violence and abuse victims and their children by developing a co-ordinated multi-agency approach to ensure that domestic abuse is identified and responded to effectively at the earliest possible opportunity.
 - Contribute to a better understanding of the nature of domestic violence and abuse.
 - Highlight good practice.

1.3 Methodology and Timescales for the Review

- 1.3.1 On 18th June 2018, on behalf of Katie's family, AAFDA (Advocacy After Fatal Domestic Abuse) contacted Torbay Community Safety Partnership in relation to the death of Katie, to enquire if a DHR was to be held.
- 1.3.2 Katie's family have advised the Chair and Report Author that it took a great deal of research (including emails and phone calls) to contact the right person. They recall that, even once

contact was made, there was a delay in receiving a formal response. The family were repeatedly advised that the reason it was not a DHR was because 'Katie's death was not a homicide'.

- 1.3.3 On 19th July, agencies were asked to secure and preserve any written records that they had pertaining to the case. Agencies were reminded that information from records used in this review, were examined in the public interest and under Section 115 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, which allows relevant authorities to share information where necessary and relevant for the purposes of the Act: namely the prevention of crime. In addition, Section 29 of the Data Protection Act 2018 enables information to be shared if it is necessary for the prevention and detection of crime, or the apprehension and prosecution of offenders. The purpose of the Domestic Homicide Review is to prevent a similar crime.
- 1.3.4 A core group meeting was convened for 14th August, and the initial information received, demonstrated that Katie had experienced domestic abuse from Damian. The core group concluded that there was evidence of appropriate actions by partners in response to the disclosures and reported incidents.
- 1.3.5 The referral from AAFDA outlined threats by Damian to end her life using illicit drugs prior to their deaths. However, the police investigation did not have sufficient evidence of a homicide or suicide. The core group therefore considered that there was not enough evidence to suggest that Katie's death had been as a direct result of violence, abuse, or neglect by Damian, or that Katie had taken her own life. Thus, they concluded that the criteria for a DHR was not met. The Home Office was notified on 7th November 2018.
- 1.3.6 Throughout October and November, the family feel that they were promised further meetings with the CSP about a potential review, but these did not occur.
- 1.3.7 The Home Office responded to the CSP on 19th December 2018. The DHR core group met on 30th January 2019 and considered the response from the Home Office. It was agreed that the coroner would be asked for further details around the circumstances leading up to, and involved in, the deaths of both Katie and Damian. This course of action was supported by the strategic board of the CSP.
- 1.3.8 In January 2019, the AAFDA advocate contacted the CSP representative to inform them that the family would continue to request that a DHR was commissioned.
- 1.3.9 There were delays in the CSP contacting the coroner and then receiving a copy of the transcript of the inquest: this was received on 1st April 2019. Having considered the transcript, the core group advised the Home Office (on 8th May 2019) that they remained of the view that the case did not meet the criteria for a DHR.
- 1.3.10 The family feel that they experienced victim blaming language that they witnessed when professionals were discussing the case in meetings, such as 'those people', which suggested that all people who used drugs were of a particular 'class'. Whilst this is not specifically addressed to any agency, it is important that language across the partnership recognises the impact upon surviving family members.

- 1.3.11 The family enlisted the support of their MP and the Home Secretary, as well as expert academics on coercive control and intimate partner abuse.
- 1.3.12 Gary Goose MBE (Independent Chair) and Christine Graham (Independent Report Author) were appointed to undertake this 'Death Review' at the beginning of September. It was intended that, although this was not a DHR, similar principles would apply. On seeing the details of the case, the Chair and Report Author expressed the view that they considered that the criteria had been met for a DHR and expressed concerns that, without a formal DHR, there would be difficulties in sharing information. At the same time, Devon and Cornwall Police also made representation of their belief that the criteria had in fact been met for a DHR. A decision was then made that a formal DHR would be undertaken.
- 1.3.13 The learning in relation to the identification of cases that are not immediately 'homicides', but which do meet the criteria for a DHR, is now embedded within the CSP. This review is confident that deaths that are unexplained but where domestic abuse may have been a contributing factor, are now more readily identified across the local area as meeting the criteria for a DHR.
- 1.3.14 The first meeting of the panel was held on 22nd January 2021, and the following agencies were present:
- Sanctuary Housing (provider of domestic abuse services)
 - Devon Integrated Care Board¹
 - Community Rehabilitation Group
 - Devon and Cornwall Police
 - Torbay Council
- 1.3.15 At the meeting, the decision to hold a DHR was explained to the panel. Individual Management Reviews (IMRs) were commissioned from:
- Devon and Cornwall Police
 - GP for Katie
 - Torbay Domestic Abuse Service
- 1.3.16 Chronologies were requested, and reviewed by the panel, from:
- GP for partner
 - Torbay Council Housing
 - Drug and alcohol services that Katie's partner had referred himself to
- 1.3.17 The Review Panel met four times and the review concluded in January 2024.
- 1.3.18 Due to delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the review could not be completed within six months of the review being commissioned. This also delayed contact with Katie's family and friends. Time was allowed for Katie's family to consider the draft report at their pace, as reading the details again, quite understandably, caused re-traumatisation for them.

¹ Replaced the Clinical Commissioning Group during the review

1.4 Confidentiality

- 1.4.1 The content and findings of this review are held to be confidential, with information available only to those participating officers and professionals and, where necessary, their appropriate organisational management. It will remain confidential until such time as the review has been approved for publication by the Home Office Quality Assurance Panel.
- 1.4.2 **Katie's family wish her name to be used throughout this report.** They do not wish her memory to be diminished by using a pseudonym.
- 1.4.3 'Damian' will be used to describe the man who was her partner immediately prior to her death. This name was chosen by Katie's family.

1.5 Terms of Reference

- 1.5.1 The review sets out to:
- Examine the professional response to Katie and her partner's relationship, including the context of the violence and abuse within the relationship, through the experiences and observations of Katie, her friends, co-workers, and family, to establish opportunities for improvement.
 - Examine the history of Katie's partner's previous relationships to determine if repetitive behaviours existed and were known to agencies, and how this intelligence was managed at the time.
 - Analyse the effectiveness of the contact and engagement of individual agencies, and as a partnership, in an effort to identify appropriate solutions that can help future identification and signposting of victims to suitable support services.
- 1.5.2 The full Terms of Reference can be found at Appendix One.

1.6 Dissemination

- 1.6.1 The following individuals/organisations will receive copies of this report:
- Katie's family
 - Agencies represented on the DHR panel
 - Domestic Abuse Commissioner
 - Police and Crime Commissioner

1.7 Contributors to the Review

- 1.7.1 Those contributing to the review, do so under Section 2(4) of the statutory guidance for the conduct of DHRs, and it is the duty of any person or body participating in the review to have regard for the guidance.

- 1.7.2 All panel meetings included specific reference to the statutory guidance as the overriding source of reference for the review. Any individual interviewed by this Chair or Report Author, or other body with whom they sought to consult, were made aware of the aims of the Domestic Homicide Review, and they were referenced to the statutory guidance.
- 1.7.3 However, it should be noted that whilst a person or body can be directed to participate, the Chair and the DHR Review Panel do not have the power or legal sanction to compel their co-operation, either by attendance at the panel or meeting for an interview.
- 1.7.4 The following agencies contributed to the review:
- Devon and Cornwall Police – Panel member and provided IMR.
 - Katie’s GP – Provided IMR.
 - MARAC – provided minutes of meeting.
 - Damian’s GP – Provided chronology.
 - Sanctuary IDVA service – Panel member and provided IMR.
 - Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust – Provided chronology.
- 1.7.5 The family of Katie’s partner were approached by the Independent Chair and Report Author and invited to engage with the review. No response was received, and the review panel respects their position.

1.8 Engagement with Family and Friends

- 1.8.1 The Chair and Report Author met with Katie’s family (her mother, stepfather, and sister), supported by their AAFDA advocate, on several occasions. The first time was on 6th October 2020. Katie’s family provided several documents to the Chair and Report Author.
- 1.8.2 Meetings were held, remotely, with several of Katie’s friends and a friend of Katie’s mother.
- 1.8.3 Initially, Katie’s family wished to meet the panel in person. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, this was delayed.
- 1.8.4 Katie’s family were provided with a copy of the draft overview report for their contribution. The Chair and Report Author met with Katie’s mother and sister, supported by the AAFDA advocate, to discuss their feedback: this was incorporated into the report.
- 1.8.5 When they met, the Report Author discussed with Katie’s mother if they still wished to meet the panel. They felt that they did not need to do this but asked to meet the CSP lead who would be their point of contact moving forwards, and this was requested.

1.9 Review Panel

- 1.9.1 The members of the Review Panel were:

Gary Goose MBE	Independent Chair
Christine Graham	Independent Report Author

Collette Eaton-Harris	Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Lead	Clinical Commissioning Group
Philip Leonard	Detective Sergeant, Criminal Case and Serious Case Review Team	Devon and Cornwall Police
Nicola Seager	Detective Chief Inspector, Local Investigation	Devon and Cornwall Police
Mandy Davis	Senior Probation Officer	Probation Service
Di Pooley	Area Services Manager (South West)	Sanctuary Housing
Jane Schofield	Clinical Nurse Manager, Devon Sexual Health	Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust
Sandra Arthurs	Project Manager Safer Communities Torbay	Torbay Council
David Parsons	ASB and Vulnerability Manager	Torbay Council
Simon Acton	Service Manager	Torbay Drug and Alcohol Service

- 1.9.2 The panel assured itself that all panel members were independent of direct involvement with Katie and Damian, or line managed those who had such involvement, and were of the required seniority within their organisation.

1.10 Domestic Homicide Review Chair and Overview Report Author

- 1.10.1 Gary Goose served with Cambridgeshire Constabulary, rising to the rank of Detective Chief Inspector: his policing career concluded in 2011. During this time, as well as leading high-profile investigations, Gary served on the national Family Liaison Executive and led the police response to the families of the Soham murder victims. From 2011, Gary was employed by Peterborough City Council as Head of Community Safety and latterly as Assistant Director for Community Services. The city's domestic abuse support services were amongst the area of Gary's responsibility, as well as substance misuse and housing services. Gary concluded his employment with the local authority in October 2016. He was also employed for six months by Cambridgeshire's Police and Crime Commissioner, developing a performance framework.
- 1.10.2 Christine Graham worked for the Safer Peterborough Partnership for 13 years, managing all aspects of community safety, including domestic abuse services. During this time, Christine's specific area of expertise was partnership working – facilitating the partnership work within Peterborough. Since setting up her own company, Christine has worked with a number of organisations and partnerships to review their practices and policies in relation to community safety and anti-social behaviour. As well as delivering training in relation to tackling anti-social behaviour, Christine has worked with a number of organisations to review their approach to community safety. Christine served for seven years as a Lay Advisor to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough MAPPA, which involved her in observing and auditing Level 2 and 3 meetings, as well as engagement in Serious Case Reviews. Christine chairs her local Safer off the Streets Partnership.

- 1.10.3 Gary and Christine have completed, or are currently engaged upon, a number of domestic homicide reviews across the country in the capacity of Chair and Overview Author, respectively. Previous Domestic Homicide Reviews have included a variety of different scenarios: male victims; suicide; murder/suicide; familial domestic homicide; a number which involve mental ill health on the part of the offender and/or victim; and reviews involving foreign nationals. In several reviews, they have developed good working relationships with parallel investigations/inquiries, such as those undertaken by the IOPC, NHS England, and Adult Care Reviews.
- 1.10.4 Neither Gary Goose nor Christine Graham is associated with any of the agencies involved in the review nor have, at any point in the past, been associated with any of the agencies.²
- 1.10.5 Both Christine and Gary have completed the Home Office online training on Domestic Homicide Reviews, including the additional modules on chairing reviews and producing overview reports, as well as DHR Chair Training (Two days) provided by AAFDA (Advocacy After Fatal Domestic Abuse). Details of ongoing professional development are available in Appendix Two.

1.11 Parallel Reviews

- 1.11.1 A joint inquest into the deaths of Katie and Damian was concluded in April 2017.
- 1.11.2 A complaint was made by Katie's family about the police investigation into Katie's death. This complaint was dealt with under the legislation relating to police complaints.
- 1.11.3 Both above processes were completed prior to the commencement of the DHR. There were no other parallel reviews.

1.12 Equality and Diversity

- 1.12.1 Throughout this review process, the panel has considered the issues of equality. In particular, the nine protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. These are:
- Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Marriage or civil partnership (in employment only)
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation

² Multi-agency Statutory Guidance for the Conduct of Domestic Homicide Reviews (para 36), Home Office, Dec 2016

- 1.12.2 Women's Aid state: '*domestic abuse perpetrated by men against women is a distinct phenomenon rooted in women's unequal status in society and oppressive social constructions of gender and family*'.³ According to a statement by Refuge, women are more likely than men to be killed by partners/ex-partners: with women making up 73% of all domestic homicides, and with four in five of these being killed by a current or former partner.⁴ In 2013/14, this was 46% of female homicide victims killed by a partner or ex-partner, compared with 7% of male victims.⁵
- 1.12.3 The majority of perpetrators of domestic homicides are men – in 2017/18, 87.5% of domestic homicide victims were killed by men.⁶ Furthermore, in 2017/18, 93% of defendants in domestic abuse cases were men⁷, and in 2017, 468 defendants were prosecuted for coercive and controlling behaviour, of which 454 were men and only nine were women.⁸
- 1.12.4 **Age**
- 1.12.5 The review believes that age is a factor in this relationship. Damian was 12 years older than Katie, and the way in which he initiated the relationship could be considered grooming.
- 1.12.6 Research⁹ undertaken, found that young women with older boyfriends were particularly vulnerable to intimate partner violence. For some, this was due to their inexperience in relationships.
- 1.12.7 The research found patterns of grooming across the participants' narratives. They reported that relationships often began vehemently, with abusers trapping future victims with intense romance and charm. Safelives refer to this as 'love bombing'¹⁰.

³ (Women's Aid Domestic abuse is a gendered crime, n.d.)

⁴ ONS (2018), 'Domestic abuse: findings from the Crime Survey for England and Wales: year ending March 2018'. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/domesticabusefindingsfromthecrimesurveyforenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2018#the-long-term-trends-in-domestic-abuse> November 2018.

⁵ (Office for National Statistics, Crime Statistics, Focus on Violent Crime and Sexual Offences, 2013/14 Chapter 2: Violent Crime and Sexual Offences – Homicide, n.d.)

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ CPS (2018), 'Violence against women and girls report, 2017-18). September 2018 <https://www.cps.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/publications/cps-vawg-report-2018.pdf>

⁸ Ministry of Justice (2018), 'Statistics on women and the criminal justice system 2017'. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/759770/women-criminal-justice-system-2017..pdf November 2018.

⁹ None in Three (2020), Young Women's Experiences of Intimate Partner Violence in the UK and Voices of Men who Perpetrate it

¹⁰ SafeLives, 2019, Psychological Violence - [https://safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/Psychological%20Violence%20-%20Executive%20Summary%20\(4\)_0.pdf](https://safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/Psychological%20Violence%20-%20Executive%20Summary%20(4)_0.pdf)

Section Two – The Facts

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 Katie and Damian had been in a relationship for approximately 18 months. They had met when Katie had returned from Australia in Spring 2015.
- 2.1.2 Katie was 21 years old: a hairdresser, just 5'4" and of slight build. Damian was 33 years old.

2.2 Chronology

- 2.2.1 This chronology includes events not only recorded by agencies, but also those recalled by Katie's family.
- 2.2.2 In November 2014, Katie went to Australia with a friend. They had intended to stay for 12 months; however, as her friend began a relationship, Katie decided to come home after 3 – 4 months.
- 2.2.3 Katie returned to the UK in March 2015 and obtained a hairdressing job. She met Damian within weeks of starting her job.
- 2.2.4 After Katie described their first meeting to her family, they believe that he had been stalking her, as he told Katie that he had been watching her. Their relationship developed very quickly. Three weeks after they met, Damian said that he was being evicted from his flat, and he moved in with Katie. She agreed to this, as he said it would be a temporary arrangement.
- 2.2.5 **2016**
- 2.2.6 On 15th June, the police received a call from Katie's friend, who said that when Katie and Damian had woken up, they had had an argument. Officers attended and spoke to Katie and Damian. Katie said that it was only a verbal argument and made no allegations of criminal offences. Katie told the officers that they were having financial problems, and this is why they were arguing. A DASH was completed and graded as low/standard.
- 2.2.7 On 13th July, Katie visited her GP. As part of the consultation, she disclosed that she feared that she may be made homeless. There is no record that the reason for this was explored with her.
- 2.2.8 In July 2016, Katie's sister decided that she needed to talk to Katie away from Damian – something that had become impossible in recent months. One afternoon when Katie knew he would be out, she arranged for her sister to pick her up near the flat. When she got in the car, her sister could see the black circles around her eyes – she looked exhausted. They drove to the pub and ordered food and a drink. They sat down, and Katie's sister asked how she was doing. Katie just said: 'okay, it's been hard now we are both out of work'. Katie seemed agitated and kept looking at her phone. Less than 10 minutes later, and before the food came out, Katie asked if they could leave, and she be dropped back. Katie's sister asked

why, but Katie just said that she needed to be home before Damian got back. No matter what Katie's sister suggested, Katie insisted.

- 2.2.9 One night in the middle of August, Katie phoned her mother (at approximately 11.30 pm) to ask if she could come and stay the night. Her mother could hear Damian shouting in the background and items being thrown about and being broken. Katie was very distressed and told her mother that she would be with them soon. Her mother came down in her dressing gown to let Katie in, and whilst she was in the kitchen getting the front door key, her stepfather came down and said that Damian was racing down their quiet cul-de-sac in his car. He opened the front door, and Katie was crying and desperate to get away from Damian, who was now turning the car round in the dead end. Katie came in the house, and her stepfather went out. Katie's mother could then hear her husband shouting for her to call the police, and she and Katie went to join him outside. Damian was trying to get through the gate and past Katie's stepfather. He seemed to be 'high' on something but not drunk. Katie was shouting at her stepfather to come indoors because Damian was dangerous. Katie's mother, who is trained and trains others in conflict resolution, sent Katie and her stepfather into the house and went to speak to Damian. She had her hands up and asked him to show her the respect that she was showing him. She kept asking him to stop shouting, as it was not fair on her neighbours. He towered over her raging, and she felt scared and vulnerable; however, then it was like she had turned a switch off, and he stopped raging. He said that he was sorry and that her attitude had calmed him down. He agreed to leave if Katie stayed with her mother and did not leave the house. She agreed to his terms to get him to go.
- 2.2.10 When Katie's mother went in the house, Katie told her that she had been driving to her mother's, and Damian had been chasing her at high speed. She had left her car, with the keys in the ignition, at the end of the street and run to the house to escape him. Damian had then driven her car, at speed, up the cul-de-sac and abandoned it in the middle of the road to try and get to Katie before she made it to the house.
- 2.2.11 Katie was so scared. She said that Damian 'had lost the plot' earlier in the evening and had not wanted her to go to her parent's house so she had sneaked out whilst he was in the bathroom.
- 2.2.12 For the rest of that night, he was constantly phoning or messaging Katie, and as per usual when she went to her parent's home, she had to Facetime him all night and was not allowed to put the phone down – to prove that she was still there. Katie went home and sent her mother a text to say that he had apologised, and everything was back to normal again. Later in the afternoon, Damian visited Katie's mother's neighbour with a bunch of flowers, mistaking it for her mother's house. There was a handwritten note thanking her for how she had handled the situation and Damian himself.
- 2.2.13 When Katie's mother received the flowers from her neighbour, she rang Katie to see if she was OK. She spoke to Katie for about half an hour, with Damian listening to the conversation. She told them how worried she was that his anger was escalating and asked him to go for help for both his anger and his obvious drug problem. Damian admitted that his anger was getting worse and said that he had tried all sorts of anger management therapies, the last one being a 'talking therapy', but he said that they were all rubbish. He said that Katie's mother had done more to calm him down than any of these therapies. She offered for him to phone her at any time, but especially if he felt that he was getting angry or out of control.

He said that he would and thanked her. He said that he loved Katie and wanted to protect her. Her mother said that she felt that Katie needed protecting from him. He laughed and said she was probably right. Katie's mother said that she would support him if Katie wanted her to, as all she wanted was for her to be happy but, more importantly, safe. He cried and said that he loved her so much and would do anything to keep her. He also promised to speak to his doctor and try and get some professional help.

- 2.2.14 On 24th August, Katie saw her GP with stress-related problems. She was given a note to say that she was not fit for work until 18th September. The reason for her stress was not recorded in her notes.
- 2.2.15 At the end of August, Katie told her mother that Damian was taking her to Egypt for her 21st birthday. Before they went away, Katie's mother and stepfather took Katie and Damian out for a meal to celebrate Katie's birthday. Katie and Damian arrived nearly an hour late, and he was obviously 'high' on something. He had driven to the restaurant and did not appear drunk but was constantly sniffing and rubbing his eyes. He was swearing and kept asking for more water. He kept going outside for some air and a cigarette. Katie was embarrassed and kept thanking her parents for being nice and apologising for his behaviour, which was becoming louder and more 'twitchy' as the night progressed.
- 2.2.16 Katie's mother recalls that Katie drank a lot that night and told her that she feared Damian. She said that she had tried cocaine recently, at his request, and had enjoyed the initial experience, but it had then become very frightening. She said that she had woken up the following morning and could not move her legs. When she told Damian that she felt paralysed from the waist down, he had given her some tablets to 'get her going again', and she did not know what the tablets were. When her mother asked her why she had taken the tablets if she did not know what they were, she said it was because Damian had told her to and that she loved and trusted him, and he had promised they would help her to feel better. She said that he had been using all sorts of drugs for years so knew what he was doing. Katie's mother reminded her that her brother, who had been an alcoholic and addict all his life, had died last year, and she said that she did not want to lose her too. Katie told her not to worry and repeated that Damian knew what he was doing.
- 2.2.17 During the evening, Damian invited a friend of his to sit at the table with them. He was introduced as being an inspirational speaker and a regular drug user. Damian told Katie's parents that taking drugs opened a whole new universe and that they were not having a full life by not experiencing it. The friend recited a poem that he said he had written whilst high on drugs. Katie's mother cried, and Katie hugged her. Katie said that whilst she smoked cannabis, she would not take anything else because she was too scared of not knowing what Damian was giving her.
- 2.2.18 During the evening, Damian became angry. He said that Katie was ignoring him and spending too much time talking to her mother. Katie's mother tried to laugh it off by saying that he could have her all to himself whilst they were on holiday, but she could see that he was not happy. Katie was quite drunk by the end of the evening, and her mother helped her to the car and wished them both a happy holiday.
- 2.2.19 When Katie's parents arrived home about 15 minutes later, Damian rang Katie's mother and was screaming that Katie had passed out and he had had to carry her up to the flat. He was

very angry and abusive about Katie, saying that he had paid a lot of money for the trip, that she had not packed his travel bags, and that they were supposed to be leaving early in the morning. He said that he was going on holiday by himself and that he deserved better. He kept calling her a lot of names and shouting at her to 'get up and pack'. Katie's mother tried to calm him down, but he kept hanging up and then ringing her straight back. She offered to go and talk to him, but he said that he did not need anyone. Katie's mother asked to speak to Katie. She said that if she did not speak to her, she would go to the flat, as she needed to make sure that Katie was OK. She reminded Damian that he had said that he would talk to her if he felt angry or out of control and that this was one of those times. Eventually, Katie came to the phone and said that she was OK and was going to bed. Damian said that the holiday was cancelled and put the phone down. Katie's mother rang Katie's phone, and she said that he had passed out on the sofa. She said that he would stay like that for hours but if she was worried, she would phone her mother and that she would definitely ring her in the morning.

- 2.2.20 The next morning, Katie phoned her mother to say that they were almost at the airport and thanked her mother for the previous night. Damian also said thank you and apologised for his behaviour, stating that he had hay fever and had been tired.
- 2.2.21 Katie disclosed in her ABE interview that whilst they were in Egypt, he had assaulted her on her birthday. They had taken some sleeping tablets that you buy over the counter and had had a few drinks with them. Katie could not recall why they had been arguing; however, the next thing she knew, she was on the balcony, and he had hit her three times, giving her a black eye. A girl who saw this happen, said to Katie: 'what the fuck is he on?'. Katie then had a black eye for the entire holiday that she could not cover with make-up. Katie said that he also strangled her, and she had run to reception to ask to be moved to another room.
- 2.2.22 When they returned from Egypt, Katie continued with her new job in Torquay. Her boss asked Katie to deliver some leaflets to houses around the salon. Whilst Katie was out doing this, Damian visited the salon and, although her boss told him where Katie was, he accused Katie of cheating on him and lying to him, saying she was at work. Following this, Damian persuaded Katie to buy a new phone and fitted a tracking device so that he could see where she was at all times. He told her that this was so that he would always know that she was safe.
- 2.2.23 All through the summer of 2016, Katie would stay with her mother overnight – at least once a week, sometimes more – and for the first time, she began to talk about leaving Damian. She began to sneak items of clothing from her flat to their house. Her mother bought her new clothes so that she would always have clean clothes, as she would often arrive in the middle of the night, in just her pyjamas. It was called her 'secret case'.
- 2.2.24 Katie's sister, feeling guilty for not attending her 21st birthday meal for fear she could not remain polite to Damian, agreed to attend a party at his flat in September. When she arrived, Katie and two of his friends were already in the lounge. He offered them food, drinks, and board games – he appeared to be a gracious host. However, within half an hour, he brought the drugs out, boasting about the amount of drugs he had and offered them around freely. Katie's sister could see that Katie was uncomfortable in this situation and asked him many times to leave the drugs for the night and just enjoy the evening. Damian kept trying to force Katie to take the drugs with him, and each time she refused, he laughed at her. He told her

to shut up if she didn't want to join in and let him enjoy himself. Several times during the evening, he received calls on different phones and would run to the front door to sell drugs. His friends were also in and out, and Katie's sister used this time to talk to Katie alone. Finally, Katie broke down and told her sister that she was afraid of him, that he controlled everything she did, and his jealousy was so out of control that she could not do simple things, like shave her legs, without him thinking that she was seeing another man. She said that she did love him, and he loved her, but that she did not know how much more she could take. Katie's sister asked why she had not told her any of this before, and Katie said that she wanted to protect her sister.

- 2.2.25 Damian came back in during this conversation, and they quickly had to change course. However, he sensed something was up. The next time he left, he escorted Katie to the shop to get some cigarettes on his way to sell more drugs. It was not a choice, but a demand that Katie went with him. As only one of his friends remained in the flat, Katie's sister took this opportunity to take as many photos as she could of the drugs and the mobile phones he was using. She thought that she could take the evidence to the police, along with what Katie had told her.
- 2.2.26 When Katie and Damian came back, the situation started to deteriorate. Katie's sister began to see his paranoid state of mind when he would not let Katie and her be in the same room together without his presence. They made an excuse to go into the bathroom, but he followed them and kept his foot on the door. Katie's sister confronted him and asked why he would not let them talk. He said that he did not want them talking alone if he could not hear what they were saying. Katie's sister described his behaviour (all evening) as vile. Katie's sister started to get angry, but Damian's anger also escalated. Katie asked her sister to leave, believing that she could calm him down quicker without her sister there.
- 2.2.27 On the evening of Saturday 8th October, Katie messaged her mother to ask if she could stay. It was unusual for her to ask so early in the evening, so her mother phoned on the pretence of asking if she wanted some dinner to be kept for her. Katie told her mother that she was OK, but that Damian was 'winding himself up', and she wanted to leave before it got out of hand. She asked her mother to keep some dinner for her.
- 2.2.28 Katie phoned her mother an hour or so later. She was obviously upset and said that they had had a disagreement, but that Damian had calmed down, and she was going to stay at the flat. Her mother tried to persuade her to come home anyway, but Katie said that he was sleeping so she would be safe. Her mother begged her to come if anything changed, and Katie said that she would. Katie then asked her mother if she would be able to help her with some rent money and a deposit for a new flat in Torquay (just for her), as she needed to get away from Damian. She said that she had made an appointment to view it the following day and asked her mother to go with her, and she agreed. Her mother was thrilled that Katie was making positive steps to leave Damian.
- 2.2.29 At approximately 11.15 pm, Katie phoned her mother again, very upset, and she could hear Damian shouting in the background. Katie said that she would be with her mother in about 15 minutes and said that she was shook up but was OK. Her mother sat and waited for her to arrive.

- 2.2.30 On Sunday 9th October, the police were called to Katie and Damian's address by neighbours who could hear people 'kicking off' inside the property. This was not the first time that they had heard Damian beating Katie, but this was the worst that it had been. Katie told officers that she had been assaulted by Damian, causing visible injuries to her face and head. Damian was arrested and became violent, so captor spray was deployed. Drugs were found in the property, and Damian was found to be in possession of cocaine. Katie did not feel able to engage with the police and provide a statement because she was scared; thus, she felt that she had no choice. Enquiries were required to allow officers further time to engage with Katie and to confirm the identity of the recovered drugs.
- 2.2.31 At about 1.30 am, Katie phoned her mother from her landlord's flat downstairs and said that the police were upstairs arresting Damian. She said that after speaking to her mother earlier, she had gone downstairs to her car to drive to her mother's house, and he had appeared on the balcony of their 3rd floor flat and threatened to throw himself off unless Katie went back in. She thought that she would calm him down and then leave when he fell asleep, as he had told her that he had taken some sleeping tablets and had been drinking. However, he took some cocaine when she went back inside and then took a handful of sleeping tablets. He told her that he had taken enough sleeping tablets, cocaine, and alcohol to kill himself, and that he wanted to die if he couldn't have Katie. He told her that it would be her fault. He hit her a few times, spat on her, and hit her again and again with the palm of his hand – where the bone is under his fingers. Her nose was bleeding, and she thought that he had broken her nose and jaw. Fortunately, this was not the case.
- 2.2.32 At about 3 am, Katie's landlord took her to her parents' house after the police had spoken to her. They stayed up for hours talking, and Katie showed her mother a newspaper cutting where she had circled various flats for rent. She had hidden it at the bottom of her handbag, but Damian had found it and realised that she was planning to leave him. Katie told her mother that his drugs, violence, paranoia, and jealousy had worsened since she had gone back to work.
- 2.2.33 Katie and her mother spent that morning (Sunday 9th October) removing all Damian's details from her online accounts and contacting her phone provider, who removed the tracking device and all the passwords that he had access to. Damian had the passwords to her bank account, emails, and Facebook account.
- 2.2.34 Later in the day, Katie and her mother went to view the flat, and Katie was able to move in that day. They checked with the police and were told that Damian was still in custody. Therefore, they went back to the couple's flat and took as many of her clothes and personal items as could be fitted into the car. They picked up some shopping, and Katie's mother left her at 7.30 pm to settle in to the flat. Katie said that she felt safe, as only her parents knew where she was. She was very tired and planned to have a bath and go to bed. She promised to phone her mother the next day at 9 am.
- 2.2.35 Damian was interviewed and bailed to return to the police station on 21st November. His bail conditions were as follows: not to contact Katie directly or indirectly, and not to attend Katie's parent's address or her workplace.
- 2.2.36 The police telephoned late on the evening of Sunday 9th to say that Damian was going to be released on conditional bail in the next few hours.

- 2.2.37 Damian began to phone Katie in the early hours of Monday 10th October: within hours of having been released. He told her that he had bought £300 worth of cocaine and that he was going to kill himself. When this did not persuade Katie to tell him where she was, he said that he was standing outside her window, watching her. He then said that he would smash up her car if she did not tell him where she was. He told her that he had intimate photos and videos of her and that he was going to post them online for all the world to see. Eventually, Katie turned off her phone until 9 am when she had agreed to call her mother. She told her mother that she had not slept because she was worried about what Damian had said. Katie assured her mother that she had not told him where she was, but that she was worried, as he sounded so convincing. She said that she had now blocked his number and was going to try and get some sleep.
- 2.2.38 On the Monday afternoon, Damian phoned Katie's mother because he was unable to get hold of Katie. He was on the phone for about 45 minutes and kept telling her that she had to smash up Katie's phone or else something terrible would happen. (Katie's mother wrote down exactly what he had said). He said that there was something bad on Katie's phone, and he wanted to send her the link. She said that she did not want whatever it was and so he said that he would go to the house and show her. Katie's mother reminded him of his bail conditions, but he said that he did not care. He said that unless her mother smashed up the phone, she could not possibly love Katie, nor did she want to protect her. He was manipulative and made various threats against Katie and her mother. Katie's mother tried to calm Damian down, as she had in the past. She could hear him snorting hard through his nose during the conversation. She assumed that he was taking drugs, and his conversation became what she described as 'weirder and more bizarre'. When she eventually asked him if he was taking drugs, he said that he was, as he could not cope without them. Katie's mother asked him to think about what he was doing to himself and Katie. He said that Katie had lied to him at the beginning of their relationship, as she had told him that she used drugs; however, more recently, she admitted that although she had smoked the odd joint, she had not done anything more. She had told him that she had not wanted him to think that she was too young and inexperienced for him. He said that he would never have given her so many drugs if he had known that she had not taken them before. He said that he loved Katie and just wanted her to be happy.
- 2.2.39 Katie's mother asked him to get help for his anger and drug problems, and he said that he had tried so many times already but that nobody could help him. He said that his mother had beaten him as a child, and this was why he was so angry. (He had also told Katie this, as she had told her mother that she felt sorry for him and his childhood). He said that the mother of his children had taken them away from him and that this had led to his drug habit. Katie's mother said that he was an adult and that he must take responsibility for himself. She said that if he got off the drugs then maybe Katie would come back to him, as she knew that Katie loved him. He then got very angry and said that she would come back to him anyway, and that if he could not have her, then no one else could. He said that he could easily kill her with drugs, and nobody would ever be able to prove it.
- 2.2.40 Katie's mother told him that she would be telling the police about him contacting Katie and begged him to leave her alone. She said that she loved her and would do anything to help her, and that he would too if he loved her as much as he claimed.

- 2.2.41 Katie's mother then phoned Katie and told her all that he had said. She advised Katie to report what he had been doing and saying to her, which were in breach of his bail conditions, and that she should tell them about the threats.
- 2.2.42 Katie's mother then phoned 101 to report the phone call with Damian. As the line was very busy, it took a while to get through. In the meantime, Katie messaged her mother to ask her to report what he had done to her as well, as she could not get through on the phone. When Katie's mother got through, the call handler took her details and said that the team dealing with the case were off duty until Wednesday. The call handler said that she would put a note on file and that someone would call her back on Wednesday. Katie's mother saw Katie in the following days, and Katie said that she had blocked Damian's number and so had not had any contact from him since the middle of the night on Sunday/Monday.
- 2.2.43 Katie spoke to her GP on Tuesday 11th October and disclosed that she had been assaulted by her partner. She was given a prescription for citalopram¹¹ for one month, and it was agreed that she would attend for a face-to-face meeting in the next few days. She did not do this, and this was not followed up by the surgery.
- 2.2.44 On Tuesday 11th October, a referral was made by Devon and Cornwall Police to the IDVA service provided by Sanctuary Supported Housing. The referral explained that Katie and Damian had been in a relationship for about 18 months, and she had just moved from the home that they shared. It was noted that he had total control of the relationship and had all her personal information, passwords, etc. The service was told that Katie was keen to receive emotional support because she was feeling very vulnerable since the split and concerned about repeat problems. It was noted that Damian had a drug habit and had previously been volatile with her. The referral confirmed that Katie worked as a hairdresser and that her boss was very supportive, so she could be called at any time. The duty worker called Katie the same day, and a voicemail was left with the number to call.
- 2.2.45 At 8.30 am on Wednesday 12th October, an officer from the SODAIT team rang Katie's mother. She said that she was disappointed that the call handler had not escalated her call from Monday, as Damian had broken his bail conditions. The officer said that the police were already on their way to try and find Damian and arrest him and asked Katie's mother to go to the police station to make a formal statement. She agreed to go later that morning. Katie's mother tried to call Katie, but it went to answerphone. She texted her and messaged her, but she did not reply. She continued to phone every 20 minutes or so, but her phone remained switched off. Katie's mother phoned her work number and spoke to her employer, who said that he had told Katie not to come in because they were quiet that day. She was so concerned that she called Damian's phone, but this too was switched off. She continued to try Katie, but the phone remained off.
- 2.2.46 When Katie's mother arrived at the police station to make her statement, she told the officer that she was worried for Katie's safety. The police immediately sent more officers out to look for Damian. Whilst she was giving her statement, Katie's mother continued to text her. After a couple of hours, whilst she was still at the police station, Katie's mother received a text from Katie asking her what the matter was. She tried to call her back immediately, but the phone again went to answerphone. Katie sent another text saying that she was OK and

¹¹ Used to treat low mood and panic attacks.

‘what was all the fuss about’? Katie’s family say that these messages were not being sent by Katie, as they were not in her usual style, for example, there were no kisses at the end. No more messages were received, and Katie’s phone continued to be switched off. Katie’s family also say that the police felt the same way; however, the police have no record of this and thus cannot confirm this.

- 2.2.47 Katie’s mother gave her statement, setting out that this was a clear breach of his bail conditions, and he was sought for arrest. Officers attended several local addresses trying to locate Damian and arrest him for breach of bail and threats to commit damage. Damian could not be located. There was growing concern for Katie’s welfare, as it was suspected that she was with Damian.
- 2.2.48 At approximately 7.30 am on Friday 14th October, Katie’s mother received a text from Katie’s phone, asking for £200 to be paid into her bank account. The text said that she would pay her back when she got paid later that day. Katie’s mother knew that this was a cry for help. Firstly, because Katie would not ask to borrow that sort of money in a text, and secondly, she knew that Katie was not being paid that day. Furthermore, they had not spoken for two days, and she would have seen all the worried messages from her mother when she turned her phone on.
- 2.2.49 Katie’s stepfather drove straight to Damian’s flat but neither car was there, so he drove to Katie’s flat: Damian’s car was parked outside. He called Katie’s mother, and she called the police, who arrived within 10 minutes.
- 2.2.50 The police found Katie in the company of Damian, and she had visible injuries to her face. It was alleged that Damian had taken Katie’s mobile phone from her, snapped her bank card, and pinned her on the bed with his hands around her throat. She said that he had repeatedly spat at her and struck her to her face, arms, and legs, which had caused bruising. Damian was arrested and taken to Torquay Custody Centre where a risk assessment was undertaken. During this, he stated that he felt like taking his own life.
- 2.2.51 When Katie’s mother arrived, Katie said that Damian had messaged to say that he was cold, as it was the middle of the night. He said that he loved her and was sorry. She told him where she lived and let him in for a cup of tea after he promised to behave. He had beaten her, on and off, for most of the previous night, and she had bruises to her face, neck, arms, and wrists. She said that he had made her send the text asking for money because he said that he wanted £200 to buy enough drugs to firstly kill Katie. He then said that he would go and find her mother and whilst raping her, he would tell her what he had done and then kill her. Lastly, he said that he would kill himself and wouldn’t it be funny because he would be using her money to do it. Katie said that Damian had looked for the kitchen knives, but he could not find them. Katie told her mother that she had thought that she was going to die; however, when she heard the police coming up the stairs, she believed that she might see her family again.
- 2.2.52 Whilst the officers were gathering evidence, Katie sat with her mother and an officer. Katie then took a call from Damian’s mother. Katie said that she would have to give a statement against Damian because he had gone further than ever before, and she was scared of him. His mother told Katie that she wished Damian had never met Katie. She said that if he had not, he would have taken another job and would be away from Katie. The officer explained

to Katie that she did not have to listen to what Damian's mother was saying, but she carried on listening and tried to explain how badly he had hurt her this time. Damian's mother tried to persuade Katie not to make a statement due to Damian being ill and not able to help himself. The officer told Katie to hang up, but Damian's mother carried on and told Katie to think of the effect on his children that a statement would have. The officer told Katie to end the call because they had to leave.

- 2.2.53 The officer talked to Katie about going to the police station to make a statement, and Katie agreed.
- 2.2.54 Katie was spoken to by officers and said that she was tired and nervous about what would happen following Damian's arrest: this was because he had made threats to kill her if she said anything to the police. She told officers that she believed his threats. Katie gave an ABE interview to the police. During her ABE interview, Katie gave an account of the night. She said that he began calling her at about 2 am after a night out, as he was cold and had nowhere to go. She felt sorry for him and so told him where she was. When he arrived at her flat, they both took some cocaine, and he went straight to her phone and accused her of sleeping with his friend. He refused to give her phone back to her. She told him that he had to calm down or leave. He refused to leave and was spitting on her and her belongings, threatening to smash up her furnished flat.
- 2.2.55 At about 5 am, he gave her the phone and told her to call the police, saying: 'by the time they get here I will have killed you'. He said that if the police came through the door, he would do the same to them with a knife. Katie said: 'I thought he was going to do it, I really did. That angry look on his face, I know that look, I know that he could do it possibly'.
- 2.2.56 She did not dare ring the police, as she feared for her safety. He grabbed her face and held her against the bed, grabbing her arms. He was asking for £200 for drugs to kill himself. Katie said that she just wanted him to go, so she gave him her bank card, which he snapped in half and threw at her face, causing a cut to her gum.
- 2.2.57 After he had called his mother and told her that it was all her fault, he wanted Katie to lay on the bed for a cuddle. She knew that if she texted her mother at 7.30 am, she would realise that something was wrong, so she sent a text asking to borrow £200. Damian made threats against Katie's mother, saying: 'he would kick the door down and hurt her and slit her throat'. At one point, Damian pinned her down by her throat. He was also punching himself in the head and making weird, loud noises. Katie said that basically she thought that she was going to die¹².
- 2.2.58 Following Katie's interview, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) authorised Damian to be charged for four offences – two assault by beating (both with Katie as the victim), criminal damage, and obstructing a police officer. Due to the charges being domestic related and the risk being high, he was kept in custody overnight and remanded to appear before Plymouth Magistrates Court on 15th October. He was served with a Police Information Notice (PIN) in relation to the malicious communications offence pertaining to Katie's mother.

¹² Katie's ABE interview will be referenced at other points in the report.

- 2.2.59 Katie accepted a Police Temporary Alarm (PTA), and a warning marker was placed on her address that would ensure that intelligence submitted would link her mobile to Katie in case any 999 calls dropped out. Katie was clear that she wished to remain at her address, but that if Damian was released, she would ensure a friend came to stay with her. She felt that it would be difficult for Damian to get into the property; however, if he tried, he could force the door, but she felt confident that he would not be able to actually get into her flat. She understood the importance of being careful when she was out and to always keep her mobile with her. Katie understood that the police would keep her informed at all stages of the investigation and criminal process.
- 2.2.60 Katie's mother says that it is her recollection that she was told by the police that the CPS had dropped the charges of 'threatening to kill her' and 'holding her against her will', as they would be Katie's word against Damian's and that this would make it 'easier in the long run for Katie because they had enough evidence to charge him with the lesser counts of assault by beating, as her physical injuries were the evidence they needed and Katie would not have to face Damian in court if it went to trial, as she would already have given her evidence.' The police have no record of such a conversation.
- 2.2.61 Katie understood that she was considered to be high risk, and she accepted the opportunity to speak with an IDVA. Katie was told that her case would be heard at MARAC on 1st November. In readiness for this meeting, an officer completed:
- MARAC case.
 - MARAC IDVA referral.
 - SIG warning placed on Katie's address for officers to be aware of domestic abuse incidents.
 - Police Alarm application submitted.
 - Sanctuary Scheme discussed – but her flat was secure.
- There was no need for a DSFRS referral, as the flat had smoke alarms. Neither was there a need for a referral to CYPS, as there were no children.
- 2.2.62 On Saturday 15th October, Damian attended Plymouth Magistrates Court and pleaded guilty to both assault charges. He was released on conditional court bail. His bail conditions were as follows: not to contact Katie directly or indirectly, and not to attend a number of addresses. He was to attend another hearing on 28th November for sentencing.
- 2.2.63 Katie was updated on the court hearing, and the police alarm was installed. Katie told officers that she felt secure and was being supported by family and friends.
- 2.2.64 Over the next few weeks, Katie saw a lot of her family. Katie and her mother went shopping in Exeter, out for lunches, and Katie cut her mother's hair for her birthday at the end of October. Katie started to see her friends again. She was loving her new flat and was excited about the future. At this point, Katie's job had ended. She had signed on and was actively seeking work, messaging her mother with various hairdressers' details, etc.
- 2.2.65 One of Katie's friends visited her flat during this time (although the date is not known). As she had not seen Katie for about four months, she was shocked to see how thin she was, which made her look ill. Whilst she was there, the review has been told that Damian's mother telephoned Katie and tried to make her feel sorry for him, but Katie was in a strong

mindset. She had finished with him and had no intention of going back with him. Katie talked about saving to go back to Australia, and the friends discussed going to Amsterdam together.

- 2.2.66 On 17th October, the Domestic Abuse Officer (DAO) telephoned Katie to discuss the court hearing. She was advised that no date had been set for the trial, but she would be told when this was confirmed. (This may be an error as there was to be no trial: he had pleaded guilty, and a date had been set for his sentencing). Katie said that she had not had any contact from Damian since his arrest, and that she hoped that this would continue. The DAO and Katie discussed the importance of her reporting any contacts from Damian or breaches of his court bail conditions, and she understood that these must be reinforced if she was to make a clean break from him. The DAO thought that Katie sounded much calmer and said that she intended to return to work the next day.
- 2.2.67 On 17th October, the Probation Service contacted the police for details of the domestic abuse incidents – to assist them in preparing the pre-sentence report for Damian.
- 2.2.68 Sanctuary received the MARAC referral on 17th October. The referral noted that Damian had been turning up at Katie's workplace and stalking her. He was on police bail at this time.
- 2.2.69 The IDVA called Katie on 18th October, but she was at work and could not really speak; however, she sounded bright. Katie indicated that she would like to meet on Monday. She said that she was safe and well. The IDVA agreed to text the details to Katie.
- 2.2.70 On 20th October, Katie was discussed at the pre-MARAC meeting. It was agreed that this would go to the MARAC meeting for mention. It was noted that she was engaging well, the relationship was over, and Damian had bail conditions not to contact her. She also had a police alarm fitted at the address, and full safety planning had been undertaken.
- 2.2.71 Katie attended the police station on 28th October to give her Victim Impact Statement for the court. She asked if she would be needed to attend court and give evidence, and it was explained that this may be required because he had entered a plea of not guilty¹³. Katie said that she did not want a restraining order because if Damian could resolve his drug dependency, she would be willing to continue the relationship. She also indicated that she had been in touch with Damian's mother.
- 2.2.72 The IDVA rang Katie on 31st October. A message was left, asking Katie to call back.
- 2.2.73 On 31st October, Katie's GP surgery was advised that she was being discussed at MARAC. 'History of domestic abuse' was added as a problem on her problem page, but this would not have appeared as a 'pop up' alert.
- 2.2.74 On 1st November, a warning marker was placed on the Force Intelligence Systems for both Katie and Damian: indicating high-risk domestic abuse and a MARAC case.
- 2.2.75 At the MARAC meeting on 1st November, Katie was listed for 'mention only'. The rationale for this was that full safety planning had been undertaken, she was engaging well at the time, there were no children involved, and no breaches of bail conditions had been reported

¹³ This was not correct and is discussed later in the report.

to date. It was noted that the relationship was over, and a police alarm was installed at the property. The case was discharged by MARAC at this meeting.

- 2.2.76 Around 6th November, Katie's mother says that Katie changed. She cancelled coffee dates, saying she was unwell. She stopped messaging her mother regularly, so her mother sent her a message saying that if she did not hear from her, she would think that the worst had happened again. Katie had replied to say that she was fine, and her mother should not worry. She said that she was feeling unwell and promised to meet for coffee soon. Katie's mother called round with a hot chocolate on 7th November, but Katie asked her to leave it downstairs because she had a cold and did not want to invite her in.
- 2.2.77 Around this time, although the exact date is not known, Katie was seen at a house party with Damian. He was providing drugs to people, who were being 'weirded out by him'. Katie was seen to take some cocaine but nowhere near as much as Damian. She sat quietly in the corner, and he was described as mocking her and being vile to her – embarrassing her in front of everyone.
- 2.2.78 On 7th November, Sanctuary considered the case. It was decided that the IDVA would close the case, as they had not been able to engage with Katie. After the IDVA was unable to contact Katie on 8th November, the case was closed.
- 2.2.79 On 8th November at 10 am, there was a report of a Police Temporary Alarm fail at Katie's address. Officers attended the flat to conduct a welfare check, but Katie was not at home. The officers contacted Katie by telephone, and she said that she was at work and had run out of electricity at her flat, hence the reason for the failure of the alarm. The alarm would reset itself once the electricity was restored; therefore, there was no need for them to attend the address.
- 2.2.80 9th November was Katie's stepfather's birthday, and her parents did not hear from her. Her mother posted a song by James Arthur, called 'Safe Inside', on Katie's Facebook page, with a message for Katie to please contact her. She replied to say that she was OK, just very tired.
- 2.2.81 On 10th November, Katie messaged her mother saying that she was OK and had applied for a job. Her mother went to her flat on 11th November to surprise her, but Katie was not in. Katie's parents were busy with their grandchild's birthday on 12th and 13th November, so the weekend passed quickly. 14th November was Katie's sister's birthday, and so her mother told herself that if she had not heard from Katie that day, she would go to her flat early on 15th November, as she was getting worried.
- 2.2.82 On 14th November, Katie and Damian were found deceased by Damian's mother: they were laid together on the bed in Damian's flat. Although the flat was chaotic, there was no sign of a disturbance. The bodies had no injuries on them, and the flat was locked. Damian's mother had been concerned that she had not heard from him all day; therefore, she called round after having seen the lights on in his flat. An ambulance was subsequently called.
- 2.2.83 On 19th February 2019, an inquest into the deaths of Katie and Damian was opened by HM Coroner. The coroner recorded a narrative verdict, stating that Katie had died after a fatal combination of morphine and cocaine, although the circumstances surrounding mechanism and intent remained unclear.

Section Three – Agency Involvement

3.1 Devon and Cornwall Police

- 3.1.1 In 2014, Female 1's friend told the police that Damian had raped Female 1; however, when spoken to by the police, Female 1 denied that this had happened.

The review notes that prior to March 2017, crime recording standards for allegations of rape were not as they are now. In 2014, a crime report for rape would only be generated if the victim confirmed a rape had taken place. In March 2017, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) found that Devon and Cornwall Police were inadequate in crime recording, with particular concern about rape. New guidance has been published, and the recording of rapes has improved.

Devon and Cornwall Police have changed their process to improve the recording of rape. The Force policy now directs that all reports of rape or attempted rape should be recorded on the crime information system immediately, and the incident log will remain open and be monitored until this is completed. The crime report will then be allocated to an investigator to progress the investigation.

3.1.2 9th October 2016

- 3.1.3 On this occasion, the police were called to Katie and Damian's flat by neighbours who could hear a female shouting and screaming. During his arrest, Damian was non-compliant and was both verbally and physically aggressive towards officers, to such an extent that incapacitant spray had to be deployed to control him.

The review notes that this tactic would only have been deployed when other verbal tactical options had been used first.

- 3.1.4 Officers agreed to contact Katie later in the morning to take her statement.

Whilst each case should be judged on its merits and circumstances, had Katie's statement been taken at the time, it would have been in line with the 'Golden Hour' Principles that state: 'Effective early action can result in securing significant material that would otherwise be lost to the investigation'.

Without Katie's statement, there was insufficient evidence to seek a charging decision from the CPS, even for an evidence-led prosecution. The review agrees with the IMR author that not following these principles and delaying taking Katie's statement, may have contributed to her reluctance to engage with the investigation going forwards.

There was no DASH risk assessment completed after this incident, by the officers who attended, in line with the Force Policy and Working Practices. Had the DASH been completed, this would have identified the escalation in Damian's behaviour towards Katie and the cumulative risk.

The lack of a DASH risk assessment was identified by the Critical Incident Manager (CIM) on duty that night, and a request was made for the incident to be deferred for the officers to complete this when they returned to duty. However, the attending officers went off duty at 7 am and went onto four rest days. The DASH could also have been completed by the investigation team and attached to the crime, but this did not happen.

The review is advised that DASH compliance rates within Devon and Cornwall Police continue to improve, and data is now available on the internal performance data portal: this identifies crimes that do not have a DASH risk assessment attached, and officers and staff who have not completed the DASH risk assessment. SODAIT Detective Inspectors are made aware of staff within their area who have not completed 20% DASH, and the matter is being raised at the Safeguarding Business Board.

To improve the level of detail on the DASH risk assessments, communication has been sent out through the Domestic Abuse newsletter, and new recruits are being made aware of the importance of the DASH and the level of detail required.

Force policy remains that every domestic abuse crime or incident should have a DASH. If one is not present, then a supervisor must provide a rationale as to why this is the case, only then can a crime or enquiry be filed without a DASH attached.

As part of an ongoing process of improvement from November 2022, the DASH risk assessment will be completed as part of the Public Protection Notice (PNN). The DASH will, in future, be known as a DA risk assessment. The Force now has specialist Domestic Abuse Investigation Teams, known as 'Moonstone', who replace the team formerly known as SODIAT. Managers responsible for these teams, monitor the DA risk assessment completion, and performance is monitored by the Investigation Standards Board.

3.1.5 12th October 2016

- 3.1.6 Katie's mother provided a statement to the police in which she described Damian having told her, on the phone, to destroy Katie's mobile. He said that if she did not do this, 'something terrible would happen to Katie'.

This does not appear to have been expanded upon by the investigation team. Whilst, correctly, a crime of Send Letter/Communication/Article Conveying a Threatening Message Contrary to Section 1 Malicious Communications Act 1998, was correctly recorded there was a lack of professional curiosity to explore this further.

- 3.1.7 It is clear from the information that Katie's mother gave to the police, that Damian had been trying to contact Katie – threatening her and intimidating her. This is a clear breach of his bail conditions and an indication of the increased risk towards Katie.
- 3.1.8 Katie's mother was clearly very concerned about Katie and her safety. This was increased when Katie panicked when told that her mother had made a statement to the police, playing

down the incident when she was assaulted by Damian. This concern was shared by the investigation team, and there was a feeling that Katie was in the company of Damian.

3.1.9 **14th October 2016**

3.1.10 This concern was confirmed when Katie was located in a property with Damian. Katie was displaying signs of having been further assaulted, and Damian was arrested on suspicion of this and breaching his bail conditions.

3.1.11 At this point, Katie was supportive of police action and gave an ABE¹⁴ interview.

The review considers that the use of an ABE interview was an example of good practice, as it allowed her to provide a video statement rather than a written statement.

3.1.12 Following an interview under caution, the evidence was presented to the CPS for both incidents (on 9th and 14th October), and four charges were authorised. Given the high-risk grading of the DASH, the custody sergeant refused bail, and Damian was kept in custody overnight to appear at Plymouth Magistrates Court the next day. *This is an example of good practice.*

3.1.13 When arrested and taken to the custody suite, Damian said that he had thoughts of taking his own life. This was not expanded upon but was repeated to interviewing officers and other custody staff.

3.1.14 Damian was therefore seen in his cell by the mental health liaison and diversion worker who is based within the custody suite. This worker recorded that Damian had no mental health concerns and no thoughts of suicide. He was signposted to substance misuse services. The custody sergeant was still concerned about Damian's risk of suicide; therefore, this contributed to the decision to keep him in custody overnight.

3.1.15 When he attended court the next day, Damian pleaded guilty to the two assault charges and was released on conditional court bail until 28th November. This will be discussed later in report.

3.2 **SANCTUARY – IDVA SERVICE**

3.2.1 The referral was received on 11th October, and in line with guidance, the duty worker tried to contact Katie the same day.

The expectation is that the service would attempt to contact Katie four times over the next four days, but it is not recorded if that occurred.

¹⁴ Achieving Best Evidence in Criminal Proceedings Guidance on interviewing victims and witnesses, and guidance on using special measures https://www.cps.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/legal_guidance/best_evidence_in_criminal_proceedings.pdf

- 3.2.2 The records show that the IDVA spoke to Katie on 18th October, that they arranged to meet on 24th October, and that the IDVA was to text Katie the details. This is the meeting where a full assessment and DASH risk assessment would have been completed, and a safety plan/risk management plan would have been started.

There is no record of whether the details of the meeting were sent to Katie or if the meeting went ahead.

The IMR author has noted that, in line with the agreed policy for police referrals, the referral would have been shredded after four contacts if the client did not engage or declined support. Given that there is no archive file for Katie, it is assumed that this is what occurred.

- 3.2.3 On 8th November, the case was closed due to non-engagement.

It is not clear if additional attempts had been made to contact Katie and had not been written down, or if the police (as the referrer) were advised that the case was being closed.

The review is advised that, following a review of the process in May 2019, once a referral is received, the service will attempt to contact the client a maximum of four times over four days. If this is not successful, the service refers to the referrer, and the contact is given to a manager to decide if the case should be closed. This is now monitored by the IDVA service manager to ensure effective partnership working is in place with the referral agency.

3.3 KATIE'S GP

3.3.1 13th July 2016

- 3.3.2 During a consultation, Katie disclosed that she may be facing homelessness, and the Report Author asked about whether the reason for Katie's potential homelessness was explored with her. The GP practice are unable to say whether this was not explored or whether it was explored but was not recorded in the notes.

The GP practice commented that given the time allocated for appointments (10 minutes including consultation and administration), patient notes are not always comprehensive. The review considers that it is important that issues that have the potential to impact on safety or risk, such as homelessness, are explored and recorded. Practitioners should signpost or refer on for further assistance and follow up as appropriate.

It is noted that Katie's BMI was recorded as 17.8. Her weight was 7 stone 2 lbs and height just over 5ft 3in. This brings her in on the lower side of underweight and should have prompted a conversation regarding her overall health and wellbeing. It is possible that a conversation around her general health and wellbeing would have provided opportunity

for Katie to talk about her relationship and the abuse that she was experiencing. Katie's parents note that there was a history of anorexia in the family that was known to the GP.

The review considers it important that NHS practitioners exercise professional curiosity in their consultations with patients to ensure that they are meeting their duty of care.

3.3.3 24th August 2016

- 3.3.4 When Katie attended the GP with a stress-related problem, once again the details of this discussion were not recorded; however, the GP conceded that it is probably fair to say that domestic abuse would not have been specifically asked about if the patient did not volunteer this.

The review has been advised that the practice has now changed, and there is an increased awareness of domestic abuse and specific protocols for recording any disclosure of domestic abuse.

Devon NHS ICB has cascaded a Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Policy Toolkit to all GP surgeries across Devon County. The toolkit provides an exemplar policy for surgeries to adopt or amend to suit their setting. The policy articulates the importance of clinical enquiry when health indicators, common to domestic abuse or sexual violence, are apparent.

Devon NHS ICB has commissioned an Interpersonal Trauma Response Service for General Practice across Devon County. The service provides training for general practice staff (clinical and non-clinical) to identify domestic abuse and sexual violence (current and non-current) and provision of a specialist support service. The service takes referrals direct from GP surgeries. Practices will have a dedicated, named specialist because GPs and patients told us this was important to making a service work.

The service will support a) adults affected by DASV, b) children affected by domestic abuse, c) adults concerned about their own abusive behaviour in relationships and d) general practice colleagues who self-refer for support.

Referred individuals will be offered support related to risk and safety, interventions designed to reduce trauma symptoms, promote recovery, build resilience and self-esteem.

- 3.3.5 On 11th October 2016, Katie spoke to the GP and disclosed that she had been assaulted by her partner. The GP gave her a prescription for citalopram and agreed with her that she would come in for a face-to-face on the Friday. She did not do this.

When a follow-up is considered important because of concerns for patient safety, non-attendance should be acted upon.

The review considers it important that NHS practitioners explore disclosures of violence or abuse, take appropriate action such as immediate safety advice, referral, or risk assessment, and that they make clear rationale of these decisions and the discussions that led to the decision.

3.3.6 The Report Author sought clarity about whether this would have been followed up with her. The GP practice was unable to say if this had been followed up and that, as they have a lot of appointments that are cancelled, they are not able to follow up all of them. It was noted that the GP had recorded that Katie was getting support from other sources so may have been happy with this. The GP hoped that, given the increased awareness about domestic abuse, this would now be followed up.

3.3.7 **31st October 2016**

3.3.8 The GP practice was advised that Katie was to be discussed at MARAC. 'History of domestic abuse' was added to her problem page, but it would not appear as a 'pop up alert' at that time.

However, the practice has now changed, and domestic abuse alerts now appear as a 'pop-up' in the same way as safeguarding alerts.

Section Four – Katie and Damian

4.1 What we know about them

- 4.1.1 The review is indebted to Katie’s family and friends who have talked openly and honestly to the review. This has allowed us to get a sense of who she was. This section draws on a number of interviews and seeks to paint a picture without, in all cases, indicating who the information has come from. Katie’s friends have shared elements of her life that she had not, quite naturally, shared with her parents, and the review is sensitive to this.
- 4.1.2 Katie was the youngest of four girls, and she was 21 years old when she died in November 2016. She was described as a ‘mummy’s girl’, and although she was quiet, she loved partying. Despite having had boyfriends, there were no serious relationships. She was hard working at school.
- 4.1.3 It was said that Katie completely changed when she decided to become a hairdresser – she was really good at it. She was very particular about her appearance, and her hair and makeup always had to be perfect. Her family said that this set her apart from the rest of them!
- 4.1.4 Katie had always been a hard worker. She had a paper round from the age of 13. She had worked full-time during the day as a hairdresser as well as 2 – 3 nights a week in a local nightclub (from 11 pm – 2 am). This was to fund her trip to Australia in November 2014. The plan had been to stay in Australia for a year, but in Spring 2015, she returned home.
- 4.1.5 Katie was described as bright, funny, and vivacious. She was creative and found her niche in hairdressing. She was warm and musical. She was very popular and had many friends.

4.2 Domestic abuse

4.2.1 Evidence of previous domestic abuse history of Damian

- 4.2.2 Devon and Cornwall Police have recorded history of domestic abuse by Damian, dating back to 2004.

2004 2005 2010 2011 2013	There are several domestic abuse incidents recorded with three previous partners. Whilst most of these incidents were verbal arguments, there are some occasions when criminal offences were recorded.
2014	Possession of cocaine – conditional discharge for 12 months
2015	Assault occasioning actual bodily harm – Community order
2016	Battery – Deceased before sentencing
2016	Battery – Deceased before sentencing
2016	Destroy or damage property – Deceased before sentencing
2016	Resist or obstruct a police officer – Deceased before sentencing

- 4.2.3 From 2013, Damian was in a relationship with Female 1, and on 22nd April 2014, Female 1 contacted the police to say that she had been experiencing domestic abuse for a few weeks. She alleged that Damian had beat her black and blue because she tried to leave the property. She said that she had been out shopping, and Damian had called her saying that he was going to kill her. Female 1 and Damian attended the police station together and spoke to officers. Female 1 was spoken to alone, and she said that she had made the allegation because she wanted Damian to leave the property and wanted the police to help her. She believed that by making this report, this would facilitate Damian leaving the property. Later, she said that she wished that she had not called the police and denied that any assault had taken place. As no offences were disclosed, a Non-Crime Domestic was raised. A DASH was completed and assessed as low. This incident did not result in a conviction, as Female 1 later said that she had made up this report.
- 4.2.4 On 7th July 2014, the police received a call from a letting agent who was responsible for the flat in which Damian and Female 1 lived. They had received a call from Female 1 saying that she was locked in the toilet at the property and that Damian was going to assault her and had damaged the flat. When the police arrived, due to the extent of the injuries, an ambulance was called. She had been assaulted and kicked to her back, with grazes to various parts of her body. Female 1 was taken to hospital, and Scenes of Crime were called to the scene to photograph the extensive damage to the property. Female 1 declined to have her injuries photographed.
- 4.2.5 When investigating this incident, Female 1 indicated that she was moving to another part of the country, and that Damian did not have the address. Later in the investigation, the OIC established that Female 1 and Damian had emigrated to Australia. The case was then referred to the CPS, who made the decision that it was not in the public interest to continue because both the victim and the suspect were no longer living in the country.
- 4.2.6 **The relationship**
- 4.2.7 Damian was 6'0" compared to Katie's 5'4". He was charming, and one friend said that she would have seen him as 'older and established'. Katie said that he was her first proper boyfriend and that she had never let her guard down to anyone else. Katie described Damian as having the most genuine heart and said that she loved him. She said: 'I do love him, I still love him'.
- 4.2.8 She said that he had a drug problem, and when he was taking drugs, he was a different person – he was 'horrible'.
- 4.2.9 Damian had a reputation for being a 'party guy', and he and his brother were said to come 'as a package'. He was a bit of a 'celebrity' in the local area. He was always in the gym and was well known for using steroids.
- 4.2.10 When Katie met Damian, he was fitted with a tag. This was as a result of his conviction for assaulting another male during an altercation about a female.

4.2.11 Evidence of domestic abuse towards Katie

4.2.12 There is evidence of a raft of abuse perpetrated by Damian towards Katie. The next section has been drawn from a range of sources – Katie’s reports to agencies, Katie’s ABE interview, and information from Katie’s family and friends.

4.2.13 Physical abuse

4.2.14 There are several occasions recorded where Damian had hit or punched Katie in the face. On the evening in October when he emptied her bag and found a dress, he slapped her around the face and made her nose bleed. He had punched her in the nose and jaw.

4.2.15 In her ABE interview, Katie said that he spat on her and her belongings multiple times. She said that she found this disgusting and that it showed a lack of respect for her and her possessions. He would also throw food at her, and during the incident that led to the ABE interview, Damian threw a clump of Vaseline at her.

4.2.16 In October 2016, he took her bank card and snapped it in half before throwing it at Katie, causing a cut to her gum.

4.2.17 It was Katie’s 21st birthday in October 2016, when the couple were on holiday in Egypt. Katie described in her ABE interview how they had taken some sleeping tablets that you buy over the counter and had had a few drinks. She could not remember why they were arguing, but she was on the balcony, and he had hit her three times. During this attack, he had also strangled her. A girl who saw the assault, said to Katie: ‘what the fuck is he on?’ Katie said that she had a black eye for the entire holiday.

4.2.18 In her ABE interview, Katie described the last assault. She said that he jumped on her, pushed her against the bed, and literally put his hand over her face and ‘busted’ her nose. Katie was struggling to get her phone back, but he held it so tight that she had to let go. He then jumped on her and was squeezing her face. He also snapped her debit card and threw it at her face, cutting her lip. She said that he was spitting on her and all over her flat. He was throwing things at her and then held her by her throat: he held her round her neck for 30 – 35 seconds. He was putting pressure on her neck so she could hardly breathe. He was holding her by her wrists and shouting in her face. Katie said that she thought that she was going to die.

4.2.19 In her ABE interview, Katie said that this was not the first time that Damian had strangled her. She said that he had done it twice before. On one previous occasion, Damian wrongly believed that there was a secret that Katie was not telling him, and he strangled her to get her to tell him. She said that she just wanted to tell him a lie so that he would get off.

4.2.20 The additional risk that strangulation poses is well researched. 68% of women who are at high risk of fatal domestic abuse will experience near-fatal strangulation¹⁵. Non-fatal strangulation has been shown in some studies to increase the risk of homicide sevenfold¹⁶.

4.2.21 **Emotional abuse**

4.2.22 Katie disclosed that she suffered from anxiety as a result of the relationship, and this was exacerbated by his continual questioning of her. He would say: 'what's this?' and 'what's that?' Whatever she did would set him off. If she sat cross-legged, he would accuse her of trying to hide something.

4.2.23 Katie referred to more than one occasion when Damian would tell her that he was going to kill himself.

4.2.24 In October 2016, having spent all night abusing Katie both verbally and physically, he asked her to lay on the bed and cuddle him. He asked her if she hated him. When she said that she loved him but that, because of what he had done, right then she hated him, he said that he wanted her to hate him.

4.2.25 Since Katie has died, several people have said that, on nights out, they had seen Damian being horrible to Katie.

4.2.26 One person who spoke to the review, described how she was having dinner in a restaurant and a car pulled up in the loading bay. Damian and Katie got out and went into the restaurant. Another car pulled up, and as it was close to Damian's car, it set off the car alarm. Damian came out screaming and then just said to Katie, 'get in' – she looked brow beaten.

4.2.27 During her ABE interview, Katie described how Damian was asking her lots of questions that she could not answer. The things he was saying were not true – they were in his head. She said that she could not persuade him of the truth because he kept constantly asking her the same questions, and she did not know what to say.

4.2.28 **Verbal abuse**

4.2.29 Katie's employer rang her mother on more than one occasion to tell her that Damian had gone to her place of work and had been verbally abusive in the salon in front of clients.

4.2.30 **Isolation**

4.2.31 When Katie would speak to her mother, she described Damian as 'smothering'. She was not allowed to have any time away from him other than to see her mother – and even then, she had a strict time frame that she had to adhere to.

¹⁵ Taliaferro, E., Hawley, D., McClane, G.E. & Strack, G, 2009, Strangulation in Intimate Partner Violence. *Intimate Partner Violence: A Health-Based Perspective*. Oxford University Press, Inc., 217-235. Cited in Strangulation in Intimate Partner Violence, V6.24.19, Training Institute of Strangulation Prevention

¹⁶ Campbell et al., 2007, cited by Monckton Smith et al., Domestic Abuse, Homicide and Gender, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014

- 4.2.32 At the end of August 2016, during the family meal in a restaurant to celebrate Katie's birthday, Damian became angry because he said that Katie was ignoring him and spending too long talking to her mother.
- 4.2.33 In her ABE interview, Katie said that she did not see her friends at all when she was with Damian. She said that he was not one of those controlling boyfriends who would say, 'don't go out', and it was not his fault: she had just gone into a bubble with him. She said that she just needed him. She said that if she had, occasionally, gone out with some girlfriends, he would stop her from talking about what had happened.
- 4.2.34 **Jealousy**
- 4.2.35 On the evening in October, Katie could see that Damian was taking a lot of drugs and drink and was not in a good place. Therefore, she packed up her bag to go to her mother's. He emptied the bag and because he saw a dress, he assumed that she was going to meet someone.
- 4.2.36 As described above, Damian was constantly asking Katie questions about where she had been and what she had been doing. When out for Katie's birthday, he accused her of spending too much time talking to her mother.
- 4.2.37 **Financial abuse**
- 4.2.38 There were several occasions when Damian had demanded money from Katie to buy drugs. He had forced her to ask her mother to lend her money when she did not have what he wanted.
- 4.2.39 After Damian had been released on police bail, he was harassing Katie for £300 for the flat. He was telling her that if she did not give it to him, they would be thrown out. He told her that the landlord was demanding that she paid her share, but the landlord had told Katie that he wanted nothing from her.
- 4.2.40 Katie's mother and stepfather bought her a car; however, Katie feared that Damian would cancel the car insurance.
- 4.2.41 On another occasion, Damian told Katie that if she did not give him £300, he would smash her car.
- 4.2.42 When he was at Katie's new flat in October 2016, he threatened to trash it if she did not get him the money that he wanted. This was a fully furnished rented flat that she had only just moved into.
- 4.2.43 As a result of the abuse that Katie was experiencing, she was not able to work for over a year and was claiming housing benefit and Employment Support Allowance (ESA).
- 4.2.44 **Coercion and control**
- 4.2.45 Katie described how when Damian had taken drugs, he become paranoid: he would go through her phone, and he would manipulate her into saying things that were not true.

Damian would tell her how she could dress, the make-up and perfume she could wear, who she could see, when she could work, and how she could spend her free time.

- 4.2.46 Damian was pleased when Katie was signed off from work, as this would mean that he knew where she was and who she was speaking to. He would still come home unexpectedly during the day to check up on her. This led to him losing his job.
- 4.2.47 Every telephone conversation that Katie had with her family or friends was monitored by Damian, and this became 'normal' to Katie.
- 4.2.48 Katie described herself as constantly being on edge. She told her mother that, after she had left, it was great to be able to shave her legs without having to explain why. She said that she was enjoying not feeling like she was walking on eggshells all the time and having the freedom to come and go as she pleased.
- 4.2.49 When Damian was released on police bail, he immediately called Katie and then continued to bombard her with calls and texts, except for a couple of days when she felt able to block his number.
- 4.2.50 When referring to the threats by Damian to put the videos he had of her online, Katie said that when he thought that he could control her, he would try to control other people's opinion of her.
- 4.2.51 There are numerous times when Katie described Damian as being in a rage and his emotions being uncontrollable. The review does not believe that there was anything uncontrollable about Damian. Coercion and control are about power and control, and this review believes that he *did have control* of his emotions. He could turn the rage off when it suited him, as evidenced in August 2016 when Katie's mother was allegedly able to talk him down.
- 4.2.52 After she recommenced work in September 2016, Katie told her mother that Damian's drugs, violence, jealousy, and paranoia had got worse.
- 4.2.53 **Stalking**
- 4.2.54 Damian had, in some way, linked his and Katie's phones so that he had access to all her contacts. He was constantly checking her phone and Facebook. After he was released on police bail, Damian was continually trying to get Katie to give him the Apple ID, as he 'wanted to change something'. He bombarded her with calls and texts. So, in the end, she gave it to him to make him stop.
- 4.2.55 Damian would turn up at her place of employment to check on Katie. He would shout at her in the salon, and one occasion, two male customers had to prevent him from verbally abusing her.
- 4.2.56 Katie was asked by her employer to hand deliver some leaflets to the houses around the salon. Whilst she was out doing this, Damian visited the salon, and even though her employer told him where she was, Damian accused Katie of cheating on him and lying by saying she was at work. As a result of this, he persuaded her to have a new phone on which

he installed a tracking device. He told her that this was so he could see where she was at any time, to be sure that she was safe.

4.2.57 Damian had access to the passwords for Katie's bank account, email accounts, Facebook account, and so on.

4.2.58 Despite his bail conditions, when Damian was released from custody in October 2016, he immediately began phoning Katie. He told her that he was standing outside her window, watching her.

4.2.59 **Non-consensual sharing of intimate images¹⁷**

4.2.60 Katie told the police, in her ABE interview, that Damian had some videos of them. She said that she had consented to him taking these, as she believed she could trust him. He then began to threaten her that he would put them online if she did not give him £300.

4.2.61 **Gaslighting**

4.2.62 It is distressing to hear Katie, in her ABE interview, minimising the abuse that she had experienced. For example, when describing his attack on her in October 2016, she said that he had hit her around the face; however, she wanted to make it clear that he had not punched her. Katie also said that Damian had spat on her several times but 'that is not hurting me'. When she talked about the most recent incident, she said that she 'would not describe it as strangling because it was not as bad as he did before'.

4.2.63 Whenever Katie spoke about the control and coercion that Damian had over her, she would minimise this by saying that it was only when he had been taking drugs, which made him paranoid.

4.2.64 When asked by the police officer in her ABE interview about the injuries she had sustained, Katie said it was 'just a bust nose and a bit of a bruise here'.

4.2.65 Damian obviously knew how important Katie's family were to her. Therefore, as a means of abuse, he would threaten Katie's family. At the same time, he would claim to trust Katie's mother and that he was happy to speak to her when he was in a rage. In August 2016, when he arrived at Katie's parents' home in a rage, her mother managed to talk him down. He told Katie's mother that she should do this for a living. He followed up this incident with flowers as an apology. The review does not believe that this was genuine.

4.2.66 Katie also talked about how, a couple of months earlier, they had been going to the gym, eating healthily, and it was amazing. They were not arguing, and it was perfect. She said that this was why she knew that they were good together and it was about anger issues. She said that this was what was so upsetting – knowing that they were good for each other.

¹⁷ Disclosing or threatening to disclose private sexual images with intent to cause distress – s33 of the Criminal Justice and Courts Act.

- 4.2.67 During her ABE interview, Katie was keen to point out that the abuse was not a regular occurrence. She said that it would quieten down and then things would happen in a couple of days, and ‘so I don’t want you to think it is an everyday sort of thing... but when it happens it is quite bad’.
- 4.2.68 When describing the attack in Egypt, Katie said: ‘he didn’t punch me – he just hit me hard in the same place’. She could not say how many times he had hit her – she said that he would hit her, step back, and then hit her again, ‘to teach her a lesson’. She then said: ‘that’s what he would always say’. When asked what he meant by that, Katie did not know.
- 4.2.69 **Sense of entitlement**
- 4.2.70 There were times when Damian demonstrated a sense of entitlement. For example, at the end of August 2016 when Katie and Damian had been out for a meal with her family to celebrate her birthday, Damian rang Katie’s mother when they returned home. Damian was very abusive and angry because Katie had drunk too much. He said that he had paid a lot for the holiday and that Katie had not packed his travel bags. He said that he was going on holiday on his own and that he deserved better. He was calling Katie names and telling her to ‘get up and pack’. The couple went on holiday as planned.
- 4.2.71 When Damian was released on conditional bail in October 2016, he immediately broke these conditions and began contacting Katie and her mother. When Katie’s mother pointed out the bail conditions to him, Damian said that he did not care.
- 4.2.72 After Damian had been abusing Katie for many hours in October 2016, he asked her to lay down on the bed with him for a cuddle.
- 4.2.73 **Threats to kill**
- 4.2.74 When Damian attacked Katie in October 2016, he told her to ring the police. He followed this up by saying: ‘by the time they get here I will have killed you’. He said that if the police came, he would go at them with a knife.
- 4.2.75 During this incident, Damian told her that he would go to her parent’s house, kick the door down, and that he would slit her mother’s throat.

4.3 The Homicide Timeline

- 4.3.1 The analysis here draws on the research of Professor Jane Monckton-Smith, of University of Gloucestershire, into Intimate Partner Femicide Timeline¹⁸. This research has identified eight stages through which a relationship that ends in homicide is likely to go. The review is conscious that we cannot say that Damian was responsible for Katie’s death, but by considering this timeline, we can see how the abuse against Katie escalated. Professor Monckton-Smith points out vehemently that at any point, the timeline can be stopped.

¹⁸ Monckton-Smith, Jane (2019), Intimate Partner Femicide: using Foucauldian analysis to track an eight stage relationship progression to homicide. Violence Against Women, University of Gloucestershire

4.3.2 **Stage One – Pre-relationship history**

- 4.3.3 When Katie met Damian, she did not know that he was on licence and was wearing a tag for beating a man some months earlier. When Katie found out about the tag, Damian said that he had been acting in self-defence, but the local paper reported that he had found a man at his ex-girlfriend's house when he went round to try and win her back. He had beaten the man until he was unconscious, then beat him more whilst he was unconscious on the floor.

4.3.4 **Stage Two – Early relationship behaviours**

- 4.3.5 Monckton-Smith notes that when stages 1 – 2 are positively identified, there is a much higher likelihood that attempts at separation later in the relationship will be met with resistance.

- 4.3.6 This was a fast-moving relationship. They met outside a sandwich bar in the town. He approached Katie and said that he had been watching her for a while. Katie said that he was 'tall, dark and handsome'. He invited her to a trendy restaurant that evening and picked her up in his BMW. In the following weeks after they met, Katie would talk about him more and more. He bought her flowers and a new phone. They would have cosy nights in with a takeaway and a film, as he said he did not like to share her company with anyone. By week two, he told her that he loved her. She thought this was romantic.

- 4.3.7 Monckton-Smith describes the relationship speeding up – with early declarations of love, possessiveness, and jealousy.

- 4.3.8 Within four weeks of their first meeting, Damian told her that he was being evicted from his house and asked if he could move in with her, 'just until he got himself sorted out'. It was at this point that he told her about the tag on his leg, and that he would need to register her address with his probation officer. He also admitted that he was 12 years older than her, at 31 years old.

- 4.3.9 He moved in with her, and her family soon started to hear rumours of his temper and of him smashing up her flat.

4.3.10 **Stage Three – Relationship warning signs**

- 4.3.11 The research by Monckton-Smith highlights that this stage is found to have the most diversity in length of time. For some, it could be 3 – 6 weeks, and in others, it could be up to 50 years. We know that in this case, the time was six months at the most.

- 4.3.12 Katie just could not see what was happening. Her confidence was taken over by the man that she loved, and her life was taken over bit by bit. His jealousy and paranoia made it too difficult for her to hold down a job, and she was signed off with anxiety and depression just four months after they met.

- 4.3.13 He changed her from a confident young woman into a quiet, controlled possession. As she was no longer working, she began to lose touch with her friends, as he did not like her to go

out without him. He said that her friends did not like him, would tell lies about him, and would be disrespectful to him. He made her choose between them and him.

4.3.14 He would phone her constantly to see where she was, and he had to agree to everything she bought, especially clothes.

4.3.15 Her parents bought Katie a car so that she could try to keep some independence, but he controlled the money and would cancel her car insurance if 'she stepped out of line'. He would tell her that she was useless as a girlfriend because she could not hold down a job. He would tell her that she was disgusting and that nobody else would want her. He made her feel that he was her protector against the world. In reality, he was the person from whom she needed protecting.

4.3.16 **Stage Four – Trigger warning signs**

4.3.17 The research shows that the biggest trigger for domestic homicide is separation or the threat of separation.

4.3.18 Damian lost his job because he was phoning her throughout the day to check that she was where she said she was, and he would leave work to go and check on her. He blamed Katie for him losing his job, as he said that if she was a proper girlfriend, he would not have to keep checking on her to see that she was OK. He was now able to keep an eye on Katie 24 hours a day.

4.3.19 With Katie signed off as well, money became an issue. Katie told her mother that he had had a drug addiction for years but had hidden it from her until sometime into their relationship. He started mixing drugs with alcohol, self-medicating his anger, and then started selling drugs from their flat, as he said it was easy money.

4.3.20 By now, his anger was getting worse, and he regularly smashed up the flat. Katie admitted to her mother that he was hitting her but said that he did not mean it. He was just so frustrated with her, and it was her fault because she knew which buttons to press just to get a reaction from him. With Damian being at home, and them being together all the time, it just seemed to make the situation worse, and she finally admitted that she was scared of him.

4.3.21 **Stage Five – Escalation warning signs**

4.3.22 At this point, the research says that there will be evidence of an escalation in the warning signs, such as the concerning behaviours becoming more frequent or more serious. In the research, this escalation appeared to be an attempt to re-establish control or status.

4.3.23 One evening when he was passed out on the sofa, Katie phoned her mother and asked if she would be able to help her with moving out into a flat of her own and help her with the deposit. She asked her to take her to view a flat the next day. She said that she had managed to make an appointment when Damian had arranged to visit a friend. She had told him that the flat needed a good clean, so she would stay at home. Her mother was thrilled and arranged a time to pick her up. That night, however, he found the advert for the flat when going through her handbag. He realised that she was going to leave him, so he drank a bottle

of Jack Daniels, took a quantity of Valium, and threatened to throw himself off their third-floor balcony if she left him.

- 4.3.24 He beat her so badly that night that neighbours called the police, stating that they were frightened for her life. Although they had heard her screaming and crying before, this was the worst it had ever been. It took four policemen to arrest him. CS spray was also used; however, this did not seem to affect him, as he was so high.

4.3.25 **Stage Six – Change of thinking/decision**

- 4.3.26 This stage appears to occur in, or at the end of, a period of escalation and may be a response to perceived irretrievable loss of control and/or status. Monckton-Smith notes that one of the warning signs is that things may become calmer.

- 4.3.27 Damian was arrested and whilst he was in custody, Katie moved into her own flat and spent the morning removing all his details from her online accounts and contacting Apple to remove the tracking device that he had on her phone. Damian knew all her passwords – email, bank accounts, Facebook, etc.

- 4.3.28 Damian was released on conditional bail but within hours, he had broken two conditions – not to contact Katie or her mother. As he could not track her or get to her directly, he phoned her constantly trying to get her to tell him where she was. Damian said that he was going to kill himself and it would be all her fault. He said that he was under her window, watching her. He also threatened to put intimate videos of her online.

- 4.3.29 As he could not physically control her anymore, Damian began an emotional campaign to wear her down. From the moment he was released, he constantly phoned her for hours until Katie blocked his number.

- 4.3.30 He then started to call Katie's mother and tried to manipulate her into telling him where Katie was. When that didn't work, he threatened Katie and her mother.

4.3.31 **Stage Seven – Planning warning signs**

- 4.3.32 Katie was now in her new flat – with a panic alarm installed by the police – and was considered to be high risk from the MARAC. Despite her parents' pleas to Katie to go home to them, Katie would not do this because she was worried, as Damian had threatened her mother.

- 4.3.33 At this point, Damian had been arrested twice in the last week, had pleaded guilty twice to counts of beating her (at Plymouth Magistrates Court), and he had been released on conditional bail with a sentencing date, four weeks later on 28th November. He must have known that he may receive a custodial sentence.

- 4.3.34 Katie told her mother that she did not speak to him for a few weeks but then told her mother that he had passed a message on (via a friend) to say that he was sorry and that he loved her. He said that he had been offered anger management, as well as drug and alcohol counselling, and that he was going to do them all to prove how much he loved her and how much he wanted to change.

- 4.3.35 Eventually, Katie allowed him to phone her. Arguably, this was the planning stage. He was now the man that she had fallen in love with: charming and respectful. He would phone her often, just for a chat, but they only spoke of the good things and of happy memories. Damian was doing what he did best – wooing her – selling himself as a caring, considerate boyfriend who had made mistakes but was now sorry.
- 4.3.36 When Damian spoke to Katie’s mother after his release on bail in October 2016, he said that she would go back to him, and that if he couldn’t have her, then no one else could. He said that he could easily kill her with drugs and that nobody would be able to prove it.
- 4.3.37 **Stage Eight – Homicide characteristics**
- 4.3.38 The homicide timeline identifies the most common characteristics of the intimate partner femicide timeline as a clear homicide with confession, which features in this case. Research identifies that the homicide more usually occurs in the home of the victim (Brennan 2016)¹⁹.
- 4.3.39 Whilst the details will vary from case to case, Monckton-Smith notes that in all the cases studied, the perpetrator had travelled along through these stages. Highly violent perpetrators may travel through stages 4 – 8 much more quickly.
- 4.3.40 Importantly, Monckton-Smith notes that progression through each of the stages is not inevitable, and interventions can prevent the cycle from progressing. The perpetrator could have changed his mind at any point.

4.4 The end of Katie’s life

- 4.4.1 We will never know what Katie was doing at his flat: whether she went there voluntarily or under coercion or threat. To assist our understanding, this section will consider the possibilities in the four weeks between the attack on Katie, his release from court, and her death.
- 4.4.2 In the early hours of Friday 14th October, Damian attacked Katie, and the police were called by neighbours. Katie was taken to her parents’ address. Katie visited the police station at 11 am the same day and gave her ABE interview.
- 4.4.3 On Saturday 15th October, Damian appeared in court and pleaded guilty. He had been released on court bail to appear on 28th November. His bail conditions were as follows: not to contact Katie directly or indirectly, and not to attend three different addresses.
- 4.4.4 Katie’s family say that they were now seeing much more of Katie. They went shopping, and she started to see her friends again, and they could tell that she was excited with her new life and loved her new flat. She was actively seeking work and was very positive about the future.

¹⁹ Brennan, D. (2016). Femicide Census. Retrieved March 30, 2018, from <http://www.northwalespcc.gov.uk/Document-Library/Advice/Femicide-Census-Report-2016.pdf> cited in https://www.womensaid.ie/download/pdf/jane_monckton_smith_powerpoint_2018_compatibility_mode.pdf

- 4.4.5 One of the friends who spoke to the review, recalled meeting with Katie two weeks before her death. Katie had contacted her out of the blue. When they met, Katie confided in her. Whilst she was with Katie, Damian's mother rang and tried to make Katie feel sorry for him; however, her friend described that Katie was in a strong mindset – she had finished the relationship and had no intention of going back to him. They talked about going away on holiday together, and her friend was sure that Katie was getting her life back.

These interactions suggest that Katie was determined, at this point, to rebuild her life without Damian.

- 4.4.6 On Monday 17th October, the Domestic Abuse Officer spoke to Katie to discuss the court hearing. Katie said that she had not had any contact from Damian since his arrest, and she hoped that this would continue. Katie understood that, if she were to make a clean break, she had to report any breaches of bail by Damian.
- 4.4.7 On Tuesday 18th October, Katie was called by Torbay Domestic Abuse Service, but Katie said that she was at work and could not speak. She said that she would like to meet on a Monday, as she worked Tuesday to Saturday. She said that she felt safe and well and would text her details. The officer noted that she sounded much calmer and said that she planned to return to work the following day.

At this point, we hear Katie vocalising a willingness to return to the relationship if Damian addressed his drug dependency: one day after he had attended a drop-in session. It is possible that this was part of his control of Katie – he was 'proving' to her that he wanted to change and that he could do so.

- 4.4.8 The review is aware that Katie told her mother that, after not speaking to Damian for some time, he had passed a message on (via a friend) to say that he was sorry and that he loved her. He said that he had been offered anger management, as well as drug and alcohol counselling, and that he was going to do them all to prove how much he loved her and how much he wanted to change.
- 4.4.9 On Wednesday 26th October, Damian referred himself to Torbay Drug and Alcohol Service through an open access session. It is clear from his consultation that he was not honest about his drug and alcohol use. He said that he had used 1 gram of cocaine on 13 of the previous 28 days. He said that he had anger management issues and would not want to attend groups. He agreed to attend 1:1 recovery focused session with a drug worker and attend SMART recovery that would be delivered on a 1:1 basis. As part of the screening, he said that he had no thoughts of suicide or self-harm but disclosed low mood. Damian appeared to be seeking to control the engagement that he had with services.
- 4.4.10 Katie attended the police station on Friday 28th October to give her Victim Impact Statement. She said that she did not want a restraining order against Damian because if he could resolve his drug dependency, she would be willing to continue their relationship. She also said that Damian's mother had been in touch with her.
- 4.4.11 On Tuesday 1st November, a warning marker was placed on the Force Intelligence Systems for both Katie and Damian: indicating high-risk domestic abuse and a MARAC case.

- 4.4.12 Katie allowed Damian to phone her, and he was now the man she had fallen in love with – charming and respectful. He would phone her often, just for a chat, but they only spoke of the good things and of happy memories. Damian was doing what he did best – wooing her – selling himself as a caring, considerate boyfriend who had made mistakes but was now sorry.
- 4.4.13 On Friday 4th November, Katie was issued with a sick note by her GP for depressive disorder: the note was until 2nd December. This was despite her having said a couple of weeks earlier that she was planning to return to work. It is possible that Damian ‘convinced’ her not to return to work.

At this point, Katie’s contact with her family falters. The review considers that it is probable that Katie was in contact with Damian from this point. Whether that was out of fear, coercion, and control, or out of feelings of what she believed to be ‘love’ for him, no one will ever know.

- 4.4.14 On Sunday 6th November, it was Katie’s maternal grandmother’s birthday. It is from this point that her family noticed a change in her. She cancelled coffee dates, saying that she was unwell, and she no longer messaged regularly, even when her mother messaged her to say that when she did not hear from her, she feared the worst. To this, Katie replied that she was fine and not to worry. She said that she was feeling unwell and promised to meet for coffee soon. We cannot be certain that this was Katie replying to the message.
- 4.4.15 On Monday 7th November, Katie’s mother went to her flat with a hot chocolate for her. Katie asked her to leave it downstairs, as she had a cold. Her mother left it downstairs.
- 4.4.16 On 8th November at 10 am, there was a report of a Police Temporary Alarm fail at Katie’s address. Officers attended the flat to conduct a welfare check, but Katie was not at home. The officers contacted Katie by telephone, and she said that she was at work and had run out of electricity at her flat, hence the reason for the failure of the alarm. The alarm would reset itself once the electricity was restored; therefore, there was no need for them to attend the address. At 6.03 pm, the alarm failed again, and this was attributed to a power failure once again. That said, officers did attend the property to check on Katie. The flat was in darkness, and there was no reply.
- 4.4.17 Wednesday 9th November was Katie’s stepfather’s birthday, and her family did not hear from her. When she did not reply to her mother’s message, she posted a message on Facebook, and Katie replied to say that she was OK, just very tired. Of course, we do not know for certain that this was Katie.
- 4.4.18 Katie sent a text to her mother on Thursday 10th November to say that she had applied for a job and that she was OK.
- 4.4.19 On Friday 11th November, Katie’s mother went to her flat to surprise her, but she was not in.
- 4.4.20 Katie’s friend told the review that at some point in this last week, Katie had been seen by another friend going into a shop near Damian’s address. She had her hood up and hurried by. The review has been told that during this last week, Katie was at a house party with Damian (at his house). Whilst Katie was taking cocaine, Damian was doing harder drugs, and people were being ‘weirded out by him’. Katie had sat in the corner, very quiet. Damian

had accused a man of looking at Katie, and those present said that he had been nasty to Katie, mocking her in front of everyone.

- 4.4.21 Monday 14th November was Katie's sister's birthday. Her mother said that if they had not heard from her by 7 pm (as this would be very unusual), she would go to her flat early in the morning because she was now getting worried again. This is the day that Katie was found deceased.

This review cannot be certain what occurred in that final month of Katie's life, but the scenario that she was coerced into returning to him is compelling.

- 4.4.22 The coroner found that Katie and Damian had both died because of ingesting the fatal combination of morphine and cocaine. However, the **circumstances of how they took this, and what their intentions were, remained unclear.**
- 4.4.23 Sadly, for Katie's family, the truth about how she met her death will never be known, but there are several possibilities. **This review has considered a range of possibilities. The evidence of significant abuse from Damian towards Katie is abundantly clear, and it is very likely that this was an overriding factor in Katie being present at his flat on that night.**
- 4.4.24 Given the body of information before this review, the DHR panel has reflected and considered the range of possibilities of what is known. Particularly, about Damian's behaviour towards Katie, the known impact of domestic abuse upon victims, and the application of that knowledge – both from research and what is known about Katie as an individual in this case. The panel, however, agrees that to include evidence of those considerations would be straying into the realms of speculation, and that could be to the detriment of the learning in this case.
- 4.4.25 Katie's family are aware of the areas discussed.

This review is unable to come to a view about these circumstances.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the police service embraces the suggested changes into the investigation of unexplained deaths (Munroe 2022).

Section Five – Further Analysis

5.1 Drugs and alcohol

5.1.1 Damian's drug use

5.1.2 Damian was known to take drugs. At the inquest, his brother said that Damian had been taking drugs since he was 14 years old. He said that, over the past 10 years, Damian had taken every drug, for example, cocaine, MDMA, ecstasy, and nitrous oxide balloons.

5.1.3 Katie said that he took cocaine a couple of times a week. He also drank a lot of Jack Daniels. Katie said that Damian's mother had told her that he had had his kidneys and liver checked out some years ago, and so she was worried about his drinking. He would drink a few bottles of Jack Daniels a week. He would drink one bottle one day and then, a couple of days later, he would drink another bottle. Katie said that he took excessive amounts of Valium. She said that there had been times when she had had to contact his mother because she did not know what to do. She said that she found it hard to see him taking so many Valium tablets that he was sick and then continue to take more.

5.1.4 Katie described the heavy drug use of Damian. On the day of the assault in October 2016, Katie had returned home from work, and he was already doing a few lines of cocaine. He had a bottle of Jack Daniels and then took 20 Valium tablets, followed by 10 more a short time later. He then got some canisters and lay on the bed doing balloons.

5.1.5 When describing the abuse to the officer in her ABE interview, Katie said that it was when he was 'coked up' that he would do these things to her.

5.1.6 Katie's drug use

5.1.7 Katie's friends have spoken very candidly about her teenage years. She smoked cannabis, as did everyone in her social group. It was said that she was introverted and that this brought her out of herself. It was a social thing that she and her friends would do at weekends. There is a suggestion that she 'dabbled' with cocaine. As a teenager, Katie was shy and therefore was easily influenced. She would do what others were doing to fit in.

5.1.8 Katie told her mother, at the end of August 2016, that she had tried cocaine recently at Damian's request. She said that she had enjoyed the initial experience but then had become very frightened. She said that when she woke the next morning, she was not able to move her legs. Katie said that when she told Damian that she felt paralysed from the waist down, he had given her some tablets to 'get her going again', and she did not know what the tablets were. When her mother asked her why she had taken the tablets if she did not know what they were, she said it was because Damian had told her to, that she loved and trusted him, and that he had promised they would help her to feel better. When her mother warned her about drug use, Katie told her mother not to worry because Damian knew what he was doing. Later in the evening, Katie hugged her mother and told her that, whilst she smoked cannabis, she did not take anything else because she was too scared of not knowing what Damian was giving her.

- 5.1.9 When she met Damian, she did not do drugs very much, but she did much more when she was with him. She said that she did take some cocaine as ‘when I take a line, I just don’t care’. Katie said that she experienced anxiety, and Damian’s continual questioning made this worse. She said that taking drugs would initially help her to feel better. When asked in her ABE interview if she felt alert after having taken the cocaine on that night, she said that she did, and her memory was clear.
- 5.1.10 In her ABE interview, Katie said that when they were on holiday in September 2016, both Katie and Damian had been drinking and had taken some over the counter sleeping tablets.
- 5.1.11 One of Katie’s friends said that she had never known Katie to use the two drugs together that were found in her system.
- 5.1.12 **Drugs within the relationship**
- 5.1.13 There is evidence from Katie’s ABE interview that Damian would tell her that he behaved the way he did because of his drug use. She believed that taking drugs made him behave the way he did. She told people that he was only violent when he had taken drugs or had been drinking. If this were the case and he truly did not want to behave in this way, it is unclear why he did he not engage with services that would help him to address his addictions.
- 5.1.14 That said, there is clear evidence of Damian abusing and controlling Katie when he had not been drinking or taking drugs. The abuse that he meted out over Katie was not driven by drugs and alcohol, it was driven by his desire for power and control over her.
- 5.1.15 Whilst this section has looked at drug use by both Damian and Katie, it is important that we do not think that because Katie took drugs, she, in some way, deserved the abuse that she experienced. This has been discussed because it is so central to the history of abuse and the cause of death.

5.2 Katie’s attempts to leave the relationship

- 5.2.1 In September 2016, Katie began to speak to her mother about leaving Damian for the first time. She began to sneak items of clothing from their flat to her mother’s house, and her mother began to buy her new items of clothing so that she had clean clothes whilst she was there. They called this her ‘secret case’.
- 5.2.2 From this point, Katie would often arrive in the middle of the night, in her pyjamas.
- 5.2.3 In October 2016, Katie asked her mother to help her with a deposit and rent money to allow her to rent a new flat in Torquay, as she needed to get away from Damian. She had made an appointment for the following day and asked her mother to go with her and view it.
- 5.2.4 That evening, when Damian was searching Katie’s bag (as was a common occurrence), he found the advert for the flat. He then assaulted her, and the police were called. Katie was taken by the police to her parent’s home, and her mother helped her spend the next morning removing the tracking device from her phone, along with all the passwords that he had access to.

- 5.2.5 Later in the day, Katie and her mother visited the flat, and her mother paid the deposit and four weeks' rent in advance so that Katie could move in the same day. As they were told by the police that Damian was still in custody, they returned to the flat that they shared and removed as much of Katie's clothes and personal items that they could fit into their cars. At 7.30 pm after having collected some shopping, Katie was settled in her new flat.
- 5.2.6 Katie was now away from him, but she was not free from him. Later that night, the police advised that Damian was going to be released on conditional bail. He began phoning Katie in the early hours of the morning until she turned her phone off. When he could not contact Katie, he began ringing her mother, telling her to destroy Katie's phone or something terrible would happen to her. He had no regard for the bail conditions.
- 5.2.7 Whilst Katie's mother was giving her police statement, she was trying to contact Katie, but there was no response. After a couple of hours, whilst still at the police station, a text came from Katie's phone asking her what the matter was. She immediately tried to call her back, but it went straight to answerphone. The police believed that the text was from Damian and not Katie and advised Katie's mother what to write in a text to her. She sent another text sometime later saying that she was OK and didn't know what the fuss was about. The police were still convinced that Damian was in control of her phone, as the texts were not written in Katie's usual way and had no kisses on the end, something that they always did. No more messages came through, and her phone was switched off.
- 5.2.8 After the last incident, Katie gave an ABE interview. In this interview, she described how he had been out for the night and had called Katie at about 2 am. He was sat in his car outside and said he was freezing cold. He said that he had nowhere else to go. He said that he wanted to see Katie. She let him in and as soon as he walked in, he went straight to her phone and said: 'how dare you?'. She knew what was going to happen and so she gave him two options – to drop her phone or to get out of her flat. He was completely blanking her. This went on for hours. She begged him to go, as she needed to go to sleep.
- 5.2.9 Even under the pressure of having had Damian in her flat for many hours, constantly abusing her, Katie had the where-with-all to alert her mother. She knew that if she texted her mother at 7 am, she would know that something was wrong and call the police, which is what she did.
- 5.2.10 When asked in her ABE interview what had stopped her from telling the truth about what had been happening, she said that she loved him, and each time something happened, she would think 'no more...' but then
- 5.2.11 Katie said that it had been difficult to give the ABE interview because she loved him, and she knew that he was going to be angry. However, she was sure that he knew that what he did was wrong, but she wanted to leave that in the past and not take it any further. She said: 'Now I have so I feel a bit guilty'.
- 5.2.12 In her Victim Personal Statement, Katie described her relationship with Damian and clearly still had feelings for him. She said that during her relationship, she had some lovely times with Damian. She said that he was a kind and generous partner who looked after her well. He was there for her when she needed support. She said that his cocaine addiction, when

mixed with alcohol, changed his personality. She said that the reason that he did not seek help for this addiction was because he was hard working; therefore, it was low on his list of priorities. She said that she would not rule out seeing him again if he gave up drugs and got help with his anger. She said: 'we were in love, and it is such a shame that he chose to treat me like this. I know that the true [Damian] would be appalled by his behaviour towards me on these occasions.'

- 5.2.13 Domestic Homicide Reviews will, where appropriate, consider the range of barriers to a person leaving the relationship; however, this review is different in the sense that the coercion and control that Katie experienced from Damian was the only, yet insurmountable, barrier. The control that Damian had over Katie was enormous. It was chilling for the Report Author to see the impact that this coercion and control had on Katie when the ABE interview was viewed – she was a shell of the young vibrant woman described by her family and friends.

5.3 Efforts to safeguard Katie

- 5.3.1 Arguably, those charged by the state have tools available to them to safeguard young women such as Katie, but those tools do not always provide the protection that they are intended to do. The review has considered the different opportunities to safeguard Katie and considered if more protection could have been given.

5.3.2 Use of DASH

- 5.3.3 The review notes that the risk to Katie escalated over time, albeit in a relatively short time. The first DASH completed on 15th June 2016 was graded as low. The IMR author has reviewed this and considers it to be accurate, given the details of the incident and the answers given by Katie.

- 5.3.4 The next interaction that the police had with Katie was on 9th October 2016, when they were called by a neighbour to sounds of a woman shouting. The police acted appropriately and proactively in arresting Damian. However, the statement and DASH were not completed with Katie at the time when she was safe – when he was in custody. Probably, unsurprisingly, Katie did not feel able to engage with the police the next day. Furthermore, as there was not enough evidence for an evidence-led prosecution, he was released with bail conditions to safeguard Katie.

The DASH risk assessment was not completed after this incident, and although Katie declined to engage the assessment, this could have been completed by the officer. Had this been done, a risk assessment of low, medium, or high would have been generated, which would have indicated if the risk to Katie was increasing. Had the risk assessment been high, this would have led to a referral to MARAC at an earlier stage.

5.3.5 Use of bail conditions

5.3.6 The review considers that this was positive action by the police in placing bail conditions on Damian.

5.3.7 When Katie's mother was interviewed on 12th October, she disclosed information that officers identified as being a clear breach of Damian's bail conditions. Damian was immediately circulated as wanted for this breach. This indication of increased risk to Katie was clearly identified and acted upon. *This is an example of good practice.*

5.3.8 After the incident on 14th October, Katie agreed to support the police and gave a very extensive ABE interview. In undertaking an ABE interview, the police clearly identified that Katie was a high-risk victim. The CPS authorised a number of charges, and the custody sergeant refused bail and kept Damian in custody overnight for court the next morning, thereby safeguarding Katie. *This is an example of good practice.*

5.3.9 Damian attended Plymouth Magistrates Court on 10th October and pleaded guilty to both the assault charges. He was then released on court bail, with the same conditions as the police bail, and to attend court on 28th November 2016.

Damian had been given bail conditions by the police on 9th October, and he went straight out and breached these conditions. The review acknowledges a long-held presumption that people should be given bail unless there are compelling reasons not to. However, given his utter disregard for any restrictions placed on him, the review finds it difficult to understand why he was given further bail conditions. We do, of course, accept that the courts must make decisions on what is presented before them, and at this late stage, there is no record of the arguments that were made in favour of either remanding him in custody or releasing him on bail. We cannot, and do not, consider that the court made their decision in anything other than good faith.

Given that he had not complied with previous bail conditions, preventing him from entering the area where Katie lived and worked would not have guaranteed her safety: it would have provided an element of protection, but the bail conditions set, offered her little protection.

The significance of this is very clear to the review.

5.3.10 The review contacted the court to understand the rationale of this decision and any guidance that prevented him from being remanded in custody. The court was not able to comment on the judicial decision but did explain the legal principles that would have been applied:

- In accordance with the Bail Act 1976 and Article 5 of the Convention on Human Rights, courts are required to take a proportionate approach to bail, even after conviction. In this case, the court could only have remanded the defendant in custody if it had substantial grounds to believe that he would offend, that he would commit offences against an associated person (e.g., partner/previous partner), or for his own protection.

- Given the passage of time, it is impossible to confirm whether the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) made any comment about bail.
- The court will take into account antecedents – in this case, records reveal Damian had two previous convictions (possession of drugs and assault occasioning actual bodily harm). He had not been sentenced to custody previously and was 33 years old.

5.3.11 The police were asked by the review to confirm whether the CPS made a request for Damian to be remanded in custody. Following a review, the CPS confirmed that the MG7 (a request for remand in custody) was submitted to the court with the file.

Recommendation

It is recommended that work is done with magistrates to ensure that they are aware of the specific dangers of repeat domestic abuse and are thus fully informed and able to apply those dangers in relation to the Bail Act 1976.

5.3.12 MARAC

5.3.13 Following the incident on 14th October, the police referred Katie to MARAC. *This is an example of good practice.*

5.3.14 At the MARAC meeting on 1st November, Katie was listed for ‘mention only’. The rationale for this was that full safety planning had been undertaken, she was engaging well at the time, there were no children involved, and no breaches of bail conditions had been reported to date. It was noted that the relationship was over, and a police alarm was installed at the property. The case was discharged by MARAC at this meeting.

The review considers that by hearing this case ‘for mention only’, partnership safeguarding did not take place. The rationale given for listing it for mention only is clearly stated but, in the view of this review, was flawed. It shows a lack of understanding of the risk to victims of domestic abuse when they separate from their abusive partner.

Devon and Cornwall Police recognise that at the time of this matter, the practice of using a pre-MARAC meeting to mention referrals, rather than listing them for discussion at the full MARAC meeting, was common practice. However, this practice was removed following concerns raised by the MARAC Steering Group, and now all referrals go forward for discussion with all MARAC partners.

5.3.15 Monckton Smith states that: ‘the *biggest* trigger for an abusive man to commit fatal violence is separation or the threat of separation’²⁰. She goes on to cite the work of Evan Stark (2007) and Polk (1994), whose studies of estrangement and homicide routinely found a correlation²¹.

5.3.16 This view is shared by Horley, who also states that women are at the greatest risk of homicide at the point of separation²².

²⁰ Monckton Smith et al., Domestic Abuse, Homicide and Gender, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014

²¹ *ibid.*

²² Horley, Power and Control, Why charming men make dangerous lovers, Vermillion, 2017

- 5.3.17 This review believes that rather than relegating cases where the woman has left her partner to ‘for mention only’, MARAC should be *elevating* the cases for a prominent discussion. This short window was vital for safeguarding Katie but was also an opportunity to support her to *stay away* from Damian, having made that break. By having this case ‘for mention only’, this vital opportunity was missed.
- 5.3.18 SafeLives²³ sets out the four aims of MARAC. These are to:
- Safeguard victims of domestic abuse
 - Manage perpetrators’ behaviour
 - Safeguard professionals
 - Make links with all safeguarding processes.
- 5.3.19 By not holding a partnership discussion, these aims were not discussed. At that meeting, there would have been numerous ‘new sets of eyes’ and experts in the field; therefore, the meeting might have identified other ways in which to support Katie. This opportunity was lost.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Domestic Abuse Commissioner and/or the Home Office commissions independent, national research into the effectiveness of MARACs.

5.3.20 Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS) or Clare’s Law

- 5.3.21 The Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS), also known as ‘Clare’s Law’, enables the police to disclose information to a victim or potential victim of domestic abuse about their partner’s or ex-partner’s previous abusive or violent offending.
- 5.3.22 The author of the IMR from Devon and Cornwall Police sought clarification about whether the police were using the DVDS in 2016. The response from the Strategic Safeguarding Improvement Hub was as follows:

‘The Home Office Guidance that was issued in 2016 states that Clare’s Law was actually rolled out across UK in 2014 after a pilot, reviewed in 2015 and then the 2016 guidance formalised it with a standard process flowchart. The guidance is clear that all this did was to structure and standardise the existing Common Law power to disclose where it is necessary to prevent crime. So, the MARAC in 2016 would have been aware of Clare’s Law, even if they were not in possession of a formal process or flowchart. The Common Law powers for disclosure would still have been apparent and available to the MARAC as a safeguarding tactic.’

Had a formal discussion been held at MARAC, the review notes that the DVDS scheme would have been one of the options that was reasonable to expect MARAC to consider. That said, MARAC was not the only route for consideration of DVDS, and Devon and Cornwall Police did not need to wait for an instruction from MARAC to consider a disclosure to Katie.

²³ <https://safelives.org.uk/node/361>

5.3.23 Evidence-led prosecution

- 5.3.24 When a victim of domestic abuse is not able to support the police in the prosecution of their abuser, the police and the CPS should consider an evidence-led prosecution. This means that a case will not rely on the statement of the victim; rather, the court will be presented with the evidence that is available, such as CCTV, 999 calls, evidence of witnesses, and so on.
- 5.3.25 The review notes that in October 2016, an evidence-led prosecution was considered, but there was not enough evidence to proceed. *This is an example of good practice.*

Section Six – Lessons Identified

- 6.1 Delaying taking Katie's statement in October 2016, at the time of the incident, may have impacted on her ability to support the police investigation.
- 6.2 Whilst the completion of DASH risk assessments continues to improve, and it is clearly Force policy, there is still a need to remind officers of this policy.
- 6.3 It is vital for all practitioners to exercise professional curiosity in their interactions with those experiencing domestic abuse.
- 6.4 The fear that coercion and control places victims under cannot be underestimated, nor how this fear impacts upon the decisions that they make.
- 6.5 There is a need for greater understanding about the danger of separation when safeguarding a victim of domestic abuse.
- 6.6 There needs to be clarity for victims about ongoing legal processes. It appears in this case that Katie may have been told that Damian had pleaded not guilty and therefore she may be required to attend court, when in fact he had pleaded guilty at court. The prospect of attending court can be an overwhelmingly intimidating prospect for victims and can influence their desire to not continue with support for prosecutions.
- 6.7 The Bail Act 1976 failed to protect a high-risk victim from further contact from a known abuser.

Section Seven – Recommendations

7.1 Home Office and Domestic Abuse Commissioner

- 7.1.1 That the Domestic Abuse Commissioner and/or the Home Office commissions independent, national research into the effectiveness of MARACs.
- 7.1.2 That work is done with magistrates to ensure that they are aware of the specific dangers of repeat domestic abuse and are thus fully informed and able to apply those dangers in relation to the Bail Act 1976.
- 7.1.3 That the police service embraces the suggested changes into the investigation of unexplained deaths (Munroe 2022).

Section Eight – Conclusions

- 8.1 This has been an incredibly traumatic case to review.
- 8.2 How Katie came to have ingested the combination of illegal drugs that resulted in her death remains unclear.
- 8.3 What is clear is that the level of domestic abuse that she suffered at the hands of her partner, in the weeks and months prior to her death, was severe. She reported that abuse and made efforts to escape his attentions.
- 8.4 Agencies did work to protect Katie, including helping her with physical protection measures and support when she made those reports and whilst he was in custody. Despite those efforts, agencies were unable to prevent her death. This review has sought to understand why and what can be learned from it.
- 8.5 Unfortunately, despite Damian breaching bail on previous occasions, it is a fact that he was released from the court on further conditional bail after pleading guilty to assaults upon her.
- 8.6 Within days after that release, for reasons that will always remain unknown – but perhaps out of fear of being unable to escape him, and/or even out of feelings of love that Katie felt for him – Damian managed to get back into Katie's life. They died together shortly afterwards.

Appendix One – Terms of Reference

- 1.1 Katie died in November 2016. The cause of death for Katie was recorded by HM Coroner, as combined toxicity from cocaine and morphine use. The coroner added that the circumstances surrounding mechanism and intent remained unclear.
- 1.2 Although the coroner did not feel able to give any clear indication that domestic abuse directly contributed to Katie's death, Katie was a victim of domestic abuse. Given that Katie was a victim of domestic abuse, and the circumstances around her death, it has been decided that a review into the circumstances leading to Katie's death, particularly the domestic abuse suffered by Katie and the responses of agencies to it, needs to be undertaken.
- 1.3 In 2016, The Home Office published statutory guidance on Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs).
- 1.4 According to the guidance, the primary purpose of a DHR is to:

'establish what lessons are to be learned from the domestic homicide regarding the way in which local professionals and organisations work individually and together to safeguard victims;'
- 1.5 Although domestic abuse cannot be directly attributed to Katie's death, it certainly was an underlying factor in her relationship.
- 1.6 Thus, a Domestic Homicide Review – established under Section 9, Domestic Violence Crime and Victims Act 2004 – will be undertaken. The review will:
 - Examine the professional response to Katie and her partner's relationship, including the context of the violence and abuse within the relationship, through the experiences and observations of Katie, her friends, co-workers, and family, to establish opportunities for improvement.
 - Examine the history of Katie's partner's previous relationships to determine if repetitive behaviours existed and were known to agencies, and how this intelligence was managed at the time.
 - Analyse the effectiveness of the contact and engagement of individual agencies, and as a partnership, in an effort to identify appropriate solutions that can help future identification and signposting of victims to suitable support services.
 - Assess whether agencies had sufficient and robust procedures and protocols in place, which were understood and adhered to by all professionals.
 - Consider the effectiveness and safety of professional interventions and the co-ordinated response/management of high-risk domestic violence and abuse.
 - Look to identify learning within and between agencies.

- Identify where improvements to service responses, for all domestic violence and abuse victims, can be made – by developing a co-ordinated multi-agency approach to ensure that domestic abuse is identified and responded to effectively, at the earliest opportunity.
- Contribute to a better understanding of the nature of domestic violence and abuse, particularly regarding coercion and control.
- Determine how, and within what timescales, these lessons will be acted on, and what is expected to change as a result.
- Analyse the Scope of the Review from January 2014 until the point that Katie was found deceased. All organisations to use their professional judgement as to whether issues prior to January 2014 may be relevant to the review and thus revealed.

Appendix Two – Ongoing Professional Development of the Chair and Report Author

- 2.1 Christine has attended:
- AAFDA Information and Networking Event (November 2019)
 - Webinar by Dr Jane Monckton-Smith on the Homicide Timeline (June 2020)
 - Ensuring the Family Remains Integral to Your Reviews - Review Consulting (June 2020)
 - Domestic Abuse: Mental health, Trauma and Selfcare, Standing Together (July 2020)
 - Hidden Homicides, Dr Jane Monckton-Smith, AAFDA (November 2020)
 - Suicide and domestic abuse, Buckinghamshire DHR Learning Event (December 2020)
 - Attended Hearing Hidden Voices: Older victims of domestic abuse, University of Edinburgh (February 2021)
 - Domestic Abuse Related Suicide and Best Practice in Suicide DHRs, AAFDA (April 2021)
 - Post-separation Abuse, Lundy Bancroft, SUTDA (April 2021)
 - Ensuring family and friends are integral to DHRs, AAFDA (May 2021)
 - Learning the Lessons: Non-Homicide Domestic Abuse Related Deaths, Standing Together (June 2021)
 - Suspicious Deaths and Stalking, Professor Jane Monckton-Smith, Alice Ruggles Trust Lecture (April 2021)
 - Reviewing domestic abuse related suicides and unexplained deaths, AAFDA (May 2021)
 - Young people and stalking: Reflections and Focus, Dr Rachel Wheatley, Alice Ruggles Trust Lecture (May 2021)
 - Giving children a voice in DHRs – AAFDA (November 2021)
 - Cross Cultural Training Webinar – Incels and Online Hate – HOPE Training (November 2021)
 - Male victims of domestic abuse, Buckinghamshire DHR Learning Event (January 2022)
 - Older victims of domestic abuse, Dr Hannah Bows, DHR Network (February 2022)
 - Enhancing the cancer workforce response to domestic abuse – Standing Together and Macmillan (April 2022)
 - Understanding Trauma – Delivered by Nikki Dhillon Keane (September 2022).
- 2.2 Christine has completed the Homicide Timeline Online Training (Five Modules), led by Professor Jane Monckton-Smith of University of Gloucester.
- 2.3 Gary and Christine have:
- Attended training on the statutory guidance update (May 2016)
 - Undertaken Home Office approved training (April/May 2017)
 - Attended Conference on Coercion and Control (Bristol, June 2018)
 - Attended AAFDA Learning Event (Bradford, September 2018)
 - Attended AAFDA Annual Conference (March 2017, 2018 and 2019)
 - Attended Mental Health and Domestic Homicides: A Qualitative Analysis, Standing Together (May 2021)
 - Attended AAFDA DHR Chair Refresher Training (August 2021)
 - Commissioned bespoke training on DHRs and Suicide, Harmless (March 2022)
 - Attended Strangulation and Suffocation: Introduction to the new offence for England and Wales, Training Institute of Strangulation Prevention (July 2022).