

# Cityforum: UK crime professionals report that almost all Domestic Abuse now involves Technology

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, December 11, 2023

/EINPresswire.com/ -- On 6th December [Cityforum](#), leaders

in policy analysis and public debate, hosted an event for more than a hundred senior stakeholders and professionals from the public and private sectors, to consider the issue of violence against women and girls, which now affects one in four women, with a sharp rise since



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*Marc Lee, Founder and Chairman of Cityforum*

the pandemic. Speakers and attendees included police forces, national and regional government, representative bodies, charities and the private sector. The event was sponsored by Forensic Analytics, Kulpa and [Parfitt Cresswell](#) and hosted by IBM in London.

Many speakers highlighted that all, or almost all, abuse is now being facilitated by modern technology. This included:

- Technology in the home (including in-home security cameras and smart devices) being exclusively controlled by abusers to keep control of their victim, with the victim having no access.
- Smartly controlled medical devices being tampered with (in one case a glucose pump had the dose altered).
- Online abuse and threat.
- Tracking devices being used to stalk women.

Parfitt Cresswell's family lawyer, Eve Geere spoke about the issue from a lawyer's perspective and shared the view of many attendees, that one of the most challenging aspects of fighting abuse is securing evidence; "In many cases, due to confidentiality, the police and social services will demand a court order before they release evidence." This requirement increases the time and cost of protecting the victim and bringing the abuser to justice.

In addition to some truly harrowing recordings of abuse the police played to illustrate their challenges, attendees also heard some encouraging tales of good practice. Joined up police work in some forces is resulting in increased detection of abuse and longer sentences for abusers. The

Chair of City of London Crime Prevention Association shared information about a series of initiatives including 'Safe Havens' that have helped hundreds of women.

There was agreement that the private sector has a key role to play, particularly in anticipating how their technology can be used for abuse. However, there were also presentations from private sector initiatives that are more proactively addressing the problem.

Lawyers Parfitt Cresswell, charities and others, reported that many victims don't realise that they're being abused, so more needs to be done to educate people on what is 'normal' and acceptable behaviour and what should cause concern. This needs to start with children. The Hollie Gazzard Trust and the Suzy Lamplugh Trust, both born out of tragedy, spoke about the work that they're doing in this area. Nick Gazzard, Hollie's father, spoke movingly of his commitment to help women understand abuse before tragedy strikes (Hollie was murdered by her ex-boyfriend following an abusive relationship).



Marc Lee - Founder and Chairman of Cityforum

Lady Mayoress of the City of London said: "I was very pleased to be asked to attend the opening session of the Cityforum round table on Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). It was concerning to hear about how technology is being used to facilitate abuse. I think it is crucial that people are educated on domestic violence and coercive control, so that everyone is able to recognise the signs and call out unacceptable behaviour.

"I am committed to this cause, and I will use my year as Lady Mayoress to support Prevent VAWG and to shine a spotlight on this critical issue."

Founder and Chairman of Cityforum Marc Lee said, "Violence Against Women and Girls is a theme that spans many policy areas. It is proving to be a complex problem for government, the criminal justice system, the police and the whole of society. Bringing together the disparate bodies resulted in a fascinating event that gave us all a lot to think about. I'm grateful to all the speakers and to our sponsors who helped make it happen. We look forward to working with Lady Mayoress Elisabeth Mainelli and her City Crime Prevention advisers, particularly Don Randall and Ian Dyson on a forum in 2024 that will make specific proposals of potential significance for prevention of VAWG in an election year."

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