

**AGM, April 2012**

*Royal Beach Hotel, Portsmouth*

**Speech given by Aurora's MARAC & probation IDVA.**



I am the MARAC and probation IDVA at Aurora.

I joined frontline services in September with Aurora and I would like to speak a little today about the part of my role linked to probation.

This project is believed to be the first of its kind in the country and it is based on the theory that there is a huge amount of domestic abuse being experienced by offenders-particularly female offenders, which is hidden under many other issues including Substance misuse and offending behaviour.

Domestic abuse can also be seen as a causative factor in the offending behaviour.

I find that in reflecting on the success of the project to date I believe it to be due to linking into an existing relationship built by the Offender manager, and to the opportunity to be able to link in with the clients through existing appointments.

One of the major factors of working in this field has been their willingness to work in often in very innovative ways to be able to link in with clients.

In one case where I am working with the survivor, it has been incredibly valuable to be able to link in with the offender manager to ascertain the perpetrators state of mind and potential risks to his ex-partner.

In this particular case there is a high level of stalking and obsessional behaviour, which is great to feel, is being managed and monitored from both sides.

Another benefit of working with the probation service is that it can give an opportunity to meet with clients that otherwise are not able to meet up with services or access services due to the level of control in the relationship.

For some clients this is the only place that they are able to go alone and is therefore a safe place to meet.

I believe the major success of the project which within its first four months had a 100% take up rate from clients has been down to the existing relationship and being able to link in and build on that relationship and also down to how the service is offered to clients.

I had no idea how the project would go when I started in September but I am thrilled to say that it is one relationship which has been very successful. In fact they have even given me a key!

The role of an IDVA is frustrating, exciting, busy and more than anything an incredible privilege to work with some of the most amazing people I have ever met

and I would like to say thank you to them for their courage and faith in using the service and for allowing me to be a small part of their story.