Some researchers have long championed Children’s rights in the field
Government’s VAWG strategy now recognises young people as victims as a distinct issue
Government’s Domestic Abuse Bill (2019) commits to better addressing young people’s needs alongside improvements for children (NB falls short recognising ‘independent agency’ though calls continue to progress this research, policy & practice agenda
These steps can & should be embedded within a strategy to identify companion animals to victims as those given independent agency.

Impact?


Di Turgoose & Ruth McKie
Institute for Research in Criminology, Community, Education & Social Justice

Power & Control Wheel (Pence & Paymer, 1993). The original wheel identified a set of behaviours adopted by abusive partners in order to maintain control & power

Behaviours include:
1) Coercion & Threats
2) Intimidation
3) Emotional Abuse
4) Isolation
5) Using children
6) Economic Abuse
7) Male Privilege
8) Minimising, denying harm, blaming

Our interpretation builds on this

Anthropocentrism vs Speciesism and towards an animal and human symmetry approach
➢ One way to shift the focus to include animals in the same way as children is to consider a broader ontological debate on anthropocentrism & speciesism
➢ An anthropocentric perspective of companion animals has provided some developments towards their protection e.g. pet fostering to victims seeking to escape/flee
➢ This is aligned with a hierarchal concept of specism placing humans at the top of a policy agenda comparative to non-human species A speciesist perspective emphasises the rights of animals to independent agency in the same way as humans. Translates into policy & criminal law regarding the treatment of animals as victims of animal cruelty. These services already exist e.g. animal organisations taking responsibility for prosecutions of animal cruelty.
➢ We contend that the treatment of companion animals/pets should – not unlike the developments regarding children as victims of DVA – be incorporated into the same approach to developing & tackling strategies to address DVA.