

Karen Becomes Safer in Her Own Home

Kiaora, my name is Karen and I am a survivor of Family Violence. I was in an obsessed relationship; I do not want to go into full detail, because I still find it difficult to talk about. But one instance just six weeks into the relationship he came around with my name tattooed on his neck; that was the first warning bells for me. Then he proposed to me and wanted to get married on the 9th November, which is my birthday. Away he went again and came back with 9/11 Tattooed on the other side, then again another tattoo next to that with 2013.

I knew I had to get out of this, so I said I did not want to get married this year as it was too soon. I knew I had to be very careful how I said things to him. Well that's when everything changed. His whole face changed; he looked like a different person and he became ugly. I acted fast - I wanted out!!!

I went to the Police they served a Police Safety Order and Trespass Order on him. This DID NOT STOP him. I went into Aviva's Safe House for a week and in this time got a Protection Order. It was granted in less than two hours. Police installed a Panic Alarm in my house. The night I came out of the Safe House, I had to use that alarm. I had seen him at the back of my house within 15 minutes of being home. The time was 9 o'clock, and it was dark. He was dressed all black from head to toe. It took Police 8 minutes to arrive, which seemed like 8 hours; I really thought my time was up, as he had told his friends that if he cannot have me, he will stab me then stab himself. I truly believe he'd do this as he had nothing to lose. He had spent most of his life in jail and kept saying he will never go back to jail. It was the longest 8 minutes of my life.

The next day I had a lovely phone call from Carol Brown (Aviva's Shine safe@home co-ordinator); she came into my house and assessed my home. I got window stays on all the windows, she made my bathroom a safe room, and put a bolt on the internal access to the garage, plus a rod for the sliding door.

Dave (the builder Aviva uses) rung me and we set up a time for him to come around. Dave came into my house and I could not have asked for anyone more professional. He rung me up a few times before he came and assured me he did not want to know what's happened, but his goal was to make my home safe and secure.

Prior to all this getting done they also decided to put in security lighting at the back of my house, where I had seen him crouched down by my bathroom window. That was the first night, after many sleepless nights, that I was able to sleep knowing my house was safe and secure. I truly believe if I did not have the support from the Police Safety Team, Stuart and Warrick, and Aviva Shine safe@home to have my home truly secured I would not be here today. From the bottom of the heart I would like to thank Carol for her awesome work and acting as quick as she did, and also to Dave for making my home a Safe Home.