

Community Awards 2017

Shortlisted projects

Restorative Approaches category

Restorative Gloucestershire – Restorative Gloucestershire

Restorative Gloucestershire is committed to promoting the use of restorative practices through facilitation, advice and by supporting others to use and develop restorative skills. Restorative Gloucestershire is a group of statutory, non-statutory and voluntary sector partners that have joined with the aim of offering all people who come into contact with the criminal justice system or who come into conflict in the community an opportunity to participate in a restorative intervention.

The Skill Mill – The Skill Mill

The primary objective of The Skill Mill is to reduce re-offending whilst giving participants real work experience and provide skills to help them gain further employment in the future. It is a not-for-profit social enterprise set up in Newcastle, in 2013 and now operating in Leeds (2015), Liverpool (2016), Durham and North Yorkshire (2017). 8 further Skill Mill teams are proposed for 2018.

The Skill Mill requires cooperation between local and central government, the private sector and VCS organisations to provide job opportunities for NEET young people aged 16 - 24, targeting those with more prolific criminal histories and in particular those who have served prison sentences.

Through an employment contract with the Skill Mill, the young people are given the opportunity of a paid job and offered training in environmental maintenance work including, small-scale landscaping works, horticultural services and general tidying of public spaces. The work is fully supervised by a competent Team Leader typically seconded from the Youth Offending Service.

Every young person who completes six month's employment with The Skill Mill is then offered a 'next step' job with one of the partners of the programme or transition into the wider labour market.

Restorative Justice Team, Lancashire – Lancashire Constabulary

Restorative Justice in Lancashire is provided by a team of nine staff from Lancashire Constabulary, the team are also supported by around 100 volunteers. The aim of the

team is to further increase the use of RJ and restorative approaches across Lancashire and divert offenders from the criminal justice system.

The team receive referrals from a number of sources, including: Police Officers, Community Partners, The National Probation Service, Victim Services, The Victim Awareness Course (run by the team in the North West Prisons).

RJ can be used as an out of court crime disposal; therefore, when officers attend incidents and crimes, they can deal with them via RJ if applicable. The team also receive referrals for RJ post-conviction, the main source for these being our victim awareness course. The team are also trained in Mediation, which can be used to prevent escalation when both parties involved appear to be 'at fault'.

Over the last 12 months, they have worked with approximately 600 clients. This is both a combination of offenders and victims that have been involved with a restorative approach. In addition to this, they have also facilitated the Victim Awareness Course for 103 prisoners.

Birmingham Restorative Justice - West Midlands Police

West Midlands Police in collaboration with Pioneer housing group have been working together to deliver Restorative Justice for crime and anti-social behaviour in order to reduce repeat re-offending and offer intervention and prevention with those families and individuals where no other solution has worked. RJ team works with other agencies to offer a wraparound support service to ensure that long term problem solving is at the heart of Restorative Justice.

Since its inception in 2015 the RJ team has had around 1500 cases referred with over 400 conferences conducted.

Academic evaluation was conducted by Birmingham City University which showed almost 90% victim satisfaction for both parties. This is around 23% higher when compared to a traditional method of criminal justice which doesn't use RJ. The housing partner had no calls for service after the RJ was conducted and for WMP there was a 79% reduction. The length of investigation is significantly reduced from an average of 4-6 months down to 21 days for an RJ.

The RJ team is focused on preventing people from entering the criminal justice system and is scoping new partnerships regularly to enable signposting to bespoke services which will give people a second chance and reflect back on their decision making for the future thus changing lives.