



Restorative justice in custodial settings

Information pack

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“This information pack is a useful guide on restorative justice for all prisons. Restorative justice is one of many areas where the co-operation and dedication of NOMS staff provides significant and often life-changing support to victims of crime. We thank staff who continue to make this possible by supporting victim-offender conferencing.”

Ian Porée, Director of Commissioning and Contract Management, National Offender Management Service (NOMS)

“This information pack provides much needed practical advice about how to facilitate restorative justice in prison. The basis of restorative justice is that harming someone creates a personal obligation to make amends. Applying restorative principles to practice within prisons can create a culture in which people understand how their behaviour affects everyone in the prison community, and where mutual respect ensures that people can live free of violence and fear. As the examples in this pack from HMP Parc and Khulisa show, managers can make use of restorative justice in running prisons to enhance rehabilitation and make them safer, more constructive places to live.”

Juliet Lyon CBE, Director,
Prison Reform Trust

About the Restorative Justice Council

The Restorative Justice Council (RJC) is the independent third sector membership body for the field of restorative practice. It provides quality assurance and a national voice advocating the widespread use of all forms of restorative practice, including restorative justice. The RJC’s vision is of a restorative society where everyone has access to safe, high quality restorative practice wherever and whenever it is needed.

Introduction

This information pack is aimed at governors of prisons, young offender institutions (YOIs) and other custodial establishments involved in restorative justice.

It will help prisons and YOIs to deliver high quality restorative justice and to create a supportive environment to enable external partner organisations to deliver restorative justice inside custodial settings.

Restorative justice is an effective response to crime that reduces reoffending while also helping victims to recover. It holds offenders to account for what they have done and enables them to take responsibility and make amends for the damage that they have caused. It provides them with an opportunity to learn from their actions and reintegrate into the society that they have harmed.

As the Secretary of State for Justice, Michael Gove, said in a speech in autumn 2015: “Committing an offence should not mean that society sees you as an offender. That means we deny individuals the chance to improve their lives...and give back to their communities.” Restorative justice offers offenders this chance. It also empowers victims and communities by giving them an opportunity to communicate with their offender to explain the real impact of the crime.

In recent years, the use of restorative justice has been growing. Legislation has been passed to enable pre-sentence restorative justice to take place and to specify that restorative justice can be used as part of a community sentence. The Ministry of Justice has also provided funding to Police and Crime Commissioners for victim-initiated restorative justice. The current NOMS Commissioning Intentions (2014) states that prisons should

invest in restorative justice in order to reduce reoffending.

The Restorative Justice Council (RJC) is the independent third sector membership body for the field of restorative justice and our role, with the support of the Ministry of Justice, is to increase the availability of high quality restorative justice. This information pack, produced as part of this work, is intended to support prisons to make restorative justice more widely available.

The pack outlines two potential delivery models that prisons may adopt – developing restorative justice capacity within the prison and creating a supportive environment in the prison to enable external agencies to deliver restorative justice. It also covers frequently asked questions on restorative justice in prison and includes articles on how partnership working with external providers works in practice.

As restorative justice continues to expand across the criminal justice arena, we would like to work closely with all custodial establishments and providers to ensure the benefits of restorative justice are realised by all parties involved in crime.

Jon Collins
Chief Executive Officer
Restorative Justice Council



“Taking part in restorative justice is challenging, certainly, but it can have a hugely positive effect on people’s lives and we’re very proud to be able to offer it.”

HMP Leeds, Restorative Service Quality Mark holder

Victims say:

“When you meet somebody and they say: ‘I did it and I’m sorry’... it’s quite a cathartic thing. It’s therapeutic for the victim. It gives you closure. People are never the way you imagine them to be.”

“For me, restorative justice turned the tables and I don’t feel like a victim any more. I’m in control now.”

“I didn’t realise how much guilt I’d been carrying around with me, until I met my victim and apologised. And then I felt so much lighter.”

“Going to prison, that’s just running away and getting away from it all. But to actually go into a room and sit down knowing that they’re going to walk through that door in a few minutes’ time and want to know why you stole from them – that’s scary for me. Every time, it kind of broke me, but it made me as well.”

“I was always scared stiff before every meeting. But then after every meeting, I came out as happy as anything. I felt like I’d got a chance to explain my situation.”

“That [restorative justice] was my turning point. When I realised what effect my crimes had on other people, I felt ashamed and embarrassed.”

Offenders say:

£1/£8

For every £1 spent on bringing victims and offenders face to face £8 is saved in lowering the cost of reoffending.

14%

Restorative justice reduces the frequency of reoffending by 14%.

85%

85% of crime victims who have been through restorative justice were satisfied with the process.

80%

80% of offenders who have met their victims face to face were satisfied with the process.

78%

78% of victims would recommend restorative justice to others.

Current landscape

Legislation on restorative justice

Recent developments in legislation, along with a growth in public support for restorative justice and a focus on rehabilitation are all likely to lead to an increase in demand for restorative justice. Prisons will be required to provide this service either directly or in partnership with external agencies.

The **Crime and Courts Act (2013)** introduced pre-sentence restorative justice, providing opportunities for offenders on remand to take part in the process.

The **Offender Rehabilitation Act (2014)** broadened the use of the Through the Prison Gate resettlement model so that it is now used for virtually all prisoners on release from custody. The requirement for statutory supervision of prisoners who have served a sentence under 12 months means more offenders can be assessed for restorative justice suitability. This is a significant opportunity to broaden the use of restorative justice.

The Code of Practice for Victims of Crime (2015)

Also referred to as the Victims Code, this was amended in October 2015 to be brought in line with the requirements set out by the EU 'Victim's Directive'. It entitles victims of adult offenders to receive information on restorative justice, including how they could take part.

It also entitles victims of young offenders to be offered the chance to participate in restorative justice where available and appropriate.

The Code sets out requirements that service providers must meet. Where a service provider funds or commissions an external organisation to deliver restorative justice services on their behalf, they must ensure the organisation meets the requirements set out by the Code.

As the prison service delivers, funds and/or commissions restorative justice, they must - among other things - provide victims with full and impartial information on restorative justice and how they can take part, confirm the offender has acknowledged the basic facts of the case and is willing to participate, and put in place appropriate safeguards to ensure quality delivery.



NOMS Commissioning Intentions (2014)

NOMS Commissioning Intentions recommends investment in the use of restorative justice for offenders with both a medium and high risk of reoffending. The document recommends that prisons: "Deliver victim-offender conferences (restorative justice) where capacity exists and develop partnerships and a supportive environment to enable delivery where it does not."

NOMS Commissioning Intentions makes it clear that services should focus on face to face conferences.

NOMS Restorative Justice Capacity Building Programme (2012–2014)

Initiatives to support provision and build capacity within custodial settings came in the form of the NOMS Restorative Justice Capacity Building Programme which began in June 2012. The aim of the project was to build capacity in probation and prisons to deliver victim-offender conferences. The programme enabled 153 conferences to take place and involved more than 300 victims and offenders across 23 sites.

The Capacity Building Programme, evaluated by the Institute for Criminal Policy Research (ICPR) in March 2015, demonstrated that restorative justice can be a genuinely transformational experience. The evaluation noted that: "[for] restorative justice to become more fully embedded, there is a need

to achieve a cultural shift in favour of restorative principles, through positive leadership at every level.” Fewer restorative justice conferences resulted from the programme than was hoped due to the large-scale organisational changes to the prison and probation service, including the Transforming Rehabilitation programme, which took place during the Capacity Building Programme.

Better Outcomes through Victim-Offender Conferencing (Restorative justice) (2012)

In 2012, the NOMS Commissioning Strategies Group recommended the use of face to face restorative justice, stating that: “If effectively delivered and targeted, restorative justice activity can result in improved victim satisfaction and reduced reoffending.”

Wait ‘til eight publication (2013)

The Wait ‘til eight document was produced in 2013 by Thames Valley Partnership in collaboration with

Restorative Solutions and funded through the NOMS Restorative Justice Capacity Building Programme. It provides guidance and advice on how to implement restorative justice within the work of your service, and includes a checklist outlining the key tasks a service needs to complete to introduce restorative justice.

Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (2015)

These revised Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, also referred to as the Mandela Rules, includes Rule 38, which states that prison administrations are encouraged to use, to the extent possible, conflict prevention, mediation or any other alternative dispute resolution mechanism to prevent disciplinary offences or to resolve conflicts.

While this is a welcome development, this should be backed up by training prisoners and staff in restorative methods and values.



Frequently asked questions – restorative justice in custodial settings

1. How can restorative justice be used in a custodial setting?

Restorative justice can take place at any stage of the criminal justice process, including within a custodial setting. It can take place following a guilty plea where the sentencer defers or adjourns sentencing to enable restorative justice to take place pre-sentence or alongside an offender's sentence. There are two delivery models – prisons can set up their own dedicated restorative justice service by training staff members to facilitate or they can provide a supportive environment for external providers to deliver.

Processes can also be facilitated by external agencies, such as probation or youth offending services or voluntary sector agencies.

2. What forms can restorative justice take in a custodial setting?

Restorative justice activities can take many forms. These include:

- A victim-offender conference – This involves a formal face to face meeting between victim and offender, led by a trained facilitator. Supporters for both parties can also attend, usually family members.
- A community conference – This is similar to a victim-offender conference but involves members of the community who have been affected by a crime.
- Indirect communication – Sometimes referred to as shuttle restorative justice, this involves messages being passed back and forth between victim and offender by a trained facilitator. The participants do not meet and messages can be passed via letter, video or audio recording.

3. Can restorative justice be used to deal with conflict within a custodial setting?

a Can it resolve conflict between prisoners?

Yes, restorative justice can be used within prisons and YOIs to help to deal with incidents between prisoners. This could be a formal restorative justice meeting after a serious incident such as an assault.

It could also take place more informally to deal with low-level conflict which can arise between prisoners on a day to day basis.

b Can it resolve conflict between prisoners and staff?

Yes, a restorative approach can be used to deal with conflicts between inmates and staff. This can include formal restorative justice taking place when prisoners have assaulted or harmed members of prison staff. It can also include the use of restorative practice to deal with situations in which inmates have made legitimate complaints about staff behaviour. This might take place alongside or instead of other disciplinary actions.

4. What training do prison and YOI staff need to use restorative justice?

Training in restorative justice is the bedrock of quality practice, particularly for practitioners who facilitate face to face meetings. All staff members who facilitate conferences and enable indirect communication between victims and offender should undertake facilitator training. Workers not directly involved in facilitating formal restorative justice activities can also benefit from training in restorative practice.

Different levels of training are available including training for managers and introductory training for workers who will not facilitate restorative justice conferences. This can allow them to see the benefits of a restorative approach and give them the ability to use restorative approaches in their work.

The RJC has an online Trainers Register which lists providers who have signed up to the RJC's Code of Practice for Trainers and Training Organisations. To find a trainer please visit www.restorativejustice.org.uk/trainers-register.

Experienced facilitators may want to consider becoming accredited by the RJC, which provides them with the opportunity to demonstrate through independent assessment that they are meeting national standards. For more information please visit www.restorativejustice.org.uk/practitioner-accreditation.

Jason's story

Jason was convicted of possession of a firearm and armed robbery and sentenced to five years at HMP & YOI Feltham. During his sentence he met the victims of his crime in a restorative justice conference. Here, Jason explains how restorative justice helped him to understand the impact of his crime and move on with his life after prison.

When I was young my dad was away a lot and I didn't see him much. I was a good footballer, and I'd been signed to Millwall Football Club but I was released from my contract when I was 15. It was a hard time for me. I had school, I was doing trials for new football clubs and I had two little sisters who I felt I had to provide for.

When I moved to a new area I started talking to some older boys who lived near me. One day one of them – Darren – offered to drive me to my football training. He started giving me lifts regularly, and I thought I'd made a friend.

One day as Darren drove me home he said: 'How would you like to make some money?' I was interested and asked him what would be involved – he told me he bought and sold jewellery. About two weeks later he phoned me and asked if I was still interested. I said I was, and he turned up in his car with a girl I didn't know. He said we were going to go to see a couple who were selling a ring.

We pulled up outside a house. Darren told me he would stay outside and that I should negotiate with the couple selling the ring, then say that I was making a phone call and go outside to speak to him about the price. Me and the girl went into the house – Darren told us to pretend to be married.

The couple gave us a price and I started negotiating. When I went outside, Darren was standing there and he had put a long jacket on. I told him the price and he said: 'We're going to have to rob it.' I said I wasn't going to do that but he just kept saying: 'Yes you are. You're going to rob it.'

Darren pulled a gun out of his jacket, put his arm around me and pushed the gun into my hand. He told me the gun wasn't real and said: 'You're going to take this and go and get the ring. You don't have to do anything, just make them scared.' I said I didn't want to do it but he just told me I was going to do it and he pushed me back into the house and followed me in.

The couple just froze when they saw me come back in with a gun and someone they hadn't seen before. Darren had put a hood over his face and they were obviously shocked. I had the gun in my hand but it was down at my side. As soon as we entered the room, the girl we had come with picked up the ring and ran out of the house with Darren. As they left, they locked the door and I realised I was trapped.

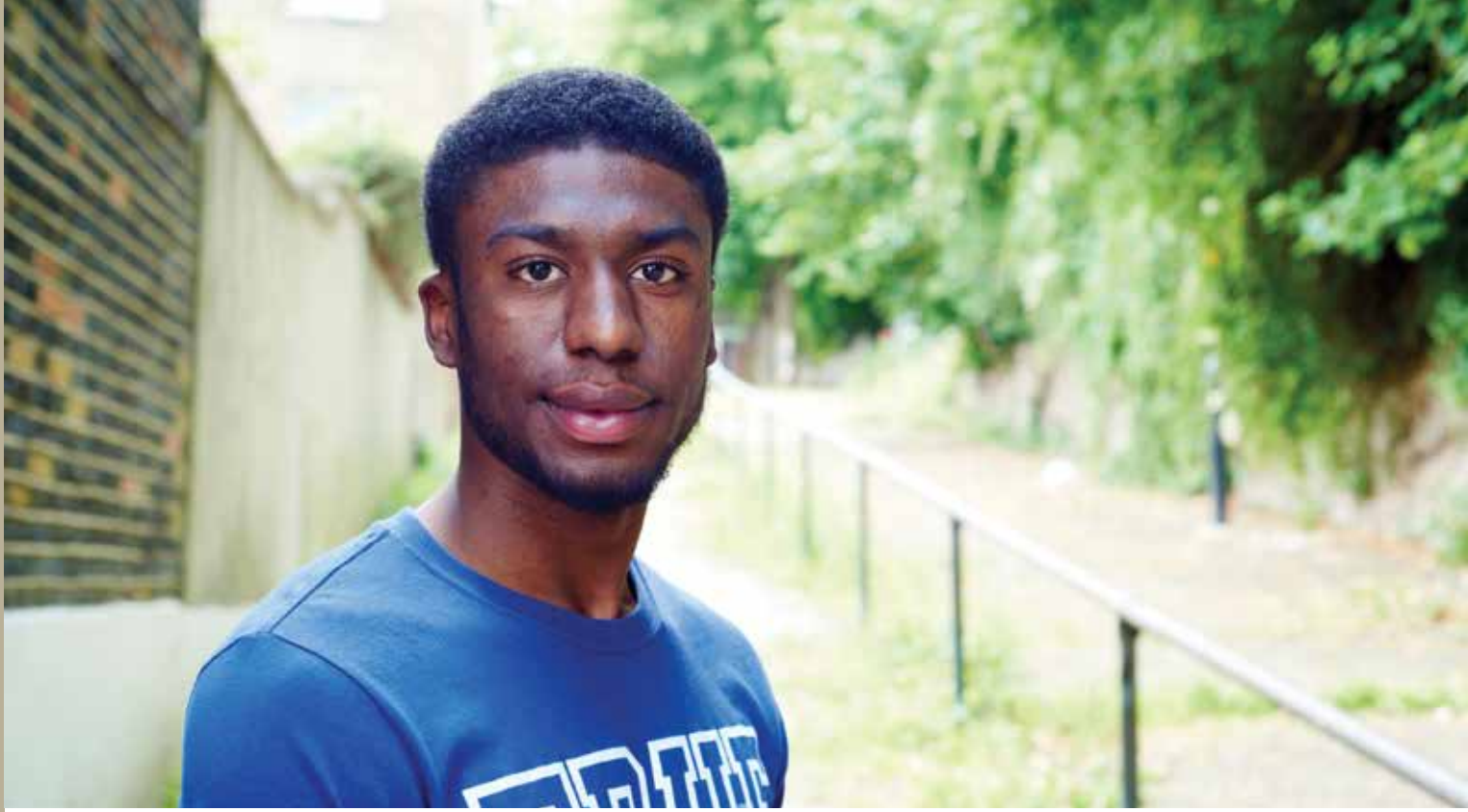
The couple were pleading with me and I was trying to talk to them and answer their questions but I still had the gun in my hand. Every time they made a movement, I lifted the gun. I knew it wasn't real, but I was scared. I was in their house and I didn't know what to do.

Suddenly something clicked in my head and I knew I had to get out. I got as far as the street but someone apprehended me. I lay on the floor and told them I wasn't fighting, and they called the police. It was the first time I'd been arrested, I'd never even been in a police station. That's the most shocking thing about the situation – I went straight in at the deep end. I was scared and I didn't know what to do. All I could think of was how my mum would react.

I received a five-year sentence, reduced from 10 because I admitted guilt and because of my age. I tried to make the best of my time in prison. I did a football coaching course and I also started to take part in a mentoring scheme for new prisoners.



Jason explaining the impact of restorative justice during his sentence. Produced by Scriberia at the RJC's event on disproportionality, 16 March 2015.



Two officers at Feltham told me about restorative justice after I'd been in there for about eight months. At my trial I'd had a number of character references from my football coach and my teacher. My victims had heard this and they said that the person they had seen at their house was totally different from the person they heard about through these references. They also said they had seen the remorse on my face during the trial and wanted to meet me.

I felt like I'd been carrying a weight on my shoulders since the crime – I couldn't be at ease without apologising to those people face to face and explaining what had led me to do what I did. They saw me as someone I wasn't and I wanted to relieve myself of that stress, that burden I was carrying.

Before the conference, the facilitator talked me through the process explaining that he would ask questions of me and the victims and we would be given the opportunity to ask each other questions. The facilitator made sure everyone got a chance to have their say and that everyone could see each other's point of view.

The conference was really emotional – I cried and so did my victims. I apologised many times and I also explained honestly what had happened and how I had got into the situation. They told me how their family had become scared in their own home, and I realised that one moment of me not thinking straight had changed their lives. Talking to them made me think about how I would feel if that had happened to me or my family. It really affected me – I saw the knock-on effects of my actions, not just on my victims but on their family as well.

I thought they might be angry but they were really sympathetic. My brother was there for support and he explained how it had been hard for my family without me at home. That made me think about the effect I'd had on my own family. My mum was coming to see me every week and it was draining for her to see me in that situation.

I was filled with remorse and sorrow. I'm not someone who expresses emotion easily but during the conference I did, and it was a relief. Out of the whole process, the thing that had the most impact was when my victims said they would forgive me for the crime I'd committed. That's when I felt that burden – that weight – lift from my shoulders. I didn't go into the conference expecting forgiveness and that was the part that really brought me to tears.

Towards the end of the conference we all spoke really freely. No one held back and the mood really lightened. I think we all got clarity and closure over the situation. We didn't come to an outcome agreement at the meeting but I did speak to the facilitator afterwards and offered to save some money when I was released and pay for my victims to go on holiday.

Since being released I've started studying for my BTEC extended diploma in sport. I've also picked up my football career and have been signed by Bromley Football Club. It's going really well, and the under 19s who I play for won our conference league.

Everyone has the ability to change and restorative justice is a way of helping people to move on with their lives.

The RJC would like to thank Jason for sharing his story with us.

Providing a supportive environment for restorative justice in prisons

While prisons can deliver restorative justice themselves, they may need help from outside agencies. NOMS, in partnership with Restorative Solutions CIC, has created guidance to help prisons provide a supportive environment for external providers. In this article, Edward Gretton, the programme manager for the NOMS Restorative Justice Capacity Building Programme, summarises the key points.

Many prisons want to make restorative justice available for their inmates and their inmates' victims. They see it as contributing to reducing reoffending and as an opportunity to help improve victims' recovery from their experience. If prisons do not have the resources to do it themselves, there is a lot they can do to make it happen. Partner agencies can assess and prepare inmates and deliver restorative justice inside the prison.

Three key words – **leadership, partnership, communication.**

First, the governor needs to identify a **strategic lead** who will provide vision and direction for restorative justice within the prison and lead on the development of partnerships. NOMS has written this role into the head of reducing reoffending's job description. Although prisons are hierarchical places, our experience in the NOMS Restorative Justice Capacity Building Programme is that leadership in restorative justice also comes from officers on the wings – people who are passionate about, and skilled in, restorative justice. Part of the challenge to senior managers is to recognise and encourage that leadership.

Prisons need to build and maintain effective **partnerships**. The nature of these will vary according to a range of local factors, and continuing changes in government policy. Key players will include the office of the local Police and Crime Commissioner – which

is funded to support victims with an expectation that this will include support for restorative justice – and the local police force, which will have its own approach to restorative justice and will be crucial in making victim contact details available. Additionally, the National Probation Service, Community Rehabilitation Companies and local independent restorative justice service providers have a significant role to play.

A restorative justice case may be initiated in a number of ways, from within the prison or through a partner agency. The key is to work with partners to build a set of relationships, information protocols and process maps that enable a swift and coherent response.

The prison needs to be good at **communication** – internal as well as external. All staff need to be aware of the prison's commitment to restorative justice and there will be personnel who can make the experience for victims coming to conferences as stress-free as possible – for example, gate staff. Wing staff will be involved in preparing prisoners before a conference and supporting them afterwards. Chaplaincy, offender supervisors, peer listeners and other peer workers should have an understanding of what restorative justice is and what it needs in order to thrive. One way of doing this is through short, tailored, training or awareness events.

Staff should be aware, too, of partners' and providers' needs – for example access to the offender, the time pressures they may be under, help navigating the system and not moving an inmate without warning. The prison needs to identify a single point of contact for communication with partners and other agencies and individuals involved.

A successful conference creates a buzz in a prison among both staff and inmates, and there's some evidence that awareness of the effectiveness of victim offender conferences can have an impact on the management of conflict within the prison itself.

Restorative Justice in Prisons; Guide to Providing a Supportive Environment can be found on the NOMS intranet or at: www.restorativeforum.org.uk/articles/712-prison-guide-2015.

Restorative justice in prisons – a facilitator’s view

Charlotte Calkin is an experienced restorative justice facilitator and Accredited Practitioner with the RJC. She began her career in restorative justice at HMP Gloucester and has continued to work in a number of prisons across the country facilitating conferences between victims and offenders. In this article, Charlotte shares her experience of running restorative justice conferences in a custodial setting.

Restorative justice works – it benefits both victims and offenders. The stage at which the conference takes place, however, is crucial and it is often necessary to hold the restorative meeting while the offender is still in prison. Sometimes, the meeting is arranged because the offender is nearing the end of their sentence and the victim is anxious about release and needs questions answered. In this case, it can be reassuring for the victim to hold the meeting while the offender is still in prison. Alternatively, a meeting may take place in prison if the offender has received a lengthy sentence and it may not be appropriate to expect the victim to wait until release to get their questions answered.

Holding restorative justice meetings in prison has, on the whole, proven to be a straightforward experience. I have encountered occasional resistance from establishments, largely when prisons are unsure of the types of crime that are appropriate for restorative justice. Additionally, some prisons are concerned about the added resources needed to facilitate restorative justice within their establishment.

In my experience, the preparation and execution of a restorative justice meeting does not need to cause added disruption or increase strain on over-stretched staff. Many prisons now have an individual or team within Offender Management Units responsible for restorative justice, and partnering with external facilitators can be a very effective way of managing resources.

Needs of the offender

Restorative justice can be extremely beneficial as part of the sentence plan for the offender, and prisons have started raising prisoners’ awareness of the process. Leaflets and video resources are available for this purpose, and most Police and Crime Commissioners’ offices have information specifically for offenders.

It is essential for the facilitator to liaise with the offender manager and supervisor responsible for the offender to find out where restorative justice can support other programmes they are participating in. Courses such as drug and alcohol treatment, relationship building and life skill programmes can be mutually beneficial when offered alongside restorative justice.

The support provided in a prison environment can be very useful for the offender all the way through the restorative justice process. It is important that all relevant parties know that the offender is participating in a restorative justice process so that they can monitor the inmate and, if necessary, provide extra support. If the preparatory meetings result in a face to face conference it is preferable not to hold the conference on a Friday or the weekend when staff may not be readily available.

Needs of the victim

Prison governors and staff can sometimes be concerned about victims coming in, but with sufficient preparation this does not present a problem. Considering whether it is in the victim’s best interests to enter a prison environment can only really be answered following discussion with the victim – it is important not to make the decision for them. Some victims feel surprisingly reassured going into the prison environment, where they feel safe. In some cases, facilitators may have a preparatory prison visit with the victim prior to the meeting, although I have never needed to do this.

My hope is that there will be an expansion of restorative justice within prisons. My experience is that the more complex the crime, the bigger the benefits from restorative justice, so it is essential to have buy in from prisons to allow this work to develop as part of the recovery process for all participants.

Working in partnership – examples of prisons providing a supportive environment in practice

NOMS' Commissioning Intentions (2014) supports the provision of restorative justice victim-offender conferencing in every prison and YOI. Custodial institutions face a choice – deliver restorative justice in-house or develop a supportive environment to enable delivery by an external provider. To complement Edward Gretton's article elsewhere in this publication, which outlines the theory behind creating a supportive environment, this article considers how partnership delivery works in practice.

Information sharing

For the past 19 years, Remedi Restorative Services has partnered with a variety of different category prisons and secure hospitals to deliver restorative justice. Remedi's assistant director, Nicola Bancroft, has found prisons to be accommodating and supportive and advises identifying a point of contact within the prison to agree information sharing protocols. Nicola said: "Information sharing, regulated by agreed protocols, is the basis for collaborative working."

Thames Valley Partnership (TVP) agree with this premise and positioned themselves at the centre of a restorative justice hub model working in partnership with statutory, private and voluntary sectors in their area. TVP developed service level information sharing agreements between each prison governor in Thames Valley and the Thames Valley Restorative Justice Service (TVRJS) – the delivery organisation.

Julie Tartakover is both a senior restorative justice practitioner at TVRJS and a probation officer at HMP Bullingdon. "When a case gets referred", Julie explained, "these agreements set out permissions to share prisoners' details, necessary documentations, permissions to access the prison, agreement to provide a venue, and generally facilitate and support restorative justice conferences."

Awareness raising and referrals

With many different people and agencies involved, determining responsibility for the different elements of the conference matters, and raising awareness is key. Julie has delivered restorative justice awareness sessions in prisons with TVRJS, and has found they helped to overcome difficulties with referral generation and expectations in how the prison can support and help facilitate a safe process. It also helps

to make sure restorative justice is prioritised by an individual or team inside the prison.

HMP Stafford, a prison for sex offenders, is committed to the restorative justice process. As with all sex offences, restorative justice can only take place where the victim has initiated the process and there has been a detailed and comprehensive risk assessment to ensure no further harm is likely to be caused. Offender Supervisor, Mark Binns, has supported restorative justice development inside the prison and seen great success with a small number of cases using restorative justice as part of sentence planning. He has, however, found it difficult to forge relationships with specific providers to formalise agreements. He said: "Because of the nature of our prison, a lot of the prisoners are from across the country, so to get involvement with local providers is quite difficult."

A solution to this is the hub model in Thames Valley, where the restorative justice service delivers restorative justice on behalf of the prison. The referral is taken through a simple page form. This is completed by the referrer – from an offender supervisor or through self-referral – and sent to the hub coordinator, who allocates the case to a facilitator to assess for suitability. "The restorative justice facilitator will be overseen, mentored and supervised by a senior practitioner", explained Julie. "This has been crucial to making the work successful, and ensuring that quality standards are adhered to."

Senior buy-in

But Julie believes it doesn't have to be a completely transformative shift towards a hub, or for all staff in prisons to be trained facilitators. When deciding on a delivery model there are multiple options, and it is often more helpful to allow staff to dedicate more time to support delivery and for governors to support this allocation of resource.

Mark echoes this view. He believes top-down support is imperative, and restorative justice needs to be backed up with an appropriate infrastructure. Ultimately, there needs to be an understanding from above that other duties have to be put to one side to ensure officers can be fully engaged with the restorative justice process.

With pressures on staff and resources in custodial settings, the support from senior staff is clearly important. The prison governor in Thames Valley who has a lead role for restorative justice is on the multi-agency restorative justice steering group which manages the work of the TVRJS. This gives prisons more control and ensures the smooth running of the multi-agency hub, a model being increasingly replicated in other areas.

Preparation

Preparation to ensure all participants feel comfortable and adequately informed is central to the success of face to face conferencing. Making initial contact with the victim is a very important part of this, and it needs to be a coordinated effort to prevent victims being contacted twice by different agencies.

Following assessment, it is all about collaborative working and organising, sometimes quite complex, practicalities. In her dual role as TVRJS facilitator and probation officer in a prison, Julie said: "The process goes both ways. Prisons need to be aware of what is involved in a restorative justice conference and restorative justice services need to involve prison staff and remain mindful of the prison regime – timings, security implications and so on. For example, participants' details have to be shared with the prison to enable them to have security clearance to enter the prison."

"The prison is providing the facility", explained Mark Binns, "so it is important that we discuss all details with the victim, from the room's aesthetics and the chair layout to security." Everyone in the prison will be informed, but their intrusion will be minimised. Alarm bells are fitted in the rooms and, from the moment the victim enters the prison gate, their experience is managed by the prison.

The process of visiting a prison can be very daunting for the victim. Pre-visits to enable the victim to see the prison, alleviate concerns and reduce some anxiety can be essential. "We're happy to facilitate that", Mark said. "If they need to come in and see initially what they would go through, we would make that happen."

To make sure the offender is ready for the restorative justice conference, preparatory meetings take place to discuss practical arrangements, verbal content and the structure of the meeting, as well as to manage expectations. Julie gave an example of a conference

where the personal officer, who came in on his day off to support the prisoner, also helped the victim gain an understanding of the prison regime. Following the meeting the same officer was an invaluable source of support for the prisoner.

This works best if it is a team effort. In HMP Stafford, all staff involved with the prisoner are notified before and after the meeting, and instructed to monitor the prisoner's wellbeing. Health care concerns, medication and other issues are considered carefully and, in the follow-up, measures are taken to see how the meeting affected the prisoner. Mark highlights the importance of officers "doing their homework" – knowing the prisoner and making sure that all necessary information is gathered.

Additionally, there is a need for staff to be aware of agreed holding transfer dates for prisoners currently engaging in restorative justice, to avoid delays to the process and reduce the risk of halting the process due to arrangements in a new prison.

There is good reason for prisons to support restorative justice. Evidence suggests that it reduces reoffending and has a positive impact on the lives of victims. It's a process, however, that requires time and resources, and buy-in from offender management units is crucial to its success. Thames Valley demonstrates this where OMUs and restorative justice services work together and restorative justice is recognised as an effective intervention.

Prison officers, like Mark, can see the benefits of a restorative meeting on an offender first-hand. He said: "I de-briefed a prisoner who had apologised in the conference. He had closure and was happy going out into the community now that he knew the victim and their family would feel safe. Because they didn't feel safe until he said sorry."

Restorative justice is achieving results in areas where working agreements have been put in place, and delivery is on the agenda. In HMP Bullingdon restorative justice is happening and interest is rising. Julie concluded: "TVRJS has built on its history of working with Thames Valley prisons. We agreed on a delivery model which takes the burden off the prison by providing facilitators, and we are constantly working to improve our service, to raise awareness and ensure safe, high standards of practice are upheld."

Prisons must work with restorative justice services to make it happen for the people that need it most. For Mark it is clear that the partnership working is needs-led. He said: "The needs of the victim will be managed by the restorative justice service on the outside; the needs of the prisoner are met by the prison. If you can marry the two up in a meeting, and if the outcome is what is required by both parties, I don't see how that can't be positive."

Quality restorative services in HMP Leeds since achieving the Restorative Service Quality Mark

HMP Leeds began using restorative justice in 2012. In April 2014 they celebrated becoming the first prison to achieve the RJC's Restorative Service Quality Mark (RSQM), an award for organisations which can demonstrate that they meet the six Restorative Service Standards. This article looks at the work of HMP Leeds and considers how other prisons might follow suit.

In the four years since HMP Leeds started using restorative justice, Emma Callaghan, the first restorative justice co-ordinator at the prison, has witnessed its positive effects on both victims and offenders. Restorative conferences have made many offenders at the prison acutely aware of the consequences of their crimes and determined not to reoffend. After meeting his victim, one man jailed for burglary told Emma: "I felt like scum. I can't believe what I'd done to him and his wife – he was such a lovely bloke. I won't do it again. What I took wasn't just possessions, it was security and happiness. All I left was fear, paranoia and devastation." Another offender, jailed for anti-social behaviour, told Caroline Rountree (the current restorative justice co-ordinator): "I didn't realise how much guilt I'd been carrying around with me, until I met my victim and apologised. And then I felt so much lighter."

As restorative justice has become ingrained in the prison's culture, an understanding of the wider significance of the practice has emerged among both staff and inmates. One man, imprisoned for theft, commented: "Restorative justice is a better way of doing things. It could stop lots of people offending and going to prison."

The quality of HMP Leeds' restorative service is also having a powerful effect on victims, with many experiencing significant post-conference benefits. One participant said: "[I immediately] stopped reliving the offence at night." Another participant commented: "I was pleased to meet him. I'm no longer scared of bumping into him in the street."

The standard of restorative work that Emma and her colleagues provided put them in a strong position to achieve the RSQM. Emma said: "I felt that we were in a position to achieve it and that becoming the first prison to do so would be a fantastic accomplishment. It was too good an opportunity to turn down."

Working towards achieving the RSQM is a significant undertaking for any organisation, but the process itself provides rewards. Emma said: "It's a very

time-consuming task, but it allowed us to review all of our practices and make improvements or alterations as necessary. It really makes you think about all the little areas in your processes and assess how efficient and useful they are, and it's created a more streamlined and consistent service."

On discovering that HMP Leeds had achieved the RSQM in April 2014, Emma said: "To see the months of hard work that we'd put in being rewarded was absolutely fantastic. We have received lots of words of congratulations from colleagues around the country – not to mention directly from the RJC. It feels great to know that we can display the RSQM logo on everything that we do and promote that we offer a best practice service to offenders and victims."

One hundred % of HMP Leeds' participants, both victims and offenders, have said that they would recommend restorative justice to others affected by, or responsible for, a crime. And all of the offenders who have taken part in restorative justice show an increase in victim empathy.

A year after achieving the award, Caroline said: "Receiving the RSQM has been a great experience for us at HMP Leeds. It's done a lot for our reputation and there have been a number of other establishments who have made contact to ask us about the process, or just about restorative justice and how to set it up. As a result, we have made a lot of new contacts along the way.

"It's also strengthened our reputation with our partnership agencies. As partnerships is one of the areas that's assessed by the RSQM, there's a general feeling that other agencies had a stake in helping us achieve the award. There's been a lot of secondary goodwill for want of a better phrase. It's given us a real sense of confidence to know that our processes and practices have been scrutinised and found to be of good quality.

"We've swung between being sure of ourselves, and doubting ourselves, so to have the department



externally assessed, and find that there's a lot to praise is fantastic."

Emma is aware of the perception that restorative justice can put participants at risk. She said: "The point of providing quality restorative justice is that everything is risk assessed – it's all in the preparation. A trained facilitator would never let a conference go ahead if they thought there was a risk of further harm to any of the participants. The RSQM is our way of showing people, both inside and out of the prison, that the service we're providing is safe. Taking part in restorative justice is challenging, certainly, but it can have a hugely positive effect on people's lives and we're very proud to offer it."

Despite Ministry of Justice figures crediting restorative justice with reducing reoffending by 14%, funding is still at the discretion of individual governors. Caroline said: "We're very lucky because our governor understands the benefits of restorative justice, and she has actively campaigned for us to receive external funding so we can continue the work we're doing. As our restorative justice service has developed and improved, it's had a direct impact on

Since HMP Leeds was awarded the RSQM, other custodial settings have received the RSQM and five others have expressed interest or started the self-assessment process with the RJC.

rehabilitation targets, which improves credibility and reputation for the prison as a whole."

As other prisons start applying for the RSQM, restorative justice is clearly taking hold within the sector. Caroline said: "We're beginning to get to a stage where the majority of offenders that

come through HMP Leeds have at least heard of restorative justice. It would be great to see that in more establishments. When we started restorative justice here, offenders would run away when they heard what restorative justice involved. Now they talk about it, they're keen to refer themselves, and recommend it to others. We've come a long way. We'd love restorative justice to be the norm in more prisons – it's such a necessary thing."

To find out more about the RSQM visit www.restorativejustice.org.uk/rsqm



Restorative justice improves prison life at HMP and YOI Parc

At HMP & YOI Parc the introduction of a dedicated restorative justice service has gone beyond victim-offender conferencing and is now improving the lives of both inmates and staff.



Situated in South Wales, HMP and YOI Parc holds over 1,400 prisoners and young offenders. The prison prides itself on its innovative architectural design and its modern approach to rehabilitating offenders. Part of this approach is a pilot restorative justice service introduced in 2014 to bring offenders and their victims together.

The prison delivers the RESTORE Programme, a three-day victim awareness course based on restorative principles, which has led to interest from inmates in meeting their victims. Amy Griffiths, the restorative justice co-ordinator at HMP and YOI Parc, said: "The course seems to plant a seed in the minds of those who take part and on the last of the three days there is always a lot of discussion about restorative justice and whether people would like to take part. This always leads to prisoners coming forward who are interested in participating."

This interest has led to six cases facilitated so far, including four face to face conferences, and demand is increasing. Amy said: "There is a real momentum growing at the moment. We are dealing with over 100 referrals, the majority of them self-referrals from prisoners, and we have lots of cases currently ongoing."

Building on the initial success of the victim-offender restorative justice programme, HMP and YOI Parc has implemented a scheme using restorative justice principles to deal with conflict within the prison. Amy said: "We use restorative justice for both serious offences and low-level conflict between prisoners – what we call 'corridor restorative justice'."

Corridor restorative justice involves the instant use of restorative principles to deal with conflict as it arises. Amy explained: "There was a prisoner who refused to enter his cell because he was unhappy with his cellmate and the cleanliness of the cell. This sort of conflict can often cause disruption as prisoners are moved away from those they're in conflict with to a different wing within the prison. But when restorative practices have been used, prisoners have been able to stay living together, saving staff time and effort."

In this case, a member of staff trained as a restorative justice facilitator was able to go onto the wing and discuss the situation with both prisoners. Amy said: "That helped them to come to an agreement between themselves about what needed to happen and they agreed to stay in the same cell."

Conflict can arise at any time within a prison. Amy said: "As you can imagine, there are issues which arise on an hourly basis here, and having staff on site who are trained in restorative justice who can help to resolve it before it escalates can be really useful."

The prison has also used restorative justice in more formal ways to deal with serious conflict such as assaults by prisoners. In these cases staff have spent a lot of time in preparation, speaking to both the harmed and the harmer, which leads to a formal face to face conference. Amy said: "The process is the same as we use for cases involving external victims. It can really reduce the anxiety of prisoners and the likelihood of further conflict in the future."

The use of restorative justice within the prison has been a real success. Staff have noticed a change in the atmosphere and want to make greater use of the process. Amy said: "We have recently been inundated with cases where staff are using restorative principles to deal with conflict. There is a real difference in the behaviour of prisoners and the atmosphere on the wings."

She continued: "In the last two months we have had a lot more backing from senior management, which is really important in helping to get a scheme like this off the ground. One of our directors is now really keen on creating a restorative community within the prison."



Amy feels that the success of the scheme is highlighted by cases in which restorative practice has not been used. She said: “The use of restorative justice has had such a positive impact on our work here. There can be so many negative outcomes in cases in which restorative principles haven’t been used. Prisoners have looked to take revenge or ruminated on issues for a long time. But when restorative principles are used it gives both parties the opportunity to put things to bed.”

The scheme has been so successful that Amy is concerned that they will not be able to cope with demand once it is rolled out across the prison. She also highlights a common problem for restorative services across the country. She said: “We have had difficulties gaining victims’ details, and this can hold us back.”

HMP and YOI Parc has also used restorative principles to deal with prisoners’ complaints against members of staff. Amy said: “In two cases so far we have been able to resolve issues by bringing staff and prisoners together to speak about what happened using restorative principles.”

Moving forward, Amy hopes to widen the scope of this scheme so that prisoners can refer themselves to the service if they feel that they have an issue with another prisoner. Amy said: “Staff don’t know everything that is going on within the prison and we never will. Some issues could even have started beyond the walls of the prison in the wider community. By allowing prisoners to refer themselves for a restorative process we are not waiting for these

issues to spill over into real conflict and are giving prisoners the opportunity to deal with issues in a positive way.”

The restorative justice team is now considering using restorative practice to repair family ties. Amy said: “Research shows that families make a massive difference in helping prisoners to settle after release and this lowers reconviction rates. This is why it is so important that they have good relationships with family members and I think that restorative principles could really help to repair these relationships that might have broken down.”

Amy concluded: “The scope for restorative justice feels gigantic and it does make me feel really excited – the project has been a real success so far. I am really optimistic that this positive momentum will continue.”



Ed and Rumbie's Story

When Ed and Rumbie were burgled two weeks after moving into their flat, their optimism about their new life together was ruined. As part of a pre-sentence restorative justice trial taking place at Wood Green crown court, they were given the opportunity to meet their offender at Pentonville prison.

Rumbie: Ed and I had just moved into our first flat together. We were in the middle of unpacking and settling in. Ed had just been promoted and I'd just got a new job, so it was a really exciting time. Ed came home one day and found a brick on the kitchen floor. He rang me and said: 'I think we've been burgled.'

Ed: I had a quick look around the flat, and at first it didn't look too bad. Then I noticed that our iPads were gone, and so was my hard drive. All of the drawers in our bedroom had been tipped out and everything had been rifled through.

I called Rumbie at work and she came straight home. I felt very upset. I knew Rumbie already had doubts about our new neighbourhood, and moving there had been my idea. I felt really guilty and I expected her to be very distraught.

Rumbie: Because the flat was still new to us it hadn't started to feel like home yet and I felt completely invaded by the burglary. We'd had great plans when we moved in and it was really frustrating to hit such a bump in the road. I already felt a bit unsafe, because our area isn't the safest in London, and the burglary made me really angry.

For me, the worst thing I lost was my backpack, which I took to work every day. Everything else was replaceable, but that one thing was so personal to me that I felt furious that the burglar had taken it.

Ed: The burglar hadn't taken anything which was dear to me, like my guitars, but I didn't feel like the flat was home anymore. As it was our first proper place together, it was the first time we'd been able to leave things lying around where we wanted them. After the burglary we started to put everything away before going out – I stopped feeling like our house was our personal space.

In those first few weeks afterwards my sleep was disrupted – the slightest noise would wake me up instantly. I was very nervous. I no longer felt as if I could take our privacy for granted.

Rumbie: What followed were weeks of visits from the police to keep us informed of what was happening. They caught the burglar through traces of his DNA which were on the brick. He was already known to the police as a prolific offender.

One day, we had a visit from PC Mark Davies and Kate Renshaw from Only Connect, a local charity. They explained that the burglar – Fabian – had been caught, and was willing to meet us in a restorative justice conference. After they left we started to look on the internet to find out more about restorative justice – we were really curious to know more about it and what it involved, and we found some films about the process.

After watching the films, we felt like it was our duty to take part in restorative justice. We were never pressured into it, but it seemed like the right thing to do.

Ed: Once we decided to go ahead with the conference, we were told exactly where it would take place and what would happen. I felt fine until a few days before the conference, but on the day, it was definitely nerve-racking.

Rumbie: I was really nervous on the day of the meeting, too. But the police had reassured us that if Fabian was violent or we were at risk, they wouldn't allow the meeting to go ahead. We trusted the people who were organising the meeting.

Ed: It was the first time either of us had seen the inside of a prison, which was interesting. We went into the chapel, where the conference was taking place, and took a while deciding exactly how we wanted the seating arranged. Then we chatted awkwardly until Fabian, the burglar, was brought in.

Rumbie: We were initially quite taken aback because we'd expected someone very different. Fabian was well dressed and well spoken – he seemed like a really normal guy and we couldn't get our heads around what was going on with him to make him do what he did.



Ed: I didn't know in advance what I wanted to ask him – I figured it would come to me on the day. We'd been encouraged not to plan too much. Fabian had brought a letter he'd prepared for us and he started by reading that out. It talked about how he understood it must be strange for us to meet him and that we probably hated him. He then went on to talk about the burglary. He'd been in the park next to our house using drugs, and when he'd run out he'd seen our road, which is quiet and secluded.

Rumbie: For me, the personal impact of the burglary was lessened by meeting him. I realised that it had been a spur of the moment decision – he was off his face – whereas before I had thought it was premeditated. I learned that he wasn't watching us, he wasn't following us, which are things you think when someone's been in your house.

Ed: I told Fabian how the crime had affected us, and how I felt about my home after he'd been in it. I didn't think it was worth asking him to go into a programme for his drug addiction – I felt that was something he was only ever going to be able to do for himself, and not because I told him to. What I did suggest was that he didn't go back to his flat – which he'd managed to keep for a decade while going in and out of prison – as that was associated with his old life.

I think I got through to him a little bit, but Rumbie was more effective. She said to him: 'If someone asks me what this guy is like, what should I tell them?' That was the first time he was lost for words – maybe

it was a little ray of light coming through a crack. He couldn't answer – it challenged him.

Rumbie: When we left the meeting I felt really sorry for Fabian, but personally, I felt a lot safer in our home and our neighbourhood. We felt empowered, but we'll definitely think about Fabian for a long time and wonder how he's doing.

Ed: The conference definitely helped me to move on – it was a valuable experience. It made both of us less worried that we'd been targeted, but it also concluded some of the emotional aspects – it closed a chapter for us. Now, I've got a sense of perspective on what happened to us, but it's also given me some insight into the criminal justice process – it involved me. We were assured that restorative justice does not necessarily lead to a more lenient sentence, and in fact, we could request that the judge didn't take it into account when considering Fabian's sentence. I felt that if the conference was going to be helpful to the judge in making a decision, then it should definitely be considered.

If someone else was considering restorative justice, I would tell them to go for it. It offers you emotional closure and it puts a perspective on a crime – it seems less sinister. And it involves people – citizens – in the justice process. They come face to face with it and understand how it works.

The RJC would like to thank Restorative Solutions CIC, Victim Support and Ed and Rumbie for sharing their story with us.

Rage to reason – creating a restorative prison culture

Khulisa is a national charity dedicated to cutting crime and reducing reoffending. Lisa Rowles, design and development lead at Khulisa, has worked in a number of prisons, YOIs, schools and on projects to build stronger and safer communities. In this article Lisa and Khulisa's chief executive, Simon Fulford, make the case for a fully restorative prison.

Our prisons are undergoing significant and unprecedented change. The government's Transforming Rehabilitation agenda has put the prison estate under considerable pressure to reduce cost, restructure and still deliver against increased targets. To achieve these goals, NOMS wants to build a culture of rehabilitation within prison and aims to 'prevent victims by changing lives'. Violence reduction is a critical part of this strategy.

Prison staff play a vital role as the prison authority. They are in the strongest position to encourage a shift in offender perspective and have the power to both reinforce an inmate's mind-set and to radically challenge it. They are the game changers. We believe that by developing a restorative relationship between staff and prisoner that values integrity, respect, honesty and fairness, offender accountability and the likelihood of changing lives increase dramatically.

The restorative prison concept applies this restorative approach to whole wings and ultimately across the prison. A restorative culture puts the ethos of rehabilitation into every interaction – from first night reception to conversations on wings. Restorative skills enable staff to build offender capability, increasing a prisoner's personal responsibility and developing

skills which improve their wellbeing and outcomes – for example, reduced substance misuse and engagement in education.

Fortunately, new and innovative models for systemic change within UK prisons are already being developed. NOMS are piloting new approaches, such as PIPEs (Psychologically Informed Planned Environments) and EEs (Enabled Environments). Both focus on a specific offender type, rather than the whole prison, but they have been shown to help staff understand the impact of their responses on the way offenders think, feel and behave. Staff surveyed in the PIPE pilot confirmed that prisoners appeared to take greater responsibility for their actions and behaviour, were recalled less and demonstrated increased compliance with licence conditions.

Outside of the custodial setting, restorative approaches have shown significant impact when implemented systemically as opposed to a 'bolt-on' intervention. Best practice examples include Norfolk Council, where a similar approach with children's homes aimed to reduce young people's activities being criminalised. This resulted in a 52% drop in charges and a 19% drop in calls to address violent incidents at children's homes. Atkinson Secure Children's Home in Devon embedded restorative approaches throughout the service, which has helped them achieve outstanding academic results, some in line with mainstream education.

In the police, the response is similar. A 2012 study in Yorkshire confirms that 74% of surveyed police felt empowered and confident about a range of restorative approaches¹, highlighting 'street-RJ' – cautionary discussions on the street with potential offenders – as a highly useful tool in reducing offending which saved time and money. With a 'common sense' flexible approach, this can be applied in prisons as 'wing RJ' or 'corridor RJ', where prison

1 Meadows, Linda, Albertson, Katherine, Ellingworth, Daniel and Senior, Paul (2012) Evaluation of the South Yorkshire Restorative Justice Programme (SYRJP). Project Report. Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield.





officers have restorative conversations with offenders, reducing the likelihood of a more violent altercation.

Using a restorative practice model and applying it to the entire prison population – the restorative prison concept – would increase understanding between staff and offenders, enhance wellbeing of offenders and inevitably decrease the prospect of violent incidents. This would create a more stable, safe, secure and rehabilitative culture in prisons, which fosters a greater likelihood of desistance from crime and enables prisoners to behave as contributing members of society.

For staff, the benefits would be tangible through improved relationships and a reduction in violent altercations, adjudications and prisoner self-harming.

Moreover it would reduce stress and improve morale, which in turn reduces sickness absence. For prisoners, this inevitably enables calmer conversations on wings and improved prisoner self-awareness and coping skills to proactively engage in interventions.

The best practice examples show that the restorative prison concept is statistically and morally worth pursuing. It has the potential to transform prisons into fully rehabilitative custodial settings. By embedding restorative practice into their work, prisons can create stable and safe environments in which offenders can learn the skills they need to stop offending.

With the support of the Centre for Justice Innovation and Clinks

General information and further reading

1. What is restorative justice?

Restorative justice gives victims the chance to meet or communicate with their offenders to explain the real impact of the crime – it empowers victims by giving them a voice. It also holds offenders to account for what they have done and helps them to take responsibility and make amends. Ministry of Justice research demonstrates that restorative justice provides an 85% victim satisfaction rate, and a 14% reduction in the frequency of reoffending.

2. What conditions must be met for restorative justice to take place?

Restorative justice can only take place when three conditions are met:

- There is an identifiable victim or victims. The person who takes part in the restorative justice process does not need to be the direct victim of the crime. It could be a family member, representative of the community or someone else who has been affected by the crime.
- The offender accepts responsibility for the crime.
- The victim, offender and any other participants consent to taking part in a restorative justice activity.

3. What should offenders expect to happen at a restorative justice conference?

During victim-offender conferences, participants meet to discuss a crime in which they have been involved. The discussion is led by a trained restorative justice facilitator and supporters for both victim and offender can also be present. The facilitator will lead a discussion on the crime by asking what happened, who was affected, how they were affected and what can be done to repair the harm that was caused. The offender is normally asked first, followed by the victim.

Offenders will be given the opportunity to hear about the impact of their actions and to explain why they committed the offence. The participants may decide on an outcome agreement outlining actions to be taken to try to repair the harm caused.

4. How do offenders benefit from restorative justice?

Restorative justice gives offenders the chance to come to terms with their actions, make an apology and move on. Research shows that 80% of offenders who have met their victims face to face were satisfied with the process and almost three quarters would recommend it to others in their situation.

5. How do victims benefit from restorative justice?

Many victims find that restorative justice helps them to come to terms with their experience and move on. Victims who engage in the process can experience reduced post-traumatic stress, higher levels of satisfaction with the criminal justice system and less fear of repercussions. There are many examples of victims who have an improved quality of life after engaging in a restorative intervention. This is because restorative justice allows victims to become involved directly in the justice process and empowers them by giving them a voice.

6. How can services ensure that restorative justice is delivered to the highest standards?

Backed by the Ministry of Justice, the RJC developed the Restorative Service Quality Mark (RSQM) in 2013 in consultation with experts in the restorative field. The RSQM is a quality mark for organisations providing restorative services – and is only awarded to those which can demonstrate they meet the minimum standards needed for quality provision. When an organisation has been awarded the RSQM, commissioners, referrers and participants can be confident that they provide a safe, high quality service. HMP Leeds became the first prison to achieve the quality mark in 2014. You can read more about this on pages 14-15.

7. What evidence is there that restorative justice works?

Government research has shown that restorative justice has a positive impact on both victims and offenders. The government funded a £7 million, seven-year research programme into restorative justice which showed that:

- 70% of victims chose to take part in face to face meetings which led to 85% victim satisfaction rates.
- 78% of victims said that they would recommend restorative justice to other victims (only 5% would not).
- The research also showed that face to face meetings reduced the frequency of reoffending by 14% and that this reduction in reoffending was highly cost effective for the criminal justice system, saving an average of £8 for every £1 spent on delivering restorative justice.

Furthermore, restorative justice consistently outperforms traditional criminal justice processes alone across a range of offence categories of varying types and seriousness. No other intervention tested in the same way as restorative justice has demonstrated such a substantial effect on reoffending.

Further information

What is restorative justice?:

www.restorativejustice.org.uk/what-restorative-justice

Wait 'til eight – an essential start-up guide to NOMS restorative justice implementation scheme: www.restorativejustice.org.uk/wait-til-eight

A victim's guide to restorative justice – a short animated film explaining the different points in the criminal justice system where victims can access restorative justice: www.vimeo.com/rjcouncil/victims-guide

Recovering from crime – restorative justice in action; a film providing an insight into what a real restorative justice conference looks like: www.vimeo.com/rjcouncil/recovering-from-crime

Case studies demonstrating restorative justice in action: www.restorativejustice.org.uk/casestudies

Guidance on the delivery of high quality restorative practice: www.restorativejustice.org.uk/guidance-and-other-resources

Information on joining the RJC: www.restorativejustice.org.uk/restorative-justice-council-membership

Information on the Restorative Service Quality Mark: www.restorativejustice.org.uk/rsqm

Information on becoming an Accredited Practitioner: www.restorativejustice.org.uk/practitioner-accreditation

For more information on the Restorative Justice in Prisons; Guide to Providing a Supportive Environment contact enquiries@restorativesolutions.org.uk

Restorative justice works

“I didn’t realise how much guilt I’d been carrying around with me, until I met my victim and apologised. And then I felt so much lighter.”

Offender

Find out more at www.restorativejustice.org.uk

