

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE WEEK

15 - 22 November 2020



Welcome to our first ever Restorative Justice Newsletter! We have introduced this as part of our campaign to raise awareness of Restorative Justice with all our partners and also as part of International RJ Week 2020. We want to keep you updated on what is happening within our service and how you can access support for the victims you are working with. We're hoping to share this quarterly and we're really keen to hear from you in how this can be developed.

Thanks for taking the time to read.

Helena Cryer, Restorative Justice Manager



Clive Grunshaw,

Lancashire Police and Crime Commissioner

Covering the police force area of Lancashire Constabulary.

Mr Grunshaw said; "Victims of crime are often left with unanswered questions. Restorative Justice provides the opportunity to get answers and can be a powerful way to help victims move forward from what has happened. Meeting the offender can be a daunting thought but the Restorative Justice team at Lancashire Constabulary can offer the advice and assurance people need to take this step.



"Restorative Justice has also been shown to reduce the likelihood of perpetrators reoffending, a key aim in my Police and Crime Plan for Lancashire.

"I am really pleased to see the team utilising digital technology to continue this important work during the pandemic to empower victims and to help them get the answers they deserve."

Meet your RJ coordinators



**Claire
Joule**
South division



**Brendan
McEneny**
South division



**Dawn
Sedgebeer**
West division



**Gary
Boardman**
West division



**Phillip
Curwen**
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For more information on RJ
click [here](#) to visit our website.



Myths

During international RJ Week
we want to dispel some of the common myths about
Restorative Justice.

**Restorative Justice can only be
used as an alternative to court.**

❖ MYTH

*Restorative Justice can be used
alongside ANY disposal for ANY
type of crime. If cases are going to
court and the victim requests
Restorative Justice, we will pick up
the referral post sentence.*

**Restorative Justice is a soft
option for offenders.**

❖ MYTH

*Offenders consistently report it is
much harder to sit face-to-face with
their victim and have to listen to the
way their offence has impacted on
their life than it is for them to attend
court.*

**Restorative Justice can
revictimise victims if they come
face-to-face with their offender.**

❖ MYTH

*Victims report very high levels of
satisfaction with RJ because they
feel they are in control, their voice is
heard and they are provided with a
safe environment to ask questions
of the offenders. All conferences are
fully risk assessed by the RJ Team
and we would never take the victim
into a meeting if we felt it had the
potential to cause further harm.*

**If offenders take part in RJ in
prison they get a reduction in
their sentence, parole or extra
privileges.**

❖ MYTH

*RJ does not result in any
advantages or added benefits for
the offender. It is however seen as a
positive step forward for the offender
by the very fact they have taken
responsibility for the offence and are
making efforts to positively
rehabilitate.*

A victim has to forgive the offender in order to take part in RJ.

❖ MYTH

A victim does not have to forgive the offender to take part, the process is an opportunity for the victim to ask questions and for the offender to take responsibility for their actions. The process aims to bring closure for the victim.

RJ can't be used for serious crime and sexual offences.

❖ MYTH

*RJ will now be considered for **ALL** offences, each case is considered on a case by case basis with a multi-agency approach. Such offences in Lancashire can only be dealt with on assessment by the RJ Team.*



FEATURE STORY

YOUTH OFFENDING TEAM (YOT) BY SARAH CALLON – SERVICE MANAGER

Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) were created by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 with the purpose of preventing offending by children under the age of 18. They are the key to successful intervention in the lives of children who commit criminal offences and their families.

YOTs are multi-agency teams made up of representatives of the Police, the Probation Service, Social Services, Education and the Health Service. They carry out a comprehensive assessment of children to find out the reasons for their offending behaviour and decide the level of risk of their reoffending. This enables YOT staff to identify suitable programmes to deal with the offending behaviour, with the aim of preventing further offending. YOT staff also work closely with the youth courts and the Crown Courts in providing pre-sentence reports to help magistrates and judges decide on the appropriate sentence to impose on children who are convicted of a criminal offence.

Where a victim has consented for their details to be shared with the YOT, the victim/RJ worker in the service makes contact with them. This ensures that the victim's voice is heard and information regarding their views and needs can be taken into account when planning interventions for the child. It is really important for the YOT to have the victim's voice to inform work with the child so that they have a full understanding of the impact of their behaviour on others. Our contact with the victim also enables them to make informed choices about involvement in restorative processes.

In Blackpool we have completed a variety of restorative processes with victims of crime. These have ranged from letters of apology to shuttle mediation and we have facilitated a number of face to face restorative conferences. Blackpool YOT and Lancashire Constabulary Restorative Justice team have previously completed a successful RJ conference after an incident of anti-social behaviour within the local community resulted in damage being caused to a local children's centre. The two services are currently working together again to facilitate a number of smaller RJ conferences to address anti-social behaviour in a local area of the town. These conferences will bring together children, members of the local community, third sector agencies and statutory services to explore concerns around anti-social behaviour.



CASE STUDY

A young male has a disagreement with another young male whilst at school and the aggressor assaults the other student in a park outside of the school. The victim sustained injuries including injury to their lip. Both pupils attend at the same school, therefore a positive resolution had to be found. A conference between both males was held at the school by the RJ Team with a positive outcome being reached.

“

Session comment, noted by PC Steven Russell from conference attendee;

Thanks ever so much for your help in sorting this out. I am really impressed that you have been able to resolve this for everyone in a way that strikes me as being very reasonable and fair to all parties involved. I will definitely look to use RJ in the future as it's a fantastic tool. Thanks once again for all your help, it's much appreciated.

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VICTIM AWARENESS COURSES IN LANCASHIRE PRISONS BY CAROL CAINE

Since the start of the pandemic, delivery of the Victim Awareness Courses was suspended in Lancashire prisons. However, I've continued to receive referrals from colleagues in prisons, the majority being from Lancaster Farms.

In order to continue to provide prisoners with victim awareness input we're piloting a new way of working. Those prisoners at Lancaster Farms who're on the waiting list for the group Victim Awareness Course will be issued with a copy of an in-cell Think Victim work book. This work book encourages prisoners to think about their offence; go through what happened; who was there; when it happened and how they and their victims might now feel about the offence. Each prisoner who completes the work book and returns it to me will be offered feedback and once successfully completed they'll be given a certificate.

Although we've piloted this in Lancaster Farms, if other Lancashire prisons would like to be involved then please contact me as follows: carol.caine2@lancashire.police.uk or call 07976 904804.

I look forward to seeing you again in the not too distant future!

Carol – Victim Awareness Course Facilitator



FEATURE STORY

Kerry-Louise is extremely passionate about helping others, and from being a young girl always wanted work with tackling crime. In 2019 she trained to become a Restorative Justice and Mediation Volunteer. The idea of bringing those harmed by crime or conflict and those responsible for the harm into communication, enabling everyone affected by a particular incident to play a part in repairing the harm and finding a positive way forward, was very much something she really wanted to be a part of. Already in a marketing and communications role, she had a very good skillset that she could bring to volunteering and hasn't looked back since.

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