

Restorative Justice

Information on Restorative Justice
for victims of crime



If you are a victim of youth crime in Gloucestershire you will be offered the opportunity to become involved in restorative justice. This can provide you with the opportunity to become directly or indirectly involved with the young person who committed the crime. You could have your loss or harm acknowledged, questions answered and amends made where possible.

How does it work?

There are many different forms of restorative justice designed to suit different cases and varying needs. It can be used for a wide range of incidents from anti-social behaviour like graffiti, to crimes such as assault and robbery. It is voluntary for all parties and each case is carefully risk assessed before people take part. The most common forms are:

Victim Statements

You may not wish to have contact with the young person that caused harm to you, however you may wish for them to hear how the crime has impacted upon you. This could be done via a written statement from you that will be read to the young person by a person of your choice or one of our trained facilitators.

Written communication

If you wish to receive a letter of apology or receive another form of supervised written communication, then this can be arranged. This can be a way of having any questions you may have answered.

Shuttle mediation

You can have contact with the young person without meeting face-to-face through shuttle mediation. The restorative justice facilitator can talk to both parties separately, ensure your views are put across and seek to find out answers to any questions by passing information between the parties. If you wish to hear directly, then audio equipment can also be used.

Regular updates

The Youth Support Team (YST) can keep you informed of the young person's sentence and progress at regular intervals.

A restorative meeting

You can meet face to face with the young person at a restorative meeting in the presence of a specially trained facilitator. Every meeting is carefully planned and organised and enables direct communication between all parties. It can help victims ask questions and hear directly from the young person. If appropriate, they can

work together on an agreement describing what they will do to address the harm done and discuss any supervised programme they will do to address the causes of offending. This could include direct or indirect reparation.

Reparation

Reparation means repairing or making amends for an offence and the harm that has been done. One way that young people can say sorry for their behaviour is through giving something back directly to you by way of an agreed activity or we can look at projects within the community where a young person can give back to the wider community. All Youth Orders contain an element of reparation.

How can it help?

- Restorative justice can provide a safe environment to express the effects of the harm done and its consequences
- It can help overcome any fears or feelings of intimidation that the offence might also have caused
- It enables victims to contribute to what happens next
- It encourages an open exchange of views
- It provides an opportunity to ask questions
- Evidence shows that it reduces re-offending
- Research shows that victim satisfaction is high from a restorative justice process.

What will happen?

An independent facilitator will talk to you about taking part in a restorative justice process to see if everyone involved is interested in taking part. If all parties are interested, then we can agree the type of restorative process and begin preparation meetings where necessary.

It's your choice

Taking part in a restorative justice process is voluntary and the YST will respect your wishes. All names, addresses and telephone numbers are kept confidential.



For further information:

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