

# WHAT IS RESTORATIVE JUSTICE?

Restorative Justice (RJ) processes bring those harmed by crime and those responsible for the harm into communication with each other, enabling everyone affected by a particular incident to play a part in repairing the harm and finding a positive way forward.

RJ offers victims an opportunity to be heard and to have their say in the resolution of harm caused, including agreeing restorative or reparative activity on the part of the offender.

RJ has a proven, significant impact in supporting victims in achieving closure and allowing them to move on with their lives. 85% of victims who have participated in Restorative Justice would recommend it to others.

For offenders, RJ provides an opportunity to face the consequences of their actions, recognising the impact that their offending behaviour has had upon others and, where possible, make amends.

In this way RJ has the potential to help rehabilitate offenders and support them in addressing their offending behaviour. It has the potential to motivate them to change and become responsible, law-abiding, productive members of society.

Restorative Justice has been shown to reduce re-offending by upwards of 14%.

# HOW DO I FIND OUT MORE OR MAKE A REFERRAL?

The service accepts referrals for **all crimes**.

The service takes referrals from the police, victims, victims' services organisations, offenders' offender management agencies and any other organisation that is working with victims and offenders.

Any RJ outcome will be determined in line with both the victim's and offender's wishes.

The RJ procedure will not prejudice the victim, offender or the criminal justice process.



If you would like to find out more, to arrange a briefing or awareness raising session for your organisation, or to make a referral please contact the RJ team today.

**Tel No (office):** 01274 437516

**Freephone:** 0800 783 1550

**Email:**

[RJWestYorkshire@restorativesolutions.org.uk.cjsm.net](mailto:RJWestYorkshire@restorativesolutions.org.uk.cjsm.net)



# RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IN WEST YORKSHIRE



## Information for sentencers, criminal justice agencies and partners

If you would like to find out more or to speak to someone you can contact the RJ Service in West Yorkshire by calling us on **0800 783 1550** or **01274 437516** or emailing us at [RJWestYorkshire@restorativesolutions.org.uk.cjsm.net](mailto:RJWestYorkshire@restorativesolutions.org.uk.cjsm.net)



## WHO WILL BENEFIT?

Victims often want to understand why the crime happened to them. They also want to play some part in the process of what happens to the person who committed the harm.

Victims want to know that they are not likely to be harmed by the same person again, and often they want to know that the offender will not harm anyone else in the future either.

By helping the offender to face up to the consequences of what they have done, RJ provides the offender with the chance to make a real difference to the victim, and to begin to think about changing their behaviour in the future.

RJ can help the offender to achieve a positive outcome for both the victim and themselves. It means that the offender has the chance not just to say sorry and feel sorry, but to do something about it.

Research shows that around 60% of victims offered the opportunity to participate in RJ say yes. For offenders, approached on the basis of having accepted responsibility/pleaded guilty and with a victim who wishes to participate, 75% say yes.

## WHEN CAN RESTORATIVE JUSTICE TAKE PLACE?

RJ can be used to resolve harm and conflict caused by crime and can be used when the victim feels it would support them in their recovery. It can take place at all stages of the Criminal Justice System (CJS), including Out-of-Court, Pre-Sentence (as part of either an adjournment between plea and sentence or as part of a deferred sentence), and Post-Sentence.

It is important that there is the opportunity for an RJ activity to take place at the right time for all the participants involved.

RJ should not disrupt CJS processes or timeliness targets.



## WHICH CASES ARE SUITABLE?

No offence is excluded.

There must be an identifiable victim, an identified harmer or charged offender, and an admission of responsibility or a guilty plea/finding of guilt if the case is proceeding through the courts system.

RJ should be victim-focused, so that it is their choice whether or not to participate, but the offender also has to agree.

The service is free of charge, completely confidential and impartial. If a victim or offender is being supported by a CJS agency or partner we will update that organisation about the outcomes of RJ activities.

## WILL IT IMPACT ON ANY SENTENCE?

That is for the sentencer alone to decide. It is not the purpose of Restorative Justice to influence sentencing decisions. That is made clear to both victim and offender at the start.

