

What can you expect from us?

1. The Police pass on your details to us and once the outcome of the investigation is clear we write to you offering the choice to be contacted or not, as you prefer.
2. If you agree we will then call you to share basic information and arrange a meeting.
3. We will normally visit you to explain the current legal status of your case and what options you have to participate in any restorative processes.
4. We will then arrange further meetings as required and agreed with you.
5. Our contact with you can stop at any time that you wish and will normally stop once everyone agrees the restorative work has been completed.
6. We only retain your personal details long enough to complete the work agreed. We will only retain them longer than this with your permission and for specific reasons.
7. If you have a complaint about our service we would like to talk it through with you to see if we can resolve any issues. You can also complain formally by phone on 0808 1683750 or by email: customer.relations@devon.gov.uk

Speak to your local

Victim Contact

Officer

North Devon, Torrington, West Devon
Phone: 01271 388150

Exeter, East Devon, Mid Devon
Phone: 01392 384978

South Devon, Teignbridge
Phone 01392 386210



Devon Youth Offending Service



What is Restorative Justice



WORKING TOGETHER TO REDUCE OFFENDING

Restorative Justice?

The staff at the Youth Offending Team believe that Restorative Justice is such a positive way of resolving an injustice that it now underpins all of the work we do as well as being a formal part of some of our most frequently used court orders such as Referral Orders. (More information available on a separate leaflet)

Restorative Justice (RJ) is any process which seeks to balance your concerns and those of the community with the need to re-integrate the offender into society. It also seeks to assist your recovery and enable all parties with roles in the justice process to take part in a positive way. It has three primary aims:

1. That the offender accepts responsibility for the consequences of their actions.
2. That there is some restoration or reparation towards yourself and others affected by the crime.
3. That both those affected and the offender can feel comfortable again in their community.

Our most common methods

1. Information sharing and consultation: Making sure that you have all the information on what is happening in your case and how you can get your thoughts and feelings heard.

2. Letters of apology and/or explanation: An opportunity for the offender to explain their actions and offer an apology and any other reparation.

3. Direct reparation work: The offender doing something for the victim to physically repair the harm—e.g. painting a fence damaged by graffiti.

4. Community Reparation work: Where the victim doesn't want any direct reparation then the offender completes a piece of work for the community.

5. Mediation: Where an independent third party goes between those affected and the offender with questions, answers and responses to form an agreement.

6. Restorative Conference: A face to face meeting led by an independent facilitator. All parties get the chance to share what happened and how they were affected. The offender gets the chance to offer an apology and agree reparation. We find this to be a very powerful method for all parties although the hardest for participants to commit to due to the obvious challenge of coming face to face with a person who has hurt you.

Why does it work?

The key to RJ working is that the participants freely agree to take part. This ensures that what comes out of the process is genuine. For example offenders do not do direct restorative work as part of their order unless they are genuinely remorseful. We also make an assessment to ensure that we do not get anyone involved in a process that will cause more harm or upset.

Most people that take part have felt that they can move on with their lives, that they have a clearer understanding of what happened, why, and that the offender has gone some way to repairing the hurt and upset they suffered.

Most offenders do not think about the consequences of their actions before committing the offence and so find it hard to be confronted with the often harsh reality of what they have done. They feel better about having apologised and about trying to repair the harm. All of this makes it more difficult for them to commit similar offences again.

RJ enables the personalisation of crime. So that all parties see that there are real people with real feelings and real lives behind the labels and not just 'victims' and 'offenders'.