

Applying Restorative Approaches to Re-Offending



BRIAN NEALE

SAFE IN TEES VALLEY



Initiative 1.

Prolific and Priority Offenders.



Building on the evidenced success over the last two years within the Stockton Integrated Offender Management team, which was introducing RA with prolific and priority offenders. (Health funded.)

Including RA in the blueprint of a single Cleveland Integrated Offender Management Hub.

Co-located at HMP Holme House – funded through the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

RA Co-ordinator will deliver Restorative Interventions; but will train and support staff and volunteers to ensure sufficient capacity to meet demand for services across Cleveland.

Initiative 1.

Prolific and Priority Offenders.



Key areas of work:

- Working closely with the IOM teams to identify suitable candidates for RA. (30 new cases, all at differing levels of activity – wide range of offences from acquisitive crime, fraud, sexual offences, through to serious violence.)
- Introduction of administrative systems to ensure consistency of approaches.
- Ensuring clear guidance is in place for the effective preparation, delivery and outcomes of RA.
- Safeguarding all parties in RA process, particularly victims.
- Ensuring victims have the benefit of skilled support, before, during and after the restorative process.
- Maintaining all records / outcomes, including identification of direct and indirect approaches.
- Monitoring quality of RA – meeting the Restorative Justice Councils (RJC) National Occupational Standards.
- Raising awareness of RA at every opportunity.
- Training of staff in RA (10 CRC and 2 LA officers trained in March, 2015.).
- Maintaining and developing links with HMP Holme House, Kirklevington and Deerbolt YOI.

Benefits of RA



RA is traditionally a victim led / focused process. This project has not lost sight of that premise.

- Victim satisfaction being 97% (previous project)
- Distinct benefit for victims engaging in the process. This includes both direct & indirect processes.
- Victims demonstrate an interest in the progress of offender/harmer
- Feedback on progress is provided to them

Quote: I have spoken with the victim & he was very positive about the whole experience, describing it as humbling for both parties. He was appreciative of the work which had gone into the planning preparation. Thanks for an excellent piece of work – well done.

Jenny Mooney – Governor HMP Holme House

Offender/Harmer Perspective



- Has provided them with an insight into their offending & an opportunity to repair harm caused
- Opportunity to explain – not excuse their actions
- Allows them to ‘get the guilt out’
- Therapeutic for family & themselves
- Providing an aid to recovery, rehabilitation & reintegration
- Reduction in re-offending with those we have worked with – currently stands at 75% (in the longer term the offending rate may increase given the unpredictability of some of the client group)

Offender/Harmer Perspective



Quote Ex Offender...

“I wanted to try to make amends I couldn't believe how getting involved in the meeting helped me get things off my chest..... I felt on a high afterwards, It was the right thing to do and has helped me move forward.....”

Quote Police Officer – IOM

“ I have looked at offender..... and his offending patterns. His offending has reduced dramatically, I have examined what we have done differently this year and the only difference in our approach has been the introduction of RA with him.”

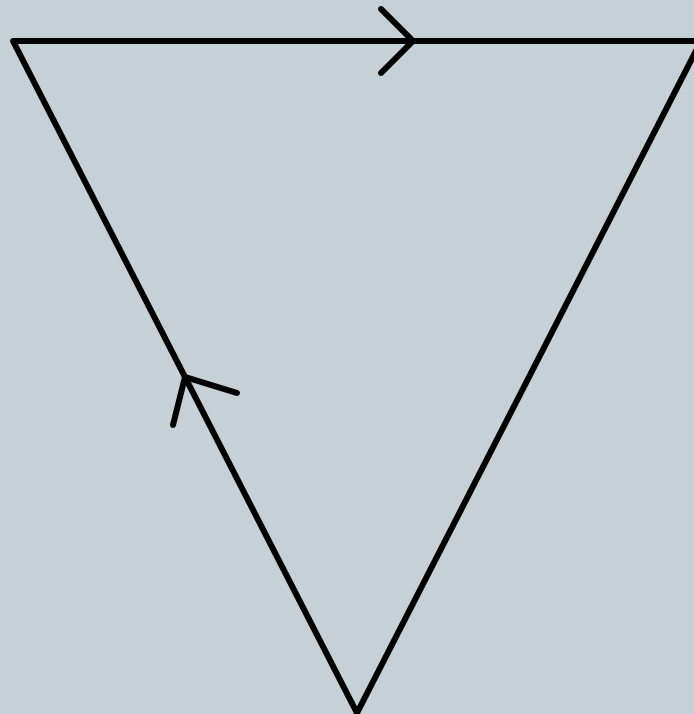
Participation Model



Working with partners we identify/examine the potential of offenders to participate in RA.

In addition to acceptance of guilt, taking responsibility for actions, and wanting to move forward, we are looking for the following from individuals.

Readiness



Ability

Willingness

Discussion



- RA clearly creates a catalyst / pathway to change / recovery.
- RA now being gradually integrated into a broader co-ordinated approach.
- Offenders who have participated in the process are now wishing to use it for purposes of repairing fractured relationships.
- Local agencies entering into greater collaboration with the aim to embed RA.
- Risk: failure to buy into RA philosophy – this is being mitigated by demonstrable success, RA delivered to a high standard, and support being given to agencies in their understanding of the wider applications of RA.
- As with the IOM hub, RA needs to become an integrated part of daily business, and not seen as a bolt on.
- Funding support is crucial for the development of RA.

Initiative 2

Low level crime and anti-social behaviour.



- Aim to offer all victims of low level crime and anti-social behaviour an opportunity to engage in RA.
- Ensuring relevant people are trained in RA, thus enabling them to deliver restorative interventions, including face-to-face meetings.
- Adherence to the Restorative Cleveland service promise, whereby RA will be developed collaboratively with the Restorative Cleveland multi – agency group.
- Work in Stockton progressing along specific lines:
- Ensuring processes are in place to enable effective RA delivery.
- Identification and discussion with key agencies in the benefits of RA application, e.g. youth offending, schools, housing, recovery services, environment, enforcement, troubled families and victim services.
- Identifying those individuals trained in RA and supporting them in the delivery of RA. (currently six cases identified with two having gone to face-to-face meetings).

Discussion



- RA can be very beneficial in the area of low level crime and anti-social behaviour, as it is with the more serious end of the spectrum.
- It is not always the most serious nature of a crime/incident that has the most impact on people.
- As with initiative 1 the benefits are one and the same for victims and offenders; this initiative having the added benefit of potentially diverting offenders away from crime and anti-social behaviour, thereby breaking that cycle of offending at an early stage.
- The challenges, issues and risks for this initiative are as those covered in the discussion section of initiative 1.