



Restorative Gloucestershire

Bringing people together to put things right

What are Restorative Practices?





What is Restorative Practice?

Restorative practice is wide field of approaches that includes restorative justice.

Restorative practice can be used anywhere to prevent conflict, build relationships and repair harm by enabling people to communicate effectively and positively. Restorative practice is increasingly being used in schools, children's services, workplaces, hospitals, communities and the criminal justice system.

Restorative practice can involve both a proactive approach to preventing harm and conflict and activities that repair harm where conflicts have already arisen.

Where the latter is required, a facilitated restorative meeting can be held. This enables individuals and groups to work together to improve their mutual understanding of an issue and jointly reach the best solution. But in many cases a less formal approach, based on restorative principles, may be more appropriate.

Restorative practice supports people to recognize that all of their activities affect others and that people are responsible for their choices and actions and can be held accountable for them. It enables people to reflect on how they interact with each other and consider how best to prevent harm and conflict.

The Restorative Justice Council 2015

What is Restorative Justice?

Restorative justice gives victims the opportunity to explain to offenders the real impact of their actions and get answers to their questions. It holds offenders to account for what they have done, makes them understand what they have done, take responsibility for their actions and make amends. It has a significant impact in reducing reoffending rates and increases levels of confidence and satisfaction in the Criminal Justice System.

Restorative justice can be used at any stage of the Criminal Justice System and can be used for resolving non-criminal harm such as low level ASB and neighbourhood disputes. It can also be used for resolving internal disputes and some disciplinary matters – subject to an organisation's guidelines.

Restorative justice has the power to change people's lives.

What is Restorative Gloucestershire?

Restorative Gloucestershire is a group of statutory, non-statutory and voluntary sector partners who have joined together with the aim of offering all people who come into contact with the Criminal Justice System or who come into conflict in the community an opportunity to participate in a Restorative Intervention.

The Restorative Gloucestershire hub, which sits at the centre of the partnership, provides advice, assistance and guidance to existing, new and potential partners. They work with other service providers to ensure that Gloucestershire remains at the forefront of best practice and that this best practice is shared. They also work strategically with the Ministry of Justice and the Restorative Justice Council.

Restorative Gloucestershire has the following aims:

- »»» Develop the use of Restorative Practices across services operating throughout communities in Gloucestershire.
- »»» Build on existing work where Restorative Practices impact positively on outcomes, in order to develop a strategy designed to embed Restorative Practices county-wide.
- »»» Implement the use of Restorative Practice Philosophy, not just Restorative Justice Interventions.
- »»» Place an emphasis on the proactive community and relationship building side of Restorative Practice, as well as dealing with the reactive side of Restorative Practice.
- »»» Employ agreed protocols that strengthen relationships and seek to repair harm when relationships break down.
- »»» Be a central hub and centre of excellence for Restorative Practices in Gloucestershire by:
 - Providing training, advice and guidance.

- Offering a Restorative Interventions service using qualified, experienced volunteer facilitators.
- Promoting and supporting the use of Restorative Practices across the County.
- Setting up a system of support for all Restorative Practitioners operating within Gloucestershire.

Restorative Gloucestershire is funded by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and is governed and held accountable to the Restorative Gloucestershire Steering Group.

Eligibility of cases

In theory any case is eligible for restorative justice, however some cases present certain difficulties, in particular cases that involve **domestic violence** between partners or ex-partners. Where there is any doubt over eligibility but it is thought that the parties would benefit from a restorative intervention the case should be referred for assessment and approval.

Suitability of participants

Do either of the parties deny any involvement?

Do either of the parties exhibit attitudes or intentions which could lead to re-victimisation or harm?

Do either of the parties have mental health problems which may make them unsuitable?

Do either of the parties have substance abuse problems that would make them unsuitable?

Feedback from Participants

(names have been changed)

Elyn

"I would say to anyone considering going through RJ, please do it for your own sake and for the sake of the offender. I'd encourage anybody to at least try and do it, and I hope in the future to be able to facilitate that."

Jane

Until you have participated in restorative justice you can't explain how powerful it is. You see the offender in a different light. It has had such an impact on our lives. It really was a fabulous thing – it has made such a difference. We have come out of it the other side so much stronger. We are able to move on with our lives. It's the best thing we ever did. I support it 100% and I think it should be available throughout the country.

David

My experience of taking part in the restorative justice conference was good, but don't misunderstand me it was the hardest thing I have ever had to do in my life. Although I am glad that I did; it gave me a chance to get my side of the story across to both sets of families, instead of them just having the evidence.

It also gave the opportunity to apologise to them. I would recommend RJ to other people but I think that they need to be strong enough mentally as it was an extremely hard thing to do; not just during the meeting, but afterwards as well. I think it would help to show people with less remorse what they are doing to their victims and maybe help to prevent them re-offending.

William

Restorative Justice has given me back my conscience. Now I can't do anything without thinking of what it will do to someone else. I would recommend restorative justice to anyone; it's life changing.

Want to know more?

Contact the Restorative Gloucestershire on:

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Visit our website:

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@RJGlos