

NEWS

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New Restorative Gloucestershire Staff

Jane Durston has joined the team as a full-time restorative justice facilitator. Jane began volunteering with Restorative Gloucestershire in September 2017. For the last 2.5 years Jane has worked as a Supported Housing Officer for people with multiple and complex needs including mental health issues, requiring high support in Taylor House. Many were prolific offenders and the vast majority had substance misuse issues. The client group sometimes came from street homelessness or custody.

Jane has a Diploma in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), a PG Diploma in Counselling Psychotherapy and an MA in Critical and Creative Writing. She has experience in administrative posts and settings, and served as Operations Manager and CEO in two medical therapy charities. She has published articles in several magazines on CBT including the Canadian Lymphoedema Framework magazine and produced leaflets on the use of

CBT for the psycho-social aspects of long-term conditions such as lymphoedema (one of which is in use by the British Lymphology Society) and one for Lipoedema UK which is about to be published.

She says **“I really enjoy working with people in the community and hope I can contribute to the team with a challenging sense of humour, enthusiasm for the work and chocolate where the need arises”**.



Above: Franki Grant & Jane Durston

Franki Grant is the Administrator for Restorative Gloucestershire. She joined Restorative Gloucestershire as a volunteer facilitator and admin in October 2017. Franki brings youth to the team, having graduated

in 2017 from The University of Gloucestershire with a First Class BSc (Hons) in Criminology.

Franki grew up in Spain and did not attend school in the UK until she was almost 9 years old. At this point she learnt how to read and write- having caught up with her peers by the time she reached secondary school. She prides herself on being part of a large family and is very family orientated.

She has been on field trips to Florida and Canada as part of her Criminology degree. This has given her the opportunity to experience the contrast in CJS of different countries. Franki recently joined Catch 22 as a Volunteer Prison Resettlement Case Manager. She believes in lifelong learning and wishes to gain more

experience of different areas in the CJS. Her interest in restorative practice began in university where she did a module on the use of RJ and was inspired by the use of RP she saw in Canada.

Restorative Practice in Schools

Gloucestershire County Council, have partnered with Restorative Gloucestershire in an exciting new initiative which brings together the expertise of both organisations, intent on improving the school experience

for children and young people in Gloucestershire. Our focus is to **reduce exclusions of young people, build stronger relationships, develop emotional literacy and resilience and have more pupil**

involvement in their school communities.

After an initial pilot scheme in 2016/17 of 2 schools, we now have 8 participating restorative practice schools: **Beaufort Co-operative**

Academy, Moat Primary School, Harewood Junior School, Calton Primary School, Grange Primary School, Tuffley Primary School, The Dean Academy and Tewkesbury School. I had the pleasure of visiting Moat Primary School recently, witnessing a calm, supportive, respectful environment - a far cry from the school before the implementation of restorative practice which had an extremely high rate of exclusions and a daily battle with challenging behavior.

Restorative practice in schools is not all focused on pupil behavior and repairing harm, that's only part of it. For it to really work in a school it has to be embedded in the school culture, in every interaction with pupils, and between teachers themselves. Lessons need to be delivered in an inclusive way, encouraging participation of every child, in a safe and respectful environment. Gone is the punitive system, replaced with restorative conversations based on high challenge and high support. Each school has trained all their staff, not just teachers, as well as Restorative

Stars & Champions who provide peer to peer support. It is indeed a total change in school culture and as such takes time to become fully integrated.

So what is our project doing to support these schools? 22 volunteers with an incredible wealth of life skills, experience and professional knowledge have now been recruited as an additional resource for the 8 restorative practice schools. These volunteers are Gloucestershire County Council volunteers coordinated by myself, based with the Restorative Gloucestershire team at Waterwells. After training in September and October, they will co-facilitate level 2 interventions alongside a trained school's restorative practice facilitator, for more serious conflicts such as bullying, inappropriate sexual behavior, etc. to resolve conflict and re-

pair harm. Volunteers may also help to repair harm in lower levels of conflict, typically using detention time more effectively.

We will review this exciting new project in the autumn to see how it evolves further with feedback from volunteers.

Julia Davey, Restorative Practice Volunteer Coordinator



The Use of Mediation Skills in Neighbourhood Cases

Community mediation is a framework of support and facilitation for groups of two or more people to enable those involved to come to a positive resolution, improve relationships and reach a settlement of negative feelings and grievances. These issues may be presenting over a long or short period, impartial facilitators support those involved to understand the underlying conflict issues before reaching an agreement at a facilitated meeting. This can address conflict, build understanding and strengthen relationships where feelings can be shared, difficult situations can be talked about in a safe environment and begin to rebuild and restore community.

Example of this – There were two households from different backgrounds, ethnicities and lifestyles,

who began living next door to each other. An elderly gentleman, *Mr Hartwell, lived alone. He had few visitors and enjoyed visits from his niece, but she lived some distance away. A young woman, *Miss Tansley, moved in next door with her three young children and shortly afterwards, her new partner also moved in. Miss Tansley did not leave her home very often.

Mr Hartwell sometimes felt quite isolated. Miss Tansley was very anxious. **Mr Hartwell and Miss Tansley had never spoken to each other.** Mr Hartwell began to hear Miss Tansley's children and thought they were quite noisy. Sometimes they were so noisy, he worried what was happening. He began to go outside and rant loudly about the noise, questioning what was going on. Miss Tans-

ley and her son felt frightened about this.

Mr Hartwell and Miss Tansley approached their housing association to raise their concerns about their neighbour. The housing association suggested to both neighbours they make a referral to Restorative Gloucestershire for community mediation. The Neighbours agreed– though they were unsure it would work. **Each had some ideas about how this might work, if only their neighbour would change, or move house.**

Two facilitators visited each neighbour. They explained the process and assured them their individual meeting was confidential. They explored their concerns and what they would like to achieve from a restorative meeting. Both neighbours explained

the impact the poor relationship was having on their lives. Both wanted to feel safe in their homes. Both wanted their relationship to be on better terms; where they could greet each other and maybe even become more involved in their community.

The meeting took place in a neutral venue. It took one hour. Everyone was asked to agree ground rules, including turning off mobile phones, treating one another with respect and not interrupting when the other was speaking. The neighbours were asked to share

their views and see whether they could agree to help meet one another's needs at certain times or days, by changing some of their behaviour.

They were able to agree a plan, which covered most of their concerns. The plan included their ideas on how to communicate in the future, without shouting, or withdrawing, or complaining to the housing association. While the facilitators drew up the plan (also known as an outcome agreement), refreshments were served and a more informal chat took

place—they shared a little bit about their history. After both parties had signed the agreement; the facilitators asked permission to share a copy of the agreement with the housing association, but both parties preferred they did not, on this occasion. Their wishes were respected. After the meeting, a copy of the agreement was sent to both neighbours in the post. A follow-up meeting will take place in three months.

***names of participants have been changed to protect identification.**

Case Study: Criminal Damage

Background: This case involved criminal damage to a number of surfaces in a primary school. This included various derogatory comments directed towards the school and football slogans which had been scratched into the signs and other items of school property.

A previous school pupil with learning difficulties was known to show his animosity towards the school, by being vocal to members of staff on various occasions in the preceding months/years.

When this pupil was at school it was customary for the senior year to read aloud a passage in the school assembly. He was very anxious about giving this presentation and owing to his condition, was having panic attacks. He felt that the teacher he had at the time, played on this anxiety and made fun of him. Due to this bad experience he suffered negative long term effects, which continued for many years. This resulted in him receiving counselling from a privately funded counsellor.

Knowing the possible suspect for the criminal damage and his previous history, the head teacher was

content for the crime to be resolved by way of restorative practice. The Ex-pupil confirmed he was responsible for causing the damage and explained his motive for causing the damage went back to his childhood experiences, some **40 years** previously. The key element to his current circumstances was being made to talk in front of the whole school as a child.

This resolution was shared with the school and was agreed, following referral to the board of governors for the school. A requirement that dialogue was held with the counsellor to ensure it would be in the best interest of the ex-pupil. The counsellor confirmed that this would not be detrimental to the Ex-pupil. The governors also considered that it should be a good experience for the current pupils and teachers.

Actions: A number of appointments were made and for a variety of reasons altered but finally in March 2018 a school visit was arranged. An address on the

Although a little belated I wish to thank you for all you have done for [redacted]
He was very pleased that he was able to speak before a crowd something he never thought he would be able to do. I believe that we owe you a great vote of thanks for arranging this and supporting him.
I do think that the support you gave him has really helped his social phobia.
Thanks and best wishes

Resolution: In viewing the nature of the damage and the potential for further damage to occur in the future, the decision was made to consider addressing the root cause of the ill-feeling felt by the ex-pupil. During discussion he was willing to find an opportunity not only to talk in front of pupils at the school, but also send a message. His message to the children would be that you should speak out, if you are subjected to something that causes you to become upset. He wanted to share information about who to approach about problems.

“Effects of Bullying” was given to the pupils by the reporting officer. During the address the Ex-pupil gave his account to the class, reflecting on how **what happened to him 40 years earlier still had an effect on him today.**

On reflection, the ex-pupil found the experience beneficial for him and this effected a noticeable change in his demeanour.

Following this process, the father of the Ex-pupil emailed his thanks to the officer on the case.

RESTORATIVE GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Gloucestershire Constabulary HQ
Waterwells Business Park, Quedgeley,
Gloucester
GL2 2AN

☎ 01452 75 4542

www.restorativegloucestershire.co.uk

Email:
RestorativeGloucestershireCaseReferrals@glou
cestershire.pnn.police.uk

Follow us on Twitter: @RJGlos

*Bringing people together to put
things right*

Upcoming Events and Training

- 26th July: Volunteer Group Supervision.
- 6th September: Volunteer Group Supervision.
- 11th-13th September: RJ Practitioner Training.
- 18th-20th September: School Volunteer Facilitator Training.
- 22nd September: volunteer Skill Share Event with Victim Support.
- 2nd-4th October: School Volunteer Facilitator and Schoolbeat Training.
- 18th October: Volunteer Group Supervision.
- 29th October : Restorative Gloucestershire Annual Event.
- 18th-25th November: International RJ Week.
- 1st December: Volunteer Group supervision.

Next edition will include:

- ◆ What is restorative justice and what is restorative practice.
- ◆ Family conferencing.

www.restorativegloucestershire.co.uk

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 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 Restorative Justice Council.

We aim to:

- * Develop the use of restorative practice 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 the reactive side of restorative practice.
- * Employ agreed protocols that strengthen relationships and seek to repair harm when relationships break down.

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.

What is restorative practice?

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

Restorative practice can be used anywhere to prevent conflict, build relationships and repair harm 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 recognise 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.