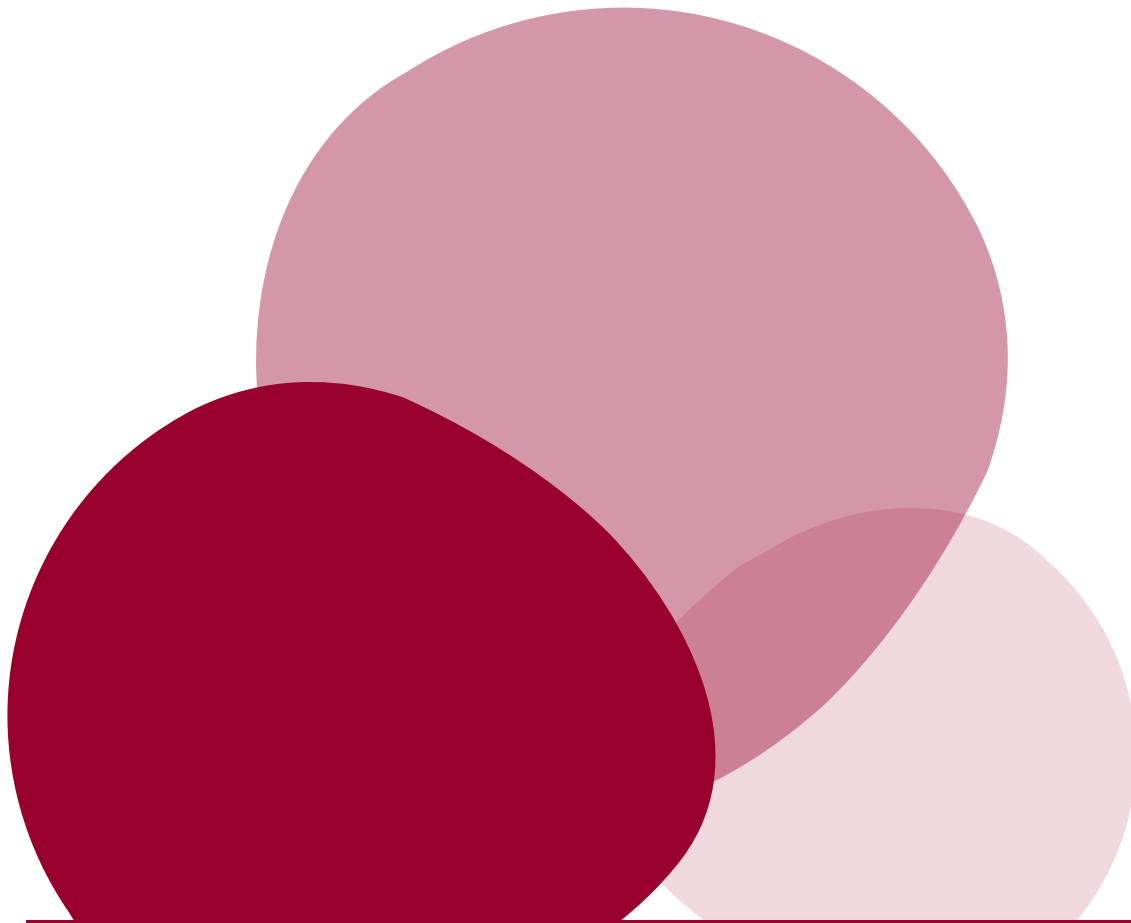




Ministry  
of Justice



# 'ONE YEAR ON' PROGRESS REPORT AGAINST THE 2013 RESTORATIVE JUSTICE ACTION PLAN

The 2013 Restorative Justice (RJ) Action Plan for the criminal justice system (CJS) was published in November 2013. The aim in implementing the actions set out in the plan was to underpin and support evolving strategies for RJ across the CJS. The action plan was also intended to serve as a framework to enable the delivery of RJ within different delivery models that meet the needs and aims of a range of agencies.

We have made excellent progress against the plan over the last 12 months at a time of significant changes in the way services are delivered across the CJS and we are moving closer to realising the vision as set out in the 2013 action plan:

- RJ is safe, of a good quality and focused on victims' needs.
- Victims can make informed decisions about participating in RJ at appropriate points in the criminal justice process.
- If victims want to participate in RJ (this is subject to the agreement of the offender), they will know how to access it and any RJ will be delivered by a trained facilitator.
- A RJ activity will only take place where an assessment by a trained facilitator indicates that this would be an appropriate course of action for all relevant parties.
- RJ is available irrespective of whether the offender in the case is an adult or a young person. Offenders will be encouraged to take part in RJ where appropriate.

A new action plan covering the period to 31 March 2018 is being published in November 2014.

# 1. STRENGTHENING CAPACITY

Skilled practitioners are needed to work safely with victims and offenders. To ensure the quality of service is consistently high they should be trained and working to agreed standards. To strengthen capacity and ensure the quality of delivery across the CJS, the following actions will be taken:

<p><b>1a.</b> Develop Key RJ Standards for training, practice, supervision, and service provision of RJ.</p>	<p><b>1b.</b> Develop an accreditation framework to build and enable the growth of quality services, enable standards to be met and monitored and quality provision to be recognised.</p>	<p><b>1c.</b> Carry out a thorough assessment of what products and guidance already exists and if necessary develop high-level strategic guidance on the development of RJ services that will be underpinned by existing more detailed guidance.</p>	<p><b>1d.</b> Explore methods by which RJ providers within the CJS can be encouraged to meet the Key RJ Standards and Quality Assurance criteria.</p>	<p><b>1e.</b> Contribute to the development and delivery of other relevant Government policies, such as the Rehabilitation Programme, to ensure that RJ is properly considered and any mechanisms available to increase and improve RJ provision are utilised.</p>
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Progress is as follows:

- The Restorative Service Standards and the Restorative Services Quality Mark (RSQM) were launched by the Restorative Justice Council on 28th January 2014. The RSQM, which is valid for three years, is an independent assessment of the ability of organisations to deliver RJ services and provides reassurances to both commissioners and users of these services. The RSQM has been positively received and the Restorative Justice Council is working with a wide range of organisations operating in the CJS that have expressed an interest in achieving the quality mark.
- A range of ongoing activities are encouraging RJ providers to meet the Restorative Service Standards and apply for the quality mark. For example:
  - Terms and conditions of grants to Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) to deliver victim services include a requirement to ensure that RJ services are safe and competent.
  - National RJ Manager for Policing is working with both the police and PCCs to ensure effective delivery of RJ services.
  - NOMS is using the current commissioning for prisons round to highlight the standards and RSQM including an expectation that prisons would work to the standards.
- A review highlighted some gaps in strategic guidance for particular audiences (updated guidance for the police, guidance relating to RJ provision within the youth secure estate) which will be taken forward through the new action plan.
- Input to Transforming Rehabilitation programme has led to:
  - The development of Community Rehabilitation Company contracts so that Police and Crime Commissioners can, if they wish, access RJ provision via these contracts without the need to carry out their own procurement exercise; and
  - Clear messages to potential service providers (via the Target Operating Model) of the benefits of RJ for offenders and the importance of delivering safe and competent RJ.

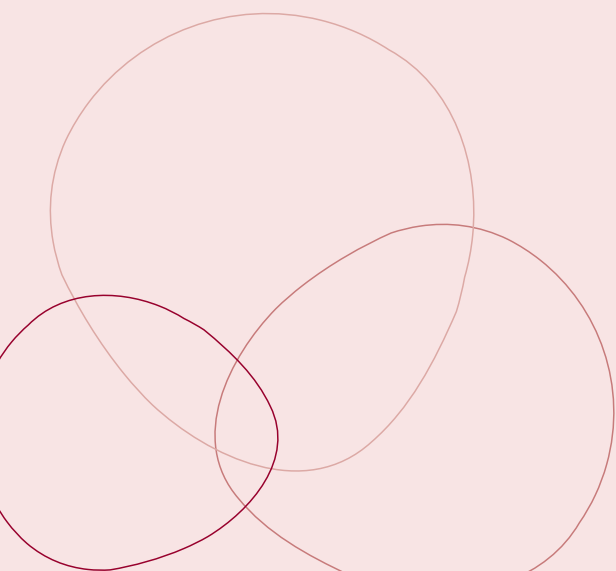
## 2. RAISING AWARENESS

The Government is committed to increasing the use of RJ across the CJS. However, there is currently low awareness of RJ with both the public and criminal justice professionals. We need to have consistent messages related to the purpose and value of RJ, presented in a way that captures the victim's attention and builds confidence. Information and guidance needs to be shared between the local CJS, community services and networks, including local authorities. These aims are consistent with the Government's 2012 responses to the Getting it right for victims and witnesses and Effective community sentences consultations. To raise awareness (and therefore increase its use) of RJ the following actions will be taken:

<p><b>2a.</b> Identify points in the criminal justice process at which information about RJ and/or the offer of participation in a RJ process can be made to victims and consider whether any wider process changes (other than possible data sharing arrangements - see 3c.) could lead to speedier contact with RJ providers.</p>	<p><b>2b.</b> Deliver a communications campaign to raise awareness of with the public, CJS practitioners and senior leaders across other sectors e.g. local authorities.</p>
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Progress is as follows:

- The initial focus has been on ensuring information on and, where appropriate, the offer of RJ is made at the point of the initial referral to victim services. The project team continues to liaise with MoJ colleagues to ensure that provision of information on RJ forms part of the processes being developed by PCCs to refer victims of crime to the services they require. National RJ Manager for Policing is engaging with PCCs directly on this issue.
- International Restorative Justice Week (16-23 November 2014) will see the launch of the 'What would you do?' communications and awareness campaign. The social media campaign centres on a dedicated Facebook page hosting a series of short, YouTube case study videos designed to demonstrate what the RJ process looks like from a victim's perspective. In addition, there will be a short engaging teaser video intended to spark debate around RJ and raise awareness.



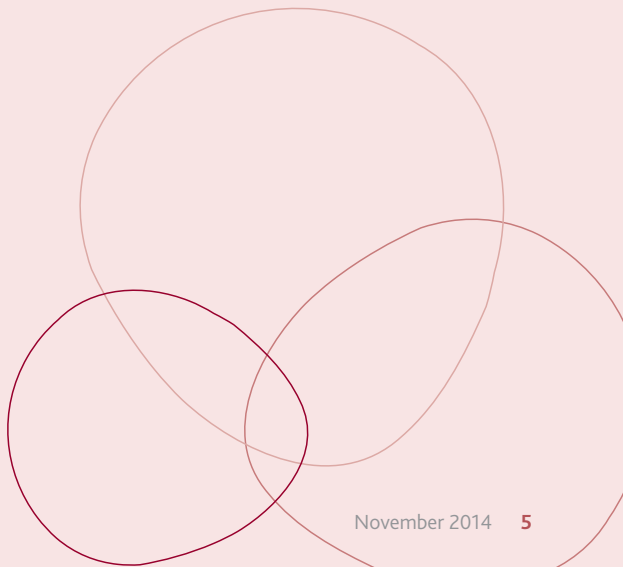
### 3. IMPROVING ACCESS

The Government’s vision is that access to RJ should be available for victims at all stages of the CJS. This will allow victims to ask to participate in RJ at a time that is right for them. For some victims, this may happen immediately after an incident, for others it may be post-sentencing. To make sure that the victims can access trained RJ facilitators and that local services receive referrals the following action will be taken:

<p><b>3a.</b> Consider whether new legislation or amendments to existing legislation are required.</p>	<p><b>3b.</b> Improve the existing public database of RJ Facilitators, allowing people to locate their nearest service or local accredited practitioners.</p>	<p><b>3c.</b> Introduce a high-level agreement/guidance document on information sharing within the CJS to increase referrals and ensure that information can be passed quickly and easily. This should acknowledge and complement existing data sharing arrangements and comply with relevant legislation.</p>	<p><b>3d.</b> Take steps to encourage local services to build partnerships, involving both victim and offender services to improve the availability of RJ locally.</p>
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Progress is as follows:

- A provision in the Offender Rehabilitation Act 2014, which received Royal Assent in March 2014, makes it explicit that RJ can form part of the new rehabilitation activity requirement.
- The Restorative Justice Council has developed a new RJ Practitioner Register microsite for practitioners applying for RJ accreditation and is also working towards improving the existing public database of RJ facilitators allowing people to locate their nearest service or local accredited practitioners.
- A practitioner’s guide to sharing information for the purposes of RJ is being developed in conjunction with a small group of practitioners. It will provide an overview of relevant legislation and advice on how it applies in the RJ context. It will be published within the coming months,
- Since taking up post in April 2014, National RJ Manager for Policing has visited the vast majority of Offices of PCCs to discuss partnership working and their approaches to commissioning of victim-initiated RJ. There is a clear understanding across the country of the importance of partnership working to build a successful restorative programme for victims, communities and offenders alike.



## 4. EVIDENCE

Commissioning bodies will have a responsibility to ensure that data collection and where possible detailed evaluation is under taken as they develop their local models, processes and programmes. Data collection will help improve local performance and monitoring ability. More detailed evidence gathered during evaluations may be used to understand effect on victims and offenders of different RJ activities across full range of offences at various stages of the CJS. The 2012 Criminal Justice Joint Inspection report Facing up to Offending: use of RJ in the criminal justice system provides a good account of thematic issues. However, it does not provide a detailed account of the criminal justice system practice and its effect in each of the sectors - youth, adult, out of court and pre-and post-sentencing. This lack of knowledge needs to be addressed. To improve our understanding of RJ and to influence policy development the following actions will be taken:

<p><b>4a.</b> Make data recording/monitoring a requirement of national accreditation standards without placing an undue burden on providers. Consider how to encourage data collection and monitoring from organisations that do not apply for accreditation.</p>	<p><b>4b.</b> Identify gaps in knowledge of the effectiveness of RJ processes and recommend future research projects.</p>
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Progress is as follows:

- Restorative Service Standard 6 (Monitoring, Evaluation and Performance Improvement) is:
  - *The organisation defines what its output and outcome measures are and makes sure that they relate to its aims for restorative practice. Monitoring is undertaken in relation to these measures and evaluations made of performance against the measures.*
  - *Targets are set where necessary. Data is collected and recorded accurately and in accordance with national guidance and legislation from RJC or the UK Government. The organisation networks with other organisations providing restorative practice and learns from them. Feedback and user satisfaction data form part of the performance measurement process.*
- *Improvements to processes are made based on the data obtained and evaluations undertaken.*
- With funding from the Ministry of Justice, the Restorative Justice Council has commissioned research into the provision of RJ in the criminal justice system across England and Wales. This will provide valuable insight into the current landscape. The Ministry of Justice will continue to engage with researchers and academics in the field to keep abreast of latest findings and developments and will disseminate learning to practitioners as appropriate.

