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Youth resettlement in North Wales, and the Resettlement Broker Project

Hampson, Kathryn; Hazel, Neal

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Youth resettlement in North Wales, and the Resettlement Broker Project

Professor Neal Hazel, University of Salford
Dr Kathy Hampson, Llamau



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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	2
Table of Contents.....	3
Chapter One: Resettlement – evolution, evidence, and policy.....	4
Chapter Two: Developing the Project.....	13
Chapter Three: Introduced Initiatives	25
Chapter Four: Profile of young people being released from custody	32
Chapter Five: Resettlement support received	43
Chapter Six: Impact - Compliance during supervision	58
Chapter Seven: The experiences of young people and their parents/carers.....	67
Chapter Eight: Practitioners' views.....	84
Chapter Nine: Policymakers' views	98
Chapter Ten: Lessons learned and recommendations	104
References	109
Appendices	113

Chapter One: Resettlement – evolution, evidence, and policy

Kathy Hampson

Introduction

As part of an initiative to pilot a new approach to improving resettlement outcomes for young people, Llamau was commissioned by Youth Justice Board (YJB) Cymru and Welsh Government to deliver two Resettlement Broker Projects, one in North Wales and one across Southern Wales. This report concerns North Wales. It examines the policy and practice relating to resettlement, including with the development of the Broker Project, and the profile and experiences of the children released from custody over the two year period to end March 2015.

Resettlement has been an important part of the YJB's plans for Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) for nearly a decade, since it published a national, regional, and local framework: *Youth Resettlement: A Framework for Action* (2006). The importance of getting resettlement right was underlined through the persistently high levels of re-offending committed by those given custodial sentences, compared with those given community sentences (Home Office, 1998, cited in Hagell, 2004). Moreover, much of this reoffending occurs quickly, with a third of these young people reoffending within a month of release (Hazel et al, 2010).

Recent figures have shown a marked reduction in recent years of custody use for young people, now standing at 56 % lower than a decade ago (YJB/Ministry of Justice, 2015). In Wales, the custody figures are even more reduced, with 38 young people from Wales recorded as being in custody in December 2014 (Ministry of Justice, 2014a), compared with 93 in April 2011 (Ministry of Justice, 2011).

There have also been decreases in, previously somewhat intransigent, re-offending levels of this population of young people. Figures for 2013/14 describe a reoffending rate for young people who have been in custody as 67.9 %, which compares favourably with the figure from the publication date of the resettlement framework (2006) of 74.5 % (YJB/ Ministry of Justice, 2015). This perhaps demonstrates some effectiveness of the framework, and the range of projects which subsequently were initiated, the evaluations of which are discussed later in the chapter to identify effective resettlement practice. However, these figures are still clearly unacceptably high.

Methodology

The Resettlement Broker Projects were intended to improve resettlement processes, and subsequently, outcomes for the young people concerned, by the introduction of a Resettlement Broker into each active area (one in North Wales and one across Southern Wales). The Broker's initial role was to map current processes for resettlement, and instigate changes which would improve practice. This was going to be evaluated through a simultaneous measurement of difference made, resulting in this report.

The evaluation aspect of the Project required an identification of what current practice looked like, then measurement of process differences made by the Brokers. Alongside this, the profile of young people being resettled after custody in each area was constructed through a data-sweep of all young people being given Detention and Training Orders (DTO) since before the Project began, also incorporating how resettlement is experienced for all involved, as they go through the process (through qualitative interviews). The Project sought to identify factors associated with successful resettlement, as measured by prevention of offending and increased wellbeing, potentially indicating lessons which could be learned for future good resettlement practice. This project also offered an opportunity to investigate what difference the Welsh factor makes to resettlement.

What is resettlement?

Resettlement has been defined as “the effective reintegration of imprisoned offenders back into the community beyond the period of any licence to which they may be subject” (HMIP, 2001). However, much of the research identifying risk factors for offending agrees that many young people are subject to a multiplicity of disadvantage in many areas of their lives (theorised into four domains of individual, school, family, and community; West & Farrington, 1973; Crow et al., 2004; YJB, 2005), leading to the question as to whether they were ever settled in the first place (Hagell, 2004). Levitas et al (2007) talk of ‘deep exclusion’, which they define as ‘exclusion across more than one domain or dimension of disadvantage, resulting in severe negative consequences for quality of life, well-being and future life chances’ (Levitas et al, 2007: 9). These young people appear to be more commonly imprisoned than those with more advantageous backgrounds (Jacobson et al, 2010), and the experience of custody may only have exacerbated already existent social exclusion, leaving the task of resettlement as one of integration (rather than *reintegration*) and inclusion.

More recently, with the rapid reduction in the use of custody for young people, resettlement in Wales has been reimagined to incorporate all young people within the youth justice system with resettlement or reintegration needs. This change has now been consolidated in the Youth Justice Board Cymru/Welsh Government strategy *Children and Young People First* as follows:

“Young people eligible for resettlement and reintegration support are those placed on remand, sentenced to custody or serving community sentences and are at risk of custody if their offending behaviour continues.”

(YJB/Welsh Government, 2014: 24)

The evolution of resettlement policy, and differences between England and Wales¹

Although the YJB’s framework for resettlement (YJB, 2006) was its initial policy response to the difficulties caused by poor resettlement practice, it had already funded a project (2005) through which 59 youth offending teams (YOTs) across England and Wales (four in Wales) offered voluntary resettlement support to custody leavers - the Resettlement and Aftercare Provision (RAP) project, which concentrated on those with substance use and/or mental health difficulties (YJB, 2010a). The Youth Crime Action Plan (HM Government, 2008), expanded RAP, and added further measures which led to the establishment of several resettlement consortia in England, based around specific custodial establishments. However, since the funding stream emanating from this policy document applied only to England, further development of resettlement activities in Wales stalled until 2009, when the Welsh Government funded a pilot of six Resettlement Support Panels (RSP) in YOTs in Wales, three of which were based in North Wales (Phillips et al, 2012).

RSPs were based on the Youth Inclusion and Support Panel model, used for prevention cases, bringing together a range of agencies to share the planning and accountability for services between the YOT and relevant services. Improved outcomes for young people and better working practices prompted YJB Cymru to make a key action for 2011/12 of encouraging all YOTs in Wales to develop such a panel. This was initially begun in Southern Wales through the establishment of a resettlement consortium (11 YOTs and 13 local authorities), centred around Parc Young Offenders Institution (YOI) and Hillside Secure Children’s Home (SCH). However, North Wales, not having the same type of population hubs as the South, developed differently: YJB Cymru liaised with the four North Wales YOTs (called ‘Youth Justice Service’ locally, so subsequently referred to throughout this report as YJS, excepting discussions of the national picture) and Hindley YOI, which was the preferred option for

¹ Much of this section has been adapted with permission from Thomas (2015). *Children First, Offender Second An aspiration or a reality for youth justice in Wales*. Unpublished PhD thesis.

boys from North Wales eligible for YOI provision, to find out what model of 'offer' for resettlement support would work.

The English provision developed as an offer to young people with resettlement needs at specific custodial establishments through the targeting of consortium service. However, the Welsh offer was targeted towards young people remanded or sentenced to custody, and those serving 'high end' community sentences at risk of custody if their offending behaviour continued (YJB 2012: 25). This therefore encompassed a wider range of young people in resettlement support services, possibly because a vastly reduced custodial population would render focusing solely on young people in custody unviable. It also allowed for better planning of 'after justice' support for young people whose statutory orders were ending.

Welsh resettlement activity was consolidated in 2013 into a shared work programme between YJB Cymru and the Welsh Government (YJB, 2013), having at its heart two Resettlement Broker Projects: one in South Wales to support the development of the Southern Wales Resettlement Consortium, the other in North Wales to support resettlement activity from Hindley YOI (Wigan). The English experience showed third sector engagement in the consortium to be vital for the provision of some services, which was mirrored in Southern Wales through the establishment of a third sector group (YJB, 2013). However, no such group was established in North Wales.

In 2014, both the UK and Welsh Governments issued their respective plans for resettlement activity, amidst their wider plans for youth justice more generally. The UK Government's strategy incorporated in its *Transforming Youth Custody* programme, which included the development of secure colleges (making education and training central to the regime), improving YOIs, and furthering a programme of work on resettlement (Ministry of Justice, 2014c). This programme included improving access to suitable supported accommodation, to education training and employment, and the establishment of two new regional employer forums (Manchester and London) to support young people into suitable work opportunities. In addition, four new resettlement consortia would be established in high custody areas, with specific funding for their development (Ministry of Justice, 2014d).

The Welsh Government decided to consult, through the publication of a White Paper *Prevention of Offending by Young People*, regarding placing a duty on local authorities and health boards. It was envisaged that this would be delivered through the establishment of Regional Reintegration and Resettlement Partnerships (RRRPs). Each RRRP would be supported by a Reintegration and Resettlement Broker, who would 'establish and embed regional processes to improve reintegration and resettlement outcomes for young people' (Welsh Government, 2014: 8). Also included in these proposals was the availability of voluntary support at the end of a statutory order for young people, preferably from non-criminal agencies – the 'after justice' referred to above.

This White Paper was not progressed into legislation, as it coincided with a report from the Silk Commission (which was reviewing the constitutional arrangements in Wales), identifying youth justice as an area for devolution (Commission on Devolution in Wales, 2014). However, the Welsh Government stated its intent to work with YJB Cymru through a joint youth justice strategy, which resulted in the strategy document *Children and Young People First* (YJB/ Welsh Government, 2014). This strategy set out the vision for 'reintegration and resettlement' at the end of sentence, widened out the remit of resettlement (as explained earlier) and indicated that RRRPs would be established throughout Wales, under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

What makes for good resettlement? Findings from the literature

Resettlement arrangements originated in probation where prisoners were being supervised on licence after custody, and have long been acknowledged as needing a multi-agency approach

(Hagell, 2004). The HM Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP, 2001) identified a need for collaboration between prisons and probation by blurring the boundary between the two. Youth Justice was already working collaboratively, as the Crime and Disorder Act (1998) set up YOTs to be formed from Social Services, Police, Probation, Education, and Health; however, there remained a weaker link between YOTs and custodial establishments. This inspection report also identified six areas which need to be addressed in order for effective resettlement to occur. This report concerned the adult estate, but the issues within the juvenile estate are not dissimilar. These areas are:

- priority for custodial establishments should be on resettlement activities (rather than just sentence planning, alongside an assumption that prisoners will be placed as close to home as possible),
- probation services need to maintain good contact with those in custody,
- 'resettlement needs of many prisoners are being severely neglected' in favour of an emphasis on security,
- better liaison is needed between probation and prison, better links should be forged with communities and the third sector,
- smarter working is needed with prisoners on shorter sentences who often miss out on provision

The juvenile secure estate struggles to concentrate on resettlement, with plans often pertaining mainly to in-custody activities (Bateman et al 2013). Security concerns (or poor behaviour) drastically reduce the chances of many young people being granted Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) which could be used for resettlement purposes (HMIP, 2011). The placement of young people further and further from home, as custodial provision shrinks, brings challenges to YOTs in maintaining meaningful contact with young people, also breaking established links between YOTs and institutions, as services are decommissioned (Bateman and Hazel, 2014). YOTs, being multiagency, have a wide range of expertise internally, but this can cause reluctance to look beyond the organisation for further support, especially into the third sector, which could potentially bring real added value. A high proportion of young people are given very short sentences (the average (mean) stay in custody for young people given DTOs in 2014 was 109 days), which reduces the chances of them being offered programmes in custody, whilst maintaining all the disadvantages caused by fracturing their connections with their local community (YJB/ Ministry of Justice, 2015; Gyateng et al, 2013).

Further to the HMIP report, an evaluation of several 'pathfinder' resettlement projects (in the adult estate) in 2003 made recommendations regarding effective resettlement, which echoed some of the earlier findings, including the need for short term prisoners to be able to access courses and services, the need for joined up working with a number of different agencies including the third sector, they found a high level of needs which were not met by any of the provisions put in place. There were several areas of need highlighted as important for successful resettlement, like accommodation, drug and alcohol work, and education training or employment (ETE) (Lewis et al, 2003).

The resettlement of young people has been developing since the introduction of the secure training order in 1998 (for Secure Training Centres) and its successor, the detention and training order (DTO) in 2000 (Hazel et al, 2002). In these sentences, in which half the time is served in custody, and half in the community. This allows for resettlement to be a major part of the original sentence, and encourages a flow between custody and community as one continual sentence (described in the reports already mentioned as a key area for development). The evaluation of this order identified some areas in which practice appeared to have improved, for example, effective co-working between custody and community (YOT) staff. However, they highlighted that there was a 'lack of preparation for the trainee's release' (Hazel et al, 2002: vii). They also mentioned failures in the

provision of accommodation where young people were not returning to the family home, delays and difficulties in arranging ETE, and arrangements in many areas which broke down quickly after release. They were also the first to identify that the point of release could be a worrying and disorientating time for young people, needing careful management (ibid.).

Research from Canada identified that merely supervising young people after custody was not enough to prevent re-offending, but that 'brokerage' was needed in order to deliver practical assistance with resettlement needs (Bracken, 2000, cited in Hagell, 2004). It was at this early stage that the need for the sentence to be treated as a whole, with all activity (both inside and out) being directed at the longer term aims of resettlement and consequential reductions in reoffending (Hagell, 2004). *The Key Elements of Effective Practice – Resettlement* (Hagell, 2004) started to identify different aspects of young people's lives where positive help would seem to improve resettlement arrangements, based on such studies as the DTO evaluation already mentioned. Particularly mentioned were ETE, housing, health, and family relations (support for which might help some young people to remain at home) (Hagell, 2004). Several of these themes outlined above were picked up by the YJB in their publication 'Youth Resettlement – a framework for action' (YJB, 2006). In this seven 'youth resettlement Pathways' were identified and detailed in terms of how each area could be tackled, the Pathways being: case management and transitions, accommodation, education training and employment, health, substance misuse, families, and finance benefits and debt (YJB, 2006). These Pathways have subsequently formed the basis for resettlement working in youth justice.

Findings from resettlement project evaluations

Many projects have since been initiated through a variety of funding streams to tackle the issue of resettlement both in the secure estate and in the community. Some of these still remain, whereas others were discontinued post-pilot funding. These have been evaluated to identify the successes, and where practice needs to improve, in order to develop more accurately what makes for successful resettlement.

Onside Project

This Nacro project, operating in Portland YOI between 1999 and 2002 with 15 to 18 year olds, appears to have been one of the first specifically offering resettlement support for young people in custody and beyond (Solanki, 2003). Young people were allocated keyworkers from the project, who worked with them to devise an action plan covering a range of needs, like accommodation, ETE, mental health, and financial needs. The keyworker role was to be a 'mentor, advisor and advocate' (Solanki, 2003: 2), as well as enabling access to 'relevant services', which implies a broker role, although the word 'broker' was not utilised. They found that this keyworker-young person relationship was pivotal to the success of the project, positively commented on by the young people themselves, especially after release. The reoffending rate for young people who did not maintain post-release contact was 73%, but for young people who accessed that support in the community it dropped to 39% (Solanki, 2003). This model was then replicated in 2002 for prisoners in the same establishment who were 17 to 21 years old (Onside II; Eagle & Gammampila, 2005). Advocacy was found to be an important element of their support, with workers negotiating support from other agencies. Young people reported having found their relationship with their worker beneficial, with improvements in practical areas such as having suitable accommodation, the arrangement of ETE placements, and helping to facilitate ROTL prior to release. However, there were no discernible improvements in reoffending, although the *seriousness* of that offending decreased (Eagle and Gammampila, 2005).

Daedalus Project

Young people at Feltham YOI were placed on a resettlement unit providing a range of resettlement-focused courses (like job readiness and living independently), and were also assigned a 'Resettlement Broker'² who's role was to provide practical support for the young person's individual resettlement needs. The evaluation of this project found that young people's motivation to engage was an issue, possibly caused by referral being through assessment and subsequent YJB placement, rather than opt-in from the young people; pressures to use the resource fully may also have led to some inappropriate placements (Ipsos MORI, 2012). However, important links were made with employers, who assisted with mock interviews and CV writing. Use was also made of ROTL for these, and other, activities in the community. The evaluation particularly identified the importance of close working relationships between the relevant agencies, consistent resettlement support which was individually tailored, and that structured routines established in custody are helpful but should also extend to evenings and weekends. The project appeared to achieve success in reducing offending, but figures for ETE involvement were disappointing, which affected the Payment by Results model used (and for which the targets were ETE-based).

Resettlement and Aftercare Provision (RAP)

Evaluation of RAP (a voluntary package of support offered from a RAP worker to a young person on a court order with substance use and/or mental health difficulties) showed some tentative successes in reducing reoffending rates and use of substances, although the numbers of young people involved were very small. Practitioners felt that it was useful for practical (and time-consuming) issues like accommodation and education to be addressed by a different member of staff than the YOT case manager, enabling a better division between 'care and control'. RAP workers also had access to an extra pot of money which they could use to address resettlement issues (YJB, 2010a). This programme was superseded by Integrated Resettlement Support (IRS), which sought to build on the findings from the RAP evaluation, and extended the provision to other areas not covered by RAP. While emphasis in RAP was focused on substance use and mental health, IRS allowed for any resettlement issue to be addressed for all custody leavers. IRS guidance calls for an 'integrated approach' with local authorities, and partnerships such as Community Safety, and Children and Young People's Partnerships, in order to gain the buy-in of local agencies and ensure sustainability (YJB, 2010b: 4).

Resettlement Support Panels (RSP)

Resettlement Support Panels were set up in six YOT areas of Wales, enabling the formation of high level multi-agency panels to address the issues of young people referred to them. Alongside this was extra funding, which YOTs used differently with some employing resettlement workers, and others using the money more directly with young people. The evaluation found that joint working between agencies had improved, and some outcomes for young people had also got better (although the report was cautious about attributing a causal relationship between the RSPs and drops in both reoffending and custody rates, as these were national features in any case). Workers involved in resettlement activities with the young people were more successful when they were not also involved in the more punitive side of case management; however, some young people were still reluctant to be involved, as they saw it as part of their punishment (Phillips et al, 2012). Since the funding ended, four of the panels no longer operate, but two are still successfully operating. Similarly, some areas have found funding elsewhere for the continuation of the resettlement worker role.

² The project's 'Resettlement Broker' role was different to the Wales Resettlement Broker Coordinator Projects (where the function of the Brokers was to improve the resettlement of young people through working strategically with the relevant agencies, rather than the young people themselves), as the Daedalus brokers were responsible for identifying solutions to the specific resettlement needs of the young people on their caseload, and so acted more like support workers (Ipsos MORI, 2012)

RESET

The RESET project operated in three distinct environments, a selection of YOTs (across two geographical regions) and in one YOI (girls only), utilising three different models: a case management model (with a funded worker becoming part of the YOT), a co-ordinating role (arranging resettlement support through a range of developed relationships with other agencies by a worker other than the case manager), and institution based (a worker based in the YOI, but continuing resettlement support post-release) (Hazel et al, 2010). The co-ordinating role appeared to have much more impact on reoffending levels than the case management approach. However, some areas of need saw little support (for example unemployment, anger management, and mental health issues), which was put down to difficulties in engaging with other agencies (under half of the agencies intended to be involved actually were in practice). It was felt that poor communication between the institution and resettlement workers hindered offending behaviour work and the provision of post-custody ETE. Some of the main messages to come out of the RESET project were: for successful resettlement, a variety of agencies need to be involved (including the private and third sectors), as one agency cannot provide everything; the period immediately after release is crucial requiring better transition for more timely support (for example, ETE and accommodation should already be arranged prior to release); there should be better co-ordination between secure institutions and the community so that programmes can be continuous; young people need to be better prepared for release (Hazel et al, 2010).

Resettlement Consortia

In England, two resettlement consortia were established in 2009, with funding from the YJB for two years, in the North West and South West. A Wessex consortium followed shortly afterwards. These consortia brought professionals from across the regions together to provide a co-ordinated response to young people leaving custody, also making use of an 'enhanced offer' of available services and options (Ellis et al, 2012; Hazel et al, 2012; Wright et al, 2012). The evaluations showed improvements in arrangements for accommodation and engagement with ETE provision, which appeared to be because of improved communications both between the secure estate and community YOTs, and between different agencies within the community. There were also reductions in young people being arrested during their licence (Hazel & Liddle, 2013). However, difficulties arose due to an additional burden for appointments being put on young people from different agencies, resulting in increased breach rates (Hazel & Liddle, 2013). This should be addressed by greater use of non-statutory appointments for non-criminal agency contact. This issue could have arisen as an attempt to ensure that young people engaged with partner agency appointments, but while this might encourage a level of behavioural engagement, for fear of breach, it is unlikely to foster the kind of cognitive engagement needed for change to ensue, and as such is ill-advised as a strategy (Wright et al, 2014). These three consortia were specifically built around specific YOIs, but four more have been developed in high custody areas in England (YJB, 2015a). This confirms that the direction of travel for youth justice is towards greater levels of cooperation and communication across the range of agencies able to input into resettlement.

Moving On

This project in Scotland concentrated on providing voluntary resettlement support to young people (aged 16 to 21) in custody along a 'youth work' model, which meant working with them holistically to help them develop personally, socially, and educationally, also developing their voice in society (Nugent, 2014). The development of close, trusting relationships between workers and young people was a vital part of this approach, eschewing the use of paper and pens for recording sessions, in favour of just talking. Plans were developed based on the goals of the young person, and all activity was centred around them achieving their goals, and identifying and building on strengths (based on the premise that increased engagement is fostered by increased empowerment – the young people devised their own plans). Facilities were also provided for accessing the internet, computers, and courses to help develop the skills needed for independent living. Participants were enabled to

develop a more positive self-identity, backed up by workers not identifying them as ‘offenders’. This approach is part of the burgeoning ‘desistance approach’ which perhaps first found practical application through the Good Lives Model (Ward and Gannon, 2006). The evaluation demonstrated reduced re-imprisonment rates, increased experiences of well-being and relationships with family, and increased access to community support (Nugent, 2014).

The most recent developments in the resettlement literature

Beyond Youth Custody is a five-year research programme (2012-17) in England to thinking around resettlement policy and practice for under 25 year olds. A collaboration between Nacro, the crime reduction charity, ARCS UK and two universities, the programme is using existing data from many of the above evaluations and the involvement of 20 local resettlement initiatives from around the country. Findings highlighted in BYC publications include:

- Young people can suffer a period of stressful disorientation immediately after release, which requires enhanced support and flexibility in meeting licence requirements (Hazel & Bateman, 2015)
- Young people involved in resettlement often have past trauma and victimisation in close relationships, particularly girls and young women. Developing positive relationships is critical to addressing vulnerabilities, building resilience to negative pressures, and empowering young people to make positive choices (Bateman & Hazel 2014b).
- Incarceration exacerbates vulnerabilities and creates barriers to engagement to support, and messages of good practice in relation to resettlement would equally help the reintegration of young people in the community without a damaging period of custody. This last point has been particularly important in Wales during the course of the Broker project as, with lower numbers entering custodial institutions, resettlement support started to be directed towards children at high risk of offending who receive community sentences (Goodfellow et al, 2015).
- Engaging young people in resettlement services has often been confused with gaining participation. Engagement is seen as a three step process: 1) Service engages with the young person (ensuring participation); 2) Young person engages with the service (building relationships to develop positive identity); 3) Young person engages constructively with wider society (using the positive identity to develop relationships beyond the service) (Bateman & Hazel 2013).

A recent HM Inspectorate of Probation report on youth resettlement (HMIP, 2015) was a reminder of how accessing mainstream services to young people leaving custody can still be problematic. Based on fieldwork conducted in England only³, the report found “shocking” outcomes for children (:4). Although the report pointed to some pockets of good practice and outcomes, findings about processes more generally included:

- Work in custodial institutions was not joined-up, with sentence planning meetings focused on behaviour management rather than resettlement
- Planning meetings were ineffective and failed to engage children and their parents
- Preparation for resettlement was not proactive while the child was in custody, leaving the child insufficiently supported at the point of release. ROTL was not used to promote successful resettlement.
- Information sharing was inconsistent between custody and community organisations, and work was not continuous between the two phases of the sentence
- Contingency planning was almost non-existent, particularly in relation to accommodation.

³ No children were released from custody in Wales during the inspection’s fieldwork period.

Citing the literature reviewed in this chapter, the report asked:

“So, even when we know the solution, and we know providing the solution is for the most part possible within current budgets, why on earth is it not being done?” (HMIP, 2015:4).

So what has the literature told us?

Taking into account research papers, project evaluations, and policy documents, the following factors have been identified as effective in fostering resettlement (incorporated into the Three Stage Model, Appendix 1):

- Joined-up, integrated multi-agency approach throughout
- System of brokerage to ensure external agency buy-in and involvement of new agencies, especially private and third sectors (including employers)
- Emphasis on addressing accommodation, substance use, emotional health, family relations, and education training or employment, ensuring that provision starts immediately on release
- Thorough preparation for release of the young person
- All activity in custody focused on preparation for release, also providing routine for all times of the day
- Effective communication between custody and community, creating opportunities for provision, continuous programmes
- ROTL used as a matter of course for all young people needing resettlement support, enabling them to visit their home area
- Resettlement activity should be voluntary for the young person ('opt in'; appointments not breachable)
- Resettlement work carried out by someone other than the case manager, to divide the responsibility for support and breach, and enable time-consuming practical support to take place; emphasis for the development of relationship is prioritised (rather than an emphasis on achieving targets)
- Resettlement plans are individual and devised by the young person themselves, based on their strengths and goals

The Beyond Youth Custody programme has recently tried to organise these 'what works' messages into a conceptual framework, relating it to 'desistance theory' in criminology. Effective resettlement has been characterised as a long-term process enabling a shift in a young person's personal narrative towards a crime-free future (Goodfellow et al, 2015). The kinds of factors listed above are seen to work because they facilitate this shift by (a) preparing the young person by engaging and guiding their shift (agency), and (b) preparing the home environment to address multiple barriers (structure). These two together empower them to make positive choices that lead towards desistance.

These findings, and those of the mapping report, tailoring resettlement process needs specifically to North Wales, thereby addressing unique attributes, became the basis for the Resettlement Broker project work-plan. The development of this plan, and that of the accompanying monitoring and evaluation plans, is discussed in Chapter Two.

Chapter Two: Developing the Project

Kathy Hampson

Introduction

This chapter will set out the context for the North Wales Resettlement Broker Project, then chart the progress of the project as it developed in this region. The Project fell into two distinct phases: the mapping phase, where information was gathered as to current resettlement practice in the region, and the implementation phase, where the recommendations of the mapping report were translated into firm deliverables for the Project in each area across the region. The difficulties in this process will be discussed, along with the progress made towards resolutions. Some of the changes brought about by the project will be described here, but more fundamental changes will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3. The project was subject to a monitoring and evaluation process, overseen by Professor Neal Hazel (Salford University). The development of this monitoring and evaluation process will be described towards the end of this chapter.

North Wales Context

North Wales comprises six local authorities served by four Youth Justice Services (YJS)⁴: Gwynedd and Môn, Conwy and Denbighshire, Flintshire, and Wrexham. The four YJS operate along different models:

- Gwynedd and Môn use two case managers (a Youth Justice Officer and a Probation Officer) for all young people who receive custody, but also have a Resettlement Worker who implements extra support, and will often collect young people from custody on release
- Conwy and Denbighshire YJS have one Youth Justice Officer who case manages all custody cases
- Flintshire YJS have a range of staff who take supervision of young people in custody on an allocation basis
- Wrexham YJS also allocate young people given custody to a range of case managers, but also have a Resettlement Worker who provides extra support in a similar way to Gwynedd and Môn

Likewise, the counties across North Wales are culturally and geographically diverse, leaving the young people with very different needs and challenges, depending on where they live. Both Gwynedd and Ynys Môn have high levels of first-language Welsh speakers, with virtually all schools being Welsh medium. They are also very rural, and although there are good transport links throughout, inevitably there are areas of isolation with few services available, especially in Gwynedd which covers the largest geographical area. Population hubs in Gwynedd are concentrated in the North of the county near the Menai Straits in Caernarfon and Bangor. Ynys Môn has several larger towns, but many very isolated small villages. Conwy and Denbighshire both have a busy and well-populated coastal strip, frequented by tourists, providing a lot of seasonal employment, which then leaves high levels of unemployment during low seasons. Language usage changes through these two counties, being predominantly first-language English to the North, but becoming more first-language Welsh inland. These inland rural areas of both counties contain remote villages which are less well served than the more highly populated coastal strip. Flintshire and Wrexham both border England, and are much more predominantly first-language English than the other counties. The cultures seem closer in many respects to those of the English counties of Cheshire and Merseyside than more western areas, but still retaining a distinctive Welsh flavour. These counties also differ significantly

⁴ Although the term YOT is the statutory description that still applies in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, YOTs in North Wales describe themselves as Youth Justice Services (YJS).

from each other, with Flintshire retaining the eastern most aspect of the North Wales coastal strip, running up the Dee estuary, and otherwise populated largely by a series of small towns and outlying villages. Wrexham County is dominated by the large town of Wrexham, giving it a much more urban feel, although there are many outlying villages bordering Denbighshire, Flintshire, and Powys. Flintshire and Wrexham are much smaller than the other counties. In the more rural areas of North Wales, it is difficult for young people to be offered the same range of services as in the towns and cities, which tend to be concentrated in the main population hubs.

At the start of the project, all custodial provision for North Wales was situated in England, within Hindley Young Offenders Institution (YOI) (Wigan), or for younger, more vulnerable children and girls in Red Bank (St Helens, but closed during 2014) or Barton Moss (Manchester) Secure Children's Homes (SCH). It is worth noting, however, that in reality young people from North Wales were being sent to a wide range of custodial institutions across the county. Hindley YOI had been identified as the preferred YOI provision and exercised a Welsh specification, which included employing a Welsh speaking teacher, offering a Welsh curriculum, and facilitating Careers Wales support. This provision was put in place to address the difficulties Welsh young people experience when being sent to custodial provision in England, however it could not address difficulties caused by being accommodated a significant distance from home, or those of girls or more vulnerable younger boys, who are sent to SCH or Secure Training Centres. The only Welsh provision is in South Wales, Parc YOI (Bridgend) and Hillside SCH (Neath). However, the geography of mid-Wales makes this proposition an unattractive one, as travelling time to either establishment from North Wales would be considerable. The YJB announced that they were withdrawing from Hindley YOI in 2014, due to a continual decline in demand for custodial beds, and selected Werrington YOI (Stoke-on-Trent) as the new preferred YOI provision. A new Welsh specification has been devised to answer young people's need for Welsh language and culture, but it will also remain a possibility that a request could be made for placement at Parc YOI, should this be felt culturally beneficial for the young person.

In preparation for the North Wales Resettlement Broker Project, a workshop was held with youth justice service managers in North Wales to determine the feasibility of regional working, which they supported. The youth justice services also assisted in developing a specification for the project, which went out to tender in 2013 and was successfully awarded to Llamau (see Appendix 2 for Project meetings).

Mapping Phase

The Resettlement Broker Co-ordinator (called the Broker henceforth) came into post in August 2013. YJS managers were consulted by YJB Cymru on provision available to them for resettlement purposes, which resulted in an Excel spread sheet being populated with a few agencies currently in use. However, this document only appeared to include statutory agencies (the like of which the YJS is comprised), with no recognition of, or consultation with, any voluntary agencies. The initial task for the Broker, therefore, was to gain a fuller picture of how the YJS operate, who they involve, but also who they do not involve. This information was to form the basis of a mapping report to identify how resettlement is achieved for young people across North Wales.

Mapping Report

Interviews were set up with a variety of staff from the four YJS, including several Heads of Service and Operational Managers, two Resettlement Workers, two Accommodation Officers, a senior practitioner, and a Speech and Language Therapist. Interviews were also arranged with four young people who had previously experienced custody across the region, and a wide range of voluntary and statutory agencies were also contacted for their input (Appendix 3). An interview was set up with staff at Hindley YOI and Red Bank SCH to ascertain secure estate views on resettlement, and a small focus group of five young people was arranged in Hindley to incorporate their views. The

purpose of this mapping exercise was not only to find out about current resettlement practice, but also to widen the scope of agencies involved and awareness of resettlement as an issue needing a multi-agency response.

As part of this awareness-raising, and to provide the North Wales YJS with opportunities for networking with other agencies, a North Wales Resettlement Conference was held in December 2013 to present the main findings of the mapping exercise (although the actual report was not completed until January 2014). This also presented an opportunity for the issues around resettlement to be further explored by Professor Neal Hazel, who had recently collaborated on a meta-analysis of resettlement literature with the Beyond Youth Custody group, allowing dissemination of the latest information on the subject for attendees (Bateman et al, 2013). The conference proceeded with three symposia covering different aspects of the YJS's resettlement pathways (YJB, 2006) of accommodation, education training and employment, and families. These were designed to draw the attending professionals into the debate, encouraging them to consider how their practice contributes (or could contribute) to good resettlement practice, within the context of the mapping report recommendations and Beyond Youth Custody findings outlined earlier in the day. Opportunities were given throughout the day for participants to respond to a number of questions posed pictorially around the venue, which included looking at thoughts on a consortium approach to resettlement across North Wales – better communication was felt to be important, but concerns were also expressed about the feasibility of a consortium approach over such a wide geographical and diverse area.

Mapping report findings

The mapping report, working within the seven resettlement pathways of: case management and transitions, accommodation, education training and employment, health, substance misuse, families, and finance benefits and debt (YJB, 2006), identified good practice, barriers to effectiveness, and concluded with recommendations for the future. This report is available from Llamau⁵, but the main recommendations are summarised below:

- Better use of third sector organisations is needed in resettlement and exit plans (with exit plans becoming a standard part of any licence or community order)
- Greater and more creative use of ROTL/mobility for resettlement purposes
- Use of the Resettlement Support Panel model currently in use in Wrexham should be extended across the whole region (one in each YJS area)
- Resettlement planning should begin immediately when a young person is given custody
- A serious case review-type (multi-agency) investigation should be carried out for each new custody case
- A North Wales 'Enhanced Offer' should be piloted in North Wales (more details later in the chapter)
- A Resettlement Checklist approach should be piloted in North Wales (more details later in the chapter)
- Where young people cannot return home, they should be placed in appropriate, safe, and stable accommodation, from which there is constructive progression into long term accommodation solutions (entirely negating the need for bed and breakfast accommodation)
- Gaps in mediation provision across the region should be addressed so that it is accessible to every YJS
- Education and training should be a continuous experience for young people going into custody (and when released)
- The Health Boards should be better represented in multi-agency meetings and panels

⁵ Report available from <http://www.llamau.org.uk/resettlement/>

- Speech and Language provision for YJS needs to be given higher priority
- In-custody pre-release courses should have a greater emphasis on the emotional aspects of release
- YJS should use the respite period families have when a young person is given custody by pro-actively offering parenting programmes
- Family Group Conferencing should be made available to all YJS areas for use with every young person coming out of custody
- YJS with video conferencing facilities should be able to use them for a wide range of needs when young people are in custody
- Secure establishments should investigate the possibilities of installing a 'Skype Suite', to enable young people to have better contact with their families
- The time delay between young people coming out of custody and the point at which they receive any benefits should be addressed and solutions found
- Use of mentors within YJS should be extended, especially for exit planning

These recommendations were filtered into a work-plan for the project, with slightly differing targets, depending on the YJS area. The main achievements of the project so far are detailed in Chapter 3.

Implementation Phase

The Broker identified potential actions for each area, based on the mapping report recommendations, but due to delays in the final agreement of this report, and the availability of YJS managers for meetings, discussion on these actions with each YJS was not complete until the start of May 2015, which caused frustration on all sides. Possibly as a result of this stalling YJB Cymru established a Project Board to increase accountability of the Project for both the Broker and the YJSs (this was, in fact, a resurrection of a previous Project Board, which was in place prior to the Broker being employed in North Wales). This would involve all YJS Heads of Service, the Broker, the YJB lead for the project, and Llamau, and by video link from Cardiff other YJB staff and the Welsh Government. By the time of the inaugural meeting on 8th April, 2014, the Broker had agreed work-plans with two YJS, and scheduled meetings for this purpose with the other two. It is fair to say that the Project Board provided more focus for the project as a whole, also allowing a more regional overview to occur, which facilitated information on all actions for the project to be shared with all concerned, rather than just in individual areas. It was at this stage that the YJS requested that the Broker have more regular contact with the teams, and arrangements were established for the Broker to spend one day a month in each YJS office. This enhanced contact with the YJS teams has enabled the Broker to develop a much closer working relationship with both management and individual practitioners. This has facilitated better communication of suggested changes and better reception of those ideas, as the Broker has, to a certain extent, been accepted as a team member.

By the time of the second Project Board meeting on 18th June, 2014, YJB Cymru had expressed serious concerns about the ability of the project to deliver on the specifications, as the agreed work-plans were not felt to be robust enough. Communications were sent to all YJS to encourage their full co-operation with all aspects of it. Attempts had been made by the Broker in each area (apart from Wrexham YJS, which already operated a Resettlement Support Panel) to initiate a multi-agency partnership for resettlement, but this had been met with scepticism regarding the likelihood of success in terms of securing the engagement of other agencies. However, in the intervening time between the completion of the mapping report and this current stage, the profile of such partnerships had increased due to their inclusion in the Welsh Government white paper *Prevention of Offending by Young People* (Welsh Government, 2014). Originally, the vision for these partnerships appeared to be regional, with one serving the whole of North Wales. However, the geography of North Wales is such that to have one overarching partnership was not felt to be feasible, feedback which was given at the North Wales consultation event on the white paper (on 30th April 2014). Although this white paper did not develop into legislation, the principle was taken

forward in the combined Welsh Government and YJB Cymru strategy document *Children and Young People First* (2014), which was released in July 2014, and included Reintegration and Resettlement Partnerships as a key pan-Wales aim. The Broker was able to convince the YJS to at least trial the principle of Reintegration and Resettlement Partnerships in each area, the details of which are reported in Chapter Three.

There were a number of other aspects to the work-plan which were proceeding during this time, which will now be discussed.

Work-plan progress

Voluntary resettlement support

The original specification for this project included the writing of 'Quality standards for voluntary resettlement support', building on the aim to ensure that all young people have an exit plan which includes engagement with voluntary resettlement support beyond the end of their licence (or community order, for those not given custody but still needing resettlement support). It has remained an important part of the Broker's role to help YJS develop their 'after justice' support further, and preferably with other partner non-criminal agencies, but the requirement to write quality standards for this support has now been dropped from the project deliverables (YJB/Welsh Government, 2014). However, the Broker has looked at after-justice support in all the YJS, with the result that several have now entered into discussions to involve the Youth Service in the delivery of this type of support, having acknowledged that the YJS may not be the best service for this. The Broker found, during interviews with young people for monitoring and evaluation, that they expressed great doubt about wanting to engage with the YJS voluntarily beyond the end of their statutory contact, which is backed up by the YJS in the main acknowledging that their take-up for this support from young people is very low.

Each area has looked at this slightly differently, with Conwy and Denbighshire YJS reaching an agreement with the Youth Service that this offer could be made at their Reintegration Partnership meetings, thereby putting the onus on the YJS to refer cases which will need this ongoing support, with enough time for the youth worker to gain the engagement of the young person prior to the end of the statutory order. Gwynedd and Môn YJS has been in discussion with the youth service for a joint worker to specifically be allocated to work with young people after justice, but who would be based within the youth service, rather than the YJS in order to distance the young people from criminal agencies. However, currently this does not appear to have progressed to a firm agreement, so negotiations are continuing. Flintshire YJS were interested in following the same path as Gwynedd and Môn YJS, but due to several changes within their service, are further behind in their negotiations. Wrexham YJS feel that after-justice engagement with their service is reasonably good, but have acknowledged that there may be other issues involved with keeping young people within a criminal service; however, that area is the only YJS with mentors. It is possible that after-justice work with the youth services will fit into changes currently being discussed for the implementation of the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework (Welsh Government, 2013).

Work with Hindley YOI

Throughout both the mapping and implementation stages of the project, the Broker has been in regular contact with Hindley YOI, with the purpose of improving processes within the secure estate for resettlement, but also lines of communication between it and the YJS across North Wales. An initial meeting took place in August 2013 (with a governor, the YOT manager, and YOT senior practitioner), with recommendations brought back to them in April. A further, much wider, meeting was arranged for June (involving a senior governor, YOT, and education staff), in which a much more

assertive stance was taken by the Broker regarding the recommendations, which seemed to have seen little progress in any area.

Of particular interest was the Hindley process for ROTL, which appeared (in practice, if not in policy) to be excluding young people from applying for ROTL when they were serving DTOs of six months or less (this was also stated by the young people interviewed during the project, many of whom said that they were not in custody for long enough to apply), also disallowing young people from ROTL when their offence was felt to be too risky. However, this principle is not backed up by research which identified good use of ROTL as a key tool for effective resettlement (Hazel and Liddle, 2012). Governors at Hindley did not agree that their process was prejudicial to young people on short orders, or that their processes were 'risk averse', and ended the discussion by saying that their ROTL processes were currently under review, so it was not currently possible to look into it further. The Broker also raised the possibility of Skype being used for young people, especially those far from home, but this was dismissed as a security risk. The other main concern of the Broker was improving communication between Hindley and the YJS across North Wales. In pursuit of this, a meeting was subsequently arranged in Flintshire between YJS case managers across the region, and staff from Hindley. The meeting took place in October 2014, and was felt to have been very useful by all who attended. Plans were tentatively made for this to be a recurring feature, but discontinued when the YJB announced their withdrawal from Hindley. However, Werrington YOI was identified as the preferred custodial option for eligible boys from North Wales (although Parc YOI can be considered instead, if this were felt to be beneficial to the young person), so negotiations for a more consistent system of communication will continue with Werrington.

Related to the discussions with Hindley regarding ROTL, it came to light that the Howard League had identified a little used, but potentially more useful (with slightly less onerous eligibility requirements) type of ROTL, which they called 'escorted absence' (Howard League, 2012: 42). Comparisons were also made with Cookham Wood's innovative use of ROTL for resettlement work, which compared favourably with Hindley's practices (Cookham Wood, nd). A paper was written by the Broker to give guidance to YJS in their duty to ensure ROTL for young people with resettlement needs. This was eventually distributed among the YJS managers for comment in November 2014.⁶ When this aspect was begun, the YJB decided they were going to conduct a full review of ROTL guidance in order to make it more prevalent in practice, which has since been instigated.

Wrexham Resettlement Support Panel

During the May 2014 contract meeting with Llamau and YJB Cymru, the Broker was asked to arrange regular attendance at Wrexham's Resettlement Support Panel (RSP), in order to take good practice from there to other areas, but also to offer advice and recommendations on how the RSP might incorporate newer guidelines on good resettlement practice. Subsequently the Broker requested this, having attended earlier in the year as an observer, which was agreed after some discussions regarding the purpose, with Wrexham YJS. Having agreed this and attended one further RSP, there was a significant hiatus before they continued, for a variety of reasons.

The next meeting did not take place until 5th January 2015, but included on the agenda a discussion about reviewing the panel with the members present. The Broker made several suggestions at this point: that voluntary agencies be included in the membership, that a new case description form be utilised (designed through feedback on forms used in the new panel areas), and that referral criteria be extended to include monitoring of out of county cases (adopted in the Gwynedd Môn Resettlement Advisory Group, which has a similarly high level of out of county placements, see Chapter 3 for more details). The RSP agreed to look at the suggested paperwork, and would actively look into the possibility of a monitoring function for out of county cases, which caused some

⁶ <http://www.llamau.org.uk/resettlement/>

interest. However, there was little enthusiasm for incorporating the third sector into an expanded membership, with issues of confidentiality and service level agreements being cited as reasons for caution. There was an agreement that where a voluntary service was relevant, they could be brought in for a particular case. The view of the Broker is that this would not afford the possibility for voluntary agencies to provide input into discussed cases, thereby widening out the responsibility from simply lying with the statutory sector.

The Broker was also keen for membership to be widened out in other areas, incorporating such organisations as Careers Wales and the Youth Service. However, Wrexham also has an education forum, at which cases are discussed from an education point of view. This would constitute something of a duplication for education to be discussed at both, but equally could cause a referral to both panels, with the same effect. It could be that the most efficient way to deal with this would be to merge the panels. YJB Cymru requested that the Broker be allowed to conduct a more formal review of the RSP, but this was rejected by Wrexham YJS on the grounds that many of the members were very committed in their positions, and would find it difficult to accommodate an interview for this purpose, but also that an informal review had just taken place within the RSP itself. The Broker feels that there is mileage in identifying why many invited members do not attend the panel, but this does not seem a likely course of action currently. It has been agreed that the Broker will continue to attend, offering ideas for development, as the project progresses.

Use of the 'desistance approach'

During discussions with Professor Neal Hazel on effective resettlement, current research on using a desistance approach was appraised, with Professor Hazel suggesting that this approach could be used first in Wales in the youth justice system (currently research has been predominantly situated in the adult criminal justice system, with desistance approaches being adopted in probation practice) through this project. The desistance approach centres around utilisation of turning points (opportunities for change in a young person's life), overcoming obstacles, and most importantly, the creation of a new non-offending personal narrative. This is in sharp contrast to the prevailing risk and protection model which has dominated youth justice for two decades, looking to build strengths, rather than minimise risk, and as such requires a very different mind-set to see what is 'effective', given that current practice appears not to be (judging by reoffending rates). However, the climate of youth justice is now changing towards a more strengths-based approach, which is at the heart of AssetPlus, the new YJB approved assessment tool being rolled out across the country over the next couple of years.

The suggestion that YJS move more towards a desistance approach was not popular at first, with some seeing this as ignoring risk, which might potentially precipitate dangerous situations. However, Gwynedd Môn YJS were very receptive, and decided to embrace this new way of thinking, negotiating with the Broker for the delivery of some training for their staff. In the meantime, details of AssetPlus were being revealed, and it became clear this proffered the opportunity for a strengths-based approach to be adopted. Since all the YJS in North Wales were going to be early adopters of this, it began to make more strategic sense to use the Broker as a training facilitator in this. The Broker delivered the first training event on this to Gwynedd Môn YJS in November 2014, which was extremely well received by staff, who commented how useful it had been. This generated interest in the other teams, with Conwy Denbighshire YJS then arranging with the Broker for a training event to be delivered to them in March 2015. The Broker also attended an event at Flintshire YJS, where the desistance approach was expounded in the context of the introduction of AssetPlus by staff from Liverpool John Moore's University. The Broker has been asked by Gwynedd Môn YJS to continue with a programme of training through 2015, and by Flintshire to complement the other training which they are arranging.

Resettlement guidance paper and the three-stage model

The Brokers (North and South Wales), YJB Cymru, and Professor Neal Hazel discussed effective resettlement as a theme in research through this project, with the result that a three-stage model of effective resettlement was constructed (within which the actions of the project fitted). The three stages were as follows:

Custody to community transition – requiring good communication between the secure estate and community services; this comprises two processes – the preparation of the young person for release, and the preparation of the outside community for the young person’s release

Wrap-around, needs-led care – requiring a comprehensive partnership approach, acknowledging that no one agency (including the YJS, despite its multi-agency composition) can meet all needs, and needs services from statutory, voluntary and private sector to work together

Smooth transition out of the order – ensuring that an exit plan is in place to meet unmet needs ‘after justice’, preferably from a non-criminal service

This model was constructed also assuming that, for best practice, a desistance approach has been taken in the overall approach.

In order to enable the YJS to understand this model, and therefore where the actions from the project fit, the Broker wrote a paper ‘Effective resettlement – Resettlement Broker Project’. This was distributed, in draft form, to the YJS Heads of Service across the region in November 2014.⁷

Evaluation of the Wrexham Review and Congratulate Panel

Wrexham YJS arranged with Glyndŵr University for a qualitative review of their Review and Congratulate Panel (RCP), and the Broker was asked, as part of this, to conduct a quantitative evaluation of the young people who had been through the RCP since its inception in 2012. The RCP was devised as a response to data showing that young people often experienced a dip in engagement at the six to nine month stage of their order, when breach was more common, most often because of new offending. The RCP was designed to be entirely positive in content, with the intention of encouraging the young person to increase their motivation to avoid breaching their order, and as such is very much in line with the desistance approach mentioned earlier, which the Broker wants to expand across the region. A magistrate always attends, adding weight to the importance of the panel, although attendance by the young people is always voluntary. The young people receive a ‘reflective letter’ after the RCP, noting the positive aspects of their engagement so far (Wrexham YJS, 2013).

The obvious indicators of success for the RCP are reduced non-compliance and breach, and reduced re-offending, and a database was set up to investigate this by the Broker. The data was analysed, with the findings reported back to the YJS in April 2015. The analyses of these data will be combined with a qualitative evaluation planned with Glyndŵr University to produce a report, based on both data-sets.

The Enhanced Offer, Resettlement Checklist, and Needs and Services Matrix

Two of the recommendations from the mapping report were the piloting of a North Wales ‘Enhanced Offer’ and ‘Resettlement Checklist’. The ‘Enhanced Offer’ came out of the North West Resettlement Consortium (NWRC), where a package of services was put together for young people within the remit of the Consortium, giving them an enhanced level of support (Hazel et al, 2012). The

⁷ <http://www.llamau.org.uk/resettlement/>

NWRC Enhanced Offer was particular to what was available in that area, so a North Wales Enhanced Offer had to involve agencies available in the areas in which it was being piloted, and which could be made available to the YJS for this purpose (Appendix 4). The North Wales Resettlement Checklist Approach was developed from research which saw the collation of a checklist to ensure that case managers of young people leaving custody had completed a range of tasks thought important for effective resettlement (Haines and Herbert, nd). The original checklist was modified for this project (Appendix 5). The Broker decided to split the introduction of these two innovations between the four teams, with Gwynedd Môn and Conwy Denbighshire YJS being invited to pilot the Enhanced Offer, and Flintshire and Wrexham YJS being invited to try the Resettlement Checklist. An action for all areas, coming not directly from the mapping report, but from the collaborative work done with Professor Neal Hazel (but related to the recommendation that YJS use more third sector services), was the provision from the Broker of a 'Needs and Services Matrix', setting out potential needs of young people alongside the local (and some national) agencies and projects which could address that need (Appendix 6). The principle behind this was both to increase the profile of needs-led working, and also to help identify new services which could be used in resettlement. The details of these initiatives are discussed in more detail in Chapter Three.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Part of the project has been an evaluation project which aimed to investigate the resettlement of young people leaving custody in the north of Wales. The research looked at the policy and practice processes involved, including with the development of the Broker Project, over a two year period. It also examined the profile and experiences of the children involved.

The research questions were:

1. What is the baseline scope of resettlement support delivery?
2. How has resettlement developed in these areas with the resettlement consortia?
3. What process differences have the Resettlement Broker Projects made?
4. What is the profile of young people being resettled after custody?
5. How is resettlement experienced for those involved (children, parents, staff, stakeholders)?
6. What factors are associated with 'successful resettlement' (in relation to prevention of offending and increased wellbeing)? What differences have the consortia made?
7. How much difference does the Welsh factor make compared with resettlement in other jurisdictions?
8. What lessons can be learned for good practice in the future?

It was acknowledged that evaluation timescales were too short to allow for an assessment of change in young people as a result of practice changes initiated through the Broker Project. As such, any findings in relation to the young people should be seen as an evaluation of resettlement practice in the two brokerage geographical areas rather than an 'impact evaluation' of the Broker Project itself.

Much of the evaluation work was carried out by Dr Kathy Hampson, the resettlement Broker and was independently supervised and monitored by Professor Neal Hazel (University of Salford). Where there would be a conflict of interests, for example in consultations with stakeholders, the work was completed by an independent evaluator and analysed by Neal Hazel (see individual methods below). All the quantitative analysis was carried out by Professor Hazel.

The evaluation utilised a mixed methods design, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative datasets for a more in-depth view of the resettlement experiences of young people. Quantitative data were collected on an Excel spreadsheet, using a similar tool devised for the NWRC evaluation,

adding the possibility of comparisons between the two datasets. Qualitative data were gathered through interviews and questionnaires with young people who were, or had been, in custody during the life of the project. The interview schedules were developed from those used in the evaluation of the DTO (also lead by Professor Hazel), and the questionnaires were adapted from ones used with young people for the NWRC evaluation. Parents were also interviewed where this was possible, using a questionnaire also from the evaluation of the DTO. Utilising these pre-existing research tools enabled the evaluation to be completed in a more timely way, and with already validated tools, adding to the robustness of the evaluation methodology.

All data gathering was completed by December 2014, allowing the analyses of data to be completed for a final report, to be written by April 2015.

Ethical considerations

For the quantitative data, details of young people who had received custody were going to be gathered and entered on a data tracking spread sheet. It was important, especially since numbers of young people being given custody has reduced drastically over the past few years, that the cases could be kept anonymous. Names were kept separately to the main dataset in a password protected document which assigned a unique code to every young people included. This document was only available to the Broker and to Llamau line management and stored on the Llamau main server, to ensure that these data were kept safe. Other documents pertaining to individual cases (for example questionnaires), and the data tracking spread sheet, were only identifiable through this unique assigned number. Care was taken over which data were collected to ensure that individual cases were not identifiable through this information alone. An information sharing agreement was made between the YJS, Llamau, and Salford University.

For the purposes of the qualitative dataset, interviews were conducted with young people, at which point they also completed a written questionnaire. Interviews were digitally recorded (where specific consent was gained for this), ensuring that the young person's name did not feature on the file either audibly or written, and transcribed by the Broker into individual documents. The questionnaire data were added to new variables in the spread sheet, to be analysed alongside the other quantitative data.

Consent was gained from all young people who were interviewed individually for the qualitative data gathering, utilising a consent form validated for the NWRC evaluation (including permission for it to be digitally recorded), which also included a statement about the limits of confidentiality. An information letter was also adapted from that evaluation to ensure that all young people taking part were fully informed of the purpose, methodology, and usage of their interview material. The consent form was completed with each young person through their case manager, but revisited with them by the Broker prior to each interview to ensure their continued consent. Care was taken when missed interviews were followed up to ensure that it was not a tacit withdrawal of consent, with missed interviews only being re-scheduled up to a maximum of three times. Consent from parents for their own interview was gained by the Broker verbally, with the actual interview taking place at a later date (by telephone) allowing time for their further reflection.

It has already been identified that many of the research tools for this evaluation came from other evaluations, and adapted for use in this programme. However, the questionnaires encompassed information regarding previously undisclosed and undetected offences, and thoughts from the young people regarding their propensity to offend in the future. Llamau was unhappy with this, feeling that such information would necessarily have to be passed on to other agencies, compromising the confidentiality for the young person, and potentially jeopardising their willingness to take part in the evaluation exercise. After negotiation, certain questions were subsequently taken out of the original questionnaires. It should be noted that these exclusions reduced the scope of the

questionnaire for assessing the impact of resettlement activities on the young people, but that this was thought preferable to their inclusion, with the concerns expressed above.

Data Tracking Spread Sheet

The data tracking spread sheet was used to track all young people being released from custody (serving a DTO) from 1/10/12 to 30/9/14, creating a continuous database of two years of DTO cases. It was based on a spread sheet used for the NWRC evaluation, thereby previously validated, which also allowed those data to be used for comparison purposes.

The spread sheet identified all variables needed for a robust evaluation of young people's resettlement experience, most of which were identifiable through records on Asset. Variables are based on demographics, offence details (current and historic), Asset scores for 12 domains and evidence questions, risk and vulnerability assessments, sentence licence and exit planning, involvement of other agencies, custody information, and reoffending and breach information. These data were collected on sentence to custody, at release on licence, and end of DTO. The questionnaire data were added to the spread sheet before it was securely emailed to Professor Hazel at Salford University for analysis.

The task of gathering these data was performed by the Broker, who was given full access to Care Works, in each YJS on the monthly office residences. Some data were difficult to identify from Care Works alone, sometimes because of recording issues, or plans which were not attached (possibly never gained, when coming from another area, or the secure estate), and conversations were needed with case managers to fill some of the gaps.

Consultation with Young People

The Broker used questionnaires from the NWRC evaluation (adapted in consultation with Professor Hazel) and interview schedules from the DTO evaluation, to interview young people at their release (Time 1), and at their licence end (Time 2). These questionnaires and interview schedules had been validated for use with young people, and passed through the University of Salford ethics committee. As previously discussed, young people were only interviewed if they gave their consent.

The Broker planned to interview every young person being interviewed since the start of the project at Time 1 and Time 2. However, completion of the interviews required that all the data collection tools had been finalised, which did not take place (in the case of the questionnaires, where debate over the inclusion of offending data caused delay) until April 2014. In hindsight, this needed to be done at the start of the project in readiness, but the mapping report took precedence instead. Consequently, many of the young people who had been released prior to that time, but after the start of the project had finished their licences and were no longer working with the YJS; opportunity to interview them was therefore lost. Plans to interview all eligible and available young people were also sometimes thwarted by the Broker not being informed of young people due for release, or by consent being refused (either tacitly or explicitly). Some young people were interviewed on release, but then could not be contacted for interview at the end of their licence, and some were released prior to the interview paperwork being agreed, and so were only interviewed at Time 2. Due to the added complications of interviewing in custody some distance away, because a wide variety of institutions were being utilised in England, difficulty in contacting young people, and refusal for the use of digital recording equipment, it was felt impractical to interview young people who had either been recalled back to custody, or sentenced to a new custodial disposal. This further reduced the number of young people available for Time 2 interviews. These issues are discussed further in the interview analyses in Chapter Seven.

Consultation with stakeholders

Telephone interviews were conducted in December 2014 by an independent research associate with a variety of stakeholders from North Wales. This mainly comprised staff from the YJS: Heads of

Service, plus others who have worked most closely with the Broker on the project. One third sector interview was also completed. These were arranged by the Broker, but conducted by an independent interviewer, who recorded the telephone conversations (with permission) and later transcribed them. Professor Neal Hazel was responsible for analysing these interviews, about which more detail is given in Chapter 6.

Data analysis

Data analysis of information gained from all the above sources were completed after the end of the data gathering period, in order to identify the impact of the Resettlement Broker Project on the research questions in particular, and to assess the lived experience of resettlement for young people coming out of custody in North Wales.

Professor Hazel was responsible for analysing the case tracking data, which were sent to him via secure email in December 2014. The interviews with young people and parents were analysed by the Broker in November, 2014. The difficulties experienced in gaining a full set of interviews (outlined above, and discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven) meant that a highly qualitative methodology needed to be employed in order to gain the most from the data. Thematic analysis was used to identify the main areas of concern for the young people under the broad topic headings of 'in custody', 'preparation for release', 'out of custody', and 'the future'. A case study approach was also taken to fully utilise the three cases (see Appendix 7) which had a complete set of Time 1, Time 2, and parental interviews.

Chapter Three: Introduced Initiatives

Kathy Hampson

The Resettlement Broker Project has introduced several new initiatives into the youth justice services in North Wales, in order to enable better resettlement planning and provision. These are discussed thematically through this chapter, but summarised in Table 1.

Table 3.1: Summary of initiatives by area

YJS Area	Initiative
Gwynedd & Ynys Môn	Resettlement Advisory Group Enhanced Offer Needs and Services Matrix
Conwy & Denbighshire	Reintegration Partnership Enhanced Offer Needs and Services Matrix
Flintshire	Reintegration and Resettlement Advisory Group Resettlement Checklist Needs and Services Matrix
Wrexham	Resettlement Checklist Needs and Services Matrix

Reintegration and Resettlement Partnerships (RRP)

The establishment of RRP became a major aim of the Resettlement Broker Project. An early consultation event with local authorities (30th April 2014) indicated that regional partnerships would be unworkable due to geography and cultural differences, so the partnerships were arranged on a local basis. It should be acknowledged that Wrexham YJS already had a Resettlement Support Panel in place prior to the commencement of this project, which was funded through a previous YJB project, and maintained by the YJS ever since. The model for this is slightly different (and does not currently involve any voluntary agencies), but the Broker is advising on good practice from other areas which might assist the further development of this panel.

When the principle of setting up the RRP was first broached by the Broker with the YJS, all areas voiced pessimism regarding the chances of engaging enough other agencies in the process to make a regular multi-agency meeting viable, often due to previous attempts having been unsuccessful. This was particularly so, given that reductions in the use of custody over the past few years have left a very small number of young people receiving custodial sentences across the region. However, the strategy document clearly redefined 'resettlement' as also pertaining to young people on community orders, acknowledging that: 'Young people serving community sentences often share characteristics and present with similar complex needs and challenging behaviours to those in custody' (YJB/WG, 2014: 24). This allows for a much wider set of referral criteria to be in place for a multi-agency meeting to consider. This development, along with the provision of the Broker as an independent facility to co-ordinate such a partnership, allowed more optimism that agencies could be successfully drawn together.

Gwynedd & Ynys Môn Resettlement Advisory Group (RAG)

Gwynedd and Ynys Môn YJS were the first area to embrace the opportunity to set up a multi-agency group, based on the RRP idea. Discussions began in June 2014, and a potential membership list was drawn up, with invitations for the inaugural meeting on 16th September being sent out to all by mid-

June to ensure maximum attendance. In the meantime Terms of Reference were devised using a template from the Southern Wales Broker Project, encompassing specific referral criteria of:

- leaving custody, those on intensive orders at or near completion, out of county transfers (in and out)
- entering transition to adult probation
- presenting a high risk of harm or re-offending and who have been referred up from the internal YJS Risk Panel.

Facility was also made for other agencies to refer cases in, as long as there was some kind of YJS link. The nature of resettlement was widened beyond those simply in custody according to the definition posited in the strategy document (YJB/Welsh Government, 2014), possibly because the numbers of young people in custody from North Wales generally has dropped significantly, and would not constitute reason alone for the formation of a RRP.

The inaugural meeting, chaired by the Broker, saw 15 different agencies represented from across both counties. It comprised a presentation of the context and purpose for the RAP by the Broker, an extensive discussion around the Terms of Reference (see Appendix 8 for an example), and a small selection of demonstration cases (presented by the Resettlement Worker) were discussed, representative of the referral criteria. The Panel members agreed that the RAG was a useful facility, and that it should continue. The YJS felt that there was scope for a closer involvement of the RAG in the oversight and monitoring of out-of-county cases, which represent a fair proportion of the YJS caseload, as there are several small privately run children's homes in the area (seven). This is particularly pertinent as concerns have been expressed at the quality of some of this provision. This was presented at the next RAG (2/12/14) in a presentation from the YJS, and agreed in principle, although the minutiae of how this might develop was not completed, and will be continued as the RAG develops. 'Remand' was also added as a further criterion for referral. One case was brought for discussion to that meeting, which was a custody case, and was reviewed at the next meeting (16/2/15), alongside a new case for discussion.

The third meeting also saw the first report of out of county cases, for the RAG to monitor, and comment upon if appropriate. It was agreed that letters would go out from the RAG Chair to home authorities when young people leave the area after placement, commenting upon their care whilst here, and suggesting a plan for resettlement. This discussion also highlighted concerns across several sectors regarding one particular care establishment, about which a joint discussion allowed all agencies who had experienced issues to express their thoughts. A tangible result of this is that the RAG Chair will formally request an investigation from the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales, to ascertain whether the services provided are safeguarding the children in their care. Revisiting of the Terms of Reference for the RAG has resulted in the suggestion to add young people given secure welfare placements to the referral criteria being discussed between the Heads of Children's Services for the two counties, and the Head of Service for the YJS. This was agreed, and the Terms of Reference altered accordingly.

The meetings appear to be progressing well, with dates arranged (bi-monthly), alternating in location between Gwynedd and Ynys Môn, to help mitigate the difficulties of working across two counties. This issue has also caused some difficulties in terms of who should attend; for example, at the last RAG, only Gwynedd cases were discussed, but the panel was held in Ynys Môn. However, the inclusion of an extensive out of county monitoring remit increases its importance to both areas. A full attendance, however, would create a very large panel, needing representatives from both authorities.

Six voluntary or private sector agencies have been involved (excluding the Broker), with reasonable attendance between them, non-attendance only being when the requisite member of staff could not

attend and there was no substitute available. However of concern is the drop in general attendance since the RAG's commencement, with 15 agencies attending the first meeting, eight at the second, and only seven at the third. Attendance (first three meetings) has been as follows (the number indicating how many meetings each agency has attended):

- Supporting People – Gwynedd (1)
- Supporting People - Ynys Môn (1)
- Anglesey Housing Support Pathway (1)
- Gwynedd Housing (2)
- NACRO (1)
- Education – Ynys Môn (2)
- CAMHS (1)
- Gisda (1)
- Social Services (Children) – Gwynedd (3)
- Coleg Menai (2)
- Y Bont (3)
- Strategic Youth Engagement and Progressions Framework Co-ordinator (1)
- Careers Wales (2)
- Police (2)
- Grwp Llandrillo Menai (0)
- Youth Service – Gwynedd (0)
- Youth Service - Ynys Môn (0)
- North Wales Police IOMU (1)
- Housing - Ynys Môn (2)
- Social Services - Ynys Môn (0)
- Probation (0)
- Digartref – Ynys Môn (2)
- Education – Gwynedd (0)

Due to the bilingual nature of the two counties, all paperwork is provided in both Welsh and English. Interpretation was provided at the December 2014 meeting, but not utilised, and all discussions conducted in English. The requirement for interpretation will be monitored in the future, and deployed as required.

Conwy & Denbighshire Reintegration Partnership (RP)

Conwy and Denbighshire were quick to pick up on the success of the RAG, arranging to have a multi-agency RP, based on similar lines to the RAG, but adding a category of 'high vulnerability' to the referral criteria (but without the RAG emphasis on the monitoring of out of county cases, as it is not such a pressing issue in this area). The inaugural meeting was planned for 2nd October 2014, with invitations being sent out by the Broker in August. It was chaired by the Broker, and well attended by 16 different agencies across both counties. The meeting comprised a presentation on the context and purpose of the RP by the Broker, a brief discussion of the Terms of Reference, followed by discussion of demonstration cases. This created lively debate, and an appetite for further meetings, which have now been diaried to take place every six weeks. The second meeting saw two discussions of live cases, which were presented by the case managers. Subsequently, the RP has reviewed previous cases and discussed new referrals (one of which was made from Children's Services). The format of the case descriptions has been changed as a result of RP discussions, to be a much more focused document, one page per case, broken down into the seven resettlement pathways, to better focus discussions (this has subsequently also been adopted by the RAG, see Appendix 9).

The RP has had reasonable representation from voluntary sector agencies, with five being regular attenders (excluding the Broker). This could develop further in the future, as the YJS engage with more agencies from the voluntary sector. Attendance (first three meetings) has been as follows (the number indicating how many meetings each agency has attended):

- North Wales Police IOMU (2)
- North Wales Police (3)
- Y Bont (1)
- Barnados (3)
- Youth Service – Conwy (1)
- Supporting People – Conwy (1)
- Supporting People – Denbighshire (3)
- Housing – Denbighshire (1)
- Education – Denbighshire (1)
- Education - Conwy (0)
- Probation – (2)
- TAF - Conwy (3)
- TAF - Denbighshire (1)
- Cais (3)
- NACRO (1)
- Relate Cymru (1)
- CAMHS (1)
- Youth Service – Conwy (2)
- Youth Service – Denbighshire (1)
- TAF Denbighshire (0)
- Community Safety Partnership (0)
- Careers Wales (2)
- Social Services (Children) – Conwy (1)
- Social Services (Children) – Denbighshire (1)
- Social Services (Adult) – Conwy (2)
- Community Safety Partnership (1)
- IFSS (0)

Flintshire Reintegration and Resettlement Advisory Group (RRAG)

Flintshire YJS has undergone some significant changes during this project, as the directorate under which it sits within the council has changed (to the education department), and the head of service has moved on, leaving the previous operational manager acting up into that role. This led to delays in the development of a RRP in the area, but after several different discussions, including with the management board, the RRAG was established, with invitations sent out to potential member agencies for a meeting on 9/3/15. The invitations were sent out at a very strategic level, to allow the inaugural meeting the function of fine-tuning who would be the best representative from each to attend subsequent panels. The Terms of Reference used in other areas have been used as a basis for discussion at the first meeting, with the facility that they can be altered to reflect the consensus of the meeting. The Broker will chair the meeting, and give a presentation about the genesis of the RRAG in principle. This inaugural meeting will utilise demonstration cases, so that the process can be illustrated, and suggestions taken for development, before decisions need to be made regarding current young people. Individual voluntary agencies have not been included in the first RRAG, but it is hoped that the Flintshire Local Voluntary Council (FLVC) representative might be able to suggest potential members from that sector.

Agencies invited to the inaugural meeting:

- Police
- Probation
- Careers Wales
- Coleg Cambria
- Youth Service
- YJS Management Board Chair
- Education
- Housing
- Social Services
- CAMHS
- FVLC

The Enhanced Offer

The Enhanced Offer originally came from the North West Resettlement Consortium (NWRC), and comprised a selection of services not necessarily available to all young people in order to ‘enhance’ resettlement provision (16 in total) (Hazel et al, 2012). For this to be transferrable to the North Wales situation, a new menu of options was required, which would be feasible for the YJS to offer to young people leaving custody. The Broker made the decision to pilot a North Wales Enhanced Offer in two of the North Wales YJS areas: Conwy and Denbighshire, and Gwynedd and Ynys Môn. It was intended that Flintshire and Wrexham will launch an Enhanced Offer during 2015 of this project.

The Conwy and Denbighshire Enhanced Offer

Conwy and Denbighshire developed, along with the Broker, a menu of options for their Enhanced Offer, incorporating services available in the area, which are non-breachable (not affecting statutory contact). The menu comprised:

- planning resettlement from the start using a pictorial resettlement plan,
- mentoring,
- constructive diversionary activities,
- use of ‘The Journey’ (a box resource to enable young people to track their life journey and plan for the future)
- a lead professional (not YJS),
- referral for Family Group Conferencing (FGC),
- referral to the NSPCC Face to Face Solution Focused project, referral to the Cruse programme,
- referral for parents to receive parenting work,
- referral to Symud Ymlaen Project (work readiness and experience programme),
- referral to the PEARL course (emotional intelligence programme; available only in Hindley YOI),
- detailed plan for the day of release,
- exit plan from the YJS, and
- registration at a GP and dentist.

The options were devised through looking at what the NWRC Enhanced Offer included, with the addition of other potentially helpful locally available services (for example, FGC, Face to Face, Cruse, and Symud Ymlaen (ETE project) were all from local voluntary agencies). This menu would be discussed with eligible young people, and an agreement reached about which would be progressed. In that way, it was an offer of support wholly within the young person’s scope of control. Some of these elements would also be offered to other young people, as appropriate, but the whole package

would be offered specifically to young people going into custody, those on Intensive Supervision and Surveillance (ISS), those identified as Deter Young Offenders (DYO) which is a police surveillance scheme based on risk of reoffending), young people assessed as high risk or vulnerability, and those Looked After by the local authority where this was felt appropriate. Proformas were created by the Broker for all aspects (Appendix 4), and the Enhanced Offer was launched with case managers at the end of October 2014.

The Gwynedd and Ynys Môn Enhanced Offer

Although Gwynedd and Ynys Môn was the first YJS to agree to pilot the Enhanced Offer, its progress was stalled by operational issues within the service, requiring the Resettlement Worker, who had been helping with its development, to devote his time to case management instead. This has been resolved, and they have accepted the paperwork used by Conwy and Denbighshire as being appropriate for their area, including the different elements on the menu of options. The Enhanced Offer will be rolled out across the service with the agreement of the YJS manager.

The Resettlement Checklist

A Resettlement Checklist had been devised through research conducted at Swansea University (Haines and Herbert, nd). The checklist provided at the end of the paper was helpful in that some of the options were used, but generally felt to be too strategic to be of most use for case managers. A new, more practical one was devised by the Broker, using the guidelines within the paper, in collaboration with a staff member from Flintshire YJS (19 items, including obtaining accommodation and ETE; bank account, national insurance, and birth certificate obtained, see Appendix 5). The Checklist was shared with case managers from both Flintshire and Wrexham YJS, with feedback contributing to appropriate changes. Both Flintshire and Wrexham YJS then agreed to pilot use of the agreed Checklist with all cases with which they felt it would prove useful. This was not necessarily just custody cases, as these had become very few in both areas; most items on the Checklist would be relevant for most young people working with the YJS, especially those of school leaving age. It is anticipated that Gwynedd Môn and Conwy Denbighshire YJS will use the Resettlement Checklist through the next year of the project. The efficacy of the Checklist will be evaluated in a formal report by September 2015, which will hopefully also incorporate the experiences of all four YJS. However, initial feedback from case managers has been positive regarding their perception of the checklist's utility.

The Needs and Services Matrix

Research has indicated that support for young people should be needs-led (rather than service-led), incorporating a wide range of services, as not all young people's needs can be effectively met by the current multi-agency design of the YJS (Hazel et al, 2012). To help address this, the Broker provided each YJS area with a Needs and Services Matrix, which listed 121 potential needs of young people, pertaining to the seven resettlement pathways identified by the YJB of accommodation, ETE, health, substance misuse, families, finance benefits and debt, and case management and transitions (YJB 2006). Matched up to each need were a range of agencies (both local and national, if relevant) which could be called upon to address it. An agency directory detailed the contact details of all agencies mentioned. The matrices will be maintained by the Broker for the duration of the project, acknowledging that such a list will go out of date very quickly; as such it was recommended as an electronic resource for case managers only, to allow easy updating, but also facilitate keyword searches to be performed by users. Initial feedback has been positive, but a fuller investigation into its utility will be made by the Broker later on in the year.

Concluding reflections from the Broker

The setting up of RRP across North Wales has been much more successful than was originally anticipated by the YJS managers. It was useful for them to be able to utilise an independent professional to co-ordinate them and Chair (at least initially). The YJS managers feel that this has increased the buy-in gained from other agencies to the principle of the partnerships. This also potentially increased the range of agencies involved, since the Broker specifically ensured the involvement of voluntary and private sector agencies, not necessarily previously engaged with this kind of work. However, this has yet to be achieved with the Flintshire and Wrexham partnerships. The Broker has found all the YJS across the region willing to pilot the two new initiatives of the Enhanced Offer and Resettlement Checklist, and to utilise the Needs and Services Matrix in their case planning, which will potentially encourage further use of non-statutory services.

It is hoped that these new initiatives will improve the resettlement processes within the YJS, also extending responsibility for these young people to other relevant agencies. This in turn should improve outcomes for young people, something which will be investigated through the next year of the project.

Chapter Four: Profile of young people being released from custody

Neal Hazel

This chapter provides a summary of the profile of young people released to a Local Authority in North Wales during the two years from the beginning of October 2012 until the end of September 2014. After giving a breakdown of the throughput of young people, this chapter then reports their basic demographics, care history and educational background. The offending history of those involved is also considered, including the offences for which they received their custodial sentence. The chapter then finally considers the stated 'needs' of the children, and what agencies their case managers considered that it would be necessary to involve in order to address these needs and to prevent reoffending. The chapter concludes by suggesting what the 'typical' profile of a child receiving a custodial sentence during this period would look like. Comparisons are made to previous evaluations of juvenile custody and resettlement projects.

Numbers released from custody during this period

During the two-year period from October 2012 to September 2014, there were 43 children released from custody to the local authorities involved in the North Wales Resettlement Project.

Table 4.1 below shows the numbers released to each local authority during that two year period. Wrexham received most young people (n10), closely followed by one fewer at Gwynedd (n9), then Conwy (n8) with one fewer than that, and Flintshire (n7) with one fewer again.

Table 4.1: The numbers of children released to each Local Authority area

Local Authority area	Frequency	Percent
Conwy	8	19
Denbighshire	4	9
Flintshire	7	16
Gwynedd	9	21
Wrexham	10	23
Ynys Mon	3	7
Other	2	5
Total	43	

Base=43; all

Table 4.2 overleaf shows the distribution of numbers released during each month of the analysis period. On average, just under two children were released each month (mean average = 1.79). However, there were somewhat fewer children released from custody during the second year, with 25 (59%) released between October 2012 and September 2013, but only 18 (42%) released between October 2013 and September 2014. Beyond the observation of a decrease in throughput, the numbers are too few to discern any clear patterns.

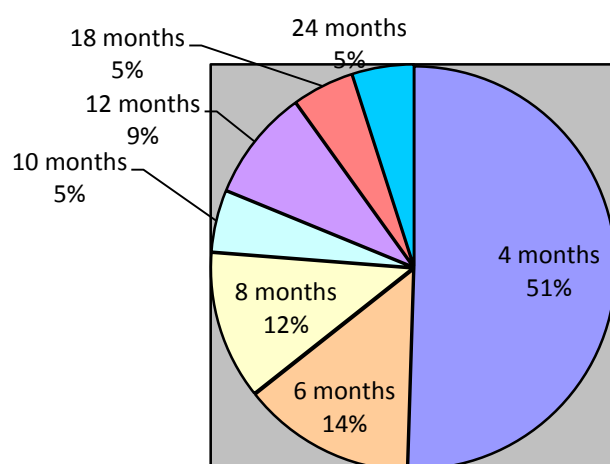
Table 4.2: The numbers of children released from custody in each month

Year	Month	Frequency	Percent
2012	October	2	5
	November	1	2
	December	3	7
2013	January	0	0
	February	3	7
	March	2	5
	April	4	9
	May	1	2
	June	0	0
	July	4	9
	August	2	5
	September	3	7
	October	3	7
	November	2	5
	December	1	2
2014	January	0	0
	February	1	2
	March	3	7
	April	0	0
	May	2	5
	June	4	9
	July	0	0
	August	2	5
	September	0	0
Total		43	

Base= 43; all

Figure 4.1 below shows that half (51%) were serving the shortest sentences of 4 months (2 months in custody followed by 2 in the community). Almost two-thirds (65%) were on sentences of six months or less, which is higher than the 50% figure in the Southern Wales areas over the same period. At the other extreme, one in every ten young people (10%) was serving a sentence of 18 months or more.

Figure 4.1: Length of sentence



Base = 43; all

Overall, these sentence lengths meant that the median average length of time that a young person served a community element of the sentence was just 2 months (63 days), but the mean average

length is considerably longer at more than 4 months (127 days) because of the small number of much longer sentences. In fact, the longest period on licence was 429 days (which must have involved consecutive sentences). Again, the comparison averages in Southern Wales showed longer sentences being served, with a median of four months (which was similar to those in the North West Resettlement Consortium (NWRC) evaluation in England). This all means that children in North Wales, like any on Detention and Training Orders (DTO), received very different lengths of support within their licence period, necessitating different approaches and programmes. It also means that the cases may be slightly less serious than those in other evaluations; an issue which will be explored below.

Gender, ethnicity and age

There were only four girls in the cohort of 43 young people, spread across three of the YJS. This number is too small to find any significant differences in outcomes based on gender.

The ethnicity of the young people is shown in Table 4.3 below. All the young people in the sample were white, with all but one being classified as White British. This is less diverse than in Southern Wales (91% white) and much less than either the evaluation of the DTO (Hazel et al, 2002) or the evaluation of the NWRC (both 81% white).

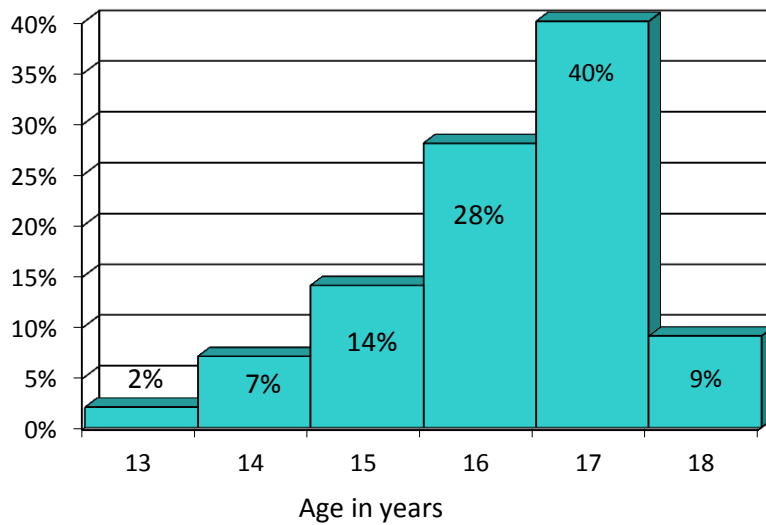
Table 4.3: Ethnicity of young people

Ethnicity	Frequency	Percentage
White British	42	98%
White Other	1	2%

Base = 43; all

The age of the young people at the time of sentencing is shown in Figure 4.2 overleaf. All the young people were between 13 and 18 years of age. Two-thirds of them were either 16 or 17 years old (78%), with a smaller substantial number at 15 years old (14%). There were a very small number of 14 year olds (n3) and one 13 year old. At the other end of the age spectrum, there were four 18 year olds. The median average age of 16 and the mean average of 16.23 indicate that the population was somewhat lower in age than in both the Southern Wales Broker Project areas and previous evaluations of juvenile custody and resettlement projects with an average age of more than 17 years old.

Figure 4.2: Age of young people at the start of their sentence

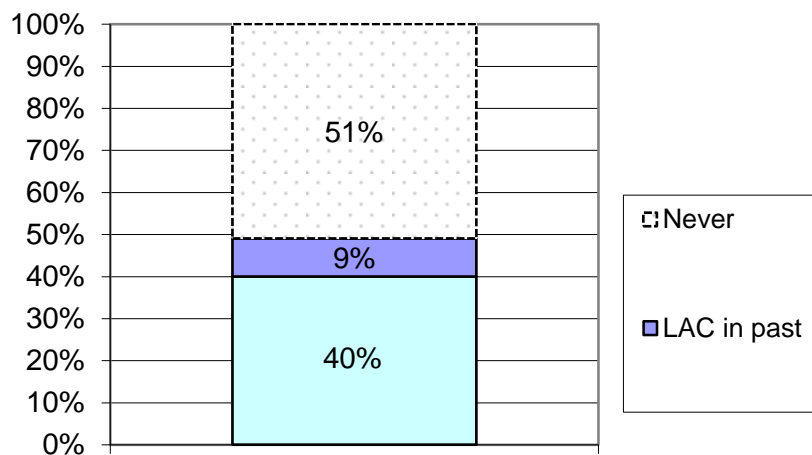


Base = 43; all

Care history

Given that it is already well established that young people in the youth justice system (and in custody in particular) have had a disproportionate involvement with care services during childhood, it comes as no surprise that the young people in the cohort have a substantial care history, as demonstrated in Figure 4.3. As a summary, almost half of the young people (49%) had been 'looked after' by their local authority at some point in their lives. Moreover, two in every five of those entering custody were in the care of the local authority at the time of sentencing.

Figure 4.3: Percentage of young people "looked after" by the Local Authority prior to custody



Base = 43; all

The instability implied by these figures was not mirrored by the YOTs' rating of the suitability of young people's housing at the time of sentencing. The majority (91%) were considered to be in suitable housing immediately prior to going into custody.

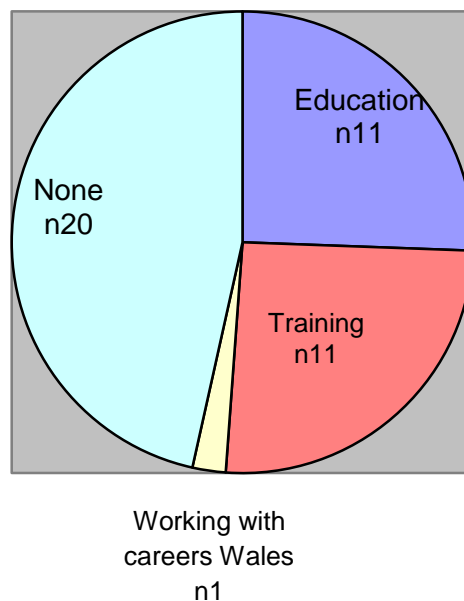
However, the extent of their care history was reflected in strong indicators of vulnerability in the children at the start of their sentences. According to their YJS workers, two thirds (65%) were rated as having medium or above vulnerability at the time of going into custody (46% in Southern Wales and the 56% in the NWRC cohort). In addition, the majority (59%) had experienced a significant bereavement or loss in the past. Almost two thirds (63%) of children were judged as having significant adults fail to communicate or take an interest in them, with about half of children (51%) having a score of 3 or 4 for Family and Personal Relationships on their Asset risk assessment. All of these vulnerability figures were higher than in previous resettlement evaluations and in Southern Wales.

More than half (53%) were judged by their case managers to have a positive view of substance use, with about the same proportion (54%) having scores of 3 or 4 for the Substance Use section of Asset. More than a quarter (27%) had scored 3 or 4 in Asset for Emotional and Mental Health difficulties. More than half were considered to have inappropriate self-esteem (55%). Again, these figures are somewhat higher than for those entering custody in Southern Wales.

Education, training and employment (ETE) background

Almost half of the 43 young people (n20; 46%) entering custody in North Wales were not at the time engaged with ETE. The rest were fairly evenly split between education and training, with one person working with Careers Wales. This is actually a slightly better pattern than with previous resettlement evaluations, possibly reflecting the younger average age.

Figure 4.4: Percentage of young people in ETE at start of the licence period



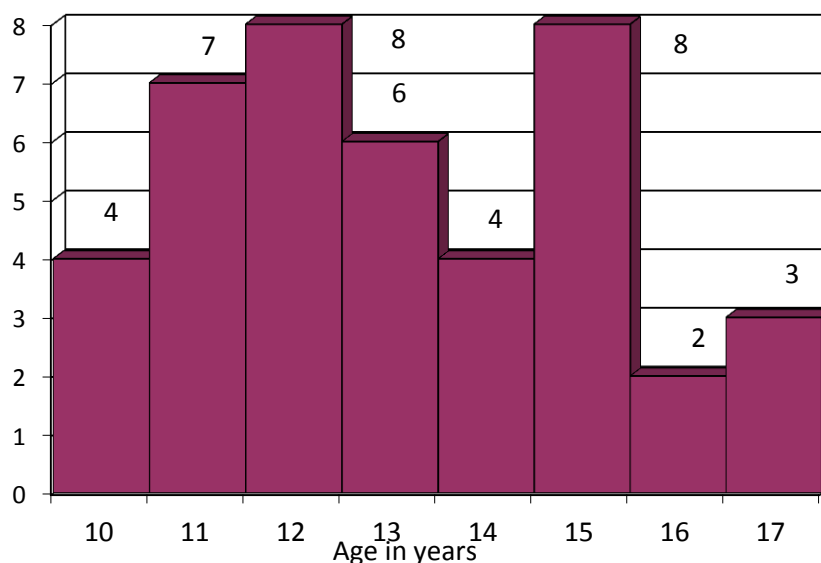
Base =43; all

Offending behaviour and criminal justice background

The young people had a substantial criminal history before their current custodial sentence. On average, they started offending at around 13 years of age, although this figure varied among the cohort. The mean average was 13.10 years and the median was 13 years, although the mode was split at both 12 and 15, reflecting the variation across the cohort. The averages are slightly lower than the average ages shown in previous research with this population in custody and other

resettlement projects (e.g. Hazel et al, 2002; Hazel et al, 2013). Figure 4.5 below shows the considerable spread from 10 years old to 17 years old.

Figure 4.5: Age of young people at time of first offence (raw numbers)



Base = 42; 1 missing

The cohort had a mean average of 7.16 convictions previous to the current sentence (median of 6; Base = all), although there was a substantial range from no previous convictions to 21 previous convictions. These averages are similar to the NWRC in England and to the cohort in Southern Wales. A quarter (24 %) had 10 or more previous convictions.

Similarly, a substantial minority of the young people had been in custody before. According to Table 4.4 below, about a quarter of them (27%; n12) had received a previous custodial sentence, with more than two thirds of those (n8) having been inside more than once before. However, these figures are lower than the corresponding ones in Southern Wales and the NWRC.

Table 4.4: Number of previous custodial sentences

Number of previous custodial sentences	Frequency	Percentage
0	32	74%
1	4	10%
2	4	10%
3	4	7%

Base = 43; all

Nevertheless, it is perhaps not surprising then, nearly half of the young people (48%) had been designated a “Deter Young Offender” (or equivalent) at some point prior to their current sentence. That label is given to young people considered at particularly high risk of offending. This figure is slightly lower than in Southern Wales.

The substantial criminal histories for these young people corresponded with the proportion who perceived themselves to have a criminal identity. This was judged to be the case by the YOT for nearly half of children at the point of the start of their current custodial sentence (n17; 43%).

Although only two of the young people had MAPPA status for risk to the public, about a quarter of the children were considered by the YOT to be a high or very high risk of serious harm to themselves, others, or from others (26%; n11).

Current offences

For what offence did the young people receive their current custodial sentence? It is sometimes very difficult to pinpoint the particular index offence that prompted the DTO because these custodial sentences are often given for a combination of offences. However, it is possible to note all the offences that were considered at the time when the sentence was given, and these are listed in Table 4.5 below.

The most common offence for which a DTO was imposed was breach of statutory orders (51%) rather than a substantive offence outside the criminal justice system. The next most common offences were domestic burglary (23%) and violence against the person (21%). The high figures for breaching an order, either statutory or bail would suggest that a substantial proportion have a recent history of non-cooperation with the YJS. This presents a substantial challenge in trying to ensure resettlement and compliance with licence conditions.

Table 4.5: Offences for which current sentence being served

Offences	Frequency	Percentage
Robbery	1	2%
Sexual offences	1	2%
Breach of statutory orders	22	51%
Domestic burglary	10	23%
Drugs	0	0%
Violence against the person	9	21%
Other	3	7%
Theft or handling stolen goods	3	7%
Bail breach	1	2%
Non-domestic burglary	0	0%
Public order	2	5%
Motoring offences	3	7%
Vehicle taking	4	9%
Criminal damage	3	7%
Arson	0	0%
Fraud	0	0%
Death by dangerous driving	0	0%

Base = 43; all. Totals add up to more than 100% because it is possible for the sentence to be for more than 1 offence.

Only about a third of cases were recorded by the YJSs as having an offence gravity rating of 6 or 7 (35%). The fact that most children were incarcerated after committing an offence with a lower gravity score underlines how the DTO was probably given for an accumulation of offences, either at that time or in association with the past or overall risk posed by the young person. However, such a finding also inevitably gives rise to questions about whether custody was used as a last resort in line with a 'children first' approach and international treaty obligations.

The needs of the young people

At the start of their sentence, the children were generally considered to be likely to reoffend after custody. The median average Asset score rating received at this time was 35 [dynamic and static factors], which means that about half of the young people were considered to be highly likely to reoffend when they were eventually released (subject to intervention). Indeed, about 30% of young people had a score of 40 or more (Base = 41; 2 missing). The median average Asset score was higher than the 32 in the NWRC cohort in England and North Wales. As such, the assessment of risk of reoffending for this group is as high, if not higher, than for those taking part in other evaluated resettlement projects in the past (although this is ultimately a subjective score that may vary across time and YOT). This underlines the scale of the difficulty facing practitioners in trying to reduce the chances of reoffending. The Asset score is calculated by looking at the young person's needs and problems across a whole range of areas, and scores that high suggest substantial problems to be tackled in several of these.

Each young person's record was examined to find the needs that were identified by YJS worker before the young person was released from custody. The results, in Table 4.6 below, confirmed a range of needs for a substantial proportion of the cohort.

Table 4.6: Areas of need that may hinder resettlement

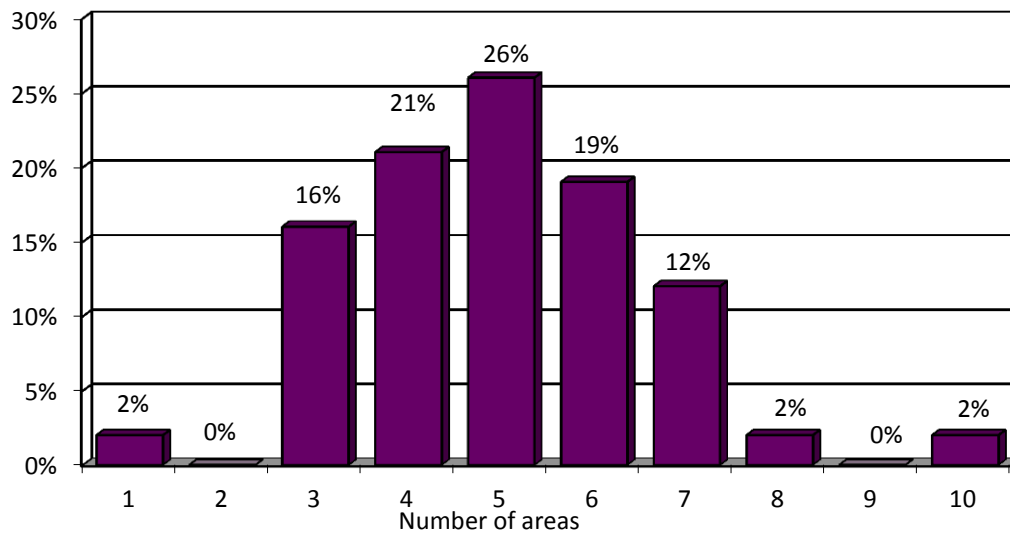
Areas of need	Frequency of all	Percentage of all
Offending behaviour	33	77%
Constructive activities	26	61%
Substance misuse	33	77%
Anger management	24	56%
Low qualifications	20	47%
Unemployment	23	54%
Family problems	26	61%
Housing / homelessness	7	16%
Life skills	3	7%
Mental health	19	44%
Physical health	0	0%
None	0	0%

Base = 43; all

Not surprising, one of the two most common needs identified was to address offending behaviour, valid for more than three quarters of young people (77%). This is, perhaps, even lower than one would expect for young people in custody, but more than the 71% in Southern Wales. There were five other needs for the majority of the children; substance misuse (77%), constructive or purposeful activities (61%), resolution of family problems (61%), anger management (56%) and addressing unemployment (54%). There were two other issues of need for a substantial minority - low qualifications (47%) and mental health (44%).

Each of these alone was considered to possibly hinder successful resettlement. However, as Figure 4.6 below shows, for virtually all young people (98%), YOTs identified multiple areas of need that would need addressing. Indeed, on average, it was considered that the young person had five different areas of need that could hinder resettlement (median = 5, mean = 4.98), and a quarter (25%) had six or more that would need to be addressed.

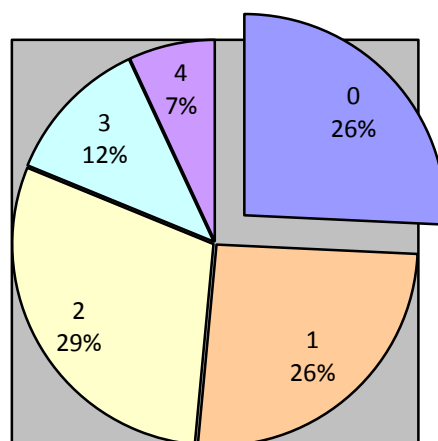
Figure 4.6: Count of areas of need that required addressing for resettlement



Base = 43; all

This clearly presented a complex task during the licence period, and potentially needing multiple agencies offered by the consortia or broker concept, which could offer services, if required. However, the YJSs generally did not intend to involve many external agencies in addressing the children’s needs. On average, despite each having an average of 5 different needs, the YJSs only intended to involve 1 external agency with each case (median=1; mean = 1.49). This is much lower than in the NWRC, where there were generally more agencies intended to be involved than the average number of issues identified. Indeed, in a quarter of cases (26%), the YJSs did not intend to involve any external agencies at all. The maximum number of agencies to be involved was four, whereas in the NWRC, which contrasts to Southern Wales in which 7% of cases planned to involve six or more agencies. This figure was almost a third of cases in the NWRC.

Figure 4.7: Count of agencies planned to be involved in supervision



Base = 139; all

The agency to be involved in most cases was Social Services for 37% of children. CAMHS (21%) and the Police (21%) where each planned to be involved with about one in five children. This approach of very few planned external agencies is an interesting one for children assessed as having multiple needs, and contrasts with both previous evaluations and principles for effective resettlement noted

previously (c.f. Hazel and Liddle, 2012). Later in the report we will note the number of agencies actually involved.

Table 4.7: Agencies intended to involve

Areas of need	Frequency	Percentage
Social Services	16	37%
CAMHS	9	21%
Education	2	5%
Careers Wales	1	2%
Drug and alcohol services	5	12%
Victim workers	0	0%
Care home key worker	3	7%
Police	9	21%
Mentor	0	0%
Integrated Offender Management	1	2%
Probation	2	5%
Voluntary agency	7	16%
Other	9	21%

Base = 43; all

Summary

From the data, it has been possible to present a picture of the young people at the start of their sentence. This also gives us some idea about the profile of young people likely to require resettlement support.

As established in previous research, it is a picture of a young person with childhood instability, disengaged from ETE, with an established criminal history and multiple areas of needs that increase the risk of reoffending. In short, just about the most challenging combination for successful resettlement to be achieved. However, they were serving shorter sentences than in other research (including the Southern Wales evaluation) and with lower gravity scores for their offences, although with similar offending histories. They tended to be slightly younger than in the other research, more likely to be or have been in care, and with higher levels of vulnerability.

However, they had higher average Asset scores for risk of reoffending, suggesting higher levels of need. This was indeed the case, with more areas for each young person identified to address for resettlement to succeed. Most surprising, however, was that fewer external agencies were planned to be involved in order to address these multiple needs than in the other researched cohorts.

To illustrate this picture more clearly, the 'typical' profile of a young person who was sentenced to custody in North Wales is described through a homunculus in the box overleaf:

- White British
- On a sentence of four months (two spent in custody and two in the community)
- 16 or 17 years old
- Has been in care (and quite possibly still in care at the time of sentencing)
- Vulnerable
- Experienced a significant bereavement or loss
- Has had significant adults fail to communicate or take an interest in them
- Probably has a positive view of substance use and such use as a risk to reoffending
- Has inappropriate self-esteem
- Possibly (although not probably) disengaged from ETE
- Started offending before 16th birthday
- At least 6 previous convictions, although probably not been in custody before
- Possibly (although not probably) has a criminal identity
- Probably sentenced to custody for breach rather than high gravity offences
- Has a high risk of reoffending according to Asset
- Has about five different areas of need that may hinder resettlement

Chapter Five: Resettlement support received

Neal Hazel

Having established in the last chapter that the young people had multiple needs that needed addressing during the resettlement period, and the number of agencies planned to be involved, this chapter goes on to look at what support the young person actually received after release. We begin by looking at what support for resettlement was given to the young person in custody, partly to see how joined up the sentence was able to be. Then, we look at whether the support was able to address all the needs identified in the young person previously, and what agencies were involved. Some needs are then considered more closely, including housing and ETE.

Custody and preparation for release

As the DTO is meant to be served half in custody and half the time in the community under supervision, the two parts should form a continuous sentence. As such, it might be expected (and principles of good practice in resettlement state) that (a) there would be work going on while in custody to plan for effective resettlement and (b) the young person themselves would be prepared in some way for release.

In terms of planning, there are DTO review meetings held in custody, attended by interested parties. In the case of meetings for young people in North Wales, the median average picture was that no external agencies other than the YJS⁸ would attend, although there was a mean average of 0.54 agencies, showing that some children had them attend. Actually, children had at most two different agencies attend any of their meetings while in custody. This median average was less than the 2 agencies attending meetings in the North West Resettlement Consortium (NWRC) in England. However, the figure of 49% (n21) of children who had at least one community agency other than the YJS attend their DTO meeting is still substantially higher than at the time of the national DTO evaluation 15 years ago, when only 10% of cases saw any other agencies attend (Hazel et al, 2002).

That shift seems to be due to the greater involvement of Social Services. Table 5.1 overleaf shows that Social Services were by far the most common agency to be in attendance at DTO planning meetings, at 30%. This is higher than in previous resettlement research, but probably reflects the higher numbers with 'looked after' status at the time of sentencing (although 30% with social services attending is still rather lower than the 40% of children who were 'looked after'). Apart from Social Services, the other agencies were only in attendance with a small handful of cases at most. The table also shows that there was little difference in attendance between the two years in which the young people were tracked, despite the work done to raise the profile of resettlement (and principles of good practice) in North Wales during that time.

⁸ Staff from external agencies that are seconded to the YJS do not count towards external agencies.

Table 5.1: Agencies attending DTO meetings in the institution

Agency	Frequency of all	Percentage of all	Percentage of those in Year 1	Percentage of those in Year 2
Social Services	13	30%	36%	22%
CAMHS	0	0%	0%	0%
Education	0	0%	0%	0%
Careers Wales	2	5%	8%	0%
Drug and alcohol services	1	2%	4%	0%
Victim workers	0	0%	0%	0%
Care home key worker	0	0%	0%	0%
Police	2	5%	8%	0%
Mentor	0	0%	0%	0%
Integrated Offender Management	0	0%	0%	0%
Probation	1	2%	0%	6%
Voluntary agency	1	2%	0%	6%
Other	3	7%	4%	11%

Base = 43; all

Only two people were recorded as having attended a pre-release course in order to help them prepare and adjust for resettlement. It is unclear whether this means that others did not attend any, suggesting poor preparation; or whether their case managers were simply not aware of it, suggesting poor communication between institution and YJS. Certainly, figures from Southern Wales and the NWRC were between half and three quarters of children.

That kind of adjustment, and preparations for release can be made easier by the custodial institution allowing release on temporary licence (ROTL), or similar 'mobility' schemes in Secure Training Centres. This allows the young person time to de-institutionalise, and help with the preparations for ETE, housing and other support ready for resettlement. Only 16% of children in North Wales went out on ROTL during the period being studied (n7), which although low, is still higher than the 11% in Southern Wales and the 4% in the NWRC. The proportion of young people going out on ROTL fell slightly from the first year to the next, from 21% to 15%.

ROTL was only requested of the institution in 23% of cases (n10). When asked why ROTL had not been offered, for 18% of all young people the reason was given that it was not considered applicable in their case (Table 5.2 overleaf). Similarly, another 46% were considered to be on too short a sentence for ROTL. Interestingly, then, for the majority of children, the block to ROTL was not necessarily risk based, but because it was not deemed to be feasible or appropriate to their particular sentence length – despite the obvious benefits to resettlement.

Table 5.2: Reasons given for ROTL not being offered

Reason	Frequency of all	Percentage of all
Not applicable / eligible / necessary	7	18%
Short sentence	18	46%
Too much risk	3	8%
Nature of the offence (e.g. violent)	1	3%
Behaviour in custody	1	3%
Reason not identified	8	21%
Other	1	3%

Base = 139; all

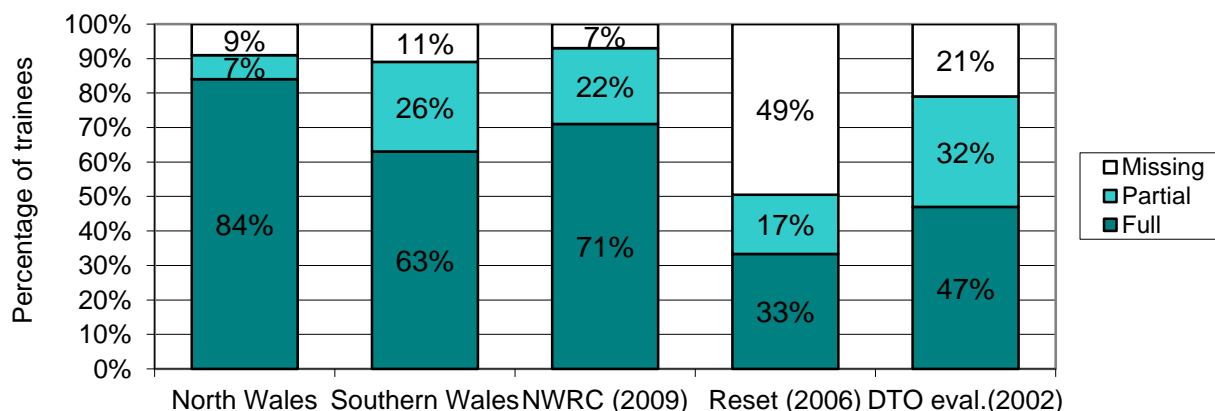
An additional task in preparation for release is to produce a 'day of release' plan with the young person. This was undertaken with almost all young people (95%) (Base =All). However, there seemed to be a small fall (not statistically significant) in the numbers having day of release plans from the first year to the second year, from 100% to 90%.

Transition in addressing offending behaviour

A key aspect of a continuous custody-community sentence like the DTO is to be able to provide a coherent programme across both parts to address the offending behaviour of the young person. In theory, by closer working between the community agencies (particularly their home YOT) and the institution, the young person's offending behaviour will be addressed in such a way. Certainly, the need to address offending behaviour was identified as necessary to address in the analysis of needs, above.

According to the YJSs, programmes addressing offending behaviour were given to almost all of young people while in custody (91 %; Base = 42; 1 missing). Moreover, Figure 5.1 below shows that the YJSs were able to obtain full information on what addressing offending behaviour activity had taken place inside for more than four in every five children (84%). Partial information was obtained for a further 7%, with only 9% left with no information passed from the custodial institution.

Figure 5.1: Extent of information on addressing offending behaviour activity available from institutions for after custody



Base = 43; all

Although there should not be any cases of information not flowing from the institution to the YJS on this, that negative figure is similar to the NWRC (7%) and Southern Wales (11%), but substantially less than that found in either the DTO evaluation (21 %) or the previous resettlement project, RESET (49 %)⁹. This may be a trend resulting from increased policy emphasis on information sharing. Furthermore, the 71% of full information is even higher than NWRC, which itself was a third higher than the DTO evaluation, and 21% higher than in Southern Wales.

The proportion of children where the YJS considered it was possible to produce a continuous programme from custody to community in addressing offending behaviour was 84%, higher than the 58% in southern Wales.

Tackling needs

In the previous chapter we looked at the different areas of need for each young person that may hinder resettlement. We noted that a median average of 5 areas of need were identified (mean was 4.98). During the licence period, the median number of these areas actually addressed, according to YJSs, was 4 (mean = 3.54). The fact that the mean average was somewhat lower than the median indicates that a minority of young people received support in a disproportionately low number of areas. Although the areas addressed were lower than those intended (explored in more detail below), the average number of needs addressed is slightly higher than for the NWRC (median =3.5).

Although there were no cases where YJS staff had felt that no areas needed addressing, when it came to it, one case did have no needs addressed. Across the two years, 96% of children had multiple needs addressed. However, only a fraction of the proportion of children identified as having six or more needs (25%) actually had that number addressed (2% of all; n1).

Table 5.3: Count of areas of need that were addressed during the licence period

Number of areas of need	Frequency of all	Percentage of all
0	1	2%
1	1	2%
2	5	12%
3	14	33%
4	13	30%
5	8	19%
6	0	0%
7	1	2%

Base = 43; all

Table 5.4 overleaf shows that three areas were tackled in the majority of cases. Offending behaviour (whether a continuous programme or not) was addressed for the large majority of cases (86%). This is close to the nine in every ten for the NWRC. The other needs addressed in the majority of cases were low qualifications (61%) and substance misuse (58%).

⁹ As noted in chapter 2 above, these projects are useful to compare at aggregate level because the DTO evaluation represents a baseline with no enhanced resettlement activity, and RESET offers a previous programme of enhanced resettlement (but without a consortium approach or single YOI approach). We cannot, however, be sure that they were precisely comparable cohorts.

Table 5.4: Areas of need tackled during licence period

Areas of need	Frequency of all	Percentage of all
Offending behaviour	37	86%
Constructive activities	20	47%
Substance misuse	25	58%
Anger management	4	9%
Low qualifications	26	61%
Unemployment	15	35%
Family problems	1	2%
Housing / homelessness	8	19%
Life skills	4	9%
Mental health	10	23%
Physical health	2	5%
None	1	2%

Base = 43; all

How do the percentage of cases addressed for each area compare with the needs identified earlier? Table 5.5 overleaf lists the extent to which the percentage of young people for each area tackled was more or less than the percentage with needs recognised in YJS records while they were in custody. It then compares these differences with other evaluations.

We find that in 6 out of the 12 areas, fewer young people had the issue being tackled than those where need was identified (compared to 5 areas in the NWRC and 4 areas in North Wales), pointing to some difficulties addressing those needs. These were constructive activities, substance misuse, anger management, unemployment, family problems and mental health.

Table 5.5: How much the required support need was actually being addressed

Areas of need	Percentage need	Percentage tackled	More or fewer than needed	Southern Wales comparison	NWRC comparison
Offending behaviour	77%	86%	9% more	7% more	9% more
Constructive activities	61%	47%	14% fewer	14% more	8% more
Substance misuse	77%	58%	19% fewer	33% more	9% fewer
Anger management	56%	9%	47% fewer	3% more	1% more
Low qualifications	47%	61%	14% more	10% fewer	15% fewer
Unemployment	54%	35%	19% fewer	4% more	1% fewer
Family problems	61%	2%	59% fewer	6% fewer	11% fewer
Housing / homelessness	16%	19%	3% more	2% fewer	2% more
Life skills	7%	9%	2% more	7% more	3% more
Mental health	44%	23%	21% fewer	1% fewer	6% fewer
Physical health	0%	5%	5% more	5% more	1% more
None	0%	2%	2% more	9% more	Same

Base = 43; all

These topics may be taken as an indication of the areas of need hardest to tackle in reality. In two areas, the shortfall was considerable – 47% for anger management and 59% for addressing family problems. This would suggest that case managers found it particularly difficult to coordinate addressing these. These shortfalls are larger than those found in the NWRC.

In contrast, some areas of need were tackled in more cases than planned – particularly low qualifications, with 14% more than planned having this tackled. This is interesting as low qualifications presented a particular problem (and shortfall) for both Southern Wales and the NWRC.

Planned and actual agency involvement

It has been suggested in previous evaluations that some areas of need are harder to address because it is more difficult to arrange help from the agencies responsible. Certainly, in the NWRC, it was noted that the two areas where the ‘tackled: need ratio’ was healthiest were both areas where it would be possible for the YOT caseworker to lead, without outside help. However, in North Wales, the area that had the healthiest ratio, low qualifications, would need the cooperation of educational services.

With a median of 1 and a mean of 1.55, the average number of agencies involved was almost exactly the same as the number planned (median = 1, mean = 1.49).

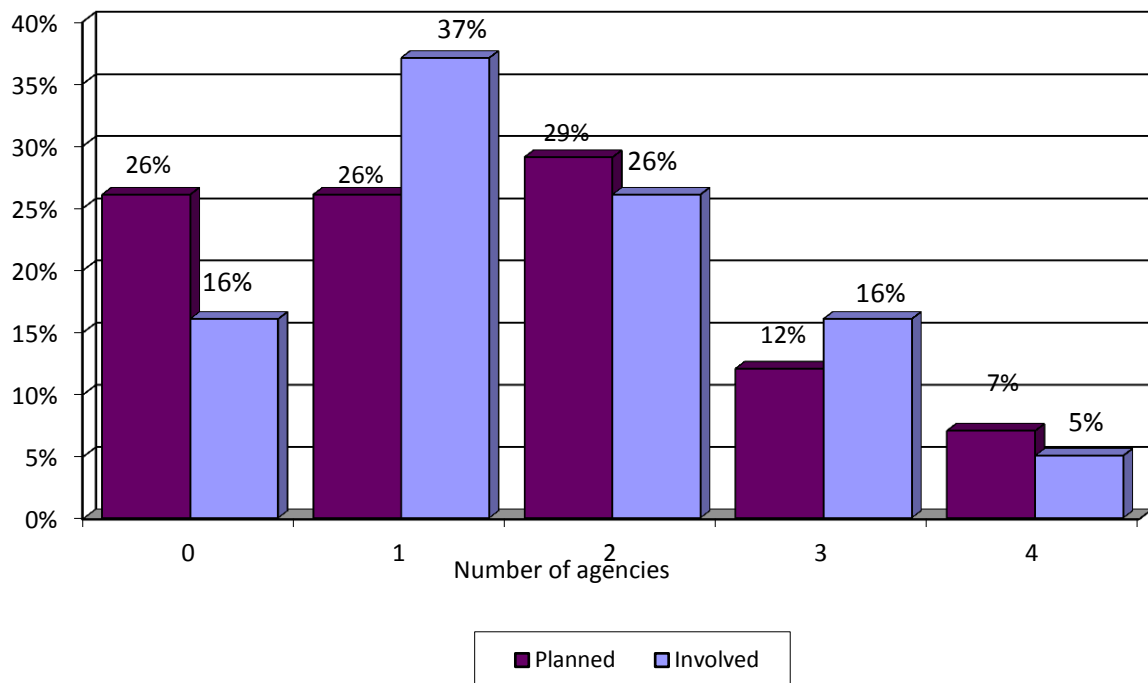
In contrast to the areas of need, the number of young people with no agencies involved was less than planned (from 26% to 16%) – so YJSs did involve at least one agency, although their initial planning indicated this would not be the case. However, as with plans, no child had more than four agencies involved. Table 5.6 below shows the count of agencies involved, and then Figure 5.2 compares to those planned.

Table 5.6: Count of agencies involved in supervision

Number of agencies	Frequency of all	Percentage of all
0	7	16%
1	16	37%
2	11	26%
3	7	16%
4	2	5%

Base = 43; all

Figure 5.2: Count of agencies planned and actually involved in supervision



Base = 82; all

Some agencies were involved with more young people than others. As planned, Social Services was the most involved agency, helping almost half of young people (44%), followed by drugs agencies (23%) and the police (19%). These three agencies were involved with more than one in five children, which contrasted with the ten agencies coordinated in this way in the NWRC (although the NWRC was given extra resources to engage with certain agencies).

Table 5.7: Agencies involved with young people during licence period

Agency	Frequency	Percentage
Social Services	19	44%
CAMHS	6	14%
Education	2	5%
Careers Wales	2	5%
Drug and alcohol services	10	23%
Victim workers	0	0%
Care home key worker	5	12%
Police	8	19%
Mentor	0	0%
Integrated Offender Management	1	2%
Probation	1	2%
Voluntary agency	12	28%
Other	1	2%

Base = 43; all

Like the areas of need, there were some agencies involved with more young people than planned, and some involved with fewer – and again, this would suggest that some of the agencies were easier to engage with or coordinate than others (see table below). Five agencies were involved in more cases than planned (compared to 12 in the NWRC) – Social Services, drug and alcohol services, care home key worker, Careers Wales and voluntary agencies. The most differences were with voluntary agencies, which had 12% more involvement than planned.

Table 5.8: Agencies involved with young people during licence period

Agency	Percentage planned	Percentage engaged	More or fewer than planned?	Southern Wales Comparison
Social Services	37%	44%	7% more	11% fewer
CAMHS	21%	14%	7% fewer	5% fewer
Education	5%	5%	Same	12% fewer
Careers Wales	2%	5%	3% more	15% fewer
Drug and alcohol services	12%	23%	11% more	8% fewer
Victim workers	0%	0%	Same	5% fewer
Care home key worker	7%	12%	5% more	1% more
Police	21%	19%	2% fewer	2% fewer
Mentor	0%	0%	Same	Same
Integrated Offender Management	2%	2%	Same	3% more
Probation	5%	2%	3% fewer	3% more
Voluntary agency	16%	28%	12% more	4% more
Other	21%	2%	19% fewer	14% fewer

Base = 43; all

In contrast, four agencies were involved with fewer cases than planned (CAMHS, the Police, the Probation Service and others), possibly suggesting difficulties in coordination or partnership. The last of these, other non-specified agencies was the biggest shortfall (19%). These failures may help to explain the shortfalls in addressing needs as planned, most obviously with the lack of CAMHS involvement affecting the mental health needs of the young people.

This mixed pattern of successful involvement of agencies was also found in Southern Wales, although not necessarily with the same agencies. For instance, in Southern Wales, there did not seem to be the shortfall with probation. However, they shared the difficulty coordinating the involvement of the police and CAMHS as planned. Interestingly, both geographical areas took more advantage of voluntary agencies than had been anticipated.

Housing

We will now consider some particular needs identified in previous research as important for resettlement success (see the literature review), focusing first on accommodation. Table 5.9 below shows that less than half of the young people went to live with at least one of their parents on immediate release from custody (44%), which is lower than other recent resettlement evaluation (including in Southern Wales, which was two thirds). Again, like those evaluations, supported accommodation was the second most popular but with a higher figure than previously of 19%.

Table 5.9: Accommodation on release from custody

Accommodation	Frequency of all	Percentage of all
Parental home	19	44%
With other relatives	4	9%
Foster care	2	5%
Children's home	4	9%
With friends	3	7%
Supported accommodation	8	19%
Hostel	2	5%
B&B	1	2%

Base = 137; 2 missing

The accommodation was clearly integrated into the planning for release with partners, with only a small proportion of young people (7%) not having had accommodation arranged or confirmed more than 24 hours prior to their release. Although this is not a terribly stringent test, with the recent HM Inspectorate of Probation report (HMIP, 2015) recommending accommodation settled weeks in advance of release, it does suggest that three children found out only on the day of release where they were going to live. As noted previously, the numbers in this evaluation are small, but this is a higher proportion than in other resettlement research.

Most of those who lived with their parents when they were released lived stably throughout their licence period. Of the young people who stayed in the parental home when they were first released, about 65% (n15/23; all) lived there throughout their licence period. Of the n8 who left the parental home, n3 of them moved on again subsequently (one child twice more). Their next accommodation tended to be with friends and relatives, which may or may not have been suitable.

The slightly more than half (54%) of all the young people who stayed with their parents at ANY time during the licence period was lower than in the earlier NWRC evaluation (69%) and the original DTO evaluation, (78% in Hazel et al, 2002). This indicates that relying on the family for accommodation throughout the sentence would be wrong and that it is, if anything, becoming more important that authorities tackle the difficulties in accessing suitable alternative provision.

Table 5.10: Places stayed in the community at ANY time during the licence period

Accommodation	Frequency of all	Percentage of all
Parental home	23	54%
With other relatives	6	14%
Children's Home	5	12%
With friends	6	14%
Foster parents	2	5%
Supported accommodation	9	21%
Independent housing	3	7%
B&B	4	9%
Hostel	4	9%
Absconded	1	2%
YOI	9	21%

Base = 43; all. Totals add up to more than 100% because they may have stayed more than 1 place

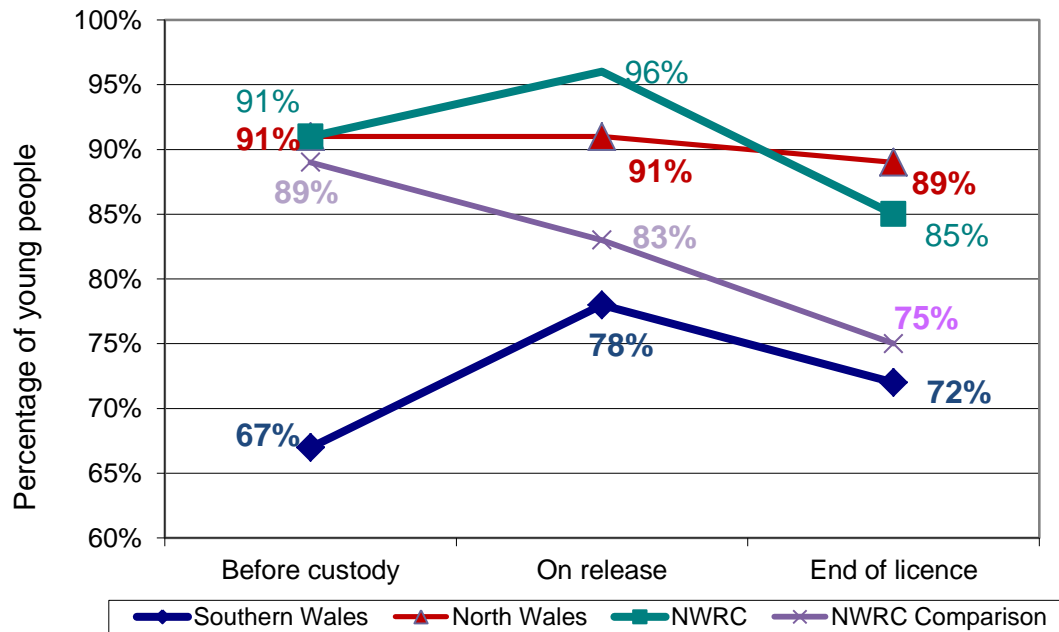
The proportion of young people in suitable and stable housing was slightly lower (not statistically significant) at the end of the licence period than before (89% compared to 91%), despite being stable at the time of release (to 96 %). Although the small numbers in Year 2 did not show a fall in suitability between sentencing and end of sentence, they did show a fall between suitability at release (100%) and at the end (89%; n16). It can be seen in Figure 5.3 below that, similar falls in suitability were found in both the NWRC and its 'business as usual' (BAU) comparison group¹⁰. Indeed, those falls were even more substantial.

This all indicates that there was an issue with breakdown of placements. Indeed, only 58% of children (n25/43) remained in the same type of accommodation throughout the community period of their sentence, and 21% moved again more than once. Similar findings were evident in an earlier study of children and young people's living arrangements following custody.¹¹

¹⁰ The comparison group for the NWRC was all the young people who were released from custody in the year before the project. These would have received existing levels of mainstreamed support, termed 'business as usual' rather than the NWRC's 'enhanced offer' of resettlement support.

¹¹ Nacro Cymru (2007) *Custody and Young People's Living Arrangements* London: Nacro

Figure 5.3: Trends in suitability of accommodation compared to other projects

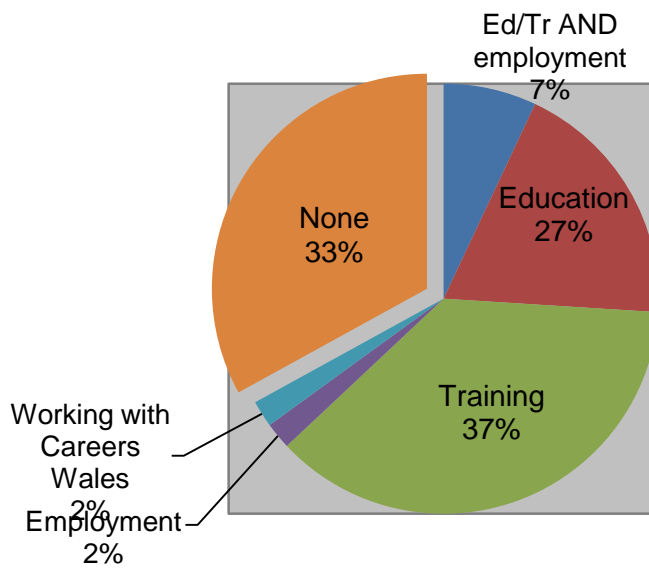


Education, training and employment

The findings in relation to the young people’s involvement in ETE were mixed, but showed success in arranging provision, if not achieving sustainability. Given the poor background in ETE engagement for this group, with 46% not engaged immediately prior to the sentence, this is perhaps to be expected. Figure 5.4 below shows that two thirds of the young people (67%) were engaged with ETE at some point during their sentence (including 2% involved with Careers Wales). This is about the same as for the NWRC (69%) and Southern Wales (65%), and better than the original DTO evaluation (53%). There was no significant difference between ETE engagement in the first year (68%) and second year (67%) of the project.

There appears to be a delay in organising arrangements between the custodial and community periods of the sentence, which risks losing the engagement and compliance of young people. ETE was set-up prior to release for only a third (33%) of children, so the large majority came out of custody not knowing what they would be doing. This figure is worse than the 67% comparable figure in Southern Wales and 50% for the NWRC. However, there was significant improvement between the first and second years of the North Wales Project, from 28% to 39% with ETE set up prior to release (Chi-square=8.783; 3df; p<0.05).

Figure 5.4: Type of ETE attendance during the licence period

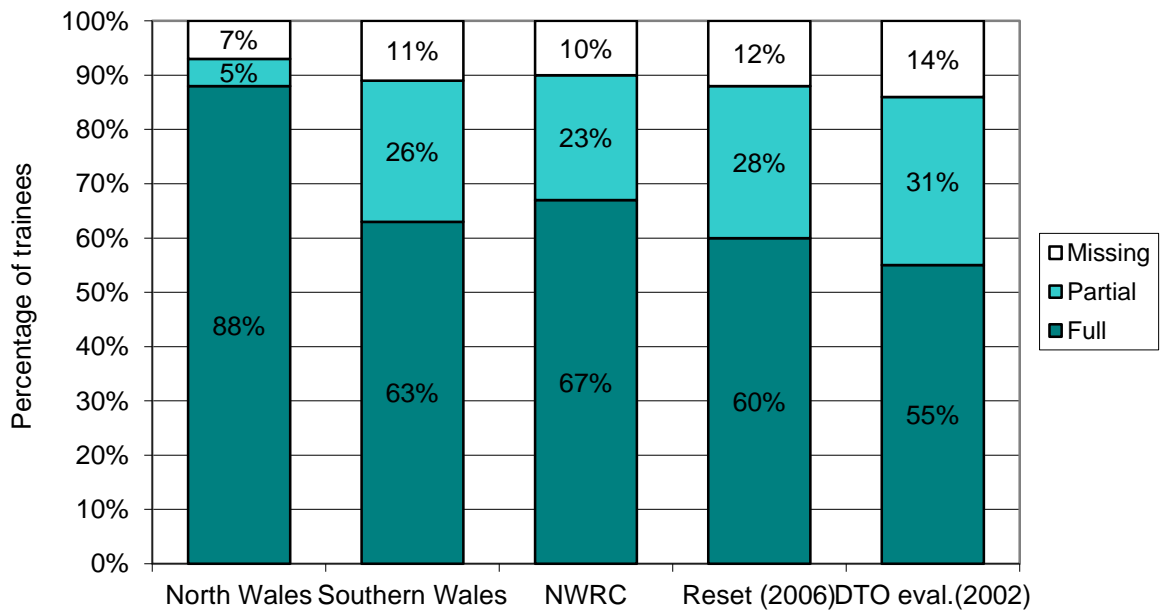


Base = 43; all

Consequently, it is worth considering briefly what was happening in relation to communication between the custodial institution and community agencies about education to help with this transition period.

An examination of case files suggested that YJSs received full information on the child's education and training activity while in custody in almost nine out of ten cases (88%). They received partial information for a further 5%. The full information figure is significantly better than found in previous evaluations (Binomial Test) (see the Figure 5.5 overleaf). The proportion with full information fell between Year 1 and Year 2 of the project from 96% to 78% (not statistically significant). These figures suggest that there were not substantial problems in communication – certainly not to prevent two thirds of children not having ETE arranged for release.

Figure 5.5: Extent of information on education and training available from institutions for after custody



Base = 43; all

Given the low numbers with ETE being set up prior to custody, it is not surprising that even when education or training was set-up at some point during the sentence (n30), providing a continuous sentence was very difficult. Figure 5.6 below shows that YJS case files indicated that it was possible to have a continuous programme in education and training in only the small minority of cases (13%). It is significantly lower than the corresponding figures for Southern Wales and the original baseline evaluation of the DTO, for which data were collected 15 years ago. It is even lower than the 18% of young people deemed able to have a continuous programme in the NWRC. However, this did improve over the course of the North Wales Broker Project from nobody in the first year to 29% (n4) in the second year.

Figure 5.6: Extent to which key workers considered it possible to form a continuous programme in education or training (for those where education or training was set up)

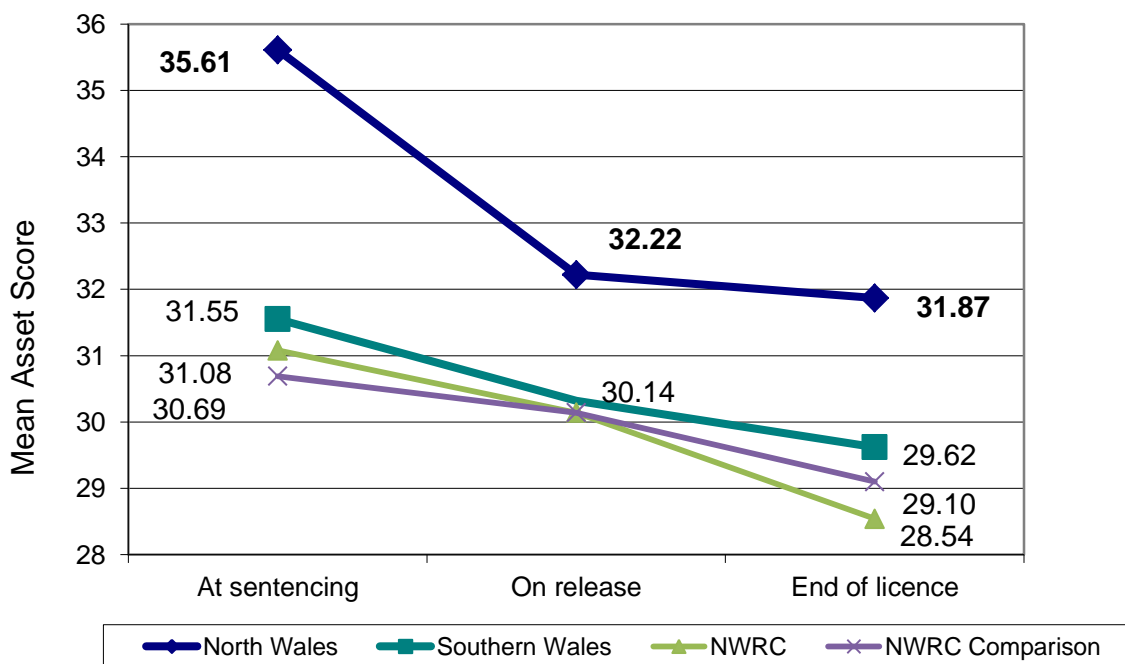


Base = 30 (all those for whom education or training was set-up)

Risk of Reoffending: Asset Scores

Overall, the young people had significantly lower Asset scores by the end of their licence period compared with their release, and then again compared with the start (Friedman Test). The mean average score dropped from 35.61 to 31.87. A drop of some kind is expected after an intervention, but this was bigger than the drop in the NWRC and in Southern Wales. Differences between the two years of the projects were not statistically significant.

Figure 5.7: Trends in Asset scores



Base=all; 39-41; 2-4 missing

It should be noted that in order to continue the resettlement and engagement work established after the end of the licence, a sustainability or exit plan should be developed for the young person. However, in North Wales, this was given to fewer than half the cohort (42%; n18). This is a lower proportion than the 66% who received a plan in the NWRC (although there were a number of missing cases there). The proportion with a plan went down between the first and second year of the project in North Wales, from 52% (n13/25) to 28% (n5/18) (not statistically significant).

A key element of providing sustainable support is to establish engagement between the child and non-statutory agencies who could work with them on a voluntary basis. In North Wales, 44% were offered voluntary one-to-one support during the licence period. Positively, this proportion went up between Year 1 and Year 2 of the study (not statistically significant) from 36% (n11/25) to 56% (n10/18).

Summary

This chapter has provided a quantitative assessment of the provision in North Wales for young people leaving custody over the past two years, looking at the support they had and how it affected their needs and risk factors.

On the basis of the relatively small numbers, the picture for provision received is mixed:

- It suggests that children are having most of their needs addressed to some extent, although not with the level of multi-agency support that would be likely to sustain good outcomes.
- It shows some good practices in relation to information flow between institution and YJS, but poor resettlement practices in relation to lack of preparation for release and ROTL.
- It shows some advance planning of accommodation, but with a lack of stability and suitability achieved (and points to the need for contingency planning).
- It shows that more people engaged with ETE than prior to custody, but that this was not arranged early enough prior to release and most children were released to no provision and unable to receive a continuous programme.

Chapter Six: Impact - Compliance during supervision

Neal Hazel

Inevitably, any evaluation of the success of a youth justice intervention will judge it in terms of the overall aim of the youth justice system, which in England and Wales is whether it “prevents offending” (Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and guidance). We recognise that offending may not be stopped or even significantly reduced within one short intervention, and may be more cumulative over time with children with established criminal behaviour, and that ‘softer’ intermediate targets found in the previous chapter may well be more realistic in indicating longer-term success with these individuals. Nevertheless, it is important to assess the levels of compliance post-release.

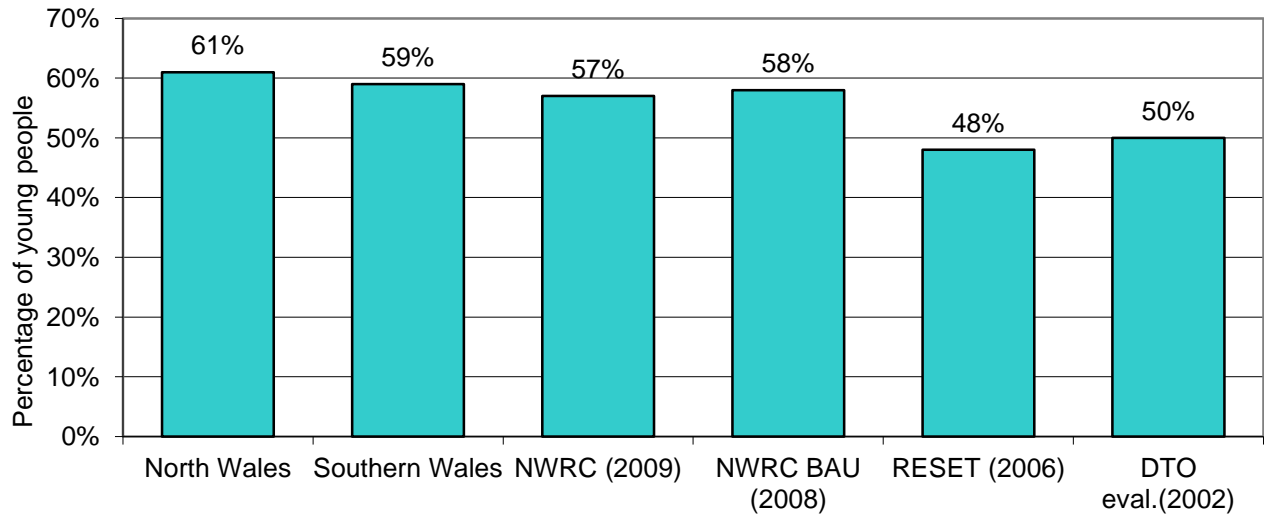
Ideally, the preferred way to measure this would be in line with the standard Ministry of Justice guidelines and to look at reconvictions one year after release. However, the timeline afforded this evaluation does not permit that measure. Therefore, we are using other “proxy measures” that have become our standard in resettlement work for the Home Office and then Youth Justice Board over the last 17 years. There are four “hard” outcome measures in the evaluation of the North Wales Project, which examine the success of services in supporting the young people to abide by their sentence. These are (a) whether the young person did something during their licence period that was against the conditions of their Order (a “breachable action”), (b) whether they were arrested for an offence allegedly committed during the supervision period, and (c) whether they have been convicted for any offence committed within three months of release (to equalise), and (d) whether the young person was returned to custody for either breaching their Order or reoffending during the licence period.

Breaching

About three in five of young people released from custody during the two year period (61%) did something that “failed to comply” with the conditions of their Order at least once during their licence period (even if no action was taken). Failure to comply means engaging in any activity that is against the conditions of the supervision part of their sentence, including not turning up for a scheduled activity or getting in trouble with the police. It is also referred to here as “committing a breachable action” because the YOT could send the child to court for a further judicial decision at this point, and they could be returned to custody to complete their sentence. Just fewer than half of children (46%) did something against the terms of their licence on *more than* one occasion.

The proportion of children who failed to comply fully is very slightly higher than the figures from the NWRC evaluation in England (57%), its BAU comparison group (58%) and the Southern Wales Broker Project (59%). However, all were notably *worse* than both the RESET group (which also did not see a significant difference) and the original DTO evaluation (see Figure 6.1 overleaf). In the case of the NWRC, this was found to be related to more demands placed on children with the additional support of enhanced resettlement. We will explore that more here. There was no difference (not statistically significantly) between Year 1 (64%) and Year 2 (56%) of the North Wales Broker Project.

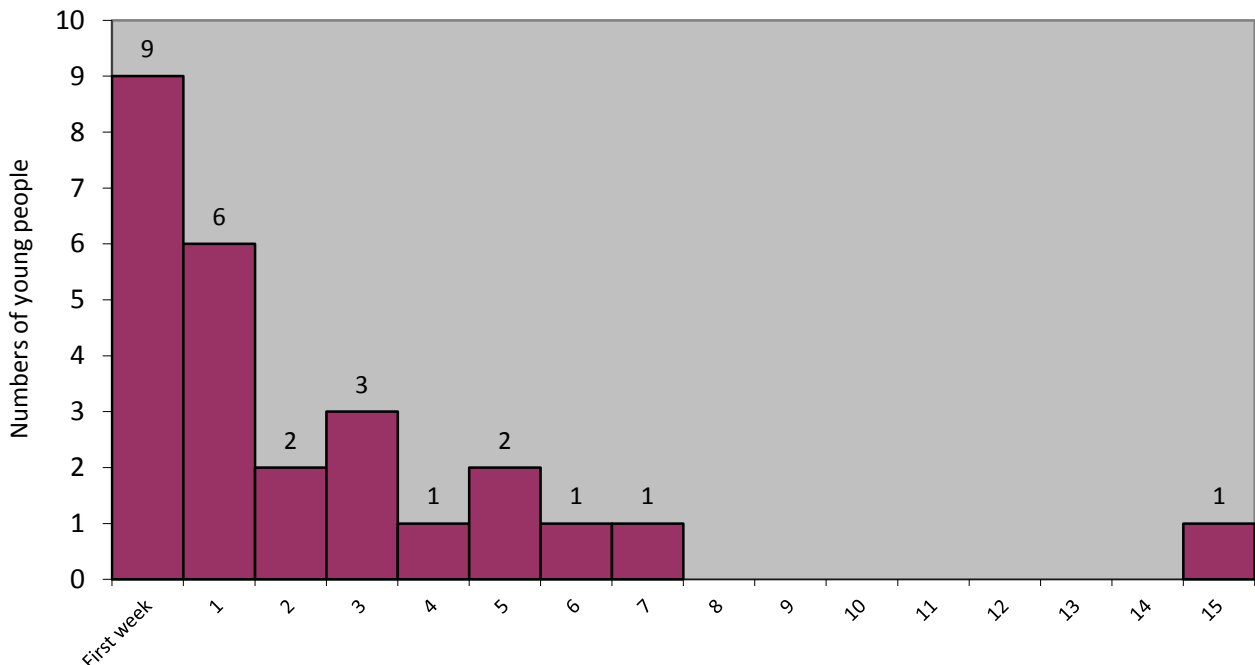
Figure 6.1: The number of people committing a breachable action, compared to comparison group and other projects



Base = 43; all

Furthermore, Figure 6.2 below shows that with one exception, the first breachable actions happened quickly after release, with the highest number occurring in the first week and the bulk of these initial failures to comply happening in the first few weeks. This is the same pattern as we have seen with previous evaluations.

Figure 6.2: Raw numbers of young people's first breachable actions at each week after release

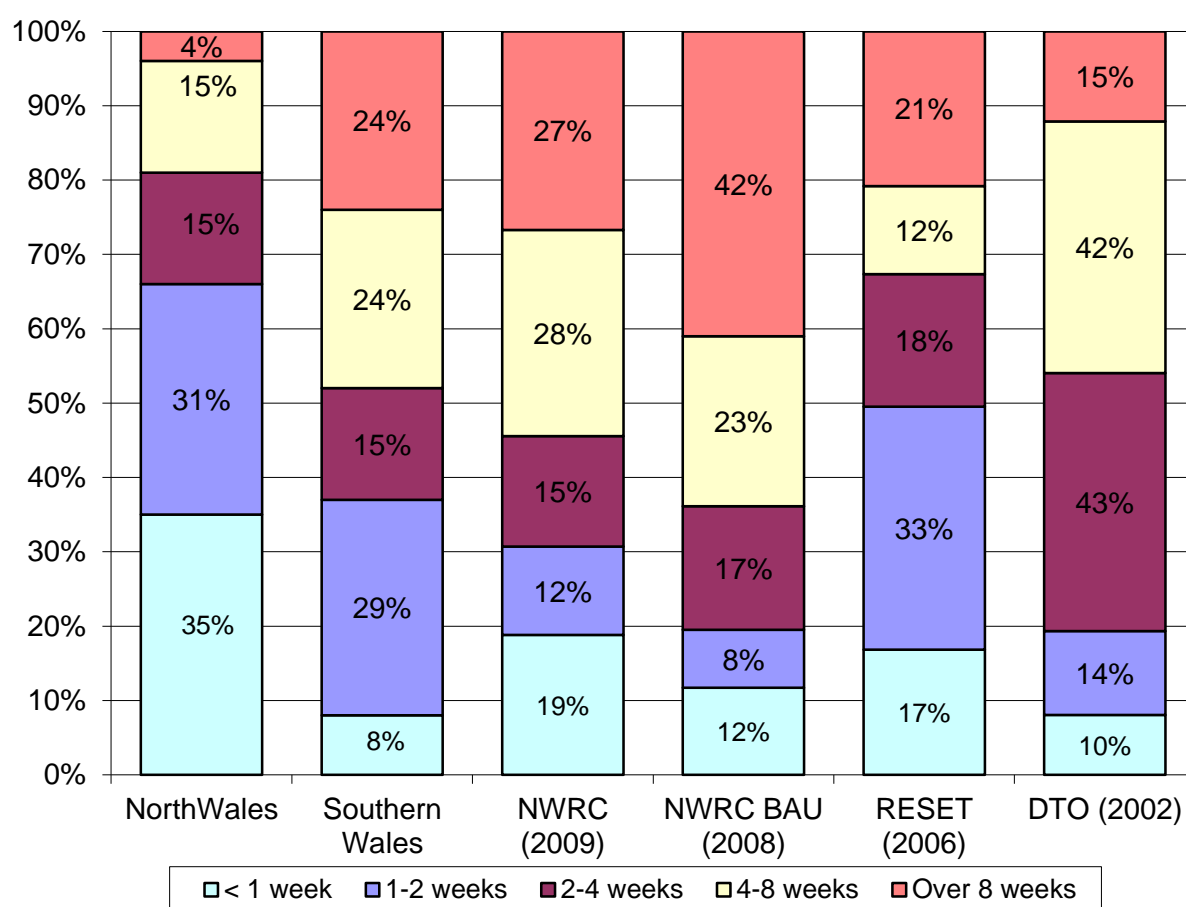


Base = all who committed a breachable action; n26, 3 missing

In fact, the median amount of time to first failure to comply was only 8.5 days, which was 22.5 days shorter than in the NWRC and 24.5 days shorter than in Southern Wales. Year 1 had a median of 8 days, with Year 2 a median of 9 days (not statistically significant). So, in both weeks, half of those who would commit a breachable action did so in the 9 days after release.

Figure 6.3 below compares the speed of this first failure compared to the previous evaluations for this group. There were more failures in the first week in North Wales (19%) than any other previous evaluation, including being almost double that from the original DTO evaluation. The particularly notable speed of first breachable action with this cohort may be related to the lower median age compared to previous projects; the evaluations have tended to show that the younger the average age, the shorter the period that they take to do something against their licence conditions.

Figure 6.3: Speed of first breachable action, compared to comparison group and other projects (for those who breached)



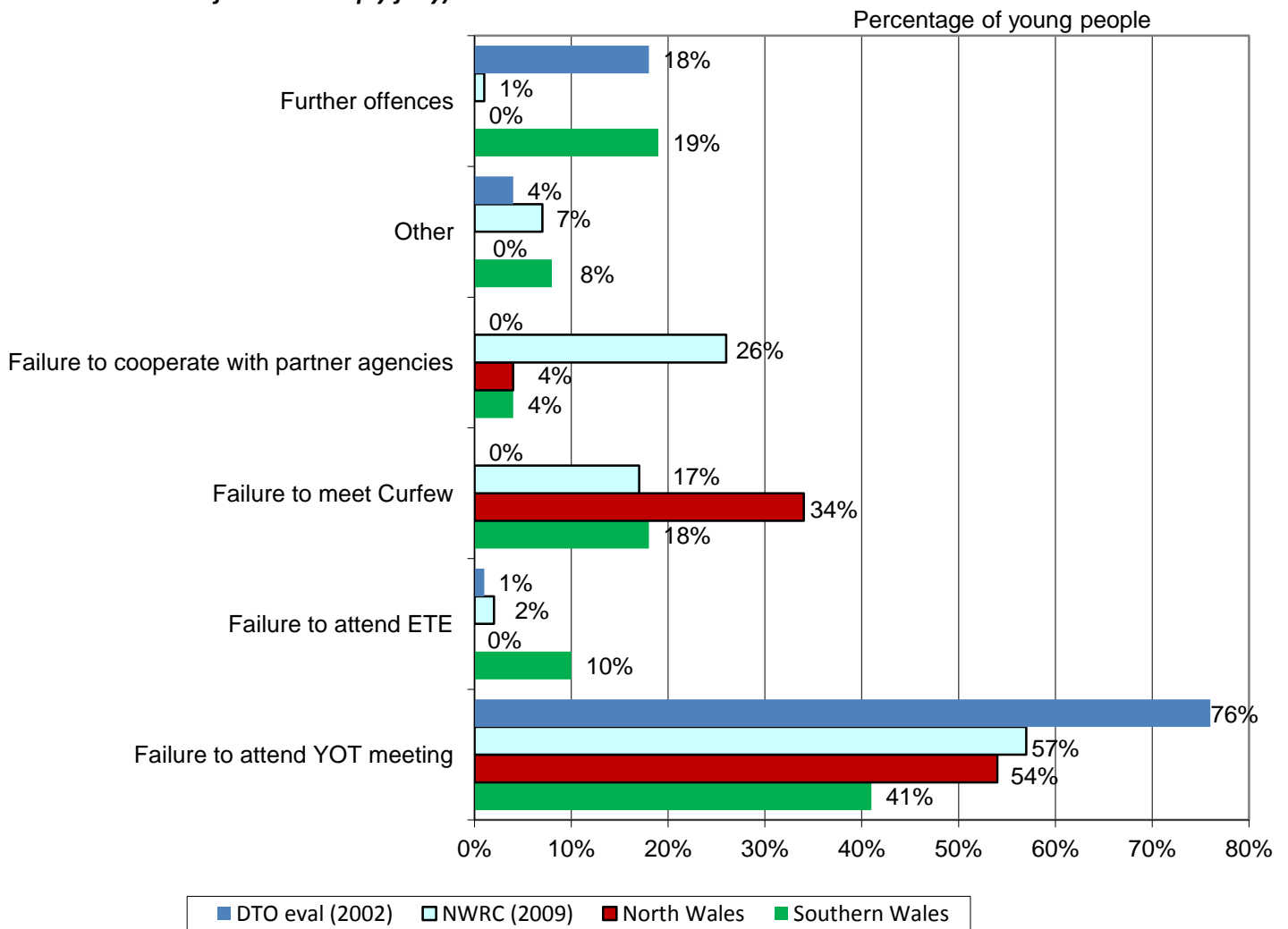
Base = all who committed a breachable action; n26, 3 missing

An important finding of the NWRC evaluation was that breach rates rose dramatically because children were being penalised for not cooperating with agencies delivering the additional support to them – in other words, they were being set up to fail. That pattern was not found in North Wales, which followed the more usual breakdown of reasons for first failure to comply. Instead, the most common reason was failure to attend a YOT meeting (54%). Of course, the reason that this has returned to normal, may be because there were fewer agencies involved or less support that the children are expected to engage with compared with the NWRC. Or it may be that additional contact was arranged on a voluntary or not-breachable basis. An interesting factor in this and the

North Wales evaluation is that failure to meet a curfew plays more of an important role, in a third of cases (34%) for North Wales.

There was no significant difference between the two years of the project in the first breachable action by the children, although failure to attend a YJS meeting was up from 38% to 46%, and further offences were down from 25% to 11%.

Figure 6.4: First type of breachable action, compared to comparison group and other projects (for those who failed to comply fully)

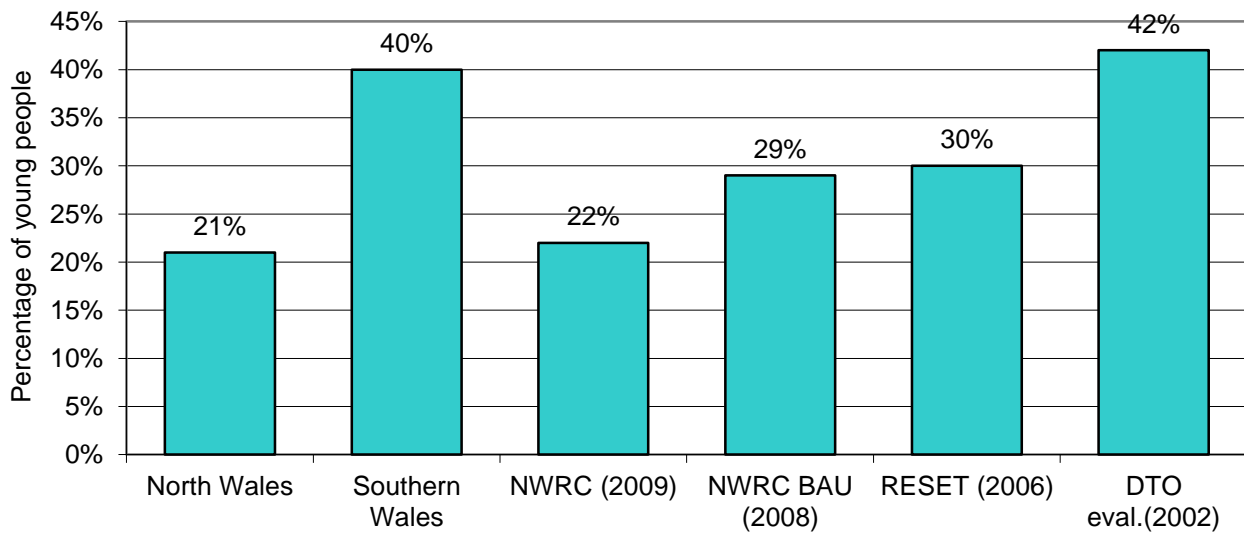


Base = all who committed a breachable action; n26, 3 missing

Reoffending

Just more than a quarter of young people released from custody during the two years committed an alleged offence leading to charge or caution during their licence period (21%). Figure 6.5 below shows that this is about the same as the NWRC project (22%) but 19% lower than in the Southern Wales Project. The small numbers in North Wales mean that we cannot draw any conclusions from that.

Figure 6.5: The number of people committing an offence in the licence period, against comparison group and previous resettlement projects

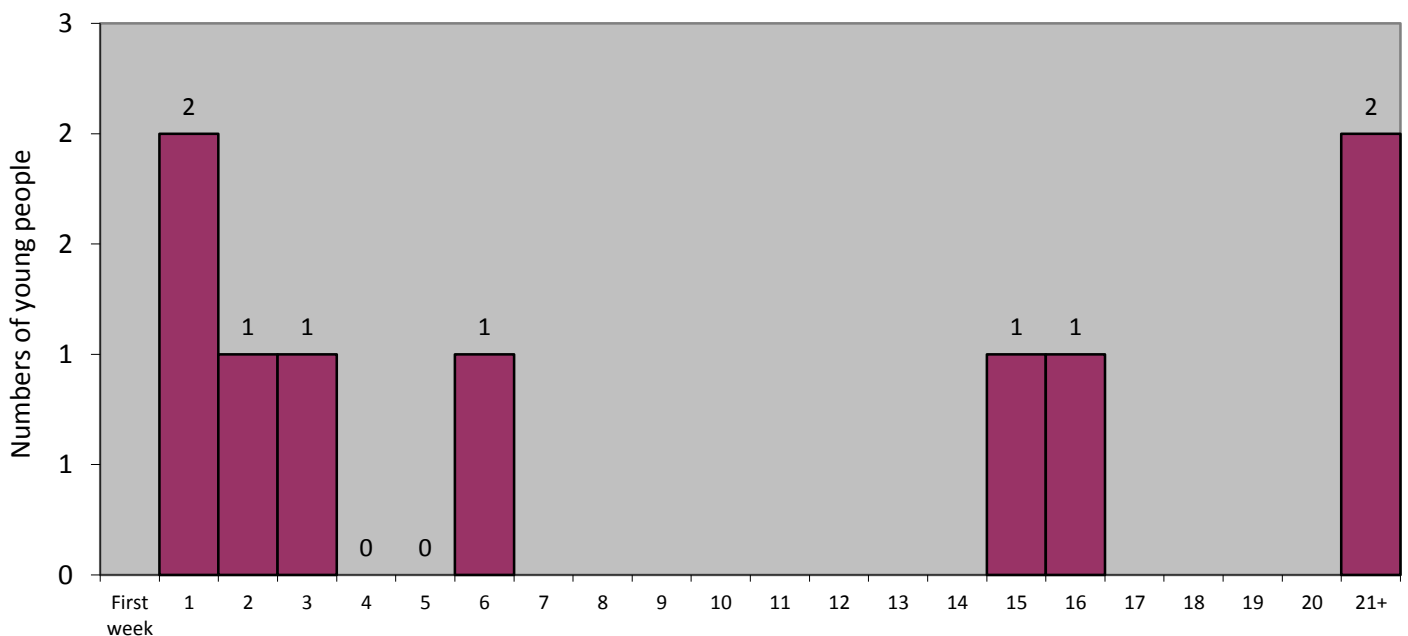


Base = all; n42 - 1 missing

The median average time to first offence for those 9 children who did offend was 45 days, which is only slightly shorter than the 51 days in the NWRC, 54 days for their BAU comparison group, and 59 days in Southern Wales.

Figure 6.6 below shows that there was a little flurry of first offences in the first month, and then sporadic offending over the following months.

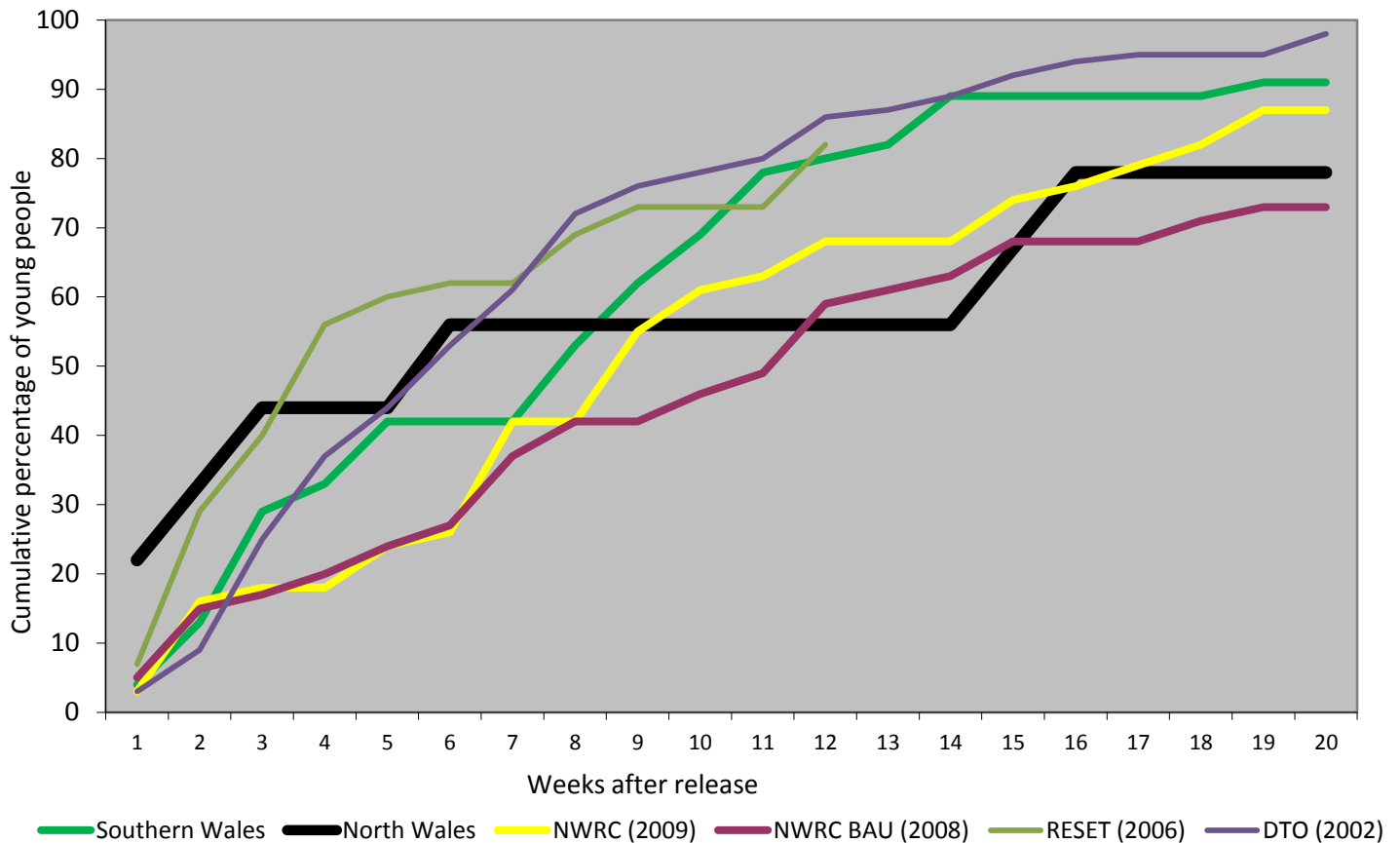
Figure 6.6: Raw numbers of young people's first offence each week after release



Base = 42; 1 missing

Figure 6.7 below shows the relative speed of first offence compared to the young people in the previous research. After a similar peak in the first couple of weeks, the North Wales cohort rises faster in the following few weeks, then plateaus off as the trends in the other evaluations go up. The plateau/gap and then further rise in the third month is a similar looking trend to the NWRC and its comparison, but just happened slightly earlier. Here, of course, we are only talking about individual cases rather than a pattern.

Figure 6.7: Weeks to first offence, cumulatively, compared to previous projects (percentage of those who offended only)



Base = 42; 1 missing

Reconvictions and recalls to custody

By the time of our analysis, a fifth of the cohort (19%; n8) had been processed and convicted for an offence during their licence period. There were more children convicted in the second year (28% compared with 12%), although the numbers are very small (so not significant enough to generalise).

Table 6.1 overleaf shows the spread of convictions during their licence period. The numbers are too small to discern any clear pattern.

Table 6.1: Offences for which convicted since release, compared to offences for the original conviction

Offences	Frequency of reconvictions	Proportion of children reconvicted	Proportion of original convictions
Robbery	0	0%	2%
Sexual offences	0	0%	2%
Breach of statutory orders	3	7%	51%
Domestic burglary	2	5%	23%
Breach of conditional discharge	0	0%	0%
Drugs	1	2%	21%
Violence against the person	1	2%	7%
Other	1	2%	7%
Theft or handling stolen goods	1	2%	2%
Bail breach	1	2%	0%
Non-domestic burglary	1	2%	5%
Public order	1	2%	7%
Motoring offences	1	2%	9%
Vehicle taking	1	2%	7%
Criminal damage	0	0%	0%
Arson	0	0%	0%
Fraud	0	0%	0%
Racially aggravated	0	0%	0%
Death by dangerous driving	0	0%	0%

Base = 43; all.

Just less than a quarter of children (23%; n10) were returned to custody for any action (reoffending or other breach) in the first three months of their licence period. This went up, though not significantly, from 20% to 28% over the course of the two years. Six of the ten children returned to custody were there because of failures to comply that did not include reoffending.

Factors associated with offending

With the numbers of young people being released in North Wales over the period being studied, it was always going to be unlikely that there would be many, if any, factors that were statistically significant in their association with reoffending. In actual fact, there were four factors (Likelihood ratio chi-square $p < 0.05$) (see Table 6.2 below). The first two related to the Local Authority that the child originated from and was released to. Those who reoffended were clustered around a minority of Authorities.

One of the other two factors related to the young person's background – low qualifications. This is interesting because we found earlier that a greater proportion of children than were intended had

the issue of low qualifications addressed to some extent. It looks as if that was a wise move by practitioners. The last factor related to disruption and instability after release – the child was more likely to reoffend when they stayed in more than one type of accommodation after release.

Table 6.2: Statistically significant relationships with reoffending

Factor	% reoffended if factor present	% reoffended if factor absent
Local authority originated in	25%-50% in 3 LAs, 0% in 4 LAs (inc 'other'),	
Local authority released to	44%-56% in 2 LAs; 0% in 5 LAs (inc 'other')	
Low qualifications	37%	9%
Multiple types of accommodation stayed in after release	1=8%, 2=33%, 3=67%	

Base = 42; 1 missing

There were no further statistically significant associations. However, as this is a population census (i.e. ALL those released from custody in a given period) rather than a sample, any difference is still real for North Wales during that two year period. Statistical significance just means that we can be more sure that increased numbers, or over a wider timeframe, would see the same pattern (because it was not just the chance pattern for those particular children). As such, it is worth noting factors where there appeared to be a substantial difference, but that did not reach our threshold level of 95% certainty of a result that would be representative of a wider population:

- Difficulties with life skills (67% reoffended vs 18%)
- Welsh as first language (43% reoffended vs 17%)
- Looked After Child status immediately prior to custody (24% offended vs 19%)
- Rating of high vulnerability (26% reoffended vs 13%)
- Unsuitable accommodation prior to custody (33% reoffended vs 21%)
- Continuous programme in Education / Training not possible (24% reoffended vs 0%)
- Accommodation not confirmed 24 hours prior to release (67% reoffended vs 18%)
- Accommodation unsuitable at the end of the sentence (50% reoffended vs 22%)
- No sustainability plan in place at the end of the licence period (28% reoffended vs 12%)

Again, we can clearly see here some existing vulnerabilities that we know are criminogenic needs, such as difficulties with life skills and looked after child (LAC) status, with the added feature of Welsh as a first language. We see factors that would make it difficult for sustained support and a smooth transition from custody to community, such as accommodation not confirmed before release and an interrupted programme in education/training. We also see indications of a lack of planning and stability during the community phase, with unsuitable accommodation by the end and no sustainability plan in place.

Summary

This chapter has considered the outcome picture for children being released from custody over the past two years to authorities involved in the North Wales Resettlement Broker Project, in terms of compliance with their Order. In short, it has looked at whether they did something against the terms of their release licence, or reoffended during the licence period.

The rate of failure to comply with their sentence was slightly higher than comparable research, though not to statistically significant levels. If it happened, it also tended to happen faster than cohorts studied previously – usually in the first weeks or even days. This speed may well be related to the younger than average custodial cohort in North Wales. The failure to comply was largely for not attending YOT supervision. Given the age and vulnerability levels of this cohort, this perhaps raises the question of whether staff need to consider recent research highlighting young people’s disorientation and stress immediately after release and reassess expectations and flexibility accordingly.

The proportion of young people who offended while on licence was low relative to previous evaluation cohorts. Although the numbers were too small to generalise beyond this particular cohort, reoffending was lower than studies of ‘business as usual’ areas and more akin to resettlement projects. The speed of reoffending was similar to previous research cohorts.

Although the above gives a description of compliance outcomes for those released from custody, the analysis is perhaps more useful for highlighting (through logistic regression statistics), the factors that seemed to make the key differences for the children. First, children who reoffended were clustered around a minority of authorities, so this was a statistically significant factor in offending outcomes. It may be worth considering how practices differ between local authorities in order to tease this apart, but in itself, this does not tell us what elements of resettlement were key for children in North Wales.

Apart from geography, there was one significant factor related to the child’s background, low qualifications; and one to do with the impact of provision, staying in several types of accommodation after release. The latter reaffirms the importance of ensuring suitable and stable accommodation for release. The importance of preparation for accommodation (and other services) is underlined by related factors which made a difference to this cohort (but not statistically significant enough to generalise beyond it), including whether accommodation was suitable at the end of the sentence and whether it had been confirmed more than 24 hours prior to release.

Chapter Seven: The experiences of young people and their parents/carers

Kathy Hampson

Introduction

The Resettlement Broker Project has looked to improve the experiences of resettlement for young people receiving custodial sentences. It was therefore important to gain young people's views of their experiences, to further inform areas for improvements in the system. To this end, young people who were, or had previously been, subject to a custodial sentence were interviewed by the Broker in order to ascertain their opinions to a variety of questions about their custody and resettlement. In this chapter the analyses of these interviews are presented. All young people being released during the monitoring and evaluation period of the project (two years from October 2012) were eligible for interview, but there were practical difficulties in gaining access to a lot of these eligible young people (and many had finished their orders, so were not accessible). These limitations are outlined, alongside the methodologies used for the interview analyses. Descriptions of the interview cohort demographics give context to the type of young people who were involved, which is followed by the interview findings themselves, in a combination of thematic analysis and case study.

Methodology

Interviews were conducted with young people, as available, in the community (after release) and digitally recorded. The decision to limit the interviews to the community was in order to mitigate the logistical difficulties inherent to interviewing in a custodial context, and the fact that permission could not be obtained for electronic recording equipment to be taken in. It was the intention to interview every young person being released from custody at two different times: soon after release (Time 1), and just before licence end (Time 2). It was also planned that wherever possible, parents/carers would also be interviewed (utilising the parent interview schedule from the evaluation of the Detention and Training Order (DTO) (Hazel et al, 2002), but that this would be over the telephone, and notated rather than digitally recorded.

All young people were given information about the project prior to the interview, and were required to sign a consent form, with a clear indication that involvement was voluntary. Consent could be withdrawn at any point, and efforts to follow up missed interviews were tempered by considerations of whether absence amounted to tacit refusal. The consent form also covered the intent to digitally record the interviews, but permission for this was re-checked at the start of every interview. Only one young person refused consent for the interview to be digitally recorded. The questions were taken from interviews devised for the DTO evaluation (Hazel et al, 2002), and so had been tested on young people of a similar background to those from this project. Interviews were conducted with a number of the young people who had been released from custody during the period within which the project was running.

Two approaches have been taken to the interview analyses. The first was to identify themes emerging from all of the responses, along the broad topic headings of 'in custody', 'preparation for release', 'out of custody', and 'the future'. These identified themes will become evident through the discussion. The second approach was to use the three intact Time 1, Time 2, and parent interviews to create three case studies (Appendix 7), incorporating other information about the subjects' subsequent actions (*vis-à-vis* breach and reoffending), in order to further investigate the potential impact on compliance of attitudes displayed in custody and on licence (also given the antecedents of prior offending behaviour and engagement). Quotes (in italics) have been used wherever possible to illustrate the discussion, and to give a voice to the young people and their families affected by custodial sentences.

The following interviews took place:

- 6 Time 1 interviews,
- 5 Time 2 interviews,
- 3 parent interviews,
- 4 mapping report interviews,
- 1 focus group consisting of 5 young people from Hindley YOI.

All the Time 1 and Time 2 interviews (except one Time 1 interview, where consent for recording was refused) were digitally recorded and transcribed. One of the Time 2 digital recordings failed part way through the interview, so subsequent data were lost. The parent interviews were conducted over the telephone and notated. The mapping interviews were also notated rather than recorded, as were the young people's responses in the Hindley focus group.

Interviewee demographic information

Given the small numbers of young people being given custodial sentences at this time, detailed demographic information about the interview cohort cannot be included, since it could lead to identification of the young people involved. However, aggregated information gives a useful background to the profile of young people who have been interviewed. The young people interviewed individually (n11) were characterised as follows:

- Mean age of 16 years of age on receipt of their custodial sentence, but with a range of 13 to 18
- Only one female
- Nine were in custody for breaching previous orders (although four of these also included another offence)
- Three had been in custody before (although one young person had five previous custodial sentences)
- Seven were serving sentences of six months or less
- Seven served their sentence in a YOI, the others in a Secure Training Centre (STC) (with one young person transferring between the two mid-sentence)
- Mean of nine previous convictions (with a very wide range of 1 to 19)
- Nearly a quarter were Looked After by the local authority
- Nearly a quarter were first language Welsh speaking
- Nearly a quarter had at some point been identified as being a 'Deter Young Offender' (DYO)
- Mean age of first detected offence (usually dealt with via a police Reprimand) was 12 years old (ranging from 10 to 15)
- Mean combined Asset score (at custody) was 39 (ranging from 27 to 46), with a mean of 2.5 (out of 4) score for the 'substance use' section
- Three were not in any ETE on receipt of their sentence, but this increased to eight having no provision on release from custody

Other information from the cohort:

- Only one was given a ROTL opportunity, which was a single instance, to visit accommodation provision.
- Nearly half had done one or two breachable actions, but were not actually breached; three were taken back to court for breach, two of whom were recalled.
- Nearly three quarters committed no further offences during their licence
- Only five of the young people had any identified support beyond the end of their licence.

In custody

Initial impressions of the custodial establishment

The young people were sent to a range of custodial establishments, which was reflected in their thoughts about it (indicated here after the quote). Some seemed to feel surprised that it was not particularly unpleasant, having assumed that it would be; some felt that it was a very positive experience:

I thought it would be a lot worse to be honest. Just expected to have a hard time there and that but I didn't. Didn't have nothing there, it was easy to handle (YOI).

I wouldn't mind living there, it was that easy (YOI)

Oh I reckon it's dead nice. It looks nice as well, like for a jail it actually does look nice (Adult female prison)

However, some young people felt that the custodial environment was not positive, with one young person commenting that no one wants to be 'inside'. He was also concerned that there is bullying in custody, with some young people expressing suicidal thoughts being encouraged by others to 'string up' (hang themselves), which was also mentioned by another young person. He felt this indicated that some young people are not 'cut out for jail'. Some of the young people felt it might be difficult for some to admit that they found it difficult to be in custody, commenting that:

It's not Butlins, and people saying that know deep down that it isn't, but might be too scared to say (YOI)

However, two of the young people were clear about their negative impressions of being in custody:

Shit. There's no good thing about it. Just everything's horrible (YOI)

Everything, it was just horrible, knowing that you're not on the out (STC)

Apart from differences within the secure estate, the wide range of opinions about custody may also reflect the resilience of the young people, with some young people finding it easier to adapt than others. One young person felt that he had made a positive decision to be sent to custody, since he would not comply with any community orders, and actually told the magistrate at his breach that he would prefer custody. However, the parent of another young person explained how he had found it difficult to come to terms with custody initially:

For the first couple of days he was constantly asking to come home, asking the solicitor for them to bring it for him to come home (STC)

She went on to comment that he subsequently got into several fights early on in his custodial experience, which resulted in him having to be physically taken back to his cell, feeling that this was due to his inability to cope with the situation.

Being Welsh in an English custodial provision

Several of the young people had been the only Welsh young person (to their knowledge) in their custodial establishment. There appeared to be some difference, in terms of being Welsh, between the different Welsh counties. Young people from the more easterly counties seemed to find more affinity with some of the English young people:

I was chilling with all the scousers. It's scousers against everyone else really. And I just fit with all the scousers

The young people who felt the difference most seemed to be those who were first language Welsh speakers, with one commenting the authorities should split up these large groups, as there were not many other young people from Wales, but also that some other young people were *'really on their own'*. One young person commented that there had been one other Welsh young person in custody with him, but they had not been a Welsh speaker, although he explained there had been a Welsh speaking teacher (from Holyhead, not part of any specific Welsh provision), with whom he had been able to speak Welsh. It would seem, then, that young people from some areas teamed up with other established groups; he felt the difficulties for Welsh young people in being within an English establishment were not universally felt. However in the Hindley focus group, they positively expressed that one of the activities they enjoyed most was getting together as Welsh young people in a group (*'this kind of thing'*), indicating some enjoyment of Welsh identity.

Focused work in custody

The young people's experience of focused work to address issues relating to their offending behaviour appeared to be mixed, with substance use work being the most universally delivered. For some young people, the short length of their sentence appeared to be the reason for the non-delivery of this work:

We had to do a re-offending programme but er it didn't start like the programme in jail didn't start. It was meant to be starting while I was in there, but it didn't (4 month sentence)

Whereas another young person with an eight month DTO commented: *'Yeah, had STOP courses and that'* (STOP stands for Short Term Offending Programmes). One young person on a four month order said that apart from a small amount of substance use work, they also had some anger management input.

Education, Training and Employment (ETE)

Young people's experiences of ETE in custody varied according to the type of establishment in which they were accommodated. STCs are designed for younger and more vulnerable young people, so their education provision tends to follow a school model, providing the (English) National Curriculum. This was varyingly received, partly possibly because most young people entering custody have often had a difficult educational history, which does not enable them very often to see school in a positive light. One young person (who had been in a Pupil Referral Unit prior to being given custody, from which he had several exclusions) described education as the worst part of custody, whereas others felt that the experience had been, if not positive, then fairly neutral:

It was like school

A normal school day. (It was) alright. Easy

Other young people who had been able to access more vocational and practical training experiences were very positive about that part of their sentence:

Yeh, went every day (to the gym) cos I was on plastering, so I got to go every day. Yeh yeh I don't like school anyway so I never picked it in there. Did not get on with school. They give me plastering, that's what I wanted to do. Sound

Baking, health and safety, art (baking and art further identified as a favourite part of custodial experience)

Did my maths, my English, catering

Painting and decorating, maths, ...and gym, obviously like

One young person put forward a reason for the enjoyment of education and training while in custody, even when prior experiences of engagement have not been good:

When you're inside is the only time you enjoy education, because you get out of the cell

However, motivation also seemed to come from the ability to gain qualifications whilst in custody, which may not have seemed possible outside:

Got my level 1 (plastering). Yeah easy. Done it in six weeks. Got my level 1. Got a level 1 maths and English as well. Yeah That's what I mean, you get quite a bit of qualifications in jail. If you're in there for a long time you come out with loads

One young person was clearly very proud of the qualifications he had achieved in custody, detailing in interview that he had done bricklaying, food hygiene, employability, maths, English, ICT, military training, and his forklift driving licence, having achieved 40 hours of basic training. One parent noted:

He did plastering inside, and got lots of certificates – he was made up by that. It's just like a boarding school where you work

However, the particular limitations which seem to be in evidence for young people given a very short custodial sentence also affected what education and training they could access. One young person, who expressed an interest in construction, was asked about this provision in custody:

Nah I was only there for a short period of time, so I didn't get a chance. (You didn't get a chance to do anything?) Nah

Relationships with others in custody

Young people gave very differing accounts of their relationships with staff in custody, although this also seemed to vary between whether the staff were educational or prison officers. Most young people felt they got on with most of the staff, but a few felt that prison officers were sometimes unpredictable, and sometimes were deliberately trying to 'wind up' young people by their words or actions. They also felt that it was hard to avoid the staff who they felt acted in this way.

In terms of relationships with other young people, most felt that they got on 'alright' with them, although several of the young people interviewed had fights in custody, which affected their behaviour reports, indicating that they possibly did not always cope with conflict situations well. One such young person commented:

There was some idiots in there, but it was alright

It was alright and that. Because of the person I am I wouldn't let nobody take me for, I dunno...(Stand up for yourself?) Yeah

Contact with home

For Welsh young people in custody in England, home is often a long way away, making visits for family problematic – difficult to afford (despite a scheme to refund travel expenses) for workless families, and difficult to arrange time-wise for working families or those with young children. Several of the young people only received statutory visits from the YOT and social workers, whereas others were able to see a variety of family members through their sentence, reflecting the different circumstances outlined above. Some parents visited only when there was a review meeting, and the YOT offered transport, others even declined this opportunity.

One parent (who has a car) expressed his frustration at the logistical difficulties of maintaining contact:

It is a long way away and I was going to have to visit twice a week. There's nowhere else is there? He called me every day on the phone. I visited twice a week every week

One parent (not blood-related, but who had taken on responsibility for looking after the young person from a young age) described the only time she had tried to attend a visit. She had very small children, and unbeknown to her the visit had been cancelled because the young person had been moved temporarily to hospital for a minor operation (about which neither her nor the young person's father were informed). She arrived at the prison to find the young person not present, and so the visit was not able to take place, much to the consternation of the young person involved. She described his visits as 'a lifeline'.

One young person expressed his feelings about lack of visits as follows:

My mum. She never visit me, she just come as a meeting thing (for a DTO meeting?) Yeah, that's all she done. Then I stayed there for 2 month without no one visiting me

One young person who, due to his family situation only received statutory visits, attempted to explain how this might actually have been beneficial, as it 'gets the time done quicker'. He noted:

If you saw someone from your family, you would then be wondering afterwards what they were doing, knowing you were just in your cell

It is bound to be difficult for young people to see family go home after a visit, knowing they could not follow. One young person said about this: 'bit hard when they left like'. However, contact was clearly very important for the young people, who also valued other forms of contact almost as much, like receiving letters. Most telephoned their family every day, sometimes more than once. They found that accessibility to telephones when they needed to call was generally fine ('Every time I wanted a phone call I got one'), but with some perceived unfairness in access to telephone numbers (although whether this was quite as it seemed to the young person remains unclear):

They wouldn't let me put any other PIN numbers on me phone as well. They only let me put one on till I got on gold and then they let me put another one on but everyone had like 15 numbers, and they were on basic. So I couldn't ring none of me mates or nothing

DTO meetings

Young people seemed to have poor recall of their DTO meetings, and difficulty remembering any plans which ensued. No young people were able to identify attendees other than prison staff, YOT staff, and parents. However, of those who could remember, all said that they understood what was being said ('Yeah kind of'). One young person's feelings regarding their planning meetings were obviously heavily influenced by the capacity of that meeting to agree with their requests (more discussions about young people putting their own ideas into plans later in the chapter):

Alright; two times I had one so, the first one was shit, cos I used to live with my mum before I went in, and I wanted to come and live here with my girlfriend, and then they wouldn't allow it at the start, at that first one. But then the second one, they said it was ok, was sorted, so that was better for me

One parent (who had not visited at any other time) clearly saw the meeting as an opportunity to see her son, commenting: 'Found them alright because I knew I was going to see him'.

Making complaints

Advocacy services are available in custodial institutions (for example, Barnardo's provide this service for Hindley YOI), which enable young people to make complaints, where necessary, about their experiences in custody. However, although all young people are informed of them, they do not seem keen to avail themselves of these services. When asked about what they can do if they have a complaint, young people commented:

Can't do nothing. You just gotta deal with it, cos everything in jail takes like two weeks for anything say you put an app in for a pair of trainers. Took me a month to get a pair of trainers in. Took me two weeks to get hold of a key worker as well. Everything in there is just a joke

Nowhere. Deal with it. Either you do something or deal with it innit

Both were aware of advocacy services, but could not explain why they did not see this as an option for them on encountering difficulties in custody. Potentially the keyworker system in operation in some establishments could also provide a safety net for young people with problems. However, one young person did not seem to feel they had much contact with their allocated worker, so it is debatable how well this system is currently operating:

Took me two weeks to get hold of a key worker as well... I only seen her twice when I'd been sentenced yeah

Preparation for release

Release on temporary licence (ROTL)

ROTL has been identified as an effective way for people to prepare for release, and as such is a vital resettlement tool. Long distances from home militate against effective use of ROTL in allowing young people to make visits back to their home community (as might be desired for ETE interviews, or potential accommodation visits), particularly pertinent to Welsh young people in English custodial establishments. As has already been identified, only one of the young people interviewed was able to access a ROTL opportunity, although two of the young people in the Hindley focus group and mapping interview cohorts also did so, one to do reparation, the other a farming activity (although he said that he was not interested in farming for a career) in the locale of the prison, which was arguably therefore not resettlement-focused.

It was not clear from the interviews why most of the young people had not accessed ROTL (supporting our findings in Chapter Five), apart from comments by two young people:

Got to be there 3 months to get mobility

I didn't have it cos I could have put in but I didn't bother cos I was only in there for 3 months. So it was worthless

These two comments demonstrate further the specific difficulties encountered by young people serving short sentences, one of whom appeared to choose not to apply because of the length of his sentence, but the other (mobility is the term for ROTL used in STCs) apparently saying that this made him ineligible. It is unclear currently whether this was a practice commonly used by the STC in question, but proffers the unwelcome possibility that it might be so. If so, then this might have affected others within the interview cohort, most of whom were on sentences of not more than six months (which would necessitate a custodial period of three months or less). The young person who visited an accommodation provision on ROTL was serving a significantly longer sentence.

Pre-release preparation

Some custodial establishments provide a pre-release course for young people, but have cited some difficulties in getting young people to engage with it, since it is offered on a voluntary basis. Most of the young people interviewed did not appear to have attended such a course, with some not being sure what the question referred to. This is consistent with our finding in Chapter Five that only two young people were recorded as having attended a pre-release course. However, those young people who had attended one seemed to indicate that it was helpful:

Yeah pre-release course... 's good (What did you find most helpful about that?) Everything really, it was just...(What did you do on it?) Done loads of things like done CVs, done banking stuff, about paying bills and that

(pre-release course) *Yeh (What did you do on that?) CVs and that (was it useful?) Alright.*

Worries for release

Most of the young people could not think of any worries which they had had in custody about their impending release. However, whether this was because they did not have any, or because having now been released, they have forgotten what they were worried about, remains unclear. One young person voiced that he was concerned at what the effects of a lack of routine might be:

Getting worried to getting bored, yeh. Cos your days fly in there than they do out here. People think they don't but they do. Go well quicker. You're always busy yeh. You're in a routine aren't you

Another young person was worried about the fact that she had already decided prior to release that she would use cannabis on release, but that this might result in her recall:

They said that I wasn't allowed to take any drugs, so I was like getting out and then I was getting drug tested every week. So I was worried about that actually because I thought, cos I knew like I was gonna get out and have a joint the day I got out, so I knew that would be breaching my licence conditions straight away. But then, I got out and I went to probation the day I got out and they said to me that I wouldn't get breached, they're more arsed about like class As and that as well like, but they obviously don't want me to smoke weed but they said I wouldn't get recalled so I was alright after that

These two young people might have identified some of the most common reasons for young people finding themselves unable to change their behaviour post-custody – going back to substance use, and losing the routine of prison quickly leading to an unstructured and chaotic lifestyle.

Out of custody

Day of release

Most of the young people were collected from custody by family, although some without family support had to rely on either the YJS or social worker to meet them at the gate. All of the young people could identify what they needed to do on that first day of release (which for several also involved a haircut!), in terms of attending the YJS to sign their licence and begin the contacts specified on the plan. However, there did not appear to be any day of release plans which were any more detailed than this, with no young people mentioning any advice given about what would be wise or unwise to do on that first day. Many young people are released on Friday (as those due for release at the weekend will also be released on the Friday before) and their allocated worker may not be available until the Monday, which might leave them feeling somewhat vulnerable (or unsupervised, if no alternative provision had been put in place) over their first weekend.

One young person, when thinking about how she would advise someone being released, observed the following:

Just don't go too mad when you get out. I wanted to be on tag when I first got out. Yeah cos I thought I was just gonna go mad at first like. You know cos I haven't been out for ages, I'll go and get wrecked and that, but I don't think I actually did. First day you get out ... normally people get steaming don't they? Or they get wrecked or something. I'd say not to do that.

Feelings on release

It is well documented that many young people feel considerable anxiety on being released. The young people in the interview cohort were able to add comments to how it felt. Conflicting emotions appeared to be commonplace:

Stressed because I had to get the train home and they didn't give me my stuff back – they'd lost it

Dunno felt mad, feels weird as well doesn't it. You've got to get used to it. Felt weird like seeing loads of people and that; being dead loud and stuff. ...I'd been in the car on the way home, and looking your window at the high land, and you can see other cars and that... (Did it take a bit of getting used to, being out?) Yeh, about a week or so

Oh buzzing! I wasn't really thinking like that (about worries) I was just like yes I'm out. (Was there anything that was difficult to get used to when you came out?) Just being out. Freedom and that. Feels like, in there you only get out and go in either dining hall, health care, or school. So, yeah, It's different like, yeah

Felt happy and when I was walking out ... Felt weird. Mad. (Did it get a bit of getting used to be out again?) Yeah (What do you think was hardest about that?) Seeing loads of people and that and loads, mad

Dunno, I was happy but, when I got out, I never feel right because I've been in there for a couple of months. And it just felt like, I dunno, felt strange. You know. (How did you cope with that? What did you do?) Erm, nothing really. Just go out and have some fun. Try to.

One young person expressed feelings of loss for the friendships made in custody when released:

Excited to get out yeah. It was good, it felt mad, like, getting up early still in the routine and that. I was just like going round seeing all me family and that, when I first got out, doing the rounds. Yeah I missed people in there. I missed me mates cos we make good mates in there.

Another young person commented that although it '*felt good; best feeling in the world*', this feeling faded very quickly, possibly shedding some light on the quick reduction in motivation to stay successfully away from offending once released.

One parent commented: '*He was quiet when he first came out*', which she felt was worrying, but had not directly addressed it with the young person involved.

Being consulted about plans

The young people did not appear to be convinced that practitioners were listening to them when constructing their plans. Some said they had not, but many commented that they had '*a little*'. The young people feeling that they had not been listened to appeared to have a particular aspect in mind:

Not a lot. Just like they put me on loads of courses, like they put me on cocaine courses, loads of different courses that I didn't really didn't feel that I needed to do because I wasn't like a heavy drug user

a little... cos they just come up and like just told me me licence stuff like what was happening when I got out. And I was like, I told em that I was gonna smoke weed but they...was alright with me when I said that I'm not going to stop smoking weed, that I'll try, but I doubt that I will be able to. They were like, well don't mind you smoking weed, but don't...take Mcat or ...or anything like that. So I just thought that I didn't really have much say in what I was what was gonna happen. Cos I thought I was gonna be on tag and that, like I wanted to be on tag when I first got out.

One young person felt that they were not listened to when the licence conditions were being discussed:

No cos I got put in there for breaching me tag and they put me back on tag and I told the court that I couldn't do it, and they put me on, put me back on tag as soon as I got out. That's what they do here...Just blags you, can't do it, really. Doing me head in.

However, when asked at the end of his (successfully completed) licence, whether he felt the YJS had listened to him when writing his intervention plan, he decided that they had ('Quite a lot'). Another young person commented, when asked about his input into his plan: 'Fair play, they did listen to me'.

Licence conditions and intervention plan

When asked about the content of their intervention plans, many of the young people were vague and unsure. Some said that they could not remember at all and some had to be prompted as to what was meant by this question. Those who could remember were not very specific:

Keep out of trouble one of them. Stay focused really. They explained the morning I got out (licence conditions)

I don't know to be honest, just one meeting a week. I've got to do 6 hours reparation work as well

The plan, a plan, to be honest with you I can't remember

Some young people felt that their licence conditions were actively helpful to them:

All the conditions that I had they helped me a bit, tag an all...reoffending cos I had to stay in

One young person (negotiated not having an Intensive Supervision and Surveillance condition), 'I said I'd do all of my meetings as long as I didn't get a tag....and I've stuck to it'), had strong feelings about the pressure which ISSP puts young people under:

I'd have been back there, first month (recalled to custody, if on ISSP). It's too many hours I couldn't handle it. It's like full time work. They shouldn't even do it. For everyone. They shouldn't, it's bad. It's like they expect you to sit in the youth justice office all day and half the day you're not even doing anything.

ETE is always a key factor on any intervention plan, but many of the young people interviewed seemed either to have no provision, or to have a provision which they did not really want:

I'm not going to do the three years, I'm just going to do the one year cos it's not the course I want to do I wanted to do like vehicle maintenance, but I got on vehicle body repair because there was no spaces left on the other one

Several of the young people had been released in the Spring, but had to wait until September for the course for which they had applied to start:

Just a long time to September yet

Yeah, they trying to get me into college in September (interview took place in April)

For some young people, logistical issues around the organisation of ETE provision meant that they did not start quickly enough after release:

I would have started a course sooner, so that I'm not like bored all the time. Like people like the course that I'm going to be starting, they meant to be coming like ages ago. I was meant to start it actually when I first got out wasn't I? _____ sorted it out for me that I was meant to start it, and I just haven't for some reason, and now, like I think that course has finished

However, when ETE provision works for a young person, it can be a very positive experience, as one parent noted:

Doing sound at college. He's knuckling down; his work is being used as examples at college. He's loving it

Being successful on licence

Some of the young people had committed no breachable actions on their licence, one of whom specifically put this down to the YJS having allowed him not to have a tag:

As long as I didn't have a tag on when I got out I'd be able to stick to it. Stick to my meetings every day, and not get in trouble while I'm on licence. I reckon I'll stick to it. Easy licence yeh

However, most of the young people had failed to comply at least once on their licence, which was assessed very differently by them, depending on their attitudes to being on licence:

I don't know, I've had my final warning already, so I've only got one more warning then I'm back in court. I've already breached.... Stick to my appointments and stick to my... permanent address, get home every night

Done alright. Not breached, I've not ended up back in there so I've done alright. It was hard when I was living in _____ cos I didn't know how I was getting there every day and things like that. But it's not too bad now (young person missed one appointment)

One young person observed that to be successful on their licence, they needed to 'stay focused and stay focused about being out and that'. Some young people were able to identify some of the reasons for their success:

Cos I don't hang around with the mates that I used to hang around with. Don't hang around with none of them no more. Just stay in the house

I had better help this time than what I did last time, cos I was still reoffending last time. I was drinking all the time as well. (This time) I aint been drinking (because) I was getting in trouble

One cautionary tale was one young person, who did not breach his licence, so focused was he on not breaching it, but reoffended the day after his licence ended (and was given a further custodial sentence). Some clues about this could be found (in hindsight) in his comments about what he needed to do to remain successful – all of his attention was on his licence period, and none on how he was going to be afterwards:

Not getting into shit. Stick, keep your head down till your licence is over, that's what I've done. Not really moved. That's what I mean that's why I haven't been out much. Just waited till I'm off licence now. It looks better for you then doesn't it? Cos if I was on licence then that's the only option isn't it to send me back, but if I did get into trouble then I'd get re-bailed then wouldn't I?

Working with the YJS

Most of the young people reported having good relationships with their YOT workers, although for many, at the point of custody, their worker was changed. However, many identified this as a positive change, especially if they, for some reason, blamed their previous worker for their custodial sentence. This was not always logical, or indeed congruent with their previous comments, but was nevertheless keenly felt in a couple of cases:

She's the reason I went inside, I'm telling you that now. Yeah cos I asked her to change YOT worker and she said no cos, I didn't want to be working with her, so I asked them about three times to change my YOT worker, and they didn't, and that's why I wasn't turning up to meetings because I was with her, and then I were in jail

She got me sent down as well. Wrote a bad pre-sentence report. Always showed up for me meetings. Never had an attitude with her or nothing. She just didn't like me

It should be pointed out though, that the latter young person also felt that he had 'chosen' custody, because he told the magistrate that he had no intention of complying with a community sentence.

Young people who had been in custody before were asked whether the help they received from the YJS had been better than previously. One young person was very clear about this:

Yeah I had like, I don't know, they like thought about more, like thought about what stuff for me to do more, you know, to keep me occupied and that. They like built up me hours and that like. I dunno they like made stuff like funner like to do, you know what I mean! They made appointments more better for me, ...like last order I was on like when I got out last time, I just go to YOTs and just like talk to them for half an hour and then go. Like, what's that? I'd forget everything they'd said by the time I'd walked down the road! But like now like with [YOT worker] and like other people we're like doing stuff more aren't we, like practical, yeah. And like you remember it don't you, you remember what they say and that when it's practical if you're doing out doing stuff.

This young person also identified that the best thing about the licence had been going to the YJS:

Been the most useful. I think you've sorted everything out for me haven't you! Like most things. I think that the best thing I done is like sticking to my orders. I've been on YOT since I was like 13. So...I don't think I've ever been off it. Like I think I just got a new order all the time.(What was your attendance like then when you were younger?) Oh it was bad. But I'm glad I like stuck to it, cos I wouldn't have like most of the things I've got now. I probably wouldn't even have this flat now would I, I doubt it, without YOT. Yeah. It has been good definitely

One young person was happy with his new YJS worker:

She's not as hard on you as other YOT workers. And she explains it all everything to you easy and all that. No it's good

One parent was clear that the appointments with the YJS had been important in keeping her son out of trouble:

Done him good really. If he hadn't come out and been on licence, he would have carried on being silly. They could remind him of the positive things

Reoffending

The young people were generally very confident that they would be able to stay out of trouble, although some of them made caveats to that, indicating exceptions:

I won't be going looking for trouble straightaway like... if someone's having a go at me then, then I'm fighting, I can't walk away from it. I'd just be like get round there and telling them there's no... but I can't walk away from it. So if it was something like that then yeh, I would

The young people were clear about what they needed to do in order to avoid reoffending:

No I know I can do it as long as someone's not there doing something to get me involved in

Stay away from the wrong crowd. It all comes down to self. It's up to you what you do. If you think about things, it will be ok

A couple of the young people who had been in custody before, when challenged as to how things were going to be different this time responded:

Going to a different jail, and I'm older now, aren't I. Just wanna change my life eh?

I've learnt my lesson this time about going back

One young person felt that the only person who could stop him going back to custody was himself, and that the YJS could not necessarily help with this: *'didn't need help...cos it's like up to me really'*

The young people in the Hindley focus group felt the keys to staying out of trouble were keeping a routine, staying motivated, and having a plan. Conversely, they felt that the factors most likely to cause someone to reoffend were being around other people who offend, victims who want revenge, and smoking cannabis. Despite the fact that smoking cannabis was on this list, many of the young people interviewed had a very positive view of cannabis, feeling that it helped them to manage anger and was therefore likely to reduce their likelihood of reoffending. One young person admitted that he smokes cannabis, but added that it calms him down, whereas alcohol has the opposite effect. One young person felt that alcohol consumption was key, commenting that people get aggressive when they drink, and can no longer *'weigh things up'*. Certainly one of the young people interviewed felt that his attitude was markedly different now that he was not drinking, and that this caused him to get into trouble before.

Similarly, being around offending peers was commonly held to be problematic for avoiding reoffending, with many of the young people citing that they needed to *'stay away from the wrong crowd'*. One young person felt that he had to stay away from other people *'telling me to rob things'*. Another young person felt strongly that he had only got into trouble to begin with because his friends did, saying that part of his confidence for staying out of trouble in the future was not *'hanging around with the wrong sort of people'*, saying also that many of them (being adults) were still locked up, which increased his confidence that he would be able to avoid reoffending. Both his YOT worker and his mother backed up this idea, saying that his friends had all been older, more sophisticated offenders. All of the young people who were challenged about their reactions should one of their friends get involved in offending while they are with them, said that they would *'walk off'*, and felt confident that they would be successful in doing so.

Feelings about going back to custody

The young people had mixed feelings about going back to custody, which might affect their motivation in being able to stay out of it. Some were adamant they would not do back, whereas others were more ambivalent:

Don't want to go back in obviously, it's better out here but I wouldn't be bothered at all if it did happen. (What would you miss most if you went back?) Well now it would be the weather because it's starting to go hot isn't it. But, winter. Happily go through winter. No point getting in trouble, no point going back

Once you've been in it's easier to go back

One parent observed (after his son had been arrested for further offences just after his licence ended):

He now knows what it is like and is a doddle. It was positive in that he was getting qualifications, but negative because he is not bothered with going back.

Change as a result of custody

The young people were all clear that they had changed as a result of their custodial experience, citing a variety of different effects which have been felt:

Yeah I've calmed down a bit. Because I thought I'll be back in on my licence, but I'm wanting to stay out

Yeah I've grown up a lot. Matured. It's like a fresh start isn't it. Got college sorted and that.

Think I've grown up more

Before when I gone in before, I didn't care. I was going out, getting out of court, going back out and causing trouble. Now I don't go out and don't get in trouble

Parental views were somewhat more circumspect:

No change in behaviour. He's been a nightmare. When he came out, he couldn't wait to get home and see all his mates. But he's been hanging around with the same crew

He's worse at home. Bad attitude – didn't before he went in. Don't know why

However, a couple of parents were able to see improvements:

He's knuckled down, got himself a college place, followed guidance. That's all he needed'. He's come out of the crowd he was with. Learned him to have more self-respect. He still thinks he's not worth 100%. Now he'll do things for himself, not for the crowd. I said to him to stay away from friends. He was given goals to work at and work towards something – goals for him

Doesn't go out no more. Then only with mates and cousin. People he is with now are better for him. He has calmed down a lot

It's clear that there are mixed opinions about whether the young people came out of custody with a better attitude or not. However, one of the difficulties is that many young people appear to come out of custody feeling that they have changed and want to change their lives, only to go on and offend again within a very short period of time. Some of the young people in the interview cohort

who expressed such desires had already reoffended and been sent back to custody, illustrating this point. There may be some indications as to why this is the case in the next section about 'the future'.

The future

Hopes for the future

Some of the young people found it very difficult to identify any hopes (never mind goals) that they might have for the future, a lack which might keep them grounded within the somewhat negative here and now. Four of the young people were able to identify some hopes for the future, although some were vague:

Nice house, and work on the oil rigs.

I don't know ... Get a decent job. Don't know. Haven't really thought about it really

Good job and that, am I

No I just hope that I get a job. I don't want to end up back in jail

In one of the interviews for the mapping report, the young person found it difficult at first to identify any hopes, eventually deciding that in five years' time he would like to have 'a flat or house, a Mrs, maybe a kid, and a big job'. His worker commented that she feels he has 'taken his eye a little off his goals in life', feeling that this then allowed him to start wasting his money on cannabis, 'when he knows he should be saving it'. Living for now, rather than planning for the future could be one of the factors stopping young people from moving on with their lives.

Voluntary support

The young people were asked about whether they were offered some kind of continuing support beyond the end of their order. One young person had been remanded by the end of his licence, so this question did not apply, but of the others, half had been offered voluntary support (although where there was social worker involvement, this often just took the form of continuing social care involvement). One young person had been offered continuing Careers Wales support through the YJS. The few young people who were accessing continued YJS support appeared to value this:

I still see [YOT worker] on like a weekly basis. I still see [DIP worker] sometimes as well

However most young people had not been offered any continuing support from the YJS, but did not seem sure they would accept it in any case.

Only careers advisor, I wouldn't want to see probation still afterwards

What, are you mad?

The Hindley focus group were similarly mixed, with one young person saying they would refuse further support, and the others suggesting that they might accept it if they felt they needed it, but not otherwise.

When this support was changed in the interviews to whether they would accept voluntary support from an agency other than the YJS (the Youth Service was suggested as an example), most of the young people reassessed their refusal to say that if they felt they needed further support they might accept it. Absolute refusals were changed to 'don't know'. This suggests that the YJS might not in all cases be the best agency to provide support beyond the end of an order, as some of the young people felt strongly they would not want to continue with that agency beyond the time when they had to. Although clearly in some cases this support has worked out well for some young people, for

others continuing to work with a criminal agency when trying to readjust their future without criminality is not the best option to be offering.

Staying successful

Young people were asked what they needed to do in order to stay away from offending in the future and to have a better future. They had lots of ideas about this, and were very clear in their own minds what they needed to do. Much of this was framed in advice which would be given to a friend:

I just I know I won't be doing anything to go back on there.... Cos I used to smoke it (cannabis) all the time, and get into trouble. When I come, got released, I hadn't had any for three months so I stayed away from it

Stay away from the wrong crowd. It all comes down to self. It's up to you what you do. If you think about things, it will be ok.

I'd just say: It's your choice

Stick to your licence

Keep your head down. Stick to your licence. Stay away from the wrong crowd and that. It's not dead easy but it's easy enough. I've done it

Stick up for yourself and don't let nobody talk over you or..I dunno, it's weird. Walk away (How easy is that to do?) Easy, cos I done it quite a lot of times

Keep his head down

Not just one thing. He feels he has enough things to stay out for. You're not going to change just for one person; it's everything that comes with it – family, girlfriend, mates

A cautionary note was sounded though by one young person who said that there is 'no point in saying to someone who was getting into trouble "if you do this you'll go to jail", because they won't believe you'.

However, the reality of having served a custodial sentence, and one of the reasons why it should be a sentence of last resort, is the labelling effect it can have, as one young person sadly observed:

I just think people look at me differently now. Now like they think I'm, like, a bad person now, because I've been to jail, I think (How does that make you feel?) Bit gutted like, because like you don't think people trust me and that... even me mates I think, I don't know, I just think they think I'm going to rob something off them or something, do you know what I mean? When I'm in their house, like before...me mate told me to go upstairs and get something, and I was like, oh no no I don't want to. Like I wouldn't go upstairs cos I don't like doing it. Cos ...if anything went missing, like there's a few people in the house, like some of them could have robbed something and I would definitely get the blame out of all of them, do you know what I mean? That's why I don't like it.

Summary and conclusions

Most of the young people found their custody experience better than they imagined it would be, but there were concerns about vulnerable young people, and how they cope. Coupled with this was the apparent reluctance of young people to utilise the advocacy services which might help them deal with issues like bullying. The availability of focused programmes for young people appeared mixed (and highly dependent on the length of their sentence), but the opportunity for young people to achieve qualifications was highly valued. Young people had difficulty remembering their planning

meetings and the content of the intervention plans which ensued. Steps could be taken to make these plans more memorable by their visual impact and the capacity for young people to input their ideas, which they largely felt was currently minimal. ROTL appeared to be used very rarely, especially in a resettlement context, despite this being a major tool for effectiveness. Similarly, a pre-release course, which appeared to be valued by those who attended, is not made compulsory prior to release (or for early release), resulting in very poor take up.

On release, young people did not have a detailed plan for their first day (or weekend, if released on a Friday), potentially leaving them unsupported at a crucial moment, especially given the mixed feelings which most young people seem to experience at this time. ETE was more commonly being accessed prior to custody than afterwards, where there were significant delays in the ability of young people to access courses. This illustrates the fracturing effects of custody on young people's lives. Young people were almost unanimous in their identification of being with offending peers as a major issue affecting successful licence completion and future reoffending. However, many young people seemed to deal with this by staying in and avoiding peers while on licence, which is potentially unsustainable post-licence. This also highlights the difficulties with a licence when all focus is on that licence period, in terms of reoffending and breach, rather than in making a sustainable future post-licence. More firmly identified hopes and goals may help achieve this. Voluntary support would have been accepted by more young people than were offered it, but YJSs should look carefully at the options for bringing in non-criminal justice agencies for this, as young people may be more likely to engage.

The labelling effect of custody, poignantly identified by one young person, causes pause for thought regarding the appropriate use of custody for young people, given that the vast majority of these young people had been given short sentences for breaching community orders. One of the difficulties with this is that short sentences appear to reduce the chances of young people accessing some programmes and educational opportunities, and also ROTL as a resettlement tool to prepare them for release. These difficulties are compounded for young people from Wales being accommodated in an English custodial provision. Apart from the cultural and language differences, more keenly felt by young people who are first language Welsh speakers, distance from home significantly reduces the chances that they will receive regular visits, or be able to access ROTL for resettlement activities in their home area.

Chapter Eight: Practitioners' views

Neal Hazel

This chapter explores the views of practitioners in the North Wales Project area on resettlement and the contribution of the Broker. Their perceptions were analysed thematically, and this chapter has grouped those themes around the dominant discourses of the difficulties faced in relation to resettlement, the achievements of the Broker and the limitations to the Broker Project.

Challenges to resettlement

Overall, practitioners concurred with the narrative established in resettlement research that children tend to be full of hope and determination at release, but then typically they become disillusioned when promised services fail to materialise. The moment of opportunity has passed and the child typically gives up and returns to a pattern of offending:

"It's about the right kind of support and it's about the right kind of structured routine that we want that young person to engage with (ie education, training and employment). And when one of those elements is missing, the whole package often falls down. So it's about the interplay of those things you know... But as soon as one of those elements really starts to fall away the young person will generally give up; that sense of hope becomes very quickly a sense of hopelessness and the whole edifice really falls down really quickly."

Practitioner A

Lack of multi-agency engagement

There was a view from practitioners (albeit not universally held) that the reason that services did not materialise was the failure of other agencies to take some responsibility for the children concerned. According to this view, other statutory agencies did not see youth offending as their business:

My concern remains with, with ensuring that other stakeholders and other partners give it the same level of priority, but that's a challenge across the board for the small cohort of young people that are subject to YJS intervention, is keeping them on other people's agendas, it's a challenging issue at this particular moment in time.

Practitioner A

The 'particular moment in time' referred to by the practitioner above seems to refer to the austerity political agenda and budget cuts to services. However, the quotation below provides an alternative theory; that agencies feel that they have already committed enough support to youth offending because they provide a secondee to the multi-agency YJS:

Many of the other agencies that could or should be involved see this as primarily the YOTs responsibility. And if they're not on the order they've never really considered who else should be working with them after us. Selling the idea of youth offending being everybody's business, like public protection is everybody's business and reducing reoffending rates is everybody's business is quite hard when agencies like the police, probation, health and local authorities have all invested so much in delivering a YOT service. That is quite hard.

Practitioner I

This was exemplified by the problems reported in getting agencies other than the YOT to attend DTO meetings. For these practitioners, although they recognised that it would be good to have other agencies involved, the coordination of partnerships is just not working effectively enough for resettlement:

One of the things that we'd be quite keen to do, and it's been a bit hit and miss I have to be honest about it, is making sure we get the right people going to the review meetings at the secure estate. But then you get issues when meetings get cancelled or you can't get meetings with times that's convenient to all the players, so there's a general administration and kind of management relationship things that I think need to improve.

Practitioner A

Although not a major theme, it was occasionally argued that the lack of engagement of services in resettlement was because youth justice is not devolved and their services were. The point made below is that the devolved agencies may not think that it is their responsibility and that non-devolved issues can be solved on their own:

I think some organisations do take a back seat because they know youth justice is not devolved, they just think we can sort it all.

Practitioner K

Transition to adulthood

There are particular difficulties if the young person has reached 18 years old before release. These 'transitions' issues are well known in research, policy and practice, but are worth reiterating here that practitioners perceived them to affect resettlement:

If they've reached 18, we're looking at how we might use IOM and transition into other adult services. We encounter a few problems because it's a very difficult transition point in terms of getting others services and agencies to actually acknowledge the fact that our young people remain quite risky. But they don't meet entry criteria into adult services so that side of things continues to be a challenge.

Practitioner A

As the quotation highlights, children's services have different eligibility to adult services and the perception is that this leaves children without adequate support. Or at least it is more difficult for the YJSs to secure that support. Again, the impression is given here that the issue is engagement by those services, a decision at the strategic level, with services not acknowledging the risk or sharing responsibility for it

Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL)

Another well-known issue that was again raised by practitioners was that of the lack of using ROTL to prepare young people for release:

So we have not been very effective in the use of ROTL and I know that's something we're looking at

Practitioner A

However, likely reasons provided for the lack of ROTL did not focus on the risk aversion of custodial institutions as has been reported in previous evaluations. The point made below is that ROTL to arrange education or accommodation placements, can only happen after a certain degree of resettlement preparation, and that may not have been done. For instance, the education cannot be arranged if it is not known what locality the child is going to. The practitioner here was blaming Children's Services for this chain that resulted in the lack of ROTL:

That makes it really hard to do any of the kind of ROTL placements or coming out to visit cos they will not have, not identified that until the week they're coming out.

Practitioner H

Accommodation

Indeed, delays in basic resettlement arrangements was a theme addressed by a lot of practitioners. Accommodation was the main focus of these concerns. Respondents' examples mirrored some of the more serious lapses found in the recent HMIP report (2015), where arrangements were only made in the final DTO meeting or later:

We've still been a position with young people coming out of custody and things only being really finalised in terms of accommodation provision at that final placement meeting, which I think is within two weeks prior to release.

Practitioner A

Again, respondents from YJSs tended to point to a breakdown in Children's Services working for the delays. As above, the issue is claimed to be partners not appreciating the needs of the young people and not engaging with resettlement:

We do have these horrible situations where young people still don't have any accommodation the day before release and social care are in place hurriedly. So there are the problems getting stakeholder partners to appreciate that work [should be] done on resettlement at the earliest stage when it's not often [their] statutory responsibility. When young people are remanded we have social care involvement, [but] once they're sentenced to DTO there's no real leverage to get social care involved.

Practitioner G

The above respondent argues that there is a lack of legal leverage to get Social Services involved in DTO cases, and they do not seem to think that they are statutorily responsible:

We've had cases where a young person was passed between social services and homelessness and they're not quite sure whose responsibility it is for that young person. So, accommodation still can be problematic for young people in custody, unfortunately.

Practitioner G

However, accommodation issues are not just about it being arranged or available in time. Practitioners note that the accommodation that is eventually made available is not always suitable for the purpose of supporting these vulnerable children:

One thing which has become more difficult is the issue of accommodation, and what the local authority have to play with when they're involved as well with the young person, which they usually are. Their hand is quite poor really, in the resources they have. But I think there's enough services around. But the biggie I think that always stands out was that it's low grade provision...I've seen a lot of clients just steered towards ultimately a B&B. Not a good outcome.

Practitioner B

As with the above quotation, the use of bed and breakfast accommodation was a theme in the concerns of the practitioners. The quality of the fabric of the accommodation, and the environment, may not be conducive to the welfare of the child. Moreover, practitioners expressed concerns about the other residents that the children would encounter:

Having a range of accommodation would be useful, which there isn't. When a young person continually messes up their placements, there has to be some really hard core [support] placement for them to go to, which is often difficult to find. There are still young people who are in bed and breakfast accommodation, which is where they are mixing with other young people and not experiencing anything positive.

Practitioner C

Essentially, the message from practitioners was that accommodation was the keystone to any resettlement package; if that was unsuitable like bed and breakfast or a hostel, it is difficult to progress:

It's just if you send someone to a bed and breakfast or unsuitable accommodation, that's the barrier. I'm a firm believer of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, first provide the basic needs, give the young person something to occupy them, and roof over their head and they're warm and then the rest of it'll come.

Practitioner J

After the lack of timely accommodation, and unsuitable accommodation, the third subtheme around housing was the lack of contingency planning for when placements broke down. Previous research and inspections have shown that a breakdown is not uncommon. The following quotation makes the point that once a breakdown happens, if there is no contingency planning, practitioners will be firefighting and the rest of the resettlement package can break down quickly:

You think you've got a really robust plan when they come out and the threads break down very very quickly, especially if accommodation doesn't come off... And quite often that's out of our hands - we'd have children's services who are identifying something and then that'll fall through at the last minute. And then you're scrabbling around trying to find something that's appropriate.

Practitioner H

Education, training and employment

Failures in establishing education, training or employment (ETE) has been a consistent finding in resettlement research, and this was also a theme from practitioners here. The claim was made that referrals to ETE providers are not made until a child is released from custody, meaning that continuous provision is not possible:

Not having suitable accommodation or ETE in place [is a problem]. You know sometimes they wait for the young person to be released to do a referral to ETE, so it's not a continuous wrap around service from custody to community. There's a break.

Practitioner J

As with accommodation, the point was made that even when ETE is arranged for after release, it is often not suitable for these children with particular vulnerabilities and backgrounds. The ETE provision is too generic and not tailored to this population, let alone personalised to a particular child. Consequently, the placement can breakdown:

We're providing support, or other stakeholders and agencies are providing support, but it's not always the right kind of support for our cohort of young people. So particularly with respect to education, we're providing services or access to courses of training that are actually being targeted to the more general population.... Of critical importance is the challenge of getting the right kind of personnel support, skills etc to work with that young person... it ain't quite working from the young person's point of view. We see too many failures in very short spaces of time, post release, of a young person's education, training or employment placement.

Practitioner A

Education was an area where Welsh nationality within the non-devolved youth justice caused issues, according to practitioners. Although the YJB identify designated establishments where young people from North Wales are to be held in England that have an enhanced service specification (notably Werrington YOI), there are a small proportion that may be held in other establishments notably secure training centres, that do not have similar arrangements. The problem then arises that not all will receive the Welsh education curriculum (including learning the Welsh language). Consequently,

there was a mismatch between the courses and qualifications that students would follow before / after custody compared to those available in custody:

Education can be another [problem] because... the curriculum is an English curriculum, so it's quite difficult to get that throughput from custody back into education. And to Careers Wales who've got to liaise with Connexions which are similar but different organisations.

Practitioner G

As the above quotation indicated, there was a subtheme that careers advice that the children would receive in the English institutions was also not suitable for Welsh children, because the National Careers Service in England and Careers Wales operate in different ways and offer different services. Not only was this an issue of equivalent agencies from the two countries coordinating, but also that the children may receive advice that is correct for England, but incorrect for Wales:

It was a secure unit right up north and in terms of their education they didn't a clue about Welsh curriculum and Welsh careers; they gave English careers advice. And the young person was very annoyed when they were told well, "Actually, you've been given the wrong information, you can't do that in Wales". I think for young people who go into custody, they most often go into an English establishment, where the Welsh context isn't given enough gravity. Even though our staff will push it, they don't get the concept... We're lucky in my area, we've very few Welsh speakers but it's obviously still very important they have the Welsh culture, and you know services in Wales can be slightly different.

Practitioner K

The point was also made repeatedly that the situation is most acute when children whose first language is Welsh are sent to an institution in England, but that situation is just the epitome of a broader organisational and cultural disconnect, notably because there are different linguistic needs and requirements:

Oh! It's a nightmare in North Wales because they're going into custody where they're placed outside the country. ...When it comes to the qualifications they're working for it's really challenging cos they're different structures altogether. So we try as much as we can but there are barriers. I think it's the cultural, it's the language barriers. We don't have a lot of pure Welsh speakers here but it's the structures behind all of that.

Practitioner H

Health

The difficulty of ensuring appropriate **health** support early enough was not a consistent theme, but was raised by practitioners nonetheless. The view was that delivery of health services may well not be suitable to this cohort of children. In addition, mental health support during the transition to adult services was particularly problematic:

I think one of the problems is that mental health services don't go to the young people, the young people have to go [to] them. And then if they don't keep the appointment, then the case is closed, which is ridiculous for the young people that we work with because they're so chaotic... Mental health issues are a big issue, especially when you're looking at transitional issues as well. So you've a young person who perhaps you know would be open to CAMHS and then have to go over to adult services and there's often a delay before those services kick in.

Practitioner C

Exit strategies

The picture presented by practitioners of planning and provision for after the end of a child's licence period (when research has shown reoffending rise if there is a lack of support) was mixed. It

certainly did not paint a picture of universal or systematic support. Some YJS managers claimed that exit strategies were considered, but only when it was deemed necessary and not routinely:

From our point of view the end of the order is not necessarily the end of our contact with a young person. If we feel that there is an appropriate exit strategy that needs to take place, that requires continued YOT participation, we will have a look at that.

Practitioner A

Other practitioners were frank in their assessment that work on exit strategies was just not good enough. This may be because they are not resourced or part of statutory duties, although they may offer a period of voluntary support:

I don't have a budget or you know any extra resources to offer, it's just help with advice, counselling really, nothing material and that's probably not very appetising. I can't really think of anybody else doing anything to do with end of licence support.

Practitioner B

I think it's something perhaps we've been weak on in the past. We've done exit strategies, but for some of the complex cases we perhaps might not have done enough in the past. I think that the Broker Project will help with that issue.

Practitioner K

Failure to engage with the children

The final area of challenge to resettlement noted by practitioners was the lack of successful engagement with some young people. The point was made consistently that enhanced resettlement support services were often delivered as voluntary to engage with, and that practitioners found it difficult to persuade these children to attend anything that they did not have to, which chimes with comments by young people in Chapter Seven:

The problem we have is convincing the young people to avail themselves of those services. Firstly we need to differentiate that it's an additional service, that it's voluntary, it's not breachable, it's not part of their order. So I think we've got to be a little bit clever ...in terms of restructuring the service to have it delivered by an external agency. But that will have funding implications as well.

Practitioner G

The problem of engaging the young people was clearly one with which practitioners struggled - not being clear how to motivate them to access the services without the threat of breach:

There's plenty of services around for them to engage in if they're willing to. And it's about motivating them really and trying to find out exactly what's going to get them going, get them interested in something.

Practitioner B

How the Resettlement Broker Project helped

Challenging existing practice

The primary success for the Project, according to practitioners, was simply raising the profile of resettlement, and key principles of resettlement, in North Wales:

I think Kathy when she arrived, it was a very useful kind of kick up the backside a little bit. I think we'd maybe got a little bit complacent, partly because of low custody numbers

Practitioner A

The view was that the Broker challenged this ‘complacency’ and the widespread view that existing or standard justice services were sufficient. Whether this view existed because of the low custody numbers as speculated above, or lack of knowledge of the principles of good resettlement, the Broker was able to show a different way. It was about starting a professional cultural shift in the way resettlement was approached:

I think it's helped us to kind of look at things in a slightly different way, if I'm honest. It's easy to kind of get stuck in a rut thinking that you know how things should be, isn't it, so it's quite good to be challenged every now and again and to kind of think about working in slightly different ways. So that's been quite useful.

Practitioner C

Reflecting a key theme in interviews with policymakers, it was considered that this role of challenging existing practice was more effective because the Broker was independent, and not from a partnership agency. She had an independent critical eye and was seen to be objective, which carried weight with agencies when holding them to account:

Probably the voice of independence [has been most valuable]. Somebody making clear to the other agencies what their role is in public protection, safeguarding and reducing offending. Having an academic, having someone independent looking and scrutinising certain areas of our work, looking for chinks in our armour with regard to the services that we provide; that's very useful.

Practitioner C

Even though some of the areas had previously (or even currently) engaged with the reintegration and resettlement partnership concept, the principles of effective resettlement had not been fully embedded. In those cases, the Broker was able to reinvigorate and develop that agenda further:

I think it's served to re-establish that focus to be honest on work that was already tentatively started and then stopped. So it's reintroduced the whole issue of looking at young people with specific needs.

Practitioner C

As Practitioner C states, a key principle is to provide personalised care for the children. This involves bringing in the relevant agencies to meet the complex combination of needs for each child, and early preparation of provision for release. The respondent below uses this as an example of the kind of messages that the Broker usefully underlined:

“...reminding us of how important it is to get the buy in from all stakeholders as best as possible, as early as possible, within a young person's sentence to custody”

Practitioner A

In at least one area, the Broker was able to reinvigorate the resettlement agenda by conceptualising it more in terms of the popular desistance theory. As the YJS manager below framed the situation, the Broker needed to “sell” or promote the key principles of resettlement in order for practitioners to see it as different from the standard service they were already giving:

About a year ago, we had a small conference over in Llanrwst around resettlement. There was a doctor or professor, Neal Hazel, give a fabulous talk about resettlement and its benefits etc etc. And one of the areas he spoke about was desistance, so I thought it would be a good idea if our Resettlement Broker actually came to one of our service meetings and gave a brief on desistance. And that went a long way to changing people's mindset, and I think that's the route we have to go down rather than trying to sell and resell resettlement as it stands... I like the idea of selling it through the principle of desistance. The young person can see themselves as a non-offender at some point in the future and they journey towards that rather than just giving them voluntary support after the order's finished.

Practitioner I

One key difference from previous projects is that the North Wales Broker Project has tried to **widen the concept of resettlement** beyond those with custodial sentences to other children on the YJSs' caseload with a high risk of going into custody. The project has tried to ensure that YJSs and other agencies treat those young people as requiring the same type of support as those leaving custody, in terms of individualised wraparound care. They are children who may have previously come under the 'Deter Young Offender' scheme. As such, the same concern with 'resettlement' now becomes a concern with 'reengagement':

Because the cohort is decreasing, there's fewer opportunities for a full blown resettlement case. So what we've tried to do is expand that so that it includes other cohorts that we can provide a type of resettlement for them.

Practitioner I

As the above quotation notes, the reason for this shift was considered to be partly because the numbers of children going into custody are small enough that it would otherwise be difficult to sustain the engagement, focus and skills of areas in resettlement, and second that this approach should help prevent the necessity for custody:

We're incorporating quite a number of young people rather than just those that have been to custody into the project at the moment, so that we can look at it as more of a prevention package I suppose, rather than a reactive package.

Practitioner C

Giving guidance

As well as the Broker promoting the key principles of resettlement generally, there was a subtheme from practitioners the more hands-on practical advice she gave was particularly useful:

I think we needed some assistance and guide to looking at what the best practice was, looking at other ways of doing things in terms of resettlement. And so that was actually very useful... I think Kathy herself has been a really strong advocate in terms of making sure that she's provided us with up to date research and guidance in relation to you know good practice and best practice and stuff like that

Practitioner A

As the above quotation makes clear, practitioners recognised and appreciated that the Broker was aware of the latest research and best practice in resettlement. She began to be seen as the font of knowledge to go to. This may have been particularly useful because the low numbers of children in custody will have meant that the local knowledge-base about custody cases may not have been very large or current:

I think the Broker's been very knowledgeable. If somebody had a question, particularly about resettlement, I'd say well go and have a chat with Kathy. Whether that's part of her role or not, they've managed to have a really good chat with her because she is very knowledgeable. So I think that has been quite beneficial.

Practitioner F

Mapping local service provision

The 'Needs and Services Matrix' produced out by the Broker in North Wales was mentioned repeatedly by practitioners. Although there were comments that this may not be kept up to date by either a broker or the YOT, it was felt to be a good idea and a useful tool:

[The Broker] established a directory of services which, to be honest, we've been intending to do for a long, long time. That's really been helpful. We've got quite a few people on that now that we probably weren't aware of, or that we've maybe not used as often as we should have.

Practitioner C

Kathy's done quite an extensive mapping of all sorts of services in the area, some of them quite peripheral to what we do. I mean there's a chart we have on the wall now. It's an extensive list I think it's probably the sort of thing that will become out of date quite quickly. I don't know how many of the extra services there young people will use to be honest.

Practitioner B

However, despite this mapping exercise, the quantitative analysis suggested that the involvement of other agencies was still low. As such, the degree to which the increased 'awareness' from the matrix was translated into practice difference by the YOTs is unclear:

She's been to visit other YOTs or organisations and said, "Oh, actually there's this voluntary agency that provides an advocacy service if you need and shared that with us". Sharing information that's been handy. But I don't think we've used any of them, although I suppose that we know that they're there now, which we didn't beforehand.

Practitioner F

Reintegration and Resettlement Partnerships

In terms of positive action by the Broker, there was also a subtheme of comments about supporting and reinvigorating reintegration and resettlement partnerships in North Wales:

The other thing that's taking place is a concerted effort to establish a resettlement advisory panel. And it's met twice and I'd say the second time was more successful than the first time.

Practitioner B

As the quotation suggests, interventions by the Broker locally may still be in the early stages by the start of 2015, but practitioners were clear that progress was being made.

Work with institutions

There was particular mention by some practitioners of the useful efforts by the Broker to develop better relations between the YJSs in North Wales and the English YOI to which their children were being sent:

We had a meeting with Hindley YOI management staff, all the regional players in North Wales met with one of the managers from Hindley and you know that was kind of a rare event.

Practitioner A

Part of this relationship development was a concerted effort to unblock the barrier to ROTL that was limiting resettlement activities while a child was still in custody. The intervention was appreciated by YJS practitioners who mentioned that the Broker had helped them understand better how ROTL could be used better to prepare resettlement. In addition to this increased awareness, the task for the Broker was also trying to cut through the regulation in order to allow ROTL, although with limited success:

And I know there was an attempt also to try and improve the use of release on temporary licence, which was a job for the Broker to try and get that improved, but with no success here anyway. They're quite risk averse, Hindley are very risk averse in the use of temporary licence.

Practitioner B

This limited success was a frustration for some YJSs, although no blame was laid at the door of the Broker. It was put down to the risk-adverse nature of the YOIs:

She tried as hard, as we had in the past, and it was very difficult. You know governors rule the roost. If they say no to ROTL in North Wales it's no to ROTL in North Wales. You know I think they actually put too many barriers up. They starting putting their own criteria for ROTL, so that a kid had to be almost saintly in their first couple of months of custody so they could qualify for ROTL. But they just set the bar too high because they didn't want to do it. It's expensive you see.

Practitioner I

The point was made that, with the rerolling of their previous YOI serving North Wales, the Broker will again need develop the relationship between another YOI and the local YJSs:

I think the Broker Project, after what felt like a very slow start in a sense, did actually enhance and improve communications between ourselves and Hindley YOI. Whether we've got time to utilise the Broker collectively as a bunch of North Wales YOTs in relationship to our new partnership with Werrington?

Practitioner A

They're not going to know the North Wales YOTs, they're not going to know who we are, or some real concerns over the Welsh dimensions as well. So there's some work there and I'm anticipating the Broker role should be able to assist in that.

Practitioner A

Consequently, they began to appreciate the shift that they would need to make and how the Broker could help them do that. For the practitioners, the shift is largely about widening the support network for children, **including other agencies**, and thinking about sustainable support:

I think she's helped us to look at linking in with more agencies than we were before, and to generally look wider at the issues that are affecting those young people. In particular, rather than looking at [only] a young person's parental support, to look a wider to friends, neighbours, distant relatives, looking at pulling in some support that that is that could be there that we may have missed in the past, so that they've got links to support them way after we finish with them as well. That's been, I think that's been a primary interest, the whole thing of having some kind of solid exit strategy and for the young people to buy into it.

Practitioner C

Making other agencies accountable

We saw earlier that practitioners highlighted the issue of partner agencies not wanting to engage with resettlement, possibly in part because youth justice was not devolved. This was an area that the practitioners considered that the Broker was starting to make a difference; she was highlighting the responsibilities that different devolved agencies had. The respondent below was one who had raised the devolution split, but felt that the Broker was bridging any divide:

And I think that's what the North Wales Resettlement Project has helped with - it is trying to get other organisations to see where their responsibilities lie.

Practitioner K

As such, the involvement of the Broker meant that YJSs could start to consider an 'enhanced offer' for children leaving custody, where their multiple needs could be met by different agencies:

Kathy is trying to help us organise a sort of enhanced offer of services to young people. We've still got to test that yet and how that's going to work.

Practitioner B

For others though, the Broker had not actually made any practical difference in bringing agencies together; they felt that she was raising awareness of other services in the mapping exercise but did not actually Broker the partnerships necessary to increase support:

In terms of working with other stakeholders and the impact on other stakeholders... I don't think Kathy was particularly influential.

Practitioner A

Consequently, those practitioners argued that involving the Broker had not yet actually made any difference to the outcomes of the children in the area. The Project was still at the stage of trying to make the conceptual shift:

It's very hard to say that resettlement led to any improvement in reoffending rates or any improvement in the standard of some of the main services that we're focussing on having; work and training and housing. I don't think that materially that an awful lot is changed really, whether it's resettlement service by me or just part of the general resettlement work.

Practitioner B

However, the potential for changing services and having an impact on outcomes was recognised. The respondent below felt that the foundations were being laid for improvements in outcomes in the future:

Probably not in terms of outcomes for young people. I mean Kathy's been instrumental in pushing the agenda in terms of getting resettlement as a feature within our service but I find it difficult to come up with a concrete example of where the Broker's role has had a direct effect on the outcomes for a particular young person. I think this may be case if the panel continues and builds on the foundations we've made I think that will bring about positive outcomes.

Practitioner G

Not recognising the value of the project

A clear theme among practitioners was that they had been unsure about the role of the Broker. The narrative was that the role had not been explained early enough to them and only recently were they understanding how the Broker could benefit them:

I think there could have been greater clarity about what the role was about. I feel it's taken a long time one to get to know her and to get to know what the process is about, how we can best utilise her and actually, and the purpose almost of the brokerage role. It seems to have been sold in different ways at different points of time in relation to the evolution of the project as such really. There's just been a degree of uncertainty about how best to use her. I mean at one point it was being told she was going to be some kind of trouble shooter going out and finding resources for young people in custody. I mean that was never a reality in terms of the extended region that is the North Wales region. So that could have been communicated better from very early on really.

Practitioner A

Any confusion over the Broker role may well have been because the YJSs did not fully understand what the project was trying to change in their practice; they did not know what they did not know about resettlement support:

When the worker first came here it did seem, we couldn't quite come to grips with what was trying to be achieved. The issues that were discussed we felt we were addressing anyway. But I think there's been an attempt to look at things in a slightly different way to the way we used to look at things, which has been helpful really.

Practitioner C

However, it is clear that this confusion about the Broker's role still existed to some extent among senior practitioners. They did not understand how the Broker relates to what they are doing currently and how she can make a practical difference:

We've got Kathy who's incredibly hard working in the middle of all of this, and I don't want it to look like we don't value Kathy, [but] there's our lack of clarity about what it is that it's supposed to be doing. Especially as the cohort numbers have decreased significantly. And yes really good resettlement needs to be in place, but I haven't really seen the link between the brokerage project and what we're already doing.

Practitioner E

Consequently, those practitioners do not see the added value of the Broker. The point is made by the practitioner below, although this was not a widely expressed view, that this was because the YJSs were not involved in the planning and development of the Broker. There seemed to be resentment that the project was parachuted in. What this seems to illustrate is that not all practitioners had appreciated or undertaken the cultural shift in dealing with resettlement that the Broker was trying to implement. They *still* did not know what they did not know, so could not appreciate her added value:

I think up until now we haven't really had any value out of it at all. I think it's been a project that's been done to us not with us. I don't think we were involved in the early stages, and this is no disrespect to Kathy cos I think she's had a real challenge to meet teams one day a month and not know any of us, with no real clear brief about where we're going, what we're doing or anything. So I don't think it's been managed well from that perspective. I think if we'd have worked together on it from the word go that it would have a much more positive remit around it.

Practitioner H

If the practitioners did not understand the shift that the Broker was trying to introduce, it followed that they were more likely to think that the existing standard service offered for resettlement in their area was sufficient.

So actually we haven't got anything that's been put in place by the Broker that actually if the Broker stopped would be taken away or we'd have to sustain because it hasn't done that for us.

Practitioner F

This lack of understanding was certainly evident in the arguments made by some respondents. For example, the respondent below revealed that the local area had apparently lost the learning that it is necessary to have someone coordinating partnerships for resettlement support to work. They had gone back to a case management only approach that research has shown is not effective:

We used to have a full time member of staff, when we first started, just focussing on resettlement. That was his main role to do. There isn't a need for that anymore. The methods have changed, the way we work has changed; it's spread across the service and everybody's responsible for resettlement.

Practitioner F

Consequently, the project had failed to highlight how the approach can be different. They seemed to think that the Broker was simply highlighting the importance of resettlement, or even just calling what they already do by a different name:

We've always been doing this work, it's nothing new. It's just perhaps been given a slightly different title but a more all-encompassing title... We have an officer who deals just with young people in custody, we've got an accommodation officer and remand. We always spent a lot of kind of

resources in terms of remand and helping young people going into custody. It's nothing new and we do have the resources and you know the effort is there in our service.

Practitioner I

There was a subtheme that the Broker Project had brought less value where they had an existing Resettlement Support Panel. The view was that the panel already meant that agencies were working together. They seemed to think that the Broker Project was just about setting up more panels/partnerships, that it did not offer anything different from previous pilot projects:

I think it's probably been more useful for other colleagues across North Wales who've struggled to get resettlement panels set up for one reason or another. So I think when Kathy as the Broker was appointed, I think we'd already done an awful lot of work, and so I haven't seen a massive amount of added value. That's not a reflection of Kathy, that's just a reflection of where we were at already with it.

Practitioner E

However, analysis of these comments does suggest an associated lack of reflection on the effectiveness of their existing arrangements. For example, the above senior practitioner later admitted that, although they may consider their practice to be good, they were not aware of the outcomes of the children resettled in their area and *"it can be a bit like groundhog day at the resettlement panel because we see the same names"* (Practitioner E). Indeed, for some, if they already had a panel/partnership and could not see what else was necessary, they are doing all that they can and that any failure is simply down to the children:

We've got all the partners round the table; they're all accountable to each other. So we've moved forward. There is still a core group of young people that are still in that washing machine of going in, coming out and going to the resettlement panel and as much as we try, they are making their own choices. And I think we've had to accept that they're making their own choices and no matter what we do they are making those choices.

Practitioner F

Until this view is successfully challenged, the value of the Broker in coordinating partnerships and bringing in new agencies to meet complex needs was not going to be recognised:

Bits of finding out information for us and alerting us to this and this and this; those have been quite helpful. But that isn't a full person's role, if you know what I mean. So I don't think it would make an awful lot of difference.

Practitioner F

Summary

The challenges to resettlement voiced by practitioners in North Wales largely reflected those highlighted in previous resettlement research and evaluations. They highlighted a lack of multi-agency engagement, particular difficulties with the transition to adulthood, frustrations at the lack of ROTL, issues with accommodation and ETE, lack of exit strategies, and the difficulties of engaging with the children.

However, there were some important nuanced differences that were somewhat revealing and may be related to the Welsh or even regional context. For example, there was the suggestion from practitioners that engaging statutory partner agencies was more difficult because they were devolved but youth justice was not. ROTL was put down less to risk aversion and more to late preparation of where the child was being released to. Also, accommodation issues were not just down to not organising placements, but also that unsuitable accommodation was being used. In

addition, that continuity with education between custody and community was not helped because provision in English institutions was not geared towards the needs of Welsh children.

Perhaps what came through most clearly from the practitioners was that the Broker was engaged in a process of challenging existing and ingrained views about what support for children leaving custody entailed. Where she was succeeding in shifting the culture to recognise the key principles of resettlement, here value was also recognised; and vice versa. In the former, the Project had provided a useful role as an independent critical voice to hold agencies accountable, provided guidance on how to meet the needs of children, and highlighted other non-statutory agencies that might help YJSs do that.

At the time of the interviews, even where the cultural shift had occurred, the Project was considered to have yet to make real practical differences in brokering new partnerships and subsequent improvements in outcomes to children. Nevertheless, the potential to do so was recognised at this early stage.

Chapter Nine: Policymakers' views

Neal Hazel

This chapter includes the views of policymakers on resettlement in North Wales and the development of the Resettlement Broker Project. The opinions are given by two representatives from the Welsh Government and YJB Cymru who are involved in the strategic development of resettlement.

The need to focus on resettlement

The policymakers interviewed were in agreement that the Broker Project was intended to address the recognised problem of resettlement in an exploratory way, and then to make a difference to practice and to children's lives. It should introduce the learning from elsewhere, but be sensitive to the particular contexts in Wales and aware that there may be specific issues and opportunities here. Ultimately, it was about finding and implementing ways to ensure that children with complex needs who had offended had those needs met, and reduce high rates of reoffending for this group:

The resettlement aspect is something we know there are issues with; there are gaps, there are problems when people leave custody, and leave the sort of higher end community sentences...There's a high rate of reoffending when people come out of custody. And it was looking at why is that, what can we do to stop that, and to help them with whatever need it is when they come out or come to the end of their sentence.

Policymaker

The above quotation makes it clear what has been noted in various other places in this report (including from practitioners), that resettlement is considered in this project not just for those leaving custody, but also those on high end community sentences with similarly complex needs. That is a shift from the concerns of previous resettlement projects which focused solely on those leaving custody. That particular quotation talks about support beyond the end of those high-end sentences, and is related to the particular policy interest at this time in "after justice" – or longer-term sustainable support.

The fundamental principles of good resettlement were already known to policymakers prior to this project; early preparation so that holistic support is prearranged and ready on release (if they are custody cases). This quotation is a useful description of what resettlement outcomes it is hoped can be achieved:

The original vision was having a situation where when people were released from custody, they went immediately into the kind of provision or activities that have been associated with desistance from offending through research. So, primarily, accommodation which is safe, secure tenancy; it's not bed and breakfast, it's a good place to live. A place to learn or a place to train or a place to work. They're the two main things. But also the things that support those, like substance misuse issues, mental health issues catered for. A situation in which young people knew about what was happening to them before they were released and they were ready to get on with it as soon as they were released. Those are the outcomes that were sought.

Policymaker

Particular issues of concern in support

The above quotation highlights specific areas of resettlement support that were perceived by policymakers to be failing and needing particular work. The top issue was appropriate accommodation, which is a nut that policymakers across England and Wales have struggled to crack.

The point is made below that many children do not have a settled place to go back to, particularly if they offended against their families or they are looked after by the local authority:

There are issues about appropriate places to live, particularly if their offences were related to their family in some way; it's not always appropriate for them to go back home, families don't always want them home. There's a big issue there. There's a lot of care leavers in the youth justice system, who are sixteen, seventeen, who may not have a settled place to go back to. There are issues with reintegrating into them their communities if their offences were against their communities; it's quite a difficult thing for them to go back to that community. And so they need that support there because otherwise they're just cut adrift and it's no surprise then that they will reoffend.

Policymaker

However, just finding some accommodation is not good enough; it needs to be suitable and stable enough for a vulnerable young person. The quotation below raises the issue of local authorities using unsuitable accommodation like bed and breakfasts for accommodation. It also suggests that this is a source of tension between national and local authorities:

I think that is the main thing is knowing that they have appropriate accommodation - the whole b&b issue, hostels, things like that. You're putting a vulnerable young person into a very difficult mix of lots of other vulnerable people, but also people who may well be dominant characters and so it's got to be safe. If you don't know where you're going to sleep tonight, what are you going to do?... We keep plugging away and saying, "You know, b&b is not appropriate, you can't do that".

Policymaker

The second specific issue noted by policymakers was support beyond the end of the licence period. This was noted above in relation to the end of high-end community sentences, but applies equally to the end of the custodial licence period. The quotation below shows how practices on this are perceived to be variable, and that this is rather a frustration for national-level policymakers:

What they get is random and ad hoc. There are YOTs who will keep in touch and keep doing things after the end of the licence period. There are circumstances in which mentors or other agencies have started to work with kids and will stick with them. But there's no guarantee that that will happen, there's no kind of process been put in place for work or statutory duty to do it. We've got no real means of monitoring it because there's no statutory duty and there's no formal process in place.

Policymaker

It was recognised by policymakers that the Welsh context for the resettlement held particular challenges and opportunities. These were in part related to geography, like the lack of a custodial institution in North Wales, and the consequential distances of institutions from home:

You can do things by email and video conference, but it's never quite the same as when you actually meet someone. And geography is an issue in Wales. I know it sounds a bit trite and something that we trot out all the time, but it is an issue... I know we haven't got huge numbers of people in custody, but if you are a YOT that's maybe got five or six people in custody and they're all scattered about the place, then actually maintaining that working relationship with maybe three, four, five different YOIs is, is quite difficult.

Policymaker

They were also related to policy and practice context, such as devolution where youth justice is the responsibility of the UK Government and other support services are the responsibility of the Welsh Government. An example was given of how this manifested in relation to accommodation, although the point was made that improvement had been seen in the last year or so:

It's been hard to get beyond recognition of the need to them having some action to say that it would make sense if you had a couple of beds in one area that kids from another area could access. It's been a huge challenge. I think that one reason is that youth justice is non-devolved. You had heads of children's services sat around the table at resettlement steering groups saying barely a word for the first few meetings, not really knowing what was going on, not really sure that this was anything to do with them... That was a challenge, but we got there.

Policy maker

The main opportunities were perceived to relate to scale in Wales – that being small relative to England offered the opportunity for policymakers to come together and be focused to solve the problems in relation to resettlement. And that the Broker Project would help that focus:

Being a small nation, we do all know each other really well and you already have that level of trust and knowledge that you just don't get on a bigger scale. And it's so much easier to get all the appropriate people in the room because they can all fit in the room in Wales. We're all a small team and that means that we can talk to each other and we can get to know a level of details in what the issues are, which you wouldn't necessarily get in England or Scotland or somewhere else with much bigger populations. We only have one YOI in Wales, one secure children's home, so we can get to know the people in those.

Policy maker

The main challenges for the Resettlement Broker Projects

Given that the fundamentals of 'what' was necessary for effective resettlement was well known, and specific barriers identified, the focus for the Broker Projects was find out 'how' the fundamentals could be achieved in the contexts of Southern and North Wales. Analysis of the policymakers' perceptions shows that they saw two main process challenges to effective resettlement support that the Broker Project should help tackle; both focused on cooperation and coordination. The first challenge is to ensure that different agencies in a local area can work together in order to address the complex needs of this cohort. The Broker is charged with fostering partnerships between relevant agencies, coordinating how they may work together, and be accountable for that work:

It's about engaging with the YOTs, talking to the youth offending teams about other support that might be out there; other agencies that can help them. Acting in a broker role, to try and bring the various people together to support this young person. And it's making sure that all those agencies actually know who's involved, and what responsibilities are, and actually who can help plug those needs. Although the youth offending team's worker might be doing a really good job, if they're not aware that a few miles down the road there's a charity or a voluntary agency that can do something about it then they're never actually gonna fill that need. So it's about bringing those people together.

Policy maker

There was agreement between the policymakers that there was resistance from YJSs to involve other agencies, particularly third sector organisations, in delivering resettlement support. In the quotation below, it is suggested that the problem stems from agencies in different sectors not wanting to share resources because they fail to see the value in what the other is doing:

There are always going to be problems in bringing agencies together...where they feel able to share resources and say, "Actually, I'm working with this person, but I think it would be better if you do this bit of work." Because it's difficult getting statutory agencies and voluntary agencies to see the value of what they are both doing.

Policy maker

However, it was also suggested that the issue came down to mistrust, both of other agencies within the state sector and more so with those from other sectors. The YJS feels responsible for the child, and does not trust the other agency in the battle to avoid breaching them. The point is made that this restricts good resettlement for children, which relies on having the most appropriate agencies to address multiple complex needs:

I think the YOT feels a real duty of care to their young people, which may sometimes prevent them from exploring all the options, or handing over the care of the kids to someone else... There's some reluctance to allow somebody else to risk the child's future by not looking after them properly and therefore they get breached. So I think that's the other thing that interrupts any good resettlement... The first thing that needs to be done is people hold up their hands to the fact that it's a hard world to work in and nobody's perfect and any help is gratefully received.

Policymaker

The second main challenge for the Broker was to ensure cooperation between local authorities, or at least between agencies across local authorities. Although this is less of a key principle for resettlement, but shared working across geographical boundaries was noted in the evaluations of the resettlement consortia as bringing some benefits. In particular, it brings possibilities for pooling resources or for finding accommodation for a child away from a problematic area. The quotation below highlights this intention for the Broker Projects:

The concept was to have cooperation or collaborative working between a set of local authorities who are the main feeder local authorities into designated custodial establishments...to open up the avenues of intervention and resource buy, so cross-border collaboration.

Policymaker

The Broker Project raising awareness of resettlement

The view from the policymakers was that both Broker Projects in the North and Southern Wales had made some progress in raising the profile of resettlement. One national policymaker perceived that this had clearly been the case at the policy level, including highlighting issues on the ground:

The work the Broker has been doing has helped highlight some of those issues for me. It's been a place where I can go and hear about what's happening in action, because you can be a little cloistered when you work in policy and strategy.

Policymaker

The other policymaker felt that most progress had been achieved in raising awareness at the senior management level locally. That awareness raising included making them aware of each other and aware of the issues of frontline practitioners and outcomes in their area:

The sort of senior partner, YOT manager, head of children's services [level], the Brokers' done a lot to make the different parties aware of each other and aware of the issues.

Policymaker

The view was given that this progress in raising the profile of resettlement had been slow to start, but was now picking up pace and on the agenda locally. By the time of the interviews in early 2015, panels/partnerships had been established and events had been held both in the North and Southern Wales:

I have seen, certainly in the last quarter, there seems to have been more momentum gaining, more panel meetings. We're starting to see people talking about resettlement. You know there was a conference last month; quite a lot of people there, a lot of people are interested in it now.

Policymaker

Problems in spreading the resettlement message

However, being aware of problems in resettlement, and even hearing innovative solutions to it, is not the same as fully understanding the necessary policy and practice changes or committing to them. A consistent story from both policymakers in the Welsh Government and YJB Cymru was the reluctance of local senior managers to take on board and pursue the resettlement agenda. Either they did not realise that the approach being espoused by Brokers from the research, including coordination of other agencies, was different from their normal practice, or they did not see the need to follow it. With the former, it was reported that managers would engage eventually, once the difference was highlighted:

Some of the common issues [to North and Southern Wales] have been YOT managers difficult to convince that it's worth doing, who say "Well, we're already doing that", or who say "Well, that doesn't happen here"...not recognised as a real issue. But at a certain point, when it clicks that we're talking about starting to do new things, not doing what you're doing already a little bit more, then you get the engagement. And that's happened in both areas at different times.

Policymaker

However, with others who did recognise the difference but just not the need to follow it, managers would be more resistant to the Brokers' help:

There have been, I think, some problems in actually getting people to take something else on board because "we're being merged", or "we just haven't got the capacity to do this now". And I think in some areas there's a reluctance to do something different that they don't see the necessity for: "But we're already doing this sort of work. Why do we need to call it this? Why do we need the services of the broker?"

Policymaker

The view from the policymakers appeared to be that this resistance was felt somewhat more in the North than in Southern Wales at the time of the interviews. YOTs and local authority partners in the south had engaged more widely. As such, a different approach may need to be taken in the north:

I think because it's been much slower in the north, I think we need to be more proactive in terms of the Welsh Government and the YJB in what we do in the north. I know it has been a slightly different approach in the north than the south but I think we need to make that even more distinct for next year, because the south has its own momentum now; It is going [in the south] and there are things that we need to do there, but I think in the north we need to be more, more directive about what we do.

Policymaker

There was some speculation that any resistance to engagement in the North may be in part related to a perception there that the resettlement agenda was being driven from Southern Wales, although there was no evidence offered for this:

There's generally a cultural scepticism towards projects driven from the south of Wales in the north of Wales, which hasn't been an explicit factor, but implicitly you can kind of pick it up.

Policymaker

Whatever the reason for the resistance in the south and in the north to adopting new resettlement strategies, there was the view from the policymakers that the Broker Projects were starting to help break this down. There was agreement that this was largely made possible by the independent

status of the Brokers; they were from a third sector agency rather than another governmental agency:

[The Brokers have managed to] break down a lot of the defensiveness that comes from seeking to improve systems in the way people do business. I think the Brokers have been very important in giving our message out in a positive way. Because they come from a third sector organisation, relatively independent... when they give advice, it's less threatening. If we're seen as judgemental, [the Brokers are] seen as less judgemental.

Policymaker

Finally, it was considered by one policymaker that the geographical issues in resettlement for Wales, noted above, were also manifested in the North Wales Project. Travel difficulties between the YOT areas and the custodial institutions in Wales and in England were felt to have made it harder to engage the institutions and broker the necessary partnerships:

It's been harder for the Broker to travel across North Wales because of the relatively poor infrastructure, but also because of the distance away of the secure establishment.

Policymaker

Summary

The aims, challenges and progress voiced by the policymakers showed similar themes to those in previous chapters. They also help explain some of the quantitative findings found in relation to the support received.

The aim of resettlement is fairly well understood and agreed, but with awareness of difficulties in making this work in practice. Again, the area of accommodation is singled out to illustrate this, which is astute when considering the areas of difficulty that the quantitative analysis highlighted. The chapter also reveals a recognition that YJSs may be reluctant to consider that they need any help in this area, and that they will resist involving other agencies (especially statutory). This certainly chimes with the perceptions found from practitioners and underlines why the rates of involving other agencies in addressing multiple needs may have been so low.

The policymakers also share the practitioners' view that the Broker Project helped to raise awareness of new approaches to resettlement, and has started to achieve engagement on the ground – although this is at an early stage. They also concurred with practitioners that the development of resettlement support in local areas benefited from the independent oversight of the third-sector broker.

Chapter Ten: Lessons learned and recommendations

Neal Hazel

This report served two purposes. First, it presented an account of the process and progress of the North Wales Resettlement Broker Project over the last two years. Second, it presented a picture of what the resettlement experience looks like for children leaving custody in the North Wales area over that same period.

Although it was acknowledged that it was too early to run an impact evaluation on any practice changes promoted by the project, the quantitative analysis of support provision and compliance by the children did highlight any evidence of change over the period of the project.

This chapter offers a 'reflective discussion' of the messages coming from the analysis. It provides the opportunity to consider the challenges faced in trying to resettle children in North Wales after they leave custody. It also highlights some of the lessons learned about how key elements found in the project can start to address these challenges. The main aim is to establish pointers for how we can enhance the effectiveness of resettlement practice in North Wales in the future. It does not dwell on any procedural difficulties, implementation issues or similar organisational points – any of which are covered in the report above – but on what is useful to the development of resettlement policy and practice.

This reflection is designed to be used by policymakers and practitioners as a starting point for wider discussion about enhancing resettlement support. In particular, the recommendations presented in red italics are intended to be practical and constructive suggestions for taking resettlement forward.

In terms of what has emerged from the report, then, we should highlight the following lessons, in no particular order:

Awareness of resettlement challenges does not mean that practitioners recognise that service improvements are needed.

The Resettlement Broker Project clearly raised awareness that resettlement was an issue, and there was widespread recognition of practice-level barriers to effective resettlement. However, the study revealed a resistance among senior practitioners in some areas to recognise that their service needed improvements. This either pointed to a lack of critical reflection or a continued lack of awareness of the key principles of effective resettlement and what these would mean for their own practice. The Broker offered a very useful means to challenge existing service provision, as well as provide on-hand guidance in development.

YJB Cymru and the Welsh Government should reaffirm, continue to promote and train on the known key principles of effective resettlement. The desistance model promoted by Beyond Youth Custody may be a useful framework to help with the necessary conceptual shift for practitioners.

If Brokers are discontinued at the end of the project, introducing resettlement champions should be considered in order to help highlight and promote innovations in policy and practice.

Critical reflection of resettlement could be encouraged through a combination of self-appraisal and audit/inspection against key resettlement principles and innovation. The latter should be conducted by a broker, resettlement champion, or an expert with knowledge about resettlement research.

Key principles of effective resettlement can be applied to other high end offending children.

The Broker Project innovatively widened the concept of 'resettlement' to include other high-end offending children who were not necessarily in custody, based on the assumption that they had the

same complex needs requiring wraparound solutions. Key principles of effective resettlement around coordination of support, engagement of the young person, and trying to shift their personal identity proved just as valid – but the work was about *preventing* custody. This also meant that even with low numbers in custody, investment in ‘resettlement’ made sense.

The key principles of resettlement should always be applied to children at risk of custody, not just those on custodial sentences. They should receive a fully coordinated holistic support package aimed at preventing custody.

Local rather than regional consortia are more appropriate for North Wales

The evaluations of the resettlement consortia pilots in England concluded that cross-authority consortia may not always be appropriate or possible, and this seemed to be the case in North Wales. The principles of effective resettlement, including brokerage to ensure coordinated services, do not need to be organised across multiple authorities – they can still have multi-agency panels/partnerships, incorporate cross-sector support and forge links with custodial institutions. However, some benefits of cross-authority consortia are likely to be lost, such as shared resources, shared learning and good practice, single points of contact for prospective providers, helping to ensure that cultural and linguistic needs are met etc. Varied practice and compliance success in North Wales underlines the importance of these potential benefits, some of which were provided by having a shared Broker.

Whether or not through a shared Broker, mechanisms should be found to ensure that agencies in different areas can share learning and best practice.

Although not instituting a cross-authority consortium, YJB Cymru should explore how areas can better co-operate and share resources.

Multi-agency working has considerable room for improvement

Multi-agency working was still poor. Although it seemed that most identified needs were being met during the licence period, it is likely that too few agencies were involved to provide sustainable holistic support to meet children’s complex needs and sustain the good outcomes. There seemed to be resistance from YJSs to involve other agencies, statutory and non-statutory. Conversely, there was a reported resistance from other agencies to be engaged with these children. Some of this may be because of the split between the non-devolved youth justice and other service areas. However, there was evidence that reintegration and resettlement partnerships helped to break this mutual resistance down.

YJB Cymru and the Welsh Government should make it clear to all statutory agencies that children who have offended are the joint responsibility of all bodies, both devolved and not. More joint activity should be encouraged between youth justice and partner agencies, such as joint training, shared aims and targets.

Partnerships or panels can benefit from an ‘independent’ Convenor

The benefits of the Broker being seen as from an independent non-statutory agency were a theme. This was particularly the case in relation to convening the reintegration and resettlement partnership panels, where their independence helped incorporate third-sector and private agencies, and keep statutory agencies on board.

Resettlement panels should have an independent convenor. Either an independent person or a third-sector agency with the stature to be able to hold agencies to account and look to involve non-statutory agencies should be co-opted.

A broker can help build cooperation between home agencies and custodial institutions

There was evidence that the Broker was beginning to improve the relations and communications between custodial institutions and home agencies, resulting in some practical solutions to challenges. Again, there was some concern about what would happen when the project ended.

In the absence of a Broker, there needs to be a coordinated commitment at the strategic level from both institutions and community agencies to take joint responsibility to unblock any challenges to resettlement.

There should be an agreed escalation process agreed by the senior management in YJSs, local authorities and institutions.

There is a lack of contingency planning in provision

Given the challenges (and failures) in preparing resettlement packages in advance of release, it is perhaps not surprising that there was an absence of planning for alternative provision in accommodation and other areas if things went wrong. Nevertheless, the consequence is invariably fire-fighting rather than purposeful support, with likely negative outcomes.

DTO/resettlement plans should include recorded contingency planning for at least accommodation and ETE placements. Case Managers should prepare for swift remedial action and know the alternative provision and plan.

Accommodation is too often unstable or unsuitable for children

In addition to the problem of late placement of children prior to release, this research saw more clearly than in previous research the issue of children placed in unsuitable or unstable accommodation. This fuelled a high rate of breakdown of placements, particularly when unsupported. Placement cannot rely on parents taking children, which happened in less than half of cases. The unsuitable accommodation included reliance on bed and breakfast and hostel placements, which in addition to being inappropriate for vulnerable children, were usual temporary and so unstable. Instability of accommodation was a significant factor in reoffending.

The Welsh Government direct that bed and breakfast and unsupported hostel accommodation not be used for young people who offend.

Accommodation should be confirmed to the young person at least four weeks prior to release. This may involve paying a retainer, as is done in some other local authority areas.

Local authorities need to shore up provision in supported accommodation for young people who have offended. All policymakers should think radically and collectively about how this could happen, including service agreements with large accommodation providers requiring the acceptance and holding of places for children who have offended and will have a priority need because of their age (notably 16 and 17 year olds).

Particular attention needs to be paid to how the sustainability of accommodation placements can be maintained, perhaps with more hands-on involvement and mediation from YJSs or children's services and by using tenancy and floating support services, wherever possible.

Education is not arranged early enough before release

Fifteen years after the importance of early arrangement for post-release education was recognised in resettlement research, we still found that about two-thirds of children were released to no provision. It is not surprising that few children were deemed not to be able to have a continuous

programme of education throughout their sentence, although this figure was improving over the two years. Again, the lack of pre-release arrangements was found to be a significant factor in reoffending.

There should be a published expectation that post-release education should be confirmed and relayed to the child at least one month before release from custody, with preparations starting from conviction.

Preparation of the child for release is inadequate

A number of principles of good practice in relation to the preparation of young people for release from custody were apparently neglected for those being released to North Wales. These included any kind of pre-release course and lack of ROTL. Given recent research showing how children can suffer disorientation and stress after release, and the quick breakdown in compliance in North Wales, these issues need urgent attention. Lack of temporary release appeared to be more to do with YJSs not pursuing possibilities rather than risk aversion from the establishment.

There should be an expectation, and necessary directive from the YJB, that all children should receive a pre-release course designed to prepare them emotionally and practically for release. Attendance at a substantive pre-release course should be compulsory.

Steps should be taken to reinforce the expectation that 'day of release plans' are at least two weeks in advance for all children leaving custody.

The YJB should continue to explore ways to encourage ROTL, including encouraging custodial institutions to reduce the time it takes to process application.

Each child should have a detailed plan for support in the first few days after release, although this should not mean an increase in required or enforceable activities.

Children fail to comply very quickly

It is known from previous research that younger children tend to fail to comply with all the terms of their order faster than older children, and much faster than adult offenders. The younger than usual cohort here may explain the fast rate of breaching – when it happened, it tended to happen in the first few days. This again suggests the necessity of non-enforceable support in the first few days.

YOTs should be made aware of research showing the disorientation and stress of children immediately after release. There should be extra non-enforceable support and flexibility in supervision arrangements in the first few days after release.

There is an increasing problem of breaching for failure to abide by curfews

Although not a feature in previous resettlement evaluations, children in North Wales were increasingly being breached for failing to abide by curfews despite fully cooperating with rehabilitation support services and not reoffending.

Further investigation should be made by YJB Cymru and YJSs into why not complying with curfews may be increasing.

YJS staff should be made aware of this trend and encouraged to guard against it. Children should be warned more strongly of the consequences of not complying, with investigation into the reasons for difficulty complying and appropriate help devised.

YJSs should consider not including curfews in the licence conditions if not required by the court, or be more flexible in enforcement if more positive steps towards resettlement are being complied with.

Exit strategies are not good enough

The report showed that more work is needed to support ‘after justice’ through effective exit strategy planning. This was too often neglected. The problems were both that children were not sufficiently engaged to want to continue any involvement with YOT related services after the end of the licence period, and difficulties identifying appropriate support.

Whether or not through a Broker, YJSs should explore further and form referral partnerships with agencies (particularly third sector) that can continue support after the end of the licence period.

Exit planning should start early, preferably included in initial resettlement planning. This will enable the young person to establish engagement with the service and dovetail support across the end of the sentence.

Children are not engaged enough in planning for their future

There was evidence that children were not encouraged enough to be involved in DTO meetings while in custody, which is not conducive to a children’s rights approach or sustainable good outcomes. Likewise, efforts to engage children could have been better, with less than half offered voluntary one-to-one support. In addition, there was not enough focus on long-term goals and aspirations that would aid a shift in personal identity and desistance.

There should be an expectation and facilitation that every young person is offered and encouraged to take-up voluntary one-to-one support, preferably from a non-criminal justice focused agency.

Processes and forms for DTO meetings throughout the sentence should ensure the participation and maximise engagement of the child in planning.

Case planning should prioritise interventions that help shift the child’s personal narrative from offender to constructive member of society. This includes focusing on reinforcing a child’s sense of self-belief and their positive goals for the future.

Placement in England caused problems for Welsh children – especially in ETE

There were clear disconnects between the education and careers needs of Welsh children and the provision offered in the English custodial institutions to which they were sent. This included incompatible curricula and careers advice. The situation was reported as particularly bad when it involved children with Welsh as their first language.

Placement of children in England, often at significant distances from home, should be avoided where possible.

There should be urgent action to investigate the reported problem of children not being offered compatible curricula and careers advice.

Children with Welsh as a first language should never be placed in an institution where education is not available in Welsh.

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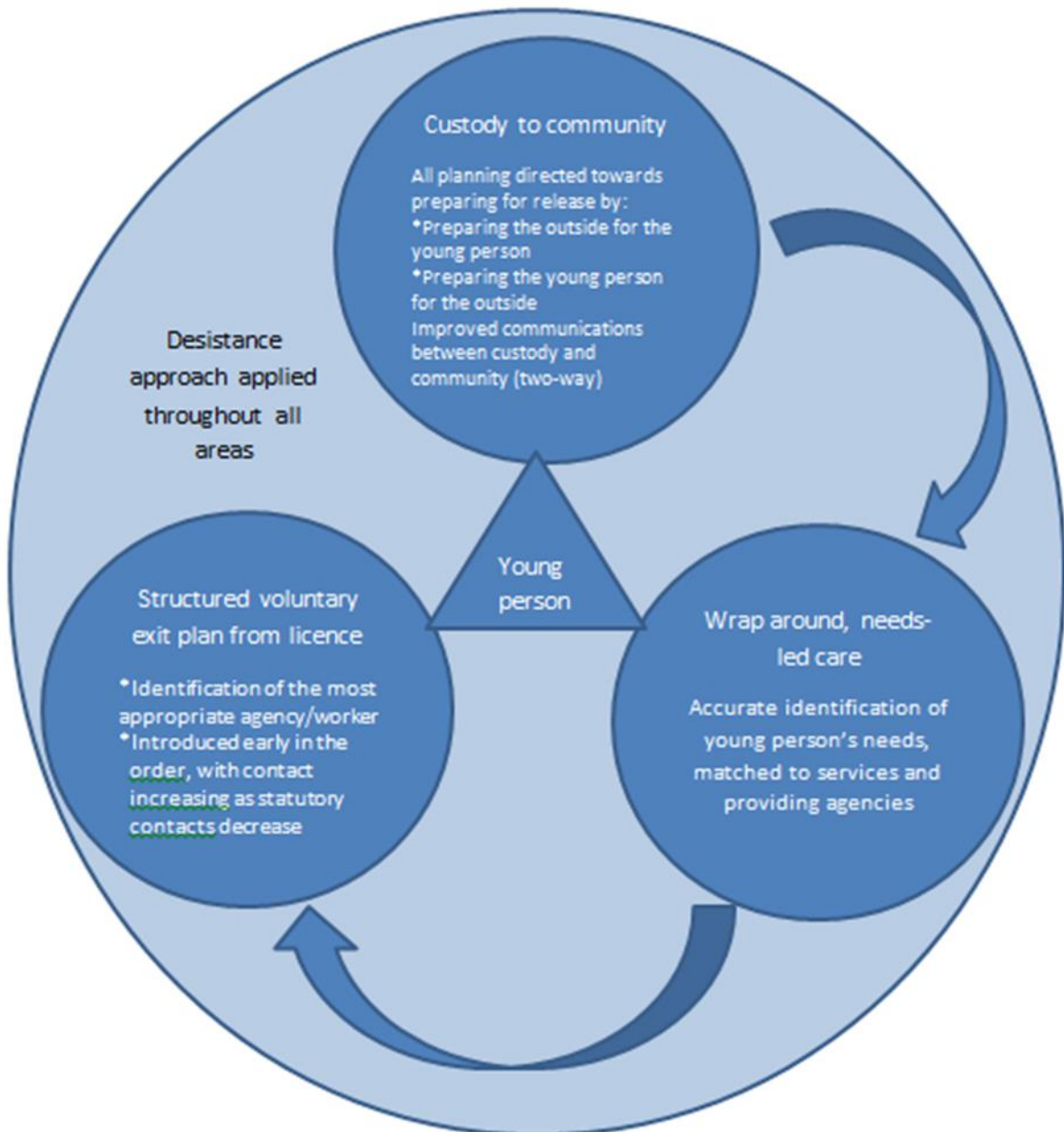
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Appendices

Appendix 1: Three stage model



Appendix 2: Project Meetings

- Llamau and the Youth Justice Board hold quarterly contract meetings.
- Llamau is represented at the Project Board by Chief Executive, Frances Beecher.

The Broker meets on a regular basis with the Youth Justice Board to discuss developments and report on progress at an operational level. The Broker attends the Project Board to report on progress and to discuss future actions for the group.

Appendix 3: Agencies consulted for mapping report

Nacro
West Rhyl Young People's Centre
NSPCC
Denbigh Youth Project
Military Preparation College Training
The Wallich
Coleg Harlech (WEA)
Police (Wrexham Rural, Denbighshire, Ynys Môn)
Integrated Offender Management
Tai Clwyd
North Wales Housing
Supporting People (Denbighshire, Gwynedd)
Shelter Prison Link
Probation (Gwynedd)
The Oyster Catcher (Timpson)
Housing Options (Flintshire)
Team Around the Family/Child (Flintshire, Denbighshire, Wrexham)
Cartrefi Conwy
Canol/Cwlwm
CAMHS
Wrexham Housing Services
Coleg Cambria
Youth Service (Gwynedd, Denbighshire)
Us Unltd
Domestic Abuse Wrexham
Relate
Integrated Family Support Service (Conwy/Denbighshire, Wrexham/Flintshire)
Coleg Llandrillo

Appendix 4: North Wales Enhanced Offer Paperwork

Enhanced Offer – agreed options

The Conwy and Denbighshire Youth Justice Service would like to make you an Enhanced Offer for your Order/Licence, which will include extra services to help you turn your life around (all extra services offered are non-breacheable). As part of this offer, we will agree to provide certain extra services, according to your needs and wishes.

Service	Action
Plan for your resettlement from the start, using a specially designed Resettlement Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/a
Provide you with a mentor	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/a
Arrange constructive diversionary activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/a
Provide you with a 'The Journey' box, which you will own, and which will be used with your worker	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/a
Allocate you a lead professional, which will not be from the YJS	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/a
Refer you and your family/supporters for Family Group Conferencing (Cwlwm)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/a
Refer you to the NSPCC Face to Face Solution Focused project, who will (confidentially) help you with the issues you want to discuss	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/a
Refer you to Cruse to participate in their programme	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/a
Refer your parents/carers for a bespoke parenting support programme	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/a
Refer you to the Symud Ymlaen project	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/a
Refer you for the PEARL course (Emotional management for employment) (Hindley only)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/a
Help you to create a detailed plan for the day of your release (custody only)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/a
Plan for when you leave the YJS with a formal exit plan identifying further voluntary support	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/a
Make all agreed referrals from the signing of this agreement	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/a
Ensure that you are registered with a GP and dentist	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/a

Conwy and Denbighshire YJS Enhanced Offer - Joint Agreement

The Conwy and Denbighshire Youth Justice Service would like to make you an Enhanced Offer for your Order/Licence, which will include extra services to help you turn your life around (all extra services offered are non-breachable).

As part of this offer, we will agree to provide certain extra services, according to your needs and wishes. We need you to agree to engage with these extra services, in order to make the most of them.

For your Enhanced Offer:

We will agree to:

- Plan for your resettlement from the start, using a specially designed Resettlement Plan
- Provide you with a mentor
- Arrange constructive diversionary activities
- Provide you with a 'The Journey' box, which you will own, and which will be used with your worker
- Allocate you a lead professional, which will *not* be from the YJS
- Refer you and your family/supporters for Family Group Conferencing (Cwlwm)
- Refer you to the NSPCC Face to Face Solution Focused project, who will (confidentially) help you with the issues *you* want to discuss
- Refer you to Cruse to participate in their programme
- Refer your parents/carers for a bespoke parenting support programme
- Refer you to the Symud Ymlaen project
- Refer you for the PEARL course (Emotional management for employment) (Hindley only)
- Help you to create a detailed plan for the day of your release (custody only)
- Plan for when you leave the YJS with a formal exit plan identifying further voluntary support
- Make all agreed referrals from the signing of this agreement
- Ensure that you are registered with a GP and dentist

We ask you to agree to:

- Complete the pre-release course in custody (where available)
- Give each referral a go!
- Make sure that you don't breach the statutory parts of your order
- Engage with the voluntary parts of the Enhanced Offer

We both agree to keep our sides of this agreement

Signed Signed
(worker) (young person)

Date Date

Appendix 5: North Wales Resettlement Checklist

Resettlement Checklist

Action	Completed	Notes: actions outstanding, and outcomes
Young person's diversity needs have been identified and addressed	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Diversity needs:
All the relevant forms / assessments / reports up to date	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Latest ASSET date:
Parents/carers' ability to attend meetings and visits checked (and funding for visits arranged/signposted)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/a	Who will bring them to meetings:
Referrals made to relevant agencies (inc Children's Services, if necessary)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/a	Agencies referred to:
ROTL/mobility/escorted absence has been applied for	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/a	
Public protection arrangements (MAPPA) have been identified / put in place	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/a	
Parenting work arranged with parents/carers while young person is in custody	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/a	
Referral made for Family Group Conferencing/Meeting	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/a	
Sentence plan agreed by the young person and relevant parties	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Suitable accommodation secured for the young person	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Accommodation:
ETE placement secured	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	ETE:
Young person's National Insurance number confirmed	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/a	NI number:
Young person has an open bank account in his/her name	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/a	
Young person has a copy of their birth certificate	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Check completed re finances available to the young person? (eg care allowance / compensation / benefits / DLA etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Young person is registered with a GP and dentist	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	GP: Dentist:
Young person understands his/her licence conditions and what will happen during supervision with the YOT (if no licence, exit plan is in place)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
All relevant parties have been informed of the release date	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/a	Who informed:
Arrangements in place to pick the young person up from the establishment on the day of release, and a detailed day of release plan is in place	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/a	Who collecting on day of release:

Please provide reasons for all 'non-applicable' responses, and actions for all 'no' responses

Appendix 6: Needs and Services Matrix

Needs-led Service Matrix – Flintshire

Needs	Services	Agencies
Accommodation/living arrangements		
Homelessness	Housing Options, helpline, bond scheme,	Agorfa-Cefni, NACRO, Shelter Cymru, Housing Options, Clwyd Alyn, Local Solution
Overcrowding	Housing Department, housing agencies	Agorfa-Cefni, Housing Options, Agoriad Cyf
Deprived Household (dependant on benefits)	Agencies supporting low income, food sources	Scout Holiday Homes Trust, Credit Union, Food banks, North Wales Superkids, Family Fund
Abscending	Helpline	Childline
Fragile accommodation	Floating support, mediation	Housing Options, Community Mediation North Wales, Teulu Cyfan
Unsuitable area	Housing Department,	Agorfa-Cefni, Housing Options,
Isolated area	Travel information	Traveline Cymru, Bus and Train Services
Neighbourhood tensions	Local authority	Housing Options, Community Safety
Has risk factors which make placement difficult	Local authority, support services	Housing Options, Anheddau Cyf,
Needs supported accommodation	Supported accommodation	Hafan Cymru, NACRO, North Wales Housing Association, Shelter Cymru, CAIS, Local Solutions
Tenancy support	Floating support, website/app	CAIS, Anheddau Cyf, Housemate (Shelter), Nacro (Flintshire Doorstep Project), Local Solutions
Lack of independent living skills	Floating support, Housing Associations, Phone app	North Wales Housing Association, CAIS, Going It Alone App, Housemate (Shelter), Youth Information Shop, Quest
Education, training, and employment		
School refusal	Alternative education providers, Counselling	Education Psychology Service, Education Welfare Service, Advisory Centre for Education
Bullying (victim or perpetrator; including cyber bullying)	Helplines, Websites, Counselling	Kidscape, Childline, Cyber Smile, CEOP, Bullies Out, Meic Cymru, Advisory Centre for Education
School attendance	Education Department, Advice service	Education Welfare Service, SNAP Cymru

Appendix 7: Case studies

Compiled by Kathy Hampson

Case Study A- Aled

Aled had been given a six month DTO for breaching a community order (served in a YOI). At this time he had 11 previous convictions, having first offended at the age of 12 (then receiving a Police Reprimand). Aled failed to attend one of his appointments on licence, and received a formal warning for this. However, at the time he had been living with his father who had lost his job, and he cited difficulties with attending at this time due to lack of bus fare. Aled went to live elsewhere (with a carer whom he called 'mum', as she had taken care of him for much of his life prior to this). The new carer expressed that she made sure Aled attended all appointments, stating that had he been living with her while on his previous order, he would not have breached it and thereby been given custody. Aled did not offend while on licence and, having been off licence for several months now, still has no further offences to his name.

Aled expressed no positive feelings about his custody experience, mainly using the word '*horrible*'. He attended a pre-release course, and was very positive about the content. He had a variety of visits from different friends and family while in custody, and was collected on release by several family members. Aled was accepted onto a college course, but this was not due to start until the end of his licence, due to the timing of his release, about which he expressed some frustration. At his Time 1 interview, Aled was adamant that he would not be going back to custody. Aled said that prior to being in custody, he used to smoke a lot of cannabis, but that after having been free of it for his custodial sentence, he managed not to restart on release. He linked his previous cannabis use with his offending. Aled liked his YOT worker and felt that he had a good relationship with her. He also felt that they had listened to him regarding what was manageable on his licence, and altered it accordingly, which he felt enabled him not to breach it. He cited '*staying away from the wrong crowd*' as being what he needed to do to avoid trouble, and thought that he would be able to achieve this, because he was already doing it. Aled said that he had '*matured*' while in custody, and felt that having achieved a college place, he was being given a '*fresh start*'.

Aled's carer recognised the change that he saw in himself, agreeing that now he stays away from others who offend. She also felt that he had more self-respect, allowing him to '*do things for himself, not the crowd*'. She felt that his supervision with the YOT had been beneficial, and helped him to make better decisions. She also said that he was doing very well on the college course, which he had just started by that time. There were evidently some very positive changes in Aled during this time, and also positive plans put in place, which gave him his '*new start*'. These positive factors, plus the evidently supportive relationship he had with his carers, may have contributed to his ability to successfully complete his licence, and continue to avoid reoffending subsequently.

Case Study B – Ben

Ben had been given a four month DTO for breaching a community order and for dangerous driving (served in a YOI). At this time he had five previous convictions, having first offended at the age of 13 (then receiving a Police Reprimand). Ben failed to attend four of his appointments on licence, and was eventually taken back to court, but the case was dismissed; he subsequently completed his licence without further incident. Ben was very focused on his licence period, even commenting that offending while on licence was not advisable, it being better to wait until it had finished. Ben committed further offences as soon as his licence finished, and was given a further DTO.

Ben had felt that custody was not as bad as he expected, stating that he would not mind if he were sent back. He had received weekly visits from his father, which he acknowledged would have been inconvenient, given that his father works. Ben seemed to appreciate the plastering course he was

able to complete in custody, and came out with several qualifications. Ben's father felt that the deterrent effect of custody had not been lost, as he was then not concerned about going back (*'he knows it's a doddle'*). Ben did not cooperate with attempts to engage him with short term ETE provision, preferring to simply apply for college for the September (which was several months away); however, he did not appear to follow up this application and was left unclear as to how far his application had got. Ben's father thought that had he attended a college course during his licence, he would not have reoffended and received a further custodial sentence; however he laid the blame for this with the YOT, rather than with Ben for not complying with available options. Ben himself, before the new offences were committed, was somewhat evasive in his reply about the possibility of being in further trouble, saying *'You can't say you do can't say you can't'*. While Ben thought he probably would not get involved in offending even if friends were, he was clear that if anyone was fighting, he would definitely want to get involved, finding it impossible to walk away from that kind of situation. His response to the possibility of being sent back was: *'Don't want to go back in obviously, it's better out here but I wouldn't be bothered at all if it did happen'*, making his resolve to stay out of trouble look tenuous. Ben felt that he had *'calmed down'* since being in custody, but his father disputed that there had been any improvement in his behaviour at all, describing him as being a *'nightmare'*, and claiming that he had gone straight back out with his old friends on release.

From this it can be seen that Ben's behaviour (according to his father) had not improved at all after custody, and that rather than being resolved not to return, he actually seemed unconcerned by the prospect. Having accessed no ETE during his licence, Ben had ended up with a lot of time on his hands, spending this with potentially offending peers. He was not convinced that he would walk away from trouble, and was sure that he would not should a fight ensue. It is perhaps unsurprising then that Ben committed further offences as soon as his licence ended.

Case study C – Callum

Callum had been given a four month DTO for breaching a community order (served in a STC). At this time he had seven previous convictions, including a previous custodial sentence, having first offended at the age of 11 (then receiving a Police Reprimand). Callum attended all of his YOT appointments and kept to all of his licence conditions. Callum did not offend while on licence, and so far has not reoffended since.

Callum did not express any positive thoughts or feelings about being in custody, adding *'I wouldn't go back there again'*. He did not receive any visits apart from statutory ones, which he clearly felt keenly; he expressed the most negative feelings about release of the interview cohort. Callum intensely disliked the education provision in the STC, as it is like a school, and his educational history had been problematic. On release, Callum was able to go straight back to the Pupil Referral Unit he attended prior to custody, which he appreciated, even though he experienced exclusions through his career there, and continued to do so through his licence. Callum was clear that his risk both of breaching and reoffending lay with those with whom he associated. He dealt with this by mostly staying at home during his licence, saying that he did not *'hang around with the mates that I used to hang around with'*. He knew that staying in was not necessarily a long term strategy, acknowledging that he was doing so only while still on licence. Callum was optimistic about his chances of remaining offence free, largely because he was complying this time, whereas he had not in the past. He put this down to having stopped drinking this time, and linked his previous alcohol consumption with his offending. Callum felt that he would be able to walk away from situations which might put him at risk of offending, saying *'I don't want to cause no trouble'*. Callum felt that while he was still having arguments with his mum at home, his attitude to offending had changed. His mother agreed with this assessment, feeling that his behaviour at home had been worse since custody, but that he had stopped offending, because he no longer went out with previous associates. Although Callum was clear that he did not want to go back to offending, his mother was unsure whether he would be able

to achieve this long term. There appears to be a mixture of positive and negative factors in Callum's case, possibly placing him in danger of reoffending, although he has been successful so far in avoiding trouble, having completed his licence flawlessly.

Appendix 8: Terms of Reference from Resettlement Advisory Panel

XXX YOT Reintegration and Resettlement Partnership Terms of Reference

Background

The XXX YOT Reintegration and Resettlement Partnership (RRP) is a multi-agency partnership put together to address gaps and barriers to effective resettlement and reintegration for young people (aged 10 to 18 at support request stage) experiencing significant change or transition in their service provision. Specifically this will include young people in the following categories:

- In custody, remanded to youth detention accommodation (yet to be sentenced; LASPO Act, 2012: S98)
- In custody having received a custodial sentence (Detention and Training Order – Crime and Disorder Act, 1998 S73-79; Section 90-92 Order, The Powers of the Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act, 2000)
- Intensive community orders at or near completion (as assessed through the ‘Scaled Approach’ using the Asset assessment tool)
- Out of county transfers (in and out)
- Transition to probation (young people at or near 18 years of age)
- High risk of harm or re-offending (referred up from the internal YJS Risk Panel)

Agencies other than the YJS may make referrals for cases which are of concern as long as they have past or current contact with the YJS (made to the Chair at least one week in advance of the next meeting on the Panel referral form). Resettlement needs will be considered under the seven pathway headings of:

- Accommodation
- Education training and employment
- Health
- Substance misuse
- Families
- Finance benefits & debt
- Transitions and case management

Aims and Responsibilities

The overall aim:

- ❖ Through effective resettlement support, engender a shift in a young person’s personal narrative from offender to non-offender
- ❖ Develop packages of support to assist resettlement
- ❖ Oversee delivery of resettlement support plans
- ❖ Facilitate continuity of care and transition arrangements from sentence to voluntary aftercare
- ❖ Facilitate continuity of care and transition arrangements from custody to community licence
- ❖ Facilitate information sharing between agencies
- ❖ Improve partnership working to make the optimum range of service provision available to enable the offer of robust community alternatives for sentencers

- ❖ Review the effectiveness of local service provision for those who have received custodial sentences in order to determine how systems could have been better deployed and what support could have been offered by partners to avoid a custodial sentence
- ❖ To reduce the numbers of young people re-offending

Embedded in these objectives, will be the full participation of young people and their families, as well as focusing on valuing differences and inclusion to ensure that appropriate unmet needs are identified and addressed.

As a partner representative we ask you to:

- ❖ Contribute your time, expertise and enthusiasm to ensuring effective operation of the XXX YOT RRP
- ❖ Any actions you take away from the Partnership to be completed to the best of your ability by the agreed date
- ❖ Contribute in an open and honest manner
- ❖ Recognise, respect and draw upon the contributions of each member
- ❖ Ensure that equal opportunities underpin the work of the XXX YOT RRP and positively promote the work of the Partnership
- ❖ Facilitate opportunities for discussion/debate/challenge in your organisation/department
- ❖ Ensure that information from the XXX YOT RRP and its work is fed back to your organisation/department appropriately
- ❖ Influence the aligning of other resources to the work of the XXX YOT RRP, where this is appropriate
- ❖ Adhere to the agreed Terms of Reference

Values

In adopting these Terms of Reference the XXX YOT RRP is committed to the following key values:

- The young people are children first
- Excellence in service delivery
- Working in partnership
- Prevention
- Diversion
- Social Inclusion

Structure of Partnership Meetings

The basic agenda will be as follows:

- ❖ Look at all referred resettlement cases on an individual basis to identify gaps and barriers in the resettlement and/or exit plan
- ❖ Agree action to address identified gaps and barriers
- ❖ Monitor and review previous cases (where relevant)
- ❖ Oversight of out of county transfers currently in the area

Membership

The North Wales Resettlement Broker will chair the XXX YOT RRP. The Partnership will consist of the Chief Officers or their representatives of the statutory partner agencies, and others able to make a significant contribution to effective resettlement plans for young people.

Membership of the XXX YOT RRP should be at a senior management level. It is acceptable for membership to be delegated to other members of staff provided that they are fully briefed and aware of any issues beforehand and can contribute constructively to the RRP process.

The XXX YOT RRP will co-opt members as and when it is deemed necessary to do so.

Members will be expected to take an active leadership role during meetings and in practice.

Additional requirements

Should cases requiring immediate action arise, the member raising the issue will consult with the Partnership Chair, who will call an emergency sitting of the RRP where appropriate, involving specific members as required, based on assessed need.

Tasks may be identified requiring more detailed work than can be achieved during the partnership meeting. Time limited 'task and finish' groups which may also require the participation of non-Partnership members will be convened and chaired by a Partnership member, who will report back to the XXX YOT RRP.

Administration

Administrative support to the XXX YOT RRP will be provided by the YOT. The YOT will ensure the effective distribution of minutes and the advance preparation and circulation of the agenda in consultation with the Chair. Should the Partnership continue, password protected case information will normally be sent out ahead of Partnership meetings. This information is highly confidential, and Partnership members **must not** use this information for any purpose other than the Partnership meeting (or actions agreed therein), and must ensure the safety of the data at all times.

Frequency of meetings

Meetings will be bi-monthly (every two months) while the Partnership is in operation.

Governance

The XXX YOT RRP is a sub group of the YOT Local Management Board (LMB). The Chair of the XXX YOT RRP will report on the Partnership's work to the LMB. A regular report will also be made to the Local Safeguarding Children Delivery Group on a six monthly basis.

Information Sharing

The XXX YOT is governed by an Information Sharing Protocol which is authorised at a strategic level by the 5 main statutory partners:

- XXX County Council (Education and Children's Services)
- North Wales Police
- Wales Probation
- Health Board

This protocol enables the sharing of information for the prevention of offending and reoffending by children and young people, these arrangements are authorised by the *Crime and Disorder Act 1998*. Furthermore members of the RRP, by agreeing to these terms of reference, will practice in a manner which will protect any and all personal and sensitive information shared with them to operate the panel processes. Information will be password protected, no agency will share the information out with the panel meetings and any breach of information security will be reported to the YOT service manager.

Review of the Terms of Reference

The XXX YOT RRP Terms of Reference will be reviewed at the next meeting on xxx. In the future, any Partnership member can request a review of the Terms of Reference by contacting the Chair before the publication of the next agenda.

Agreement

I agree to abide by the Terms of Reference, as stated above, and to any subsequent agreed alterations of the same.

Signed:

Agency:

Date:

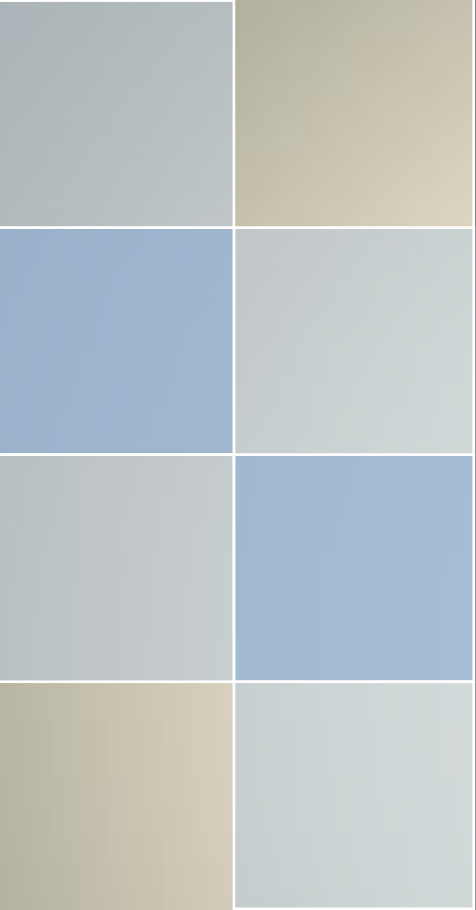
Appendix 9: Case Description Form

HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL – DO NOT SHARE

CONWY AND DENBIGHSHIRE REINTEGRATION PARTNERSHIP

Meeting date:

Name		Date of birth		Age	
Address					
Area			LAC status		
Current Order(s)			ASSET score		
Length			ROSH		
Dates			MAPPA		
Offence(s)			Vulnerability		
Overview					
Thematic summary of issues					
Accommodation					
Education, Training, Employment					
Health					
Substance Use					
Family					
Finance, Benefits, and Debt					
Case Management and Transitions					



Llamau,
23 Cathedral Road,
Cardiff. CF11 9HA