



Improvement

Customer led transformation programme

Case study – Bradford Metropolitan District Council

Reducing reoffending and young people in custody

30/58

Contents

About Bradford	3
Background	4
Objective	5
Approach	5
Findings	7
Outcomes	16
Benefits	20
Governance	22
Resourcing	22
Challenges and lessons learnt	23
Next steps	23

The Customer Led Transformation Programme

Bradford Metropolitan District Council's work has been funded under the Customer Led Transformation programme. The fund aims to embed the use of Customer Insight and Social Media tools and techniques as strategic management capabilities across the public sector family in order to support Place-Based working.

The Customer Led Transformation programme is overseen by the Local Government Delivery Council (supported by the Local Government Association).

The fund was established specifically to support collaborative working between local authorities and their partners focused on using customer insight and social media tools and techniques to improve service outcomes. These approaches offer public services bodies the opportunity to engage customers and gather insight into their preferences and needs, and thereby provide the evidence and intelligence needed to redesign services to be more targeted, effective and efficient.



About Bradford

Bradford is a metropolitan borough in West Yorkshire. It is situated in the foothills of the Pennines, 8.6 miles (13.8 km) west of Leeds, and 16 miles (25.7 km) northwest of Wakefield.

Bradford rose to prominence during the 19th century as an international centre of textile manufacture. It was a boomtown of the Industrial Revolution, and amongst the earliest industrialised settlements, rapidly becoming the 'wool capital of the world'.

The area's access to a supply of coal, iron ore and soft water facilitated the growth of Bradford's manufacturing base, which, as textile manufacture grew, led to an explosion in population and was a stimulus to civic investment; Bradford has fine Victorian architecture including the grand Italianate City Hall.

The textile sector in Bradford fell into decline from the mid-20th century and Bradford has faced similar challenges to the rest of the post-industrial area of Northern England, including de-industrialisation, housing problems, social unrest and economic deprivation.

Levels of wealth vary markedly across the district. 16 per cent of households in Bradford District have an average income of £50,000 or more but a much larger number (43.9 per cent or 132,365 households) have a combined income of less than £20,000 per year and 42,994 households have a total income of less than £10,000 per year. These inequalities of wealth appear to be increasing.

According to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD 2007), of the 354 authorities measured, Bradford district is the 32nd most deprived. This puts the district in the 10 per cent most deprived local authority areas and on one particular measure – income deprivation – Bradford was ranked as 4th worst in the country.

Bradford has a population of over 500,000, making it the fourth largest district in England (Birmingham, Leeds and Sheffield are larger). Although there was a small decline in population in the late 1990s, Bradford has grown steadily since 2000 and is expected to continue growing for the foreseeable future with ONS forecasts showing a further rise in the population to 655,100 by 2031, an increase of 27.8 per cent since 2009.

Bradford has the youngest population of any English district outside London, with under-16's forming a higher proportion (23 per cent) of the total population than average.

Bradford has a rich ethnic and cultural mix, with the ethnic minority population accounting for approximately 18 per cent (87,150) of the District's total population.

The vast majority (75,050 or 86 per cent) of the ethnic minority population is of Asian origin. A further 7 per cent (5,950) are of Afro-Caribbean origin. By the year 2011 it is estimated that the District's ethnic minority population, which is growing, will form 26 per cent of the district's total population.



Background

Bradford has a young population, with 28 per cent of the population under 20 years of age, compared to 24 per cent nationally. It also has relatively high levels of both youth offending and of youths breaching community sentences so that they end up in custody.

To address these issues this project set out to utilise customer insight to better understand and engage with young people ultimately hoping to divert them away from offending and improve compliance with court orders. In addition to the obvious benefit this will bring, both for the individual young people themselves and for their families, it will also help to reduce overall costs through lower expenditure on policing; court appearances and short custodial sentences and it should contribute to lower levels of crime within the locality.

By gaining a deeper insight into this client group, they would be enabled to deliver more differentiated and targeted youth offending services, as well as removing duplication as different agencies currently work across each other to support his group.

The project also set out to profile the wider community and consider their attitudes to youth offending. It sought to identify opportunities to support wider work on community cohesion and identify localities where Big Society initiatives could be used to reduce youth offending. This part of the project sought to provide better information on youth crime to local area committees, providing a vehicle for local residents to determine which preventative services should be delivered in their locality.

Objective

The principal aim of the project was to reduce youth crime and anti-social behaviour through the delivery of the following objectives:

- a reduction of breaches through better compliance with court orders
- a reduction in prolific offenders
- support to those local social enterprises activities that target crime and anti-social activity
- improvement of prevention activity, by understanding how targeted activities work best for different groups
- profiling of offenders and anti-social behaviour order information
- mapping the frequency of reoffending of young people in custody and patterns to help prevent reoffending.
- mapping the impact of breaches of orders
- increasing levels of cohesion between youths and the wider community.

The project had the following targets, which it recognises are ambitious considering the current economic climate and the increase in youth unemployment:

- a 5 per cent reduction in detected offences committed by young offenders
- a 5 per cent reduction in young people sentenced to custody
- a 3 per cent reduction in the breach of court hearings
- It was estimated that these would provide the following financial savings:
 - £448,000 reduction in detected offences committed by young offenders
 - £203,200 reduction in the costs of providing annual custody for offenders

- £12,600 reduction in the cost of preparing for court appearances

This is a total potential direct saving of £665,800.

Additional benefits are more difficult to quantify and relate directly back to the project, however, these are likely to include those 'societal costs' that are difficult to measure in financial terms.

For example, costs from reoffending in terms of resident well-being (eg reduced levels of fear of crime and associated mental health benefits) and local authority and partner provider savings from more effective targeting and delivery of prevention services, avoiding the duplication of services.

Approach

Data Analysis

The Youth Offending Team (YOT) in Bradford set out to work with young offenders with the intention of preventing reoffending. In addition to their direct employees the YOT takes secondees from a number of organisations (eg police, probation service, health, social care and education).

The YOT has been operating for 10 years and over this time has built up a rich and comprehensive data base covering all the offences, interventions, assessments and prevention activities undertaken over that period. This included information on young people who were arrested and charged and was linked with court sentences and YOT assessments of the risk of reoffending.

This project provided an opportunity to analyse this data, to look for patterns and trends and consequently to improve the operation of the team.

The YOT data was matched to data from Bradford council's Data Observatory, which included information on local housing, the economy, health and education outcomes.

The council then worked with CACI to match this against CACI's data repository on demographics, income and lifestyles and to analyse the resulting data set.

Firstly the data was aggregated to higher geographies, grouped by defining characteristics such as age, gravity of offence, ethnicity, gender and so on to observe what was happening across distinct cohorts,

Secondly, geodemographic profiling was employed to understand how offending and breach occurred across the diverse communities within Bradford. This technique has proven useful in numerous previous studies and provides a mechanism to effectively extrapolate from one area to others with similar social characteristics.

Spatial analysis also played a key role in understanding where certain behaviours are outside expected ranges, based upon geodemographics and other profiling techniques, and to look at how changing demographic factors, such as maturation, may have on future offending patterns, ensuring Bradford YOT stay ahead of developing areas of need. This spatial understanding also provided a focussed redefinition of neighbourhoods based upon a number of characteristics that impact of offending behaviour.

In addition to this initial demographic analysis the project also used the following techniques:

- offender profiling of core groups to identify demographic and ethnicity patterns
- differentiation between those for whom prevention activities have had success and those for whom they fail
- an analysis of the journeys of offenders over time to look at their full engagement with the YOT – thereby providing a first view of how young offenders respond to interventions
- undertaking attitudinal surveys, overlapping British Crime Survey with local data to describe the attitude to youth crime, and the fear of crime, within the broader community across Bradford
- an analysis of the future population makeup of Bradford and the potential impact on offending
- an analysis of trends in crime escalation (from petty to serious)
- an exhaustive analysis of the patterns of breach offenders.

In order to better understand the spatial and demographic nature of youth offending, CACI split the 30 wards within the Bradford Council area into 7 distinct zones. These zones were defined both geographically and demographically, grouping together wards in similar regions that exhibited comparable levels of average income per household and ethnic breakdown.

Offender Engagement

In an attempt to gain a better understanding of what drives young offenders, how they interact with the system and why some reoffend and others don't, a detailed analysis was undertaken of a number of individual 'journeys'.

To achieve this Bradford undertook a process of offender engagement. This involved a series of structured interviews and focus groups with a range of young people who were either in breach of a statutory order or in local authority care (LAC) and in the criminal justice system. A group of twenty individuals were involved, both male and female and ranging from 13 to 19 years of age.

Their stories and backgrounds were investigated. For example:

Benjamin James

Pattern offending in Jan-Mar each year, then engaging with YOT and not offending till next year !

- Starts offending with Criminal Damage around 13yrs old
- No offending for a year during Final Warning Programme
- Concentrated batch of offending in early 2007 with 10 offences around Criminal Damage and Common Assault
- Supervision Order and no offending for nearly a year
- As 15 year old, Aggravated Common Assault with Blade in early 2008
- Fallow for a year during Supervision Programme
- As 16 year old again offends Common Assault

Leone

- First seen in Nov 2006 with Common Assault as 12 yrs old
- Early 2007, thefts offences for which he fails to surrender to bail in Oct
- Starts referral order in December, now a 14 yr old which he successfully completes in July 2008
- One year later in July 2009 he offends: Theft From Shop. Receives a second Referral Order which he breaches in the same month. He fails to surrender to bail in Oct and again breaches the Referral Order in Nov before it ends in Mar 2010
- Three months after the Referral Order completion he offends by Assault occasioning Actual Bodily Harm in May 2010 leading to a Youth Rehabilitation Order in October, one month before his 17th birthday.



Findings

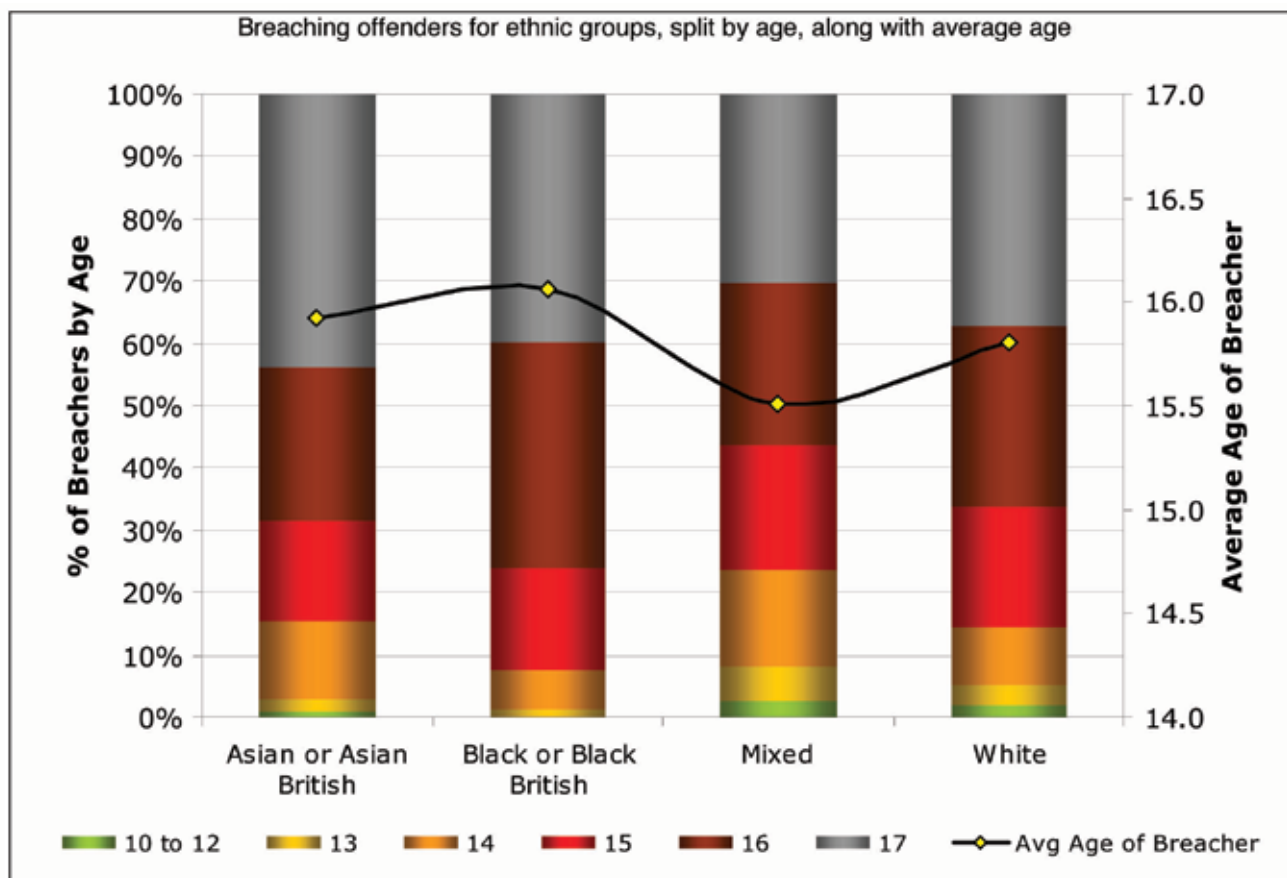
The extensive data base built up by the YOT over the last decade was of a very high quality. This funding allowed the YOT team to take the time to undertake a full and dependable statistical analysis which identified patterns and trends within the data as outlined in the 'Approach' section earlier.

Reducing Breach

The analysis of the data base (Figure 1) showed that approximately 20 per cent of young people in custody are there for breaching a community sentence. The pathway from breach to custody has high associated costs and comparatively poor outcomes, specifically showing high re-offending rates.

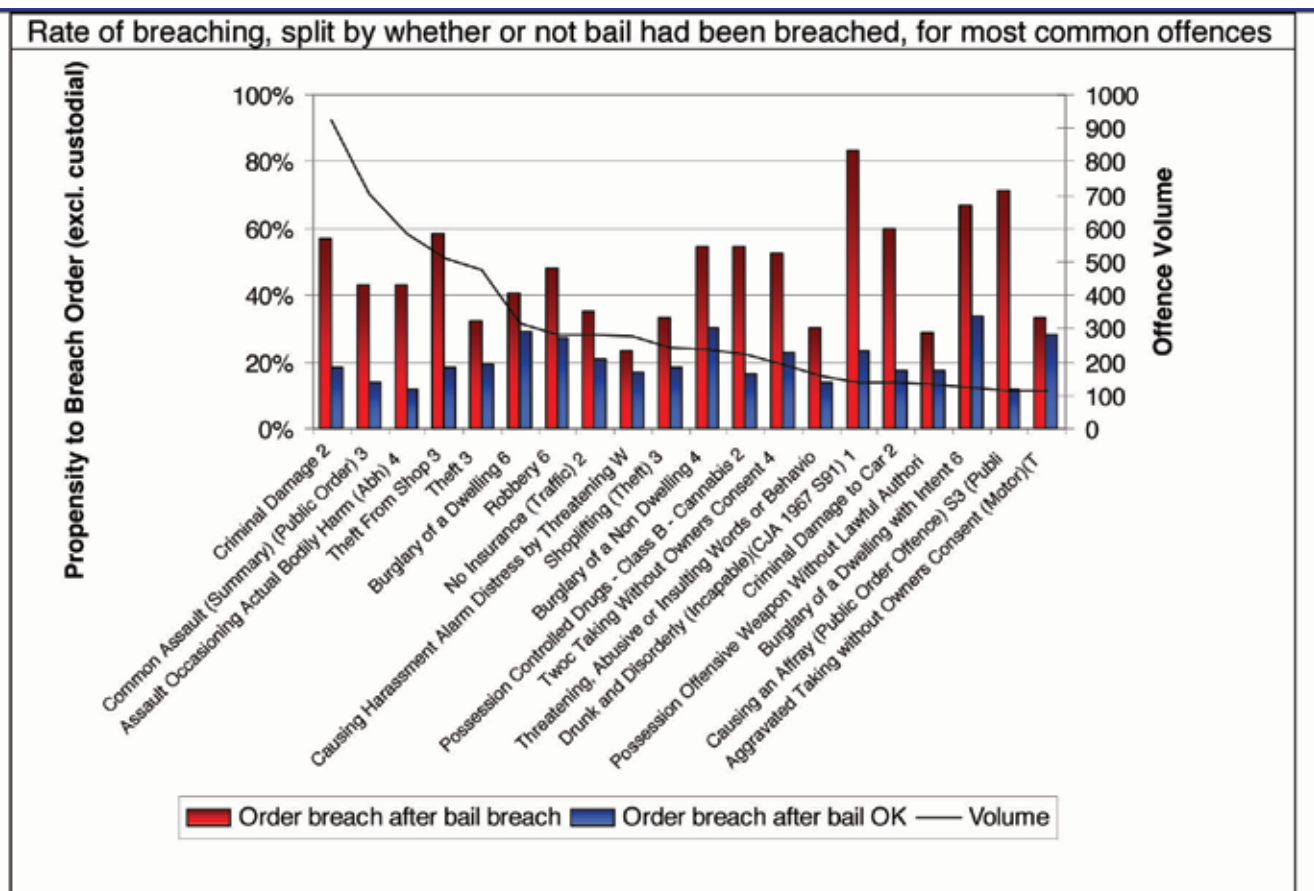
Looking at breaches against the offender's age and ethnicity highlights that although the average age of breaching offenders has varied relatively little over the past decade, the average age by ethnicity shows a problem with younger mixed race offenders, who have the lowest average age of breaching offenders.

Figure 1



The relationship between breaching bail and breaching a community order was studied (Figure 2). It was seen that for cases with no breaches of bail, 84 per cent of their interventions are not breached whereas those with a single breach of bail, have a 50 per cent likelihood of breaching intervention, rising to over 90 per cent for those with five or more bail breaches. The following chart illustrates that for every common offence, those that breach bail are more likely to breach their orders.

Figure 2



The analysis highlights that breaching behaviour is a roller coaster whereby once a pattern of breaching starts it increases and gathers pace for that offender. Breaching bail conditions significantly increases the likelihood of breaching statutory orders.

However, the gravity of offence isn't especially relevant.

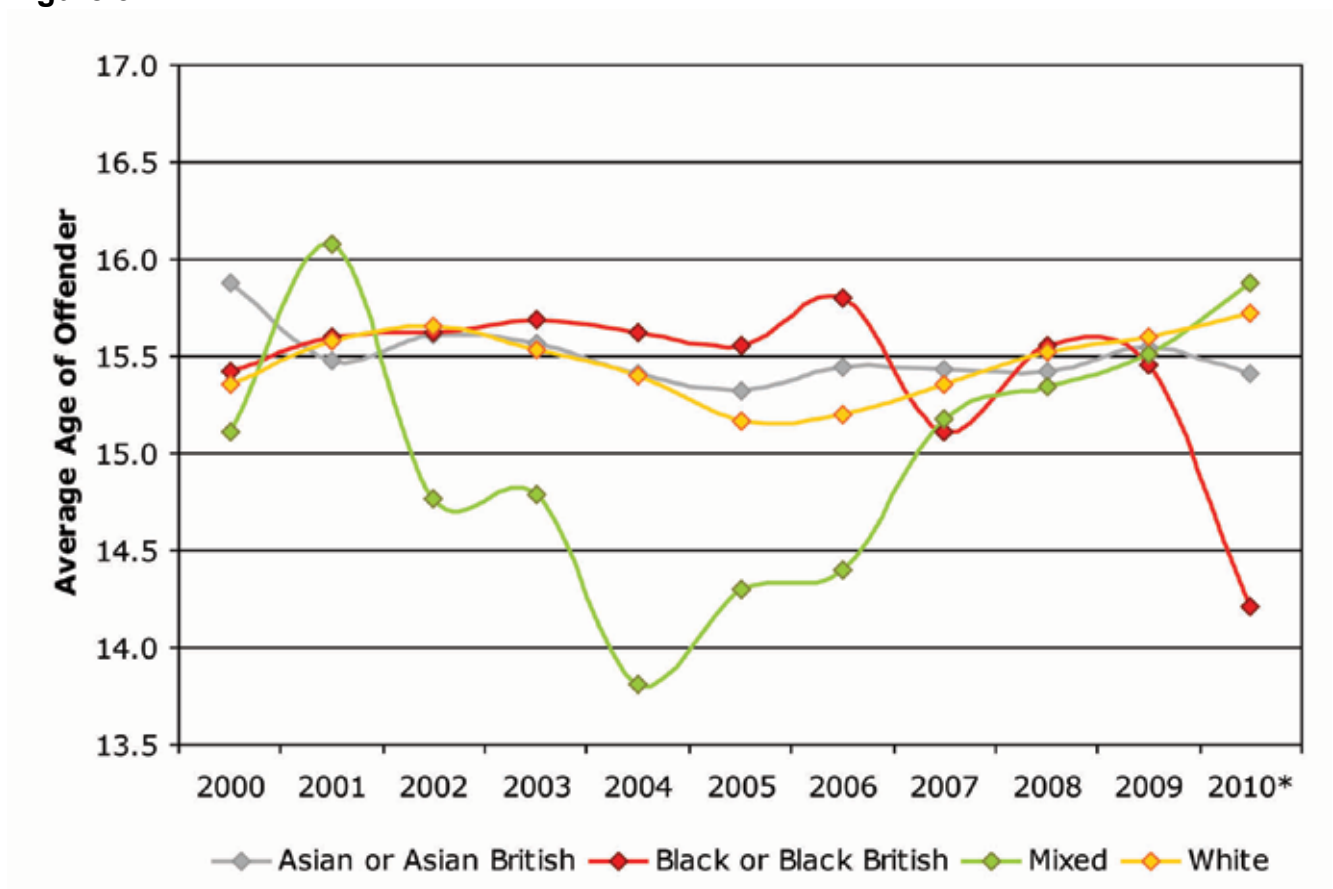
Overall the average age of breach is 15-16 years and this has been constant over the decade, although mixed race young people breach at an earlier age. In terms of ethnicity, in Bradford the trend for breach by Black and Black British has decreased whereas Mixed Race and Asian are on the rise.

Ethnicity

The initial research showed that there are different patterns of offending for different ethnic groups (Figure 3).

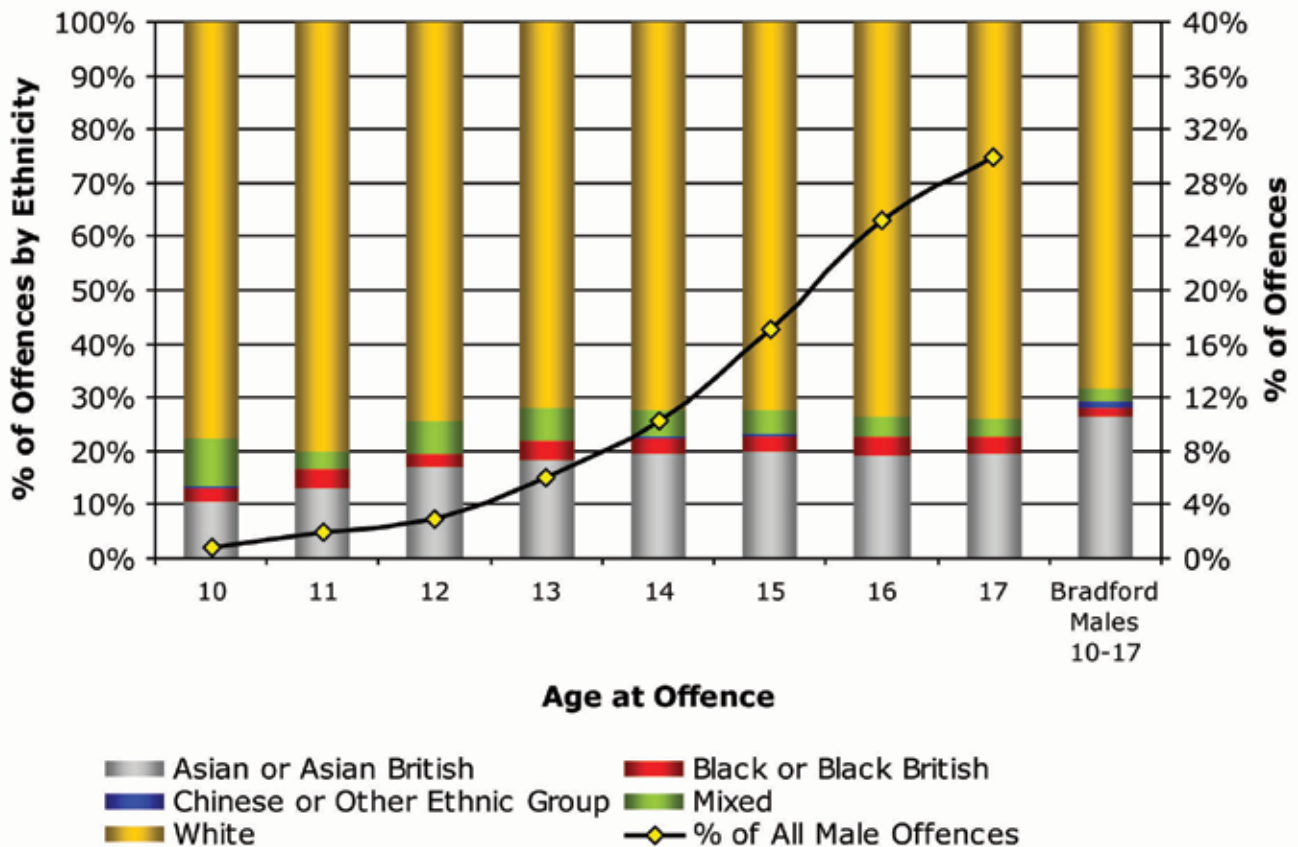
Looking at the trends over the last ten years, the average age of male offenders by ethnicity is relatively consistent, with the exception of mixed race males, who were on average much younger than all male offenders between 2002 and 2006. The average age of Black male offenders in 2010 has also produced a notable drop.

Figure 3



However, a more detailed analysis (Figure 4) showed that although the proportion of offences by Asian males increased with age, each age group caused a lower proportion of offences than the overall ethnicity breakdown of children in the Bradford area would suggest.

Figure 4



Note: The right hand bar shows the relative sizes of the ethnic groups within the 10-17 age range. The other bars show the comparative levels of criminality for each age.

Offences committed by black or mixed race males are particularly pronounced, and whilst low in terms of overall percentages, by age group they regularly commit twice as many crimes as would be expected given the ethnicity profile.

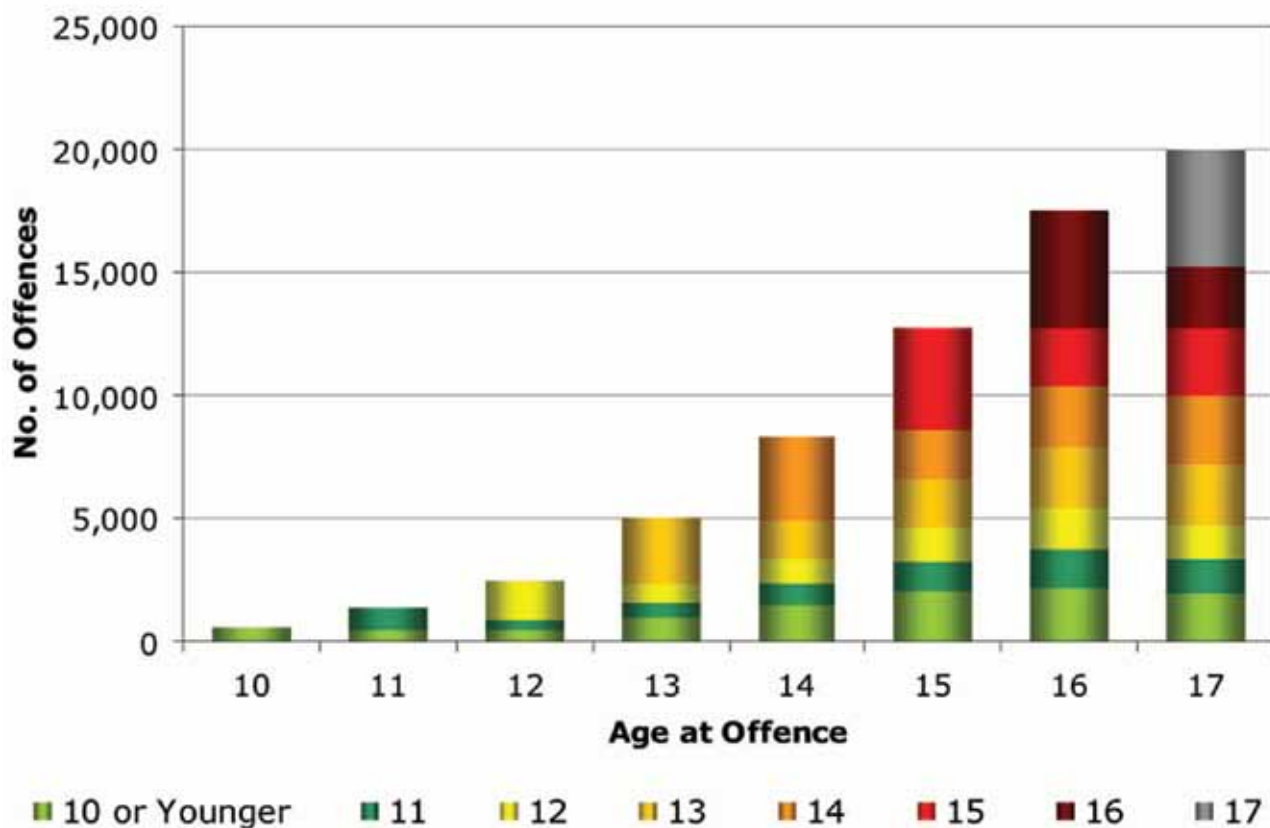
The Youngest Offenders

The youngest offenders are especially challenging for the YOT. They want to ensure that they are getting their assessments right, are taking full account their childhood history and the risks that they pose for the future.

They ask themselves: 'Do offenders that we first see when 10-12 years old become long standing offenders in spite of our work at that age?'

To provide a degree of insight, CACI analysed the longitudinal journeys of offenders over time to look at their full engagement with the YOT – thereby providing a first view of how young offenders respond to interventions.

Figure 5

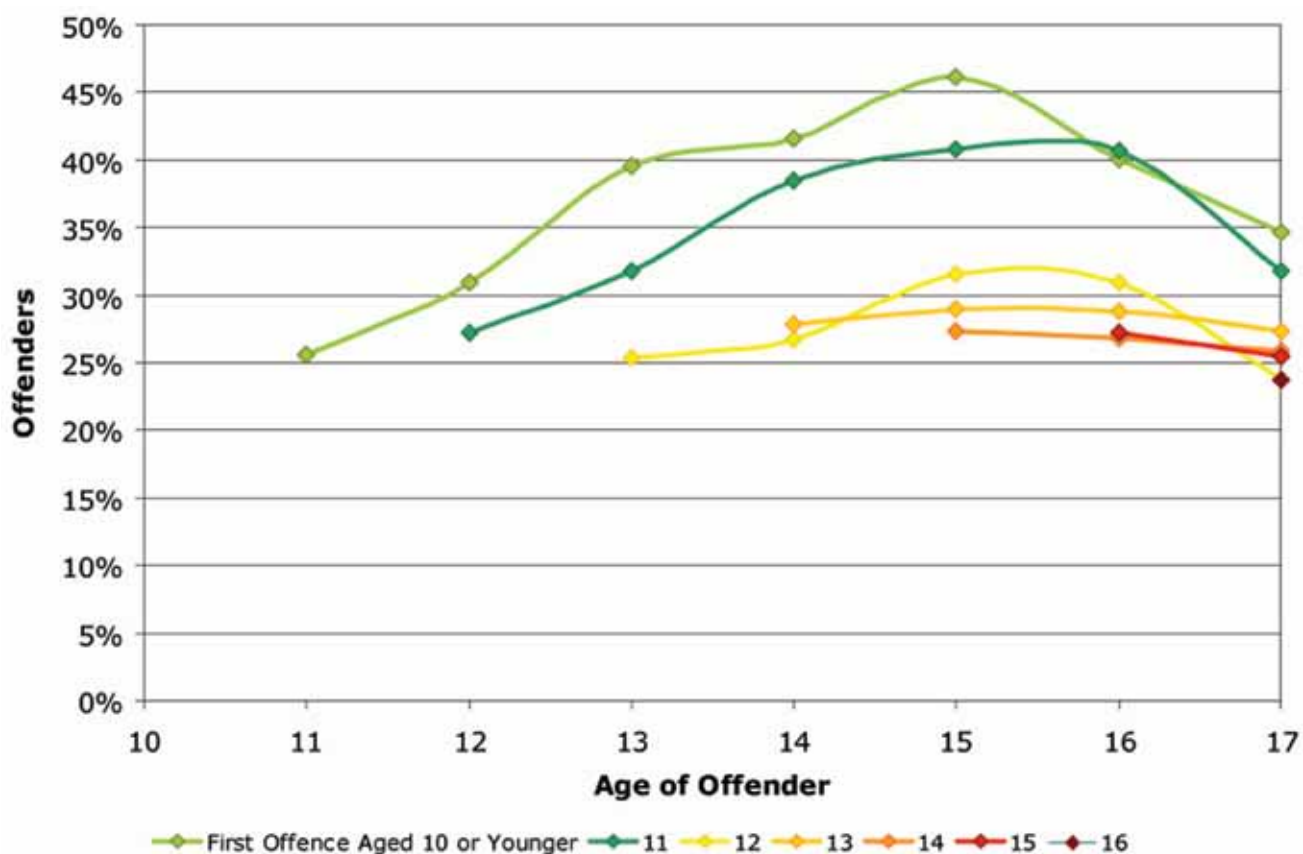


This analysis of offences (Figure 5), broken down by the age at which the first offence is committed, shows that although a large number of offences at older ages are caused by new entrants into the youth justice system, the number of offences by those who enter the system as 10-12 year olds grows in every subsequent age.

An analysis of re-offending (Figure 6) shows a clear pattern that those who offend first at age 11 or younger are much more likely to re-offend on each subsequent year than adolescents who first offend at a later age (who typically show around a 30 per cent chance of re-offending with each passing year).

However, the analysis also showed that Asian offenders who begin offending at the age of 11 also do not cause more offences the older they become – unlike offenders from the white British ethnic groups. Perhaps this results from there being more protective factors within the Asian community.

Figure 6



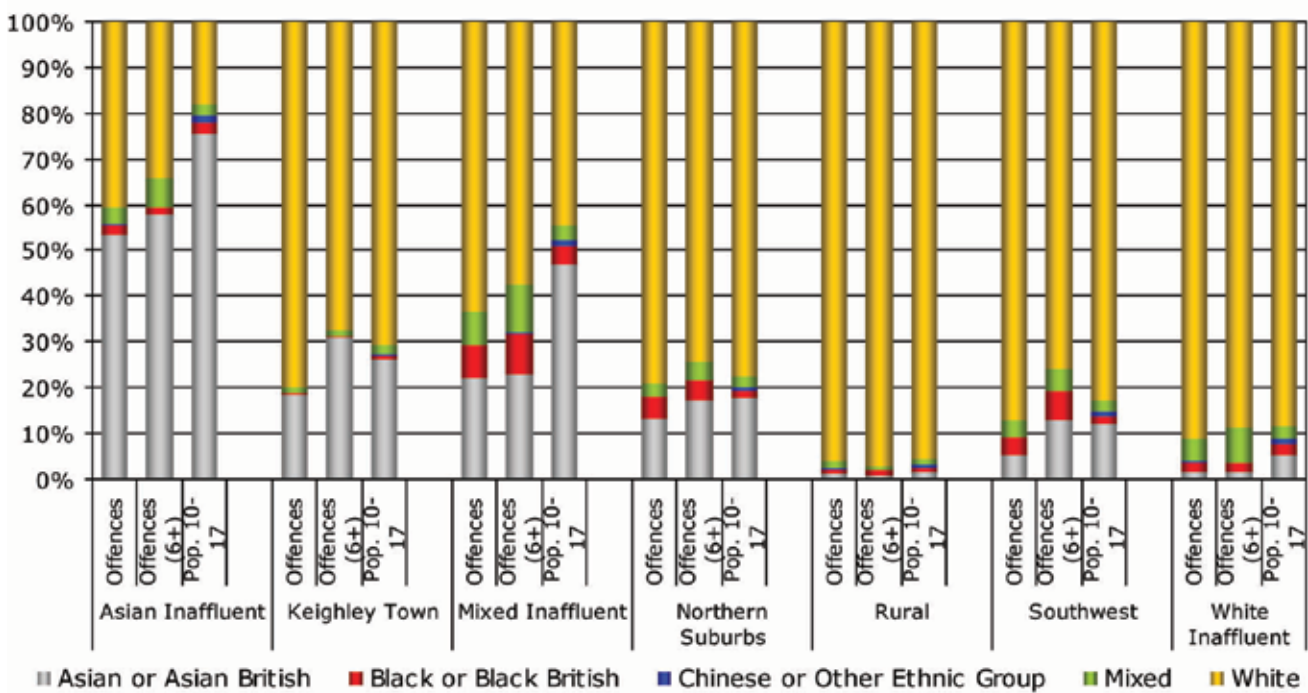
Neighbourhoods

There is a complex relationship between the communities living within specific neighbourhoods and the patterns of youth offending. It is recognised that increasing levels of poverty, deprivation, poor levels of housing and educational attainment, reduced health and well being all correlate with youth offending.

However, the YOT wanted to dig deeper to understand which groups of people are offending in which neighbourhoods and to what extent the wider community attitude correctly reflects the actual prevalence of youth crime.

The research delivered interesting insights into offending patterns in relation to ethnicity and affluence (Figure 7). For example, there are more offences in poor areas with mainly white or mixed race population.

Figure 7



Serious offences are particularly prevalent in the predominantly Asian areas. However, it is notable that Asian children cause significantly less of these crimes than expected, given the population breakdown.

Conversely, black and mixed race children, as well as white children, are often causing offences at greater rates than would be expected given their representation in the overall population.

Offender engagement

The direct engagement with 20 young offenders resulted in a number of documented journeys being captured. For example:

Leanne's story

Leanne was 17. She was into tattooing and described herself as a "chiller" (someone who just liked to chill out). When asked about her past she said: "I've lived with me mum all me life and me mum was like an ex-heroin addict and me dad died when I was 9. He hung himself in prison".

When asked where she felt she was going, she replied,

"Either to prison or to the top...You can either go up or down can't ya...I don't think I'm going to prison, if I get through this order, but if owt goes wrong through it, I can't tell the future can I. If I mess up, I'll go to prison, but if I don't I'll make a good life for myself...[at the moment] it's in the middle really. But my worker [name] is helping me a lot so I think I'm going more to the top than the bottom...he's really helping me and supporting me on things..."

When Leanne was asked what would stop her offending or had stopped her offending in the past, she responded,

"Me! It's only me that can choose at the end of the day what I do and what I choose to do and my actions. They're not always right, but you learn from your mistakes, don't you. It's only me that can choose what I do; no one else can tell me what I do. But it's whether I make the right decision or not, in't. It's different all the time in't, like the thing I've got done for now, I don't think that were wrong because I was sticking up for my family and protecting my family. And obviously I shouldn't have done it in the way I did, but, so yeah..."

When asked what would tempt her to offend, or had tempted her in the past, she said,

"People and life. Like when life gets stressful and you feel down and you feel like you've got no one and you just give up on yourself. So, you just don't care, in a way. And people push you to it don't they. People can do and like people around you and your surroundings and if you chill with the wrong people and get into stuff, you're more likely to do more things than with other people".

When at the junction between offending and not offending and considering her direction, Leanne said,

"It just me really, I don't know. It's hard ain't it – you can't tell the future....but I think I'm doing well at the moment [laugh]".

The key themes emerging from this engagement were that, in general:

- young people believe that they have a choice whether to offend or not
- young people thought that the people that they hang around with can both stop them offending and tempt them to offend
- geography and parents also influence them
- the support young people get stops them offending (although some young people refuse help)
- having nothing to do can cause young people to offend
- young people thought that understanding consequences can stop them offending.

Outcomes

The insight delivered by this project has been incorporated into service delivery in the new 'payment by results' project - a Reducing Custody Pathfinder funded by the Ministry of Justice.

The actions taken were based on the development of a new Engagement / Reduce Breach Action Plan and included:

- establishing Compliance Panels (details below)
- alerting staff to the risks associated with breaching bail and elevated it's importance in their work - this is addressed through supervision of staff, case audits, young peoples feedback on services they have received and staff training on engaging young people and the importance of clear simple communication
- introducing a scheme of monitoring and sharing best practise in response to the variation in staff practise for breaching young people.

Using the information from the Customer Led Transformation Project the Bradford YOT have also developed a family involvement scheme. This is a new way of giving a stronger voice to families whose sons/daughters are appearing in Crown Court for a first offence and are a high risk of being sentenced to a custodial sentence.

The scheme involves visiting the family when the young offender has pleaded guilty and before sentence. The process is explained to the family and issues explored including:

- impact on the victim
- impact on the family
- risk of reoffending.

The family are asked to work on how they can help the young offender not offend if they are sentenced to a community sentence. Working alongside the YOT staff doing a Pre-Sentence Report the family write to the Judge stating what they will do in order to stop their young person reoffending in the future.

This new approach has resulted in several young people who faced being sentenced to custody been given a community sentence.

The initiative ensures that the family are fully on board and understand that their young person faces custody if they do not comply with their community sentence.



Examples of the letters to the judge are outlined below:

Example A – Letter from Hussain’s uncle

I would just like to make you aware of the effect having Hussain receive a prison sentence would have on myself and my business.

At the moment Hussain is working and helping myself at my DIY shop. He stays there from 8.30am to 6.00pm Monday to Sunday. I am trying to provide him with the opportunity to get himself on the right tracks, to focus on working hard and to make something of himself. He is aware now what an opportunity this is for himself and he is now dedicated to turning his life around.

He has realised the error of his ways and needs an opportunity to prove that he has learned his lesson. Having him in prison would mean that I would have problems with keeping my business running, he assists me by running the shop on a daily basis. Without him I would not be able to open up everyday, it would be a great loss to myself.

At the moment he has all the support of the family to make the changes in his life. I feel strongly that if he is sentenced it will have a negative impact on him and undo all the changes he has already made. He would be in contact with a lot of people who are more hardened/career criminals and that would only get him more involved in a life of crime. There is a risk that he will come into contact with drugs whilst he is in prison. He will end up with a criminal record and that will cause problems for him when he wants to find a job.

I feel that he should be punished for what he has been involved in but in a way which will benefit him and society, which will have a positive impact on him and keep him from making the same mistakes again. He has already made changes and is proving to be a valuable employee for myself. I don't want to see him lose his future by getting locked up after he has started to prove he is a changed adult.

Outcome: Sentenced to 12 month Youth Rehabilitation Order with Intensive Supervision and Surveillance.

Example B – Letter from Michael’s mother

Our son Michael is due to be sentenced for offences of Robbery and Attempted Robbery. We do not agree with what Michael has done and do believe he needs to be punished, but we don’t think he should go to custody. Michael would not be able to cope with being in a young offenders unit. He doesn’t know how to and is not capable of looking after himself at home never mind in there. I would constantly be worried sick about him and would not sleep till he was back home.

We have spoken to representatives of the young offender’s team and have arranged for Michael to remain under their supervision until they believe he is rehabilitated, should he be allowed to come home. Also our family and friends will be helping out, offering additional support to Michael and his father and I. We will make sure he attends every meeting/appointment when required and will not cover up for him if he doesn’t. We will do the exact opposite and ring whoever it concerns if he does anything out of line or refuses to do anything required of him by yourself or the young offender’s team. Michael needs good role models and we have good friends/family members to help us make sure he gets that. There is also concerns about the friends he was keeping which is also going to be resolved. We are going to keep a close eye on Michael to be with family and people who care about him and his future, he has a lot of people who want to help him with this.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Outcome: Sentenced to 12 months Youth Rehabilitation Order

The actions taken have enabled Bradford YOT to exceed the targets set for this project (Figure 8):

Figure 8

Description	Baseline (2010)		Quarterly Target		Outcome Oct-Dec 2012	
	Annual	Quarter	Number	%	Number	%
Number of offences	4264	1066	1013	-5	371	-63
Court Breach hearings	290	72	70	-3	48	-34
Custodial sentences	88	22	20	-5	15	-32

The success of this project has been recognised by the Youth Justice Board.

Jon Bradnum’s Quarterly Report for the Youth Justice Board states:

“Bradford YOT has a proven track record of data analysis leading to evidence based improvement activity. The current YOT plan to reduce the number of young people in custody 2011/12 is based, in part, on a recently commissioned Customer Insight Project”

The project has had a direct impact on the lives of individual offenders. For example:

Mary

Mary 17 years 6 months was sentenced at Crown Court for an offence of wounding with intent to do Grievous Bodily Harm with others under the influence of drink and was facing a long custodial sentence. She was sentenced to a two year Supervision Order with Intensive Supervision and Surveillance conditions which included electronic monitoring, work to address her alcohol issues, anger management, victim awareness and support to enter training and employment.

Mary complied well with the order but faced breach and return to custody. But a successful compliance panel involving her and her family were able to motivate her to successfully complete her order. She has not committed any further offences and wrote this letter to the courts on her experience.

Compliance Panels

All of these initiatives contributed to the achievement of the project's aims but one area that was particularly successful was the Compliance Panels introduced to support young people so that they comply with their court orders.

Many of the young people are on long orders and are struggling to keep focused on completing their order. If they fail to do so they face being breached, this can result in a custodial sentence, with no new criminal charges.

These panels involve bringing together the young offender, the parents, the YOT worker and the YOT Team Manager to discuss the situation with the aim of ironing out any issues that might be getting in the way of compliance with the court order.

I am writing this letter to thank you for giving me a second chance. When you first sent me to prison, I felt upset scared and ashamed for my family. I was lonely, confused and in shock. When I was taken back to court I was really frightened I didn't want to go through it all again. When you give me ISSP I was so happy I felt like the luckiest girl in the world.

I feel you were right to do this because it has given me a chance to turn my self around and to prove to people that I am not an evil person. While I have been on the order I have attended drug and alcohol sessions which have helped me look at my D & A use, it has also shown me the risks I have been putting my self in. I now, know how to drink responsibly. Offending behaviour sessions have given me the chance to see how I got into the situation in the first place.

I have also been attending victim awareness sessions which have made me look at how the victim must feel. At the time of the offence I didn't even think about the victim but looking at it now he must have felt very scared and for a long time frightened to go out. I struggled to come to terms with what I had done. My lack of self esteem and confidence has meant I have struggled with education and training. However doing sessions around these areas I feel I am now able to move forward. My mum is paying for me to do a gel nail course and hopefully this will help me to get a job.

The last couple of years have been a bit of a roller coaster where I seem to have gone one step forward and three back, I finally feel that I am on the right track. If you hadn't given me this chance it might have been a different story. So once again I would like to say thank you for giving me this opportunity.

Mary

Whilst these panels are not actually compulsory, the alternative can result in the young person going into custody and so they are used in most cases where young offenders are not complying with their order. The panels are convened by the YOT as and when they are needed.

These quick and relatively informal panel sessions have been well received both by the offenders and by the parents. There has been a good level of attendance at the panels and some parents were unaware their young person was in danger of breaching their court order.

Young offender:

“Compliance panels are more helpful than being brought back into court”

Panels have come up with creative ways to support young people eg one young person asked to go back on weekly contacts as he couldn't cope with 2 weekly appointments. In another case, the young person stated that he felt threatened by other, bigger young offenders when attending the office for appointments so these have been moved to a local youth centre.

The YOT has been trialling a number of different approaches to Compliance Panels:

- some held at the office
- some held at young people's homes
- compliance meetings on Referral Orders.

To date, there have been 25 compliance panels. Of these 16 have successfully got young people back on track with their order and 2 young people have gone on to successfully complete orders. Only 7 of the 25 went on to be breached in Court whereas under the earlier system all 25 would have returned to Court.

Police and crime prevention

West Yorkshire Police have had an officer associated with each secondary school in the area for quite some time. However, as a direct result of this project's research, showing that when criminal behaviour begins at an early age it is more likely to escalate to serious crime, the service has now begun to engage with 10 and 11 year olds. This is delivered through Junior Youth Inclusion Projects. As a result of the identification of this area of risk funding has been secured to continue this work.

Research by the Audit Commission¹ identifies that behavioural problems may lead to criminality with, for example, a high correlation between excluded young people and levels of offending. Consequently, this engagement has initially been with the 4 behavioural units within Bradford. Although it is too early to measure the impact of this initiative the feedback from the staff at the units is very positive.

Restorative Justice Clinics have also been introduced in an attempt to keep youngsters out of the Criminal Justice System. These involve a meeting between the youngster (usually with parents) and the victim. The idea is that the offence is admitted and restorative actions agreed without the need to criminalise the youngster.

Benefits

Benefits to individuals

The use of Customer Insight enabled the YOT to achieve a range of benefits. The detailed analysis of different offender's profiles, behaviour and journeys allowed the support offered to be targeted more effectively.

¹ For more information see the Audit Commission's Misspent Youth Reports – at <http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/nationalstudies/communitysafety/Pages/misspentyouth.aspx>

There are obvious benefits to the individuals involved, their families, neighbourhoods and society as a whole if the number of youths involved in crime is reduced. For example, the latest figures on fear of crime show that 80 per cent of the population in Bradford feel safe compared with an average of 76 per cent across England and Wales.

In addition, the initiative has resulted in a number of unforeseen benefits. For example, supporting vulnerable offenders back into the mainstream of society by helping them to register with General Medical Practitioners has enabled them to access health services. This will therefore support work to reduce the health gap between vulnerable young people and the general population.

Sergeant Paul Robinson of the West Yorkshire Police reports that:

“These are often quite dramatic, with people in tears, but they are also very successful”

Although it is difficult, in the short term, to demonstrate the benefits statistically, there are a number of indicative examples: eg where health staff have supported young offenders to attend follow up appointments at accident and emergency and therefore avoid longer term health issues following serious accidents.

Financial benefits

The criminal justice system is very expensive to maintain and any reduction in numbers could generate significant savings.

According to the Home Office Research Study 217 the cost of an individual crime varies widely depending on the nature of the offence, but averages out to £2000 per crime.

Using this figure, the reduction in detected offences achieved by this project in one quarter, has dropped from 1066 to 371 (see the table on page 18), delivered a saving of £1.39m (ie 695 x £2000). If this was extrapolated for a full year then this would deliver an annual saving of (2780 x £2000) over £5.5m.

Court breach hearings cost on average approximately £550 each. So the reduction of 24 in a quarter delivered a saving of £13,200 and could lead to an annual saving of over £50,000.

The cost of keeping a youth in custody for one year is estimated at £50,800. This project resulted in 7 fewer youths being sentenced to youth custody in one quarter. Using the assumption that on average these individuals would have been in custody for 6 months, without this project, then savings of £177,800 (7 x £25,400) were generated. If this success was continued throughout the year, then savings of over £0.7m could be achieved.

Using these figures this project has achieved savings of over £2m and could potentially deliver savings of over £6.25m per annum.

Benefits to the organisation

This project has contributed towards the growing use of Customer Insight across the council. For example:

- CI underpins some of the total place work undertaken by Bradford Council - the total place project looked at the experience and journey of adult offenders and how to improve service delivery resulting in the improved joint working between agencies through the integrated offender management process by bringing the Youth Offending Team, police, probation, health and drug services together to support and supervise offenders to reduce offending

- the council has now devolved some budgets to 5 areas and these are used to reflect local needs.

CI is now fully embedded within Children's Services and is informing the wider engagement with and participation of young people.

This has resulted in the situation where young people are involved in and influence budget setting, in the way it allocates funding from youth opportunities funds, and service delivery, eg by the creation of a Junior Youth Inclusion Programme in Bradford.

Within the YOT, the voice of users is being promoted to seek the views of offenders to shape improved service delivery.

Governance

The project was managed by Paul O'Hara; the Manager of Bradford's Youth Offending Team and was overseen by a Senior Officers Steering Group. This group is chaired by Kath Tunstall, Strategic Director (Children's Services) and reports to the Safer Communities Board and the Safer Communities Scrutiny Committee.

It includes representatives from a range of partners including the health service, social care, police, the probation service, children's mental health services, the youth service, education and the voluntary sector.

Although this group covers a number of topics, it received regular reports on the project and dedicated one meeting to considering the findings of the project.

Elected members receive information about the project through the YOT annual report to the Safer Communities Scrutiny Committee.

Resourcing

The project received a grant of £67,000 from the CLT Programme, which it used as follows:

£8,000 to undertake business analysis with data owners across the partnership, detailing data sets to gather and analyse – the Data Observatory has already commenced this work and will therefore their processes and agreements will enable easier access to this data.

Kath Tunstall, Strategic Director – Children's Services, reports that:

"This project has allowed the Youth Justice Board to be clear about their strategic priorities and the direction of travel"

£7,000 to securely transfer and process the data into a consolidated analytical view, undertaking such matching and aggregation as required

£10,000 to undertake customer journey mapping work, both through data and case file analysis as well as structured interviews.

£10,000 to general profiling of the sub-groups and present the same back to the business owners.

£5,000 to run the workshops with core team and as required key front line workers.

£20,000 to provide Project Management support for overseeing the project, securing data sharing agreements and protocols, and working in conjunction with external expertise in customer insight and holding joint workshops with Lewisham, Central Beds and Luton projects.

£7,000 to support with materials and workshops to disseminate the findings across the Youth Offending Team communities.

Challenges and lessons learnt Next steps

Focus on the individual

The most obvious lesson derived from this work is that the service must focus on the individual. It is only by considering the young offender as an individual within the context of their community and home life that services can be effectively targeted to keep them out of further trouble.

Breaching community orders

The research clearly showed that a major reason why young people end up in custody is because they breach community orders. A typical journey goes: they commit an offence, get a community order, fail to comply and end up in custody. Clearly, disrupting this pattern would be of benefit to all concerned.

Complexity

An obvious lesson from the work done with these young offenders was in the realisation that there is no obvious single factor driving criminality. In reality it proved difficult to get a clear, articulate story from these youngsters and a deeper insight would require a more detailed, searching and challenging process than was possible within the timeframe of this project.

The project sought to identify an area where investment reduced crime but failed to find sufficient evidence because the individual situations proved too complex for cause and effect to be clearly evidenced.

However, the CLT project produced evidence of how youth offending services could be improved and these are being actively incorporated into the current work and initiatives of the YOT (eg compliance panels) and the police (eg working with 10 and 11 year olds).

The findings of the project were presented by the project team to the wider Bradford YOT Senior Officer steering group. They asked that further research was undertaken looking to integrate data from multiple agencies such as Schools, Education Welfare Officers and Pupil Referral Units to build a fuller picture of the offender's childhood.

Analysis of this data should help to ascertain whether young offenders have a history of problems at school or in the community before they 'offend'. It is hoped that such an approach might identify key points for early intervention to prevent or change their offending journey.

The customer insight analysis results are now being disseminated to the wider partnerships including Community Safety Partnership. The YOT is now looking at the links between the offending activity and anti-social behaviour and the local community's attitude to crime.

A number of actions will be taken to enhance and improve the Compliance Panels:

1. Compliance Panels will be used in most cases where young offenders are not complying with their order.
2. a Family Support worker will offer support to families attending Compliance Panels.
3. after a panel the YOT are looking to open communication with parents re young people's attendance at appointments either by phone or text.
4. the YOT will continue to monitor the implementation of panels.



Local Government Association

Local Government House

Smith Square

London SW1P 3HZ

Telephone 020 7664 3000

Fax 020 7664 3030

Email info@local.gov.uk

www.local.gov.uk

© Local Government Association, August 2012

For a copy in Braille, larger print or audio, please contact us on 020 7664 3000. We consider requests on an individual basis.