

# WHAT IS RESTORATIVE JUSTICE?

Restorative Justice (RJ) brings those **harmed by crime** and those **responsible for the harm** into communication with each other, enabling everyone affected by a particular incident to **play a part in repairing** the harm and finding a positive way forward.

RJ offers victims an opportunity to be heard, to ask questions of the offender, and to have their say in the resolution of harm caused.

RJ has a proven, significant impact in supporting victims in achieving closure and allowing them to move on with their lives. 85% of victims who have participated in Restorative Justice would recommend it to others.

For offenders, RJ provides an opportunity to face the consequences of their actions, recognising the impact that their offending behaviour has had upon others and, where possible, make amends.

In this way RJ has the potential to help rehabilitate offenders and support them in addressing their offending behaviour. It has the potential to motivate them to change and become responsible, law-abiding, productive members of society.



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS?

## What happens if I change my mind?

You can change your mind at any time, either by opting out or opting in.

## What happens if I want to communicate with my offender but they don't want to communicate with me?

RJ has to be voluntary for both victims and offenders; if the offender decides they do not want to communicate with you, our team will talk to you about what other support you might want.

## What if I don't want to meet my offender face to face?

We will arrange another way for you to communicate.

## Will this affect the sentence the offender gets?

If a case goes to court then sentencing is always up to the Judge. Restorative Justice is not an alternative to sentencing. The Judge is the only person who can decide on the appropriate sentence for the crime that the offender has committed.

**For further information or to talk to a member of our team contact us today.**

**Tel No (office): 01233 896457**

**Freephone: 0800 783 1583**

**Email: [RJKent@restorativesolutions.org.uk](mailto:RJKent@restorativesolutions.org.uk)**



# HAVE YOU BEEN THE VICTIM OF A CRIME?



## When you're ready Restorative Justice can help

If you would like to find out more or to speak to someone you can contact the RJ Service in Kent and Medway by calling us on **01233 896457** or **0800 783 1583** or emailing us at **[RJKent@restorativesolutions.org.uk](mailto:RJKent@restorativesolutions.org.uk)**



# HOW CAN RESTORATIVE JUSTICE (RJ) HELP ME?

For some people who have been affected by crime it helps them to explore why the crime happened.

Evidence shows that most people who take part in a Restorative Justice process come away feeling satisfied because it has allowed them to have their say.

It also helps people to move on and to feel less fearful of crime in the future.



If you decide you would like to try RJ, when you are ready you can:

- Have your say
- Explain to the person who harmed you what impact their behaviour has had on your life
- Get some answers to any questions you may have about what happened
- Help to prevent the same thing happening to someone else.

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

If you would like to learn more, a member of our team will meet with you to talk through what has happened. They will seek to understand the details of what happened and the impact that it has had on you.

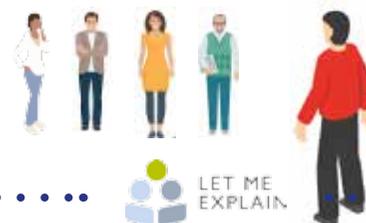
If you feel that you would like to communicate with, or meet, the offender, we will try to arrange this. The offender has to agree as well, and to accept responsibility for the harm they have caused, but we will start with finding out what you would like to do.

If the offender does accept responsibility (or pleads guilty if the case is going through the courts), and agrees to communicate with or meet you, the timing of any communication or meeting will still be up to you.

The service is free of charge, and is completely confidential and impartial.

## THE MEETING

If you, the offender and our team member all agree that it's right to arrange a meeting then we will organise that. You will be welcome to bring a friend or family member with you to support you, and the offender can do the same.



The meeting will be guided by our team member. It will be held in a neutral, safe place and during the meeting everyone will get to have their say about what happened.

If another type of communication is more suitable we will help with that. That might be by an exchange of letters; or by our team member meeting you and then meeting the offender separately to ask the questions/tell the offender what you would like them to know, and then meeting you again to tell you what the offender said.



## WHAT DOES RESTORATIVE JUSTICE DO FOR OFFENDERS?

Restorative Justice can be helpful for offenders because it enables them to understand the impact that their actions have had. It gives them the chance to listen and to answer any questions you might have.

They might apologise for what they have done and agree on what they should do to make things better. This might include dealing with the issues in their life that led them to commit the crime.