Beyond
YOUTH CUSTODY

LESSONS FROM
YOUTH IN FOCUS:
RESEARCH REPORT

LOTTERY FUNDED

BIG LOTTERY FUND

Contents

Part I - Introduction and background

1. The Youth in Focus programme

The Youth in Focus (YIF) programme is funded by the Big Lottery; it aims to support vulnerable young people through key changes in their lives.

The YIF programme made funding available for:

- projects to work with young people from three different groups – young carers, young people leaving care and young people leaving custody
- three England-Wide Learning and Awareness (EWLA) programmes, which were designed to adopt a broader practice, policy and research focus on one of the three key YIF client groups

We provide further details concerning each of these strands of funded work below.

1.1 YIF service delivery projects working with young custody-leavers

Service delivery projects funded as part of the YIF programme worked with one or more of the three different client groups referred to above. The BYC work focused specifically on young custody-leavers.

Fifteen individual projects worked with young custody-leavers, although some of these projects also worked with one or more of the other client groups. The following table summarises which client groups were worked with by each YIF project.

Table 1: YIF projects working with young custody-leavers

	Young custody-leavers	Young care-leavers	Young carers
ADAPT	●		
Creating Positive Futures Programme	●	●	
Dig In: Stay Out (DISO)	●		
Fixed 4 Your Future (F4F)	●	●	
Future 4 Me	●	●	
Inside Out	●		
Moving On	●		
Next Steps Project	●	●	●
No Cracks	●		
Reaching Your Potential (RYP)	●		
Safe Choices	●	●	
Safe Hands	●		
Sisters Project	●		
Youth Transitions Network (YTN)	●	●	
Y-POD	●	●	

In total, YIF projects working with young custody-leavers involved more than 2,000 young people during the programme.

The projects themselves varied quite widely in terms of their target group, the type of service that they delivered, their funding periods and launch dates, their partnership arrangements and oversight, and their approach to delivery. Some examples of these variations in project characteristics or features were:

- **Age**
  The full age range of participants across all YIF projects was 14-25 but there was a great deal of variety across projects, with some working with young people under 19, for example, and others working with both young people and young adults up to age 25.

- **Gender**
  Some projects worked only with girls or young women, others with mixed gender groups, and some with only boys and young men.

- **Intensity and duration of work with individuals**
  Projects with smaller caseloads tended to work more intensively with young people, whereas projects with large throughputs tended to adopt a more universal approach to their work and to work less intensively with most participants. Some projects had a clearer combination of levels of intensity, with some participants using projects for a fixed time limit (such as three or six months, for example) and others adopted an "as long as it takes" approach.

- **Programme content**
  Some projects had a strong focus on the acquisition of practical skills or on employment and training, while others focused more on building confidence or resilience. Most delivered a mix of practical and emotional support, while some also focused on trauma-informed resettlement practice.

In some cases a project's focus or its target group also varied over time; falls in custody-levels for younger people led some projects to expand the age range of their target groups earlier in the YIF programme, for example, or as throughputs for some client sub-groups proved more difficult to secure than expected (e.g. custody-leavers with learning disabilities).

Although these variations in resettlement practice presented the research team with some difficulties in terms of evaluation focus, it also created some opportunities for comparing and contrasting these approaches and their respective outcomes and levels of effectiveness.

Further details concerning target groups, type of service and approach to delivery are outlined for each project in the remaining sections. These summaries outline details concerning throughputs and characteristics of those worked with, type of service delivered and approach taken to delivery.

1.1.1 ADAPT

ADAPT is a resettlement project which helps young men and women leaving custody and returning to the community. It is an intensive mentoring, support and advocacy programme delivered by the Salford Foundation in conjunction with Creative Industries Salford (CRIS) and MORPHIC.

Target group
ADAPT works with young custody-leavers between the ages of 15 and 25. The original intention had been to work with young people aged 15-18, but low numbers of young people leaving custody during early implementation necessitated a change in the age range.

Type of service delivered
ADAPT offers a comprehensive package of support to young people leaving custody. The project provides mentoring and support which helps participants improve their employability skills. In addition, the project provides advocacy and support to enable easier access to other services.

Project workers build up a relationship with the young person while they are still in custody. On release, intensive support is provided. The case worker works proactively with the participant to ensure that they have access to opportunities for education, employment and accredited training.

ADAPT employs young ex-offenders as peer ambassadors to work alongside professional staff. The project is supported by key statutory, public and private sector partners and offers young people the opportunity to break out of the cycle of offending behaviour and to adapt to a positive future beyond custody.

Approach to delivery
Engaging young people is a key priority. Participant engagement is built up and sustained through the relationship with the case worker – this relationship is key to the success of the project.

The project's work is also trauma-informed and staff are trained to have an understanding of previous adverse experience in the backgrounds of young custody-leavers involved with the project.

Funding period
October 2011–May 2016.

1.1.2 Creating Positive Futures Programme

The Creating Positive Futures Programme (CPFP) is offered through the New Horizon Youth Centre. It seeks to support young people in achieving independence though the provision of one-to-one support, group work sessions and drop-in services.

Target group
Young people aged 15–25 who are leaving custody, in addition to care-leavers.

Type of service delivered
CPFP provides a very broad range of programmes including taster sessions combined with counselling and life skills opportunities. The focal point is the New Horizon Youth Centre which is open on a daily basis and provides drop-in services and facilities with classes and workshops catering to a variety of different needs.

In addition to education, employment and training (EET) sessions there are also sessions on various life skills. This includes accommodation advice and referrals, accredited education and training programmes, counselling and music production workshops. There is a full timetable of activities and sessions which are run over seven days. Services are tailored to individual need and there is a focus on transitions to adulthood.

For custody-leavers, a package of support is available which helps with preparation for release and reintegration into the community.

Approach to delivery
CPFP designs and delivers a joined-up service. They provide open access to drop-in services, including one-to-one support which is tailored to need and provided alongside group work.

Life skills workers deliver a wide range of taster sessions and other activities for young people. Transitional workers provide outreach and pre-release support as well as one-to-one and group work with some young people (e.g. young women at risk). The project work is also supported by a range of tutors and volunteers.

Funding period
January 2012–January 2015.

1.1.3 Dig In: Stay Out

Dig In: Stay Out (DISO) is a supported employment programme for young male custody-leavers. It is delivered by Groundwork Greater Nottingham. DISO assists participants to settle back into their local community, giving them support to gain relevant skills, employment and working with them to reduce the likelihood of them reoffending.

Target group
DISO works with young male custody-leavers between the ages of 18 and 25.

Type of service delivered
DISO works to build up the skills and confidence of the young men who access the service. It supports them into volunteering and then into employment. Giving the young people the chance to work leads to them feeling valued and enables fuller participation in the world around them.

Supported employment is based in the horticulture sector.

Approach to delivery
The work programme is delivered in three stages:

1. In prison (three months) – young people are assessed and receive five hours' contact, during which they undertake a horticulture course and are given support to prepare them to leave prison and rebuild their lives outside.

2. Volunteering (three months) – continued assessment and support and up to 16 hours of volunteering on Groundwork's and partners' allotments.

3. Employment (three to nine months) – continued assessment and support and up to 30 hours of either working on Groundwork's contracts or being placed with a partner organisation.

The participants are offered training to build confidence and develop skills to help them into work as an alternative to reoffending. This means that they leave the programme with vocationally relevant training, real work experience and references that demonstrate their positive in-work behaviour.

Funding period
2012–2015.

1.1.4 Fixed 4 Your Future

Fixed 4 Your Future (F4F) delivers personalised life coaching to young people leaving custody and care. As a result, skills and resilience are developed. The service is delivered by Prospects.

Target group
F4F works with young people between the ages of 15 and 25 who are leaving custody or care.

Type of service delivered
F4F is based on a life coaching approach. Support is tailored to each individual depending on their interests and particular needs. Where possible, initial contact with the young person is made while they are still in custody or immediately following release.

Each young person is allocated a life coach who helps support them to develop their resilience and achieve their goals. Participants who are engaged with the project will typically have fortnightly coaching sessions. In addition, the project offers short life skills courses, apprentice style challenges, volunteering opportunities, employment support and independent living sessions.

Approach to delivery
F4F uses an empowerment and resilience model. Participation on the project is voluntary and tailored to each individual.

The advice and guidance given enables integration back into the community. The College of North West London runs workshops to teach essential aspects of everyday life such as cooking hot meals.

Funding period
December 2011–December 2014.

1.1.5 Future 4 Me

Future 4 Me is delivered by 1625 Independent People. The project provides specialist one-to-one support to vulnerable young people with challenging needs by supporting them through key transitions in their lives.

Target group
Young people aged 16–19 leaving custody or secure children's homes and young people aged 16–21 leaving local authority care.

Type of service delivered
Future 4 Me offers specialist support to some of the most vulnerable young people. Project workers bring specialist skills in housing, mental health, and learning and work. Young people are typically supported for 6–12 months through weekly meetings.

An intensive package of support is offered through a key relationship with a project worker. The emphasis is on helping young people to identify their goals and seeking out opportunities to help them achieve success.

Future 4 Me works with partner agencies who offer numerous opportunities and additional support to achieve positive outcomes. Project workers can help young people to find and sustain good quality housing, ETE, and structured activities including sports, leisure, media and arts. There is also help available with health and wellbeing, managing money and promoting family contact.

Approach to delivery
A youth empowerment model is used to deliver the project. Project workers place a high priority on engagement; initially they focus on identifying the interests of participants and help them to articulate their aspirations so that a pathway can be developed which will help them to achieve their goals. Programmes of work with individual participants can be quite intensive and workers allocate time to 'work things through' with each participant.

The project team is thorough in its approach and highly committed. They take mental health issues seriously and tailor practice accordingly. There is a strong focus on supportive relationships with very difficult young people.

Funding period
2012–October 2016.

1.1.6 Inside Out

Inside Out works with young custody-leavers to develop their personal and social skills, improving access to appropriate services and enabling a positive transition from custody to the community. It is delivered by Endeavour Training Ltd.

Target group
Inside Out works with young custody-leavers aged 15–21; young offenders with learning difficulties are prioritised.

Type of service delivered
Inside Out aims to teach life skills and build up confidence. Relationships between young people and project workers are a key element to its success. Access to EET, housing and other support services is also addressed as part of the project's work.

The project has a strong focus on personal and social development, which is seen as underpinning the ability of young offenders to engage fully with supportive provision. The project aims to meet local gaps and improve joint working, with learning being used to develop a service framework to improve support services for young offenders.

Approach to delivery
There is a strong focus on a varied activities programme to facilitate engagement. The project also places a high priority on harmonising partnerships and policies.

Inside Out offers a three-stage programme:
1. An introductory stage, delivered within custodial establishments and involving individual meetings and group sessions.
2. An engagement stage involving a wide range of individual and group activities and ongoing assessment.
3. A follow-on stage involving ongoing support with targeted aftercare plans which, in some cases, may last until the end of the funding period.

Funding period
2011–2014.

1.1.7 Moving On

Moving On is a one-to-one mentoring project for young women who are leaving custody. It is delivered by Pecan.

Target group
Moving On works with young female custody-leavers between the ages of 15 and 25.

Type of service delivered
The Moving On programme offers up to 12 one-to-one coaching sessions, which are client-led, trauma-informed and gender-specific. These are provided by professional, trained coaches to young female ex-offenders resettling in London. The programme operates across London, with women both in prison and in the community.

The resettlement coaching offers a regular coffee or working lunch to help resettlement into a new environment, non-judgmental guidance and advice to help set and achieve goals, encouragement to make good choices and decisions towards a positive future, someone to talk to when support is needed, and encouragement in the journey toward independence and sustainable employment.

Approach to delivery
There is a strong focus on gender-specific approaches to facilitating and sustaining engagement and one-to-one work, tailored to individual interest and need.

Through the gate seamless support is provided to young women who are leaving custody. The project works with women while they are in prison to build a strong relationship and then provides through the gate support and continuity. After release, the project works with each client to set goals and plan tasks and mentors continue to act as advocates for women to access other services. The one-to-one mentoring is offered for up to 12 months and aims to empower women towards a different kind of life. Recognising that change processes can be lengthy for people with multiple and complex needs, the project is committed to staying the course with people and providing ongoing practical and emotional support to enable women to live a settled life after prison.

Funding period
2012–2015.

1.1.8 Next Steps Project (NSP)

NSP provides specialist one-to-one support to young people to help them overcome barriers and settle successfully into independent living. It is delivered by No Limits, in partnership with Youth Options and the local authority.

Target group
Young people aged 16–25 leaving young offender institutions or care, and young carers.

Type of service delivered
One-to-one specialised support delivered in a flexible format according to individual needs. The project aims to empower young people by providing them with necessary knowledge and skills. An intensive package of support is offered through a key relationship with a project worker.

Approach to delivery
NSP offers specialist advice through a drop-in service, positive activities and group work and a peer mentoring service.

Young people can access advice on social welfare and health/wellbeing issues and receive the support needed to act on that advice. They are also enabled to make positive decisions about health, lifestyle, education and employment. Young people also gain the skills needed to settle successfully into independent living or reintegrate into family life. The project supports young people to make successful transitions, overcome barriers and realise their potential.

Funding period
2012–2017.

1.1.9 No Cracks

No Cracks provides intensive support to young people when they leave young offender institutions or prison. It is delivered by Cambridgeshire and Peterborough YMCA.

Target group
Young people aged 15–23 who are leaving custody, with a particular focus on those with learning difficulties or mental health issues.

Type of service delivered
No Cracks provides a through the gate resettlement service which is designed specifically for the young person's needs. A Key Worker is allocated to each client to assess individual need and identify which services will be required on release.

Bespoke support is available to help tackle a variety of issues, from basic life skills, seeking employment, organising benefits and securing accommodation to support in dealing with the problems of addiction, self-harm and relationships.

Approach to delivery
In consultation with their client the Key Worker will, before release, establish a personal plan and then be available to meet them at the gates and settle them into their new accommodation. The Key Worker will then liaise with the Youth Offending Service and Probation Service to ensure that their client attends the required meetings and accesses the relevant services. At this stage, if appropriate, a volunteer mentor will be assigned.

No Cracks adopts an enabling and empowerment model, with the aim of the young person gaining more confidence and independence as time goes on.

By tackling the key causes of reoffending and providing planned and intensive support, this project aims to reduce the number of young people who reoffend when they leave custody.

Funding period
2012–2017.

1.1.10 Reaching Your Potential (RYP)

RYP provides a holistic package of support to young people making the transition back into the community from the secure estate. It is delivered by Sussex Central YMCA in partnership with Eastbourne & Wealden YMCA, Sussex Nightstop, Brighton & Hove Youth Offending Service, East Sussex Youth Offending Service and West Sussex Youth Offending Service.

Target group
Young people aged up to 19 leaving young offender institutions or secure training centres.

Type of service delivered
RYP aims to support young people leaving the secure estate by finding accommodation, identifying their needs as they see them, exploring their future potential and realising their ambitions, sharing their experiences with others in order to develop and shape provision for the cohort, and preventing future reoffending.

By speaking to young people before they leave the institutions, RYP can begin building their tailored plan early. The service works with young people 'on their grounds', which means it will operate how, when and where (within reason) the young people want.

Approach to delivery
The project will provide a tailored package of support to young people making the transition from the secure estate for up to six months post-release. The project will address the problems that young offenders face as they resettle into their families and community, providing an integrated support package to dissuade them from reoffending and other risk-taking behaviour. RYP is a holistic service which works with young offenders to address the barriers in their lives which prevent them from reaching their full potential.

The project has a strong focus on engaging young people in the design and delivery of its work. A young people's panel has budget responsibility for purchasing activities as well as for giving young people individual personalised budgets for their own support needs.

Funding period
2012–2016.

1.1.11 Safe Choices

Safe Choices delivers a gender-specific approach to support young women leaving care and custody. It is delivered by The Children's Society in partnership with the Nia project.

Target group
Young women aged 16–21 leaving young offender institutions or leaving care. Safe Choices helps girls and young women leaving custody who are at risk of sexual exploitation and gang association or are involved in offending.

Type of service delivered
Safe Choices offers practical, therapeutic and advocacy support. Through one-to-one sessions and group work the project seeks to improve young women's safety, understanding and emotional wellbeing.

The aim is to build a supportive relationship and give young people the tools to reflect on their experiences in a safe environment. Issues explored may include emotions, gender, relationships, self-esteem, identity, safety, consent, grooming and exploitation, gangs and involvement in offending.

Approach to delivery
Safe Choices delivers a gender-specific approach, supporting young women to develop the critical thinking skills necessary to make positive, safe choices when making the transition to independence. Safe Choices provides a safe space for women to explore the issues behind their offending.

The project also works with professionals to promote the value of a gender-specific approach, raising awareness of the differences in practice needed and the impact on outcomes for young women. Young women who engage with the project will play a role in the development of training material.

Funding period
2012–2017.

1.1.12 Safe Hands

Safe Hands helps custody-leavers integrate back into the community using the power of sport as well as education, training and wider social support. It is delivered by Everton in the Community. Safe Hands aims to repair families and communities damaged by crime. It supports young people to build positive relationships with their communities.

Target group
Safe Hands works with male and female custody-leavers between the ages of 15 and 21.

Type of service delivered
Safe Hands provides a comprehensive package of support which begins when the young person is still in custody. An individualised support package is developed based on the particular situation and the specific needs of the young person. The project-worker then meets the young person at the gate on the day of release.

Usually, participants take part in 20 hours or more per week of bespoke themed workshops and accredited training and education opportunities. A range of accredited qualifications are offered which allow the young person to develop new skills and succeed in training and employment.

Safe Hands works with each person to help them readjust to life on the outside. The project uses education, sport, media and the arts to sustain motivation.

Approach to delivery
The project works by offering positive support structures and coping mechanisms. At the same time it works to reduce the negative stigma associated with young offenders. A highly skilled and dedicated staff team at Safe Hands ensure that each young person has the opportunity to realise their full potential.

Funding period
2012–2017.

1.1.13 Sisters Project

The Sisters Project is a mentoring programme for young women aged between 15-24 who are leaving or have just left prisons and other custodial environments. It is run by Spurgeons. The key delivery partner is HMP/YOI Drake Hall.

Target group
Young women aged 15-24 who have recently been in, or are leaving, custody.

Type of service delivered
The Sisters Project is an intensive mentoring programme for young women who have recently left custody or are about to leave custody.

The volunteer mentors act as role models and build a unique relationship with the custody-leavers. The mentoring starts prior to release and is usually done on a one-to-one basis. The project team works carefully to ensure that the mentor-mentee relationship is appropriately matched.

Approach to delivery
The Sisters Project mentors in custody and provides post-release support to address young women's emotional and practical needs. The mentors are volunteers who have specialist training – such as family group conferencing – to engage, befriend and motivate the young women towards positive change.

The mentors are professional women who have the energy, commitment, experience and personal ethos to make a real difference.

The Sisters Project works in partnership with, and enhances the statutory work undertaken by, prisons, youth offending and probation services. It also provides additional support to women to make positive changes to reduce reoffending.

Funding period
2012–2015.

1.1.14 Youth Transitions Network (YTN)

The YTN project works with young custody-leavers and care-leavers to engage them in education, training and employment and to enable a network of community support to be built. The project is led by Action West London in partnership with Pupil Parent Partnership and Platform 51.

Target group
Young people aged 16-24 leaving custody or leaving care.

Type of service delivered
YTN has an employment/training focus. Each participant has a one-to-one action plan tailored to individual need. YTN project staff work alongside the young person to address personal and career aspirations and goals. YTN aims to change people's lives through employment, education and enterprise.

Approach to delivery
The YTN model focuses on intensively supporting young people to overcome the barriers they face to securing education, training or employment. This is done through help with CVs, interview skills, job searches and employer expectations. An employer engagement officer works with employers and training institutions to open up opportunities and pave the way for the young people to progress in terms of EET.

As well as flexible, holistic support, a key element of the YTN model is to make best use of existing resources for young people. A database of local resources and organisations is created, and then young people are introduced to these resources. The project supports young people to build up their own network of contacts/resources in their borough so that they can confidently access services that will be helpful for their ongoing progression and development after the YTN project has ceased.

Funding period
2013–2016.

1.1.15 Y-POD

Y-POD provides wraparound support to young custody-leavers and young care-leavers to prevent them from falling between gaps in existing services. It is delivered by Leicester YMCA.

Target group
Disengaged young offenders leaving custody or at risk of custody, and care-leavers aged 16-20 presenting with complex needs.

Type of service delivered
The project works with very challenging young people. It has a strong focus on effective engagement, and also on joined-up practice and partnership working.

Y-POD provides a wraparound service through a single access and referral point. This includes signposting and help to access existing services.

Approach to delivery
Y-POD project workers provide intensive wraparound support to young people following referral from the youth offending service or looked after children team. The support is focused in three main pathways comprising employment/education/training, health, and accommodation. A key aim of the project is to champion a joined-up approach and prevent vulnerable young people from falling between gaps in existing services.

Y-POD will provide a single referral point in the three key support areas: housing, health and EET. The project also commissions new support and learning programmes to meet the individual needs of the young people.

Y-POD offers opportunities to genuinely transform the way that voluntary and statutory agencies work together at the same time as having a positive outcome for young people who often fall through the cracks.

Funding period
2012–2015.

1.2 The England-Wide Learning and Awareness (EWLA) projects

A key aim of the YIF programme was to fund three EWLA projects which would highlight and promote good practice and undertake evidence-based lobbying for policy and practice change.

2. Beyond Youth Custody

Beyond Youth Custody (BYC) is one of the three England-wide learning and awareness projects funded under the Big Lottery Fund's YIF programme.

BYC was set up to focus specifically on the young custody-leaver group. Its principle aim was to challenge, advance and promote better thinking and practice in resettlement services for young people after release from custody. It was initially funded for a five-year period ending in April 2017.

BYC is led by Nacro, the social justice charity, and is delivered in partnership with three research and evaluation partners – ARCS (UK), and Salford and Bedfordshire universities. Members of the partnership have very strong previous experience in undertaking research that focuses on youth offending and resettlement, and in lobbying and networking to raise awareness and enhance the quality of evidence concerning effectiveness.

An overview of the BYC programme is provided in the following section, followed by a description of the final YIF data set which was generated by the research work.

2.1 Overview of BYC programme and key activities

During its five-year funding period, the BYC partnership delivered a multi-faceted programme of research, networking, publicity and awareness-raising activities. The BYC team also produced a wide range of publications and resources for practitioners, policy-makers and researchers as part of that programme.

This report refers to some of the wider material produced by BYC during its five-year funding period, which can also be accessed on the BYC website, but the key purpose of this report is to highlight key findings and lessons from the YIF programme itself. A key part of BYC's work involved close and regular involvement with individual YIF projects that worked with young custody-leavers, focusing on issues concerning data collection and evaluation, but also on wider practice and policy issues. That involvement with YIF projects generated a substantial set of evidence concerning the implementation and effectiveness of resettlement practice and informed the team's critical understanding of key resettlement issues.

2.2 BYC's involvement with YIF projects

The BYC team has been involved in a wide variety of research and dissemination activities with YIF projects working with young custody-leavers.

The team's involvement with YIF project delivery began well before the official launch in April 2012. It included site visits and follow-up discussions during 2011, in particular after a national event in June 2011 which was attended by delivery organisations associated with all 15 YIF projects that were being set up to work with young custody-leavers.

Since that initial mapping work, the BYC team has been involved in an interconnected package of activities with YIF projects including:

- further site visits and liaison with YIF projects to monitor local evaluation planning and assess the need for current/ongoing assistance from the BYC team
- assisting projects in relation to data collection and record-keeping, particularly:
  - capturing routine data concerning clients and activities
  - gathering more specific feedback from young people and/or measuring progress or distance travelled during project involvement
  - maximising fit between all data collection strands to allow for more effective reporting and aggregation. In some cases this involved the team designing full client databases for projects and providing training in the use of those systems

- regular collection and analysis of YIF project documentation and key data sets
- interviews and focus groups with project staff, young people, agency representatives and other key stakeholders
- design and delivery of online surveys
- observational research and shadowing work undertaken during on-site visits
- collection and analysis of offending data at key stages in the latter half of the programme
- collection of financial and other information to underpin cost-benefit analyses
- development of case studies (both of good practice and of individual project participants)
- provision of regular feedback to YIF projects about research and evaluation work, and about BYC's publications and briefings
- ongoing consultation with projects concerning our theme-based work, our dissemination activities and website, and a range of local and national events

Projects again varied in terms of their level of involvement with the BYC team, with all projects being involved in at least some of the above work strands, and others being involved in most or all of them. In some cases the team helped to design a large part of a project's data collection instruments, or contributed to the design of (or constructed) the project's client database. In other cases, where projects had external evaluators, the BYC team liaised with those researchers to fill the gaps in terms of data collection or analysis and add value where possible.

2.3 Final YIF data set

As part of the above programme of work, the BYC team generated a large set of documentation and data.

The team made more than 200 site visits, conducted a similar number of staff and stakeholder interviews, and had several hundred telephone discussions with YIF team members. Several dozen focus/discussion groups with YIF team members and young participants were held; these sessions and exchanges generated a large number of transcripts and write-ups which formed part of our qualitative data set.

The team also collected a range of documents from projects – such as their initial business plans, regular and final reports to the Big Lottery, interim reports on achievements, publicity material and project reports on their own data sets – as well as sets of project data in electronic format, about the project participants and their progress.

That material has been analysed in considerable detail using a range of tools including NVIVO (for the analysis of qualitative, unstructured data), and SPSS and related packages (for analysing quantitative material including project client databases, survey returns, offending data relating to YIF participants and other data sets). The findings summarised here are based on that detailed analysis of the YIF data set generated as part of our work.

Part II Key findings

In this part of the report, key lessons from the YIF experience are highlighted, using the BYC Model of effective resettlement as a grid for understanding and describing these lessons.

The model has been explored in more detail in several recent publications but, in short, it identifies a number of key characteristics of effective resettlement support. Those characteristics are that such support should be coordinated, individually-tailored and continuous, that it should be client-centred, and that it should have engagement as a key focus. In addition, the model highlights the extent to which these characteristics are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. It also considers the way in which effectiveness is enhanced where practice is designed and delivered to underpin and sustain processes of change – processes which involve individual offenders moving away from offending behaviour and lifestyles.

The model, and specific components within it, are referred to throughout the following sections of the report; the key topics addressed in these sections are also based on that model.

Section 3 focuses on the key unifying focus of the model, which concerns individual processes of change, and assesses the final YIF data set in terms of what it can teach us about those processes themselves, as well as how to describe and understand them.

Section 4 focuses on what the YIF experience has to tell us about how to facilitate and sustain the engagement of young offenders in resettlement work. Again, we draw from the final YIF data set described in Part 1, and from other previous work that we have published on this topic.

Section 5 focuses on what we have referred to in the model as the need for resettlement work to be both continuous and tailored, and we again draw from the YIF experience to identify key lessons and to highlight good practice.

Section 6 focuses on another key component of the BYC model – the need for resettlement provision to be coordinated – and assesses the YIF data and practice examples relating to issues concerning collaborative working in resettlement.

The final two sections of this part of the report focus on the extent to which YIF projects delivered and monitored key resettlement outcomes, and on the costs and benefits of effective resettlement delivered by the YIF programme.

3. Young people, offending and processes of change

As noted in section 2.4, the BYC team has developed a resettlement framework based on its own, as well as previous, research and consultation work. The framework is designed to highlight the key components of effective resettlement practice – that support should be coordinated, individually-tailored, continuous, client-centred have engagement as a key focus – and the connections across these components.

As important as these components are within the framework, the notion of individual processes of change is what makes the framework cohere as a package. In short, the key components are only important to the extent that they facilitate and support a young person's shift in personal narrative.

The starting point of this shift involves an acceptance of offending behaviour and identification of the vulnerabilities and contextual factors which allowed it to take shape and continue, to an eventual point where offending has ceased and the young person shifts toward a more future-oriented and positive personal narrative, with a strengthened capacity to access non-offending opportunities and lifestyles.

In this section we examine the YIF experience to gauge the extent to which it helps us to answer key questions about those change processes, including:

- How should these processes of change be understood and what is it that has changed (i.e. is it attitudes, identity, personal narrative, frameworks for making decisions about individual circumstances?) when an individual ceases offending.
- How do young people themselves describe these processes of change and do those descriptions suggest any typologies?
- What role do resettlement workers play in facilitating and sustaining these processes and how do workers describe them?
- What are the key factors that facilitate or impede these processes and to what extent are such processes linear in individual cases?

We have structured our comments in the following sections in terms of key topics suggested by the overall YIF data set discussion in anchored in the relevant literature.

3.1 Understanding desistance

Desistance is the process of abstaining from crime amongst those who previously had engaged in a sustained pattern of offending. Understanding why offenders might eventually desist from offending has been of particular interest to criminologists for some time, although what is now referred to as 'the desistance literature' is fairly recent, having accumulated over the last 10-15 years in particular.

A full overview of that literature is beyond the scope of this report, but several very useful reviews of the desistance literature have been produced elsewhere, including Shapland, Farrall, and Bottoms (2016).

In the following sections we sketch out some of the key concepts from that literature, however, as these relate to our assessment of the YIF data set. We will draw selectively on other sources to highlight some of these issues.

3.2 Personal narratives, identity and sense of self

The BYC team was particularly interested in understanding what kinds of changes are involved when an individual effectively moves from offending to non-offending behaviour over time. This change process is described in a wide variety of ways within the desistance literature; some writers focus on 'shifts in identity', for example, and

others on changes in personal narrative, while others still describe the shift in terms of maturation or even in terms that are 'non-transformational'.

A highly influential account of desistance has been offered by John Laub and Robert Sampson, which focuses on the importance of individual investments that desisters make in roles that involve strong bonds of attachment, such as being an employee or a marriage partner (Laub, Nagin, and Sampson 1998; Laub and Sampson 1993, 2003; Sampson and Laub 1993). Within this account, identity change is not a requirement for desistance – a change towards non-offending behaviour and lifestyles can be a result of an individual being involved in those conventional roles to a point where they have something to lose if they return to offending. Moreover, an individual can increasingly be involved in such roles without them even being conscious of the implications of such involvement – they can move toward desistance 'by default', as they put it (Sampson and Laub, 2003: 278-79).

Other writers have noted that accounts such as Laub and Sampson's place an unduly strong focus on structure and that those subjective aspects of desistance that are actually of crucial importance to change processes are left unexplored (Paternoster and Bushway, 2009).

In contrast, subjective factors are carefully described in Shadd Maruna's earlier work on individual narratives (1997, 2001), and on processes which allow a desister to maintain a continuity of identity rather than a change involving the casting off of a criminal or offending identity. For the desister, he describes that:

> **Desisting is framed as just another adventure consistent with their life-long personality, not as a change of heart. Again, this allows the individual to frame his or her desistance as a case of personality continuity rather than change.**

(Maruna, 2001:154).

That framing may involve 'wilful cognitive distortion', where past criminal behaviour is described by the desister in ways that are consistent with them being a 'good person' in the present, but does not involve the offender casting off a criminal identity and adopting a new, non-offending identity.

Other accounts place identity change as the ultimate goal of desistance. For example, the perspective offered by Paternoster and Bushway (2009), highlights the role of individual agency in processes of desistance and regards identity change as being the key end product. As they put it:

> **[T]he decision to quit crime is just that – a decision by an offender that she has "had enough" of crime and being a criminal and desires a change in what she does and who she is. In our view, desistance comes about as a result of the offender *wilfully* changing his identity and both working toward something positive in the future and steering away from something feared.**

(emphasis in original; Paternoster and Bushway, 2009: 1108).

While they are sympathetic to the arguments of researchers such as Peggy Giordano et al. – who focus on the central role in desistance played by social processes (social interactions, social experiences, social influences and the emotions linked to these) – Paternoster and Bushway also argue that these important conventional social relationships and 'role-taking' by the desister are "not accessed until after offenders first decide to change and then actually begin to change their sense of who they are" (2009: 1106).

To some extent, the different conceptualisations of the change process are anchored in different sociological paradigms and different views about the balance between individual agency and structures or factors external to the individual. Some writers tend to focus more on structure than agency, and still others tend to describe phenomena such as desistance in terms of a dynamic interplay between individual agency and structural factors. At the same time, however, it is also clear that there are very real variations in the processes across individual cases – that is, the desistance trajectories that individual offenders take vary so widely that they can almost seem unique, or at least difficult to categorise. Some desisters describe changes in self-perception that are based on radical revelatory experiences which leave them in no doubt that they are profoundly different people to who they used to be. In other cases, desistance pathways are described as incremental, hesitant or non-linear, and involving varying degrees of perceived change in self-awareness or conception. Feedback from YIF participants certainly reflects that kind of variety.

Shifts towards offending-free lifestyles are sometimes described by young people in terms of maturation; they describe their pasts in such a way that it is clear that although they have a 'new sense of self', there is a continuity of sorts between that past self and their current position. The following participant describes his own change in that manner, and also makes it clear that his new position is much more future-oriented:

> **I've matured a lot. I used to run around the streets, acting like an idiot. Now all I care about is my future. Next I'm going to my level 3 then university to do gas and oil management and accounting. My life is only just beginning. I'm moving through every page of every chapter of my book. Without [Project 2], I'd be doing nothing. Or I wouldn't be alive. I thank them all, all the time.**

[File 823, Project 2]

Another participant also described his changes in terms of maturation – which he describes in terms of a journey – but added that the person he was two years prior to his interview, was "not me":

> **I feel the way I do because of [resettlement worker 1] and [resettlement worker 2] and the agency, but I've grown so much in myself, and I think they are a big part of that, they have helped me come on that journey a long way. Yes, I've grown up a lot in the last year, two years, since I came out. That was when it all changed, and since then a lot more has changed with the help of [workers], and now I'm in a position where I look at myself two years ago, that's not me.**

[File 598, participant, Project 13]

In this case it would seem entirely appropriate to describe the change process as involving a very clear shift in the young person's sense of self.

Feedback from other YIF participants involves a similar narrative about how different their current situation is compared with that of their past self, with the journey from one to the other being described in some cases in quasi-redemptive terms – as in the case of one participant who claimed that before he joined the YIF project he was a "lost soul" [File 802, participant, Project 2] who has now found purpose, direction and new meaning.

Other YIF participants focused instead on the power of specific relationships – with a partner or child, for example – within those change processes and the way in which they acted as a catalyst for sets of changes to be made or embraced by the young person. One female YIF participant described how her commitment to her daughter provided an overriding focus for other changes in her life, although she also made references to processes of maturation:

> **My main goal was to see my little girl again. I've changed since I've come out. Since I came out my anger has gradually lifted. Everything I've done, I've done for her.**
>
> **Some people have said, "I've seen a big difference in you, now you really care." When I was away I was thinking all the time. Thinking how stupid I was, not seeing my child for god knows how long. Custody has made me wiser… it was my first offence. It's helped a lot. I don't want to go back. Social services think they know best for the child but they don't.**

Feedback from YIF participants has also underlined how pivotal individual workers can be in these change processes – a finding which resonates with much previous resettlement research.

When we have queried YIF participants directly about the notion of a 'shift in identity', they have in many cases seemed resistant to the notion, preferring instead to describe changes in their own lives as if they were (and still are) the authors of those changes.

Again there was considerable variety in such feedback; there was sometimes a tension between comments about "the old me" and "having a different head on now", and the idea that they had been autonomous decision-makers all along:

> **It's about changing how you think to think differently and make different decisions. Everything I've done is through choice.**

This kind of variety led the team to focus primarily on processes of change rather than shifts in identity, although in some individual cases the latter description also appears to be appropriate.

3.3 Turning points and 'crystalisation of discontent'

Our understanding of feedback from YIF participants about change processes is enriched by a useful set of concepts which can also be found in the wider desistance literature.

The first of these concerns life events or sets of life events that play a role in leading offenders to question their current lifestyle and where it might lead them in the longer-term, or which provide them with extra motivation to embark on a path toward an offending-free future.

The concept of turning points has become more prominent in the literature since the work of Laub and Sampson (2003) who, as noted in section 3.2, focused fairly specifically on experiences associated with conventional roles such as securing employment, joining the military or becoming involved in a relationship. Their analysis showed that turning points of that sort were strongly related to positive desistance outcomes.

Of course, an event can only be regarded as being a turning point in retrospect, as Maruna (2001) and others have pointed out, and some prolific offenders may experience a particular (potential) turning point many times over before it actually becomes one. In short, something can only become a turning point if its change potential is recognised and acted on. What is important here is the interplay between an external event and subjective positioning undertaken by the individual in relation to that.

The related notion of 'crystallisation of discontent' has become a feature of the desistance literature. It describes particular experiential junctures which lead an individual not only to question the direction that they are taking in their life, but to draw connections across a variety of factors which range more widely than a single event or

incident. There is clearly an overlap between this notion and that of turning points but the crystalisation of discontent involves more 're-framing', cognitive work on the part of the individual.

The term seems to have first been used by Baumister (1991, 1993), who describes the crystalisation of discontent as involving a subjective process that is:

> **Understood as the forming of associative links among a multitude of unpleasant, unsatisfactory, and otherwise negative features of one's current life situation. Prior to a crystallization of discontent, a person may have many complaints and misgivings about some role, relationship, or involvement, but these remain separate from each other. The crystallization brings them together into a coherent body of complaints and misgivings... The subjective impact can be enormous, because a large mass of negative features may be enough to undermine a person's commitment to a role, relationship, or involvement, whereas when there are many individual and seemingly unrelated complaints that arise one at a time, no one of them is sufficient to undermine that commitment.**

(Baumister, 1991: 281-282).

Again, our qualitative data set includes a wide variety of descriptive accounts offered by young people in which particular events or incidents led them to examine their life and its trajectory in a manner consistent with Baumister's account. As one participant described:

> **I was homeless. I got kicked out of my dad's house because we never got along. I would go out and have late nights, get home drunk. Didn't have that family network to go to, it was all broken down. If couldn't find a friend's place I would go to a park bench but I didn't sleep. I saw a lot of things, junkies injecting etc. It was horrible, it was cold and I was putting myself in danger. I got into [the] wrong crowd taking drugs and stealing and doing stupid stuff. I lost my job because of it... I was going downhill. I needed to do something about it.**

[File 816, participant, project 2]

For this participant, offending and drug use led to her losing her job – an event whose significance seems to have triggered an openness to change. But her description involves much more than a flagging up of a single event; she describes several different aspects of her life at that time which, when looked at as a package, anchored her judgement that she was going downhill and needed to take action. She was also aware that she had few social resources that she could draw on to help her navigate through these problems.

Although the notion of turning points (or the somewhat broader notion of a crystallisation of discontent) are of great value in helping us to understand many stories of desistance, it is worth noting that it does not follow that they are an essential feature of such stories. Some change processes appear to be relatively smooth and incremental, rather than marked by radical shifts in perception or negative and significant life events. As such, some YIF participants might be described as having 'desisted by default' (as described by Sampson and Laub, 2003: 278-79) and their descriptions of change sometimes have an "I used to do that, and now I do this" feel to them.

3.4 Imagined future selves

The feedback from YIF participants also highlights another feature relevant to processes of change – that of imagined 'future selves' (Paternoster & Bushway, 2009) which participants sometimes refer to.

On the one hand, imagined future selves can be highly negative and undesirable, and descriptions of this kind clearly provide the participant with further motivation to move away from offending behaviour or lifestyles, in order to avoid such a possibility from becoming reality.

Imagined future selves can also be highly positive, of course, and can provide a participant with perceptions of possible realities that they might instead wish to move toward.

Precipitating events such as those referred to in preceding sections might provide the initial impetus for imagining these future selves. A young person who wakes up from a drunken stupor in a police cell, for example, may well be led to imagine that this immediate experience is a kind of taster for what might come later if they do not change their ways.

The use of peer workers on some projects can effectively help some young people to consider change processes in their own lives. For example, the peer ambassadors used by Project 10 in their discussions with groups of project participants provided the younger participants with both negative and positive selves. On the one hand, the message of the ambassadors was "I used to be like you are, and if I can do this, so can you". This allowed the project participants to believe that more successful life trajectories were also possible for them and, more specifically, that they could take on roles that allowed them to move away from offending or related activities, to make a difference to others, find work, etc.

On the other hand, the peer ambassadors also traded on images of possible negative future selves which the other young people could understand and relate to, and which would be avoided if they chose to move down a different path. The comments of peer ambassadors often had a testimonial strand focusing on events or incidents which led them to decide that they needed to make different choices, and those incidents or events quite often involved 'reaching the bottom' – being seriously injured in a knife fight, receiving a hefty custody sentence, and so on. These portrayals of can be quite powerful in allowing other participants to imagine where they might end up if they do not take steps to avoid such outcomes.[1]

3.5 The maintenance of hope and support for development of agency

The importance of subjective factors to successful cessation of offending is strongly highlighted both in our YIF data set and in the desistance literature. The importance of hope and individual agency has been highlighted in particular.

That subjective side of individual change processes was richly and consistently highlighted in feedback from YIF participants during the teams' programme.

> **The guys at [Project 2] made me not give up at times where I thought there was no point in trying because it wasn't working out. They kind of… you know when there's a bunch of people just as stubborn as you are when somebody rejects you… they are like an extra part of my spine really.**

[File 836, participant, Project 2]

---

1. It is worth noting that focusing exclusively on negative future selves can also have negative impacts on young people. The now-famous Scared Straight programme, for example, involved the use (by then-serving prisoners at Rahway State Prison) of very graphic portrayals of prison life to dissuade young offenders from "taking the path that we did". Such programmes have since been found to increase offending in the longer-term (Petrosino et al, 2013). This perhaps highlights the importance of taking much broader factors into account if young people are going to be supported to embrace change processes and make them successful.

The participant's reference to the project workers forming part of his spine is a powerful one, and it highlights the ways in which project workers can provide hope and resilience when young people themselves are in short supply of these emotional resources.

In keeping with BYC's own research on trauma, Wilkinson (2009) comments on how it can complicate a participant's vision of possible futures and their capacity for planning intermediate steps to get there.

Given the importance of these processes it is also clear that, because the individual's embarkation on a desistance pathway and their commitment to it over time is underpinned and sustained by those subjective factors, the measurement and tracking of soft outcomes is crucial.

3.6 Impediments to change

Much of the focus so far has been on subjective factors that are of key relevance to processes of change, but it is also clear that practical difficulties can present significant obstacles to the effectiveness of those processes.

Some YIF workers suggested that it is also unwise to focus unduly on individual agency, as if resettlement outcomes are somehow exclusively a result of what young people decide to do. Clearly, it is also the case that while effective resettlement outcomes will require decision-making and commitment by young custody-leavers, young people do not make these choices in circumstances of their own choosing.

One YIF worker suggested that a kind of context-free focus on individual behaviour and decision-making was actually a key impediment to the delivery of effective resettlement:

> **There's still a lot of misunderstanding and misconception about the behaviours that young people are presenting with. So professionals don't see the risk because they're preoccupied with seeing the problematic behaviours. With the older teenagers they're seen as consenting adults who are making informed decisions. Young people who are gang-associated are seen as making an active, free choice rather than being at risk of harm. So perception of risk and the vulnerability of the young people is the barrier.**

[File 625, practitioner, Project 1]

By focusing only on behaviours, a whole range of contextual factors which can complicate successful change for custody-leavers move into the background even though factors of this kind can (and do) derail efforts to change.

> **But if you're not in a position to get up in the morning and think about going to college because you don't have a roof over your head or any money to get there, it doesn't matter who you are – you can't function.**

[File 802, participant, Project 2]

On the employment and training side, custody-leavers are also burdened with the impact of their previous criminal convictions, because having a criminal record can place real constraints on what might otherwise be available as 'hooks for change'. Acceptance on some courses of study can also be complicated by previous offending history. One YIF practitioner explained:

> **A common problem that the project has experienced is that due to the nature of some young people's offending histories, there are significant barriers to them being able to undertake training in fields that interest them, as colleges and other training provide will not offer a place. This means that young people have to be helped to identify other aspirations, which can cause frustration and disengagement by young people.**

[File 851, practitioner 13, Project 13]

3.6.1 The impact of periods in custody

It is worth beginning by noting that custody itself has impacts that are detrimental to longer term desistance, and an understanding of these impacts can aid the effectiveness of resettlement services.

Some of these impacts concern practical issues which are of key importance to desistance processes. In relation to accommodation, for example, a wide range of research has indicated that imprisonment has both an immediate and ongoing negative impact on an individual's prospects for securing suitable housing. In the prominent report by the Social Exclusion Unit ('Reducing Re-offending by Ex-Prisoners', 2002) it is noted that only two-thirds of those entering custody had permanent housing at the time, and around a third of prisoners lost their accommodation as a result of their imprisonment. Other research has suggested even higher percentages for those custody-leavers who were unable to return to their previous accommodation after release. For example, Jane Carlisle's research into the housing needs of ex-prisoners found that more than 50% of her sample was not able to return to their previous accommodation after release (Carlisle, 1996). Other research has suggested even higher rates (see section 7.2.1 for a more detailed discussion of accommodation issues which relate to YIF participants).

There is also little doubt that periods of imprisonment can further distance young people from legitimate employment opportunities post-release, not least because having a record of imprisonment can close off opportunities for securing certain types of employment. Periods of imprisonment also present gaps in an individual's work history, during which time others of similar age will be accumulating work experiences, further disadvantaging ex-prisoners in an increasingly competitive job market.

YIF participants have also described for us what the impact of imprisonment has been on their emotional wellbeing. One participant who had just spent a year in custody described imprisonment as involving a kind of frozen development.

> **Prison just changes you all together. You don't think the same, you don't act the same anymore. I just think it sends you a bit crazy really. Always stays with you. I think it's the year missed. A year of growing up that you just missed growing up, sat doing nothing. Not getting used to being older and you still act the same age as you went in. It's like time's stood still and you're still the person as when you went in.**

[File 28, participant, Project 10]

Given the importance of subjective dimensions such as hope and agency to successful desistance, such descriptions make it clear that resettlement work will need to include a focus on re-building or strengthening resilience post-release.

3.7 The role of resettlement workers

The most effective resettlement workers appear to have particular skills in relation to the recognition and monitoring of the change processes described above. They also seem to understand the often non-linear nature of those processes and are able to assess 'where a young person is at' in relation to their own circumstances and commitment to change.

In relation to a young person's 'willingness to change', the most effective resettlement workers also appear to understand that such willingness is a dynamic, rather than static, factor. Although it may have a set of psychosocial prerequisites (such as hope, and some ability to consider options for the future), willingness to change is also something that can be facilitated, nurtured and sustained over time by staff who understand its processual and incremental nature.

Subjective elements are highlighted by participants as being of particular importance and they also describe the key role played by resettlement workers in supporting those elements. One participant from Project 2 said:

> **[The project worker] put her belief in me… Sometimes you need to hear from other people that you're worth more than that and this isn't the right way for you to go about life. It's about somebody taking a chance on me, no one has ever done that for me except for her… I got there at 11 and they didn't let her in and she waited for me until I got out of there at 9 o'clock. She didn't have to do that. That was something I needed. I needed someone to believe in me and think to themselves he's not that kind of person, he's not going to go all the way back. She's just like my aunt. This is the person I will come to as my centre point.**

[File 802, participant, Project 2]

These comments illustrate how powerful and positive it can be, in terms of facilitating or sustaining a commitment to change, to have someone else believe in you. The fact that this young person has not had that kind of validation before simply adds to its power, and this kind of comment was made to us by a large number of YIF participants, many of whom had difficult family histories or histories of care (and also experience of abuse or neglect). For many YIF participants, resettlement workers represented a 'continuity of interest' and, while this is obviously not sufficient on its own to guarantee positive change outcomes, can provide a strong support for change processes which the young person has committed to or embraced.

Of course, focusing on subjective aspects of desistance only would never be sufficient for successful resettlement (and longer-term desistance) outcomes to be generated.

3.8 Complexity and change – individual cases

While the above feedback from YIF participants has been drawn on to illustrate particular features of the change process being discussed in this section, it is worth noting how individualised and variable these processes usually are. This is hardly surprising given the range of variables involved and the variety of ways in which these variables can combine over time as part of an individual life trajectory.

That complexity is illustrated repeatedly in the feedback from YIF participants. One participant, who we would regard as being in the initial stages of the change process, highlights a range of key factors in one short exchange with one of our interviewers:

" I went to one school, got kicked out of there after a month, I think it was. And then I moved to [a local Pupil Referral Unit] for people with disabilities and anger issues, and I got kicked out of there. I was too violent, so...

And then I was home schooled for a while, and then I got chucked in care, and then I was bounced about from different children's homes, foster care, and then back with the parents...

Obviously, I got adopted, yeah, and I'd be young. And I was, like, I think I was home schooled, then school, and then... but I got kicked out of school and then that. And I remember getting home schooled for a while, but I don't know, obviously, shit happens. But yeah, I got kicked out of [a local Pupil Referral Unit] for being angry, got kicked out of the school beforehand 'cause, obviously, they couldn't look after me that well, and then, obviously, home schooled.

Yeah, 'cause, obviously, when I look and that, there's some stuff that happened to me and I don't wanna remember... So, obviously, I don't really wanna remember it all so it, kind of, messes up with all shit like that, but...

Interviewer: Has anyone ever offered you counselling for all that?

Yeah, I've got counselling on Monday. Apparently they wanna unearth my problems. Maybe I could be a normal citizen. Doubt it. Might make me more angry, but, you know...

But I don't... if this place closes then I won't be going to [an alternative service] 'cause there's people that go there that I don't like, and it's just gonna end up making me go back into crime, so I need to get myself sorted before this place closes.

[File 513, participant, project 12]

This participant's description of his previous experience (which was also consistent with the project case data, and with feedback from project workers) indicates that he has had a sporadic and largely negative educational experience. He has experienced multiple exclusions because of what he claims are his issues with violence and anger and he also has a history of care which reflects considerable upheaval and conflict.

His feedback also highlights his own perception of damage resulting from previous trauma which he is reluctant to speak about or even to remember. He appears to link some of his current difficulties (and his own anger in particular) with that previous experience, and goes so far as to suggest that what he has been through might preclude him from being a "normal citizen". His comments about those issues are telling and highlight the extent to which previous trauma can act as a barrier to positive engagement with change processes.

They also highlight the importance of hope and agency – the participant would like to be "normal", and is clearly able to picture an alternative future self which he would choose if he could, but he feels that he does not have the capacity to do so. That capacity is not directly related to practical opportunities but is about the subjective requirements of successful desistance and, in particular, a belief that he has the strength and resilience to make positive life choices and act on them.

The participant also clearly has a wish to "get himself sorted" and he notes – as many young offenders do – that he wants to avoid falling back in with "people I don't like", as he feels that this will lead him back into crime. Related to that, his remarks illustrate a perceived link between people he wants to avoid and particular parts of the city where he is more likely to run into them. This issue has also been highlighted in the desistance literature – see Bottoms and Shapland, 2016.

However, his comments identify opportunities for intervention and support, and effective resettlement workers will often spot these and adopt approaches that will maximise their scope both for engaging participants and for supporting and sustaining the individual's longer-term commitment to desistance.

The tenuous nature of this participant's desistance journey is well recognised by experienced resettlement workers, and they often spoke to us (sometimes with great frustration or regret) about individual cases where young people "fell down" even after having spent a great deal of time with a project, and after a great deal of progress had been made with them. One manager of a YIF project noted that:

> **There may have been an underestimation of the complexities of issues of young people requiring support through resettlement, and the original bid said we'd work with [respondent refers to throughput target] per year which was unrealistic. Also some young people need to be supported more than once – one young person is currently on his fourth resettlement programme. The revolving door continues for some young people, which is a source of continuing frustration.**

[File 593, Project 13]

It is worth noting that this frustration was not about seeing unexpected negative outcomes materialise. Indeed, notions such as 'the zigzag of desistance' were familiar to the YIF staff teams and had strong anchorage in their collective practice experience. It was more a result of the fact that key workers often worked very hard to establish and maintain positive and supportive relationships with each participant and they empathised with those on their caseloads. To see young people relapse, in some cases even after considerable positive progress had been made, was obviously a keen disappointment. Many workers provided us with stories about such cases but also noted that for some "revolving door" cases, it might take more time to be effective in the longer-term.

3.9 YIF participants and processes of change – conclusions

The above discussion of examples drawn from YIF projects and participants suggests a number of overarching conclusions concerning processes of change:

- Like resettlement itself, desistance is a process rather than an event.
- The timescales for desistance processes may outstrip the timescales usually involved in the delivery of resettlement work, but the latter takes place over a time period that is of crucial significance to the success of longer-term desistance.
- Desistance trajectories are highly individual in nature, reflecting very wide variations in the way that personal characteristics and history, individual strengths and weaknesses, and opportunities and forms of support can combine and change for an individual over time.
- Desistance trajectories can be linear in nature but frequently are not (they often zigzag).
- Those who desist from offending will often describe that change in terms of taking up a new identity, but others will describe it in terms of continuity or maturation.
- These processes of change can be described in a wide variety of ways but the notion of 'narratives' seems to cover all of them.

4. Facilitating and sustaining engagement

The work of BYC has highlighted the importance of engagement to the facilitation of positive resettlement outcomes and our briefings on this topic (Hazel and Bateman, 2013; Wright et al, 2013) have been strongly informed by 'the YF experience'.

Indeed, one of the hallmarks of effective YIF work with young custody-leavers is clear success at engaging young people in a consistent manner across the various stages of work. Many YIF projects have managed to engage young people who had not previously engaged successfully with any other services; the BYC team has focused on such practice over the years in order to learn lessons from those projects.

4.1 Engagement as a process – BYC's three-step model

In our published material on engagement we have described a three-step model of the engagement process (Bateman and Hazel, 2013:29). The model is intended to be heuristic, and individual cases will obviously not always follow these steps in order over time (and in some cases, individuals will remain longer than others at a particular stage, or will even move backward).

The three steps are:

Step 1:

The service engages with the young person.

The service makes contact, establishes a relationship with the young person and motivates them to become involved in activities provided by the service.

Step 2:

The young person engages with the service.

The relationship with the service and staff is further developed, with the young person adopting its objectives, and becoming involved in a meaningful way. This allows new roles to develop for the young person, and involves active support for their involvement in processes to change their lifestyle and their perception of themselves and their possibilities.

Step 3:

The young person engages with wider society.

The young person builds on or extends new roles established through the service engagement, to engage more widely with other agencies and wider society. The young person may exit the original intervention, but is able to move on and identify further opportunities and roles that will further their integration into society.

Our research report and practitioner briefing 'Engaging young people in resettlement' (Hazel and Bateman, 2013; Wright et al, 2013) both provide details on principles for effective engagement.

4.2 Initial engagement and establishing relationships

The comments offered both by YIF resettlement workers and by young custody-leavers highlight again and again how important relationships are to engagement and to the facilitation of positive resettlement (and desistance) outcomes.

It is also noted that the scope for establishing positive relationships with young custody-leavers is broadened if that process can be started while the young person is still in custody. As one worker said:

> **A young person's willingness to engage with the project worker while in custody is critical for the success of any support intervention post-release, as is establishing a positive trusting working relationship. A young person has to enjoy the activities and programmes they are engaged in post-release, otherwise they will not sustain commitment to the activity.**

[File 851, practitioner 13, Project 13]

4.3 Designing programme content – activities and interventions

The YIF evidence highlights the need for resettlement providers to design packages of support and activities which not only include 'hooks' for initial involvement (i.e. content that is positive and of interest to the young person) but which involve a balance of some 'quick wins' (i.e. activities that will have some fairly immediate successes or rewards, that will boost individual confidence) and longer-term plans which are designed to tackle more serious or difficult issues.

The evidence also underlines the importance of the young person's own authorship of this programme content; this point resonates with claims made in the literature about the importance of co-production. In short, the evidence suggests that the young person needs to embrace change processes themselves and, although they need to be supported to do this, to draw on their own agency to sustain commitment to that change process.

One worker spoke about the need for such 'authorship':

> **I think the young people should decide on the activities themselves. We as professionals often have an idea of what young people may like to do but this isn't always correct. It needs to be something they want to do and they have been involved in setting up. Their involvement is key as this gives them ownership and encourages their attendance.**

4.4 Sustaining engagement over time – responding to change

Because resettlement is a process, engagement itself needs to be monitored and assessed over time, and providers need to respond to changes in individual circumstances. The need for support and involvement will also change over time, for example:

> **[A] young person maintaining, though not necessarily initiating, repeated contact with the project is the main indicator of engagement. Many young people need constant motivation and caseworkers need to be tenacious and to find ways to demonstrate their support over time.**

[File 851, practitioner 15, Project 14]

4.5 Engagement and tailored individual support

There is clearly a strong connection between successful engagement and the level of fit between a package of resettlement support and a young person's needs and experiences. As one YIF resettlement worker summed up:

" Engaging young people can often be a long, tedious task and as a professional you often wonder what you are doing wrong. I think understanding the lives these young people have led is key. Understanding they have rarely been given clear boundaries, they have often been neglected and may feel uncared for and that nobody listens to them. It is important to be persistent in our approach, give them ownership of the work and really show care and understanding. This will assist in making the young person feel worthwhile and will encourage them to engage.

To the extent that a young person's need for support covers multiple issues, their engagement can be affected by gaps in provision. The importance of collaborative working across partners is therefore also linked to successful engagement.

4.6 Engagement and the desistance process

As previously stated, evidence makes it clear that a young person will not commit to and sustain their involvement in a change process if they do not engage with the provision and support structures that are designed to help them to make those choices. In short, engagement is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for a young person to embrace the processes of change that we are describing.

5. Providing individually tailored and continuous support

Members of YIF project teams commented to us regularly about the importance of holistic assessment and provision for young people leaving custody. It was highlighted that young people come from a very wide range of backgrounds and previous experiences and that they also have needs, challenges and interests that vary widely. Our analysis of YIF project data also confirmed this.

It is therefore clear that tailoring resettlement provision to the individual needs of project participants can increase the scope for engagement. Where services are individually tailored it is more likely that young people will perceive them to be relevant to their needs and interests, in turn increasing the scope for effective resettlement itself.

5.1 Assessing individual needs and circumstances

The YIF experience underlines the importance of proper initial assessment to the design of tailored packages of support. Without proper assessment there is a risk that the service fit will not be appropriate and this can have a detrimental effect on engagement.

Individual needs are often interrelated and mutually reinforcing, which means that ignoring some of them can blunt the scope for effectiveness overall, so getting a clear sense of the full picture is crucial. However, it was also pointed out to us on numerous occasions that young people in custody in particular can "get tired of assessments".

Details collected by YIF projects concerning their participants again make it clear that individual participants bring widely varied sets of needs and vulnerabilities to each project.

In the database for Project 2, for example, the project used 10 separate categories of need for assessing individual participants. Those categories included substance misuse, debt, housing, physical health, mental health, benefits, child care, domestic violence/abuse, family support and learning difficulties.

Details concerning individual needs were recorded for 62% of participants at that project and, as indicated in Figure 1, concerns about housing were the most common within that group (34%), followed by benefit and family support (each 19%), addiction concerns (16%) and mental health (10%).

Figure 1 – Percentage of clients having specified need (n=235; Project 2)
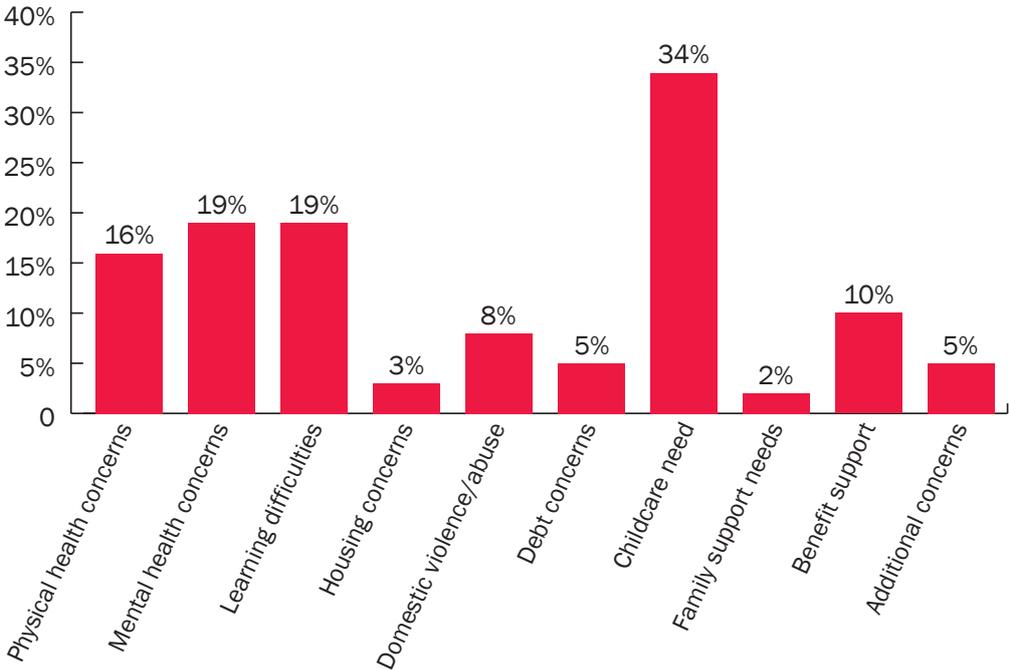
Figure 2 highlights the number of different needs identified for each individual participant and also includes a column for those participants where no information about needs was recorded.

Figure 2 – Percentage of clients, by number of specified needs recorded (including 'none listed'; n=381 need specifications; Project 2)
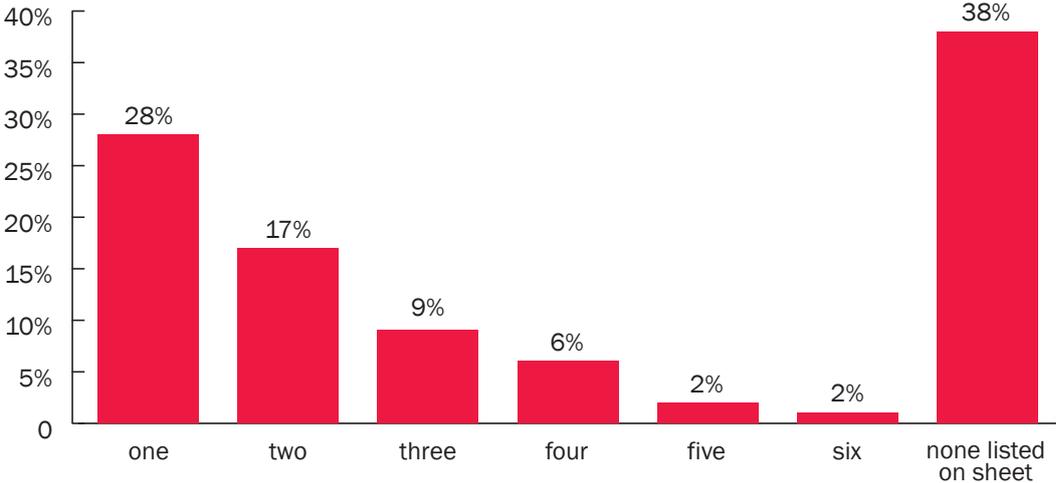
Figure 3 presents overall percentages only for those young people for whom such information was entered into the database (n=235); of those, 46% had one identified need, 54% had two or more, 27% had three or more and 12% had four or more needs.

Figure 3 – Percentage of clients, by number of specified needs recorded (excluding 'none listed'; n=235; Project 2)
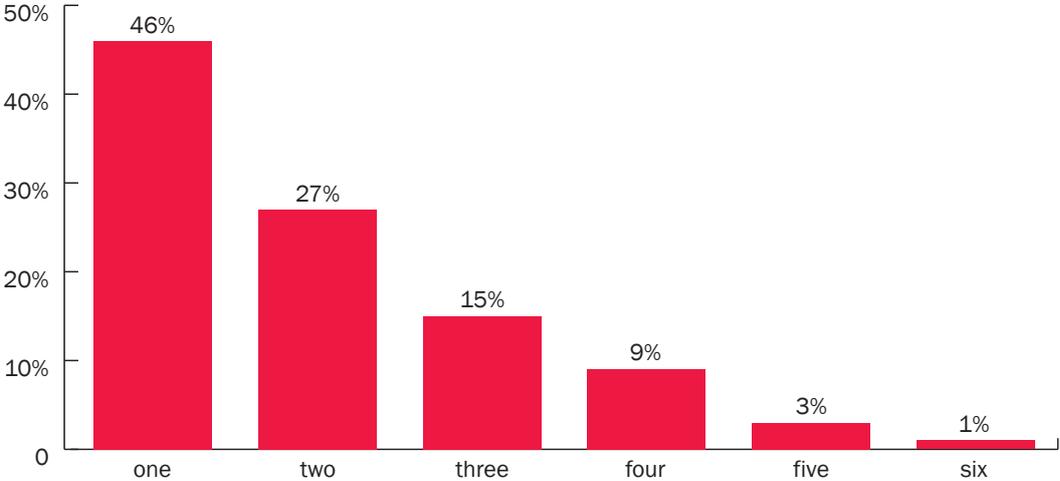
Project 12 also collected very detailed information about individual needs and vulnerability. On the main table in their database, there were 2,513 entries relating to the category of vulnerability. A breakdown of these vulnerabilities by category is presented in Figure 4. Sixteen per cent (406) of all vulnerability entries related to poverty, 15% (382) were in the category 'workers' and 15% (369) related to behaviour. Thirteen per cent (327) related to homelessness and almost 12% (291) were categorised as 'circumstances'.

Figure 4 – Percentage of vulnerability entries by category (Project 12)
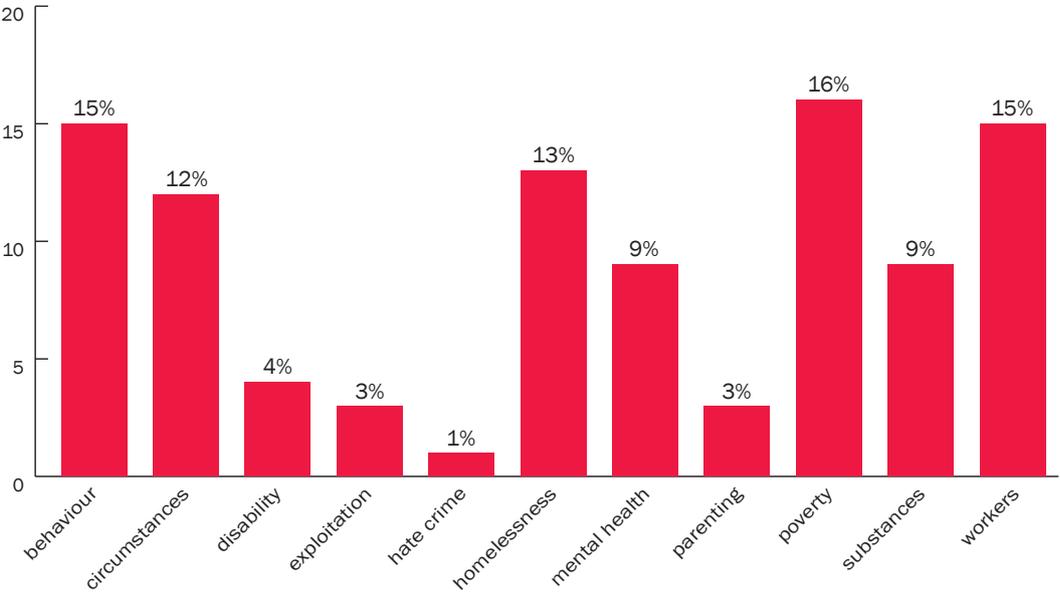
Table 2 shows the number of entries relating to vulnerability, per person. Twenty-three young people had only one entry for vulnerability and 20 had 20 or more entries. Sixty-seven per cent (175) had between one and 10 entries and the remaining third (87) had between 11 and 55 entries.

Table 2: The number of entries on the sheet for vulnerability, per person (banded) (Project 12)

No of vulnerability entries	Count	%
1	23	8.78%
2	14	5.34%
3	17	6.49%
4	11	4.20%
5	20	7.63%
6	15	5.73%
7	20	7.63%
8	23	8.78%
9	18	6.87%
10	14	5.34%
11-15	41	15.65%
16-20	26	9.92%
21-55	20	7.63%
Total	262	100%

For Project 10, assessments of young people's support needs at referral also revealed a wide range of issues to be dealt with. The project categorised 10 separate key areas of need for individual participants and assessments of such need were made around the point of referral. Information of this kind was available for 61 participants and is summarised in Figure 5:

Figure 5 – Assessed need at the point of referral (by % of participants having this need; n=61, Project 10)
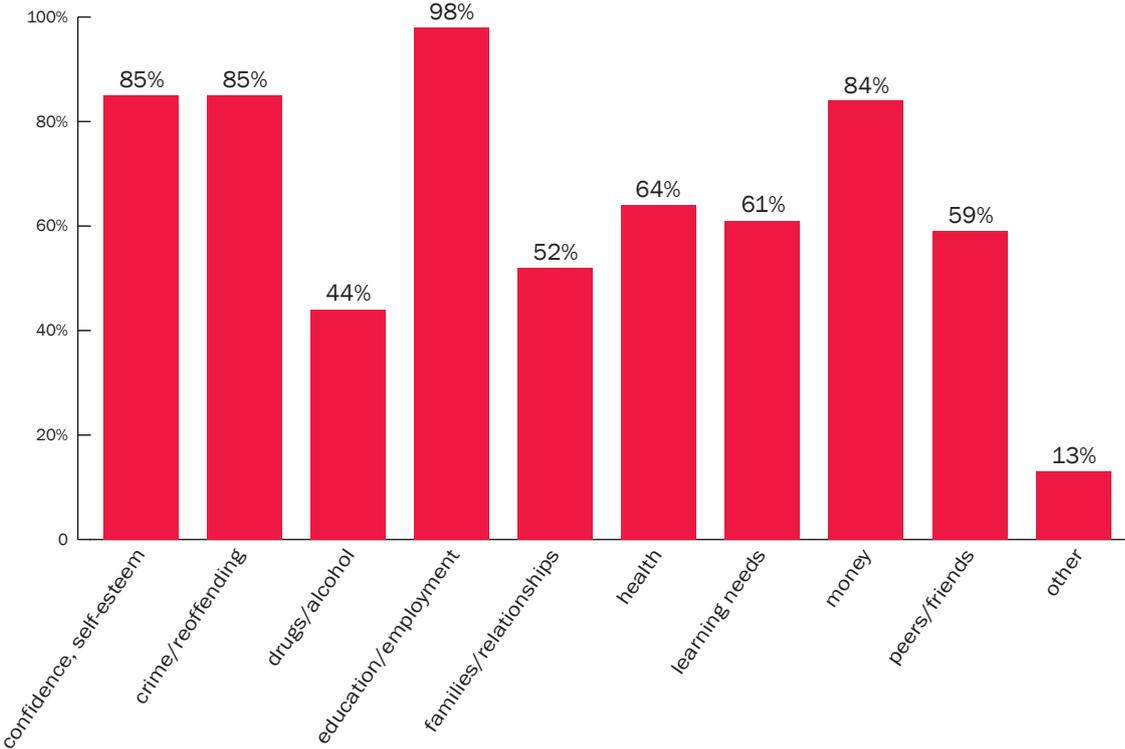
Although some projects did gather comprehensive information about individuals and their needs and circumstances, it is worth noting that knowledge about certain needs can only be gathered incrementally during work with individual young people. Project teams described cases where particular difficulties only came to light after a trust relationship had been established with the young person and a resettlement worker.

In the case of Project 8, for example, a young female participant who had been living in a particularly abusive relationship during her involvement with the YIF project only disclosed details about the abuse several months after starting with the project; it was not referred to in any of the initial existing records.

In another case described to us by staff at Project 12, a young man disclosed serious prior abuse to a worker only after almost two years of involvement with the project – while taking part in a residential with a group of other participants – and that prior abuse was also not referred to in any of the existing records.

The identification of individual needs and experiences relevant to resettlement work should therefore be regarded a process rather than a single event. Although some initial assessment is clearly important, ongoing monitoring of need will be important as well, not least because some areas of need are also quite dynamic and can change very quickly.

5.1.1 Addressing diversity issues

Assessments of individual needs and circumstances also need to incorporate careful consideration of issues concerning diversity since, as has been explored in some of our previous briefings, factors such as gender, race and ethnicity are a key part of what each young person 'brings to the table' when they begin resettlement work.[2]

Different configurations of diversity variables will obviously have implications not only for the content of resettlement packages, but also for the way in which a service should engage with a young person and perhaps also for the timescales required for effective engagement. In relation to issues concerning timescales and gender, for example, a manager at one of the YIF projects noted that:

> **On the whole the young women are far more damaged, vulnerable and traumatised than the young men – DV, sexual exploitation, sexual violence, etc – so they've needed an extended period of resettlement support.**

[File 593, Project 13]

More generally, if individual identity is a key focus of change processes, then diversity issues will obviously be of key importance to those processes and their success because they are related to how individual young people see themselves. Some young people will perceive themselves to have suffered discrimination because they are gay or because they are from a particular BME community, for example. An acknowledgment of that experience can help to strengthen a positive non-offending identity and also to harness the potential support networks and services which could help to underpin positive change processes.

5.1.2 Understanding previous experience

Young people also bring with them a variety of previous experiences when they start working with a project and an understanding of this can be crucially important to the success of any resettlement work undertaken. For example, a young person might have:

- a history of non-engagement with other services, which could erode their trust in resettlement workers and reduce the scope for engagement

---

2. For further reading see BYC guides on 'Ethnicity, faith and culture in resettlement', 'Recognising diversity in resettlement' and 'Resettlement of girls and young women'.

- a history of previous trauma, which can have a negative effect on a young person's resilience and scope for compliance
- had a particularly negative prison experience (e.g. involving bullying, serious drug use, depression, suicidal behavior) in which case they could need more structured emotional/psychological support as part of the resettlement package
- had a particularly negative experience immediately after release (during which time there is real scope for young people to have mental health difficulties, as explored in the BYC publication 'Custody to community: how young people cope with release')

Such previous experience will also be affected by diversity issues, as noted in the previous section.

5.2 Maintaining continuity

Previous research has illustrated again and again how resettlement support for an individual young person can be quite truncated in practice. For example:

- The custody/community divide has often not been bridged by services in a coordinated manner
- Service provision changes its form as the young person passes through key age bands, with services for those under 19 having quite a different statutory and practice framework than services for those 19 and older (and with similar issues for some young adults when they reach 22 years of age)
- Resettlement services that are primarily 'single-issue' focused can lead to a young person being 'passed around' from one worker to the next – with those workers having a particular focus on housing, substance misuse or employment training, for example. YIF participants have commented to us that they feel as if they have a multiplicity of workers in such cases, without such workers speaking to one another or having a wider view of the young person's life.

The YIF experience has shown how some of these issues can be addressed effectively, so that the young person can be provided with a more continuous and interconnected set of provision coordinated by a small number of workers over time.

5.2.1 Beginning resettlement work prior to release

The YIF feedback underlines findings from previous resettlement research which suggests that beginning such work while young people are still in custody broadens the scope for successful engagement after release.

As one resettlement worker noted:

> **A young person's willingness to engage with the project worker while in custody is critical for the success of any support intervention post release, as is establishing a positive trusting working relationship. A young person has to enjoy the activities and programmes they are engaged in post-release, otherwise they will not sustain commitment to the activity.**

5.2.2 Through the gate support

The YIF experience has again illustrated how important it can be to a young person's progress, to have arrangements for through the gate support in place. BYC's research demonstrates how vulnerable a young custody-leaver can be during the first few weeks after release in particular. Feedback from both YIF practitioners and project participants illustrates how through the gate support can provide a kind of safety net for the custody-

leaver and also how it can maintain the continuity of the relationship between the young person and a key resettlement worker.

5.2.3 Maintaining continuity of relationships

Probably the most referred to success factor during our research with YIF projects has been the quality of relationships between young custody-leavers and key workers. The YIF experience underlines the importance of focusing on that quality and on the continuity of those relationships over time.

5.2.4 Planning for disengagement, managing dependence risks

Particularly for those YIF projects that worked fairly intensively with young people – and sometimes over long periods of time – issues were raised about the risk of allowing a young person be become dependent on a project (or project worker). This was a particular concern in cases where the young person appeared not to have experienced any continuity of interest in the past.

Members of the BYC team were made aware of cases where a young person reacted very badly when a particular worker left a project, for example, and their progress was negatively affected.

YIF staff have pointed out that this risk cannot be eliminated entirely, with some staff turnover being inevitable, but have also described ways in which they have sought to manage developments of that kind.

In terms of forward planning, one project worker noted that the project "focuses on working with the young person to identify and strengthen their own support networks", so that they can build on this and be sustained by it increasingly over time.

Some of the YIF projects also had a very strong team focus, which allowed them to plan for staff changes well in advance and to come up with strategies in individual cases to reduce the stress on young people in a particular worker's case load.

6. Delivering coordinated resettlement services

The importance of coordination to effective resettlement has been underlined by a whole range of previous research and findings from our assessment of the YIF experience have also highlighted the importance of joined-up provision. Strong connections between coordination and other characteristics of effective practice have also been illustrated, such as the facilitation of engagement, the tailoring of provision to individual need, and also the extent to which individual processes of change can be supported and sustained by young custody-leavers.

Some of these key findings are highlighted below.

6.1 The importance of brokerage

The evidence from YIF projects indicates how streamlined and focused resettlement practice can be where there is not only an understanding across partners of roles and responsibilities for delivery, but an element of brokerage facilitated by resettlement workers themselves. In other words, where individuals who work directly with young people can help to 'join up the dots' for individual clients by liaising regularly as required with workers from other agencies.

Young people often shared with us a perception that workers from various agencies did not talk to one another, and that the young people had to "tell the same story" on multiple occasions to different people. They found this frustrating when it occurred and also sometimes contrasted this with how the YIF project they were involved in managed to reduce this kind of duplication.

6.2 YIF project fit within wider service delivery landscape

Where project teams liaised most effectively with other providers and agencies, they managed not only to identify overlaps in provision and to avoid duplication, but also to enhance the value of the range of existing provision by ensuring that services talked to one another.

As one YIF staff member described, it was of key importance for projects to "know what's out there" in terms of provision:

> **Having an in-depth and broad understanding of local protocol, procedures and services is key to providing effective outcomes. Further to this I believe that national organisations that serve more than one area fail to build necessary relationships and fail to have a robust understanding of the services available. Furthermore in-house prison resettlement services also fail for this reason.**

[File 855, staff respondent 56, project 12]

The YIF experience highlights how labour-intensive a project's involvement in that kind of liaison can be, however, and how much time is required to facilitate and sustain networks of professional relationships. For example, one project that had a particularly strong focus on community and ETE organisations had details concerning well over 200 groups and organisations on its database and it was clear that most of these contacts were kept live throughout the project's work. Given the normal cycles of staff turnover and organisational change that occur during the life of a three, four or five year project, it is impressive that some YIF projects kept those kinds of relationships active over time, in order that required services could be drawn upon as individual cases required them.

A key implication of YIF practice here is that resettlement projects need to be mindful of the resource implications of this kind of networking, communication and liaison. Striking a realistic balance between the requirements for servicing multi-agency or partnership networks and the benefits of doing so, and what the service can offer young people, is crucial. Stakeholders who formed part of a specific project's service provision network occasionally complained to us that they did not get updates from projects about specific young people and their progress. Such claims were consistent with feedback from project staff which suggested that they simply had not found the time to report back as often as they would have liked.

6.3 Key issues

YIF team members pointed out a range of issues that needed to be addressed initially and monitored over time if resettlement provision is to be properly coordinated.

6.3.1 Maintaining a consensus about roles and responsibilities

Feedback from YIF teams highlighted the need for clarifying what the roles and responsibilities were across key partners. Some also noted that even where there was some clarity about those roles, it did not always follow that partners would perform them.

Perhaps related to resourcing issues, some YIF project staff said that other agencies sometimes leave resettlement projects to deliver work that is actually the responsibility of those other agencies. As one respondent said:

> **A lot of my job is spent trying to get other agencies to do what they are meant to do anyway. We get a lot of "[Project 8] is doing that, so we don't need to" – we see a lot of boys who have only ever been visited once by their social worker. So we're effective but we shouldn't have to exist in a way – it's frustrating… YOTs and Probation staff are saying it's great that there's someone to see the young people in custody – but that's what's supposed to happen anyway. Our support in custody is working well but this is what's not happening through the other agencies. I had a phone call from a prison asking us to house a young person due for release. But they were being released tomorrow, after six months inside – I said to the officer, "What have you been doing for the past six months and why hasn't this already been sorted?"**

[File 775, practitioner, Project 8]

6.3.2 Information sharing

YIF projects usually had arrangements in place with partners for the sharing of information about individual participants but sometimes these were highly informal rather than being anchored in actual, signed) protocols. Some respondents commented to us that partners' interpretation of data protection rules can be a barrier to the delivery of holistic resettlement provision.

6.3.3 Partnerships and staff turnover

While most projects had established networks of contacts which allowed them to undertake the kind of brokerage work referred to above, these were often interrupted by staff changes in partner organisations. Changes of that kind could obviously have a negative impact at any time, since working relationships take time to form. However, they can have even more of an impact in cases where these relationships have been forged by workers organically and without the benefit of a formal agreement between partners at strategic level (which would require that the resettlement brief for one agency representative would be passed on to a new representative in the wake of a workers departure, for example).

6.3.4 Harmonising resettlement practice and strategy

The latter point raises other issues which were also referred to by YIF team members regarding the harmonisation of practice and strategic levels by key partners involved in the delivery of resettlement work. In cases where relationships between different agencies or groups are created organically by practice-level operators who perceive them to be mutually beneficial, that arrangement can result in liaison work not being formally recognised at senior level. That can lead to some workers being involved in partnership work almost like an extracurricular activity and practical issues such as meeting time can be seen as detracting from a worker's 'real' responsibilities.

In addition to these issues about strategic and practice-level harmonisation, there is a need for the range of roles and responsibilities across agencies not just to be identified but communicated in an ongoing manner to the range of partners whose support for the resettlement work is required.

6.3.5 Resources

Feedback from YIF team members also suggested that resource issues can have a negative impact on their efforts to coordinate resettlement work.

The evidence suggests that where budgets are under considerable strain, agency workers can react by focusing only on their perceived highest priority and specifically mandated service requirements, retreating into a sort of agency party line.

There are also tensions between the efficiencies that effective coordination can generate in the longer-term, and the short-term implications for agency workloads with regards to partnership working which can generate those efficiencies over time. This issue is also linked to issues concerning the harmonisation of practice and strategic levels within partner agencies.

YIF respondents have reported that the current climate serves to put a brake on effective partnership working at both levels; some agencies have simply retreated because they do not have sufficient resources to allow them even to deliver on what are the most basic statutory requirements.

6.3.6 Monitoring partnerships over time

Given that resettlement and desistance are processes rather than events, the issues concerning coordination will not necessarily be the same at all points in the process. As such, the nature of partnership working will change over time, reflecting the exigencies of different stages of the change process; projects that have thought about how to address dependency issues have focused on the development of support networks for individual custody-leavers, for example.

It is more likely that liaison with accommodation providers or substance misuse services will be required at early stages of resettlement work. At later stages, it may be more important to ensure that there is appropriate liaison with, and involvement from, other partners such as key people in the young person's support network, in anticipation of a young person moving towards the exit stage of the process.

In keeping with the idea that resettlement support should be individually tailored, the feedback suggests that coordination itself needs to be monitored over time, so that changes in its focus and make-up can be made as a young person's needs and circumstances change.

7. Delivering and assessing resettlement outcomes

Although YIF projects did not always collect information about impacts associated with their work consistently, the YIF data set as a whole suggests clearly that YIF work with custody-leavers did facilitate a wide range of positive outcomes.

There is of course a distinction to be made between outcomes that a project might have achieved and outcomes which can actually be demonstrated. In many cases, while we do know from some of the available evidence (e.g. feedback from project staff or from young people) that particular outcomes were achieved, it has not always been possible for the BYC team to quantify them because relevant projects did not collect information on a regular basis (or at all).

The BYC team did attempt to standardise data collection frameworks at the start of the programme. Data fields that used similar categories for recording information were introduced (e.g. recording ethnicity using census categories, recording dates of birth rather than numerical age at referral, or by suggesting ways of categorising assessed need or participant progress so that these could be aggregated and compared across YIF projects). However, those changes proved to be difficult to implement, for a range of reasons, including the following:

- There was no stipulation of any minimum requirements for data collection as part of each service provider's agreement with the Big Lottery, although all projects were required to provide details about how they would keep track of their own work and were also encouraged to cooperate with the work of the EWLAs. This meant that the streamlining of data collection arrangements was not always a high priority, even though the BYC team could offer support which did not incur any extra cost for projects.

- Some projects were delivered by organisations that had been involved in similar delivery previously, sometimes for a considerable length of time. This meant that some projects had already developed or inherited organisational or client databases and did not have the resources to introduce new systems just for collecting data concerning their YIF work. Even where resources had existed, data collection practice within the organisation had developed a momentum of its own over time which would have been difficult to change.

- Some projects were involved in several strands of resettlement or other work with young people from the same cohorts. Those other strands were usually undertaken using funds from other sources – sources that in turn often had completely separate reporting requirements which were difficult to harmonise with the YIF reporting requirements.

7.1 Understanding and assessing success and effectiveness

Although projects varied widely in terms of the information that they actually collected about the young people they worked with, as well as the progress made or outcomes achieved, feedback from YIF project teams did suggest a degree of consensus about the kinds of changes that are most important when it comes to resettlement work with young people.

YIF teams tended to agree about how they would define 'effective resettlement' even where projects differed widely in terms of their focus. In particular, projects tended to single out areas of change that would be regarded as intermediate outcomes or measures of distance travelled – such as positive changes in levels of self-confidence, or resilience or self-efficacy – as being fundamental to other changes such as employability, or desistance from offending more generally. Comments of the following sort were typically offered by YIF team members when we asked them to describe the most important outcomes for young people:

> **Increase in self-confidence, pursuit of work or training, better relationships, engagement with other services.**
>
> [File 855, staff respondent 26, project 5]

> **A change in attitude about themselves and what they might be capable of. Clients often also learn to relate better to other people and agencies. Learn how to be assertive instead of aggressive.**
>
> [File 855, staff respondent 27, project 5]

> **Belief in themselves and identification by the young people that there are opportunities for them for the future.**
>
> [File 855, staff respondent 36, project 14]

> **Increased confidence and self-esteem.**
>
> [File 855, staff respondent 38, project 14]

> **Confidence and trust in workers and flexible working approaches that allow young people to have a responsive and effective delivery that is often needed for crisis.**
>
> [File 855, staff respondent 39, project 14]

7.1.1 Key outcomes monitored by YIF projects

All YIF projects collected information concerning the characteristics of the young people who were referred to and/or engaged with the project – including details about age, ethnicity, gender, referral source and date, assessed need and general reasons for referral – and most projects also gathered some information about individual progress and exit or case closure.

Specific data concerning outcomes achieved tended to be less comprehensive and of lower quality, with some projects not recording much in the way of individual achievements except what specific workers happened to remember when questioned by the BYC team.

Most projects did have some focus on specific outcomes and the key areas of need outlined in resettlement policy, such as those underpinning the seven resettlement pathways that have also become enshrined in policies adopted by the Youth Justice Board.

7.1.2 Keeping track of distance travelled

The measurement of soft outcomes or distance travelled has, from the start of the YIF programme, been one of the more difficult areas for projects to cover, even though project teams described this outcome area as being of key importance to the effectiveness of their work. In our view, it is a major weakness in many programmes such as YIF that the success of projects and programmes is measured in ways that are either not very robust or resistant to meaningful aggregation.

All YIF projects kept track to some extent of the emotional wellbeing of their participants over time but, in some cases, this knowledge was simply 'in the heads' of workers and was not recorded anywhere in a systematic way. Many projects designed their own in-house instruments or measures for key intermediate outcomes such as self-confidence or motivation, but these instruments were not always robust in research terms and had usually not been tested for reliability or validity.

Other projects used existing tools such as the Outcome Star, the Progress Wheel or psychometric tools such as IOMI for measuring such outcomes but information generated by these tools was not always properly integrated with other data, such as that held on project client databases, for example.

A key lesson is clearly that there remains a strong need for similar programmes to encourage the use of distance travelled measures that are both as robust as they can be and capable to some extent of generating data which could allow both for measurement of impact over time in individual cases, and for cross-project impact comparisons which could enhance our knowledge of such impact across different kinds of cases. Given that some of these intermediate outcomes are singled out both by providers and young people as being of major importance to positive change processes, it would be of great value if researchers and practitioners could learn more about them and how they are linked to wider outcomes such as employability, substance misuse reduction and reductions in offending.

Toward the end of 2013 some members of the BYC team were also involved in work for the Ministry of Justice, to design ways of measuring intermediate outcomes over time. The team made this work available to YIF projects and worked with several projects to use the relevant questionnaires and to analyse the results.

7.2 Outcomes delivered by YIF projects

Before describing some of the outcomes that YIF projects appear to have generated among their participant cohorts, it is worth making a general point we have also made in some other BYC publications (e.g. Liddle, 2016) concerning the importance of adopting an evaluative focus when considering outcomes data.

It is one thing to keep careful track of specific vulnerabilities or areas of need and the extent to which these change over time, but it is not always straightforward to attribute such changes to the work of an individual project on its own. In order to 'tell the story' of project impact it is also necessary to have some theoretical account of key causal processes – in short, to have some account of what causes what, and how the services provided might actually have led to measured changes in vulnerabilities or need.

In all of our work with YIF projects we have tried to keep this kind of evaluative focus 'live', and it has also informed our discussions and ongoing work with project teams.

This point also applies to calculations about costs and benefits of work delivered by YIF projects.

7.2.1 Accommodation

Addressing accommodation needs is absolutely crucial to much resettlement work; Allender et al. (2005) have even said that, "It is absolutely clear that appropriate housing is the single most important factor in preventing re-offending" (2005:20). Accommodation issues were also of major importance for YIF participants after release.

The way in which YIF projects assessed accommodation needs again varied widely, with some projects recording yes or no responses within a category labelled 'homelessness', for example, and others using categories such as 'suitable accommodation' or similar. These different category titles do not, of course, always refer to the same thing and issues of this kind made aggregation of accommodation data from across YIF projects impossible.

However, it was clear that across all YIF projects working with custody-leavers, issues concerning accommodation were important to many project participants. For one project, 34% (235) of their cohort had 'housing concerns' listed as being an area to address at the point of referral. Figures in that area are consistent with what we know from previous research and with what is often quoted in the wider literature. The 2002 report from the Social Exclusion Unit suggests that about a third of custody-leavers do not have suitable accommodation lined up at the point of release, although the level of need does appear to vary by age group.

In the same way that assessed accommodation needs tended to vary from project to project, the extent to which (and the way in which) services were provided to address such needs, and the outcomes generated from such work, varied widely. For the majority of projects, it was not possible to 'count up' the number of positive accommodation outcomes achieved.

Of course, finding suitable and stable accommodation for a young person can be just as much an incremental and non-linear process as addressing substance misuse or offending issues over time. Accommodation outcomes are, therefore, harder to record than short-term impacts such as course completions or jobs secured etc.

However, it is clear from the YIF evidence that positive accommodation outcomes have been achieved in cases where such achievements have not even been recorded. The participant comments in section 5.2 include a reference to the young person's homelessness prior to starting work with the project, and we know from that young person and from project staff that the young person managed to secure stable accommodation as a direct result of the project's assistance, but this is not referred to as an outcome within the project records.

Based on all of the available data, we would estimate that about a third of the YIF project cohort did have particular accommodation issues at the point of referral and that positive outcomes were achieved in the majority of those cases. It was not possible for the team to assess things like durability of accommodation outcomes at aggregate level, although we were able to do this in relation to specific YIF projects where local data sets were of sufficient quality to allow for more detailed analysis.

7.2.2 Substance misuse

Many of the comments made about the assessment and impacts of accommodation issues would also apply to the area of substance misuse. YIF practice in relation to keeping track of this area of resettlement need also varied widely across projects.

The available information suggests that a large proportion of YIF participants were involved in substance misuse at the time of referral, and it is clear from the qualitative (and case study) data in particular that many participants had substance misuse issues that were also related both to offending behaviour and to other resettlement issues such as accommodation or employment. These issues were not always recorded by YIF projects at the time of referral, although some projects did include detailed references to assessed need in this area, support offered to address the issue and related to those interventions.

Based on the figures that we do have, and on qualitative and other supplemental data from projects, we would estimate that the YIF cohort experienced difficulties with substance misuse to roughly the same extent that national figures would suggest – i.e. that roughly half of custody-leavers are involved in substance misuse to an extent that it has problematic implications for them in terms of areas such as offending, employment or the maintenance of stable accommodation.

The evidence also suggests that YIF projects did have positive impacts on individual substance misuse in many cases, by which we mean that involvement with the project resulted either in reductions in substance use to 'safe' or manageable levels, or in complete abstinence for sustained periods of several months or more.

7.2.3 Employment, training and education

All projects viewed this area of need as being important to their participants but only a few projects focused very strongly on facilitating positive outcomes in relation to employment, training and education (ETE).

Again, not all projects collected information about interventions in this area or made assessments which could be used to describe the ETE needs of a project's cohort but some collected very good quality information.

In one case, for example, the project gathered sufficiently detailed information for the BYC team to be able to undertaken detailed analysis of ETE needs and interventions over time, and even identify ETE trajectories within the project cohort. The BYC team was able to plot types of event over time, as in Figure 6 below, which tracks the percentage of project participants in employment or apprenticeship, across ETE assessments made for participants over time. The figure indicates that while 1.8% of participants were in employment or apprenticeship at their first assessment, the percentage had increased to 23% by the time of the second assessment.

Figure 6: Percentage of participants in employment or apprenticeship, by ETE assessment number
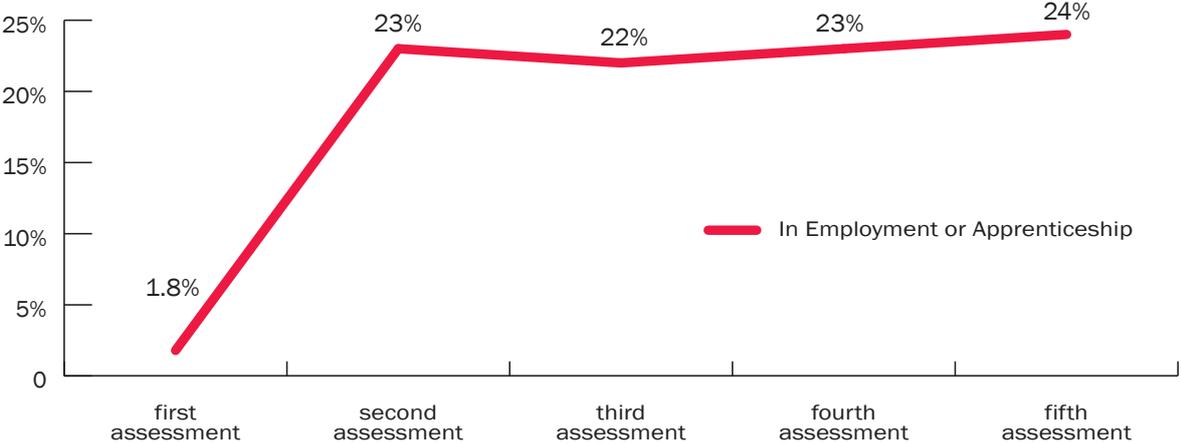
Figure 7 presents figures for the proportion of that project's participants in work placement over time.

Figure 7: Percentage of participants in work placement, by ETE assessment number
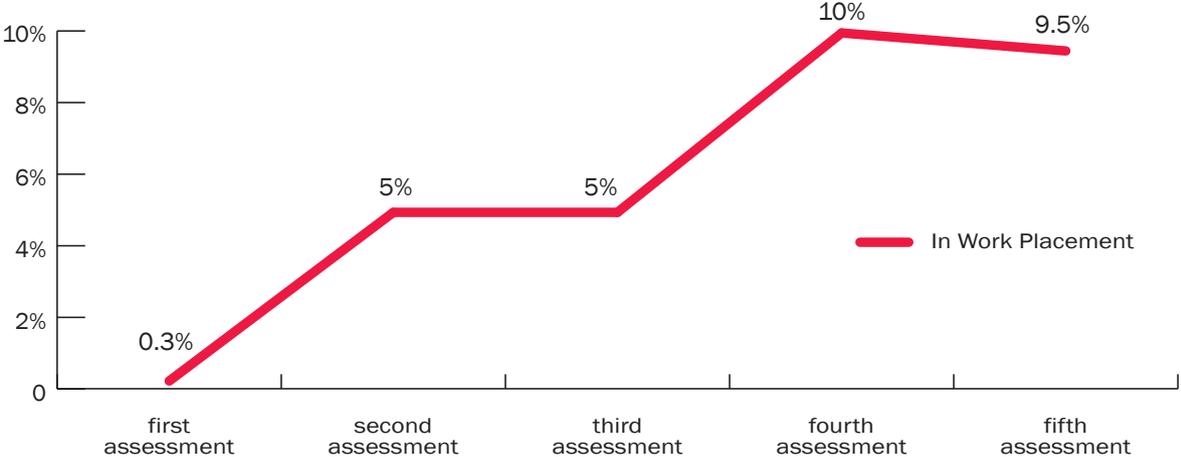
What is striking about these presentations is that, when taken together, they highlight positive ETE movement and change over time. The data set indicates very little in the way of 'down time' in ETE terms and this is also highlighted in some of the interview feedback from young people at the same project. One participant commented on this and also linked the focus on movement to a more general feature of the project's approach, which is about strengthening individual resilience:

> **The biggest thing they've changed is my mentality. I'm less impatient now and if I get knocked back I'm more determined to go for something else. Before, on my own, I would have been in a mood for two weeks and not applied for many jobs. If I find out I haven't got a job, I come in here, tell them and they're like: "OK – next one!"**

One issue concerning ETE provision for custody-leavers is that many in this group struggle with difficulties that can work together to erode levels of employability. Some of our participant case studies involved young people who struggled with substance misuse issues had anger management difficulties, had previous trauma which eroded self-confidence and contributed to impulsivity, and had a very poor educational history with numerous gaps in it.

Our research suggests that YIF projects in general were very good at working with such young people to move them along a path toward employability or employment, by equipping them with various life skills and experience, but most importantly by helping to build resilience, confidence and autonomy. Changes of the latter sort are notoriously difficult to capture but are essential to a young person's success in ETE terms.

7.2.4 Mental and emotional health

As noted earlier, YIF projects used widely varying methods for keeping track of impacts on mental or emotional health. All projects looked at this to some extent but not all projects managed to keep the kind of information which would have allowed them to demonstrate impact clearly.

When looking at all the available evidence (including interview feedback from workers and participants) it is clear that YIF projects had positive impacts on factors such as self-confidence and motivation. For projects that used particular measures consistently and over time, it was also possible for the research team to assess such changes in the light of other data (e.g. from client databases) and in some cases also to compare such changes with other (non-project) groups.

Overall, it is clear that the majority of YIF participants experienced positive change in relation to factors of this kind.

Project 2 for example, used an assessment form consistently and at key stages of each participant's involvement. The form covered several key areas of the sort being discussed here including motivation, confidence, teamwork, leadership, negotiating conflict, and approaching employers or other agencies.

Figure 8 – Average scores for each measured area on action plan/review forms, by action plan/review number (Project 2)

Legend: First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth
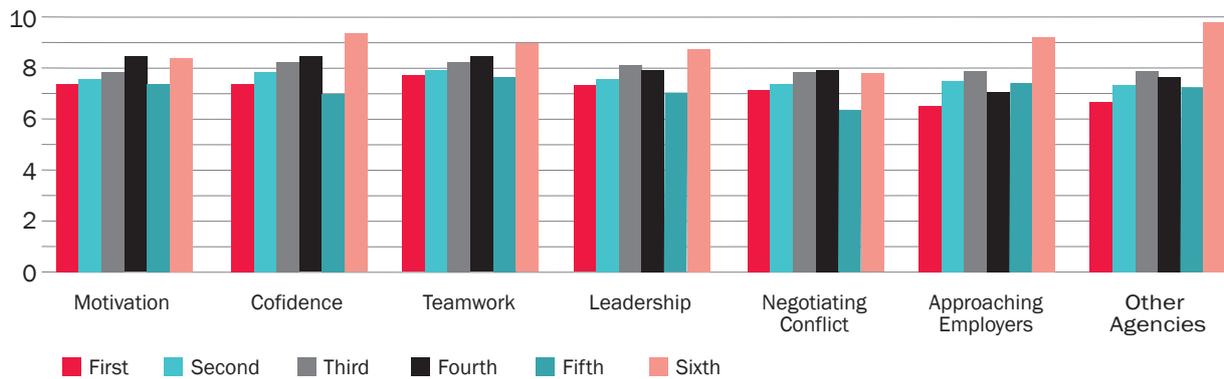
The same pattern is illustrated when measured areas are focused on separately, as can be seen in Figure 9, which summarises scores across readings for motivation only. A trend line has also been included in the presentation to illustrate the broad change.

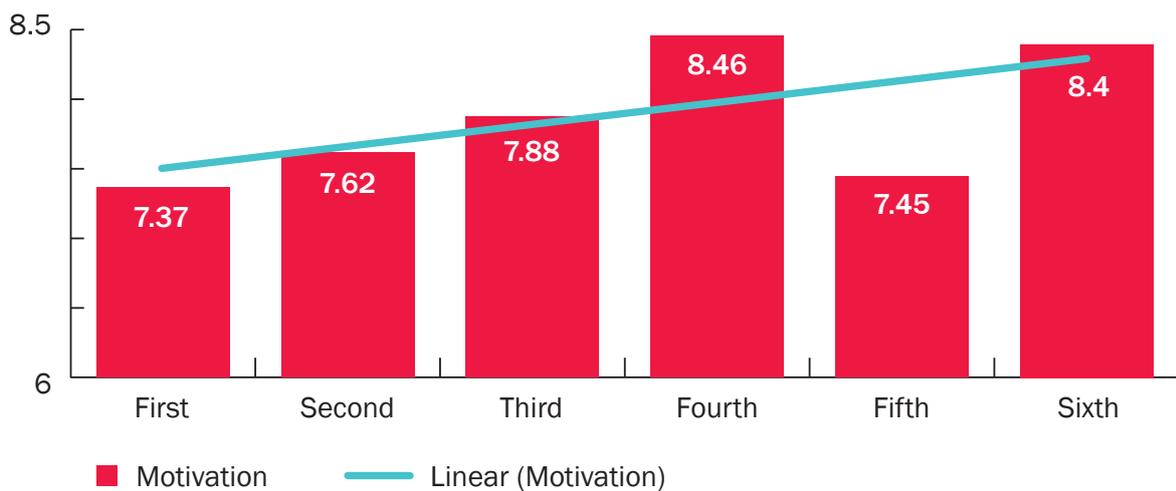**Figure 9 – Changes in average scores for motivation, by action plan/review number (Project 2)**

First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth
7.37	7.62	7.88	8.46	7.45	8.4

Legend: Motivation, Linear (Motivation)

We do not reproduce graphs for all measured areas but the pattern is similar for all except negotiating conflict, whose measured area has a general upward movement until the fifth reading, at which point the average dips and results in a more or less static trend line.

Similar results were found using data from other projects (e.g. those using IOMI to measure dimensions of emotional/psychological wellbeing) although, again, the categories themselves varied widely, as did their mix with other factors.

The YIF evidence also shows how effective some projects were in the following terms:

- Using brokerage to secure other mental health services for individual participants where that was deemed necessary and appropriate (e.g. where a participant had a diagnosable mental health condition but needed assistance with medication or maintenance).
- Recognising the impacts of previous trauma on their participants and in adopting trauma-informed ways of working with project teams. The BYC team was also pleased to see that YIF projects were receptive to their findings on trauma, offending and young people and that positive awareness-raising around such issues seemed to occur during the last two years of the programme in particular.

7.2.5 Offending and anti-social behaviour

An assessment of all of the available YIF data suggests that the programme overall has had a positive impact on reoffending by participants and staff at all YIF projects have corroborated that their work has had such an impact.

Although the majority of projects (13) did collect some details concerning offending, the form of this information and the way in which it was collected made proper analysis difficult.

Some projects had fields in their databases or client spreadsheets with categories such as 'offended in last three months?' and project staff would enter 'yes' or 'no' in that field, based only on what they knew from their case work or from feedback from either partners or the young people themselves. Some others would also record specific details about such offending, including the specific offence and the date when it was committed, but most projects did not routinely gather official data on offending or use such information to assess impact in a rigorous manner.
The BYC team worked more closely with interested projects to help them access and analyse data about offending to help them assess the impact of their project's work.

In the case of Project 10, the team was able to access offending data not only for a large sub-sample (122 young people) from the project's participant cohort (a total of 279) but also for a comparison group in a similar location. The comparison group sample (72) was made up of young offenders who would have qualified for referral to Project 10 i.e. they had at least one custodial sentence and were within the appropriate age range for the project to work with them. The offending data was used to undertake a detailed analysis of offending patterns for both groups before and after the date when Project 10 commenced.

While 28% of the Project 10 group reoffended during a one-year period after their start date with the project, 92% of the comparison group reoffended within the same one-year period.

In all cases where the team had sufficient data to allow us to assess impacts on offending, we found that YIF project cohorts offended (sometimes markedly) less than national figures would have led us to expect. Those reductions are also related to some of the substantial cost savings that the BYC team was able to identify as part of our work (summarised below in section 8).

8. Assessing the costs and benefits of resettlement provision

As part of our work programme, the BYC team began to focus on the costs and benefits of resettlement services provided by YIF projects in year three, and we have continued to develop that key work strand from that point until the time of writing.

Findings have illustrated not only how substantial the 'costable' benefits (those for which a monetary cost can be assessed) can be in cases where projects manage to support young people on pathways out of offending but also how, in aggregate, some YIF projects have managed to generate benefits that are well in excess of the costs of delivering their resettlement work.

The team used two main approaches to the costing work. One focused on using costable outcomes data at aggregate level (e.g. offending data for a YIF project cohort or for a sub-group of that cohort, or data concerning other achievements in relation to key resettlement issues such as those listed in the above section). The second focused on individual case studies and used separate tools for locating estimated costs and benefits relating to those cases onto individual timelines.

8.1 Estimating project unit costs

For each approach referred to above, it is important to know how much a YIF project itself costs in terms of its involvement with individual participants, in order to ascertain whether a project represents value for money. The BYC team usually used unit costs to help us answer the latter question and to establish cost-benefit thresholds for individual projects.

All YIF projects focused on as part of the BYC programme were provided with advice concerning the calculation of their own unit costs. Unit costs were defined as those costs associated with a project's work with one individual young person, which can be calculated either for a specific period of time (e.g. annually) or as an overall figure.

As part of work undertaken by some of the BYC team members for the Ministry of Justice (referred to in section 7.1.2), the team also designed a bespoke tool for projects to use to calculate their own unit costs.

The tool was designed in Microsoft Excel format was accompanied by a brief set of instructions. The final version is made up of four separate worksheets, with three of these being used by providers to input information and one being automatically populated by the programme. The three data entry sheets cover running costs (by year), numbers of service users and their level of participation in a project or intervention (by year) and set-up costs.

The summary sheet uses totals from the other sheets to calculate weighted annual costs. It also calculates unit costs both by type of participant (in terms of how intensive their involvement with a project is) and by year, as well as an overall unit cost, which is a weighted average.

The tool was piloted with a number of projects nationally, including YIF Project 10 and, in cases where the team has been able to undertake some cost-benefit work with YIF projects, we have used that tool to calculate unit costs for project participants by year and by type using financial information provided by staff at the projects. These costs were calculated using two or more client bands (depending on the project), using project databases to gauge levels or intensity of involvement.

Such calculations were inevitably approximate on account of projects not always recording information about everyone who they worked with, but we were able to use their data roughly to calculate the banding.

We usually estimated unit costs for three different groups – high, medium and low – to reflect the full range of participant types. This covers those with complex needs who engage with a project over a long period of time through to those who simply drop in now and again to participate in various activities; clearly those in the first category attract a higher proportion of project time and resources.

With Project 12, for example, we were able to estimate unit costs ranging from £4,524 (in total) at the high end, to £3,324 in the medium group and to £1,149 in the low group.

For Project 2, the overall unit costs associated with those three groups were estimated at £4,258, £3,128 and £1,081, respectively. Those figures cover the entire length of a participant's involvement with a project, rather than being annual costs.

In cases where there was insufficient information to allow us to calculate banded unit costs, we simply calculated overall unit costs. These unit costs turned out to be fairly typical for YIF projects – ranging from about £1,000 for low end participants, to around £5,000 for high end clients.

These distinctions between different user groups are important, because they allow us to see how much different groups of project participant cost in terms of the primary intervention, and to compare those figures with estimated benefits and other costs. In turn, this can help us to identify cost-effectiveness thresholds i.e. the levels at which costable benefits that are generated by a project begin to outstrip the costs required to generate them.

8.2 Costs and benefits of impacts on offending and anti-social behaviour

As noted in section 7.2.6, the evaluation team was able to gather enough data for some YIF projects to be able to demonstrate clear and positive impacts on offending.

This did not always mean that we were able to follow up that analysis with further cost-benefit analysis but we were able to use offending data for some projects to cost all 'before and after' offending for particular project sub-groups – using project start dates for all participants, as recorded in the project database – or even for entire project cohorts.

The approach taken to generating cost figures for offending involved a number of key steps:

- A cost estimate for each specific listed offence was selected, with most of these estimates coming from the New Economy toolkit.[3]
- Where such breakdowns could be provided, these cost estimates were broken down into fiscal costs (i.e. those costs associated directly with key agencies and their direct expenditure) and wider economic and social costs (e.g. including insurance and property costs on the economic side and costs relating to the physical and emotional impacts on victims of crime on the social side.
- In cases where a specific offence type did not have robust cost estimates available, it was either converted into a related category which did have such an estimate or simply treated as a generic 'other' offence (which does have a cost estimate averaged across all crime types).
- Once estimates were selected for each offence, those values – along with figures for the number of offences of each type committed – were plugged into a tool used by the BYC team, which calculated the figures used on some of the tables later in this section.
- The tool calculated separate totals for each offence by type, as well as the 'total public value' of each offence (i.e. the total fiscal, economic and social costs associated with it).

3. The New Economy toolkit has several components. There is a useful set of guidance notes – Supporting Public Service Transformation: Cost benefit analysis for local partnerships; HM Treasury, Public Service Transformation Network; New Economy, April 2014 – and a unit cost database, the most current version of which is Unit Cost Data Base v1.4; Supporting Public Service Transformation: Cost benefit analysis for local partnerships; HM Treasury, Public Service Transformation Network; New Economy, March 2015. The latter is in EXCEL format, as is the main tool itself – Greater Manchester Cost Benefit Analysis Tool, version 4.2, March 2015.

- The tool calculated a final total using an 'uplift' figure, which is an estimate of the numbers of actual crimes committed in comparison to the number of crimes that a person is convicted for.[4]

Using that approach we were able to provide detailed costings relating to offending and anti-social behaviour for five YIF projects.

For projects where we were able to access and analyse offending data for their cohorts over time, we were also able to undertake some very detailed costings and, for all such projects, to identify significant savings associated with positive impacts on reoffending.

The team used very robust and carefully researched cost estimates for specific offences and examined costs at several levels, including fiscal, as well as economic and social costs.

That work illustrated first of all how 'expensive' some individual YIF participants have actually been in terms of previous offending. We provide an example below, which is a presentation of costings for three participants from one YIF project.

Figure 10: Breakdown of previous offending costs (fiscal, economic and social) for three YIF participants

These three participants represent less than 1% of the participants listed in that project's database at the time of our analysis, so the amounts involved are substantial.

Although it cannot be claimed that the sums involved are somehow immediately 'cashable' if they are prevented or avoided they are nonetheless very significant and illustrate how substantial and multi-faceted the benefits can be just in relation to offending, to the extent that a programme or project is able to bring about reductions or a cessation in individual offending.

More specifically in terms of thresholds of cost-effectiveness, it is clear that if costs of this kind can be avoided even for a small number of young participants, it makes the costs of the interventions themselves highly justified. For some projects, we were able to calculate offending costs directly for much larger cohorts, or to extrapolate up

4. Specific offence types vary widely in terms of how closely their actual occurrence matches official recorded crime figures. While very serious crimes such as homicide have little or no element of 'hidden crime', other offences such as shoplifting certainly do – that is, for offences in the latter category, a person will often commit a large number of offences that they are not convicted or even arrested for. So that particular offence has an uplift figure of 16.1, for example. The uplift figures used by the team were produced by Greater Manchester Police, to inform the crime section of the New Economy toolkit.

to larger cohorts from smaller group costings. Those analyses were highly detailed but in terms of broad figures they showed not only how substantial the costs of offending can be in terms of public expenditure but also how cost-effective resettlement projects can be if they are successful in working with young people to reduce or eliminate individual offending. In one case, based on very detailed analysis of offending data for both a sizeable project cohort and a comparison group, we estimated the value of avoided offence costs at just over £9,000,000.

Below we provide another example below of how detailed costings of offending can be undertaken for larger cohorts. For this project, we were able to access useable offending data on a sub-group of 85 participants an followed the same steps listed above to estimate the costs of offending both before and after joining the YIF project.

Table 3 summarises all offending costs for this sub-group, relating to offences committed prior to their start dates with Project 12. Table 4 offers a similar presentation for all offences committed by these participants after their project start dates.

Taken together these two tables clearly illustrate that:

• the costs of offending can be quite substantial even for small numbers of individuals
• the details concerning 'after' offences committed by these YIF participants are more positive overall than those presented in the 'before' table

The costs are broken down into the categories described above and we have also calculated totals using uplift figures. It is important to note that the uplift figure should be interpreted cautiously, however, and the 'total public value' should normally be the overall cost estimate to use for this purpose. Given that offences that are not prosecuted do not incur the same level of fiscal costs, we have deducted a proportion of direct criminal justice costs from these totals. Uplifted totals should still be regarded as indicative only, since we do not know how many offences participants may have committed for which they were not officially charged or prosecuted. As noted earlier, uplift multipliers are based on large aggregate data sets.

Table 3: Costs of offending for 85 YIF (Project 12) participants – offences committed prior to their project start dates

	Recorded incidents	Cost (fiscal) per incident	Total fiscal	Economic impact per incident	Total economic impact	Social impact per incident	Total social impact	Total public value	With uplift
Antisocial behaviour	32	671	21,472	(no estimate available)	(no estimate available)	(no estimate available)	(no estimate available)	21,472	10,736
Burglary in a dwelling	23	1,522	35,015	1,953	44,919	898	20,659	100,593	232,640
Burglary not in a dwelling	25	1,786	44,659	2,293	57,327	1,055	26,370	128,356	201,450
Common assault	26	509	13,233	357	9,277	1,096	28,501	51,011	350,719
Criminal damage	20	170	3,400	353	7,069	657	13,132	23,602	129,219
Other wounding	8	3,093	24,743	1,548	12,385	6,332	50,658	87,785	113,121
Robbery	11	4,110	45,206	1,503	16,537	4,238	46,621	108,364	411,651
Serious wounding	3	20,814	62,443	1,548	4,644	6,332	18,997	86,084	82,294
Sexual offences	4	4,023	16,094	5,879	23,517	31,638	126,550	166,161	2,150,352
Shoplifting	47	29	1,367	109	5,100	(no estimate available)	(no estimate available)	6,466	93,106
Theft (not vehicle)	29	400	11,613	285	8,272	164	4,768	24,653	56,540
Theft from vehicle	10	67	671	717	7,170	370	3,702	11,544	39,228
Vehicle theft	26	265	6,893	4,160	108,159	1,112	28,908	143,960	182,667
Other crime	207	681	141,010	756	156,523	1,843	381,584	679,117	3,164,785
Total	471	(no estimate available)	427,818	(no estimate available)	460,899	(no estimate available)	750,451	1,639,168	7,218,508

Table 4: Costs of offending for 85 YIF (project 12) participants – offences committed *after* their project start dates

	Recorded incidents	Cost (fiscal) per incident	Total fiscal	Economic impact per incident	Total economic impact	Social impact per incident	Total social impact	Total public value	With uplift
Antisocial behaviour	5	671	3,355	(no estimate available)	(no estimate available)	(no estimate available)	(no estimate available)	3,355	1,678
Burglary in a dwelling	13	1,522	19,791	1,953	25,389	898	11,677	56,857	131,492
Burglary not in a dwelling	9	1,786	16,077	2,293	20,638	1,055	9,493	46,208	72,522
Common assault	19	509	9,670	357	6,780	1,096	20,828	37,277	256,295
Criminal damage	13	170	2,210	353	4,595	657	8,536	15,341	83,992
Other wounding	1	3,093	3,093	1,548	1,548	6,332	6,332	10,973	14,140
Robbery	7	4,110	28,767	1,503	10,523	4,238	29,668	68,959	261,960
Serious wounding	3	20,814	62,443	1,548	4,644	6,332	18,997	86,084	82,294
Sexual offences	0	4,023	0	5,879	0	31,638	0	0	0
Shoplifting	40	29	1,163	109	4,340	(no estimate available)	(no estimate available)	5,503	79,239
Theft (not vehicle)	20	400	8,009	285	5,705	164	3,289	17,002	38,993
Theft from vehicle	2	67	134	717	1,434	370	740	2,309	7,846
Vehicle theft	4	265	1,060	4,160	16,640	1,112	4,447	22,148	28,103
Other crime	133	681	90,601	756	100,568	1,843	245,172	436,341	2,033,412
Total	269	(no estimate available)	246,374	(no estimate available)	202,804	(no estimate available)	359,179	808,357	3,091,965

It is worth highlighting further points about the above tables, especially given that the main interest here is in making before and after comparisons.

First of all, the time periods involved on both tables do vary widely by individual; some individuals were offending as long as several years prior to joining the project, for example, and were then involved with the project for a much shorter time period. One participant had committed nine offences over a 52-month period prior to starting with Project 12 and had committed no offences since starting with the project, but had only been involved with the project for just over four months at the time of the data download.

That sort of difference in time periods was reversed with some other participants – in one case a total of six offences were committed over a nine-month period prior to starting with Project 12, and one offence was committed over the 26.5 month period since joining the project.

In order to describe this variation more precisely the team calculated time periods for all participants in the sub-group, then calculated averages both for numbers of offences committed per month overall and the average number of offences committed by single individuals per month. That analysis suggested that there is indeed a positive difference between the 'before and after' periods in terms of offending.

The length of the 'before' time periods (i.e. the time period between the participant's first offence before starting with the project and their project start date) ranged from zero – in cases where an individual was listed as having not committed any offences prior to their start date – to over 60 months, with an average of 13.5 months. The length of the 'after' time periods (i.e. the time period between the participant's project start date and the cut-off date for the offending data set) ranged from just over two months to more than 40 months, with an average of 18 months.

Using those time periods to calculate 'per month' offending rates for each participant and then averaging those for the whole cohort it was possible to show that, while participants were committing offences at an average rate of 0.39 offences per month before their start with the project, the figure for the second time period had reduced to 0.2 offences per month.

Converting that reduction into cost terms (using an average annual public value total per offence, without uplift) would mean a reduction in annual offence costs of £134,514 across the whole cohort of 85 individuals.

Although the team only had offending data for 85 Project 12 participants, we know that there were more custody-leavers than this in the project cohort at the time of the data download. Extrapolating up to that number, the estimated reduction in annual offence costs increases to £199,017. If we extrapolate up again to account for the project's full funding period, the figure becomes £238,821 per annum.

Since the latter is an annual figure, we have also estimated an overall figure as well, which is meant to reflect the fact that annual savings would accrue pro-rata for the life of the project beyond the date of the data download. That final figure is £401,217, which is a very conservative estimate in our view, given the likelihood that some of our 'before' offending data appeared to have gaps, and given also that the case study data for that project suggest a much more positive cost-benefit impact overall.

8.3 Cost savings relating to reduced custodial sentences

In cases where it is possible to demonstrate that a project has had a positive impact on offending, it is also possible to calculate benefits in terms of sentences avoided or more specifically, further custodial sentences that might have been avoided.

This should be regarded as another set of estimates which can be used to assess a project's overall cost-benefit impact, given that some offence cost estimates also include a proportion of criminal justice and/or sentencing costs. It is important when undertaking cost-benefit assessments to avoid possible double-counting, and to ensure that where comparisons are made which could involve overlaps, this is clearly noted in presentations.

The average annual overall cost of a prison place in the UK is estimated to be £35,371,[5] although the costs of custody for young people are significantly higher.[6] The average cost of a place in custody is suggested to be £100,000 per annum, but in the case of Secure Training Centres (STCs) and Secure Children's Homes (SCHs) the average cost is upwards of £170,000 and £210,000 per place each year respectively.[7]

For the purpose of calculating costs in this section we have used the lower figure of £35,371.

In order to estimate the costs of custody, it is also necessary to estimate the average length of custodial sentences for the custody-leavers who have engaged with YIF projects. Across the criminal court system, the average sentence length for all those sentenced to immediate custody for indictable offences increased from 15 months in 2001 to 17 months in 2011.[8] However, for young people the average length of custodial sentences is somewhat shorter. For those aged under 18 the average length of time spent in custody increased by eight days to 85 days in 2012/13.[9] For young adult offenders aged 18-20 the average length of a prison sentence in 2007 was 11.6 months.[10] We have used this figure to approximate the average length of previous custodial sentences for YIF participants.

Use of the above two findings allows us to calculate the average cost of each previous YIF client custodial sentence at £34,192. If we estimate that the YIF programme as a whole has engaged with some 2,000 young custody-leavers, then the estimated public cost associated with previous custodial sentences for these YIF participants would be £68,384.

This would also be a conservative estimate, since we know from the offending information that we were able to gather for some projects that some YIF participants had several previous custodial sentences, and the above figure assumes that each participant had only one. Unfortunately, however, the team did not have access to full details about previous convictions and sentences issued by the court.

In terms of avoided costs of future custodial sentences, it is worth attempting to estimate possible impacts on custodial sentences themselves. Prison Reform Trust data reveals that, on average, 47% of adult offenders are reconvicted within one year of release.[11] Other evidence points to higher rates for young offenders. For example, Ministry of Justice figures show that 73% of under-18s reoffended within 12 months of being released from custody for the year ending September 2011, up from 70% for the previous 12 months.[12] Regarding young adults, data from the Howard League for Penal Reform indicates that 74% of young adults released from prison will be reconvicted within a year.[13]

Using that figure of 74% and applying it to the total number of YIF custody-leavers worked with by the programme, we would expect 1,480 of these young people to be reconvicted within one year of release. Of those, we would expect a significant minority to receive another custodial sentence (perhaps as high as 40%, or 592 young people from this cohort). While the available information is too sketchy to allow us to estimate a precise figure for the actual number of custodial sentences handed down to YIF participants (and the applicable time periods would not allow us to identify these outcomes anyway, since the project start dates for some people are less than one year ago), the information that we do have suggests that the actual numbers of YIF participants being sent back into custody is far lower than we would expect.

5. This figure represents the overall average cost per prisoner and comprises "public sector establishments direct resource expenditure" plus "an apportionment of costs borne centrally by Her Majesty's Prison Service (HMPS) and the National Offender Management Service" and the "resource expenditure of contracted-out prisons, also increased by certain costs borne centrally." Unit Cost Data Base v1.3; Supporting Public Service Transformation: Cost benefit analysis for local partnerships; HM Treasury, Public Service Transformation Network; New Economy, April 2014; the figure has been uplifted to 2015 values.
6. The Government published a consultation paper on 14 February 2013, Transforming Youth Custody: Putting education at the heart of detention (CP4/2013). This set out the Government's vision for Secure Colleges that would equip young people with the skills, qualifications and self-discipline they need to lead productive lives on release.
7. Criminal Justice and Courts Bill; Fact sheet: Secure Colleges, 2014; figures have not been uplifted, as the estimates were only meant to be indicative.
8. http://sentencingcouncil.judiciary.gov.uk/facts/facts-and-figures.htm
9. Youth Justice Statistics 2012/13; England and Wales; Youth Justice Board/Ministry of Justice, Executive Summary; Published 30th January 2014.
10. Transition to Adulthood, Working with young adults with multiple needs; A commissioning guide; Revolving Doors Agency
11. Prison: the facts; Bromley Briefings, summer 2013, Prison Reform Trust.
12. Neil Puffett, Children and Young People Now, 'Youth re-offending rates on the rise', Friday 26 July 2013.
13. http://www.howardleague.org/young-adults/

To the extent that numbers of new custodial sentences handed out to YIF participants are lower than expected, it can be seen how quickly benefits accrue from the programme's work just on this one measure. For example, if just one less participant gets a custodial sentence than expected, the costs associated with that avoided custodial sentence would be £34,192, a figure which is almost equal to the total unit costs for seven YIF participants (at the typical level of unit cost for 'high end' participants – see section 8.1). To look at it another way, a 10% less than expected rate of future sentencing in the YIF cohort would have an associated benefit of £2,024,166.

It should be pointed out that these avoided costs are not immediately cashable – that is, they are not sums of money which can immediately be redeployed or saved directly in the short term – but they are substantial nonetheless and warrant careful consideration as part of an overall assessment of costs and benefits.[14]

8.4 Other costable non-offending related outcomes

The following table summarises annual benefits which can be realised when sustained impacts are achieved in a variety of areas including reductions in substance misuse, employment, and the successful addressing of mental health issues etc.

---

14. For a useful discussion of issues concerning fiscal benefits and cashability, see New Economy (2015).

Table 5: Indicative costs and benefits (per annum) for positive non-offending-related outcomes, by number of YIF project participants

	Number of participants				
	1	2	3	4	5
Alcohol misuse – estimated annual cost to the NHS of alcohol dependency, per year per dependent drinker[i]	3,693	7,386	11,079	14,771	18,464
Drugs misuse – average annual fiscal savings resulting from reductions in health and social care costs as a result of effective treatment[ii]	16,437	32,874	98,622	65,748	82,185
Apprenticeship Level 3 Qualification – annual benefits to the exchequer[iii]	3,709	7,418	22,255	14,837	18,546
Fiscal benefit from a workless JSA claimant entering work (per individual, per year)[iv]	9,949	19,898	59,694	39,796	49,745
Not in Employment Education or Training – average cost per 18-24 year old not in education, employment or training[v]	14,827	29,653	88,960	59,306	74,133
Homelessness application – average one-off and ongoing costs associated with statutory homelessness[vi]	2,798	5,595	16,785	11,190	13,988
Average cost of service provision for people suffering from mental health disorders, per person per year (all ages, including children, adolescents and adults) – total fiscal cost[vii]	6,872	13,743	41,230	27,487	34,358

Using estimates of this kind, the team costed a range of areas where we were able to access data of sufficient breadth and quality. Areas included:

• mental health

• substance misuse (including drugs and/or alcohol)

• accommodation

• employment, training and education

---

i. See Alcohol Use Disorders: diagnosis, assessment and management of harmful drinking and alcohol dependence (NICE Clinical Practice Guidance 115), p.408. Figures have been uplifted for 2015 and include fiscal and social costs. This measure is 'amber-flagged' in the New Economy toolkit due to the lack of a full breakdown of constituent costs.

ii. *See Estimating the crime reduction benefits of drug treatment and recovery* (National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse, 2012), p.11. Figures have been uplifted to 2015, and include fiscal and social costs.

iii. This figure is simply an example of the level of benefit generated by a specific qualification – similar costs can be derived for a very wide range of qualifications. The actual calculations involved in producing these estimates are complex – see BIS (2011): *Returns to Intermediate and Low Level Vocational Qualifications*, p. 9-10.

iv. *See The Department for Work and Pensions Social Cost-Benefit Analysis framework* (Working Paper 86)/response to parliamentary questions (HC Deb 6 February 2013, vol 558, col 352W).

v. See *Youth Unemployment: the crisis we cannot afford* (ACEVO Commission on Youth Unemployment, 2012).

vi. *See Research briefing: Immediate costs to government of loss of home* (Shelter, 2012), p.7. Figures have been uplifted for 2016, and include fiscal and economic costs.

vii. See *Paying the Price: the cost of mental health care in England to 2026* (King's Fund, 2008), p.118, 25, 40, 59, 74, 96, 104-109 and 114. Figures have been uplifted to 2015, and include fiscal costs.

8.5 Other costable outcomes

In addition to cost estimates associated with those key resettlement outcome areas referred to above, the team also looked at other more specific costs associated with events or issues that projects would not normally collect data on routinely. In cases where it is possible to demonstrate that a project has had a positive impact on offending, it is also possible to calculate benefits in terms of sentences avoided or more specifically, further custodial sentences that might have been avoided.

8.51 Regular (multi-agency) intensive monitoring undertaken with persistent/priority offenders

As part of our work with some YIF projects, we became aware of cases where a young person's work with a project appeared to have resulted not only in a range of positive outcomes associated with key resettlement issues but also in reductions in offending. The reductions in turn related to changes in the level of monitoring that they had been subjected to because they were prolific or priority offenders or because they were deemed to be particularly high risk.

In one project area we interviewed a range of local practitioners as part of our development of cost estimates for this kind of monitoring. In a few cases it was clear not only that a particular YIF participant had been de-registered from intensive individual monitoring but that such de-registration was described by key stakeholders as being a direct result of the work of the project. In other words, it was clear from the evidence that the project had been pivotal in bringing about the change with the young person.

Table 6 provides some indicative figures illustrating how potential savings can vary according to the number of participants involved and the durability of the outcome itself.

Table 6: Intensive monitoring of PPO/high risk offenders – illustration of benefits for reductions in costs relating to YIF participants[15]

No. of offenders	Police[viii]	Drugs/alcohol worker[ix]	Pobation/ YOS[x]	Total cost per week	Total cost per month	Total cost for six months
1	£1,378	£264	£412	£2,054	£8,901	£53,404
2	£2,756	£528	£824	£4,108	£17,801	£106,808
3	£4,134	£792	£1,236	£6,162	£26,702	£160,212
4	£5,512	£1,056	£1,648	£8,216	£35,603	£213,616
5	£6,890	£1,320	£2,060	£10,270	£44,503	£267,020
6	£8,268	£1,584	£2,472	£12,324	£53,404	£320,424

Having established a broad framework for costing these kinds of outcomes, we then used them with other projects where the evidence suggested that developments of this kind had occurred.

---

15. All figures are based on cost estimates provided in Nadia Brookes, Barbara Barrett, Ann Netten and Emily Knapp, 2013; Unit Costs in Criminal Justice. Personal Social Services Research Unit, PSSRU Discussion Paper 2855; and Lesley Curtis, 2013: Unit Costs of Health and Social Care 2013. Personal Social Services Research Unit, University of Kent. Figures have not been uplifted to 2016 levels but the relevant uplift would be 1.5%.

---

viii. Total is calculated assuming that roughly three-fifths of the police hours (six hours at £79 per hour) are client-focused work and two-fifths (four hours at £226 per hour) face to face.
ix. Total is calculated using figures for a Specialist Support Worker, and assumed one hour of case-related work at £71 per hour and one hour of face-to-face work at £193 per hour.
x. Total is calculated using YOT practitioner figures and assuming two hours case-related work at £45 per hour and two hours face-to-face work at £161 per hour.

Some of the more specific areas referred to above could only be costed in relation to individual case studies, where we were able to gather data concerning them.

8.6 Using case studies to highlight overall costs and benefits

The second approach to costing involved focusing on individual case studies and incorporating a range of cost estimates onto a timeline. The approach is described in some detail in our main report 'Resettlement work with young people: using individual case studies to assess costs and benefits' but, in general, the approach involves several key steps:

- pooling all available information concerning an individual case and supplementing this where possible with specific details concerning incidents/behaviours and responses to these over time
- calculating appropriate unit costs for the particular service or intervention using calculated figures for different client groups as discussed in section 8.1.1, according to the intensity and duration of their involvement
- plotting such costs over time for that individual, using either monthly averages or more precise figures if available
- plotting costs related to other services that the individual uses both before and during the intervention of interest
- identifying which areas of need were relevant to that individual, and selecting the most robust cost estimates available for those areas of need, to use in plotting costs (both reactive and proactive) and benefits over time for that individual

This approach to costing individual case studies adds considerable power to an overall cost-benefit assessment of a project or programme. The material presented earlier in this section of the report is highly useful on its own but costed case studies allow us to incorporate a time dimension and to begin to consider questions about when particular cost-benefit changes might occur. In short, the method allows us to:

- illustrate how levels of expenditure and investment change over time in relation to particular clients
- identify shifts in key types of cost – in particular, shifts in weighting between reactive and proactive costs[16]
- identify break-even points on a timeline (i.e. the points at which cumulative benefits begin to outstrip cumulative costs)
- extrapolate up to wider sub-groups, where possible

We provide some examples taken from YIF projects that we have worked with and discuss these below.

8.6.1 Case study – Henry (Project 14)

This client was both a care leaver and a young offender, who began with Project 14 in March 2015, at which point he was 18 years of age.

He had accommodation issues and difficulties with substance misuse, emotional wellbeing, and money and debt. He also had narrow employment prospects, which the project helped him with, in addition to the other difficulties mentioned. The project assisted him in securing employment and suitable accommodation, and also in accessing support for his impending parenthood.

We provide details below, concerning specific areas where we have used available information to estimate costs/benefits and plug these into the timeline tool.

---

16. Reactive expenditure refers to resources that are required to address or 'deal with' a negative event such as a crime, an accident, a sectioning, suicide etc. Proactive expenditure is more like an investment which is at least partly designed to reduce the need for reactive expenditure in the future. If a drugs worker manages to work with a client to reduce problematic drug use, for example, that intervention has a cost but it is a proactive, strategic cost in terms of that individual's trajectory. The distinction is widely used in the literature.

8.6.1.1 Areas costed

8.6.1.1.1 Offending

The information suggests that this client served a period in custody after being convicted of arson; the case notes also suggest that staff at Project 14 regarded Henry as being at high risk of reoffending. There are references to other previous offending but further details concerning this were not available.

Cost estimates for arson are notoriously varied and without knowing full details about the offence it would have been risky to use any of the available estimates as a basis for costing Henry's offending prior to involvement with the project. We therefore opted for a more conservative estimate at a moderately serious property offence level (based on details provided in the New Economy toolkit and uplifted to 2015 figures) and converted this into an annual and then a monthly estimate.[17] Given that Henry has not offended again since starting with the project, we have used that monthly figure as a 'per month' benefit during the period of his involvement.

8.6.1.1.2 Sentence costs

We have not included cost estimates for Henry's custodial sentence (although it is well known that custodial sentences are extremely expensive) but we have included the per month cost of the supervision portion of that sentence, as those costs were incurred during the period when he was engaged with the project. That cost has been entered as a reactive cost during the first six months of Henry's period of involvement with the project.[18] It is important to note that a component of costs associated with two of the following areas of provision (substance misuse and homelessness) also relates to offending costs but, as these are plugged into the tool as benefits on the timeline, it would be wrong to exclude supervision costs during the same period.

8.6.1.1.3 Substance misuse

The case notes suggest that cannabis use was particularly problematic for this client when he started with the project but that this problem was reduced during the initial months of involvement, to the point where it was no longer a problem at all (when the client secured paid employment seven months in). In the absence of further detail we have included only 15% of the normal monthly benefit of having eliminated a substance misuse problem and we have also assumed that this change was incremental (using a period of six months as the change period).[19]

8.6.1.1.4 Accommodation issues

The case notes and feedback from project workers suggest that the project was particularly active in supporting this client in order to allow him to secure/maintain accommodation, and therefore avoid eviction and/or homelessness at particular stages of his involvement. The project appears to have worked quite successfully with the client on this issue and the feedback does suggest that if it weren't for the project the client would most probably not have been able to avoid eviction or homelessness.

---

17. Where full offence details are not known it is sometimes possible to use a generic offence cost, but this would have been quite low given the seriousness of Henry's known offence(s), and the concerns about his risk of reoffending. We have therefore used a generic property offence cost as a more accurate estimate, which has estimated fiscal costs of £1,522 per incident, economic costs of £1,953, and social costs of £898 (2015 figures; fiscal costs are basically financial costs relating to key agencies and their direct expenditure or allocation of staff resources to an incident, event or problem; wider economic and social costs are sometimes lumped together, but costs of the former sort include insurance and property costs, for example, while on the social side, costs relating to the physical and emotional impacts on victims of crime are usually included; fiscal, economic and social costs are often aggregated to come up with a 'total public value'). Given that social costs can take some period of time to accrue, whereas fiscal and direct economic costs accrue fairly quickly, conversion of a per incident estimate into a per annum (and then per month) estimate is not entirely straightforward. In this case we have included only 50% of social costs into our per annum figure, which was then used to generate a per month figure of £327.
18. We have used an annual figure of £2,380 for the cost of supervision in the community; this converts to a figure of £198 per month.
19. See table 5, note ii.

On the basis of the available information we have estimated a monthly benefit and entered that into the model.[20]

8.6.1.1.5 Securing employment

The case information suggests that this client secured paid employment at month seven of his involvement with the project, and we have therefore entered an estimate for a monthly benefit from that point in the timeline onward.[21]

8.6.1.1.6 Costs associated with project involvement

The project appears to have worked fairly intensively with this client, although the intensity of involvement also appears to have changed over time (with there being a decrease at the point where the client had secured employment and largely stopped problematic use of substances). As such, we have included a per month (proactive) high end cost for this client but reduced that to a lower maintenance cost from month seven onwards.[22]

8.6.1.1.7 Costs associated with client accessing other services

The case notes suggest that Henry did not have a positive history of engagement with other services prior to his involvement with Project 14. In fact, the available information suggests that this client did not engage well even with services that could have benefited him. Assistance and support from his project worker allowed this client to access needed services successfully (e.g. dentist, GP, housing office and benefits agencies) and these have therefore been costed as well, using a linked tool which also incorporates estimated usage of these services to generate monthly totals.

We have assumed that increased access to these services was also incremental over a six month period and that it also tailed off after month seven.

8.6.1.2 Changes in cost mix over time

In terms of changes in the mix of reactive and proactive costs (see Table 6, reference x), the following graph illustrates positive impact on that mix, up until the data specified. For the sake of illustration, we have included known costs for one month prior to involvement with the project.

---

20. We have used an annual estimate of £2,798 (or £233 per month) to reflect this saving; see Research briefing: Immediate costs to government of loss of home (Shelter, 2012), p.7. Figures have been uplifted to 2015 and include fiscal and economic costs.
21. We have used an annual estimate of £9,949 (or £829 per month) to reflect the benefits generated by the employment of an individual previously on benefits; this figure is made up of fiscal benefits only. See The Department for Work and Pensions Social Cost-Benefit Analysis framework (Working Paper 86)/response to parliamentary questions (HC Deb 6 February 2013, vol 558, col 352W).
22. Based on financial information and feedback from project management and key workers, we were able to calculate a basic (annual) unit cost of £2,431, but we also calculated separate, banded unit costs, to reflect the fact that some clients are particularly high end (and absorb a disproportionate level of project and staff resources), while some are lower maintenance and therefore have lower unit costs. In this case we calculated unit costs for two separate bands of client – high, and medium/low intensity. Feedback suggests that these two groups are fairly evenly split in terms of numbers, but we estimate that the high end users absorb a highly proportion of resources (we have used a figure of 70% to reflect that proportion, based on our work with other similar projects). Further analysis yielded two separate unit costs – one of £3,403 per annum (or just under £284 per month) and £1,458 per annum (or just under £122 per month), respectively.

Figure 11 – Changes in proportion of reactive and proactive costs over time, for case study – Henry (Project 14)
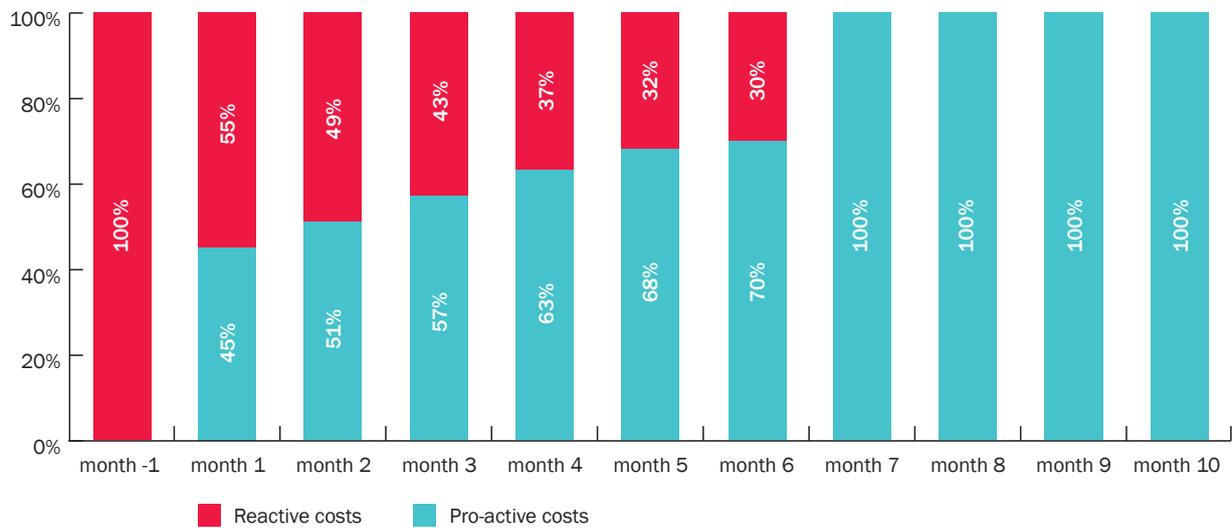
While previous costs relating to this individual were primarily (or exclusively) reactive, that mix of costs began to change when the individual was engaging with the project. By month six, reactive costs had reduced to 30% of total costs, and from month seven onward, there were no reactive costs incurred. The presentation does not include months beyond month 10, as the mix of costs remains the same until month 18.

The following graph presents the totals for both costs and benefits by month, for the period from 'month -1' (i.e. one month before participation) to month 10 (bars beyond month 10 are repetitive).

**Figure 12 – Total costs and benefits per month, for case study – Henry (Project 14)**

8.6.1.3 Cost-benefit trajectory

The following graph plots the client's 'net value' in terms of costs and benefits over time; it can be seen that it took several months for the project to gain traction with this client in terms of overall costs and benefits. That is, the costs of all interventions and events during the period of involvement (including both reactive and proactive costs) only start to be out-stripped by costed benefits generated by those interventions at about the month seven.

As the trend continues beyond month seven, the accumulated positive value increases. The presentation continues until month 18 (as the available information takes us only up to that point), by which time a net benefit of £14,967 had accrued.

Figure 13 – Net value/cost-benefit trajectory for case study – Henry (Project 14)
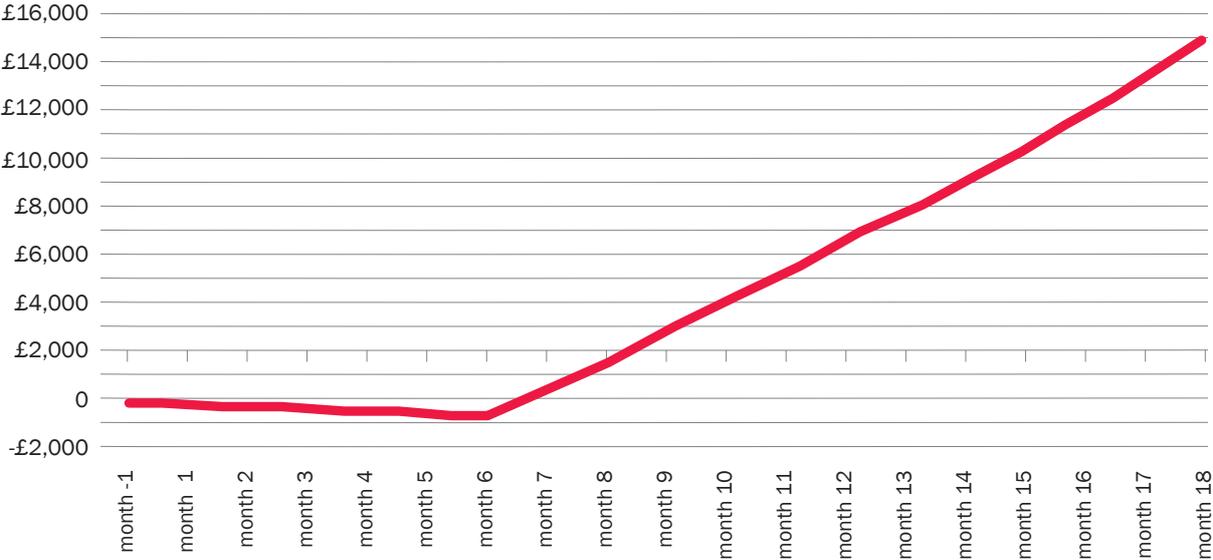
8.6.2 Case study – Walter (Project 12)

Walter started with Project 12 at the age of 20, while he was still in custody for a range of weapons offences and acquisitive crimes. He had difficulties with drugs (primarily cannabis) in particular, but he also had a difficult educational history and securing stable accommodation.

8.6.2.1 Areas costed

In terms of proactive costs, we estimated Walter's use of outside services (including a GP and a drugs worker – services which he had not accessed previously) and we also assigned him a 'high end' monthly project unit cost.

Reactive costs prior to involvement with the project including fairly high offending costs, costs associated with substance misuse (which were not also related to his offending) and costs associated with homelessness. Since the latter difficulties appear to have been resolved as a result of Walter's work with the project, we assigned monthly benefits to each of these areas and assumed that these achievements were incremental. For offending, however, Walter did commit an offence after starting with the project, so we included costs associated with that offence as reactive costs incurred after his project start date.

Walter was downgraded from red to green offender management status during his work with the project – reflecting perceived reduction in his risk and threat levels – but there was not sufficient information to allow us to cost this.

8.6.2.2 Changes in cost mix over time

The overall mix of reactive and proactive costs also changed in a more positive direction for Walter after the point when he joined the project but, in this case, reactive costs did not disappear because the participant committed a further offence after they started with the project. Since those offence costs are essentially reactive, they have pulled down the proportions accordingly in the diagram.

Figure 14 – Changes in proportion of reactive and pro-active costs over time, for case study – Walter (Project 12)
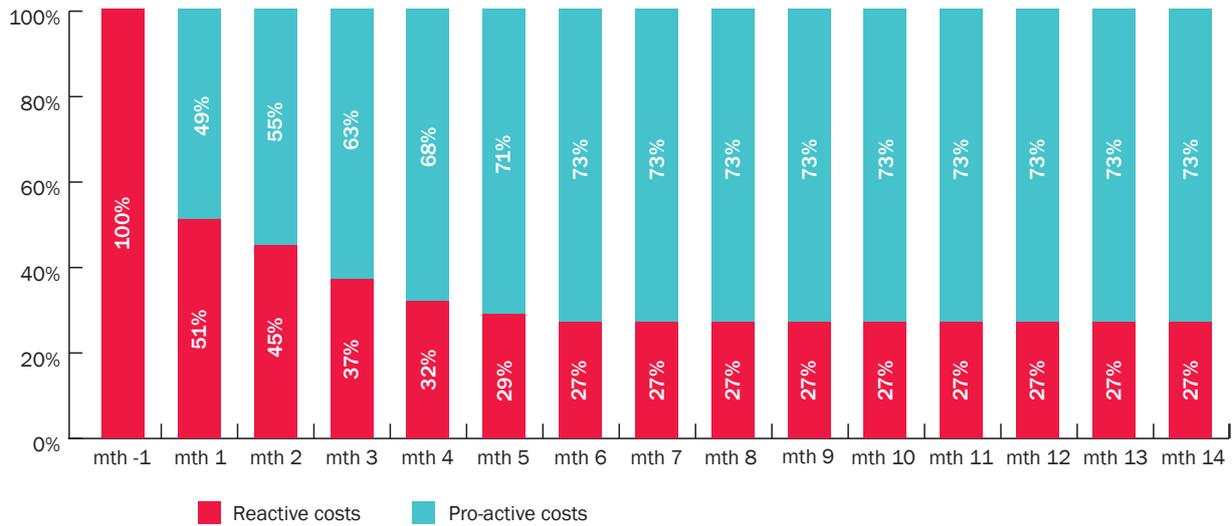
8.6.2.3 Cost-benefit trajectory

It is interesting to note that this participant still presents an upward (and linear) cost-benefit trajectory and, as can be seen at Figure 2, reached a break-even point at around month four of involvement. The break-even point is where the participant's cumulative costs for the period of their involvement begin to be outstripped by their cumulative estimated benefits.

Figure 15 – Net value over time, associated with case study – Walter (Project 12)
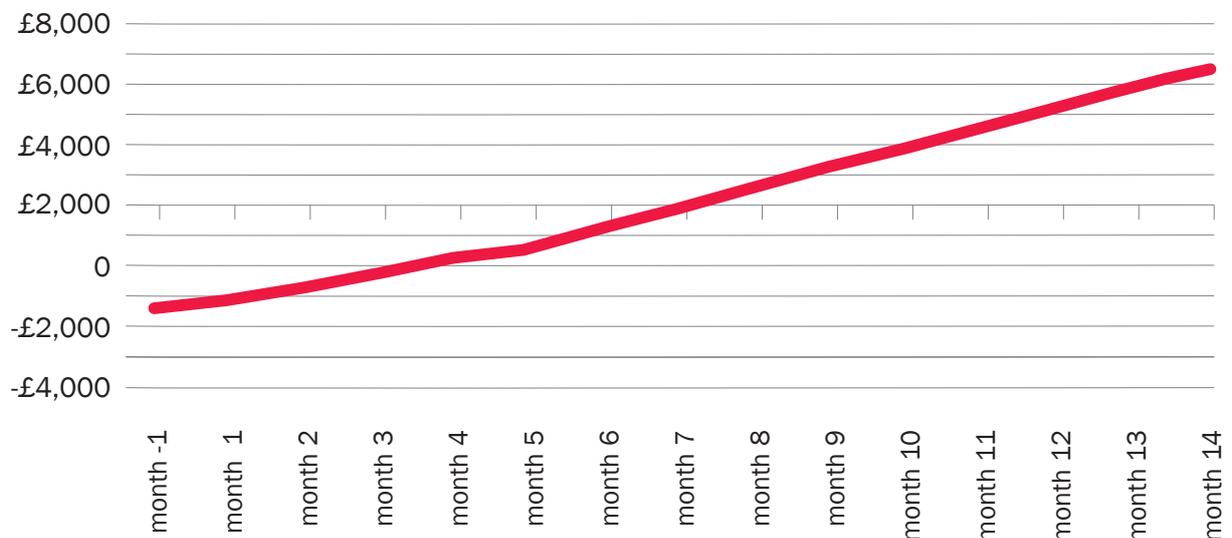
8.6.3 Case study – Jane (Project 14)

8.6.3.1 Areas costed

We do have information on reactive costs concerning this client's offending; those details suggest that Jane was convicted for four offences prior to her involvement with the project, with three of these being violent in nature and one being a shoplifting offence. The available information suggests that there were no convictions after the client's start date.

Those four offences had a total public value of £33,057 (made up of £9,308 fiscal, £4,753 economic and £18,997 social costs) over a 62-month period. We have converted this into a pre-project monthly average of £533 which, since the client did not offend again after starting with the project, we have used as a per month benefit during the period of her involvement. We did not have sufficient information to allow us to cost any criminal sentences for this case study.

Substance misuse, including both alcohol and a wide range of drugs, was clearly a serious problem for this client – one that was sufficiently serious to have had a clear impact on mental and physical health. It was noted that difficulties with substance misuse were strongly connected to a range of incidents including arrests for drunkenness and violence and appearances in A&E departments. We would normally cost events of this kind over time as well, but the available information was not sufficiently detailed to allow this.

The case information also suggests clearly that substance misuse issues were addressed successfully during the client's period of involvement with the project but that this took some time to take effect.

We have therefore used a period of eight months as the best estimate for the period of incremental positive change; although progress during that period was clearly not linear, the evidence suggests that by the end of that period the difficulties referred to were no longer an issue for the client. In our view the evidence justifies calculating standard benefit amounts for this progress and we have calculated a per month figure based on those.

For accommodation, again, the case notes and feedback from project workers suggest that the project was particularly active in supporting this client in order to allow her to secure/maintain suitable accommodation, including a supported lodgings placement at one point.

The project appears to have worked quite successfully with the client on this issue and the feedback suggests that accommodation outcomes could have been quite negative without project intervention. We have therefore estimated a monthly benefit and entered that into the model, using the same estimates as for previous case studies above.

The case information suggests that this client secured paid employment working with young care-leavers but as this post was taken up after the client's official project closure date we have not included the estimated benefits in the model (which only runs to month 14). However, we can assume that those benefits – calculated in the same manner as for previous case studies – would have accrued after that point.

In terms of proactive costs, the project appears to have worked fairly intensively with this client, and the intensity of involvement also appears to have been fairly steady during the period of contact. As such, we have used a per month (proactive) high end cost for this client, for the whole period from the first month to month 14, with that cost being calculated in the same manner as for previous case studies.

Finally, given the available information for this client, we calculated her access to other services on the same basis as for the previous case studies above and have used the same assumptions.

8.6.3.2 Changes in cost mix over time

In terms of changes in the mix of reactive and proactive costs (see footnote 16), the following graph illustrates positive impact on that mix, up until the data specified. We have again included known costs for one month prior to involvement with the project for the sake of illustration; bars beyond month 10 are not presented, as they simply repeat the pattern established by month 10.

Figure 16 – Changes in proportion of reactive and pro-active costs over time, for case study – Jane (Project 14)

The following graph presents the totals for both costs and benefits by month for the period from 'month -1' (i.e. one month before participation) to month 14.

**Figure 17 – Total costs and benefits per month, for case study - Jane (Project 14)**

8.6.3.3 Cost-benefit trajectory

The following graph plots the client's net value in terms of costs and benefits over time and in this case it can be seen that it took several months for the project to gain traction with this client in terms of overall costs and benefits. That is, the costs of all interventions and events during the period of involvement (including both reactive and proactive costs) only start to be outstripped by costed benefits generated by those interventions at about the six month point.

As the trend continues beyond month six, the accumulated positive value also increases. The presentation continues until month 14 – as the available information takes us only up to that point – by which time a net benefit of £14,551 had accrued.

Figure 18 – Net value/cost-benefit trajectory for case study – Jane (Project 14)
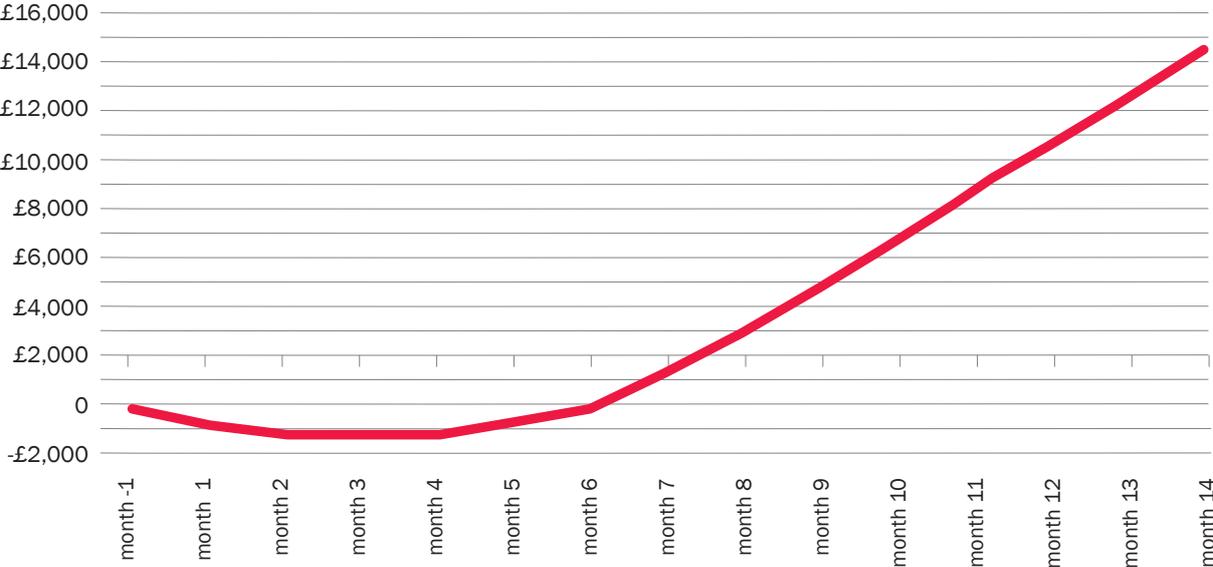
8.6.4 Case study – John (Project 12)

John began his work with Project 12 at the age of 18. He was dealing with a range of difficulties at that time, including street homelessness, substance misuse (both alcohol and drugs), anger management, previous traumatic experience (specifically family violence) and a number of physical health issues.

This case study is of particular interest because it highlights a non-linear trajectory which will be very recognisable to those who work in the field. Projects that work with vulnerable young people will often describe individual progress as being zigzag or "spiral", as a worker in this case described it. There are many cases where solid progress is made over time, and where the individual then 'back-slides', relapses, or otherwise loses control of events or individual life circumstances. Those points where progress stalls also tend to be points where additional reactive costs are incurred, either because the individual reoffends, begins using substances again or loses a tenancy or employment, for example.

8.6.4.1 Areas costed

In terms of reactive costs, the team estimated costs for John's offending, and his substance misuse and homelessness, factoring out some of the constituent costs to avoid overlap with offending cost estimates.

As noted above, John offended again after having made considerable progress in a range of areas, and he starting misusing substances again and also became homeless, so we added per month additional reactive costs for these developments onto his timeline. Prior to that time, we included per month estimates for benefits in all of the areas mentioned.

In terms of proactive costs, the project worked fairly intensively with this client and the intensity of involvement appears to have been fairly steady during the period of involvement, up to and including those months where he reoffended.

We have therefore used a per month proactive high end cost for this client, for the whole period from the first month to month five, with that cost being calculated in the same manner as for previous case studies.

Finally, given the available information for this client, we calculated his access to other services on the same basis as for the previous case studies above. We have also used the same assumptions although the costs were higher in this case because the number of outside services that he accessed was fairly wide (including some specialist dental and other medical services).

8.6.4.2 Changes in cost mix over time

In this particular case, the individual offended again, and also lost a tenancy and started misusing substances again several months after starting with the project. The trajectory in terms of reactive and proactive costs can be seen on the following graph.

Figure 19 – Changes in proportion of reactive and proactive costs over time, for case study – John (Project 12)
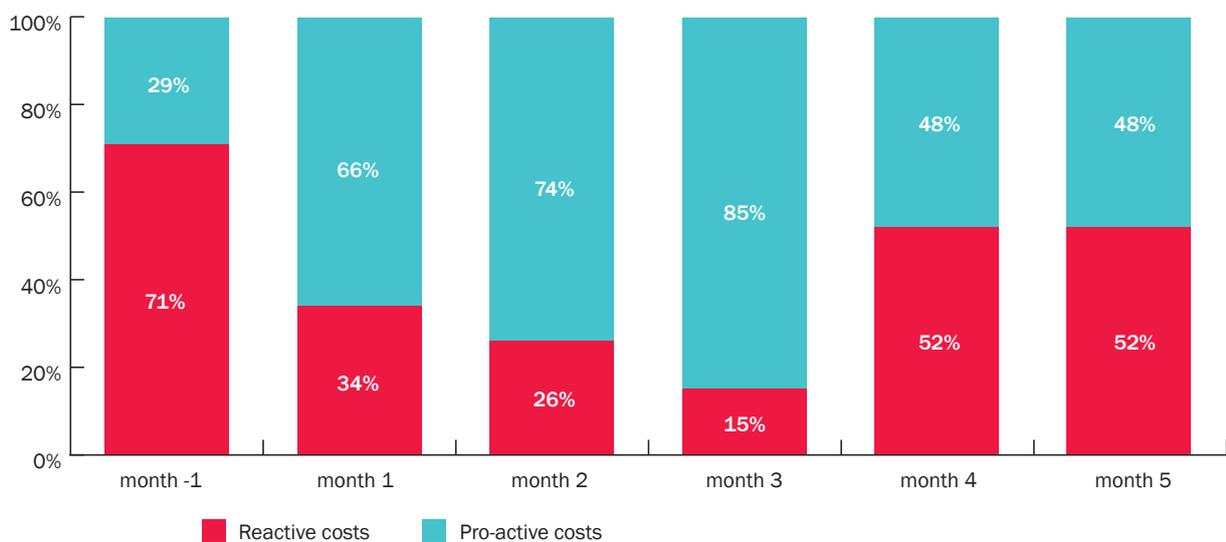
The actual figures for estimated costs and benefits can also be illustrated over time, by month, as on the following graph.

Figure 20 – Costs and benefits by month, for case study – John (Project 12)
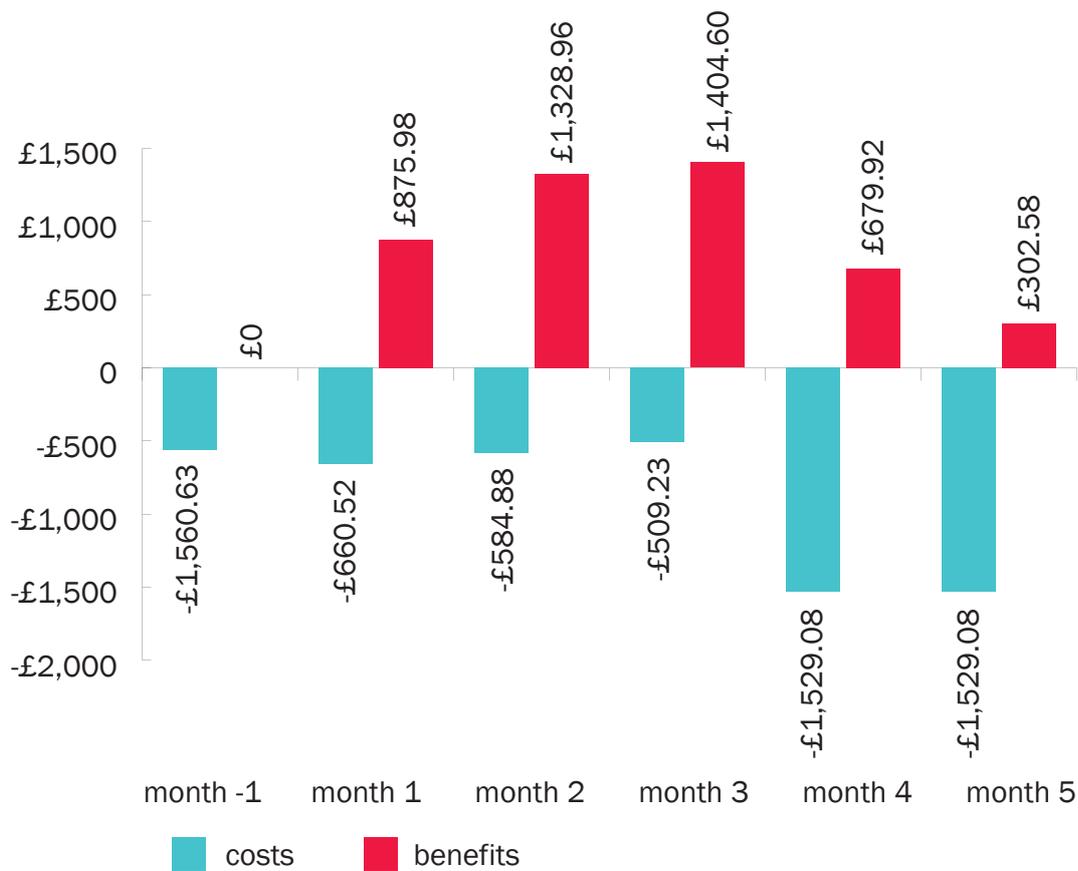
8.6.4.3 Cost-benefit trajectory

And finally, although the first few months of involvement with the project are associated with an upward trend in terms of costs and benefits, the trend reverses when the individual gets into further trouble, as can be seen on the following figure.

Figure 21 – Net value over time, associated with case study – John (Project 12)
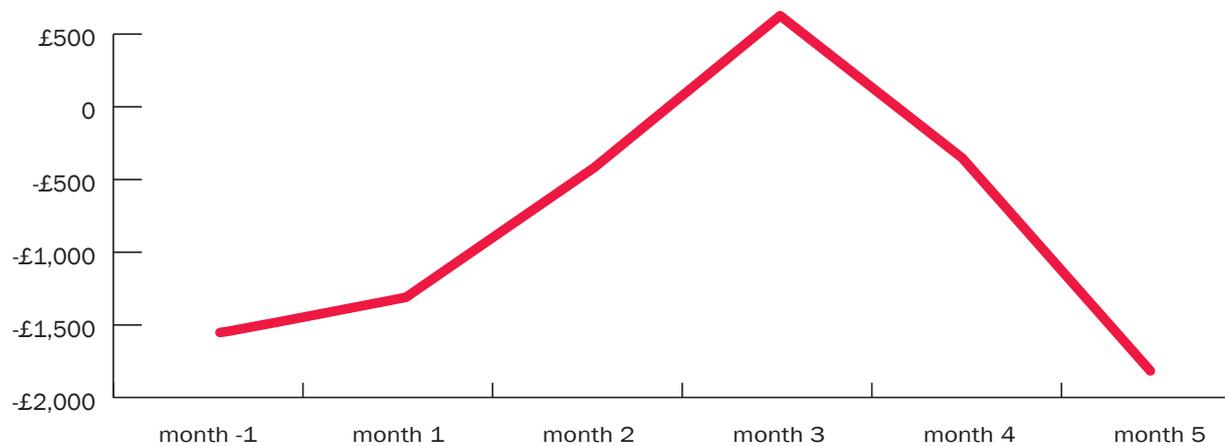
8.6.5 Case study – Jill (Project 8)

Jill began her work with Project 8 at the age of 17, at which point she was dealing with a range of issues concerning her mental and physical health, accommodation and substance misuse. She also had a patchy educational history and needed help with a range of issues relating to EET more generally.

As in the previous case study, this one also illustrates a non-linear trajectory, with an upward spike in costs associated with a significant mental health event which took place while Jill was working with the project (and therefore a downward spike on the overall cost-benefit trajectory presented in Figure 24).

8.6.5.1 Areas costed

The team incorporated reactive cost estimates for Jill's offending – she committed 20 offences prior to involvement with the project and four after her start date. Since we had precise details concerning each of these offences, we were able to use specific estimates for each offence type, rather than the generic estimate referred to in Section 8.2. Her accommodation and substance misuse issues were also costed (ensuring that the criminal justice component of the latter were reduced to avoid double counting), as were mental health costs (more specifically, the costs of formal sectioning under the Mental Health Act, and subsequent costs of hospitalisation in a psychiatric facility).[23]

Proactive costs for this client included project involvement (using a high end estimate per month), and costs associated with Jill's use of external services (which she had not been accessing adequately prior to involvement with the project).

Since difficulties associated with stable accommodation, substance misuse and mental health appear to have been resolved during the period of Jill's involvement with the project, we assigned monthly benefits to each of these areas and assumed that these achievements were incremental. In terms of offending, we have costed this precisely based on the police data but with the reduction in offending being incorporated into the model as a benefit in relevant months of the timeline.

8.6.5.2 Changes in cost mix over time

The overall mix of reactive and proactive costs did move in a more positive direction for Jill after the point when she joined the project, although the mental health incident referred to above had an impact on this, as did offending committed subsequent to project involvement.

---

23. The case notes suggest that the individual was sectioned under the Mental Health Act around the time of joining the project and that during that period she was also in hospital for some months for mental health reasons. The team could not find an estimate for the average cost of an individual sectioning process, and so designed a composite estimate based on other available figures. The literature suggests that the costs of sectioning can vary widely depending on the section of the Act under which the action is taken and the perceived needs and circumstances of the patient. We assumed the involvement of a social worker or approved mental health nurse (AMHN) and two doctors (where these professionals would need to have 'approved' status under the Act). We have also assumed that there would have been a police presence. Estimates for police inputs are based on figures for a typical arrest without detention (costed at £336.00 – this figure is amber-flagged in the New Economy toolkit, however, as it is several years old; Salford: Police costs 2006/07). A qualified social worker or AMHN's time for three hours is calculated using a 'face-to-face' rate of £90 per hour of client contact, including qualifications multiplier (Unit Costs of Health & Social Care 2013, Curtis, 2013, p.198). The costs for two approved doctors' time for three hours each has been costed at £230 per client contact hour, including qualification costs (Unit Costs of Health & Social Care 2013, Curtis, 2013, p.188). Subsequent 'formal' admittance to a psychiatric facility is then costed at £445 per day (National Schedule of Reference Costs 2011-12 for NHS trusts and NHS foundation trusts; 'MHIPSS' worksheet, currency codes MHIPA1-2, MHIPC2-3, MHIPEDA, MHIPEDC, MHIPMB and MHIPOTH), and it is assumed from the case notes that the individual was hospitalised for a total period of two months during their period of involvement with the project.

Figure 22 – Changes in proportion of reactive and pro-active costs over time, for case study – Jill (Project 8)
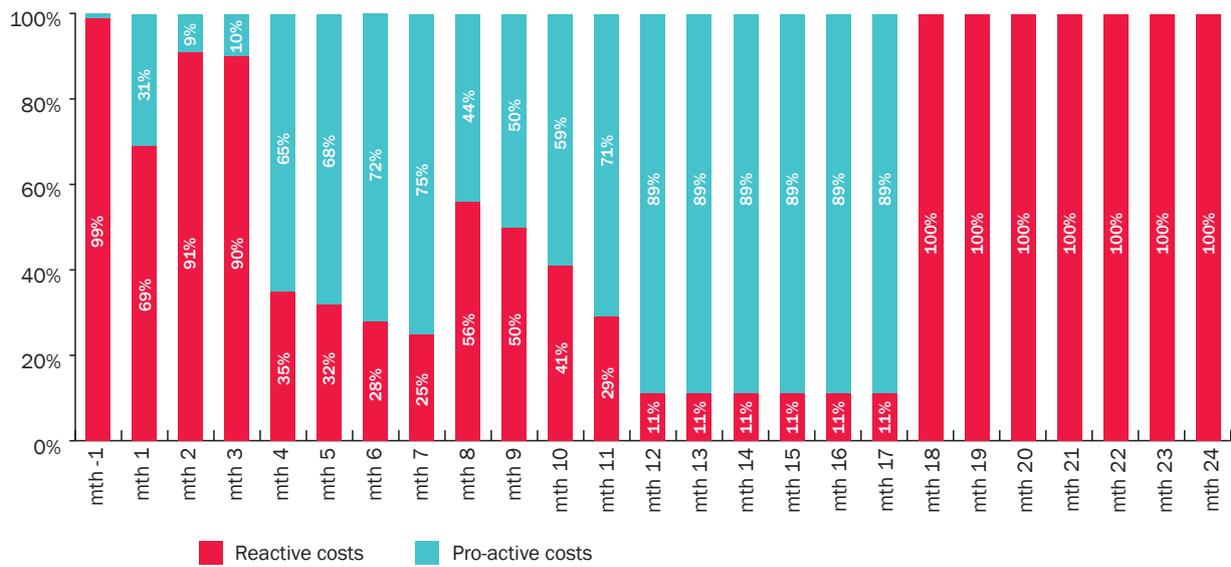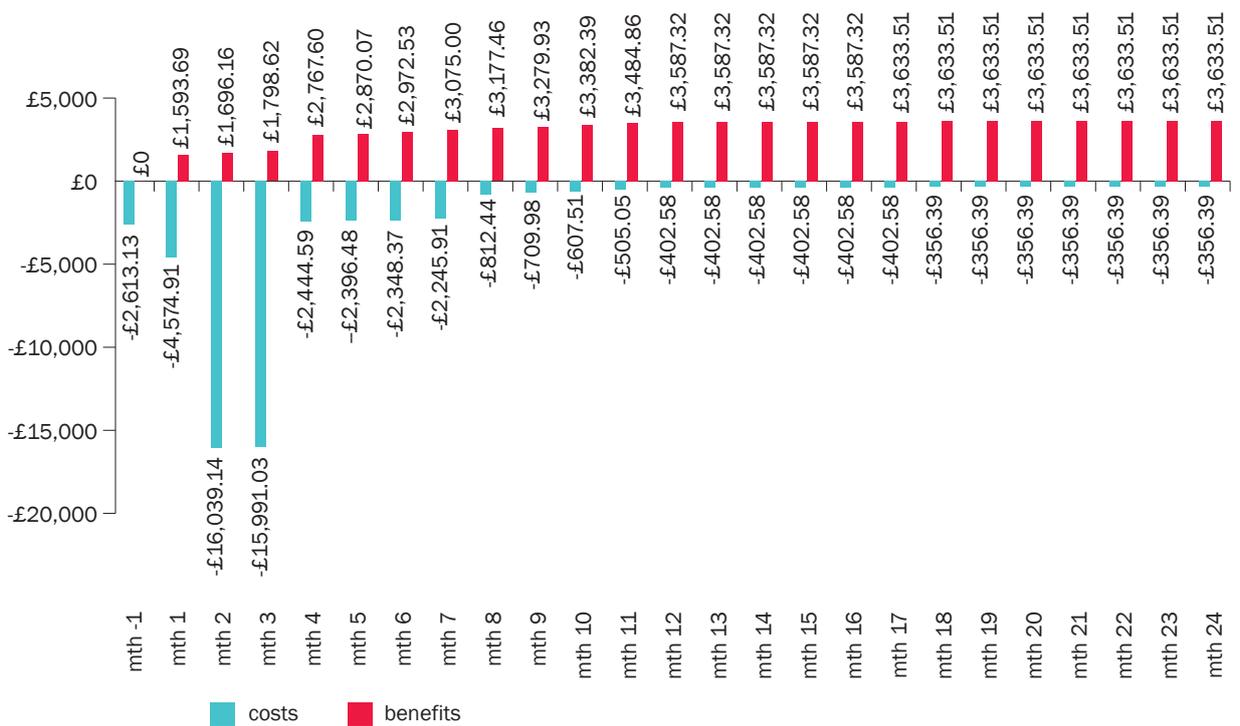

Figure 23 – Costs and benefits by month, for case study – Jill (Project 8)

8.6.5.3 Cost-benefit trajectory

In this case, because mental health and offending issues exerted a downward pressure on the overall cost-benefit trajectory, a break-even point was not reached until around month 17 of project involvement. The research team was informed that positive changes in Jill's life had been sustained beyond the time of our analysis but we do not have official data which could allow us to extend the timeline beyond month 24.

Figure 24 – Net value/cost-benefit trajectory for case study – Jill (Project 8)
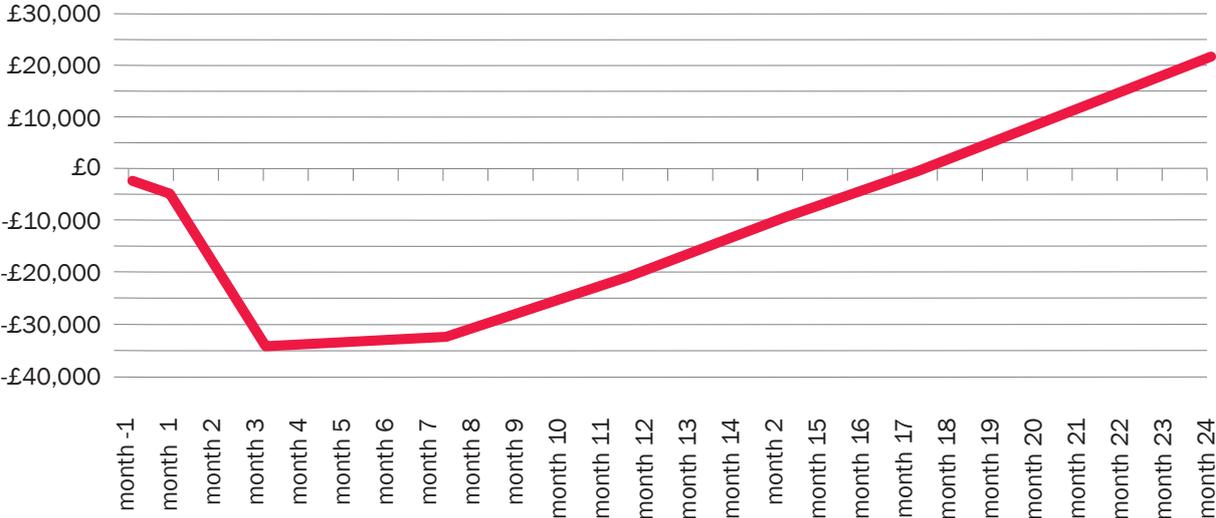
8.6.6 Case study - Tim (Project 12)

Tim was 19 when he started with Project 12, having received a custodial sentence of just under five months for drugs offences and for carrying a bladed weapon. He was diagnosed as having ADHD and also had issues with money/benefits, accommodation, previous trauma and a poor educational history.

The project began working with Tim about two months before his release and was still working with him seven months after release.

8.6.6.1 Areas costed

In terms of proactive costs, the project supported Tim in his engagement with a range of outside services which the project helped him to secure, including a GP, a counsellor and a substance misuse service. We included the costs of all of these services over time, as well as the project cost itself, for which we used a high end unit cost.

The reactive costs included the cost of his sentence both while in custody and while he was in the community (using monthly figures for each), since these were costs incurred from the point when he joined the project.

Regarding benefits there was sufficient information to allow us to cost the securing of stable accommodation (Tim was homeless on release) and we also calculated a benefit to cover Tim's cessation in offending. Given that Tim has not offended again since starting with the project, we calculated a monthly figure as a benefit during the period of his involvement. Interestingly, official offending data on the participant suggested that more offences had been committed previously than were visible in the project records.

There was some evidence of positive impacts on substance misuse, but there was not enough reliable information for us to base a costing on.

8.6.6.2 Changes in cost mix over time

This client had not been involved with the project for very long at the time we last enquired about him (in November 2015) and the following presentations therefore cover a period up to month seven.

In terms of changes in the mix of reactive and proactive costs, the following graph illustrates positive impact on that mix, up until the data specified. For the sake of illustration, we have included known costs for the two months prior to involvement with the project.
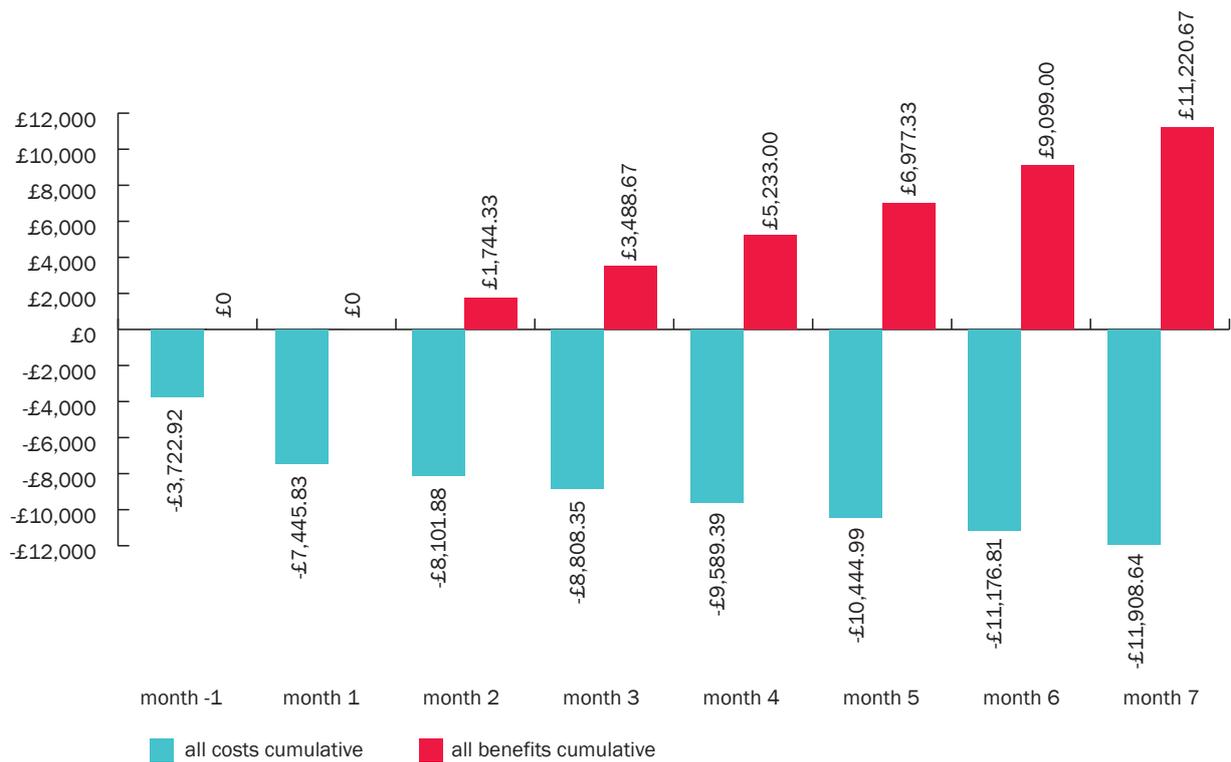
Figure 25 – Changes in proportion of reactive and proactive costs over time, for case study – Tim (Project 12)
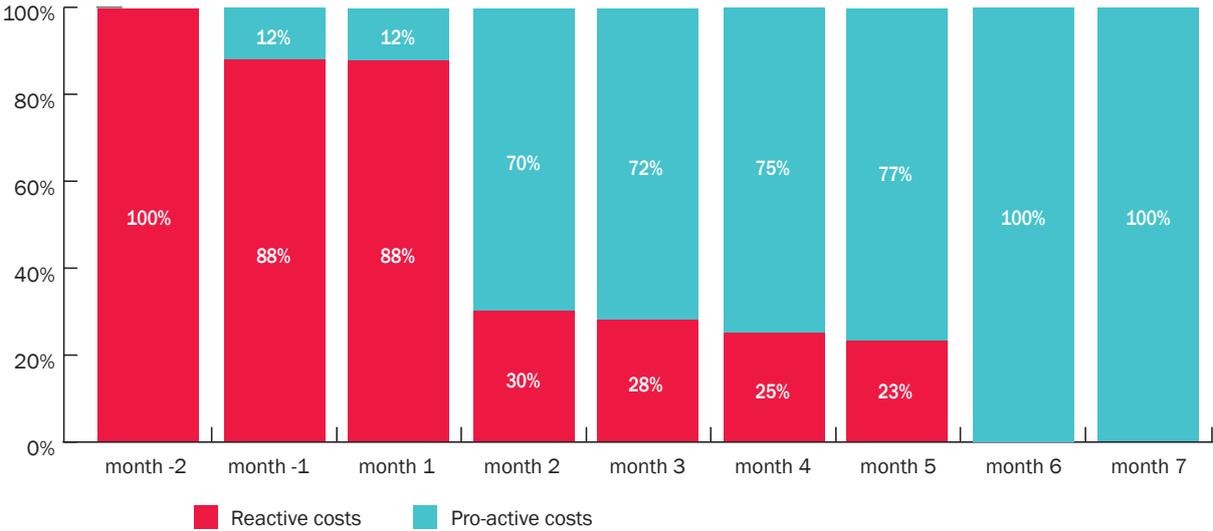
The figure shows that while previous costs relating to this individual were primarily (or exclusively) reactive, that mix of costs began to change when the individual was engaging with the project. By month six, there were virtually no reactive costs incurred.

The following graph presents the cumulative totals for both costs and benefits by month, for the period from 'month -1' (i.e. one month before participation) and month seven.

Figure 26 – Cumulative costs and cumulative benefits by month, for case study – Tim (Project 12)

month -1 | month 1 | month 2 | month 3 | month 4 | month 5 | month 6 | month 7

■ all costs cumulative   ■ all benefits cumulative

The following graph plots the client's net value in terms of costs and benefits over time. As with previous case studies, it can be seen that it took several months for the project to gain traction with this client in terms of overall costs and benefits. The costs of intervention during the period of involvement (including both reactive and proactive costs) only start to be outstripped by costed benefits generated by those interventions, at about the month seven point. We do not know if those trends continued beyond November 2015.

Figure 27 – Net value over time, associated with case study – Tim (Project 12)
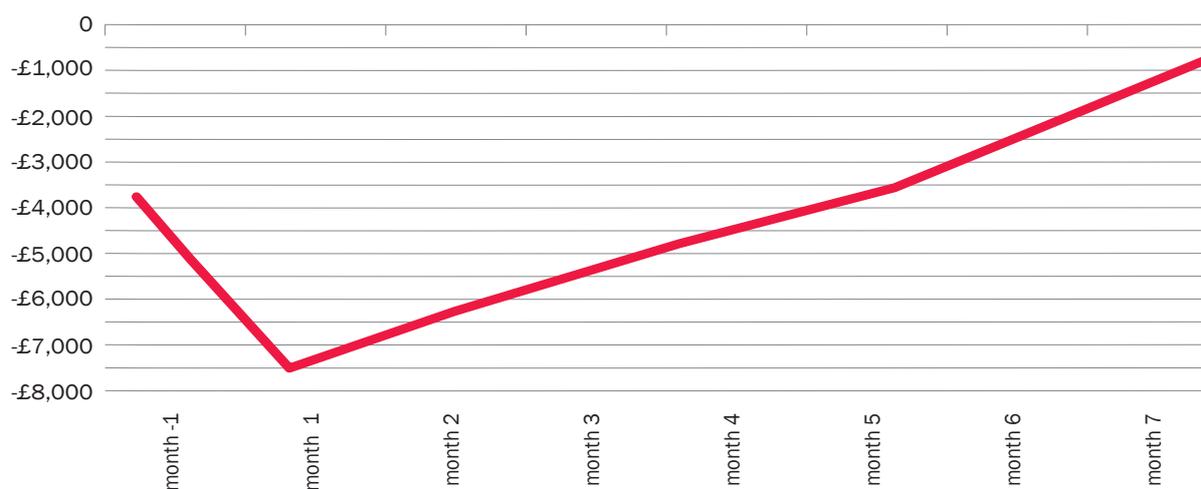
8.6.7 Using costed case studies to estimate costs and benefits for wider cohorts

This particular approach to assessing costs and benefits also has the advantage of allowing different sets of timelines to be aggregated and compared. For example, if a set of 10 costed case studies includes five males and five females, aggregating the two sets by gender can allow the researcher to determine whether break-even points vary by gender.

The approach would also allow for comparisons to be made in terms of the types of difficulty faced by sub-groups of young people. For example, questions of the following sort could be examined:

- Do groups of young people whose primary difficulties involve substance misuse tend to take longer to work with before break-even points are reached?

- Do cost-benefit trajectories tend to differ for those groups having more serious mental health issues (e.g. do these trajectories tend to be non-linear for those groups)?

- Where cost-benefit trajectories show significant peaks and troughs, what scope is there for identifying and anticipating the events or issues which give rise to these?

In our own case study work we were able to examine some of these questions, although a larger number of timelines would have been required to allow for statistical testing of such hypotheses.
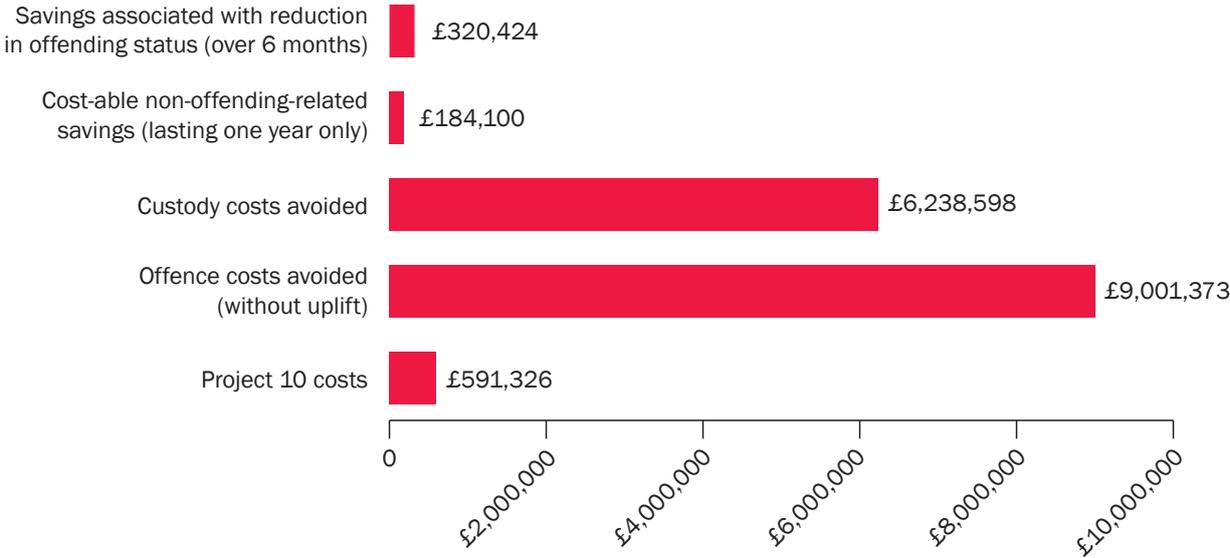
8.7 The costs and benefits of YIF practice – overarching findings

Although it was not possible to undertake full costing research with even a majority of YIF projects, the work that has been delivered does suggest some overarching conclusions about the costs and benefits of work delivered by YIF projects.
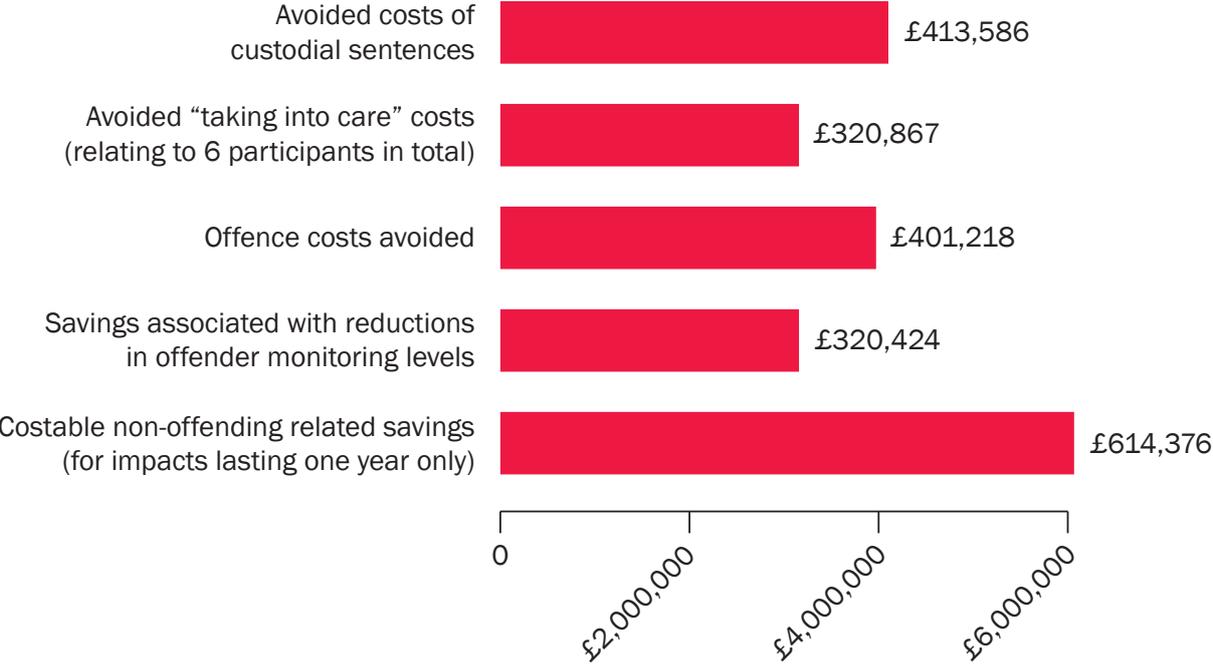
It was clear from our analysis that YIF projects represented positive value for money and that the costs of delivery were clearly outstripped by a range of costable benefits that this work generated. In overall terms, we were able to demonstrate typically that for every pound spent on a particular project, for example, at least two pounds of costable benefits were generated. These were, in our view, very conservative estimates based only on actual data which we were able to access.

We provide further examples below, from Project 10, followed by a similar presentation for Project 12. These presentations are meant only to illustrate how different strands of costs and benefits compare with one another in relation to a particular project's work.

Figure 28 – Overall costs and benefits relating to the work of Project 10

Savings associated with reduction in offending status (over 6 months)	£320,424
Cost-able non-offending-related savings (lasting one year only)	£184,100
Custody costs avoided	£6,238,598
Offence costs avoided (without uplift)	£9,001,373
Project 10 costs	£591,326

Figure 29 – Summary of key benefits generated by Project 12

Category	Amount
Avoided costs of custodial sentences	£413,586
Avoided "taking into care" costs (relating to 6 participants in total)	£320,867
Offence costs avoided	£401,218
Savings associated with reductions in offender monitoring levels	£320,424
Costable non-offending related savings (for impacts lasting one year only)	£614,376

Axis: 0   £2,000,000   £4,000,000   £6,000,000

We would point out again in relation to each of these examples, that any outcomes which could not be evidenced were not included in the calculations.

9. Conclusions and recommendations

Careful assessment of evidence gathered from YIF projects during our work programme has illustrated a number of key, overarching conclusions about the delivery and impact of YIF work with young custody-leavers.

The evidence suggests that the 15 projects that have been involved with young custody-leavers have brought about positive changes across a range of impact areas, including areas associated with the standard resettlement pathways but also real reductions in offending.

More generally, the YIF experience has informed the development of our resettlement models in key ways and has underlined and confirmed the importance of resettlement practice being:

- holistic and individually tailored, increasing the scope for addressing resettlement needs effectively and broadening the scope of engagement and the development of individual commitment to change processes
- viewed as part of a wider process of change, which is about young people moving away from offending lifestyles and toward other choices that involve the identification and take-up of non-offending opportunities and skills
- continuous over time and across key transition points and ages
- coordinated across all relevant services, monitoring partnerships over time
- focused on facilitating and sustaining engagement – without individual engagement, there can be no scope for positive impact
- designed to ensure that young custody-leavers play a key role in the identification and prioritisation of individual issues and action plans to address difficulties because that kind of authorship and decision-making builds self-efficacy or autonomy

The BYC team was impressed by the extent to which YIF projects were able to engage with young people who often had a multiplicity of difficulties, had a history of non-engagement or who could be very hard to work with. Part of the reason for the success of YIF projects in terms of engagement is that projects were generally successful in attracting staff team members who:

- were extremely dedicated to working with young people and able to establish good quality trust relationships with them as well as monitor and manage those relationships thoughtfully and reflectively over time
- had professional and people skills that were well suited to resettlement work with young people with multiple and diverse individual needs and experiences
- were appropriately inducted, trained, supported and managed as part of a professional and collegiate team

The team was also impressed by the range of positive outcomes generated by YIF projects, although there was a clear relationship between the extent and range of positive outcomes that we could describe for a particular project and the quality of the data that the project maintained. In general, the deeper that the team was able to dig, the more positive the picture of impact seemed to be. When looking at the evidence all together, the fact that we were not able to confirm specific impacts in some cases seems to be linked to data problems rather than to any ineffectiveness of the part of the projects.

This is unfortunate because it means that some YIF projects have probably achieved much more than the team has been able to evidence. In turn, that means that to some extent the accounts the YIF projects can give of their period of Big Lottery funding do not do full justice to the effectiveness of the work that they have delivered.

Many YIF project workers suggested to us that their original bids for funding had set targets which turned out to be unrealistic, noting that the complexity of individual need had in practice taken longer to address than anticipated. This was linked to a perception on the part of some YIF project team members that the YIF programme itself could have been more flexible in terms of allowing changes in midstream where circumstances warranted this or where they at least warranted a review of targets.

10. References

Allender, P., Brown, G., Bailey, N., Columbo, T., Poole, H., and Saldana, A. (2005) *Prisoner Resettlement and Housing Provision: A Good Practice Ideas Guide*. Coventry: Coventry University.

Bottoms, A. and Shapland, J. (2016). *Learning to Desist in Early Adulthood*. In Shapland, A., Farrall, S. and Bottoms, A. (eds.) (2016: 99-125).

Møller L., Stöver, H., Jürgens, R., Gatherer, A. and Nikogosian, H. (eds.) (2007) *Health in Prisons: A WHO Guide to the essentials in prison health*. (2007). Health in Prisons Project (EU WHO). Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe.

Laub John H., Daniel S. Nagin, and Robert J. Sampson. (1998) Trajectories of Change in Criminal Offending: Good Marriages and the Desistance Process. *American Sociological Review*, 63:225–38.

Laub John H. and Robert J. Sampson. (1993). Turning Points in the Life Course: Why Change Matters to the Study of Crime. *Criminology* 31 (3), 301–25.

Laub, J. and Sampson, R., (2003) *Shared beginnings, divergent lives: delinquent boys to age 70.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 338 pp.

Liddle, M. (2016) *Resettlement work with young people: using individual case studies to assess costs and benefits.* London: Beyond Youth Custody/Nacro

Maruna, S. (1997) Going Straight: Desistance from Crime and Life Narratives of Reform. *The Narrative Study of Lives* 5, 59–93.

Maruna, S. (2001) *Making Good: How Ex-Convicts Reform and Rebuild their Lives* American Psychological Association Books. Washington DC.

Paternoster, R. and Bushway, S. (2009) Desistance and the Feared Self: Toward an Identity Theory of Criminal Desistance. *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, Volume 99, Issue 4: 1103-1156.

Petrosino, A., Turpin-Petrosino, C., Hollis-Peel, M. and Lavenberg, JG. (2013) *Scared Straight and Other Juvenile Awareness Programs for Preventing Juvenile Delinquency: A Systematic Review.* Campbell Systematic Reviews 2013:5. DOI: 10.4073/csr.2013.5.

Sampson, Robert J., and John H. Laub (1993). *Crime in the Making: Pathways and Turning Points through Life*. Cambridge, Massachuesetts: Harvard University Press.

Shapland, J., Farrall, S., and Bottoms, A. (eds.) (2016) *Global Perspectives on Desistance: Reviewing what we know and looking to the future*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Vaughan, B. (2007) The Internal Narrative of Desistance. *British Journal of Criminology* (2007) 47 (3), 390-404.

Wilkinson, K. (2009). *The Doncaster Desistance Study.* Sheffield: Hallam Centre for Community Justice; Sheffield Hallam University.