

## What is Restorative Justice?

Restorative Justice allows the opportunity for victims to meet or communicate with their offender in a safe, facilitated way, to explain the real impact of the crime. This provides a chance to discuss what has happened, for victims to explain the affect it's had and provide the opportunity to ask questions.

The person accountable for the harm caused must accept responsibility for their behaviour.

The process is voluntary and goes at the pace of those involved.

## How can RJ help me?

Many victims feel that the criminal justice system does not give them a voice or real chance to get involved. Restorative Justice puts victims at the heart of the process, giving you the chance to ask the offender questions and get anything that you want to say about the impact off your chest. National research shows that 85% of victims who take part find the process helpful. This can be a huge step in moving forward to recover from the crime and get closure.

## Restorative Justice

Essex Restorative and Mediation Service provides safe and effective communication between people in conflict to encourage mutually agreed, positive outcomes for all involved.

“

*A huge thank you to everyone,  
for making it so easy and  
helping me through it.  
Your service was brilliant*

”

### Contact us

If you would like to talk to us about the service, or are interested in taking part you can find out more here:

 [www.restorativeessex.co.uk](http://www.restorativeessex.co.uk)

 [restorativejustice@essex.police.uk](mailto:restorativejustice@essex.police.uk)

 01245 291 621



## Have you been a victim of crime?

Have you considered talking to the person who caused you harm? Do you have unanswered questions, or would you like to explain what the impact has been on your life? Restorative Justice could allow you to do just that.

## How can I access the service?

You may be asked if you would like to be referred by an agency that you are already dealing with such as the Police, Witness Care, or Victim Support. You can also get in touch directly if you would like us to come and talk to you about the process. There is no obligation for you to progress to a restorative outcome, and facilitators will work with you to ensure the most appropriate and safe way to address your case.

Please contact us if you feel that you might like to take part in a restorative process.

## How does the process work?

After you are referred, someone will contact you to discuss the process and ensure that a restorative outcome is suitable (this will be explained to you). We will only progress if and when everybody is ready and it is assessed as safe.

Our facilitators will meet with everyone involved in the crime and a decision of how to proceed will be made (direct or indirect).

The facilitator will arrange for the communication to happen, ensuring that everyone is as comfortable with the process as possible. You will never be left alone with the offender and the facilitator will support you every step of the way.

## Frequently Asked Questions

*What offences can Restorative Justice be used for and is it available to me?*

It is a free service available to those involved in crime or conflict in Essex. It can also be used in any crime, from low level to serious offences.

*What if I want to take part but the offender doesn't want to?*

RJ is a voluntary process therefore everyone involved must consent to take part, and some responsibility must be taken for the harm caused.

*What if I change my mind?*

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

*When does Restorative Justice happen?*

Restorative Justice does not replace the Criminal Justice System or sentencing; rather it is a process used later on to help deal with the emotional impact of the crime. If a case has gone to court, we will wait until sentencing has happened before we begin the process. RJ does not replace the sentencing.

*What if I don't want to meet the offender?*

Communication can be indirect including letters of explanation / apology or shuttle communication.

## What are the benefits?



93%

PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION



RESEARCH HAS SUGGESTED THAT RJ CAN REDUCE RE-OFFENDING BY 14%



ALLOWS YOU TO ASK QUESTIONS AND EXPRESS THE HARM CAUSED



PUTS YOU AT THE HEART OF THE PROCESS AND GIVES YOU A VOICE



ALLOWS FOR CLOSURE AND MEANINGFUL REPARATION