

Case Study One

We have observed an increased use of 'Released Under Investigation' (RUI) for serious offences (arson, rape, supply class A) and the possibility that they may be at risk of custody should they be charged and listed in Court. To reduce the risk of custody, we have offered prevention interventions to RUI cases encouraging them to engage with us voluntarily to address the factors that increase the risk of reoffending and to demonstrate that they are able to work with the Youth Justice Service (YJS).

An example of this was when a sixteen year old **male** was referred to the service following his arrest and 'Released Under Investigation' for possession with intent to supply and concerned in the supply of class A and B drugs in October 2020. He agreed to engage with YJS on a voluntary prevention intervention until sentencing in February 2021. As a first time entrant to the Court system, he was only able to receive a Referral Order or custody and as such, the YJS needed a robust community alternative to custody given the seriousness of the offences. His positive engagement in this voluntary intervention provided the YJS with evidence of his willingness to engage and gave us the confidence to recommend a community alternative to custody as his engagement suggested to the Court that he would be capable of complying with a community court order and our proposal was accepted.

Case Study Two

The YJS is proactive and creative with dealing with non-compliance and to outline work the YJS undertake to promote compliance is as follows.

There has been ongoing issues with compliance with a young person made subject to a Youth Rehabilitation Order with Intensive Supervision Surveillance in September 2021. He has been returned to Court and dealt with by the sentencing Judge who has recognised the young person's significant trauma as a refugee from Sudan and adjourned the case on three occasions to try to encourage him to engage fully. Throughout the Order, the YJS was responsive to his needs, for example putting in place an online English Language course and construction skills, hoping that this would promote engagement. Multi-agency working between YJS and Bays Plus and the young person's housing provider and other agencies was key to offer an effective provision that enabled the young person a chance to re-engage. Our interventions can sometimes just be simply a text message to remind him that he has an appointment the following day which can have a significant impact on a young person's compliance, particularly when they do not have parents or carers.

Unfortunately, the young person continued to miss sessions and after a two week and two month long adjournments with the young person failing to comply, the Judge decided that he would remand the young person for 6 days before sentencing him in the hope that this would allow him to experience custody and return to Court with a different perspective. This was an effective strategy and having experienced custody, the young person was motivated to comply. At the

last hearing, rather than resentence the young person to custody, the Judge amended his existing Youth Rehabilitation Order to include 30 hours Unpaid Work Requirement as a direct sanction for his non-engagement and allowed the order to continue.

The commitment of YJS staff who developed a trusting working relationship with the young person who, due to his adverse childhood experiences was unable to trust professionals, ensured that the young person had daily support in place, emotional and mental health and substance misuse support and a range of engagement opportunities has been impressive as they have strived to offer any flexibility and creativity in order to support compliance and the Judge recognised the efforts of the YJS and praised our work.