



**RESTORATIVE
SOLUTIONS**

reducing harm, resolving conflict

Restorative Solutions Newsletter

July 2026

The Horizon/Post Office Scandal: a Gleam of Light

You will undoubtedly have heard of the Post Office computer scandal, through Fujitsu and their Horizon IT system, which has been described as “one of the greatest miscarriages of justice in British history”. In summary, between 1999 and 2015, over 900 subpostmasters throughout the UK were wrongfully convicted of theft, fraud and false accounting based on faulty Horizon systems and data. Some were forced to cover illusory losses with their own money, and thirteen subpostmasters took their own lives. A public enquiry has been undertaken and the consequent police inquiry has stated that it needs 99 more detectives, to work with 111 already employed on following up criminal liability, and £16.5M to add to existing costs of £2.8M.

What has this tragedy to do with restorative justice? Because, in the midst of investigation, uncertainty and previous untruths, there is a small but significant gleam of light: the independent charity, the Restorative Justice Council (Restorative Solutions CIC is not directly involved), has been commissioned by the Government to employ eight restorative justice practitioners “at the sharp edge of restorative justice – where harm is profound, scrutiny is high, and the quality of your (RJ) decisions matters deeply to the people involved.” The proposal goes on to say, “This programme is live, nationally mandated and operating under public scrutiny. The work you (RJ practitioners) do will directly affect how people who have been harmed experience recognition, accountability and repair, often for the first time in decades.”

“Many of the offenders we work with say that restorative justice was harder than court or prison, because they had to face the consequences of their actions, not only for themselves, but also the consequences for those they have harmed.”

“The job is about listening and working with individuals who are vulnerable and need help, or just an ear to talk to, to hear their needs.”

This is, by any measure, a significant and welcome step in accepting the value of RJ around (not replacing) criminal proceedings. Victims can be heard and helped, and those accountable – or some of them – can be given a chance to understand the consequences of their wrongful actions. For the first time on a national scale, restorative processes are acknowledged to have value in dealing with the aftermath of wrongful actions. Let us hope it will be a successful programme, mostly for those who have suffered injustice, but also, as the specification says, “to contribute to a national legacy of learning, accountability and repair.” Practitioners will “help demonstrate what safe, responsible restorative justice looks like at scale.”

Restorative Solutions CIC wishes every step of this process success and looks forward to positive outcomes for all concerned.

Let's Hear It for Our Volunteers!

In addition to our very competent, trained and qualified professional restorative practitioners, Restorative Solutions CIC is proud to make use of a considerable number of volunteers in our work. This enables us to increase our range and to bring to bear a huge diversity of backgrounds, skills and approaches, both from full-time careers and in other interests and, indeed, volunteering elsewhere. We have volunteers who work or have worked in the criminal justice sector, other public services, and a variety of private, commercial, academic and business roles. They bring to bear not only these professional experiences, but their own life skills, such as bringing up children, which is in itself restorative practice, reconciling different points of view. Sometimes a past victim or offender can be motivated to "give back" something for the experience they have been through, which also makes them very empathic and understanding in their future volunteer role(s).

Work undertaken includes restorative justice, restorative conversations, mediation practices and, in one of our service areas, West Yorkshire, involvement in the Appropriate Adult service to support vulnerable adults in custody suites. In the first nine months of that service, 1,258 volunteer shifts have been worked in support of people in need, which is different from our traditional role but still represents a human interface between individuals and the requirements of the criminal justice system.

"This has been a life changing experience for me and I will carry forward the skills I have learned in a positive way that enable me to have a happier future."

A victim

We greatly value our volunteers' energy and commitment and we thank them for all that they contribute. We can arrange different locations for volunteers and overcome transport difficulties; we fit volunteering around other commitments, including study. Volunteers can work in restorative areas or in mediation, adding social value to our work. Some volunteers even come to work with us as professionals later. Please get in touch if you might like to talk about volunteering; just head to the Restorative Solutions CIC website, where you will find contacts.

HM Prison and Probation Service Re-Hub (Restorative Justice Hub) Review



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The Re:Hub Review has created a significant moment for Restorative Justice, including potentially limiting access to RJ for victims and offenders of more serious offences whilst those offenders are under the management of HMPPS. Restorative Solutions have been working with the Restorative Justice Council (RJC) and Remedi (another large RJ service provider) to consider what comes next for RJ in prison and probation settings.

We believe that creating space for open, cross-sector dialogue will be vital as the next stage of this work develops. Strengthening how we work together can help build greater consistency, confidence and trust in complex restorative justice practice.

Read the full update from the RJC here:
<https://restorativejustice.org.uk/blog/rehub-review-working-together-shape-what-comes-next>

"From the feedback that has been provided by police, we are delighted to say that every single question has so far been rated as "strongly agree" – this is absolutely fantastic and a real pleasure to see."

An RS manager describing local feedback

"He told me about his time in prison and what he's done; it made me think to myself that this person made a truly horrible mistake one night and now he's living his life with that pure guilt."

A victim

"Both practitioners were lovely, supportive and empathetic, yet stayed impartial."

An offender



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