

## Youth Justice

### Restorative Justice Case Study: Referral from the Procurator Fiscal

A 17 year-old was referred to the Restorative Justice Service from the Procurator Fiscal office for three offences (Feb 2006) of Wilfully, Recklessly, Destroying or Damaging Property, namely kicking and breaking wing mirrors from cars. The cost of repairs is estimated to be £132.

The young person had previously received two fixed penalties for Breach of the Peace, one in 2005 and one in January 2006. They are currently employed on a full-time apprenticeship and reside with their parents and sibling in a residential area in the south of Perth city.

Police attended a call early one evening (Feb 2006) with regard to the above young person alleged to have been assaulted by a large group of youths while in the city centre. The young person refused medical treatment and declined to press charges. The young person and a peer left the scene heading towards home. The police noted that the young person was heavily under the influence of alcohol at the time.

About 20 minutes later the 17 year-old allegedly kicked out at a wing mirror of a parked car which was witnessed by his peer and two other adults. The police then caught up with accused and warned the 17 year-old he was being charged with vandalism and to go straight home. Later that same evening further witnesses came forward to notify that their tow cars had also been vandalised by the person on that evening. The police therefore made two further charges.

On our initial visit, the young person was extremely remorseful and very willing to make amends in any way thought suitable. They had already put aside some of their wages to make good the repairs if required. The young person was also able to say that they had been embarrassed by their actions and acknowledged the part that alcohol played in this. Their awareness was raised with regard to safe levels of drinking and the risks that they put themselves in. The young person is reported to have taken steps already to avoid such a situation again. The young person's parents were very disappointed and shocked to learn of the behaviour and found the whole incident to be quite difficult. They were very supportive of the young person taking responsibility for his actions and encouraged the young person to do this in an adult manner by staying on the fringes of any meetings themselves.

The three people harmed all participated with the Service and requested financial reparation as a means of resolution. This was to cover their costs of repair as well as some fuel costs and time involved in having their cars repaired.

The young person willingly agreed to make the financial reparation and was able to understand the impact their actions had had on the lives of the people harmed. The monies (totalling £212.80) were quickly gathered and passed onto each car owner with a message of sincere apologies from the young person. The young person was so grateful at the efforts made by the three people harmed to purchase a second-hand wing mirror from a scrap yard, that he forwarded a Giftcard to them as well as the monies requested of them. This was much appreciated by the person harmed.

The young person was given advice on possible consequences i.e. lose his apprenticeship, should he fail to learn from this process and as reported earlier has already taken steps to avoid this happening.

*AM Campbell, Sacro Youth Justice Worker, May 2007*

### Perth & Kinross Youth Justice Service