

Youth Justice Working Group & Advisers

Mike Royal (Chairman)

National Director of the Lighthouse Group, a charity working with young people excluded from school across the UK. He has considerable experience in youth work delivered by the faith sector and has worked as an adviser to statutory agencies on gang related issues. He has considerable experience of policy formulation and was part of the CSJ Education Failure Working Group.

Pam Hibbert

Part time worker for 11 MILLION, member of the Standing Committee for Youth Justice and committee member of the National Association for Youth Justice. Previously co-Chair of the Children's Advocacy Consortium (2003 – 2009)

Steve Crocker

Deputy Director, Children's Services, Hampshire. Previously Head of Service for the Wessex Youth Offending Service and Vice Chair and Chair of the Hampshire Criminal Justice Board

Rod Morgan

Professor Emeritus at the University of Bristol, visiting Professor at the Police Research Institute, Cardiff University and the LSE and is a Government-appointed advisor to the five criminal justice inspectorates. Former HM Chief Inspector of Probation (2001-4) and Chairman of the Youth Justice Board (2004-7).

Vicky O'Dea

Operations Director at Serco Civil Government. Previously worked for HM Prison Service

Rob Owen

Chief Executive at St Giles Trust

John Pitts

Vauxhall Professor of Socio-Legal Studies and Director of the Institute for Applied Social Research at the University of Bedfordshire

Chris Stanley

Former Head of Nacro's Policy and Research Division and was previously a member of the Audit Commission's Youth Justice Study Advisory Group

Malcolm Stevens

Director of JusticeCare Solutions and an independent adviser/consultant to providers of healthcare, youth justice and children's services. Formally the Government's professional adviser responsible for youth justice policy, children in custody and children detained at Her Majesty's Pleasure and also the Director and Chief Executive of various services for children and in youth justice

John Sutherland

Superintendent (Operations) for Islington. Previously a Metropolitan Police Officer

Phil Thain

Founder and Chief Executive of Future Skills Training

Advisors:

Rob Allen

Director at the International Centre for Prison Studies at King's College London, Chairman of CLINKS and a Specialist Adviser to the House of Commons Justice Select Committee. Former Director of Research and Development at Nacro and a member of the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (1998 - 2006)

Gracia McGrath O.B. E.

Chief Executive of Chance UK. Previously the Director of Islington Voluntary Action and London Director of a Carer's charity

Breakthrough Britain: Youth Justice

Key facts:

- It is those young people who have experienced educational failure and family breakdown who overwhelmingly end up in the youth justice system:
 - 42% of female young offenders have experienced domestic violence.ⁱ
 - 73% of young offenders describe their academic achievement as zero.ⁱⁱ
- England and Wales spend **11 times more on locking children up than on preventing** their involvement in crime in the first place.ⁱⁱⁱ
- The **re-offending rate for young offenders leaving custody is currently 77%**. The re-offending rate for young offenders leaving community sentences is currently 69%.^{iv}
- **Custody is not safe:**
 - 30 children have died in custody since 1990
 - In 2007, there were over 1,000 self-harm incidents among children aged between 15 and 17.^v
- Failures of the juvenile secure estate:
 - Poor mental health care: Despite the fact that up to 95 per cent of young offenders may have at least one mental health disorder, only 53 per cent received care from local child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) in 2006.^{vi}
 - **Poor education:** The more welfare-orientated Secure Training Centres and Secure Children's Homes provide formal education for 25 hours per week, 50 weeks per year. YOIs have a stated target of 25 hours per week, yet around 15 per cent of young offenders in YOIs only receive between 15 and 20 hours, while around 25 per cent receive less than 15 hours.^{vii}
 - **Inadequate support upon release:** In 2004-2005, 54 per cent of those leaving YOIs had no recorded education, training or employment place.^{viii}
- **Children in custody are getting younger:** The use of custody for 10-14 year olds has increased by 550 per cent since 1996.^{ix}
- **Custody is not used as a last resort:** Between 2003 and 2006, there was a 39 per cent increase in the number of children dealt with formally in the criminal justice system for minor offences.^x

Key areas for review:

Youth crime is a disturbing symptom and consequence of social breakdown. It is those young people who have experienced educational failure and family breakdown who overwhelmingly end up in the youth justice system. The current youth justice system fails to properly rehabilitate young offenders so that they can go on to lead law-abiding and positive lives. Custody is currently neither a safe nor a productive place for children, and community orders appear to be equally as ineffective. Once a sentence is complete, many of these young people turn back to crime and end up back in the system as adults. The human and financial cost to society of such failure is staggering.

The Centre for Social Justice believes that the current youth justice system is in desperate need of reform, and to that end, will complete a wide-ranging review. Key themes of the report will include: cause and prevention of youth crime; progression from crime to the youth justice system; role and efficacy of youth courts; effectiveness of both community and custodial sentences; suitability of post-sentence support; and Governance and accountability structures.

ⁱ Childhood abuse amongst young offenders, from *Psychiatric Morbidity among Young Offenders in England and Wales* (analysis of data from 1997 ONS survey)

ⁱⁱ CSJ, *Breakthrough Britain*

ⁱⁱⁱ Julia Margo and Alex Stevens, *Make Me a Criminal: Preventing youth crime* (February 2008)

^{iv} Ministry of Justice, *Re-Offending of Juveniles: 2006 England and Wales*, p.18

^v The Howard League for Penal Reform, *Growing Up, Shut Up Factsheet* (July 2008)

^{vi} Department of Health, Department for Children, Schools and Families, and Durham University, *A Profile of Children Health, Child and Adolescent Mental Health and Maternity Services* (2007)

^{vii} UK Children's Commissioners' Report to UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2008)

^{viii} The Prison Reform Trust, *The Bromley Briefings: Prison Fact File* (2008)

^{ix} Ministry of Justice, *Court Proceedings Database* (2007)

^x Ministry of Justice, *Court Proceedings Database* (2007)