

ENHANCED CONSTRUCTIVE RESETTLEMENT PROJECT

*FINAL EVALUATION REPORT FOR
NEW HORIZON YOUTH CENTRE AND
LB CAMDEN YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE*

Sally Cupitt
Harriet Pearce Willis
Sarah McCoy

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NEW HORIZON YOUTH CENTRE AND
LB CAMDEN YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE*

Commissioned by



Research conducted
and report written by



Sally Cupitt Consulting

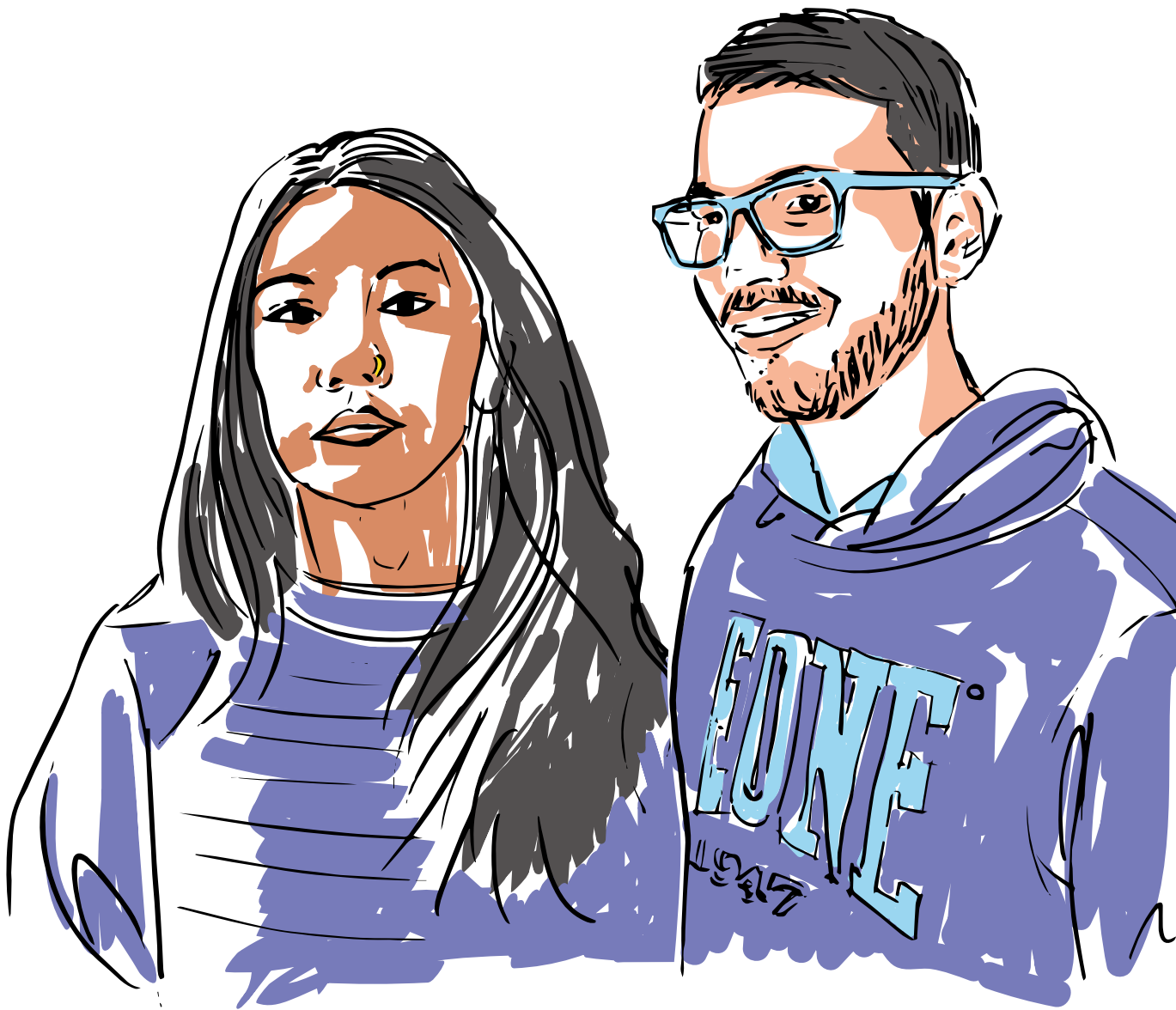
Funded by



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many thanks to the many people who gave their time to this evaluation, by attending meetings and workshops, being interviewed, taking part in the evaluation Advisory Panel, and cleaning and sharing anonymised data:

- ECR young people
- staff at New Horizon Youth Centre and Camden Youth Offending Service
- the former ECR psychologists
- staff from external organisations



FOREWORD

If we are to prevent violence affecting young people, it requires a fundamental shift to change the system to better support and improve their chances.

The Enhanced Constructive Resettlement (ECR) project makes that case powerfully. It explores what works best for young people who have already been caught up in violence and how to prevent re-offending.

It brings evidence to the mantras that London's Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) holds dear. The role and effectiveness of the trusted relationship between adults and young people borne from long-term and consistent interactions. The role of young people as co-shapers of services, not passive recipients. And how equity and respect must be at the heart of a seamless relationship between statutory services and the voluntary and charity sector.

In doing so it makes the case for real systems change. Greater investment in people must go hand-in-hand with long-term financial investment.

London's VRU was pleased to have invested in the ECR programme, and to have supported Camden council, Islington and Camden NHS and those young people and front-line workers leading the way with this programme. We will continue to promote its work to government as a model that needs both long-term investment and commitment.

Lib Peck

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lib Peck', with a horizontal line underneath.

Director

London Violence Reduction Unit

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Enhanced Constructive Resettlement (ECR) pilot project ran between 2018 and March 2022. Funded by the London Borough of Camden and the Mayor of London's Violence Reduction Unit, it was delivered by New Horizon Youth Centre (New Horizon), in partnership with the Camden Youth Offending Service (Camden YOS) and Camden and Islington NHS Trust (C&I). ECR was based on the Youth Justice Model of Constructive Resettlement, defined as 'collaborative work with a child in custody and following release that builds upon his or her strengths and goals to help them shift their identity from pro-offending to pro-social'. The ECR delivery team consisted of two fulltime equivalent caseworkers and a part-time psychologist.

ECR aimed to reduce the high reoffending rates of a small cohort of young people aged 15-25 in Camden, supporting them to improve life chances and fundamentally change lifestyles. Of the 24 young people supported, almost all were male and most were under 18 when they started with ECR. Two-thirds were from Black ethnic backgrounds. On average, young people received support for 18 months; six were supported for more than two years. When ECR closed, open cases were taken on by New Horizon's Youth Outreach Project.

In October 2021, New Horizon commissioned [Sally Cupitt Consulting](#) to undertake an independent evaluation of ECR. The evaluation aimed to:

- Assess the model's impact and the extent to which it achieved its intended outcomes.
- Identify learning, including around the delivery model and around partnership working between the voluntary and statutory sectors.
- Provide a simple cost-benefit analysis based on case studies and an initial exploration of factors affecting feasibility of replication or scale-up of the ECR project.

This evaluation is based on programme monitoring data for all ECR clients, and in-depth analysis (including interviews with a range of stakeholders) of eight young people's cases. Access to data was more limited than had been anticipated.

THE ECR OFFER

- ECR supported young people through **caseworker support sessions**, supplemented by practical and material support. Sessions were approximately weekly; Covid-19 social distancing restrictions sometimes limited their frequency.
- The ECR **psychologist** supported young people with more complex psychological needs and undertook casework when ECR was under capacity.
- ECR support for young people was **not time limited**. Dormant cases would be reopened immediately should a young person get back in touch requiring support.
- Engagement with young people's **wider networks of professionals** was a core part of ECR. Caseworkers referred young people to services and accompanied them to meetings. They advocated for young people to help put their views across and access support. ECR tried to improve communication across networks to promote joined up support.

THE APPROACH

- Key aspects of the ECR approach were that the work was **trauma informed** and **put the young person first**. Caseworker sessions were co-created, with young people discussing with their caseworker what their support could consist of. The project also involved young people in staff recruitment and evaluation design.

A central focus on **psychological input**, both for young people and for ECR staff, was also key. The psychologist offer was valuable for young people, especially for those with high need and for whom other forms of support were limited. The placement of a psychologist within the ECR team was unusual, sometimes tricky, and ultimately very useful. Although some caseworkers found the intense psychological input difficult at first, the team came to appreciate it, and it informed their practice. There was some confusion with other professionals as to how the role of the psychologist would work alongside other mental health offers, although this was largely resolved. The psychology part of the ECR service was withdrawn in 2021 in part due to a lack of agreement around funding for it.

“I’ve met so many people through the system, I’ve been all up and down, from the care system, to the jail system to the probation system to the young offender. And I’ve never really rocked with people the way I do especially with [ECR staff] ... I have a good relationship with them and I know I can chat to them if the worst came to the worst. ... I’ve met a lot of workers over the years, and especially [my caseworker] and the team around her, and a couple of others, I can honestly say they are the nicest people I’ve ever met. ... They are good hearted people and they have done a lot for me.



ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE

Engaging young people was important, and the necessary precursor to the achievement of other outcomes. On the whole, young people engaged well with their ECR caseworkers; some had strong relationships with them. One commented:

“I’ve met so many people through the system, I’ve been all up and down the system, from the care system, to the jail system to the probation system to the young offender. And I’ve never really rocked with people the way I do especially with [ECR staff] ... I have a good relationship with them and I know I can chat to them if the worst came to the worst. ... I’ve met a lot of workers over the years, and especially [my caseworker] and the team around her, and a couple of others, I can honestly say they are the nicest people I’ve ever met. ... They are good hearted people and they have done a lot for me.”

Factors that helped build and maintain engagement were:

- ECR **staff being able to relate** to young people, and being **tenacious** in encouraging young people to engage.
- The provision of **regular, non-judgemental** support that was **responsive** to immediate need and **accessed voluntarily**.
- Caseworker sessions that were **customised and co-created** with young people.
- Careful **management of contact with other services**, as necessary collaborative work with other agencies occasionally led to a loss of trust with young people.

Difficulties in engaging young people were sometimes faced when:

- They were in the community with more freedom and less monitoring (as opposed to custody)
- Young people could not be contacted in custody (for example, because of pandemic-related restrictions)
- There was turnover in the ECR staff team
- Young people experienced acute mental health difficulties.

OUTCOMES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Young people experienced a range of outcomes. It was often not possible to attribute these entirely to ECR; other factors or other professionals contributed to some changes.

ECR supported young people to **access and engage with other services**. Of the eight young people whose cases we explored in depth:

- Three accessed or better engaged with **educational or training courses**, while two others secured places on courses due to begin later in 2022. Two young people passed courses or gained qualifications and one of these went on to secure employment.
- Four accessed **leisure opportunities** including gym membership and music sessions.
- Four engaged with **healthcare services** and two with **solicitors**.

Other outcomes for our sample of eight young people included:

- Two were **rehoused**, with ECR support being instrumental in these moves.
- Young people's experiences of some **transitions** – for example, from custody to the community or vice versa, or from children's to adult services – were improved and smoother than they would otherwise have been without ECR.
- There was a **reduction in offending** for five of eight young people. Although its relative contribution is difficult to determine, ECR may have contributed to the reduction in offending in four cases. There was evidence that ECR contributed to one young person being given a **non-custodial sentence** and some indication of this in two further cases.
- Some young people were supported by ECR to identify their **strengths, interests and goals**.
- Some young people were better able to **manage their anger and distress**.

There was some evidence that receiving ECR support over a longer time period and while living in the community led to more outcomes. Young people's family members and young people's own past experiences of trauma variously acted as enablers of, or barriers to, change.

THE ECONOMIC VALUE CREATED BY ECR

We used methods similar to cost-benefit analysis to look at the value created by ECR and found that ECR is likely to create considerably more **economic value** than it costs. To do this, we quantified and then monetised key outcomes for eight young people. We extrapolated high-confidence findings in a very conservative way to the whole user group.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING AND OUTCOMES FOR ORGANISATIONS

The partnership between New Horizon, Camden YOS and C&I was strong. The relationship between New Horizon and the YOS was particularly close; the two organisations have a long history of mutual respect, predating ECR, as well as aligned values and approaches. ECR also worked closely with other organisations that support young people. Joint working was facilitated by regular contact, valued specialist knowledge held by ECR staff, a clear delineation of roles and tasks, and cross-agency communication.

Although not a core focus of ECR's work, the project brought learning to other organisations:

- Despite being an already high-performing YOS, Camden described some changes in their work, including **better engagement with young people** and further impetus to their **child-centric** ways of working.
- ECR helped bring the **young person's perspective** to their wider professional network, offering a contextual and trauma-informed understanding of young people.
- In some cases, ECR staff reported success in getting other organisations to **meet their obligations** to young people supported by the project.
- There was evidence that some services, including council housing departments and colleges, had provided **more appropriate support** to young people, better tailored to their needs and interests, as a result of ECR.
- Some stakeholders felt that ECR had contributed to **wider sectoral changes**, such as greater interest in child-centred approaches and more attention on transitions. This may be the case, although other concurrent initiatives will have had an effect too.

REPLICATING ECR

There is significant interest currently in the wider application of constructive resettlement approaches such as ECR. Factors likely to affect the feasibility of replication or scale-up of the project are:

- The **nature of local need**, both in terms of need for, and young people's interest in, the service.
- The **nature of the proposed activity**, including its cost, size, scope and intended geographical remit.
- The **local service context**, in terms of what services exist, whether they collaborate and the capacity and culture of the local youth offending service.
- The **proposed implementers**, including the sector they are in, their leadership, skills and expertise, and their relationships with local partners.
- The **local socio-political context**, in terms of the extent to which an ECR-type project would fit with local plans and priorities.

01

INTRODUCTION

1.1 ABOUT ECR

The Enhanced Constructive Resettlement (ECR) project was launched in 2018. It was funded by the London Borough of Camden (Camden) between 2018 and 2020 and then by the Mayor of London's Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) until ECR's closure in March 2022. ECR was delivered by New Horizon Youth Centre (New Horizon), working in partnership with the Camden Youth Offending Service (Camden YOS) and Camden and Islington NHS Trust (C&I).

ECR was housed within New Horizon's Youth Outreach Project (YOP). New Horizon supports young people facing homelessness in London and its YOP team works with young people impacted by serious youth violence and the criminal justice system.

ECR aimed to reduce the high re-offending rates among a small cohort of young people (aged 15 to 25) in Camden by supporting them to improve their life chances and fundamentally change their lifestyles. It was based on Constructive Resettlement,¹ – an approach which the Youth Justice Board is encouraging the youth justice system to adopt to improve resettlement outcomes for children. ECR was one of the first projects to apply a constructive resettlement approach through a local partnership between the voluntary and statutory sectors.

Young people involved in the ECR project received intensive, long-term support from a caseworker and often clinical psychological input. Twenty-four young people took part.

1.2 ABOUT THE EVALUATION

In October 2021, New Horizon commissioned [Sally Cupitt Consulting](#) to undertake an independent evaluation of ECR. The evaluation aimed to:

- Assess the model's impact and the extent to which it achieved its intended outcomes.
- Identify learning, including around the delivery model and around partnership working between the voluntary and statutory sectors.
- Provide a simple cost-benefit analysis based on case studies and an initial exploration of factors affecting feasibility of replication or scale-up of the ECR project.

This is our final evaluation report.²

1.2.1 EVALUATION METHODS

This report is based on:

- an analysis of eight cases of ECR young people, open at the time of writing
- interviews with ECR delivery staff and stakeholders³
- an analysis of Camden and ECR monitoring data.

For each case, we interviewed the young person's current ECR caseworker and reviewed case notes. We also interviewed four young people and four non-ECR professionals who worked with these young

1. [How to make resettlement constructive](#), Youth Justice Board, 2018

2. Following our interim report, shared with stakeholders in March 2022. The interim report focused on process and operational learning; key points from it are summarised here.

3. We interviewed: 3 ECR caseworkers, 2 team managers, 2 team psychologists (2018 to 2021) and 3 stakeholders from Camden (the YOS manager, the head of Integrated Youth Support Services and chair of YOS board).

people. Our sample of eight young people was broadly representative of the whole ECR client base (24) in terms of demographics and of whether they were in custody or not while receiving ECR support. However, all cases in our sample were open cases (around half of all ECR cases are closed) and on average our sample had been supported over a longer period than the average ECR young person.⁴

1.2.2 LIMITATIONS OF OUR EVALUATION

We were able to access summary engagement data on all 24 young people supported by ECR. We were able to focus in depth on eight of the 24 young people supported by ECR through its lifetime. We could not report on outcomes for the other 16 young people as most of these cases were closed and we did not have young people's consent to access case notes.

Within the eight focus cases, our data on young people's outcomes is less substantial than anticipated. This is partly because we were unable to interview as many non-ECR professionals and young people as we had hoped to; the young people's changing and complex circumstances limited our access to many of them. The manner in which ECR case notes were recorded also made the extraction of findings difficult.

The evaluation was also limited in the following ways:

- That our sample had been supported by ECR for longer than average may mean there is some bias in our sample in favour of young people who feel positively about ECR or who have experienced outcomes through ECR, or both.
- We had more data on one young person in our sample than on others. This young person features in two case examples in section 4.
- A number of factors limited our work on economic value. See more on this in section 5.

In appendix 2, we suggest ways in which these issues could be addressed to help with evaluations of similar projects in the future.

1.2.3 LANGUAGE AND ANONYMITY

For brevity, in this report we refer to all children (aged 15-17) and young people (aged 18 to 25) that ECR worked with as 'young people'.

When referring to individual young people's cases we have changed or taken out some details so our reporting is confidential and keeps young people safe.



4. The average ECR young person in our sample had been receiving ECR support over a period of two years and two months to date, compared to one year and six months for the average ECR young person.

02

ABOUT ECR

2.1 CONTEXT AND SET UP

The main driver in setting up ECR was a recognition that a small cohort of young people involved in reoffending in Camden could benefit from additional support. Following discussions between New Horizon and Camden YOS, a pilot mentoring and prison in-reach project was set up in 2016 to work with some of these young people. In 2018, the project was re-funded by Camden. Through its lead role in Project 10/10,⁵ C&I came on board as a third project partner and, from this point, the project became known as ECR. Our evaluation is focused on the project from 2018 onwards.

Nationally, the Youth Justice Board was encouraging the adoption of an approach it named 'Constructive Resettlement' (CR), defined as 'collaborative work with a child in custody and following release that builds upon his or her strengths and goals to help them shift their identity from pro-offending to pro-social'.⁶ CR was developed in response to outcomes for children leaving custody remaining poor, despite work in the criminal justice sector to improve resettlement. The approach recognises that young people entering custody: have multiple and complex needs; are more likely to have experienced previous traumatic events; and have often been subject to social injustice and excluded from social structures including education, training and employment.⁷ The CR approach informed the delivery of ECR.

The ECR theory of change (see page 10) was developed in late 2021 as a guide for this evaluation. It was created by the evaluators, through consultation with key ECR stakeholders.

2.2 STAFFING

ECR's funding covered two fulltime caseworker posts based at New Horizon and managerial support for them; six staff held caseworker posts over the lifespan of the project. Staff often worked part time on ECR and part time on New Horizon's YOP team.

Between 2018 and early 2021, funding also covered staff costs for a 0.8 FTE psychologist to support the ECR team and deliver support to young people, who often had considerable mental health needs. The psychologist was employed by C&I, although funding for her role came from Camden as it did for the rest of ECR. Another C&I psychologist also worked on the project for approximately one day a week. He supervised the team psychologist, contributed to supporting the team and was involved in discussions about ECR's development. He described his work as being delivered under 'some seconded time'; there was no ECR funding to cover it.

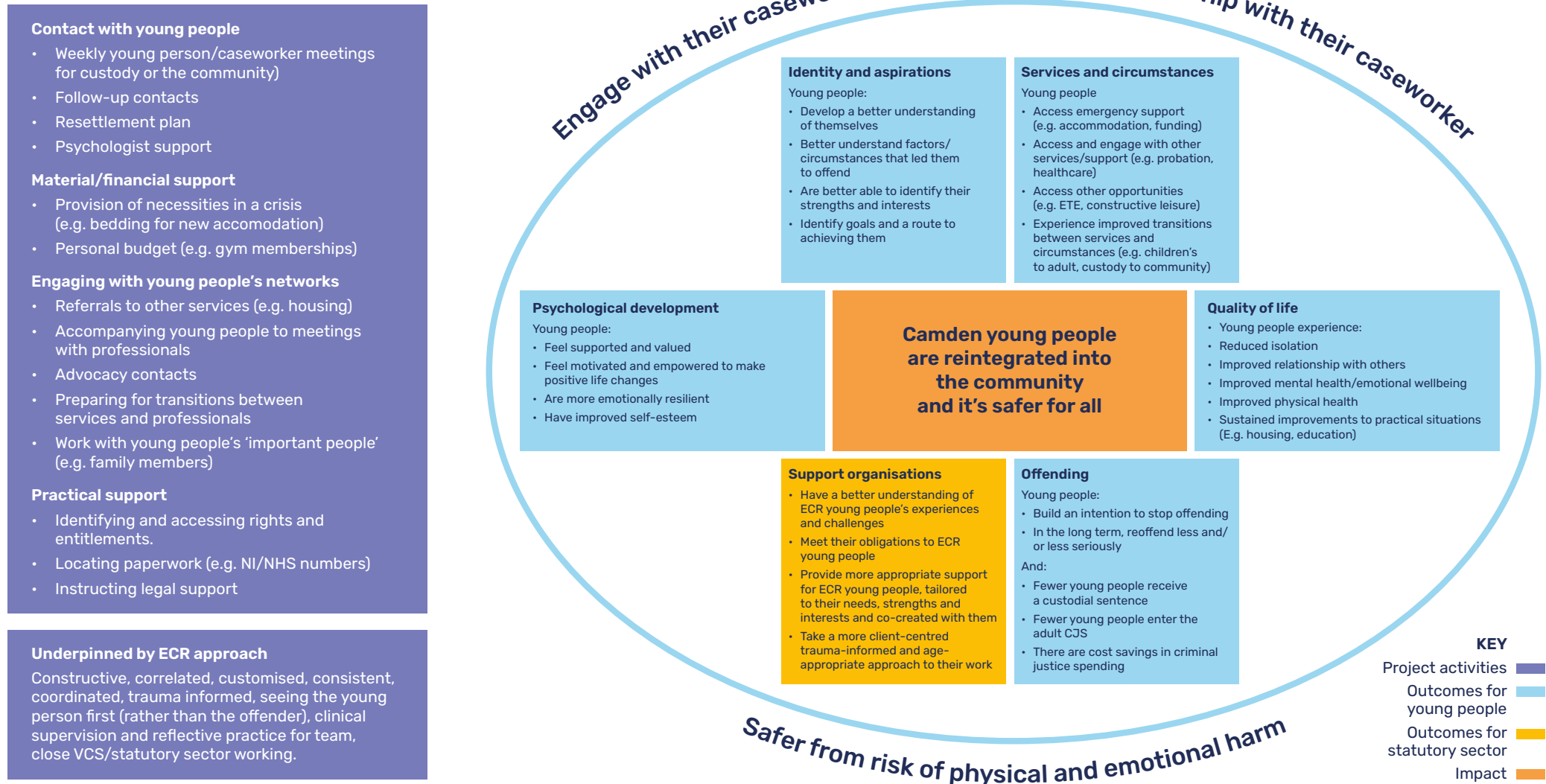
5. Project 10/10 is a multiagency children and young people's project led by Camden and Islington NHS Trust and comprised of Camden Integrated Youth Support Service and Coram's Fields children's charity.

6. [How to make resettlement constructive](#), Youth Justice Board, 2018

7. ['Now all I care about is my future'. Supporting the shift: framework for the effective resettlement of young people leaving custody](#), Beyond Youth Custody, 2017

ECR THEORY OF CHANGE 2021

Target group: Camden young people (15-25) in custody or at high risk of going into custody.



Contact with young people

- Weekly young person/caseworker meetings for custody or the community)
- Follow-up contacts
- Resettlement plan
- Psychologist support

Material/financial support

- Provision of necessities in a crisis (e.g. bedding for new accommodation)
- Personal budget (e.g. gym memberships)

Engaging with young people's networks

- Referrals to other services (e.g. housing)
- Accompanying young people to meetings with professionals
- Advocacy contacts
- Preparing for transitions between services and professionals
- Work with young people's 'important people' (e.g. family members)

Practical support

- Identifying and accessing rights and entitlements.
- Locating paperwork (e.g. NI/NHS numbers)
- Instructing legal support

Underpinned by ECR approach

Constructive, correlated, customised, consistent, coordinated, trauma informed, seeing the young person first (rather than the offender), clinical supervision and reflective practice for team, close VCS/statutory sector working.

2.3 WHO ECR SUPPORTED

ECR supported 24 young people in total. Of those young people for whom we have data:

- All but one were male and most (19) were under 18 when they started receiving support.⁸
- Two-thirds were from Black ethnic backgrounds.⁹
- Nine of 12 had a history of contact with social services before having ECR support.¹⁰
- 23 lived in the community for at least some of the time they were supported by ECR. Of these, 13 lived with family and 14 lived away from their family (alone or in care).
- Twelve spent some of the time during which they received ECR support in custody.

2.3.1 AGE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Age eligibility criteria changed over the period in which ECR was running. At first, young people aged 15 to 17 who were in custody, on remand or considered at high risk of receiving a custodial sentence were eligible. In 2021, the age range was extended up to 25. This was mainly because of a reduction in the number of young people in custody and on remand in Camden, which meant that there were not enough young people in suitable circumstances to refer to ECR.

Other factors that influenced the decision to change the age criteria were:

- A need to improve young people's transitions between children and adult services.
- A feeling from ECR staff and stakeholders that young people were still developing in terms of their maturity at the age of 18 and that support should be maintained beyond this, when some outcomes were more likely to occur.

Initially, all new clients were referred to ECR through Camden YOS. Following the extension of the age eligibility criteria, referral sources were widened to a range of statutory agencies in Camden, including the gangs team, probation and social care.

2.4 HOW LONG SUPPORT LASTED

When ECR ended in March 2022, the 11 cases still open were taken into New Horizon's YOP team for ongoing support. Of the 23 cases about which data was available:

- On average, open cases had support for 25 months from ECR, closed cases for 11 months.
- Of the 12 closed cases, three engaged for less than 6 months, three for 6-12 months, four for 12-18 months and two for 18-24 months.
- Of the 11 open cases, two had support for 6-12 months, two for 12-18 months, one for 18-24 months, two for between two and three years and four for more than three years.

2.5 WHAT ECR DELIVERED

2.5.1 CONTACT WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Caseworker support sessions

Central to the support offer were caseworker sessions; 21 of 24 young people accessed these, with a total of 445 meetings taking place between March 2019 and March 2022.¹¹ Of the three who did not, one had only become an ECR young person in February 2022,¹² while the other two had very limited engagement with the project.

Among young people who had support sessions (21), the average number of sessions with ECR caseworkers was 21. Thirteen young people had fewer than 20 sessions, six young people had between 20 and 50 sessions and two young people had more than 50 sessions. All young people who had more than 20 caseworker sessions had also been supported for more than 1.5 years. Six of the seven young people who had between one and five sessions had support for less than a year.

Once young people were engaging, caseworkers reported that sessions were held on approximately a weekly basis. Sometimes sessions were held less frequently. Social distancing restrictions associated with the Covid-19 pandemic limited the number and frequency of sessions held in custody. Young people's engagement and availability also affected frequency of sessions.

8. We have age data for 20 young people; 19 were under 18 when they started receiving ECR support.

9. Of the 18 for whom we have ethnicity data, two-thirds (12) were from Black backgrounds. Three were from White backgrounds, two from Mixed/Multiple ethnic backgrounds and one was from another ethnic group.

10. It was not known whether the remaining 12 young people had a history of contact.

11. There is some uncertainty around the number of meetings that took place in the monitoring data; we may have underreported slightly here.

12. This young person attended caseworker sessions after March 2022 under New Horizon's Youth Outreach Project.

Other caseworker contact with young people

Caseworkers also had contact with young people outside of support sessions, for example through phone calls, text messages or emails. There were 1,987 contacts recorded for 23 of 24 ECR young people, although we do not know how many of these involved direct contact with young people and how many involved contact with others on behalf of young people.

Monitoring data records 86 such contacts on average, per young person. Twelve young people had fewer than 50 contacts, two had 50-100, six had 100-200 and three had more than 200 contacts. All but one of the young people who had 100 or more contacts had also been supported for more than 1.5 years. All the young people who had fewer than 50 contacts had support for less than 1.5 years.

Psychological support

Some young people also had support from the ECR psychologist; this was either at the same time as having support from an ECR caseworker or with the ECR psychologist acting as a caseworker herself during periods of staffing shortages and/or to maintain worker continuity for young people. The psychologist is recorded as having been involved in 15 of 24 young person cases. She had support sessions with eight young people and was one of the main ECR staff contacts for seven of these.

Team members reported that the psychologist provided important support for young people. This included situations where a 'stop gap' was needed before young people could access other support or where other support for their mental health needs was not available to them.

The psychologist stopped working with ECR in February 2021, and her role was not re-funded (see 6.1). Following this, there was no longer a psychology offer for young people using ECR. Other ECR staff reported that this was a loss for young people.

2.5.2 MATERIAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

ECR provided a range of material and financial support to young people. Support in a crisis included food vouchers, access to New Horizon's food bank and taxi and public transport fares. ECR young people also had access to a personal budget of £1,000 to pay for more substantial, often one-off costs. Examples of personal budget use were for gym memberships, driving lessons, accommodation service charges and prison account top-ups. Although the full budget was not used for all young people, ECR staff reported that having access to personal budgets was significant, helpful for engaging young people and unusual in the context of similar projects.

In our sample of eight young people's cases, ECR additionally supported one young person to access grants for clothing and a laptop from external organisations on his release from custody. The young person's caseworker felt he would not have got these grants without her support.

2.5.3 ENGAGING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE'S NETWORKS

Caseworkers advocated for young people to help them access the support and services they needed, and to put the young people's views across. This included supporting – or sometimes challenging – services to engage better with young people.

Caseworkers attended 357 meetings with other professionals with, or on behalf of, 22 of 24 ECR young people.¹³ Each young person who had accessed this type of support had 16 contacts on average. Twelve had fewer than 10 contacts, seven had 10-40 contacts and three had more than 40 contacts.

Sometimes caseworkers worked directly with young people's family and friends, although this was primarily to facilitate support for the young person.

2.5.4 PRACTICAL SUPPORT

Caseworkers offered practical support to enable young people to engage with or access services, and to help other services to engage with young people. For example, they helped locate young people's paperwork, such as National Insurance or NHS numbers, supported applications for bank accounts, driving licenses and passports, and instructed legal support. They also helped young people to identify and access rights and entitlements, like welfare benefits. It may be that some of this support would not have been provided to young people – either at all, or in a timely manner – without ECR or other voluntary organisations in young people's networks.

2.6 KEY ASPECTS OF THE ECR MODEL

2.6.1 THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

ECR's theory of change explained that the way in which caseworkers supported young people and the relationships they developed with them were just as important as the activities delivered. It anticipated that ECR staff would:

13. This underreports the number of meetings that took place as data was not captured in the early stages of ECR. We do not know how many meetings young people were or were not present at.

- See the young person first (rather than the offender) and adopt a trauma-informed approach to working with them.
- Work according to the 'five Cs' set out in the Youth Justice Model of Constructive Resettlement, being constructive, co-created, customised, consistent and coordinated.¹⁴
- Take a psychologically-informed approach, both directly with young people and across the work of the team. It was intended that the team psychologist would support the rest of the team, drawing on approaches such as AMBIT, the mentalisation-based approach developed by the Anna Freud Centre,¹⁵ and INTEGRATE co-production.¹⁶

Much of this framework was central to ECR's delivery and staff described ways in which they had put the approaches into action. In relation to the 'five Cs', taking a co-created approach had been particularly important.

To a certain extent, some of these approaches were ways of describing how the wider New Horizon YOP had worked before the start of ECR, rather than guiding day-to-day practice. However, one of the ECR psychologists emphasised that ECR was something different from other services (if not from New Horizon itself), tailored to the needs of the specific client group:



... What is needed is a different way of working around the young people, developing their networks and the way that their networks understand them."

"We would never describe what we're doing as necessarily like a therapy intervention, ... This is a new way of adapting to the unique challenges that this very specific cohort of young people face when trying to seek help. ... I suppose we're a community psychology intervention, we're trying to take psychological ideas into systems fundamentally to get workers to reflect in a different way about how they're relating to young people and how to understand the behaviour of young people. ... What is needed is a different way of working around the young people, developing their networks and the way that their networks understand them."

One element of the Youth Justice Model of Constructive Resettlement intentionally not included in the ECR theory of change was young people developing their identity from pro-offending to pro-social. ECR stakeholders felt that this put all the onus on young people making changes and did not sufficiently recognise the need for system-level change and the importance of services needing to improve the way they work with young people to better be able to support them.

2.6.2 PSYCHOLOGICAL INPUT TO THE TEAM

Until July 2021, caseworkers were supported to deliver their work effectively through weekly individual clinical supervision and team reflective practice, supported by the ECR psychologists.

Initially, some caseworkers found it hard to get used to the intense psychology input, particularly the individual supervision. It was necessarily time consuming, and sometimes hard to prioritise alongside busy caseloads. Although newer staff found the model easier to adapt to, some staff had been caseworkers for a long time, had built up their own ways of working and found it hard to be given what felt occasionally like close supervision of work they were very experienced in. However, as the project continued, tensions reduced, and staff valued the support; an ongoing dialogue about effective team working was important in enabling this.

Several of the team benefitted personally from the psychologists' support, in terms of being able to put in

boundaries for their work or avoid feeling overwhelmed or 'burnt out' by it.

It was intended that the support would enable the team to take a psychologically-informed approach to their work with young people. Caseworkers felt that it had usefully informed their practice,

both in terms of planning and delivery. One reported:

"The work we do is so complex and young people come in crisis so it's reactive. Being able to unpick and reflect on situations was very useful. And thinking how we can better support young people [was useful]. I liked the fact that we could look at how my practice could impact the results of my work. So if a young person wasn't engaging I could look at how I might have led to that."

As well as space for support and reflection, the psychologists gave the team tools to use with young people. Some found these useful but others found the techniques difficult to apply.

After the psychologists left the project in 2021 (see 6.1), psychological input for ECR was reduced. This was felt to be a loss by the team. One commented:

"I was sad when the psychologists left. ... I loved having those conversations, bringing a case to the meeting, to people who were genuinely interested."

14. [How to make resettlement constructive](#), Youth Justice Board, 2018

15. <https://manuals.annafreud.org/ambit/>

16. <https://mac-uk.org/our-approach/>

I missed the group discussion, bouncing ideas around, unpicking young people, how trauma may have affected them."

The team continued to have access to support from a different psychologist who works with New Horizon's Youth Outreach Project. While useful, this was less intensive and more reactive than the previous support. A staff member felt this approach might be limited if 'you don't realise you need it until it's too late'.

2.6.3 ANTI-RACIST PRACTICE

New Horizon committed to ensuring that anti-racist practice was embedded in ECR, as in all its work; staff have also been trained extensively in racial trauma-informed approaches. While committed to anti-racist values, this was not a strong focus in ECR casework. However, staff gave various examples of how they had addressed issues of racism and diversity:

- A caseworker felt that much of the workers' role was in understanding and validating young people's experiences. At points where young people disclosed that other agencies had been racist, ECR staff discussed whether the person wanted to make a complaint, but in most cases they didn't want to.
- Another said that, when advocating on behalf of young people, she had sometimes had to point out to services when they had treated them unfairly. She explained that some services had made assumptions about young people's involvement in certain types of behaviour on the basis of their background or ethnicity.

In terms of the external context, one Camden stakeholder talked about ECR being part of Camden's work to address disproportionality in the criminal justice system:

"The other thing is that because of the disproportionate number of those children who are Black, and the tendency of the system to – there's a horrible word called 'adultify' – but basically to treat Black young people as if they are more like adults than white young people. There's another reason to [do work such as ECR, to] make sure that we actually get to know the person, talk to them about how we go about their futures, take the opportunity of custody to help people sort of re-evaluate, but then make active approaches to secure the things we know that will help."

2.6.4 CO-PRODUCTION WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

As with the focus on co-creation in casework with young people, so ECR sought to involve co-production opportunities in planning and management. For example, young people had some involvement in recruiting ECR caseworkers, through helping to design interview questions and to review interviewee answers. Staff reported that co-production work had been useful for project development. However, it did not progress as much as had originally been intended, in part because of capacity challenges. There were also difficulties in: getting young people to commit to some opportunities, particularly those with greater time requirements; and in setting up opportunities that kept young people safe – for example, a planned young people's panel did not go ahead because of associated risks.



03

ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE

As a result of support and the way in which it was delivered, it was hoped that young people would achieve the core outcomes of engaging with their caseworker and building a trusting relationship. These were felt to be necessary precursors to the achievement of other outcomes.

3.1 THE CASEWORK RELATIONSHIP

3.1.1 NATURE AND EXTENT OF ENGAGEMENT

Engagement with ECR was quite good or better in all but one of the eight cases in our focus sample. Staff described some of these relationships as being strong. The four young people we interviewed were positive about the ECR caseworkers as people. One commented:

"I've met so many people through the system, I've been all up and down the system, from the care system, to the jail system to the probation system to the young offender. And I've never really rocked with people the way I do especially with [ECR staff] ... I have a good relationship with them and I know I can chat to them if the worst came to the worst. ... I've met a lot of workers over the years, and especially [my caseworker] and the team around her, and a couple of others, I can honestly say they are the nicest people I've ever met. ... They are good hearted people and they have done a lot for me."

The four young people were also positive about the support they had received. Three explained:

"[ECR] support me with a lot of things, like helping me work at home with a laptop. They help me with funds sometimes, for like a gym membership or something. They have helped me a lot of times."

"Since I started working with [my ECR caseworker], ... we've made progress to the point that I'm trying to work legit, I'm living out the area, I'm going to the gym, I'm doing activities. ... since working with [my caseworker] they have completely helped me change my life ... they have done a lot for me and helped me become a better person."

"It's been alright. It's been very helpful. They help with things I need help with like bank accounts, help me with little things."

There is good evidence in ECR case files of some young people proactively seeking support from their caseworker. There is also evidence of young people giving positive feedback about support received; some sent cards to their caseworkers.

Most of the young people we spoke to couldn't think of anything that could be improved about ECR, although one suggested that caseworkers could keep their phones on for longer hours so as to be more readily available.

3.1.2 BUILDING TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS

The four young people we spoke to all felt that they had come to trust their ECR caseworkers. For some the nature of ECR support had contributed to the development of trust. For example:

"[ECR] are a lot different [to other services]. Compare them to probation for example. I don't chat to probation, I don't got a relationship with probation."

17. In the eighth case, the support relationship was at an early stage and minimal work had taken place.

18. ECR staff were contactable by phone during working hours and were also contactable outside working hours if there had been prior agreement with a young person.

Probation don't treat ... probation just look at the paperwork and say 'oh [young person's name]'. ECR and especially [my caseworker] have never done that. ... They are very similar to [another charity that supports me] ... the people I trust are from [that other charity] and [ECR]."

Development of trust may be a significant outcome for this client group. Several young people said that it was hard for them to trust others, in some cases because of childhood experiences.

3.2 WHAT HELPED BUILD ENGAGEMENT AND TRUST

3.2.1 ECR STAFF ABILITY TO RELATE TO YOUNG PEOPLE

The four non-ECR professionals interviewed all praised ECR caseworkers' ability to relate to young people and some mentioned this had contributed to engagement. For example:

"[The ECR caseworker] is very relatable, she worked very well with young people. [A young person we both worked with] warmed to her very quickly which is unlike [him]. It takes a while, normally."

Young people appreciated that their caseworkers had been open and warm. One said:

"[The ECR staff are] just genuine people, especially [my caseworker]. ... Can chat to her. ... She goes out of her way."

3.2.2 STAFF WHO DON'T GIVE UP

The tenacity of ECR staff increased the chance of young people's engagement. Failure to engage was seen, at least to a certain extent, not as the young person's responsibility but as ECR's failure to engage with the young person. One caseworker explained that they:

"Keep going until [young people] eventually crack [and engage]! ... ECR are definitely more tenacious than statutory [services], as we don't have the same paperwork. ... ECR is not constrained by just those things 'in my remit' – we go the extra mile. We keep going until the things that need to be done are done."

Another team member highlighted the importance of being creative if your efforts to engage a young person were not working:

"Since I started working with my ECR caseworker, ... we've made progress to the point that I'm trying to work legit, I'm living out the area, I'm going to the gym, I'm doing activities. ... since working with my caseworker they have completely helped me change my life ... they have done a lot for me and helped me become a better person."



"What works may change, so checking in with them – 'is this still working, if this time of day doesn't work anymore can we change it to a different day, if this location isn't working anymore can we meet somewhere else' – so if they're in a hostel but they don't feel like it's a confidential place to meet in a hostel, can we meet in a café instead."

3.2.3 CUSTOMISED AND CO-CREATED SUPPORT

Although ECR staff didn't call them the 'five Cs', elements of the Constructive Resettlement approach – particularly in terms of being customised, consistent and using a co-created approach – were raised as important ways to engage young people. (See 3.2.4 for more on consistency.)

In terms of being **customised**, meeting where and when a young person wanted and working at the young person's speed were both important. One caseworker

stressed that helping a young person make plans for the future worked only when the young person was ready:

“I think there’s a lot of pressure on these kids to kind of know what path they want to do, because people are so worried they’re going to go down the wrong one. ... [For one of my young people] it’s totally pointless trying to make a plan with them, now, about something that might happen in a year, and I think they get bogged down with it. I think it’s just about keeping that open line of communication for when he does have ideas about what he’d like to do, knowing that we would be able to then support him with that.”

Co-creation was also seen as enabling and encouraging engagement. A team member explained:

“Being able to think together about what [their] support looks like is all part of them starting to trust you because you’re actually listening to what they’re wanting support to look like rather than going in saying ‘this is what I’m here to help you with’; it’s more led by them.”

One of the young people we interviewed also described the importance of ECR’s co-created approach to him. He explained that he found it annoying to be asked repeatedly about his future plans and aspirations by social workers and preferred that his ECR caseworker was more focused on his priorities: ‘she always asks for my opinion, what I want, asks what I want to do’.

However, one caseworker had experienced challenges when using a co-created approach:

“All my work is tailored to what [young people] want, [but] sometimes they don’t know what they want support with. There’s a fine line between doing with and doing to but if they don’t know what they want support with but you don’t ‘do to’ it’s kind of like you’re building a relationship that has no purpose.”

“ *Being able to think together about what their support looks like is all part of them starting to trust you because you’re actually listening to what they’re wanting support to look like rather than going in saying ‘this is what I’m here to help you with’; it’s more led by them.”*

3.2.4 CONSISTENT SUPPORT

ECR caseworkers kept trying to meet with young people and maintaining relationships with them, over long periods of time and in often trying circumstances; this was a key part of the ECR offer.

Staff reflected that regular meetings with young people kept the momentum of their support going. One talked about how engagement would follow as a result:

“My experience is that most of the young people engaged really well once they understood what we were doing and that we meant it when we said, ‘we’re going to come and see you once a week in prison to get to know you’. Maybe the first session they’d be like ‘who are you?’ but when we kept coming back time and time again at the same time, doing what we said we’d do. Then they understood and they were more willing to engage with us.”

Several interviewees talked about the importance of ECR’s building and maintaining good relationships with young people in prison, sometimes in the absence of other consistent visitors. A young person who engaged well with ECR described how regular support had helped him:

“[ECR] have never really given up. They came to visit me when I was in jail. ... And it wasn’t just me, they looked after my [family] and reassured them, even when I was getting in trouble and in prison. ... They have given me more options, even when I was falling back into the life sometimes or I got in trouble. ... I’ll always remember [my ECR caseworker], she was visiting me in jail ... she was visiting me every week, that’s more than my own mum had done!”

3.2.5 NON-JUDGEMENTAL SUPPORT

The theory of change anticipates that ECR will see the young person first rather than the offender. A caseworker felt that it was at least in part because of this approach that she had built a positive relationship with a young person serving a long sentence:

“I was interested to learn about who he was despite the seriousness of the charges he was dealing with. I said tell me about you and asked what he was interested in, he said he was interested in interior design and he’d only figured that out when he was in custody so we spent lots of time talking about it. ... And generally asking how he was doing and if he was worried and if he wasn’t ready to talk about something being ok with that.”

A young person explained how ECR staff had not judged them according to their reputation:

“*ECR have never really given up. They came to visit me when I was in jail. ... And it wasn't just me, they looked after my family and reassured them, even when I was getting in trouble and in prison. ... They have given me more options, even when I was falling back into the life sometimes or I got in trouble. ... I'll always remember my ECR caseworker, she was visiting me in jail ... she was visiting me every week, that's more than my own mum had done!*”



“You build relationships with [ECR staff] and they don't judge you and they don't look at me like I'm [my gang name], they don't look at me like I'm a bad person, they got their own opinion of me. They got to know me not from what other people have said but how I have spoken to them, how I have interacted with them.”

3.2.6 VOLUNTARY NATURE OF SUPPORT

The fact that ECR support was voluntary – unlike statutory services – encouraged some young people to engage. Across the ECR team, caseworkers found this to be a valuable message to convey to young people. One caseworker felt that a young person who generally engaged well did so because ‘he knows if he doesn't want to see me, it's fine – I will go back another time’.

Some challenges related to ECR's voluntary nature were experienced in the referral process. While ECR stakeholders saw the fact that young people were asked to consent to referral as a positive feature of the project, some young people were not interested in accessing the support.

3.2.7 OPEN-ENDED SUPPORT

Open ended support up to the age of 25 was an important feature of ECR, enabling young people to continue to receive support after other agencies would have closed their case. Caseworkers felt that this had encouraged young people to engage. The team had been able to manage the demand for ongoing support; not all young people wanted support over a long period.

3.2.8 RESPONDING TO IMMEDIATE NEEDS

Team members noted that young people who engaged well with ECR were often those who needed immediate support – for example, because they had an upcoming court case, were experiencing a mental health crisis, were worried for their safety or could not get housing. These young people engaged because ECR provided the possibility of accessing the support they needed. When asked why he kept seeing his caseworker, a young person responded: ‘because she might be able to help with my housing’.

Responding to immediate need also encouraged engagement, particularly early on:

“He found [I] was quite helpful when they kicked him out of his hostel. And I was able to kind of work with other services to kind of ensure that he could have that placement back. So then he was like, ‘oh, she's very useful!’”

“*You build relationships with ECR staff and they don't judge you ... they don't look at me like I'm a bad person. They got to know me not from what other people have said but how I have spoken to them, how I have interacted with them”*

3.2.9 CAREFULLY MANAGING CONTACT WITH OTHER SERVICES

The theory of change outlines that the development of trusting relationships between young people and ECR can occasionally be set back by some activities undertaken by ECR staff, for example, necessary collaborative work with other services can lead to loss of a young person's trust. Two team members described how they managed this type of sensitive situation:

"If you work closely alongside professionals that young people have a negative view on, sometimes that can make them start to view you negatively. ... Maybe some statutory services would want to join your meeting because the young person won't engage with them. ... Because ECR is very much based on consent I always ask my young person if they're happy for that professional to join so the young person feels as in control of our space as I do. And I guess being completely transparent – [I'd say to a young person:] 'I know you don't want to meet them, we have to have this conversation, why don't we have it together?'"

"Perhaps there might be pressure from parts of the system to focus on one particular thing, whether that's mental health or doing weapons awareness training or whatever it is. They might be putting pressure on the ECR worker because often that worker would be the person holding the relationship [with the young person]. ... When these dilemmas came up, we were quite open and transparent about that with the young person – 'your [statutory service] worker wants me to talk about this, I'm mindful we haven't spoken about this yet, is it important, should we think about it?'"

A team manager reflected that, while it was important to recognise young people's concerns about other agencies, it was also important to try to remain positive when talking about the agencies' roles, and to avoid colluding in any negative perceptions the young person might have.

3.2.10 ASSIGNING YOUNG PEOPLE TO WORKERS

To encourage effective engagement, the team took into account what they knew about young people when assigning workers. A team manager gave an example of what might be considered:

"Like in [the young person's] upbringing we might notice a lack of bonding with a sibling or a mother so we would look at who on the team could be a mother or a sibling role. We would try to identify

gaps for a young person to allocate possibly to the characteristics of the people we have on the team."

However, assigning young people to workers according to commonality of experience was not straightforward. One caseworker reflected that having things in common with young people she supported could be a positive, because it encouraged bonding, or a negative, because:

"Sometimes when things are too close to home a young person might filter how they feel because they perceive you might make a judgement [about them] because you are somewhat like the people in their family, [for example]."

3.3 WHAT MADE IT DIFFICULT TO BUILD ENGAGEMENT AND TRUST

3.3.1 SECURING ACCESS TO YOUNG PEOPLE

Custody and the community

It was usually easier to engage with ECR young people in custody, or when they had been released with electronic monitoring, rather than in the community. Some stakeholders argued that young people in custody were more amenable to contact because they might want company or to get out of their cell, and the structured prison timetable made it easier to get into a routine of regular contact. One noted that being in custody could be a 'teachable moment' for young people, when they are more receptive to engaging with an initiative like ECR. Camden YOS stakeholders also observed that some young people were unwilling to be referred to ECR while in the community but consented to be after going into custody.

One young person said he had engaged with ECR because he was in custody; when asked if he would have engaged in the community, he laughed and said: 'maybe, if [my ECR caseworker] came to my house!'. The same young person's YOS worker noted that 'his being in custody has allowed [his ECR caseworker] to get in there and be able to pin him down because we couldn't before'.

Two caseworkers noted that young people sometimes engaged less after their electronic monitoring was removed, although it was not clear if this was temporary.

Getting into custodial settings

Access to young people in custody was not always easy for ECR. Covid restrictions affected access to young people in custody more than to young people in the community because securing legal visits became more difficult. A team manager noted that seeing young people in custody 'is not quite normal, even now'.

ECR also had more limited access to young people serving custodial sentences in one institution in the latter stages of the project because of changes in contracts for work in prison. The change meant that ECR caseworkers had reduced access to young people and could only see them through more complicated, time consuming and restrictive legal visits. The timing of these did not always work for young people; for one, the visit was often scheduled during their gym time, forcing them to choose which to attend.

3.3.2 STAFF CHANGES IN THE ECR TEAM

Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the importance of relationships between young people and ECR caseworkers, managing changes in ECR caseworkers was critical.

The ECR team worked hard to minimise the effects of staff changes on young people. Wherever possible, upcoming staff changes were discussed with young people. New caseworkers were introduced carefully and sensitively, and staff discussed and explored young people's feelings around these changes. One of the caseworkers went on maternity leave, and, with the encouragement of the team psychologist, wrote letters to her young people, talking about memories of them, what they had achieved while she knew them and wishing them luck.

Other transitions were also considered carefully, with new contacts being 'bridged in' by existing network members. For example, the YOS referrer often introduced young people to ECR and ECR caseworkers introduced the project psychologist.

Even with planning, staff changes were difficult to manage and sometimes weakened or damaged relationships with young people. In at least three cases, young people stopped engaging with ECR after a change in their caseworker, although in one of these the new caseworker noted that the young person was in a 'good place' and may no longer have needed support. Even among young people who continued to engage, the loss of an ECR staff member could be felt keenly. Of the departure of the team psychologist one young person said that 'it was a big shock [when she left], it was very unexpected, it was upsetting'.

3.3. YOUNG PEOPLE'S DIFFICULTIES WITH MENTAL HEALTH

On the whole, young people experiencing periods of better mental health engaged more with ECR than those having difficulties, particularly acute difficulties. Young people needed to be 'in the right headspace for change'. A caseworker described the fluctuating engagement levels of a young person they worked with:

"When I first met him he was in a much more resilient headspace so we were able to make that connection and build up a relationship. Since then his mental health has deteriorated and when he is having a bad patch he isn't as engaged and won't pick up the phone. ... Sometimes he says 'I don't want to talk to you because I don't want to think about what's going on, I just want to shut it off for a day. If I talk to you it'll all get riled up inside of me.'"

In our focus sample, at least one young person had mental health problems that at times inhibited engagement with ECR. In addition, sedative medication also contributed to some troubles with engagement.

04

OUTCOMES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

In this section, we explore the outcomes for our focus sample of eight young people. This is based primarily on interviews, due to the limitations of project monitoring data. We have been unable to report on outcomes for the 16 ECR young people outside our focus sample; most of these cases were closed and we did not have young people's consent to access case notes.

In our analysis we quantify how many young people in our focus sample experienced outcomes. It is possible that we may have undercounted young people's experiences as we were reliant on staff memory (including in situations where staff working with young people had changed) and on monitoring data that did not always capture all details of young people's cases.

4.1 CHALLENGES IN ATTRIBUTING CHANGE

Most of the young people in our sample had fairly extensive networks of professionals working with them alongside ECR, particularly when they were aged under 18. Many of these were statutory, such as social workers, leaving care personal advisers (PAs) and probation workers. Some were from other voluntary sector organisations, which provided support in some ways similar to that provided by ECR.

Because of this, it is often not possible to attribute outcomes entirely to ECR. Other professionals or factors often contributed to changes. Where possible we explore the relative contribution of those involved. This is not always straightforward – for example, of our four young people interviewees, two who were also

receiving support from another voluntary organisation could not attribute change to one or the other, or even distinguish between the two organisations. One explained that workers from the two organisations were his 'support team'.

4.2 ACCESSING AND ENGAGING WITH SERVICES

It was anticipated that ECR would support young people to access and engage with a range of services and opportunities, including accommodation, healthcare, education, training and employment, and constructive leisure. We found good evidence that ECR had done so, with caseworkers introducing young people to new services, helping them to engage and supporting – or sometimes challenging – services to engage better with young people.

A caseworker explained that ECR support to access services could be important to help young people manage what could be a large number of professional relationships:

"A lot of the time the kids we work with have quite a lot of professionals already. Being a professional and being able to contact other services, instead of the young person having to go there – maybe getting the information from that service and feeding back to the young person – is more effective than expecting the young person to build another relationship with another professional."

17. In the eighth case, the support relationship was at an early stage and minimal work had taken place.

18. ECR staff were contactable by phone during working hours and were also contactable outside working hours if there had been prior agreement with a young person.

4.2.1 ACCOMMODATION

Securing accommodation

ECR young people need accommodation in a range of circumstances, including when leaving custody, or because they are at risk in their community accommodation, or to move away from historic and unhelpful networks.

Two young people in our sample of eight were rehoused. Help from ECR included discussing their housing options, advocating for their needs to other professionals and funding necessities at the time of their moves. Although other professionals were involved, in both cases we had feedback that the moves would not have happened without ECR. Further detail is in case examples A and D.

Of the other young people in our sample who had ECR support with their housing:

- One lost their hostel place because of a build-up of arrears and lack of engagement. The young person's network worked together to get an agreement between young person and hostel to reinstate it. While the bulk of the work was done by another professional, ECR advocated on the young person's behalf, letting them know his needs, relaying messages back to him, and letting him know the outcome of the process.
- Two were waiting to be rehoused for safety reasons. ECR and other agencies have advocated on their behalf. Cases such as these appear to take a substantial amount of time to resolve, sometimes one to two years, despite advocacy efforts.
- One had support from ECR and other professionals to plan his living arrangements on his release from custody. He subsequently decided against moving into an accommodation placement that had been secured for him.

CASE EXAMPLE A:

FINDING AND RETAINING ACCOMMODATION IN AN EMERGENCY

A young person's professional network recommended that he move out of Camden because there was a threat to his life there. Initially not keen, the young person spent some time discussing it with his ECR caseworker. Around six months later, an application was made; the caseworker wrote a letter in support of this.

The young person's situation became urgent a few months later and he had to move into emergency accommodation. ECR, along with other members of the young person's network, paid for food and a hotel room for two weeks. After some trouble at one of the hotels, ECR helped him find another.

When the young person was finally found somewhere to live, outside London, ECR and another charity supporting him helped him buy basic essentials. ECR also applied for benefits for him for the accommodation.

The ECR caseworker felt strongly that the young person was safer out of London, and that he would not have made the move without ECR support:

"Without ECR, I'm 100% sure he would have stayed in Camden and I'm 100% sure he would have been in more risk."

The worker in the other charity supporting the young person agreed:

"I don't think he would have got the move [without ECR]. We've done a lot to support him, but when [ECR] come on board, there's so much more that both of us can offer him as a collective."

ECR also helped the young person maintain his tenancy. The young person explained the importance of this:

"You know if it wasn't for [ECR] I think I would have failed it. Because they were coming to see me all the time they were checking how I was, they were helping out with all my stuff like with my bills, help[ing] me sort everything out."

Difficulties associated with rehousing

While ECR caseworkers felt that both young people who had been rehoused were safer in their new accommodation, rehousing them outside London had isolated them from their existing support networks. A caseworker and a young person explained:

“So you’ve got this problem ... you’re faced with all the time. You move the kids out [of an area] for their immediate safety. But where are we moving them to? Without a network, [my ECR young person] really just sees me and another worker in another youth centre that sees him also. There’s nothing there [in the area he’s moved to]. So it’s just a real double-edged sword.”

“It’s temporary [accommodation], I need to move out. Interviewer: Do you feel safe? Yeah. But I’m far away from my family, [I’ve got] no support.”

Securing care leaver status

Alongside other professionals, ECR advocated on behalf of two young people in our sample to get their status as care leavers accepted, aiming to ensure the council had a duty to house them. For one of these ECR advocacy, alongside legal work outside ECR, led to the young person accessing housing on his release from custody. ECR found the young person a solicitor, and ensured the young person engaged. The ECR caseworker felt the young person would not have accessed or engaged without support and, in turn, would not have been recognised as a care leaver and accessed housing.

4.2.2 EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING AND EDUCATION (ETE)

Finding educational or training courses is a priority for many young people, both to keep them busy and to help them find work. In our focus sample of eight, three young people accessed or better engaged with courses with ECR support and two other young people were supported to secure places on courses due to begin after our interviews. Two young people in our sample went on to pass courses or secure qualifications and one of these went on to secure employment – see case example B. We also had feedback that the future work prospects of some others may have improved as a result of ECR support.

ECR’s ETE work with young people in our focus sample included:

- Discussing interests and course/employment options with young people, including options available to young people with a criminal record.
- Referring young people to courses, including

business and music courses and chef training, and supporting them to make applications where needed.

- Advocating for young people who experienced difficulties in accessing courses.
- Alongside others in young people’s networks, supporting young people to engage with courses, including maintaining their interest during periods of boredom, frustration (exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic) or other difficulties.
- Paying for skills-based training such as driving lessons.
- Paying for equipment needed for course completion or job searches.
- Supporting a young person to update his CV and look for job opportunities.

The ECR team’s location within New Horizon, with its access to a specialist employment team, courses and funding, helpfully enabled some of this work. A lack of available external funding, delayed course scheduling and a young person’s immigration status were barriers to supporting young people. In one case, ECR was unsuccessful in applying for external funding to continue a young person’s driving lessons. In another, an external provider postponed the start date of a course because of funding issues, risking potential disengagement from the young person. In a third case, the young person needed to secure residency – also being undertaken with ECR support – before being able to start a course.

CASE EXAMPLE B:

A SEARCH FOR EMPLOYMENT

ECR's support for one young person pursued several directions before he decided on an employment path, securing work¹⁹

The young person was studying at college when he started receiving ECR support. His ECR caseworker helped him to engage with his college course and ECR paid for a laptop for him. The young person went on to pass his Maths and English GCSEs with good grades, although he decided not to stay on at the college to complete a vocational qualification that he had started.

With a family member of the young person and a Connexions professional, the ECR caseworker supported the young person to access a second college to do another vocational qualification. The two professionals advocated for him when the college at first refused him a place on grounds of age. The young person started but did not complete the course.

The young person expressed interest in becoming a fitness instructor, and ECR explored several sports coaching courses with him. Alongside a Connexions worker, ECR identified courses and discussed them with the young person. Connexions signed him up for a course, which he started. He struggled with time and coursework requirements, and ECR asked Connexions to discuss flexibility with the providers. In the end, the young person didn't complete the course.

The young person became interested in a particular employment area and got a place on a short course. ECR helped the young person get time off from his other college course to do this training, which he passed.

Working alongside the young person's mentor from another organisation, ECR helped the young person to look for work. His ECR caseworker helped him to update his CV and look for opportunities. The young person got a job and is still working in the employment area 18 months later.

4.2.3 CONSTRUCTIVE LEISURE

In our focus sample of eight, four young people were helped to access constructive leisure opportunities. Significant efforts were made to respond to some young people's expressed interests; not all opportunities were taken up by young people, or sustained.

ECR paid for six months of gym membership for two young people in our sample and asked another involved agency to pay for membership for a third young person, which they did. In interview two of these young people mentioned their membership as an aspect of ECR support that they had been particularly pleased with; the third young person was recorded in case notes as having enjoyed gym sessions. One young person, relocated to a new area, explained:

"[ECR] help[ed] me sort a gym membership. ... if it weren't for them I think I'd have just been trapped up in [the new area] with nothing to do."

Two young people in our sample attended and enjoyed creative music sessions at New Horizon Youth Centre.

4.2.4 HEALTHCARE

In our focus sample, ECR supported four young people to access or engage with services for help with their physical or mental health.

One case (see case example C) involved intensive support work from ECR to encourage a young person to engage with a community mental health service, another involved occasional liaison with a GP on a young person's behalf, while in a third case ECR had recently completed a young person's registration forms for a GP and a dentist.

Caseworkers noted that there were some barriers to young people engaging with health services, including struggling with administrative requirements and insufficient valuing of their health, that caseworkers needed to provide support with. One commented about her young person:

"It's a work in progress for him to understand his physical health and mental health are important. Lots of young people say 'I'm not sick' so don't go [to see medical professionals], they don't [understand] prevention or blood tests."

19. We do not refer to the nature of the young person's work to maintain anonymity and keep the young person safe.

CASE EXAMPLE C:

ENGAGING WITH COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

A young person who experienced mental health difficulties had regular appointments with a mental health service. Initially, he did not engage well with the service but, following support from ECR which included attending appointments with him, his engagement improved.

The ECR caseworker saw her role as supporting the young person to share relevant information with the mental health service. She explained:

“[My role is] to see if there is anything [the young person] wants support with, anything he wants to speak about with [the mental health service] that he might not have mentioned – sometimes he says things with me and I ask if he wants to discuss with [the mental health service].”

The caseworker gave an example of this:

“[The young person] was feeling anxious about hearing voices and not being able to manage the voices. I gave him techniques to manage them and I said ‘we should talk to the mental health service about this’. He didn’t want anyone else to know, but I said, ‘can we speak to [the mental health nurse]?’ ... [At the mental health appointment] I supported him to explain what the voices were like, what they were saying.”

The young person had found his caseworker’s support useful. He explained:

“She helps me with like speaking to [my mental health professional] and telling him how I want to express my feelings. ... So if I want to say something she like helps me say it, so she tells me the best way to say it or if I should say it or not.”

4.2.5 LEGAL COUNSEL

In our sample of eight, two young people were supported to access or engage with solicitors. One had legal support to secure his status as a care leaver, while the other was supported to challenge a deportation order.

In both cases, ECR supported the young people to engage with their solicitors, variously liaising between young person and solicitor, accompanying young people to appointments, supporting them to speak up and ensuring that solicitors had the appropriate paperwork and that young people gave consent and signed documents as needed. The ECR caseworker involved felt that both young people had engaged more with their solicitors as a result of her support; the young person we spoke to felt that the caseworker had helped him answer the solicitor’s questions.

In relation to her work with one young person, the caseworker commented:

“[This young person] tends to bury his head in the sand – [the solicitors] might not have got the documents needed if there wasn’t someone to prompt [him] or to encourage him to sign something.”

4.2.6 TRANSITIONS BETWEEN SERVICES

A key aspect of the ECR approach was to support young people as they experienced transitions. Workers helped prepare young people for transitions – primarily from custody to the community or vice versa, but also from children’s to adult services, or if a professional they worked with was leaving their role. In our focus sample, we found evidence that key transitions were improved and smoother than they would otherwise have been, sometimes significantly so. In some cases, the YOS and other professionals also helped with this.

Case examples D and E set out how ECR worked to improve transitions for two young people.

CASE EXAMPLE D:

A TRANSITION FROM CUSTODY INTO THE COMMUNITY

A planned move from a young person's bail hostel to new accommodation was delayed, causing him considerable stress. His ECR caseworker worked closely with a worker from another voluntary sector organisation, with the two professionals spending several days with the young person at his hostel. They helped to calm the young person down and liaised with statutory professionals, including the young person's personal advisor (PA), to help identify suitable temporary accommodation for him.

The young person was initially offered a hostel place he felt to be unsuitable in terms of his safety. ECR voiced his concerns to his PA and, with the other voluntary sector organisation, advocated for a more suitable alternative. His ECR caseworker commented that he had been housed more safely as a result:

"Initially they didn't understand how great his risk was and through those [professional network] meetings [at which we advocated for the young person's needs] they changed how to approach housing him."

The professional from the other organisation felt that she and the ECR caseworker had helped the young person to manage his emotions, perhaps contributing to an effective resolution:

"When [this young person] gets stressed sometimes it can come across as him being aggressive – [the ECR caseworker and I] were there to listen [in the bail hostel], help him stay calm, be that sounding board so he didn't express that to probation or the leaving care team when it could have got him in trouble. It helped because he was extremely overwhelmed and stressed. Whereas when we were physically present with him he remained a lot calmer."

CASE EXAMPLE E:

SUPPORTING THROUGH STAFF TRANSITIONS

For a young person in custody on a long sentence, during which he transitioned into adult services, his ECR caseworker at times felt the need to keep encouraging other professionals to take an interest. This was particularly the case when there was staff turnover.

"[The young person's social worker] left without doing a handover for reallocation [of his case] so when the new worker was reallocated [to him] I was bridging them in. ... I supported with the introduction and ensuring the PA was included in the network, linking him into the responsible officer in custody. And when that PA left I did it again. ... [I was] making sure no work got forgotten, that stuff was followed up ... and doing general introductions like ensuring the PA knew who [other professionals involved with the young person] were, all of that type of stuff."

The ECR caseworker felt her work was an important factor in the young person's access to his PA:

"I feel like [the young person] might not have got the service [without my work]. I was chasing to make sure he had the PA – [the young person] would say he hasn't heard from his PA so I would chase and see who the allocated PA was ... ensuring he's got money in his account, that kind of thing. ... Because [the young person] is in custody I don't feel there is pressure put on the PA to make those contacts, to ensure he's ok, to meet with him."

4.3 OFFENDING AND CUSTODIAL SENTENCES

4.3.1 LEVEL OF OFFENDING

In our focus sample of eight, there was a reduction in offending rates for five young people, although we cannot know how long changes will be sustained for. This may be seen as quite impressive; it was anticipated that changes in offending behaviour might occur some years after initial engagement with ECR and might only occur in line with young people's developing maturity. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that the relative contribution of ECR is difficult to determine.

Of the eight young people in our sample:

- Four had not reoffended since being referred to ECR. Alongside impetus from young people and the involvement of other organisations, significant work by ECR may have contributed to a reduction in offending in three of these cases. In the fourth, the caseworker felt the young person was already on a positive trajectory, pre ECR; this is supported by the Camden YOS intervention plan. The ECR caseworker said:

"It seems like the chaotic stage of his life was much earlier on, because he's been engaged with [other] services for quite a long time, so I feel like he'd reached a stage where he wanted support and he was willing to accept support before he was referred to the ECR project."

- One young person reoffended post referral and his offences were of a similar gravity to those committed before he was referred. However, there was a subsequent reduction in offences, with the young person not having offended in the last year. Available data indicated that ECR contributed to the reduction in offences.
- Two reoffended with offences of higher gravity than before they were referred.
- Offending data was not available for one young person.

In the cases where ECR may have contributed to a reduction in young person offending, the following aspects of ECR's work are likely to have been important: rehousing young people in safer environments, away from areas in which they had previously offended; discussing longer term goals; exploring or making available options to reduce boredom; encouraging young people to stay out of trouble. Case example F explores one young person's journey.

CASE EXAMPLE F: MOVING AWAY FROM OFFENDING

Following long-term, intensive support from ECR and a move out of Camden, one young person hadn't offended for a year. Before working with ECR, he described himself as being 'very involved in the gang member lifestyle', explaining:

"When I first started working with [ECR], I was in ... prison. ... If you'd seen me [then] I was well known. ... I was doing everything you could think of. I was getting into a lot of trouble; I was in and out of jail all the time from very young."

The young person's offending increased after he started receiving ECR support. His caseworker felt that a subsequent move out of the area, part facilitated by ECR, had reduced the young person's violent behaviour:

"I think that absolutely, without a shadow of a doubt, moving him out has reduced the violence [towards others] tenfold. And that's backed by, you know, his [family] saying the same thing. His conversation is not around violence all the time. ... There hasn't been any violence [involving him]."

CASE EXAMPLE F: MOVING AWAY FROM OFFENDING (Continued)

She had also noticed some change in his attitude to offending, although noted that this might be temporary or evolving:

“I think possibly there’s a slight shift in [his] attitude towards violence. I think maybe more in the sense that he’s starting to not necessarily see so much value in it? I mean, this could be different now, [but] ... very recently, talking to him it felt like ... the realisation that actually you don’t necessarily need to be violent to get things that you need. I felt that that was a bit of an outcome, a bit of a shift.” ECR and another charity that supported the young person both contributed to his reduced offending and different attitude to offending. ECR support played an important role. The young person explained:

“[ECR] has [changed my offending behaviour], 100%. I even moved out of the area! They taught me that committing crime, yeah, might help me now but not in the long term, it’s a short-term thing. ... I haven’t been in jail for over a year. Before that I used to be in jail every three months. ... I learned a lot from [ECR staff]. I learned that Camden is not a big place, ... Camden’s a very small portion of the world. Before I met them, my mindset was Camden is everything and I want to control it. I now know that Camden is 0.00001% of the world. ... They did teach me that.”

A professional from the other charity also talked about the attribution of ECR, alongside the young person’s own motivation:

“The major change is [this young person] speaking to [his ECR caseworker], and just saying ‘I don’t want to be part of this life anymore’. When I say life, I think this is more involved with gangs. ... just him acknowledging that ‘I don’t want this anymore; I just want a normal life and [I’m] willing to leave it all behind. And this is basically all he knows. I think that’s the major, major, major breakthrough for him.”

The young person felt that the combined support of ECR and the other charity had helped him:

“Honestly, I wouldn’t be where I am if it wasn’t for [ECR]. I wouldn’t be doing what I am doing without [ECR] and [another charity that supported me]. If it weren’t for them two teams, I don’t know where I would be. ... [They] are the ones who have kept me out of jail. ... I honestly believe if it weren’t for them lot I would be in jail right now, doing a very long time, or maybe not even be here. ... Think about how many people are in jail cos they don’t have people like [my ECR caseworker] and [the staff from the other charity].”

In the ECR young people cases outside our sample, 6 of 14 for whom we had data had not offended since being referred to ECR. It is difficult to draw any clear conclusions from this; we did not have access to data about the 14 young people’s offending before ECR referral, about their circumstances or about the likelihood of ECR having contributed to any reduction in offending.

4.3.2 CUSTODIAL SENTENCES

It was intended that, through ECR, fewer young people would receive a custodial sentence and fewer would enter the adult criminal justice system. It was thought that this would be, in part, because of an intended reduction in reoffending over time. In the shorter term, it was anticipated that young people’s access to ECR

support might contribute to non-custodial sentences being given, if compliance with ECR was seen favourably.

In our focus sample of eight, there was fair evidence that ECR support had contributed to one young person being given a non-custodial sentence and some indication of ECR contribution in two further cases. In addition, a case against one young person was dropped following work from ECR, alongside solicitors.

The young person for whom there was fair evidence of ECR contribution had had a letter of support written about him for the court. His caseworker explained that these letters noted that young people had voluntarily engaged with ECR and were 'showing signs of wanting to change aspects of their life with the support of our service'. Letters also detailed 'the struggles and challenges [young people] may have faced leading up to the point of custody with the hope that the judge will take a different perspective of the young person'.

The young person was certain that ECR's letter had made a difference in his case, and his caseworker agreed that this was likely. The young person reported:

"[ECR] stuck up for me in court. 100%! The judge even said it made a difference. ... The judge said to me, these are the judges' words: 'if you didn't have such a good support team around you I would have sent you to prison today:'"

In the two cases where there was some indication of ECR contribution:

- One young person received a suspended sentence, considered by some evaluation respondents to be 'lenient'. It is possible that ECR's report to the court, alongside other information, may have influenced the decision.
- Another young person was given a non-custodial sentence for a potentially imprisonable offence. ECR wrote a letter for inclusion in his pre-sentencing report and voluntary support from ECR was included as part of his rehabilitation order.

Attribution

The number of Camden young people in custody reduced dramatically during the time ECR was in operation; the extent to which ECR contributed to this wider trend is not known.

Work undertaken by Camden Council with local courts may also have contributed to non-custodial sentences being given. In recent years, the YOS has developed a strong working relationship with the court, encouraging the development and use of alternative approaches to custodial sentences where appropriate.

4.4 IDENTITY, ASPIRATIONS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

It was anticipated that young people would experience a range of changes in their understanding of themselves and their circumstances, their future aspirations and their psychological development through engagement with ECR. Our reporting on these is limited as we interviewed fewer young people than anticipated, and data on such outcomes needs user input.

4.4.1 IDENTIFYING STRENGTHS, INTERESTS AND GOALS

ECR caseworkers gently tried to discuss strengths, interests and goals with their young people, to move them away from offending. A team manager saw this, and the provision of related opportunities to young people, as characterising ECR's work around identity development:

"I know that none of the team sit down and do formal identity development work in terms of, 'okay, you're here, and you see yourself as this and now we're going to...'; they don't do that. But I think the positive regard [young people] get from the team, and just the team trying to find them really positive things to do, ... I think those activities are a natural shift in identity because you're seeing yourself as something different to just being a 'gang member' or whatever it is you thought ... you were before."

“ *The major change is speaking to my ECR caseworker, and just saying 'I don't want to be part of this life anymore'. When I say life, I think this is more involved with gangs. ... just him acknowledging that 'I don't want this anymore; I just want a normal life and I'm willing to leave it all behind.*

CASE EXAMPLE G:

DEVELOPING AN INTENTION TO CHANGE

For one young person in custody, his ECR caseworker talked to him about how he might bring about changes in his life. He explained:

"[She says] 'look into what you do, think about a job or things you like doing'... sometimes I do think about it, what am I going to do when I get out. ... I wouldn't think about any of this stuff if she wasn't going on about it. ... I don't want to come back to prison – no one does."

His YOS worker explained that she and his ECR caseworker had tried to 'build [the young person] up and not let him lose hope':

"Before he went in [to custody], he didn't have any positive influences. There was no one, no positivity going into his ears. And it was just a very negative lifestyle. Since he went in, he has that sort of team, that network around him who are constantly talking about the same things. We're talking about education, we're talking about his peer group, we're talking about substance misuse, we're talking about all that stuff."

Specifically in relation to the ECR caseworker, the YOS worker said:

"I know that she was the first one to kind of get some dialogue out of him about his future. And he said he wanted to be a community worker and stuff like that. And so we'd never heard him talk like that. We'd never heard him talk positively, you know about any kind of future or any ambitions or anything like that."

ECR and the young person wrote a letter together to the young person's victim; the young person was advised that this might help his case, but ECR also viewed it as a useful intervention. The caseworker noted:

"I felt a genuine remorse from him. You don't normally get that from young people, [they're] not lacking in empathy, but they can move on quite quickly. He didn't want [the victim] to be scared. He was empathising with their fear as he had it himself."

The young person and his YOS worker felt that he would not have written the letter without ECR's support and that writing it had given the young person pause for thought. The young person commented:

"I did think about it a bit. What his family is going through, because I know what my family would go through if that happened to me."

The YOS worker said:

"I think it helped him writing the letter to the victim, because he wasn't someone that would have done something like that before. ... I know it was quite a process. [The young person and the ECR caseworker] met up quite often to go through that. ... I feel like it had an impact ... because before that he just had that bravado, that you have to keep up, that 'don't care, don't care, not bothered'. And then all of a sudden, we see him ... actually saying, 'I am bothered, and it was a mistake, and I shouldn't have done that, and I understand the impact to you'. So yeah, I think it was a good process for him to go through."

4.4.2 MANAGING ANGER AND DISTRESS

It was intended that ECR support would help young people become more emotionally resilient. In our sample, there was evidence that four young people were better able to manage their anger or distress, at least in some situations. In three cases, the ECR psychologist worked on this with the young person, sometimes alongside their caseworker.

Different approaches were employed by ECR: supporting young people to engage with mental health services; psycho-education about relaxation and the fight or flight response; practising breathing exercises; spending time with young people in stressful situations (see case example D); simply giving young people space in which to express their emotions.

There was evidence that this work was effective. One young person, who may also have been helped by an anger management course accessed while he was in custody, said of his support from the ECR psychologist:

“She helped me with my mind, trying to control my anxiety. ... I can fully say my temper and my mind did get better; I can control it more. Interviewer: Has that lasted? Yes, it still has that effect, it’s like learning lessons. It’s like riding a bike, you know what I mean?”

Following a session in which she practised breathing exercises with another young person, the psychologist noted that ‘[the young person] noticed how he felt more relaxed and calm afterwards and his mind was clearer’. The young person’s YOS worker later emailed that the young person had ‘stated that he felt you have really helped him and was able to list how you have helped ... managing his stress and sleep’. The young person’s case notes recorded that a new medication had also contributed to improved sleep.

A caseworker explained how a young person in custody valued someone to share concerns with:

“I think he values the space [in ECR meetings] to talk and maybe just be a child – he’s quite childlike and he likes to be babied a bit. ... He’s able to say his worries in [our conversations]. In custody you can’t say you’re worried about something or be stressed or be upset. In our sessions he’s allowed. In custody all of those emotions are dressed up as anger.”

4.5 QUALITY OF LIFE

Safety is an issue for a number of young people due to their criminal associations. We found evidence that some young people were safer – three because of changes to

their living situations contributed to by ECR. Others had had support to, for example, use taxis rather than public transport or discussed strategies with their ECR worker to keep themselves safe.

We also found some evidence of **improvements in relationships with others** for some young people. In two cases in our focus sample, professionals or young people themselves felt that they were more open and trusting of others since receiving ECR support. In another case, a caseworker’s notes record that she spoke to a young person about his tendency to write letters to female professionals. Following this the young person was ‘able to change [his] approach and keep things very bounded with [his] conversations and letter writing’.

It was also intended that young people would experience other changes in their quality of life through ECR, including being safer from risk of emotional harm, reduced isolation, improved mental health/emotional wellbeing and improved physical health. From the data available for our sample of eight cases, there was limited evidence of these changes occurring as a result of ECR. This may be because there has not yet been time for them to occur or because of limited availability of outcome data.

“ ECR has changed my offending behaviour, 100%. I even moved out of the area! They taught me that committing crime, yeah, might help me now but not in the long term, it’s a short-term thing. ... I haven’t been in jail for over a year. Before that I used to be in jail every three months. ... I learned a lot from ECR staff. I learned that Camden is not a big place, ... Camden’s a very small portion of the world. Before I met them, my mindset was Camden is everything and I want to control it. I now know that Camden is 0.00001% of the world. ... They did teach me that.”

05

THE ECONOMIC VALUE CREATED BY ECR

Cost-benefit analysis (CBA) is an evaluation technique used to look at the impact of an intervention by comparing its costs with benefits achieved. By expressing outcomes in monetary form, it becomes possible to compare them with the total costs of the intervention.

This section gives an illustration of the potential value created by ECR, using similar methods to CBA; we assessed the cost of the project, and compared it to the value created, by quantifying and monetising young people's outcomes. We found that ECR created more value than it cost.

5.1 UNDERSTANDING THIS SECTION

A number of factors limited our analysis. Some are challenges common to many CBA analyses; some were due to the nature of the available data. More detail can be found in appendix 1.

5.1.1 CHALLENGES COMMON IN CBA ANALYSES

We have made necessary assumptions:

- Very limited hard data was available on 'deadweight' and 'attribution'. Calculating deadweight (what would have happened anyway, without ECR) and attribution (what proportion of change is due to ECR as opposed to another organisation, for example) is hard for any evaluation. In this analysis it required many assumptions.

- It is very hard to predict future outcomes, which is required by most analyses.
- There is no guarantee that early changes in young people's attitudes will lead to anticipated behavioural change and therefore tangible outcomes.

Limited resources for this analysis meant that:

- We have focused on 'hard' outcomes, like increased earning. Lack of time and limited access to young people meant we were unable to monetise 'soft' outcomes like increased self-esteem; this is likely to mean we have underestimated value created.
- We have 'smoothed' variation between cases to manage complexity, which has meant some reduced accuracy.
- Some positive outcomes for users, for example increased use of other services, create costs for those services; we have not been able to account for this in our analysis.

5.1.2 DATA-RELATED CHALLENGES

- Limited data was available on some programme costs, particularly indirect costs like pro bono time from other organisations.
- There was data only on a small sample (8) and we do not know if they were representative of the wider client group (24).
- There was a lack of data on some outcomes and young people. More than two thirds of the total estimated value was in relation to one young person²⁰ and there were two young people for whom no outcomes could be identified and tangibly valued

20. This is partly because this young person had experienced a range of different and significant outcomes, but also because we had more interview data for this young person than for most others.

at the time of the evaluation. Some of the sample were in a very early stage of relationship with ECR or were in prison, so limited outcomes had been possible.

- Limitations to monitoring data mean we relied largely on qualitative sources.

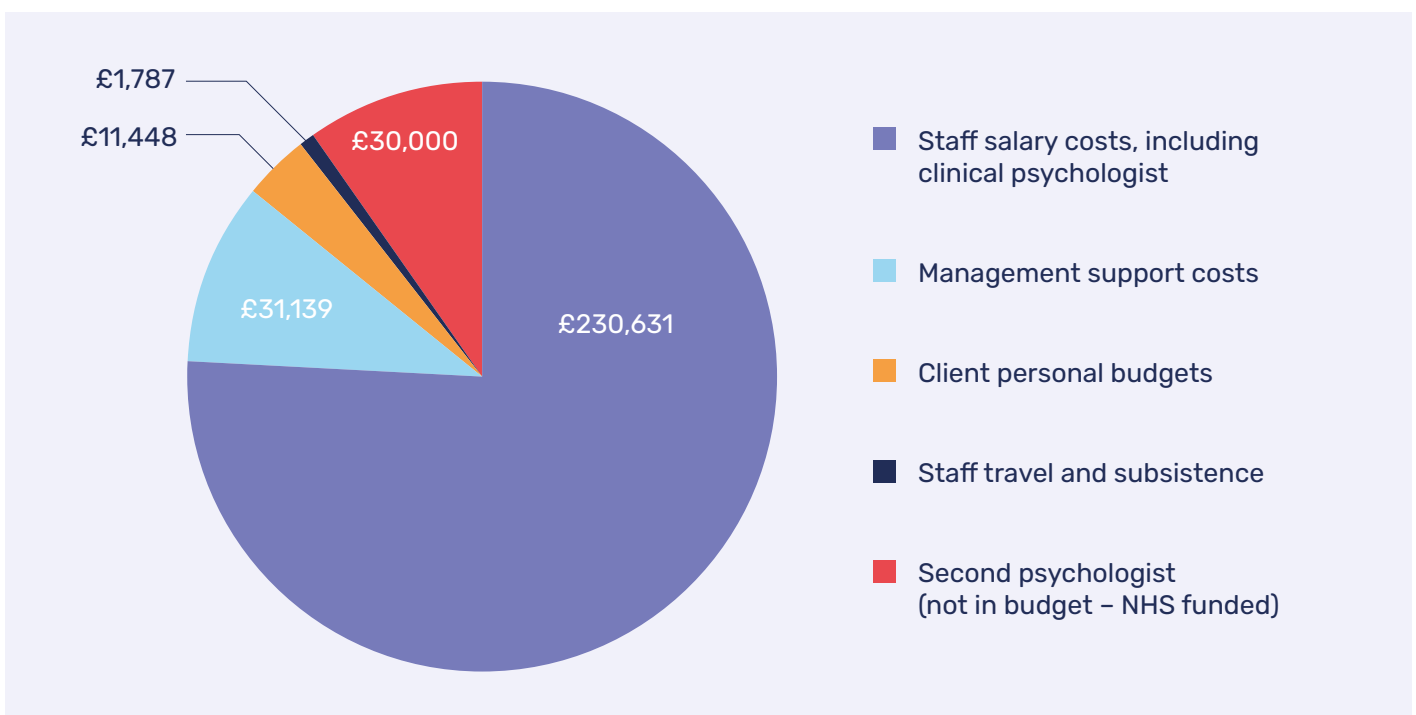
5.2 FINDINGS

5.2.1 THE COSTS OF ECR

To estimate ECR costs we referred mainly to the project accounts. These show expenditure of £275,006. Expenditure comprised: staff costs, including the cost of the ECR psychologist; management and administration costs; young people's personal budgets; and staff expenses.

A second psychologist was allocated to the project for a day a week from January 2019 to July 2021. This post was funded by C&I and is not included in the project accounts. We valued this contribution at £30,000²¹ and added it to reported expenditure to estimate total costs at £305,006.

FIGURE 1: ECR COST BREAKDOWN



As might be expected for a service that provides intensive one-to-one support, most project expenditure was on staff: £260,631 (85%), including the costs of the second psychologist. Nearly £11,500 was spent on young people's personal budgets. More than half of this was expenditure on emergency accommodation, funds or supplies for young people. Funding was also provided for travel, training and telephone top-ups.

21. NHS band 8a - (£47,126 entry step point) a day a week for 2.5 years at £200 a day, plus overheads (25%): <https://www.nhsemployers.org/articles/annual-pay-scales-202122>

5.2.2 THE VALUE CREATED BY ECR

As noted in 5.1.2, inconsistent levels of evidence were available in relation to young people's outcomes. This made it challenging to decide whether outcomes yet to be experienced, but for which there was evidence they would be experienced in the future, should be included. To manage this, we used the eight cases in our focus sample to explore the financial value of ECR's benefits at three levels:

- High confidence: At this level we valued only those outcomes we were highly confident in because they had already been experienced when data was collected.
- Medium confidence: At this level we also included the value of anticipated outcomes for which there was strong evidence to suggest they would be experienced in the future.
- Low confidence: At this level we included the value of anticipated outcomes for which the evidence was less solid.

Table 1 below summarises the value we estimate was generated in relation to the eight cases. Appendix 1 provides more detail on our rationale and value sources.

TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF VALUE GENERATED FOR EACH CASE BY CONFIDENCE LEVEL

Young person	Total 'high confidence' value	Total 'medium confidence' value	Total 'low confidence' value	Total value
1	–	£3,671	£2,529	£6,200
2	£18,545	£58,139	£10,116	£86,800
3	–	£5,873	£2,762	£8,635
4	–	–	–	£0
5	£1,193	–	–	£1,193
6	£22,295	–	–	£22,295
7	–	–	–	£0
8	£252,880	£17,562	–	£270,442
TOTAL	£294,913	£85,245	£15,407	£395,565

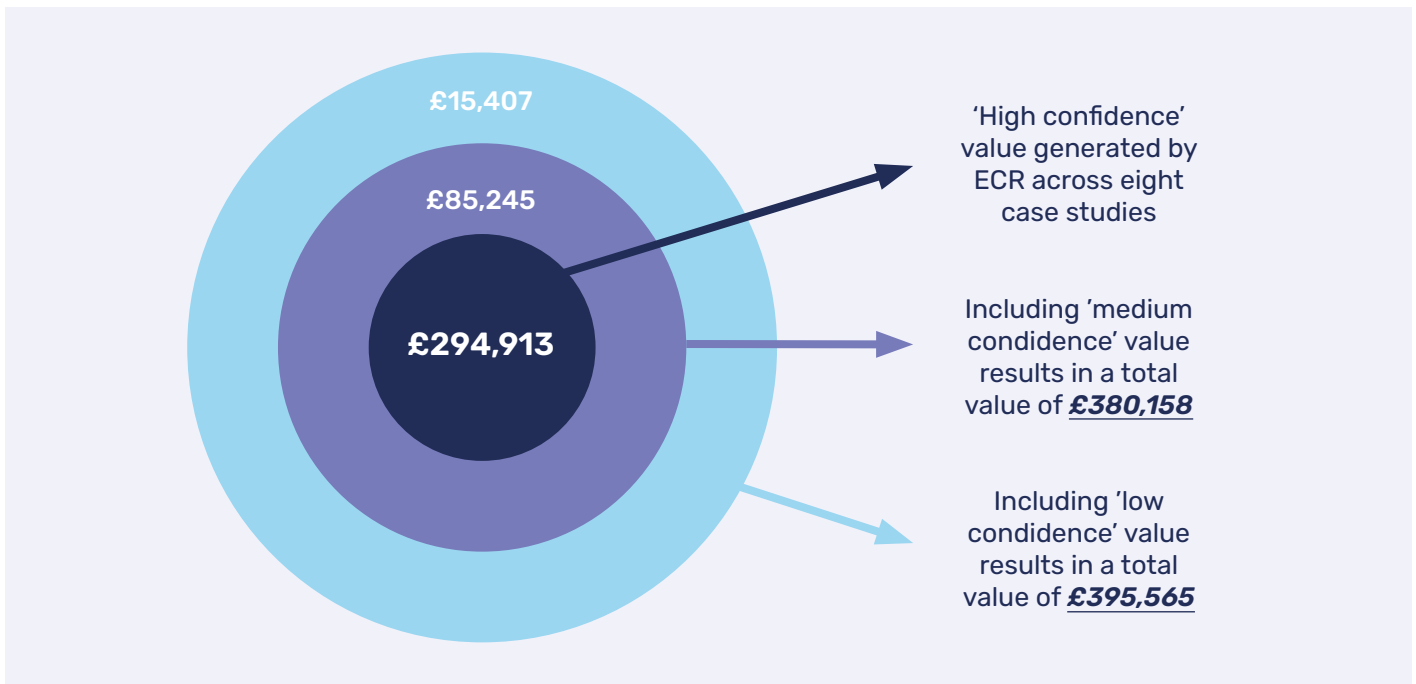
Where the value of an outcome is likely to be realised in the future, we have calculated this value for a period of three years.²² It is possible, of course, that the value of the outcome may be experienced beyond this.

22. For this analysis we have not applied any discounting to future value.

Figure 2 combines our findings to show the total benefit that we estimate has been generated across the eight cases with 'high', 'medium' and 'low' confidence. As would be expected, the total estimated value when using a high confidence approach is smaller than when using a medium or low confidence approach.

At the two extremes, if we include 'high confidence' outcomes only, we estimate ECR generated a total of just under £300,000 in relation to the eight cases. If we include all identified outcomes the total increases to nearly £400,000.

FIGURE 2: TOTAL VALUE OF BENEFITS FOR EIGHT CASES AT 'HIGH', 'MEDIUM' AND 'LOW' CONFIDENCE



Value for different stakeholders

Over half (58%) of the estimated value is for young people or other members of the community, while 42% is for statutory services, as seen in the table below.

TABLE 2: VALUE BY STAKEHOLDER GROUP

Confidence level	Value for young person/ community members	Value for statutory services
High	£164,777	£130,139
Medium	£54,488	£30,756
Low	£10,178	£5,229
TOTAL	£229,443	£166,124

5.2.3 DISCUSSION

With some caveats, we have estimated the value of the outcomes in which we have high confidence to be £294,913. This value estimation relates to eight of the 24 young people ECR supported.

With access to data about ECR's other 16 cases limited, it is difficult to estimate the overall value that may have been generated. However, we identified more than £18,000 of high confidence outcomes for three of our eight cases (for one, we identified more than £250,000). If we cautiously include £18,000 each for six additional cases,²³ ignoring the likelihood that several may have experienced change of a higher value than this, we could add another £108,000 to our value estimation. This would bring the total estimated value to over £400,000 – considerably more than the £305,006 project investment.

When we consider that our analysis excluded other valuable outcomes, due to limited access to data, the potential value of the service is much greater. Excluded outcomes include:

- Softer outcomes linked to wellbeing, such as improved relationships or self-esteem. These outcomes have a high value for individuals and may lead to important behavioural change.
- Enhanced support from other services. The eight cases included many examples of ECR enhancing the support provided by other services (such as probation or YOS) through the sharing of information or knowledge.
- Reduced duplication/increased efficiency across multi-service teams. In many cases, ECR played a coordinating role, bringing together services to support young people. This increased efficiency, reduced duplication and strengthened advocacy efforts, making positive outcomes more likely.
- Realised value from elsewhere: In some cases, ECR facilitated communication between young people and other services (such as solicitors) almost entirely. It would be reasonable to suggest that the value of these additional services was only realised because of the contribution of ECR.

²³ Six is selected because, if three of eight cases had £18,000 of high confidence outcomes, it might cautiously be anticipated that six of the 16 additional cases could be valued in the same way.

06

PARTNERSHIP WORKING AND OUTCOMES FOR ORGANISATIONS

6.1 THE THREE MAIN PARTNERS: WORKING TOGETHER

Partnership working was key to ECR: the three main partners were all part of ECR's steering group; the YOS made client referrals to New Horizon; ECR worked with YOS staff on young people's cases. The partnership was strong. An ECR team manager explained:

"All agencies involved had the young person at the centre of the discussion and worked in a similar manner, [they] almost [had] the same ethos regarding the young person and really wanted the young person to thrive and succeed."

A Camden stakeholder described their particularly strong relationship with New Horizon:

"It's not a kind of contracting, or even completely a commissioning arrangement. It is a shared endeavour, I would say, based on a long relationship with New Horizon. ... I think there clearly are aligned values between New Horizon and the Camden children's services generally and Camden's approach to youth offending."

There were some challenges in the partners' relationship regarding the funding of the psychologists beyond the initial two-year funding period. These included: a lack of agreement as to how the team psychologist role would be funded; some concerns in the NHS about unfunded time being delivered by the senior psychologist;

concerns about involving their psychologists in externally hosted-projects such as ECR, following a safety-related incident in another such project. The psychologists stopped working on ECR in 2021.

6.2 OUTCOMES FOR PARTNERS

6.2.1 OUTCOMES FOR CAMDEN YOS

Despite already being a very high-performing YOS, Camden described some ways in which ECR had affected their work, in terms of access to young people and changes to working practices.

Increased access to, and relationship building work with, young people.

Stakeholders felt that ECR resulted in young people in custody having more support, and more regular support, than they would otherwise have done. A Camden respondent explained:

"In the community in high-risk cases they are seen twice or three times a week by their YOS worker or professionals in the YOS team. ... In custody, in addition to regular phone contact [the YOS team would] see them in person once a month – we would see them more regularly if we could but capacity meant that wasn't always possible. A key element of ECR was workers were in the [custodial] establishments and could see young people on a weekly basis."

The same stakeholder felt that this increased contact with young people had improved YOS workers' understanding of young people in custody (although not necessarily in the community):

"The ECR worker would feed back to the [YOS] case manager – 'I saw [the young person] and they seemed a bit low today' or 'we had a really productive session'. So the [YOS] case manager ... would call [the young person] and there would be that link and the YOS worker could say '[ECR worker] was telling me this, this is really positive'. There was a better web of communication support and understanding when children were in custody."

Child-centric working

Camden YOS was starting from a high baseline in terms of child-centric working; a 2011 inspection found the YOS to be child-centred. However, a Camden stakeholder felt that joint working with ECR had further reinforced the importance of working in a child-centred way:

"I think as a YOS team we have reflected on the approaches and the work that the ECR model has taken. ... The whole point about ECR is what does the child see as key drivers to helping them form a pro-social identity – and really trying to be led by them. I think Camden has always been ahead of the curve in that respect anyway – but I think seeing how ECR staff have approached the work and kept the child at the centre it's reinforced the need and the successes you can gain from that. ... I think [ECR]... has enabled [YOS] case managers to think more about the child's interests, their priorities as [the child] sees them, their life and their choices as they see them."

Joint work between YOS and ECR contributed to the development of the child-centric principles and co-production techniques. For example, ECR helped YOS consider how to end their relationships with young people when they were 18 and how to support young people through the experience. The YOS went on to examine its approach in this area for all young people.

The ECR team psychologist felt there had been a 'bit of a culture shift' in the YOS in thinking about co-production. However, there may be limits to the incorporation of co-production into an organisation with statutory responsibilities and a focus on offending and harm reduction.

Improved YOS reputation

In its May 2020 Ofsted inspection, Camden YOS was judged to be 'outstanding' – the only London and only urban YOS to be so rated. A component of this included a case study of ECR as a 'notable partnership practice example'.

6.2.2 OUTCOMES FOR CAMDEN AND ISLINGTON NHS TRUST

Both ECR psychologists felt that ECR had made them reflect on their practice, particularly on how accessible they were to others. One commented:

"I think the work is taking us as psychologists out of our comfort zones and our safe structured spaces which I think is important, and part of the community psychology movement. For me, getting in these spaces and doing this kind of work makes you reflect on how accessible you are as a clinician and makes you try to adapt and learn from the really flexible client-focused, young person-focused way of working that an organisation like New Horizon really epitomises. "

6.3 WORKING WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

ECR worked closely with other organisations that support young people. As well as Camden YOS, these included probation, social services, colleges and educational institutions, housing officers, solicitors, mental health services, hostels and accommodation services, employers and other voluntary organisations. ECR liaised with organisations to support its own casework and helped other organisations deliver effective support to ECR young people. Wherever possible, ECR worked with networks of professionals also supporting ECR young people.

New Horizon is voluntary sector, and from the evidence here there may be limits to the statutory sector's ability to run a similar service without a voluntary sector partner. The combined strengths of the voluntary and statutory roles have been effective in meeting needs of ECR users.

The four professionals we interviewed from other organisations felt positively, often very positively, about their experiences of working with ECR.

6.3.1 WHAT WORKED WELL

Regular contact and clear communication

With young people's consent, ECR staff were in regular, close communication with other members of young people's networks. The professionals we spoke to had good relationships with ECR staff and saw them as proactive, effective communicators. For example, a

“ I think ECR... has enabled YOS case managers to think more about the child’s interests, their priorities as the child] sees them, their life and their choices as they see them.”

probation officer described how the ECR caseworker she worked with would share concerns about their shared young person and would relay information between young person and probation officer. A YOS worker explained that:

“[The ECR caseworker] and I will have contact by email or by telephone if there’s something that we need to discuss about [our shared young person], or if [there are] messages to pass on [to him], or if there’s something that needs to be done. ... We have a good personal relationship, ... so it’s kind of easy for us to do that.”

Specialist knowledge in the ECR team

All four professionals noted that ECR’s expertise was particularly valuable. They variously mentioned the ECR team’s knowledge of care leavers, housing, psychologically-informed work, and children and young people. A probation officer explained:

“[ECR] have a lot more knowledge about other agencies, options, what works [for young people]. ... I have a large caseload of 55 people from 18-85, not many young people (a couple). I don’t know all the services and our team doesn’t have such specialist knowledge.”

Clarity around roles and tasks

The two professionals from statutory services we spoke to were clear about the differences between their roles and ECR. One described the benefits of having different roles:

“With YOS we have to send them back to court and enforce them and all that kind of stuff. So it kind of helps to have [the ECR caseworker] who doesn’t have those kind of requirements, where they can just build that relationship and be that support for that young person.”

Where ECR worked alongside other voluntary organisations there was sometimes less role differentiation, particularly if both offered long-term support addressing a range of needs. However, evidence suggests this did not usually present a problem because of the strength of working relationships. In one case, ECR and a voluntary organisation supporting the same young person split tasks according to capacity and skill. A worker from the other organisation commented:

“It’s been an amazing partnership [between my organisation and ECR, working on behalf of our shared young person]. If there’s crossover work, we tend to do things together. ... ECR have probably been the best collective or joint kind of work we’ve done with most agencies. ... No matter how minor it might seem, we won’t let something slip through the cracks.”

Multi-agency working

ECR worked closely with young people’s professional networks, attending multi-agency meetings and sometimes coordinating communication between professionals. This could be particularly useful when young people moved into adult services, when networks were smaller and might communicate less. An ECR worker commented on how multi-agency working had been helpful when supporting one of her young people:

“One of my key roles was to ensure [the young person’s] network as an adult was closely linked so that everyone knew each other’s roles, and [I was] calling for professionals’ meetings when we were becoming detached. ... [That meant] we all knew what services he was working with ... and what support each of us could provide.”

“ With YOS we have to send them back to court and enforce them and all that kind of stuff. So it kind of helps to have the ECR caseworker who doesn’t have those kind of requirements, where they can just build that relationship and be that support for that young person.”

“ *It’s been an amazing partnership between my organisation and ECR, working on behalf of our shared young person. If there’s crossover work, we tend to do things together. ... ECR have probably been the best collective or joint kind of work we’ve done with most agencies. ... No matter how minor it might seem, we won’t let something slip through the cracks.”*

6.3.2 WHERE THERE WERE CHALLENGES

When ECR was first introduced, there were concerns about ECR overlapping with other support for young people and for their caseworkers, about the different type of approach taken by ECR (for example, in not closing cases) and about how data would be recorded and shared.

There was also some confusion among professionals about the nature and parameters of the ECR team psychologist’s role and about how she would work with other mental health professionals. Lack of clarity about the role of the ECR psychologist may have meant the risk of young people missing out on needed psychological input. One of the ECR psychologists explained:

“[The ECR team psychologist]’s role could be best described as a community psychologist but her title is clinical psychologist. ... People make assumptions that because there is a clinical psychologist working with this young person they are going to be doing psychological assessments, doing outcome measures, providing treatment for something. ... So if [the ECR psychologist] was working with a young person that could sometimes mean another service ... would say [because the young person is] already working with a clinical psychologist they don’t need to be seen by CAMHS.”

However, stakeholders agreed that ECR had largely resolved some of the early tensions by explaining the nature of the project to other professionals and discussing learning.

6.4 OUTCOMES FOR OTHER ORGANISATIONS

6.4.1 A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF ECR YOUNG PEOPLE’S EXPERIENCES

Bringing the young people’s perspective

ECR staff helped to bring the young person’s perspective to their network. This contextual and trauma-informed understanding of young people’s experiences sometimes helped in understanding their behaviour, for example, why they were not engaging. One ECR team member explained:

“[In] multiagency meetings [it was] very beneficial to have [the ECR team psychologist] there, as she brought a fresh perspective of the young people. As ECR caseworkers we can also do this. We see them so often, get to know them well. Those meetings are often a bit quick, ‘tick list’. Especially in prison, [they’re] not very young people focused. We bring advocacy. A side of the young people the other agencies haven’t seen.”

A network professional explained how ECR had helped her when she started supporting a young person:

“Because [the ECR caseworker] had worked with [our shared young person] very closely since he was younger she was able to give me a lot of insight into the reality of the support he would need, how vulnerable he is and a lot of the risk around him. I called and texted [the young person] Monday to Friday every day because [the ECR caseworker] had said he would need a lot of support, ... and she was absolutely spot on.”

Better communication with young people

One caseworker thought a young person’s solicitor’s use of technical language could be a barrier to the young person engaging. She had worked with the solicitor, asking them to make appointments shorter so the young person didn’t lose attention, and facilitating communication:

“I let them know to be flexible – the solicitors were really good at that; and I would recap the main points after [the appointments] to help [the young person].”

Arguing for their needs

A strong value of ECR is to see the young person before the offender. Caseworkers frequently mentioned having to advocate for this with statutory colleagues. One described how the most challenging aspect of their casework was getting statutory bodies to recognise young people's needs:

"[Services are] just like 'oh, they've been involved in criminality' or 'oh, they're young, it doesn't matter'. [The young people are] constantly not being treated fairly – in housing, or at college because they don't understand the background they've come from, or in prison there's not the understanding of why they might be a bit scared or acting up. ... Nobody's bothering to look past the fact that they're young offenders."

6.4.2 MEET THEIR OBLIGATIONS TO ECR YOUNG PEOPLE

ECR caseworkers supported – or sometimes challenged – services to engage better with young people. In three of our sample of eight cases this involved ensuring Camden met their housing duties to looked after children. In another, a young person in custody was supported to write an appeal letter to challenge a decision to move him away from a custodial setting he found helpful.

In some cases, obligations may be met due to pressure from ECR rather than as a result of shifting attitudes; a caseworker commented 'they do it because we've made seven complaints'.

Respondents from both ECR and YOS talked about how they used each other's strengths to achieve outcomes for young people. YOS had authority that could benefit ECR young people; ECR as part of a voluntary organisation was much freer both in terms of their remit and their ability to challenge. A team manager commented that New Horizon's close relationship with Camden YOS and other departments was helpful in enabling ECR to ensure some organisations met their obligations:

"Where we were established with the [Camden] gangs team, if we wanted a letter from the police saying this [young] person is at risk [to facilitate a young person moving house], I can get it like that, like literally, I can just email them and say 'could you write me a letter? I want to move this kid'. I've never had a problem getting one. They'll write one straight back."

It may be the case that, should a project similar to ECR be developed in other areas, more work would

be needed to encourage other professionals or organisations to meet their obligations to young people than was the case in Camden. One Camden stakeholder talked about relationships between the YOS and the local housing department having improved in recent years, with the result that it could be easier to secure their effective support for young people.

Supporting the team to challenge statutory services

An ECR team manager said that supporting caseworkers to have the confidence to challenge statutory services was a key part of her role:

"I'm trying to build confidence more and more with them that statutory services are amazing a lot of times and there's a lot of amazing social workers. However it is a very fallible system. And it's a bureaucracy and it's very under resourced. So sometimes you will be right that they are wrong. Just because they say no doesn't mean that that's automatically something that you have to go 'okay, we can't do anything about that:'"

6.4.3 PROVIDE MORE APPROPRIATE SUPPORT FOR ECR YOUNG PEOPLE

We found several examples in our focus cases of services, including local authority housing departments and colleges, providing more appropriate support to young people, better tailored to their needs, strengths and interests. One network professional felt strongly that their support of a shared young person was better as a result of working alongside ECR:

"My role would have been a lot more challenging if I wasn't able to work side by side with [the ECR caseworker]. ... Like I've spoken to her recently to say [the young person] is behaving like this and I'm not sure how best to support him. She's given me insight 'oh it might be because of this, or due to that'. Maybe there are certain triggers I wouldn't necessarily think of."

As a result of this learning, the same professional had also changed how they worked with other young people not linked to ECR:

"I have another young person I work with who had been through a lot prior to custody. [Working with ECR] has made me more aware of how those experiences could impact on how he looks at the world and responds to it. [Having worked with ECR] I reflect a lot more on my practice and the type of support I offer."

6.4.4 SECTORAL CHANGES

As with the changes at Camden YOS (see 6.2.1), an ECR team manager argued that the wider young people's sector was adopting more of a 'young person first' approach, in line with the approach advocated by New Horizon. The team manager noted the important influence of Camden YOS in this context.

"I am proud of the fact that it's brought the way we work, the ethos we had in New Horizon, in YOP anyway, much more into the mainstream, because at some point, we've seemed like mavericks and over the years, banging on about trauma informed and young person first, and let's see him as a child and not an offender. ... I'm really happy that the sector is much more aligned with how we've always worked, what we've always thought was the right way of working. And I think a lot of that has got to do with how ... Camden and [the YOS manager] is."

One Camden stakeholder argued that the ECR model had raised questions for other local services about how they operate. ECR showed alternative possibilities in terms of service delivery, for example not time-limiting cases before the age of 25 or by engaging with young people in a custodial setting:

"There is great learning in this – if organisations are brave enough they can modify how they deliver, but can you keep open-ended interventions, can you work in a different model?"

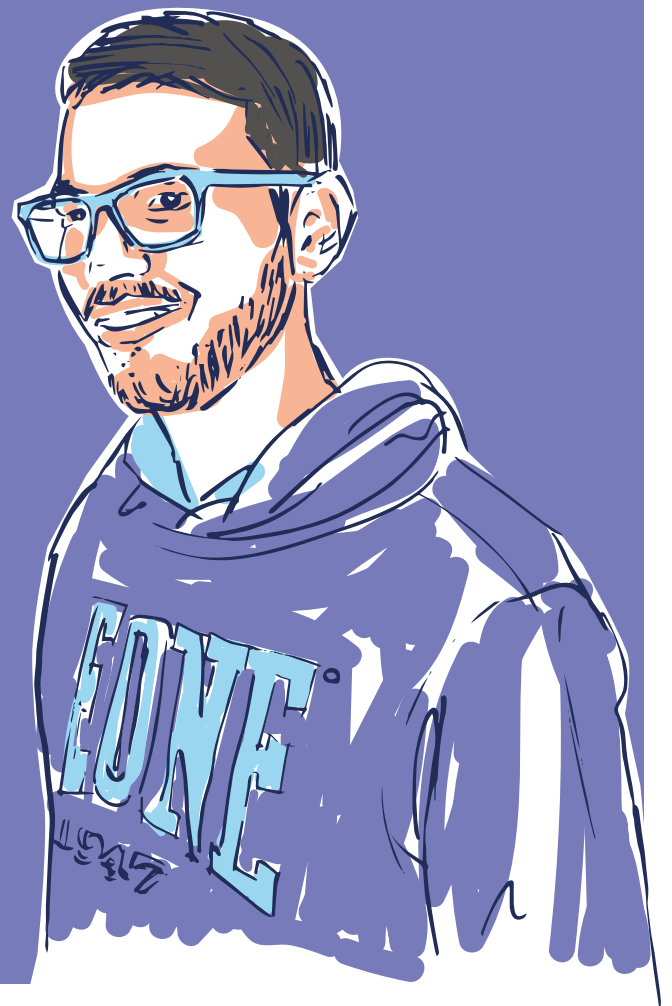
ECR stakeholders felt the project had highlighted a gap in support for young people transitioning into adult services. There is some evidence that ECR has raised the profile of these young people with individual professionals, and with services more broadly.

Attributing change to ECR

It is not possible to attribute all these changes to ECR. However, the team spoke at a wide range of events in the sector, including running training sessions and sharing ECR ways of working; these interventions may have contributed to some of these changes.

Camden stakeholders noted a number of other influences on sectoral change, including: an existing recognition of the need to transform children's criminal justice services; Camden council's focus on transition points for children and young people; the establishment of a new council-run service for young people transitioning from children's to adult services (Evolve).

“ *I have another young person I work with who had been through a lot prior to custody. Working with ECR has made me more aware of how those experiences could impact on how he looks at the world and responds to it. Having worked with ECR I reflect a lot more on my practice and the type of support I offer.”*



07

LEARNING

7.1 LEARNING FROM ECR

This section summarises learning from ECR for commissioners, delivery organisations and partners wanting to run similar projects. Learning about evaluation methods is in appendix 2.

7.1.1 WHAT WORKED IN ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE

That young people engaged with their caseworkers and built a trusting relationship with them was of central importance, a necessary precursor to other outcomes. ECR managed to engage with some young people who had not engaged significantly with other services. Young people also really valued the support. ECR achieved this through:

- Staff being able to relate to young people and being tenacious in encouraging engagement.
- Providing regular, non-judgemental support, responsive to immediate need and accessed voluntarily.
- Co-creating support with young people through discussions in casework sessions.
- Personal budgets for young people so support could be provided in a crisis and so young people could get involved in activities they were interested in. Sometimes this also helped caseworkers achieve 'quick wins' that promoted engagement early on.
- Carefully managing contact with other services so as to maintain young people's trust.

- Offering support that was not time limited. Future projects should carefully consider delivery organisations' capacity and culture, as well as funding implications.
- Having good relationships with the secure establishments and good access to young people within them.
- Waiting until young people were ready for change.

Barriers to engagement

Other factors sometimes made it more difficult to engage with young people; future projects might consider how to address these. They included:

- Young people experiencing more freedom in the community (as opposed to custody), particularly when they were not on electronic monitoring.
- Staff turnover within ECR. ECR minimised the impact of change on young people in many cases by employing strategies such as exploring young people's feelings around changes, letter writing from departing caseworkers and careful introduction of new workers.
- Changes in young people's mental health, particularly if they experienced acute mental health difficulties.

7.1.2 HOW ECR SUPPORTED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF OUTCOMES

Of the eight cases we examined in depth, significant outcomes were achieved for many, including in terms of moving away from offending, better accommodation situations and improved engagement with education,

healthcare and legal services. A number of ECR ways of working contributed to these achievements.

The ECR approach

- Being trauma informed and putting young people first.
- Providing access to a psychologist, particularly in situations where young people were experiencing anger or distress. Future projects might consider the backgrounds of staff to further facilitate a psychologically-informed approach – for example, by recruiting caseworkers with a background in psychology or psychologists with casework experience.
- Offering very long-term support, over several years, where needed. More positive outcomes were identified for some young people when supported for longer.
- Carefully managing young people's transitions in and out of custody and from children's to adult services, as well as staff changes in other network professional roles. Having a long period of time to establish engagement with a young person prior to major transitions – such as from custody to the community – was also important.
- Offering a range of ETE opportunities until something of interest was found.

The nature of relationships

- The close nature of the relationship between ECR worker and young person. One young person told us that, even though a staff member who supported him had left the project some time ago, a desire not to let her down continued to motivate him.

Work with other services

- Close working with networks of professionals supporting young people, including facilitating communication, joining up support, covering gaps and avoiding duplication.
- Providing close and frequent support to help young people start and then maintain engagement with other services.
- Supporting – and sometimes challenging – other professionals to meet their obligations to young people. ECR achieved this largely through working with organisations on individual young people's cases. With sufficient resource, future projects could consider delivering more targeted work – for example, training or policy work – to achieve greater outcomes for organisations.

7.1.3 OTHER FACTORS AFFECTING OUTCOMES

Time in the community

In our focus sample, young people who had spent at least some of the ECR-supported period in the community experienced more outcomes than those in custody. This might be anticipated; ECR caseworkers focused on building relationships with young people in custody with a view to preparing them to experience other changes when they were released and could access other opportunities. One young person commented that '[my ECR caseworker] would help me more if I was out of [prison]'.

Family

Sometimes young people's family supported outcomes by supporting engagement with ECR or other services. However, family involvement sometimes presented challenges. In one case, a young person's professional network had concerns about the very close involvement of the young person's carer, and case notes record that the young person was more reserved in meetings if the carer was present. The ECR worker focused on 'trying to get him to be more independent as he is an adult.'

A professional observed that limited family engagement might have affected another young person's progress:

"He has received support from his family [but] ... because he [couldn't go back into the family home] when he was released I think that's had a huge impact. Because no matter how much [the ECR caseworker] and I do we're not his family, we're still a service and he can't call us after a certain time, can't meet us on the weekend."

ECR sometimes had to set clear boundaries with family. In one case, a young person's carer was very keen for the young person to engage with ECR. While that was helpful to a certain extent, the caseworker worked hard to ensure that the focus was on the young person. She explained:

"Because we are a voluntary service and we work with young people, what we do is based on what they would like. Despite [the young person's carer] wanting to engage I was boundaried with [them] – I said I would like to engage with [the young person] but it was his choice."

Past experiences

Many – if not all – ECR young people had experienced trauma. Stakeholders noted that seeing their friends

pass away or go to jail could be an incentive to help young people move on. However, it was also noted that undealt-with trauma could be a barrier. A network professional explained why they thought a young person they shared with ECR might struggle to move on:

“The main barriers I think, from all the trauma he’s experienced, and witnessed, I think it’s PTSD. It’s going to be hard to for him to make new friends or trust people. ... It’s going to be hard for him to know [if] someone genuinely wants to make friends with him or [if] someone might be after him. ... He won’t allow people into his space or he’ll definitely keep himself to himself.”

Another young person had explained that talking treatments were difficult. His caseworker said:

“He’s not much of a talker and he feels that when he does speak it puts him in a bad place afterwards. He says that ... when he speaks about things it makes him think about things that he wouldn’t usually think about. I think he finds it difficult to manage those emotions.”



Other barriers to change

Stakeholders had noticed a range of other factors that acted to inhibit or prevent changes for young people. These included:

- Factors that might encourage young people to re-engage or engage more in criminal activity. For example, boredom through a lack of regular or structured activity, relationships with others who might exploit them (to whom young people may be particularly vulnerable on release from custody), desensitisation to risk, loneliness and a lack of money.
- Factors that might prevent or dissuade young people from engaging with other services and activities. For example, staff turnover in support roles, situations (for example, rehousing) taking time to resolve in spite of advocacy, having a criminal record, a lack of understanding from professionals around the nature of risk faced by young people and a lack of available support for people over 18 with multiple complex needs.

7.2 THE FEASIBILITY OF REPLICATION

There is significant interest currently in the wider application of constructive resettlement approaches, for example in the establishment of a pan-London post focusing on resettlement for children and young people. This section provides an initial exploration of factors affecting feasibility of replication or scale-up of the ECR project to a pan-London or sub-regional level. It is based on an analysis of data collected for this evaluation, including feedback from stakeholders on what should be considered if the project was replicated.

The following definitions have guided this section:

- ‘Scaling up’ involves increasing the size of the programme to support more young people, often across larger geographical areas. This may no longer be applicable for New Horizon as ECR has closed. However, we will consider issues of programme size.
- ‘Replication’ in this context is about creating something like ECR in other areas of London.
- ‘Feasibility’ is about ease of implementation. However, we believe an assessment of need and intended outcomes of the proposed intervention is so crucial, we include them here.

7.2.1 ASPECTS TO CONSIDER

To determine the feasibility of replicating ECR we see the following as important.

KEY ASPECTS	FOR CONSIDERATION
Local need	
Need for the service	<p>The eligible age range for any new service will need to take into account the number and profile of young people currently heavily involved in the criminal justice system in that area.</p> <p>ECR was set up to focus on transitions in and out of custody. As numbers of eligible young people in Camden reduced, they widened out their criteria.</p> <p>A wider view of critical transitions, including the transition to adult criminal justice agencies and other services, may be needed; ECR needed to offer a lot of support to some young people through the transition to adult services, especially those with complex needs.</p>
Young people’s interest in the service	<p>A key aspect of ECR was that it was voluntary. It was New Horizon’s experience that, with effort, many young people did choose to access the service and appreciated the lack of statutory powers.</p>
Nature of the proposed activity	
Meeting local need	<p>If the need is different to that in Camden, how likely is an ECR-type intervention to work?</p>
Cost and funding	<p>Length of funding is important. It takes time to set up a service, especially if new staff must be recruited and trained. Relationships with this client group often take a long time to build – and outcomes may take time to develop. Three-year funding should be the minimum, with longer being desirable.</p>
Size of the proposed activity	<p>ECR had a small, tight-knit team. They supported each other and advised on each other’s cases. What might be lost or gained with scaling-up, including in terms of staff turnover?</p>
Intended geographical remit	<p>New Horizon are very well established in Camden; they are well known and know the borough well. That credibility helped them support ECR users effectively.</p> <p>Small clusters of boroughs, perhaps where young people tend to go to the same custodial settings or where there is a history of effective cross borough collaboration between voluntary and statutory sector organisations, may make sense. It is possible a pan London approach would struggle if delivered by one organisation with less knowledge of, and credibility in, so many areas.</p>

<p>Whether all aspects of ECR are necessary</p>	<p>To what extent does any new service need to stick to a specific model, for example the 5 Cs?</p> <p>ECR also had a team psychologist, which is unusual. It is very hard to disentangle which aspects of ECR were effective, but on the basis of available data, that psychologist was an important part of achieving outcomes for users, either through direct support or in her support for the team.</p> <p>The use of personal budgets appears to have been effective for ECR, both for engagement of young people and for supporting outcomes.</p>
<p>The local service context</p>	
<p>What local services exist</p>	<p>Is there a gap in terms of meeting need? Is there an organisation with relevant expertise already in the area who might run such a service?</p> <p>Does the area have a range of services for young people to which a new service can refer? Camden is a relatively well-resourced borough, which meant it had, for example, ETE opportunities to refer young people to.</p>
<p>Whether local services collaborate</p>	<p>ECR collaborated very effectively with some other voluntary sector agencies, in some cases forming a very effective and organic 'team around the child'. Pre-existing New Horizon relationships may well have been helpful here.</p> <p>Within the local authority itself, is there a strong culture of cross-team collaboration? ECR staff reported some barriers to their work as a result of local authority teams not always working well together.</p>
<p>Nature of the local YOS (values, culture etc)</p>	<p>Some YOSs, for example in Westminster, already have in-house resettlement workers. Is a new team needed? Will it complement or duplicate?</p> <p>What is the capacity of the local YOS? If they are stretched, the need for an ECR-type service will be greater. However, the creation of a relatively well-resourced new team would need to be handled sensitively.</p> <p>Does the local YOS have an interest in partnering with the VCS?</p> <p>There are some key values/aspects underpinning constructive resettlement, including: young person first, offender second; co-creation; consistency; trauma informed. If these are not already established ways of working with the local YOS, embedding a new ECR-type service may be tricky.</p>
<p>The proposed implementers</p>	
<p>What sector they are in</p>	<p>New Horizon is voluntary sector, and from the evidence here there may be limits to the statutory sector's ability to run a similar service.</p> <p>The combined strengths of the voluntary and statutory roles have been effective in meeting needs of ECR users. We heard some compelling stories from staff about how they had combined the relative freedom of their roles with the 'clout' of statutory partners to meet young people's needs. At the same time, each service needs to respect the others' remit and boundaries. They are distinct but complementary.</p> <p>ECR young people told us they valued having access to a service they could choose whether to engage in, and which had no statutory responsibilities over them.</p>

History in the local area	New Horizon has 50+ years' experience in working with young people, and many years' experience of working with young people involved in the criminal justice system.
Relationship between YOS and local voluntary sector	Assuming the new service is going to be in the voluntary sector, the relationship between the local YOS and the sector will be important. Do they have an established working relationship? New Horizon had already worked with Camden YOS and one ECR team lead had worked in Camden local authority youth services before. The two organisations genuinely saw each other as partners with different strengths and trusted each other.
Skills and expertise within the implementing organisation	<p>New Horizon had been running their YOP project for years before hosting ECR; ECR was a natural extension of the way they already worked.</p> <p>Do at least some staff have skills with this client group? Do other staff with relevant skills need to be recruited? Do staff have established working relationships with other organisations that can help get things done?</p> <p>Being part of a larger organisation brings resources when capacity is stretched, as well as additional offers to young people. That ECR staff could access wider New Horizon resources for their young people was a strength.</p> <p>Does the implementer have expertise in how to meet the needs of the young people involved in the criminal justice system in the local area? Have they worked with young people with similar levels of need before?</p>
Leadership	Does the implementer have strong and dynamic leaders able to support a difficult area of work, including tolerating and managing risk?
Culture and values	New Horizon was already working in ways that were similar to the constructive resettlement approach. A new organisation will struggle if there is a battle around culture and values. Is there a culture of tenacious dynamism, and of collaboration with other organisations? Are there people within the organisation who could effectively champion this new project?
Relationship with, and access to, secure establishments	A very useful aspect of the ECR offer was access to young people in prison; this was particularly attractive to YOS/probation staff for whom such regular access was not possible.

Socio-political context	
Fit with local plans/priorities	A fit with local plans is clearly helpful. In the case of ECR, its work fitted with YOS priorities e.g. improving transitions, tackling disproportionality.
Political will	Is there interest in the constructive resettlement of young people in the proposed area? Is there an appetite for long-term work with small caseloads? If not, a campaign to win hearts and minds may be necessary. In Camden, buy in at board level was achieved early on, at least in part due to their previous history of taking a child-centred approach.

APPENDIX 1: CALCULATING ECONOMIC VALUE

This appendix is simplified to protect young people's confidentiality and reduce document length; more detailed workings are held by New Horizon.

OUR PROCESS

To undertake the economic evaluation we undertook the following:

1. Quantified outcomes that hold monetary value for the young person, the community (i.e., in relation to reduced crime) or statutory services. Outcomes identified related to:
 - o changes in offending levels and sentencing (e.g. avoidance of custodial sentences)
 - o avoidance of immediate harm
 - o increased (propensity for) employment
 - o increased access to benefits²⁴
2. Valued outcomes using open-source data. We primarily used the following:
 - o the Home Office's 'Economic and Social Costs of Crime'²⁵
 - o government information regarding current benefit rates²⁶
 - o the Ministry of Justice's 'Cost per prisoner' information²⁷
 - o National Minimum Wage rates²⁸
3. Used the (largely qualitative) information available to estimate what would have happened without ECR (deadweight) and the proportion of the value attributable to ECR (attribution).
4. Calculated value per outcome, per individual, per stakeholder, and overall, for each of eight cases.

UNDERSTANDING OUR ANALYSIS

We were unable to undertake a full CBA because of a number of considerations.

CHALLENGES DUE TO THE NATURE OF COMPLEX SOCIAL INTERVENTIONS

- **Valuing softer outcomes**, like increased self-esteem, takes a lot of resources and requires significant access to young people. Limited time for this aspect of the evaluation, plus difficulties engaging young people, meant we focused on 'harder' outcomes, and in particular the cost-savings²⁹ associated with these for statutory services. We were unable to value the softer outcomes that are so important to the work of ECR. This means we are likely to have significantly underestimated the value of ECR.
- **Very limited hard data on 'deadweight' and attribution.** Calculating deadweight (what would have happened anyway, without ECR) and 'attribution' (what proportion of change is due to ECR, as opposed to another organisation) are tricky for any intervention, and are of particular importance in ECR, where workers work closely with other agencies to create a network around the young person. The levels for deadweight and attribution have a significant bearing on overall valuation. Sensitivity testing on this (using slightly lower and higher assumptions) would help to further understand the potential value generated by ECR.
- **Managing complexity means reduced accuracy.** To make the analysis manageable, we have had to lose some of the variation in outcomes between young people, for example by assuming the same value for reduced offending for all young people.
- **It's hard to predict future outcomes**, but we have done some projection into the future.
- **There's no guarantee that early changes in attitudes will lead to behavioural change** and therefore tangible outcomes.
- **Some positive outcomes for beneficiaries, for example increased service use, create costs for those services.** To simplify analysis we have not accounted for this, except for welfare benefits.

DATA-RELATED CHALLENGES

- **Limited data on all programme costs.** While basic direct costs were available, costs around, for example, time given pro bono from project partners, were not always available. This means we have likely underestimated the true costs of ECR.

24. Note that the increased value for the young person associated with increased benefits is cancelled out by the cost involved for Government.

25. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/954485/the-economic-and-social-costs-of-crime-horr99.pdf

26. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/benefit-and-pension-rates-2022-to-2023/proposed-benefit-and-pension-rates-2022-to-2023>

27. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/929417/costs-prison-place-costs-prisoner-2019-2020-summary.pdf

28. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1065743/The_National_Minimum_Wage_in_2022.pdf

29. Where we use the term 'cost savings' we refer to opportunities for resource re-allocation. 'Saving' money that would have been spent on an ECR beneficiary will free up resource to be used elsewhere, rather than enabling a service to be reduced.

- **Limited data on young people's outcomes.**
 - o The sample size of eight cases is very small.
 - o We only had access to data on eight of the 24 cases ECR worked on. We do not know the extent to which our sample was representative.
 - o The amount of data between cases varied – and a lot of the value comes from one case. Had we not had access to data on that case, the value would look very different.
 - o Much of the data was qualitative which made it vulnerable to subjective interpretation.
 - o Offending data is on recorded crime only and might be higher if unrecorded were included. Data on the nature of crimes is limited.
 - o Of our 8 cases, two were at too early a stage for significant outcomes; a third is also serving a long sentence so ECR is limited as to what can be achieved for them.

HOW WE WORKED OUT THE VALUES

The tables below summarise how we worked out the values in our analysis. A more detailed explanation of our assumptions and proxies is held by New Horizon; we have not included this here partly to protect client confidentiality and partly to limit the length of this document.

SUMMARY OF HIGH CONFIDENCE OUTCOMES

ECR young person	Valuable outcomes	Valuation proxy	Value before attribution and deadweight	Assumed deadweight	Assumed attribution	Estimated value of ECR contribution (all)	Estimated value for young people /community	Estimated value for statutory services
2	Move to employment (XXX industry)	Average earnings for entry level XXX industry worker. Full time wages for 2 of 3-year post-support valuation period. Considering changes in Universal Credit	£27,437	30%	80%	£15,365	£11,800	£3,565
	Avoidance of custodial sentence	Overall cost per prisoner of 13 weeks in a male YOI	£19,875	80%	80%	£3,180	–	£3,180
	TOTAL (young person 2)					£18,545	£11,800	£6,745
5	Avoidance of (non-suspended) custodial sentence.	Overall cost per prisoner of 9 months in a male YOI (half suspended sentence)	£59,625	80%	10%	£1,193	–	£1,193
6	Avoidance of physical harm (moved out of borough)	Unit cost of one incident of 'Violence with injury', replacing physical and emotional loss element with own estimation of the harms that may be experienced by an individual (valued using the QALY approach)	£30,965	10%	80%	£22,295	£18,112	£4,183
8	Increased personal safety (avoidance of homicide or violent crime)	Expected value based on assumed probabilities of avoiding 'Homicide' – unit cost of one incident (15%) or 'Violence with injury' – unit cost of one incident, replacing physical and emotional loss element with own estimation of the harms that may be experienced by an individual (valued using the QALY approach) (85%)	508,981	30%	50%	£178,143	£115,558	£62,588
	Avoidance of custodial sentence (during support)	Overall cost per prisoner of 18 months in a male YOI (half of support period)	£119,250	10%	50%	£53,662	–	£53,662
	Maintained benefits	Standard PIP allowance for three-year support period. Overall value is £0 as benefit for YP is cancelled out by loss for statutory services	£0	10%	80%	£0	£6,947	-£6,947
	Reduced offending (during support)	Unit cost of five incidents of 'Violence with injury'	£70,250	40%	50%	£21,075	£12,360	£8,715
	TOTAL (young person 8)					£252,880	£134,865	£118,018
Total value for all eight case studies						£294,913	£164,777	£130,139

Note there were no outcomes we could value with 'high confidence' from young people 1, 3, 4 or 7

SUMMARY OF MEDIUM CONFIDENCE OUTCOMES

ECR young person	Valuable outcomes	Valuation proxy	Value before attribution and deadweight	Assumed deadweight	Assumed attribution	Estimated value of ECR contribution (all)	Estimated value for young people /community	Estimated value for statutory services
1	Increased likelihood of stable future employment	Part-time wages (20hr per week) at National Minimum Wage for 2.5 years. Considering changes in Universal Credit	£17,483	70%	70%	£3,671	£2,150	£1,520
2	Increased personal safety (avoidance of homicide, violent crime or parental anxiety as a result of move from area)	Expected value based on assumed probabilities of avoiding 'Homicide' – unit cost of one incident (5%) or 'Violence with injury' – unit cost of one incident, replacing physical and emotional loss element with own estimation of the harms that may be experienced by an individual (valued using the QALY approach) (40%) or parental anxiety (50%)	£181,683	20%	40%	£58,139	£37,800	£20,339
3	Increased income through benefits (including housing support)	Average of basic Universal Credit (minimum) and benefit cap (maximum) Overall value is £0 as benefit for YP is cancelled out by loss for statutory services.	£0	80%	20%	£0	£1,116	-£1,116
	Reduced offending (avoidance of crimes)	Sum of unit costs for: 'Violence with injury'; 'Theft from person'; 'Criminal damage'	£16,780	50%	70%	£5,873	£3,122	£2,751
	TOTAL (3)					£5,873	£4,238	£1,635
8	Reduced offending (after support)	Unit cost of five incidents of 'Violence with injury'	£70,250	50%	50%	£17,562	£10,300	£7,262
Total value for all eight case studies						£85,245	£54,488	£30,756

Note there were no outcomes we could value with 'medium confidence' from young people 4, 5, 6 or 7

SUMMARY OF LOW CONFIDENCE OUTCOMES

ECR young person	Valuable outcomes	Valuation proxy	Value before attribution and deadweight	Assumed deadweight	Assumed attribution	Estimated value of ECR contribution (all)	Estimated value for young people /community	Estimated value for statutory services
1	Reduced incidents of violent crime (following move back to Camden)	Unit cost of one incident of 'Violence with injury'	£14,050	70%	60%	£2,529	£1,483	£1,046
2	Reduced offending (avoidance of violent crime)	Unit cost of three incidents of 'Violence with injury'	£42,150	40%	40%	£10,116	£5,933	£4,183
3	Increased earning potential (by gaining XXX qualifications)	Estimated increased lifetime earnings based on DfE research	£4,932	20%	20%	£2,762	£2,762	–
Total value for all eight case studies						£15,407	£10,178	£5,229

Note there were no 'low confidence' outcomes to value from young people 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8

APPENDIX 2: LEARNING FOR FUTURE EVALUATION

New Horizon and the evaluators both worked hard to make this evaluation as good as it could be within time and resource constraints. For future evaluation of ECR-type projects, we suggest the following considerations:

- Get consents for data sharing in place with young people from early on – allowing for review as young people’s needs and wishes change.
 - Where cross-agency working is common, ensure data sharing agreements are in place and include evaluative purposes.
 - Get the evaluator involved early on, and long term, so interviews with young people can be done opportunistically and when young people are able to engage.
 - Start the evaluation well before the programme starts to wind down so there are a lot of young people to try to engage.
 - Ensure there is someone in-house to manage data and support the external evaluators.
 - Consider attribution – this kind of work involves significant levels of multiagency working. This presents issues as to who can claim outcomes. If simple ways to monitor respective organisational input on cases were put in place, this would be very helpful.
 - Set up well-organised, complete case records, with evaluation in mind from the outset. Ideally involve the evaluator in this, to focus monitoring on appropriate data requirements.
 - In the event of staff turnover, ensure data about cases is well captured.
- in relation to costs for each young person, exploring whether increased investment results in increased value. Monitoring time spent with each individual would allow the value of staff time per beneficiary to be calculated.
- Seek offending data by type, to allow analysis regarding the types of crime that had been avoided (and associated cost savings).
 - Explore avenues for assessing ‘deadweight’. With such a small sample, it is not feasible to determine what would have happened without intervention, for example with a control group. However, anonymised data from elsewhere (for example, demographic and crime-matched re-offending data) would allow more informed appraisal of ‘deadweight’.
 - Attempt to gather more accurate information on the involvement of other services. An improved understanding of what other services are doing with users will enable more accurate assumptions to be made regarding attribution.
 - Collect data over a longer time period. While tracking users after they have left is difficult, a more accurate picture of service outcomes – including whether they are sustained – may be gained if there is a time lag between service end and data collection.
 - Undertake sensitivity analysis on subsequent analyses. To increase the value of CBA, explore the sensitivity of the overall valuation to assumptions that have been made.

TAKING A COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS APPROACH

- Allocate sufficient resources to the task. Exploring the value generated by a service like ECR takes time and resources.
 - Accurately monitor the contributions of others for inclusion in project costs, including pro-bono time.
 - Monitor spend/activity per young person. Costs per individual would allow analysis of outcomes
-



68 Chalton Street,
London, NW1 1JR

Phone: 020 7388 5560

Email: info@nhyouthcentre.org.uk

nhyouthcentre.org.uk

@nhyouthcentre

Registered Charity No. 276943



Camden Youth Offending
Service (Camden Council)

London Borough of Camden
8th Floor, 5 Pancras Square
c/o Judd Street,
London, WC1H 9JE