

Youth Justice Blueprint – history, achievements and the year ahead

James Searle, Welsh Government

The context

Justice services – reserved to the UK Government



But they interface with devolved services – housing, mental health, substance misuse, education...

Need to work collectively across both governments to support the best outcomes possible for young people in Wales

Developing the Blueprint

In 2018, Ministers in UK and Welsh Governments tasked the Justice in Wales Strategy Group (which is chaired jointly by Welsh Government and officials from Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) Wales), to develop Blueprints for the delivery of youth justice services and female offenders to reflect the landscape in Wales.

The Welsh Government commissioned the Youth Justice Board (YJB) Cymru to develop advice and recommendations for the youth justice Blueprint.

In May 2019 the Blueprints were published.

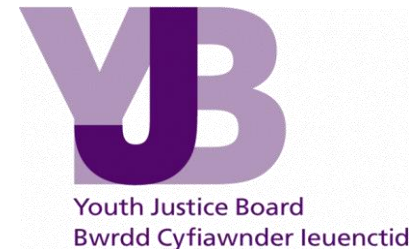


Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Gwasanaeth Carchardai a
Phrawf EM yng Nghymru

HM Prison & Probation
Service in Wales



Key Principles

- Children are treated as ‘child first, offender second’
- Acknowledge, and build on, the achievements of the youth justice system in Wales
- Embed trauma-informed approaches into Wales-wide community and custodial practice
- Integrate and align devolved and non-devolved services through a shared vision, values and approach

Areas of focus

- Prevention
- Pre-court diversion
- Community and trauma informed practice
- Custody
- Resettlement and transitions
- System oversight (now concluded)

Achievements

What	Impact
Trauma Informed Practice	Upskilled workforce and improved practice – 15 TIP workshops across 6 months with 337 attendees. Professional qualification via UNITAS Trauma Informed Practice Award.
Psychology support and Enhanced Case Management (ECM)	New FACTS offer rolled out. All 17 YJS can access psychology support and ECM (34 referrals to date). More effective service provision and improved outcomes for children.
Evaluation and research	ECM evaluation in completed in 2021
Raised profile of YJ in Wales	Greater awareness and understanding of YJ and factors leading to children's involvement.
Blueprint as a 'brand'	Strong banner for change, clear call to action for partners and a collective point of focus for Ministers in both governments.
Newsletter	Raising profile, communicating change and celebrating success.

Pre-court diversion

Strengthen pre-court diversion activity by:

- Maintaining the existing effective and cohesive models of delivery
 - Through the Bureau
- Developing diversionary practices to enhance practice:
 - Consistent notification of youth restorative disposals/community resolutions from the police to YOTs
 - Ensuring that children's rights are protected in pre-court processes
 - Voice of the Child in pre-court processes
 - Sharing and developing best practice



Prevention workstream

Focussing on pre-emptive and targeted prevention services led by Youth Offending Services

- Improve alignment with other preventative services through a joint framework model for Wales
 - Recognition of YOT activity to the wider preventative agenda
 - Preservation and sustainability of role and function
- Develop a common methodology for monitoring all YOT prevention work across Wales and improving the evidence base
 - Ceredigion YOT/Aberystwyth University pathfinder
- Explore alignment of funding

Strengths of the Blueprint way of working

- Established workstreams with a clear reporting structure - able to see where strengths and weaknesses are and to take action when needed.
- A focus on priority areas (prevention, community and secure) has put impetus behind these workstreams.
- Wide-ranging partnership working including the Welsh Government, Ministry of Justice, Youth Custody Service, YOTs, Forensic Consultation and Treatment Service, Probation Service, PCC Offices, Welsh Centre for Crime and Social Justice and End Homelessness Cymru
- Newsletter and narrative widely circulated communicating progress to a wide range of stakeholders

Wider work on next steps

- Focussed work over the next 12 months to deliver further work on prevention, pre-court diversion and secure environments
- New Key Performance Indicators bedding in to give us a richer understanding of where the system is working well and where we can add more value
- Plan to review where we are one the KPIs are fully embedded next year
- Continued work with related initiatives – including the Wales Without Violence Framework