

<b>Institution:</b> University of Bedfordshire		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> Social Work and Social Policy		
<b>Title of case study:</b> The Post-Custodial Resettlement of Children and Young People		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> October 2011 to March 2018		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Names:</b>	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>
Dr. Tim Bateman	Reader in Youth Justice	April 2010 to present
Dr. Isabelle Brodie	Senior Research Fellow	February 1995 to present
Dr. Fiona Factor	Principal Lecturer in Applied Social Science	October 2009 to present
Prof. Margaret Melrose	Professor of Sociology	August 1994 to July 2015
Prof. John Pitts	Vauxhall Professor of Socio-legal Studies	January 2005 to present
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> January 2014- December 2020		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> No		
<b>1. Summary of the impact</b>		
<p>Beyond Youth Custody (BYC) (2012-2018) improved understanding of effective post-custodial resettlement, reshaping policy and practice for young people in and leaving Secure Children's Homes, Secure Training Centres and Young Offender Institutions. BYC's <i>Framework for Resettlement</i> (a theory of change) underpins the Probation Inspectorate's inspection criteria (HMIP, 2015); the Youth Justice Board's 'constructive resettlement' strategy (YJB, 2018); <i>National Standards</i> (Ministry of Justice, 2019) and <i>Case Management Guidance</i> for the youth justice sector on children's resettlement (YJB, 2020). It also informs London's strategy to reduce youth offending in the capital (London Assembly Police and Crime Committee, 2015); and is cited as central to resettlement in the <i>Guide to Youth Justice in Scotland</i> (CYCJ, 2015). Developments underpinned by BYC have supported youth justice professionals to embed effective resettlement practices and benefited children in and leaving custody, amongst the most vulnerable in society.</p>		
<b>2. Underpinning Research</b>		
<p>There are around 600 children and young people aged 10-17 years held in the secure estate (Secure Children's Homes, Secure Training Centres and Young Offender Institutions) in England and Wales, more than half of whom are Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority (BAME) (Bateman, 2020). Research indicates that prior to custody 39% had been the subject of a child protection plan and more than a quarter (27%) had spent time in care. Almost half had been excluded from school, one in five had self-harmed and 11% had attempted suicide. Effective resettlement is important to safeguard and promote the welfare of these children and reduce reoffending; but evidence suggests that two-thirds of children reoffend within 12 months of release from secure institutions and this figure is substantially higher for children sentenced to less than 12 months imprisonment (<b>Bateman et al, 2013a) [3.1]</b>.</p> <p>Beyond Youth Custody (BYC) (2012-2018) was an England wide collaboration between the University of Bedfordshire (UoB), Applied Research in Community Safety (ARCS UK), the University of Salford, and Nacro, a social justice charity. The team was funded by the Big Lottery to develop, and disseminate, a robust-evidence base in relation to the resettlement on children and young people leaving custody. BYC worked alongside 15 <i>Youth in Focus</i> (YIF) resettlement projects. The UoB research team played a leading role in the design, deployment and outputs of</p>		

the programme of research outlined below. Staff from the UoB co-authored 22 of the 37 outputs produced by BYC and led work on: reviewing the literature; the engagement of children and young people in resettlement; resettlement of girls and young women (which built on earlier work undertaken at UoB (**Bateman, Melrose and Brodie, 2013b**) [3.3]); gangs and resettlement; and measuring effectiveness in resettlement. All partners contributed to designing and building the BYC framework for effective resettlement.

The UoB research team was central to building a robust evidence base on effective resettlement. We did this by addressing key elements of the resettlement task and the resettlement process that had previously received little or no attention. For example, the experiences of girls and young women and BAME young people in and after custody, and the impact of gang involvement on resettlement had rarely been explored prior to this body of research. This evidence base – rooted in the views of children and young people - see [3.2, 3.3 and 3.4]– was used to challenge, advance and promote clearer thinking in policy and practice for the effective resettlement of young people leaving custody.

**Bateman et al (2013) [3.1]** undertook a systematic review of over 100 academic outputs and ‘grey’ literature (including policy, practice guidance, legislation, statistical data), pertaining to the resettlement of children and young people in England and Wales which was augmented by interviews with resettlement professionals in the 15 YIF projects. This methodology was designed to facilitate shared learning across resettlement services for young people and to contribute to the development of evidence-based resettlement policy and practice, building upon the learning of professionals working in the field. The findings highlighted the areas where future BYC work should focus. These included engagement with young people, the need to acknowledge violence and sexual abuse in the backgrounds of girls and young women in custody and the over-representation of BAME young people among those deprived of their liberty. The review also identified the distinctive challenges associated with the resettlement of gang-involved children and young people and pointed to the centrality of effective multi-agency collaboration in effective resettlement.

A study exploring the centrality of engaging young people in resettlement provision, as a prerequisite of promoting desistance, and a core element of relationship-based practice (**Bateman and Hazel, 2014**) [3.2], integrated the wider literature on engagement with the experiences of resettlement practitioners working in the 15 YIF projects. The research explored the meaning of engagement in a youth justice context, the barriers to children engaging with resettlement support and effective mechanisms for maximizing engagement. It developed a framework for understanding engagement as a three stage model of transformation, that prefigured, in some respects, and informed the latter framework for effective resettlement. A subsequent study on girls and young women leaving custody, building heavily on previous research undertaken by the UoB (**Bateman et al, 2013b**) [3.3] cross-referenced evidence of ‘what works’ in the resettlement of young people with the academic literature on desistance and what was learned in the 25 interviews with young women, both in custody and following release. This iterative synthesis also aimed to demonstrate how a gendered perspective could be applied in both policy and practice.

The relationship between ethnicity and youth custody came to the fore in *Gang-involved young people: Custody and beyond* (**Factor and Pitts, 2015**) [3.6]. In 2013/14, 16% of boys in young offender institutions (YOIs) reported having experienced ‘gang problems’ when they first arrived at the establishment (rising to 21% for BAME young people). The research revealed that what happens in the secure estate has a significant impact on whether and how gang-involved young people engage with resettlement services. The research was based upon a systematic review of the English language literature on the rehabilitation of gang-involved young people aged 10 to 25. Interviews were conducted with 19 gang-involved young people aged between 16 and 25. Five policy makers and 27 practitioners attended focus groups in south-east and north-west England where the implication of the observations of the young people and the key findings of the literature review for policy and practice were explored.

*Custody to Community: How Young People Cope with Release* (Bateman and Hazel, 2015) [3.4] involved analysis of 57 interview transcripts, drawn from a variety of studies, of young people's experiences in the criminal justice system. The findings pointed to the disorientation which precede reorientation and the role of resettlement professionals is supporting young people through these stages and responding to the trauma many of them were experiencing during this time.

Overall, the BYC research programme highlighted that resettlement was often ineffective because there had been no unifying aim for resettlement beyond the prevention of reoffending and no theory of change. In the absence of a theory of change, there was no shared perception between the relevant agencies about how multi-agency resettlement planning might work in practice (Bateman and Hazel, 2018) [3.5].

### 3. References to the research

[3.1] Bateman, T., Hazel, N. and Wright, S. (2013a) *Resettlement of young people leaving custody: lessons from the literature*. London: Beyond Youth Custody, available at: <http://www.beyondyouthcustody.net/wp-content/uploads/Resettlement-of-Young-People-Leaving-Custody-Lessons-from-the-literature.pdf>

[3.2] Bateman, T and Hazel, N (2013) *Engaging young people in resettlement: research report*. London: Beyond Youth Custody, available at: <http://www.beyondyouthcustody.net/wp-content/uploads/Engaging-young-people-in-resettlement.pdf>

[3.3] Bateman, T., Melrose, M and Brodie, I. (2013b) 'Nothing's really that hard, you can do it'. *Agency and fatalism: the resettlement needs of girls in custody*. Luton: University of Bedfordshire, available at: <https://uobrep.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10547/622170/Nothingsreallythathard.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y>

[3.4] Bateman, T. and Hazel, N. (2015) *Custody to community: how young people cope with release. Research report*. London: Beyond Youth Custody, available at: <http://www.beyondyouthcustody.net/wp-content/uploads/BYC-Custody-to-community-How-young-people-cope-with-release.pdf>

[3.5] Bateman, T. and Hazel, N. (2018) 'Promoting shifts in personal narratives and providing structures of support: transitions of incarcerated children in England and Wales' in O'Neill, S (ed) *Incarcerated youth: transitioning back to the community. International perspectives*. Singapore: Springer, pp167-186. ISBN 978-981-130751-5, available at: [https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-981-13-0752-2\\_11](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-981-13-0752-2_11)

[3.6] Factor F, and Pitts, J. with Bateman, T (2015) *Gang-involved young people: custody and beyond: practitioner's guide*. London: Beyond Youth Custody available at: <http://www.beyondyouthcustody.net/wp-content/uploads/Gang-involved-young-people-custody-and-beyond-a-research-report.pdf>

### 4. Details of the impact

#### Overview of impact

The HMI Probation inspection of services for youth resettlement noted that a body of previous research evidence on what helps children leaving custody to stop offending had not resulted in changes in practice or improved outcomes (HMI Probation, 2015, Foreword) [5.1]. BYC was described by the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) as being 'pivotal' to understanding the reasons why the evidence base had had a limited impact. It also highlighted that the programme had provided a theory of change to underpin more effective service responses and guide the approaches adopted by professionals to work with this group (YJB, 2018, p.7) [5.2 and 5.3].

BYC cross-referenced the responses of young people, practitioners and policy-makers with theoretical perspectives on gender, ethnicity, trauma and desistance to develop a theory of change which served as the basis for the, now extensively adopted, *Framework for Resettlement* (Beyond Youth Custody, 2017). The model argued that guidance had focused on

issues of process rather than recognising that effective practice consists in the provision of personal and structural support that enables children and young people to see themselves in positive terms, with a constructive, crime free future, rather than as 'offenders', constrained by their past mistakes. The framework identifies five characteristics of effective resettlement support that BYC research has shown are crucial to effectiveness and sustainability: 1. Constructive 2. Co-created 3. Customised 4. Consistent 5. Co-ordinated [5.5].

#### Dissemination to and impact with practitioners

The framework, designed as a resource for policy makers, decision makers and academics studying youth justice has been widely adopted (as specified below) by voluntary services (e.g. The Prisoners' Education Trust and St Basils Trust) and statutory providers, including the South London Resettlement Consortium, Kent, Medway, Lewisham and Leeds youth offending services and the South and West Yorkshire Resettlement Consortium. The manager of the latter reflected that: *'the work with BYC and the knowledge and understanding of the theory of change gained by practitioners has seen developments locally which have supported youth justice professionals to embed effective resettlement practices and benefitted children in custody who are among the most vulnerable in society'* [5.4].

Over the course of the programme, nearly 700 stakeholders, the majority being youth justice practitioners, signed up to receive BYC's quarterly e-news updates which included information on the latest findings from the research and practice guidance. This effective communication with practitioners in youth offending teams and custodial institutions, as policy makers, ensured that visits to the website increased every year of the programme: in 2012 the total number of page views was 11,403; by 2018 this was 80,724, 64% of whom were new visitors demonstrating the growing reach of the project over time. The website provided free access to all of BYC's publications, and the majority of visits resulted in downloads of research reports or guidance documents. BYC's research forms a fundamental part of the Custody and Resettlement module in the *Youth Justice Effective Practice Certificate* launched in 2018. The course, the primary professional qualification for youth justice practitioners, is endorsed by the YJB and delivered by Unitas and the University of Suffolk.

#### Adoption of the BYC model

The YJB recommended the adoption of the framework to resettlement consortia and have noted that the 'research-informed principles for effective resettlement from custody apply equally to work with other high-risk children' (YJB, 2018, p.3) [5.2]. The framework has been incorporated into the inspection criteria developed by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation's thematic inspection of youth resettlement (HMI Probation, 2015) [5.1]. It also forms the basis of the YJB's (2018) approach to "constructive resettlement" which it established as one of six strategic priorities in the Board's *Strategic Plan 2019-2022* (YJB, 2019). BYC's key principles of effective resettlement were also adopted by the London Assembly in its strategy to reduce youth reoffending in the capital (London Assembly Policy and Crime Committee, 2015) [5.5]. BYC's framework was acknowledged as being the basis of the Centre for Youth and Criminal Justice's (2019) *Guide to Youth Justice in Scotland: policy, practice and legislation* section on reintegration and transitions [5.6]. The latest *Standards for Children in the Youth Justice system* (Ministry of Justice, 2019) [5.7] also explicitly acknowledge the importance of transition plans that set out "the personal and structural support to be made available to support the child develop a pro-social identity. Identify the child's strengths and capacities (and those of the wider community around them) and set out how these factors will impact upon the activities and be built into a full desistance plan" (Standard 5, p.17), in line with recommendations from BYC. The "constructive resettlement" approach, based on the BYC model, including desistance through identity shift, also informs national *Case Management Guidance on Custody and Resettlement* (YJB, 2020) for youth offending team practitioners and managers [5.8]. The work of BYC was also cited by the Parliamentary Office for Science and Technology in its report on *Education of Young People Leaving Custody* (Ravenscroft and Hobbs, 2016) [5.9]. Drawing on a cost benefit analysis by Renshaw (2007) they suggested that good quality resettlement could save over GBP20,000 per offender per year, if it reduced the frequency of re-offending by 35% and the severity of offences by 10%.

Embedding the legacy

The programme culminated in a Parliamentary Conference in 2018 addressed by the Chair of the YJB and the Minister for Youth Justice, to celebrate the successes of the programme and embed its legacy [5.10].

**5. Sources to corroborate the impact**

[5.1] HMI Probation (2015) *Joint thematic inspection of resettlement services to children by Youth Offending Teams and partner agencies*. Manchester: HMI Probation.

[https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmi probation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2015/03/Youth-Resettlement\\_report.pdf](https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmi probation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2015/03/Youth-Resettlement_report.pdf)

[5.2] Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (2018) *How to make resettlement constructive*. London: Youth Justice Board. <https://yiresourcehub.uk/custody-and-resettlement/item/610-how-to-make-resettlement-constructive-yjb-document.html>

[5.3] Impact statement from Head of Innovation and Engagement – Youth Justice Board Cymru provided as PDF

[5.4] Impact statement from South and West Yorkshire Resettlement Consortium Manager provided as PDF

[5.5] London Assembly Police and Crime Committee (2015) *Breaking the cycle: Reducing youth reoffending in London*. London: London Assembly.

[https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/gla\\_migrate\\_files\\_destination/Breaking%20the%20cycle%20-%20Reducing%20youth%20reoffending%20in%20London%202015\\_1.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/gla_migrate_files_destination/Breaking%20the%20cycle%20-%20Reducing%20youth%20reoffending%20in%20London%202015_1.pdf)

[5.6] Centre for Youth and Criminal Justice (2018) *A Guide to Youth Justice in Scotland: policy, practice and legislation Section 6: Reintegration and Transitions*. Edinburgh: University of Strathclyde. <https://www.cycj.org.uk/resource/youth-justice-in-scotland-guide/>

[5.7] Ministry of Justice (2019) *Standards for Children in the Youth Justice system*. London: Ministry of Justice. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-standards-for-youth-justice-services>

[5.8] Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (2020) *Case Management Guidance on Custody and Resettlement* (YJB, 2020). London: Youth Justice Board.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/custody-and-resettlement/custody-and-resettlement-section-7-case-management-guidance>

[5.9] Ravenscroft, S and Hobbs, A (2016) *Education of Young People Leaving Custody*. London: Parliamentary Office for Science and Technology. <https://post.parliament.uk/research-briefings/post-pb-0023/>

[5.10] Beyond Youth Custody (2018) *Parliamentary Conference 2018: Embedding BYC's legacy* <http://www.beyondyouthcustody.net/beyond-youth-custody-parliamentary-conference/>