5th Annual Conference

Offenders' Learning, Skills and Employability

The resettlement of young offenders: improving education training and employment

Bob Ashford – Head of Youth Justice Strategy

Youth Justice Board for England and Wales

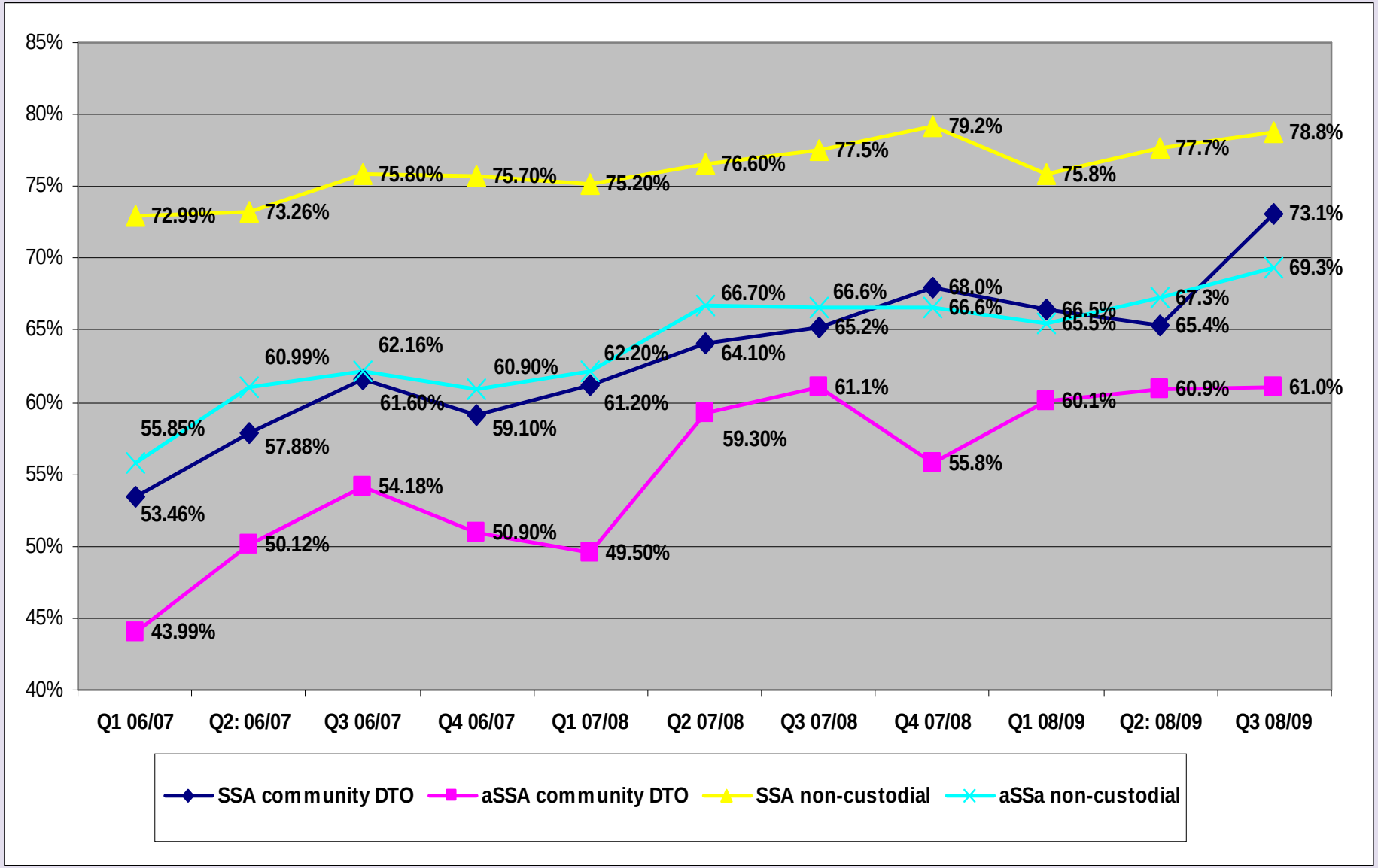
Thursday 14th May 2009

Youth Justice Board
Bwrdd Cyfiawnder Ieuenctid

YOT ETE performance

Broken down by age and community/custodial sentence

April 2006 – Dec 2008



ETE and Resettlement - the Proposition

- Just under 3000 children on average in custody in the year ending March ‘08, an annual throughput of around 7000
- 78% of them are likely to reoffend within two years of release
- The YJB has a statutory duty to prevent offending and all govt departments have a crime reduction remit
- Engagement in education, training and employment is proven to reduce the risk of offending
- Therefore closer working between schools and youth justice services should significantly reduce offending and anti-social behaviour and help close the inequality gap

Children and Young people in custody – some facts

- **Average number in custody on any day: 2902**

(Source: YJB monthly snapshot data for 01 Apr 08 - 01 Mar 09)

- **Average number sentenced to custody per year: 3904**

(Source: YJB admissions data for 01 Apr 08 - 31 Mar 09)

- **Average number remanded to custody per year: 4526**

(Source: YJB admissions data for 01 Apr 08 - 31 Mar 09)

- **Average length of stay in custody: 91 days**

(Note this figure incorporates young people both sentenced and remanded. The average length of stay for those sentenced is 146 days and average for those remanded is 42 days)

(Taken from YJB episode data for 01 Apr 08 - 31 Mar 09)

- **144 offences were committed nationally within 6 months for every 100 offenders leaving custody in 2008**

(Source: YOT quarterly returns to YJB)

YCAP resettlement related commitments

- Expand Resettlement and Aftercare Programmes (RAP)
- Develop a more comprehensive package of care for young people leaving custody backed by legislation
- Improve education and training in custody by giving ‘host’ LAs commissioning and funding responsibilities and ‘home’ LAs duties to improve attainment
- Reinforce the role of children’s services in overseeing resettlement provision
- Develop regional or sub-regional resettlement consortia to provide coordinated solutions for LAs in a single area
- Consultation on making local authorities responsible for the full cost of court-ordered secure remand, and making the costs of custody more visible
- Developing a formal review process for children who go into custody… this review could become a formal duty on local authorities

Trend towards mainstream provision in custody 1999-2009

- Late 90's prison health replaced by NHS and PCT commissioning
- 2002 Munby judgement – Children Act '89 applies
- Children Act 2004 – embedding safeguarding arrangements for custody in local provision
- 2004 – LSC given responsibility for funding and commissioning education and training
- 2007 – 'Sutton' judgement LA should provide supported accommodation for custody leaver
- 2008 CYPA – local authority duties to visit looked after children in custody
- 2008 Education Act – local authorities given responsibility for IAG/Connexions
- 2008 - YCAP proposal for greater local authority involvement before, during and after custody
- 2009 – Apprenticeships Bill local authorities to commission & fund education in custody (implementation April 2010).

What are the key elements of resettlement?

- Education, training, or employment
- Suitable, and supported accommodation
- Continuity of mental health and substance abuse services
- Mentoring
- Family contact during custody and family mediation
- Immediate post custody support

Resettlement from custody – the importance of getting it right

- ‘Youth Resettlement – a framework for action’ – YJB 2005
- Children and young people in custody tend to be those with the greatest vulnerability, presenting the highest risks of reoffending (78%)
- The system is currently failing
- Custodial placement can reinforce disengagement from mainstream services creating an ‘equality gap’
- Youth justice services alone can’t resolve these issues

EVERY CHILD MATTERS

- **Not least young offenders and young people in custody.**

"… cooperative working is increasingly becoming the normal way of working. However, good examples of joint working too often rely on the goodwill of individuals… All professionals working with a child should explicitly understand their responsibilities in order to achieve positive outcomes…"

"Yet it is evident that the challenges of working across organisational boundaries continue to pose barriers in practice, and that cooperative efforts are often the first to suffer when services and individuals are under pressure."

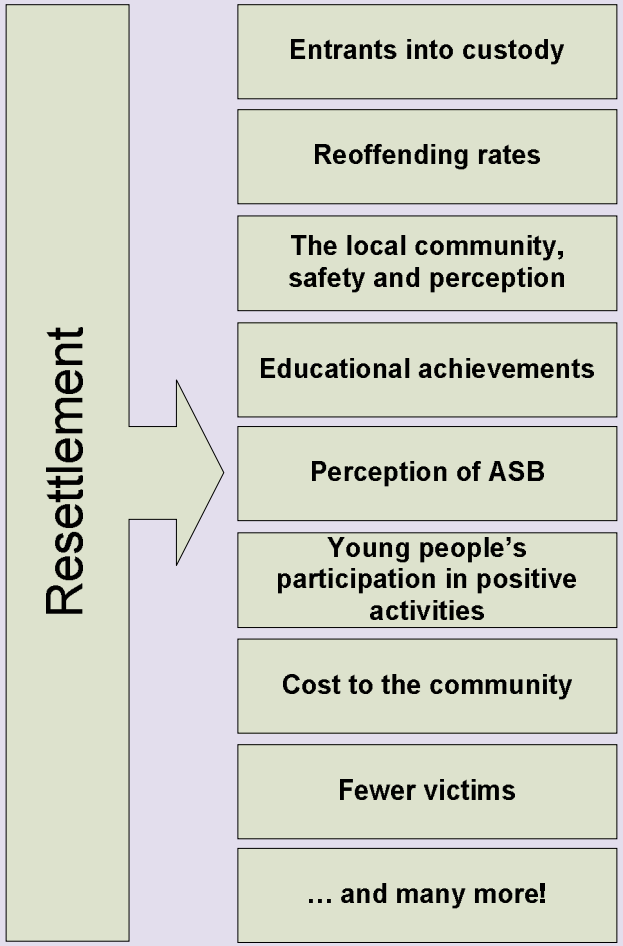
(The Protection of Children in England: A Progress Report, (Lord Laming, March 2009))

The consortia approach?

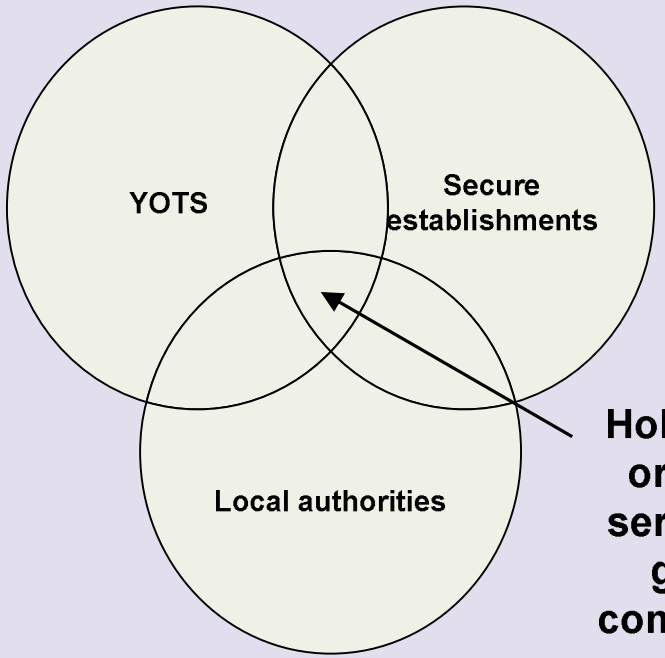
- Renewed focus on resettlement following YCAP – current approaches are not delivering
  - Resettlement – to provide a 2% contribution to reducing re-offending nationally and locally
  - National performance: 144 offences were committed nationally within 6 months for every 100 offenders leaving custody in 2008
  - Regional performance: In the North West region, 163 offences were committed within 6 months for every 100 offenders leaving custody in 2008
- Increasing governmental demands on LAs to take responsibility for young people in custody
- *Joint* working, with shared aims and objectives are in line with the new environment of Local Accountability. Shared decision making and development of solutions for the benefit of all key stakeholders
- Where placement patterns from a group of LAs are more consistent, they will have more of a common interest in the custodial provision and resettlement outcomes
- Some historical evidence to suggest benefits to consortia working, but also challenges e.g. ISSPs

The benefits working together

Individual aims can be achieved by joint working



Joint ownership of resettlement provides better continuity



Holistic, co-ordinated service and greater continuity of care

Key success factors for consortia working

- Funding
  - Sufficient resource to take this forward
  - A robust evaluation, designed from the outset
  - Funding flexibility for consortia areas
- Stakeholders
  - Buy-in at CEO and Director level
  - Agreement on high level objectives
  - Joint working, with honesty and openness
- Outcomes must be measurable and consistent with youth justice and ECM aspirations,
- Coterminosity with specific custodial catchment areas and close working relationships between custodial establishments and ‘home’ children’s services departments

Issues/Discussion

- What more can schools and LAs do to engage children and young people coming out of custody in education, training or employment?
- How can we ensure communication between home and host LAs to achieve effective resettlement?
- How can we improve access to mainstream ETE services both in custody and post release?
- Are the barriers to improvement more about resources or failure to work across boundaries, what are the challenges to consortia working?