

# Valuing Victims: A Review of Police and Crime Commissioners' Delivery of Restorative Justice

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Transforming lives through  
Restorative Justice



# Introduction

This year marks Why me?'s ninth Valuing Victims report, offering a critical analysis of PCC commissioned Restorative Justice (RJ) services across England and Wales. The report draws on data collected through a Freedom of Information request to the Ministry of Justice, examining crime types, providers, funding sources, referrals, support delivered, waiting times, and victim engagement. Please note, the data covers the period 2023-24. As part of Why me?'s Valuing Victims initiative, this report focuses on identifying the strengths, inconsistencies, and gaps in Restorative Justice provision, particularly in relation to victim accessibility, engagement, and support outcomes. As with previous years, inconsistent reporting quality continues to limit our understanding of the nationwide impact of Restorative Justice.

## Data Limitations, Methodology & Dataset Overview

The dataset outlines Restorative Justice (RJ) services commissioned by Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs), including crime types covered, service types, providers, funding sources, and key performance metrics such as referrals, support completions, waiting list figures, and engagement levels. It captures a snapshot of victim-focused RJ provision funded through the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and other co-commissioned sources. However, the data is limited by significant gaps and inconsistencies. Many PCCs failed to report on critical indicators such as waiting lists, wait times, and victim engagement outcomes. Additionally, key terms like "victims supported," "no contact," and "disengaged" lack consistent national definitions, making comparisons between areas difficult. Financial reporting is also uneven, particularly regarding co-commissioned and third-party expenditures, further complicating direct analysis across regions.

## Key Findings and Critical Issues

### Incomplete and Inconsistent Reporting

A significant portion of data across PCC areas is missing or marked with asterisks (\*), indicating unreported or unavailable figures. Key metrics such as waiting lists, engagement outcomes, and service results are often omitted, severely hindering transparency and comparative analysis. For example, one area reported 405 victim referrals but only 55 supported, with no data explaining the drop-off.

### Funding Inequality

There is wide disparity in MoJ funding allocations, ranging from £800 in one PCC area, to £329,728 in another. Cost per victim also varies substantially, from £483 to £1,506.

Number of PCC areas	Amount
1	£0 - £50k
4	£50k - £100k
14	£100k - £150k
5	£150k - £200k
3	£200k - £300k
2	£300k +

Only a handful of areas reported additional, non-MoJ funding. With no national guidance on how much budget should go towards Restorative Justice, and some relying solely on the MoJ's Victims Fund where others gain additional funding elsewhere, there are large discrepancies across areas. This contributes to a 'postcode lottery' which means that people affected by crime in some areas find it easier to access Restorative Justice than others.

### Number of Victims Supported

The total number of victims supported by PCCs varies significantly across the country, revealing a striking disparity in service reach and delivery. The breakdown is as follows:

Number of PCC areas	Total no. of victims supported
10	0 - 100
3	101 - 200
4	201 - 300
5	301 +

This variation raises important questions about the consistency and effectiveness of RJ provision nationally. While some PCC areas support several hundred victims each year, others reach fewer than 100 and in some cases, none at all. This uneven distribution suggests disparities in funding, service capacity, and operational models, further proving the existence of a postcode lottery in access to RJ. Some regions may lack the infrastructure or resources to deliver RJ at scale, whereas others might benefit from higher investment and a more developed referral pathway system. Additionally, inconsistent definitions of "support" and variable reporting practices further obscure the picture, highlighting the need for standardised national monitoring to ensure all victims have equitable access to RJ services, regardless of where they live.

## Additional analysis

Category	Key Findings	Examples / Data
Referral-to-Support Gaps	Significant drop-off between referrals and victims supported with no explanation	Area A: 497 referred → 118 supported. Area B: 303 → 85. Area C: 278 → 65. Area D: 219 → 219
Victim Engagement & Drop-Off	Engagement outcomes like “No Contact” and “Disengaged” are poorly defined and inconsistently reported raising the question about what constitutes meaningful support	One area reported 7,100 victims supported, yet also recorded 4,432 victims with “no contact” and 807 as “disengaged”.
Wait Time Transparency	Wait time data is largely unreported, with only 4 out of 24 PCCs providing meaningful data.	Area E - 30 Area F - 12 Area G - 140 Area H - 25
Provider Variability	Mix of Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises (VCSEs), public bodies, and police-led models show inconsistent levels of service delivery and outcomes depending on postcodes.	VCSEs range from low conversion rates to extremely high volumes with limited engagement. Public body-led models show potentially better support-to-referral ratios.

## Key Differences Between 2017 and 2023/24

Since 2017, there has been notable progress in the visibility and reporting of RJ services across PCC areas. While the 2017 report highlighted widespread gaps in data, undefined funding, and minimal victim engagement tracking, the 2023/24 findings show improved data collection and more defined funding streams. However, key issues remain. Data remains inconsistent, wait times are still largely unreported, and engagement outcomes like “disengaged” or “no contact” remain poorly defined. Although the provider landscape has expanded, the quality and transparency of service delivery still vary significantly by region. Overall, despite progress, many of the foundational challenges identified in 2017 persist today.

Category	2017 findings	2023/24 Findings
Data Transparency	Minimal to none	Better, but still patchy and inconsistent
Funding Clarity	Often unrecorded or undefined	Broadly recorded, but highly variable
Victim Engagement	Not tracked	Numbers reported, but outcomes unclear
Wait Times	Not reported	Largely underreported
Provider Models	Limited and unclear	Expanded but uneven and poorly defined