

T2A PILOT PROJECT FORMATIVE EVALUATION

Reflections on the Emerging 'Transition to Adulthood' Pilots

Preliminary Feedback Report
to the Barrow Cadbury Trust

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This preliminary report aims to reflect back to the Barrow Cadbury Trust and the T2A teams some of the main features in the progress of the Pilot T2As so far. We view these early developments in the context of the broader vision of Barrow Cadbury Trust's *Commission into Young Adults and Criminal Justice* which is being taken forward by the Pilots and by the T2A Alliance. The evaluation aims to encourage critical reflection on how the objectives are being fulfilled and what might enable better fulfilment, so that learning and ideas can be shared between pilots, thereby helping to shape subsequent developments. The Oxford evaluation team appreciates the full co-operation and welcome that it has received so far and we look forward to continuing dialogue and sharing of information.

AIMS, PRINCIPLES AND GETTING STARTED

The BCT Commission

In its influential report, *Lost in Transition* published in 2005,¹ the BCT commission argued that 'young adults' are especially vulnerable given the transitions they face at this stage of life and therefore interventions should be dependent on level of maturity rather than chronological age. Its overarching proposal was that there should be more joining together of services, including transfer arrangements between the youth and adult systems, links between criminal justice and other government agencies with responsibilities for the welfare of young adults, and involvement of the voluntary and community sector. As an interim solution for achieving this ultimate goal of a unified criminal justice system, the Commission proposed the establishment of Transition to Adulthood (T2A) teams to pioneer and develop these joined-up services for this age-group.

The T2A Alliance

Whereas the T2As are intended to develop practice and strategies in their local areas, the Commission also argued for there to be a campaigning arm in taking forward its ideas. Accordingly, the Barrow Cadbury Trust in 2008 brought together various criminal justice organisations, charities and individuals to form a Transition to Adulthood (T2A) Alliance to raise awareness of the issues identified in the report and to campaign for policy change. In November 2009 they launched their *Young Adult Manifesto*.² This contains 10 recommendations for change, grouped into four main topics: diversion, sentencing, custody and resettlement.

¹ Barrow Cadbury Trust *Lost in Transition*, 2005. <http://www.bctrust.org.uk/pdf/commission-report.pdf>

² T2A Alliance, *Young Adult Manifesto*, 2009. <http://www.t2a.org.uk/publications>

The three T2A Pilots and their aims

Three areas were selected to pilot the ideas being projected: South London, West Mercia and Birmingham. Two of the T2As are led by established voluntary sector organisations and one is led by a probation service.

South London T2A, launched on Jan 12, 2009, was the first pilot to be up and running. Based in the London branch of the St Giles Trust, it builds on the Southwark Offender Support project (SOS) but has been expanded to include work with prisoners returning to Croydon (an outer London borough) as well as those returning Southwark (an inner London borough). It is a proactive service, going into prisons to tell people what they offer; which is 'through the gate' mentoring plus practical support, such as finding accommodation and brokering for jobs. Two features are: the employment of people who have a similar background to the targeted service users, namely BME ex-offenders from London to work with BME prisoners returning to London; and the NVQ training of prisoners to provide advice and support to returning prisoners and to talk to young people at risk of offending.

West Mercia T2A is being led by YSS (Youth Support Services), a well-established, successful voluntary sector organisation with much experience of delivering youth justice services. It was launched on April 2, 2009 and, focuses on vulnerable young adults in Worcestershire. It builds on existing projects, including ACCLAIM (Assist, Coach, Co-ordinate, Liaise, Advocate, Integrate, Mentor) and ISSP (Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Scheme) that YSS has already delivered to a high standard.

Birmingham T2A was launched July 7, 2009. The T2A team is based in and employed by Birmingham Probation Service. Its explicit purpose is to work in partnership with other services in order to support low to medium risk young adults across the artificial age divide which separates youth and adult justice systems. The Birmingham pilot has a dedicated full-time T2A manager.

T2A similarities, differences and emerging themes

Though their collective mission springs from the same source and thus they share common ground, each of the three T2As is building on existing expertise and is driven by needs in their area and so they have different histories and starting points. As well as differences in size and scale, there are variations in the risk levels and age limitations of those being targeted and in other characteristics of the target groups - see Table 1 on page 20.

As the T2A pilots stemmed directly from a recommendation of the Commission's report in which their functions were described, it is unsurprising that there are clear links between the purposes of

the T2As that were identified in *Lost in Transition* and the broad purposes, aims and principles which the T2As have set for themselves. Similarly, the publications of the T2A Alliance give emphasis, first, to the experimental nature of the T2As in that they are seen to be testing out improved provision for young adults; and secondly, the strategic inroads that the pilots can make in pressing for joined-up services and in showing what can be done to support the campaign. We have set some of these similarities side by side in a comparative table (see Table 2 on page 22). This table also shows some differences of emphasis and possible gaps in the foci of attention.

Taken together, the BCT, its Commission, the T2A Alliance and the T2A pilots have set forth a long list of goals, aims, objectives, guiding principles, and intended outputs. It therefore becomes difficult to pin down and categorise what the T2As are essentially meant to be doing and striving to do. For the purposes of preparing this summary report and to aid further discussion, we have organised the various aims, objectives, principles, and so forth, into the following common themes:

1. Working intensively with young adults during transitions
2. Achieving diversion, resettlement, desistance and better life-chances
3. Engaging with diversity, difference and the hard-to-reach
4. Service-user involvement
5. Improving transfer arrangements
6. Bringing statutory and voluntary services together
7. Identifying and filling gaps in services

These reflect the aspirations of the T2As and the work they are doing so far. The first four themes are more concerned with the development of practice in work with young adults during the interim period until there are established young adult services, while the last three themes are more future-orientated towards long-term strategies for a unified service.

PROGRESS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN THE T2As

Working intensively with young adults during transitions

Each of the T2As have applied a model of working with these young people which recognises that they are not yet fully functioning adults but rather are facing challenging transitions in their lives – and that they therefore need additional support, in terms of both frequency of contact and practical help. This level of contact and support is often referred to as ‘hands-on’ involvement. It is a different model of working with young people (or, arguably, reverts to an older way of working that was more ‘holistic’ and welfare-oriented in contrast to current offender management models with

their emphasis on monitoring and enforcement). The approach is person-centred in that the frequency of contact and issues of focus are, to a large extent, determined by the client.

All of the T2As are employing a problem-solving and goal-oriented approach in their work. They make use of 'solution-focused action plans'. In West Mercia and Birmingham the action plans are based around needs defined by the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) seven pathways, namely Accommodation; Education, training and employment; Health; Drugs and alcohol; Finance, Benefit and debt; Children and families; and Attitudes, thinking and behaviour. Another key element of this style of working is putting the young adults in touch with relevant services to meet their needs, and helping them to access these services.

Achieving diversion, resettlement, desistance and better life-chances

Diversion – both in the sense of diversion from custodial sentences and in the sense of diversion from prosecution and court appearances – has been a key theme throughout Barrow Cadbury's reports and campaign messages, and one that has been picked up on by the T2As. Both Birmingham and West Mercia T2A talk about part of the work they do as helping their young people navigate and meet the many requirements of their orders, so that they do not breach them and end up in custody. London and Birmingham T2As have also begun to work with magistrates to promote community orders rather than custody for young people. London T2A is currently the only T2A to be working to divert younger people from becoming further involved in the Criminal Justice System, in some cases well before they could be described as 'young adults'.

With regard to resettlement work, both London T2A and Birmingham T2A provide 'through-the-gate' mentoring and support services to those young adults in custody. London T2A draws on the SOS project's work in Young Offender Institutions (YOIs) to provide what it terms as its "Rolls Royce of 'through-the-gates'": they provide support and mentoring long before release and long after it. A key feature of London T2A's work is that it is ex-offender led and so T2A workers, as ex-offenders, are able to provide first-hand knowledge, advice and support about what a young person is to encounter on his release, because he has actually been through the process himself.

The teams have also given various impressive examples of how they manage to engage young people in a working alliance whereby they closely support them to lead offending-free lives, and work with them in their efforts to access opportunities and improve their prospects. In many respects the approach adopted is in keeping with the BCT Commission's vision of a "life-course approach" that supports desistance from crime and will "promote the life chances of young adults".³

³ Barrow Cadbury Trust, *Lost in Transition*, p17; p4.

Engaging with diversity, difference and the hard-to-reach

In talking about diversity, difference and the hard-to-reach, people have different understandings of what these categories include. Race and gender have been noted as relevant by each of the T2As, but it is less clear whether they have specific strategies in place yet for engaging young people from such categories. On the other hand there is some indication of an implicit assumption that they are already engaging with diversity as a result of the types of referrals they are getting because of where they are situated or because of who they are and how they work.

As for young people with learning difficulties, two sites referred to the fact that many of their clients have such difficulties and so are benefiting from the intensive support T2A provides. Nevertheless, one site was concerned that its staff are not trained in dealing with learning difficulties and questioned whether they were best equipped to receive such referrals.

Service-user involvement

Service-user involvement is central to both West Mercia T2A and London T2A; indeed West Mercia T2A specifies service-user involvement as one of its key aims. As an output they aim to create a "Service User Toolkit" for T2A teams, Probation and the YOS. So far, they have held two service-user groups to gain feedback on services and to follow-up on suggestions made by the young people involved. London T2A have also developed feedback sheets that young people fill in to convey how they thought their session went and provide suggestions for improvement of the overall service. West Mercia and Birmingham T2As use a self-assessment questionnaire and a four-weekly review form which asks for service-user feedback. The three T2As have also had service-users talk about their experiences at public events or to other organisations.

London T2A involve former service-users even more directly; that is, they use ex-offenders to provide the services. This is described as a key feature of London T2A, and more generally is regarded as a significant factor in the success of the St Giles Trust services. Ex-offenders help engage the young people into their services.

Service-user involvement is also being built into the Oxford evaluation of the T2As. Arrangements have been made to include up to 10 in-depth case-studies from each of the T2As in which the young adults will be consulted for their views on the services offered and required, relating these to their own plans and progress. Towards this, an interview schedule and a distance-travelled measure have been developed for use by the key workers or mentors in gathering information about the young adults' experiences of and perspectives on the T2As.

Improving transfer arrangements and strategic links between services

The T2As are intended to develop policies and linkages which will end the rigid divide between the youth justice and adult justice systems, so that service provision and sentencing policies can have regard to, not simply age but, level of maturity. Also, the Alliance Manifesto and related documents see the pilots as taking on a local role in influencing statutory agencies and sentencers. Accordingly, all of the T2A executives and managers are insightful about ways in which services need to be bridged and the need for forward planning towards their own exit strategy. Challenges to the achievement of a better interface and working relationship with probation and youth justice are the shortage of resources which these services increasingly face and rationing of their services according to levels of risk. Nevertheless, Birmingham T2A aims to put in place a 'transition service' that was not present before. A YOT Transfer Guidance Protocol has recently been developed by NOMS and the YJB and Birmingham are using some of the learning points from the T2A project to inform this protocol and improve services. Similarly, London T2A see themselves as providing a much-needed bridging service between the YOS and Probation, through their own ex-offender-led services to support this transition.

Bringing statutory and voluntary services together

BCT has given prominence to the important role of grassroots groups and *Lost in Transition*, although it does not use the concept of 'grassroots', makes frequent reference to the need to involve the voluntary sector by inviting representatives to join the teams. The subject of 'grassroots groups' as such has not been raised by the T2As and it is not clear how they are being involved if at all. However, YSS and St Giles – the parent organisations of two of the T2As – originated as local initiatives and they are now well-established voluntary sector agencies. There is a potential conflict between the objective of T2As being *temporary* with a view to getting mainstream services to take over the added-value work that is being developed by the T2As and the objective of integrating the voluntary sector into mainstream provision. YSS and St Giles have been working in partnership with the public sector for years whilst retaining their own independent identity; in doing so though, they are clearly relieving the public sector from some of the work that it would otherwise be called upon to do.

Birmingham T2A see themselves as "working in partnership with the voluntary sector" as well as "adding on value" to public sector services by working alongside them. They see their statutory status, within the Probation Service, as a bonus to their work because of their easy access to Probation, the prison system and to shared data. London T2A has forged links with statutory agencies both in Southwark and Croydon as well as YOIs; have managed to get T2A issues on the agenda in local probation services; and have built up a good working relationship with the police. Occasional initial resistance against referring young adults to T2A staff who are ex-offenders has been resolved when public sector staff observe the success of these ex-offender-led services.

Identifying and filling gaps in services

A constant source of frustration in work with young adults is shortfalls in local services. Key workers in each of the T2As made frequent reference to gaps and inadequacies in the services that young adults need in order to be integrated within the community and to support them in leading crime-free lives. Partly this is because the provision of services is insufficient (such as lower housing benefit for those who are under age 25) or hard to access (as in the case of substance abuse services for young adults). Partly it is because of omissions on an organisational level; two examples are, a lack of joined-up services when young people are leaving care, and insufficient assistance prior to their discharge date to enable returning prisoners to arrange their accommodation and access other services they will need following their release.

SOME EARLY LEARNING POINTS AND OBSERVATIONS

Emerging good practice

Key workers emphasised that young adults in the criminal justice system are most able to benefit from:

- an approach which provides practical, hands-on assistance in solving problems and in accessing opportunities and services.
- frequent and easy access to supportive contact with key workers or mentors who are empathic and non-judgemental.

Some argue that a critical factor in engaging people who might otherwise be hard to reach is key workers having had first-hand experience as an ex-offender.

The T2As are intended to develop 'added value' services rather than to replace core services, yet they have been introduced to address what has been seen as failures and deficits in mainstream services. The objective is that they will develop, and set an example in delivering, better ways of addressing the distinct needs of this 'young adulthood' age group. The main 'added value' that the T2A teams are uniformly projecting is a model of working with these young people that is geared to their transitional needs and future well-being rather than being only focused on offending behaviour and the strictures of criminal justice requirements. Whether we call it 'mentoring', 'transitional work', 'befriending', 'motivational counselling' or any other name, we agree that this important package warrants further exploration in the T2A context.

As well as this focus on *how* they work with young people, another prevalent point of emphasis concerns the *purposes* of providing these supportive relationships, with particular attention being given to: (1) diverting them from criminal justice interventions and from custody; (2) resettling them

in the community, in the case of those who have been in care or in young offender institutions or prison; (3) supporting the natural desistance process; and (4) improving their life chances. While the work undoubtedly includes attention to offending-related attitudes and problems, this approach is more holistically concerned with helping them to access opportunities and nurturing their abilities and pro-social goals. It therefore exemplifies a strengths-based approach.

On an executive level all three T2As are working extensively towards better transfer arrangements between the youth and adult criminal justice services so that young adults will continue to have access to those services that are normally more readily available for those under the age of 18.

Some tensions, contradictions and mixed messages

This initiative was always multi-faceted in its intentions and therefore challenges those delivering the services to work with a complex array of purposes in addition to those set by their own employing agencies. The recommendations and manifesto of the T2A Alliance have added a further layer of objectives and principles; and they more overtly implicate the work of the pilots in the political messages of the campaign and manifesto. Which of these must the T2As *essentially* achieve without which the initiative will be seen to have failed? For example, while *Lost in Transition* underlined that the T2As should be temporary rather than replacing current services, it is unclear to some of the practitioners, and to us, whether such mainstream services will be complemented by *continuing* T2As as distinct teams, regardless of whether they are voluntary or statutory, or whether the intention is that they will be absorbed into mainstream services as part of seamless provision between the youth and adult justice systems. There are some early indications that what is effective about the T2As is something to do with them not being seen as mainstream – so that ‘magic’ could be lost if they are taken over.

The requirement to work with other services raises other problems. There may be a danger that under-staffed mainstream services, and other public services with a responsibility to young adults, will take the opportunity to offload some of their responsibilities onto the T2As thereby failing to develop their expertise in dealing with this age group. This again could be problematic in the long term when T2As ‘exit’ from providing their interim services.

There are other ways in which the boundaries of the original mission for the T2A projects may be moved. One example is the extent to which the pilots should be explicitly and solely concerned with “young adults” rather than children or immature adults who are not so young. Linked to this is the question of whether the provision being developed should be clearly labelled as a service for young adults, or whether it should be part of seamless provision and therefore less self-consciously dubbed as distinct in that way. Too much blurring could detract from the transitional special needs of this age group. It will be useful to explore whether a distinct T2A identity for the

project and its workers, with its 'trademark' T2A moniker, is something with which young adults can more readily engage and should therefore remain a permanent feature of a joined-up criminal justice service.

Another inherent tension, on every level of the Transition to Adulthood initiative, is the apparent clash between the importance of cutting costs and the need for more services and provision for young adults in the criminal justice system. However, intensive intervention that will shorten involvement in crime is always going to be cheaper in the long-run than under-resourced short-term responses followed by prolonged or repeated periods in custody. This is particularly the case if young adults who would otherwise be 'hard to reach', or non-compliant, are successfully engaged in positive change by the special qualities and skills of the T2As.

INTRODUCTION

Although it is only 6 months since the official commencement of the evaluation, the Transition to Adulthood (T2A) pilots were launched, respectively, eleven months ago (London), eight months ago (West Mercia), and five months ago (Birmingham). This is therefore a useful point in time to review the origins and initial work of the T2As. 'Reflection', as in our title, is a doubly useful word to apply in describing our purposes. This preliminary report aims to reflect back to the Barrow Cadbury Trust and the T2A teams what we have learned so far about the progress of these pilot projects within the context of the larger vision that the Barrow Cadbury Trust set in motion with its Commission into Young Adults and Criminal Justice, so that participants are further enabled to see the important bigger picture as well as relevant specific detail in their own and the other two, counterpart, pilots. Just as crucially, we aim to encourage critical reflection on how objectives are being fulfilled and what might enable better fulfilment, so that learning and ideas from any one side of this complex initiative can be shared across the divide and thereby help to shape subsequent developments.

This formative evaluation (see Appendix 1) is closely integrated with the knowledge and insights of the practitioners who are forming, trying out and delivering this T2A initiative and of the service-users who are experiencing it. In other words, the approach and methods we are using in the evaluation are intended to draw out and build on the practical expertise and strategic wisdom being accumulated by the pilot teams and the lived experiences of the service-users. The Oxford evaluation team appreciates the full co-operation and welcome that it has received so far and we look forward to continuing dialogue and sharing of information.

This report is divided into three sections. The first sets out the aims and objectives for the T2As that emerged from the Barrow Cadbury Trust's Commission on Young Adults and compares and contrasts these against those of the three pilots and the strategic projections of the T2A Alliance, particularly the ways in which it envisages the role of the T2As. The main overlapping themes from across the initiative are drawn out. These themes provide the framework in Section 2 for presenting our findings so far on the work of the T2As. Section 3 discusses what appear to be the most salient features of the T2As at this early stage and some arising observations.

1. AIMS, PRINCIPLES AND GETTING STARTED

1.1. The BCT Commission

The independent Commission on Young Adults and the Criminal Justice System was established by the Barrow Cadbury Trust, “to develop a way in which the criminal justice system can recognise the importance of the transition between adolescence and adulthood, to develop ideas about how the system can promote natural desistance from offending in young adults in transition, and to find a way in which the criminal justice system could better promote the life chances of young adults”.⁴ In its influential report, *Lost in Transition* in 2005, the keystone argument was that young adults are especially vulnerable given the transitions they face at this stage of life and therefore interventions should be dependent on level of maturity rather than chronological age. Its overarching proposal was that there should therefore be more joining together of services, including transfer arrangements to bridge the youth and adult systems, links between the criminal justice system and government agencies responsible for the welfare of young adults, and involvement of the voluntary and community sector.

As an interim solution for achieving this ultimate goal of a unified criminal justice system, the Commission proposed the establishment of Transition to Adulthood (T2A) teams to “support young adults in the current system”⁵ and perform a “strategic”, “bridging role”⁶ between agencies. These teams would therefore be critical in “developing a criminal justice model for young adults in transition”⁷

The recommendations of *Lost in Transition* further specified that the T2A teams should:

- give special attention to the needs and specific circumstances of young Black and minority ethnic adults, and to young adult female offenders, such as by developing culturally appropriate interventions for them.

Other proposals were not directed specifically at the T2As but were clearly relevant in shaping their objectives and domains of attention; in particular the recommendations to:

- improve access to appropriate services to meet their needs, including mental health, health and social care, housing, drug addiction treatment, education and employment opportunities.⁸
- develop measures of success, beyond reconviction rates, that focus on the ability of the services to promote improvements in social outcomes for young adults and desistance from crime.⁹

⁴ Barrow Cadbury Trust (2005) *Lost in Transition*, 2005, p.4

⁵ Ibid, p.19

⁶ Ibid, p.19

⁷ Ibid, p.16

⁸ Barrow Cadbury Trust *Lost in Transition*, 2005, pp.62-63

⁹ Ibid, p.63

Subsequent strategy papers prepared by the T2A Development Director,¹⁰ Rachel Cerfontyne, reaffirmed and developed the following recommendations and guiding principles:

- In order to better meet the needs of young adults in the justice system, the youth justice and adult criminal justice systems should be bridged (by making transfer arrangements between the two systems, and by working intensively with vulnerable young adults across the artificial divide at age 18).
- The T2As should lead the way in doing this bridging and transferring, but only as an interim solution. The T2As should deliver 'added-value' rather than services that are 'core responsibility'. Nevertheless they should lead to a more permanent arrangement that is part and parcel of statutory provision: the added-value is to become core. Meanwhile the T2As should provide a framework for achieving these objectives.
- Although the T2As should be temporary, the eventual statutory provision should continue to incorporate the efforts of grassroots voluntary groups. Grassroots groups are critical to this endeavour and must remain so. They should be enabled to work as part of the mainstream services, to secure development opportunities and to tailor their services to meet gaps in provision.
- The T2As must engage with diversity and difference in sub-populations, and with hard-to-reach populations. This will involve a focus on methods of reaching these sub-populations and then providing tailored services.
- Young adults should be supported through transitions: transitions from youth to adulthood; transitions from the youth justice to adult systems. As well as mentoring, support includes better services to help with particular needs (mental health; ETE; substance abuse; accommodation).
- Young adults targeted by the T2As (the service-users) must be involved in decisions about the services being provided for them.¹¹

In proposing that the T2As would play an interim strategic role towards developing an integrated system, *Lost in Transition* included a range of additional (not covered above) more specific recommendations. These are of interest for their greater specificity on the strategic operation of the teams:

- T2A Teams should comprise representatives from the NOMS, YOTs, Connexions, Drug (and Alcohol) Action Teams, local authorities and the independent and voluntary sector. [...] Encouraging voluntary and community sector representatives to attend should encourage the sharing of practice on work with young adults, and the development of funding sources for work with young adults.

¹⁰ Until her departure in Summer 2009, Rachel Cerfontyne, became, effectively though not titularly, the T2A Champion whose appointment had been proposed in *Lost in Transition*.

¹¹ Cerfontyne, R. (2007).

- Local T2A managers, appointed jointly by the National Offender Management Service, the Youth Justice Board and statutory agencies, should fulfil the role (never implemented) envisioned by the Chief Inspector of Prisons in a 1997 thematic report which was that young adults should have a single person overseeing their treatment and care across different agencies.
- T2A Teams should have a statutory obligation to manage transition arrangements for young adults between the youth justice and adult justice systems, so that the Youth Justice Board's knowledge of working with young people is not lost. They would be responsible for monitoring the 'blurring' of youth and adult justice systems.
- T2A Teams would complement Regional Offender Managers in implementing the National Reoffending Action Plan, which outlines the need for greater joined-up working between relevant Government departments and agencies.
- T2A Teams would complement the work of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (Community Safety Partnerships in Wales), Local Criminal Justice Boards and Drug Action (and Alcohol) Teams at local levels.
- T2A Teams would ensure that all agencies and services that deal with young adult offenders treat them as a strategic priority and have policies aimed at improving the life chances of young adults in the criminal justice system, including ensuring that appropriate provision is available for young women and BME young adults.
- T2A Teams would measure the effectiveness of local services and would hold 'strategic responsibility' for filtering information about local needs and highlighting local failures in service provision back to local statutory agencies such as NHS trusts and local education authorities, thus increasing local and national accountability for service provision. Currently, local authorities do not audit the needs of young adults and therefore do not know what kind of services they require.
- T2A Teams would ensure that adequate resettlement arrangements between prison and the community are in place.
- T2A Teams should ensure that young adults who had been in care were being properly protected as outlined in the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 relevant for those up to the age of 21.¹²

1.2. The T2A Alliance

Whereas the T2As are intended to develop practice and strategies in their local areas, the Commission also argued for there to be a campaigning arm in taking forward its ideas. Accordingly, the Barrow Cadbury Trust in 2008 brought together various criminal justice

¹² Barrow Cadbury Trust. *Lost in Transition*, 2005.

organisations, charities and individuals to form a Transition to Adulthood (T2A) Alliance to raise awareness of the issues identified in the report and to campaign for policy change. The T2A Alliance is a coalition of 13 criminal justice organisations and charities, chaired by Rob Allen, Director of the International Centre for Prison Studies at King's College London. Taking up the main message of *Lost in Transition*, the T2A Alliance's clarion call is for "a distinct and radically different approach to young adults in the criminal justice system; an approach that is proportionate to their maturity and responsive to their specific needs"¹³.

The Alliance meets regularly and has produced a series of documents, including a consultation paper in July 2009 called *A New Start: Young Adults in the Criminal Justice System*¹⁴. This proposed a total of 21 recommendations for change. An impressive 300 organisations and individuals, including politicians, practitioners, young people and ex-offenders, contributed with their comments over a three-month consultation period enabling the T2A Alliance to develop its work and clarify its campaigning message in the production and launch of their *Young Adult Manifesto*¹⁵ in November 2009.

The *Young Adult Manifesto* contains 10 recommendations for change, "which would serve to make the way in which we deal with young adult offenders more effective, fairer and less costly."¹⁶ These recommendations are grouped into four main topics: diversion, sentencing, custody and resettlement. As the manifesto states, the core of its recommendations is in four parts:

First, is to divert more young adults away from the formal criminal justice system into measures which can address the causes of their offending and provide reparation to victims; second to replace short prison sentences for non violent offenders with constructive community sentences; third to make the experience of custody much more educational for those who really do need to be locked up; and fourth to intensify efforts at reintegrating these young people after release¹⁷.

The T2A Alliance now aims to campaign for its 10 recommendations to be endorsed in all three main political party manifestos for the 2010 general election. This builds on campaigning work that it has already started with statutory bodies and practitioners "to raise awareness of the distinct needs of young adults and to provide support and guidance"¹⁸.

¹³ T2A Alliance website: www.t2a.org.uk

¹⁴ T2A Alliance, *A New Start: Young Adults in the Criminal Justice System*, 2009.

¹⁵ T2A Alliance, *Young Adult Manifesto*, 2009.

¹⁶ T2A Alliance, *Young Adult Manifesto*, 2009, Foreword.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ T2A Alliance website: www.t2a.org.uk

1.3 The three T2A Pilots and their aims

The Commission's proposal that every area should introduce Transition to Adulthood Teams – known from the start as T2As – was enthusiastically received by BCT, which appointed a T2A Development Officer to take this idea forward. After considerable discussion, strategic planning and competitive tendering, three areas were selected to pilot the ideas being projected: South London, West Mercia and Birmingham. Two of the T2As are housed in established voluntary sector organisations and one is housed in a probation service.

South London T2A, launched on Jan 12, 2009, was the first pilot to be up and running. Based in the London branch of the St Giles Trust, it builds on the Southwark Offender Support project (SOS) but has been expanded to include work with prisoners returning to Croydon (an outer London borough) as well as those returning Southwark (an inner London borough). It is a proactive service, going into prisons to tell people what they offer; which is 'through the gate' mentoring plus practical support, such as finding accommodation and brokering for jobs. Two features are: the employment of people who have a similar background to the targeted service users, namely BME ex-offenders from London to work with BME prisoners returning to London; and the NVQ training of prisoners to provide advice and support to returning prisoners and to talk to young people at risk of offending.

London T2A's¹⁹ project goals are to:

- "Support Probation in Southwark and Croydon to consider different models of working, specifically creating specialist Offender Manager posts who will work exclusively with young adults.
- Work closely with Probation, to support young adults leaving... YOI who are returning to Croydon and Southwark, providing holistic support to address issues likely to lead to re-offending, such as housing, income, ETE, gang or other criminal affiliations and family relationships.
- Deliver this support using a mixed team of paid staff and volunteer peer advisers, demonstrating the value of this model.
- Support ex-offenders to gain NVQ 3 in IAG and progress through voluntary work into paid work".²⁰

Its strategic goals are to:

- "Influence practice and policy relating to the treatment of young adults in the criminal justice system.

¹⁹ From here on we refer to South London T2A simply as "London T2A" because this is how it is generally named in discussion by stakeholders.

²⁰ London T2A Project Proposal.

- Establish a model of good practice capable of replication in other parts of London and the UK.
- Provide evidence on issues relating to T2A that can be used by Barrow Cadbury in promotion of their general policy on young people.
- Provide opportunities for service users/ young people/ offenders to contribute to the development of policy/ practice so that sustainable changes can be achieved in the provision of services.
- Promote more positive perspectives of vulnerable young people that reduce stigmatisation and promote the concept of young people in need.
- Create long term opportunities for a more strategic approach to the needs of young people involving the statutory, voluntary and independent sectors.
- Clarify the role of mentors involved with young people”.²¹

West Mercia T2A is being led by YSS (Youth Support Services), a well-established, successful voluntary sector organisation with much experience of delivering youth justice services. It was launched on April 2, 2009 and, focuses on vulnerable young adults in Worcestershire. It builds on existing projects, including ACCLAIM²² and the Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Scheme (ISSP) that YSS has already delivered to a high standard²³.

The main aim of the West Mercia T2A is: “To ensure that young adults receive their statutory entitlements, and wherever possible are prioritised as a target group within local strategic plans”.²⁴

Some of their planned outcomes and outputs include:

- “A well established multi-agency advisory group to influence and change local policy/practice.
- Evidence of policy and practice changed at both a local strategic and operational level with a particular emphasis on Probation and YOS
- A clearly defined West Mercia T2A strategy post BCT Funding
- Fully developed T2A Referral, Assessment and Case Management systems
- Service User Toolkit for T2A teams, Probation and YOS
- Police Engagement Forum best practice
- T2A Staff training programme and guidance materials
- T2A Probation/YOS staff training programme and guidance materials
- Range of statistical data recorded and evidenced;
- Lower rates for breach within the target group”²⁵

²¹ Ibid.

²² A tailor-made West Mercia adult PPO project which aims to Assist, Coach, Co-ordinate, Liaise, Advocate, Integrate, Mentor.

²³ This was a Youth Justice Board programme delivered in partnership with two Youth Offending Services.

²⁴ West Mercia T2A project proposal.

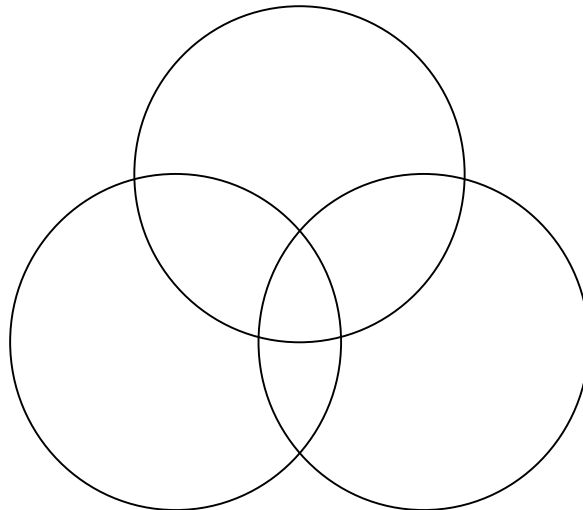
Birmingham T2A was launched July 7, 2009. The T2A team is based in and employed by Birmingham Probation Service. It has been set up to work in partnership with other services in order to support low to medium risk young adults across the artificial age divide which separates youth and adult justice systems. Birmingham T2A's expressed vision at its launch and in publicity material is: "To enhance the lives of young people in their transition to adulthood through and beyond the Criminal Justice System." They aim to:

- "Motivate selected participants to become confident citizens;
- Effectively work in partnership to support participants to complete their planned actions;
- Adopt a structured process and project management approach to managing the quality of our work to reduce re-offending;
- Develop an approach that ensures all participants complete their planned objectives consistent with their sentences."²⁶

1.4. Similarities, differences and emerging themes

Though their collective mission springs from the same source and thus they share common ground, each of the three T2As is building on existing expertise and provision in their area and so have different histories and starting points. There are also some different characteristics that are geared to local needs and resources (see Figure 1). We are therefore not comparing like for like and there is, rightly, no obvious sense of there being competition between them.

Figure 1: Symbolic representation of overlap between the T2A projects



As well as differences in size and scale, there are variations in the risk levels and age limitations of those being targeted and in other characteristics of the target groups. The management structures, staffing arrangements and referral procedures are among other variations. The most useful way to present some similarities and differences is in tabular form (see Table 1).

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Information from Power-Point presentation at the Birmingham T2A Launch.

Table 1: Structural similarities and differences across the T2A sites

	LONDON	WEST MERCIA	BIRMINGHAM
Launch Date	Jan 12, 2009	April 2, 2009	July 7, 2009
Services	Voluntary sector Ex-offender led	Voluntary sector	Statutory – Probation
Name	SOS / T2A	T2A	T2A
Target group	15 to 25 year olds Involved in or at risk of being involved in CJS	17 to 19 year olds (16 to 25 for women and BME young people) At key stages of criminal justice transition (within CJS)	17 to 24 year-olds Low to medium risk of re-offending (within CJS)
Client location	Urban	Rural & semi-urban	Urban
Case load	20 to 25 (10 to 15 with intensive support)	8 to 12	10 to 15
Length of support	Support is open-ended, dependant on client needs – typically 12 months	4 to 8 months	Ongoing during their order/licence and beyond, if needs have not been met
Assessment	Sometimes receive copies of Asset, OASys and Police assessments, though do not have formal access Use an assessment tool developed in-house	Access to Asset & OASys assessments if appropriate and linked to risk No formal assessment tools	Access to Asset and OASys assessments No formal assessment tools
Support Pathway	<p style="text-align: center;">Referral ↓ Initial engagement ↓ Assessment & Action Plan ↓ Developing skills, meeting welfare needs & empowering ↓ NVQ 3 IAG training for some to become peer mentors ↓ Ongoing support (less intensive)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Referral ↓ Initial engagement ↓ Action Plan ↓ Developing skills, meeting welfare needs & empowering ↓ 4-weekly reviews towards Action Plan completion ↓ 4 month case review ↓ Case closed or extension of support for 4 months</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Referral ↓ 3-way meeting ↓ Initial engagement ↓ Action Plan ↓ Developing skills, meeting welfare needs & empowering ↓ 4-weekly reviews towards Action Plan completion ↓ Case closed (with regular monitoring)</p>
Management structure	Part-time T2A manager (50%) Reporting to Head of Community Services	Part-time T2A manager (33%) Reporting to Operations Director	1 Full-time T2A manager (100%) Line managed through the Probation Service
Administrative Support	No project-specific administrator	No project-specific administrator	1 Full-time administrator
T2A workers	1 Full-time Ex-offender 1 Trainer (80%) (Delivers NVQ 3 in Information, Advice and Guidance to young adults in YOI and in the community)	3 Full-time Not ex-offenders	3 Full-time Not ex-offenders
Voluntary mentors	Several peer mentors (all ex-offenders)	Existing pool of 80 volunteer mentors. T2A to have active caseload of up to 10 volunteer mentors at any one time.	2 Mentors

It is their similarity of purpose and in the nature of the work that they are undertaking, however, which is of greater importance to us here, and which we consider more closely in section 2 of this report. All three T2As include some form of one-to-one, person-centred support for people in this age group who have got involved in offending activity or are at risk of doing so. This support is conceptualised as mentoring as well as practical interventions, and its purpose is both to help young people make the transition from adolescence to adulthood and to provide continuity of the broader multi-agency input of the youth justice system beyond the arbitrary cut-off point at age 17. There is also much common ground in the strategic work that each T2A is undertaking towards the development of joined-up services.

In the preceding sections, we have highlighted the various aims, objectives and principles of the Barrow Cadbury Trust's Commission on Young Adults and the Criminal Justice System, of the three T2A pilots and of the T2A Alliance green paper and manifesto. As the T2A pilots stemmed directly from a recommendation of the Commission's report in which their functions were described, it is unsurprising that there are clear links between the purposes of the T2As that were identified in *Lost in Transition* and the broad purposes and the broad aims and principles which the T2As have set for themselves. Similarly, the publications of the T2A Alliance give emphasis, first, to the experimental nature of the T2As in that they are seen to be testing out improved provision for young adults; and secondly, the strategic inroads that the pilots can make in pressing for joined-up services and in showing what can be done to support the campaign. We have set some of these similarities side by side in the following comparative table (see Table 2). This comparison also indicates some differences of emphasis and possible gaps in the foci of attention.

The pilots, and therefore the evaluation, need to have regard for the various goals, objectives and principles that have been signalled as important; though the nomenclature may vary, considerable thought and debate has gone into distinguishing what it is that the T2As should be aiming for and driven by in improving provision for young adults. However, given such a long list of goals, aims, objectives, guiding principles, intended outputs (other labels can be found) it becomes difficult to pin down and categorise what the T2As are essentially meant to be doing and striving to do. Too long a list becomes unmanageable, whereas combining the list to singular overarching goals or mission statements becomes too general. For simplicity we will use the collective term 'aspirations' here. In seeking to find out whether and how these aspirations are being realised in activities and strategic plans, it seems helpful to distinguish their common themes so that we can apply them in organising this preliminary report and as a vehicle for further discussion about what is being achieved.

The themes we have identified for present purposes are:

1. Working intensively with young adults during transitions
2. Achieving diversion, resettlement, desistance and better life-chances
3. Engaging with diversity, difference and the hard-to-reach
4. Service-user involvement
5. Improving transfer arrangements
6. Bringing statutory and voluntary services together
7. Identifying and filling gaps in services

Although there is, perhaps unavoidably, some slight overlap between these, they are each arguably distinctive enough to facilitate a meaningful review of progress which reflects the original vision of the Commission into Young Adults and Criminal Justice as well as themes within BCT's and the Alliance's developmental thinking since then. Also, our investigation so far, based on interviews, focus group discussion and documentation, suggests that all of the aspirations and activities can be covered under these thematic headings. The first four themes are more concerned with the development of practice in work with young adults during the interim period until there are established young adult services, while the last three themes are more future-orientated towards developing more unified services.

2. PROGRESS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN THE T2As

2.1. Working intensively with young adults during transitions

One of the main drivers of the T2A Commission and the T2A Alliance is recognition of the continuing immaturity of the age group described as young adults even though, once they reach age 18, they are technically adults. Also, irrespective of their level of emotional and cognitive maturity, this age group also face transitions in life-style and routine (from school to work, from being the responsibility of their carers to being responsible for themselves) which require considerable adjustment. This is a period of intense change, involving life transitions which would be difficult for anyone to negotiate (such as coming out of care, returning to the community after a period of custody, leaving school and perhaps their family homes and needing to find some means of supporting themselves and perhaps a partner, and in some cases needing to adjust to being a parent).

Each of the T2As have therefore applied a model of working with these young adults which recognises that they are not fully functioning adults, and are facing challenging transitions in their lives – and that they therefore need additional support, in terms of both frequency of contact and

more active involvement in what they are trying to achieve. This level of contact and support is often referred to as 'hands-on' involvement.

It is a different model of working with young people (or rather reverts to an older way of working). Key workers endorse the value of forming a supportive relationship with the young person. Their views fit with the conclusion of France and Homel²⁷ that "what young people value is not programmes but a supportive relationship with a non-judgemental adult who is able to help them navigate their way through difficult circumstances". It is a style of working which involves tenacity and patience, meeting a reluctant or hesitant client more than half way, and, in the language of motivational interviewing (Miller and Rollnick, 2002), 'rolling with resistance' rather than arguing against the individual or being confrontational.

All of the T2As are employing a problem-solving and goal-oriented approach in their work. They make use of 'solution-focused action plans'. In West Mercia and Birmingham the action plans are based around needs defined by the NOMS seven pathways, namely Accommodation; Education, training and employment; Health; Drugs and alcohol; Finance, Benefit and debt; Children and families; and Attitudes, thinking and behaviour. Another key element of this style of working is putting the young adults in touch with relevant services to meet their needs, and helping them to access these services. It could be described as brokering. In explaining this role to us, one metaphor that was used was that of 'glue'; indeed this metaphor was seen as more appropriate than the bridge metaphor that has been proposed in BCT documentation:

It's a question again of linking in because I don't think the links are there. So, as an organisation and as a project, T2A can act as the glue. It's what sticks the young person between one set of resources and probation, we're looking at the criminal justice system.... that's a better metaphor. Rather than the bridge, ...we're the glue between the criminal justice system, wider society and those agencies in that wider society that are set up to work with this group. [...] So we're a bridge if we're an interface or a link.

The approach is person-centred in that the frequency of contact and issues of focus are, to a large extent, determined by the client.

It would depend on the individual. Some contacts would be, you'd have more contacts with one young person depending on their need and what they have decided they want, because we are very much leaving it up to them, what they think it important. Because they might have certain things they have to do with, like for example, Probation or the YOTs and we actually wanted to be driven by them. You know if there is something they really want ... want us to, you know, support them with and advocate on their behalf and then that's what we do. I mean I might have one young person I see twice a week and that is sufficient for them and then another young person I might have phone calls coming in relating to their housing. I might be making a lot of contacts.

The practitioners shared a preference not to overwhelm their client group with assessment and monitoring forms, although London T2A do use an in-house assessment tool to guide the

²⁷ France and Homel, 2006, p.9.

development of their action plan. Nevertheless in all teams some paperwork was intrinsic to the solution-focused method of working with the young people. Some user-friendly forms had been developed so that the action plan can be built up in discussion with the client and so that relevant activities and steps towards achieving goals can be noted and seen to be done. It was not clear whether assessments were being built on prior statutory assessments that may have been made by youth justice or probation service staff. West Mercia and Birmingham emphasised that they preferred to avoid using formal assessments that had been made via Asset and OASys because they felt it better for engaging with clients if they “distanced themselves from statutory authorities” in terms of the language used and the approach taken: “I think that if we were to start inputting those sort of assessment tools and those sorts of practices, I think that it would give a conflicting message really, of what are we about, what are we trying to introduce”.

2.2. Achieving diversion, resettlement, desistance and better life-chances

This second theme is highly related to the previous one but, whereas theme 1 concerns *how* T2A practitioners work with service-users and the processes involved, this theme is more orientated towards *what* they are striving to achieve. For this heading, we considered applying the four core topics around which the T2A Alliance has grouped its recommendations – namely: ‘diversion’, ‘sentencing’, ‘custody’ and ‘resettlement’ – given that our theme has two processes in common; but what we wish to capture here is main categories of positive end-points that *Lost in Transition* clearly identified and that T2A workers and service users aim for in their action plans.

Diversion – both in the sense of diversion from custodial sentences and in the sense of diversion from prosecution and court appearances – has been a key theme throughout Barrow Cadbury’s reports and campaign messages, and one that has been picked up on by the T2As. Both Birmingham and West Mercia T2A talk about part of the work they do as helping their young people navigate and meet the many requirements of their orders, so that they do not breach them and end up in custody. London T2A works along similar lines:

If they have one of our staff in court that’s really helpful for them and massively increases the chances of a non-custodial... Because so many magistrates, you talk to magistrates, they are sick to death of sending people down for short sentences, but they’ve run out of options ... If there’s somebody standing there credibly saying, “Well actually, this person is working well with me”, most magistrates will go for it.

Birmingham T2A has also begun to work with magistrates to promote community orders rather than custody for young people. They have “put a T2A package together” in the pre-sentence report for two young people that ended up with them getting community orders rather than custody (which is what the courts were originally looking at). They have also started working with the police “to look at diverting young people from progressing in the Criminal Justice System”.

London T2A is currently the only T2A to be working to divert younger people at risk of becoming further involved in the Criminal Justice System. Croydon Youth Offending Services are referring many young people to London T2A, even as young as 11 years old:

Croydon has the most school-age children than any borough in London, so they have got a huge gang problem. I mean the structure of the gangs and all of that and the youth offending, it goes right low in age group and I am getting a lot of referrals, 15 year olds, 14 year olds. I have been asked to talk to 11 year olds... But with the 11 year-olds rather than opening a case on them, on the file, I'll just do a one-off workshop... Get all the 11 year-olds in for today, we're going to do this today, we're going to talk about respect and all the rest of it and then hopefully get some good feedback in a week or two. That's as far as I got. With the 15 year olds, I'll open a case on them.

London also works in two local schools, with ex-offender peer volunteers facilitating a 12-session violence prevention workshop for young people:

The fact that it's delivered by people who know what they are talking about, they can deal with absolutely any random question from the audience. It makes it really, really powerful. The other thing we brought into schools work was – there's a tendency for these things to be seen as a sort of lecture that happens in a moment in time, you know, you all go into assembly and someone says, 'Don't do drugs' and then you go out again. [So] one of the things we tried to do was to have a bit more involvement with the schools so that we are going back, and also to allow some time for sort of general association, so that over lunchtime, the staff will stay over lunchtime, hang out, have food in the canteen. Just allowing the young people to come up and ask questions and things like that, because we just think that's one of the things that's lacking and there's every chance that you are actually going to be told stuff ... [It's a chance] for young people to tell you things about things they're doing which are wrong and, you know, for them to get a clear message from someone they can respect.

This strategy has allowed them to receive referrals to T2A from the schools of “at-risk” young people.

While diversion has figured prominently in our discussion with teams about the purposes of their work with young adults, so too has resettlement. Both London T2A and Birmingham T2A provide “through-the-gate” mentoring and support services to those young adults in custody. London T2A draws on a strong tradition of this kind of work within the SOS project, whereas Birmingham T2A is just starting to provide this service. Birmingham T2A is currently working with six who are in custody and who will need “through the gates” services²⁸.

London T2A draws on the SOS project's work in YOIs to provide what it terms as its “Rolls Royce of ‘through-the-gates’”. It is a ‘Rolls Royce’ service in that most ‘through-the-gates’ services “just about link up with people pre-release” whereas the SOS project provides support and mentoring long before release and long after it. The T2A worker thus “ends up being, is a kind of continuous feature in somebody's support network”. He is able to get the young adults “to use their time in

²⁸ Because Birmingham T2A is housed in a statutory agency, namely Probation, they have had easy access to the prison system and so do not face the challenges that London T2A have faced in gaining access.

prison constructively...[he] does an awful lot in trying to [get them to] plan for release by doing sensible courses.”

A key feature of London T2A's work is that it is ex-offender led and so a T2A worker, as he is an ex-offender, is also able to provide first-hand advice and support about what a young person is to encounter on his release, because he has actually been through the process himself. The T2A worker also puts in place a support package for a young person's release, such as access to housing, benefits, training and so on:

So they are building a support network so that when they come out of prison they don't just have nothing. They don't have just like a £40 travel warrant, a list of appointments, you know, perhaps, hopefully, if they are working with me, you know, they'll have less challenges.

London T2A have noted that the “first three weeks are the most important once an individual has been released. This is because it is during this time that individuals tend to face the most barriers and fall into difficulties, often linking them back into old friends and habits”²⁹.

The teams have also given various impressive examples of how they manage to engage young people in a working alliance whereby they closely support them in taking steps away from criminal activity, and in gaining a greater sense of control in their efforts to access opportunities and improve their life prospects. In many respects their work seems entirely fitting with the Commission's vision of a “life-course approach” that supports desistance from crime and will “promote the life chances of young adults”.³⁰

2.3. Engaging with diversity, difference and the hard-to-reach

In talking about diversity, difference and the hard-to-reach, people have different understandings about what this means. Race, gender and learning difficulties have been noted as relevant by each of the T2As, but it is less clear whether they have specific strategies in place yet for engaging young people in these categories. There is some indication of an implicit assumption that they are already engaging with diversity as a result of the types of referrals they are getting. For example, West Mercia T2A explained that “if someone is from a BME background, then he or she is automatically flagged up as being extra vulnerable” and so would more likely be referred. In contrast, the population that the London T2A deals with is predominantly BME:

We can't help it ...Well, the thing is, the sort of profile of Southwark is around 50% BME in its broadest sense. And the profile of offenders around Southwark is... about 75 to 80% BME... and the profile of our project is about 85 or 90% BME. So it involves no effort whatsoever. But that's kind of historical really because of where we are and what we're doing.

²⁹ St Giles SOS Project Overview and Update at January 2008 p.2-3.

³⁰ Barrow Cadbury Trust *Lost in Transition*, p17; p4.

Similarly, the Birmingham T2A note that: “They are already engaging with [us], they are already on an order or a license and stuff, anyway”. Birmingham, however, are being somewhat proactive in trying to include the hard-to-reach. They encourage such referrals when attending team meetings in the Probation and Youth Offending Services: “When we are going round team meetings, we are saying if you’ve got young people that are going to breach a lot, are just not compliant, they are the ones that we want really”.

For some sites it was also important that T2A workers be representative of their communities. For example, before hiring the T2A workers, one Birmingham T2A strategist stated: “I’d like to think that the worker’s going to come with a diverse background, representing the community that we live in”. London T2A also felt that a T2A worker’s race was important to aiding immediate engagement:

Some people in the prison would say the further north a black prisoner serves time, the harder the time they’ll have. I don’t think it’s as simple as that, but certainly the further away from London, the more difficult it can be. So that when you’ve actually got a black worker who’s from the area you’re going back to, who knows what’s going on, where you’re coming from, there’s an immediate link. I mean I don’t believe it’s essential that somebody shares a background with someone to give them a good service, but it makes initial engagement so much easier ... I mean, we were in [a] remand centre the other day, 15 to 18 year olds and we were with [... they see this], black guy, you know, he’s served time and so on, and immediate response from the young lads! They just spotted him from across the room...and there were loads of other services on offer there, but they could immediately see something. So he just had a head start. You know, immediate engagement.

As for young people with learning difficulties, two sites referred to the fact that many of their clients have such difficulties and so are benefiting from the intensive support T2A provides. Nevertheless, one site was concerned that its staff are not trained in dealing with learning difficulties and felt that they were perhaps not best equipped to receive such referrals.

2.4. Service-user involvement

Service user involvement is central to both West Mercia T2A and London T2A. West Mercia T2A has service user involvement as one of its key aims. As an output they aim to create a “Service User Toolkit” for T2A teams, Probation and the YOS. So far, they have held two service-user groups to gain feedback on services and to follow-up on suggestions made by the young people involved (such as having staff from different agencies come to talk to them about services offered).

A key feature of London T2A and what is argued to be a significant factor in the success of the St Giles Trust services is the fact that they use ex-offenders to provide the services. In fact, for London T2A, 100% of their direct staff are ex-offenders and they also provide NVQ training of young offenders to provide advice and support to young people within the criminal justice system and to talk to young people at risk of offending. They state in their proposal that:

The principle of user involvement will be central to our whole service; some paid staff will be ex-offenders as well as all the trainees. We see ex-service users as integral to the way we deliver services... We confidently expect that by the end of the project 50 young adults will have achieved an NVQ 3 in IAG [Information, Advice and Guidance], and we expect many of these to gain employment in the IAG sector - bringing the ex-service user perspective to other organisations.

The use of ex-offenders helps engage the young people into their services. As one staff member states of his work in prisons:

I don't sell it as a benefits service, what I say to the young people is, "Look, I've been there and I know exactly, you know, the kind of minefield that's going to exist. I know what's going to be on your licence papers; for example, I know these all-inclusive statements that Probation like to use, that you might overlook and ultimately will lead to you being recalled. I have been rejected, you know. I used to keep a folder, I got rejected by loads of jobs purely because I was an ex-offender, you know. So I know all of these challenges". So basically I'm there explaining to them, "I will be there for you, I will be there 100% as long as you will be there 100% for yourself and we've got the support and I've got the team that will back me up 100% and it's up to you".

Over a period of three years working for the service, this worker could only recall three occasions when his offer of support had been turned down, and in two of these cases there were extenuating factors. "Everybody else has signed up. Everybody! ... [and] once they have signed up, they have engaged".

London T2A have also developed feedback sheets that young people fill in to give feedback on how they thought their session went as well as suggestions for improvement of the overall service. Birmingham T2A uses a self-assessment questionnaire and a four-weekly review form which asks for some service-user feedback (these forms have been adapted from West Mercia T2A). The three T2As have also had service-users talk about their experiences at public events or to other organisations.

In addition to the users' perspective which is being collected via the Case Studies, there are already some valuable sources of collated service-users views. These include the following suggestions made by young people to The Prince's Trust:

- "more mentors and workers should be available with similar experiences to support them;
- greater incentives to take on education courses in prison;
- a tailored, in depth pre-release programme established in every prison;
- investment made in schemes that provide training and supported employment for ex-offenders, led by ex-offenders;
- more opportunities for young people to put something back into their communities.

A Task Force established by CLINKS has considered how the voice of service users can be better incorporated in various ways. These include:

- having a greater say in the recruitment and training of staff of criminal justice organisations and through greater opportunities for ex-offenders themselves to obtain employment in the sector;
- contributing more systematically to the development of policies by government and criminal justice agencies and through participation in the commissioning of services by the National Offender Management Service and other relevant bodies”³¹.

These are valuable as an early source of relevant user perspectives and it will be useful to see if these will be reinforced by information that we collect in the course of this evaluation.

Service-user involvement is also being built into the evaluation, in particular by including up to 10 in-depth case-studies from each of the T2As. We consulted the teams about how best to include the user voice in assessing and shaping T2A services. We had originally envisaged that service users would be included in focus groups as well as some one-to-one interviews, but T2A workers thought there would be some reluctance to attend or to speak up in focus groups where there would be representatives from all types of stakeholders. We therefore decided to concentrate on case studies in which young people would be consulted for their views on services offered and required, relating these to their own plans and progress. In developing these, our emphasis is in accord with the view of expressed by one team leader that the evaluation should aim to be:

... a strengths-based approach rather than a needs-based approach and that it would fit in [with their own approach] and get the balance right. This evaluation process for me, and I speak for all of us here ... this is about empowering and enabling young people, not adding another layer of bureaucracy

Such an approach is consistent with the ‘responsibility model of desistance’ (Raynor 2004) which encourages ex-offenders to see themselves as having some control in shaping their own future. Towards this we developed an interview schedule (Appendix 3) and a distance-travelled measure (Appendix 4) to be used by the key workers or mentors in gathering information about the young adults’ experiences of and perspectives on the T2As.

2.5. Improving transfer arrangements and strategic links between services

A big part of what the T2As are meant to develop are policies and linkages which will end the rigid divide between the youth justice and adult justice systems so that service provision and sentencing policies can have regard to, not simply age but, level of maturity. Also, the Alliance Manifesto and related documents see the pilots as taking on a local role in influencing statutory agencies and sentencers, under the four headings that have been punched out by the Manifesto: diversion, sentencing, custody and resettlement – according to Shan Nicholas’s recent discussion paper³² this would involve the pilots in a “targeted local media campaign” thereby bringing the work of the pilots and the Alliance closer together.

³¹ Rob Allen, *Lost in Transition: Three Years On*, Barrow Cadbury Trust: 2008.

³² Nicholas, S. (2009)

Most of the strategic goals of the London T2A are relevant here:

- To influence practice and policy relating to the treatment of young adults in the criminal justice system.
- Establish a model of good practice capable of replication in other parts of London and the UK
- Clarify the role of mentors involved with young people
- Provide evidence on issues relating to T2A that can be used by Barrow Cadbury in promotion of their general policy on young people
- Promote more positive perspectives of vulnerable young people that reduce stigmatisation and promote the concept of young people in need
- Create long-term opportunities for a more strategic approach to the needs of young people involving the statutory, voluntary and independent sectors

One Chief Executive gave a very clear exposition of the project's strategic role in a pre-evaluation interview, clearly seeing this as one of their twofold aims:

One [aim is] to form local strategy and to get them to realign policies and systems based on the feedback that we're finding on the ground. So that's why there's a big service user element. So when we're talking about the project, I think that's 50% of the project as far as I'm concerned and then we can feed-up into the national debate and the national alliance and stuff. [...] if we're going to be successful in what we're doing with T2A, it isn't just about the on the ground practice. We need to be informing the local strategies about what our practice is telling us, and we need them on board to be able to change from the top, and realign their strategy and policies accordingly.

Similarly, the broad objective of the St Giles T2A is to "work in conjunction with other Barrow Cadbury funded Transition to Adulthood (T2A) initiatives, and other agencies, to support broad cultural and systemic changes in the way the Criminal Justice System works with young adults".

What is the nature of these links? What gaps need to be filled? All of the T2A executives and managers are insightful about ways in which services need to be bridged and the need for forward planning towards their own exit strategy. Some of these insights are best conveyed in their own words:

Although we've created a dedicated service here, in three years time we're not around. What I think is achievable on the ground would be Probation having that interface with Connexions and a targeted youth support agenda when 18 and 19 year olds are referred to probation, to make sure that there are resources that those young people could log into and [that] they could access. You could make an argument for saying all 18 and 19 year olds would still maybe have an offender manager who is maybe based in the youth offending service, say: that would be a way of managing that gap. But then there's practical things like resources come to mind ... [Another possibility is that the Probation Service] maybe in three years time, based on [ourT2A work will] end up saying [they'll] hand over all responsibility for 18 and 19 year olds to the Youth Offending Service in some form or another [because by then] probation have lost that skills set of engaging with them. ... The offender managers don't know what's available for 18 and 19 year olds. ... we want them to have a better understanding of the needs and maturity issues of 18 and 19 year olds. And maybe to have a little more time to do more than they would do for another client, and for them to know what services they can link those young people into.

Concerns were expressed about the difficulty of achieving a better interface and working relationship between the various services, given shortage of resources and rationing of services based on level of risk of harm or risk of reoffending. Young adults of low risk in these regards, though they may be vulnerable and have numerous social and welfare needs, would be low priority for busy probation service staff dealing with PPOs,³³ MAPPA³⁴ and level three and four offenders.

Birmingham T2A project see themselves as providing a much-needed bridging service between the YOS and Probation. As one staff member stated, “a lot of young people are totally lost when they make that transition from the Youth Offending Service to Probation, they are just totally lost in the system”. Sometimes a young person’s paperwork never even gets transferred across and needs which were being addressed in YOS will not get met in the transfer across to Probation. Birmingham T2A aims to address this gap in services by putting in place a “transition” service that was not present before. A YOT Transfer Guidance Protocol has recently been developed by NOMS and the YJB and Birmingham are using some of the learning points from the T2A project to inform this protocol and improve services. Youth Offending Teams can contact the T2A team when a case is due to be transferred to Probation to assist the young person with the transition by ensuring that the transfer is carried out in line with local policy and assist in coordinating and accompanying that young adult’s transition from YOS to Probation, providing continued support and communication..

London T2A project also see themselves as providing a much-needed bridging service between the YOS and Probation. They too have experienced the gaps in the transition from YOS to Probation:

We see the problem all the time, you know, the YOTs and the YOS manage people up to 18 and then adult probation take over, and sometimes a file doesn’t even get transferred. I mean ... to find a harmonious relationship between a the adult Probation [Service] and the YOT team is so rare. I mean, it’s dreadful, really dreadful. Like I mean some of the better boroughs have managed to second people across and things like that, to try and help with the transition, but that’s really rare. Most of them are like two separate units, um, the YOT team think adult Probation are a bunch of mean fascists who just go out breaching their nice young people. Adult probation think the YOT team are a bunch of sappy social workers who mollycoddle them and they need a slap. You know, the stereotypes are just awful. And that’s not exaggerating either; this is how they talk about it.

They see the solution being that the voluntary sector provide supportive transition via ex-offender-led services:

My solution to it would be to have services like ours who work across the age range so that we’d, a service, a community based version of our type of service would be available to the YOT team so they could ... use a person like [a T2A worker] or one of his colleagues to support a young person who was 14, 15, getting into trouble doing things they shouldn’t, before prison. And ideally again this should be someone who’s an ex-offender who can talk very directly to them, give them some practical advice on how to actually avoid doing those

³³ Prolific and other Priority Offenders.

³⁴ Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements.

things which, you know, in the short term seem so much fun. And then that project would stick with them across the divide. So that's my short-term solution to tidying it up.

London T2A also feel the need for a pan-London resettlement service to provide "through-the-gate" mentoring services to London prisoners who are serving their time in prisons located outside of London. At the moment funding is borough-led and scanty.

London prisoners serve their time outside of London so they are not being um, you know, people who are dealing with them within the prisons are not Londoners, who don't know where they are going back to... And in terms of a cultural gap between staff and prisoners, it's huge. So what it's all about is getting a London based service out and there's so much more of that to do. I mean, London prisoners are scattered all over the place, and you know, we couldn't expand big enough really to cover the needs. Every prison we go to that has Londoners, the further out of London they are, the more desperate they are for a service like this. They tend not to have the money to fund this kind of thing. That's one of the issues: who in the statutory world should fund this? And I would argue it's a London issue. And if London wants its offenders to be successfully resettled after they've completed their sentence in the middle of nowhere, they should probably pay for it.

2.6. Bringing statutory and voluntary services together

BCT has given prominence to the important role of grassroots groups and *Lost in Transition*, although it does not use the concept of 'grassroots, makes frequent reference to the need to involve the voluntary sector by inviting representatives to join the teams. Apart from a pre-evaluation discussion with one of the executives at the T2A planning stage, who dismissed such bodies as not sufficiently resourced or aware of risk issues to be usefully made part of the T2A, the subject of 'grassroots groups' as such has not been raised by the T2As and it is not clear how they are being involved if at all. Is this objective in danger of being overlooked?

Perhaps there is a need for clarification on what is meant by 'grassroots organizations'. The label was coined by Senator Albert Beveridge in 1912 in reference to a political party that had "grown from the soil of people's hard necessities".³⁵ More loosely it refers to pushes for change and provision that occur at a local level and arise from need rather than being driven by central political activity or government. In this regard, it could be argued that all of the pilots are influenced by local concerns and expressions of need – and that, according to this definition, YSS and St Giles are themselves grassroots organisations if we base this on their origins in local districts, though of course they are now well-established, even renowned, voluntary sector organisations.

Regardless of how it is interpreted, there is a potential conflict between the objective of being *temporary* with a view to getting mainstream services to take over the added-value work that is being developed by the T2As and the objective of integrating the voluntary sector into mainstream provision. YSS and St Giles have been working in partnership with the public sector for years

³⁵ Beveridge, A.J. (1912).

whilst retaining their own independent identity; in doing so though, they are clearly relieving the public sector from some of the work that it would otherwise be called upon to do.

Birmingham T2A see themselves as “being responsive to individual needs and working in partnership with the voluntary sector” as well as the Criminal Justice System, by “adding on value” to current services rather than replacing them. As such they work alongside Probation Office managers and Youth Offending Service workers to provide whatever assistance the young person needs. Contact between a young person’s case worker and the T2A worker is regular, with T2A workers often accompanying a young person to their appointments, hearings and court dates. This type of service has resulted in positive feedback from some Probation officers who can begin to see the difference in their clients as they begin to show up to appointments and make progress.

Birmingham T2A see their statutory status, as part of Probation, as a bonus to their work because of their easy access to Probation, the prison system and to Asset and OASys data: “We are trusted because we are part of the program and so we can come in and out of their offices; they feel comfortable with us”. There has also been a knock-on effect of having a T2A pilot within a statutory agency because the work has been disseminated more within Probation and as a result other Probation Services are already interested in implementing similar services (e.g. Yorkshire Probation).

Birmingham T2A also link up to local voluntary sector services, such as Fairbridge, St Basil’s, and De Paul’s, a local theatre group, as well as drug and alcohol services. Two young people have already been referred to Fairbridge. The T2A manager has also had one-to-one meetings with various local voluntary agencies to promote T2A’s goals. Birmingham T2A is now engaging with Crime strategy groups. The T2A manager attends the Birmingham Youth Crime Strategic Group and has input into the Safer Birmingham Partnership. The T2A manager has now briefed all 17 Probation teams and 5 YOTs across Birmingham on T2A. She has also attended various events to promote T2A and raise its profile in the city.

London T2A has forged links with statutory agencies both in Southwark and Croydon as well as YOIs holding London returners. They have managed to get T2A issues on the agenda in local Probation services. Probation in Croydon has used access to ‘pathways’ funding regarding gangs to get funding for two posts in Probation that work specifically with gang youth. Nevertheless, because of the statutory nature of their work, they have had a hard time getting the gang youth to engage in their new work and so have begun to work in partnership with T2A – a partnership that T2A feels should have been there from beginning when the new project was designed.

London T2A has built up a good working relationship with the police, especially with Southwark’s Operation Hamrow Unit which works with gangs. They refer young people to the T2A teams and

have trusted them with sensitive information. This has enabled T2A to help their clients with difficult situations. For example in getting a client to turn themselves in when they found out that a warrant was to be executed:

There was a client, there was an allegation of, against a breach, the police would have gone in with the strong arm tactics, his girlfriend was pregnant and because he's like a MAPPA client, I know they would have just kicked off the door and charged in and this kid would just have gone into a rage. So what I done was I hooked up with them, I was like, you know you need to hand yourself in ... And I said like bring it to them, rather than they come to you so that it's sorted, you know. That's one of the strengths that we've got from being in our position because we've built up a rapport with the client. It's like, think of the person that you trust the most, if they ask you to do something, you probably do it. It's the same thing with us and our clients, like they trust us implicitly. They trust us that ... we've got their best interests at heart, that we will not bring them into a situation that will be dangerous for them. And further if they hear what we are saying, they'll be alright.

Nevertheless, London T2A has come up with some challenges in working in prisons or with Probation because T2A staff are ex-offenders and so some in the Criminal Justice System have been hesitant to have "their clients worked by their clients". For some, this has been resolved when they see the success of these ex-offender-led services: "I think the work stands up for itself and there might be a bit of scepticism in the beginning, but when they start seeing results they realise, 'Hey this is something we need.'"

2.7. Identifying and filling gaps in services

It is particularly ironic that the various transitions discussed in section 2.1 often involve the ending of a source of support when the young person comes to the end of a period of 'looked after' or secure containment or youth justice supervision, leaving him or her additionally vulnerable and without formal oversight assistance. There may be no formal supervision provided during the various transitions they are making.

Discussion with West Mercia suggests an envisaged system in which a service (not clear whether continuing T2A or mainstream transitional worker) would offer continuing support after a period of formal supervision comes to an end (e.g. at the end of an ISSP when the person reaches age 18 and is no longer responsibility of youth services). This is an example of the way on which T2A can be seen to be providing 'added value' to the exiting system but with a view to such additional provisions being adopted in the future as an element of statutory service.

Another example of added-value service is the way in which T2A/transitional workers can provide support and supervision which complements and extends a period of formal supervision by probation. One manager gave this example:

Let's say there's a sentence plan for a young person and within that sentence plan there is a drugs provision specifically or mental health provision. They can make it an enforceable part of their order, but what we know for the client group [is] they've got a chaotic, difficult

life [and] just getting to that provider is part of the battle. So what we would do is say, you know, “we’re in touch with your probation officer, and whilst we’re working slightly differently and not completely in league with them, we do know you’ve got a sentence plan, and you need to do X, Y and Z. We don’t want you to go to custody, we know you don’t want to go to custody, what you need to be able to do is get to this appointment” [and the client says] “Well, yeah, but the bus doesn’t work, or I’m frightened about going to this part of town, or I’ve got some apprehensions...”, “Okay, well we’ll work with you”. So it will be about helping them, supporting them to comply with any of those conditions as well. So that’s a significant element of it.

Another example of added-value, also from West Mercia T2A, and which overlaps with the last example, is purposeful provision of supportive work to facilitate and motivate the compliance of young people subject to an order who would otherwise be at high risk of breach. A good example was given by West Mercia T2A:

We’re just running a pilot project in Worcestershire at present called Supporting Compliance, and we’ve a worker who offers six solution-focused sessions for people at risk of being breached or they’ve been breached once and they are at risk of being breached again and so they will probably go to court. And it’s exactly that type of reason. And a lot of the young people seem to be younger people. And when we go out and when we do the home visits, we then find out what the problem is. The problem isn’t them sticking two fingers up at the sentence plan, they just don’t understand, or if they’ve misunderstood it, or if there’s problems then we’ll help them problem solve. So we can go and do a short piece of work and then when they are in the groove, we can then pull out.

This provision of a supportive role by the transitional worker, however, is envisaged as unconstrained by the existence or termination of an official period of supervision or licence. The T2As operate an ‘open door’ policy whereby the young adult is invited to get in contact again if the need arises.

The nice thing with T2A is, they’ve got the ability to always come back to us. Because once they leave there will be an open door for them to self-refer to come back. Not to go on the whole programme again necessarily, but ... [for example] pastoral support, signposting, guidance.

All the T2As have noted the various continuing gaps in services that need to be filled and are each, within their local settings, identifying them and trying to devise ways in which to fill these gaps.

Gaps in meeting Accommodation Needs

London T2A note that, “The housing situation in most prisons is set up to fail ... They have two workers covering the whole of the prison for the whole of the return boroughs and they will not see a client until just before release. That is not giving them enough time to do the work”. London T2A also see as part of the problem of gaps in offender resettlement as arising from the focus of the National Offender Management Service on “chasing these key performance targets [rather than] not looking at the bigger picture”:

Unfortunately the prison is not given targets about long term success. They are given targets which I call outputs... I mean getting someone housed ... you could call it an outcome, I call it an output; it’s just a step on the way. The outcome is not going back to

prison, not getting into trouble again. That's the big one. And for us, we'll always do that if that's what's needed, but we don't see that as an end in itself. You know, housing an offender isn't a result, housing someone as part of the process to persuade them to no longer be an offender, that's what we're up to.

Another problem with prison offender resettlement is that most often “the housing advice service will be run by a local housing agency that knows all about resettling people [for example] in [a particular city] ... and there is nothing about London. They just haven't got a clue”. This is why a London-based “through-the-gate” mentoring service, such as London T2A, is so important for young offenders in prison.

Birmingham T2A want to tap into a recourse that already exists in prisons (ROTL – Release on Temporary License) in order to try to fill the gap in offender resettlement services. At the moment, service providers have to wait for a young offender to be released from prison as they have to access benefits, accommodation, and so on in person. This means that, for example, housing will only interview a young person on the day of release and if their claim is rejected, then little time is left to sort out alternate accommodation. Therefore, Birmingham T2A are looking at using ROTL more effectively to see if it is possible for a young person to be temporarily released in order to access services before coming out of prison, and thereby “to assist with community integration and securing accommodation upon release”.

Other issues involving housing, mentioned by the T2As, which create difficulties for young people, include the fact that housing benefit for under 25-year-olds is less than for those older. This has meant that young offenders have to share housing. In one instance, London T2A teamed up with a local agency that also has a need to house young offenders. In this way, six young offenders came to be sharing a single house, but this turned out to be counterproductive as it boosted their criminal behaviour (mainly drug use).

Gaps in Leaving Care Services

Birmingham T2A has a Project Board, made up of the Chief Officer for West Midlands Probation, the Head of Youth Offending Services, the Head of Adult Transition Services, the Probation District Manager, the Finance Manager, and Barrow Cadbury Trust³⁶. This has helped the agencies involved identify blockages for young people within the system because when: “statutory agencies are working together they can see where the gaps in services are”. As a result, Birmingham T2A is now working with the Head of Transitions at Birmingham City Council to bridge the gaps in the ‘Leaving Care’ services: “Service provision is varied; some have had very good service leaving care and others none”. The aim is to enhance the quality of service provided to young people by improving the relationship between the Leaving Care Team, YOS and Probation.

³⁶ Birmingham T2A would like to extend membership of the board to include the police and representatives from the voluntary sector and service users.

Gaps in service provision to Families

All T2As are working or starting to work on bridging the gap in service provision to families. They note that when there is a transition from YOS to the Probation Service, the work with families ends. For London T2A, holistic working is key to providing effective services for young people. Part of this is working with the family. They talk about the need for conflict mediation and the need “to sell the young person back to their parents”. Birmingham T2A has recruited two older volunteer mentors, one of whom is a retired Probation Service member, who will be responsible for working more intensively with families, alongside the T2A workers.

Gaps in service provision to Young Addicts

Birmingham T2A has identified that “currently only 19 out of 223 Drug Rehabilitation Orders imposed in Birmingham are under the age of 24 and these are mainly in the age group of 23-24.” They want to increase young people’s access to substance abuse services and examine “why intervention is not targeted at younger people before their offending and drug misuse becomes more entrenched.”

Gaps in Mental Health Service Provision

West Mercia T2A has noted the gaps in mental health services for young people in their region. Thresholds about qualifying for a service have been inconsistent. Whereas The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) are theoretically a set of services for young people up to the age of 18, in practice many 16 and 17 year-olds have difficulties accessing the services.

Inconsistencies in Funding

As argued by one of the T2A executives, there is a need “to push people to rethink how they fund things”. He suggests that there is a need to commission transitions work. For example, funding tends to be either for under 18 year-olds or over 18 year-olds and so much-needed transition work is neglected funding-wise.

My big thing now is that the voluntary sector should be commissioned across the gap and that’s not happening. I mean predominantly we’re commissioned to mirror statutory service, so you know, Probation would fund us for 18+. If YOT funded us, they would fund us for under 18s. Whereas actually I think we should be funded for 15 to 25 or something like that.

This same executive also sees a need to commission work for services both in and out of prison together and not just one or the other (in other words, a need for “through the gates” work). The implication here is that government departmental demarcations should be changed and wrap-around services for young people need to be provided.

Some funding can also be restrictive in that, for example, a London borough will only feel responsible for funding support services for offenders within that borough so that if a young person

gets re-housed in another borough because he has a contract out on his life in his own borough, then technically a borough-bound funded support service can not give him continuing support in his new location.

3. SOME EARLY LEARNING POINTS AND OBSERVATIONS

3.1. Emerging good practice

The most frequently expressed and emphasised viewpoints about what troubled young adults in the criminal justice system are most able to benefit from can be summarised as: an approach which provides practical, hands-on assistance in solving problems and in accessing opportunities and services. An added proviso is that there should be frequent and easy access to supportive contact with key workers or mentors who are empathic and non-judgemental. Some argue that a critical factor in engaging people who might otherwise be hard to reach is key workers having had first-hand experience as an ex-offender.

The T2As are intended to develop 'added value' services rather than to replace core services, yet they have been introduced to address what has been seen as failures and deficits in mainstream services. The objective is that they will develop, and set an example in delivering, better ways of addressing the distinct needs of this 'young adulthood' age group. Arguably, the main 'added value' that they are uniformly projecting is a model of working with these young people that is geared to their transitional needs and future well-being rather than being only focused on offending behaviour and the strictures of criminal justice requirements. Thus, all the teams emphasise the importance of their relationship building and the nature of support they give, which is both practical and interpersonal in the sense of being warmly encouraging and concerned and interested. It is holistic and person-centred.

There are several elements in this approach to working with young adults, each of which seem to be necessary or contributory to being effective; though, in different discussions, alternative elements may figure more prominently. As one manager put it:

We expect the work of the Barrow Cadbury funded Oxford University evaluators will illuminate the whole issue of mentoring, and hopefully draw some distinctions between the many types of service that describe themselves as mentoring projects.

Whether we call it 'mentoring', 'transitional work', 'befriending', 'motivational counselling' or any other name, we agree that this important package needs to be further explored in the T2A context,

drawing on existent research on mentoring, the 'supervisory relationship', the 'therapeutic alliance'.³⁷

As well as this focus on *how* they work with young people, another prevalent point of emphasis concerns the *purposes* of providing these supportive relationships, with some purposes given more prominence than others. Specifically, in contrast to the preoccupation of mainstream services with offending behaviour and offender management processes and checks, more attention is given to: (1) diverting them from criminal justice interventions and from custody; (2) for those who have been young offender institutions or prison, resettling them in the community; (3) supporting the natural desistance process; and (4) improving their life chances. While the work undoubtedly includes attention to offending-related attitudes and problems, this approach is more holistically concerned with helping them to access opportunities for a better life and nurturing their abilities and pro-social goals. In many respects, it exemplifies a strengths-based approach.³⁸

On an executive level all three T2As are working extensively towards better transfer arrangement between the youth and adult criminal justice services so that young adults will continue to have access to those services that are normally more readily available for those under the age of 18. Two sites have multi-agency steering groups through which, together with the networking and relationship building that practitioners are doing for specific cases, they are forging more joined-up approaches and greater awareness of the additional needs of young adults.

3.2. Some tensions, contradictions and mixed messages

This initiative was always multi-faceted in its intentions and therefore challenges those delivering the services to work with a complex array of purposes in addition to those set by their own employing agencies. The recommendations and manifesto of the T2A Alliance have added a further layer of objectives and principles; and they more overtly implicate the work of the pilots in the political messages of the campaign and manifesto. Which of these must the T2As *essentially* achieve without which the initiative will be seen to have failed? Is there an over-riding indispensable element? Can a hierarchy of objectives be established so that the most important are not sacrificed or short-changed by use of resources for those further down the list? For example, while *Lost in Transition* underlined that the T2As should be temporary rather than replacing current services, it is unclear to some of the practitioners, and to us, whether such mainstream services will be complemented by *continuing* T2As as distinct teams, regardless of whether they are voluntary or statutory, or whether the intention is that they will be absorbed into

³⁷ For example see: Horvath and Greenburg, 1994; Hubble et al, 1999; Burnett 2004.

³⁸ Maruna and LeBel 2002; Burnett and Maruna 2006.

mainstream services as part of seamless provision between the youth and adult justice systems. There are some early indications that what is effective about the T2As is something to do with them not being seen as mainstream – so that ‘magic’ could be lost if they are taken over.

In providing support to their client group, the T2As are often working with young adults who continue to be subject to court order or licence requirements. In doing this, they seem able to work alongside any existing court orders and licence requirements which are being delivered by probation and youth justice colleagues, though there may be some tension between their own client-led approach and offender management models which have to be enforced according to national standards. As observed by one manager:

We’ve tried to follow the offender management principles absolutely to the letter of, you know, of the law so to speak. And, we walk a bit of a tension between probation’s, you know, arena around risk and enforcement, public protection and our attitude of being very person-centred [and our] solution focused, holistic type of approach. So we’ve constantly got to walk that.

The three T2As are likely to each have valuable experience in handling such challenges and could be encouraged to exchange information about best practice and perhaps hold joint workshops for their staff and mentors.³⁹ The requirement to work with other services raises other problems. We wonder whether under-staffed mainstream services, and other public services with a responsibility to young adults, may be glad to offload some of their responsibilities onto the T2As thereby failing to develop their expertise in dealing with this age group. This again could be problematic in the long term when T2As ‘exit’ from providing their interim services.

There are other ways in which the boundaries of the original mission for the T2A projects may be moved. One example is the extent to which the pilots should be explicitly and solely concerned with “young adults” rather than children or immature adults who are not so young. Should the provision being developed be clearly labelled as a service for young adults, or should it be part of seamless provision and therefore less self-consciously dubbed as distinct in that way? The London pilot does not restrict its activities under this heading to those who might reasonably be placed in the loose age bracket typically referred to as ‘young adults’; they also work with younger people, some as young as eleven, in carrying out diversionary work. This diversification is consistent with the commendable, innovative approach of the St Giles Trust and is appropriate in a pilot project, but it might lead to a difficulty in distinguishing between what is being done as part of the transition to adulthood initiative and work which SOS is doing for other age groups. It does also, of course, present practical difficulties for the evaluation when the boundaries of agreed work become so fluid; and other services that are meant to be engaged into a multi-agency T2A approach may have difficulties identifying the project.

³⁹ The training day at Oxford to prepare staff and mentors to carry out interviews for the case studies demonstrated that T2A workers from the different sites are interested in learning from each other.

Linked to this is the question of whether the provision being developed should be clearly labelled as a service for young adults, or whether it should be part of seamless provision and therefore less self-consciously dubbed as distinct in that way. Such fluidity has advantages because children will become young adults, and connection between activities and services and avoidance of arbitrary age divisions are what this initiative is all about. On the other hand, too much blurring could detract from the transitional special needs of this age group. It will be useful to explore whether a distinct T2A identity for the project and its workers, with its 'trademark' T2A moniker, is something with which young adults can more readily engage and should therefore remain a permanent feature of a joined-up criminal justice service. More generally, at this stage, BCT should consider whether modifications are a desirable aspect of dynamic development or are indicative of slippage away from the shared goals.

Another source of tension, on every level of the Transition to Adulthood initiative, is that between the mission to build in more services and provision for young adults in the criminal justice system and the importance of cutting costs. Financial considerations have always been a factor in the commission and campaign to improve provision for young adults in contact with the justice systems. Inevitably in the current financial climate they have had to become much more central a consideration for all those involved in delivering this initiative. While the model of working with young adults which is being put into practice seems exemplary in engaging with this client group and making changes in their lives, it is necessarily time consuming and therefore potentially more expensive than the kind of support they would typically be offered. While some argue that costs can be cut by involving unpaid voluntary workers, they too need to be trained and supported to be effective⁴⁰; also, too much reliance on voluntary workers can result, for some organisations, in discontinuities of contact for clients if their mentors decide to leave. Yet, intensive intervention that will shorten involvement in crime is always going to be cheaper in long-run than under-resourced short-term responses followed by prolonged or repeated periods in custody. This is particularly the case if the T2A approach engages young adults who would otherwise be non-compliant and resistant against interventions, and then supports them in their efforts to integrate into the community and lead law-abiding lives. The argument of Matrix Knowledge Group in their report to the BCT sums up the cost considerations:

Young adults, aged between 18 and 24, account for a disproportionate amount of offending compared to the size of that group in the population as a whole. Roger Bowles estimated in 2005 that between 26 and 32 per cent of all offending is attributable to this group....This

⁴⁰ West Mercia T2A notes that to provide a quality volunteer mentor service requires rigorous selection procedures followed by ongoing support, supervision and training which can be as costly as hiring staff. They point out that they choose to use volunteers as well as paid staff because of the positive impact volunteers can have on their client group when they find out that these mentors are there for them voluntarily rather than being paid to do so. West Mercia T2A also note that by using volunteers they are "benefitting the wider community by up-skilling volunteers, helping them to recognise and understand the issues and barriers that people in the Criminal Justice System might face in our communities and how we can help them to overcome those barriers, encouraging social cohesion, promoting diversity and equal opportunity and looking to make our communities safer, more vibrant and more cohesive."

disproportional impact provides a prima facie case for services aimed specifically at decreasing the level of reoffending by young adults.⁴¹

Therefore, anything which hastens the desistance from crime of persistent young offenders, and abstention from involvement in offending by those who are in danger of becoming persistent, is cost-effective for public expenditure.

3.3. A learning environment and the role of evaluation

It is in the nature of pilots that they try out different things and that they are unfixed and liable to specialise in differences of emphasis and to innovate and alter course. This is particularly likely where there is a multiplicity of aims and activities. The pilots should be able to learn from each other and, importantly, policy should be able to learn from practice and from service users. Our role as evaluators is to aid this process – through data-collection and analysis; through feedback reports such as this one; and through continuing dialogue with stakeholders in this initiative. The Formative Evaluation framework we have adopted matches the developmental nature of the pilots (see Appendix 1). In accordance with the now widely accepted rationale for ‘realistic evaluation’⁴², progress towards meaningful knowledge of *what works for some people in some contexts* (in this case, young adults in transition, within the criminal justice system) requires ongoing discussion with participants in order to explore their meaning systems and what matter to them, and their reasons for responding or not to the measures introduced.

We will continue to explore these questions further with the key players through focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with managers, specialists and expert informants. We appreciate the full co-operation and positivity that we have received so far and look forward to working with you in continuing to learn from, and shape, T2A practice. Next steps for the evaluation are outlined in Appendix 1. The case studies of service users in each of the pilots, as discussed in section 2.3, will enable us to systematically gather information on the user perspective, linking this to their ‘journey’ through T2A services.

⁴¹ Bowles and Pradiptyo, 2005.

⁴² See Pawson and Tilley 1994; Pawson, 2000.

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APPENDIX 1

Evaluative framework and tasks

Following the publication of *Lost in Transition* (Barrow Cadbury Trust 2005) the T2A Development Director at the time, Rachel Cerfontyne, approached the Centre for Criminology at the University of Oxford to discuss the evaluation requirements. Dr Ros Burnett prepared a paper on a suitable evaluative framework, and a group of us subsequently met on a few occasions, including a seminar at Oxford in June 2008 to meet project leaders and to advance our thinking on this. It was originally decided that an Extended-Term Mixed-Method (ETMM) evaluation design was to be adopted (following Chatterji, 2005). This includes both a formative and a summative evaluation phase. A formative (or process) evaluation uses data to assist in programme planning and refinement, while a summative (or outcome) evaluation attempts to measure the effects and outcome of programmes. An Extended-Term Mixed-Method (ETMM) evaluation design replaces narrow notions of good research practice as *only* randomised control trials, but does not preclude a more targeted, experimental study further down the line. It gives full weight to the time dimension in changing practice, and to variability of context.

It was later decided to focus on the formative evaluation aspect. Barrow Cadbury Trust provided funding for an 18-month formative evaluation which was initiated in June 2009. Although an ETMM evaluation is a longer-term approach which defers a more rigorous attempt to provide evidence of what works, the formative evaluation is of value in its own right. The overall objective of the formative evaluation is to help projects refine and focus their services so that effort, time and money are dedicated to the most promising and necessary elements. The evaluation aims to systemically identify which elements of the interventions and policies are perceived to be successful or promising, and also whether they are proceeding according to plan.

In either case, the limitations of evaluation should be recognised. It cannot provide all the answers but can help to develop an understanding of the “chemistry of programme operations” (Tilley, 2000), and to identify practices and innovations that appear to be advantageous. Not least, by adding to the stock of understanding about factors and processes that increase programme effectiveness and as well as why and how programmes fail, a formative evaluation can “help to rally support for effective programs” (Weiss, 1998: 319).

This initial report covers research done during this period of six months (June to November 2009) as well as before while Ros Burnett and her research team were acting as consultants in the development of the research design.

The Formative Evaluation

Given the embryonic status of the T2As and their plural objectives, including Barrow Cadbury Trust's longer term policy objectives, it is by no means clear yet what aspects of provision could most usefully be made the subject of a systematic outcome evaluation. Therefore, at this stage, a formative evaluation research design has been adopted.

A formative evaluation is context-sensitive and will help to specify more closely 'what', and 'how', interventions and implementation strategies will improve services for young adults within and across the chosen sites. As well as being of value in its own right, a formative evaluation can be the basis for designing and setting up a more focused outcome evaluation once there is clarity and greater precision regarding the interventions or policies to be tested.

Following Pawson and Tilley's (1994) promotion of 'realistic evaluation', there is now wide consensus that it is better to develop theoretical understanding based on deeper understanding of context and underlying mechanisms, in order to focus more specifically on the question of "What works for whom in what circumstances?". An attempt must be made to unpick and distinguish the separate aspects of helpful provision and then explain the variables and the processes that result in positive effects. In the language of 'realistic evaluation', we are aiming to identify "context mechanism outcome configurations (CMOC)" and to develop CMOC theories, some of which might later be tested (Pawson and Tilley, 1994). Context must be regarded as part of the evaluation. It can be the key to discovering the circumstances in which and the reasons why an interventions works (Greene et al., 2001). The intervention, or some specific aspect of practice which is seen as key to getting better results, is likely to vary qualitatively in its manifestations in different areas or at different times. "Without systematic study of these qualitative differences *in context* ... cause-effect questions are difficult, if not impossible, to answer" (Chatterji, 2005:17). In order to move on later to a summative evaluation of impact, the formative evaluation allows the study of the most critical variables *in situ*. "The knowledge gained through the early research on a program can help researchers identify a small set of sharply formulated causal hypotheses to test" (Chatterji, 2005: 20).

Aims of the Research

The specific aims of this formative evaluation are to:

- Document 'what' interventions and implementation strategies are being put in place to improve services for young adults within and across the chosen sites, and 'how' they are expected to result in improvements.

- Develop understanding of the local contexts and variables affecting T2As including the organizational context, local provision, target service users and internal dynamics.
- Articulate a shared understanding of what key changes are needed for interventions and the implementation of improved provision for young adults. (In more formal language, develop shared *intervention theories* and *implementation theories*).
- Track progress and assist T2As to monitor the extent to which they adhere to their own intentions.
- Collect and analyse feedback from service users and service deliverers on what has helped, and why.
- Identify best practice and obstacles to progress, and further refine theories and conceptualisation of the critical variables that are blocking or will advance change in their local contexts.
- Provide stakeholders with timely information to help shape, modify and improve programme delivery while in the early stages of operation.
- Identify elements which lend themselves to a controlled outcome evaluation.
- Help T2As and BCT to isolate and conceptualise how best to integrate improved provision into mainstream services for young adults.
- Report and disseminate findings which help to publicise this whole enterprise, but in a way which accurately reflects emerging findings whether favourable or otherwise, as well as supporting the efforts made and achievements gained.

Research Design

In order to meet these aims, the research team plan to run 16 focus groups (4 in each T2A spaced out at intervals across an 18-month period); carry out in-depth interviewing of key stakeholders and specialists; train staff to carry out interviews and instruct them on other evaluation data to be collected; organise and analyse data from 60 service-user interviews (10 in each T2A interviewed twice); attend key meetings; observe selected interventions; prepare three progress reports including the final formative evaluation report; and disseminate findings as thought appropriate at relevant conferences, including a BCT seminar to launch a published version of the final report from the formative evaluation.

Research Undertaken during this Initial Stage

Although the formative research officially began on June 1st 2009, research was carried out beforehand in the consultation phase. In October and November of 2008, a member of the

research team, Catherine Appleton, visited the three T2A sites and carried out research interviews with staff to learn more about early developments in each.

The research officially began in June 2009 and a full-time research officer, Dr. Gisella Hanley-Santos, was appointed on August 3rd, 2009. During this period each site was visited again. Monitoring and assessment tools used by each site were discussed and focus groups were held about each site's intervention and implementation theories and the inner workings of their T2A service (see Appendix 2 for the Interview Schedule used for these focus groups).

In consultation with each of the three T2A pilot sites, it was agreed that the transitional workers themselves (or their peer mentors) would be best suited to interview the young adults participating in the T2A pilot projects as they have already built up meaningful relationships with them, which would facilitate more comprehensive data gathering. As a result, on October 8th 2009 a training day was held at Oxford University for six T2A transitional workers as well as three peer mentors from London T2A. Through extensive role playing, the T2A workers were trained in qualitative interviewing methods and appropriate use of and improvements to the interview instrument were discussed at length (see Appendix 2 for final interview schedule). A distance-travelled measure, designed by the research team (see Appendix 3) was also presented to the T2A workers, but its use at this stage was left as optional.

The T2A transitional workers and peer mentors have been doing the case study interviews throughout October and November. Data analysis of the case study interviews is to commence in December.

In sum, the following have been some of the activities of the research team during this period:

1. Preliminary interviews about early T2A developments (October and November 2008);
2. Presentation about the evaluation research design at West Mercia and Birmingham T2A launches (April 2nd and July 7th 2009);
3. One focus group with each site about intervention and implementation theories and the inner workings of the T2A service (July to September 2009);
4. Meeting with Shan and Alice of BCT (August 2009);
5. Attendance at T2A Alliance meeting (September 2009);
6. Attendance at T2A Steering group meeting (September 2009);
7. Development of an interview schedule for the case study interviews (September and October 2009);
8. Development of a distance-travelled measure (September and October 2009);
9. Research training of T2A workers and some peer mentors (October 8th, 2009);
10. Follow-up telephone interviews with each T2A site (October and November 2009);

Next steps in the evaluation

The research team's main activities in the next six months (between this initial report and the next interim report, due on May 31st, 2010) will be:

1. Transcribing and data analysis of the first set of case study interviews (undertaken throughout October and November by the T2A transitional workers and some peer mentors).
2. Organising and running 3 focus groups – 1 in each T2A (in Feb10).
3. Organising and conducting in-depth interviews of key informants
4. Observation of key worker practice (subject to permission)
5. Designing the interview schedule for the second set of case study interviews (Time 2)
6. Organising and overseeing the second set of 30 case study interviews (March to May 2010)
7. Further transcribing, coding and analysing of data collected from 2-4 above.
8. Participating in relevant seminars and meetings
9. Preparing the interim progress report (due 31May10).

Research Schedule for the next six months

ACTIVITIES	Dec09	Jan10	Feb10	Mar10	Apr10	May10
Day-to-day liaison with T2As and BCT						
Organise and run focus groups						
Observation and attendance T2A activities						
Interviewing and oversee interviewing						
Co-ordinate and collect self-monitoring data						
Transcribing of interviews and focus group						
Data entry, coding, analysis						
Literature and policy review						
BCT meetings/key events/conferences						
Prepare interim report (for31May10)						

APPENDIX 2

Interview schedule for focus groups

1. SERVICES FOR YOUNG ADULTS

- The Barrow Cadbury commission identified gaps in services for young adults coming in contact with the criminal justice system; and that's why the T2A pilots have been set up. What do you think has been missing or going wrong in services for young adults who are offending or at risk of offending?
- What are the main ways in which this T2A is trying to improve services for these young adults?
- Is this different from Youth Offending Services, or from Probation Services? How? Is there anything else that is different or special about the way that you are working?
- Why, or how, will [specify each of the above] work to help young adults?
- Is there anything else that you feel *should* be done that isn't yet being done? Why, or how, would this help young adults?
- What do you see as your chief aims when you are working with these young people? [Probe: Are you mainly focused on their well-being and them getting on in life? Or are you focused specifically on offending?]
- So when you start off with them, how do you explain what your purpose is?
- How do you think people change?
- What are you doing that contributes to helping them change?

2. PROCESSES AND IMPLEMENTATION OF T2A SERVICES

Criteria for Service

- How do young people come onto your T2A services? How does this process work?
Are they always 'voluntary'?
Do you do 'outreach' work?
- How do you decide who to accept? Do you reject anyone? Who and why?
- What about the age group? Are you staying strictly within a specified age range or are you being flexible at that level?
- What about someone who is not engaging? What is your policy for them? Do you have a cut-off point for trying to engage someone (e.g. 4 months)?
- And do most of your service users have a mandatory requirement to see either the YOTs or Probation, or do you find that you get most of the in-betweeners?

Record Keeping

- What kind of records on the young people do you keep? Do you have an initial assessment? Do you have an Action Plan? Do you have a self-assessment questionnaire for young people to fill out? Do you have a distance travelled measure? Do you have an inbuilt evaluation of your services by the young adults?
- In what circumstances, if any, do you have access to Asset or OASys assessments? And criminal records?

Work Involved

- What kind of work is done with the young adults? Run me through a typical T2A case.
- [If not mentioned] Do you work with the seven reoffending pathways? When you do an Action Plan do you try to cover all the seven pathways or do you just go with what they bring to you?
- What times are you available? Evenings, nights, weekends?
- What size is your case-load? Do any of you specialise?
- Are you doing anything special to reach out to people who are normally hard-to-reach. For example, Barrow Cadbury is keen on diversity issues and people who might have difficulties in using services?
- Any group work done?
- Service-user involvement?
- Work with families?

Length and intensity of Support

- How frequently do you have contact with ongoing cases?
- What is the typical length of time for working with people?
- How do you decide when a case is closed?
- Could you envisage staying in contact with somebody beyond the young adult age group?
- Do you have an open door policy when they can come back later at some point?

Staffing

- Who is on the T2A team?
- Do you allocate the young people to a T2A worker according to specialist background or any other criteria?
- Is the T2A manager full-time? If not, has this hindered your work in any way?
- Do you have regular staff meetings? Are these just between T2A workers or is management always present? What is talked about in staff meetings? Do you have supervision for your cases?
- Do you have volunteer mentors involved? Is that something you plan to do? What work do they do or would they do? Are they ex-offenders?

Linking up to Local Services

- How do you link up to local services?
- Do you work with the voluntary sector in any way?

Case study interview schedule



T2A PILOT EVALUATION

YOUNG PERSON'S INTERVIEW-1

ID: _____ -1 **Date:** _____

Time: _____ **Venue:** _____

Interviewed by: Own T2A worker / peer mentor Other T2A worker / peer mentor

Section 1: T2A and Other Services

1. How long have you been with the T2A service?

2. How often do you see your T2A worker?

3. Does anything stand out about the T2A service that is helpful to you or that you have liked?
What?
 - 3.b. How does that help you?

 - 3.c. Anything else that you like about T2A?

4. Has anything about the T2A annoyed you or disappointed you?
[Prompt: *Is there anything you think that we got wrong?*]

4.b. [If nothing mentioned]: What could be improved?
[If something mentioned]: What else could be improved?

4.c. If you were running this service, what would you do?

5. What services apart from T2A are helping you?

5.a. How?

6. Are there other services, outside the T2A, that you would like to use but can't get access to?
[Prompt: *help or support that you think other people get but you can't get into, or isn't meant for you or is hard to get?*]

7. Broadly speaking, many services do not take into account the **diversity** of different service user needs, such as the needs of ethnic minority groups, religious groups, people with mental health problems, and so on. Do you have a diversity-type need?

7.a. Do you think your needs are being met or addressed? How?
[If no]: What can be done to meet those needs?

8. Do you think that **young adults** (18-24 year-olds) who commit offences should be treated just the same as older adults in the criminal justice system?

[If yes] Why?

[If no] Why not?

9. Do you think we need a separate T2A service or should it be a part of the criminal justice system?

[If yes] Why?

[If no] Why not?

10. What do you think the government needs to do for young adults in the Criminal Justice System?

Section 2: Getting into Crime and Getting Out of it

11. What do you think causes young people to get involved in crime?

12. What caused **you** specifically to get into crime? [*Encourage a detailed account*]

13. Some people who get involved in crime manage to turn their lives around and 'go straight'. How do you think they do that?

14. What would have to happen for **you** specifically to stop offending and 'go straight'?
[If have already stopped offending: What happened that meant that you were able to do that?]

15. What is the greatest problem facing you in your life right now?
[Prompt: what are the main things that stress you, or that you need to get sorted?]

16. What is the greatest plus-point in your life right now?
[Prompt: The main good thing that you have going for you, that will help you achieve your goals?]

17. What do you think are your strengths as a person, such as your qualities, abilities and skills?
[Prompt: What do you like about yourself?]

17.b. What do other people say they like about you?

Section 3: Looking ahead Six Months

Let's talk a bit about what might happen over the next 6 months. We're going to start off talking about involvement in crime.

18. Do you **want** to stop getting involved in crime or do you want to continue?

[Remember this is confidential]

- Want to stop
- Want to continue
- It depends

18.b. Why?

[If answer is "want to stop offending" or "it depends"]

18. c. How much confidence do you have in your ability to stay away from crime?

- Not confident
- Slightly confident
- Reasonably confident
- Completely confident

18.d. Why?

19. Regardless of the chances of whether you get arrested or not, what are the chances that you will commit an offence 6 months from now?

- No chance
- Slight chance
- Reasonable chance
- Every chance

20. Is there anything that makes it harder for you to stay away from crime and look forward to a good future? What?

20.b. *[If not mentioned]* What about the area where you live?

20.c. *[If not mentioned]* Do you feel there are enough services for young people there?

20.d. *[If problems identified]* We've talked about all these things that make it hard for you to stay away from crime and look forward to a good future. What do you think can be done to prevent or deal with them?

21. How much do think your life will have improved six months from now?

- No improvement
- Slight improvement
- Reasonable improvement
- Massive improvement

22. What improvements and positive changes do you think there will be?

22.b. How likely is it that these things will happen?

- Impossible
- Unlikely
- Quite likely
- Definitely

22.c. Why?

22.d. [*If answer is “unlikely”*]: So what is likely to happen?

23. What could help you to make improvements and positive changes in your life?

I've finished all my questions. Thank you very much for your patience!

Comments on the interview: [Please remember to leave names out of any comments you make].