



**EVALUATION OF GLASGOW HOUSING ASSOCIATION'S YOUTH  
DIVERSIONARY PROGRAMME**

**October 2010**

**Elizabeth Aston  
Hilary Thomson  
Anne Scoular  
Ade Kearns**

**Acknowledgements:**

Hexagon Research and Consulting (Glasgow) conducted and reported on the focus groups that formed part of this research.

Nicole Lederle prepared tables reporting questionnaire data and the graphs presenting routine crime statistics in the appendices.

This evaluation was funded by Glasgow Housing Association (GHA) as part of the GoWell Programme.

**Authorship and affiliations:**

Elizabeth Aston (EA) was the researcher on this project and was based at the Medical Research Council, Social and Public Health Sciences Unit (MRC/CSO SPHSU). EA conducted the literature review, developed the evaluation methods, carried out the data collection and analysis, and prepared a first draft of this report. EA was funded by a project grant from GHA's Wider Action Framework fund.

Hilary Thomson (HT) contributed to the design, management and analysis of this project. HT is funded by the Chief Scientist Office at the Scottish Government Health Directorate as part of the Evaluating Social Interventions programme at the MRC/CSO SPHSU.

Anne Scoular (AS) and Ade Kearns (AK) contributed to the design and management of this project. AS is funded by NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde. AK is funded by the University of Glasgow.

All authors sat on the steering group for this project and all contributed to the writing of this report.

## CONTENTS

	Executive summary	1
	Abbreviations	15
1	Introduction	16
<b>PART I: AN OVERVIEW OF YOUTH DIVERSIONARY INITIATIVES</b>		
2	Review of best practice for youth diversionary initiatives	21
3	Youth Diversionary initiatives supported by GHA's Wider Action Fund	26
4	Methods of the evaluation	34
<b>PART II: EVALUATION FINDINGS</b>		
5	Understanding of the problem: residents' and stakeholders' views of local crime and anti-social behaviour	42
6	Intervention content, stated aims and theories of change	48
7	Impacts, views and experiences of the intervention	72
8	Challenges and suggested improvements for youth diversionary projects: stakeholder and young people's (participants') views	100
<b>PART III: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>		
9	Conclusion	108
10	Recommendations	111
	References	113

NB: All appendices are contained with a separate document entitled "Evaluation of Glasgow Housing Association's Youth Diversionary Programme - Appendices". To download this document go to [www.gowellonline.com](http://www.gowellonline.com)

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Introduction

Glasgow Housing Association (GHA), in addition to its role in social housing provision, is engaged in a wider range of activities intended to promote safe, inclusive and sustainable environments and enhance tenant and resident wellbeing. GHA co-funds these activities principally through its Wider Action Fund (WAF), working in partnership with tenants and homeowners, local housing organisations (LHOs) and other registered social landlords (RSLs) and a range of other agencies.

Youth diversionary projects are one dimension of the WAF programme, others include health improvement, employability, and financial inclusion initiatives. Youth diversionary projects supported by GHA vary in terms of their aims, scope, coverage, content and stage of development and range from strategic partnerships at national and citywide level to more localised level initiatives.

To assist with funding decisions in this area and to build an evidence base, GHA commissioned an evaluation of a selection of its youth diversionary programmes in 2007. This evaluation was conducted between October 2007 and November 2008 as a nested study within the wider GoWell research programme. This report is also available on the GoWell website ([www.gowellonline.com](http://www.gowellonline.com)).

### Background and aims of the evaluation of Youth Diversionary projects

Across nearly all the areas studied in GoWell, perceptions of anti-social behaviour have been worsening over time<sup>1</sup> and within this, one of the most often cited problems is 'teenagers hanging around on the street', which itself is linked to many other problems in residents' minds<sup>2</sup>. It is hoped that regeneration of the most deprived areas will help to reduce such problems through a mixture of physical and social changes which both alter opportunity structures within communities and change young people's aspirations and preferred activities.

---

<sup>1</sup> See GoWell Report *Progress for People and Places: Monitoring Change in Glasgow's Neighbourhoods*.

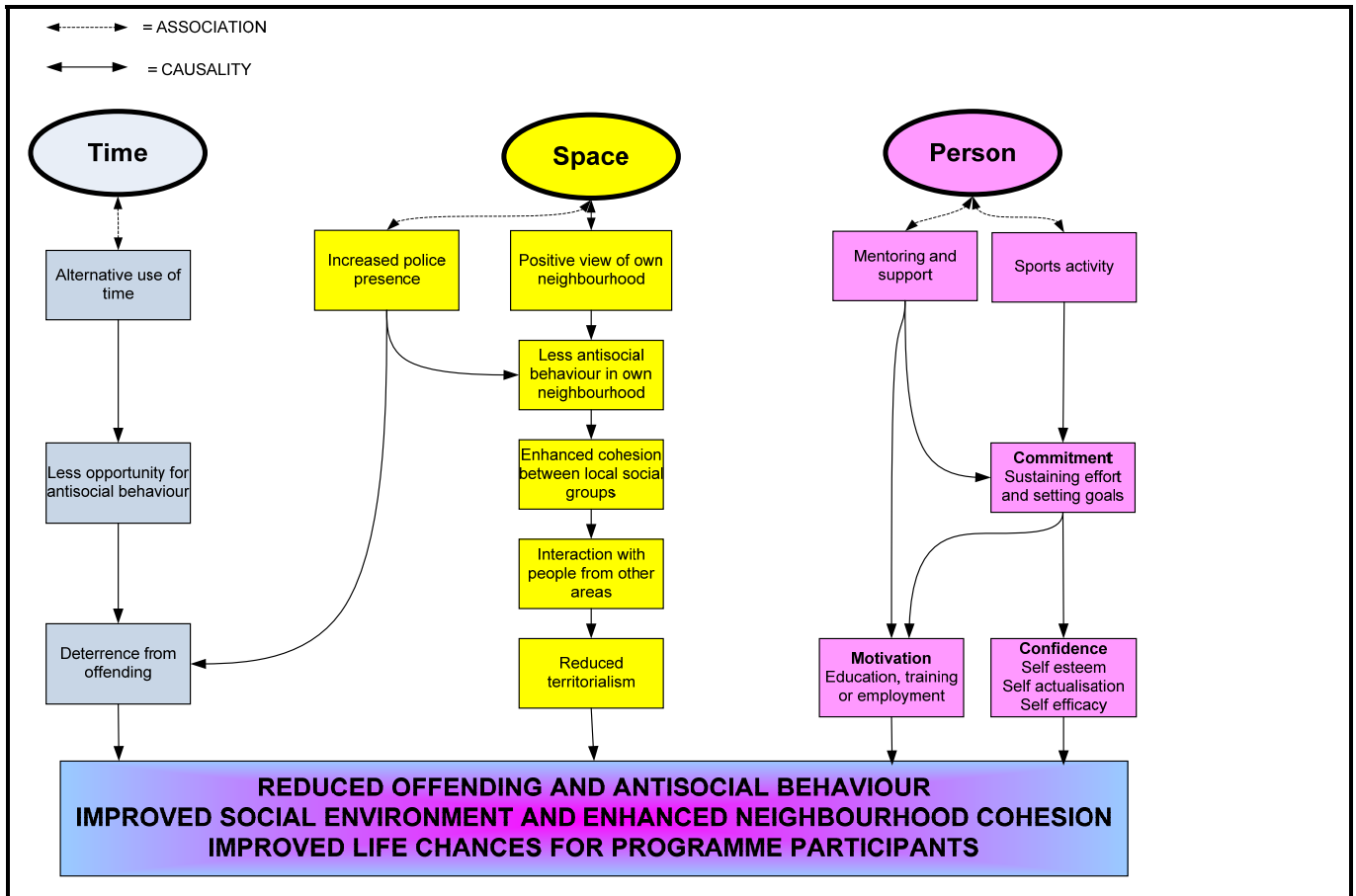
<sup>2</sup> See GoWell Briefing Paper *Who Says Teenagers are a Serious Problem?*

Regeneration will not happen to the same degree everywhere, and changes occur over a long period of time; many communities cannot wait that long for help with problems of anti-social behaviour. For these reasons, public agencies seek to intervene specifically to tackle youth-related antisocial behaviour problems in disadvantaged communities.

### The Aims and Characteristics of the Projects

In 2007/08, Glasgow Housing Association (GHA) funded 22 Youth Diversionary Projects across the city through its Wider Action Fund. The projects aimed to reduce offending and ASB; to improve the local social environment and community safety and cohesion; and to improve the life chances and opportunities of young participants. Our own understanding of the unifying logic of the programme is shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: GHA Youth Diversionary Programme: Proposed Programme Logic**



## **Evaluating GHA Youth Diversionary Programmes**

The aims and objectives of the evaluation were to:

- Gather evidence relating to best practice in youth diversionary initiatives.
- Describe GHA's portfolio of projects in relation to this best practice.
- Evaluate three selected projects in terms of their processes, outputs and outcomes for the young people themselves as well as for local residents and local organisations working in the areas.

The evaluation was also intended to contribute to GHA's learning about the programme so that both future projects, and future monitoring and evaluation of the programme and projects, can be improved.

### **Methods of the Evaluation**

The evaluation combined qualitative and quantitative research methods, studying three youth diversionary projects with different characteristics. The evaluation comprised of interviews and focus groups with project participants, local residents and stakeholders (both directly involved in the projects and others). The evaluation also involved a survey of participants and the analysis of several sources of secondary data on crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB). This incorporation of the views of local residents, young people, and project stakeholders on the performance and effects of the projects is a particular strength of the evaluation.

From the 22 Youth Diversionary projects run by GHA we selected three to study in detail:

**Operation Reclaim (OR):** Operating in five sites across the North-East of the city since summer 2007 providing coached sporting and physical activities for large numbers of young people, plus mentoring support for education, training and progression towards employment.

**Participate (P8):** Operating in the Shawbridge Estate in the South-West of the city since January 2008 providing individual level support for personal, social and educational development to ten 'disaffected' young people.

**Jedworth Avenue (JA):** Operating in the Drumchapel Estate in the North-West of the city, completing in summer 2007 providing individual level activities for six young offenders, including cognitive behavioural therapy and training opportunities.

See table 1 (below) for more detail.

**Table 1: Summary of key characteristics of the three Youth Diversionary projects included in this evaluation**

Project Name	Location	Project implementation stage (at time of evaluation)	Target group	Intervention content
<b>Operation Reclaim (OR)</b>	Five localities across North East Glasgow  Located at football training grounds with indoor and outdoor facilities	Well established: in five sites since summer 2007	All young people in five neighbourhoods , including asylum seeker and refugee sub-population	Coached sport and physical activities  Support with education, training and progression towards employment
<b>Participate (P8)</b>	Shawbridge (Single site in South West Glasgow)  Located in shopping centre in local area	Early implementation: began in Jan 2008	Local group of approximately ten 'disaffected' young people	Individual level promotion of young people's personal, social and educational development
<b>Jedworth Avenue (JA)</b>	Drumchapel (Single site in North West Glasgow)  Located in local youth centre	Completed: summer 2007	Local group of six young people who had already engaged in offending or offensive behaviour	Individual level restorative justice activities, including cognitive behaviour therapy and personalised training opportunities

As stated, the main aims of the projects are **to reduce levels of anti-social behaviour and raise the community's sense of safety**, but they also had other important, fundamental aims, namely:

- **Sustainability:** to affect long-term changes in the sustainability of tenancies and communities; and to change young people's aspirations and behaviour in the long-term.

- **Integration:** to contribute to the integration of migrant and foreign residents within communities; and to re-integrate offenders into the community.
- **Familiarity and Respect:** to reduce hostility and raise young people's familiarity with, and respect for, both people from other areas and for the police and fire services.

## Findings

### ***The Problem of Anti-social Behaviour***

The topic of anti-social behaviour (ASB) was explored with local residents through a number of focus groups. ASB involving young people was a prevalent issue according to residents, and underlying it were issues of poverty, boredom and associated alcohol misuse. However, the term 'youth diversion' was considered a bit misleading as many of those involved in causing problems for the community were reported to be people in their 20s.

Local residents thought that many young people lacked sufficient parental support and guidance, and suffered from low self esteem and lack of confidence. Thus, youth diversionary projects with personal and social development objectives were thought to be appropriate; simply keeping young people 'busy' would not provide a sustainable answer to the problem.

**Inadequate management of the local environment contributed to the opportunities for ASB.** In particular residents reported that parks, play areas and open spaces lacked supervision and sufficient maintenance.

### ***Regeneration could be both part of the problem and part of the solution***

- Derelict or empty buildings (an inevitable part of the regeneration process in some areas) provided a location for young people to gather and drink or set fires (see below). It is not clear whether levels of security around buildings was a contributory factor here.
- However, it is difficult to attribute changes in crime and anti-social behaviour to a youth diversionary programmes alone, independent of other ongoing social influences and processes (for example increased policing, CCTV, or wider environmental improvements), especially in regeneration areas where structural and social improvements are continually taking place.



### ***Characteristics of successful youth diversionary initiatives***

Through a review of the research literature we identified a number of characteristics associated with successful youth diversionary initiatives, as shown in Figure 2.

**Figure 2: Characteristics of Successful Youth Diversionary Initiatives**

<b>Planning and design</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• clarity of objectives, rationale, strategy and desired outcomes</li><li>• locally-based: founded on a clear definition of local needs, employing local staff, and adopting a 'bottom-up approach'</li><li>• young people involved in design and organisation, where possible</li><li>• medium or long-term in duration, not limited to a few months</li><li>• strong organisational culture of collaboration and multi-agency working</li></ul>
<b>Content and delivery</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• use peers or qualified outreach/street-workers</li><li>• target at-risk youth/offenders</li><li>• work in the context of other aspects of young people's lives (school, training/education, employment)</li><li>• given attention to people's wider personal and social development (e.g. cognitive skills, self-esteem and confidence)</li><li>• leisure or sporting activities should be integrated within a wider development programme</li></ul>

### ***GHA's youth diversionary initiatives***

**When measured against best practice criteria identified in the literature, the majority of GHA funded youth diversionary projects appear not to have contained many of the elements required for success.** Of the 22 youth diversionary projects which GHA fund, seven projects contained four or five of the 'success components', but a further 12 projects contained two or fewer success components – indeed, many projects had none. On this basis, there is scope for GHA and its partners to review the nature and quality of the youth diversionary projects they support.

**Nonetheless, a range of factors or characteristics were thought to enable the projects OR, JA and P8 to successfully address their aims.** The key elements that contributed to the projects' impacts, according to stakeholders and participants were:

- The diversionary effects of having something enjoyable to do.
- Team based competitions (in the case of Operation Reclaim) which enabled young people to engage with people from other areas as well as to co-operate with young people from other ethnic groups from within their own area.
- The involvement and visibility of the police and the fire service, which together provided a sense of safety and suitable role models. This also reduced hostility towards and boosted respect for these services and personnel.
- Having staff who were skilled in dealing with young people; able to communicate and build trust but also offering structure and discipline. Mature and experienced coaching staff were considered most effective in this regard.
- **Complementary and inter-agency working** which enabled both simultaneous and reinforcing action on several fronts, as well as offering referral opportunities to assist with the needs of individual participants, e.g. for advice or training and employment opportunities. Multi-agency commitment to tackling local problems in a co-ordinated way was both an important part and a by-product of the youth diversionary projects.

**Stakeholders' reported that sustained coverage, intensity, inter-agency collaboration and quality of project staff were essential to achieving and sustaining the aims of reducing ASB and improving community safety. However, only Operation Reclaim (OR) was reported to have each of these elements.**

**The impacts of the largest project, OR, may also be a function of its intensity and scale,** leading to its success in engaging large numbers of young people: a maximum of up to 15% of young people in the relevant areas of north Glasgow could attend on any one night. Nine out of ten of those participating reported attending every week, with the vast majority (85%) attending 'most days'.

**There was also widespread agreement among OR participants that they enjoyed the activities provided.** OR involved team sports which mixed people from different neighbourhoods, and involved competition and awards ceremonies which also helped boost its

impact. The former broke down territorial barriers between young people and the latter instilled a sense of pride and achievement in participants.

### ***Impacts on the Neighbourhood and Community***

A number of positive impacts of the projects upon the local neighbourhood and community were fairly consistently reported by a range of stakeholders and by the participants themselves. However, data was often not available, robust or consistent enough to corroborate these reported benefits. The most significant impacts were reported in two areas:

#### **Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour:**

- ***Reductions in incidents and reports (to official agencies) of crime and ASB.*** Residents, participants and stakeholders all reported reductions in crime and ASB, partly attributing this to the projects. Residents' focus groups in particular elicited consistent perceptions of reductions in local crime and ASB in recent years. Official crime data tended to support the notion of a recent reduction in crime levels, particularly non-violent juvenile crime from early 2007 onwards, by which time the largest project (OR) was operative in all five locations in the north of the city.
- ***Reductions in fire setting, particularly to buildings and rubbish.*** Stakeholders reported that fires and bogus calls to the fire service had reduced. We examined fire service data for the JA project area, which showed elimination of fires to buildings and of malicious calls to the fire service over a 12 month period. However, demolition of derelict buildings is also a likely reason for the reduction in fire raising.
- ***A reduction in gang activity, especially gang fights.*** This was reported consistently by residents, the police and participants; and reported in both the north of the city and the west.
- ***Resource savings, firstly to the police in respect of dealing with gang incidents and, secondly, to the Local Housing Organisations (LHOs) in respect of property repair and graffiti removal.*** One LHO estimated its spending on graffiti removal had fallen by 90% in three years. Regeneration activity and building clearance could also have contributed to these cost savings.

### **Community Social Life:**

- ***Reclaiming of public spaces for use by young people and the wider community.*** Residents and young people reported that some parks and open spaces were being made more accessible for use by the local residents. Some residents reported an increased confidence to venture outside and make use of nearby spaces. This was reported by both stakeholders and project participants.
- ***Reduced tension and hostility between youth from different ethnic groups.*** Stakeholders reported a reduction in hostility and racist incidents. However, this had not progressed to 'meaningful interaction' between youths from different ethnic backgrounds and it was reported that social segregation still existed between ethnic groups in and around the projects. The passage of time and interaction through schools were other recognised contributors to 'improved' ethnic relations.
- ***Improved police-community relations.*** Both stakeholders and participants reported an improvement in relations between the police, young people and the community as a result of police involvement in the projects.

### **Other Factors**

**There were other developments or activities which occurred during the period of operation of the youth diversionary projects which probably also impacted upon incidents of crime and ASB.** These serve as confounders when trying to attribute any success to the youth diversionary projects, but in some ways also complement the youth diversionary projects. The main other developments were:

- Increased policing and the installation of CCTV.
- Demolition and clearance processes which had two effects: reducing the opportunities for fire-setting – once buildings were down; and removing some key offender individuals and families from the area.
- Improving local expertise in dealing with ASB, particularly through the LHOs supported by GHA's Neighbour Relations Team.
- The efforts of Strathclyde Fire & Rescue service, putting on a range of school and community-based fire and safety programmes.

## ***Impacts upon Project Participants – Young People***

The impacts of the projects upon participants can be summarised in four areas:

### **Offending:**

Without systematic follow-up procedures, it was difficult for project staff to be certain about having impacts upon offending behaviours. However, staff in each project could relate accounts of particular individuals whom they had observed moving away from crime and ASB to more positive relations and endeavours.

### **Personal Development:**

Both project participants and stakeholders reported personal development gains for young people from their involvement with the projects, with most references to: improved confidence; maturity; self-esteem; a more positive attitude to life; and an interest and desire to form relationships or networks with other people.

### **Education, Training and Employment:**

Survey evidence from participants indicated that they received a range of types of help via the projects (in terms of advice, support and referrals), with most help being given in relation to sport, leisure, health and social issues. Significant proportions of participants also received help with learning and training - 31% of OR participants said they received advice on these things. Help was also provided with employment - 11% reported receiving employment support, which could mean help with job searching or with CV preparation.

It is possible that the projects had a broader effect upon participants' attitudes and motivation: a third (33%) of OR participants had started work experience since attending OR; nearly a fifth (18%) of participants had started a job; and a tenth (11%) had started a new course. However, without a comparison group of young people from similar areas and backgrounds, it is difficult to be certain about the extent of the wider impacts of the projects.

### **Health Behaviours:**

**Perhaps the most important impact of the projects is reflected in the fact that three-quarters of OR participants reported that they felt healthier and more optimistic about the future since attending the project.**

In interviews and discussions, some participants reported improved fitness and a healthier lifestyle since participating in the projects, but it is possible this is only true for the more committed participants. However, our survey of OR participants found a reported reduction in the number of evenings and weekends spent at home, possibly indicating that participants are more physically active than previously.

**The other most notable potential health-related gain was that there was a significant reduction in participants' reported frequency of drinking alcohol, perhaps due to less 'hanging around' on the street.**

Changes in participants' reported experience of, and involvement in, crime and ASB presented a mixed picture, and were not statistically significant, possibly due to the small size of the survey. Reports of being involved in fighting and stealing rose slightly, but involvement in vandalism and violence fell slightly.

## **Recommendations: Improving and Developing the Programme and Projects**

There are several key areas where issues pertaining to the effectiveness of the projects should be discussed by the sponsors:

### ***Targeting***

The two main issues here relate to gender and offender-status:

*Gender:* the projects currently recruit predominantly boys (80% of participants in OR are boys). This is insufficient given resident reports that girls are also engaging in ASB. **Girls in general may also benefit from the activities and support offered by the projects.**

*Offender-Status:* some projects target offenders and others do not, but are open to all local young people. These two approaches offer different benefits to participants and to the community. However, stakeholders in both OR and P8 advocated **the benefits of mixing offenders with non-offenders**, namely that: it weakens the gang dynamic among offenders; it

gives offenders the opportunity to change their behaviours through mixing with others; and it avoids non-offenders feeling that offending is subsequently rewarded with enjoyable activities.

There is also an issue of *Age*. The broader the age range, the harder it is for projects to provide suitable activities for everyone. Yet, local reports indicate that **older young people (aged 20 and above) should also be included** because they are the source of many local problems.

The indications of community level effects, for example on crime and ASB, were strongest in the case of OR, and here it is worth noting that these impacts may have come as a result of the project's much larger *scale*. Stakeholders argued that **the scale of OR delivered benefits** because positive peer influence was more likely to operate among participants, and it created a 'virtuous circle' of increasing levels of local participation in OR rather than gangs.

### ***Activities***

**The activities provided in the largest project, OR, are predominantly sports-based and mostly male-oriented. This currently limits the attractiveness of the project for girls. Furthermore, most projects do not currently provide a lot of personal and social development (PSD) activity** to many of their participants, though all provide some personal development and advice. This is an area that merits strengthening in all funded projects, taking advantage of the fact that more enjoyable activities manage to attract young people (including the disaffected), to the projects in the first place.

### ***Monitoring***

**Project activity and monitoring information available from Youth Diversionary Projects funded by GHA could be improved in coverage and quality to enhance future evaluations.**

In addition, consideration should be given to establishing consistency in the collection and recording of ASB incident data, including repairs and vandalism by social landlords (LHOs and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)). **A planned and systematic approach to the use of local crime data to evaluate the impact of youth diversionary projects is essential.** This would have to involve a comparison of trends in crime data for project areas, with trends for a number of similarly deprived non-project areas in the same part of the city (e.g. north Glasgow).

### ***Stakeholder Involvement***

**Several stakeholders professed their interest in being given more information on a regular basis about the projects, and getting more involved in the projects.** This would

offer the projects both promotional opportunities (there was some lack of awareness of the projects among residents), and a greater range of support mechanisms for participants through partners.

### ***Coverage and Duration***

Several aspects of coverage and duration were evident as issues for the projects. First, should the projects operate on Saturday evenings as well as weekday evenings? There were some reports by participants that they engaged in ASB when the projects were not running, and police stakeholders thought **weekend operation would be desirable**. Second, **there were other local areas**, especially where gangs operated, that would benefit from the projects. Third, some of the projects were short-term or seasonal, and yet **there were clearly benefits from the sustained duration** of OR.

### **Limitations of the Evaluation**

**The evaluation faced a number of difficulties which limit its ability to make very strong, generalisable conclusions.** These drawbacks include the following:

- The fact that only three of 22 projects were studied, although one of these was the most extensive, multi-site project, Operation Reclaim.
- The lack of a prior baseline position for the project areas.
- The lack of a control or contrast (non-project) area in the study.
- The non-availability and narrow range of types of project data available for examination.
- The incomplete and inconsistent nature of the secondary data available, as well as the small number of recorded incidents for tightly defined areas, reducing the robustness of the data analysis.
- The modest size of the participants' survey (63 completed and useable forms).

### **Questions and Uncertainties about Impacts**

A number of **uncertainties remain about the effectiveness of the projects** in delivering the range of impacts reported. The main unanswered questions are:



- Whether some impacts (e.g. reductions in vandalism or alcohol consumption) are maintained on evenings when the projects are not operational.
- Whether impacts will be sustained over time, particularly if projects cease to operate.
- Whether reductions in crime and ASB are greater than in other similar areas of the city which do not have youth diversionary projects operating.
- Whether some problems (e.g. gang activity) are displaced to other locations.
- Whether attitudinal and behavioural changes (e.g. to other areas and to people from other places) are also evident outside the context of the projects, i.e. when young people are free to make choices in their own time.

These **issues of displacement, sustainability and extension of impacts** are not ones which this study can answer within the resources, methodologies and information available and therefore future research would benefit from considering these issues.

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>ASB:</b>	<b>Anti-social behaviour</b>
<b>GHA:</b>	<b>Glasgow Housing Association</b>
<b>GNRA:</b>	<b>Glasgow North Regeneration Agency</b>
<b>JA:</b>	<b>Jedworth Avenue youth diversionary project</b>
<b>LHO:</b>	<b>Local Housing Association</b>
<b>OR:</b>	<b>Operation Reclaim youth diversionary project</b>
<b>P8:</b>	<b>Participate youth diversionary project</b>
<b>PSD:</b>	<b>Personal and social development</b>
<b>QPRs:</b>	<b>Quarterly Progress Reports</b>
<b>MRC/CSO SPHSU:</b>	<b>Medical Research Council/ Chief Scientist Office Social and Public Health Sciences Unit</b>
<b>RSL:</b>	<b>Registered Social Landlord</b>
<b>WAF:</b>	<b>Wider Action Fund</b>
<b>YDP:</b>	<b>Youth development programme (part of Operation Reclaim)</b>

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background and purpose of report

Glasgow Housing Association (GHA), in addition to its role in social housing provision, is actively engaged in a wider range of activities intended to promote safe, inclusive and sustainable environments and enhance tenant and community wellbeing. GHA co-funds these activities principally through its Wider Action Fund (WAF), working in partnership with tenants and homeowners, local housing organisations (LHO), registered social landlords (RSL) and a range of other agencies as appropriate. With a budget of over £3 million, the WAF supports a large variety of projects, ranging from health improvement, life skills development, employability, community safety and financial inclusion initiatives.

Youth diversionary projects are an important dimension of the WAF programme. GHA's youth diversionary programme has developed incrementally in response to concerns expressed by residents about anti-social behaviour (ASB) associated with young people, including vandalism, graffiti, damage to property and groups of individuals gathering in public places and/or harassing others. It operates at several levels, ranging from strategic partnerships at national and citywide level, to provision of an extensive range of youth diversionary activities in partnership with LHOs. Youth diversionary projects supported by GHA at a local level vary enormously in their aims, scope, coverage, content and stage of development. Whilst some of these projects involve large numbers of young people, delivering a comprehensive range of recreational activities (e.g. sport, dance, art, drama, IT), other projects are much more focused and targeted, working more intensively with smaller groups of young people to reduce their offending behaviour or to address highly specific local cultural issues, such as gang culture or territorialism. Overall the central objectives of youth diversionary work are twofold; firstly, to provide alternative activities to divert young people away from ASB; and secondly, to improve community safety.

In recognition of the importance placed on the youth diversionary initiative and also acknowledging that the range of initiatives presents a range of potential investment options, GHA was keen that funding decisions in this area could be informed by evidence. Accordingly, GHA commissioned an evaluation of selected components of its youth diversionary programme in 2007. This report sets out the main findings of this work.

The evaluation was conducted between October 2007 and November 2008 and was one of several nested studies within the wider 'GoWell' research programme. 'GoWell', a collaborative partnership between the Glasgow Centre for Population Health, the University of Glasgow and the MRC/CSO Social and Public Health Sciences Unit, is a long term study of the health and wellbeing impacts of a substantial programme of housing investment, regeneration and neighbourhood renewal, implemented incrementally across Glasgow from 2006 onwards ([www.gowellonline.com](http://www.gowellonline.com))

The primary aims of this evaluation were to:

- assess the processes, outputs and outcomes of selected youth diversionary projects;
- evaluate the projects' impacts on perceived community safety and wellbeing in the targeted neighbourhoods; and,
- identify any adverse consequences associated with project delivery.

In addition, the evaluation had the following secondary aims:

- to enhance GHA's organisational learning in respect of its current youth diversionary portfolio;
- to develop a consistent framework to inform evaluation of GHA's youth diversionary work; and,
- to build a robust evidence base for prioritisation of its future funding decisions.

The research was conducted by Dr Elizabeth Aston at the MRC/CSO SPHSU, in collaboration with Hilary Thomson (MRC/CSO SPHSU), Dr Anne Scoular (previously

MRC/CSO SPHSU, now NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde) and Professor Ade Kearns (Department of Urban Studies, University of Glasgow). Professor Mark Petticrew (previously MRC SPHSU, now London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine) supervised the original research specification.

## **1.2 Evaluation objectives**

The objectives of the evaluation were:

- To gather evidence relating to best practice in youth diversionary initiatives, with respect to their design, implementation and effectiveness
- To describe GHA's portfolio of local youth diversionary projects in relation to best practice
- To conduct an impact evaluation of three selected projects on project participants and communities, with a particular focus on
  - young people's behaviour
  - local residents' perceptions of community safety and cohesion
  - organisations working in the local area
  - levels of ASB and crime

## **1.3 Definition of youth diversionary interventions**

For the purpose of this report, we defined youth diversionary interventions as a range of services intended to divert young people away from potential or previous involvement in criminal and ASB, engaging them and their interest, and enhancing their knowledge, life-skills and experience

## **1.4 Outline of report**

This report comprises three main parts. **Part I** adopts a wide-ranging perspective, beginning with an overview of best practice in youth diversionary initiatives, derived from a rapid review of the literature. This informed our design of a framework for appraisal of

GHA's existing portfolio of youth diversionary initiatives and created the rationale for selection of suitable projects which would undergo detailed evaluation. In **Part II**, we present the findings of the detailed evaluation of three discrete projects, each at a different stage of maturation and delivering different types of interventions. Findings cover impacts on the local community, impacts on participants and views of the youth diversionary projects. In **Part III**, we return to the broader perspective of GHA at an organisational level, where we consider the strengths and limitations of the evaluative work and review the implications of the findings for future planning and evaluation of youth diversionary interventions in Glasgow.

## **PART 1: AN OVERVIEW OF YOUTH DIVERSIONARY INITIATIVES**

Part I is presented in three chapters and provides:

- a summary of available literature relating to best practice in youth diversionary initiatives and prevention of youth offending;
- an overview of youth diversionary projects supported by GHA; and
- an outline of the methods used for this evaluation and the selection of the projects included in the evaluation.

## 2. REVIEW OF BEST PRACTICE FOR YOUTH DIVERSIONARY INITIATIVES

### 2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we provide a synopsis of best practice in youth diversionary initiatives, derived from a rapid review of the literature. The principal purpose of the literature review was to create a suitable framework for appraisal of GHA's current range of youth diversionary projects and inform the selection of projects for more detailed evaluation.

### 2.2 Best practice for youth diversionary projects: programme planning and design

Previous research investigating the success of youth diversionary projects points to the importance of three aspects of programme design: responsiveness to clearly defined local needs; clarity of objectives; and intervention breadth and duration.

#### 2.2.1 Responsive to clearly defined local needs

Firstly, it is important that a systematic assessment of community need is conducted at the outset, and that activities informed by these are locally based (Coalter et al, 2000, DfEE, 1996). A 'bottom up approach' is recommended, where young people (not just older adults) are involved in influencing the programme's overall design, the nature of the provision, or the organisation of a constituent element (Coalter et al, 2000, DfEE 1996, Hutchinson et al, 2001, Schulman, 2006). This approach also encourages young people to participate and potentially empowers participants.

#### 2.2.2 Clarity of programme objectives

Secondly, the most promising programmes are generally governed by a clear rationale and strategy for achieving their objectives (Utting, 1996; Hutchinson et al, 2001). It is important to have a clear understanding of **how** projects are expected to achieve their objectives and to understand the relationship between inputs, intermediate outcomes (psychological changes) and final outcomes (changed behaviour) (Coalter et al, 2000:



31). However, with respect to youth diversionary activity, three common difficulties have been reported. Firstly, objectives are often vague; secondly, there is often little explicit discussion of the theoretical basis on which projects might achieve these rather vague objectives; and, thirdly, their measurement can prove challenging at a community level (Coalter et al 2000). A report from The Department of Education and Employment (DfEE, 1996) suggested that the most effective programmes involved practical, straightforward plans with clearly defined intended outcomes and an explanation of how the proposed project would reduce the likelihood of young people committing offences. It is important for all parties involved (young people, their families and those running the projects) to be clear about the objectives of the programme.

### **2.2.3 Breadth and duration of intervention**

Finally, a range of diversionary activities and longer-term strategies should be employed, rather than narrow, time-limited interventions (Coalter et al, 2000). Utting (1996) suggested that the most promising programmes are concerned with the wider practical aspects of young people's everyday lives, including school attendance, maximising training and employability opportunities and enhancing life skills. Follow-up work with participants in their own communities is recommended.

### **2.3 Best practice for youth diversionary projects: programme content and delivery**

Three aspects of programme content and delivery may be important in determining the success of youth diversionary programmes. These include appropriate use of structure, flexibility of delivery approaches and delivery by skilled youth workers.

Witt and Crompton (1996) concluded that young people in structured activity programmes showed more improvements in a range of key outcome scores, compared with those in less structured activities. However, Coalter et al (2000) observed that programmes aimed at at-risk youth are unlikely to succeed if they are run along conventional/traditional lines. The use of peers or outreach/street-workers and having a flexible approach are both important components in reaching at-risk youth (Crompton

and Witt, 1997). Qualified youth workers with skills to build up relationships of trust with young people have been an important component of previous successful youth diversionary projects (DfEE, 1996). Recruiting sports leaders from the local area and making sports leadership coaching courses available provides training and employment opportunities and can be helpful in ensuring longer term sustainability of a project.

#### **2.4 Impact of youth diversionary activities on criminal activity**

There are many theories about the various causes of juvenile delinquency, and multiple psychosocial risk factors associated with the propensity to commit crime (Utting 1996, Asquith et al 1998). Clearly, expectations of the ability of youth diversionary interventions to address these complex, multiple and interacting risk factors should be realistic. However, it is difficult to attribute any positive outcomes to a youth diversionary programme independent of other ongoing social influences and processes (for example increased policing, CCTV, or wider environmental improvements), especially in regeneration areas where structural and social improvements are continually taking place.

Coalter et al suggested that 'large scale diversionary projects tend to have vague rationales, overly-ambitious objectives and a limited understanding of the variety and complexity of the causes of criminality.' (Coalter et al, 2000: 2). However, as highlighted above, the more promising programmes are distinguished by a clear rationale and strategy for achieving stated objectives (Utting, 1996; Hutchinson et al, 2001).

Utting (1996) asserts that if youth diversionary programmes are to achieve more than simply providing short-term alternatives to opportunity-led crime, they must achieve at least some of the following changes from baseline among the intervention recipients:

- improvements in cognitive social skills (see also Asquith et al, 1998);
- reductions in impulsiveness and risk-taking behaviour;
- raised self-esteem and self-confidence;

- improvements in education and employment prospects.

Finally, there is evidence that targeting priority groups and individuals at risk, or actual offenders, results in a reduced propensity to offend and/or a significant reduction in crime figures in the intervention area (Ruiz, 2004; DfEE, 1996).

## **2.5 The effectiveness of sports based interventions**

Sporting and leisure activities are a common component of youth diversionary programmes. In reviewing the evidence base in this area, Ruiz (2004) concluded that 'although no research has demonstrated a *causal* relationship between participation in arts, culture and sport activities and a reduction in offending behaviour, national and international research and evaluation has demonstrated a link between the two.' (Ruiz 2004: 148).

Sport alone is unlikely to reduce offending, but it is thought that involvement in sporting activities can improve personal and social outcomes that may reduce offending behaviour. Sporting activities may go beyond creating a simple 'diversion' from criminal behaviour, facilitating additional learning, personal and social skills and potentially providing routes into further education and employment, all of which are linked with a reduced propensity to offend. Sport-based interventions are likely to be most effective when combined with multi-faceted programmes addressing wider social development (Coalter et al, 2000).

## **2.6 Conclusions from rapid literature review**

The overall conclusions from this rapid review of the literature suggest that by tackling the longer term or wider social causes of crime, rather than shorter term or opportunity based factors, programmes may achieve a more sustainable impact on offending. An approach that integrates the activity (arts or sports) into wider social programmes; combines multifaceted aspects of personal and social development; and encourages

collaboration and multi-agency working, is likely to work best (Coalter et al, 2000). Multi-agency involvement must also have a clear sense of purpose (DfEE, 1996), and agencies involved must be committed to this co-operation (Utting,1996).

## **2.7 Summary**

We identified the following factors associated with successful youth diversionary initiatives:

- Planning and design
  - clarity of objectives, rationale, strategy and desired outcomes
  - locally-based: founded on a clear definition of local needs, employing local staff, and adopting a ‘bottom–up approach’
  - young people involved in design and organisation, where possible
  - medium or long-term in duration, not limited to a few months
  - strong organisational culture of collaboration and multi-agency working
- Content and delivery
  - use peers or qualified outreach/street-workers
  - target at-risk youth/offenders
  - work in the context of other aspects of young people’s lives (school, training /education, employment)
  - give attention to people’s wider personal and social development (e.g. cognitive skills, self-esteem and confidence)
  - leisure or sporting activities should be integrated within a wider development programme

### **3. YOUTH DIVERSIONARY INITIATIVES SUPPORTED BY GHA'S WIDER ACTION FUND (WAF)**

This chapter describes how the projects included in the evaluation were selected, and provides a brief description of the three projects' approach and content (further details of each project content and aims are presented in Chapter 6). Informed by the literature review, we have developed a programme logic model (Figure 3.1) outlining three key pathways through which Glasgow Housing Association (GHA)'s youth diversionary projects may lead to reduced criminal and anti-social behaviour (ASB). This is presented in Section 3.2.

#### **3.1 Identification of suitable projects for inclusion**

It was acknowledged that the entire programme of youth diversionary projects funded by GHA could not be evaluated in the given time. The project steering group engaged in a detailed discussion about how projects could be selected, with the decision that this should be based on promising projects, rather than an attempt to be representative of the totality of projects. Nevertheless, it was also felt important to locate the limited number of projects which would ultimately be evaluated within the wider organisational context of the programme as a whole. To characterise this wider context, information relating to all 22 youth diversionary projects currently funded by GHA's Wider Action Fund (WAF) was amassed. This information was derived from four principal data sources:

- WAF application forms
- Quarterly Progress Reports (QPRs)
- Annual Progress Reports
- Information from a meeting with WAF Regeneration Officers

Data on all 22 youth diversionary projects across Glasgow currently funded by GHA were entered into an Excel spreadsheet. Recorded details included the project name; hosting LHO; operational area; objectives; activities; outcomes; target population; relevant practical arrangements; implementation date; and progress notes. A matrix

(Appendix 1) summarising intervention content, target group and constituent elements of good practice in youth diversion (as defined by the literature review), was developed, and projects were ranked according to the number of elements of good practice they contained. Five of the 22 projects contained five elements of good practice and 12 included two or less elements.

Three projects were selected by the project steering group for more detailed evaluation. The three projects are described in Table 3.1 below. Each of these projects were located in the GoWell study areas and were selected to represent the different approaches to youth diversion with respect to target group, intervention approach, and stages of implementation as well as being projects which incorporated five elements of good practice in youth diversion.

**Table 3.1: Youth diversionary projects selected for more detailed evaluation**

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Project implementation stage</b>	<b>Target group</b>	<b>Intervention content</b>
<b>Operation Reclaim (OR)</b>	5 localities across North East Glasgow  Located at football training grounds with indoor and outdoor facilities	Well established: in five sites since Summer 2007	All young people in five neighbourhoods, including asylum seeker and refugee sub-population	Coached sport and physical activities  Support with education, training and progression towards employment
<b>Participate (P8)</b>	Shawbridge (Single site in South West Glasgow)  Located in run-down shopping centre in local area	Early implementation: due to start Jan 2008	Local group of approximately ten 'disaffected' young people	Individual level promotion of young people's personal, social and educational development
<b>Jedworth Avenue (JA)</b>	Drumchapel (Single site in North West Glasgow)  Located in local youth centre	Completed: Summer 2007	Local group of six young people who have already engaged in offending or offensive behaviour	Individual level restorative justice activities, including cognitive behaviour therapy and personalised training opportunities

**Operation Reclaim (OR):** OR is located in five neighbourhoods across North Glasgow. The project is open to all local young people, and operates every week-night during the summer months (June-August) and three nights a week throughout the rest of the year, primarily providing sports and physical activities. In addition to reducing young people's involvement in ASB by providing alternative activities, OR aims to improve relationships between young people from different ethnic groups, reduce territorialism, and support young people to pursue training, education and employment. OR also includes a training programme (Youth Development Programme (YDP)) to train a selection of young people to become sports coaches. In 2008 around 12 young people took part in the Youth Development Programme; four of these young people completed the programme successfully and became paid coaches with OR.

**Participate (P8):** P8 was developed in the Shawbridge area of South West Glasgow, in response to concerns expressed by tenants about youth disorder, together with observations from police statistics that suggested an increasing trend in youth offending in the locality. P8 was still under development when the evaluation started and although it was hoped that the project would be underway by January 2008, continuing difficulties with staff recruitment resulted in delays in this project. The project planned to target around ten disaffected young people at an individual level and involved a mix of formal and informal activities, including pool and football intended to encourage participants to socialise together.

**Jedworth Avenue (JA):** The JA project was a small project of eight weeks' duration over the summer of 2007. The project targeted six young people who were involved in offending and/or ASB in a particular neighbourhood on the Drumchapel estate. The project was delivered in partnership by several local agencies. Senior housing and police representatives visited the target group in their homes, informing participants and their parents of the risk of eviction if the offending behaviour continued. This approach was intended to emphasise the seriousness of the young person's offending behaviour. Young people were challenged about their offending behaviour and its impact by the

local youth project and Restorative Justice Services contributed both to group work and to one-to-one sessions with young people.

Further details about what each of the projects entailed, the stated aims, implementation, attendance, and activities undertaken by the participants are presented in Chapter 6.

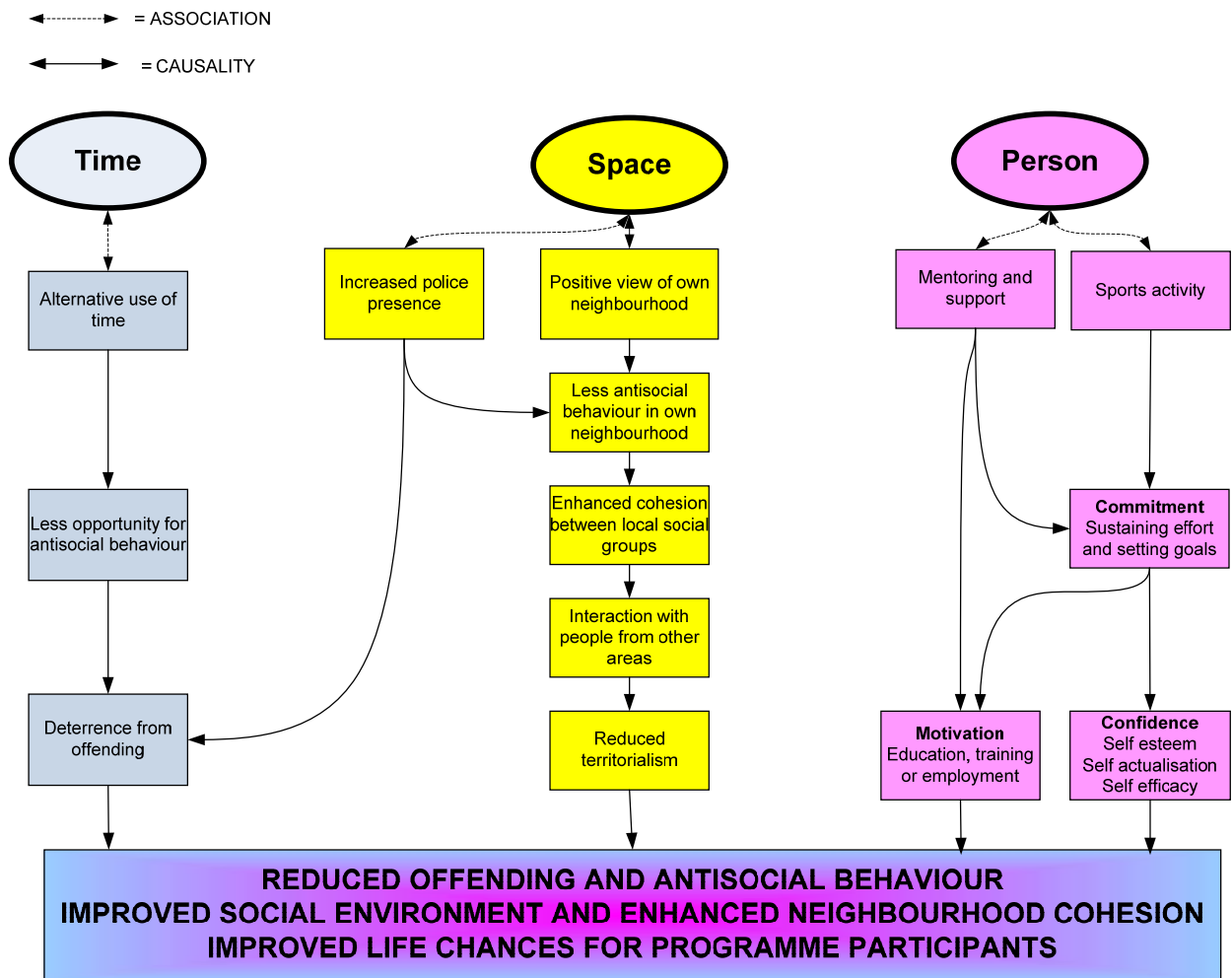
### **3.2 GHA Youth Diversionary Programme: unifying programme logic**

The stated aims of each individual project and their expected mechanisms for change (programme logic) are outlined in Section 6.2, where these are considered in the context of the experiences and perceptions of project staff, participants and other stakeholders. Below, we outline the programme logic for the youth diversionary projects at the broader level of the WAF, with particular reference to the local projects included in the evaluation.

GHA's youth diversionary programme aims to contribute to better quality of life in its neighbourhoods by enhancing community safety. The specific mechanisms by which it achieves this are often not explicit, but implied with varying levels of clarity within project plans. We developed a programme logic model from documentary analysis of the project specifications and planning processes associated with the three youth diversionary projects we evaluated in detail. The programme logic developed is informed by the review of literature on best practice in youth diversion) (Chapter 2) and comprises a set of possible causal pathways through which the youth diversionary projects appear to contribute to the community safety agenda, which can be conceptualised as a set of three change processes operating on time, space and personal dimensions (Figure 3.1).



**Figure 3.1: GHA Youth Diversionary Programme: Proposed programme Logic**



**3.2.1 Time dimension:** this assumes that positive use of leisure time leaves less time to engage in ASB. By providing positive alternatives to offending behaviour for young people, both P8 and OR aim to improve community safety and, via the same mechanism, prevent young people’s involvement with the justice system. By providing activities that meet the needs of young people in a safe place, the project aims to reduce levels of youth disorder, vandalism, gang fighting and fear of crime. This aim is underpinned by the rationale that reducing the amount of leisure time young people spend unsupervised is likely to decrease levels of involvement in risky activities. Fitzpatrick (1998) reported that leisure was central to the quality of life of young people, as a key source of friendship, networks and self-identity. Relevant leisure opportunities were the most frequently mentioned life-enhancing asset among young people.

However, for those in deprived areas, access to leisure was often regarded as expensive, too far away from their locality, not open at weekends or did not appeal to women. If youth diversionary interventions can deliver accessible and acceptable leisure opportunities that achieve adequate coverage in the target population, they are likely to reduce the available opportunities for young people to engage in ASB. Young people in Larson et al's 2006 research reported higher rates of negative influences and peer dynamics in their interactions with friends than in organised activities. As Robins points out, diversionary sports programmes may, at their most basic, achieve 'the casual integration of youth at risk in order to reduce delinquency rates by encouraging the positive use of their leisure time' (Robins 1990: 19).

However, as illustrated in Figure 3.1, it is possible that OR may achieve its outcomes through a range of possible interacting mechanisms. Levels of offending may have reduced for example, as a result of the police presence rather than through the diversionary activity alone. Flint and Kearns' (2005) evaluation of a Community Policing Initiative found that levels of complaints about ASB were significantly reduced during additional patrol times.

**3.2.2 Space dimension:** All three projects aimed to engender positive views of their own area among young people, as a means of reducing ASB in the locality. OR specifically aimed to stop recreation grounds being used for running battles between youths. By organising competitions between groups of young people from five areas, OR also aimed to encourage interaction with people from adjacent localities, thereby addressing territorialism issues. In working with different groups in the community, P8 sought to promote understanding, active citizenship and community cohesion, including integration of the large asylum seeker/refugee population. The use of physical space for sporting activities may have additional wider benefits; as Coalter et al (2000) pointed out, sports facilities can provide a social focus for a community, improving people's perceptions of their neighbourhood and thus enhancing perceived quality of life for all residents of defined geographical communities.

**3.2.3 Person dimension:** All three projects aimed to reduce offending behaviour through working with individual young people, albeit with varying levels of intensity, on their personal and social development. In the case of OR, this involved tacit acknowledgement of the fact that young people should be encouraged to move along a defined progression path to volunteering, education or employment. OR also advised and supported young people with employability issues and could refer them on to relevant provision when appropriate. However, given the very large number of young people with whom OR engaged, this was a secondary objective, rather than the project's prime focus. P8 used a Community Learning and Development approach in its engagement approaches to a much smaller target group of young people. Its structured personal development activities aimed to facilitate personal, social and educational development as a route to education, training and employment and ultimately to prevention of ASB. Finally, the JA project, in its work with a small target group of young people who were already engaged in offending or offensive behaviour, aimed to help its participants understand how their behaviour affected the wider community and individuals within it. Individual level restorative justice activities, including cognitive behaviour therapy and personalised training opportunities, for example fire safety training courses, were used to address offending and offensive behaviour.

There is evidence from the literature that working with young people on their personal and social development in the manner described in these three projects, can achieve a beneficial impact on youth offending and ASB (Ruiz, 2004; Larson et al, 2006). Sports in particular showed high rates of experiences related to sustaining effort and setting goals, although sports were also associated with higher levels of stress among young people (although these rates of stress were similar to those reported by young people in the contexts of their school classes, friends and jobs).

Finally, beyond the various interacting influences within the interventions themselves, there are likely to have been a variety of other emergent social influences and processes (for example increased policing, CCTV, or wider environmental

improvements) in the community, that may have impacted on levels of offending behaviour.

### **3.3 Summary**

- 22 youth diversionary projects funded by GHA were ranked according to their constituent elements of good practice, derived from the literature review (Chapter 2). Five projects contained five aspects of good practice (as outlined in the literature review), all other projects contained fewer than five elements.
- Three projects were selected for more detailed evaluation: these projects represented a range of approaches to youth diversion, incorporated key elements of good practice, and were located in the GoWell study areas.
- A unifying programme logic was developed for the three youth diversionary projects evaluated in detail. This describes three sets of causal pathways through which the youth diversionary projects may achieve their desired outcomes, acting upon dimensions of time, space and the person.

## 4. METHODS OF THE EVALUATION

This chapter describes the evaluation methods used to assess the impacts of the Youth Diversionary projects. While we endeavoured to obtain quantitative and qualitative data for each project, this was not always possible. A brief description of some of limitations of the data and the implications for the evaluation conclusion is also presented.

### 4.1 Overview of methodology

Three Youth Diversionary projects were selected for evaluation. The content of each of these projects and the rationale for their selection is described in Chapter 3. The three projects were selected to represent different approaches to youth diversion and had different target groups, intervention content and were at different stages of implementation. Although the same broad methodological approach was used for each project, this had to be adapted according to the availability of data and stage of each project. In addition, the specific questions being asked of each project differed slightly to be appropriate to the project's content and approach.

The evaluation gathered a range of quantitative data to assess levels of participation and the possible impacts of the projects. In addition, qualitative data was gathered to describe how participants, residents and workers experienced the interventions, as well as how project staff and stakeholders viewed the project, comparing the stated aims with what they thought the project could realistically achieve. Table 4.1 summarises the data sources we successfully accessed for each project. As the JA project was ended and P8 was not yet fully implemented it was difficult to conduct a full evaluation of these projects, and some of the data we hoped to access for each project was not available. In the case of OR, we gathered data relating to each of the five sites where the project operates.

**Table 4.1: Summary of data sources for evaluation, by project**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Operation Reclaim (OR)</b>	<b>Jedworth Avenue (JA)</b>	<b>Participate (P8)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Quantitative data</b>				
<b>Project activity</b>	Y		Y (All) *	* 2 participants
<b>Participant questionnaires</b>	80*			* low levels of completion
<b>Local Housing Organisation routine data</b>	Y	Y	Y	Data on repairs related to anti-social behaviour
<b>Routine crime statistics</b>	Y	Y	Y	
<b>Routine fire statistics</b>		Y		
<b>Qualitative data</b>				
<b>Participants (Interviews)</b>	3*		2 (All)	* Youth Development Programme participants
<b>Participants (Focus groups)</b>	2*			* 6 participants in each focus group
<b>Residents (Focus groups)</b>	5		1	Conducted and analysed by Hexagon Research & Consulting, Edinburgh
<b>Stakeholders (Interviews)</b>	11*	6 (All)	5 (All)	* Selected stakeholders representing 5 sites

#### **4.2 Quantitative data sources**

The quantitative measures were intended to evaluate the uptake and effect size of the interventions at all seven sites. However, for the reasons outlined below and further discussed in Section 4.4, data were not provided by all projects, with resultant gaps in the evaluation of these aspects.

#### **4.2.1 Project activity**

**OR:** Project attendance data were obtained from all five project sites for three timepoints; July 2007, January 2008 and July 2008. These were stratified by gender, age and ethnic group. Additional project data on progression through the project, referrals to outside agencies and personal action plans were unavailable.

**JA:** Project records had been archived and were not available to the evaluation.

**P8:** Project records were only available for two participants at the time of the evaluation.

#### **4.2.2 Participant questionnaires**

**OR:** Participants in the five OR sites were asked to complete a questionnaire, which elicited information on use of leisure time, involvement in anti-social behaviour (ASB), views of and involvement with OR (Appendix 5). It had been estimated that questionnaires would be administered to 150 participants across the five sites (30 per site). However, due to heavy rain and the screening of the European Cup (football competition), attendance at OR was lower than expected during the study period and only 80 participants agreed to participate in the survey. In addition, eight questionnaires were incomplete, six were answered inappropriately, and three were excluded as respondents were under 12 years of age. Overall, 63 of the 80 questionnaires distributed could be included in the final analysis.

**JA:** the project had ended by the time of the evaluation, therefore administration of a survey was not possible.

**P8:** the project had not yet been fully implemented at conclusion of the evaluation and it was not appropriate to conduct a questionnaire survey at this stage in the project.

#### **4.2.3 Local Housing Organisation (LHO) routine data**

We sought data from LHOs on repairs following vandalism and ASB complaints by residents, for the purposes of analysing temporal trends in relation to the youth diversionary projects in each locality. However, these data did not exist in a form that enabled analysis; available data related to whole LHOs, rather than the local areas pertinent to each project. In addition, data were not entered in pre-defined categories, with inconsistent recording between staff. Finally, the age of perpetrators of deliberate damage to property was rarely recorded.

#### **4.2.4 Other routine data sources**

Data on reported crime in all three localities were provided by Strathclyde Police. Fires were a key focus of the JA project, so that data from Strathclyde Fire and Rescue Service was collected and analysed for the JA neighbourhood (but not OR or P8 neighbourhoods).

### **4.3 Qualitative data sources**

Interviews and focus groups were conducted to obtain the views of project participants, local residents, project staff and stakeholders.

#### **4.3.1 Semi-structured interviews with project participants**

These interviews included questions about participants' views and involvement with the youth diversionary projects, use of leisure time and involvement in ASB, involvement in training or progress towards gaining employment, and participants own perceptions of the impact of the project on their own lives (see Appendices 2 and 3 for full interview schedules). The interview schedules were adapted as appropriate to the different projects and their content.

**OR:** Three young people from OR who participated in the Youth Development Programme (YDP) (see Chapter 6.1.1) were interviewed. All three were currently employed by OR as coaches as a result of their participation in the YDP.



**JA:** None of the six participants from the JA project was able to be contacted for interview as the project had completed almost a year previously.

**P8:** Face-to-face interviews were undertaken with the only two participants who were engaging with P8 during the fieldwork period.

#### **4.3.2 Focus group discussions with project participants:**

Two focus groups with OR participants were conducted, involving six participants in each group. The focus groups were used to explore the following:

- Participants' views and involvement in OR
- Whether participants feel they are appropriately advised and supported by project staff
- Participants' relationship to and involvement in the wider community
- Participants' use of leisure time and involvement in ASB

(see Appendix 4 for full focus group schedule)

**4.3.3 Focus group discussions with area residents:** Focus groups with local residents were conducted in each of the five OR neighbourhoods, and also in the P8 neighbourhood. 100 households in each relevant LHO area were sent invitations to participate in the focus group; each focus group consisted of four-six local residents.

The focus group discussion included questions about:

- Perceptions of levels of youth disorder in the area
- Perceptions of community safety
- Fear of crime
- Community cohesion and relationships between different groups in the community]

(see Appendices 6 and 7 for focus group topic guides) <sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> The residents' focus groups were conducted and analysed by Hexagon Research and Consulting. The methods and focus group topic guide were developed in discussion with Dr E Aston and H Thomson of the MRC/CSO Social and Public Health Sciences Unit, Glasgow. A full report detailing the methods and providing more detailed findings is available.

#### **4.3.4 Semi-structured interviews with other stakeholders**

Interviews were conducted with stakeholders from all three projects. Stakeholders interviewed included LHO representatives, police, staff involved in delivering the project and staff from other local organisations. All of the relevant stakeholders were interviewed in the JA and P8 projects but only a selection in the OR areas. OR operates across five sites and key stakeholders representing the different agencies involved in the project were selected for interview. The stakeholder interviews included questions about:

- their own involvement with the project
- whether disaffected young people (or those involved in ASB) have been attending the projects
- whether they perceive there has been a change to levels of youth disorder and community safety
- whether the impact of youth disorder on organisations e.g. LHO or the police has reduced
- whether there has been any change in levels of racial tension or community cohesion

(see Appendix 8 for the full interview schedule)

#### **4.4 Limitations of the Evaluation**

A number of methodological challenges were encountered in the process of conducting the evaluation. These occurred at the design, conduct and data collection stages. Within the resources available, we were only able to examine three youth diversionary projects, and so we selected projects that had taken different approaches to their main task. As such, there is a limit to what can be said about the effectiveness of the youth diversionary programme as a whole.

Routinely available data were sought for key outcome measures such as crime rates, vandalism repair expenditures, and fire service call outs. However, these data were often of poor quality, incomplete, inconsistently defined and not available at sufficiently small geographical area level to permit analysis of temporal trends at the local area

levels pertinent to the projects being evaluated. We also lacked baseline data for the project areas and participants, and similar data for control areas, thus restricting the ability of the evaluation to pass firm judgement on the impacts of the projects. We did not obtain as large a sample of participant questionnaires as we would have hoped for, partly due to the short time opportunity available to us for its collection. We were also unable to validate the quality of completion of the participant questionnaires. However, analysis of the available quantitative data, in combination with qualitative accounts, does provide valuable information on the types of impacts that may be associated with youth diversionary projects, in particular OR. In addition, the lessons from this evaluation may be used to improve future evaluations.

#### **4.5 Summary**

- The evaluation used quantitative measures to estimate the uptake and type of impacts related to the youth diversionary projects.
- Qualitative methods were used to investigate the views and experiences of project participants, local residents, stakeholders, and project staff.
- A number of methodological challenges were encountered during the evaluation, and not all the hoped for data were available; in particular routine data for the small areas surrounding the youth diversionary projects was difficult to obtain.
- Due to the stage of implementation and data availability, OR was subjected to a more detailed evaluation.
- Despite difficulties in accessing suitable data, the quantitative and qualitative data gathered provide information on the types of impacts associated with youth diversionary activities, as well as possible mechanisms or pathways for these impacts.

## PART II: EVALUATION FINDINGS

Part II is presented in four chapters and provides:

- local perceptions of the problems of crime and anti-social behaviour (Chapter 5);
- stakeholders' views of the ways in which the projects might achieve their aims (Chapter 6);
- an assessment of the impacts of the projects upon the community and the participants, based on a mixture of qualitative research and secondary data analysis (Chapter 7);
- identified challenges and potential ways of improving the projects (Chapter 8).

## 5. UNDERSTANDING THE PROBLEM: RESIDENTS' AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS' VIEWS OF LOCAL CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

This chapter presents reports by local residents and stakeholders of anti-social behaviour (ASB) in the neighbourhood, including their perceptions of who is involved, responsibility for ASB and its causes and possible explanations.

### 5.1 Area and anti-social behaviour

Stakeholders reported problems of ASB including young people loitering, graffiti, vandalism, fire setting and gang fighting; these problems increase over the summer months. Some areas were highlighted by the GHA Neighbour Relations Team as 'hot spots' of ASB, for example the recreation ground in the Red Road area had been reported to be a venue for gang fighting.

Residents were often concerned about unpredictable violence and intimidation, fuelled by what they said was a 'drinking culture':

*'There is a lot of violence in this place. I am a bit afraid to go out late when it's dark'*

[Operation Reclaim residents' focus group- Royston participant 1.3]

*'It's the young ones. You don't know what they might do – it used to be that people would walk about and speak to each other. Now, you can't look at the young ones without getting a mouthful'*

[Operation Reclaim residents' focus group- Sighthill participant 2.4]

*'There's a lot of drinking that goes on down at the swing park because there's nothing to do. It's just local people - mixed ages, but I'd say twenties upwards.'*

[Operation Reclaim residents' focus group- Royston participant 1.2]

The physical environment was reported to have an influence on levels of ASB. Derelict buildings (an inevitable part of the regeneration process in some areas) provide a location for young people to gather and drink or set fires (see section below). In the JA area there was a particular problem with fire-setting in derelict property and attacks on fire crews attending the fires. Areas and buildings, i.e. multi-storey flats, with high

concentrations of people living in them were reported to compound the negative effects of ASB.

Parks were identified as being unsafe due to poor maintenance and lack of supervision:

*'Glasgow has the most parks in Europe and yet the parks are abused and people are getting attacked, so instead of them being an asset they're actually a drawback.'*

[Operation Reclaim residents' focus group- Springburn participant 3.6]

*'The big park is filthy and full of glass so you can't really go onto the grass. And the other park is a baby park with those swings that save the babies falling out, and the chute is only tiny.'*

[Operation Reclaim residents' focus group- Royston participant 1.4]

*'The play grounds are dreadful, just young boys with drink and girls with push-chairs'*

[Operation Reclaim residents' focus group- Sighthill participant 2.2]

### **5.1.2 Regeneration activity facilitating anti-social behaviour**

A number of stakeholders raised the issue of the local physical environment and the physical process of regeneration (in particular demolition) as providing opportunities for ASB. For example, in order to work on buildings scaffolding had been erected and some young people had climbed the scaffolding and torn the new surfacing off the walls. In the JA area a derelict property due for demolition became a site for fire-setting. This created a risk for adjacent occupied premises and the young people entering the property. Stakeholders in Shawbridge (P8 area) said that a problem with ASB moved down the road as they demolished the high rise flats. When the flats were empty young people wanted to get in because they had nowhere else to go to drink.

## **5.2 Perpetrators of anti-social behaviour**

Although there were frequent reports of ASB the stakeholders were not always certain that the ASB could be attributed to young people. Stakeholders most often had to rely on residents' reports about young people loitering and related ASB rather than on their

own eye-witness accounts. In addition, ASB was often caused by neighbour disputes rather than youth disorder.

There was a widespread perception amongst stakeholders that young people may not be involved in actual ASB or offending but rather that groups of young people hanging around make tenants feel insecure.

*'There's elderly folk, they become that wee bit more frightened cos there's maybe youths just hanging about outside, not particularly doing anything but just hanging about out on the wall'*  
[P8 Stakeholder 1]

Some stakeholders pointed out that when young people are blamed for ASB the most serious offenders may be those in their mid-twenties and does not necessarily relate to teenagers.

*'They are generally an older age group, the worst offenders in this area. I mean, we call it youth disorder – but I mean, youth disorder's anything up to, you get twenty-five year olds doing youth disorder, you know?'*  
[P8 Stakeholder 4]

In contrast other stakeholders reported that the age profile of young people involved in ASB had dropped, with children as young 9-10 years involved.

This spread of involvement across all ages of young people as well as adults was echoed by residents:

*'The kids there range from about 12 upwards – and they go all the way up to late teenagers, even people in their twenties sometimes.'*  
[Operation Reclaim residents' focus group- Red Road participant 4.1]

Residents were also aware that girls could be problematic as well as boys:

*'The girls are actually worse than the boys – the girls encourage the boys and I've seen the girls leading the gangs and the boys are following them– it's disgusting. The girls egg them on'*  
[Operation Reclaim residents' focus group- Red Road participant 4.1]

There were varying levels of involvement with young people among the stakeholders and this affected how young people were talked about. Stakeholders with experience of

working with young people felt that the majority of them are involved in positive things and that only a minority are involved in ASB.

*'I mean, some of them are going to school and getting good grades, some of them are going into training courses, doing exceptionally well, getting jobs, going on holidays, involved in local football teams, involved in local drama groups. I mean, just being good citizens.'*

[Operation Reclaim Stakeholder 11]

This view is contrary to how young people are portrayed in the press, which can serve to reinforce negative stereotypes. The influence of the media on shaping people's perceptions was reinforced by a comment from a stakeholder who thought that despite the fact that youth disorder was not generating complaints for them as an organisation it must still be a problem because it was a regular feature in newspaper and television news.

*'When you read the newspapers and watch television news, young kids must be because you see it [youth disorder] on a regular basis – but it's not generating complaints for us as an organisation. It's not affecting our housing stock, and by-and-large, it's dropped off the agenda even of our management committee members, youth disorder.'*

[Operation Reclaim Stakeholder 8]

### **5.3 Nothing for young people to do as a cause of anti-social behaviour**

Both stakeholders and young people linked youth disorder to boredom from having nothing to do. Community police officers said the biggest complaint they got from young people was having 'nothing to do'. Youth diversionary project staff agreed that there was a lack of things to do in the local area. OR was seen as providing something to fill this gap for local young people.

*'I think there wasn't anything for- well that was the- the feedback was that there wasn't anything for them to do. We have simply provided something for them to do and they've actually responded. And it's been, it's down to them. I mean they've said to us, "look we've got nothing to do here, that's why we're getting involved in all this trouble so".'*

[Operation Reclaim Stakeholder 9]



Interestingly although residents saw young people as causing problems they also said this was because there was nothing for them to do.

*'There's no purpose to their drinking apart from getting drunk, and that's just because there's nothing for them to do.'*

[P8 residents' focus group- participant 1]

*'It's boredom– they just do it for something to do'*

[Operation Reclaim residents' focus group- Red Road participant 4.4]

*'The kids don't have anything to do – they see what the older ones are doing and they just copy them'*

[Participate residents' focus group- participant 4]

Residents also understood that there were other reasons why young people got involved in 'gangs', drinking and ASB. Poverty was commonly cited to explain why young people have 'nothing to do'.

*'Sometimes it comes down to money too– people might not have the money to send kids off to the pictures or to the ice-skating or wherever– these things are really expensive nowadays.'*

[Operation Reclaim residents' focus group- Quarrywood participant 5.5]

Young people also lacked confidence, security and self-esteem, and group cultures were seen as providing alternative routes to these things:

*'You need to give them something more worthwhile so that they get more positive with themselves – it's so sad that they just don't care about anything apart from drinking. It's their parents need to give them help – these kids have horrible upbringings often. And then there's peer pressure to be one of the gang. The wee ones just follow the bigger ones.'*

[Operation Reclaim residents' focus group- Red Road participant 4.3]

## **5.5 SUMMARY**

- ASB was a prominent issue in the accounts of residents and other stakeholders, who were particularly concerned about unpredictable violence and intimidation fuelled by alcohol.

- The physical environment was thought to influence levels of ASB. Parks, recreation grounds, derelict buildings and multi-storey buildings were reported to be 'hot spots' for ASB.
- It was acknowledged by residents and stakeholders that those in their twenties may be responsible for more ASB than teenagers.
- Lack of things to do and lack of money was cited as an important factor which led to youth disorder and gang membership.

## 5. INTERVENTION CONTENT, STATED AIMS AND THEORIES OF CHANGE

This chapter presents a description of the three projects evaluated (Operation Reclaim (OR), Jedworth Avenue (JA), and Participate (P8)). Section 6.1 describes what each of the projects entailed, such as activities and workshops, as well as attendance figures where available. Section 6.2 outlines the project aims as stated in the funding application; which are then compared with the stakeholders' (including project staff) perceptions of the project aims and their accounts of what can or has been achieved. Section 6.3 presents stakeholders' perceptions of the routes or mechanisms through which the project has or can promote positive outcomes for young people and the wider community.

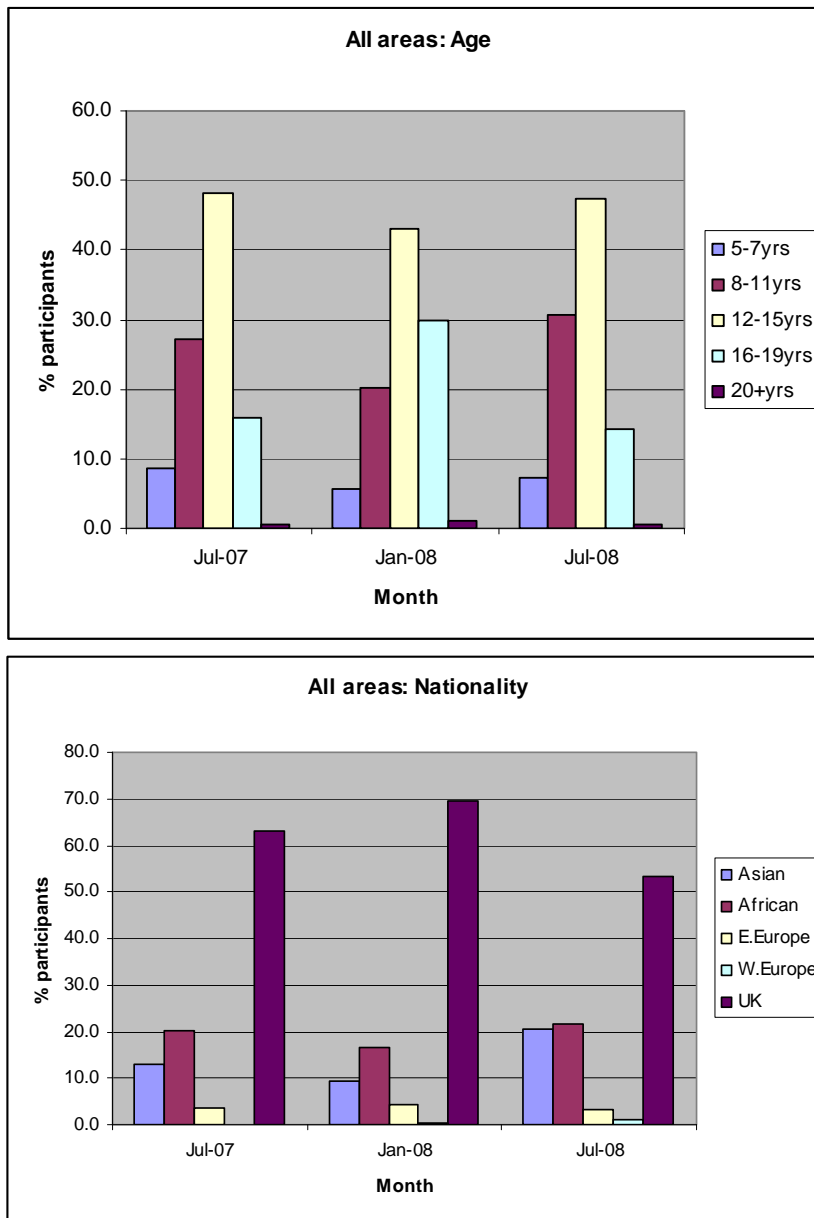
### 6.1 Project content

The three projects included for this evaluation were selected to demonstrate three differing approaches to youth diversion. The projects and what they consisted of are described below.

#### 6.1.1 Operation Reclaim (OR)

OR offers a range of (predominantly physical) activities, such as football, basketball, dance, drama, cheerleading, and indoor games. In addition, it provides young people with opportunities for volunteering, training (e.g. for coaching badges) and employment advice. For a small number of participants OR offered a more intensive Youth Development Programme (YDP) which provided training and referral to the local regeneration agency for assistance with employment. OR is available to all young people residing in the area.

**Figure 6.1** Age and nationality of OR participants 2007-2008



The majority of young people attending OR were male, between 12-15 years of age and were UK nationals (self-reported) – see details of OR project data presented in Figure 6.1. A breakdown of age, nationality and gender of OR participants for each of the five areas is available in Appendix 9. Monthly attendance figures for the OR projects indicate that around 30 to over 100 young people could attend an OR site on any single night. Attendance appears to be higher in the winter months (Appendix 14). Using population estimates for the Glasgow City Council Ward (GRO Scotland Estimate, 2005)

which includes four of the OR areas (Red Road, Springburn, Sighthill, and Royston), it is estimated that the numbers attending the projects represent a maximum of 15% of the young people aged between 5-19 years living in these areas.

OR participants were asked to complete a questionnaire describing the activities they took part in. Of the 63 completed questionnaires, data on gender were available in 55, of whom 45 (82%) were male. Data on ethnicity were provided by 58 respondents; 38 (65%) described their ethnic group as white. Data on age were available for 46 respondents; 33 (72%) were aged under 16 years (mean age 14.7 years). Most (61) questionnaire respondents who answered the relevant question had been attending OR for some time; 19 (31%) had been attending for more than two years and a further 32 (53%) for between three months and two years. 50/59 (85%) attended the project most nights (see Appendix 9 for full breakdown of questionnaire respondent details)

**Table 6.1: Information/support/referrals provided to OR participants (questionnaire data, n=52)**

Type of information/advice received:	%
Sport/exercise	83%
Health	42%
Learning/training	31%
Community safety	29%
Diet/nutrition	21%
Employment	12%
Literacy and numeracy	4%
Type of help/support received:	%
Socialising with other young people	22%
School issues	18%
Employment opportunities	11%
Family issues	9%

Referrals to other services	%
Sports clubs	72%
Local leisure centre	22%
Youth Health Service	20%
Learning/training programmes	18%
Art groups	14%
Police	14%
Glasgow North Regeneration Agency	6%

Football was the most common activity in which young people participated, but cricket, basketball, and rounders were also popular. A small number of young people took part in athletics, dance, music, drama, and indoor games (see Appendix 10). The types of information, referrals and support provided by OR (as reported by questionnaire respondents) are summarised in Table 6.1 (see Appendix 11 for full details). Most participants received information or advice about sports and exercise, with significant proportions also getting advice on health related issues, safety and learning.

### **6.1.2 Jedworth Avenue (JA)**

The JA project targeted individual youths who were already engaging in anti-social or offending behaviour, delivering a range of cognitive behavioural therapies, offence analysis, denial minimisation, victim awareness, empathy building and personalised training opportunities.

The JA project used role play and other methods, such as drawing, to encourage the young person to discuss and reflect on offending behaviour, including how they perceive their personal responsibility and understand the impacts of any previous offending. Towards the end of the project, activities to build self-confidence and promote goal setting were increasingly used. The style of most of the activities was intended to be different from school and did not assume full literacy. Activities were very interactive and involved physical activity to maintain the young person's attention. In order to

address one of the most prevalent issues for this project the participants also went on a fire safety course.

### **6.1.3 Participate (P8)**

P8 aimed to target around ten disaffected young people at an individual level, delivering a mix of formal and informal activities, including pool and football, with the aim of encouraging participants to socialise together.

The P8 project included a mix of people, including previous offenders, those with low levels of confidence and a mix of several ethnic groups. It was hoped that racist barriers would be overcome by this mix. Project staff felt that having a mixture of people is beneficial because young people can learn from one another. However, one young person who lacked confidence described how he had been bullied at the project, without the staff knowledge of these events. Relations between young people from different ethnic backgrounds were thought to have improved following engagement in the informal activities provided by P8.

## **6.2 Stated versus stakeholders' perceived/desired project aims and outcomes**

The following section provides a brief summary of the stated aims and outcomes or impacts for each project and compares this with what stakeholders (both project staff and key local agencies such as LHOs, police, and fire services) themselves believed the projects could achieve.

### **6.2.1 Stated aims of OR**

The stated aims of OR are outlined below. They included reducing young people's involvement in ASB by providing alternative activities. In addition, OR aimed to improve relationships between young people from different ethnic groups, reduce territorialism, and support young people to pursue training, education and employment.

### *Stated project aims*

- a) By providing safe coached activity services that meet the needs of young people, the project aims to reduce: the number of local young people engaging in ASB, vandalism, gang fighting and crime; fear of crime; and the number of incidents reported to the police for youths within the 12-21 year old age group.
- b) To stop the recreation ground being used for running battles between youths, work towards the integration of a large asylum seeker/refugee population and encourage active citizenship.
- c) To help address territorialism via competitions between the groups from the five areas.
- d) To advise and support young people, provide a progression path (coaching certificates, work experience etc), move young people on to positive outcomes (volunteering, education, employment) and refer participants on to other support or provision.

### **6.2.2 Stakeholders perceptions of projects aims and what OR can achieve**

OR was set up initially by Strathclyde Police in response to a growing problem of racist assaults in the area. It was hoped that by providing young people from different ethnic groups with an opportunity to mix outside school, that inter-racial relations and cultural integration would improve.

*'You know, it didn't deliberately set out to be a diversionary project but it had a diversionary effect if you know, by offering what it was but its roots were about racism and I think that's changed, I think it's about diversion now'*  
[Operation Reclaim Stakeholder 2]

Although not originally an intended objective, one of the aims of OR now involves breaking down territorial boundaries and reducing gang fighting. One stakeholder hopes that as a result of OR in the near future young people in the North East of Glasgow will have grown up without ever having experienced gang fighting.



*'Initially it was set up for integration of asylum seekers, refugees into the indigenous community. Because of how well that worked, I'm sure the decision was to spread it out and tackle things like territorialism and perceived boundaries that young people have got to get young people, rather than fighting together, playing football together, and I think that's the main emphasis behind it, but it's moved on a wee bit now and I think it's looking at, now that those young people are participating in a positive activity, what's the next step for them?'*  
[Operation Reclaim Stakeholder 11]

The diversionary aim of OR was described as reaching young people before they become involved in serious offending and turning them around. It was hoped that, through participating in OR, young people would see the opportunity of a hobby for themselves or a career to help others. It was also hoped that young people would choose a positive lifestyle:

*'But if this is on then they'll go "right, I don't want to be that [drug addict], I want to be something, I want to do something with my life" and then maybe they'll have a good life when they're older. I think that's what our focus is as well... Making sure the youngsters have good lives when they're older, not bad lives.'*  
[Operation Reclaim YDP Participant 2]

In addition, OR also provides young people access to additional services which can support young people pursue positive life choices. The development program within OR is there to help young people in their first steps towards employment. This was also reported to be a means to promoting improved behaviour amongst future LHO tenants.

*'If they apply to us for a house, hopefully what they've got is that they've learned through their experiences in Operation Reclaim, they've been given opportunities to move on and, perhaps even in many cases, develop a career for themselves. So, what we're hoping is that we're going to get a more rounded tenant in the end, from the kids who go through the program'*  
[Operation Reclaim Stakeholder 8]

Stakeholders from beyond the OR project also reported ways in which they hoped OR would have benefits. Strathclyde Fire and Rescue Services hoped to reduce attacks against the Fire Service during their brief involvement with OR. LHOs also hoped that OR would reduce repair costs related to vandalism and that OR may go some way to alleviate tenants' fears about youth disorder.

*'We're looking to make it- to help sustain our neighbourhoods and tenancies. So if kids aren't running amok, and they're playing football then people feel a lot safer, they feel a lot better about where they live, and they're maybe hopefully less inclined to, move. You know or be disruptive or...So from our point of view I think GHA are putting the money in because it's for the community, that's what the whole Wider Action thing is. If the communities gel a bit better, people are happier in their home, they pay their rent, and they look after their property.'*  
[Operation Reclaim Stakeholder 5]

### **6.2.3 Stated aims of JA**

The stated aims of the JA project are outlined below.

#### *Stated aims*

- a) To reduce youth disorder (e.g. fire setting, gang fighting and re-offending) and improve community safety in the area by engaging disaffected youths in a proactive programme involving: cognitive behavioural therapy; offence analysis; denial minimisation; victim awareness and empathy; and fire safety training etc.
- b) To reduce costs of vandalism and ASB in the area to LHO, Police etc.
- c) To reduce fear of crime.

### **6.2.4 Stakeholders perceptions of projects aims and what JA could achieve**

Those involved in delivering the project contested the widely held idea that the desired outcome of the project was to reduce offending.

*'A lot of people make the mistake of thinking that it's to reduce offending. It's not. It's to address their offending behaviour and help them, help them change their own behaviour for the future.'*

[North West Stakeholder 3]

The intention of the stakeholders was to get young people to think about the consequences of their actions, to learn about the opportunities and choices available to them and to change behaviour in the long term. At the end of the programme the intention was to help them to get assistance with their careers, and to integrate young offenders back into the community.

### **6.2.5 Stated aims of P8**

The stated aims of P8 are presented below.

#### *Stated aims*

- a) To improve community safety by providing disaffected young people with positive alternatives to behaviour that may lead to involvement with the Justice System.
- b) To divert them from anti-social and criminal behaviour by: supporting participants and involving them in structured personal development activities; using a community learning and development approach to facilitate personal, social and educational development; and encouraging and supporting them towards education, training and employment.
- c) To promote understanding, awareness and community cohesion by working with different groups in the community.

### **6.2.6 Stakeholders perceptions of projects aims and what P8 can achieve**

Four factors were thought to be key to P8's success; firstly, these included identifying the appropriate young people (i.e. those with most serious offending histories); secondly, delivering a programme which successfully engaged the young people; thirdly, maintaining contact and input with the young person. Finally, it was suggested that mixing with people who are not involved in ASB may lead to a change in behaviour amongst previous young offenders.

Stakeholders involved in delivering P8 stated that a key outcome for the project was raising awareness and getting young people to realise they are part of a community and have a voice. Improved personal development outcomes, as well as being a method by which to reduce offending behaviour, were described by one stakeholder as operating through the reverse mechanism, in that reducing young people's involvement in offending would directly improve young people's potential personal development.

*'Well, I think the project's aim is more to change the behaviour of offending young people, but in doing so, an ideal outcome is that they would then move on to employment or training or, in some cases, even just returning to regular attendance at school.'*

[P8 Stakeholder 3]

### **6.3 Stakeholder and participant perceptions of how the youth diversionary projects might achieve their outcomes**

This section examines stakeholders' and participants' understandings of the mechanisms by which projects achieve their intended outcomes. This raises issues of what the stakeholders considered to be key elements of the projects and how these might result in the desired outcomes. Most of the data available and reported here relate to OR (Section 6.3.1-6.3.3). This is a reflection of the stage, nature, and size of OR compared to projects in JA and P8 which determined availability of data and decisions to focus the evaluation on OR (see Section 4.1). Where issues and data for specific projects are reported this is indicated using sub-headings (OR JA and P8, see Sections 6.3.4-6.3.8 & 6.4).

It is often difficult to know exactly how or why a community based programme does or does not have the desired effect. The quote below suggests that although OR was thought to be having a positive effect it was not always clear how this was happening or what other interventions may be contributing to changes in the area.

*'[Operation] Reclaim. Bang. And I'm not saying that everything's [Operation] Reclaim, it's a magic wand for everything, but it just- I don't know what's going on out there, there's somebody sprinkling magic dust but, it's certainly part of it. [Operation] Reclaim's part of things. But something's- I think you've heard me saying it before I don't know, there's something happening.'*  
[Operation Reclaim Stakeholder 9]

More specific ways in which it was thought that the youth diversionary projects were having a positive effect are outlined below.

#### **6.3.1 Diversion/something enjoyable to do**

Provision of something for young people to do was seen as an important mechanism to divert young people from engaging in offending or ASB. It was felt that whilst being in a gang had previously been the only source of amusement in an area, OR had provided another choice. This was confirmed by both stakeholders and participants.

*'If you provide them with opportunities to do things that they want to do, and Operation Reclaim seems to have been particularly good at that, then kids will participate— and if they're doing that, then they're not gang fighting, they're not loitering around causing problems, they're not out in the early evening with their bottles of Buckfast, hanging around the streets causing general disorder – they're not out doing graffiti, they're not out vandalising things, mainly because, for three or four hours that particular evening, they've been out playing football or doing whatever other activity's on the agenda at Operation Reclaim, and I think it's as simple as that.'*

[North East Stakeholder 8]

*R: 'It's like they [Operation Reclaim] keep us busy and we can't go out to the streets and fight and do stuff like that, if we are busy playing football, obviously we won't go out and fight.'*

***I: Yeah. But you said that's happening afterwards – there's fights afterwards, yeah?***

*R: Yeah, well afterwards, yeah we can't be bothered going'*

[Operation Reclaim Participant focus group 1]

Provision of activities for young people was seen to be especially important in a context, such as the OR areas, where there previously had been nothing available.

*'I don't think there's any one factor – I think you've got a combination, and that's what makes it work. You've got absolutely no provision there in the first place, so I think what's been, what other areas might find hard to gauge is if they've already got provision, then they don't know if Reclaim will work in their area— whereas, we started with Reclaim in an area where there was nothing.'*

[Operation Reclaim Stakeholder 7]

Young people were told that if they got involved in gang fighting they would not be allowed to attend OR.

Young people reported feeling safer when outside because fewer young people hang around drinking, as more are playing football at OR. A number of stakeholders reported that on the nights when OR was not open, in particular Saturday night, young people still went drinking. Similarly, in the summer holidays when the OR football league was not running young people were more likely to go drinking on a Friday.

*'When they came to Operation Reclaim they weren't out drinking, smashing windows, they were always wanting to play football.'*

[Operation Reclaim YDP Participant 3]

**It is important to note that there was widespread agreement amongst the participants that they enjoyed the activities provided by OR.** This is obviously an essential component of a successful programme. This is further emphasised by the failure of OR to attract girls to the programme despite many efforts to provide suitable activities other than sport. Reports of changes in how OR participants spent their leisure time and observed changes in violent and ASB are presented in Chapter 7.

### **6.3.2 Team sport, competition and integration**

Community Police attributed part of OR's success to the physical activity component, which they perceived to provide young people with a positive means of burning off their energy. As mentioned above, participation in the Friday football league was only allowed if the young person had attended OR each week night during the previous week. Young people, instead of persuading their friends to go drinking on a Friday night, said they were persuading them to come and play for their area.

Team sports and the Friday league provided the opportunity to meet and make friends with young people from areas they may have previously fought with. Both stakeholders and participants confirmed that by getting to know each other through OR, young people grow to realise that just because somebody lives in a certain area does not mean they're 'bad'. The fact that young people play football together, know each other and are mutual friends was given as an explanation for the reduction in gang fighting and territorialism.

*'as soon as you put them into team A and against team B, it didn't matter what colour, size, age or whatever the person next to them was, as long as they were in their team, you know? ... it broke down barriers'*  
[Operation Reclaim Stakeholder 3]

It was apparent to stakeholders at the OR award ceremony that the young people had a sense of achievement and pride when they collected their awards or trophies, with young people applauding peers from different areas, with whom historically they may have been fighting.

### 6.3.3 Police presence and visibility

A police presence was a key element of OR, with police in attendance at each of the evening sessions. The level of involvement of the police varied between individuals and areas. In some areas, police officers actively engaged with the activities and the young people but in others, they fulfilled more of a background role in maintaining order.

The police presence (a component of OR) was widely thought, by both stakeholders and participants (including YDP participants) to have helped improve feelings of safety in the local area. Young people reported feeling safer when the police were around because they know there will not be any 'trouble'.

*'R1: Cause of them [police], it's, you know there won't be a lot of trouble*

*R2: You feel more safer when they [police] are around.....*

*R3: Nobody come and fight with us when the police are there, or else they're going to get arrested. They always stay away*

*R4: And it [police] intimidates the trouble makers, so they don't cause trouble.'*

[Operation Reclaim Participant focus group 1]

Provision of a safe environment was seen to be key to participation, and facilitating integration between groups and thus to the success of OR. Stakeholders believed that both the police presence and the physical visibility of the OR grounds (i.e. you could see the young people from different parts of the neighbourhood) meant that parents felt their children would be safe when at the project. The police presence was generally thought to deter gangs from other areas coming to cause 'trouble', and also to provide '*control for the small minority of problem kids*' [North East Stakeholder 3].

*'I definitely think that where Reclaim seems to be successful is you know they're, they're out of doors, they're visual, the young people can see, "oh look that's going on over there and that's quite regular and I'll go to that". I think that's where their impact and their success comes from because they're visible. They're not hidden away in some community facility.'*

[Operation Reclaim stakeholder 5]

One stakeholder suggested reducing the police presence in order to see whether the project continued to be successful.

#### **6.3.4 Staff (quality: building relationships, being role models and discipline)**

##### **OR**

Participants were pleased with the standard of coaching provided, saying it was *‘the best coaching you can get’* [North East Participants focus group 1], with some of the coaches being ex-professional players. Both participants and stakeholders mentioned the potential for the coaches, project staff, and police in attendance to be role models for the young people, suggesting that older, more mature coaches may be more able to take on this role.

*‘Because I can say they’re the elder ones so we have to look the way they behave and follow it and look up to, yeah, look up to them’*  
[Operation Reclaim Participant focus group 1]

The contact between the community police and Fire Service personnel with the young people in OR was also seen as an opportunity to get the young people to view these individuals and the services they represent differently, hopefully reducing hostility towards police and fire personnel.

Discipline was an important feature of OR. Participants who persisted with disruptive behaviour were excluded from the project. Although some participants felt that the discipline was sometimes unfair, others mentioned that the strict discipline improved the standard of the team’s football.

*‘I think having people who set ground rules. Yeah, a lot of the young people that go along don’t have that in their every-day life, and I think, just having a bit of structure, something they can work towards’*  
[Operation Reclaim Stakeholder 7]

##### **JA**

JA project stakeholders reported that outreach and streetwork by local project workers can be invaluable to the success of local youth project, principally as a key means of engaging ‘hard to reach’ young people. The police reported that this work has enabled engagement with young people that they have previously found difficult to make contact with. Stakeholders recognised that long term funding for local projects is often difficult to secure and as a result many of these projects suffer from a short term approach.



*'And a lot of our diversionary work is, is aimed at the hard to reach kids. Now I can't get a list of the hard to reach kids from anybody, because they don't engage with anybody. So I can't go to any kind of agency and say, give me a list of your hard to reach kids. Because we don't engage with them. So the only people that have a chance, of engaging with them, are the youth street workers, that are on the street on a Friday and Saturday night, where they're bumping into them and speaking with them. And trying to encourage them to, to divert their behaviour elsewhere. And then we have a chance of linking in.'*

[Jedworth Avenue Stakeholder 4]

## **P8**

Reports from P8 stakeholders emphasised the importance of project staff being appropriately trained and experienced in engaging and working with young people. Good communication skills, the ability to build up trust with young people, readiness to challenge unacceptable behaviour, whilst not being directly associated with enforcement agencies, were all seen as essential for the personal effectiveness of project staff. An interactive style of programme delivery is important to young people.

*'R: I couldn't sit and listen to somebody talking half hour or something, going on and on.*

*I: **But if you were involved, if you were interacting, you know if you were...***

*R: Like if I was like taking part in it and I liked it?*

*I: **Yeah.***

*R: Aye, I'd come but I don't really like it any more 'cause no fun in it.'*

[P8 Participant 1]

### **6.3.5 Positive group influence**

## **OR**

Peer influence was reported to be an important mechanism for change within OR. The size of OR created a 'virtuous circle' effect, attracting increasing numbers of young people who wanted to attend in preference to gang involvement.

*'Traditionally within gangs or bigger groups it's usually negative sort of stereotypes and negative peer pressure that comes through for young people. Not always, but... so I think just being involved within sporting activity within a bigger... the framework of a bigger group, leads to better positive peer pressure.'*

[Operation Reclaim Stakeholder 11]

OR used a 'flooding approach', making the project and its activities available to all young people in the area, not only those involved in ASB. It was argued that by restricting the programme to offenders, the gang dynamic would remain and the project could be seen to be rewarding gang behaviour. By mixing young people who are involved in offending in a group or 'gang' with other young people the gang dynamic may be weakened. Young people who are not involved in offending were said to be pleased that OR is inclusive because they feel that often activities are only on offer for those who are causing problems.

*'He's [non-offending OR participant] quite happy because a lot of time they were only interested in kids that are in trouble. Or you know the ones that are causing problems. And he just thinks it's great that it's inclusive. He can go, he doesn't need to be, as he would say, you know a ned or -and it's good. So I would say it's across the board, and I think that's great.'*

[Operation Reclaim Stakeholder 5]

However, there may be difficulties with combining those who are involved in offending with those who are not.

*'I've seen like the young people in my site – when the big people come, they leave, and when they go, they come, and they hate playing with them'*

[Operation Reclaim YDP Participant 1]

## **JA**

The JA project took a different approach, targeting key people involved in ASB, this was seen to be key to the success of the project. It was hoped that by changing the behaviour of the more serious offenders, this would influence other young people locally.

### **6.3.5 Engagement with offenders and participants' involvement in offending**

#### **OR**

OR was open to all young people from the local area, regardless of previous offending behaviour. There was widespread agreement among stakeholders and participants that young offenders, including those previously involved in gang activity and ASB, were actively participating in OR. Participants' previous criminal records and levels of participation in gang activity were unknown and there were no attempts to check this.

However, police reported identifying known offenders and gang members among OR participants, estimating that around 20-30% of OR participants had previously had some involvement in offending or gang activity. This proportion was thought to be lower over the summer months. Stakeholders also believed that some OR participants, although not previously involved in offending, were at risk of involvement in offending had they not been attending OR.

Participation in OR was voluntary, thus inevitably there would be young people who chose not to take part or who had been excluded due to disruptive behaviour while attending OR. It was therefore acknowledged that there are still some young people who engaged in ASB and made the choice not to attend the project.

*'there used to be a crowd of maybe ten, twelve young people, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen age group, used to come and drink on a Friday night you know, at the back of our offices and you know they said that they were there because they just couldn't go near Red Road because there were too many you know, the police were there you know, and they had no intentions of joining Operations Reclaim you know, and to a certain extent I don't know if that's really that common knowledge.'*

[Operation Reclaim Stakeholder 2]

## **JA**

The JA project recruited six participants, identified through local knowledge and police intelligence. The project was unable to work with very serious or older offenders, due to pre-defined participation criteria set by Restorative Justice. The six JA participants had been regularly involved in 'low level' offending, including underage drinking, abusing tenants, loitering, graffiti, fire-setting and gang fighting with weapons. However, the stakeholders thought that the Restorative Justice criteria for participation meant that there were some older youths with clear capacity to benefit from the project, who 'missed out'.

## **P8**

P8 aimed to reach young people who had previously been in trouble with the police and who may also be truanting from school. Although a number of referral routes were designed, including police, social work and concierge services, most of the referrals

were through school. It was estimated that of the 24 young people on the P8 register, only 12 had been formally referred, with the remainder of young people attending casually along with friends. Not all of the 24 young people on the P8 register were at risk of offending; some were described as lacking self-confidence. Of the two participants interviewed, only one had previously been involved in offending.

There were mixed views on whether P8 had successfully engaged with its intended target population. A police interviewee reported recognising a few of the young people in P8, but only one was a prolific offender well known to the police. They also mentioned that young people regularly causing trouble tend to be older than 16. One stakeholder thought that P8 had successfully engaged with some of the young people who were most heavily involved in offending in the local area but acknowledged that it would be difficult to involve every young offender.

*'I think some of them, and I think that's simply because they don't appear to have big enough numbers to say that they're getting to all of them, and frankly, I would be very dubious of any organisation who turned round and said, you know, we have got every single young person who's involved in, you know, whether it's, you know, this, that or the other. It wouldn't be credible.'*

[P8 Stakeholder 5]

### **6.3.6 Personal development & Training**

#### **OR**

One of OR's aspirations was that the project would demonstrate to young people some of the opportunities and choices available to them, raise their expectations and break the cycle of unemployment, by engaging their interest and letting them know that they do have options if they 'apply themselves':

*'Well I think... in terms of like, if they've got the youth off the street, they're thinking of what they can do in their life, they're not just thinking that, they come out of school and they've got nothing to do. They're looking at- saying to them well, it's not just- I mean I understand they talk to them about, you know careers and-. So there's a whole range of things that- well I'm hoping they're raising expectations of children, to think I can get out of this, I can do better or whatever.'*

[Operation Reclaim Stakeholder 5]

The Youth Development Programme was widely viewed as providing long term benefits with training and employability for young people:

*'We can't take this funding, engage with this amount of young people and say, well, we gave them football for three years and we gave them dance for three years – it needs to be more. So, the development program is helping some young people in their first steps towards employment, you know? We are working with, Glasgow North coming on board as a partner has been really significant'*  
[Operation Reclaim Stakeholder 3]

Another development in this regard was the establishment of a football team, which recruited players from across the five sites to play in a competitive league. Those selected for the league team were required to register with the Glasgow North Regeneration Agency (GRNA), which aimed to promote full employment in the local area. Those registered receive training and assistance with seeking employment.

## **JA**

JA stakeholders viewed the use of positive self-talk and confidence building as important elements of the intervention. These, along with other approaches, were used to help promote a sense of achievement and pride for participants, which was hoped to help prevent future offending. Stakeholders also felt that by taking offenders out of their environment, young people could see the potential for an alternative way of life and different behaviour choices.

## **P8**

One of the stakeholders explained that P8 might change young people's behaviour by providing opportunities through intensive training and support.

*'the initial aim of the project was to run quite a formal training programme where the young people would look at where they were at right now, and through a series of, as I said, formal training intervention and sort of support and having different agencies coming in and discussing a variety of projects, or sorry, a variety of topics, that there would be a marked change in the young person's behaviour and attitude.'*  
[P8 Stakeholder 3]

However, ongoing logistical difficulties with implementation meant that the more structured aspects of P8, such as one-to-one support and training, had not been started

by the end of the evaluation period; stakeholders remained hopeful that these would be implemented in the near future. P8 planned to involve group and one-to-one sessions on issues such as conflict, communication, understanding others' points of view, consequences of actions, dreams, aspirations and goal setting.

### **6.3.8 Interagency working**

#### **OR**

Collaborating with other agencies was seen to be an important part of OR. OR staff viewed the project's role as signposting young people to other services. Some services and agencies with particularly key roles (e.g. police) participated directly in the project, engaging and building relationships with young people, thus fostering an improved understanding of the public service role of agencies such as the police.

Community police attributed reductions in gang fighting and improved integration to the combined effect of their own work in "neighbourhood reassurance" policing, in conjunction with OR and education projects in schools. The multi-faceted approach used by OR was seen to be a valuable way to reinforce messages and strengthen relationships. The example of showing a video about gang fighting in schools, followed a few days later by meeting and speaking with the same individual young people and subsequent discussions with them at OR.

The involvement and collaboration of the various agencies involved was viewed as beneficial by stakeholders, fostering good inter-agency relationships, which was anticipated to bring longer term benefits. For example, GNRA had developed a good relationship with coaches at OR, so when a young person asked about employment or training programmes, most coaches would direct them to the Regeneration Agency. Through OR, GNRA engaged with 22 young people, none of whom had had any prior contact with the agency, leading to assistance with finding further education, training and employment.

## **JA**

Multi-agency working was a key element of the JA project. There were regular meetings between police, LHOs, the fire service, GHA, Glasgow Community Safety Services and a local youth organisation. This collaborative approach was seen as key to the project's success.

*'I Again... just with the partners that there were. I mean everybody was up date with everything that was happening so...just that general conversation, that general partnership work and that general sort of eagerness to try and make it work. I think- think made it work....Everybody was talking, everybody was communicating with each other. '*

[Jedworth Avenue Stakeholder 1]

The fact that all the agencies were working collectively and met regularly meant that they were actively aware of developments and participants could not 'play stakeholders off against each other'. The joint visits of the Local Housing Manager and Police Inspector to the parents of the young people identified as causing problems in the area was seen to be valuable. Fire Service informants were pleased that partnership working with the police resulted in individuals being charged under the Emergency Workers Act for attacking a member of the Fire Service.

## **P8**

The P8 project had successfully collaborated with some agencies, such as the police. However, some other agencies felt that there had been reluctance on the part of P8 staff to engage with them as partners.

### **6.4 Other contributing factors to young people's involvement in anti-social behaviour and gang activity**

Although most interviewees felt that the youth diversionary projects, in particular OR, had helped reduce ASB and gang activity, a number of other contributing factors to these positive changes were postulated. These are summarised below.

#### **6.4.1 Other explanations for reductions in local gang activity**

Young people reported an increased police presence in the all areas, suggesting that this may have reduced gang activity. Other initiatives to reduce gang activity and ASB were also mentioned by stakeholders, for example ensuring derelict buildings are boarded up to prevent fire setting, and an initiative involving educational visits to schools about fires (Fire Reach).

It was also reported that relationships between different ethnic groups were improving and this was the result of a number of factors in particular the passage of time and the emergence of a generation of young people from different ethnic groups who have grown up together. However, OR was also seen to have promoted improved inter-ethnic relations.

Stakeholders also suggested that ASB and crime may have lessened in at least one of the areas because a large number of residents had been relocated as part of the demolition and regeneration process and in many cases the key gang members no longer live in the area. Reduction in gang activity was also attributed partly to GHA's improving expertise in dealing with and preventing ASB. Stakeholders cited the benefits of the Neighbourhood Relations Team as a specialised service providing support to LHOs. Another LHO also suggested that they were now better at managing the problems of ASB in their area.

While a number of stakeholders, in particular the police mentioned other initiatives aimed at reducing gang activity and ASB, the opportunities for joint working provided by OR were nevertheless seen to be a very valuable way to reinforce messages and build relationships with local young people.

#### **JA**

In JA, where reduction in fire setting was a focus of the project, it was not clear whether the reductions in fire setting could be attributed to the project or to the demolition of vacant buildings.



*'I think they changed after. I think the fire-settings, were non-existent. But bear in mind the properties were pulled down. So the fire-setting stopped because the demolition had occurred. Or... would it have stopped anyway, or was it our project? So again -you know -and I have to put these factors in because they have to be considered.'*

[Jedworth Avenue Stakeholder 4]

The Fire Service said that the demolition of a derelict building really helped with a problem of fire-setting and attacks on fire crews related to the building. They also said that a problem they had with people opening fire hydrants largely disappeared as a combination of interventions: a community safety day; a play put on by the fire service; school based education; information given out through the community; the installation of lockable hydrant lids; and law enforcement.

### **P8**

In the P8 area, factors over and above the project such as CCTV, the visibility of police, access to alcohol, and outdoor activities were reported to have an impact on levels of ASB. Reports from the police suggested that the closure of an off licence and the absence of two or three key individuals currently serving a sentence in prison had led to reduced youth disorder and violence in the area. One stakeholder said that the change in population make-up of the area as a result of re-housing and regeneration could impact on levels of ASB.

It was also reported that some of the activities of regeneration, especially demolition, can provide an environment which facilitates ASB such as fire-setting in unused buildings (see Section 5.4).

## **6.5 SUMMARY**

- A common aim in each of the projects was to improve community safety, by reducing ASB among young people. Two of the projects (JA and P8) aimed to target a small number of young people already known to be involved in ASB, while OR was available to all young people in the local area.

- There were conflicting views between stakeholders involved in the different projects about the relative value of a project which targets a small number of known offenders (such as JA and P8), compared to OR which is provided to all young people in the local area.
- **Stakeholders' reported that sustained coverage, intensity, interagency collaboration and quality of project staff are essential to achieving and sustaining these aims. However, only OR was reported to have each of these elements.**
- Stakeholders' views of the mechanisms by which youth diversionary work achieves its desired aims agreed broadly with the theoretical model shown in Figure 3.1.
- **OR's coverage, intensity and size appeared to be important**, allowing it to generate a sustained community presence that influenced young people's social networks and worked over time towards long term community level change. In addition, successful elements of OR were reported to include: providing alternative uses of leisure time in a safe place; peer influence of other non-offending young people; offering a structured referral system for employment and training opportunities; and providing an opportunity to develop relationships with positive role models (project staff) and the local police.
- **Multi-faceted approaches are crucially important in reinforcing actions, strengthening relationships between agencies and working in partnership towards common aims.** New youth diversionary projects must accommodate the existing organisational context. In all three cases, a relatively small number of agencies were involved. In the particular case of P8, apparent difficulties with establishing local partnerships compounded implementation delays, highlighting the importance of interagency planning prior to project design, funding and implementation.

## 7. IMPACTS, VIEWS AND EXPERIENCES OF THE INTERVENTION

This chapter reports the impacts of the youth diversionary projects. Section 7.1 reports the impacts of the projects on the wider neighbourhood environment as reported by key stakeholders (i.e. project staff, personnel from Local Housing Organisations (LHOs), police and fire services), local residents, and by young people participating in the projects. The section also draws on routine crime and fire data, and questionnaires completed by project participants. Section 7.2 reports the impacts on participants themselves and draws on interviews and questionnaire data from the youth diversionary participants. Section 7.3 reports people's views of the projects, covering stakeholders, residents, and young people participating in the projects.

Most of the data available and reported here relate to Operation Reclaim (OR), where data for a specific project is being reported this is highlighted by the use of sub-headings. This is a reflection of the stage, nature, and size of OR compared to projects in Jedworth Avenue (JA) and Participate (P8) which determined availability of data and decisions to focus the evaluation on OR (see Section 4.1). Where no data for a specific project are reported this is due to no data being available on this topic. For example, it was not possible to trace and interview any of the young people who had participated in the JA project so no data are available on the views of the young people and their perceptions of the projects effects.

### 7.1 Impacts on the local community

This section reports what types of local impacts are perceived to be related to the local youth diversionary project. The section draws on the views of key stakeholders, young people participating in a local youth diversionary project, local residents, as well as police data on reported crime.

#### 7.1.1 Perceptions of crime: views of stakeholders, project participants, and local residents

### **OR, JA and P8**

Many of the stakeholders found it difficult to comment on the impacts in a quantifiable way. In particular, impacts on crime and interpretation of crime statistics were seen to be problematic. Furthermore, stakeholders from the P8 neighbourhood, including the LHO, were unable to comment on any possible impacts of the local youth diversionary project as the project had only been established for a few weeks at the time of the interviews.

An OR leaflet reporting large reductions, between 24-57%, in local crime had been distributed. Although OR partners and stakeholders thought that these reductions in crime were related to OR, stakeholders admitted that it was difficult to know with any certainty the extent to which the project contributed to reductions in crime as recorded by official data:

*'...the fact that they're coming off the Strathclyde Police database and what's actually been recorded, it's staggering, and I don't know that we can say that it's all down to Reclaim, but it's got to be making a huge dent in some of those crime stats'*

[Operation Reclaim Stakeholder 7]

A stakeholder in the OR area mentioned the potential for gang activity and youth related anti-social behaviour (ASB) to be displaced to other areas.

Some stakeholders thought it may be more appropriate to assess the local impacts by looking at how local residents perceive any changes in the area and levels of local crime and ASB. Local residents and other key service personnel may be more sensitive to subtle changes, such as damaged property, moving young people on from an area etc.; these impacts may not be captured by routine statistics.

To this end, **residents' focus groups elicited consistent perceptions of reductions in local crime and ASB in recent years.** A number of reasons were suggested; most importantly, these were thought to be the use of CCTV and an increased police

presence, but residents also attributed some of the improvement to the processes of regeneration itself:

*'It's definitely been calming down: we've had police patrolling on bicycles, we've had CCTV cameras. I agree that down here in the past it has been worse, but I think that a lot's been done and that's helping – the houses are getting better and I think that's making the youth problems better too. Things are happening gradually, and that's a shame because people are scared to go out at night, but hopefully that's all changing.'*

[P8 residents' focus group- participant 3]

*'The gang fights have stopped in Sighthill because they are demolishing the flats. That was where the major problems were, especially Fountainwell – that was where the problems were worst, but people have been moved away, so the problems have stopped.'*

[Operation Reclaim residents' focus group- Sighthill participant 2.1]

*'There's been a change, all the CCTV has stopped stuff up at Arden – even their drinking has stopped a bit. It doesn't stop it all, but the young ones, they know it's there so it's a deterrent.'*

[P8 residents' focus group- participant 3]

*'The police have clamped down and it seems to have got better in some areas.'*

[Operation Reclaim residents' focus group- Quarrywood participant 5.1]

There was a common perception among OR participants and stakeholders that levels of crime and ASB, including gang activity, had declined since the introduction of the youth diversionary project. Stakeholders often cited the leaflet (mentioned above) reporting substantial reductions in crime within the OR neighbourhoods. In the JA area stakeholders also reported crime reductions.

*'Vandalism... it's not completely eradicated but I would say yes greatly reduced. Now, when I give you these figures, I hope these figures back up what I'm saying to you. But in my opinion the reports we have of vandalism in that area, are greatly reduced. The gang-fighting hugely'*

[Jedworth Avenue Stakeholder 5]

Some LHOs within the OR and JA neighbourhoods reported a noticeable fall in residents' complaints about vandalism, graffiti and youth disorder.

*'Well we used to come in on a Monday morning you can guarantee there'd be a list of complaints. Length of your arm. Now you get the odd one. And it's nothing like it was before. Still not a perfect area, still not perfect- still not a lot for young people to do up there. But, in terms of actual complaints to the Police and to us, it's far less than what it was before.'*  
[Jedworth Avenue Stakeholder 3]

One OR LHO reported that the reductions in local incivilities meant reduced costs in cleaning up its effects.

Community police who were working in OR areas also reported reductions in ASB, graffiti, youth disorder and gang fighting (see Sections 7.1.2-7.1.9). More specifically, the Community Police reported that after the start of OR there was a reduction in the numbers of adults drinking outside the tower blocks (Red Road), less loitering at the Quarrywood shops, and an increase in the numbers of families using the swing park (Springburn).

### **7.1.2 Reported crime (police statistics)**

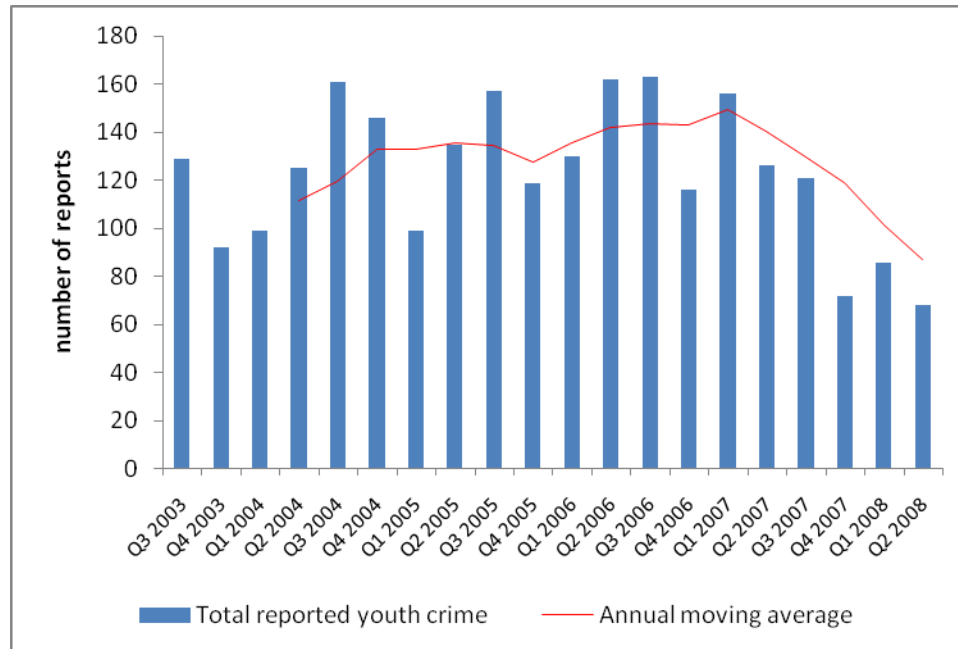
#### **OR**

Figure 7.1 shows changes in reported juvenile (under 18 years) crime for the neighbourhoods around the five OR areas, overlain by a trendline showing the average for the past 12 months (moving average) at each timepoint. It is important to note that the five projects started at different time points since summer 2004; all five projects have only been in place since the summer of 2007.

The annualised average number of youth crime reports began to decline from early 2007 onwards and it is possible that the implementation of five youth diversionary projects may have contributed to this reduction in some way. However, changes in youth crime statistics would also need to be compared with other areas and over a longer time to confirm whether this reduction in reported juvenile crime was attributable to OR. Appendices 15 and 16 show that reported adult crime has also been falling

across the same OR neighbourhoods since early 2007, raising the prospect that some other factor or factors has also been impacting upon crime levels in 2007 and 2008.

**Figure 7.1: Total reported juvenile (under 18 years) crime in OR areas, by quarter, 2003-2008 (Quarter 3 2003 to Quarter 2 2008)**



More specific data were available for the following categories of reported juvenile crime: vandalism and malicious damage/mischief; serious assault; petty assault; racially aggravated crime; attacks on emergency workers; consumption of alcohol in a non-designated place; breach of the peace; and disturbances (see Appendix 17). For many of these subcategories, in particular the more serious crimes, such as serious assault, the numbers reported were too small for reliable interpretation of trends. The data quality also did not allow distinction between missing data or absence of reported incidents for any given time period. However, for several categories, levels of juvenile crime were relatively low in late 2007 and the first half of 2008, being lower than they had been for much of the period 2004 to 2007, and ending either lower than, or as low as, they had been in the second half of 2003. This can be seen for breach of the peace, alcohol consumption in public places, disturbances and petty assault. Again, the only potential explanation relating to OR is that any impact upon crime levels only occurred

after the project was established in all five areas, since reductions in crime levels were not apparent earlier in the life of OR. On the other hand, there were no discernable movements in levels of vandalism (and other malicious damage), which is fact peaked in early 2008 across the OR areas.

Area specific graphs are presented for each of the five OR areas, for more commonly reported crimes (vandalism and petty assault; Appendices 18 and 19).

### ***JA and P8***

There is little to suggest that there have been changes in the numbers of reported vandalism incidents or petty assaults in any of the five OR areas between 2003 and 2008. There is also little evidence that levels of reported crime in the JA or P8 areas changed since the start of the youth diversionary projects (see Appendices 20 and 21).

### **7.1.3 Territorialism**

#### ***OR***

OR has the potential to address perceived spatial barriers and young people's understandings of where they can and can not go. Before OR, some of the participants had never ventured outside their residential areas, for fear of being attacked. OR provides the opportunity for young people to get to know people within their area, as well as in other neighbourhoods, through activities such as football tournaments across the five project sites.

Stakeholders hope that these tournaments will help to break down area divides and reduce hostile territorial attitudes. One of the LHOs said that through OR young people have gone to areas their parents would not previously have allowed them to enter. Young people from different areas come along to watch the Friday night league. One of the Youth Development Programme (YDP) participants felt that OR had changed people's lives because they are no longer restricted by boundaries as it had facilitated



communication between young people from different areas and gave them the opportunity to bond with people who they had previously fought with.

*'It's brought us together....I could walk into Red Road and the likes of Sighthill and Germiston, just generally chat amongst people, who, like, two years ago I was fighting with.'*

[Operation Reclaim YDP<sup>4</sup> Participant 3]

Another participant explained that once they know one young person from another area, it opens up the possibility of friendships with other people from that area.

*'Cause I mean, he's from Maryhill, and hardly any of us go to Maryhill, but if he goes to Maryhill and stuff, we'll find him and his friends will become our friends as well, you know? And we can, like, sort of scatter out and spread and everyone will be good friends where there's no fights and no problems.'*

[Operation Reclaim Participant focus group 1]

However, some stakeholders felt that although OR enables young people to cross territorial boundaries, they do not yet know if they are doing this of their own accord. OR participants had spent time in other areas, but this was generally as a participant in the project; otherwise they were not believed to voluntarily spend time in neighbouring areas. Some participants thought that they would be called names or be stabbed in some of these areas. Some of the young people in the focus groups said that they did not live in the vicinity of the OR site that they attended.

#### **7.1.4 Gang fighting**

##### **OR**

Although stakeholders admitted that it was difficult for them to know with certainty whether rates of ASB and crime in areas had reduced, they often reported that gang fighting between certain areas, particularly Red Road and Germiston, had considerably reduced or disappeared altogether. When OR began, police from a neighbouring area

---

<sup>4</sup> YDP is used to refer to the Youth Development Programme element of Operation Reclaim. This is a programme offering training and coaching experience that a small number of Operation Reclaim participants had taken part in.

(where residents used to fight with residents in one of the OR areas) reported very low levels of gang activity.

*'You used to get an awful lot of gang fighting up there [bridge]. You don't get as much.....*

*In the last few years, it has certainly settled down.'*

[Operation Reclaim Stakeholder 6]

Residents in the focus groups also reported reductions in gang activity:

*'We went through a period where there were gangs being dropped off and they were roaming Menzies Road. They'd head up to Springburn Park – but it's got better.'*

[Operation Reclaim residents' focus group- Quarrywood participant 5.5]

*'There aren't really any gang fights any more – I think that they've been done away with now.'*

[Operation Reclaim residents' focus group- Sighthill participant 2.1]

Although the reductions in gang activity were linked to OR there was concern that the reduction would only last as long as the youth diversionary project, or that the problem would be displaced to another area.

*'R: It [gang fighting] stops when Operation Reclaim is there you know, if you're in the right location it doesn't happen.*

***I: And what about on the nights that Operation Reclaim isn't there?***

*Then it'll come back, in fact, at Red Road coming towards the end of the programme we started to see young people appear on the bridge, you know, as if in readiness for Operation Reclaim not being there.'*

[Operation Reclaim Stakeholder 2]

Community Police officers said there used to be two to five gang fights an evening between Red Road and Germiston but now gang fights are extremely rare. They said that the week before their interview, on a Saturday night, boys from Germiston instigated a gang fight at Red Road. They pointed out that there was no OR in the Germiston area and OR does not run on a Saturday night. They could not recall when the last gang fight before that had been but were sure it was more than a year ago.

OR participants said that they saw fewer gang fights but participants in one of the focus groups were divided about whether there are hardly ever any gang fights or they happen but they do not see them.

***'I: And has that... has the amount of gang fights that you think are going on, changed over time?***

*R1: Aye*

*R2: Aye, definitely. It used to be on every day of the week an now it's hardly ever on.'*

[Operation Reclaim Participant focus group 2]

OR YDP participants also said that gang fighting had reduced dramatically.

*'I think I used to see it [gang fighting] before this [OR] started, you know, but now not anymore, because everyone is busy with the sports and that, because they're training for the game [at the end of the week]'*

[Operation Reclaim YDP Participant 1]

Also:

*'Usually during the summer at this time, at five o'clock and six o'clock and seven o'clock, there's usually gang fighting when I was younger. So as I'm walking over the bridge, that was a bridge when I was younger I wouldn't walk over myself, anyway, and now I'm walking by it, I'm like that, it's clear, there's nothing there, 'cause they're all playing football together, they're talking to each other, they're maturing, they're going out clubbing together and eventually, it's just looking good on them.'*

[Operation Reclaim YDP Participant 3]

Gang fighting was also reported to have reduced following implementation of the JA project.

**The crime statistics received from the police did not include any information specifically about gang activity. However, as reported above, overall levels of youth crime began to decline from early 2007 onwards in the areas covered by OR. This, together with stakeholder accounts of a reduction in gang fighting activity in recent years, suggest that gang fighting has declined in the areas where OR has operated. However, the extent to which this is directly attributable to the youth diversionary project itself is unknown.**

### 7.1.5 Fire and arson

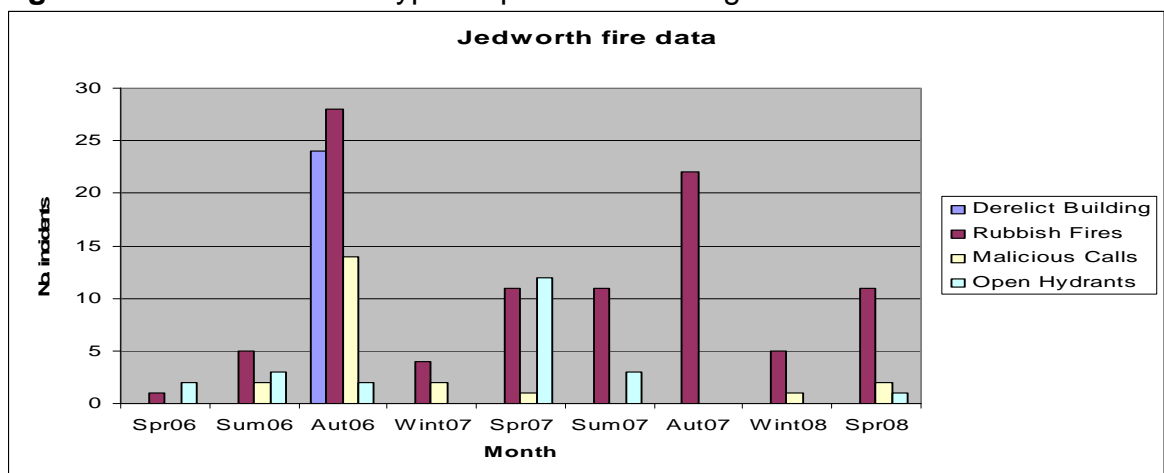
#### JA

There were reports from the JA LHO that fire-setting was eliminated following the project. However, many properties were demolished at this time and it was unclear whether this or the youth diversionary project could explain the reduction in fire-setting. The Fire Service said that levels of reports relating to secondary fires (e.g. setting rubbish on fire), open hydrants and attacks on fire crews in the area had also reduced, but again it was unclear whether changes were related to the work of the JA project or possibly to seasonal fluctuations.

*'The calls based on fires in derelict buildings, fires and secondary fires, open hydrants and recording of attacks on fire crews – all these dropped right off. Subsequent months, this is, we're talking maybe January, February, March, April, and then there was maybe a slight increase again, as things picked up – especially the summer months, it tends to pick up.'*  
[Jedworth Avenue Stakeholder 6]

Routine data on incidents recorded by the Fire Service in the JA area are presented in Figure 7.2 below. The peak of incidents in derelict buildings during the autumn of 2006 is evident. It is not clear if the numbers of other fire setting incidents, such as 'rubbish fires' has changed.

**Figure 7.2** Numbers of fire types reported in JA neighbourhood 2006-2008



*(Spr- March, April, May; Sum- June, July, August; Autumn- September October November; Wint- December, January February)*

### 7.1.6 Use of public spaces

#### OR

**Stakeholders from the OR areas commented on the changed use of public space by the project. By using pitches and outdoor spaces, the projects reclaimed public spaces for use by the community,** whereas beforehand some of these spaces had been used for gang fighting, quad-bikes, drinking and other ASB. Although not really used on Saturday nights, stakeholders reported that young people used open spaces during the day at the weekends.

*'The pitches probably weren't in best condition because of all the gang activity – you tended to have loads and loads of smashed bottles, glass, used by people for walking dogs and covered in dog litter. And I think that's probably changed as a result of Operation Reclaim. Local people probably wouldn't have gone there by choice, and certainly, kids who weren't interested in any kind of bad activities would not have used the recreation ground. I suppose you could maybe term it, to some degree, maybe a bit of a no-go area...But what it has done is it's made that area, at night time, now, I think it's five nights a week it's operating – so it's in almost constant use every night of the week by members of the local community, which just wasn't the case even three or four years ago, and it's used for the kind of range of activities that Operation Reclaim puts on for the kids. I mean, it's turned something that was used very infrequently by members of the local community, to something that is now in almost everyday use. I suppose it's brought that particular part back to life, at least members can come down and use those facilities.'*

[Operation Reclaim Stakeholder 8]

OR participants also reported the improved use and availability of public space to the wider community following OR.

*'Aye, dramatically, so much. It used to be so bad, full of junkies and alcoholics and that, just scared to go out just in case anyone started on you. But it's just... you don't see anybody, it's just wee weans that are kicking a ball and playing tennis, et cetera.'*

[Operation Reclaim YDP Participant 2]

Reports from the questionnaire suggest that OR participants felt better about their neighbourhood and felt safer since attending OR (Table7.1).

**Table 7.1: Self-reported changes in feelings about neighbourhood safety among OR participants (questionnaire data)**

Changes experienced since attending OR	Worse	Same	Better	Number of respondents (n)
Feelings about the neighbourhood	6%	35%	59%	46
Feelings of safety	9%	37%	64%	45

One of the stakeholders said that although tenants thought that OR was ‘great’, there were also anecdotal reports of young people habitually throwing rubbish into people’s gardens on leaving the project, comprising a minor incivility as a consequence of the project activity.

### 7.1.7 Police community relations

#### **OR**

The involvement of the police in OR is seen by the project as presenting a good opportunity to improve relations between the police and young people, in circumstances where there may be entrenched negative attitudes to the police amongst young people.

Reports from both stakeholders and participants were generally positive about police involvement in the youth diversionary project; participants appreciated getting to know local police officers and ‘seeing their human side’. Stakeholders said they had seen young people and the police talking to each other on the streets in a friendly rather than confrontational manner. Some participants also said that they now realise the police are there to help.

*‘It’s really good, because the police and the kids have bonded a lot more, whereas, like, when I was growing up it was like “fuck the polis” and this, that and the next thing, but now it’s... you don’t see that any more. It’s more “oh, they guys are here, if somebody robs my house, who’s helping me? Like, if somebody breaks in and steals my stuff, who’s gonna help me?” The police will help you.’*  
[Operation Reclaim YDP Participant 3]

*R2: Aye, because I used to hate the polis, but now I realise that*

*R3: They’re there to help*

*R2: They don’t do anything bad, they’re there tae help you....*

[Operation Reclaim Participant focus group 2]

Around half of young people participating in OR (questionnaire respondents) reported an improved opinion of the police since attending the project (Table 7.2).

**Table 7.2: Self-reported changes in opinion of police among OR participants (questionnaire data)**

Change experienced since attending OR	Worse	Same	Better	Number of respondents (n)
Opinion of police	18%	33%	49%	45

Residents had also noticed both an increased and an improved community police presence:

*'I've seen police going about on bikes and I've never seen that before in my life. The area's nicer now because you know that there's someone about.'*  
 [Operation Reclaim residents' focus group- Sighthill participant 2.4]

However, the relationships and images of the police appeared to be highly dependent on individual officers and their willingness to break down barriers with the young people.

*'You want the police to come in and join in, in a sort of way, to show the youngsters that they're no bad, they're just friendly, they're just, they keep you safe, but some of them don't, they just make the weans [young children] scared.'*  
 [Operation Reclaim YDP Participant 2]

### 7.1.8 Ethnic group relations

#### **OR**

Stakeholders, including police, reported that asylum seekers had set up gangs in response to racist incidents but this had been considerably reduced since OR started. There were also reports from stakeholders and OR participants themselves that young people from different groups were mixing more together and that relationships had improved.

*'Race crime started dropping, assaults on asylum seekers started dropping, we started to see families actually, while you were there coming and using the spare ground, grass for picnics. Which- I'm from up there and never seen anybody doing that in your life before.'*  
 [Operation Reclaim Stakeholder 9]

*'Like, I'm from Maryhill, and I never used to come to Sighthill because it was that bad. I mean, you could be walking around, somebody could come behind you or something... but since Operation Reclaim has been involved, it's been a lot safer you know?'*

[Operation Reclaim participant focus group 1]

Reports from young people attending OR suggest that there were fewer race related incidents however the small numbers here mean that it is not possible to know if these changes are statistically significant (Table 7.3)

**Table 7.3: Reports of race related incidents before and after attending OR (questionnaire data)**

Once a month or more I have:	Before attending OR	After attending OR	
Spent time with young people from different ethnic backgrounds	64%	59%	Not statistically significant (n =44)
Been picked on because of race/skin colour	16%	9%	Not statistically significant (n =45)

It was hoped that the youth diversionary project would, by mixing different cultural groups together, help young people from different cultural groups get to know each other, break down cultural barriers, and show young people the things they have in common, for example football. However, one of the stakeholders who had attended the opening night of one of the sites of OR reported that the ethnic communities remained segregated. Stakeholders also viewed the passage of time as the major factor that explained improving relationships between different ethnic groups. The fact that young people have grown up together over the years was given as the explanation for improved integration. It was pointed out that young people were mixing at school as well as at OR.

**P8**

P8 participants comprised a range of ethnic groups, however stakeholders with direct personal involvement in the project noticed a divide between two groups, white and black/other minority ethnic. One stakeholder reported that there had been an initial



division between the two groups, which had reduced over time to the extent that the two groups would engage in the same activity, but not really talk to each other.

*'Well there was a definite...there was definitely a big division in here- a massive division where it was us and them. To the extent where there was a black basketball team and a white football team. And it just, it never sat right with me anyway at all. But then we sort of a broke the barriers down themselves you know by playing pool and stuff like that and talking to each other, before they were being, the white guys were being really racist because they could not understand why black guys would be in their club.'*

[P8 Stakeholder 2]

Relations between different ethnic groups were felt to be good in the P8 area. One of the stakeholders attributed this to a dedicated officer to welcome asylum seekers when they first arrived.

#### **7.1.9 Use of resources and implication for local agencies**

##### **OR**

Police stakeholders suggested that the reduction in gang fighting that had occurred since the introduction of OR had freed up time for the police to attend to other calls, which previously would have backlogged while urgent calls related to gang activity were being dealt with. A senior police officer estimated that if OR was not in operation, four additional police officers would be required per shift in the locality.

LHO stakeholders also reported reduced costs in relation to cleaning and maintaining the local neighbourhood. However it was difficult for LHOs to provide an indication of the actual cost reduction.

*'I mean, we used to, probably over the last seven years, we've put aside around fifteen thousand pounds a year just to deal with graffiti, and in the last two years, we've only spent around eighteen hundred pounds of that. So I mean, that's one kind of specific, measurable thing that we can say, going back three years ago, we would have spent that, and maybe had to add some more money on top of that just to deal with graffiti within the area. We're now spending a tenth of that – and last year, we spent just about a tenth of what we'd allocated for it.'*

[Operation Reclaim Stakeholder 8]

It must be acknowledged that there may be various alternative explanations for any reduction in spending on such costs. For example, regeneration and building clearance may reduce the demand for graffiti removal.

## **JA**

LHO stakeholders in the JA area reported that, since the advent of the project, bogus calls to the Fire Service had stopped, and there were fewer complaints to the Police and the LHO about ASB. This was seen to be linked to reduced staffing costs to the LHO in relation to cleaning up the effects of vandalism, graffiti and eviction but 'reductions in costs' was not quantifiable.

Stakeholders from the Fire Service reported a reduction in fire setting and bogus calls which they felt would have reduced the cost to the service of sending out an appliance and also freed up the appliance for other duties.

## **7.2 Impacts on participants**

The following section reports the views of both participants and stakeholders about the ways in which the youth diversionary projects impacted on participants, drawing from interview and focus group data.

### **7.2.1 Diversion from offending and involvement in anti-social behaviour**

## **OR**

A number of young people reported that prior to OR they would hang about and fight, or stay at home with nothing to do. Some of the participants now attend OR on most nights, reporting that OR gives them something to do in their spare time, such as football.

*'And it [OR] keeps everybody off the streets, 'cause it's good and it's something to do at night.'* [Operation Reclaim Participant focus group 2]

*'There was about... more or less the full team, not the full team but the majority, they used to be all into gang fighting and drinking but since Operation Reclaim it's just... that's just pushed aside and they've come to this and want to stop it and they just want to play football, 'cause they know that's better, 'cause you can't be going fighting for the rest of your life, unless they want to live till they're about 20 if you're lucky.'*

[Operation Reclaim YDP Participant 2]

Some of the OR participants also mentioned that OR had helped them improve their attitude and behaviour, and become more disciplined. One of the YDP participants, who used to hang around and be involved in fights with people from different areas said:

*'I: has your involvement in any of those things [offending/fighting] changed, then, in the last few years?*

*R: It's changed a lot because of, like, Operation Reclaim, it's gave me the opportunity to meet kids, like, from the areas I was fighting with, get to know them a lot better, and it's matured a lot of us because, like, playing in a football league together, it's like 90 minutes of arguing and then you're shaking hands after the match and you're quite friendly after it.'*

[Operation Reclaim YDP Participant 3]

This YDP participant describes in further detail how OR has changed things for other participants:

*'There's boys who were probably fighting with each other every day in school and then after school, who now I see are walking up to each other and big hugs and carrying on with each other, know what I mean? It's quite moving because, like, when you think about it, it was people being chased with knives and, like, everything, bottles, and now eventually they're sitting and they're drinking juice and that together and they're sitting, playing football and tennis. It's quite moving to see that because you just think a couple of years ago they hated each other and eventually it's changed them.'*

[Operation Reclaim YDP Participant 3]

There were reports from stakeholders that OR had reduced the number of young people engaging in ASB simply by offering young people something to do in the local area. As the project has now been running for a number of years it was thought that for the younger ones the provision of OR may prevent them from ever getting involved in offending or in gang fighting.

*'What I like about it is we've been going now for, since 2004, so this is our fourth year. So the boys that were involved [in offending] were fifteen, sixteen have now gone on. But it's their brothers and sisters that we've- they've brought along. We've*

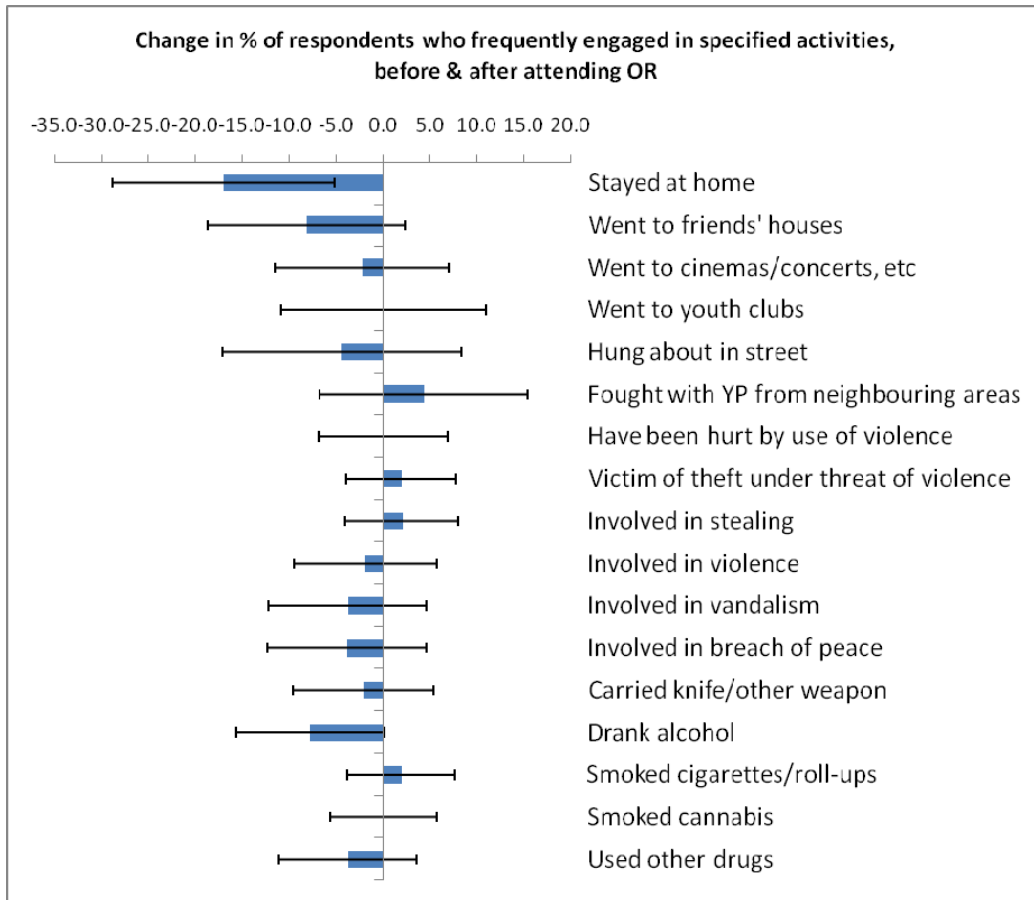
*had them for three or four years, who are now thirteen, fourteen, who've never been in a gang fight, but would've been, and have got the potential. So we've actually captured them, so that we- Operation Reclaim continues. We keep they kids out of bother. Well, we hope.'*  
[Operation Reclaim Stakeholder 9]

More negatively, Community Police Officers commented that a minority of regular OR attendees still go drinking on Friday and Saturdays (OR runs football league matches on Fridays- but only participants who have attended every weeknight can take part in this component). When the participants in one of the focus groups were asked what they do on Saturday nights (when OR is not running) the older participants said that most of them do not drink but do go into town clubbing. The younger ones said they go to the cinema or 'hang about'.

Questionnaire respondents were asked how they spent their spare time before and after attending OR. This included questions about leisure activities, involvement in ASB including drug and alcohol consumption and experience of violence (Figure 7.2, also Appendix 12).

For most of the behaviours and experiences shown in Figure 7.2, the wide confidence intervals around any observed changes mean that it is not clear whether there was a favourable change or not associated with young people's involvement with OR. There are two possible reasons for this; firstly, an inadequately powered sample size of young people who participated in the questionnaire; or secondly, because the project genuinely had no effect on these behaviours. However, there were two exceptions; a significant decline in the reported frequency of two behaviours occurred before and after participation in OR; the proportion of respondents who reported staying at home weekly or more declined from 60.4% to 43.4% (95% CI -17.0% to -28.8%) and those who reporting drinking alcohol weekly or more declined from 23.5% to 15.7% (95% CI -15.6% to -0.7%). Appendix 12 shows the data in more detail.

**Figure 7.2: Change from baseline in proportion of young people reporting specified activities weekly or more, Operation Reclaim Participants**



**JA**

JA project stakeholders reported that, to their knowledge, most of the participants had not re-offended since the end of the project (one year ago), and that most of the participants had wanted to change their behaviour and stay away from trouble. However, stakeholders had not followed up participants, therefore this could not be verified.

*'I think for the ones definitely for the JA group, from the most part, all the ones in the group wanted to change. And it was just about trying to access a wee bit help for them to do that. And, I would say four out of six, probably did do that. We haven't had anything back from them since, it's only been recently some stuff coming back for one of the young people.....So, you know it's been a whole year he's managed to go without- without being kind of back involved in stuff [offending] again.'*

[Jedworth Avenue Stakeholder 3]

When asked whether the JA project had achieved one of its aims: to challenge participants' attitude towards their offending behaviour one of the stakeholders replied:

*'My point of view is it did. We went to the ceremony where they all got their awards at the end of it and I did- I think they'd just thought of all this as a bit of fun, they didn't realise how much it would cause danger to life and limb. And in that was certainly what the Youth Workers were saying as well. They didn't realise what they were doing-and soon as they started to think about it, because that was what it was all about, thinking about their behaviour then. And I think the fact that they haven't re-offended demonstrates that that was the outcome.'*

[Jedworth Avenue Stakeholder 2]

### **P8**

P8 stakeholders did not think any reduction in offending behaviour had been realised, or felt that it was too early to comment. One of the stakeholders said that they thought it was unlikely that the project would make a huge difference to participants unless staff managed to build up really good relationships with the young people. A member of staff involved in delivering the project said they were not in a position to comment on whether participants' involvement in ASB or crime had changed. They said that as far as they were aware only one (of 12) of participants' Single Shared Assessments mentioned involvement in offending. This young person was no longer attending the project and the member of staff felt that they had not engaged in the project. However, when asked whether P8 had achieved anything so far one of the stakeholders who worked in the area said that one of the participants had reduced his offending.

*'R: I've never spoken to the people from P8 about their results, but if I was to identify one individual guy that I know that goes to it, I would say he's visibly – visibly changed for the better in the last couple of months. He still gets involved, sporadically, in things, but I mean, I don't know to attribute that to whether his main influences are in the jail, which could be the case, although some of them are still out and about – but certainly, I've seen him do, like football, I've seen him being sober and polite and stuff, of late, which he certainly was never in the past.'*

***I: Right – and do you know why that might be?***

*R: Well, I've seen him in here, you know? I've seen him out on the street with kids who also go to the club, rather than with his old squad. So I would imagine, if they're getting new activities that are interesting to them, but they're also meeting other people who don't just want to drink and fight. '*

[P8 Stakeholder 4]

In the words of the participant being referred to above:

**'I: Yeah, so tell me about, like is there anything good about it [P8], anything good that you think has come of that for you?**

R: Aye, it's done me well. It's made me calm down.

**I: Is there anything bad that's come out of it for you?**

R: No.'

[South Participant 1]

## 7.2.2 Personal development

### **OR**

As well as improving sports skills, such as football and tennis, participants felt that their involvement in OR had helped increase their self-confidence and self-esteem, improve their ability to work in a team and generally improve their 'attitudes'.

*'Well, they kind of, our attitude – they improve our attitude towards, like, in general, you know? 'cause normal we are cheeky and stuff, so yeah, so yeah, they kind of lead us in the right direction, to be honest with you.'*

[Operation Reclaim Participants focus group 1]

There was widespread agreement amongst participants that making new friends and getting to know each other was a really good aspect of OR.

*'Get to interact with each other, get to know each other better that's the best thing'*

[Operation Reclaim Participant focus group 1]

YDP participants had undertaken around four months training, received awards and were then employed by OR. Collectively, they gained awards on: introduction to sport and football, basketball, netball, youth development, early first touches in football, SFA Level 2 in youth development. In addition to gaining knowledge and training YDP participants reported having gained confidence and maturity.

*'R: It's [OR] done a lot of things for me, personally.*

***I: Right. What kind of things?***

*R: Like, it's took me away from trouble. It's kept me away from like the dark episode of my life, but it's actually gave me more opportunities to meet people who I wouldn't want to meet and it's getting me into areas that I wouldn't usually go to, so in a way I think it's made me a lot maturer and it's made me a lot older in a way because it's made me into a man instead of a boy, so it's gave me good opportunities and it's really changed my life because if it wasn't there I'd probably still be hanging about on street corners and looking for trouble.'*

[Operation Reclaim YDP Participant 3]

This YDP participant mentioned their involvement in the community as a positive outcome. They also said they had stayed on at school because of OR and would soon be starting college.

*'Yeah, I was going to school this year, I stayed on for a fifth year, got my education, but that was also due to Operation Reclaim, who gave me the advice to say, like, stay on, get your grades.'*

[Operation Reclaim YDP Participant 3]

A couple of the stakeholders believed that the OR participants really valued and were proud of the awards they had worked for through the project. Some stakeholders thought that OR was producing quality football players, which would be beneficial to Scotland in the future. Table 7.4 below shows the types of achievements which OR participants reported in the questionnaire.

**Table 7.4: Participant achievement since attending OR (questionnaire data)**

	<b>% (n=45)</b>
Started work experience	33%
Started new job	18%
Started new course	11%
Participated in the OR Volunteer Development Programme	9%
Received coaching certificate	7%



One of the stakeholders mentioned that OR had referred young people on to their own agency for assistance with finding further education, training and employment (see Appendix 11 for the full range of referrals reported by participants). Through these referrals, the agency had managed to help a number of young people with whom they had not previously engaged, some of whom had successfully secured employment. Another stakeholder said that OR can change people's lives, citing an example of a young person who was regularly drinking and fighting when they first presented to OR. Soon afterwards, they began playing in the league, joined the 'Get Ready for Work Programme' and subsequently got a full time job.

### **JA**

The local youth organisation in the JA area reported that a couple of the JA project participants had approached them for assistance with their CVs and job searches. One participant went on to secure an apprenticeship.

The JA project included skill building activities to improve decision-making, anger management, positive self-talk, social networking and self-confidence. After the project, some of the participants had volunteered to participate in a community clean-up day, which was thought to reflect increased self-confidence.

### **P8**

As the P8 project had not been delivered as originally intended, stakeholders were unable to comment on its impacts. However, one of the project workers who also worked in a local employment agency had managed to get a project participant onto a training programme. Another member of P8 staff reported that four of the participants had had positive outcomes: one had moved on to college; another had had an apprentice interview; one had started volunteering; and another started working two to three days a week. Other positive outcomes reported included young people building relationships, showing commitment and pride in the project.

***'I: So far has, do you think the project P8 so far has facilitated people's development in any way like social or personal or educational or anything like that?***

*R: Aye because I think that if we'd a camera in here the first day people walked through our doors, and then they same people come in the day, I think you would see a difference. Even a difference in being more confident. And wanting to mix with other folk so there isn't that whole them and us, there isn't blacks against whites or whatever it may be. Which it kind of a was at the start there was tendency for people just to stick to their own groups.'*  
 [P8 stakeholder 2]

### 7.2.3 Health impacts for participants

#### **OR**

Participants were not directly asked about health in the interviews. However, improved fitness was mentioned by a number of OR participants and some reported having lost weight. YDP participants saw OR as offering a healthy lifestyle through sport as an alternative to unhealthy lifestyle behaviours such as drinking, smoking, and drug use.

*'I'm a lot more fitter. When I first started I was probably small and a wee bit chubby on the side, but kinda drinking and stuff and eventually I've become a lot fitter. I'm no out associating wi', like, drugs and stuff, and like, I'm no eating as much chippies and stuff that I would usually be doing because they're getting you fit for matches. I'm eating more salads, I'm eating more things and, like, by doing that, it's the education that they've gave me.'*  
 [Operation Reclaim YDP Participant 3]

Stakeholders also recognised the health improvement potential of OR by providing opportunities to be outside exercising instead of sitting indoors drinking smoking or being exposed to other people's smoke.

In the questionnaire, participants reported having improved health and optimism about the future since attending OR (Table 7.5).

**Table 7.5: Self-reported changes among OR participants (questionnaire data)**

Changes experienced since attending OR	Worse	Same	Better	Number of respondents (n)
Health	6%	21%	73%	48
Optimism/confidence about the future	6%	20%	74%	46

## **P8**

It is worth noting that not all participants had changed their health behaviours. Since their involvement in P8 one of the participants interviewed said that he continues to smoke cigarettes and cannabis daily but had reduced his alcohol intake dramatically.

*'There actually isn't, there's only a small four of five guys that come in here and do smoke hash. They won't hide it from you anyway they'll tell you that, and my honest opinion is I don't think it's stopped. I know it's not stopped do you know what I mean.'*

[P8 Stakeholder 2]

### **7.3 Views of the Youth Diversionary projects**

Stakeholders, young people, and residents were asked about their views of the local youth diversionary project and whether or not they viewed it to be successful. They generally took a broad view of what constitutes success.

There were consistently positive views of the projects, with no negative reports. Stakeholders reported hearing a range of positive views relating to the projects, including some improvements in the local environment and fewer complaints about local youth disorder. Youth diversionary project participants reported that the projects had been positive for the local area as well as for themselves. Project staff also felt that the projects had managed to engage with young people who were not always easy to engage with.

#### **7.3.1 Young people's views of the project**

### **OR**

Reports from young people attending OR suggest high levels of satisfaction with the project (Table 7.6), both with the activities provided and with the staff involved in delivering the project. In addition, 78% would not suggest changing anything about OR.

**Table 7.6: Satisfaction with OR activities and associated staff (questionnaire data)**

	Activities provided (n=58)	Coaching staff (n=52)	Project staff (non-coaching) (n=43)	Police (n=46)
Extremely dissatisfied	12%	8%	5%	20%
Dissatisfied	2%	-	7%	9%
Satisfied	47%	31%	51%	39%
Extremely satisfied	40%	62%	37%	33%

Young people also agreed that project staff responded to what the young people wanted to do and took their views into account (Table 7.7).

**Table 7.7: Responsiveness of project to participants needs (questionnaire data)**

	Yes
Staff asked what participants wanted to do as part of OR	75%
Participant's wishes were taken into account	66%

### 7.3.2 Residents' Views of the Projects

#### **OR and P8**

Residents were very positive about the youth diversionary projects (mostly based on information about the projects rather than direct experience), but they also identified a number of areas for improvement. These are listed below and accompanied by some quotes from the residents to illustrate these points.

- Developing activities of specific interest to girls

*'It doesn't look like there's a lot there for the girls though – I think that someone's got to sort out stuff for the females because the gangs of girls are worse than the boys' ones.'*

[Operation Reclaim residents' focus group- Springburn participant 3.6]

*'They should speak to the lassies what it is that they'd like to do – give them the chance to do something.'*

[Operation Reclaim residents' focus group- Red Road participant 4.2]

- Ensuring the project runs throughout the year

*'Why is it only happening in the summer– what about the winter when it's dark and there's nothing to do and it's more frightening for us walking around– they need to make sure that it's running all year round. What happens in winter time?'*

[Operation Reclaim residents' focus group- Red Road participant 4.3]

- Raising parents' awareness of the project

*'I am not happy with my girls going out. I feel sorry for them because there's not much for them to do. I have found a football team for one of my boys but it's quite a long way from here. I haven't heard of Operation Reclaim.'*

[Operation Reclaim residents' focus group- Springburn participant 3.2]

*'How do you get the P8 project across to youngsters– is it advertised to the kids at school? I have nephews and nieces at school and I can't remember hearing them mentioning it.'*

[P8 residents' focus group- participant 3]

#### **7.4 Summary**

- In the OR neighbourhoods there were consistent reports from stakeholders and residents of reduced crime and gang activity. There was some suggestion from police crime data that there had been a small reduction in juvenile crime since mid-2007; however it is not clear if this is due to OR.
- Following the JA project, fire and arson incidents were reduced. Fires in derelict buildings were eliminated following a peak in Autumn 2006. However, demolition of derelict buildings is also a likely reason for this reduction in fire raising.
- Reduced demand on police and fire services and LHO cleaning and maintenance services was reported to have had resource implications for these agencies; freeing some resources for other activity.

- In OR the police presence at the project was reported to have improved police relations with young people.
- OR stakeholders reported a reduction in hostility and racial incidents since the projects started. However, it was also reported by stakeholders that meaningful interaction between youths from different ethnic backgrounds was sparse and separation still occurred. Participants' reports indicated that inter-ethnic interaction was fairly common, though not impacted on by the projects.
- It was reported by stakeholders and participants that OR had effectively reclaimed outdoor public spaces and sports pitches as safe places for the community to use.
- OR participants viewed the project positively and there were some reports of improved health and increased physical fitness being linked to the project.
- Some OR participants reported that the project provided them with something to do, and helped them to improve their attitude and behaviour. There was little change in reports of involvement or experience with violent or criminal behaviour.
- JA stakeholders thought that the participants behaviour had improved following the project and few had become involved in offending. However, no data to confirm these views were available.
- P8 had not been successfully implemented at the time of the evaluation and assessment of impacts was not possible.

## 8. CHALLENGES AND SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS FOR YOUTH DIVERSIONARY PROJECTS: STAKEHOLDER AND PARTICIPANTS' VIEWS

This chapter reports the views and experiences of project staff, stakeholders, and project participants in relation to some of the issues encountered within the projects and what action has been suggested to address these issues and improve the ways the projects are implemented in future.

### 8.1 Setup, implementation and staffing

Operation Reclaim (OR) was set up in Spring 2004 in the Red Road area, and since then has been extended to a further four areas in the North East of Glasgow. The Jedworth Avenue (JA) project was a short term project running over the summer months of 2007. There were no reports of problems with either of these projects in relation to setting-up.

There were a number of concerns raised by stakeholders about the Participate (P8) project, largely relating to problems of identifying suitably qualified staff, compounded by difficulties in identifying suitable accommodation. The P8 project was originally intended to be operational in early 2008 but this project encountered numerous difficulties and was never fully operational in the period of this evaluation (i.e. by November 2008). There were difficulties in appointing suitable project staff, both a project co-ordinator and youth workers. The venue originally intended for the project was not available for use and there were delays in finding suitable alternative accommodation. Once the project was ready to start, there were further difficulties and delays in identifying and recruiting participants. There was almost a six month period between the beginning of staff recruitment and the time when participants started attending the project.

P8 stakeholders also reported concerns that only a small number of the formal group work sessions tailored to the target group were being delivered. Some formal sessions had been delivered but there appeared to be a lack of planning and co-ordination within the project. In some cases external agencies had been used to deliver sessions that

stakeholders felt they should have been asked to contribute to. Stakeholders reported that the project resembled a youth club rather than a specialised programme targeting specific young people.

Local concierge staff had complained to some stakeholders about the behaviour of P8 participants during a football match: the P8 participants were reported to have sworn and shouted at them. There appeared to be an overall view that the P8 project lacked cohesion and direction. Both stakeholders and some P8 staff thought that the project should be able to provide some structure for and disciplinary control over anti-social behaviour(ASB) of the participants, in particular while attending project activities.

These serious problems resulted in stakeholders threatening to withdraw funding for the P8 project unless tangible improvements were visible in the following months. It was suggested that the difficulties encountered in staffing and setting up this project may have been avoided if the stakeholders had insisted on using their own experienced staff, rather than advertising for new staff. It was also recognised that attracting high quality applicants for a one year project was inherently difficult.

## **8.2 Participant inclusion and reach of the projects**

**The vast majority of regular OR participants were boys. Although some girls did attend and some took part in football it was recognised that more needed to be done to include activities that might appeal more to girls.** Possibilities included dance classes, cheerleading, running, athletics, or fashion design.

The broad age range of OR participants was raised as presenting difficulties in organising suitable activities to suit all ages. In some cases children as young as five were reported to have been attending the project. Older participants were reported to be less likely to attend in the summer months when the Friday night football league was not part of the programme. It was also mentioned that reaching the black and minority (BME) community may require offering alternatives to football such as basketball.



It was clear that some of the young people who attended OR sites did not live in the local neighbourhood. One stakeholder was keen to get assurance that OR was reaching and including children of Glasgow Housing Association (GHA) tenants.

*'we've got so many owner-occupiers in the area, right, and we don't have a lot of involvement with them at all, so, in particular our tenants, are the tenants or the tenants' children of GHA benefiting from this?'*

[Operation Reclaim Stakeholder 1]

Some of the JA project stakeholders said they would have liked to work with more young people, for example those on the periphery and older people, outside of the criteria applied by the organisation who delivered the project.

In the P8 project, it was originally planned that most participants would be referred to the project from schools. However, there did not appear to be a clear referral pathway to P8. Some participants had been identified through street workers, some from schools, but many had also self-referred, hearing about the project from friends. The concierge service had provided a number of names of the young people who were causing the problems in the area but these were either not followed up or deemed unsuitable by P8 staff. There was a concern that P8 had not targeted the right schools. Stakeholders also felt that referrals should have been made through social work and the police. Police said that most of the worst offenders in the area no longer live in the area.

P8 staff reported that participants who lacked confidence found it difficult to be involved in the project. One of the young people attending P8 had been bullied and had asked that some of the other participants be banned. Attendance at P8 fell over the summer months. This was possibly due to the availability of alternative activities, for example Culture and Sport's (Glasgow City Council) Zest programme. Territorial boundaries were seen as potential barriers against participation in a youth project. Stakeholders said they would like to see more activities in the area for young people in general, rather than projects which only target those involved in offending behaviour.

### **8.3 Facilities and activities**

OR participants thought the equipment, facilities, and activities offered are good. There was some mention that new balls and higher fences would be beneficial.

The facility used for the OR league was said to be very costly. There were also a number of reports that the project needed to offer activities in addition to football, such as basketball and dancing. However, there had also been difficulties in identifying suitable accommodation which made the provision of indoor activities more difficult.

The community challenge aspect of the JA project was not possible due to opposition from local residents who perceived it as graffiti. The challenge was intended to enable the participants to create a mural for the local neighbourhood. On reflection one of the staff involved in delivering the project said it would have been preferable to have found a challenge that the young people were interested in and willing to engage in.

Both of the P8 participants interviewed wanted more activities and suggested that they would like to go away on trips. In the words of one of the stakeholders:

*'I mean, you would like to think that they would introduce new things that the kids aren't aware of, you know, rather than maybe just feeding them the same stuff that they want all the time like pool. PlayStation, computers and football, because they'll never, it needs to be something that they..., once they've left, they can provide for themselves'*

[P8 Stakeholder 4]

### **8.4 Participant support, advice, referrals, and development**

OR participants reported receiving advice about football skills but there were few reports of other types of advice, support or referrals. This contrasts with the data from the questionnaire where participants reported receiving a range of different types of advice, support, and referrals to other organisations (see Appendix 11). YDP participants also reported having received advice and support with coaching and football skills but that they had not been given any other advice or support. However, participants did report

that OR had helped them to mature and be more confident. **Community police felt that it would be good to include more educational activities and advice in OR.**

It was suggested by a stakeholder in the JA project, that more involvement and partnership working between the project and a local regeneration agency may improve the potential to impact on education and employment outcomes for participants.

### **8.5 Stakeholder working relationships**

LHO stakeholders provided essential financial backing to the projects; in addition, some of the LHOs advertised OR to their tenants and informally monitored the projects, occasionally attending project events. Some of the LHO stakeholders reported knowing very little about OR and would like their involvement to extend beyond financial support. The Fire Service, who had provided facilities for OR for a brief period of time, also reported being interested in further involvement with the project.

There was some frustration among stakeholders that despite the success of OR there was a lack of internal recognition of this within their own organisations.

*'I'm disappointed actually in what the Police's reaction to this, to the whole thing, when the figures are there. And they've no- they don't push it more, they don't advertise it'*

[Operation Reclaim Stakeholder 9]

P8 stakeholders reported difficulties encountered in engaging with the project despite the stakeholders providing project funding.

### **8.6 Project length, resources and future**

Stakeholders from the company involved in delivering OR voiced a need for more financial investment than originally agreed, as well as longer term objectives and guaranteed funding for three years. The need for longer term objectives and the need to monitor the impacts was also reported by OR stakeholders who were keen to ensure that the project remained relevant and able to reach young people and provide benefits

for the local community. There was a suggestion that OR may be a way of engaging young people in the 2014 Commonwealth Games.

Community police hoped that OR could be extended to Saturdays as they felt this would reduce ASB. They also thought that the project should be extended to Blackhill and Germiston and eventually across Glasgow and Strathclyde.

Staff from the JA project felt that the short term nature (six weeks) of the project had important implications for the potential impact the project could have on participants in the longer term, as well as limiting the ability to develop longer term plans for the project. Stakeholders saw sustainability as an issue and said they would ideally like to have been able to continue working with the participants after the project had ended. One stakeholder suggested that, even though the project had ended, longer term support for participants may be available through referral to the local regeneration agency. Additional funding could have been used to extend the project's timescale, include more young people, and provide more street workers, previously said to be a valuable way to target hard-to-reach individuals. The local youth organisation said they would have liked to have had more money to do one-to-one work with the participants.

One of the JA stakeholders said that if they were to run the project again they would like to look at before, during and after and analyse information better.

*I: Was there anything that you would do differently?*

*R: I think probably if we run it again, we would be more, we would maybe be slightly more switched on with our before, during and after. Facts wise, and figures wise and you know we would be more, keyed up, saying well look let's document, what have we got here?*

*And, right this is what we're doing. And this is what has happened as a result. But at the time it was a group of people who got together and thought well let's try and do something here. And we were very much more concerned of the product and doing it than we were perhaps of the process in recording it.'*

[Jedworth Avenue Stakeholder 4]

## **8.7 Summary**

- OR and JA did not report any significant problems with setting up and the initial implementation of the projects as planned.

- The broad range of OR participants made it difficult to provide activities to suit everyone; the majority of participants were teenage boys. Efforts to provide activities suitable for girls had been considered, and also to provide indoor activities; but these had not been very successful.
- Local objections to the community challenge aspect (painting a mural on a neighbourhood wall) of JA prevented this element being carried out.
- P8 encountered difficulties in recruiting suitable staff, securing suitable accommodation, and using the identified referral routes to recruit the young people which the project aimed to reach. At the time of the evaluation P8 was not being implemented as originally planned.
- Some of the OR stakeholders who had provided financial support for the project would have liked more contact with and information from the project about its progress.
- OR and JA stakeholders reported a need for longer term funding to allow the projects and their effects to be sustained for the local community.

### **PART III: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Part III presents the overall conclusions to the study (Chapter 9) and the key recommendations which stem from the findings (Chapter 10).

## 9. CONCLUSION

This report has presented the findings of an evaluation of three youth diversionary projects being supported by Glasgow Housing Association's (GHA's) Wider Action Fund. The three projects selected for the evaluation varied in the approach used and also in their stage of implementation; the two smaller targeted projects were not fully operational at the time of the evaluation (Jedworth Avenue (JA) had completed the previous summer, and recruitment and implementation difficulties had delayed the start of Participate (P8)). Operation Reclaim (OR) was the largest and longest established of the three projects. OR had been running for three years at the time of the evaluation, it operated in five sites, was accessible to all young people in the local neighbourhood, and had well established links with local agencies, including a police presence at the project, and official referral routes to training and employment opportunities through a local regeneration company. Most of the data available to the evaluation came from OR, and therefore the conclusions are largely (though not entirely) based on the assessment of OR. P8, on the other hand, had not been successfully implemented at the time of the evaluation and assessment of local impacts was not possible.

Residents and stakeholders reported violence and anti-social behaviour (ASB) as issues for concern in the project areas, but it was not always clear whether the perpetrators of these problems were mainly teenagers. The physical environment and lack of things to do was thought to influence levels of ASB. Parks, recreation grounds, derelict buildings and multi-storey buildings were reported to be 'hot spots' for ASB.

The three projects each had a broad aim to improve community safety by reducing ASB among young people. While the approaches of the three projects varied in their approach, the key elements of each project were to provide alternative uses of leisure time, alternative life choices, to improve use of the local area, and to provide opportunities for personal development, employment and training. Inter-agency

collaboration was seen to provide added value and influence for the projects and the participants, as well as for the collaborating organisations. Stakeholders reported the need for sustained funding, and indeed this, plus intense coverage, was seen to be a strength of OR.

The evaluation was supported by a preliminary literature review of best practice in youth diversion. This review was used to develop the evaluation questions and informed the selection of projects for more detailed evaluation. The evaluation used a mix of qualitative and quantitative data to assess the views and impacts of the youth diversionary projects, incorporating data from the young people participating in the projects, local residents, key stakeholders (including project staff), and also routine crime data.

A key finding was that the youth diversionary projects, in particular OR, were viewed positively by residents, stakeholders, and participants. There were consistent reports of reductions in crime and gang activity in the OR neighbourhoods. However, among OR participants there was little change in reported involvement with violence or ASB. Official crime statistics suggest that there has been a small reduction in juvenile crime since mid-2007, and reductions in arson in the JA neighbourhood. It is unclear whether these changes will be sustained or to what extent the youth diversionary projects have contributed to these changes. Other initiatives (for example increased policing, CCTV, or wider environmental improvements) may have also influenced changes in crime, especially in regeneration areas where structural and social improvements are continually taking place. Another important impact was that the use of public outdoor spaces by the OR project was reported to have re-established key public spaces as safe and accessible for the whole community.

For individual participants, the main benefits from the projects were that they felt healthier, fitter, and were less likely to either stay at home in the evenings, or hang around on the street and get involved in drinking alcohol. Thus, there appear to be notable health gains reported. There were also reports of personal and social



development (PSD) gains, such as achieving greater confidence and maturity, and significant proportions of participants (though still a minority) received advice and support in relation to learning and employment opportunities. However, overall, there was considerable scope to enhance these PSD components of the projects

## 10. RECOMMENDATIONS

We make recommendations in relation to the programme as a whole, the conduct of the projects themselves, and the requirement for better evaluation.

### The Programme

- ***The Programme should be continued on a more sustainable basis, with wider assessment of the need for such activities across communities.***

The programme as a whole is valuable to communities, participants and to stakeholder organisations. As such we recommend that it be continued on a more sustainable basis. This requires discussions with a range of interested parties who would benefit from its operation, including local housing organisations (LHOs), the city council and emergency services such as the police and fire service. A proper assessment of the need for such a programme covering a wider number of communities with large numbers of under-occupied young people and/or problems of anti-social behaviour (ASB) should be undertaken to properly establish the need for such a programme.

### The Projects

- ***A better gender balance should be achieved within each project.***
- ***The personal and social development dimension of the projects should be enhanced.***

Two key improvements to the projects could be made. First, to attract the involvement of more girls, which may require a rebalancing of project staff and activities. Second, to enhance the personal and social development content of the projects, which are often mainly focused on diversionary activities rather than also on bringing about sustainable changes to the attitudes, behaviours and expectations of participants (though there is an element of this already).

## **Evaluation**

- ***Any extended or future programme should have an evaluation element built into it from the start.***
- ***An attempt should be made to achieve better and more consistent data on vandalism and ASB as recorded by social landlords in the city.***
- ***Trends in crime data for project areas should be compared with trends in non-project areas in the same part of the city.***

In relation to future funded projects, wherever possible, evaluations should be planned in conjunction with the interventions. This allows pre-definition of desired outcomes and indicators and definition of requirements from routine datasets. Although it can be difficult to prioritise aspects for evaluation, it is important to do so and not to attempt to evaluate every aspect. Use of logic models can be immensely helpful in refining evaluation design at the project planning stage, ensuring clear understanding of project boundaries, inter-relationships with other agencies, resource inputs, theories of change and a range of outcomes of interest. An attempt should be made to achieve greater consistency and utility in the recording of ASB incidents, reports, and property impacts/costs by social landlords across the city. Lastly, partners should plan to make better use of police crime data in any evaluation of the projects, comparing trends in crime data in project areas with trends in similarly-deprived non-project areas in the same part of the city.

## REFERENCES

Asquith, S., Buist, M., Loughran, N., MacAuley, C. and Montgomery, M. (1998) *Children, Young People and Offending in Scotland: A Research Review*. Edinburgh: The Scottish Office.

Coalter, F., Allison, M, and Taylor, J. (2000) *The role of sport in regenerating deprived areas*. The Scottish Executive Central Research Unit.  
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/156589/0042061.pdf>

Cole-Hamilton, I., Harrop, A., Street, C. (2001) *The value of children's play and play provision: A systematic review of the literature*. New Policy Institute.  
<http://www.npi.org.uk/reports/play%20literature.pdf>

Crompton, J.L. & Witt, P.A. (1997) 'Programs That Work: The Roving Leader Program in San Antonio' *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*. 15(2):84-92. (cited in Coalter et al.. 2000).

Department of Education and Employment (1996) *Grants for Education Training and Support GEST 11: Youth Service*. Circular to Chief Education Officers 19/7/96. (cited in Utting 1996)

Fitzpatrick, S., Hastings, A. and Kintrea, K. (1998) *Including Young People in Urban Regeneration: A Lot to Learn?* Bristol: The Policy Press

Flint, J. and Kearns, A. (2005) Evaluation Study of Reidvale Housing Association Community Policing Initiative. Final Report May 2005 Department of Urban Studies, University of Glasgow.

Flint, J, Casey, R, Davidson, Pawson, H and McCoulough, E (2007) *Tackling anti-social behaviour in Glasgow: An evaluation of policy and practice in the GHA. Final Report*. Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research, Sheffield Hallam University and School of the Built Environment, Heriot Watt University.

Furlong, A. et al.. (1997) *Evaluating Youth Work with Vulnerable Young People*, Edinburgh, Scottish Council for Research in Education. (cited in Coalter et al.. 2000)

GHA Wider Action: *Action Plan 2006/07*.

Hutchinson, J; Henderson, D. and Francis, S. (2001) 'Evaluation of Pilot Summer Activities for 16 year Olds: Summer 2000' DfES Research Brief No 260, February. (cited in Cole-Hamilton et al.. 2001)

Larson, R. W., Hansen, D. M., Moneta, G. (2006) 'Differing Profiles of Developmental Experiences Across Types of Organized Youth Activities' *Developmental Psychology* 42 (5): 849-863.

Roberts, H., Kristin, L., Lucas, P., DuBois, D. and Sheldon, T. (2004) 'Mentoring to reduce anti-social behaviour in childhood' *British Medical Journal* 328 (7438): 512-514.

Robins, D. (1990) *Sport as Prevention: The Role of Sport in Crime Prevention Programmes Aimed at Young People*, (University of Oxford, Centre for Criminological Research occasional paper no. 12) Oxford: The Centre

Ruiz (2004) *A literature review of the evidence base for culture, the arts and sport policy*. Scottish Executive.  
<http://www.scottishexecutive.gov.uk/Publications/2004/08/19784/41507>

Schulman, S. (2006) 'Terms of Engagement: Aligning Youth, Adults, and Organizations Toward Social Change' *Journal of Public Health Management Practice* November S26-31.

Taylor, P. (1999) *External Benefits of Leisure: Measurement and Policy Implications*, Presentation to Tolern Seminar DCMS. (cited in Coalter et al.. 2000)

Unit for the Arts and Offenders (2003) *Arts in Criminal Justice Settings: Research and Evaluation*. (cited in Ruiz 2004)

Utting, D. (1996) *Reducing Criminality Among Young People: A Sample of Relevant Programmes in the United Kingdom*, London, Home Office Research and Statistics Directorate. <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/hors161.pdf>

Witt, P.A. and Crompton, J.L. (eds) (1996) *Recreation Programs that Work for At-Risk Youth*. Pennsylvania: Venture Publishing Inc. (cited in Coalter et al.. 2000)

NB: All appendices are contained with a separate document entitled "Evaluation of Glasgow Housing Association's Youth Diversionary Programme - Appendices". To download this document go to [www.gowellonline.com](http://www.gowellonline.com)