



Includem IMPACT Project

Includem's key messages from Dartington Social Research Unit independent evaluation (carried out from 2013 to 2016)

1. Introduction to IMPACT programme

IMPACT is an intensive support programme run by Includem for young people and young adults aged 14 to 21 causing most harm in their communities, particularly focusing on violent and persistent offending. The service focuses on those young people who are not engaging with any other service and are most likely to serve repeated periods of custody due to the serious nature of their offending.

Through partnership working with Police Scotland and other agencies the aim is to divert them away from further offending and to build the resilience and self-esteem necessary for them to avoid the cycle of involvement with the criminal justice system.

The IMPACT programme is underpinned by a clearly defined logic model that places tackling alcohol-fuelled, violent offending at the core of the project. This is delivered within a framework of other risk and protective factors which we aim to address and is purposefully structured non-sequentially. The outcome is to reduce violent offending; the method is to change the strongest risk factors associated with offending underpinned by a quality relationship between worker and young person.

“...stuff I want to do is illegal, enjoyment and stupid and daft things... thinking before you do things instead of after, that's what Includem has kind of helped me to do.... thinking of stuff before I do it”
(young person)

The severity of offending amongst the referrals to the IMPACT programme has increased year on year – a success in refining the referral pathways to ensure it supports those with the most persistent records of offending. It is clear from analysis of Police Scotland data that demand for the service far exceeds current capacity. This highlights that despite the significant reduction in youth offending across Scotland there remains a cohort of young people involved in violent offending, particularly in the Glasgow area.

Dartington reflects on the wider literature on theories of change:

“Includem's IMPACT model possesses the components that existing literature on 'what works' at reducing reoffending suggests are crucial”.

This model includes –

- A well-defined target group
- Clear logic model
- Rigorous evaluation protocols
- Intensive, enduring and community based
- Cognitive and behavioural interventions

2. Background and purpose of evaluation

Includem commissioned a two year independent evaluation of the IMPACT reducing offending programme in 2013. Dartington Social Research Unit (DSRU) was chosen to take forward this work, with two key drivers in mind:

1. To meet the need for a robust and independent evaluation of the Reducing Re-offending Change Fund project as part of a wider look at the sustainability of Public Social Partnerships and to provide detailed evidence on the outcomes achieved and the social and economic cost savings of this project;
2. As part of Includem's ongoing process of continuous service improvement of practices, processes and partnerships to ensure the programme is as effective as it can be and to share 'what works' both internally and to a wider audience.

An interim report was prepared in June 2014, with a further interim report in November 2014. The final report was presented to Includem in May 2016. This report summarises the key findings from all three of these reports.

At the outset we were determined to have as robust an evaluation as possible, including the introduction of a comparison group of young people. However this comparison group had limitations as far as the evaluation could go – particularly because we could not obtain the same level (and in some cases any) data on their circumstances – most importantly whether they were in or out of custody during the evaluation period.

3. Headline findings



Estimated total incidence of crime per young person fell in the region of 50% on average in the six months after involvement with Includem than in the six months prior



Estimated social and economic costs of crime per offender fell by over 50% from approximately £56,000 for the six months prior to involvement to £27,000 for six months after



Recorded crime/offences per young person involved in the programme fell by over 33% in the six months after participation compared to the six months prior



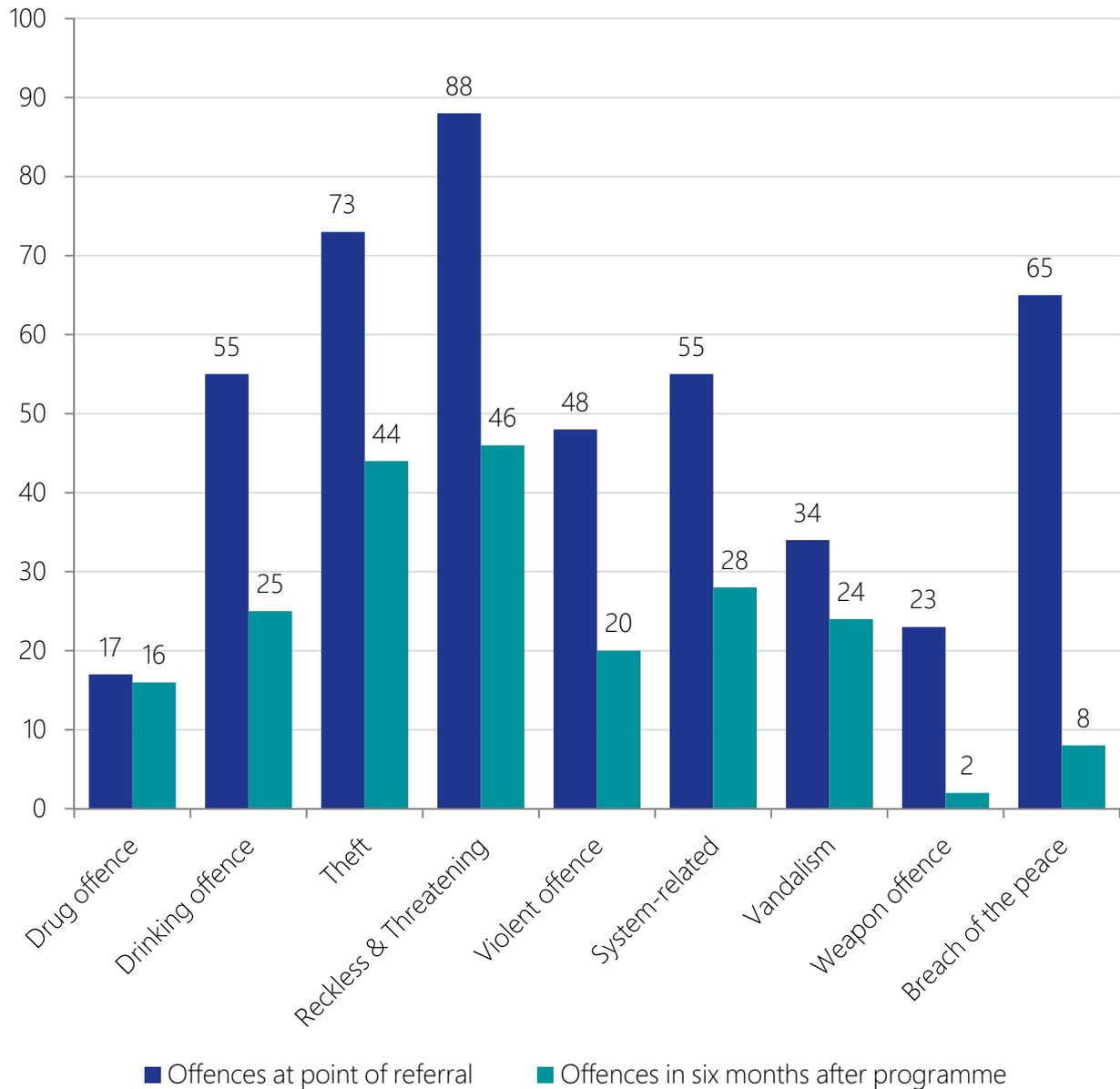
The total number of injuries involving attendance at accident and emergency decreased by 38% after involvement in the programme



The estimated social and economic cost of violent offending fell from £10,259 per offender prior to involvement with IMPACT to just £122 after being on the programme.

4. Headline change in specific offences

Analysis of the offending date suggests a significant reduction in both the frequency and severity of offending for those involved with the IMPACT programme. The breakdown of data pre (six months prior to involvement) and post (six months after involvement) is available in the full report and is summarised here:

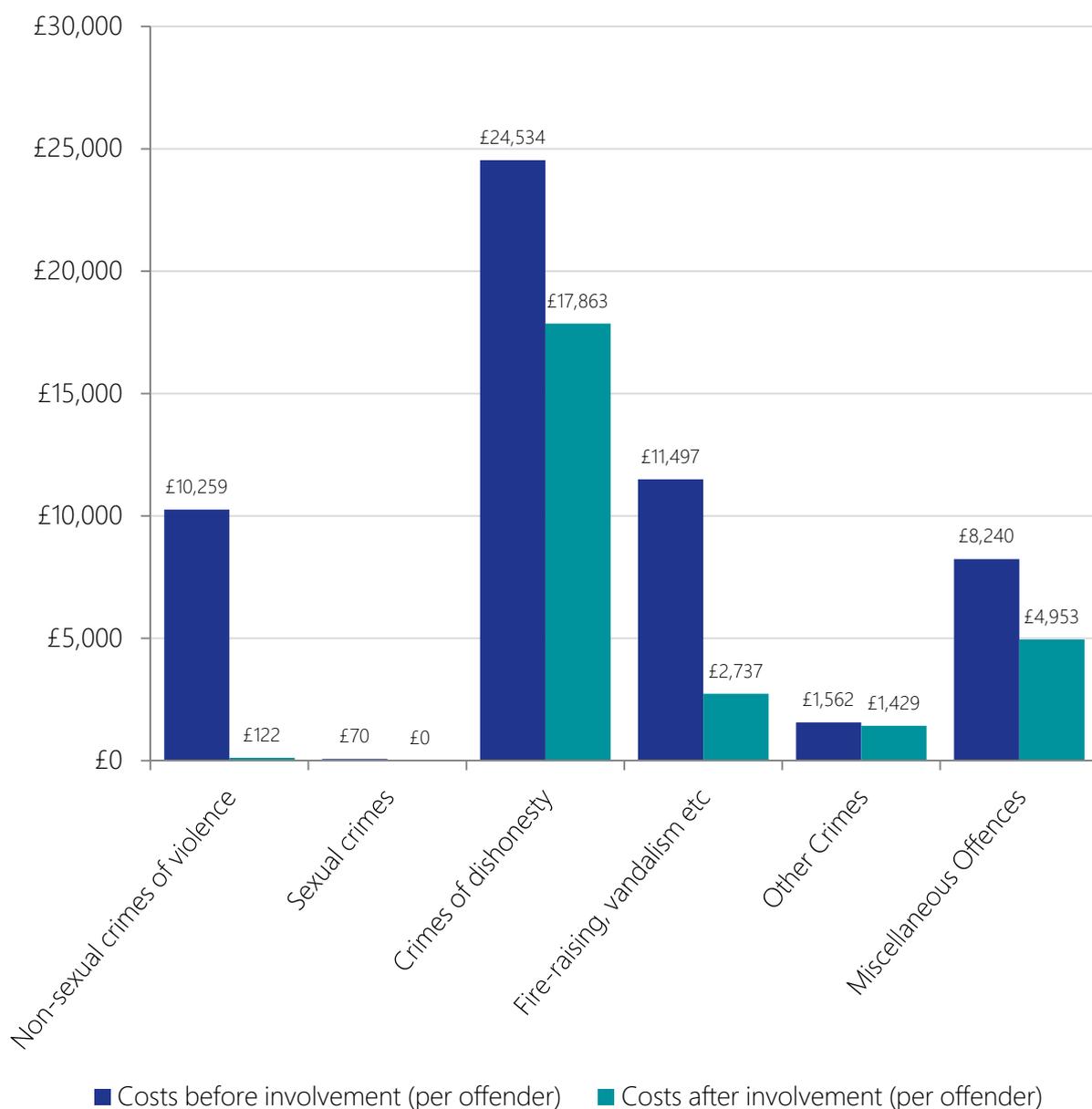


5. Estimation of economic and social costs of crime

As part of the evaluation, the Scottish Government agreed to support an economic and social cost analysis of those participating in the IMPACT programme. Justice Analytical Services provided estimates of the costs to wider society in offending behaviour from before and after participation in the programme.

The headline data from this analysis shows significant reductions, particularly in the areas most focused on by the programme – for example violent offending fell from £10,259 per offender prior to involvement with IMPACT to just £122 in the six months after being on the programme.

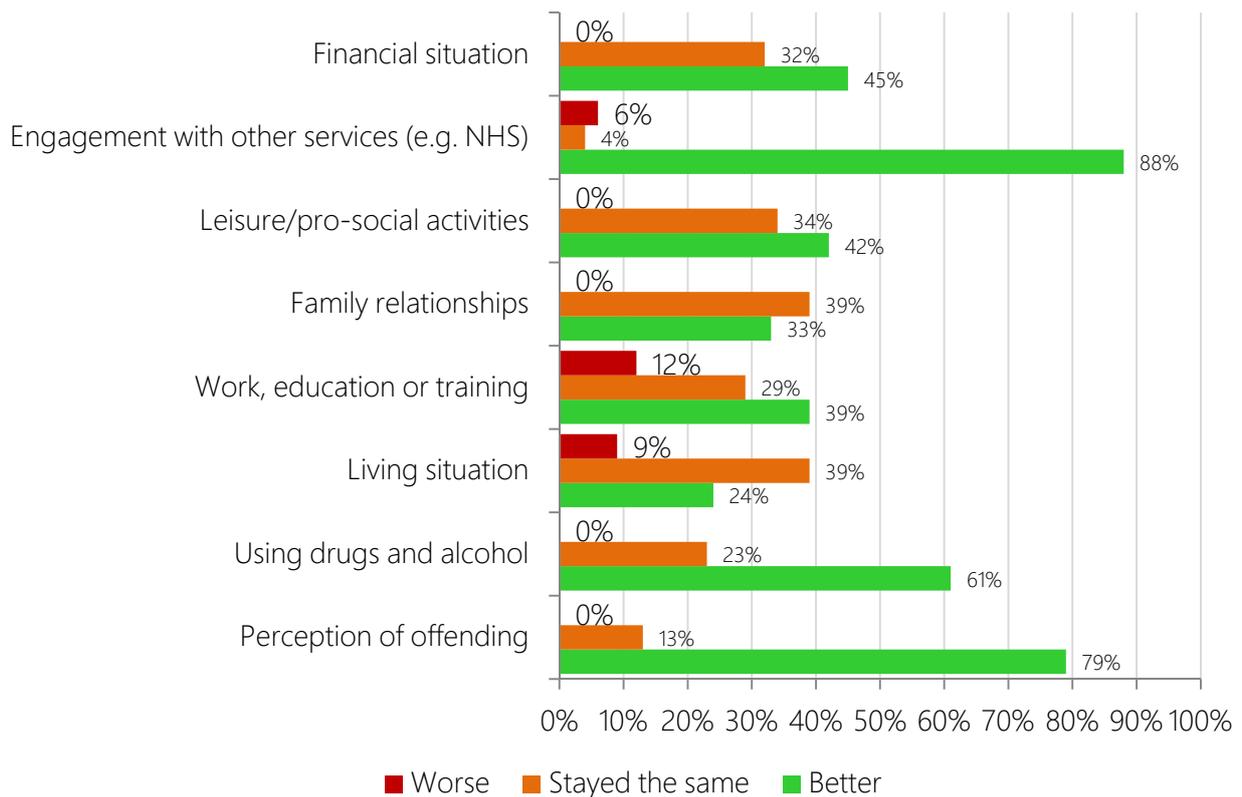
Breakdown of all crime types and estimated economic and social cost per offender for the six months before and after being on the IMPACT programme:



6. Offending risk factors – outcomes met by IMPACT

The key aim of the IMPACT programme is to reduce violent offending. However key to that aim is making positive change in a number of offending risk factors. There are powerful and sometimes harmful societal influences which can work against a young person so the IMPACT recognises the need to work to overcome the environmental factors which they can control in order to move away from offending.

In a number of key areas, the evaluation recognised significant progress:



Case study - Patrick

At 15 Patrick was referred to IMPACT because of his offending behaviour and his membership of a gang. His chaotic and damaging home life, his misuse of alcohol and drugs with a peer group focused on territorialism and a history of non-attendance at school and lack of future goals were the key underlying factors.

IMPACT helped Patrick to think about the implications of his drug and alcohol misuse, and supported him to attend an intervention programme. We encouraged his mother to use our 24/7 helpline to seek support when Patrick was at the point of crisis or in a preventative way to encourage him away from engaging in risk taking.

Through focussed work we helped Patrick to understand the effects of his offending and to think about what his life goals were. We supported him to attend training placements and a college course.

After 13 months of intervention, Patrick came off the programme after demonstrating significant reductions in his offending – with no charges at all in the final six months of work with him. Relationships in the home and within the community had improved and Patrick had a more positive outlook on his own future.

For more information

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You can find more case studies and podcasts with young people on our website at www.includem.org.