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Restorative Practices in Institutional Settings: The Challenges of Contractualised Support within the Managed Community of Supported Housing

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Abstract: Supported housing services provide help to some of the most vulnerable in society, yet across the world face increasing pressures from residualisation in the form of service reduction and stretched budgets. In response to these challenges, providers of supported housing and other similar community-focused services have sought alternative and innovative methods of engagement. This paper reports on one such example, the Restorative Communities Programme, which took place in 2018 in a residential supported housing setting for males aged 16–25. Designed as a five-week programme, it aimed to offer a proactive intervention promoting the benefits of restorative thinking. The research team observed the sessions and conducted follow-up qualitative interviews after two weeks and one year. This paper considers the challenges and success of the programme, reflecting particularly on issues of contractualised support and its impact on participation, and the dynamics of running such programs within the 'managed community' of a supported housing project. As such, the paper provides a useful analysis for others exploring the development and use of restorative projects in institutional settings, such as prisons, probation, and schools, and particularly those services struggling with the pressures of residualisation.

Keywords: restorative justice; restorative practice; supported housing; criminal justice; community; institutional settings; residualisation

1. Introduction

In the UK, supported housing sits in between social housing (typically lower cost rental housing provided by local authorities or housing associations) and emergency housing (short-term, temporary accommodation for those at great need). Accommodation is accompanied by support packages for what the National Housing Federation (2015, p. 3) describe as 'some of the most vulnerable people in society who face barriers that go far beyond housing'. Those in supported housing often require intensive support to maintain tenancies and develop the skills needed for independent living and includes those with complex and overlapping needs such as 'prolific or serious offending histories [and] ongoing drug and alcohol addiction' (Lynch et al. 2016, p. 591).

In recent years, the picture for supported housing provision has become more complex. State-funded welfare services, including supported housing, have come under increasing pressure in many countries, and austerity followed by an emphasis on neoliberal, 'small-state' policies have meant a reduction in funding, levels of support, and overall levels of provision. This 'residualisation' has the effect of reducing services 'so that they supply a service only to those most in need, who may often then become further marginalised by an underfunded and under-resourced service' (Hobson et al. 2020, p. 4). This is not restricted to the UK, with similar studies identifying residualisation in housing services in Sweden (Andersson and Turner 2014, p. 5); in Australia (Morris 2013, p. 1); and in the Netherlands

(Van Duijne and Ronald 2018, p. 16). These examples represent an international pattern of residualisation that Forrest and Wu (2014, p. 135) describe as a widespread global reduction in state-run public services and 'growing social and spatial segregation, enclaves of concentrated and multiple disadvantage and increased stigmatisation'.

In response to these factors, supported housing and providers of other similar and community-focused services, have sought out alternative and novel methods of engagement, with growing interest in potentially less punitive approaches (Anderson 2011). One such approach is the Restorative Communities Programme, a planned course of five restorative sessions run in a supported housing provider for young males aged 16–25 and is the case study for this article. The programme used restorative approaches with the intention of promoting the benefits of restorative thinking to positively influence tenant behaviour and ultimately support individuals in their journey to becoming self-supporting. This paper uses the Restorative Communities Programme as a case study to help consider some of the challenges and potential successes in developing and deploying such restorative programs in institutional settings, typified here in a case study on one such programme. In particular, it uses this case study to examine two key issues that are relevant to a wide range of institutional settings across many countries and that share similar characteristics: first, the nature of voluneerism as impacted by contractualised support (McDonald 2005, p. 281), where support is tied to certain conditions and behaviours; second, the difficulties in generating community engagement in a circumstance in which that community is artificially created and maintained, a 'managed community' as we term it in this paper.

The paper begins by exploring restorative justice theory through the prism of contractualised support and managed communities in the context of supported housing. It then sets out to describe the Restorative Communities Programme in its design and in our observations of its delivery, including a methodological discussion on our methods of data collection as part of this. The paper then reconsiders the provisions of restorative services using the key concepts of contractualised support and working in managed communities and concludes with a summary of the key learnings from this.

2. Supported Housing and Restorative Approaches

It is important to understand the provision of restorative programs in the context of institutional settings, such as in supported housing. In this section, we set out some of these considerations under two main headings, considering both 'contractualised support' and 'managed communities'.

2.1. Contractualised Support and Supported Housing Provision

The shape and nature of supported housing services can differ quite significantly between providers, depending on the nature of the needs-based services and the wider social and physical geographies of the service provision. These differences are increasingly influenced by the pressures of residualisation and austerity, with services 'stretched by growing numbers of high-risk high-needs service users with profound support needs, that are hard to engage and may be resistant to change' (Hobson et al. 2020, p. 10). All of this provision, however, employs the concept of 'contractualised' support (McDonald 2005, p. 281), where residency is tied to a contract of behaviours and actions to which those receiving services must adhere. This might include accessing additional support, attendance at certain types of therapies, completing independent living courses, and the maintenance of certain accepted behaviours (Hobson et al. 2020, p. 10). In those services that are still residentially based, these contractual agreements are much more likely to contain behavioural elements. However, residualisation and the reduction in services has also meant that there is often little or no choice on the type or location of services for those in need of supported housing services. In this sense, 'bricks and mortar' supported housing projects are created communities and, as we call them here, 'managed communities'.

We can see the same processes of contractualised support elsewhere in the world, reflecting moves towards 'greater political control over service delivery' (McDonald 2005,

p. 281). For example, the funding of services may be tied to outcomes or residency limits (Hobson et al. 2020, p. 9), and much of this may be stipulated in the tendering of contracts (Lynch et al. 2016, p. 600). Consequently, supported housing providers face an increasingly difficult task, and whilst some providers are exiting the sector, others are 'responding to the shifting housing landscape in a range of innovative and entrepreneurial ways' (Lynch et al. 2016, p. 599). This case study reflects one such innovative response, using restorative approaches to support the development of individual skills and to address problem behaviours.

Restorative justice primarily conceives of crime and other forms of harm as a breakdown of private relationships, with ownership of conflicts devolved to a broader range of stakeholders including the three core groups of victims, offenders, and the community (Braithwaite 1989). Sullivan and Tifft (2004) speak of the transformative potential of restorative justice with respect to its ability to facilitate dialogue and heal relationships. Similarly, Dzur and Olson (2004) describe how restorative justice can strengthen and rebuild social relationships while at the same time minimizing the governmental role in criminal justice by making the victim the central interest in responding to crime and conflict. Allied to this are restorative practices, which focus on the broader restorative concepts underpinning the method without always involving the core three groups and at times without the focus of a specific offence or harm (Hopkins 2015). Restorative practices are increasingly used as a means for strengthening and empowering individuals, promoting resilience, and as diversion away from potentially harmful situations. Such approaches are relevant in the context of supported housing, where individuals are often struggling to build or rebuild relations to each other, their communities and, at times, in the context of harm and criminal behaviour.

There is growing success with these approaches in a number of other similar institutional settings and across the world. For example, in schools, where restorative approaches are an alternative to detentions, expulsions, and suspensions (Wearmouth et al. 2007; Teasley 2014); in prisons, to develop thinking, reasoning, and positive cultures (Dhami et al. 2009; Calkin 2021; Kim 2021); and across broad applications in social work, social care (Parkinson et al. 2018), and probation (Kirkwood and Hamad 2019).

2.2. Managed Communities' and Supported Housing Provision

The conception of a 'community' is a key factor in the deployment of restorative approaches, particularly in the context of supported housing and other such constructed and 'managed communities'. In restorative justice scholarship, 'community' is often portrayed as an unproblematic solution to issues of justice legitimacy, and it is often argued, perhaps quite rightly, that any response to crime and anti-social behaviour needs 'to restore a community's fabric by dealing effectively with victim's needs' (Pavlich 2005, p. 33). Although described as one of the core concepts underpinning restorative justice, the concept of community that is often deployed does not always match up to its reality as a highly contested and often superficially explored phenomena (Pavlich 2005). Arriving at an accurate conception of 'community' is fraught with difficulty, particularly in the context of its relevance to the 'managed communities' of supported housing. Across a range of social science disciplines, the notion of 'community' has been defined as having a multitude of meanings from, 'interlocking social networks of neighbourhood, kinship and friendship' (Crow and Allan 1994, pp. 178–79) to a people joined by a set of shared attitudes, interests, or identities. Anderson (1983) argues that even a nation can be described as a 'community', albeit one that is socially constructed, or 'imagined' by the people who perceive themselves as part of that group. For Rossner and Bruce (2016, p. 107), 'the key third party in restorative justice' of community is central to the application of restorative processes with effective community participation used to 'improve the dynamics of the justice ritual', adding 'legitimacy to the proceedings' (Rossner and Bruce 2016, p. 109).

One way to conceive of community is as a series of both micro- and macro-relationships (McCold 2004). The micro-community includes the people who are the most affected by

a particular offence or conflict, ones 'community of care' (Braithwaite 2002). This can incorporate those who are close to the offender, including family members, friends, and others who have a profound interest in our lives. Macro-communities, on the other hand, are groups not defined by relationship but by geography and membership of a particular area, space, or population group (McCold 2004). In this sense, residential supported housing projects, where people not only receive housing but also a range of support to tackle problematic behaviours, is a good example of both micro and macro communities. They are micro-communities of conflict, often housing high-risk individuals with histories of substance abuse, offending behaviour, mental ill health, and other complex societal and personal struggles that people experience in their own biographies (Hobson et al. 2020). They are also macro-communities, with the population defined by their location, where residents are brought together in 'managed communities' by their needs, including the availability of services rather than the ties that are often seen in other forms of housing. From such a perspective, how supported housing schemes understand and manage their 'communities' has a bearing on the outcomes within that scheme. Particularly, as created communities place people in close proximity and encourage the sharing of space and resources. They are a community that shares a common bond of need, and for the residents in those schemes, they are a home. They are, however, also deeply impacted by the effects of residualisation and of contractualised support. It is within this context that we examine the Restorative Communities Programme, a planned course of five restorative sessions run in 2018 by a supported housing provider for young males aged 16–25 that used restorative approaches to support individuals in their journey to becoming self-supporting.

3. Method

The Restorative Communities Programme took place in 2018, designed with five meetings to take place over five weeks. The supported housing project is a busy and largely urban residential area that is within a large town/small city. It offers short- to medium-term accommodation and support to six young people aged between 16–25 years of age, with the aim of the tenants achieving some stability before hopefully moving on to independent longer term social housing. As is increasingly common in such residualised services, some residents (or 'service users' as they are often termed) struggle with the range of complex issues described earlier in this article. The housing project provides placements under shorthold tenancies and license agreements, and includes agreements as part the accommodation which, if broken, can lead to warnings and eviction. The housing placements are funded through the Supporting People Programme (Lynch et al. 2016, p. 590), supplemented by a housing benefit and, at times, residential contributions.

The aim of the Restorative Communities Programme was to provide participants with restorative skills to complement the other skills being developed through their housing support. It was facilitated by a project worker at the supported housing property, whose day-to-day role was to support the young people in the housing project and was therefore well-known to the young people. As well as being a trained project worker for the supported housing provider, the facilitator was a trained and experienced restorative practitioner, and they had used these experiences to design the Restorative Communities Programme. All sessions took place at the supported housing facility where the tenants lived, and each session was intended to be 120 min long. In total, 3 of the 5 sessions ran, and only one of these ran for close to the 120 min.

The researchers spoke with the designer and facilitator of the Restorative Communities Programme before the session and were given access to session plans and schedule documents, which we refer to in the data. One member of the research team was given permission by the facilitator, the participants, and the supported housing project manager to observe the sessions. The same observer sat in all of the sessions. At the start of each session, the observer introduced themselves to the group, engaged in 'small-talk' and interacted with participants and the facilitator before and after activities; they did not participate in the activities designed for the participants. During the sessions, the observers

took notes of interactions and short quotes from participants and the facilitator. Two months after the final session, we revisited the project for a follow-up interview with the facilitator. We then followed up again a year later to explore the longer-term impacts of the scheme. To maintain anonymity for the project and participants, we use no names or locations in the following analysis. We have also changed other potentially identifying details, such as the specific nature and types of offenses referred to in the data.

The data, discussion, and analysis in the rest of the paper is organised into two main sections. Section 4 examines the design and implementation of the Restorative Communities Programme. It details the programme as designed, contrasting this to our observations of reflections from each session from the observer during the follow-up interview. Section 5 sets out the broader future learning from this case study, examining the wider implications of using restorative approaches in supported housing and in other contexts where there is a 'managed community'.

4. The Restorative Communities Program

This section will detail the aims and objectives for the Restorative Communities Programme and provides details on how these were deployed and received from our observations of those sessions that ran.

4.1. Aims and Objectives of the Programme and Its Sessions

The programme was designed by an experienced restorative practitioner and facilitator, who was also a long-standing supported housing worker in the project in which the intervention was deployed. Table 1 shows the overall aims and objectives for the programme.

Table 1. Overall aims and objectives for the Restorative Communities Programme.

Aim:
To help participants take the full benefit of the support offered to improve their daily living and overall wellbeing and help them to achieve long-term independent living, avoiding the negative impact of anti-social behaviour. They will achieve this by recognising the role that their own behaviour has on themselves and others and learning how to take control of this behaviour.
Objectives:
• To introduce the concept of restorative behaviour and how it can help find a better way forward in the future;
• To increase the participants understanding of values and beliefs and how these impact the behaviour of themselves and others;
• To increase the emotional vocabulary of the participants, introducing the concept of positive self talk to control their behaviour;
• To help participants better understand the impact of their behaviour on others and to better take responsibility for this;
• To promote better resilience for the participant and help them to plan for a longer-term independent future.

Source: Restorative Communities program schedule.

The programme was designed to run over five sessions, introducing participants to concepts and practices linked to restorative thinking in order to support reflection on their behaviours. Table 2 outlines the objectives for each session, and full details of the activities in each session are in Appendix A.

Table 2. Session objectives for the Restorative Communities Programme.

Session	Objectives
1. Introducing Restorative Justice	To set a group working agreement and introduce the concept of safe values; To introduce the concept of restorative behaviour and how working with a restorative approach will achieve this; To compare the use of restorative approaches with a traditional approach to discipline.
2. Values and Beliefs	To look at personal values and beliefs and why they are important; To understand that we all hold either the same or different values for different reasons; To look at respect and how this impacts our behaviour in the short and long term.
3. Thoughts, Feelings, and Behaviour	To look at emotions and why we have them; To understand the links between thoughts, feelings, and behaviour; To look at how our values impact on our thoughts, feelings, and behaviour; To introduce the skill of positive self-talk
4. Positive Behaviours	To look at the impact of our behaviour on others; To introduce Maslow's hierarchy of needs; To use Maslow's hierarchy of needs to understand our own and other's behaviour.
5. The Future	To start planning for the future; To look at support networks and how to improve them; To set realistic short- and long-term goals; To plan how these will be achieved and monitored; To review the programme and how it has and/or will help.

Source: Restorative Communities Programme schedule.

4.2. Observations of the Sessions

The material that follows is taken from the observations of the sessions made by the research teams as the sessions ran. We have removed or changed any aspects that could identify the participants.

The first session began with an introduction that explained the programme and contextualised this in light of the activities that followed; the subsequent sessions had introductions that asked participants how they were feeling and why, and for their thoughts on the previous session. Similarly, each session concluded with an activity asking participants how they felt; to reflect on the part of the session that meant most to them; and how they could use this in their own lives in a positive way.

Session 1—Introducing Restorative Justice. Session duration (of the expected 120 min) —70 min; attendees—present: A, B, C (partial)/absent: D, E, F. The facilitators introduced themselves, welcoming and thanking the group for their attendance. They explained the concepts behind a restorative programme and reiterated their hopes that this would provide some additional support in moving-on from supported living. Although this was generally well received, two of the three participants expressed some reservations over the proposed two-hour session length. Two participants also appeared agitated that other residents of the house were not in attendance, as they believed that the sessions were compulsory, stating '*they better be getting a warning*', and '*we get warned all the time*'.

The facilitator began Exercise 1a, introducing the concept of a 'group working agreement' on acceptable behaviour. The interaction between all three participants and facilitators was enthusiastic and positive, although two participants answered phone calls, one apologising for the interruption. One participant again became agitated with the non-arrival of other residents and, appearing unhappy with the facilitator's further response, left the room. The session continued without this participant.

The facilitator continued into Exercise 1b, with an explanation of restorative behaviours, challenging behaviours, and the concept of being supportively challenged. The remaining two participants were unsure on these concepts, although one began to reflect on the adoption of agreed 'restorative behaviours' as positive for the smooth running of the communal living areas. The facilitator used the social discipline window model (see McCold and Wachtel 2003) as a mechanism for explaining the positive advantages of a

restorative approach, and although both struggled with the concept, both had positive reflections on the concept of working *with* rather than *for*. One described this approach as making him feel '*independent*' and that they would be '*helping ourselves*'. The other stated that he would be '*proud*' and '*happy*' and that what they understood as a restorative approach was '*in the middle that's fair*' and '*problems are getting solved*'.

The session ended after approximately seventy minutes (50 min early), before undertaking Exercise 1c, as the facilitator felt that it would be difficult to achieve the remaining activities with the two remaining participants. Although there was some good engagement in the session, having participants absent created a difficult dynamic in the group.

Session 2—Values and Beliefs. Duration (of the expected 120 min)—120 min; attendees—present: A, B, C (partial)/absent: D, E, F. The same three participants attended the second session, which began with a discussion on how they were feeling and if there was a positive reflection on the first session. In Exercise 2a, participants were asked to explain their reactions to a hypothetical choice between acting honestly or displaying loyalty to a friend who was being dishonest. One participant stated that they '*used to value friendship but not no more*' and to '*learn from your mistakes*', and another stated that we should '*Do what you know is right*' and '*explain to both parties*', and the stated third that he may behave differently in a group dynamic but '*me on my own different story*'. The activities culminated in a valuable discussion on the importance of the values and beliefs that underpin decision making.

The group took a ten-minute break, after which one participant did not return. The facilitator continued with Exercise 2b, where participants completed a moral reasoning questionnaire and were then presented with a moral dilemma followed by a discussion around decisions, which participants described as '*thought provoking*' and '*something to think about*'. The facilitator ended the session with a discussion on how the material from the session might be valuable to the participants in their everyday lives. One participant stated that their '*values had not changed*' and that in certain circumstances, it was necessary to take '*justice into own hands*'. They also said that they would feel '*hostile*' and '*intimidated*' by an attempt to impose values upon them. The other stated that although they had '*not changed values at all*', when values clashed, you should '*compromise, get on the same page*'. They reflected that '*restorative* [behaviour] *was good things we need to do*' and that by displaying '*respect for everyone people [are] respectful of you*'.

Session 3—Thoughts, Feelings, and Behaviour. Duration (of the expected 120 min)—60 min; attendees—present: A, B, C/absent: D, E, F. The same participants attended the third session, which started 15 min late and with varied engagement from participants. Exercise 3a began with asking the group to name various emotions, which led into a discussion on how emotions exist and how many young people will bottle up their emotions, which can lead to explosions of anger, adapting the material in Exercise 3b. The facilitator then introduced the concept of a continuum or range of anger and how language can be used to explain feelings, which developed into Exercise 3c, where the thoughts, feelings, and behaviour triangle was used as an illustration of how it is possible to use your thoughts to control your behaviour. In discussion, participants talked about changing their behaviour if they can '*think differently*' or '*don't associate with certain people*'. The facilitator used these discussions to explore how feelings can influence our perception of others and the concept of positive self-talk as a tool to assist in stopping and thinking before reacting to a situation. The notion of reframing a situation was acknowledged as a positive one by the group, and the session concluded with a discussion on how participants would feel if their thoughts and values were challenged by the views of others. Participants talked about having '*mixed emotions*' but elaborated on the importance of '*stopping to think how others are feeling*' and that a positive response should be '*don't get pissed off its what they want to say*'. However, at this point one participant had disengaged from interaction and was using their phone, and the facilitator ended the session after an hour.

Session 4: Positive Behaviours. Duration (of the expected 120 min)—0 min; attendees—absent: A, B, C, D, E, F. Upon the arrival for the fourth session, the observer was informed that two participants had been arrested; one was held in custody, and the other questioned

and released. The facilitator made the decision to postpone the session when no participants had arrived 40 min after the start time of the session.

Session 5: The Future. Duration (of the expected 120 min)—0 min; attendees—absent: A, B, C, D, E, F. The fourth session was not rescheduled, and the fifth session was cancelled.

4.3. Overall Reflection on the Success of the Sessions

We followed up our evaluation with interviews with the facilitator at two months and one year after the programme ended. In these interviews, the facilitator reflected on the design of the programme, the engagement from the participants and staff within the project, and some of the wider benefits from the project.

Designing a restorative programme in an institutional setting is a challenging task that is further complicated by issues such as residualisation. The simultaneous decrease in the volume of services and increase in the risk categories of those within these services means higher concentrations of residents with complex and overlapping needs, including those resistant to change (Hobson et al. 2020, p. 10). This was reflected in the Restorative Communities Programme, where clients struggled with complex and overlapping issues; two clients were arrested during the run of sessions, one of whom was subsequently charged for a serious crime and evicted from the accommodation:

> 'I was frustrated by this [participants being arrested] but that's about my needs, what matters is their needs, they have chaotic lifestyles a chaotic lifestyle all their lives it's about meeting them halfway . . . getting other support staff supportive.'—Facilitator

In such a context, restorative programmes such as this can offer an alternative to more punitive approaches that manage behaviour through sanctions. They can run the risk of becoming another form of behaviour management: becoming an additional or alternative form of contractualised governance (McDonald 2005). This was reflected in the concern's that the sessions were compulsory and that clients were 'spoken to' for non-attendance early in the sessions. There were, however, no sanctions applied to those that did not attend, and this caused problems in ensuring attendance from at least one participant across the series of sessions, who 'Once he realised he wasn't obligated and there were no penalties he didn't bother attending'. Free and willing engagement is a cornerstone of restorative processes, and the nature of a 'managed community', such as supported housing, make this difficult. Although reflecting elements of both micro- and macro-communities (McCold 2004) and of 'communities of care' (Braithwaite 2002), the danger of such schemes is slipping into forms of contractualism (McDonald 2005, p. 281), especially if participation is, or is viewed as, compulsory. One way to support this is to include wider representation from within the community, externalising the relationships and providing additional legitimacy to the process (Rossner and Bruce 2016).

Finding ways to support engagement is essential for such projects, and the facilitator talked about several other options to increase this, including running sessions with 'a cohesive group of three or four who already know each other'. The facilitator indicated that after the initial run of session, he had engaged on a one-to-one basis with another client that did not attend any of the original sessions but who had subsequently successfully completed the Restorative Communities Programme, and this had assisted in the client obtaining their own independent accommodation: 'One guy got a good result . . . he had moved on and progressed he had his own flat he had hope for the future'. Although this is a positive outcome for that client, it is difficult to attribute this to the programme over the dedicated one-to one support.

The facilitator of the Restorative Communities Programme also suggested that in order for the programme to be useful, engagement also has to come from the other staff in the project, who need to think and work in a restorative manner. As he put it, 's*taff need to get on board and upskill their principles*'. Engagement, he said, also needed to come from the wider organisation, although such a culture change presented some challenges: '*The ethos of company needs to change to be more restorative . . . All restorative work is expensive up front but the long-term gain is positive . . . . management sees the cost not the long-term benefit*'.

There are those who evidence the benefits of wider change to restorative cultures in such settings. For example, there has been success in creating whole-system restorative organisations in schools (Wearmouth et al. 2007; Teasley 2014) and prisons (Calkin 2021). However, there is not an easy or quick process to do this, and it involves significant training and willingness to engage. The facilitator reported that one of the positive outcomes was a transition from 'Acceptable Behaviour Contracts' to 'Positive Behaviour Contracts'. The former (Table 3) uses authoritarian language and focuses on the doing '*To*', emphasising acceptable behaviours with the company as the arbitrator of those behaviours and the sanction of eviction if broken. The new 'Positive Behaviour Contract' (Table 4) uses language that is more restorative in tone (McCold and Wachtel 2003), emphasising 'positive goals' agreed upon '*With*' a support worker, and embracing behaviours that are empowering for that individual's journey to independent living. Nevertheless, both are contractual agreements, and without engagement from residents in the process of drawing them up, both are particular interpretations of behaviours required to maintain tenancy.

Table 3. Key behaviour elements of previously used "Acceptable Behaviour contract".

This agreement is made on the (date) between (Company) and (Customer), who agrees to the following in respect of his/*her* future conduct:

- To . . .
- To . . .
- To . . .
- Not to . . .

BREACH

If *(Customer)* does anything which she/he agreed not to do under this agreement, which (Company) considers to amount to a breach of Tenancy and House Rules, we can commence possession proceedings in the County Court.

Source: Restorative Communities Programme schedule.

Table 4. Key behaviour elements of New "Positive Behaviour contract".

This contract has been made between (**Customer Name**) and (**Name of service**) services on (**Date**).
The positive behaviour contract specifies terms which have been put in place to help aid my recovery and to encourage and empower me to reach my goals maintain my tenancy successfully.
I understand that I will be agreeing to the following conditions agreed to by myself and my **support worker**, which have been specified to help prevent homelessness, and:

- I will . . .
- I will . . .
- I will . . .
- I will . . .

By accomplishing these positive goals, I hope to achieve:

- (achievement)
- (achievement)

Source: Restorative Communities Program schedule.

5. Discussion: Restorative Approaches in Supported Housing, Engaging with Contractualised Support in a 'Managed Community'

Although designed with restorative principles at its heart, the Restorative Communities Programme clearly struggled to engage the young people. This is clear in both its approach to support them in a highly contractualised environment as well as the struggle to create supportive environments in a managed community. These are considerations, we believe, that are important for other schemes in similar, institutional contexts.

5.1. The Incompatibility of Restorative Approaches with Contractual Support

It is clear from the data in this article that the Restorative Communities Programme struggled to engage the young people in the housing project. There are many reasons for why this might be the case, including the chaotic lifestyles that are increasignly common in these residualised services. To some extent, the programme was designed to address these

problem behaviours, offering a more engaging strategy to other contractualised approaches. However, it is difficult to move away from this contractualised relationships, especially where issues of tenancy are involved. Unless they are de-coupled from other requirements on engagement and behaviour, there is a clear danger of restorative schemes becoming another approach to 'contractualism'.

These issues are in part structural, related to how supported housing and other such institutionalized settings work, for instance those programmes deployed in schools (Wearmouth et al. 2007; Teasley 2014), in prisons (Dhami et al. 2009; Calkin 2021; Kim 2021), in social work and social care (Parkinson et al. 2018), and in probation (Kirkwood and Hamad 2019). In this case, supported housing provides both a home for those in need as well as behavioural boundaries over and above those that would be applied in a private or rented home, including a requirement (of some degree) to engage in the support on offer to tackle the issue that led to the need for that supported housing in the first place. As a regulated and often institutionalized environment, it is difficult to create schemes that are not (or are not viewed by those working on the schemes) as advocating certain behaviours adjudged to be beneficial to the self, socially desirable, and 'responsible' conduct. There was some recognition of these structural issues in the Restorative Communities Programme, which was reflected in the development of the behaviour forms and the move away from punitive and contractual approaches, which we have argued above are beset by disintegrative shaming approaches that stigmatise service users (Makkai and Braithwaite 1994), towards one in which the young people were encouraged to take ownership of their own behaviours and engage positively with the wider community in the supported housing project.

Despite this, there remains a danger that instead of being restorative in nature, programmes such as the one we analysed here become associated with punitive approaches that use shame in a disintegrative manner and are therefore stigmatising (Makkai and Braithwaite 1994). Schemes of this nature are borne out in the ways that they frame the relationship between the supported housing providers (or other residualised sectors) and their clients, who are often some of the most marginalised and struggling within society (Hobson et al. 2020, p. 4). As such, it is difficult to have the 'balanced interaction' that Rossner and Bruce (2016, p. 115) point to as so important in restorative processes. Developing restorative schemes in such contexts requires active engagement with this and consideration for how they can avoid becoming one more form of 'contractualism' for the participants.

5.2. Authentic Interaction in Managed Communities

The case study here also highlights the difficulty in creating meaningful and authentic interaction in 'managed communities', particularly those suffering from a reduction of funding, provision, and residualisation (Lynch et al. 2016). It is in this context of a 'managed community' that the Restorative Communities Programme struggles, both as a successful scheme in its own right as well as an effective restorative approach. On the one hand, the controlled nature of the community means that it does offer both elements of McCold (2004) macro- and micro-community, providing a structure for residents and, to some extent, a community of common experiences and needs. However, this 'managed community' is artificially created, often with little input from the participants. The obligation to attend, perceived or real, calls into question the extent to which the course can be called restorative in its approach. Although the concept of 'restorative justice', both in general and specifically in this scenario, and what constitutes a 'restorative approach' are profoundly contested, the majority of those who use the term 'restorative' consider it to be a more constructive and progressive strategy to help facilitate positive change than traditional disciplinary approaches (Johnstone and Van Ness 2007). Whilst the Restorative Communities Programme as it was set out did reflect those restorative principles around taking ownership for behaviours and reflecting on actions, the context in which it took place challenges principles around volunteerism and community participation.

The second issue is the nature of the community in the supported housing context. these 'managed communities' are products of residualised services where there is little or no choice of services for those who need them, and where the reduction in resources means that there are increasingly stringent requirements within service contracts for achieving some form of 'successful' intervention (Lynch et al. 2016). Consequently, the high risk, often chaotic, at times law-breaking, and frequently short-lived and changing resident lists make this a challenging environment in which to undertake restorative programmes. Although community is, as Dhami and Joy (2007) argue, the most difficult restorative justice component to obtain, it is also difficult to conceptualise a restorative programme existing in a neutral context. In the internal sphere of the project, the community in which these young people have found themselves is not one of choice, and whilst it might share an element of identity, it is harder to construct those other elements such as friendships, shared attitudes, and kinship (Crow and Allan 1994). In the external sphere, the 'growing social and spatial segregation, enclaves of concentrated and multiple disadvantage and increased stigmatisation' (Forrest and Wu 2014, p. 135) that is often associated with supported housing makes it difficult to engage with those outside of the housing context (Lynch et al. 2016, p. 596). The Restorative Communities Programme did not have external engagement as part of the programme, and although difficult to achieve, this may have supported the young people involved to persevere and find voices of encouragement outside of their 'managed community'. It may also have helped to move the programme further away from contractualised support, or indeed, as a form of punishment for those whowere unwilling to participate. Pamment (2019, p. 792) makes similar observations in the potential for community reparation schemes for young people, where unpaid work is too often framed as punitive rather than 'rehabilitative and re-integrative'. For Pamment (2019), contact with the external community can help to drive such programmes, 'ensuring that the process is perceived by offenders as worthwhile' (Pamment 2019, p. 793).

Similar questions are raised in other restorative schemes, where both 'victims' and the wider 'community' may not be involved in restorative processes. For example, whilst there are schemes in prisons that do involve bringing victims and offenders together, sometimes with wider community present (Shapland 2008; Johnstone 2014), there are also schemes that are more about restorative thinking and reasoning. For example, there have been attempts to develop restorative prisons in Belgium (Biermans and d'Hoop 2001 cited in Van Ness 2007, p. 313) and more recently, studies into restorative practice in three UK prisons, which found that they supported 'a culture of fairness, avoiding or defusing confrontation and contributing to constructive approaches to prison and post-release life and relationships' (Calkin 2021, p. 92). In both of these cases, the practice did not intrinsically involve the victims of those in prison, but, certainly in the latter cases, did involve instilling a restorative culture across the prison community, including with guards and other prison staff. Calkin (2021, p. 93), with others, points out that such approaches might more properly be termed restorative practice rather than restorative justice, insofar as they use the broader tools of restorative work that are 'proactive rather than reactive by reducing conflict and building relationships, looking at consequences of actions rather than punishment'.

6. Conclusions

In this paper, we have set out a case study of a restorative programme in a supported housing project in order to examine the ways in which programs in similar institutional settings might develop and function. Supported housing provides a good vehicle for this conversation as a sector that is perhaps further down a path of residualisation that is increasingly impacting a wider range of services (Hobson et al. 2020). This residualisation in services is not restricted to the UK, with similar processes identified in Sweden (Andersson and Turner 2014), Australia (Morris 2013), and the Netherlands

(Van Duijne and Ronald 2018); Forrest and Wu (2014) also describe increasingly broader international patterns of this issue.

The case study of the Restorative Communities Programme helps us to illustrate two key areas of consideration for those planning restorative programmes: the dangers of contractualised support and the impact that this has on the voluntary and free nature of interactions with such programmes as well as the difficulties in creating and engaging with participants where there is a 'managed community'. As such, the findings in this paper also have important relevance for similar restorative schemes in other institutional settings, for example, those programmes deployed in schools (Wearmouth et al. 2007; Teasley 2014), in prisons (Dhami et al. 2009; Calkin 2021; Kim 2021), in social work and social care (Parkinson et al. 2018), and in probation (Kirkwood and Hamad 2019). At a broader level, then, it is important to consider how far schemes of this nature can go in bringing about positive outcomes. Whilst there are clearly concerns with how such schemes are designed and deployed, these are also evident opportunities. Schemes such as the Restorative Communities Programme can be part of a shift away from problematic approaches that emphasise particular constructions of 'responsible' conduct and the contractual approaches that are often part of the structure of such provision. An example from the case study provided here is the shift in language and approach from an 'acceptable behavior' to 'positive behaviour' contract. Ultimately, for such restorative schemes to work, there needs to be a shift in organisational practice to allow the conceptual and structural space for the development of reintegrative, non-stigmatising approaches to managing conflict and perceived wrongdoing in these vital communities of care.

Appendix A

Table A1. Full schedule for the Restorative Communities Programme.

Session 1: Introducing Restorative Justice
Objectives: To set a group working agreement and introduce the concept of safe values; To introduce the concept of restorative behaviour and how working with a restorative approach will achieve this; To compare the use of restorative approaches with a traditional approach to discipline.
Session 1 Introduction Welcome the group and explain it is a restorative programme designed to help participants to look at their own behaviour and that of others and to help them to make better decisions in future. Reinforce the idea this is not like school, it is not about prescribing what to think or how to behave, but to show some new ways to look at things and help make more positive choices. **Exercise 1a** Consider what comfortable, quality learning means and looks like for participants. Using behaviour cards, ask each participant to choose the 4 cards that are the most important for them and ask them to explain their choices. Then lead a discussion about which behaviours will make up the group ground rules.

Table A1. *Cont.*

Exercise 1b

Explain, explore, and develop knowledge of restorative approaches.

Introduce the social discipline window model (McCold and Wachtel 2003). Ask the group if they believe these are effective ways to work with someone. Use the "With" box to contrast this and develop this as more effective in the long term.

Explore how this helps them to achieve independent living as the levels of support and control reduce in the future.

Exercise 1c

Introduce the traditional vs restorative discipline table and develop it on the flipchart.

Summary

End the session by asking each participant how they are feeling now and to describe the exercise from the session that has been most helpful for them and why.

Session 2: Values and Beliefs

Objectives:

To look at personal values and beliefs and why they are important;

To understand that we all hold either the same or different values for different reasons;

To look at respect and how this impacts our behaviour in the short and long term.

Session 2 Introduction & Recap

Start by asking the group how are they feeling and why and for their thoughts on the previous session

Ask the group members to think of, if offered which option would they take: either £10,000 a year for life or £100,000 as a one off payment.

Ask the group if they were to be appointed Prime Minister what would the first law that they would enact be, and why?

Lead a short discussion about what influences our decision-making.

Exercise 2a Values

Ask the group what they think 'values' and 'beliefs' are and collectively discuss and consider the difference between values and beliefa, where they come from, and how they can change as we mature.

Ask the group to list their 'top 5' values and rank them on the Values List. Use this to complete a 'Values Questionnaire', linking to their own behavior.

Break

Exercise 2b Moral Dilemma

Ask group to complete a 'Moral Reasoning Questionnaire'

Facilitator develops the values and considers what happens when these are challenged with the group. Ask how their own values have impacted their answers.

Group is asked to consider why they might behave differently in a group than when they are on their own and if how others will perceive them influences doing the right thing.

Summary

Draw the session to a close by asking the participants how they feel, to reflect on the part of the session that has meant most to them, and how they can use this in their own lives in a positive way.

Session 3: Thoughts, Feelings, and Behaviour

Objectives:

To look at emotions and why we have them;

To understand the links between thoughts, feelings, and behaviour;

To look at how our values impact our thoughts, feelings, and behaviour;

To introduce the skill of positive self-talk deleted

Session 3 Introduction and Recap

Welcome the partcipants and ask how they are feeling and why they are feeling that way, encouraging them to express more than 'just fine'. Ask what they remember from the previous session and how they think it could be of use to them.

Exercise 3a Emotions

Presented with a flipchart divided into quarters with headings 'Happy', 'Sad', 'Angry' and 'Fear', the group were asked to name as many emotions as they could. They talked about the many words in the English language to describe emotions, and noted how they can all be fitted into the categories provided. It was explained that emotions are natural and are neither good nor bad: almost as many people get into trouble for behaviour linked to happy emotions as they do for angry ones.

Draw a continuum along the bottom of the flip and choose one of the four main emotion groups and use it to show how emotions grow, i.e., grumpy–pissed off–irked–annoyed–angry–tamping–raging–red mist etc.

Exercise 3b Emotional Recognition

Pin 4 or 5 of pictures of emotions around the room and ask the group to write on the flip chart what the person in it is feeling. Lead a discussion about how we interpret how other people are feeling.

Table A1. *Cont.*

Exercise 3c Thoughts, Feelings and Behaviour
Ask question the "how is their behaviour judged?" and consider what they might want to change. Discuss that emotions are natural and happen, but by controlling the thoughts linked to them, we can improve behaviour—developing 'positive self -talk'.
Summary
End session by asking each participant how they are feeling now and to describe the exercise from the session that has been most helpful to them and why.

Session 4: Positive Behaviours

Objectives:
To look at the Impact of our behaviour on others;
To introduce Maslow's hierarchy of needs;
To use Maslow's hierarchy of needs to understand our own and other's behaviour.

Introduction
Ask how each participant is feeling and why. Use this to recap the work on emotions from the last session.
Exercise 4a The Incident
Introduce "The Incident" (a scenario involving anti-social behaviour was considered) to the participants and ask them what they believe has happened and why. Ask the group who they believe has been harmed and who is the harmer. Ask why they think it has happened and what could have happened differently to avoid the situation.
Exercise 4b Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
Discuss with group and complete an empty timeline of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, leading into the 5 basic levels of: the need for physical, safety, love/belonging, self esteem, and self actualisation. Get group members to relate this to themselves.
Exercise 4c Application of Maslow's
On a flip chart divided into 4 vertical columns, record and discuss: a recent conflict/event that they have had. What they did to resolve the conflict/event. Which "need" they were trying to meet. If it did not help them to achieve their "need", what they could have done differently to resolve the issue.
Exercise 4d Impact of Behaviour
Return to "The Incident" (Exercise 1) and ask the group to look at the behaviours in it and link them to the hierarchy of needs, asking if the needs of all of the partcipants are being met and if not, what has to change.
Use a set of concentric circles on a flip chart and ask the participants to write all those that they believe have been affected on individual post-its, and then ask them to place them on the circles with the most impacted needs in the centre and the least impacted needs in the outer circle.
Give participants the circles printed out and ask them to repeat the process with their own incident from the previous exercise. This is to be completed on their own and is not for sharing, but the facilitator (2s) should support them in creating a list that is as detailed as possible.
Summary
End the session by asking each participant how they are feeling now and to describe the exercise from the session that has been most helpful for them and why.

Session 5: The Future

Objectives:
To start planning for the future;
To look at support networks and how to improve them;
To set realistic short- and long-term goals;
To plan how these will be achieved and monitored;
To review the programme and how it has and/or will help;

Introduction
Start by asking the participants how they are feeling now that this is the last session, what they remember from the last session, and how are they going to use it.
Exercise 5a Support Networks
In pairs, brainstorm as many supports, both agency and personal, as they can and then bring the group together and record them on a flipchart. Ask them which ones they are accessing at the moment and how. Then develop a list for where they are now and one for after they have postivelt moved-on. If possible, include friends and family. Have a conversation about which ones are accessible 24/7 and what help each support can give. On a flipchart, show this as a web with them sat in the middle, with the major ones nearer the middle and the lessor ones on the outside. Handout the 'Support Web' worksheet and ask them to fill it in for themselves then fill in those that they believe they need to develop further for themselves with a different coloured pen.
Hand out the 'Developing Supports' worksheet and ask the participants to set themselves targets as to when they will contact each of the missing supports in their support web abdask them if the people who they have named are actually willing to help and for what.

Table A1. *Cont.*

Exercise 5b Goal Setting Ask the participants to think that if they were to go to sleep tonight and wake up tomorrow and everything has been achieved in their lives, what would that world look like? Get them to record this on the top of the worksheet. Then ask them what they have to do to achieve this in the short (6 months), middle (1 year), and long term (5 years +) Write these down the in the first column of the 'Future Goals Plan' worksSheet and then complete the questions for each of them on the worksheet: What support do I need? What help/resources do I Need? Who is impacted by my plans both positive and negatively? What is the timescale to achieve it? **Summary** End by asking the participants to complete a short evaluation questionnaire and to say how they are feeling now and award the Certificates of Completion.

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