

# T2A PILOT PROJECT FORMATIVE EVALUATION

## User Perspectives on the 'Transition to Adulthood' Pilots

**Feedback Report**  
to the Barrow Cadbury Trust

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## **Abstract**

The aim of this report is to focus on, and share the initial findings from, the Case Studies within the Oxford University's Formative Evaluation of the T2A Pilots. These Case Studies are being undertaken in collaboration with key workers and volunteers in the pilots who have taken on the role of interviewers (in other words, 'peer researchers'), and involve two in-depth interviews, at six month intervals, with young adults who have agreed to share their experiences. On a policy and political level, there is now a consensus that the views of young people should be included in the development of policies which affect them. On a theoretical and intellectual level, desistance research has given prominence to role of individual agency and subjectivity in outcomes following interventions to reduce reoffending in their lives; therefore the narratives and perceptions of those receiving services must be included in explanation. This is a valuable exercise for consulting service users about their experiences of this initiative and gaining their firsthand insights, and for including practitioners in the assessment of their own work. The findings from the first round of interviews reflect well on the early work of the pilots, and so are worth sharing at this point in time. While many of the interviewees in the case studies expressed some uncertainty about their ability to "stay away from crime", they suggested that they were far more likely to do so with the continuing support of their worker. This overwhelmingly favourable view applies to all three of the pilots, though more of the London participants expressed a wish for additional contact than was presently available to them. One cautionary note that can be drawn from these findings is that the T2As are in danger of being a victim of their own success because they may not be able to meet the increasing demand for their services. These case studies are based on a small sample (29 young adults so far) and the first interviews took place during the 'honeymoon' stage of the pilots; therefore it will be particularly important to learn from follow-up interviews of the individuals taking part.

## **Acknowledgement**

We are grateful to the hard work of our 'peer researchers', the T2A workers who are carrying out the interviews, and to the young people who are generously giving up their time to share their views for these case studies. Their names and identifying details have been changed in the extracts we include, to protect their anonymity.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## **Rationale for doing the Case Studies**

It has become a truism that firsthand accounts are paramount, both for policy development and in social science research. In policy, it has long been argued that the reform and delivery of services should be informed by the views of those who receive the services, including some groups who at one time would have been regarded, wrongly, as less capable of making a useful contribution: children and young people, and more marginalised groups such as those with mental illness and disability. As part of this movement, the last decade has seen the incorporation of the principle of 'listening to young people' into criminal justice reforms and within voluntary sector initiatives concerned with responses to young offenders (e.g. Hazel et al 2002; Lyon et al 2000). This is, in part, the result of earlier political developments, such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), giving greater weight to what is said by children and young people.

Valuing the perspectives of marginalised and disadvantaged groups is intrinsic within the vision, mission and themes of the Barrow Cadbury Trust, while the seventh principle of the T2A Alliance is that:

The consistent and meaningful involvement of offenders, young adults and their families, across the various parts of the criminal justice system is essential to improving it. We are committed to offender involvement in the work of the T2A Alliance both in policy and practice.

(Transition to Adulthood Alliance, 2009: 15)

Inclusion of the participant's 'voice' and perspectives, for both ethical and theoretical reasons, is also a tenet of our own approach to research (Burnett 2000; Hanley Santos 2003) and is built into the present evaluation in various respects, not least these case studies. Our research approach prioritises the perspectives and subjectivity of participants because of the significance of their interpretations and meaning systems within their ongoing action, and in response to the situations in which they find themselves, including interventions intended to help them. As observed by Hough (2010: 14), much research into what works to reduce reoffending and change behaviour reflects "a failure to recognize that work with offenders is a highly reflexive process in the sense that the meanings attributed to the process by those involved in it will affect the outcomes".

For all the above reasons, we have decided to focus on the case studies in this interim report.<sup>1</sup> While only the first round of interviews has been done, and the sample is relatively small (29 cases is at the minimum end of the number range proposed for inclusion), the initial findings are extremely encouraging and worth sharing, if only for the boost they must provide for all those working so hard to improve services for young adults. Also, discussions with members of the Alliance and BCT staff about the importance of positive outcome data for the campaign has galvanised us into sharing these early positive findings so that they may support the ongoing campaign,<sup>2</sup> especially now that there is a new Government. It is through the eyes of the young people that we can build the most meaningful and vivid picture of what the pilots are doing and the impact they are making.

The case study interviews have been designed not only to access the young adults' views of T2A and their access to other services but, more broadly, to gain their self-stories and to obtain snapshots of their concerns and situation at different points in time. Services can help young people to build better lives and move away from circumstances associated with offending, but the desistance process belongs to the service users. How people make sense of their own lives, their identity and their motivations are fundamental to achieving the twin purposes of the T2A services: helping young adults to avoid involvement in crime and to move towards better lives. Desistance from crime and associated behaviour occurs at the interface between the natural process of growing out of crime (Rutherford 1992), social structure and opportunities, and the subjective dimension of people's lives (McNeill 2006; Burnett 2010). The importance of subjectivity (motivation, agency, values and perceptions) requires us to access their narratives; and these case studies – made possible by the cooperation of the T2A workers and some willing service users – have provided us with a special opportunity to do that.

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<sup>1</sup> Another dimension which is particularly important in accounting for outcomes of interventions is that of the specific contexts in which they are delivered. We are therefore also preparing a 'special focus' report on the local contexts for each of the T2A pilots.

<sup>2</sup> We can do so without compromising our stance as independent researchers through biased selection from the data, because the findings so far are almost universally positive.

## 2. SETTING UP AND DELIVERING THE CASE STUDIES

The T2A teams were consulted about how best to include the service user voice in assessing and shaping T2A services. Various ideas were discussed and in the end it was decided that between 10 and 15 service-users from each T2A site would be invited to give their feedback on the emergent services at two points during the pilot period – one at the beginning of their T2A experience and one four to six months later, to also include some measure of ‘distance travelled’. This report focuses on the data gathered at the first interview.

In order to encourage the young people to feel more at ease with the interview process, the T2A workers were invited to work with us as peer researchers. A training day was held in October 2009 for the T2A workers, an administrative assistant from one of the T2A sites and two young adult service-users who, now acting as peer mentors in their T2A, wanted to be involved in the research project as peer researchers. During the training day, those present were guided through the skills required for qualitative research interviewing and had opportunities to practice the interview, and typical challenges which arise, through observing and taking part in extensive role playing with the case study questionnaire (see Appendix 2)<sup>3</sup>. We also provided a briefing for them to use in explaining the purpose of the interview and for inviting the young person to take part (see Appendix 1); this was also used in the role-playing. This process also allowed us to work collaboratively with the practitioners in refining the interview schedule and related materials (briefing information; consent forms). The practitioners were keen to ensure that the language of these tools was accessible to the young adults and we were pleased to take their advice on this. Also discussed on the day was participant selection. The peer researchers were encouraged to invite a cross-section of young people from their site (for example: from different areas; different ages; different offending backgrounds; both sexes; and different racial and cultural backgrounds). They were also asked to ensure that the service users interviewed were at the beginning of their T2A experience, and to avoid ‘cherry picking’ those who they were already expressing a favourable view of T2A.

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<sup>3</sup> A distance-travelled measure, designed by the research team was also presented to the T2A workers, but only London T2A used it with its interviewees. Of the 10 service users interviewed by London T2A only 4 filled in and returned the distance-travelled measure. Therefore the discussion in this report focuses on the data gathered from the case study interviews and not the distance-travelled measures.

In all, 29 interviews with service users were carried out between November 2009 and April 2010 – ten each from London and West Mercia T2A and nine from Birmingham T2A. On the whole, the T2A workers found the experience to be very positive despite the various challenges they faced in trying to recruit service users to do the interviews, especially those early on in their T2A experience as relationships were still being built and their pressing needs took precedence. It was hard for some T2A workers to juggle their case loads and the practical demands of their job with the added task of doing interviews. In Birmingham T2A, it was, in the end, their administrative assistant, rather than the T2A workers, who carried out the interviews.

The interview schedule was semi-structured, with open-ended and close-ended questions. The content broadly fell into 3 categories: (1) the young adults' thoughts on the T2A service as well as other services (statutory and voluntary) and on whether they thought their needs were being addressed; (2) getting into crime and getting out (i.e. what causes young people to get involved in crime and what helps them 'go straight', including a look at the strengths they have as a person); and (3) looking ahead 6 months (the improvements, if any, they think there will be; potential challenges and stumbling blocks; their thoughts on offending; and self-assessment of whether they will stay away from offending). Interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed. Only 3 of the 29 research participants refused permission to record their interviews and so their answers were recorded by hand on the questionnaire. These questionnaires and the transcripts were coded by hand and analysed thematically, with data being collated under the key interview topics and common themes being identified.

Of the 29 service users interviewed, 19 are males and 10 are females. Twenty-two are White British, four are Black British, two are Asian and one is mixed race (Black and White). Service users ranged in age from 16 to 24, with most being 19 years old. At the time of interview, only ten had been on T2A for less than two months; the majority (19) had been on T2A for over two months (three for 2 to 4 months, twelve for 4 to 6 months and four for 6 to 8 months). Of these 25 were on Probation orders and three were on YOS orders.

The frequency of contact they experienced varied with each T2A site. The sites having the most face-to-face contact were West Mercia T2A and London T2A where contact was at least once a week, sometimes twice or more, with phone contact in between. At

Birmingham T2A most face-to-face contact was once every fortnight, sometimes every week, also with phone contact in between.



### **3. THE SERVICE USERS' PERSPECTIVES**

In our last report we identified seven overlapping themes from across the 'Transition to Adulthood' initiative. These can be further organised into two major overarching themes: the first four are more concerned with practice in working with young adults and the last three are more concerned with strategic policy in developing unified services for young adults. The themes we have thus identified are:

#### **A. Practice: Working with young adults**

1. Working intensively with young adults during transitions
2. Achieving diversion, resettlement, desistance and better life-chances
3. Engaging with diversity, difference and the hard-to-reach
4. Service-user involvement

#### **B. Policy: Developing unified services for young adults**

1. Improving transfer arrangements
2. Bringing statutory and voluntary services together
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An analysis of the perspectives of the service users, as revealed in the case studies, provides insights of relevance to each of these themes. In our subsequent communications with T2A stakeholders, these themes have been well received as a helpful way of structuring the multiple aims and objectives of the T2A. We have therefore continued to use them in our analysis of the issues brought up in the interviews with service users, and to structure our discussion of the findings here.

#### **A. Practice: Working with Young Adults**

Service-users can sometimes experience a service differently from how it was originally intended to be experienced – the project intention can be one thing and service delivery another. Addressing possible mismatches between project goals and service-users' experiences and expectations of the services is fundamental to delivering a service with which users will engage. We are therefore happy to report that the first interviews in the case studies reveal that service users are experiencing T2A in a way that is closely

matched to the project intentions. Indeed, service user feedback about T2A has been almost consistently positive, with the only recurrent complaint being that they wanted to see more of their T2A worker but she/he was too much in demand by others.

## **1. Working intensively with young adults during transitions**

The T2A pilots offer young adults one-to-one, person-centred mentoring support as well as practical interventions that recognises their level of cognitive and emotional immaturity as well as the many challenges they face in their transition to adulthood. In discussing their intervention and implementation theories, T2A practitioners talk about the key differences in the services they were offering. They saw these as being the fact that they offer genuine and “credible support”; “ongoing engagement and actual delivery”; they “remove barriers”; promote “attitudinal change”; have a “holistic welfare approach” and they “empower and help people to help themselves” by developing goal-oriented action plans. Building up supportive relationships with prolonged contact time is an important part of this, as well as being available to help the young adults access services and showing them the ropes, rather than just pointing them in the right direction. For example, they are involved in “hand-holding” them through the filling of an application form, or will accompany them when they go to enrol in a course or training program. This type of support involves being available to young adults outside office hours, via phone or in person, depending on the T2A site, and meeting them outside the office to be able to address their needs – be it finding accommodation, a drug rehab program, a training course, or a job, for example. This initial period is time-intensive, with each young person differing in the amount of time they need before they feel confident and empowered to do it themselves

These aspects that T2A workers see as being the key differences in the service they offer were all reiterated by the service users themselves. Service users appreciated the supportive relationship they had with their T2A workers and that they could contact them by phone if needed, thus giving them the sensation that they were “there all the time” . Also mentioned by the service users was the fact that they are able to feel more relaxed around the T2A workers; can meet outside the office; can have flexible appointments; and that T2A is a voluntary service, rather than a requirement on an order. Many of the service users also compared their experiences with T2A very favourably in contrast to their experiences with Probation.

### *Supportive and respectful relationships*

As mentioned above, of the things about T2A that had stood out for the service users as being helpful or that they liked, the majority stated something about the supportive relationship they had with their T2A worker, the sense of having someone “there all the time” who listened to them and supported them. Comments included: “been respectful and stood by me”; “sister-like relationship”; “there for you”; “someone to talk to on same emotional level”; “I feel I can actually talk to him”; “a friend-to-friend service”.

“Just having someone there to speak to and listen to me... Because I’m normally a shy person and I don’t like to speak about my issues to just anyone, especially my family, anyone really. So, it’s helped me quite a lot to be honest. It’s let me speak my mind.” (Brad)<sup>4</sup>

“I’ve found it’s helped me progress in life, really. To be honest with you it’s helped me a lot... Basically, you help me with debt issues. You gave me sort of my confidence back. You’ve been able to get me back on to courses, show me there’s different ways around, you know, not to blow my top and actually listen and be able to not think so negative on what’s coming next”. (Mary)

“Talking is a good thing, trying to achieve goals... Just makes me feel better, more confident, makes me feel I can achieve more because I’m getting help.” (Andrew)

One service user liked the way in which she could be more relaxed around her T2A worker:

“The fact that it’s on like kind of a personal level, a friendship instead of a professional one – well it is professional but...you’re more in your comfort zone, you know, you’re not gonna really be panicking, conscious of what you’re saying and things like that if you’re more relaxed you’re gonna be more relaxed in what you’re saying, in what you’re talking about.” (Debbie)

A couple of young adults spoke of the fact that they liked seeing their T2A worker outside of Probation: “The other thing was like I can see him in other venues, than just [Probation]... Because when I come here I don’t really feel comfortable ... When I’m outside, when I’m at Starbucks or something. When it’s just me and him. You know people don’t think of me as a bad person because I’m in Starbucks”.

### *T2A as broker to access other services*

Also mentioned often by the service users interviewed is the fact that T2A helps them with their needs (accommodation, going to college, getting on courses, finding a job). As one of

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<sup>4</sup> Real names are not used; those given are pseudonyms.

them said, T2A “give[s] you the help that you want and not the help that they think you need”. What is important to note here also is that most felt that their main needs were being met.

“That you could come here and there’s someone to meet your needs, like anything you can have a problem [with], there’s someone that will listen to you and, if not, help you, put you on the right track to helping you.” (Simon)

“It’s helped through the things in life, like getting a bank account, signing on, the things you need like... Working with T2A has done more for me than what the courts have done for me.” (Gary)

“It’s basically helping me out with college. It’s helping me out home-wise, you know, sort of you know, it does stand out in that kind of way, you know.” (Gordon)

Some service users felt that T2A support was important because it helped them access other services that they either did not know about or did not feel comfortable approaching on their own.

“Like T2A helps me look for things, whereas if I was on my own I don’t think I’d really – [Interviewer: *find them*] – yeah, look in the right places and that.” (David)

“They help you get through to other services and things like that... I wouldn’t have found out about them if it weren’t for T2A.” (Shane)

Also mentioned by some was the fact the T2A workers pick them up and go with them to appointments. One liked the extra “emotional support” of that.

“When I’ve got someone with me I feel like I’ve got a little bit of protection ... I would say I’ve got more confidence because when you first meet somebody – I’m like a little shy – you don’t know what to say, and it’s a bit uncomfortable. And when you’ve got someone else with you it’s less uncomfortable like for the other person and for me.” (Mary)

### *Being a phone call away*

Key to the service users feeling that T2A workers were “there all the time” was the fact that they were only a phone call away. Most T2A workers will answer their phones outside office hours. Only the London T2A worker actually makes himself available to meet with service users outside office hours, should the need arise<sup>5</sup>. That the T2A workers made

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<sup>5</sup> West Mercia T2A has recently started working with volunteers who do activities with the service users outside office hours, such as going to the gym at the weekend.

themselves available in this way was strongly appreciated by the service users across the three sites:

“Just feel like that if I got a problem then I can ring ya to see if you can help me out.”  
(Patrick)

“The fact that they’re there for you whenever you need them and it’s like a 24 hour service... if I have a problem at 10 at night, I can ring up and it’ll be sorted then or the next day or as soon as possible, and that’s how it’s helped me. Constant contact.” (Tom)

“That I can have one-to-one sessions with my T2A and he’s there whenever I need him at the end of the phone... whenever I have a problem I can go to him and he can advise me, the best way to do it.” (Kirsty)

### *Voluntary nature of T2A*

Some appreciated the voluntary aspect of T2A, given that the arrangement was not tied to a court order or requirement and they could have “flexible appointments”. One liked “going to do something you want to do and receiving help that you want to get”. Others talked about feeling “more free” and not experiencing their contact with T2A as an added pressure:

“If I thought I had to go everyday, it would be more pressure on top of everything else I have to do... It’s voluntary and it makes me feel like, if I’ve got an appointment with ya and I can’t make it I don’t feel pressured to go to it. I can just ring you and say, ‘I can’t make it’.” (Patrick)

### *Compared to Probation*

Some service users compared their experience with T2A to their experience with Probation, noting that those in Probation had little time for them and did not really listen.

“I’m on Probation but they don’t really help me. They just basically do their job.”  
(Simon)

“I’ve had more help off T2A then I have ever had off Probation... You see with you, you could go half an hour, 40 minutes talking about problems, real problems and you can actually tell you’re listening to it, if you know what I mean, whereas Probation it’s in one ear and straight out the other.” (Mike)

Like because before when it was just Probation, you couldn’t really phone Probation up for help...But with [my T2A worker] you can.” (David)

“I’m with Probation for 18 months, but I prefer this T2A scheme to Probation... Because I don’t see how Probation will help me or make things better for me... a hello and a goodbye, that’s all I get.” (Brad)

One quote that stands out, in contrasting T2A against experiences of Probation, is from a young man who has a learning disability. Throughout his interview he stated that he has difficulty expressing himself and yet found an eloquent and moving way of describing his experiences at T2A compared to Probation:

“If I explain Probation through colours and then T2A through colours, because I’m not good with words, I’d paint Probation as black and dark and miserable and then T2A with rainbows and daisies.” (Mike)

For other service users their positive experiences at T2A meant that they would like to see Probation taking up the kind of work that T2A does:

“If it was up to me personally I would change [Probation] ... into an all-over T2A base ... because I’ve had mates and stuff, and I know that they would personally like seeing T2A teams better than Probational teams.” (Rauf)

“Maybe this kind of work, Probation officers should do this kind of work.” (Troy)

### *T2A as a great plus-point in their lives*

Service users were asked what the greatest plus-point in their lives was. The most commonly cited plus-point was the T2A support they were getting, mentioned by eleven. This was followed by seven who mentioned getting accommodation and four who stated the fact that they were no longer offending was a plus-point for them<sup>6</sup>. Many of the plus-points mentioned by service users had been brought about because of T2A intervention.

“This T2A is really good at the moment; it’s really helping me.” (Jackie)

“I’ve got everything that I need ain’t I? I’ve got my mum that looks after me... I’ve got you that comes up, helps me go out, get my bank and everything, all the major things in life sorted. And I’ve got my family to help me.” (Gary)

“Probably the fact that I’m with T2A and trying to sort this out actually. Trying to sort out college and I’ve just sorted my place, you know that is my plus side. I’m going to move somewhere, I know that I’m going to get somewhere.” (Gordon)

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<sup>6</sup> Three talked about the course they were on; two mentioned the good relationship they had with their family; two stated their girlfriend. Other reasons were cited by one individual only, such as: their job; new hobbies; living alone; college; moving out of the area; their voluntary work; and having no-one “running after” them.

For one young man, his experiences with his T2A worker inspired him to be a youth worker. He states: “I loved the way he done his job, I loved it so much that I’ve gone out there and got a job similar to his.” For him this is the plus-point in his life:

“The way I’ve just turned everything around, you know, doing youth work... I don’t want to be like out there selling drugs when I can change a child’s life to be a doctor, to be a lawyer, to be a fireman, to be a policeman. Do you know what I mean? I’ve got the self-belief that I’ve got the confidence of, do you know what I mean, talking someone into having a good future for him.”

### *Improving T2A*

The great majority said there was nothing about T2A that annoyed them or disappointed them. When asked what they would do if running this service, most said they would run it the same. One service user stated: “If I was your boss I would just say ‘Go on doing what you’re doing, you’re doing a good job’. Don’t need improving I don’t think.” (Andrew). Nevertheless, the interviewers encouraged them to make suggestions for improvement, and several were made.

The most frequently mentioned issue in one site, as described above, was the need for more than one T2A worker. This was London T2A which currently has one T2A worker in the community, whereas the other two sites have three T2A workers. Five service users stated that they felt there should be more than one T2A worker in London because they wanted to spend more time with their current worker and did not want to “wait around” to see him.

“I would prefer not having to wait around for as long, sometimes... The fact that there’s only one T2A worker in this area, because that increases the waiting time because there are so many people for that one person.” (Tom)

“There could be a bit more T2A workers, that would help coz obviously my T2A – there’s a lot of people getting on so you have to be fitted in so if there was more it’s not gonna be so hard.” (Simon)

Similarly, with regard to the other two sites, one service user at West Mercia T2A also said that he wanted more time with his T2A worker and at Birmingham T2A one service user said he wanted “more contacts, ring every day” and another service user said they needed more T2A workers as they run “around too much”:

“Actually a couple of things could be improved. They need more funding ... because they are understaffed and I see the way [my T2A worker] runs around too much. Obviously you want a person to work, but you don’t want him running around 24/7 ... He needs time to chill... I think he’s working too hard. He does enough work with me, more than enough. I’ve brought enough stress on his head.” (Said)

This flags up the dilemma of ‘quality versus quantity’. Originally T2A workers were to have caseloads of up to 15, with the ideal seen as being from 8 to 12. West Mercia T2A still works within these numbers, with the average caseload being 10 service users to each T2A worker. In London T2A because of the great demand for the service and the fact that there is only one T2A worker in the community, this has meant that his caseload is upwards of 25. Recent changes in Birmingham<sup>7</sup> have also meant that T2A workers there are stretched, with caseloads of 25 or more as well. Despite the fact that both London and Birmingham T2As are hopeful that new developing partnerships with voluntary sector agencies<sup>8</sup> will be able to ease caseload demands as referrals are to be made to these, these developments warrant a discussion on the directions some of the T2As are taking. If the key differential of the service, described by practitioners as well as service users, is the supportive relationships with prolonged contact time in order to meet welfare needs, then a high caseload can compromise this. Also a large city, such as London (even if services are for only one of the London boroughs), warrants more than one T2A worker in the community<sup>9</sup>.

Apart from having more T2A workers, several other suggestions for improvement to T2A services were given by service users. Some suggested that there be separate buildings for T2A:

“Maybe have its own building, or own specialised area so that it’s not so shared and it’s not so cramped. It gets quite busy in the ... office that they should have their own headquarters.” (Tom)

“More T2As with their own buildings, where people actually know you.” (Said)

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<sup>7</sup> “The referral criteria has widened to include leaving care, vulnerable adults and there is a “non refusal” ethos, in that no referral which comes into the unit is rejected.” (January to March 2010 Birmingham T2A Monitoring Report to Barrow Cadbury Trust, p.4).

<sup>8</sup> Birmingham T2A will refer their service users onto various local grassroots organisations who have been commissioned to provide services including employment training, creative activities, counselling, holistic therapy, conversation groups, and outdoor activities. St Giles have recently received LDA [London Development Agency] funding to provide mentoring and support services to 18-19 yr olds in the pan-London community and London T2A will be able to refer some of their clients onto this new service.

<sup>9</sup> Funding for the T2A pilots was unequal, with London T2A roughly receiving a third of the amount of the other T2A pilots.



One service user, at Birmingham T2A, suggested that T2A provide a programme of activities at the weekends, as that is when he gets bored and more at risk of what he, perhaps euphemistically, described as “messaging about”:

“I’d do things on the weekends because ... [my T2A worker works] Monday to Friday, weekends he answers his phone but on the weekends I stay at home I be bored, I go out. Do you understand? Which makes me more prone to messaging about ... if they done something, not like a club, but if they take us out or something.”

Other ideas included: make funds available for people to do courses; make apprenticeships available; give financial advice and help with budgeting; “help transport offenders to appointments”; “more training”; go to “different areas and talk to young youth”; have “a separate housing worker from my T2A, so it would be quicker”; know “a little bit more about some of the services” available to young people; and support a person past the end of their order<sup>10</sup>.

## **2. Achieving diversion, resettlement, desistance and better life-chances**

Overall, the end goals of the T2A pilots are to help the young adults they work with desist from crime and better their life-chances. Service users were asked for their opinions on how people get out of crime so that we can gain insight into what they see as being the main mechanisms of this process and feed it back into improving service provision. They were also asked to reflect on the improvements in their lives, if any, that they thought they would have in six months time – a way in which to gauge whether they felt that T2A was having an impact on their pathways out of crime.

### *Getting out of crime*

The two most common reasons given for how people get out of crime and ‘go straight’ were: “wanting it” and receiving help and support. Of these, thirteen stated that receiving help and support, be it from their family, T2A or other agencies, would be an important factor in helping people get out of crime. As one young man says, “People don’t realise that it’s just a couple of words, a couple of words that will change everything.”

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<sup>10</sup> This was a suggestion from a young adult at West Mercia T2A. This practice of supporting a person until their order finishes happened during the first six months of running; now young adults at West Mercia T2A get support beyond the end of their order, if necessary.

“They do that [give up crime] with the help and support of such groups as T2A because it opens your eyes up, it shows you that: look there’s more to life than crime, there’s more to life than doing this, know what I mean?” (Said)

“By help of others. They might just find someone for advice and they might help them” (Christine)

“By getting certain help. Like what I’m doing now.” (Frank)

Ten referred to their own motivation and conscious personal agency as critical in avoiding or giving up offending activity; that is, they stressed that a person has to “want” to get out of crime, needs “determination” and must be in the right frame of mind for “listening to help”.

“It takes a lot of bloody will power and a lot of help and a lot of people to be able to push you into the right direction because you do need help, you do need it. You just can’t do it on your own.... [but] at the end of the day it always comes down to whether you want to do it or not. If you don’t want to do it, if you’re quite happy with what you’re doing, then you’ll keep doing it.” (Mary)

“By receiving help, by realising you know what went wrong and it’s down to the help that they get I think ... and their own gut. If they wanna go and do it they can do it, it is as easy as that. “ (Debbie)

“They’ve got to really want it. Do you know what I mean? ... People can tell them all they want, but unless they want it, do you know what I mean?” (David)

While researchers have long debated the relative importance of structure (social disadvantages vs. social capital and opportunities) and agency (including motivation to change, intentions and self-efficacy), these words convey in simple but lucid terms the relative importance of each during transitions out of criminality. Nevertheless, the practical problems they face loom large in their accounts.

Other reasons cited by the service users include those also often found in the desistance from crime literature, such as gaining employment, having children and having a supportive partner. Seven cited getting a job; five cited changing or cutting off friends; four cited experiences that make them stop and think; three cited having children; three cited moving away; and two cited getting caught and going to prison. Other reasons mentioned by one person only include: getting housing; having a supportive girlfriend; “growing up”; getting a new hobby; and “moving on”.

When asked what specifically would have to happen for them to stop offending or what did happen for them to have stopped offending, if that was the case, the most frequent answer was getting a job (mentioned by 8). Six said receiving help; three said occupying their time; three said going to prison or fear of going to prison; two said having to want to stop and two said going to college. Other reasons mentioned by one person only include: stopping use of drugs; being in a better relationship; getting a hobby; having more confidence; less stress; getting housing; getting a girlfriend; moving away; not talking to old friends; getting “fed up” of doing crime; and having a child – again many reasons which echo the desistance from crime literature.

“I think it was my son being born. That had a big impact on my life, because I couldn’t think about myself no more. It was my responsibility and I had to look after him. Do you know what I mean? So I think that really made me fix up.” (David)

Some service users mentioned how hard it was to change; the significance of T2A workers in supporting these pathways to change was evident in many of the narratives.

“At the end of the day, now and again I do get the temptation to go out and do something about it because I feel helpless, I feel low, but then [my T2A worker] comes along and tells me it’s not worth it. It’s not worth going back.” (Said)

“But personally for me, it took [my T2A worker] to help me turn my old thing around, you know what I mean. Because [my T2A worker] used to sit me down, ‘ Look bruv, I’ve been through this, this is my experience. It’s your choice’. But then once I really did have a deep think about it and I thought if my Mum and Dad are telling me that and somebody brought out here to help me is telling me the same thing, then it must be right, you know what I mean?” (Rauf)

Thus a common message from the service users (echoing the view of the practitioners) is that change occurs if a person, first, wants it to occur and has the “determination” and “will power” to sustain that desire, and, second, if they have the help and support in place to help them undertake that change. Clearly, many of these service users are in particularly vulnerable situations, be they care leavers, homeless or with mental health needs, and for them the practical help of services such as T2A becomes acutely necessary. Their problems are exacerbated by the current criminal justice system which sees them as fully functioning adults when, according to developmental research, many in this age group still lack cognitive and emotional maturity needed to deal with the additional challenges of transition to adulthood.

### *Looking ahead six months*

All the service users interviewed said that they wanted to stop getting involved in crime. Most were confident that they could stop reoffending: using our multiple choice labels, 13 stated that they were 'completely confident'; 13 were 'reasonably confident'; and 3 were 'slightly confident'. Reasons given for feeling confident are similar to those mentioned above in discussing how to get out of crime: personal agency, support and structural opportunities.

"Because I don't want to put my family through it. And I don't want to put *myself* through it, I want to make a life for myself, get a good future. Because I'm having good help off of T2A." (Andrew)

"Because I'm determined not to, and I'm on the course, so I'm occupied. I'm not hanging around with the same people that I was before so I won't be led into doing anything more." (Kirsty)

"Now I can say no, before I couldn't, now I can say no. I've got self-belief, do you know what I mean? I can say no. I can stand up to anything right bad now. Anything and anyone and anything, I can say no." (Rauf)

"I suppose it's a decision, give myself time to think because I'm getting older now and it's not good to keep getting into trouble because it's, I need to grow up and think about my future. If I keep getting into trouble, it's just going to hold me back from what I want to do." (Patrick)

Those who felt only slightly confident recognised that change is hard and that there are obstacles to overcome. One spoke of "the pressure of the Police" who are trying to get "their claws" into him – a challenge reiterated by some other service users who referred to the difficulties of "being known by Police" and a sense of being stigmatised by those who do not believe that offenders can change.

In looking ahead six months, all service users interviewed anticipated improvements in their lives. Using our multiple choice labels, 12 thought these improvements would be 'massive'; 12 thought these would be 'reasonable'; and 5 thought these would be 'slight' improvements. The explanation given again reflected the role of T2A support in their lives:

"Because of the help I'm getting as well, I think it's looking up, to be honest ...Because when you are on your own, it does affect you mentally. And when you've got a lot more help around you, I think you get more confident with yourself." (Jackie)

"Because of all the support I'm getting now that I didn't have before." (Jane)

All of those interviewed thought that it was either 'quite likely' or 'definitely likely' that these positive improvements would be made within six months time. Reasons given for this faith in a more positive future were, again, support from T2A, plus personal motivation and "power."

"With housing they're sorting me out, they're helping with things, and then it's down to me then, I think I've got the power to do it like. I can do it." (Chris)

"Because the T2A have been helping me and I've got things like lined up. I want to get onto my plumbing course and hopefully with getting onto my plumbing course I can then go onto an apprenticeship who pay to learn. And then once my plumbing apprenticeship's done hopefully go into a job in plumbing." (Simon)

"I'm trying to help myself really and no-one ain't gonna help you if you ain't helping yourself, so I'm trying my best at the moment. But I'm not sure if, if I do get to do what I want to do then I'll be alright. But at the moment everything is going alright but slow, slowly but surely." (Frank)

Again evident here is the significance of T2A support in their lives in moving them away from crime and into a more positive future. It will be interesting to note in the second round of interviews with the same service users (to take place 4 to 6 months after the first interview) whether, in fact, these improvements in their lives have been made and if not, what are the barriers that have faced them in this period and how can T2A work towards improving services.

### **3. Engaging with diversity, difference and the hard-to-reach**

As stated before, of the 29 service users interviewed 19 are males and 10 are females. Twenty-two are White British, four are Black British, two are Asian and one is mixed race (Black and White). The racial make-up of the service users is reflective of the sites in which the pilots are located. In West Mercia T2A, all service users interviewed are White. In London T2A, five are White, four are Black and one is mixed race. In Birmingham T2A, seven are White and two are Asian.

In trying to get at whether service users felt that their individual, diverse needs were met, we asked them if they had a 'diversity-type need' taking into account that, broadly speaking, many services do not take into account the diversity of different service user needs. Of the 27 service users who answered the question, 14 stated that they had a diversity-type need. Of these, seven stated they had mental health issues, including depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, and anger issues; three stated they had a learning

disability, two mentioning ADHD; two stated they were Muslim and two stated they were female (though in fact there were 10 females who were interviewed).

Most who had a self-identified diversity-type need felt that their needs were being met. One service user who says he is a Muslim feels that his needs are met, not because of any specialised or tailored provision for Muslims, but because of the inclusiveness of the service:

“T2A services are for everyone: Everyone is welcome. Do you know what I mean? At the end of the day, T2A do offer one services for every group. Do you understand? They don't care about your colour, your race, where you come from, what area you were born in, nothing like that.”

Of the 14 who identified a diversity-type need, only one, who has dyslexia and learning difficulties, said that his needs were not being met. He explained: “I kind of just cope with it at the moment.” However, he acknowledged that his T2A worker has helped him by getting him into college and getting him “to speak to new people [and] learning to ask for help.”

Two other service users felt that their mental health needs were “partly met” and met “most of the time”. One service user said that her needs as a female were “kind of” met. She said that she would like it if London T2A had female staff “because they would know a lot more to do with females. Men will know some but not as much.”

On the whole, it seems that T2A has had a vital role in making sure that the needs of all are being met. This has included identifying such needs and making referrals. For example, in the case of mental health needs, T2A workers speak of helping young adults enrol with a GP so that they can receive referrals for mental health services as well as accompanying service users to such appointments. One service user who noted that he suffers from depression and anxiety has liked the fact that his T2A worker accompanies him to his meetings with the health worker as this, he states, “helps with my anxiety.”

For one young woman, T2A has been the crucial link to get her to accept and deal with her newly discovered schizophrenia:

“Basically my doctor says I have mental health issues ... how do you say it, like what is it, a schizophrenic, and I've only just accepted it if you know what I mean. So I don't really know about it, I've just like blanked it out really, but [my T2A worker] knows and he says he'll help me, but I don't know how, if you know what I mean, because I don't know how to help myself with it ... I know that one minute I'm

fine and the next minute I'm like a lunatic and there's nothing else to control it really, so. I don't know. I'm fine I think anyway." (Chloe)

Before T2A, Chloe knew that she had a mental health need but did not know what specifically what it was and chose, instead, to self-medicate through heavy cannabis use. It was her T2A worker who facilitated her diagnosis and referral to a GP and counsellor. Even with these services now in place, Chloe needs the constant support and reassurance of her T2A worker who is in regular contact.

#### **4. Service user involvement<sup>11</sup>**

Service user involvement is a key aspect of the work in two of the pilots: West Mercia T2A and London T2A. West Mercia T2A hold 'Service User Forums' to gain feedback on services and to ensure that "young adults feel that they are central to the decision making processes of the project."<sup>12</sup> Of the 10 service users interviewed at West Mercia T2A, six had participated in a Service User Forum at the time of their interview. Of these, three mentioned the Forums when asked what they liked about T2A. Interestingly, as the aspect they liked about it, they did not specifically mention the fact that their voices were being heard by their T2A. What they enjoyed was having the opportunity to meet up with others like them, "having a chat with other people", "see what their problems are, what they've been through"; "I can get to know other people and things". One specifically liked that in the Service User Forums he was in contact with others from a similar background and with a similar desire to change their lives – what he called "decent people". He compared that to his experience at the Probation waiting room, where he was once offered heroin to buy:

"I hate going to even sit in that [Probation waiting] room because there's baggards walking in. I don't mean to be nasty, but there's blags and baggards, rifs, pissheads, people who just don't want to get on in this world, like. And then you've got decent people. Yeah you've slipped up a few times like and then they put you in the same office... I had a bloke come up to me and ask me if I wanted to buy heroin. Do you know what I mean? You don't go to Probation to be pushed on with heroin and stuff. See what I mean? That's what gets me."

Those who enjoyed the Service User Forums felt it gave them "confidence" and helped them "socialise a bit". One thought it helped him improve his social skills: "it's meeting other people, my social skills and things like that".

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<sup>11</sup> The Case Studies discussed in this report are obviously another way in which service users are being involved.

<sup>12</sup> Steedman, Alison (2010) *T2A Easter Forum Report*, p.3.

At London T2A, service users are involved in a different way. Key features of their pilot is that they use ex-offenders to provide the services and also provide NVQ training for those service users who are interested in becoming peer mentors. These aspects of their provision were not specifically mentioned by the service users interviewed. As so often mentioned in these case study interviews, like service users in the other sites, what the London service users liked most about T2A was the supportive relationship that they have with their T2A worker. In this case, it remains to be known whether, and in what respects, his status as an ex-offender is a vital part of that relationship building. Pertinent to this discussion, nevertheless, is the insight offered by one service user, a peer mentor, interviewed in another setting (as part of a focus group with T2A workers and peer mentors). She mentioned two significant aspects of having an ex-offender as her T2A worker. Firstly, in the way that her T2A worker becomes a living example of someone who has turned his life around: “I think if he weren’t here then I wouldn’t be here. Basically, he’s just inspired me...he used to be an ex-offender and come out the way he is now and I wanna do that as well.” Secondly, in the way that she can relate to her T2A worker and feel that he understands her in a way that previous services have not:

“It’s just easier, you feel more at ease to talk to him. Like I opened up quite a lot with [my T2A worker]. I went to counselling... and I couldn’t open up with the woman I was in counselling with coz I dunno, if I tell her this she won’t understand why I done it, why this has happened, whereas with [my T2A worker] I can tell him stuff and he’ll understand what’s happened and why it’s happened. I just feel more laid back with ex-offenders.”

For this young woman, her T2A worker has provided daily motivation and inspired her to believe in the possibility of change:

“No one else has helped me like that, I just felt there weren’t no help for me. But they’ve made me wanna get up in the morning whereas I never used to bother. I was like ‘I can’t be bothered, I’ll just stay in’ but now I get up in the morning, I’ve got something to do, not doing what I used to do.”

## **B. Policy: Developing Unified Services for Young Adults**

The *Young Adult Manifesto* states that the main goal of the T2A initiative is to highlight “the need for a distinct and radically different approach to young adults in the criminal justice system; an approach that is proportionate to their maturity and responsive to their specific



needs.”<sup>13</sup> In order to get the user perspective on this, service users were questioned as to whether they thought that young adult offenders (18 to 24 year olds) should be treated the same as older adults in the criminal justice system. Those interviewed were divided on this, with twelve thinking that they should be treated the same and twelve thinking otherwise<sup>14</sup> .

The most common reason cited for thinking young adult offenders should be treated the same as those older was the idea that young adult offenders also have to accept the consequences of their actions as they are old enough to know what they are doing:

“If you’ve gone out and committed a crime, you know what you’re doing. It’s just basic punishment. Don’t do the crime, if you can’t do the time, basically.” (Mike)

“Because if you commit an offence then – I can’t explain it – you’ve got your own mind. Just because you’re younger it doesn’t mean that you should get away with it or if you’re older you should get away with it. Should be dealt with the same.” (Patrick)

“I do think that as soon as you turn 18 you’re an adult, you make your own decisions... So as soon as someone turns 18 I do think they should learn it the hard way... You’re an adult, you’ve got to deal with the consequences.” (Susan)

On the other side of the spectrum, the most common reason cited for thinking that young adult offenders should be treated differently to those older include an awareness of the immaturity of young adults, though most service users do not necessarily term it that way. Instead, they talk of young adults “still learning”, being “young”, and not knowing better.

“With adults they’ve had a lot more experience so they should know more. But with 18 to 24 year-olds they’re probably just getting used to it now and starting to learn their mistakes.” (Christine)

“Because young people are learning from their mistakes, whereas older people have learned from their mistakes and they’re older and wiser and should know different, know better.” (Kirsty)

“Because young adults are just living their life. Adults at 40, 50 getting into trouble with the police, they are just being silly.” (Brad)

The only service user who spoke specifically in terms of maturity was Tom:

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<sup>13</sup> T2A Alliance, *Young Adult Manifesto*, 2009. <http://www.t2a.org.uk/publications>

<sup>14</sup> Three thought that it depended on their offence and two were not sure.

“Because once you get to 25 you’re much more mature than an 18 year-old and you can’t compare an 18-year-old and a 25-year-old’s levels of thinking and just because you hit 18 doesn’t mean you suddenly grow up and should be treated the same as a grown man when you could still be a kid inside.”

Interestingly, one service user thought that young adult offenders should be treated differently to those older because young adults are still “making mistakes”, but when probed further he talked about the same issues as the group of service users who thought young adults should be treated the same as those older – the fact that “we still know what we’re doing”.

“When a person’s younger they obviously make mistakes and that. An adult, once they’ve got a few years of experience they know their actions more than a young person. [Interviewer: *So you think they should be more lenient with 18 to 24 year-olds?*] Slightly, it depends. Yeah, they should be but only by so much though cos obviously at 18 years old we still know what we’re doing, we make mistakes. It’s the years for making mistakes but, you know, we still know what we’re doing.” (Gordon)

Some service users also spoke of the influences of peer pressure and negative role models on the young, influences they believe “shouldn’t really bother” an adult:

“As a 40 yr old you’ve lived your life, you’ve lived your teenage life, you’ve lived your twenties, you’re a fully grown man – a fully grown adult I should say - so you should know what’s wrong, what’s right from wrong, peer pressure shouldn’t really bother you coz you’re a fully grown adult... Like you should have been through the teenage peer pressure and all that, you shouldn’t be getting into trouble at 40 or 30 or whatever age it is, for a 16 to 24 yr old you’re still going through like puberty, peer pressure with their friends, trying to keep up with the Joneses kind of thing, like you understand what I mean?” (Simon)

“I don’t think the youths should get treated the same as adults because youths can easily get influenced by the adults to do things, you know what I mean? ... The way I grew up was like this, where the elders used to do stuff and we used to think, ‘Yeah, the elders done that. I want to be like him. I want to go do the same thing’. But we used to get busted because we never had the brains as the elders did”.  
(Rauf)

Some service users gave specific suggestions for interventions and services. One thought that there should be a Young Person’s Probation for those aged 18 to 21 or 24.

The polarity of views expressed on this matter may simply reflect that young adults have difficulty in pinning down what is expected of them. The most thoughtful responses suggest the appropriateness of a more graded or nuanced response that makes allowance for youth and lack of experience.

## **1. Improving transfer arrangements**

Service users were not specifically questioned on their experiences in the transfer from Youth Offending Services (YOS) to the Probation Service or from prison to resettlement in the community. Nevertheless a few did talk about their experience of moving from contact with YOS to contact with Probation and the stark difference in the way these two services were currently being delivered.

“I wanted to get off YOT because I thought it was boring and crap and thought, ‘Forget this. I might as well go straight to Probation. It might be easier’. But it weren’t. It were 10 times harder ... They was more lenient with you, the YOT, I mean still strict but just a bit more lenient. You know, sometimes you’d have a house visit. You know, it’s not every week you had to go to the office - there’s only the odd time. With Probation you have to get yourself there. If you miss it, it’s breach or a warning. It’s not forgotten... once I was in Probation I wanted to go straight back to YOT ... I mean YOT listen to you, they listen to you, they did actually listen and they cared, if you know what I mean. See with Probation they don’t care. I mean they must deal with enough people, but still they could at least, you know, engage with you, make you feel a bit happy to come. Because I didn’t even want to go there because of the way they was.” (Mike)

One young woman thought that YOS needed to be “a little bit tough” with young offenders to prepare them for the transition to Probation. In her experience it was “a bit of a shock” going from YOT to Probation: “It is like because with YOT you can get away with it sort of thing, whereas when you come to Probation, that’s it.” She states:

“If they are going to go over to Probation, if they are still on an order, then I think YOT should try and prepare them and make them understand... Not be as tough as what they are with adults, but be a little bit tough.” (Mary)

## **2. Bringing statutory and voluntary services together**

One of the drivers of the T2A initiative is that there be more unified services for young adult offenders. Vital to this is partnership building across the statutory and voluntary sector. Each of the T2A pilots is building these bridges in different ways, but common to all is the emphasis on the need to bring statutory and voluntary services together.

Most of the service users interviewed had accessed statutory and voluntary sector services outside of T2A. These include Probation; employment and education services (e.g. the Job Centre and Connexions); housing services (a hostel, council housing services, and local voluntary sector services); mental and physical health services (mental

health team; community drugs team; psychiatrist; victim support; counselling services; and local self-help groups) as well as social services.

For most, access to other services depended on their needs, some needing more support than others.

“I’m getting everything ... I’m quite sorted. I’m quite independent. It was just little things I needed to touch up on and like a little bit of help, a little bit of guidance here and there. That’s the main thing that I get from the thing innit. It’s just a little bit of help. I’m glad. It’s when I need it.” (Troy)

Those who accessed other local voluntary sector services, often as a result of T2A, spoke positively of their experiences:

“That housing service helped me, innit, because before that I was just moving from place to place in bare trouble...I was just wild and now as soon as I got a house, I’ve settled down, I’m not getting in trouble no more. I’m away from the different people.” (Troy)

“This [voluntary sector organisation for drug users] it’s basically run by service users for service users ... I like it because I feel like I’m fitting in because I’m with people who have been in the same boat as me.” (Mary)

As stated before, many who were on Probation spoke negatively of their experiences there feeling that their Probation Officers did not have time for them and did not really listen to them. Their perceptions of the Probation are a indictment of a service that over the decades has shifted from an ‘Advise, Assist and Befriend’ ethos to one that is focused on risk management and delivery of punishment in the community. The very high caseloads carried by Probation Officers make partnership working with services such as T2A all the more vital in providing young adults in the criminal justice system the necessary support for them to stop reoffending and better their life-chances. It is ironic that one of the few to speak positively about Probation did so only because they referred her to T2A:

“Probation have done a lot actually because if it wasn’t because for Probation, I wouldn’t have found out about T2A, so in a way Probation have done really well.” (Mary)

Services thus need to work together to provide the best possible outcomes for young adult offenders, as each brings something different and unique to the plate. What comes across most evidently in the service user feedback is the need for a broker, such as a T2A worker, to support, guide and refer young adults to the services they need.

### 3. Identifying and filling gaps in services

Although not specifically questioned on the barriers to accessing services, many of the service users interviewed talked about their frustrations at various barriers they have encountered – barriers that T2A sometimes could not help them surmount. They also talked about gaps in services and the need for government to provide more opportunities for young adult offenders and to examine and address the reasons behind their offending. Some also thought that T2A should be a service provided to all and not just those in the criminal justice system.

Of the 28 who were asked whether there were any services outside T2A that they would like to access but could not, 16 said that there were none. The remaining 12 had one of the following on their wish list of services or openings: a place to redo GCSEs; to have their own flat rather than shared accommodation; to be able to participate in the free gym service that Probation provides to some; to gain access to the drugs scheme; to be in full-time college education while on job seeker's allowance; to take dancing lessons; to have legal advice; to have funding to set up own business; to have access to ICT courses and college; to see the Council; and to have access to the Princes Trust.

#### *Barriers to accessing education while on JSA*

Mentioned by some has been the challenge of trying to gain qualifications in order to improve employment prospects, just to have these plans dashed because it would mean losing their only source of income – job seeker's allowance (JSA).

“I do think things have gone wrong, in the things that we try and do, but that's not been T2A's fault. I think it's been down to the system. I think you know what I mean, like with college, for instance, I couldn't do full-time college or I lost my benefits. You know that's the only thing that's annoyed me but that's not been down to T2A.”  
(Mary)

Mike wanted to do a motor vehicle maintenance course, but because it was classified as a full-time course (even though it was for only 16 hours a week) it meant that his job seeker's allowance would have to be suspended should he do the course. As he has no other source of income, Mike did not enrol in the course, despite attempts by T2A to get the Job Centre to make an exception.

“I tried to get to college, yeah, fair enough I'm not looking for a job, but at least I'm looking for a career to get a job in something I like, and 'No, you need to be looking

for work'. They expect you to do some cleaning job for the rest of your life... Say if I wanted to do a college course, they should be like, 'Yeah we'll do everything we can', no matter if it's full-time or whatever like... To help you out like. Because once you've trained up and that, and got your qualifications, like me, motor vehicle, I want to be level 3 and go on towards MOTing. Once you've got it, you can get a job, there's no excuse to say, 'Look I can't get a job', because I've got the skills to get [it]."

According to Mike, the frustration of this situation made him contemplate returning to prison because those with longer sentences have access to various courses inside: "I'd do 12 months just to do that course!".

Although not necessarily talking about the impact of losing job seeker's allowance, another service user also talks about education. He would like to redo his GCSEs and believes that the government needs to provide "some type of course for people like me", people who were expelled from school at a young age, to give them the opportunity to get their GCSEs. Linked to this, another service user suggests that instead of going to Probation every week, young adult offenders should go to an education centre. He suggests that those who miss lessons there be referred to court so that they would not "mess about" in the classroom, "they would learn a lot more stuff then."

### *Gaps in drug rehabilitation services*

Gaining access to drug treatment was another barrier mentioned by one service user who, by the time her drug treatment program had become available, had reoffended and gone back to jail:

"I waited for meth for 3 weeks and that was hard. By the time I waited for it I was [back] in jail so that was difficult and because I was on a DRR [Drug Rehabilitation Requirement] I shouldn't have had to have waited." (Mary)

### *Gaps in mental health service provision*

Although his needs were currently met, one service user talked about chronic problems he had faced in the past as a result of ADHD which had not been properly acknowledged and diagnosed throughout his childhood. Instead of being helped with his ADHD at school, he got "kicked out" and feels he lost out as a result:

"I never got told in school, when I was in middle school that I got ADHD and that. You know, they never helped me. They even said to me, 'They *think* he's got ADHD'. But then they kicked me out of school, they didn't give me no help with ADHD ... and you'd think if they recognised that, they'd put you in for something,

not boot you out of a school for behaving like you've got ADHD. Do you know what I mean like? I think schools need to be helping you ... You lose out because you've got something you didn't want in the [end], you know what I mean?" (Mike)

### *Challenges of being unemployed and living on benefits*

Lack of money and employment were the greatest problems mentioned by most service users, be this because it means that they have nothing to keep them occupied or because of the challenges of living on benefits. For Julia being unemployed makes her feel like she is "nothing" and she turns to alcohol for respite:

"I just want to do something to keep me occupied ... It does my head in. I don't know. It makes me feel like I'm nothing, if you know what I mean. I have nothing. It's just like I sit there everyday and like as much as I try and try because I've got 3 years worth of retail experience and I've been a manager as well, yeah. Where's there's no retail around I just feel so poor, I just feel like, I don't know, I've got nothing to do and like I look at everyone and they're all coming home from work, sitting in. I'm just like really, really bored, if you know what I mean, and by the end of the month, they've all got money and I'm still stuck on my job seeker's allowance and I hate it. And it just really gets me down. And that's why, on a weekend or in the week, you turn to the alcohol to just get you to sleep."

Other service users also mentioned wanting to enrol in courses, but the barriers in these cases were lack of funds to pay for the courses. One service user, Susan, wanted to take dance classes, but even though they were only £2 an hour, it was money that she did not have. She felt that this was something that T2A could help her with.

"I know that like [my T2A worker] would be able to go on the internet for me and look for like dance schools and that for me, but I need help to pay for dance schools... coz even though it's only £2 an hour... Would be good to have that £2 when I need it because I could be having one session every two days or something, in a week and it's like where am I going to find the money for that? I'm paying like £18 a week at my hostel...plus my Jobcentre money's going down because of how many crisis loans I have and it's just like I said I'm unorganised, I've got a very unorganised life... it's like I wanna do something to keep me occupied, to stop me getting in trouble with the police because all I'm doing now is sitting down on my arse smoking weed, drinking, and when I get a chance it's sniffing coke.....I wanna train myself and then when I get to a certain stage I wanna become a dance teacher."

Another service user talked about the barriers to accessing crisis loans at the Job Centre where you have to wait hours on the phone. He said that it would be helpful if T2A had "a direct line" to the Job Centre to help him access and manage these crisis loans.

Some service users were frustrated at having to have shared accommodation because of the lower rates of housing benefit young adults get. They dreamed of one day having their own place.

Each of these examples of the various gaps in services and barriers faced by the young adults illustrate the structural constraints that bear down on individual lives, often undermining feelings of self-efficacy and personal motivation in moving away from crime. The young adults themselves feel that the government should provide them with more opportunities and should examine and address the reasons behind their involvement in crime.

### *Providing more opportunities*

Most service users interviewed (21 of them) felt that the government should provide more support and opportunities for young adults in the criminal justice system, mainly by providing more jobs, courses, apprenticeships, and housing – opportunities that would help them overcome some of the barriers they face.

“What they need to do is, young people that come out of jail, they need to give them more opportunities like apprenticeships, like vacancy jobs, a chance to turn their life around.” (Frank)

“Provide a lot more opportunities for them, coz as you see it you get convicted, you go to prison you come out, you’re a criminal now. That’s how people see it. Like there’s not a lot of opportunities, like there’s only a handful of people that come out of prison succeed in the big outside world on their own.” (Simon)

“I think they need to give them more support, more help, more things to do so that prevents the crime from happening in the first place, but if the crime does take place then a lot more support for afterwards to stop it happening again.” (Tom)

Another service user suggested that there should be more activities and youth clubs for the young to keep them occupied and “off the streets”:

“Get a few more youth clubs, set up football teams for all different areas. I don’t know, stuff like that. Just keep us off the streets. Keep us occupied. ...There isn’t much to do out on the street. You just stand there and that’s when you end up thinking, ‘Yeah, let’s go break a window, let’s go rob a car, let’s go and do this, let’s go and do that’. And that’s what gets you into trouble.” (Brad)



Some service users also felt that the government had to “listen a lot more”, “be more understanding” and have “a little more interaction” with young adults. Christine believes that the government needs “to listen to them more because maybe their voice is not getting heard so they need to start paying more attention to them.”

One interesting suggestion from a service user was that the government should provide those on Probation the opportunity to do outdoor activities like camping trips and white water rafting with non-offenders. He believes that both offenders and non-offenders should take part in these activities, so that offenders can make new friends and not be “stuck in one group” who never “meet people who aren’t criminals”. This he believes would help people move away from crime.

“Like if they’re mixing criminals with some normal people who don’t do criminal stuff, and then they could meet new friends that don’t do criminal stuff and then maybe them new friends that don’t do all that stuff could change that other person?.... So if we was all to mix together and blend in we’d probably like just end up finding other things because people who ain’t criminals, they’ve got better things to do out there than rob cars and stuff like that, they might lead a criminal onto a better life.”  
(Andrew)

### *Looking at reasons for offending*

Several of those interviewed talked about the need for criminal justice agents to examine further the reasons behind their offending. This was a theme that came up throughout the interviews. For them, addressing the reasons why young adults offend is an important part of supporting their pathways out of crime.

“See what is the root cause of the criminal activity and the root cause of drugs and alcohol and what makes people want to use and try and prevent it and get down to the why this person feels this way.” (Mary)

“Because everyone at the end of the day has had their own problems, their own personal experiences, been through certain things, so maybe they should look into why this person is, if someone keeps on doing this and doing that, they have to look into why they’re doing it and not just that they are committing crimes; there’s obviously a reason behind it, it might be cos they ain’t got a good life at home or they ain’t got money.” (Troy)

“I reckon to go more into backgrounds and see why they’re doing it more. Instead of thinking, he’s a rebel and send him to prison every two minutes, if you know what I mean?” (David)

“Probably notify what made them do whatever they did, see if they can help them on a personal level to stop them from offending, to try to help them with their needs,

to make sure they get on the right paths, to get them into employment and things like that and to become independent.” (Debbie)

In asking the service users directly why they think young people get involved in crime, most gave multiple answers. These include: the friends they have (mentioned by 21), having no job and no money (mentioned by 15), use of drugs and alcohol (mentioned by 10), a person’s upbringing (8), boredom and having “nothing to do” (7), problems at home (6) as well as the area they live in (2), among others.

Most service users stated that young people get involved in crime due to the people they “hang around with” and the “bad company” they keep.

“You have people around you that are also getting themselves in trouble and stuff, [it] is all you know so.” (Gordon)

“Wrong crowd of people they hang around with.” (Brad)

For some this was because of peer pressure and trying “to fit in.”

“I think it’s people you hang around with, personally... You just want to be involved in the gang and if they’re doing it, you do it. And sometimes if it tastes good then you do it more and you have a laugh. You try and fit in, if you know what I mean.” (Mary)

For another, peer pressure depended on the type of person you are:

“It depends how the person is, if they’re a follower or if they’re a leader. If they’re a leader, they can choose to say no. If they’re a follower then they are just going with the flow like and they’re doing whatever their mates are doing.” (Brad)

One young man believed that some young people get involved in crime because they find it hard “to show their real side, the good side of them”:

“They feel frustrated, they’ve got all that anger, cause they want to open up to people and they want to show their real side, the good side of them, but they’ve got no confidence to do it so they feel frustrated, angry, so they go and do something stupid. That’s what I think.” (Andrew)

When asked for the reasons that led to their own offending, most again gave multiple answers. Nine said because of their friends’ influence. Use of drugs and alcohol was cited by eight; boredom and having nothing to do was cited by six; anger was cited by five; past experiences were cited by four; being bullied was cited by three; wanting money was also

cited by three; and others cited individual reasons, such as “sticking up for the wrong story”.

One spoke of not realising that he and his friends were committing a crime; to them it was “having fun”:

“I think basically sometimes when you just go over the limit with your friends you don’t know what is a crime, but you’re committing it, do you understand me?” (Rauf)

Those who described their personal situation in more detail indicated that it was a combination of factors that have led to their involvement in crime, including past experiences, local environment, a lack of structural opportunities and scarce support with the challenges they face.

For Gary, according to his account, it was boredom that led to his involvement in crime. He was expelled from school at the age of eleven and was never enrolled in another one. As his age peers were still attending school, he ended up “hanging around with a lot of older lads” and became involved in crime with them. In his case one wonders why he never enrolled in another school and what the role of the State should be in ensuring that those expelled from school still have access to education.

For Mary, it was a combination of what was happening at home, with a move to a Council Estate “rife with drugs and weed and coke and base and all that” and wanting to make new friends:

“I’d moved to a new area and I wanted to make friends, you know. And when they did offer me weed and stuff, I had a drag, it didn’t hurt me so I did it again. And I was with my mates everyday and I was having a laugh and it was getting away from my Mum and Dad as well when they were arguing and stuff. It was my little get away, my friends ... my friends were my family at the time and they were my little get away.”

She got involved in shoplifting and arson with her new friends because she “wanted to look big” and “fit in”. When she was older she became addicted to heroin and her involvement in crime increased as she began to shoplift to feed her and her boyfriend’s habit.

For Gordon, who was living in a hostel at the time, it was the fact that he needed money when his benefits did not come in:

“I moved into a hostel with nothing and you know ... After a while I’m living with like really, really poor circumstances and I have no money to eat properly, you know... the job centre and stuff was the only source of money I was to have coming in and when they play you over and don’t give you no money, you have nothing, so it’s like you don’t have a choice but to offend kind of thing to make some money.”

Again the interplay between structural constraints and agency becomes evident in these narratives. The young adults’ earlier observations about the need for the criminal justice system to tackle the structural factors that underlie much of their offending, become particularly salient in these explanations about the causes of their own offending. Some of these case studies are striking illustrations of how badly New Labour policies failed to implement the second half of their slogan ‘Tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime’. It remains to be seen what the new coalition government will do.

#### *Integrating T2A with mainstream criminal justice service I*

Service users were asked whether they thought T2A should be a separate service or part of the criminal justice system. Views were divided. Eleven thought it should be a separate service whereas 12 thought that it should be part of the criminal justice system (three were not sure; two said both; and one was not asked the question).

Some service users who thought that T2A should be a separate service wanted it to be available to all young people who need it and not just those in touch with the criminal justice system. A few gave examples of friends who need help, but feel they have “to get into trouble” first in order to receive it.

“I don’t think it should just be for people who have been involved in crime coz obviously there’s young people who haven’t been involved in crime who would need the same help...even if I hadn’t been involved in crime I’d still need the help in finding places for cheap furniture and things like that, I’d still need the help finding out where food parcels are, and obviously I wouldn’t have had that help if I hadn’t have committed a crime.” (Shane)

“I think it’d be better both ways. Even if you aren’t in trouble, or you haven’t got a criminal record you should be able to have a T2A.” (Andrew)

“I’ve got friends who smoke weed and do things and haven’t been in trouble for it, but need as much help as what I need... because people like who don’t get in trouble have got problems themselves and just because they don’t get convicted they still need the help because they need that little push in the right direction. I’ve got a mate who feels so low about everything and he just sits and smokes weed and that don’t make him any better, you know. And he said to me the other week,

‘What have I go to do, do I have to go out and get in some trouble to get some help’ and that’s how my boyfriend feels as well. He feels like he’s got to get into trouble to get help.” (Mary)

For those who thought T2A should be part of the criminal justice system, reasons given were various, but mainly to do with the positive support that they feel T2A provides and having that support be made available to more people within the criminal justice system.

“Because T2A would be able to do a lot more work and be able to help a lot more peoples. Because T2A are there to help and Probation are just there to do a job, like just to do the job and see if you’re okay, whereas T2A are there to help you and help you where you want to go like”. (Mary)

“Because it’s helped me a lot and it took me going to prison to get it, get T2A. ...I think people in the criminal justice system, need their minds set, they need their goals set, something to do in life, something to look forward to. That’s what T2A has helped me do, realise ... And it’s made me want to stop doing crime, especially petty little things.” (Brad)

One service user who thought that T2A should be both a separate service and part of the criminal justice system, also felt that all those in the criminal justice system should be referred onto T2A so that those who wanted help could get it.

#### 4. KEY POINTS: SO FAR, SO GOOD

From the perspective of the young people taking part in the case studies, the early signs are that the T2A services, both on a practice and strategic level, are delivering a service that they value and see as making a crucial difference to them. Some wanted more from their T2A though, making suggestions for improving it, but the nearest to a substantive criticism was that their worker was too busy to see them more often. This overwhelmingly favourable view applies to all three of the pilots, though more of the London participants expressed a wish for additional contact than was presently available to them. Moreover, there is a good match between what the young adults say they get from the service and the specified objectives of the T2As. Also, the young adults' explanations and examples of how their T2A is helping them correspond with practitioners' theories<sup>15</sup> about how their interventions will 'work' (or help) to improve the prospects of their young adults.

Many of them were comparatively critical of their treatment by the probation service and, to a lesser extent, youth offending services. In effect, the T2A service is fast becoming the humanitarian service that the public sector has been too busy to provide and too bent on targets to consider. Government crime control policy over the last two decades has eroded the welfare-based, caring ethos of public sector criminal justice services and has promoted a punitive and technocratic, risk-based approach. This has left little room for the more intensive, interpersonal work plus provision of material help and social opportunities which are necessary to support troubled young adults, who are often from deprived and abusive backgrounds. As it happens, the approach of the practitioners in their work with young adults and the policies being pioneered by the T2As are strongly in line with the 'desistance paradigm' for working with offenders (Maruna, 2001; Farrall 2002; McNeill 2006; McNeill et al 2005). This is an approach which builds on the strengths and goals of service users rather than their perceived risks and deficits, and which respects the autonomy of the individual and recognises that what works is *what helps*, including strong rehabilitative relationships and access to facilities and opportunities which are a necessary passport in transitions to a good life (Ward and Maruna 2007).

One cautionary note that can be drawn from these findings is that the T2As are in danger of being a victim of their own success. The T2As open their doors to young people who are not readily recognised as the responsibility of other services or who seek them on a

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<sup>15</sup> As shared with us in focus group discussions.

voluntary basis, and are sometimes proactive in offering support to those who are marginalised or hard to reach. The current service users want more of their T2A worker and get frustrated when they cannot reach them. Thus some of the very features that make them so popular with the service users ('being there'; open door policy) will make it hard to keep up with demand and could result in a serious dilution of the intensity of support that these young adults often need.

We also need to be cautious about the validity of the findings from a small sample which may well be biased in favour of the T2A despite our hope that workers could avoid recruiting only those who might be expected to speak well of the service. In practice, it would be unreasonable to expect a random sample. For obvious ethical reasons, the participants are 'self-selected'. They have volunteered to take part in interviews following a careful explanation that their views and experiences could influence the shaping of the T2A. They are therefore likely to be those who feel well disposed towards the worker inviting them to take part, and perhaps those who have made sufficient use of the service to feel that they have something to say about it. Those who are adverse to using the service or who might have been disappointed – if there are any – are for obvious reasons unlikely to be available for comment.

It must also be recognised that positive feedback is more likely to coincide within the honeymoon period of a service, when all parties are enthusiastic and embarking on a fresh undertaking with optimism. One of the lessons from systematic evaluations of interventions is that the motivation of staff and participants is critical in outcomes (Falshaw et al 2003; Hough 2010), and for various reasons this may not be maintained. While many of the interviewees in the case studies expressed some uncertainty about their ability to stay out of trouble, they suggested that they could do it with the continuing support of their worker. The sentiment that "it makes me feel I can achieve more because I'm getting help" was prevalent in these first interviews. They had a sense of moving forward towards their goals and tackling issues that had blocked them, and they took hope and confidence from this. We hope that the second round of interviews will include those who are no longer in contact with the T2A, as well as those still making use of the service, in order to gain a more balanced view of the continuing impact it has in the eyes of the young adults who have been assisted.

The peer researchers are now carrying out the second case study interviews (see Appendix 3) with the same research participants as before. These second interviews are being held between four and six months after the first, in order to have some measure of distance travelled. While the period of the formative evaluation only allows for two rounds of interviews, there remains the possibility of extending the duration of the case studies to include further rounds of follow-up interviews in order to gain longitudinal, qualitative data on the impact of the T2As.



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# APPENDIX 1

## T2A PILOT EVALUATION

### YOUNG PERSON'S INTERVIEW-1

#### RECRUITMENT BRIEFING

T2A is a new service aimed at helping young people make a move forward in their life away from offending and towards a good future for themselves. Because it is new, the T2A is being evaluated by Oxford University and they have asked if some young adults will share their experience of what is and isn't helping them to become more stable to be able to (1) stay away from crime and (2) lead a better life. We agree with the Oxford team that it is important for the people using the T2A to be consulted about the development of policy and practice. You don't have to do this of course, but if you agree to it, they've asked me to do two recorded interviews with you, one in the next few days and one in four to six months time. The interviews are to get your honest views about: why some young people get into offending and what can help them to turn their lives around – and how all of that applies to you, and ways that we can make the T2A better.

If you are happy to go ahead, we can do the first interview now [*other suggested time*]. Although you will be telling me a lot of things that I already know, it will be useful for us too because, it will be good to review all this and think about some of the things that are important to you. Are you willing to be one of the consultant case studies?

[*If yes, read or give them the Invitation and Information Sheet*].

[*If they are willing to go ahead, ask them to sign two copies of the Consent Form and give one back to them plus a copy of the Information Sheet*].

Please remember that if at any time you feel uncomfortable with a question, you can say that you don't want to answer it and if you want to stop before the end, then that's fine too. Just please let me know. We hope you enjoy the interview process and hope that it will feel more like having a good conversation and a chance to think about some things in your life, than a grilling! Thank you for helping us.

**First case study interview schedule**



**T2A PILOT EVALUATION**

**YOUNG PERSON'S INTERVIEW-1**

**ID:** \_\_\_\_\_ -1      **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Time:** \_\_\_\_\_      **Venue:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Section 1: T2A and Other Services**

1. How long have you been with the T2A service?
  
2. How often do you see your T2A worker?
  
3. Does anything stand out about the T2A service that is helpful to you or that you have liked?  
What?
  - 3.b. How does that help you?
  
  - 3.c. Anything else that you like about T2A?

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

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

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

5. What services apart from T2A are helping you?

5.a. How?

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

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

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

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

[If yes] Why?

[If no] Why not?

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

[If yes] Why?

[If no] Why not?

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

## **Section 2: Getting into Crime and Getting Out of it**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Section 3: Looking ahead Six Months

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

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

[Remember this is confidential]

- Want to stop
- Want to continue
- It depends

18.b. Why?

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

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

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

18.d. Why?

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

- Impossible
- Unlikely
- Quite likely
- Definitely

22.c. Why?

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

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

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

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

**Second case study interview schedule**



**T2A PILOT EVALUATION  
YOUNG PERSON'S SECOND INTERVIEW**

ID: \_\_\_\_\_-2      Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Time: \_\_\_\_\_      Venue: \_\_\_\_\_  
Interviewed by: Own T2A worker / peer mentor       Other T2A worker / peer mentor

**Section 1: Looking back over the last Six Months** (or period since Interview 1)

*Last time we talked about what you thought might happen in the next few months, the problems you were facing and the plus-points in your life. I want to ask you now about what HAS happened. There will be points in the interview when I'll need to remind you that this is confidential, unless you or anyone else is at risk of significant harm.*

1. How have the last six months been for you?

- Great
- Okay
- In between
- Not so good
- Terrible

1.b. Why?

2. Have there been any improvements or good things in your life in the last six months?

- Worse than before
- No improvement/ same as before
- Slight improvement
- Reasonable improvement
- Massive improvement

2.b. If yes, what?

3. Have you been involved in any offences? *[Please remember this is confidential, unless you or anyone else is at risk of significant harm.]*

- |                             |                          |                         |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Yes, but not detected       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <i>[Now go to Q.3b]</i> |
| Yes, leading to prosecution | <input type="checkbox"/> | <i>[Now go to Q.3b]</i> |
| No                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <i>[Now go to Q.3c]</i> |

3b. **[If yes]** Was the offence more or less serious than before?

- |                    |                          |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| More serious       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The same as before | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Less serious       | <input type="checkbox"/> |

3bi. Why do you think you offended again?

3bii. What might have helped prevent you from offending this time?

3c. **[If no]** How did you manage to stop offending/ avoid offending this last six months?

4. *[If not already mentioned]* What are the main problems that you have faced over the last six months? *[Prompt: what are the main things that have stressed you?]*

5. Last time we talked about your skills and strengths. Do you remember what they were?  
*[If can't remember]* What are your skills and strengths?

5b. Which of your skills or strengths have you used to help you deal with things?

## **Section 2: T2A and Other Services**

*We're now going to talk about T2A and other services. We're going to be asking you many of the same questions as in the first interview to see if anything has changed since the last interview.*

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

7. How often do you see your T2A worker?

8. Does anything stand out about the T2A service that is helpful to you or that you have liked? What?

8.b. *[Interviewer: Please don't forget to ask this important question. Probe for reasons]*

**Why** is that helpful? In what way does it make a difference?

*[Prompts: How does that help? Why is that important to you]*

8.c. Anything else that you like about T2A?

9. Has anything about the T2A annoyed you or disappointed you?

*[Prompt: Is there anything you think that we got wrong?]*

9.b. *[If nothing mentioned]:* What could be improved?

*[If something mentioned]:* What else could be improved?

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

10. What services apart from T2A are helping you?

10.a. How?

11. *Have you faced any difficulties accessing services or things you want? Please describe all examples.*

12. Has T2A helped you gain access to services or other things you wouldn't have accessed on your own? Please describe all examples.

12b. Has T2A helped you to overcome any other difficulties you may have had in the last six months? How?

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

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

### Section 3: Looking ahead again to Six Months from now

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

14. Do you [still] **want** to stop getting involved in crime or do you want to continue?  
[Remember this is confidential]

Want to stop   
Want to continue   
It depends

14.b. Why?

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

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

Not confident   
Slightly confident   
Reasonably confident   
Completely confident

14.d. Why?

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

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

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

- Yes  [Now go to Q.16b, Q.16c and Q.16d]
- No  [Now go to Q.17]

16b. [If yes] What?

16c. What do you think can be done to prevent or deal with that?

16d. Has T2A helped you in this?

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

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

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

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

- Impossible
- Unlikely
- Quite likely
- Definitely

18.c. Why?

18.d. [If answer is "unlikely"]: So what is likely to happen?

19. If you hadn't decided to participate in T2A, how do you think the last six months would have been?

20. Is there anything else that we've not covered in this interview that you would like to add or comment on?

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

**Interviewer's comments on the interview:** [Did anything stand out about this interview? e.g. Did the young person understand the questions? Did he/she seem withdrawn and reluctant to answer? Were there significant interruptions and distractions? *Please remember to leave the names out of comments you make*].