

Police Drug Diversion Evaluation (EAF)

The West Midlands Police Drug Diversion Scheme

DIVERT: Descriptive Manual

March 2023

University of
Kent



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CONTACT DETAILS

	Title	Email
Prof. Alex Stevens	Principal Investigator University of Kent	a.w.stevens@kent.ac.uk
Paul Quinton	Evidence and Evaluation Advisor College of Policing	paul.quinton@college.police.uk
Nadine Hendrie	Project Co-ordinator Research Associate University of Kent	N.Hendrie@kent.ac.uk

ABBREVIATIONS

AUDIT	Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test
NVQ	National Vocation Qualification
OPCC	Office of Police and Crime Commissioner
TIDieR+	Template for Intervention Description and Replication + (Economic Costs)
PDD	Police-led drug diversion
PPU	Public Protection Unit

INTRODUCTION

What is the Police led Drug Diversion (PDD) scheme?

The College of Police and the University of Kent are leading an evaluation of police-led drug diversion schemes that are already operating in three areas: Durham, Thames Valley and **West Midlands**. People on the schemes are assessed, then referred to education, treatment, or support (as needed) with an ‘out of court disposal,’ like a warning, which does not create a criminal record.

PDD project partners include, universities, police forces, the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities and the lived experience charity, User Voice.

The PDD project started in mid-2022 and will finish in March 2025. It is funded by the Cabinet Office’s Evaluation Accelerator Fund. Findings will be published in a range of reports, practical guidance documents and academic articles.

PDD Scheme name: DIVERT - West Mids. Police Drug Diversion Scheme

Delivery dates: This manual describes the DIVERT PDD scheme from 01/10/2022 – to date.

Why: To evaluate the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of police-led diversion (PDD) schemes for drug-involved suspects. This national evaluation will inform policymakers, police forces, and their partners of how to maximise the benefits and reduce the costs of policing low-level drug-related offenders.

Manual: Method of production

This manual has been produced in collaboration with the West Midlands Police, the delivery provider Cranstoun, local authority stakeholders, User Voice and academic partners following the DIVERT PDD regional workshop. The aim of the collaboration process was to create a detailed description of the DIVERT scheme to enable evaluation, to produce an operational manual, to enable replication of police drug diversion schemes in other areas and to produce a TIDieR framework⁽²⁾ to judge the fidelity of implementation.

DIVERT: CONTEXT

The West Midlands is a highly populated rural and urban area. The West Midlands Combined Authority has seven constituent authorities, Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall, and Wolverhampton. These include areas of deprivation with high levels of poverty nationally, including the lowest council tax banding nationally.

West Midlands Police have a force wide diversion policy in place for possession of all controlled drugs as an alternative to arrest. **DIVERT is a pre-arrest diversion scheme.**

A drug possession offence must be recorded. The crime reporting process is:

- Officer identifies an offence has been committed, records it on an electronic Crime Report, usually these days on their hand-held mobile device.
- This is submitted electronically to the Crime Service Team (CST), who check it has been correctly recorded (correct offence type) and confirm it the system.

DIVERT allows drug involved suspects to receive a non-criminal sanction (Community Resolution), rather than a more traditional outcome such as an arrest and subsequent caution or prosecution. DIVERT is an out of court disposal that does not lead to a criminal record.

DIVERT delivery providers are the OPCC commissioned service, Cranstoun. They provide services for adults and young people facing difficulties with alcohol and other drugs, domestic abuse, housing, and criminal justice (1). [Cranstoun](#)

THE TARGETED PARTICIPANTS

Eligibility Criteria: for referral onto the DIVERT scheme

1. Adults and Youths (tailored courses for under 18).
2. Simple Possession of any controlled drug (Class A, B, or C).
3. Cultivation of cannabis for personal use (up to 9 plants).
4. Offender must agree to engage with the intervention.

Responsibility: Alongside the eligibility criteria, the offender must also agree that they are responsible for the offence. The Community Resolution form, (WC201R) (see appendix 1.) has a field for the officer to identify what offence they are accused of, and they must sign below that to agree they have done it. This is not an interview, it does not constitute a PACE compliant admission and wouldn't be sufficient to prove the offence in court, but Community Resolutions are informal and sub-judicial outcomes.

West Mids. Police understand that continued engagement with this type of programme is often required to change behaviour. Multiple Community Resolutions are possible for 'simple drug possession' offences, provided the individual engages with the programme after each referral.

DIVERT is not a deferred prosecution model, the diversion to the DIVERT scheme is recorded as the resolution of the offence. Non-compliance with the diversion does not revoke this resolution.

However, if they choose not to engage in the programme at all after their first offence, they will not be offered the opportunity to attend DIVERT again after any subsequent offences. They will instead be processed towards caution or charge.

Absolute Exclusion Criteria: Possession or cultivation with intent to supply.

Discretionary exclusion: There are **NO** restrictions on the number of previous convictions. However, offenders who are assessed as having ongoing problems with Class A drugs and who are committing acquisitive crime to fund their use will not be considered suitable as DIVERT is a 'light touch' intervention. They will be seen in custody by other services i.e., CARS (Cranstoun Arrest Referral Scheme) and/or the Liaison & Diversion service. They will be assessed and referred to treatment services and/or local mental health services.

REFERRAL PATHWAYS

The DIVERT pathway is a community resolution and will be recorded on the local police record management system with a crime report. It is recorded as an **Outcome 8** and the community resolution clears the offence.

The decision to divert a drug involved suspect is mostly taken on the street by response or neighbourhood police officers. Officers follow the force wide diversion policy when dealing with a person in possession of any controlled drug. When a suspect fits the criteria for DIVERT, officers first check if there has previously been a DIVERT referral and if the person complied before referring or re-referring to DIVERT. Officers refer to DIVERT using an app on their mobile device and are able on the spot to book an appointment to Cranstoun for assessment. This is usually within a week of the officer's contact with the suspect.

Those arrested for other offences as well as simple drug possession will be dealt with by Force CID or PPU (who deal with Domestic Abuse, Child Abuse and Sexual Offences) for that

offence, as well as being diverted via DIVERT for the drug possession offence. Officers are encouraged to separate and DIVERT the drugs offence before investigating the other offence. Force CID can also refer directly into DIVERT, via the Cranstoun app on the officer's mobile device. If they are investigating a drugs offence, they can make a referral from custody, whereas most referrals are made pre-arrest by Response officers.

COMPONENTS OF THE PDD SCHEME

Process: Following referral, the individual will have a screening assessment at their first appointment with Cranstoun. This is a 1:1 telephone substance misuse assessment conducted with a drug counsellor. Harm reduction advice is also offered. Allocation to either the individual telephone-based session or the group session is then offered. The person who is being diverted only does one of these sessions; either a 1:1 or group session.

Modes of delivery: A mix of 1:1 sessions (for assessment and follow up) and group work. 1:1 sessions are telephone based and group work is conducted online (Zoom).

The group session consists of 1 session and are separated into four types, depending on age range and the type of drug of which the divertee was in possession,

- Cannabis only
 - 18-25 years
 - Over 25+ years

Other controlled drugs

- 18-25 years
- Over 25+ years

If people are assessed at the first appointment, to be users of Class A drugs, they are offered 1:1 contact only, instead of a group session. This is a telephone based 1-1 session, adapted to meet individual needs and to include appropriate harm minimisation advice and support. Referral to a drug treatment service and other wraparound services are offered where required.

Duration of session: There is no defined duration for the 1:1 session. The DIVERT group session is typically a 2-hour session.

Location: All delivery is handled by Cranstoun and away from police premises. The initial assessment is predominantly conducted by telephone and the group sessions are conducted over Zoom. Telephone based interventions are delivered to any individual who cannot access Zoom.

Who delivers? A team of 7.5 FTE recovery workers deliver the 1:1 assessment (3.5 FTE) and group session delivery (4 FTE). The required qualification for this role is an NVQ- Level 3 in social care or equivalent.

Voluntary/Unpaid Staff: The DIVERT scheme has no voluntary or unpaid staff delivery for any element of the scheme.

Other referral: The DIVERT programme workers can also refer into other services when required, this may include, housing, further drug treatment services, Citizens Advice Bureau, and mental health services.

CONTENT OF THE PDD SCHEME

Aims and Objectives: to educate and support individuals to make informed choices about drug use.

Content: The DIVERT course covers (1), [Cranstoun](#)

- Drug-specific harm reduction advice.
- Naloxone advice and dispensing (as part of the 1:1 assessment) . Not generally discussed in the group unless a client were to ask as part of a wider discussion.
- Economic and lifestyle impact of drug use.
- Tailored individual advice and support (as part of the 1:1 assessment).
- Onward referrals to specialist treatment
- Police/community relations

DIVERT materials: Each participant is sent a paper workbook that allows them to follow along with the Zoom group session and engage in the polls that are used throughout. The workbook also contains an area for participants to add notes and has a list of services applicable to their area, should they need ongoing drug or alcohol support.

Other materials: Cranstoun also provide online materials, these include, (1) [Cranstoun](#)

- Drug AUDIT tool
- Cannabis quiz
- Drug diary
- Drug leaflet
- Alcohol audit tool
- Alcohol quiz
- Alcohol and keeping safe
- Administering Naloxone Self-care Opiate
- Healthy eating booklet

Modifications: There were no modifications made to the DIVERT scheme since Nov 2020. The policy was introduced during the Covid 19 pandemic and was originally set up to operate by phone and Zoom.

COMPLIANCE

What counts as compliance? The offender has to agree to engage with the DIVERT intervention, attend the 1:1 assessment and the allocated individual or group session.

What happens for non-compliance? No action is taken for failure to comply, but an intelligence log is submitted by Cranstoun to West Midlands Police advising that they should not be offered DIVERT if they reoffend.

What happens for repeat offenders? If the offender has previously complied with DIVERT and meet the eligibility criteria, they can be given DIVERT again. There are no limits on how many times they can be offered DIVERT, if they comply with attending assessments and subsequent sessions.

PAYMENT

The person who is diverted is not charged any costs for the diversion, assessment, or subsequent session.

MONITORING

Cranstoun send West Mids. Police a weekly update of all the DIVERT referrals they have received and those who have completed or breached the course. This information is updated on the police record management system (Connect) and the outcome logged on the Investigation record once everything has been finalised.

INTENDED BENEFITS FOR PARTICIPATING POLICE FORCES

It is intended that the benefits from DIVERT affect different stakeholders and include:

Police: Reduced reoffending, reduced cost, improved community relations.

Treatment Practitioners: Early identification of people who may need drug treatment, or who may be at risk of developing problems with drugs.

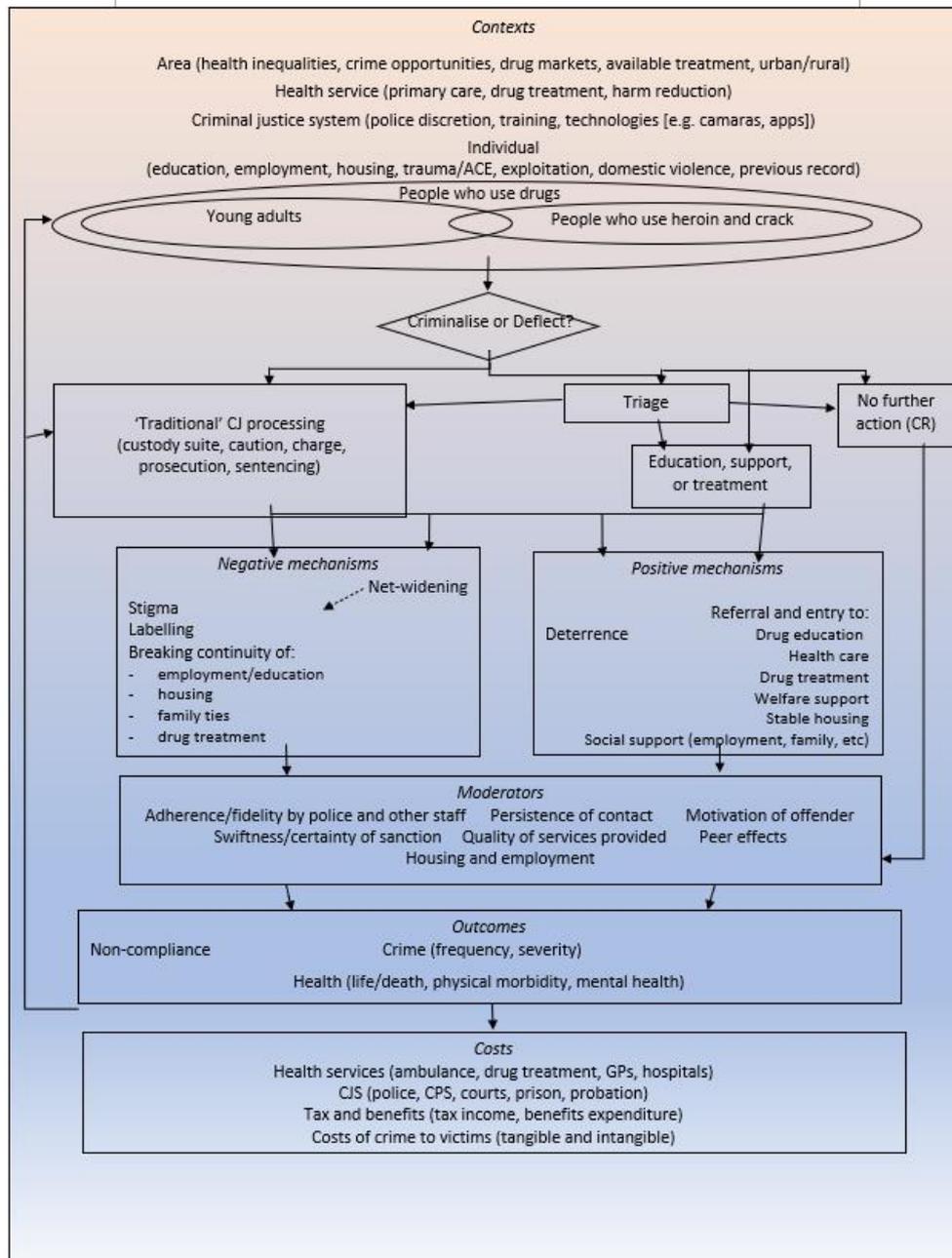
People who use drugs: Increasing their access to useful educative and treatment services, reducing the harms done to them by unnecessary criminalisation, and so improving their health and wellbeing and reducing their offending.

Families of people who use drugs and local communities: Reducing the burden of poor health and offending.

THEORY OF CHANGE

DIVERT aims to educate and support individuals to make informed choices about drug use and is an early intervention for those at risk of drug related harm. DIVERT is based on the current evidence base that recognises that formal processing in the CJS leads can lead to an increase in offending.

Theory of Change, March 2023



OTHER DIVERSION PATHWAYS: ALTERNATIVES TO THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE ROUTE

This section provides a brief overview of two other relevant diversion pathways that are offered in the West Midlands.

1. **Diversion name:** Alcohol Related Violence

Diversion Provider: Cranstoun

Eligibility Criteria: Those whose alcohol use has resulted in low level violence.

Pathway:

- Community Resolutions (Outcome 8) or Conditional Caution (Outcome 3)
- Offered at pre-arrest, arrest, or custody suite.
- Often used as part of night-time economy measures

Contact details:

WMPARW@Cranstoun.org.uk

Tel: 020 8335 1830

Similar approach to DIVERT, in that officers can book via an app, the client is contacted at the specified time and booked onto an applicable group session which is offered over Zoom.

1:1 offered for applicable circumstances.

2. **Diversion name:** Alcohol Related Domestic Abuse

Diversion provider: Cranstoun

Eligibility criteria: Low level DVA offences where the client has admitted the offence and agreed to referral.

Pathway:

- Community Resolutions (Outcome 8) or Conditional Cautions (Outcome 3).
- Arrest, Custody Suite

Contact details:

WMPARW@Cranstoun.org.uk

Tel: 020 8335 1830

Officers can book and initial assessment via the Cranstoun App. All follow up sessions are then agreed between the client and Cranstoun.

The reason for both these options is to avoid criminalising first time offenders, whilst providing a meaningful outcome for repeat offenders.

APPENDIX: PDD DOCUMENTS

Appendix 1. West Mids. Community Resolution Form


RESTRICTED (When complete)
WC201R
(9/15)

WEST MIDLANDS POLICE

Community Resolution Form

Crime Ref:

Offence as recorded:

PART 1: Notice to Victim

A community resolution is an opportunity to deal with the offence you have reported without going through the courts: this means that you can suggest an alternative course of action which you feel will make things better for you, and stop this from happening again. The list below includes some options that might be of benefit, although you can also suggest anything else which is not on the list. The officer dealing with your matter has to decide if the suggestion is fair and reasonable in the circumstances, but will try to ensure that your wishes are followed:

1. Restorative Justice – this is an opportunity to meet with the offender and explain how the incident has affected you. Most people who choose this option say that it solved their problem and allowed them to put the matter behind them.
2. Warning and Agreement – if you don't wish to meet the offender directly, you can still request that the officer dealing with the matter warns them about the impact of their behaviour on you, and they must agree to stop that behaviour.
3. General Reparation – if the incident has caused you some specific loss, but you don't want to meet the offender, you can ask that they do something to make amends for your loss.
4. Rehabilitation – a course of action which will help to stop the offender from doing this again. This will depend on what services are available locally, and the officer dealing with your case can advise you more on this.

"The resolution process has been explained to me and I agree for this offence to be dealt with as outlined below. I understand that once the resolution has been completed, the police do not propose to take any additional formal action" (This section **must** be completed)

"For the offender in this matter to attend a one-off Victim Awareness Session within 12 weeks of today's date, and in advance of attending that course, to pay Victim Support the sum of £55. Furthermore, for the offender to provide a contact telephone number and email address which will be used by Victim Support to make Contact."

Date by which resolution will be completed:.....

Victim Signature:..... Print Name:.....

Appt Adult Signature Print Name

Officer Signature:..... Collar:


RESTRICTED (When complete)
WC201
(9/15)

WEST MIDLANDS POLICE

Community Resolution Form

Crime Ref:

Part 2: Notice to suspect

Surname:..... Other Names:.....

DOB:..... Self-defined ethnicity:..... Sex: M/F Nationality:.....

Address:.....

Details confirmed by: Officer..... Method.....

"CAUTION"

You have been identified as having committed the offence of.....
In that you: (Officer must outline details of offence and requisite intent- KIV Points to prove)

.....

The victim has said that they are willing for this offence to be dealt with 'informally' and provide you with an opportunity to make amends for your actions. This is voluntary, so you do not have to take part in this process. However, failure to complete the actions specified may result in further investigation: where appropriate, you may be liable to further criminal/civil proceedings, and this declaration may be used in evidence at such proceedings (**Officer must record any response and capture signature at end of writing**):

.....

"I admit committing this offence and agree to participate in the resolution outlined in Part 1 of this document which is
To attend a one-off Victim Awareness Session within 12 weeks of today's date, and in advance of attending that course, to pay Victim Support the sum of £60.
Furthermore, I agree to provide a contact telephone number and email address which will be used by Victim Support to make Contact."

Tel No:..... E-mail:.....

I have been made aware that all information is available to chief officers and may be disclosed as part of the Disclosure and Barring Service's 'enhanced disclosure' process. I consent to the information contained in this form being disclosed if applicable.

Offender Signed:..... Print Name:.....

Appt Adult Signed:..... Print Name:.....

Officer Signed:..... Collar/Name:.....

Date:.....



Crime Ref:

Officer Rationale (Tick to indicate that all below checks have been completed – include results of PNC /
 Firms checks):

PNC Flints YOS (if Applicable)

.....

Signed..... Collar/Rank.....

Supervisor Comments:

.....

Signed..... Collar/Rank.....

Inspector Authorisation and comments (Required for Excluded or Reglna offences):

.....

Signed..... Collar/Rank.....



Crime Ref:

Information Sharing Consent Form

(Must be completed if referral to be made to partner agency)

Where rehabilitation has been deemed to be an appropriate method of resolution and you have indicated that you wish to take part in such a programme West Midlands Police may share with our partners where necessary details of your name, address and contact numbers. Our partners will share with West Midlands Police outcomes in relation to appointments you have attended and or workshops.

In the case of non-attendance at any appointments without a reasonable explanation, this may be recorded as a breach of your rehabilitation programme and you may face prosecution for the original offence.

1. I have read the above information and I give my permission for West Midlands Police to share my personal details with partner agencies.

Name.....

Address.....

Telephone number(s).....

Email address.....

Date..... Signed.....

2. I do not give my permission for West Midlands Police to share my personal details with partner agencies and I understand that in doing so I will no longer be able to undertake any rehabilitation programme as discussed and may not be eligible for a Community Resolution.

Date..... Signed.....

Finalisation for 2nd Community Resolutions:

Resolution Completed Y/N

Signed..... Collar No.....

REFERENCES

1. [Empowering People, Empowering Change | Cranstoun](#)
2. [Template for Intervention Description and Replication \(TIDieR\) | Cochrane Training](#)