Viv’s Story

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Viv Hulland and her husband were awoken during the night by a sound downstairs at her home in Leeds. They went down to find that a young man had broken in through a window. They talked to him for a while before the police arrived and arrested him.

A few months later, Viv asked the police about the fate of the young man. She was told he’d been given a Youth Referral Order (a community sentence often used for first time offenders). She asked if she could have a Restorative Justice meeting with him and he agreed.

“I thought – this isn’t a bad lad, just a daft lad and I wanted to meet him to tell him about the effect his breaking in had had on us.

“It was an upsetting experience and it was made worse by the fact that we had my mother’s funeral that morning. When I told him about that, it seemed to hit him like a sledgehammer.

“He said sorry to me and I think it was a genuine apology. He said he was glad he had a chance to do it in person.

“I said to him that I wanted him to promise me that he’d never do it again to anyone else – that was how he could make it up to me.

“He agreed with that. I was really grateful to have had the opportunity to say it to his face.”