

Agenda Item	9.
Report No	CPB/14/23



**Highland**  
Community  
Planning  
Partnership

Com-pàirteachas  
Dealbhadh  
Coimhearsnachd

**na Gàidhealtachd**

**Highland Community Planning Partnership Board – 15 September 2023**

## **Community Justice Annual Report**

**Report by: Margaret McShane**

### **Summary**

The CPP Board are asked to consider and approve the attached Highland Community Justice Annual Report 2022-23 prior to submission to Community Justice Scotland by 29 September 2023.

### **1. Background**

- 1.1 Following the implementation of the Community Justice Scotland Act (2016), which delegated responsibility for the implementation of Community Justice to CPPs, the Highland Community Justice Partnership was established in April 2016.

On behalf of the Highland CP Board the CJP provides an annual return to Community Justice Scotland (CJS). The document is attached. It is also a requirement for the CJP to produce and publish a public facing annual report, this will be completed over the coming weeks.

The attached return provides a variety of information and pulls from the activity contained within the current Addendum to the CJP plan which runs until 2022 and is available here -

[updated 2021-22 plan.pdf \(highlandcpp.org.uk\)](https://highlandcpp.org.uk/updated_2021-22_plan.pdf)

Further to this, a Position Statement has been produced which outlines the position of the CJP in Highland in relation to a new CJ Plan for 2023 onwards. The new National Strategy for Community Justice was published in 2022 and the Outcomes Performance and Improvement Framework, now known as the Community Justice Performance Framework (CJPF) was published in April 2023.

[Community Justice Partnership | HTSI main \(highlandtsi.org.uk\)](https://highlandtsi.org.uk/)

The Highland Community Justice Partnership will be renewing their plan over the coming months.

## 2. Highlights

### 2.1 Custody Link Worker Project:

The Custody Link Worker Project has continued throughout the period in question staffed by 2 link Workers and a Coordinator. This is a 3-year project which is jointly funded by the Big Lottery, The Robertson Trust, Police Scotland and the Community Justice Partnership.

They work with clients on a one-to-one basis to help them identify their individual issues which increase their risk of offending behaviour and help to identify their aspirations for change.

The project is already starting to highlight areas of commonality and areas of need and there has been a higher uptake on the number of referrals than originally anticipated. There is a remarkably high incidence of past trauma in clients lives and they frequently have multiple needs. Clients are highly motivated to effect a positive change in their lives and respond well to the non-judgemental approach of the project. High levels of trust have been established between the link workers and their clients.

The project will cease from March 2024 unless further funding can be found.

### Small Change for Justice II:

Following on from the huge success of the original event in 2017, the Small Change for Justice II event, which had been postponed for 2 years took place in the Drumossie Hotel on Friday 18 March 2022.

On the day, ten groups pitched their ideas for funding of a maximum of £4,000 each in relation to their work with those who have offended, those who have been affected by crime or who are involved in working to prevent offending. The invited audience were asked to vote for the groups who, in their opinion should receive the funding.

All ten groups were successful, and we are currently gathering the reports in relation to this. A compilation report of the work carried out by the organisations in relation to this over the past year will be circulated over the coming months.

### Community Justice Dragon's Den:

In the Community Justice Dragon's Den event which took place digitally on Tuesday 22 March, two organisations pitched for larger sums of funding (between £20k & £40k). The panel which had representation from the Community Justice Partnership and Criminal Justice Social Work decided that both organisations should be successful to progress their projects in relation to -

- Creating opportunities for people to undertake their Community Payback Order with an unpaid work or other activity requirement within communities and on community projects

- Working with people who have an offending history to support their recovery and reduce their risk of reoffending within rural and remote Highland

Two organisations were successful, and we are currently gathering the reports in relation to the work carried out over the past year in relation to this.

### **3. Challenges**

- 3.1 While the partnership continues to benefit from a core group of regular attendees, general participation and engagement across agencies and different departments is not as strong as the Partnership would like. This is primarily due to ever increasing workloads, expectations of organisations, staff changes and Covid 19. This impacts on the ability of the CJP and the CJ Manager to understand the wider landscape of contributing actions and opportunities within Highland.

Raising awareness of community justice also continues to present a challenge, given the nature of the work, how community justice is perceived by the general public can be problematic.

#### **Recommendation**

The Board is asked to consider and approve the Community Justice Annual Report.

**Author: Margaret McShane**

**Date: 07 September 2023**

**Appendices: Community Justice Annual Report 2022-23**

# **Community Justice Scotland**

## **Ceartas Coimhearsnachd Alba**

### **Community Justice Outcome Activity Across Scotland Local Area Annual Return Template 2022-23**

April 2023



# Community Justice Outcome Activity Across Scotland Local Area Annual Return Template 2022-23

## 1. Background

This reporting template has been developed in discussion with community justice representatives from local areas, and is designed to support local areas in reporting to CJS on the achievement of outcomes in order that CJS is able to write its annual report to satisfy s27 of the Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016 ('the Act'). The process of requesting information from local areas through the completion of this reporting template fulfils the requirement for CJS to consult with community justice partners and stakeholders when preparing the annual report, as set out under section 27(3). Completing the template can also support local areas to make an assessment of progress towards national outcomes and prepare their own local-facing annual report, which is a statutory obligation under section 23..

Significant strategic developments took place in and around the reporting year 2022-23, namely;

1. Publication of the Scottish Government's [Vision for Justice](#) in February 2022.
2. The publication of a revised [National Strategy](#) in June 2022.
3. The review of the OPIF culminating in the publication in April 2023 of the [Community Justice Performance Framework](#) and the accompanying [Community Justice Improvement Tool](#).

These significant strategic developments had substantial implications for local areas in their delivery of their statutory obligations within community justice. Further, they had the effect of creating a de-facto transition year, where the National Strategy for Community Justice and reporting framework were not aligned. In recognition of this, we have reconsidered the scope of this template and the report it informs for the reporting period 2022-23.

CJS approached community justice coordinators and managers in March 2023 seeking volunteers to participate in the creation of the 2022-23 annual report template. CJS would like to extend thanks to those community justice partners that took the time to participate in the development group and others that provided sense-checking comments on the draft.

## 2. Statement of Assurance and Data Usage

The information submitted to CJS using this template will be specifically used for the purpose of fulfilling the requirement under s27 of the Act for CJS to produce a report on performance in relation to community justice outcomes across Scotland. It will also be used by CJS in its role to monitor, promote and support improvement in, and keep the Scottish Ministers informed about, performance in the provision of community justice.

In line with provisions in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), CJS will use appropriate data to ensure that there is continuous reporting, development and progress towards the national outcomes. By providing data to CJS you are consenting to its use by CJS as indicated. Community



## **Community Justice Outcome Activity Across Scotland Local Area Annual Return Template 2022-23**

Justice Partnerships should be aware that any information held by CJS is subject to statutory Freedom of Information obligations.

The template can be used by local partnerships to fulfil their requirements under s23 (1b) of the Act, when published as an appendix to a publicly facing summary statement of annual progress.

### **3. General principles of the template**

The template and guidance have been developed using the following principles:

- Retention of the outcomes and indicators from the 2016 OPIF and previous templates, supplemented with additional guidance and direction around answering the questions.
- The template should enable a shorter return.
- Better support local partners to comply with their local reporting requirements set out in section 23 of the Act. E.g. the inclusion of local outcomes, which also support CJS to understand local issues.
- Continue to seek evidence about new collaborative activities.
- Support CJS to comply with their requirements in section 27 of the Act.



## Community Justice Outcome Activity Across Scotland Local Area Annual Return Template 2022-23

### 4. How to fill in the template

The return should be completed and consulted on with partners involved in community justice in your local area. In line with the Act this includes statutory partners, third sector bodies involved in community justice in relation to the area, such community bodies in relation to the area as partners consider appropriate, and such other persons as partners consider appropriate. CJS expects that completion of this template will be a collaborative effort.

This template incorporates guidance support completion, with the text *(in blue)* providing reflective prompts to consider to develop your answer, which can be deleted and replaced with your response. These should be considered together through the development of your answer, rather than addressed individually.

In response to feedback on accessibility and in order to support our analysis, we have removed the text boxes around questions and answers.

There is no expectation that areas will return substantial numerical data. We would encourage partners to develop the response to this template in conversation with each other, and view it as an opportunity to reflect on your strengths and needs in partnership.

Where the template asks for evidence, a written response will suffice and there is no expectation that you send additional supporting documentation – if there are any aspects CJS is unclear on it will be our responsibility to request clarification where necessary.

If any response or evidence requires details about people with lived experience (e.g. evidence in respect of someone's life story) please DO NOT include any identifiable personal or sensitive information (as outlined in Schedules 2 & 3 of the Data Protection Act 1998) as CJS does not require such information. If this is unavoidable then please ensure that the data is fully anonymised.

This is the sixth iteration of the template and guidance. If you have any queries about completing the template then please email [CJSImprovement@communityjustice.scot](mailto:CJSImprovement@communityjustice.scot).



**Community Justice Outcome Activity Across Scotland  
Local Area Annual Return Template 2022-23**

<b>1) Community Justice Partnership / Group Details</b>	
Name of local authority area/s	Highland
Name and contact details of the partnership Chair	Name: Ross MacKillop Email: <a href="mailto:Ross.MacKillop@highlandtsi.org.uk">Ross.MacKillop@highlandtsi.org.uk</a> Telephone: 01349 864289
Contact for queries about this report	Name: Margaret McShane Email: <a href="mailto:cjmanager@highlandtsi.org.uk">cjmanager@highlandtsi.org.uk</a> Telephone: 01349 864289

**2) Template Sign-off from Community Justice Partnership / Group Chair**

Date: xx September 2023

Name: Ross MacKillop





## **Community Justice Outcome Activity Across Scotland Local Area Annual Return Template 2022-23**

### **3) Governance Arrangements**

Last year, we asked partnerships to describe their governance structure for community justice arrangements and include links to wider community planning. Please describe any substantive changes since your previous answer.

### **4) The year overall**

2022-23 saw substantial developments and change within the service delivery and strategic policy landscape. This section should be used to reflect some of the a) challenges/negative implications and b) opportunities/positive implications from the reporting year on the community justice partnership. This can include impact on the improvement activity, partner collaboration, and delivery of services.

#### **Challenges / Negatives**

The partnership has faced some difficulty in gaining traction again following the Covid 19 pandemic. As the meetings had moved to being conducted online there has been some reluctance and hesitation in moving back to face-to-face meetings. Staff changes during this time have also played a part in the engagement of partners to community justice. It is also recognised that workloads and financial cuts to services have stretched resources making commitment difficult.

In addition to this, the delay with the suite of national documents has not been helpful in allowing the partnership to gain traction and focus on the main priorities suggested at that national level.

#### **Positives / Opportunities**

During the reporting period the partnership have funded a new role to aim to increase engagement with third sector organisations in relation to working with those involved in CPOs and Unpaid Work to allow for a range of more diverse opportunities in this regard.

The partnership has managed to engage in discussions around planning for the new Community Justice Plan for Highland and what the local priorities should be in addition to the priorities outlined in the new National Strategy for Community Justice. The partnership has also engaged in discussion in relation to the use of some funding, again with a view to where our priorities lie.



## Community Justice Outcome Activity Across Scotland Local Area Annual Return Template 2022-23

This section is designed to capture the evidence and data that has been used by your partnership over the reporting period to assess progress against the national outcomes.

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### NATIONAL OUTCOME ONE

#### Communities improve their understanding and participation in community justice\*

Where applicable have regard to the following indicators:

- Activities carried out to engage with 'communities' as well as other relevant constituencies
  - CJ Newsletter** – the Community Justice Newsletter is produced and circulated to a wide network of statutory and third sector organisations to keep them informed of what is happening locally and nationally.
  - CJ Conference** – the conference 'Where is the Justice in Poverty' was held in March 2023 and had a great range of speakers who delivered messages in relation to the links between poverty and those entering/within the justice system to around 80 people from across Highland. STV covered a piece about the conference and interviewed clients from Apex which was covered in the STV News. Moray Firth Radio also covered key messages from the conference.  
<https://www.apexscotland.org.uk/stv-news-visits-apex-highland/>
  - Social Media** – the CJP have facebook and twitter accounts which they utilise to convey information in relation to what the partnership is involved in and items of interest to the wider community. The facebook account has 405 followers and the twitter account has 445 followers.
- Consultation with communities as part of community justice planning and service provision
  - CJ Forum** - the Forum continues to meet quarterly and is a space for third sector organisations to meet, share information and ideas and potentially work collaboratively in relation to community justice.
  - Female Offending Meeting** - A group was set up to look at female offending in Highland which has been raised as a priority for the new plan. The partnership then agreed to fund a separate piece of work in relation to this to better understand the issues and needs of females who offend within the Highland area.
- Participation in community justice, such as co-production and joint delivery
  - Custody Link Workers** – this project has continued over the year in question with third sector and police working collaboratively to engage and support those coming through custody in Highland. This has resulted in improved outcomes for many of those involved.
  - Community Integration Plan** – this has continued over the year in question with several organisations involved in working with those who have drug and



## Community Justice Outcome Activity Across Scotland Local Area Annual Return Template 2022-23

alcohol issues entering the prison and preparing them for their release back into the community. This has resulted in improved outcomes for many of those involved.

**CPO Role** - the partnership has funded a new role to aim to increase engagement with third sector organisations in relation to working with those involved in CPOs and Unpaid Work to allow for a range of more diverse opportunities in this regard.

**Café Link Worker** – the partnership has also enabled the role of a Link Worker for Café 1668 in Inverness to be undertaken. This role is helpful in signposting people to the right services for their needs.

**Dragon's Den** – the partnership has funded 2 third sector organisations to provide opportunities for those carrying out CPOs or Unpaid Work. The organisations have undertaken this work throughout the year in question.

**Small Change for Justice** – the partnership has funded 10 third sector organisations to provide opportunities to work with those involved in offending, having been affected by crime or who are on the periphery of offending. The organisations have undertaken this work throughout the year in question.

- Level of community awareness of / satisfaction with work undertaken as part of a CPO
- Evidence from questions to be used in local surveys / citizens' panels and so on
- Perceptions of the local crime data

The perceptions of local crime data can be a difficult area to report on, as each individual will perceive criminality based on their own experience, exposure to criminality and the influences around them. Previous surveys have shown that where an individual has no experience themselves, their perception can be based on social media reporting. Confidence surveying locally in Highland (2022) has reported that 89% of respondents said they felt safe or very safe in their local area, but 48% reporting an increase in concern about crime.

Public surveying shows that the areas of most concern, to the public are;

- Traffic related offences – speeding, boy racers, illegal parking
- Drug related crimes – drug dealing, substance use
- Worries about limited police presence or visibility and accessibility
- Anti-social behaviour and house-breaking.

This mirrors to an extent the policing priorities for the Highland area, but the need to allocate resource based on threat and risk, can result in behaviour of concern to the public, getting a lesser priority, in order to focus on the highest risk areas. Notably the public do not have visibility of local policing priorities in respect of Protecting Vulnerable People, Serious and Organised Crime and Counter Terrorism. Local scrutiny of crime data is provided at a localised level in Highland, through the Area Committees, and this allows local elected members the forum to explore their perceptions and seek understanding of the allocation of resources and prioritisation.



## Community Justice Outcome Activity Across Scotland Local Area Annual Return Template 2022-23

\*Community Justice comprises the activities, services and partners that work with and around people from the point of arrest, through the justice system and supporting their exit from justice contact and integration into their community

### **5) How have you engaged with partners, communities, and individuals to improve their understanding and participation in relation to community justice?**

This engagement, through the partnership itself, the CJ Forums, discussion groups (female offending) and through the work of the Custody Link Workers in particular has allowed us to have discussion in relation to what is working for people and where the areas for improvement lie. Important points from the CJ Forums that third sector organisations have raised including e.g., current trends in the cost-of-living crisis and the effects in relation to community justice are fed back to the Community Justice Partnership for their information and consideration. The Custody Link Project Manager updates the Community Justice Partnership at each meeting in relation to the project itself and importantly their experience of issues that might need to be addressed and improved or indeed escalated through the CPP.

In particular the CJ Forum is seen as a positive environment where people can share information in the knowledge that it could be relevant to everyone within the group who are working with those involved/affected by community justice, and therefore it is important that what is being seen at grass roots is fed back in order that potential issues and improvements can be considered.

Through the work of the Custody Link project in particular there is a direct link to “people with lived experience”. As stated above, relevant information is fed back to the Community Justice Partnership for their consideration in relation to the delivery of service and decision making in relation to that project in particular.

Through the CJ Forum and discussion groups there is also an opportunity for the ‘voice’ of those with lived experience to be heard through those attending. This is also true in relation to the Community Justice Partnership itself from those who are working with those affected, particularly our representatives from third sector organisations Apex, Families Outside and Rape and Sexual Abuse Service Highland (RASASH).

Serious consideration is given to any issues that are raised which present an opportunity for improvement and which will in turn lead to better outcomes for people.

The Custody Link Project had 52 active clients at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022. Between April 2022 and March 23 a further 165 referrals were received from Police Custody and 7 clients self-re-engaged. Of these new referrals, 81 engaged with a Link Worker. Throughout the period 40 clients reached a stage where they felt that they had established a crime free life and no longer required the support of a Link Worker. At the end of the period there were 81 active clients.



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The main topics that clients required support with are listed below

Individual clients were advised/ supported around:	Clients
Mental Health	80
Referral and Signposting	65
Drugs and Alcohol	56
Emotional Support	56
Housing	55
Finances	53
Criminal Justice	51
Offending	45
Physical Health	43
Education, Employment and Training	33
Children	27
Safeguarding	25
Parenting	16
Risk Assessment	11
Other	9
Safety Planning	6
Family Law	5

Over the period, 198 connections between clients and support services were made in the period which includes 35 for drug and alcohol support, 21 referrals to Foodbanks and 16 referrals for telephones/devices.



## Community Justice Outcome Activity Across Scotland Local Area Annual Return Template 2022-23

### NATIONAL OUTCOME TWO

#### Partners plan and deliver services in a more strategic and collaborative way

#### Where applicable have regard to the following indicators:

- Services are planned for and delivered in a strategic and collaborative way  
**Custody Link Steering Group** – the Custody Link Project continued throughout the period in question. The Steering Group meet to look at the delivery of the project and if any aspect of this needs to change. As previously mentioned, any issues are taken forward to the Community Justice Partnership meetings that might need to be addressed and improved or indeed escalated through the CPP.
- Partners have leveraged resources for community justice  
**Small Change/Dragons Den/Link Worker/CPO role** – during the time in question the partnership has provided funds to enable Small Change for Justice and Dragon’s Den initiatives to be undertaken. Funding has also enabled the work around developing third sector engagement with those on CPOs/Unpaid Work. It has also enabled the role of a Link Worker for Café 1668 in Inverness to be undertaken.
- Development of community justice workforce to work effectively across organisational/professional /geographical boundaries  
**CJ Newsletter** – the Community Justice Newsletter is circulated to the partnership for dissemination within their organisations. It is also circulated to the third sector network within HTSI for dissemination within their organisations.  
**CPO Role** – this role is aimed at increasing third sector engagement of organisations to work with those on CPOs and Unpaid Work across the Highland area. A Toolkit is being devised to inform those third sector organisations interested in working with those on CPOs/Unpaid Work which will provide information and guidance. There has been some groundwork in relation to publicising the work of those carrying out CPOs on social media.
- Partners illustrate effective engagement and collaborative partnership working with the authorities responsible for the delivery of MAPPA

#### 6) How has your partnership worked to enable strategic and collaborative service planning and delivery?

The partnership recognises that if issues/gaps are raised then it is better to work together to find a solution which can improve outcomes. This includes working with those who have identified the issues/gaps, those who are affected and the decision makers who can change what approach is taken to make the improvements needed.

The Partnership Manager provides a Community Justice Update for the Highland Public Protection Chief Officer’s Group (HPPCOG) which meet quarterly.



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The Partnership Manager attends the Child Protection Committee Sub-Group on Drugs & Alcohol and the Community Safety & Resilience Sub Group of the Highland Outcomes Improvement Plan.

The Partnership Manager also attends the Inverness Community Safety Partnership and meetings in relation to Operation Respect which occur during the festive period.

The partnership has funded a refresh of the Azets Dashboard which is useful when considering where our priorities should be.

The partnership will identify issues or gaps and pull together a smaller meeting with relevant people to discuss and potentially create a pathway to move forward. Once this is agreed, then this will be discussed with the wider partnership for approval and action.

Where there has been excess funding, this has been utilised for agreed purposes by the partnership in order to alleviate issues and gaps identified in relation to community justice. This process has happened several times previously and has provided the partnership with a degree of confidence that the monies will be utilised in a positive and productive manner.



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### NATIONAL OUTCOME THREE

**People have better access to the services that they require, including welfare, health and wellbeing, housing and employability**

**Where applicable have regard to the following indicators:**

- Partners have identified and are overcoming structural barriers for people accessing services

**Custody Link Project** – the project has continued in the period in question. This is evolving to address issues and gaps identified which means that there are always opportunities to engage with services/new initiatives. A recurring theme of this work involved assisting referrals to access Mental health interventions and issues around access to drug/alcohol support.

**Community Integration Plan** - The HCIP initially established within HMP Inverness in December 2020, with set criteria for those living in the inner Moray Firth area and having addiction issues. This is a multi-agency project which has been successful in terms of assisting those who are returning to the community from prison to assess their needs and tailor plans to support them on their release. Those who wish to engage with the HCIP are offered 6/8 weeks pre-liberation support and one year thereafter once in the community with CJSW and any third sector organisations identified through assessment process, with regular reviews throughout the year. This work sees individuals supported to re-engage with communities and allows for any perceived barriers to accessing services to be addressed through structured support.

- Existence of joint-working arrangements such as processes / protocols to ensure access to services to address underlying needs

**Café 1668** - HTSI manages a social café (Café 1668) in Inverness city centre for those in need. (It has been part of the CJ Plan for Highland to provide a safe place within the city centre for those who need it). The café provided free hot meals and access to services via a Café Link Worker working alongside the Custody Link Project. Customers were also able to access regular drop-in sessions or be referred to partner services. The café provides access to a telephone and/or a laptop to allow people to access online services should they require this. The café also served as a safe space over the festive period as part Operation Respect which involved many CJP partner organisations.

- Initiatives to facilitate access to services

**Custody Link Project** - A significant number of clients have failed engagements in the past with many statutory services. This can be the result of being unable to attend appointments or negative experiences during appointments. The link workers have successfully rebuilt the confidence and motivation of clients to enable them to re-engage. Link workers have also referred clients to alternative services often provided in the third sector where that service was seen as being more empathetic in its approach. A good example of this would be the 13 referrals to Addictions Counselling Inverness.

**Community Integration Plan** - This is a multi-agency project which has been successful in terms of assisting those who are returning to the community





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from prison to assess their needs and tailor plans to support them on their release. Key community partners are CJSW, NHS Highland and a wide range of third sector organisations.

- Speed of access to mental health services
- % of people released from a custodial sentence:
  - a) registered with a GP
  - b) have suitable accommodation - 86% had secured accommodation, 12% has appointments with a relevant housing provider and 2% were provided with contact details of a provider and use of a telephone.
  - c) have had a benefits eligibility check - All convicted prisoners are offered JCP appointments prior to liberation.
- Targeted interventions have been tailored for and with an individual and had a successful impact on their risk of further offending  
The following interventions have continued over the period in question and have tailored interventions with the individuals they are helping -

**Custody Link Project** - Each individual prioritises and works through the issues that they believe require improvement and the link workers role is to connect them to the services or organisations that will help them.

Topics most frequently identified were mental health, substance misuse, emotional support, housing and finances. 198 connections (referrals and signposting) were made in the year 22/23. This figure is for initial connections and does not include subsequent connections made, for example a referral to the local CAB may lead to many more referrals. Many clients had existing connections particularly with health services and statutory services where link workers helped re-establish access to these services.

Clients welcomed the non-judgemental, person-centred approach which looked at all aspects of their lives that they felt were factors which contribute to their offending.

This support is not time limited and recognises that there is never a straight line progression to a crime free life. Clients can re-engage with their link worker at any time if they wish. Seven clients in the year re-engaged through choice for assistance.

### **Community Integration Plan -**

1 x initially engaged but once in the community failed to attend.

1x initially engaged in the community and after 2 reviews (6m) decided he no longer required support.

1 x also had 2 reviews (6m) then disengaged.

1 x engaged in custody but once in the community failed to attend.

1 x engaged for almost 1 year was placed in a FIT home but returned to custody.

1 x engaged prior to release was transferred and failed to attend housing and support on release.

1 x engaging has only CJO support.

1 x fit home and previous HCIP has re-engaged with CJO.



## Community Justice Outcome Activity Across Scotland Local Area Annual Return Template 2022-23

### 7) What steps have you taken to improve access to services, and what impact has there been as a result?

**Families Outside** – Through funding from the CJP, greater awareness of the service has been raised. In the period in question, many were self-referrals and almost half (46%) were parents with a son/daughter in prison.

Total 17 cases were supported by Families Outside consisting of:

- 16 Adults
- 6 Primary School aged children
- 3 Secondary School aged children
- 2 Professionals

**Custody Link Project** – Link Workers returned to working from the custody suite at Burnett Road Police Station, Inverness following the removal of Covid 19 restrictions. Many referrals however were transferred to court early in the morning prior to the link workers starting work. Arrangements were made with SCTS staff and GeoAmey for link workers to meet with referrals in the court cells whilst they waited to be called to court. This allowed link workers to make the initial contact and establish a connection with referrals prior to their release.

#### **New Activities -**

**CPO Role** – work undertaken will assist with the vision that this will enable those on CPOs/Unpaid Work to gain new skills and potentially provide opportunities for volunteering and employment.

**Café Link Worker** – will assist those who are vulnerable to engage in relation to issues they have and gain assistance. The Café has a series of monthly drop-in sessions which include Homeless Mental Health, Voiceability & Social Security Scotland and Cuppa with a Copper.

**University of Highlands & Islands** – the partnership has been engaging with the UHI and West Lothian College with the aim of tailoring a programme of engagement//study similar to The Trust Project at West Lothian College to enable those with a justice background to access further education more easily.

[The Trust Project | West Lothian College \(west-lothian.ac.uk\)](https://www.west-lothian.ac.uk)

**Highland Alcohol & Drug Partnership** have worked with partners to initiate and support delivery of the Highland Housing First (HF) pilot with partners to improve people's access to services they require. The Highland HF pilot supports a caseload of approximately ten people most at risk of death from harmful drug and alcohol use. A recent evaluation has highlighted key benefits for some individuals stating that "Stable housing alongside rapid access to treatment and support for independent



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living provides a foundation for improved health and wellbeing, reduction in criminal behaviour and less health emergencies including overdose.” As per the recommendations, work continues to cascade the HF principles and working practices into mainstream services, in particular housing support services.

**Justice Pipeline** – the partnership has agreed to fund construction of a website which will provide people involved in the justice system in Highland, whether as an accused person, a victim or family member, with information and signposting to services along the entire justice pathway.

**Place-based challenges - Small Change/Dragon’s Den** – funding organisations throughout the Highland area has helped to provide opportunities and facilities to enable those involved in community justice to engage at a local level to address their behaviour and needs and ultimately improve their outcomes -

**Apex** – Worked with 18 clients making items from reclaimed wood. This project has been a massive inspiration for our clients to recycle and make items for local charities, churches, schools and personal use. Whilst engaging in sustainability and making an impact on the local community.

**Citizens Advice Bureau, Inverness, Badenoch & Strathspey** – Have been enabled to conduct a research piece of work with a client group in HMP Inverness. This project has unlocked the potential of a wider funding bid to service an outreach advice project at the prison.

**Care And Learning Alliance** – The focus of this project was strengthening and maintaining family ties with those fathers who are in prison and their children, especially those who can't see their children regularly because of distance. The Play boxes are intended to pass between child and parent with items that the parent has made (in conjunction with the Prison Education) for the child to play with.

**Centred/HTSI** - Implemented a conversational art group with a focus on reducing isolation, promoting inclusion, reducing recidivism, encouraging health and wellbeing and supporting mental health. The group now being delivered within HMP Inverness ensures that effective interventions are made to reduce recidivism and creatively support people to access the services they require.

**Collywobbles** – The project delivered mindfulness, that was introduced to children and families in Dingwall to help support them with their emotional regulation. Thirty children aged between 5 and 12yrs took part. There was positive feedback from parents, school staff and participants themselves.

**Families Outside** – The project enabled the Regional Family Support Coordinator to work with the Support & Participation Team to raise awareness in Highland about their work. Since April 2022 they have successfully engaged with 20 families consisting of 17 adults, 1 professional, 8 Primary aged Children and 3 Secondary aged children. This is an increase from the previous year where 6 families were referred. The project has also enabled questionnaires to be sent to all prisons and prison visitor centres as identified as housing a high number of people from the Highland region and enabled an awareness raising trip to Skye.



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**Lochaber Hope** – The project i) worked in schools with children who were already offending or deemed at risk of offending. A total of 61 young people, 19 of them were not engaging, 6 are now fully engaging, 8 are reduced hours and 5 are now engaging with Lochaber Hope's The Workshop Studios.

ii) New Connections (NC) was set up to facilitate activity and support groups, in the pilot year, NC has seen 14 peer support and activity groups set up. They involved people who had a Community Payback Order (CPO) to volunteer, and this was very successful.

**New Start Highland** - The project provided a platform for training people either with a background of offending or at risk of being involved in offending behaviour. People gained a range of qualifications and work experience, but most specifically, a PAT testing qualification. In total 14 people who had backgrounds of offending were supported as they carried out meaningful work experience.

**Rape And Sexual Abuse Service Highland** – Through the project RASASH advocacy were able to implement a weekly presence of the service within the Inverness Royal Academy as it had a high number of referrals to allow for more direct access to the service. A safe and comfortable place has been established within the school for those pupils who need it. RASASH also provided some informal trauma informed training with 3 x guidance staff that had difficulties dealing with disclosures. Although the project money was used to set things up, once the funding period concludes, the ongoing costs of the project will be covered by the advocacy budget.

**Step'n'Style** – The project provided children in a deprived area of Inverness the opportunity to engage in dance and exercise on a regular basis. This provided a safe space for children who may otherwise have become involved in criminal activity.

**Strengths and achievements** – In relation to the initiatives outlined above there was a great achievement of small pockets of funding going deeper into communities that had identified a need in relation to community justice, and who were able to utilise this to the direct benefit of those in need.

**Custody Link Project** - The main issues for people coming into custody within the scope of the Custody Link Project have been identified and they have been assisted on their journey to addressing their needs and improve their outcomes.

The Custody Link Project have completed their internal evaluation of the first three years of the project. The University of Stirling have also completed their external evaluation. The key findings are:

- Analysis of custody record data found that rates of custody appearance amongst those who accepted a referral declined significantly
- Police Custody is an ideal place to engage with individuals who are motivated to seek assistance



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- Many individuals, particularly females, present with far more complex and challenging circumstances and higher levels of vulnerability and adversity than were envisaged at the beginning of the project.
- individuals who have accepted a referral are significantly more likely than those who have declined the referral to report mental health problems, current thoughts of self-harm or suicide, to take one or more prescribed medications, to previously having attempted self-harm or suicide, and to report dependence on alcohol.
- Those accepting the offer of a referral tended to highlight getting stabilised before being referred to and accessing alcohol and drug-related services and supports as helpful.
- “A... key area repeatedly raised by participants is the empathetic and emotionally supportive approach of Link Workers, building rapport and trust in changing and pressured circumstances at the arrest referral and bail stage. In lives with heightened distress, navigating stigma and sometimes having been breached or ‘burnt bridges’ with services in other sectors, this flexible and empathetic approach can make a real difference. Service users we spoke to are emphatic that they found this helpful.”

### Housing

- Rapid Rehousing particularly for our longest term homeless applicants. We’ve recognised that for some of our customers, protracted periods spent in temporary homeless accommodation can be detrimental to maintaining their safety and wellbeing. And that the sense of security that often accompanies settled secure housing or better temporary options, can contribute to positive choices to move away from offending behaviour. Time spent in homeless applications and related stays in temporary accommodation have seen a reduction from 43 to 35 weeks across all applications and areas in Highland. Work undertaken to reduce time spent in homelessness includes revisions in policy / procedure to allow Homeless applications to remain open for up to one year- applicants therefore benefit as ‘waiting time’ points continue to accrue and will apply on release toward allocation of secure tenancies.
- Housing services undertake weekly liaison visits to HMP Inverness which are seeing increasing success in achieving SHORE guideline outcomes. Sustainable permanent housing on release isn’t always possible but we have been able to reduce our use of ‘House of Multiple Occupancy’ options through commissioning and use of Shared accommodation as well as a proactive approach to ‘flipping’ [i.e. converting temporary units to permanent with the new secure tenant, in situ] thus avoiding several temporary placements.
- Housing services work closely with the non-fatal overdose team in Inverness [*InverNess Engagement Service ‘NES’* -Rapid Response Pathway to reduce drug related deaths in Highland] to ensure we work cooperatively to reach out assertively to tenants and homeless applicants who experience or at risk of



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overdose have services nonetheless are followed up and potential for harm minimised.

- Housing services are focussed on becoming a Trauma Informed service. That entails recognising the training and support our staff require to deliver quality services to victims of trauma. And adopting trauma informed approaches to environments, procedures and processes. An example would be where we have set out to avoid re-traumatising victims of adverse life events by minimising the requirement of homeless applicants to relate accounts and potentially re-live traumatic events such as domestic abuse. As a first stage we have carried out a Housing Services staff team's survey on their experiences of vicarious trauma in order
- Housing services have adapted their involvement in the Highland Drug and Alcohol Partnership [HADP] Housing First Pilot. Housing management and Land lord functions are now met via area Housing officers. As there are Council and Housing Association tenants, these arrangements include HC, Albyn and Cairn HA officers. The project itself has been positively evaluated. HADP and HC Housing Services have arranged to second a Principle Housing Officer to the partnership to undertake a review on optimal partnership working arrangements.
- Housing services are working in partnership with Albyn HA and CJSW partners to deliver 'Tech Enabled' properties for offenders on release as part of our Rapid Rehousing and Housing First initiatives. Clients are identified and their informed consent sought in the lead up to release. Properties are identified and electronic equipment installed in pre- identified properties. Clients report an enhanced sense of security and confidence [for example in maintain positive 'door management' decisions] while improved outcomes are evident in reducing drug related harms.

**Community Integration Plan** - The CIP model allows for structured and supported liberation from prison, which aims to avoid the "cliff edge" often faced by those re-entering their communities.

### **Challenges** -

Lack of funding/resources in organisations within the public sector have hampered access to services on many occasions leaving people without the services and support they require when needed.

The geography in Highland is also a challenge and in particular transport to enable people to access services they need when they need them. That said, the use of digital connections and technology brought about by the Covid 19 pandemic has helped in some cases.



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The findings from the Custody Link Project have highlighted the following challenges for those leaving police custody:

The unequal availability of services across Highland and the centralisation of services in the Inverness area. This has been described as a “Postcode Lottery”

The absence of a co-ordinated trauma informed response at the time that an individual is seeking assistance. Long waiting lists and a lack of an empathetic understanding of the complex needs and challenges faced by individuals adversely affects the motivation for change. Individuals lose the belief that they can change their lives and that services exist to support them very quickly.

Time limited interventions addressing single aspects of a person’s support needs are ineffective if the other needs are not addressed.

Clients received confusing and contradictory information about accessing Mental Health and Drug and Alcohol support services, particularly around the issue of abstinence being a pre requirement before being referred for mental health support. Individuals using drug and alcohol to self-medicate for mental health clearly stated that they could not cope without substances and wanted help with both issues simultaneously.

Housing services have encountered issues in relation to female offenders, in particular where those imprisoned away from Highland lose contact with family, professionals and other potentially positive social networks. In some cases tenancies which might have had issues resolved around rent arrears have become untenable due to difficulties maintaining meaningful contact. We recognise the efforts the SPS are going to, to introduce female trauma informed prison environments but can also see that geographical distance in and off itself can exacerbate experiences of trauma.

Scottish Prison Service – Community Integration Plan - There are however some challenges in maintaining this initiative moving forward, these relate to capacity to grow caseloads, funding and staffing turn over within key project partners.



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### NATIONAL OUTCOME FOUR

**Effective interventions are delivered to prevent and reduce the risk of further offending**

**Where applicable have regard to the following indicators:**

- Use of 'other activities requirements' in CPOs
  - Café 1668, Inverness** – the partnership has provided funding for a role through the Community Justice Dragon's Den initiative to host people on CPOs within Café 1668. This will allow them to learn new skills and behaviours within a social setting and provide them with a degree of structure in their life.
  - Socially Growing, Thurso** – the partnership has provided funding for a role through the Community Justice Dragon's Den initiative within Socially Growing. This has allowed 11 people to carry out their CPOs and to participate in training and learning in community, climate, land based, enterprise or retail skills.
  - CPO Role** – as mentioned previously, the partnership is trying to engage a greater number of third sector organisations in the work around CPOs/Unpaid Work to increase the diversity in this regard.
  
- Effective risk management for public protection
- Quality of CPOs and DTTOs
- Reduced use of custodial sentences and remand:
  - a) Balance between community sentences relative to short custodial sentences under one year
  - b) Proportion of people appearing from custody who are remanded
- The delivery of interventions targeted at problem drug and alcohol use [NHS Local Delivery Plan (LDP) Standard]
- Number of Police Recorded Warnings - 1098
- police diversion - Anti-social behaviour tickets – 79 (non-conviction disposal)
- fiscal measures,
- fiscal diversion, supervised bail,
- community sentences (including CPOs, DTTOs and RLOs)
- Number of short-term sentences under one year

**8) What changes have been made to community justice arrangements to enable desistance, reduce reoffending, and promote integration, and what impact has there been as a result?**

The efforts of the partnership have been outlined in this report previously in relation to the Custody Link Project and the work around the CPO Role. There is also work in relation to the projects that have been funded by the partnership through the Community Justice Dragon's Den and Small Change for Justice initiatives.

Highland Alcohol & Drug Partnership have worked with partners to initiate and support delivery of a Drug Treatment and Testing Order light pilot. DTTO II has been





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developed to support women and young people particularly as these orders have been shown elsewhere to contribute positively toward reducing or removing offenders' dependency or propensity to misuse drugs and associated criminal activity. Some positive impact has been demonstrated at an individual level.

Implementation of the national Medically Assisted Treatment (MAT) Standards from 2022/23 has helped drive improvements in access to drug and alcohol recovery services. In the final quarter of 2022/23, the percentage of referrals to Community-based services with completed waiting times within 3 weeks or less from referral to first treatment increased to 91% above the national standard (90%). In the same quarter, Prison-based services completed waiting times from referral to first treatment was 88% for a total of 21 referrals received in the quarter.

Fifteen Community Payback Order (CPO) requirements were issued for drug or alcohol treatment in Highland in 2021/22 which was just above the lowest recorded in the previous year of 12.



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### **NATIONAL OUTCOME FIVE**

**Life chances are improved through needs, including health, financial inclusion, housing and safety, being addressed.**

#### **Case Study –**

This Highland Custody Link Project client faced two charges of driving whilst over the alcohol limit.

Working with her link worker she identified areas of her life which she felt would benefit her to have support with. She had been struggling with bereavement since their mother's death some years ago and this had affected her mental health. Client was assisted in accessing appropriate mental health support and was allocated a CPN. The link worker also helped her with financial difficulties, and she received a Crisis Grant through the Scottish Welfare Fund, food bank parcels and Covid-19 relief grants.

The client was also supported by Woman's Aid following a 22 year psychologically and physically violent relationship and was referred to RASASH (Rape & Sexual Abuse Service Highland) and CLAO (Civil Legal Assistance Office). Link workers sought assistance from the housing charity Shelter, to help resolve a long-standing housing situation and the client was transferred to a more appropriate property.

The individual has been fully committed in her engagement with the Custody Link Project and her focus has always been on the wellbeing of her family. She has confronted and overcome many very difficult challenges and has shown considerable resilience, determination, and courage. The individual has not been arrested since being referred and the positive outcome of this case demonstrates the benefit of early intervention at the point of leaving custody.

### **NATIONAL OUTCOME SIX**

**People develop positive relationships and more opportunities to participate and contribute through education, employment and leisure activities.**

#### **Case Study –**

The client was referred from Police custody to the Highland Custody Link Project. Arrested for drug driving, amount of cocaine in their sample was 16 times above the legal limit. Client had serious long term health conditions, unrelated to long term use of cocaine, and was estranged from parental support. Client had been using cocaine for 4 years and unemployed for 3 years.

Client was supported by their custody link worker and completed a 20-week course with Addictions Counselling Inverness. Client was then able to find full time employment and at court, evidence of how they had engaged positively and a letter of support from the employer, was presented to the Sheriff. Client received a one-year driving ban and a fine of £420.



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Client sent the following message to their Link Worker

“thank you for all your help you truly have saved my life I think I would be dead if you didn’t reach out to me....thank you so much for everything I’m delighted I took the help when it was offered”.

Client has re-established a positive relationship with their parents and intends to train to become a drugs counsellor.

### **NATIONAL OUTCOME SEVEN**

**Individuals’ resilience and capacity for change and self-management are enhanced.**

#### **Case Study –**

The client has a history of post-natal depression and previous mental health breakdown and was using alcohol to cope.

On first contact the client was extremely upset. She explained that there had been an incident involving alcohol use whilst in charge of children which led her ex-partner to take on temporary care of the children, during this incident her ex-partner threatened that he was going to a solicitor to gain full custody of the children. The client became distraught and threatened to harm herself causing her ex-partner to call the police and the client was detained for her own safety.

The client recognised she needed help and main the concern was losing custody of her children. The client had agreed to her ex-partner having temporary custody until she had worked on her issues.

Throughout conversations it became clear that the client was being threatened and intimidated by her ex-partner who appeared to be very controlling and had made false allegations about the client to social work. The client felt that when dealing with social work her voice was not heard. The client was in unsecure accommodation and made redundant during our period of engagement.

Client identified main Barriers to regaining custody of children as:

- Poor Mental health
- Alcohol use
- Insecure Housing

The client contacted her GP and started medication to help with mental health and abstaining from alcohol.

She was referred to Addictions Counselling Inverness (ACI) for counselling on alcohol consumption, and Advocacy Highland to help with dealing with social work.

She was also sign posted to Inverness Women’s Aid and Shelter for advice on housing options.



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The Link Worker provided a significant amount of emotional support for this client enabling and encouraging her to remain motivated and hopeful whilst navigating social work, other services and court appearances.

Within 6 months the client had secured permanent housing, had gained employment, and has had full custody of her children granted to herself by the court. She reports that her mental health has improved, that she has abstained from alcohol use since being in custody and has not been arrested subsequently. The client has strengthened the support networks available to the family and has become much healthier overall.

### **Have regard to the following indicator:**

- Individuals have made progress against the outcome

These case studies are only a small sample of the stories from clients. There are many more that could be shared which highlight the fact that clients who engage with the Custody Link Workers gaining advice and support demonstrates that they tend to make progress in many aspects of their complex lives.

### **9) What mechanisms and arrangements enable your area to understand progress for people against these outcomes?**

Custody Link Project- this has enabled work with a significant number of people coming into custody over the period in question. Any work carried out is tailored to that person's needs and is recorded on a case management system. The project uses the justice star which will record progress in several key areas for those involved.

The Steering Group provides the opportunity to update and reflect on the work involved and discuss any changes that might need to be implemented. The project also reports to the CJP on a quarterly basis which also allows time for reflection and scrutiny.

### **10) If available, provide one or more supporting case studies, lived experience narrative or other information to demonstrate activity and impact relating to the objectives reflected by person-centred outcomes 5, 6 and 7.**

Please see above



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**11) Look ahead with the new National Strategy, Community Justice Performance Framework and Community Justice Improvement Tool. Please tell us what the next steps are for your partnership in light of these significant developments.**

At present our strengths are:

'provision of person-centred care within police custody' – Priority Action 1 from the National Strategy

'Enhance community integration and support by increasing and promoting greater use of voluntary throughcare and third sector services' - Priority Action 10 from the National Strategy

We are currently still working on our priorities for the new CJ Plan.

We intend to finalise and publish our plan as soon as reasonably practical.

There is an opportunity for the partnership to reflect on all 13 of the Priority Actions within the National Strategy and assess where we are in relation to the implementation of these over the lifetime of the new plan.

Funding for the Custody Link Project is currently in jeopardy.

