

Community Justice Ayrshire Partnership

Newsletter No 2 – Summer 2025/26



Latest News

The Partnership held a Positive Pathways event in January within HMP Kilmarnock with a focus on employability. The event allowed men in prison to talk to employability support agencies, local employers, training providers, and volunteering organisations about opportunities available to them upon liberation. A total of 18 stallholders

100% of stallholders and prisoners who responded said they would come to a future Positive Pathways event.

from a range of agencies took part and 91 men in custody attended on the day. Feedback from the men attending and local partners and employers was positive and showed a need and a desire for future events. A further Positive Pathways session is planned for September this year and aims to build on the previous event.

The Partnership worked alongside colleagues from Dumfries and Galloway Community Justice Partnership and the South West Scotland MAPPA team to develop a new video to raise awareness about Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements. MAPPA are a set of arrangements which allow for the assessment and management of certain sexual and violent offenders. The new video, which will be used for training and awareness raising, evidences why MAPPA works, and was shown to around 80 guests at an event last month. MAPPA co-ordinator Allan Woods presented to a wide range of attendees to increase knowledge about the arrangements and how they work to keep people safe in our communities. He also raised awareness of the risks around public 'outings' of people subject to MAPPA and how partners can help address these concerns with communities. Allan is available to attend team development days, workshops, team meetings, etc to provide partners with an overview of MAPPA further raising awareness – Allan's details can be provided via the CJAP Support Team.



Focus group work was undertaken in June with an Unpaid Work squad in South Ayrshire. The aim is to undertake a wide range of focus group work across services and in all three Ayrshire areas. This feedback from people involved in the justice system will help the partnership in reviewing the support wider services can give to people serving sentences in the community. This work will also inform how we strengthen the use of 'Other Activity' for people sentenced to Unpaid Work. 'Other Activity' refers to structured, purposeful activities that are not Unpaid

Unpaid Work requirements provide individuals with an opportunity to gain the skills and to access the supports required to lead positive lives and desist from offending.

Work placements but still contribute to the individual's rehabilitation and community integration. The East Ayrshire Community Payback Team quarterly newsletter details work undertaken by UPW squads, quotes from various services and community members, and details of how to get in touch to suggest projects. You can read it on the [Local Community Justice News](#) section of the CJAP website.

National Updates

Sections 1-4 of the [Bail and Release from Custody \(Scotland\) Act 2023](#) came into force on 14th May 2025. These changes will reform how bail decisions are made in Scotland, with a focus on transparency, fairness, and reducing unnecessary use of remand. This will include courts considering a broader range of information when deciding on bail, removing restrictions on bail in certain solemn cases, and requiring courts to determine and state what good reason there is for refusing bail. As well as a more person-centred approach to bail decisions, another expected impact of these changes will be a reduced remand population (currently around 26% of people from Ayrshire in prison, are on remand).



The new national voluntary throughcare service – Upside – support people being liberated from prison, launched on 1st April 2025. This is a new single service, funded for three years, with nationwide delivery. Eight organisations are involved in the delivery, with Barnardos as the lead agency for our area, and Families Outside working across the whole country. Support from Upside is available for males, females and young people serving short term sentences and those on remand. Our local lead will continue to engage with the partnership to strengthen delivery of the service.



Did you know that securing stable employment is a crucial factor in reducing reoffending rates. Studies have shown that individuals who find employment are less likely to reoffend than those who remain unemployed. Employment can provide a sense of purpose, financial stability, and a structured routine, all of which are essential elements for a successful reintegration into society. Additionally, having a job helps to build self-esteem, encourage resilience and foster positive social connections.

Performance and Reporting

When the Community Justice Outcomes Improvement Plan (CJOIP) was launched in April 2024, partners agreed to review the deliverables on an annual basis. Five of the initial deliverables which partners agreed to work towards have already been completed. The first annual review took place recently and partners felt most of the current deliverables were sufficient and we are focussing on the correct areas for now. There will be new deliverables added looking at the streamlining of appointments for someone leaving prison, and development of webinars to raise awareness of various CJ elements.

You can read the plan in full [here](#).

The CJAP statutory annual return to Community Justice Scotland was submitted in July. This report details activity over the year which contributed toward the priorities set out in the national strategy. We have also published part 1 (of 2) of our public facing annual report, which looks at the priorities, what they mean and what's going on locally. You can read the reports [here](#). Part 2 of the published annual report will look at national indicator data to assess the success in meeting outcomes – it will be published later in the year and you can see last years on the website.



Up Next

- Partners are working towards a second Positive Pathways event to take place in HMP Kilmarnock in September following the success of the first event. We already have some new employers who were not at the first event signed up to come along.
- The Partnership are looking at creating a working group to consider how to safeguard people released from police custody and court. There will also soon be an initial meeting of a pan-Ayrshire forum looking specifically at women involved in the justice system.
- In August partners will take a focussed look at Diversion from prosecution, looking at a range of data to pose and answer a selection of questions in relation to current delivery and identify any future actions partners think should be progressed.
- Partners felt the best way to raise awareness and confidence in Community Justice is through webinars. Following some discussion at the last round of delivery groups, the CJAP Team have confirmed several topics for webinars to take place throughout 2025-2026 (see below and get in touch to sign up). These webinars will be co-delivered with a partner who is working in that area. If you are interested in attending, please email CGilsenan@north-ayrshire.gov.uk to book your place. The CJAP Team are also available to attend team meetings, and development days to provide an input. If you would like something delivered for your team or service / organisation, please contact the team.

17.09.2025 2.00pm	What are community sentences? The Scottish Government are keen to see a 'shift in the balance' between the use of custodial sentences and community sentences. This session will provide a general overview of sentences delivered in the community, looking at what they are, how they are delivered, and what the benefits are to both the individual and the wider community.
29.10.2025 2.00pm	Community justice - facts, figures and myth busting. What is community justice? How much does a prison sentence cost compared to a community sentence? Join us for this session as we discuss the facts and figures around community justice and aim to break down some of the myths around using community justice as an approach to reducing reoffending.
03.12.2025 2.00pm	How do we support people when they are leaving prison? This session will offer an overview of the support provided to individuals leaving prison, looking at pre-release planning, what happens on the day of liberation, the challenges around delivering this support and the needs experienced by people when leaving a custodial sentence.

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