

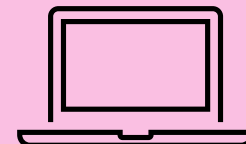
Community Justice Ayrshire Partnership

Newsletter No 1 – Winter 2024/25



Latest News

The CJAP Support Team worked with South Ayrshire Council's Equality and Diversity Forum to deliver a webinar in October. The webinar provided an overview and introduction to Community Justice to 65 attendees, with the aim of increasing knowledge and awareness amongst the workforce and the community. It included some community justice facts and figures, an explanation of the national aims and priorities, and some examples of local work going on in Ayrshire. The webinar included videos and case studies of people with lived experience of the justice system. If you would like something delivered for your team or service / organisation, please get in touch with the team.



Prisons Update



You may have been aware of an emergency programme of early release from prison which took place in the summer. The CJAP Support Team facilitated a series of meetings with partners to raise any issues with the increased number of liberations and plan for a smooth release process.

The early release process was enacted by government in response to the rising and critical numbers of people in Scotland's prisons. This was necessary to protect the security and good order in Scotland's prisons and maintain the health, safety, and welfare of those who live and work in our prisons.

Although this temporarily reduced the number of individuals in prisons, the prison population has grown again and is projected to continue to rise. In an effort to reduce the pressure on prisons, the Scottish Government passed the [Prisoners \(Early Release\) \(Scotland\) Bill](#) in November, which changes the point of release for most short-term prisoners - those serving sentences of less than four years. This applies to eligible prisoners currently serving short-term sentences and those who are sentenced in future.

Currently most short-term prisoners are released from prison custody once they have served half (50%) of their sentence, the bill changes this release point to following two fifths (40%) of their sentence. These changes do not apply to prisoners who are serving all, or part, of their sentence for sexual offences or domestic abuse offences. These prisoners would continue to be released once they have served 50% of their sentence.

A six-week period of Early Release will commence in February 2025 and plans are in place to reconvene the CJAP Early Release Planning Group over this period to provide support to the partners involved.

New National Throughcare Service

Community Justice Scotland (CJS) are currently leading on the recommissioning of the national voluntary throughcare service which provides support to people leaving prison from short-term sentences with no statutory involvement. An announcement on the third sector organisation who have been appointed to deliver the new service is expected over the next few weeks – keep an eye on our social media for the announcement!



Did you know that Scotland has one of the highest incarceration rates in Western Europe. We proportionally send more people to prison than all our neighbouring countries.

Partnership Delivery Groups

The new partnership model of three delivery groups taking forward the deliverables and reporting into the CJAP Board has been in place since the summer and is developing well. Each delivery group is responsible for a set of deliverables as laid out in the plan. The current priorities for each delivery group are:

Community Reintegration – current priorities include considering the best way to streamline and simplify the day of release for people leaving prison.

Diversion, Intervention and Alternatives to Custody – work including progress and development of the Saltcoats police custody navigator service.

Community First – launched with a workshop in June with over 40 attendees. Presentations included the role of Justice Social Work, Community Payback Orders and Unpaid Work, and partners were asked how they could help to contribute. An aim for this group is increasing awareness and confidence of community justice.



Performance and Reporting

The Community Justice Outcomes Improvement Plan (CJOIP) has been live since April 2024 and the CJAP Board have received the first six monthly update on the deliverables (including RAG status). You can read the plan [here](#).

The CJAP statutory annual return to Community Justice Scotland was submitted in September. 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 report [here](#).



Community Interventions and Support Directory

Community Justice Scotland (CJS) has developed an online directory, which provides detailed information about community interventions and support across Scotland. The directory aims to provide the Judiciary, Social Workers, Defence Agents, and the prosecution with information on local and national specialist and voluntary sector resources in every Local Authority area across Scotland. Its goal is to facilitate better-informed problem-solving conversations at the point of sentencing. The information contained within the directory will also be useful to Police, people leaving prison and reintegrating into their communities and people being diverted away from the justice system.

You can access the directory on the CJS website [here](#). The team will be looking at ways to further promote the use of this resource during 2025.

Up Next

- Partners are working towards a Positive Pathways event to take place in HMP Kilmarnock in the New Year which will focus on employability. This event will see employability support agencies, employers, training and volunteering opportunities at stalls to talk to men about their future options.
- Working with MAPPA colleagues and the Dumfries & Galloway CJP Lead to develop an awareness raising video in relation to the management of sexual and violent offenders in the community.
- Part 2 of our annual report – looking at national indicator data to assess the success in meeting outcomes – to be published soon.

Christmas and New Year



WISHING YOU ALL A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

**The CJAP Support Team will be out of the office from Monday 23rd December until
Monday 6th January 2025**

Visit our website - [Homepage - Community Justice Ayrshire](#)

Follow us on X - [@CJAyrshire](#)

Email the team - communityjusticeayrshire@north-ayrshire.gov.uk