

COMMUNITY JUSTICE SCOTLAND

NEWS LETTER



Welcome to the third CJS E-Newsletter of the 2026–27 financial year, bringing you a brief overview of key updates from across CJS and the wider national community justice landscape for quarter 3 of the financial year.

It aims to keep partners informed and connected by sharing current priorities and offering a forward look at what's ahead.

Key Updates

- CJS continues to support Scottish Government with the **review of the current National Strategy for Community Justice and the associated Performance Framework.** A series of workshops is currently underway aiming to gather views from partners across the community justice sector.
- A full list of workshop topics, dates and registration details can be found **HERE.**
- We are now more than half way through the sessions, with **two workshops remaining.** While these sessions are currently full, partners who are interested in attending are encouraged to get in touch and we will submit a request to the Scottish Government team to explore whether additional places can be made available.
- Community Payback Order (CPO) returns of completed templates are due on the **30th of October 2026.** Please send reports to CJSImprovement@communityjustice.scot

Prioity Action	Description of work
1. **Enhance intervention at the earliest opportunity by ensuring greater consistency, confidence in and awareness of services which support the use of direct measures and diversion from prosecution.**	• The revised Diversion from Prosecution Guidance has now been published. • The Learning and Development Team have developed a **new online diversion from prosecution training module**. This is **now live** on the CJS Learning and Development Platform. Designed for frontline practitioners, the module provides an overview of the updated guidance and has already been shared with those who require access. • Work is underway to expand capacity and make the module available to a wider audience in the near future.
2. **Improve the identification of underlying needs and the delivery of support following arrest by ensuring the provision of person centred care within police custody and building upon referral opportunities to services including substance use and mental health services**	• Police Scotland with partners have developed **options and associated funding proposals for arrest referral** services. These are now being considered by Scottish Government. • **Local practice examples needed:** Academic Ruth Friskney is still looking at undertaking research looking at **developing an understanding of how Police Scotland works with partners to improve community wellbeing**. If you are aware of local initiatives or approaches that you think they could explore, please contact Ruth Friskney at ruth.friskney@strath.ac.uk.

Prioity Action	Description of work
3. **Support the use of robust alternatives to remand by ensuring high quality bail services are consistently available and delivered effectively.**	• Following the recent Bail Policy Sprint, Scottish Government has **funded new pilot activity to strengthen bail support services** in **Edinburgh, Fife, and North** and **South Lanarkshire**. Launching on the **2nd of November, the 18 month pilot will be delivered by SACRO** in partnership with Justice Social Work (JSW) and other local partners. • The service will provide practical, person centred support to individuals who have been **assessed by JSW as suitable for supervised bail but are subsequently granted standard bail.** Working alongside partner agencies, the service will help individuals understand and comply with their bail conditions, access appropriate support services, aiming to work towards positive longer term outcomes.
4. **Strengthen options for safe and supported management in the community by increasing and widening the use of electronic monitoring technologies.**	• CJS colleagues recently attended the **14th Electronic Monitoring Conference in Antalya, Turkey,** where practitioners, policymakers and researchers from **more than 30 countries shared learning** on the use of electronic monitoring in modern justice systems. • Sessions explored international approaches to rehabilitation, victim protection, digital innovation and human centred justice, providing valuable insights to inform ongoing discussions about the future of electronic monitoring in Scotland

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5. **Ensure that those given community sentences are supervised and supported appropriately to protect the public, promote desistance from offending and enable rehabilitation by delivering high quality, consistently available, trauma-informed services and programmes**	• The **Caledonian System continues to roll out** across Scotland, with recent implementation support delivered in **Renfrewshire.** • The LDIC team has also been working with universities to strengthen JSW education, including contributions to postgraduate teaching, the development of a new assessment module with Glasgow Caledonian University, and a forthcoming CYCJ workshop on writing court reports for children and young people. • Consultation on the Learning Pathway for JSW is ongoing ahead of pilot cohorts later this year, with training options available through the LDIC training hub. • CJS also continues to pilot the **Community Justice to Residential Rehabilitation (CJ2R) project,** supporting access to residential rehabilitation for people on community sentences with substance use treatment needs. Currently operating in **Aberdeen City, West Dunbartonshire and West Lothian**, the programme is expanding through additional provider partnerships and is supported by an independent evaluation to inform future development.

Prioity Action	Description of work
6. **Ensure restorative justice is available across Scotland to all those who wish to access it by promoting and supporting the appropriate and safe provision of available services**	• **Options appraisal for RJ was submitted to the Scottish Government on 3rd of September.** • Building on the success of the 2024/25 Test Case Project, CJS and the Children and Young People's Centre for Justice are now seeking test cases for 2026/27. While the previous project evaluated the operational delivery of restorative justice, this next phase will also explore people's experiences by capturing the voices and stories of those accessing restorative justice in Scotland, as well as testing the RJ prison protocol. • For further information, contact lauren.emmerson@strath.ac.uk regarding children and young people, or chloe.boullier-richards@communityjustice.scot regarding adults.
7. **Enhance individuals' access to health and social care and continuity of care following release from prison by improving the sharing of information and partnership-working between relevant partners**	• CJS hosted an online discussion event today (**29th of October (10am-12pm)) on** Understanding and Responding to Health Needs in Community Justice: **What We Know and What Do We Do?** • The session featured speakers from the **RELEASE Project, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Needs Assessement Project, Aberdeenshire and West Dunbartonshire,** sharing evidence, learning and practical examples to support improved health outcomes for people involved in the justice system. • A summary report capturing the main discussion points will be sent out shortly.

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8. **Ensure that the housing needs of individuals in prison are addressed consistently and at an early stage by fully implementing and embedding the Sustainable Housing on Release for Everyone (SHORE) standards across all local authority areas.**	• Recent Scottish Government workshops exploring the review of the National Strategy for Community Justice have highlighted the importance of considering how emerging policy developments, including the **SHORE standards and the new "Ask and Act" homelessness prevention duties,** can be reflected within any future Community Justice National Strategy and associated performance framework (if the current review concludes a new startegy should be developed).
9. **Enhance individual's life skills and readiness for employment by ensuring increased access to employability support through effective education, learning, training, career services and relevant benefit services**	• The CJS Engagement & Improvement Team is working with **Skills Development Scotland** (SDS) to pilot a **professional learning session on Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) for SDS Careers colleagues.** The session is being developed with input and support from colleagues in the CJS Learning, Development and Improvement (LDI) and Caledonian teams. • The team is also planning a collaborative event with **Forth Valley College in early 2027 to explore pathways into further education** for people with experience of the justice system. • Further details will be shared with partners closer to the event date.

Prioity Action	Description of work
10. **Enhance community integration and support by increasing and promoting greater use of voluntary throughcare and third sector services**	• CJS continues to oversee delivery of the National Voluntary Throughcare Grant, awarded to Upside. Through ongoing grant management and monitoring arrangements, this funding supports voluntary throughcare services across Scotland, helping individuals access tailored support as they transition from custody back into their communities.
11. **Deliver improved community justice outcomes by ensuring that effective leadership and governance arrangements are in place and working well, collaborating with partners and planning strategically.**	• CJS colleagues continue to support with the series of workshops to review the current National Strategy for Community Justice and the associated performance framework. • Subject to decisions on the future direction of the strategy, CJS will work closely with national and local partners to identify and develop potential new outcomes and indicators to deveop a performance frameowk to accompany new startegy. Recommendations for changes will be considered by Scottish Government in 2027. • CJS has published its draft **Corporate Plan 2027–2032** for consultation and welcomes feedback from partners and stakeholders. The consultation closes on **30th of October 2026 -** draft Corporate Plan 2027-2032

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12. **Enhance partnership planning and implementation by ensuring the voices of victims of crime, survivors, those with lived experience and their families are effectively incorporated and embedded.**	• The CJS Engagement & Improvement Team will be hosting an event on Lived Experience in December 2026. • Building on the recent publication, **"Effectively and meaningfully involving the voices of lived experience in influencing work"** by Resilience Learning Partnership (RLP), the event will explore how organisations can meaningfully involve people with lived experience of poverty and trauma in shaping policy, services and systems. • Commissioned by The Robertson Trust and delivered in partnership with The Lines Between, and supported by the Improvement Service, the research highlights what it takes to share power, build trust and ensure that lived experience contributions lead to meaningful and lasting change. • The event will provide an opportunity for partners to reflect on the findings, share learning, and consider how lived experience can be more effectively embedded within community justice policy and practice. • Further details will be shared with Community Justice Coordinators and partners in due course.

Prioity Action	Description of work
13. **Support integration and reduce stigma by ensuring the community and workforce have an improved understanding of and confidence in community justice**	• The Serving the Community Campaign continues to showcase the positive impact of unpaid work projects across Scotland, with new stories from the Scottish Borders, Dumfries and Galloway, and Inverclyde due to be featured soon. The campaign is also expanding its reach through its first video content, increased activity on Instagram and a new presence on TikTok. With almost 1 million views and 36,000 engagements to date, the campaign continues to raise awareness of the benefits unpaid work delivers for local communities. • If you want to know more about how you can get involved in the Serving the Community campaign, please get in touch. • If you missed this year's CJS National Event: Beyond Bars – Problem-Solving Courts and the Future of Justice, recordings are **NOW AVAILABLE** on the YouTube channel , with a podcast version coming soon. Keep an eye on CJS social media channels for further updates (Facebook / Instagram / LinkedIn).