

Impact Assessment of Shine Women's Mentoring Service May 2023



Contents

Executive summary	01
01 Introduction	06
02 Shine's strengths.....	10
03 Cost-effectiveness.....	22
04 Challenges	24
05 Future developments	28
06 Discussion and analysis.....	31
07 Conclusions and recommendations.....	36

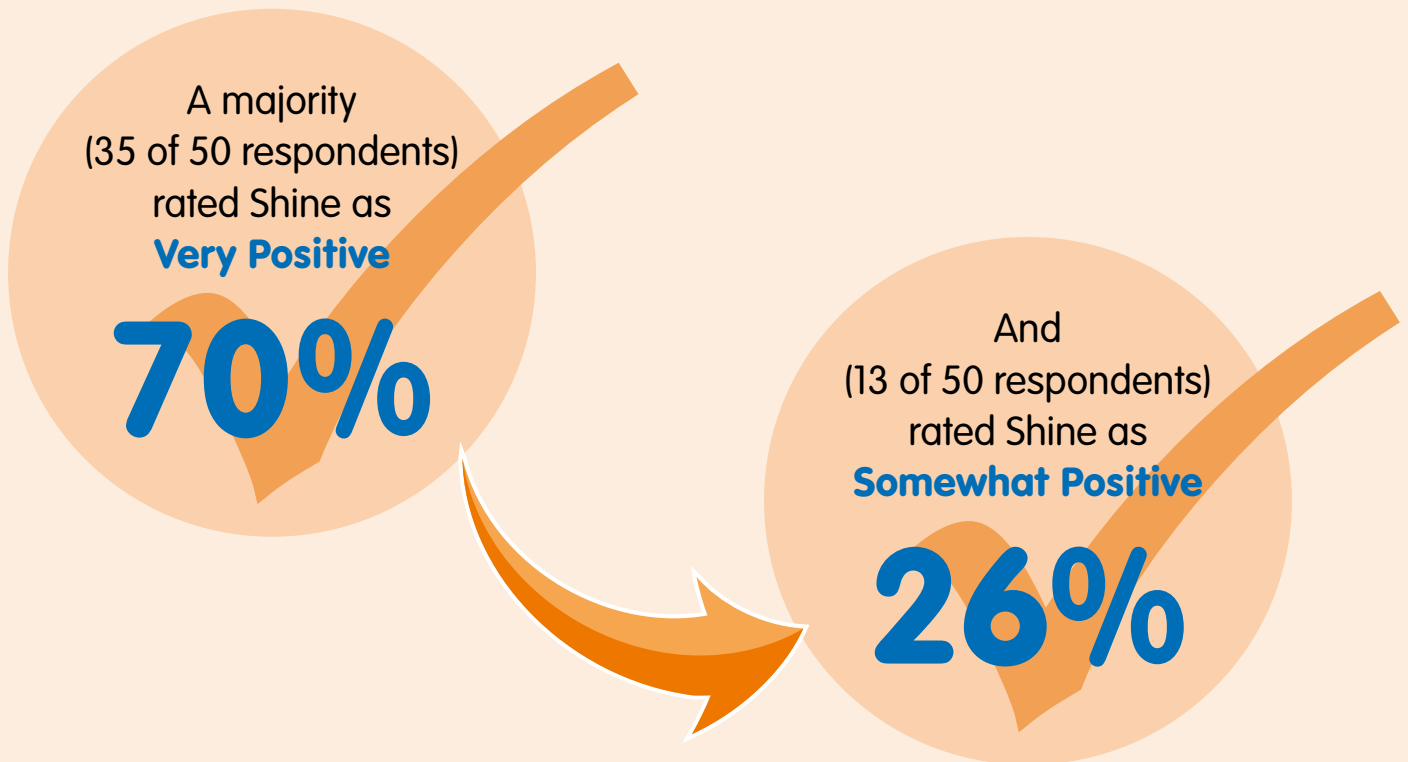


17 out of 18 women

described their experiences with a Shine mentor as 'very good', with the remaining one describing it as 'good'

Strengths

Stakeholders were strongly positive about Shine



They highlighted:

- Shine's positive impact on women
- Effective delivery
- Responsive, supportive and holistic approach of mentors

Women supported by Shine said the service had provided:

- Positive, trusting relationships
- Emotional and practical assistance
- Life-changing support

Executive summary

Shine is a well-established national project which offers a powerful working partnership to deliver a responsive model of mentoring which meets women's needs and reduces harm.

This independent research gathered views from Shine delivery partners, women with experience of the service, and wider community partners. It evidences Shine's achievements and stakeholders' perspectives on the project's successes, impact, challenges and considerations for future development. The impact assessment of the Shine Women's Mentoring Service provides a clear understanding of the value of mentoring for women with experience of offending, and the effectiveness of Shine's model.

The report concludes that there is scope for Shine to develop further. Recommendations for development include for Shine to maximise the knowledge base and skills of partners, continue to align with the evolving justice landscape, and further embed trauma-informed practice. Finally, there is potential to improve story-gathering by Shine to bring women's voices and descriptions of impact to the forefront. This will provide material to promote Shine to local partners and improve accessibility for more women.

The evolution of Shine

Shine launched in 2013 as a national service for women in the justice system. It was designed in response to a recommendation from the Commission on Women Offenders, which called for mentoring support to be offered for women at risk of reoffending.

Shine's short-term aims are outlined in a logic model which identifies impacts such as a positive impact on the attitude, motivation and behaviour of women in custody. These short-term impacts are anticipated to lead to longer-term outcomes such as reduced offending, increased integration and a reduced prison population.

Established as a Public Social Partnership, Shine is funded by the Scottish Government. The national provision of mentoring is provided by eight third-sector organisations (Access to Industry, Apex, Barnardo's Scotland, Circle Scotland, Sacro, The Wise Group, Turning Point Scotland, Venture Trust), which work in partnership with Scottish Prison Service and Criminal Justice Social Work departments. In this model, mentors establish relationships with women at different stages of involvement in the justice system. The initial service model featured support for women in prison who were due for release in the coming months and has evolved to include work with women on remand and referred from community settings.



*I have never had support like this,
anything at all like this in my life...*
(Mentee)



These service developments have been introduced in response to changes in the justice system and sentencing procedures.

Many of the women Shine supports face multiple challenges, including a background of trauma, domestic violence, addiction and mental health problems, and they typically have little positive support in their lives. As a result, person-centred and trauma-informed practices are central to the mentoring approach.

The Lines Between was commissioned to assess Shine's impact. We gathered data through surveys, interviews and focus groups with mentees, mentors, PSP partners, the Scottish Prison Service, Scottish Government, Housing, and Criminal Justice Social Work services.

Shine was found to be a widely valued service because of the following:

- its national partnership approach,
- style of delivery
- the wide-ranging support offered by mentors and
- positive impact for women



When I was released I was trying to pretend everything was okay when inside I wasnae okay, [mentor name] was the first person I broke down and opened up to and was open and honest with her.
(Mentee)

Key features of the model's success include the voluntary nature of engagement with the support, and Shine's flexibility in meeting women's needs. The prison gate pick-up was described as crucial for some women to prevent immediate difficulties which would negatively affect their ability to cope and potentially trigger reoffending behaviour.

Mentoring was found to respond to women's diverse practical, emotional and developmental support needs. Typically, the initial focus is on building a relationship and ensuring practical needs are met so women are safe and housed and have financial support. Ongoing support with mental health issues or addictions is often needed. As well as listening and providing encouragement, mentors support women to engage with universal and specialist services. Support to develop forward planning skills, a positive outlook, improve self-belief and explore new life opportunities often takes place once initial practical and emotional issues have been addressed. However, Shine is flexible enough to offer practical, emotional and developmental support at any stage of the mentoring relationship.

Women who engaged with Shine described the mentoring as helpful, supportive, encouraging and effective. Shine's person-centred approach was found to be flexible, non-judgemental and consistent, with women trusting the mentors who support them.

The length of mentoring relationships was highlighted as an important consideration. While mentoring is offered on a six-month basis, there is flexibility to extend this, depending on the need. Stakeholders recognise that women's complex backgrounds may mean they need support for longer, particularly to reach a developmental stage in a mentoring relationship.

For some, the support from Shine was life-changing, and examples identified in the impact assessment included improvements to mental health, recovery from addiction, support for families to stay together and prevention from reoffending. Women often suggested their reasons for continued engagement with the mentoring stemmed from the kindness, care and rapport that developed with mentors.

Beyond individual impacts, there are also broader benefits, such as reduced use of emergency services and the justice system. Women are in a better state of health, have reduced harmful behaviours and have not reoffended because of the ongoing support of a mentor. Many stakeholders highlighted cost savings for the health, social care and justice system which they attributed to Shine's support for women.

Shine has developed in a changing context, most recently adapting to COVID restrictions with a hybrid form of digital and face-to-face support and providing liberation packs for women being released. Changes in sentencing trends have resulted in more women serving sentences in the community, and this is an important area of future development for Shine to maximise its local and national potential.

Communicating opportunities and impacts to community-based partners will increase the profile and accessibility of mentoring support to women. Involving mentees in telling their stories about the impact of Shine helps to raise awareness and enables women's voices to be better heard. Sharing this lived experience will also help to explain and illustrate the findings of Shine's ongoing internal evaluation.



I was letting things pile up – the housing benefit, the court case, speaking to the lawyer and not having anybody to put it to me in terms I could understand... I think, without a doubt, [without my mentor] I would definitely have had a bad relapse and just ended up in a really bad place again.

(Mentee)

The first 10 years

Creating a successful national partnership to deliver a local service for women in the justice system.

Developing an approach to 1:1 support and evolving to be an accessible, impactful service in prison and the community.

Areas of ongoing development

Listening to and hearing from women – incorporating their voices into the understanding and development of the service.

Gathering stories of Shine's support and impact to better understand its full impact on women's lives and wider society.

Communicating publicly about the effectiveness of Shine's support.

Building an understanding of Shine and integrating a trauma-informed approach to its work.

Establishing and securing local partner relationships to embed Shine in the community.

Building on national partner relationships to maximise the skills and experience available.

Stabilising and supporting the mentor team.

The next phase

Connecting and communicating more with women, and local and national partners.

Developing the most effective, person-centred mentoring support possible, in the throughcare and community support of women in the justice system.

Introduction

I would have found life more stressful... [Shine] has helped make me stronger... it has brought me a long way from where I was. (Mentee)

Introduction to Shine

- 1.1 The Shine Women's Mentoring Service (Shine) is a national mentoring service for women in the justice system. Established in 2013, it supports women serving a custodial sentence¹ on remand or those subject to a Community Payback Order (CPO) or Drug Treatment and Testing Order (DTTO) through 1:1 relationships with a mentor.
- 1.2 Shine's origins are linked to the recommendations from the Commission on Women Offenders² in 2012, which highlighted the *"urgent need for action to reduce the number of women reoffending and going to prison"* and stated that *"Intensive mentoring (a one-to-one relationship where practical support and monitoring is provided by mentors on a wide range of issues relating to offending behaviour) should be available to women offenders at risk of reoffending or custody to support compliance with court orders."*
- 1.3 Women comprise 4% of the prison population in Scotland³, with an average daily population of 284. Around a quarter of these are on remand.⁴ On average, 2330 women have been placed on CPOs annually between 2016 and 2021.⁵
- 1.4 Shine is a Public Social Partnership (PSP) comprising eight third-sector organisations⁶, with Sacro as the lead partner. The service is funded by the Scottish Government and works in partnership with Scottish Prison Service and 32 Local Authority Criminal Justice Social Work departments. Shine has an annual target of 720 referrals through 25.5 full-time equivalent mentors. Each partner organisation manages an allocation of mentors in their staff team.
- 1.5 Mentors support a caseload of mentees referred to Shine towards the end of their prison sentence or from a community setting if serving a community sentence (for example, CPO or DTTO). Each woman is met by her mentor one-to-one through regular, face-to-face meetings.
- 1.6 During the COVID lockdown, alternative digital ways of supporting women were introduced. Depending on each woman's needs, a hybrid face-to-face and remote support model is now used.
- 1.7 The basis for all Shine's mentoring support is being person-centred and trauma-informed, and it is intended to reduce women's social isolation and loneliness and increase self-confidence. It also encourages engagement with community-based services and offers practical advice and emotional support as needed.

- 1.8** The Shine delivery is based on a Logic Model⁷ with short and medium-term outcomes relating to engagement with mentoring and attitude, motivation and behaviour changes, and long-term outcomes such as reduced offending, increased integration and reduction in the prison population.
- 1.9** Literature on women in the criminal justice system highlights that time in prison can have significant and enduring effects on women, spanning physical and mental well-being, housing, relationships with children and families, and employability. On release, these factors can contribute to poverty, debt and homelessness. Recent research by Women in Prison⁸ found that women's circumstances and needs are more significant since the pandemic and cost of living crisis, with more debt and financial issues and an increased need for benefits and foodbank support.
- 1.10** Shine aims to reduce reoffending and, as a result, deliver savings for the public purse. Reoffending has a range of costs and impacts for victims, people with experience of offending and their family members, the criminal justice system⁹ and broader society. The Ministry of Justice (2019) estimates that the economic and social cost of reoffending by adults in England and Wales in 2016 was £16.7 billion¹⁰. In Scotland, this has been estimated at £4 billion per year¹¹. However, the figure for female reoffending rates is likely to be significantly less than this because while reconviction rates for females are similar to that of males, overall, women are much less likely to be involved in Scotland's criminal justice system¹².
- 1.11** For specific prison-related costs, the Scottish Prison Service Annual Report 2021 notes, "the annual average cost per prisoner place, which excludes capital charges, exceptional payments and the cost of the Court Custody and Prisoner Escort contracts, in 2021-22 was £41,858 (2020-21 £39,350)."
- 1.12** During the pandemic, Shine worked closely with their funder, the Scottish Government, to adapt their approach to ensure that engagement with women remained. This extended to expanding their eligibility in some aspects of community sentences to ensure there was the scope to engage with women and offer a broader service. These steps were to widen access and provide added value for money within a changing landscape.
- 1.13** Shine has adapted to the changing landscape of the justice system, notably due to the pandemic. As court processes changed, the throughput of women being sentenced and released from custody was affected, with the remand population increasing dramatically. This affected practice around liberation, and Shine developed a liberation information pack and practical items to ensure that Shine remained accessible to women even when the release happened unexpectedly.
- 1.14** Shine's 2022/23 Annual Report states that overall referral numbers were 484 for the year, with a year-on-year increase in community referrals for the past three years. Community referrals in 2022/23 increased 12%, from 111 to 126, and 61% of referrals were to support women on remand referrals.

1. of less than 4 years and not subject to a statutory order

2. <https://webarchive.nrscotland.gov.uk/3000/https://www.gov.scot/Resource/0039/00391828.pdf>

3. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics-2021-22/pages/5/>

4. <https://howardleague.scot/news/2021/may/scandal-remand-scotland-report-howard-league-scotland-%E2%80%93-may-2021>

5. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/criminal-justice-social-work-statistics-scotland-2020-21/pages/20/>

6. Access to Industry, Apex Scotland, Barnardo's, Circle Scotland, Sacro, The Wise Group, Turning Point Scotland and Venture Trust Scotland.

7. <https://www.shinementoring.report/home/appendix-b-logic-model>

8. <https://womeninprison.org.uk/media/downloads/The-value-of-Womens-Centres-report.pdf>

9. Horn, D. 2013. An Assessment of the Economic Costs and Benefits of Circle's Meet at the Gate programme. Accessed on 7/3/2023 from: <https://circle.scot/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/FullReportAnAssessmentoftheEconomicCostsandBenefitsofCircleMeetattheGateProgramme.pdf>

10. Ministry of Justice (2019). Economic and Social Costs of Reoffending: Analytical Report. Accessed on 7/6/23 from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/814650/economic-social-costs-reoffending.pdf

11. Scottish Government (2022). Bail and Release from Custody (Scotland) Bill: Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment. Accessed on 7/3/23 from: <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/impact-assessment/2022/06/bail-release-custody-scotland-bill-bria/documents/bail-release-custody-scotland-bill-business-regulatory-impact-assessment/bail-release-custody-scotland-bill-business-regulatory-impact-assessment/govscot%3Adocument/bail-release-custody-scotland-bill-business-regulatory-impact-assessment.pdf>

12. Scottish Government (2022). Women in the Justice System: Evidence Review. Accessed on 7/3 from: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/women-justice-system/pages/5/#:~:text=17%25%20of%20people%20convicted%20of,time%20in%20prison%20were%20women>

The Impact Assessment

- I.15** In early 2023 the Shine PSP commissioned an impact assessment to gather independent evidence on Shine's achievements and explore stakeholders' perspectives on the project's successes, impact, challenges, and considerations for future development.
- I.16** The impact assessment occurs in the context of transition within criminal justice services and changes in the procurement of voluntary mentoring for women leaving prison or on remand. A review of the existing arrangements and proposals for future arrangements around service provision and funding is underway by Community Justice Scotland (CJS) and external review bodies. In 2024/25, funding will move from the Scottish Government to be administered by CJS.

Methodology

- I.17** A mixed methodology for the impact assessment was used, drawing on analysis of data gathered by Shine and engagement with various stakeholders through online surveys, focus groups and one-to-one telephone or online interviews.
- I.18** Stakeholders participated in the impact assessment through a range of formats:
- 18 Mentees (18 by online and hard copy survey, 8 of whom were interviewed by phone)
 - 10 Mentors (9 in two focus groups and 1 in an interview)
 - 66 stakeholders, including mentors, PSP partners, SPS Scottish Government and CJSW staff (50 by online survey and 16 by interview)
- I.19** Shine identified stakeholders representing the Programme Board, Project Board, and external organisations, including the Scottish Prison Service and Scottish Government. Participants were provided with information on the impact assessment before the interview.
- I.20** Mentees received the survey through their mentors (online link and hard copy format), and within the survey, there was an option to take part in an interview (with options for telephone, online or in-person). All interviews took place by phone, and mentees were offered a £10 supermarket voucher to reimburse them for their time.
- I.21** All interviews and focus groups were recorded and transcribed. The transcripts were then analysed using a coding framework, with qualitative data coded under different thematic sub-headings. The Findings section presents the results from this analysis, and illustrative quotes and five case studies are included throughout the report.



Claire's story

It has helped make me stronger.

Claire has been supported by Paula, her Shine mentor, since being placed on a compulsory supervision order five months ago. This story illustrates the many stages in a woman's recovery journey.

Paula's warm, honest and responsive approach was described by Claire as crucial to helping her feel safe and willing to engage with support.

She was really kind, compassionate, caring, honest, transparent, which is important. She listened, was available to talk – tried to help me in any way possible.

Do you know what is really important with the person [mentor]? It's that their job is important to them. You're not just a tick box. You're not... just another person. You can tell when somebody cares about their job and actually has empathy and a heart... people sometimes just do jobs, and they're not even happy and you can tell. People like myself from whatever situations can pick up on this... then you sort of feel quite withdrawn... I just felt safe knowing that (Paula) had my best interests at heart.

Claire appreciated the practical and emotional support from her Shine mentor, and Paula's flexibility in responding to her needs.

They helped me with an E-voucher and with getting me a microwave. Paula was very good, not just getting stuff just (but also) somebody I could pick up that phone to when things was stressful... you could just say what you needed to say and they would talk to you, just help you... or your anxiety, whatever it is.

With Paula's guidance, Claire developed new strategies to help her cope and avoid becoming overwhelmed.

Giving me advice or guidance... guiding me to the right sources that I need, making sure I've done things if I need to do them... coping mechanisms and (asking)... 'do you need me to do this for you?', 'do you need me to do that for you?' I'm a person that gets quite on top of things, but you know, unfortunately, things become quite on top of me.

Without this help, Claire thinks she would have struggled to manage and may have resorted to previous coping mechanisms. She reflected on the importance of her relationship with Paula to her recovery journey.

I would have found life more stressful. I was stressed enough as it, and I think I would have found it even harder... It has helped make me stronger... it has brought me a long way from where I was.

I've had challenging times... At times, I could have picked up and used [drugs] but because I had that phone, I was able to reach out... Sometimes just someone else giving you their input just talking to you, and then you completely change your mindset. So, yes, if it wasn't for that, you know, I could have (used again)... yeah, she helped me with my recovery. More than she even knows most probably.

Shine's strengths

A lot of the time, Shine is the only service women engage with to start with; therefore Shine plays a vital role in their journey. (Mentor)

2.1 This chapter presents the main findings on Shine's strengths exploring:

- Overall perceptions of Shine
- Views on the national model
- Support at different stages of throughcare
- The voluntary nature of the mentoring relationship
- A flexible delivery style
- The range of support delivered
- Building hope
- Meeting complex needs
- Addressing practical matters
- Health and well-being

Overall perceptions of Shine

- 2.2 **Stakeholders were strongly positive about Shine.** A majority (70%, 35 of 50 respondents) rated the service as 'very positive', and 26% (13) 'somewhat positive'. Explanations for this assessment included stakeholders' perceptions of Shine's positive impact on women and the effective nature of delivery, with the **responsive, supportive and holistic approach of mentors.**
- 2.3 Some noted that the mentees need support because of high levels of disadvantage and complex needs, which have created barriers to engagement. They were described as "often traumatised and presenting with multiple complex problems." **Shine was highlighted as the sole source of support for some,** and external organisations reflected on Shine's role in delivering positive outcomes and support for other organisations.
- 2.4 All but one mentee (17 out of 18) described their experiences with a Shine mentor as very good, and the remaining one described it as good. Mentees described positive, trusting relationships with mentors, and said **mentors' support exceeded their expectations, spanning emotional and practical assistance.**

A well-established national model of effective partnership work

- 2.5** Shine's ten-year delivery history has contributed to it being recognised as a well-established programme with a **distinct identity**.

It's not badged as Sacro. It's not badged as Turning Point Scotland, or Apex Scotland or whatever... we try and approach it from a Shine perspective as opposed to a Sacro perspective. (Shine partner)

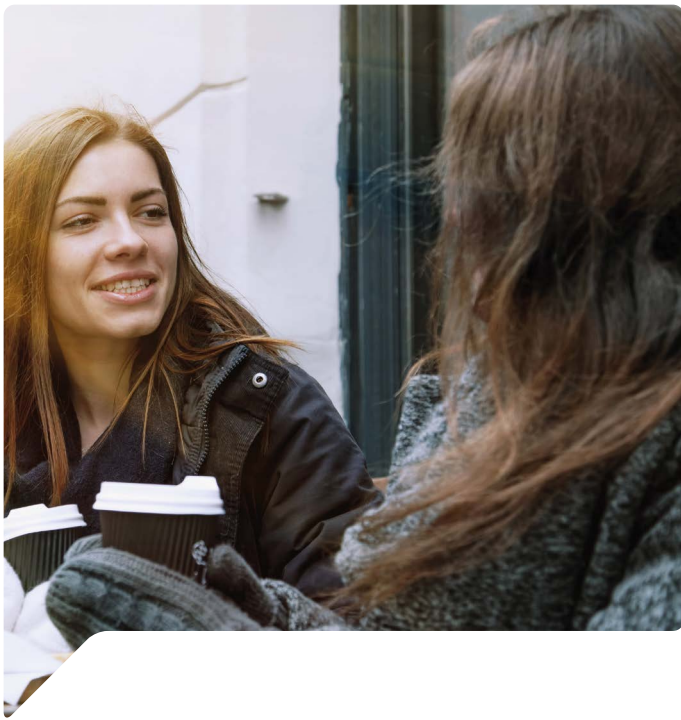
- 2.6** The partnership was also highlighted as a strength, described by one respondent as 'Scotland-wide delivery through a consortium approach'. Stakeholders reflected that it had encouraged joint working and brought diverse, complementary organisations together. **It was seen as efficient, cost-effective and avoided competition for resources.**

In another world or in another part of our work, we would be competitors, but under the banner of Shine, we are genuinely on the same level playing field and are partners... what's key is the fact that it's Shine. (Shine partner)

- 2.7** Broad coverage, described as "wherever someone is in the country", was identified as another strength – **a combination of national partnership and local delivery.**

If one of our women, which happens quite a lot, maybe they've been living in Fife and they've come into prison, but they are perhaps fleeing domestic violence, or they need to move to another area... and they already had a mentor allocated... we can then say 'okay, that's fine, what we'll do is we will reallocate you to a mentor who works within the new locality that you'll be moving to' whether that's 15 miles down the road in another local authority, or whether that's the Highlands... (Prison-based Champion)

It means we can continue the Shine service seamlessly, and make sure they're still getting that trusted service... So I think the fact that we are a national service is a really big strength. (Prison-based champion)



Sarah's story

Through the years, I've grown a wee bit extra because I've had support with Shine.

It has been five years since Sarah first met her Shine mentor, Tanya, at the prison gates. Her story illustrates the critical role of prison gate pick-ups in supporting women to re-integrate into the community. It also highlights how longer-term mentor relationships can help women connect, and sustain their motivation for change.

Sarah felt she would have been vulnerable had Tanya not met her at the prison gates.

Sarah: I would have had to get the train home – I mean, you never know who you meet on the way home and things like that.

Interviewer: So what would have happened if you had met people on the way home?

Sarah: Well you're just out the jail... you could bump into anybody asking where have you been, where are you going kind of thing – it's easy to be led astray.

Attending appointments on her own can be challenging for Sarah. In the early days after her liberation, she drew motivation from Tanya's support.

Some days to give me a bit of motivation – like telling me when I've got appointments and stuff because I struggle with that... She helped me with a doctor, and she helped me with going for my PIP (Personal Independent Payment) interview... She's been to court with me as well – because I struggle to do things on my own.

Sarah described the importance of her relationship with Tanya in helping her cope with difficult life experiences, and she valued Tanya's responsiveness to her changing needs.

My mum had cancer a couple of years ago, and she [Tanya] was there through that. And then I got the jail the week before Christmas there. I got out a month ago. It's been quite tense, she's really helped me. I've seen her every week. We've been doing stuff – I've got stuff done.

Sarah also appreciated the social aspect of meeting with Tanya; this support enabled her to get out into the community. She felt this had helped her well-being, social skills and personal development.

Since I've got out the jail, it's just getting me out of the house really as well... I'm not so stuck, like not lonely... not so stuck in the same kind of cycle.

With Tanya, we talked about adult things as well... we'll just talk about day-to-day stuff... when we're out and about – how you talk to somebody, do you know what I mean?... I've definitely grown, like, I've matured a lot more.

Sarah described the consistent relationship with Tanya as central to establishing trust. She has drawn encouragement from the relationship, rather than feeling that she had to justify herself.

I've known her for so long as well so that makes me feel a bit better... I've got this thing where I feel everybody is out to get me, but with Tanya, I know that she's got my best interests at heart.

I feel like with Tanya, I've not got a point to prove... I just feel like she's an extra person in my life that can be like, 'Oh, well done!', do you know what I mean?... Aye, because I think people like us, people like me... sometimes you do need that extra praise.

Sarah felt Shine's input had brought stability to her life that otherwise may not be there. She reflected on how, with time, Tanya's support has helped her grow and connect with her motivation for things to change.

(If I hadn't met with Tanya) I'd probably be doing the same thing going in and out of hostels and things like that.

It's not been like a quick thing... I just feel like through the years I've grown a wee bit extra because I've had support with Shine. A couple of years ago, I wouldnae care about anything, I wouldnae care if I was getting sanctioned fae the UC [Universal Credit]. I wouldnae care about anything like that... but it's opened my eyes to it a wee bit... I'm more motivated.

Support at different stages of throughcare

- 2.8 Respondents value Shine's ability to support women at different stages of their involvement in the justice system. Mentors can engage with women pre-release, so building a relationship at this point and **establishing a foundation of support for liberation was seen as positive**. In addition, a referral might originate from a community setting, so Shine has in-built flexibility and accessibility.

To be able to support individuals who are on CPOs... I think that for Shine, that is one of the most positive things... you can accept referrals in the community. (Shine partner)

Visiting the women in prison is also an important part of the role, to show women we are keen to build a relationship with them before they are released. (Mentor)

Early interventions in prison and working in partnership on resettlement plans for women transitioning back into the community. (CJSW staff member)

I think having that journey out of custody and into the community where they're struggling with a lot of kind of chaotic stuff that's going on, I think the model works well. (Shine partner)

- 2.9 **A prison gate pick-up service** where mentors meet women at the point of liberation and provide practical and emotional support was also repeatedly highlighted as a strength.

That first day for women being released from prison is such an important one to get right. (Prison-based champion)

- 2.10 Mentors and mentees illustrated how crucial this could be in **achieving immediate practical support and minimising risks in the critical first hours after release**, where women might be particularly vulnerable. An intervention at that pivotal moment could be the difference or not between re-engaging with destructive networks or behaviours that link to offending.

Because if they come out [of prison] and that first day doesn't go to plan and they're still left with needs unmet, they're so much more likely to return to either an abusive relationship or drugs or alcohol or negative coping behaviours. So the fact that we will have someone there at the gate waiting to take them home, take them to a safe place and get them sorted and not leaving them until the end of the day and they've got all their basic needs met. (Prison-based champion)

- 2.11 The usefulness of Shine's liberation pack, created for women at the point of release, was also described. This is a way to provide women with information and supporting materials, even when a prison gate pick-up is not possible.

If there's women going to court, and we don't quite know if she will get out or not that day, then I deliver a liberation pack to the prison. So it's got her mentor's details, basic toiletries, sanitary products, contraception, things like that, just to make sure that she has a kind of starter pack there, until she sees her mentor in case she does get out from court. And we've also, during COVID, started putting mobile phones in that as well. So it's a contract mobile phone, it's paid for by Shine. So it means that the woman has that lifeline there. She can call her mentor, family or friends or benefits, you know, whoever she needs to be in contact with. And a lot of women have said that has been a major help for them. (Prison-based champion)

I've had challenging times... At times, I could have picked up and used [drugs] but because I had that phone, I was able to reach out... Sometimes just someone else giving you their input just talking to you, and then you completely change your mindset. (Mentee)

The voluntary nature of the mentoring relationship

- 2.12 **The voluntary nature of the mentoring relationship** which women are offered and then choose to enter was described by many as a **critical foundational strength of Shine**. While this aspect means that some women who might benefit from Shine decide not to engage with the service, it was generally seen as a positive principle. It also links with **the trauma-informed approach**, which underlies Shine, whereby women are offered a choice, trust is built, and the safety of mentees is at the heart of the support provided.

It is voluntary, so there is motivation from the women to engage and make changes for themselves, not as a condition or a feeling of being coerced. (Shine partner)

A flexible delivery style

- 2.13 Shine's flexibility means mentors can support women at different times if they return to prison and are re-referred. It also means that mentors can work with women **regardless of their changing circumstances**. Stakeholders reflected that this is a pragmatic model for working with women in the justice system.

Our ability to work with the women however many times they need to come back and without judgement is crucial to continue. (Mentor)

Flexibility in responding to women in crisis. The one-to-one support the women receive has proved invaluable, particularly in times of distress and during changes of circumstances. (CJSW staff member)

I suppose that consistent approach to repeating and trying again and again, not giving up on someone, that's probably the strength. (Shine partner)

The range of support delivered

- 2.14 The practical support and delivery style were commonly identified as strengths, which stakeholders felt should be retained in the future.

The level of one-to-one practical support should be sustained. Shine mentors provide invaluable support to our service users to access a range of essential services that they would not approach without the support provided by the mentor. (CJSW staff member)

Having a mentor with a wealth of knowledge and understanding, non-judgemental attitude, empathy, and a real passion to support women through the justice service to make real positive changes is a great asset to have and one that the women appreciate whilst on their journey to full recovery. (Mentor)

So for me being released from prison, it was just like going back into the big bad world. I had been away from my family, my children for seven months. I was back in the house, back to normal life – like I found myself for a wee while longer after that it was a wee bit overwhelming. And I didnae know who to turn to. [Shine mentor name] in that service came into my life at the perfect time. It was honestly as if it was meant to be. (Mentee)

- 2.15 Scope for mentors to offer varied approaches and activities was identified as a strength. Delivery can be **adapted depending on each woman's situation and needs**.

- 2.16 Stakeholders, staff and mentees reflected that **care and compassion are at the core** of Shine mentoring relationships. This can involve delivering practical and emotional support, tackling immediate pressing issues, and building women's confidence to support personal development and consider fresh opportunities and outlooks.

Supporting females to attend appointments, such as specialist drugs and alcohol, mental health services. Providing housing advice and guidance. Being a listening ear to females – who really trust their Shine worker. Promoting independence and setting goals. Life skills such as budgeting, cooking. Supporting engagement and joint appointments with Justice Social Work. (CJSW staff member)

Shine mentors will provide that practical support. In terms of housing, benefits, getting things done, support... whether it's food banks, money for clothes and support for utilities, particularly in this current cost of living crisis. But also in terms of that emotional support, and being there, being visible, being present. And following up with them and they often haven't had that before. (Shine partner)

- 2.17** Emotional support for mentees was frequently referenced and described in various ways. Some mentors reflected that **the women they support lack positive, supportive and encouraging relationships**. Mentees described rapport with their mentors and an interest in their well-being they had not expected.
- 2.18** A lack of opportunities for women leaving the criminal justice system to receive positive affirmation was also described by different stakeholders, who noted this group's low levels of confidence and self-belief. **Shine mentors are in a unique position of being able to offer positive encouragement – and build a trusting relationship – reflecting Shine's trauma-informed approach.**
- 2.19** Stakeholders, mentors and mentees reflected that this way of working enables **women to see themselves differently**, to understand capabilities that they might not have appreciated, to reduce harmful behaviours, and be more willing to take up opportunities or tackle activities which previously might have presented barriers.

It's the first time they've actually had a relationship that is boundaried that they can trust, that's consistent, and that's supportive without any agenda. (Mentor)

I think that to me is the biggest impact – if you've got a relational injury – a lot of broken relationships from way back from when they were kids, right up, all the way through...for me, the biggest impact of us as a service is supporting the women with that kind of boundaried but non-judgemental, zero agenda kind of relationship, that they feel safe, trusted and can trust for it to move on in a positive direction. (Mentor)

What we do is positive affirmations, which a lot of these women don't actually get... I'll maybe speak to somebody on a Monday morning, and they'll say, 'Oh, yeah, I was offered [drugs] but I didn't take it'. So you expand on that with them. You say 'yeah, that's good you know, what was your decision-making?' And I do think that's the thing that an awful lot of the women we work with, don't get positive affirmations in their life and people are so quick to knock them, if they have a lapse... so quick to just write them off. But I think one of the things that we as mentors do is we actually say – that was positive – that's really good. (Mentor)

They don't judge on what you've done, if anything, what they do is they try and push you to be that wee bit better. And when you think things are not going that great, they're there to say 'two months ago you didn't have this but now you have this.' (Mentee)

- 2.20** The importance of **gender-informed support** was highlighted by some mentors who identified that relationship issues faced by women, issues relating to the care of children and the attitudes of others, mean that they are particularly vulnerable.

A mentee disclosed that she's in an abusive relationship, and she's now leaving her partner. And the first thing her mum said to her was 'How could you be so stupid, you've let this happen again'... basically this is your fault... you need to make this work. It's shocking, but for her to open up and disclose that, that's what she assumes is going to be the response from people... So I think just having someone go 'No, it's not your fault. You're being really brave, you're doing an amazing thing moving on, and we'll help you, we'll support you with it' can make such a difference. (Mentor)

Building hope

2.21 Encouragement and affirmation, developing self-belief, and recognising the achievement of successful small steps can support women to **build hope and resilience** to recover from setbacks.

People may have become a bit agoraphobic and stuck in a rut living in the house and probably disengaged from society. But I think Shine's very good at bringing them forward and actually getting them engaging again, giving them hope for the future. (Shine partner)

It's not always positive. Sometimes it takes a good few attempts. Sometimes the women are never ready, but we're not there saying you've got to do this at this time. It's just we're there when they're ready to engage, to make that next step and move forwards in a positive way. And I think supporting them to have belief and actually hope, and actually believe in that hope, that there could be a different future for them. (Mentor)

Meeting complex needs

2.22 The impact of mentoring is captured internally by Shine using the Justice Star version of the Outcomes Star™ tool, which it began using in 2017. Mentors choose an appropriate time to talk to the women they support and ask them to score themselves against different domains, including living skills and self-care, relationships and family, drugs and alcohol and positive use of time. From this baseline, change can be captured when the exercise is repeated.

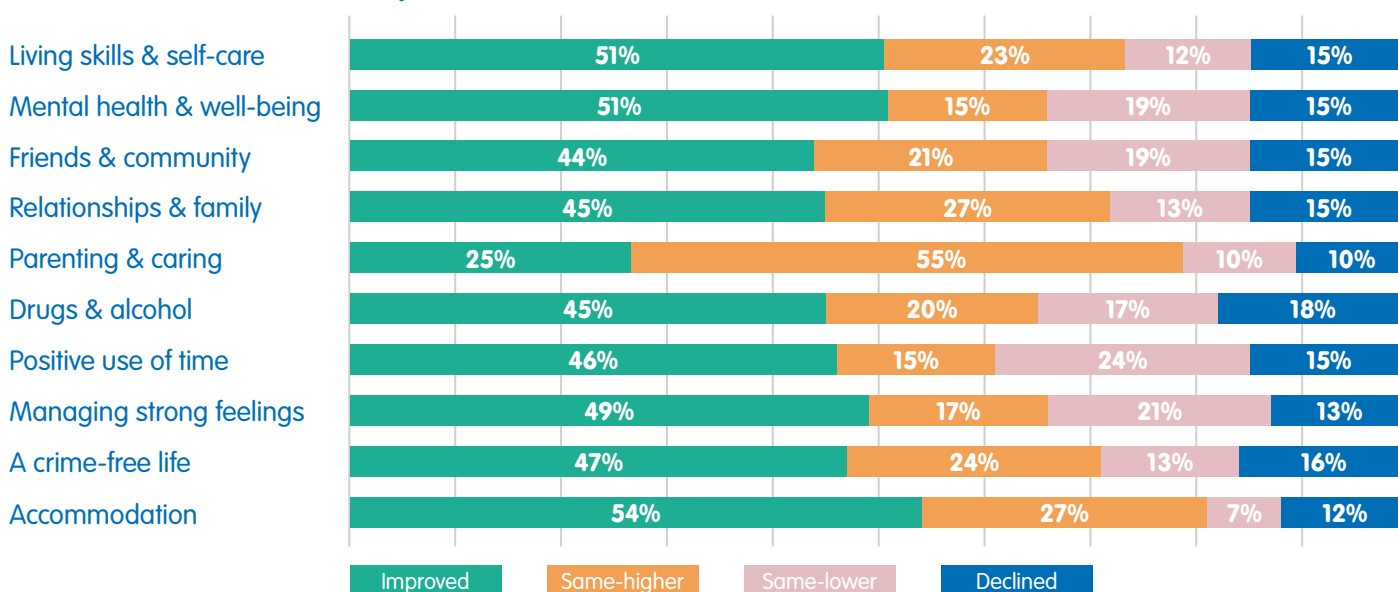
2.23 Results collated by Shine up to 2022¹³ show that domains for accommodation, living skills and self-care, mental health and well-being and managing strong feelings are where improvement is seen most often¹⁴.

2.24 In this impact assessment, we explored stakeholders' views on which aspects of life they felt Shine mentoring was most likely to have a positive impact on. Some highlighted **the complexity of issues women face post-release**. These, combined with the legacy of past problems, influence the priority needs to address and affect how mentor support is received and acted upon.

A lot of these women have got nothing. Absolutely nothing, no house, no nothing, they're homeless, no belongings. They've just not got it because of their lifestyle so it's just building that up to have some type of normal life – whatever normal life is. (Mentor)

They tend to come from a place of trauma, domestic abuse and sexual violence... they aren't in a good place. (Shine partner)

Outcome Star Heatmap for all Shine Case Studies Since 2017



13. <https://www.shinementoring.report/home/appendix-a-performance>

14. Same-higher = scored 5 or higher, Same-lower = scored 4 or lower on the scale of 10



Amber's story

If I didn't have Shine, I would have just given up.

Amber currently lives in a homeless hostel and has longstanding struggles with mental health. She has been supported by her Shine mentor, Kirstie, since leaving prison nine months ago. Two weeks before being released from prison, Amber discovered she was being evicted from her property. Her mentor Kirstie played a key role in helping her deal with this distressing situation, advocating for her rights to accommodation, and supporting her transition back to life in the community.

This story illustrates the importance of the Shine mentoring relationship in supporting women to re-establish life outside prison, cope through hard times and maintain hope.

She's fought for me to be here (hostel). Realistically this hostel could put me out and they don't have to rehouse me because I'm intentionally homeless. She's fought to keep me here... At least I'm safe now.

It was good to have the extra help – to help me deal with the things that I'm gonna have to face. I'm just trying to come back out and go back into the community... Everything that happened when I got out – there was so much, so overwhelming. If I hadn't had Shine, I wouldn't have been able to do it all.



It took time to build trust, but Amber can talk to Kirstie about her mental health and feels understood by her.

She understands my mental health; she can sometimes already anticipate how I'm going to feel about something... Because sometimes with mental health, you cannae help it, and then you feel ashamed, or you feel silly. But having somebody that understands it's a big thing. It takes a while to build that relationship up where you can be open and you can be honest.

Amber has a weekly meeting with Kirstie and appreciates her flexibility to meet more often when she needs it. She feels this level of commitment and understanding differentiates Shine from other services she has worked with.

Even if I've seen Kirstie that week – an appointment or something that I need extra help with or support – it doesn't matter that it's maybe twice in the one week, she'll support me through it all. It's not like some people will say, 'I've already seen you this week'. She doesn't do that.

She will actually go out of her way to try. If she cannae help you, she'll find you the help that you need... other services don't do that; they just go, 'oh, I'm sorry, we cannae really help with that' whereas if it's something important (Kirstie) will find somebody to help.

Amber reflected on what life might be like without Kirstie's support. She described the mentoring relationship as non-judgemental and encouraging and said it helped her develop her sense of hope and rebuild her life.

They're understanding of people's circumstances. They don't judge on what you've done; if anything, what they do is they try and push you to be that wee bit better.

Battles that I just keep losing – if I didnae have Shine; I would have just gave up. They gave me the push – 'let's just try somewhere else'. There's always this 'don't worry'. There are many times I've said to her, 'I've had enough now,' and she would say, 'just hang on, we'll get good news at some point'.

Before I met with Kirstie, well, my life was just chaotic – and then I got put in prison, and... it's been so hard coming out with eviction, lots of different things. See if I didn't have Kirstie and the support from Shine... I would have gave up a long time ago, and I'd probably be back in prison.

Amber said Kirstie's practical and emotional support helped her to understand, navigate, and cope with benefits assessment processes.

There's forms you have to fill out... Then you have to do a phone call... Sometimes when they're asking me questions, it's hard for me to get out what I want to get out. She was there when I was getting all flustered; she was able to speak to the person on the phone.

You get upset even writing some of the things you've got to physically write on your forms... They make it really hard for people because people suffer with mental health, people suffer with different things... There's probably a lot of people that don't get what they should... They cannae fill it out because they don't have somebody to help them... You think you're writing the wrong things.

Kirstie also supported Amber to overcome anxiety and build up enough confidence to access opportunities in the local community.

Before, I didn't even go out – my mental health was bad – even just going out for a coffee. I'm one of these people where trying to get me to go somewhere for the first time is a big thing. It's because I've got bad anxiety... She's got me out to places that I'd never have went to before.

She'll take me to the same place – she'll say do you want to go back to that place? And she's built me up the confidence to go... Sometimes I've went to these places when I've not been with Kirstie. And I know that sounds not much to some people. But if you've got really bad anxiety, it's a lot.

Practical matters

- 2.25** Mentors initially spend time identifying and addressing immediate needs. **Housing and money are priorities**, and stability in these areas contributes to improved mental health and creates a better base from which other issues can be explored. Overall, mentors suggested they are typically able to address most practical matters.

Health and well-being

- 2.26** Supporting mental health was identified as an essential area of mentors' work, and many women referred to Shine have mental health problems, whether diagnosed or not. This work can take the form of support to **enable women to regulate and understand their emotions, organise practical tasks and reflect on past difficulties.**
- 2.27** Mentors also support women to make and attend health appointments, **enabling them to access the specialist support they need.**

Mental health support is massive – I think every woman I work with has mental health issues and it's very rare if they don't... the difficulty to be able to get a GPs appointment or mental health support – it's really hard and it's so frustrating for the women. So us advocating on their behalf to be able to get an appointment and being able to support them to attend that appointment is really big. (Mentor)

A lot of mental health issues are related to past traumas and adverse childhood experiences that women a lot of the time don't open up to anybody about until they meet somebody like a mentor – they feel that warmth from them so they're able to open up about that. (Shine partner)

When I was released I was trying to pretend everything was okay when inside I wasn't okay. [Mentor name] was the first person I broke down and opened up to and was open and honest with her. (Mentee)

I definitely think I'd have had a relapse in my mental health because I was letting things pile up, the housing benefit, the court case, speaking to the lawyer and not having anybody to explain the words she was using, put it to me in terms I could understand. So I think, without a doubt, I would definitely have had a bad relapse and just ended up in a really bad place again. I think [mentor name] prevented that from happening, coming in when she did. (Mentee)

- 2.28** Providing information about addiction support and encouraging and enabling women to access this is another example of the more comprehensive support provided by mentors.



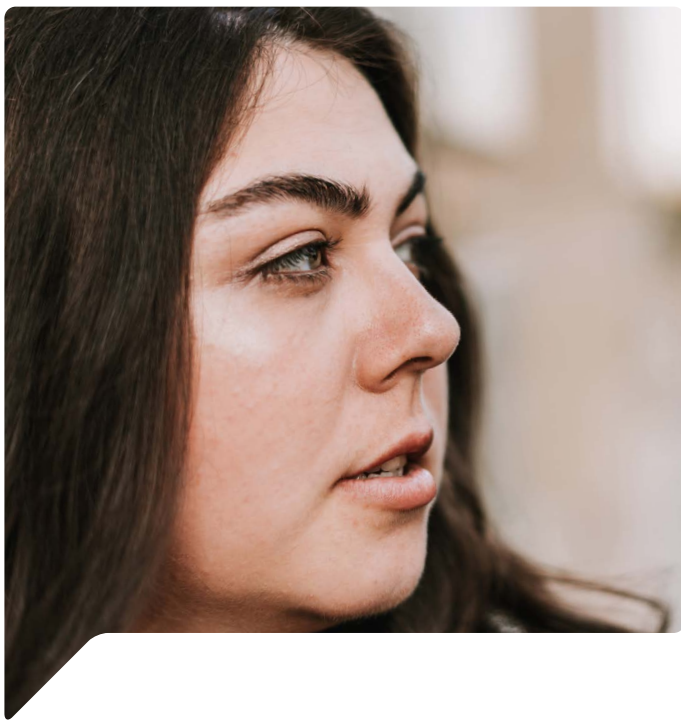
Anna's story

She helps me understand why I'm feeling the way I'm feeling.

Anna meets her mentor Laura regularly since her release from prison. She lives independently but copes with several mental and physical health issues, including depression, epilepsy and arthritis. Her life has also been impacted by many traumas, through which her mentor has been a strong support.

This story illustrates the importance of Shine's consistent support and non-judgemental approach to mentoring relationships throughout changing and challenging personal circumstances.

I'm a recovering alcoholic, and I've been in and out of prison for the past 10 years. I've tried to take my life more than once. I've lost count. But over the past... I would say three months, I haven't had any strong (mentee pauses)... well I have, but they're away now, it's good. That's thanks to people like Laura. It's all about the company you keep in life.



I first met Laura when I came out of prison... She helps me understand why I'm feeling the way I'm feeling, which is a big step. Whereas you go to the GP and he'll write you a prescription and it's... I don't know, just point blank. Laura will go through it with me, she understands that I don't take a lot in at a time, and she explains it in a way I understand it.

She's worked for Women's Aid before, and I've went through a lot of domestic violence, so she helps me with that as well... She'll give me good advice, very good advice, like how to get wise about the company I keep... I'm getting wiser. I'm getting wiser every day. But it's took me till I'm this age, unfortunately.

Anna has had difficult experiences with professionals from other services, who have judged her and treated her poorly. She describes how Laura interacts with her compared to the other professionals in her life.

She's really non-judgemental, which is very hard to find in professionals now.

At the moment, I've got a housing officer... I think she picks on my vulnerability... no empathy at all in any way whatsoever. I think she thought because I was just out of prison, I was wandering about stabbing people, I'd no hope or no want to get better... Laura takes into consideration my disabilities...

She got my confidence back bit by bit, taking me out for coffee... she's just very understanding, like she can adapt to most things I say and do... Yeah, I don't think anything surprises Laura... And I'm sure if I was cheeky to her, she'd be cheeky right back.

Laura has supported Anna in moments of real crisis and during more prolonged difficult times.

I was overdosing myself, thinking, 'I'll just drop dead'. But I didn't. I collapsed in the middle of Glasgow, and that lady made it up to Glasgow to collect me from the hospital and take me to a safe place down here in a hostel, and then I got moved to a temporary flat. And then here.

I had a bereavement there over Christmas. She was so, so supportive... When I was sitting here, she put a card through, and knowing that I couldn't get out for messages and I had no benefits, she would leave a food bank or something at the front door. Things like that... And she doesn't accept nothing – I've asked to buy her breakfast, coffee, anything, and she won't accept it.

When I was on the drink, I could tell Laura... And if she's got to tell people, she has told it to the relevant people which has helped me, as in my doctor and then now I've got another OT coming to see me, which is absolutely fantastic. It's going to stop me falling so much and learning how to eat again properly. She'll say, 'Right, Anna, eat this darling, that's good for you'.

A critical feature of Anna's successful relationship with her mentor is trust; she has confidence that their conversations remain confidential and that Laura has her best interests at heart.

It's not just me, she's had people in and out. But she never ever discusses anybody's business outside, like, she won't ask me about other people that she supports. I've had social workers, I've heard them in the past talking about other clients they've got, and that just takes my trust right away.

She's helping me more than my mum, more than a doctor could. She explains everything. Sometimes I worry I put too much on her shoulders. I can be open and honest with Laura.

Her relationship with Laura has helped to improve Anna's life, and she now has a different outlook on the future.

This time last year, I wanted to go to prison. I was better off in prison than the life I had outside... I've got a different outlook on things. It's good. It's weird, I don't know how to explain it. I'm not depressed when I'm with Laura. And when I get depressed, I can tell her. And you know... a couple of weeks ago, I was kind of down in the dumps and I hadn't been sleeping for weeks, and then I took not well. And she noticed. We were in Asda having coffee and she says, 'Are you alright, Anna? You just don't seem your normal self today'.

I mean, to me, she's a mentor... Yeah, I really look up to Laura. I always say to myself, when I grow up, I'd like to do... not what Laura does, because I think that is a very, very demanding job she must have. But I would like to work with women once I get better.

Cost-effectiveness

...I am confident that with the reduction in use of bail, breaches of orders and overall reoffending, Shine is a very cost-effective service. (CJSW staff member)

- 3.1 As part of the impact assessment, stakeholder views on Shine's cost-effectiveness were gathered.
- 3.2 Overall, the comments on cost suggested that **Shine offers a preventative spend**. Mentoring was viewed as making a positive and complementary contribution to the justice, health and social care sectors by supporting women to live safer, healthier and more stable lives and empowering them to make better choices for themselves and those around them.
- 3.3 Mentees' comments, shown in the case studies, indicate Shine's success as a preventative intervention. Some stated that **without Shine, they believed that they would have returned to prison** or struggled more with addiction or mental health problems which would have impacted other people or other aspects of life.
- 3.4 The majority of comments related to prison-related costs and the wider context of health, social care and societal costs, although one respondent noted that the PSP model itself brings efficiencies as "*all of the organisations support, manage and provide the staff, recruit the staff... the added value by having all of these organisations is significant and keeps the costs low*".
- 3.5 Most respondents believed that **Shine produces savings by complementing other services**, reducing the need for statutory support, preventing reoffending, and reducing imprisonment. One stakeholder described that "inferences can be drawn to the cost-savings it creates in the system – across justice, healthcare etc".
- 3.6 Women described their lives as more stable because of Shine, and these views were echoed in observations from stakeholders on **reduced involvement in the justice system and more positive (sometimes reduced) and proactive use of health and social care services**. Combined, these perspectives suggest that the investment in Shine has a cost-saving impact in different sectors.

I think the Shine Women's Mentoring Service probably is incredible value for money from a social perspective... some of them [the mentees] have incredible anxiety, or concerns around their mental health and perhaps suicidal ideation... in terms of the number of times they phone or contact A&E... over the period of mentoring support, how that can lessen. So actually, the impact on the public purse can be massively different by the end. (Shine partner)

The work that the [Shine] workers do is vital in early interventions for reoffending. (CJSW staff member)

If you were to reduce the amount of people who are reoffending by 10%, or more than that... the cost that you're taking out of the system, from the judicial, the court system, from the Scottish Prison Service, from Police Scotland, from criminal justice, social work – all those people have a cost. (Shine partner)

- 3.7** Respondents with less direct connection to Shine, such as CJSW staff, were less likely to have views on cost-effectiveness. However, half (11) suggested that **Shine delivers savings to the public purse** because they believe it leads to less use of other costly aspects of the criminal justice system.

I think as a consequence of Shine, women engage with justice services differently, and that relationship is important... where a Shine mentor would be a key individual, it would allow that woman to have more support. And so in my view, therefore, it would be very cost-effective because it helps us, from a local authority, justice point of view, to direct attention elsewhere. (CJSW staff member)

- 3.8** On the wider costs of reoffending, one stakeholder highlighted lost opportunities to make a positive social contribution.

Then the cost to society of somebody who then goes on to commit another offence who hasn't had a chance or taken up the chance to look differently at their lives and move forward in a more positive way. It sounds philosophical, but actually what you're saying is, you've not yet got that person as a citizen of the community contributing to society, making a positive difference there, let alone the mental cost, the anguish to the individual woman. So you can see cost in a few different ways. (Shine partner)

- 3.9** In discussing resources, some respondents reflected on situations which create higher operational costs. Because of the delivery of a national service, some circumstances require mentors to cover large geographical areas with time-consuming travel for meetings in prison and for prison gate pick-ups.

- 3.10** One respondent noted that national coverage and the aspiration to build pre-release relationships and achieve outcomes while women are in prison can be more cost-intensive. On occasion, staff are required to make long journeys for short meetings – which due to a fluctuating prison context may not occur.

Challenges

As we have moved in the landscape from a sentencing court-based system where our referrals would predominantly come from the prison, we are increasingly reliant on community referrals and I don't think as partners we've, across the board, successfully cracked that particular nut in terms of how to increase our community referrals... (Shine partner)

- 4.1 Stakeholders identified several challenges which, if addressed, could enhance Shine's impact. The issues most frequently highlighted were:
- extending the length of mentoring relationships (currently six months with some flexibility for extension)
 - a need for greater awareness of the service to increase referrals
 - achieving consistency in local provision, which currently differs depending on Shine's local profile and the relationships with, and willingness of, local partners to engage

Length of the mentoring relationship

- 4.2 Most mentors suggested that the prescribed six-month length mentoring period should be extended. They reflected that women often face multiple challenges before they engage with Shine. Release from prison presents additional practical and emotional issues, and mentoring relationships were described as often only being able to focus on the initial practicalities of getting settled in the community during a six-month period.
- 4.3 Exploring and working through any deeper-rooted issues or supporting personal development was only possible with **more time to support women**. Some noted that longer-term engagement should be an option for practice to be more trauma-informed.
- 4.4 In some cases, mentors will work with mentees beyond the six-month period because a need has been identified.

It's particularly difficult, when you've only got a six month journey at the end... when someone's liberated, there's so much issues and trauma there that in terms of the length of period that you're supposed to engage with a woman, in my opinion is too short... moving forward we need to look at that to ensure that what we're delivering actually achieves the best outcomes for the woman. (Mentor)

If we were able to say you can have up to 18 months support... we might actually be able to get to the stage where we could say, 'do you think you might be able to look at some voluntary work?' Or would you like to look at maybe a simple college course that you could take on... But as soon as we mention anything like that, they think we're just saying 'Bye' and handing them off. And then it's back to square one. (Mentor)

- 4.5 Some mentors said mentees reacted negatively if they felt the mentoring relationship ended too soon. In these discussions, it was noted that longer mentoring relationships needed to be balanced against any risk of dependency developing.

At the end of six months we can see that they are not ready to give up that support – they still feel they need more, and you'll see they will self-sabotage... so they can say 'Look, I'm not doing good, I really do need you – I still need your support'... we see those women sign up repeatedly, and because they want that longer-term support... I feel like we must be making some kind of impact for the amount of women who want to sign up again and again, and who are managing to stay out of prison. (Mentor)

Community profile and referrals

- 4.6 Many (9) of the 13 survey respondents who described their overall views on Shine 'as somewhat positive' were external, for example, CJSW staff. They highlighted that **improved joining-up of services, better communication and visibility of staff** would support Shine to be more effective.

- 4.7 The justice system is moving from short-term sentencing to community service, and some participants reflected that there should have been a corresponding shift in the source of referrals. Stakeholders raised the need to increase the profile of Shine's work to encourage more engagement from community partners and stimulate more community referrals.

It's something about our responsibility locally, both Shine and justice social work from a community-based referrals point of view of creating a process of communication that allows for a better understanding of that. (CJSW staff member)

- 4.8 On communicating about Shine to local partners, some participants reflected that the range of ways in which Shine mentors engage with women could present a message that's difficult to explain clearly.

There are variations in the model across the country, although it's supposed to be the same... we see it because we're working in a prison. And we have women in the prison that come from different local authorities that are covered by different partners. And there's a real difference in delivery... moving forward it would be a real benefit to ensure that consistency is across the whole of the partnership. (Shine partner)

Variations in local coverage

- 4.9 Whilst the Shine model ensures that national delivery and accessibility are achieved, and Shine's mentoring approach with women is consistent, ensuring the consistency of delivery in different local settings was identified by some stakeholders as a challenge to address. Geographical challenges and resourcing constraints can be factors, as well as systemic issues, including the strength of relationships with local stakeholders, their understanding of Shine, its role and potential, and how much they engage with it. Overall, a need was identified to ensure a joined-up approach to the management of justice.

- 4.10 One CJSW participant suggested an assessment of the scope for delivering in island settings, and for Shine support to be available in more remote areas.

- 4.11 Staff turnover in referral agencies was identified as a barrier to developing working relationships with local partners and meant that ongoing profile-raising and communication are needed. Post-COVID, changes in local networking meeting structures were also identified as a factor that reduced opportunities for relationship-building between agencies.

We sometimes see in the justice landscape and wider social care a higher turnover of staff, particularly within the third sector with sort of short-term funding arrangements. (Shine partner)



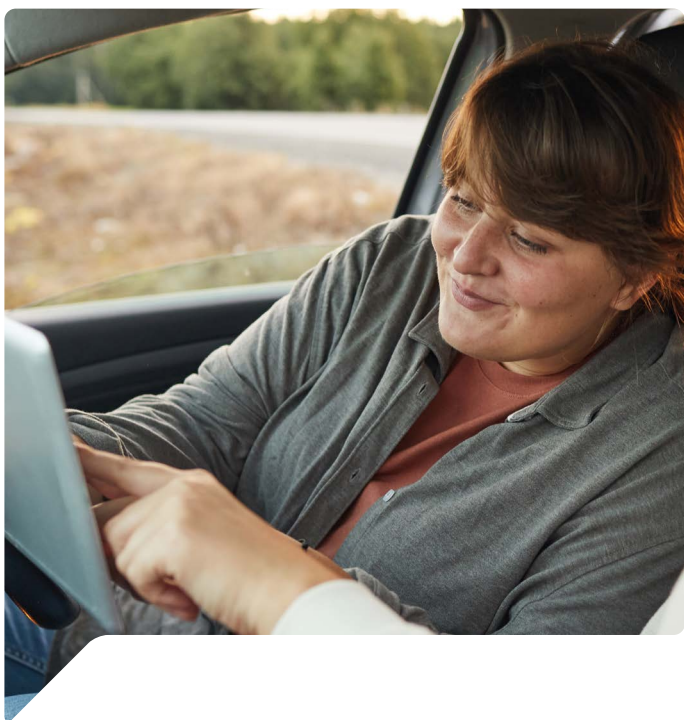
Gemma's story

Honestly, I tear up thinking about what that service has done for me.

Gemma first learned about Shine when she was still in prison but decided not to engage with the service immediately, feeling that she did not need any additional support. She changed her mind a few weeks after being released. Her story illustrates the range of support delivered by mentors.

Two or three weeks before I was released, I was getting things sorted for me being released back into society, going home, and the Shine help was one of the things that was offered to me, but I didn't take the help at that time. I thought I would be okay.

About 3 or 4 weeks after I was released from prison, the social worker I had been allocated said the children were doing fine, I was doing fine, my mental health was doing okay, so the social worker asked me how I would feel about getting a Shine worker so that I still had somebody to reach out to. So that's when Michelle came into our life, and she's just been fantastic.



I had a toddler, so I was trying to cling on to the help of the social worker, thinking she could help me, but obviously, that's not how it works. So I think Michelle was introduced to me in the hope that she could accompany me to the meetings at court, the Child Welfare hearings and things like that. That was the initial reason, just to have a wee bit of support, because I don't really know how these things work. So Michelle stepped in there, and she helped me out with paperwork, phone calls, speaking to my lawyer, feeding things back to me that I don't really understand.

When I was released, I was trying to pretend everything was okay when inside, I wasnae okay. Michelle was the first person I broke down and opened up to and was honest with.

The flexibility of the service was important to Gemma. She experiences poor mental health and isn't always in the right state of mind to meet her mentor, but Michelle is empathetic and doesn't pressure her to engage.

If I'm nae feeling great, some days I can say, 'Michelle, I'm not really feeling up tae it... my mental health isnae good' and she's so understanding about it... Michelle doesnae phone me and say, 'you need to be in at such and such a time. I need to see you and if you're not in, I need to phone my boss to tell her.' I find it quite laid back. The way the service works for me is absolutely amazing.

Throughout the ten months they have known each other, Michelle has provided Gemma with different types of support.

I could phone up and ask her about anything, and she can help me. I just think it's amazing how they can help you with so many different things. They never say, 'Sorry, we cannae help you with that.'

I suffer from mental health problems and bipolar, and I suffer with really bad anxiety and depression. Michelle has sat next to me and advised me to go to the doctors, and helped me to get in touch with the Crisis team when I've needed it. Honestly, she's helped me in so many ways. She still does housing forms for me. Honest to God, I could phone that lady up today and ask her to help and she's there. She's amazing.

At Christmas time, there was me and my children, and Michelle came out to my house the day before Christmas with presents, a turkey, like a full Christmas dinner... Honestly, I tear up thinking about what that service has done for me.

They've helped me out before when I've not had gas and electric. I told her I had trouble with my gas and I had no money, and she was like, 'give me 10 minutes', and she phoned back and gave me a phone number for the local council welfare fund. And before that day was out, I had gas in my meter. Honest to God, the woman is amazing.

Gemma is confident that life would look very different without support from Shine for her mental health, and the practical help in dealing with housing and legal issues. She believes this prevented a relapse and helped her family stay together.

I definitely think I'd have had a relapse in my mental health because I was letting things pile up – the housing benefit, the court case, speaking to the lawyer and not having anybody to put it to me in terms I could understand. So I think, without a doubt, I would definitely have had a bad relapse and just ended up in a really bad place again. I think Michelle prevented that from happening coming in when she did.

I have never had support like this, or anything at all like this in my life. Being released from prison, it was like going back into the big bad world. I had been away from my family, my children for seven months, and I was back in the house, back to normal life. For a wee while, it was a bit overwhelming and I didnae know who to turn to... Michelle came into my life at the perfect time. It was honestly as if it was meant to be.

Future developments

I would love to see them being... more known... other organisations for women are quite well known. But I would say Shine provides a lot more services, a lot more help for women... I think if a lot more people were to know about the services... there would probably be a hell of a lot more people would be grateful to have that support. (Mentee)

- 5.1 This chapter summarises participants' views on priorities and opportunities for Shine's future development. The common theme across mentees' responses is that Shine is valued, and they want it to keep doing what works.
- 5.2 Comments from other stakeholders are set out under two themes:
- Partnership working; within Shine and with other agencies
 - Valuing and developing staff

Partnerships within Shine

- 5.3 Collaborative working between Shine's delivery partners was identified by some as a strength of Shine to preserve or develop further. One mentor, for instance, spoke of the benefits of connecting and sharing a sense of team, with another delivery partner. The **wealth of expertise within the partnership** was described as a resource to drive improvements, and it was suggested that the skill sets of partners **could be better leveraged** for the benefit of each other and mentees.

The other delivery partner... it's just quite good for me to link in with them and kind of have as a team, I think is always a great thing to be working on and improve. (Mentor)

I'm not 100% convinced that we all... shout out our strengths and skills from other areas... we don't necessarily always have Shine partners that shout out to say, 'we also provide this'... Could we have that particular Shine mentee engaging and benefiting from some other service within that partner organisation? (Shine partner)

- 5.4 While some stakeholders stressed the need for ongoing work to nurture a collective Shine workforce identity, others emphasised the need to recognise local differences and maintain local identities within the wider national partnership.

There's something for me about how Shine (works) as a collective partnership and how we see ourselves... it's a continual, drip, drip messaging type piece, for people to understand the impact when they don't operate as a Shine workforce member. (Shine partner)

Ensuring that, although it's a national service, it's very much seen as a local service... And I think there's some real benefits in that... if you're going to make changes, sometimes universal changes are not ideal... it's going to be a national service, you also need to take in nuances that are... in the different localities as well. (Shine partner)

Partnership work with other agencies

Shine Services have provided significant support to our Statutory CJSW remit for a number of years and assisted in the reduction in remand and CPO breaches. (CJSW staff member)

- 5.5** Most stakeholders and one mentor called for continued or **increased focus on relationship building, communication, and partnership working between Shine and other agencies.** These included: social work, the Scottish Prison Service, courts, mental health services, health services, housing, third sector organisations and other potential 'associate partners'. One respondent noted, "We need to get better at trying to second guess when people will be liberated from court".

There's better communication with the criminal justice reform teams in some areas (than) others... that's always something that could be worked on... If we did have that great partnership work – liaising with the justice, social work team and even things like new (community custody units)... it's always good to keep up with any new teams that come about. (Mentor)

We support (women on) remand, (there are) sometimes examples of poor communication around women going back to and then being released directly from court... the ideal world would be that we have presence in court or presence in court by a justice social worker for some sort of collaborative piece. (Shine partner)

- 5.6** **At delivery and strategic levels, it was argued that closer partnership working and networking would serve to: build trust with external agencies; address inconsistencies across local authorities in referrals to Shine; and inform support work with mentees by, for example, enabling multi-agency risk assessments before prison gate pick-ups or ensuring Shine is aware of, and able to offer support to, women attending court.**

We're expecting social work teams to generate referrals to us as a third party, but what relationship do they have with us, do they even trust us? (Shine partner)

(There is) probably something about how we work in partnership locally right across the country to better understand... what additionality Shine can do... For those areas that are of the view that there isn't any additionality... (who think) they're able to deal with it in-house and they don't have that many women, so why use Shine? (Shine partner)

- 5.7** Some called for a **greater focus on awareness-raising and promotion of Shine.** While stakeholders tended to focus on raising the profile among agencies, one mentee felt women should also be better informed about what the service can offer.

Due to COVID there's been a breakdown of... the presence of our Shine service... with social work, or women's hubs, addiction services, mental health... you sometimes get a question 'I didn't know you were still running?'... that presence has been lost... it's something we need to work on. (Shine partner)

Increasing the knowledge of court staff... court clerks... the legal profession... For Shine to be on the radar of people. So they think 'has this woman been supported?' or 'could this woman be supported?'... Some of the front-of-house SPS staff who are transporting people from cells... It's about doing it in quite a coordinated and sustained, ongoing way until it is at the forefront of everyone's mind. (Shine partner)

- 5.8** Awareness raising was identified by some stakeholders as necessary to **promote clarity about how Shine operates locally and to increase understanding of the referral process.**

There can sometimes be for community-based referrals, a lack of understanding when is the right time to refer – when is the right time for Shine to become involved. (CJSW staff member)

- 5.9 Communicating and clarifying Shine's role and its limits within the wider service provision landscape was also highlighted as a priority by a few stakeholders.

That connectivity into services like alcohol, drugs services, mental health services, housing support and health... that's core to what we try and do... but I think recognition of that both locally and nationally, and the fit of that altogether needs some more advanced thinking. (Shine partner)

- 5.10 Shine was described as complementing other services well, and this was raised as something to maintain and develop by some. One stakeholder advocated for formal partnership agreements between Shine and other providers, although the importance of maintaining the voluntary nature of engagement with Shine was emphasised.

Support for mentors

- 5.11 Working arrangements and the level of support for mentors were also identified, particularly by mentors, as an area to address to enhance Shine in the future. They suggested that the insecurity of year-on-year funding undermines staff retention and, therefore, the programme's stability.
- 5.12 **More support for staff well-being, given the complex and emotive work they are involved in,** and the need for professional development were also raised. The planned reinstatement of opportunities for mentors across the programme to meet regularly was highlighted as an important step to enhance Shine in the future.

Sometimes in an organisation when you've only got maybe two mentors working in Shine, I think that bigger, wider support forum really helps. It really does. And you can't underestimate that. (Mentor)

Discussion and analysis

Well, I don't know what I was hoping, but what I got from it was like, you know, I felt the person she was really kind, compassionate, caring, honest, transparent, which is important... she listened, was available to talk, tried to help me in any way possible. (Mentee)

- 6.1 Women in the justice system face particular challenges. In addition to the stigma of offending, they often live with a background of trauma, domestic violence, mental health problems, addictions and complex family relationships. This combination leaves them especially vulnerable.
- 6.2 Being in this situation without having any positive affirming relationship contributes to a higher risk of women with little confidence and self-belief being unable to change. This puts them at risk of continuing with damaging patterns of behaviour and potentially reoffending.
- 6.3 Shine offers mentoring that enables women to have a positive one-to-one relationship. This gender-specific support means that mentors offer women an understanding of the issues and attitudes they commonly face and establish the most appropriate support style. **The value of gender-specific approaches is clear given gendered dynamics in:**
- **reasons for entering the criminal justice system;** for example, research by the Howard League for Penal Reform¹⁵ argues that prison is over-used for women and there are gendered assumptions when a woman appears before the court, which can drive punitive responses and skew risk assessments by the judiciary.
 - **women's experiences and needs,** these can vary significantly and may include issues around self-harm, mental health, substance use or relationships. For example, research by Clinks¹⁶ found that pregnant women or women with infant children were particularly vulnerable and had a distinct set of needs.
 - **outcomes;** for example, a report by the Prison Reform Trust in 2022¹⁷ found that:
 - a. fewer than one in 20 women (4%) were in employment six weeks after release from prison, compared with one in 10 men (10%).
 - b. six months on from release, this rose to 6% of women and 14% of men in employment
 - c. half (50%) of women who have been involved in the criminal justice system, including conviction, caution or prison sentence, are claiming out-of-work benefits two years later, compared to just over a third (35%) of men.

15. <https://howardleague.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Rethinking-remand-for-women.pdf>

16. https://www.clinks.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/Understanding%20the%20needs%20and%20experiences%20of%20pregnant%20women%20and%20new%20mothers%20in%20contact%20with%20the%20criminal%20justice%20system%20in%20the%20community%20in%20England_0.pdf

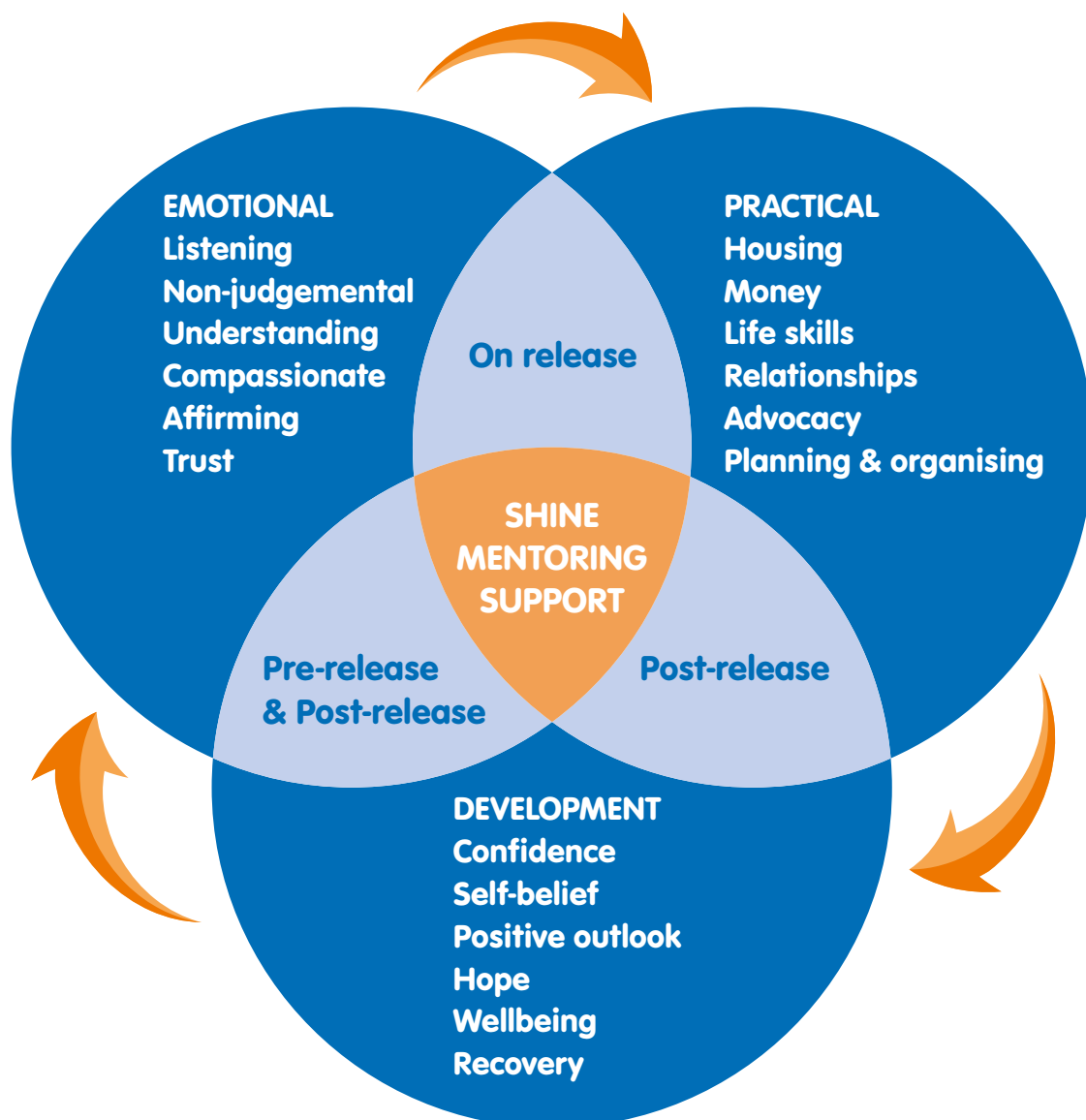
17. <https://prisonreformtrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Why-women-2022-briefing.pdf>

- 6.4 Shine mentors are **adaptable and flexible, and with a person-centred approach** focusing on the needs of each individual, their role may take the form of listener, advocate, signposter or crisis support, depending on the circumstances at the time.
- 6.5 Mentoring at Shine differs from exclusively goal-focused mentoring projects, as it is **needs-based with a deliberate lack of constraint**. Mentors are aware of and maintain boundaries, but the responsive and personalised nature of the mentoring support is greatly appreciated by mentees and plays a big part in the positive impacts achieved.
- 6.6 The rationale for a mentoring approach which is responsive to individual needs is that this is a **realistic delivery response** given the challenging and changing circumstances facing women in the justice system. This often means initially ensuring safety and security and addressing basic daily living needs – helping them to stabilise their situation before any longer-term planning or goal-setting takes place.
- 6.7 With a growing understanding of **the need for, and value of trauma-informed support**, fully considering how Shine’s mentoring style can align with this will further help to articulate the rationale for Shine. Trauma is likely to have played a role in routes to entering the criminal justice system and may affect the needs and experiences of women in custody, in transition periods like release from custody, and in the community. The manifestations of trauma can be markedly different from person to person; examples include; aggression, lack of trust, non-engagement, depression, anxiety, difficulties in emotional regulation, and low self-esteem.
- 6.8 Trauma can be compounded by and linked to **gender-specific experiences**; for example, mothers in custody may have their children placed within the care system; the stigma for women with experience of offending may be long-lasting, as can the sense of shame and guilt. Such factors may then influence the extent to which women can recover and rebuild their lives after experiences in prison. Women in the criminal justice system are also likely to be survivors of abuse, which can have enduring impacts on well-being, self-esteem, mental health and employability, exacerbating the difficulties of rebuilding a life after leaving the criminal justice system.
- 6.9 The case studies provide examples of Shine’s support being trauma-informed with its emphasis on women’s safety, building trusting relationships, validating women’s feelings, and providing women with opportunities to collaborate, have choices and be empowered. Further exploring and articulating how Shine’s trauma-informed approach is embedded in this ethos through its next phase of working would be valuable in contributing to communicating to partners about Shine’s work.
- 6.10 Shine’s support can be summarised as covering **three broad areas – practical, emotional and developmental**. While each may be offered at any time, there is some connection between these forms of support and the different phases of pre-release, on-release and post-release for those women referred while in prison.
- 6.11 An example of how support might vary at different stages is that for a woman in prison (pre-release), mentoring may focus primarily on listening and relationship building and looking ahead to the practicalities of release. On-release support, for example, at a prison gate pick-up, is typically focused on practicalities, to ensure that a woman’s basic needs, such as housing and finance are as secure as possible – to provide the best foundation for life in the community. The developmental aspect of a mentor’s support is more likely to occur when any practical issues have been resolved.

Support offered by Shine mentoring across all stages of release

- 6.12 These areas of support might evolve during a mentoring relationship, and there is the potential for each to continue to be relevant over time. However, developmental support is offered most commonly later in a mentoring relationship.
- 6.13 Understanding how Shine’s mentoring model functions can contribute to decisions on the most appropriate length of a mentoring relationship. In the early stages, Shine mentoring support is likely to focus on practical and emotional areas. Longer-term support might offer more opportunities for greater personal development.
- 6.14 Shine’s support is delivered through a person-centred approach, and the illustration below describes how this is offered and experienced based on descriptions by mentees and mentors.

Support offered by Shine mentoring across all stages of release



- 6.15 Given the diversity of support offered through Shine, the complexity of women's lives and support needs, and the scope for goal-setting varying greatly between relationships, the **impact of Shine mentoring is hard to measure using only a quantitative tool.**
- 6.16 Internal evaluation through Outcomes Star™ offers evidence of impacts on themed areas. However, this does not capture the full story of the support provided, how it is received and felt by women, and the range of impacts it has on their lives. It can include crucial practical outcomes relating to housing, money and food, and there are more nuanced areas around personal well-being, changed outlooks and attitudes and a sense of hope which are potentially life-changing.

I feel like we knit a lot of things together for people. It's like we get them grounded where they are and then support them in engaging with the services around them. And I think a lot of that builds up their independence and their confidence, and also their trust in services and people as well. (Mentor)

That's the crux of it. If I can be there alongside someone and see that suddenly they're starting to believe in themselves that there could be a change and they could have a different path... that's so rewarding. (Mentor)

- 6.17 Creating more opportunities to **capture women's stories** will ensure that their voices are heard and their experiences understood, while building a better understanding of Shine's strengths and impacts, as well as any improvements which it may need to make. There is scope to do more of this, more often to communicate better about what Shine can achieve, improving the profile, understanding and reputation of the service.

The ten features of person-centred mentoring

What person-centred mentoring sounds like

- I care about you – you matter
- I will adapt how I support you when things change for you
- I am listening to you
- I will stand up for you and support you to be heard
- I am here with you if things go wrong
- I will cheer with you when things go well
- I am interested in your past, present and future
- Together we will try to look ahead, be hopeful, and think about good choices
- You can talk to me about anything you want to (or you can choose not to) – either way I won't judge you
- Tell me what you feel is most important to you... I'll try to help you with that and I'll introduce you to others who can help

- 6.18** While measurement of the programme's cost-effectiveness is difficult, evidence gathered in the impact assessment suggests that **without Shine, vulnerable women would have unmet needs** in relation to housing and finance, mental health, offending behaviour, recovery from addiction, and their knowledge and use of other support services. Each of these areas require resources from different parts of the health, social care and justice system. Shine, therefore, appears to play a **complementary and preventative role**.
- 6.19** The prison gate pick-up, while identified as costly, is cited as one of Shine's most valuable services, an effective intervention at a particularly crucial time of support for some women. Exploring the costs and benefits for this specific area of support is therefore essential to understand if efficiencies can be achieved without affecting the positive impacts for women.
- 6.20** There are **opportunities for Shine to develop**. It is an established and valued service among stakeholders, but there are opportunities to improve its profile, particularly at the local community level. This needs to happen for Shine to be more accessible to women.
- 6.21** In addition, with **changes in the justice landscape**, there are new opportunities to provide support for women at different stages of court involvement, remand and community sentencing and with the new Community Custody Units (CCU). Capturing and communicating what Shine mentoring can offer and using this to build relationships with local partners will enable Shine to reach the women it aims to support more effectively in varied settings.
- 6.22** **Effective national and local partnerships are essential, but it is vital that Shine continues to focus attention on mentees**. This is needed to fully understand how the service best reaches and supports them. There is also scope to enhance the support for the team of mentors to ensure they feel valued, confident and connected to their peers across the country.

Conclusions and recommendations

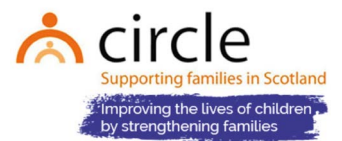
The length of time Shine has been in operation – it has built up expertise, experience, and trust amongst other providers. It is also able to give perspective to the Scottish Government and inform policy. (Shine partner)

- 7.1 Stakeholders view Shine as an **excellent and effective example of a national partnership** which has sustained for over ten years and demonstrated evidence of its positive impact using the Outcomes Star™ tool. Shine’s responsive model of mentoring, coupled with a person-centred approach, provides a realistic and flexible means of supporting women in the justice system who frequently face multiple challenges.
- 7.2 Women appreciate their mentors’ support, care and interest in their well-being. They describe positive impacts such as securing housing, better mental health and steps towards recovery from addiction. Some describe interventions by their mentors as **life-changing and preventing damaging behaviour, including reoffending**. Their stories are examples of Shine’s contribution to reduced use of health, social care and justice services.
- 7.3 There are potential areas for further development of Shine to ensure the service adapts to a changing context of sentencing and remains as accessible as possible to women. Developing more effective relationships with local partners could **increase the understanding and awareness of Shine’s offer** across the wider organisations that engage with women who have experiences with the criminal justice system and generate more referrals.
- 7.4 Considering the most appropriate length or range of lengths of mentoring relationships would be helpful. Given that Shine wants to **further embed a trauma-informed approach** to its work, it would be appropriate to assess the value of Shine mentoring through this lens and determine the best model. Important considerations include balancing the cost of continuing support while avoiding the development of dependency.

Recommendations

- 7.5 Shine could consider:
- **how the successful national partnership can be improved further**, maximising the knowledge base and skills from each organisation and the opportunities for support and sharing of experience between mentors;
 - **how the current model of mentoring can further embed a trauma-informed approach**;
 - **broadening the measurements of success** by gathering stories from women on an ongoing basis, including further development of innovative methods such as podcasts, to capture Shine’s involvement and impact in their lives. This would help Shine articulate the experience of women in the justice system, understand how the service works best, how it impacts them, and the links to cost-effectiveness, and provide material to support Shine’s profile-raising as it engages with local partners to improve accessibility to women;
 - **exploring how to improve local relationships with community-based partners** fully to maximise Shine’s support in the light of changes in practice in the justice system. Seeking good practice models of how community-based work is best being delivered would support learning for the wider service;
 - **reviewing support for staff** to ensure that they are suitably supported to manage the complexity and challenges of meeting individual needs.

Shine Women's Mentoring Service is delivered across Scotland by:



In partnership with the Scottish Government and the Scottish Prison Service.



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