



## THE OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE A BETTER COMMUNITY

Issue 4 November 2018

Welcome to our November 2018 newsletter. This has been a very busy year for community justice in Renfrewshire! Along with awareness raising at events and promoting our brand to provide us AN IDENTITY that people will come to recognize, the first few months of this year have seen us review progress made so far and develop and consult on our new local Community Justice Outcomes Improvement Plan (CJOIP) for 2018-2021. This THREE-YEAR plan focuses on the issues that we feel important for Renfrewshire and has an annual action plan underneath it, detailing the actions we will take to BEGIN MAKING a difference to the way we work together and ultimately to those involved in the justice system, victims of crime and the families of both. We recently published our annual report outlining progress on our CJOIP 2017/18, this issue of our newsletter aims to outline some of the work undertaken and update you on our plans going forward.

*“The first year of the new model of community justice has been very exciting for us. Lead Officer support and an established Steering Group within Renfrewshire Community Planning Arrangements, has allowed us to focus specifically on offending in Renfrewshire on the 1 in 3 males and 1 in 10 females who have convictions, and who are finding that this creates barriers in their lives.*

*Before we wrote our 2017/18 plan, we spoke with the range of people affected: with victims, with people with convictions currently in prison or on court orders in the community, with families, and those in the community with prior convictions. We asked them about their experiences and what would help prevent further offending. We also asked those agencies and organisations already working with people with convictions for their views. We examined statistics too, and from all of this we created 5 local priorities we wanted to take forward in 2017/18.*

*In this first year there has been a range of innovative work progressed and a number of highlights achieved as a partnership. We believe we have begun to make a difference”*



**Councillor Marie McGurk**

## **Community Justice Renfrewshire** **So Far....**

In April 2017 we published our first Community Justice Outcomes Improvement Plan 2017/18 (CJOIP). Our focus in this first year was on:

- Prevention and earlier intervention
- Reducing offending and re-offending
- Increasing awareness of Community Justice Renfrewshire and its role

The key local priorities chosen for this plan were identified through our needs assessment, interaction with stakeholders and involved focus groups with people with convictions.

### **Our Key Local Priorities for 2017/18**



**Employability** – We will work to ensure that gaining skills and training for employment are a part of the rehabilitation journey and access to the job market is fair for people with convictions.

Throughout our first year we successfully bid for funding through the Scottish Governments Employability Innovation and Integration Fund. This allowed us to begin our ‘Just Learning – Skills for Employment Project’ The aim of which is to improve the employability pipeline for people with current or historical convictions.

*Although it's early days, the programme is proving extremely positive for service users and services alike. We have over 40 clients*

*registered so far who are gaining support in various areas. Some have accessed our Sector Based Skills Academies, construction qualification training, as well as getting support and advice with CV's, covering letters, applications and disclosure.*

**Alternatives to custody** – We will work to gain a better understanding of alternatives and any barriers to their use.

In 2017 we implemented an innovative perpetrator programme developed by Portsmouth City Council. Up2U was adapted in consultation and partnership with Renfrewshire Council for use within Criminal Justice Services. Partner support is also provided to victims.

*Up2U provides the courts with a further intervention that could be used within a community order. It has given Sherriff's confidence that there is a programme based on up to date research that means that those who are violent to partners would have to face up to work to change their behaviour, and that partners would be supported.*

*Service User Comment. "In future relationships, I am going to slow down and build trust. I also saw in the media recently about men controlling their partner's phones, social media. That was who I was; I don't want to be that man anymore"*



**Homelessness for Prison Leavers** – We will develop initiatives to minimise the proportion of prison leavers presenting as homeless.

We have recently introduced the “Keys to Learn” programme. The course provides the opportunity for people with convictions from Renfrewshire who are homeless or at risk of housing crisis, the opportunity to learn skills to help sustain a tenancy, along with building self-confidence, employability skills and allowing them to feel part of their community.

*All the 7 clients who were registered, completed the first course which runs 3 days per week for 8 weeks. Out of those 7, 5 have applied to attend college (2 already accepted), 1 has entered employment and the remaining client is looking into applying to join a training scheme through Barnardo’s.*

**Gender Based Violence** – We will contribute to the development of a Gender Based Violence Strategy to reduce gender-based violence in Renfrewshire through a consistent approach to addressing perpetrators behaviour. We have been involved in several development sessions to assist in setting the direction of a Gender Based Violence Strategy for Renfrewshire.

*Now that the Equally Safe Strategy along with the National Standards and Performance Framework have been published, we can finalise our draft strategy, so we can reflect the measures contained*

*on Equally Safe and begin to take forward our action plan.*

They've been sent to prison.

families outside

Don't know where to turn?  
Need support or information?

0800 254 0088

Families Outside offers support and information to families affected by imprisonment.

Helpline 0800 254 0088  
Email support@familiesoutside.org.uk  
Chat private webchat service  
Text text FAMILIOUT then your message to 60777  
Website www.familiesoutside.org.uk

Community Justice

**Support to children and families** – We will work with Families Outside to raise awareness of and improve support to families and children and to educate staff to have a better understanding of the impact of custody on family members.

Throughout 2017 we have enabled around 80 Renfrewshire staff members, including Social Workers, Health and Social Care Workers, and Families First Staff to attend the “Out of the shadows” training provided by Families Outside. This training provides participants with an understanding of the impact on families when a family member is sent to prison. 18 Renfrewshire teachers also attended training with HMP Low Moss which provided them the opportunity to understand the experience a child goes through when visiting a prison.

*Feedback from staff member attending the course. “I arrived early and, after going through security, I was asked to sit in the waiting room. It was just before visiting and there were lots of mothers/grandmothers with their children. This really hit home that this was normal life for some of these families. Going in to the visiting hall made this experience feel real too and I’d be able to speak to pupils about this if they were having to visit.”*

## **Community Justice Renfrewshire** **What Next....**



In April 2018 we published our new CJOIP 2018 to 2021. As before, we identified local priorities through research and consultation with those involved with community justice services. In the first year of this plan, we will focus on 4 key areas:

**Improved Community Understanding and Participation** – By engaging with our communities to improve understanding of and participation in community justice developments within Renfrewshire. We aim to increase awareness of the complex issues facing people with convictions within our communities and help people understand that by addressing these issues we can reduce re-offending and thus reduce the number of victims, making our communities safer.

**Employability** – By continuing to progress our “Just Learning-Skills for Employment Project”, funded by the Scottish Government’s Employment Innovation and Integration Fund. We aim to Develop the employability pipeline to better meet the needs of people with convictions in Renfrewshire and increase the number of local employers who would consider recruiting people with convictions.

**Homelessness for Prison Leavers** – We will develop initiatives to minimise the proportion of prison leavers presenting as homeless and through the ‘Keys to Learn’ project we will contribute to building skills designed to improve opportunities to access employment. We will closely monitor the trend in the number and proportion of homeless applications from those leaving prison and will track the impact of initiatives, which aim to intensively support those with convictions to sustain their tenancies.

**Mental Health and Wellbeing** - The population in contact with the criminal justice system is a vulnerable one in health and wellbeing terms, with people experiencing high levels of mental health problems, trauma, learning difficulties and challenges with problem alcohol and substance use. It is important that we develop a greater understanding of any barriers that exist, which prevent people with convictions from accessing support services. We will Identify the services in Renfrewshire who support people and explore if they are trauma informed. We will work towards improving access to information and clarify pathways to support services for mental health and wellbeing.

**We will review our plan and publish an annual report each year, which will provide an overview of outcomes and achievements. This will enable us to measure success and ensure the priorities are still the right ones and that we are grasping the opportunity to create a better community for Renfrewshire.**



## **Community Justice Scotland National Campaign**

### ***Community Justice Scotland asks, 'Who deserves a second chance?'***

On 11 October 2018 Community Justice Scotland launched its first national campaign aimed at changing perceptions of what justice should look like in 21<sup>st</sup> century Scotland.

**Second Chancers** is centred around the voices of those whose lives have been touched by the justice system. Comprising of a series of short documentary films and a touring audio exhibition, the campaign tells authentic and raw stories of success and failure, change and transformation, obstacles and helping hands. It paints a warts-and-all picture of what works, what doesn't and what we should be doing better.

Scotland has one of the highest incarceration rates in Europe. Scandinavia's incarceration rate is almost half that of Scotland's, whilst having a similar crime rate. Short sentences in prison are not only less effective at reducing reoffending than sentences in the community but can have additional effects beyond the time spent inside, including homelessness, unemployment and family separation.

Community justice aims to repair harm, address offending behaviour and support reintegration back into the community. Pay back often comprises of unpaid work and underlying issues connected to the crime are addressed through appropriate support – for example, drug and alcohol counselling or mental health treatment. Support with skills training, education, housing and employment may be provided to help the person return to the community able to look after themselves, their family and contribute economically.

### **Karyn McCluskey, Chief Executive of Community Justice Scotland said:**

'Scotland has always been a country of inventors, explorers and innovators. In the fields of science, engineering and technology, we strive for what works rather than what has always been done. Why would we approach justice any differently?'

We deserve a smart justice system driven by the best evidence of what reduces offending, repairs harm and improves the lives of everyone. Isn't that what justice is for?'

The campaign aims to increase awareness of community justice and grow public support for a smart justice system that is evidence-based, innovative and focused on solving people's problems in the most effective way.

The people sharing their stories include someone from a background of crime; who has made a one-off mistake; who has been a victim of crime; who has battled with addiction and mental health issues; as well as showcasing unpaid work projects which have restored pride to their community.

Some are a million miles away from their past, some are still walking the road to recovery – all demonstrate the importance and effectiveness of recognizing and responding to the human and their particular needs. And all tell the story of people who, through hard work, support and sheer grit, have grabbed a second chance and changed everything.

The first three films in the Second Chancers film series, are available to watch at <http://secondchancers.tv/stories/>

The app for Second Chancers, the audio exhibition, can be downloaded in the Play or Istore. The exhibition will be touring the country and dates and locations will be updated in due course. The audio stories and pictures are available to listen to online at [www.secondchancers.tv](http://www.secondchancers.tv)



We are keen that this newsletter has information that informs but is also meaningful and of interest to you all locally. With this in mind we would be happy for partners to contribute articles highlighting the good work taking place and explaining their own roles and organisations. If you would be interested in contributing, please get in touch. Remember, whether you realise it or not it is highly likely that you contribute towards community justice outcomes and we really value that contribution. You could be that one person who makes a difference to the life of someone else.

## Get involved!

Contact:

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To find out more information on Community Justice Renfrewshire and to view our plans please visit;

[www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/communityjustice](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/communityjustice)



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