

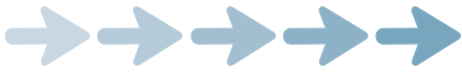


UNLOCKING THE LOCAL  
CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM



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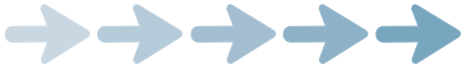
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## Introduction

Jointly produced by NAVCA and Clinks, this guide will provide information and advice for local support and development organisations and their members to help them understand and engage with the systems, structures and statutory agencies in the Criminal Justice System.





## About NAVCA's 'Supporting Work with Offenders' project

NAVCA's 'Supporting Work with Offenders' project is delivered in partnership with Clinks. It is designed to provide local support and development organisations – such as CVS and volunteer centres – with the information and resources they need to offer effective support to voluntary and community organisations working with offenders, ex-offenders and their families.

The main aims of the project are:

- to provide information, resources, learning and networking opportunities for staff working in local support and development organisations, regional organisations and voluntary and community organisations
- to raise awareness of the support and services available from local support and development organisations to local organisations working with offenders and their families
- to work in collaboration with relevant partners to strengthen volunteering opportunities and support offered to offenders.

To find details of your local support and development organisations, visit the NAVCA website at [www.navca.org.uk/liodir](http://www.navca.org.uk/liodir)





## About Clinks

Clinks supports the voluntary and community sector working with offenders in England and Wales. Clinks aims to ensure the sector and all those with whom it works, are informed and engaged in order to transform the lives of offenders. It does this through:

- providing representation and voice
- promoting the sector
- influencing policy and campaigning
- providing information and publications
- running training and events
- providing services and support
- undertaking research and development.

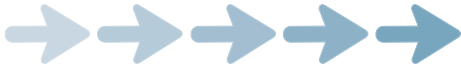
Clinks also provides advice and support to over 4,500 people working to support the rehabilitation of offenders.



supporting voluntary organisations that  
work with offenders and their families

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Web: [www.clinks.org](http://www.clinks.org)



*Voluntary organisations and community groups are led by core values that include a focus on the service user, a commitment to social justice, and a belief in the importance of strong communities.*

## The Criminal Justice System and the voluntary and community sector

### What is the Criminal Justice System?

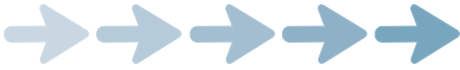
**criminal justice** *n.* a generic term for the procedure by which criminal conduct is investigated, arrests made, evidence gathered, charges brought, defences raised, trials conducted, sentences rendered, and punishment carried out.

The voluntary and community sector brings essential qualities as partners to the development, delivery, evaluation and improvement of support services for offenders and their families. It helps those serving sentences address the issues that contribute to their offending and supports them with the additional difficulties that may result from having served a sentence.

Ex-offenders often find it harder to get a job, obtain secure accommodation, access health services, and generally regain status as a citizen. Many require counselling, guidance and specialised support to enable them to reintegrate back into their community and families.

*Voluntary organisations and community groups are led by core values that include a focus on the service user, a commitment to social justice, and a belief in the importance of strong communities. Many were established specifically to address social issues and meet the needs of the community. They have detailed knowledge and understanding of the local communities in which their members and volunteers work.*

*Voluntary organisations and community groups have unique expertise in caring for vulnerable and marginalised individuals. Offenders can trust them to work to meet their needs, and often regard statutory services with a degree of scepticism. Voluntary organisations and community groups are well placed to offer formal and informal advice and support to offenders, and to act as trusted intermediaries with statutory services.*



## Working with offenders and their families

### An overview of sentencing

Voluntary organisations and community groups may be asked to deliver support and services for the rehabilitation of offenders. It is important that local support and development organisations and service providers understand sentencing and the range of community and custodial sentences that voluntary and community organisations may be asked to deliver.

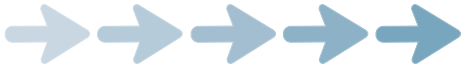
Voluntary organisations and community groups may deliver a direct service to an offender or their family as part of their sentence plan within the time and resources available (while in prison or in the community), or they may work with them indirectly as part of their wider work, for example in the fields of supported housing, drug and alcohol counselling, mental health services, family support and services for women.

### Prison sentences

Prison sentences are intended to punish and rehabilitate. Prisoners are assessed following an induction and follow an agreed sentence plan which looks to address their risk of reoffending and address needs across nine pathways (see page 9). All prisons work with external partners, including voluntary organisations and community groups, to provide services for offenders. This includes supporting visiting families in visitors' centres, providing literacy support and linking offenders with volunteer mentors who will support them after release.

Within each prison there should be an identified prison officer who acts as the key link with external voluntary organisations and community groups, facilitating access to the prison and supporting their involvement.

For more information on prisons and how they work visit [www.hmprisons.gov.uk](http://www.hmprisons.gov.uk)



### Community sentences

A community sentence or order is designed to combine punishment with changing the offender's behaviour. This may include supporting the offender to deal with personal problems, such as alcohol or drug misuse, and other issues that may be contributory factors to offending. The management of community sentences is the responsibility of the probation service. VCS services are often included as a component of community sentences through a requirement in a community order. Community orders are imposed by a magistrate/judge.

Voluntary organisations and community groups are often involved in providing drug treatment programmes, housing provision and support, and mentoring services.

### The Courts Service

Her Majesty's Courts Service (HMCS) is an executive agency of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). Its remit is to deliver justice effectively and efficiently to the public. It is responsible for managing the magistrates' courts, the Crown Court, county courts, the High Court and Court of Appeal in England and Wales. [www.hmcourts-service.gov.uk/](http://www.hmcourts-service.gov.uk/)



# CASE STUDY

## HMCS problem solving pilots

For the vast majority of those passing through magistrates' courts, whose offence may not be so severe as to merit probation supervision, there is currently little practical assistance available in addressing the issues which may be contributing to or perpetuating their offending behaviour, such as alcohol misuse or debt. By joining up with voluntary and community organisations and public sector organisations, HMCS problem solving pilots aim to improve the availability of services that can help address such underlying issues, leading to reduced reoffending and improved court outcomes for victims, witnesses and communities.

The six pilot areas went live between December 2009 and February 2010. To date there have been over 950 referrals across the pilot areas.

Selby Action for Voluntary Service (SAVS) is involved in its local pilot. The pilot began in May 2010 and will last for six months. A member of staff from SAVS spends one morning a week in Selby County Court to accept referrals from the magistrate. The officer speaks to the offender and signposts

them to services from relevant organisations which they can then access. Examples include referrals to local alcohol advisory services for those committing alcohol-related crime or, for problems with money management, referrals to CAB (Citizens Advice Bureau) for debt management support.

The work is focused on low risk offenders, with SAVS expecting a low referral rate from court, for example only one or two referred per month. The reality is that it received seven referrals in that time and is considering whether to open this up to repeat offenders, but who are still deemed low risk.

*"I have found the pilot very interesting and have gained a greater understanding of how the magistrate's court works and the problems they have to deal with. I think the problem solving pilot has proved useful and, given time, will provide help in addressing some of the issues the offenders have. We have received the expected number of referrals, mainly alcohol related, but have had a very low take up. It is still early days and the offenders can take up the referrals at any time and in fact when I speak with them if they seem reluctant I ask them to go away and think about it and stress they can contact the agencies at any time in the future when they are ready."* Gill Bell, Selby AVS

# CASE STUDY

## Sefton CVS and HM Prison Kennet Partnership Project

Sefton CVS employs a partnerships officer who is based part-time within HM Prison (HMP) Kennet. Funded by HMP Kennet for three years, this project aims to enhance prison engagement with third sector partners and develop strong community engagement between the Sefton Merseyside community and HMP Kennet. This enables offenders to access support to reduce reoffending both inside and outside the prison estate.

Key activities include:

- supporting voluntary organisations and community groups to acquire access to the prison
- representing voluntary organisations and community groups in HMP Kennet
- providing information, advice and guidance to prison staff and prisoners
- organising events, for example family days
- identifying gaps and supporting providers across the nine pathways (see page 8)
- improving and increasing volunteering and access to positive opportunities for offenders.

*“He felt like a pillar in the prison community and shared his life experiences with people in the hope they wouldn’t make the same mistakes”.*

Robbie Durgan, Deputy Governor at HMP Kennet, talks about an offender involved in prison volunteering

*“The project has been challenging, criminal justice organisations work very differently to third sector groups and we have had to be flexible, adaptable and willing to respond to a range of enquiries to gain confidence and build trust within the prison, the staff and with the offenders. The project has enabled Sefton CVS to support local third sector groups involvement in the delivery services and support for offenders who will be released into the local and wider community”.* Paula Atherton, Sefton CVS

*“This model was born out of the frustration at trying to manage a lot of Service Level Agreements and evaluating outcomes with little success. I approached SCVS as a mobiliser of the Third Sector who could give access to many organisations according to offender need. Outcomes are now routinely monitored and gaps in provision are easily overcome. Do not know how we ever managed effectively without them - don’t think we did!”*





## Understanding the structures within the Criminal Justice System

### National Offender Management Service

The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) is responsible for the work of prisons and probation trusts, bringing together the work of other government departments that provide services to offenders.

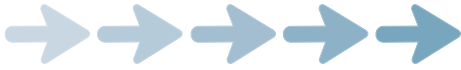
This work is reflected in interventions addressing offender needs across the nine offender pathways, with seven generic pathways and two gender-specific pathways:

- Accommodation
- Education, training and employment
- Health
- Drugs and alcohol
- Finance, benefit and debt
- Children and families
- Attitudes, thinking and behaviour
- Women victims of domestic and physical abuse
- Women working in the sex industry

NOMS operates within the nine English regions and Wales, led by a Director of Offender Management (DOM) who has delegated responsibility to manage the prisons within each region and oversee the work of every probation trust in the region.

The role of the regional NOMS teams is to set strategic reducing reoffending targets for their regions and to delegate delivery responsibility to probation trusts and prison governors. NOMS teams play a role in the award of large contracts in relation to prison-based services or employment services funded through European Social Funding. Each regional team includes a designated partnership officer who supports and develops engagement with other partners across the region.

There is growing recognition within prisons and probation trusts of the importance of engaging with the voluntary and community



*Just over a quarter of offenders serving community sentences are aged 16-20 and just less than three-quarters are aged 21 and over*

sector, harnessing the range of services it can provide for offenders, ex-offenders and their families both in prisons and in the community.

*Voluntary organisations and community groups are well placed to help deliver services to reduce crime, promote social inclusion, and maximise opportunities for effective rehabilitation. They bring valuable local knowledge, expertise, specialist skills and a fresh and innovative approach to working with offenders. This benefits the offender and their family, and also supports the work of prisons and probation trusts, communities and society.*

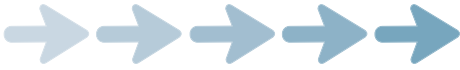
### **The Probation Service**

Under the Offender Management Act 2007, independent probation trusts replaced probation area boards. The majority of probation trusts continue to cover the same geographical territory as probation area boards; some areas are merging to form larger trusts. For a list of probation trusts go to **[www.probation.homeoffice.gov.uk/output/Page21.asp](http://www.probation.homeoffice.gov.uk/output/Page21.asp)**.

Probation trusts provide their own in-house services to fulfil their statutory duties in relation to serious high risk offenders and public protection. Probation trusts have responsibility for working with community safety partnerships (CSPs) and a range of other departments at a local level to provide and commission interventions and other services from providers in the public, private and voluntary and community sectors.

Each year the Probation Service commences the supervision of some 175,000 offenders. The caseload on any given day is in excess of 200,000. Approximately 90% are male and 10% are female. Just over a quarter of offenders serving community sentences are aged 16-20 and just less than three-quarters are aged 21 and over: **[www.probation.homeoffice.gov.uk/output/page2.asp](http://www.probation.homeoffice.gov.uk/output/page2.asp)**.

Probation trusts are required to work with local communities delivering services through local delivery units (LDUs). Typically these cover one, occasionally two, shire, county or unitary authority areas. Each LDU has an area manager



who is responsible for all work delivered or commissioned by the probation trust. The LDU manager is also responsible for engaging with other local statutory and VCS partners.

### Public service agreements

Public service agreements (PSAs) set out specific outcome expectations for expenditure and delivery and are supported by indicators at local levels.

PSAs provide an opportunity to embed the reducing reoffending agenda across regional levels to support effective local delivery.

*Due to the change in government, national and local indicators are under review and this leaflet will be updated to reflect any changes.*

### Local strategic partnerships and local area agreements

Each local authority has a local strategic partnership (LSP) established to deliver the targets and plans agreed through its local area agreement (LAA) with government. The membership of LSPs includes statutory, voluntary and private sector agencies.



LAAs are negotiated between local and central government. NAVCA has produced two leaflets relating to LAAs: 'What are LAAs?' and 'LAA: what's it got to do with me?'. These can be downloaded from the Improving Local Partnerships Infobank at [www.navca.org.uk/localvs/infobank/localisation/laas/](http://www.navca.org.uk/localvs/infobank/localisation/laas/).

There are over 32 national indicators that relate to reducing reoffending or contribute to reducing reoffending. A full list of indicators can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/mvnxmy>.

### Safer and stronger community partnerships

Each local strategic partnership has a specific strand or theme focusing on achieving safer and stronger communities. The partnerships are made up of a wide range of public, private and voluntary and community organisations who are working together to reduce crime, anti-social behaviour, substance misuse and domestic abuse in the local area.



### Community safety partnerships

In each local authority in England and Wales there is a community safety partnership (CSP). The CSP panel should be representative of statutory, voluntary and private organisations with a role in crime reduction. CSPs are encouraged to engage with as many local agencies and voluntary groups as possible in order to achieve a truly community-based multi-agency approach to crime reduction.

CSPs have a statutory duty under the Policing and Crime Act 2009 to reduce reoffending. The Act also requires probation trusts to become a responsible authority for CSPs with the local authority, police authorities and health authorities.

Responsibilities of CSPs include:

- researching the local levels of different crime and disorder problems
- consulting with local communities to ensure statistics match local perceptions, especially those of groups vulnerable to hate crime
- developing and reviewing three-year strategies to address local challenges, with appropriate targets.

For more information on CSPs visit [www.csas.org.uk/cdrp](http://www.csas.org.uk/cdrp) or contact your local authority.

### Local criminal justice boards

Across England and Wales, 42 local criminal justice boards (LCJBs) bring together the chief officers of the key criminal justice agencies including police, probation, youth offending teams, HM Courts Service, Crown Prosecution Service, and HM Prison Service. In addition, LCJBs may co-opt other relevant bodies (e.g. Victim Support).

LCJBs should work closely with crime and disorder reduction partnerships to consider:

- the findings of consultations with local communities
- evidence from police intelligence about local crime



*Local support and development organisations have an important role to play in communicating with the wider sector, in brokering engagement and in helping to facilitate improved partnership working.*

- the performance of the CJS in delivering justice
- effective means of dealing with various types of offenders.

To find your local criminal justice board, please visit [www.cjsonline.gov.uk/in\\_your\\_area/](http://www.cjsonline.gov.uk/in_your_area/).

#### **Multi-agency partnerships in criminal justice**

All of these agencies and multi-agency structures view it as increasingly important to engage with voluntary organisations and community groups. These relationships can be:

- strategic – influencing the priorities for criminal justice in local areas and contributing to the design of services to meet needs
- delivery – being commissioned to provide specific services and interventions for offenders and their families
- referral partners – establishing agreements to accept offenders and their families into their services.

In certain areas efforts are being made to streamline the structures, for example by merging criminal justice boards, CSPs and ‘safer and stronger community’ partnerships covering the same geographical areas.

*Local support and development organisations have an important role to play in communicating with the wider sector, in brokering engagement and in helping to facilitate improved partnership working.*

# CASE STUDY

## Gloucestershire Association for Voluntary and Community Action

Gloucestershire Association for Voluntary and Community Action (GAVCA) received funding from NAVCA's Supporting Work with Offenders networking support grant to deliver an event bringing together local VCS organisations working with offenders and families, victims of crime and local Criminal Justice System (CJS) agencies.

The Partnership Planning Group included:

- Gloucestershire Assembly
- Gloucestershire Criminal Justice Board (GCJB)
- Gloucestershire Probation Trust
- Clinks South West

During the planning stages the GCJB agreed to provide funding for GAVCA to facilitate future VCS representation on its Reducing Re-offending and Engagement and Communication sub-groups. This was an important step in building capacity to take on a

more clearly defined 'brokerage' role between the wider VCS and CJS structures in the county.

The 'Safer and Stronger Together: Improving partnership working between the Voluntary and Community and Public Sectors' event was held in March 2010. It was very well attended by VCS organisations and statutory partners including GCJB, police, probation, Integrated Offender Management, prisons, Courts Service, Gloucestershire County Council and the PCT.

Delegates participated in workshops focusing on real issues affecting partnership working in the CJS. The event identified a number of priorities for future action to improve engagement and partnership work with the VCS, which will be taken forward by the planning group.

*During the planning stages the GCJB agreed to provide funding for GAVCA to facilitate future VCS representation on its Reducing Re-offending and Engagement and Communication sub-groups.*





## How to find out more about the Criminal Justice System in your local area

1. Contact your local probation trust and approach the local delivery unit (LDU) manager regarding local commissioning opportunities and the work of the crime and disorder reduction partnership (CDRP). You can find out more at [www.probation.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.probation.homeoffice.gov.uk)
2. If you are a local support and development organisation you should view the IDeA website below and identify the priority targets in your LAA.  
[www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=8399638](http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=8399638)
3. If you are a voluntary organisation or community group, contact your local support and development organisation to find out about the local strategic partnership (LSP) and the priorities for Safer and Stronger Communities in your area. Locate your local support and development organisation at [www.navca.org.uk/liodir](http://www.navca.org.uk/liodir)
4. For information about working in or improving partnership working with prisons go to the HM Prison Service website, locate the prison(s) in your area and contact the prison's VCS co-ordinator (sometimes also known as the partnership co-ordinator or community links co-ordinator).  
[www.hmprisonservice.gov.uk/](http://www.hmprisonservice.gov.uk/)
5. To find voluntary organisations and community groups working with offenders and their families in your area, visit Clinks' Working with Offenders Directory  
[www.workingwithoffenders.org](http://www.workingwithoffenders.org)





## Further information

### Public sector organisations

#### **Criminal Justice System (CJS)**

[www.cjsonline.gov.uk/](http://www.cjsonline.gov.uk/)

#### **HM Inspectorate of Prisons**

[www.justice.gov.uk/inspectors/hmi-prisons/](http://www.justice.gov.uk/inspectors/hmi-prisons/)

#### **HM Inspectorate of Probation**

[www.justice.gov.uk/inspectors/hmi-probation/](http://www.justice.gov.uk/inspectors/hmi-probation/)

#### **HM Prison Service**

[www.hmprisonservice.gov.uk/](http://www.hmprisonservice.gov.uk/)

Describes the work of the prison service and also has a 'prison locator' providing details of all prisons in England and Wales.

#### **HM Probation Service**

[www.probation.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.probation.homeoffice.gov.uk)

#### **Home Office (HO) – Crime Reduction**

[www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/](http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/)

Provides information about crime and disorder reduction partnerships.

#### **Improvement and Development Agency**

[www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageId=8399638](http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageId=8399638)

Independent body that supports the work of local government. This link provides information about the local area agreement priority targets for each local authority in England including those that relate to crime and reoffending.

#### **The Legal Services Commission**

[www.legalservices.gov.uk](http://www.legalservices.gov.uk)

#### **Local criminal justice boards**

<http://lcjb.cjsonline.gov.uk/>

This has an online map to identify your local criminal justice board.



### **Ministry of Justice (MoJ)**

[www.justice.gov.uk/](http://www.justice.gov.uk/)

### **NOMS (National Offender Management Service)**

[www.noms.homeoffice.gov.uk/](http://www.noms.homeoffice.gov.uk/)

Provides a link to contact information for each probation service area in England and Wales.

### **Offender managers**

[www.noms.justice.gov.uk/protecting-the-public/supervision/](http://www.noms.justice.gov.uk/protecting-the-public/supervision/)

Describes the work of offender managers.

### **Youth Justice Board (YJB)**

[www.yjb.gov.uk/en-gb/](http://www.yjb.gov.uk/en-gb/)

## **Voluntary and community sector organisations**

### **Clinks**

[www.clinks.org/](http://www.clinks.org/)

Voluntary sector infrastructure body supporting voluntary and community organisations working with offenders and their families.

### **Development Trusts Association (DTA)**

[www.dta.org.uk/](http://www.dta.org.uk/)

The Development Trusts Association is the leading network of community enterprise practitioners dedicated to helping people set up development trusts and helping existing development trusts learn from each other and work effectively.

### **The Howard League for Penal Reform**

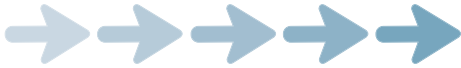
[www.howardleague.org/](http://www.howardleague.org/)

Campaigning penal reform organisation.

### **Nacro (formerly National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders)**

[www.nacro.org.uk](http://www.nacro.org.uk)

The largest crime reduction charity in England and Wales providing employment, training, and accommodation services to offenders and those at risk of offending.

**NAVCA**

[www.navca.org.uk/supportingoffenders](http://www.navca.org.uk/supportingoffenders)

National infrastructure body for local support and development organisations. Provides information, advice and guidance about the Supporting Offenders Project and much more.

**National Association for Youth Justice (NAYJ)**

[www.nayj.org.uk/website/](http://www.nayj.org.uk/website/)

Campaigning and training organisation focussing on youth justice and children's rights issues.

**Prison Reform Trust**

[www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/](http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/)

Research and campaigning organisation working to improve the prison system and the treatment of prisoners.

**Volunteering England**

[www.volunteering.org.uk/](http://www.volunteering.org.uk/)

Volunteering England is a volunteer development agency committed to supporting, enabling and celebrating volunteering in all its diversity.

**Youth Support Services**

[www.yss.org.uk/](http://www.yss.org.uk/)

YSS is an independent charity, providing a wide range of innovative support services for over 2000 young people a year who are at risk of social exclusion.





**navca**

local focus national voice

NAVCA is the national voice of local support and development organisations in England. We champion and strengthen voluntary and community action by supporting our members in their work with over 160,000 local charities and community groups. NAVCA believes that voluntary and community action is vital for vibrant and caring communities.

We provide our members with networking opportunities, specialist advice, support, policy information and training. NAVCA is a vital bridge between local groups and national government.

Our specialist teams take a lead on the issues that matter most to local support and development organisations. We influence national and local government policy to strengthen local voluntary and community action.

Membership is open to all local support and development organisations.

For more details about the full range of ways that NAVCA can help you please go to [www.navca.org.uk](http://www.navca.org.uk) or call us on 0114 278 6636.

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