



NORTH LANARKSHIRE COMMUNITY JUSTICE ANNUAL REPORT

2022-2023



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Foreword

Welcome to the North Lanarkshire Community Justice Partnership (NLCJP) Annual Report 2022-23. The NLCJP is responsible for reducing reoffending in North Lanarkshire. It has representatives from across justice statutory organisations, as well as an endorsed third sector network. Additionally, the voices of people with lived experience of the justice system, staff and the community are sought and used by the partnership, alongside data to make decisions in the planning and development of services. In this report you will find examples of how partners have worked together to improve support and interventions for those in the justice system to reduce reoffending and therefore make communities safer. There are also examples of how people with convictions have paid back their communities by carrying out work in North Lanarkshire.

The publication of the Revised National Community Justice Strategy in June 2022 has been welcomed by the NLCJP, following the necessity to extend the previous North Lanarkshire Community Justice Outcome Improvement Plan ([National Strategy for Community Justice](#)). The NLCJP consider the aims and priorities of the revised strategy as a positive direction for community justice. During the reporting period the NLCJP has undertaken activities to understand the needs of people in the justice system by engaging with key stakeholders including those with lived experience, third sector organisations, the public and partner workforce, as well as reviewing related data. The work completed led to the development and publication of the NLCJOIP 2023-28 ([North Lanarkshire Community Justice Partnership](#)).

The NLCJP is committed to work together to reduce reoffending and therefore improve the lives of people living in North Lanarkshire.



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Background

The Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016 (the Act) sets out the statutory duty of designated partners to implement the Scottish Government national strategy relating to community justice at a local level. Community justice is principally about organisations working together to ensure that people who have offended address the underlying causes of their behaviour, and pay back to the community where appropriate. It aims to encourage rehabilitation, reduce reoffending, and protect the public, leading to fewer victims and safer communities.

The membership of partnership includes statutory partners:

- North Lanarkshire Council (across services)
- NHS Lanarkshire

- Police Scotland
- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
- North Lanarkshire Health and Social Care Integration Joint Board
- Skills Development Scotland
- Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service
- Scottish Prison Service
- Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.

Additionally, Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire representing third sector colleagues.



Governance Arrangements

The North Lanarkshire Strategic Leadership Board is the key strategic multi-agency planning mechanism in North Lanarkshire and is responsible for the joint delivery of the priorities detailed in The Plan for North Lanarkshire on a partnership basis. At a community level, the role is provided by 9 community boards. The 9 Boards enhance and support community involvement to provide a single approach for local community-led decision making. This is further enhanced through the ongoing delivery of co-produced local Outcome Improvement Plans in each of the 9 Community Board areas. Action plans stemming from these, highlight and address the key priorities for each area. Local Partnership Teams have been established to drive delivery of the LOIPs and with responsibility for effective monitoring and management. The responsibility for driving forward the community justice agenda has been devolved to North Lanarkshire Community Justice Partnership, with the leadership board providing strategic oversight and appropriate connections to other partnerships.

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What have we been doing?

During 2022-23 the North Lanarkshire Community Justice Partnership (NLCJP) reviewed and updated our Strategic Needs and Strengths and Needs Assessment (SNSA). The purpose of the SNSA is to understand the needs of people and the impact of community justice.

The SNSA supports evidence-led strategic planning to effectively address the needs of people in our local area. Activity undertaken in the development of the SNSA included:

- **Review of North Lanarkshire population data**
- **Public and workforce surveys**
- **Focus groups and individual meetings with people with lived experience**
- **Engagement with North Lanarkshire Community Justice Endorsed Third Sector Network**
- **Analysis of data to understand the needs of people in the justice system**
- **Review performance related to the accessibility, availability and effectiveness of service provision.**

The Updated SNSA 2023 includes robust data relating to crime, sentencing, needs and services relating to men and women who reside in North Lanarkshire. The information and data gathered within the updated NLCJP SNSA was used to highlight key themes and identified improvement opportunities to contribute to the development of North Lanarkshire Community Justice Outcome Improvement Plan 2023-28 (NLCJOIP).

During the reporting period 127,057 hours were imposed in relation to unpaid work and other activity, which constitutes a 64% rise from the previous year. In total 75,465 unpaid work hours were completed. These hours were carried out via a combination of single placements, squad placements, home working and other activity. NLCJP partners continue to work together to deliver services that address offending behaviour and support people to move on with their lives more positively.

Unpaid work NLC justice services have provided 115 refurbished bikes to both adults and children in the North Lanarkshire area during the reporting period. In September 2022 a new initiative was launched to repair bikes for people who struggle financially in North Lanarkshire, 32 repairs were completed up to April 2023. Through regular appeals to staff and members of the local community, people have donated bikes, materials and recycled wood to make Rags to Rugs, draught excluders, positive mental health and anti-bullying wooden signs, which are unpaid work home working tasks that can support people in the justice system who have specific needs, including health and childcare responsibilities, which prevent involvement in group and community based projects. These are distributed to people in need via the local SSPCA, Dogs Trust, Police dogs, foodbanks and wooden signs are displayed throughout NLC. During 2022- 2023, 204 draught excluders, 137 rags to rugs and 136 wooden signs were distributed. All large items made by service users have plaques advising that they were completed by people on community payback orders.



The following are testimonies from the beneficiaries of having work identified by North Lanarkshire Restorative Justice Team and undertaken by people subject to Community Payback Orders:

- ***“The Squads carrying out work makes it so much easier for our plot holders and now the private placements have kept the allotments looking good”*** – Greenlink Allotment Group
- ***“The Restorative Justice Service redeveloped a piece of waste ground, at the back of the veterans hub in Craigneuk into a fabulous garden area that will improve the mental health and wellbeing of the veterans. This transformation could not have been done without the help of the Restorative Justice Service and the Veterans Community in Lanarkshire are extremely grateful for the help and support of the service. Many thanks.”*** – Veterans Community (Lanarkshire) SCIO
- ***“Thanks for the two bikes for the Kids at Christmas, it will make their Christmas morning”*** – Active Schools Co-ordinator
- ***“The squads have done great work getting the parks back to a level they can be used again. I pass on my thanks to Supervisors, Service Users and management”*** - Burnbank Bowling Club
- ***“Just to say the Supervisor and staff have done so well already in painting the building”*** – Addiction Team Leader Bellshil.
- ***“The work was completed to an exceptionally high standard, the Supervisor who was in charge of the team was excellent, he kept me right in what stain to buy to ensure it wasn’t slippy for the tenants etc. The place is looking great and finished just in time for the tenants to sit out and enjoy the warmer weather”*** – Sheltered housing staff

- ***“We are delighted to share phase 1 of the works are now complete! A mammoth task clearing the overgrown area by restorative justice community payback teams. Amazing Job, thank you N.L.C.”*** – Auchinloch Community Council
- ***“Thanks for getting the squads in to remove all the metal swings from the garden and for tidying up the garden, the work is most appreciated”*** – Mavisbank School staff.



Continued availability of Scottish Government funds has facilitated the ongoing commissioning of third sector partners to support the delivery of interventions related to the 'other activity' component of CPOs. This partnership working ensures that people subject to CPO have access to a range of opportunities to develop their skills. Commissioned organisations included Wise Group, Love Learning and the Creative Change Collective. NLC Justice Services also support people to complete other activity by:

- **Completing worksheets relating to a wide range of issues**
- **Online educational courses**
- **Parenting courses**
- **Employability courses**
- **Engaging with employability services, addictions, and other support services**
- **Practical skills courses**

Interventions focused on wellbeing, problem solving, consequential thinking, positive use of time, literacy/numeracy, employment, creativity and personal development. Feedback from participants reported an enhancement of self-worth, motivation and self-confidence, as well as improved mental wellbeing. Some service users also believed that their involvement has enabled them to consider more positive pathways for their future.

A member of the NLC Tackling Poverty Team is now a permanent member of the NLCJP. During the reporting period, a NLCJP meeting was focussed around tackling poverty, with a member of the team delivering a briefing to partners highlighting issues related to the financial crisis and the impact on people within North Lanarkshire. Despite the 'Cash First' approach which was adopted by North Lanarkshire in 2015 and continues to lead the way across the country with the Scottish Government, Trussell Trust and other local authorities adopting the model, the sustained pressure on households and individual budgets during the crisis is having a significant impact. Access to specialist welfare rights based support has been reconfigured to enable faster and simpler access to the expertise of North Lanarkshire's Tackling Poverty Team. Alongside this, the Food Poverty Action Group, which includes many statutory and third sector partners, has continued to develop and deliver advice, guidance and practical assistance to those in financial and food poverty. Additionally, collaboration between NLC Justice Service, the Court Social Work Services, NLC Housing Solutions and the NLC Tackling Poverty Team has resulted in those leaving Court having access to written information and advice covering a range of issues and signposting towards support options, including support with benefits, housing, food and energy poverty related matters.

NLC Restorative Justice Services delivered diversion from prosecution briefing sessions to Police Scotland and NLC Social Work colleagues. This aim of training was to increase awareness and knowledge of how diversion from prosecution can be used to work with people and prevent them entering the justice system.

Naloxone training was rolled out to unpaid work supervisors and service users during 2022 – 2023, with participants receiving a certificate to confirm completion of this training. Similarly a first aid course was delivered to service users to learn vital first aid skills, for which they also received a certificate on completion of this one day course.

The North Lanarkshire Arrest Referral Service (NLARS) is an 18 Month Test of Change funded by North Lanarkshire Alcohol and Drug Partnership (NLADP) and developed in partnership with the NLCJP, for people arrested and held in police custody. During the reporting year, NLCJP, NLADP and Police Scotland undertook a review of data relating to the numbers of people being held in custody centres in North Lanarkshire, the needs of people in the justice system and service delivery models elsewhere in Scotland. Engagement events with people with lived experience, statutory and third sector partners also took place. Two local third sector organisations Scottish Drugs Forum and Phoenix Futures were identified to deliver the service across the two custody centres in North Lanarkshire and who have employed support workers with experience of the justice system. The service aims to ensure that people have support to access local community based services at the earliest opportunity following arrest engage with people to improve access to treatment where alcohol, drugs or mental health issues have been factors in their presentation within police custody. The NLARS has now been operational since April 2023.



The NHS Lanarkshire Keep Well Nurse Service (KW) works in partnership with NLC Justice Services to provide clinics for people in the justice system. The holistic Keep Well health check was delivered to 65 individuals during 2022 -2023 with 34 clinics held.

45% people seen were referred onto their GP practice for further management due to abnormal clinical finding or health concerns identified at the health check. Case management support was offered to these individuals as well as to others where additional support was required to assist with engagement with other services. 75% of people seen by Keep Well benefited from this support. 34% were referred onto leisure services to aid an increase in physical activity. 30% people accepted testing for Blood Borne Virus detection. 6% people benefited from a referral to Sexual Health and Cancer Screening Project. 7% people were referred to addiction support services and 5% people accepted referral to Quit Your Way team for support to stop smoking. Other referrals made by the team included Dieticians, Weigh to Go, Carer Support Services. People were also signposted to Tackling Poverty Services and Well Connected to support mental health. The partnership working of NLC Justice Services, NHS Lanarkshire Keep Well and the local NHS Lanarkshire health services have consistently resulted in people in the justice system engaging with services to improve their health and wellbeing.

NLCJP partner funding received from NLC Employability Support and Skills Development has enabled the extension of voluntary throughcare support in North Lanarkshire. The commitment of funding was agreed following significant work undertaken by the NLCJP Education and Employability Group to review the voluntary support available to people on release from prison following serving a short term prison sentence. The group engaged with people with lived experience and staff, as well as reviewing available data. This evidence highlighted a need to increase voluntary support to people leaving custody.

'Bridges and Beyond' has been developed over the last year. The project identifies short term prisoners who originate from North Lanarkshire who may benefit from support upon release to resettle. The project works closely with NLC Housing Solutions, NLC Employability Support and Skills Development, NHS Lanarkshire, Addiction Recovery Teams, Scottish Prison Service, NLC Tackling Poverty Team and the families of our individuals being released to support them to achieve better outcomes. Whilst the project is in its infancy it is already proving to be beneficial in supporting reintegration.



Case Study 1 - Throughcare

A male released on non-parole licence had a history of violent offending and non compliance with previous periods of licence. Previous episodes of offending are linked to negative peer association, poor use of time and substance misuse. The service user was assessed as posing a very high risk of general re-offending and a high risk of causing serious harm. Upon release from custody the allocated worker worked closely with housing colleagues to find suitable accommodation which was geographically distanced from the area he was previously involved in criminality. As he had never lived independently within his own tenancy, additional support was provided to ensure he was supported with household management tasks, budgeting and cooking, he was also supported to familiarise himself with the local area. He was also referred to the addiction recovery team to undertake work on relapse prevention and learn more about the impact of alcohol and drug misuse. Once stable and his confidence had increased, he was then referred to Routes to Work and after completing some individual work with his work coach he was successful in securing employment in a local distribution centre. At his final review his work coach attended and provided a positive report from his employer confirming that he was a valued member of their team and that he had shown excellent timekeeping and a strong work ethic. He was also able to have his tenancy made permanent as he had settled well and housing colleagues were happy that he had maintained the property to a high standard and had kept his rent account fully up to date.

Case Study 2 - Women's Community Service

A woman subject to a community payback order with supervision requirement as a result of an assault on her child was supported and supervised by the woman's community justice team. Initially, the woman was unable to recognise her involvement in the offence and the impact her actions had on her child's safety and development. As such, the woman had restricted contact to her child which was supervised by children and families Social Work.

Both Women's Service and Children and Families Social worked closely together to structure offence focussed conversations with the woman to reflect on her parenting and to educate and enlighten the woman on the impact of domestic abuse and physical chastisement. As work progressed, so did the relationship between the woman and the Social Workers which built trust and a deeper understanding of parenting capacity.

This led to the woman acknowledging the impact of aggression and violence on children within multi agency meetings and a body of evidence accumulated which indicated meaningful behaviour change. The woman was now able to acknowledge her actions and the damaging affect violence can have on any child's emotional and physical wellbeing. This meant that the woman's capacity as a caregiver became more reliable and gave agencies increased confidence that the child would be safe if contact restrictions lessened. The conversations that facilitated this process were underpinned by the principles of the Solihull approach which both Social Worker's had a good working knowledge of and used to guide discussions. Information sharing with the child's school and kinship carers helped inform future safety planning and ensure the child's needs were at the centre of decision making.

The structure of the community payback order strengthened this process and the interventions provided by the women's service led to notable positive outcomes including improved family relationships, resumption of safe parental caregiving, increased knowledge of child development and reduction in the risk of future offending.

Looking forward...

The Revised National Community Justice Strategy has set a clear direction for community justice in local partnership areas. The NLCJP has undertaken a wide variety of activities in this reporting period to understand our strengths and areas of development, which has informed the development of the North Lanarkshire Community Justice Outcome Improvement Plan 2023-28 (NLCJOIP).

The NLCJOIP has identified 5 key priorities underpinned by 31 actions, which will be driven by annual plans of activity. Crucially, mechanisms are being developed to ensure the participation of those with lived experience and to raise awareness of community justice within local communities. Progress in relation to the NLCJOIP, will be led by partners and measured via the development of a performance framework.



