

Community Justice Renfrewshire

Outcome Improvement Plan 2023 to 2026

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1. What is Community Justice?

Community justice is where people who have broken the law are held to account and supported to reconnect and contribute to their communities.

It's about ensuring those whose lives have been impacted by the justice system receive the right support, at the right time, through the best possible means. For those who work in the justice system, it's about working smarter to understand how we can encourage rehabilitation, reduce reoffending, and see fewer people falling victim to crime.

Where it is safe to do so, people who commit certain crimes receive community-based sentences. This can include treatment for underlying issues such as drug or alcohol addiction, unpaid work, fines and compensation, or restrictions of liberty such as electronic monitoring and curfews.

A community justice approach is also relevant to those leaving custodial sentences and moving back into our communities. It shapes our thinking around how we manage risk whilst providing support and opportunities to ease reintegration and minimise the likelihood of returning to custody and causing further harm to communities.

Evidence shows community justice can help people stop breaking the law again, leading to fewer victims and safer communities.

2. Who are Community Justice Renfrewshire?

Community Justice Renfrewshire (CJR) is the forum where we plan, design, monitor and report on community justice activity. CJR is established within Renfrewshire's Community Planning arrangements, meaning our work feeds into wider activity to improve outcomes for local people.

CJR's broad membership represents statutory and third sectors. Members include:

- Renfrewshire Council
- Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership
- Police Scotland
- Scottish Fire and Rescue
- Scottish Courts and Tribunals
- Scottish Prison Service
- Skills Development Scotland
- Crown Office & Procurator Fiscal Service
- Engage Renfrewshire (third sector interface)
- Criminal Justice Voluntary Sector Forum

- Victim Support
- The Wise Group
- Apex Scotland
- Turning Point Scotland
- NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde
- Renfrewshire Alcohol and Drug Partnership (ADP)
- OneRen
- Action for Children
- Department for Work and Pensions

Delivering community justice for Renfrewshire depends on effective partnership working. CJR provides the space and time to think about what we do as single agencies and how we can add value to it by sharing ideas, information, and resources that help us target services to those that need it most.

This work is supported by Renfrewshire’s Community Justice Lead Officer. It is their job to frame the strategic thinking of statutory and non-statutory partners and support the structures, processes and deliverables that contribute to nationally determined community justice outcomes.

CJR reports to the Community Planning Partnership Executive Committee and the Communities and Housing Policy Board for oversight and governance by elected members. A range of partners are involved in multi-agency processes including MAPPA (Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangements), MARAC (Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conferences) and MATAAC (Multi-agency Tasking and Co-ordination) all of which create multi-agency risk management plans.

3. Why have a community justice approach?

Effective community justice has the potential to benefit whole communities. It encourages us to look at the experience and circumstances of those who commit crime to understand the drivers, decisions and behaviour that result in the offence. For some, this lets us identify alternatives to custody that focus on rehabilitation and re-integration, something that evidence suggests can be more effective in reducing offending.

If we’re successful in this, we’ll see fewer people becoming victims of crime too. This can help improve our communities’ perception of how safe and secure they feel and reduce the impact on them. A strong community justice approach depends on effective engagement, creating opportunities to have conversations with our communities – including those who commit and fall victim to crime – to understand their thoughts, feelings and opinions on what justice should look and feel like in Renfrewshire.

This insight also helps us identify the work we need to do to educate and inform what community justice is and the benefits it can bring. Community justice is about providing preventative activities to address some of the issues around health and wellbeing, employment, accommodation, and substance misuse that we know are linked to offending behaviour. For those who have committed an offence, it's about making all the necessary support available to address these needs when this is required. For victims of crime and the wider community, it's important we provide assurance that prison will remain appropriate for people who commit serious offences and pose a risk of serious harm, whilst creating an understanding that for others rehabilitative approaches are proven to work and can offer the best outcomes for individuals and future generations.

A community justice approach requires lots of different groups and organisations to work together. This means we can draw on the skills, knowledge, and expertise of individuals across different sectors who work across all parts of the justice journey, from point of arrest through to integration into the community. Having a broad, multi-disciplinary group responsible for planning how we deliver community justice in Renfrewshire means we can deploy the right people to the right place at the right time. We can take a strategic approach to make best use of the resources we have to deliver on national priorities and respond to local needs.

Public protection will always be our top priority, and with effective risk management systems in place, we will ensure those who have committed offences can be managed safely and effectively into the community where it's appropriate, or transition from custody to community-based service when required and/or agreed.

4. Community Justice Scotland

Community Justice Scotland (CJS) is the national body for community justice in Scotland. CJS has a statutory requirement to promote the National Strategy and monitor the performance of local authorities across national and local community justice outcomes.

CJS provides advice, guidance and assistance to community justice partnerships. They work collaboratively to help drive change by identifying improvements and challenges in the community justice system.

Community Justice Renfrewshire has a strong relationship with CJS. We will build on this over the life of this plan to ensure our approach delivers the best possible outcomes for our communities.

5. The Vision for Community Justice in Scotland

The Vision for Justice in Scotland was published in January 2022. The vision is aligned with the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework (NPF) and sets out a series of aims that will help ensure Scotland is a just, safe, and resilient place to live.

The vision takes a rights-based approach to ensure those who experience the justice system do so fairly, without discrimination and barriers. It emphasises the drive towards evidence-based services that are monitored, evaluated, and reviewed to ensure they make a positive impact.

The vision is driven by the principles of person-centred, trauma-informed practice and partnership collaboration. This means that justice services should seek out, listen, and understand a person's needs and views and make sure this influences decision making and the types of services delivered. It also means that those who work with people involved in the justice system ensure services are joined up to maximise collective impact, particularly around the areas of prevention and early intervention. Where this is successful, individuals involved in the justice system will feel respected, have a lower risk of further harm, and be better placed on their journey to recovery.

6. The National Strategy for Community Justice and the Community Justice Performance Framework

The National Strategy for Community Justice was published in June 2022. It draws on the evidence and strategic direction set out in the Vision for Justice in Scotland and provides community justice partners a roadmap for future improvement work. Specifically, strategy supports and drives forward action in relation to the outcomes set out under the aim to 'support rehabilitation, use custody only where there is no alternative and work to reduce reoffending and revictimisation'.

The strategy identifies 4 national aims which the Scottish Government and community justice partners should seek to deliver over the duration of the strategy. The aims are:

1. Optimise the use of diversion and intervention at the earliest opportunity
2. Ensure that robust and high-quality community interventions and public protection arrangements are consistently available across Scotland
3. Ensure that services are accessible and available to address the needs of individuals accused or convicted of an offence
4. Strengthen the leadership, engagement, and partnership working of local and national community justice partners

The priorities set out in the National Strategy are reflected in the national Community Justice Performance Framework (CJPF). CJR and other national partnerships use the

strategy and the CJPF to guide the activity that contributes to national outcomes. These inputs form the structure of our Outcome Improvement Plan.

CJR will use the outcomes and associated indicators set out in the CJPF to report annually on our progress. This will feed through to CJS who will monitor progress at a national level. A table showing the priority actions and national outcomes that are aligned to the four national aims can be found in Appendix 1.

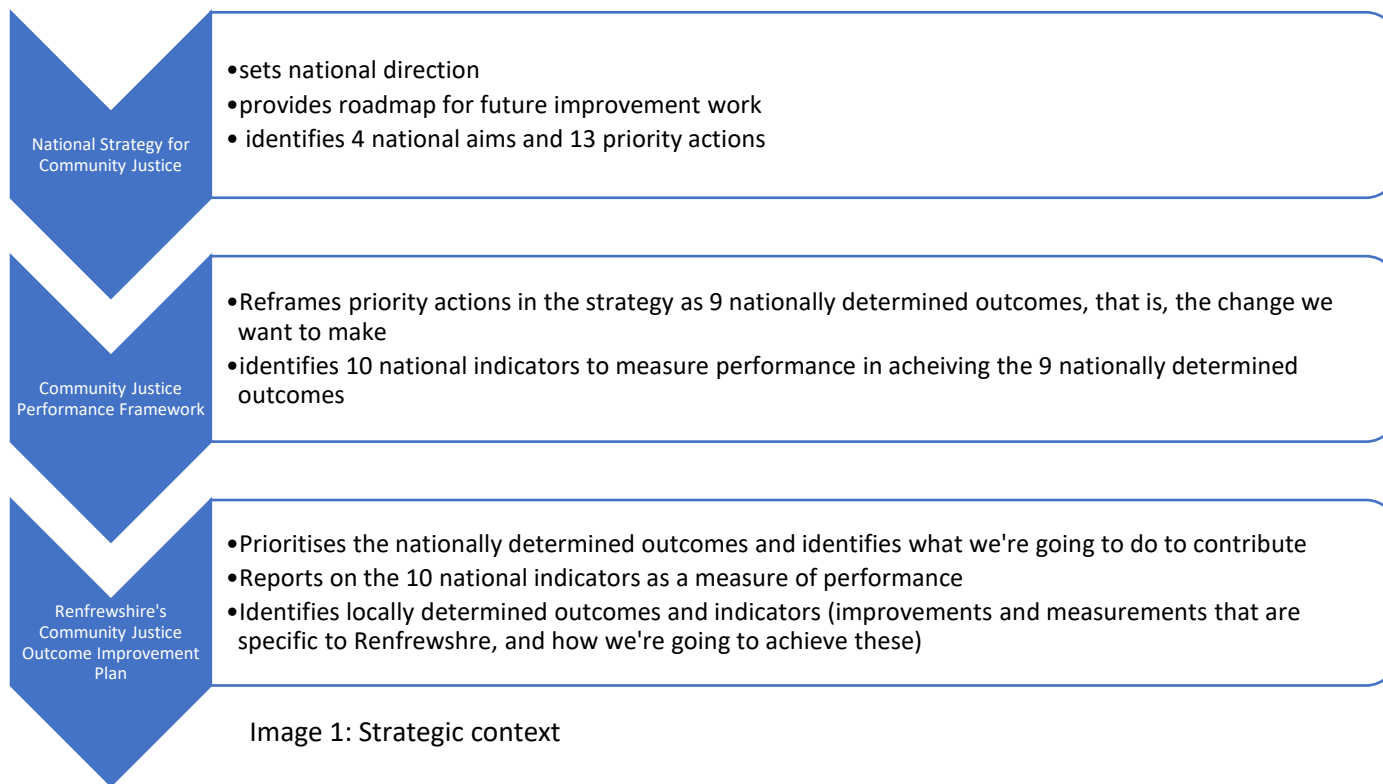


Image 1: Strategic context

7. About Renfrewshire

In 2022 Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership (CPP) refreshed Renfrewshire’s Community Plan. CPP partners worked together to share and review data and insight – with a focus on community voice – to identify where we need to focus our collective local efforts.

The plan sets a vision that Renfrewshire is **thriving**, with our residents able to share in our plans for inclusive growth. We know a quite a lot of our local population are in low-paid work or under-employed, and this can present challenges in securing an acceptable standard of living. Going forward, our local population will need the skills and knowledge to respond to the changing needs of the economy and access jobs that will likely be important in the future. For those involved in the justice system, we know this might be particularly challenging as there may be more barriers that prevent this group from accessing fair work opportunities.

For our communities to thrive, we also need them to be **well**, both physically and mentally. We know health inequalities mean some groups experience poorer health than others. Isolation and loneliness are key issues for a significant proportion of our population, with many feeling disconnected from services, people, and the place they live. We also know that often a whole-family approach is required to address challenges at an early stage to prevent needs becoming more complex. For the people we work with through CJR, we will make sure we have sight of their physical and mental health and where relevant ensure this plays an important part of their recovery and reintegration. We will also be mindful of the impact of the justice journey to people around the individual – namely their families – to provide support to those who face disruption, uncertainty and potential vulnerability that can have a negative impact on health and wellbeing.

We know that deprivation is an issue for some of our communities. We have a long-term commitment to creating a Renfrewshire that is **fair** by reducing the inequalities that limit life chances. The ongoing cost of living crisis has bolstered our efforts to mitigate poverty and help our communities achieve financial security. We also know we have a particular issue with alcohol and drugs, with our alcohol-specific death rate in our most deprived communities more than 4 times that of our least deprived communities, and our drug-related deaths increasing by 163% since 2010. Involvement in the justice system can add an extra layer of complexity to individual's relationship with alcohol, drugs, and other factors that may give rise to inequalities.

Something that is central to the work of CJR is our efforts to keep Renfrewshire **safe** by reducing harm and protecting vulnerable people. We are encouraged by the fact that the number of recorded crimes has fallen, and our community planning partners will maintain efforts to ensure this continues. We are however aware that the number of recorded domestic abuse incidents continues to increase across Scotland. This continues to be a main driver of child concern referrals too, being the majority reason cited by Police Scotland. Through CJR, we will make sure we complement the work being undertaken to protect people from harm. We will focus on the value we can add by helping individuals at the point they encounter the justice system, drawing on available learning to take a trauma-informed approach to our work.

8. Building on Success

Our last Community Justice Outcomes Improvement Plan 2018-2021 set a strong vision for local improvement activity. We achieved a great deal over this period, not least our coordinated partner response to addressing the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Our collaborative, operational focus helped us deliver essential support to our clients at a time when they needed it most.

Many of the driver identified in our last plan are still relevant today, though we understand the needs of some members of our community have grown more complex. We are

mindful that the new National Strategy for Community Justice provides a refreshed view on what our focus needs to be on the coming years, making sure our efforts and those of our colleagues in other areas feed through to support national change. At a local level, our partnership also looks and feels very different to what it did just a few years ago, with people, agencies and structures having gone through big changes. All these factors mean CJR has a great opportunity to review and adapt what we deliver to make sure our efforts are aligned to our client groups' needs. We need to be clear on what works, what doesn't, and what can be improved to make sure our resources have the biggest impact.

We've made early progress in enhancing our governance arrangements, with the new Lead Officer hosted within Renfrewshire Council's Chief Executive Service. This provides a strategic platform to enhance links between justice social work, council services and the wider Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership. We've also enhanced our relationships with partner members – particularly the third sector – who we worked with closely during the pandemic to address arising priorities around mental health and wellbeing. We embrace change and have successfully re-shaped processes and information between justice social work and Renfrewshire Alcohol and Drug Partnership to help improve the experience for our clients. This has resulted in new pathways for those deemed high risk, helping them secure prompt assessments and appropriate interventions.

We learned a lot from the way we worked with partners, clients and the wider community during the pandemic. Some of the measures put in place such as online meetings, phone contact and innovative homeworking as part of unpaid work activity demonstrated our ability to adapt to challenging circumstances. A good example of this was our local employability support and other activity interventions being offered remotely to clients on community payback orders, making sure these critical relationships were maintained to equip clients with the skills, knowledge and confidence they needed to support positive long-term outcomes.

9. Drivers

The Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on justice services across Scotland. Associated restrictions resulted in backlogs at various points in the justice process, with the legacy of these still being felt in places today. The pandemic also required a shift in focus, from strategic, improvement-driven activity to a more responsive, operational service delivery. In the context of community justice, this meant that some key objectives were unable to be progressed in the intended way. Our experience in Renfrewshire mirrored this too, with all our available resource and capacity directed to those in our community who required the most support.

Although we're still feeling the impact of the pandemic and the related issues of the cost-of-living crisis, our focus is shifting back towards improvement-led activity. This is more important now than ever, as we work with our partners – particularly our third sector

organisations - to identify a strategic approach to how we can meet the needs of our community, and within our context, the individuals involved in the justice system.

It's important we review the experience and learning from our community justice colleagues around Scotland and use this to inform our approach in Renfrewshire over the coming years. This will help us start from a stronger position by framing our improvement activity, so it aligns with the national outcomes for community justice. From this, we can identify the following key drivers:

Communication and engagement

The pandemic required us to adapt how we communicate with each other. We couldn't have the conversations in the way we'd have liked, and this made it harder to establish new relationships and strengthen existing ones. Looking ahead, our partnership will focus on improving the breadth and depth of our collaborative relationships to inform our planning. We want our partners to feel valued, and see how their skills, knowledge and expertise can feed in to and add value to single-agency work. We want to make it clear that these individual contributions are essential to help us develop our local approach and ultimately help us achieve our community justice outcomes. For our wider community, we need to promote and raise awareness of community justice in the right way, making sure perceptions are fair and informed. For those with experience of the justice system, we need to create opportunities for these individuals to have their thoughts, feelings and opinions listened to and acted upon to make sure our services and support are effective.

Strategic Planning and Governance

Effective community justice relies on strong partnership working. In Renfrewshire, we're proud of the relationships we've built with our community planning partners, and the more focused work of our CJR. We also know that governance arrangements can be complex. Sometimes, we might perceive duplication of effort across different teams, structures, and streams of work. This can also complicate reporting and monitoring, as we might not always tell a story that's ours to tell.

We know our partnership will always involve lots of teams from lots of different organisations. It's important we make sure we have the right people to inform our approach and make best use of their time. It's also important we have sight of the work being delivered through other governance structures, and where there is a need for us to be a part of that, we contribute strategically and add value. For the work progressed through our own partnership, we must be responsible for designing, delivering, and monitoring our improvement activity that is over and above that delivered by individual teams or organisations and clearly contributes to community justice outcomes.

Evidence-led Approach

The Community Justice Performance Framework provides a consistent approach for community justice partnerships to report progress against national community justice

outcomes. In Renfrewshire – like in other community justice partnerships across Scotland – we will use these to obtain a high-level overview of some of the demand for our justice services and what we deliver. This will direct us to the areas where data suggests we might have a challenge in supply or an unmet demand, and frame a deeper dive into the experience, needs and outcomes for individuals involved at this point in the process.

We will use Community Justice Scotland’s Improvement Tool to identify the local evidence that will help us build this picture. Where there are gaps, we will identify the partner(s) best placed to take this forward. In time, we will develop a detailed picture of the strengths and needs of our local community and use this information to target our partnership activity that adds value and contributes to national justice outcomes.

10. Working in Partnership

Partnership working is crucial to improving community justice outcomes. In addition to the statutory partners, we require the input of a diverse range of individuals and organisations covering a wide range of interests, including housing, employability, and health and wellbeing.

The third sector plays an important role in improving community justice outcomes. They are a source of innovation, responsiveness, and flexibility, and can provide a meaningful connection to otherwise hard-to-reach service users and communities. The most effective way to improve outcomes for people and communities is by joined up working with the third sector at the planning stage.

Community is at the heart of our approach. Whether challenging stigma, employing people with convictions, or participating in community justice planning, improving community justice outcomes requires the involvement and support of local people and businesses.

11. Key Priorities Over the Next 12 Months

We will support the national aim to **optimise the use of diversion and intervention at the earliest opportunity**, where safe to do so, by improving our understanding around the number of individuals who receive direct measures as an alternative to prosecution. We will look at our current processes and identify opportunities to enhance the knowledge and awareness of our teams who work with individuals at this point in the justice system. We want to understand if there are any barriers or challenges that prevent us doing this more effectively. We will improve our understanding around the capacity of our third-sector partners and other potential service providers, and most importantly of all, we want to hear from those who experience direct measures to understand the impact it’s had.

We will make progress to **ensure that robust, high-quality interventions and public protection arrangements are available in Renfrewshire**, building on early work to develop proposals for early intervention services with appropriate referral pathways. We will look at the experience and outcomes of individuals who participate in community sentences and identify opportunities to enhance the rehabilitative support on offer, particularly in relation to desistance from domestic abuse and sexual offending. We will take time to listen to the views of the community justice workforce and look at where we can better equip them to deliver these essential interventions.

We will take time to **review the services we have on offer to individuals accused or convicted of an offence** to make sure information sharing and transitions between services are as best they can be. We will look at the mechanisms we have in place to ensure individuals in the justice system have the knowledge and confidence that their needs will be met upon release, particularly those relating to health, housing, and employment. We will take time to consider how, when and who provides this support to maximise the likelihood of it being accepted and acted upon

We know that partnership working and strategic planning is key to achieving national community justice outcomes. We will work together to **strengthen our leadership, engagement, and integrated approach** by looking at who we are, what we do and how we do it. We want to reduce the opportunity for duplication across similar work areas and refine our structure and decision making to clearly show the value our partnership adds. We need to effectively engage with individuals whose lives have been impacted by the justice system to make sure their experiences, thoughts and opinions guide our route to improvement. We also need to think about how we can highlight and promote the benefits of community justice to our local population and consider how we can improve awareness and confidence in positive community justice outcomes.

12. How will we know it is working?

Community Justice Scotland oversees the work being delivered in each of council area. This plan is part of that oversight. Every Community Justice Partnership is required to have a plan which explains what they intend to do to reduce offending and re-offending in their local area. Community Justice Scotland will give us feedback on the plan and give us support with things that we want to improve.

We will write a new plan every three years, but there will be annual reviews so that we can check our work is on track and that the priorities are still the right ones for Renfrewshire.

Our performance against national outcomes will initially be measured against national indicators and then – once agreed by our partnership – appropriate local evidence. We will develop a detailed action plan once we have reviewed our priority areas over the next 12 months. Progress against this action plan will be reviewed by our Community Justice

Renfrewshire Steering Group and submitted to Community Justice Scotland as part of the national reporting mechanism.

We understand that circumstances can change quickly, and our partnership will remain open to emerging needs and opportunities and take steps to re-align our focus as necessary.

13. Appendix 1: Table of National Outcomes and Associated Indicators

Priority Actions from National Strategy for Community Justice	National outcomes	National indicators
Aim 1 - Optimise the use of diversion and intervention at the earliest opportunity		
1. Enhance intervention at the earliest opportunity by ensuring greater consistency, confidence in and awareness of services which support the use of direct measures and diversion from prosecution	More people successfully complete diversion from prosecution	Number of diversion from prosecution: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assessments undertaken • cases commenced • cases successfully completed
2. Improve the identification of underlying needs and the delivery of support following arrest by ensuring the provision of person-centred care within police custody and building upon referral opportunities to services including substance use and mental health services	More people in police custody receive support to address their needs	Number of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • referrals from custody centres
Aim 2 - Ensure that robust and high quality community interventions and public protection arrangements are consistently available across Scotland		
3. Support the use of robust alternatives to remand by ensuring high quality bail services are consistently available and delivered effectively	More people are assessed for and successfully complete bail supervision	Number of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assessment reports for bail suitability • bail supervision cases commenced • bail supervision cases completed

<p>4. Strengthen options for safe and supported management in the community by increasing and widening the use of electronic monitoring technologies</p>	<p>No nationally determined outcome.</p> <p>This priority action currently has no robust and measurable national outcome. This will be considered as part of future development.</p> <p>Local evidence can still be collected to support activity relating to this priority action.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>5. Ensure that those given community sentences are supervised and supported appropriately to protect the public, promote desistance from offending and enable rehabilitation by delivering high quality, consistently available, trauma-informed services and programmes</p>	<p>More people access services to support desistance and successfully complete community sentences</p>	<p>Percentage of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community payback orders successfully completed • drug treatment and testing orders successfully completed
<p>6. Ensure restorative justice is available across Scotland to all those who wish to access it by promoting and supporting the appropriate and safe provision of available services</p>	<p>No nationally determined outcome.</p> <p>Achievement of this priority action will be tracked through the implementation of the restorative justice action plan and other national governance structures.</p> <p>Local evidence can still be collected to support activity relating to this priority action.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Aim 3 - Ensure that services are accessible and available to address the needs of individuals accused or convicted of an offence</p>		

7. Enhance individuals' access to health and social care and continuity of care following release from prison by improving the sharing of information and partnership-working between relevant partners	More people have access to, and continuity of, health and social care following release from a prison sentence	Number of transfers in drug/alcohol treatments from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • custody to community
8. Ensure that the housing needs of individuals in prison are addressed consistently and at an early stage by fully implementing and embedding the Sustainable Housing on Release for Everyone (SHORE) standards across all local authority areas	More people have access to suitable accommodation following release from a prison sentence	Number of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • homelessness applications where prison was the property the main applicant became homeless from
9. Enhance individual's life skills and readiness for employment by ensuring increased access to employability support through effective education, learning, training, career services and relevant benefit services	More people with convictions access support to enhance their readiness for employment	Percentage of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • those in employability services with convictions
10. Enhance community integration and support by increasing and promoting greater use of voluntary throughcare and third sector services	More people access voluntary throughcare following a short term prison sentence	Number of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • voluntary throughcare cases commenced
Am 4. Strengthen the leadership, engagement, and partnership working of local and national community justice partners		
11. Deliver improved community justice outcomes by ensuring that effective leadership and governance arrangements are in place and working well, collaborating with partners and planning strategically	No nationally determined outcome. Improvement in relation to this priority action can be demonstrated through progress in the 9 outcomes in the CJPF. The themes within this priority action are also captured within the Care Inspectorate's guide to self-evaluation for community justice partners in Scotland.	N/A

	Local evidence can still be collected to support activity relating to this action.	
12. Enhance partnership planning and implementation by ensuring the voices of victims of crime, survivors, those with lived experience and their families are effectively incorporated and embedded	<p>No nationally determined outcome.</p> <p>Improvement in relation to this priority action can be demonstrated through progress in the 9 outcomes in the CJPF. The themes within this priority action are also captured within the Care Inspectorate’s guide to self-evaluation for community justice partners in Scotland.</p> <p>Local evidence can still be collected to support activity relating to this action.</p>	N/A
13. Support integration and reduce stigma by ensuring the community and workforce have an improved understanding of and confidence in community justice	More people across the workforce and in the community understand, and have confidence in, community justice	<p>Percentage of people who agree that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • people should help their community as part of a community sentence rather than spend a few months in prison for a minor offence