

How probation services are delivered in Wales and South West England

Briefing for the voluntary sector

October 2016

“The Transforming Rehabilitation reforms have changed the way in which people are managed by probation services”

This briefing gives an overview of how probation services are managed and delivered in Wales and South West England following the Transforming Rehabilitation reforms that took place in 2015.

Transforming Rehabilitation (TR) is the name given to the Government’s recent reforms to rehabilitation services in England and Wales which replaced 35 Probation Trusts with Community Rehabilitation Companies and a National Probation Service.

The TR reforms have changed the way in which people are managed by probation services. Full details of the reforms are set out in [‘Transforming Rehabilitation: A Strategy for Reform’](#) and further information can be found on the [Clinks Transforming Rehabilitation webpage](#).

Clinks has also published the report [‘Change & Challenge: The voluntary sector’s role in Transforming Rehabilitation’](#), which sets out key recommendations for how we would like to see probation services engage with the voluntary sector. The report is based on a survey of 150 voluntary sector organisations looking at their experience of the changes brought about by TR.

Offender Rehabilitation Act

The National Probation Service (NPS) now manages service users that are of high risk of harm to the public, and 21 Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) are responsible for the management of low to medium risk service users.

From 1st February 2015 the Offender Rehabilitation Act 2014 (ORA) came into full force, meaning an extension of supervision to approximately 45,000 additional people per year who are released from short prison sentences of less than 12 months. The Act has also created greater flexibility in the delivery of sentences served in the community. Clinks has produced a [briefing](#) providing more detail about the ORA.

Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs)

The three CRCs in Wales and South West England are now owned by [Working Links](#), a company that has a social ambition and vision to ‘help people to maximise their full potential, moving them from social exclusion to social inclusion, benefitting them, their families and their communities’. Its strategic partner is Innovation Wessex CIC, which was set up by a group of staff from what was previously the Devon and Cornwall and Dorset Probation Trusts. Innovation Wessex does not deliver rehabilitation services directly to service users, but its role is to support the design, development and implementation of new offender services as well as carry out quality assurance. The three CRCs are:

- [Wales CRC](#)
- [Bristol, Gloucestershire, Somerset and Wiltshire CRC](#)
- [Dorset, Devon and Cornwall CRC](#)

Through the Gate (TTG)

The three CRCs manage resettlement services in 10 prisons. In Wales these are [Cardiff](#), [Parc](#), [Swansea](#) and [Usk / Prescoed](#). They also manage services for people resettling in Wales after being released from HMP Stoke Heath in the Midlands. In the South West they are [Bristol](#), [Channings Wood](#), [Guys Marsh](#), [Leyhill](#), and [Portland](#). The CRCs also manage resettlement services in [Eastwood Park](#) women's prison in Gloucestershire, for people resettling to both Wales and the South West.

The TTG service supports people through the gate and helps them to reintegrate back into the community. It is mainly delivered by subcontractors on behalf of the CRCs. These are [St Giles Trust](#) for men in Welsh prisons, [Catch 22](#) for men in South West prisons, and [Safer Wales](#) in Eastwood Park women's prison. Wales CRC delivers through the gate activity at HMP Parc. In addition, [Pact](#) delivers through the gate mentoring services where additional assistance may be required such as practical and emotional support.

The core TTG resettlement service includes completing a Basic Custody Screening Tool and a Resettlement Plan, addressing immediate needs including finance, accommodation, employment and the needs of offenders with a history of sex working or domestic violence.

Operational hubs

Operational hubs across the CRC regions provide administrative support for frontline people, helping them to spend more time with service users. They also enable the CRC to deliver remote In Touch case management services over the telephone, and digitally giving service users immediate and convenient access to rehabilitation activities.

Community hubs

Community hubs are one of the key ways in which the three CRCs increasingly undertake their work. This is a multi-agency approach where a range of agencies work together, to provide a joined up service in one location.

People under CRC supervision and other members of the community are able to access a range of services, facilities and opportunities within a community setting, ensuring that the problems people often face can be responded to in one place. This enables people to access services close to home, which is known to be an important part of rehabilitation and preventing further offending behaviour. There are approximately 50 community hubs across Wales and South West England.

Rehabilitation Activity Requirements (RARs)

RARs can form part of a service user's community sentence. CRC case managers work with the service user to identify what activities and interventions will support them through their rehabilitation journey. RAR activities can include addressing housing issues, finances, health and wellbeing, education, training and employment and restorative justice.

Interventions

The CRCs deliver a range of interventions, which include:

- **Unpaid work** – providing a range of rehabilitative benefits and opportunities to develop life and vocational skills that can reduce reoffending.
- **Restorative justice** - victims are given the opportunity to get answers to their questions, while the person who has committed the crime has to take responsibility for their actions.
- **Accredited programmes** - teaching skills such as emotional management and problem solving, targeting factors related to reoffending.
- **Employment, training and education** - working with a range of partnership agencies to provide opportunities for personal development, independent living skills, education, vocation, work placements and employment.
- **Senior attendance centre** – providing opportunities for young adult service users (18-24 year olds) to work together as a group to look at their behaviour and gain life skills.
- **Women's services** - through dedicated services, including women's centres, the CRCs are able to deal with the specific issues which lead to women's offending behaviour.

The CRCs have developed a directory of services that lists the interventions they and their delivery partners can provide, and which can be bought by the National Probation Service or others. These directories are available to view on the CRC websites:

- [Wales Directory](#)
- [Bristol, Gloucestershire, Somerset and Wiltshire CRC Directory](#)
- [Dorset, Devon and Cornwall CRC Directory](#)

They also have a commissioning strategy and a Local Commissioning Board to encourage innovation of services and refresh their range of delivery partners.

Key contacts

For more information please contact:

Wales CRC

Dawn Blower, Probation Director – dawn.blower@wales.probation.gsi.gov.uk

Emma Richards, Head of Operations – emma.richards@wales.probation.gsi.gov.uk

Bristol, Gloucestershire, Somerset and Wiltshire CRC; and Dorset, Devon and Cornwall CRC

John Wiseman, Probation Director - john.wiseman@bgsw.probation.gsi.gov.uk

Liz Hickey, Assistant Chief Officer - liz.hickey@bgsw.probation.gsi.gov.uk

Websites

www.walescrc.co.uk

www.bgswcrc.co.uk

www.ddccrc.co.uk

National Probation Service (NPS)

The NPS works in partnership with the CRCs, courts, police and with private and voluntary sector partners in order to safely and effectively manage people who have offended. The NPS are able to purchase services from CRCs using what is known as the rate card, or directory of services (see above).

NPS responsibilities:

- preparing pre-sentence reports for courts, to help them select the most appropriate sentence
- managing approved premises for people with a residence requirement on their sentence
- assessing prisoners to prepare them for release on licence to the community, when they will come under NPS supervision
- helping all people serving sentences in the community to meet the requirements ordered by the courts
- communicating with and prioritising the wellbeing of victims of serious sexual and violent offences, when the offender has received a prison sentence of 12 months or more, or is detained as a mental health patient.

The National Probation Service has a division for [Wales](#), and one for [South West and South Central England](#) which includes Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight as well as the South West region.

Key Contacts

Ian Barrow, Interim Director of the Wales National Probation Service and Partnership – Ian.Barrow@probation.gsi.gov.uk

Angela Cossins, Deputy Director of NPS South West and South Central Division – swscdivisionaloffice.generalenquiries@probation.gsi.gov.uk

Further information

The Ministry of Justice has produced a [Probation Directory](#) with the contact details of CRCs and the NPS. It also includes contact details for the probation contract managers at the National Offender Management Service (Matt Douglas for the South West, and Leanne Semmens for Wales) as well as the Deputy Directors covering those areas.

Contact

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