

**RR3 Special Interest Group on Accommodation
Terms of Reference**

Background

The Reducing Reoffending Third Sector Advisory Group (RR3) has established a special interest group (SIG) on Accommodation, which will build on previous work completed in this area – including Clinks’ 2018 paper – [‘are the accommodation needs being met for people in contact with the criminal justice system?’](#); this reconstituted SIG will reflect on existing Government initiatives designed to support people in contact with the criminal justice system into accommodation, namely through:

- The Accommodation for Ex-Offenders (AfEO) scheme
- Community Accommodation Services-Tier 3 housing provision

The Group will then have a two-pronged focus: building an evidence base on the barriers – both practical and structural – to accommodation faced by people leaving prison and people with criminal records; promoting current best practice at a local level and developing further solutions to mitigate the barriers faced by this cohort.

The SIG will provide advice, and a final recommendations paper, from a third sector perspective to officials from Ministry of Justice and HM Prisons and Probation Service (MoJ/HMPPS) to consider as they seek to increase the number of people in contact with the criminal justice system into settled accommodation.

This group terms of reference sits alongside [the terms of reference for the main RR3](#).

Membership

The chair of the SIG is Sam Julius (Clinks Head of Influence & Communication), and the sponsor of the SIG is Steve Matthews (Shelter), in his roles as the RR3 seat-holder for accommodation. The secretariat is provided by Clinks.

Meetings will be attended by relevant permanent members of the RR3, which will be confirmed through direct expressions of interest from RR3 seat holders. These will be confirmed in due course.

The chair and secretariat will also co-opt additional members from the wider voluntary sector for their specific expertise, as per the RR3 term of reference. These will be recruited through Clinks’ communications channels, supported by the SIG’s sponsor.

Purpose

To advise MoJ and HMPPS officials on the barriers faced by prison leavers and people with criminal records in accessing suitable accommodation, in order to inform a future joint Ministry of Justice-Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) spending review bid making the case for additional support for this cohort. Particular attention will be given to:

- Building an evidence base highlighting the particular barriers faced by people leaving prison/people with criminal records in accessing suitable, settled accommodation

- Highlighting best practice across the voluntary sector in supporting this cohort into settled accommodation

The final output will incorporate the practical and structural solutions developed throughout the duration of the SIG, at both a local and national level, designed to mitigate the barriers covered during the work.

This paper will then be shared with the relevant stakeholders.

Officials

The Group will include input from a range of officials from the MoJ/HMPPS that will liaise with the group on an ad-hoc basis. This will include (but is not limited to):

- Graham MacKenzie – Head of Policy, Offender Accommodation and Family Engagement (Ministry of Justice)
- Paul Ruff – Deputy Director, Transitional Accommodation (HMPPS)
- Ruth Boyd – Head of Stakeholder Engagement (HMPPS)

Additional officials will be invited depending on the topics being discussed.

Frequency

Meetings to be convened when required, with the expected frequency of approximately one every three months. RR3 chair, sponsors and secretariat to agree with a programme of meetings as early as possible.

Communication

Officials will be open with information when they can, with the caveat that some information shared with the group may not be in the public domain yet and must not be shared publicly. Products discussed will be subject to further development and senior official approval through the relevant HMPPS governance structures.

A summary note will be published after each meeting on the Clinks website. Comments will not be attributed in the notes, and both SIG members and officials will have the chance to review notes prior to them being published.