

FURTHER FUNDING BOOSTS VOLUNTARY SECTOR SUPPORT

Charities and voluntary organisations working with offenders received a double boost today as Justice Minister Jeremy Wright announced that the pioneering Justice Data Lab pilot would be extended for a further year, along with a grant of £720,000 to provide support to the sector.

The grant was awarded to a partnership led by the umbrella organisation Clinks which aims to provide support to smaller voluntary organisations including those who specialise in rehabilitating specific groups of offenders – for example female offenders, those from black and minority ethnic communities or those with learning disabilities.

The grant will start in April and is for one year, which covers the period during which the new approach to rehabilitation will be rolled out. This will see a new and refocused public sector National Probation Service tasked with protecting the public from the most dangerous offenders and 21 Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) across England and Wales working to turn round the lives of medium and low risk offenders.

Private and voluntary sector organisations will work together to run the CRCs and the competition for preferred bidders is underway. To date, 830 organisations have expressed an interest in playing a role as part of the wider supply chain – including more than 575 Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations. Registration is still open and the numbers continue to grow.

VCS organisations will also benefit from the extension of the Justice Data Lab pilot, which will now run until April 2015.

This innovative service gives VCS groups access to high-quality reoffending data tailored to their needs, allowing them to better understand the impact of their work and design more effective interventions supporting offenders to turn their backs on a life of crime.

Jeremy Wright said:

“We have always been clear that we want the voluntary sector to play a major role in our reforms to rehabilitation.

“They have a wealth of experience and knowledge in tackling the high reoffending rates which see more than 500,000 crimes committed each year by those who have broken the law before.

“Our reforms we will see the best of the private, voluntary and community sectors working hand in hand to crack the stubborn cycle of reoffending.”

To date, 25 out of 55 reports published by the Justice Data Lab have measured the impact of services run by voluntary groups or charities. Eleven of the 19 statistically significant reductions in re-offending measured through the service have come from VCS organisations.

Director of Clinks Clive Martin said:

“We are delighted to be able to continue providing much-needed support and voice to our network of over 2,000 organisations working with offenders. This

is a particularly challenging time for our sector, which makes Clinks' role more important than ever. Our support ensures organisations can meet the challenges and continue to offer valuable services to transform the lives of offenders and ex-offenders.”

Our new approach will see, for the first time, every offender released from prison receive at least 12 months' statutory supervision and rehabilitation in the community. Those most in need of help to turn their lives around will finally receive the support they need.

A nationwide network of resettlement prisons is also being created so nearly all offenders are released into the area in which they will live and be supervised.

Providers will only be paid in full if they are successful at reducing reoffending, making hardworking tax-payers' money go further.

Notes to Editors

1. For more information please call the Ministry of Justice press office on 020 3334 3536
2. Further information on Transforming Rehabilitation can be found here: <http://www.justice.gov.uk/transforming-rehabilitation>
3. The Clinks-led partnership includes the Black Training and Enterprise Group (BTEG), Women's Breakout, Action for Prisoners Families, Wales Council for Voluntary Action, Arts Alliance, New Philanthropy Capital, and the Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations and Candour Collaboration. For more information visit: www.clinks.org
4. The next Justice Data Lab statistics are released on 13 March. Latest statistics can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/justice-data-lab-pilot-statistics>
5. The grant sits alongside a wide-ranging package of support for voluntary organisations interested in delivering offender rehabilitation services under the rehabilitation reforms. Previous MOJ funding worth £500,000 was awarded to:
 - £150,000 to 3SC to develop an action plan recommending how the remaining grant could be allocated;
 - £150,000 to ACEVO to deliver a series of workshops; and
 - £200,000 to Clinks to provide legal support for voluntary organisations.