



NIACRO

ANNUAL REPORT

2018 - 2019

**WORKING TO REDUCE CRIME
AND ITS IMPACT ON PEOPLE
AND COMMUNITIES**





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INTRODUCTION

NIACRO launched its five-year Corporate Plan 2018 – 2023 early in the year. This is the first annual report marking progress against the new Corporate Plan which identifies five key areas of focus:

- Children and young people (early age intervention)
- Families affected by imprisonment
- Adults in prison and in the community
- External engagement
- Applying resources effectively

The year opened with the launch of our employability support programme, Working Well, in partnership with Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNi), Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS), the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Department for the Economy (DfE). The programme is subject to Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) inspections. A baseline inspection in February 2019 confirmed the commitment and enthusiasm of the staff to support participants in overcoming barriers and progressing towards education, training and employment.

Working Well was launched formally in November when we were pleased to welcome Chris Stacey, Director of Unlock (a national charity supporting people with convictions), who addressed the prison and community launch events.

Our Peace IV programme Get Real, established in the prior year, had its formal launch in May 2018. Guest speaker, Professor Paul Iganski, had produced a paper to mark the launch entitled *'Hate Crime: The Need to Strengthen Civil Courage'*. Get Real supports those involved in hate crime, their victims and those in communities who want to address the issues and prejudices that motivate hate crime.

The programme is also developing diversity training to first responders of incidents of hate crime. The Get Real staff have worked hard to engage partners and supporters and the programme is evidencing significant progress against its targets in what is a challenging area.

The pilot programme CHIP trialed several innovative engagements with the children of imprisoned parents alongside staff from NIPS including a residential trip in October. Over 30 parents, children, and staff from NIACRO and NIPS travelled to Corrymeela in Ballycastle where all had an opportunity to participate in feedback sessions and additional activities including 'self-care awareness', games, arts and crafts. There was also all-important family time.

An evaluation of CHIP this year highlighted the impact of the pilot and helped to shape the amalgamation of CHIP into Family Links. This new approach will be trialed in 2019/20.

We were disappointed to lose our Belfast CAPS scheme following a re-procurement exercise but pleased that staff were able to transfer under TUPE to Barnardo's in January 2019. All other children and young people's services performed strongly throughout the year.

NIACRO meeting with NACRO and SACRO from England and Scotland.

Despite the ongoing absence of a working Executive and Northern Ireland Assembly, we continued to meet with local representatives and established a political panel to support the work of Get Real, the first meeting of which was held on 6 March 2019 and attended by a wide representation of the political parties.

Lord Farmer addressed our AGM in November 2018, on ***'The Importance of Strengthening Prisoners' Family Ties to Reduce Re-offending and Reduce Intergenerational Crime'***. His thoughtful presentation made clear links between his recommendations and the work of NIACRO and provided useful and validated evidence for our response to NIPS' Strengthening Family Relations Strategy Consultation in February 2019.

In February, we hosted the Prison Reform Trust's Transforming Lives Programme Advisory Group, set up in response to concerns over women's imprisonment nationally. Representing a range of voluntary organisations working in the field, the group visited community women's centres to explore the model of community support for women leaving the justice system and were hosted by the Director General of the Prison Service at Hydebank Wood where they had an opportunity to meet with the women in residence. The visit coincided with the launch of staff members' Ruth Walker and Geraldine McGuigan's research. Supported by the Griffins Society, the research explored the role of domestic abuse as a pathway to offending and criminal justice responses. Dr Gillian McNaull (Executive Committee member) also presented her PhD findings on women's experiences of custodial remand in Northern Ireland.



Significant investment in staff training saw the introduction of accredited Skills for Justice qualifications and we added two new members of staff to the Senior Leadership Team with qualifications in Social Work, Finance and Human Resources. In the year, we also invested further in our IT infrastructure and launched our bespoke database which is helping us to evidence the outcomes of our work in line with Programme for Government.

Maintaining existing and building new relationships is a significant task for every third sector organisation. Whilst the past number of years have been challenging, the experience and resilience of the organisation enables us to remain positive about our ability to make an evidenced-based contribution to reducing crime and its impact on people and communities.

NIACRO remains appreciative of the support of our funders, members, supporters, staff and volunteers. The commitment and support of our governing body the Executive Committee provides the surety of purpose and accountability necessary for us to thrive.

O. Lyner *Sid McDowell*

Olwen Lyner
Executive

Sid McDowell Chief
Chair



CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Belief: *Early interventions can support children and young people to make positive life choices and avoid risk-taking behaviours. We therefore work alongside families, schools and communities to offer such support.*

In June 2019, we received the Investing in Children award for which we had been assessed last year. It recognised our commitment to investing in the lives of the children and young people we support. The assessors drew evidence from interviews with children, staff and volunteers.



Children and young people in our programmes learning to DJ and engaging their creativity with spray painting.

We were delighted that the EISS contract has been funded for a further year and that we were able to engage with the Public Health Agency to celebrate its work. We also took part in a presentation to the Early Intervention Transformation Programme Board in December 2018 to highlight the work of Family Support Hubs and in particular our experience of receiving, processing and supporting referrals in the Craigavon and Banbridge Hub.

We were delighted to receive an increase in Hub funding in recognition of the significant contribution the Hubs are making to family engagement and the scale of their activity.

SCOPE (Supporting Children of Imprisoned Parents) continues to benefit from the support of an engaged funder (BBC Children in Need) with extensive public reach. This created several opportunities to raise the profile of the needs of children who have a parent in prison including a BBC Radio 1 *Life Hacks* podcast telling Aobha's story and a feature in Top of the Pops Magazine. Children participating on SCOPE also produced an information booklet for other children who have a parent in prison. SCOPE funding was put on hold for six months in October 2018 and will be re-instated in April 2019 to coincide with the launch of the new Family Links model.

"They're determined to make a difference in these kids' lives. They don't get to see how the kids feel after. They've all smiles on their faces because it just takes that one person to remind them that things aren't so bad, they can turn things around."

Participant on Independent Representation

"I don't get in trouble as much as I used to...School has noticed because last term everyone was saying that I needed to work on my behaviour but then everyone, every teacher has been saying that I've worked on my behaviour and I'm better now."

Participant on CAPS

"Yeah they don't force me to do stuff. I have my own choice. They ask for my opinion."

Participant on EISS

SERVICE	ACTIVITY	PRIMARY FUNDER
CAPS (Child and Parent Support): intensive support services to families whose children aged 8 – 13 are at risk of engaging in anti-social/offending behaviour		
CAPS (Southern Trust)	72 families engaged	HSCB/SHSCT
CAPS (Belfast Trust) to 31/12/19	65 families engaged	HSCB

SERVICE	ACTIVITY	PRIMARY FUNDER
EISS (Early Intervention Support Service): support for families when difficulties arise, before they need involvement with statutory services		
EISS (Southern)	130 families supported	PHA
EISS (Belfast)	178 families supported	PHA

Family Support Hub: NIACRO chairs a group of voluntary, community and statutory bodies providing family support in Craigavon/Banbridge	278 referrals; 12 hub meetings chaired	SHSCT
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Independent Representation: advocacy and support for young people in Lakewood Secure Care Centre	56 visits to Lakewood raising 25 issues	SEHSCT
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Independent Visitor: volunteers befriend and support “looked after” young people	30 young people matched with volunteer 595 activities completed over 2,029 hours	BHSCT/SEHSCT
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SCOPE: one to one support to children and young people who have a family member in prison	50 children supported until October 2018	BBC Children in Need
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CHIP (Children with Imprisoned Parents): support for children with a parent in prison to access early intervention services in their communities	407 referrals	Early Intervention Transformation Programme (EITP) via NIPS
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FAMILIES AFFECTED BY IMPRISONMENT

Belief: *People in prison and their families have the right to maintain (or not) relationships in prison and in the community. Helping families to access services strengthens their ability to cope, to achieve effective resettlement and to desist from crime. We therefore work to reduce (re)offending and its impact, by supporting families affected by imprisonment.*

This year we strengthened our work with families, focusing on the impact of having a parent in prison on a child or young person and helping to ensure adult family members are better equipped to cope and support their families during this critical time.

In partnership with Playboard, we delivered a **Play Matters** workshop to fathers in HMP Maghaberry, promoting the contribution interactive play can make to developing/maintaining relationships during imprisonment and to improving children's well-being.

We consulted with family members when preparing our response to the NIPS Strengthening Family Relationships Strategy, all of whom emphasised the importance of a positive visiting experience.

The CHIP residential for families in Corrymeela in October was an opportunity for families, NIACRO and NIPS to engage with one another and better understand the experience of visiting prison from a child or young person's perspective.

"I enjoyed it and am interested in anything at all that can help the interaction with the wee one. The more I can do while I'm still here, to bridge the gap with the child for when I'm released."

Participant in Play Matters workshop.

"It helps people maintain relationships and stops people living in a bubble when they are inside. It gives people something to look forward to."

Family Member

"We have to use all of the tools at our disposal if we are to put a crowbar into the revolving door of repeat reoffending and tackle the intergenerational transmission of crime. In this era of ongoing constriction on public spending, family ties are themselves a resource that newly empowered governors can, and must, deploy in the interest not just of reducing reoffending rates, but also of creating a more settled regime."

The Importance of Strengthening Prisoners' Family Ties to Prevent Reoffending and Reduce Intergenerational Crime (Farmer, 2017)



Lord Farmer and guests at our 47th Annual General Meeting

FAMM continues to provide accessible debt advice, particularly during times when families are experiencing financial insecurity or crisis. In the year, FAMM worked on debts totalling £285,087.

SERVICE	ACTIVITY	PRIMARY FUNDER
Family Links - emotional and practical support for families affected by imprisonment	1,310 referrals	NIPS, HSCB, WHSCT
Transport Service - affordable and accessible transport to all three NI prisons to support family contact	196 journeys made; 1,556 passengers transported	NIPS
FAMM (Family and Money Matters) providing debt advice to people in prison or post release, and their families	459 referrals	Money Advice Service



"The service was a great help to me, it was like a weight being lifted from my shoulders. I received support with filling in my PIP forms, this is still in progress, but it was definitely a big help. I have spoken to other people about the service and passed on details about it as it is very useful, especially as some people are leaving prison unable to read and write. Staff were very easy-going."

FAMM Service User.

Participating in the Children of Prisoners Europe (COPE) conference in Manchester, England.



ADULTS IN PRISON AND IN THE COMMUNITY

Belief: *Supporting people who have offended or who are at risk of offending to make positive choices contributes to desistance from crime. We therefore work to contribute to a reduction in offending and re-offending by supporting people leaving prison and in the community*

2018-2019 was the first full year we partnered with PBNI to deliver the two Aspire projects. Aspire Community Engagement also works alongside Northern Ireland Alternatives and Community Restorative Justice Ireland. Aspire supports marginalised young men (aged 16-30) to help reduce their risk of becoming involved or further involved in criminality and is funded through Fresh Start. In March 2019, the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) released an evaluation of Aspire¹ which was complimentary about the impact of the programme:

“The qualitative and quantitative evidence highlighted in this evaluation shows that Aspire is a highly worthwhile and effective programme for service users who very much value the support it provides. It has impacted positively on their lives through the provision of both practical and emotional support...”

The first year’s results for Working Well were strong; 14% of participants referred to the programme secured employment and 41% progressed onto training or education, meeting our Year 1 targets.

We also made significant developments in the range of training and progression opportunities on offer to participants in the prisons and in the community.

Supported by an artist from Prison Arts Foundation and the National Trust, members of the Women’s Project explored their responses to the National Trust’s national exhibition **‘Faces of Change - Votes for Women’** marking the centenary of women’s suffrage. Participants created sculptural pieces in response to the exhibition, the surrounding symbolism of Mount Stewart and their own personal experiences. Their artwork was displayed as part of the main exhibition and members of the group attended the exhibition’s opening night in Mount Stewart. The group also engaged with The Street Law Project, presented by Queen’s University students, exploring the impact of domestic abuse and coercive control.

In the context of its Floating Support Projects, APAC ASB and APAC STEM, NIACRO was appointed to chair the Belfast Regional

¹ Evaluation of Aspire September 2017 to September 2018, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, March 2019

Homelessness Prevention Sub-Group which co-ordinates activities and approaches working towards the prevention of homelessness.

Our Welfare Rights programme, which has had a presence in the prisons since the mid 1980's, came to an end in March 2019.

The Department of Communities is committed to providing a similar service called "Make the Call" to those in prison into the future and we will be watchful of the roll out of this development, whereby mainstream services are to be made available to those in prison.

SERVICE	ACTIVITY	PRIMARY FUNDER
Working Well - employment support for people with convictions, in prisons and in the community, including disclosure advice for individuals and employers		
Working Well Community - employability support based in Probation and NIACRO offices across Northern Ireland.	856 referrals received	ESF/PBNI
Working Well Prisons - employability support based in the three prisons, helping people to connect with services and programmes in custody and offering 'through the gate' support	451 referrals received	ESF/NIPS
Working Well Disclosure Hub - advice regarding disclosing a conviction and support if discrimination is experienced; advice to employers for compliance with legislative requirements.	220 enquiries received; 14 training sessions provided, attended by 89 people	ESF/NIACRO
Aspire - supporting marginalised young men who are at risk of becoming involved or further involved in criminality.		
Aspire Mentoring - support for young men subject to PBNI supervision.	248 participants	PBNI
Aspire Community Engagement - support for young men not in the formal criminal justice system.	285 participants	PBNI
APAC ASB - support for people to keep their tenancy and prevent homelessness because of anti-social behaviour	158 referrals received	NIHE/ Supporting People
APAC STEM - support to people whose tenancy may be of risk due to harassment or intimidation because of their ethnicity	79 referrals received	NIHE/ Supporting People
BASE 2 - crisis response	1,297 referrals	NIHE



SERVICE	ACTIVITY	PRIMARY FUNDER
Get Real - help for those with hate crime offenses, are at risk of committing a hate crime offense, and for victims of hate crime offenses	22 referrals and training delivered to 10 groups	SEUPB
Women's Project - support PBNI in the management of women in the community who have previously offended	38 referrals with average weekly attendance of 10 participants	Pilgrim Trust
Welfare Rights - Advice and support relating to finance and access to benefits for people in prison and their families	603 prisoners supported prior to release and 92 individuals in the community	NIPS

Outcomes Achieved and Signposts Recorded Across Services

Figure 1 summarises the breakdown of those NIACRO supported in 2018-19; 7,676 in total.

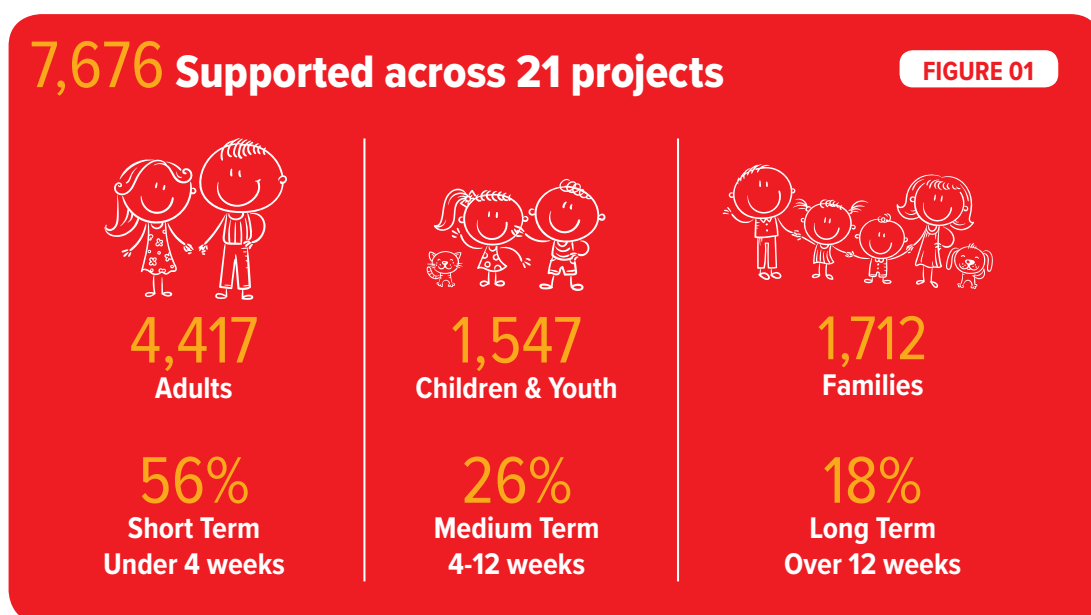
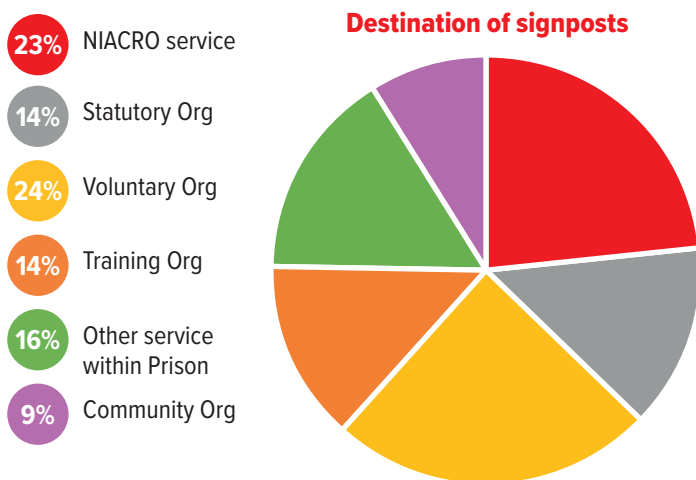
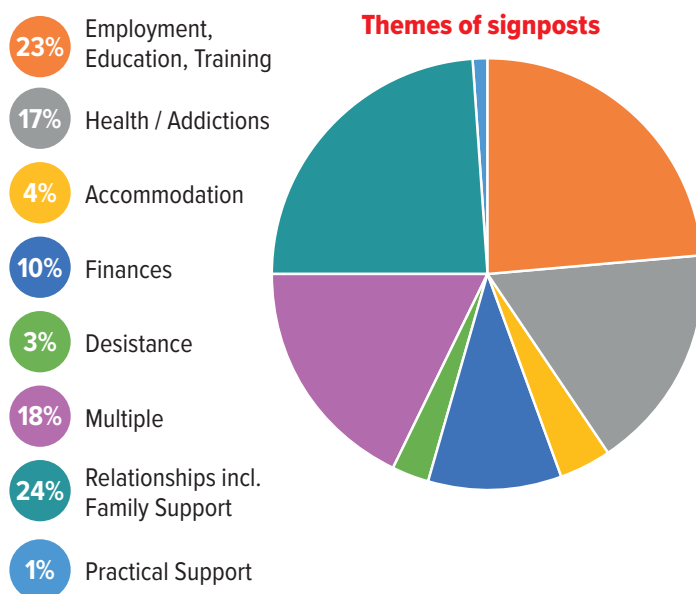


FIGURE 02



Across our projects, we recorded individual outcomes achieved by our service users. Each outcome was robustly evidenced and represents significant progress made by an individual with the support of NIACRO. Signposting service users to specialist sources of support or advice and supporting them to follow through with referrals/engagements is an increasingly important aspect of our work. Figures 2 and 3 summarise the breakdown of signposting recorded over the year.

FIGURE 03



The employability focus in the outcomes and signposting data reflect the impact of Working Well, which is now the organisation's largest single project (supporting over 900 participants per year). Signposting within NIACRO (accounting for 23% of all signposts) is reflective of a growing emphasis on ensuring that service users and their family members are aware of other ways in which NIACRO can support them and of our emphasis on helping whole families to access support.

Trends also reveal the increasing extent to which health (particularly mental health) and addictions difficulties are being experienced by the people we support.



EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT

Belief: *The knowledge and experience we gain from our work gives us the obligation, the authority, and the responsibility to seek to influence policy makers, service providers, and the wider public. We will continue to have an impact on policy and practice by communicating our key messages and engaging with the relevant publics.*

Public Affairs remains challenging with no Northern Ireland Assembly or Executive in place. However, over the year we connected with elected representatives at the five main party conferences and further follow-up meetings.

We continue to seek a commitment from each of the political parties for our six **Policy Priorities**:

1. Remove barriers to effective resettlement
2. Stop criminalising children
3. Support families and children affected by imprisonment
4. Pursue alternatives to prosecution
5. Attend to mental health and wellbeing across the criminal justice system
6. Tackle Hate Crime



The launch of our sponsored Crime and Justice edition of The View Magazine with other contributors.

SERVICE	ACTIVITY
Communications	<p>We updated our Overview of Services leaflet to give to all service users and family members so that they are better informed about other relevant service(s).</p> <p>We increased our use of social media and engaged with members and volunteers to share what we are doing and to gather their views on a variety of topics.</p> <p>We published and hosted a Crime and Justice edition of View Magazine.</p> <p>We attended all major political party conferences and engaged with elected officials in relation to our Get Real Political Panel which is ongoing.</p>
Policy Development	<p>We responded to the following public consultations, before which we consulted with staff, service users and volunteers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Justice Anti-Social Behaviour Legislation in Northern Ireland Consultation • Department of Health and Department of Education Strategy for Looked After Children: Improving Children's Lives Consultation • Working-Age Money Management Commissioning Plan Call for Evidence • Northern Ireland Affairs Committee Brexit and Northern Ireland Inquiry • Northern Ireland Prison Service Visitor Experience Consultation • Supporting People Draft Outcomes Monitoring Proposals Consultation • Northern Ireland Office Addressing the Legacy of Northern Ireland's Past Consultation
Reporting and Research	<p>The Annual Report was completed, and the new five-year Corporate Plan launched.</p> <p>An evaluation of Aspire was commissioned by PBNI and completed by NISRA.</p> <p>NIACRO commissioned an evaluation of CHIP.</p> <p>A Griffin's Society Research Fellowship was completed by two members of staff. The title of the research was <i>Survived: But at What Cost? A Study of Women in the Criminal Justice System Who Experienced Domestic Abuse and the Potential for Change</i>. The findings and recommendations have been well received by NIPS and others.</p> <p>Two informative trips to SACRO in Edinburgh were undertaken to learn more of their work and build links.</p>

APPLYING RESOURCES EFFECTIVELY

Belief: *We must use our resources efficiently and effectively to bring maximum benefit to our service users. To realise our outcomes, we will support our staff and volunteers, and secure and manage the necessary resources.*

Staff training and induction provision expanded as staff numbers grew over the year. 25 new staff members went through the induction process which incorporated a visit to Hydebank Wood College. The most significant addition to our training plan was the introduction of accredited Skills for Justice qualifications in Early Intervention, Community Rehabilitation and Restorative Practice. Our annual staff day in June provided an opportunity for everyone to come together and to take part in seminars and discussion about desistance and problem-solving justice.

Two posts were added to our Senior Leadership Team; a Central Services Manager, responsible for Human Resources and Finance, and a Working Well Programmes Manager.

The organisation's financial controls remain subject to internal and external audit. With an increasing number of funders paying for services delivered in arrears, we face increased pressure on cash flow; at each quarter end we are owed in the region of £750,000.

Tendering and re-applying for funding is a constant activity in the world in which we operate.

We continue to invest in technology applications and have applied for external certification through Microsoft Essentials Plus to evidence the security of our systems.

Throughout the year, we recruited and supported dedicated volunteers who add significantly to our work with young people. We held our annual volunteer's celebration event in June 2018 during Volunteers Week to mark our appreciation for their contribution to the organisation.

Our Biannual Executive review was also held in June 2018 with a focus on safeguarding and we have since appointed an Executive Safeguarding Champion in line with good practice.



From our Spring Showcase event with guests and stakeholders.

SERVICE	ACTIVITY
Staff Support and Training	<p>Training plan prepared, approved and delivered including induction for 25 new staff.</p> <p>Software package aids evaluation of training events to inform improvement plan.</p> <p>Supervision and appraisal guidance implemented; all Senior Practitioners attended relevant training.</p>
Volunteers	30 matched volunteers and 8 on waiting list.
Securing Resources	See financial results (pages 18 and 19).
Quality Standards and Controls	<p>Investors in People; working towards renewal of accreditation in August 2019.</p> <p>Investors in Children; received the award (one of only three organisations in NI to hold accreditation).</p> <p>Database embedded over year for capturing and reporting on data including outcomes data.</p>



Prof. Shadd Maruna of Queens University presenting at our Staff Day training.



GOVERNANCE

We are registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland and make a full Directors' Return which includes a statement of governance related policies.

NIACRO Executive

Directors during the year ending 31 March 2019 were as follows:

- Sid McDowell (Chairman)
- Brendan Fulton (Vice Chairman)
- Tony Glover (Treasurer)
- Christine Hunter
- Christine McLaughlin
- James McClean
- Ricky Rowledge
- Majella McCloskey
- Frank Mulhern
- Gillian McNaul
- Clare Dwyer
- John Topping

NIACRO Senior Leadership Team

- Olwen Lyner, Chief Executive
- Donnie Sweeney, Deputy Chief Executive
- Ruth Walker, Business Development Manager
- Gareth Eannetta, Programme Manager
- Rachel Long, Programme Manager
- Maggie Butler, Central Services Manager

Key Information

Company Registration Number: NI 018121
Charity Registration Number: NIC101599

Registered Office

Amelia House, 4 Amelia Street, Belfast BT2 7GS.

Company Secretary

Olwen Lyner

You can request a copy of the full Financial Statements by emailing us at:

niacro@niacro.co.uk

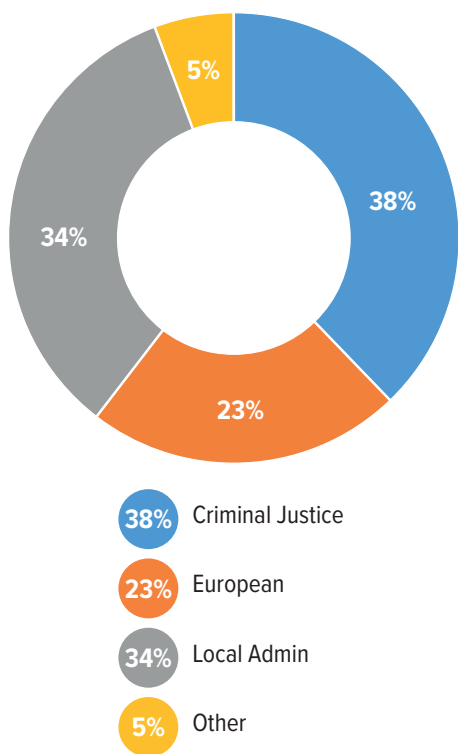
or write to us at the Registered Office address above.



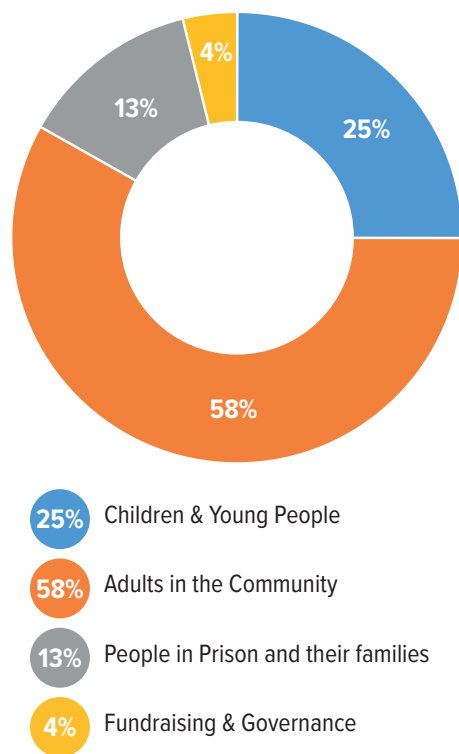
Financial Overview

Our Funders	Classification	Value £
Department of Justice	Criminal Justice	265,738
Northern Ireland Prison Service	Criminal Justice	401,367
Probation Board for Northern Ireland	Criminal Justice	752,700
Belfast Health and Social Care Trust	Local Admin	79,549
Health and Social Care Board	Local Admin	391,926
Northern Ireland Housing Executive	Local Admin	361,073
European Social Fund	European	683,507
Public Health Agency	Local Admin	307,095
South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust	Local Admin	25,015
Southern Health and Social Care Trust	Local Admin	93,361
Western Health and Social Care Trust	Local Admin	10,623
Special EU Programmes Body	European	179,400
Pilgrim Trust	Other	14,169
Children in Need	Other	18,694
Money Advice Service	Other	119,517
Voluntary Agencies	Other	33,895
Services Income	Other	9,633
Investment Income	Other	6,065
Arts Council	Other	9,822
Total		3,763,157

Income Overview



Resources Expended



Breakdown of Income Sources		
Criminal Justice	1,419,806	38%
European	862,908	23%
Local Admin	1,268,647	34%
Other	211,796	5%
Total	3,763,157	100%

Breakdown of Resources Expended		
Children & Young People	920,421	25%
Adults in the Community	2,153,871	58%
People in Prison and their Families	483,814	13%
Fundraising & Governance	140,555	4%
Total	3,698,661	100%

Service Locations

Belfast

Amelia House
4 Amelia Street
Belfast
BT2 7GS
028 9032 0157

Portadown

6 Carleton Street
Portadown
Craigavon
BT62 3EP
028 3833 1168

Derry/Londonderry

Embassy Building
2nd Floor
3 Strand Road
Derry/Londonderry
BT48 7BH
028 7127 1459

We also deliver services in PBNI offices and all
custodial establishments in Northern Ireland.

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- 📘 facebook.com/NiacroNews
- 📺 youtube.com/NiacroVideos

