

Annual Impact Report 2024-25



Working to reduce crime and its impact on people and communities.

About us

Our mission is to reduce crime and its impact on people and communities. For more than five decades Niacro has stood shoulder-to-shoulder with service users, families, neighbourhoods, voluntary groups and statutory partners - creating powerful interventions that confront the roots of harm, tackle inequalities and address systemic barriers. Niacro's work is rooted in accountability, anti-violence and justice as we aim for a more inclusive future for everyone, where everyone's rights are respected and protected.

Acknowledgements

We extend heartfelt thanks to our dedicated staff and volunteers for their unwavering commitment, to the people who use our services and choose to work with us every day, and to our funders and partners for their invaluable support in 2024-25.

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Moving forward. Together.

A joint message from our Chair and Chief Executive

At the heart of Niacro is a story of decades of value driven work and service provision to people and families on the margins in Northern Ireland, and a commitment to influencing change and improving lives to reduce crime and its impact. The impact delivered in 2024-25 and outlined in this report stands testament to that.

Much of the emphasis of Niacro's work is supporting people to create a stable living environment in terms of housing, finances, health and employment. We are struck that these matters are not

only the purview of the justice system, but are indeed systemic, societal and fall across all NI Executive departments. With this in mind, Niacro welcomed the commitment within Programme for Government 2025-27 to develop a Cross Departmental Strategy to reduce offending and re-offending and are already actively engaged in the early development stages.

During 2024-25 the total numbers of people and families accessing our service programmes grew from 7,080 to 7,710 and we supported 50,183 visits through our Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) funded Visitor Centre service. This continued demand on programmes, coupled with an ever-challenging financial context across the voluntary and community sector saw the senior leadership team focus on

securing funding for existing services e.g., a successful tender to continue to deliver the Visitor Centre service. Opportunities to grow into new areas in response to the people who use our services were also explored, and we commenced distribution of our Glasspool Frontline Fund which will provide vital one-off payments to people in crisis.

During the final quarter of the 2024-25 financial year a further successful funding application to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund was made for the third and final year of the fund, and we worked closely with NICVA and other providers to the fund to ensure future continuity of our vital employability programme SkillSET, through the NI Cant Wait Campaign.

In September 2024 the Justice Minister published a draft Justice Bill, including reform of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Order 1978. We welcomed the long awaited draft bill and prepared a detailed written submission for the purposes of giving evidence to the Committee for Justice. Our submission also included a call for the introduction of an amendment to raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility (MACR) in Northern Ireland, because 10 is too young and out of line with international children's rights standards.

As our team delivered our large service portfolio of 27 programmes, we maintained a focus on our people and our Investors in People Gold status through investment in training and development, commitment to staff wellbeing and staff engagement events as well as a comprehensive IT upgrade, to keep us better connected.

Innovative strides to collaborate and drive improvements in organisational quality were also at the centre of delivery across 2024-25 and included:

- Having our status as a Living Wage

Employer recognised.

- Developing and delivering bespoke Niacro CPD Training programmes to service users, businesses, and partner organisations.
- Launching our exciting long-term social value partnership with CGI, a global IT and business consultancy service.

Throughout this report you will see that the Niacro team remain focussed on delivery, engagement and collaboration as well as supporting each other to live out the Niacro values every day. You will also see the increasing impact of our work through the voices of the people who use our services and who choose to work with us every day to bring about change.

We are proud to present this report.



Les Allamby
Chairperson



Fiona Greene
Chief Executive

Our impact in numbers

In 2024-25, Niacro invested over £5.5 million to reduce crime and its impact by:

- Supporting people including children and families.
- Creating safer and inclusive communities.
- Diverting young people from the justice system.
- Driving change through insight.
- Operating efficiently.



What we did



7,710

7,710 adults, families and/or children supported



27

27 services provided



36,405

36,405 support interventions



300

300 grants awarded via the Glasspool Flexible Frontline Fund, delivering £50,000 in hardship support



50,183

50,183 visits welcomed at our Maghaberry, Magilligan and Hydebank Visitor Centres

How well we did it



90%

90% of people completed their engagement



93%

93% service user satisfaction



10,314

10,314 positive outcomes across supporting relationships, health and wellbeing, employment, education and training, stabilising accommodation, stabilising finances and supporting people living with a conviction



“Thank you for all your help and support. I am now feeling more confident about my future. You were easy to talk to, and I never felt judged but valued.”

Aspire Mentoring

“I got the best support worker - I couldn't have imagined working with anyone else. I've never felt support like this. I'm looking forward to my new life with my tool kit to help me stay on the right path.”

Connections

“I attended this event today to see my son who is currently serving a sentence at Magilligan. I just wanted to let your team know how much this meant to me and how much we both enjoyed it. The kindness and effort was greatly appreciated, and it was lovely to enjoy a “normal experience” with him and spend quieter time enjoying each other's company. You made a mummy's Mother's Day without her eldest son a little more bearable.”

Visitor Centre, Magilligan

“I really appreciated my mentor supporting me through all of this and I didn't feel alone when I started going to counselling. I was also glad of support with my housing benefit and my personal safety and my mentor supported me to get involved in voluntary work and I'm applying to go to college to gain qualifications.”

Insync

“It (starting a new job) went really well I just told them everything and was open about it all and they ended up accepting me, so I start in 3 weeks. Thanks for your help couldn't have done it without you!”

Disclosure NI Advice

“Extremely helpful, excellent approaches, gentle in nature. Really helped both myself and my son with new strategies and coping mechanisms that we use on a daily basis. Always thankful for all your help.”

EISS

Why we do what we do

Northern Ireland's criminal justice system is facing deep and complex challenges. Rising prison numbers, long delays in case processing, and persistent social inequalities are placing immense pressure on individuals, families, and communities as well as the statutory services we work with.

- Prison population has surged by 54% since 2021, reaching 2,123¹ in March 2025.
- Remand rates remain high at 36.8%.
- The economic burden on low-income households supporting someone in custody is growing.
- Mental ill-health, linked to deprivation and the legacy of conflict, affects 45% of probation-assessed cases and drives over 21,000 PSNI mental health-related calls annually².
- Case delays have worsened, with median processing times rising to 769 days³, undermining justice, increasing further victimisation and blocking timely rehabilitative interventions.
- Underfunding and legal aid stagnation have led to resource shortages and a shrinking pool of criminal lawyers.⁴
- The latest re-offending rates for adults and young people is 17.6%⁵ (3,386 out of 19,196 reoffended).

1 Source: <https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/articles/weekly-situation-reports-20242025>

2 Source: <https://www.niassembly.gov.uk/globalassets/documents/raise/publications/2022-2027/2024/justice/3124.pdf>

3 Source: <https://www.cjini.org/reports/transforming-the-criminal-justice-system-in-northern-ireland>

4 Source: <https://www.agendani.com/the-crisis-in-northern-irelands-criminal-justice-system-urgent-action-needed/>

5 Source: <https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/news/adult-and-youth-reoffending-northern-ireland-202122-cohort-published-today>

- The minimum age of criminal responsibility remains at 10 years old which is too young, and is leading to the unnecessary criminalisation of many children and young people.

Emerging trends - such as rising cybercrime⁶, hate-motivated offences, and digital transformation - are also reshaping the justice landscape.

Niacro exists to bridge these gaps. We deliver evidence-based and trauma-informed support to thousands of individuals and their families to provide expertise, early help and prevention, reduce reoffending, and advocate for a fairer and more effective justice system.

In a system strained by delay, inequality, and rising demand, Niacro's role is not only necessary - it is vital; in order to support transformative change, as sustained investment in preventive and restorative approaches will be essential to building a more responsive and equitable criminal justice system.

6 Source: <https://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/files/nipolicingboard/2025-04/Policing%20Plan%202025-30%20and%20Annual%20Performance%20Plan%2025-26.pdf>



“Niacro has never stood still. The needs we meet, the issues we face and the mission we have set ourselves will continue to motivate and galvanise us into the future.”

Key results for 2024-25

Goal 1: Crime reduction through support

We will support people affected by crime and imprisonment through the provision of bespoke, co-produced and trauma-informed services that strengthen relationships, develop skills and build confidence aiding a successful resettlement.



4,264 people received tailored, trauma-informed supports including:

- 249 young men (aged 16-30) were supported through **Aspire Community Engagement** to build resilience and reduce risk of paramilitary or criminal involvement.
- 167 young men (aged 16-30) under Probation supervision were supported through **Aspire Mentoring**, helping those most at risk of paramilitary or criminal involvement build resilience and healthier coping strategies.
- 112 women were supported to navigate and move beyond the criminal justice system through the **Connections** service.
- 1,079 families of people in prison received emotional and practical support through **Family Links**.
- 49 people in Hydebank Wood College and Women's Prison received **Family Links+** support, helping those with limited or no family contact strengthen relationships and cope with challenges.
- 482 people received debt and money management support through **FAMM**, helping individuals and families impacted by imprisonment or community sentences.

- 745 people engaged with **SkillSET's** employability support and training, leading to 185 people securing employment.
- 74 people received mentoring from **Transitions**, a service for adults facing significant and complex challenges after release from custody.
- 50,183 visits to **Visitor Centres**, including 9,458 childrens visits, at Northern Ireland's three prisons, delivering hospitality, childcare, information and welcome services.

Supporting employment journeys through SkillSET

The second year of the SkillSET programme at Magilligan Prison saw the delivery of three week-long hospitality training sessions in partnership with Springboard. Each session welcomed 10 participants and offered a comprehensive curriculum including the WorldHost customer service award, CV writing, interview skills, budgeting, and confidence-building.

The week concluded with a live cookery demonstration - ranging from ice cream making to crepes - followed by a graduation ceremony where participants received certificates celebrating their achievements.

This initiative exemplified the impact of cross-sector collaboration between public, private, and third-sector organisations, creating meaningful opportunities and fostering hope for positive change. Feedback from participants and staff was overwhelmingly positive, with many expressing interest in further training and support post-release.

Several participants have since secured employment in the hospitality industry, highlighting the programme's real-world impact.



“This was a really great course and helped me change for the future.”



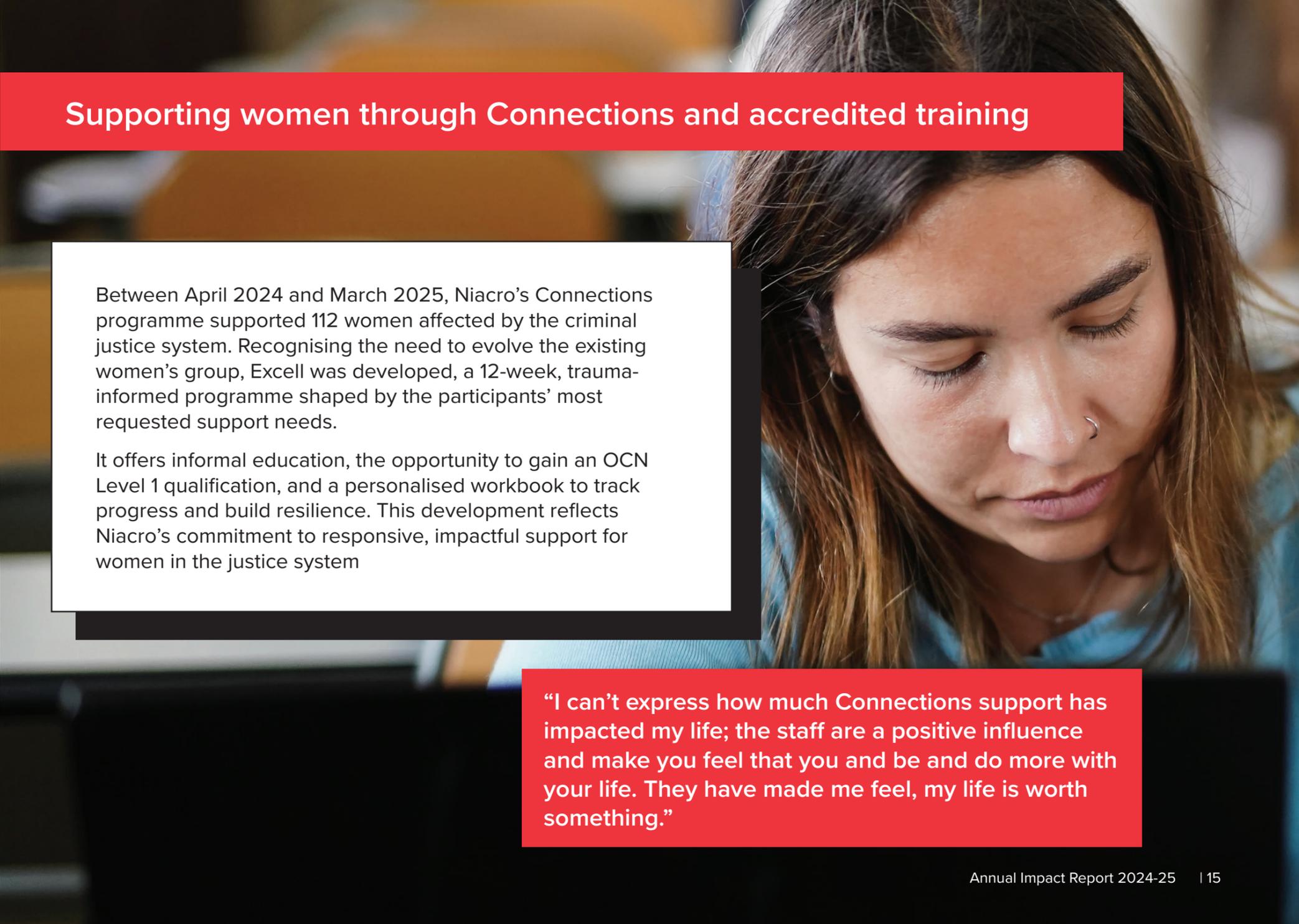
Supporting transitions from custody to community

In June 2024, Niacro was awarded the contract to deliver the Transitions Through the Gate Programme (2024-2026) on behalf of the Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI). The programme supports men aged 30+ and women of all ages as they move from custody into the community under probation supervision.

Using Niacro's trauma informed mentoring approach, Transitions provides up to three months of tailored support, helping service users access accommodation, health services, financial assistance, as well as other resettlement needs. This early intervention can be the critical difference between reoffending and rebuilding.

Transitions continues to offer vital, person-centred support at a pivotal moment in people's lives.

"I never expected to go to prison, and being released was equally daunting. You made me feel at ease, never judged, and helped me tackle things I'd been avoiding - like registering with a GP, accessing benefits, and managing my mental health. You went above and beyond."

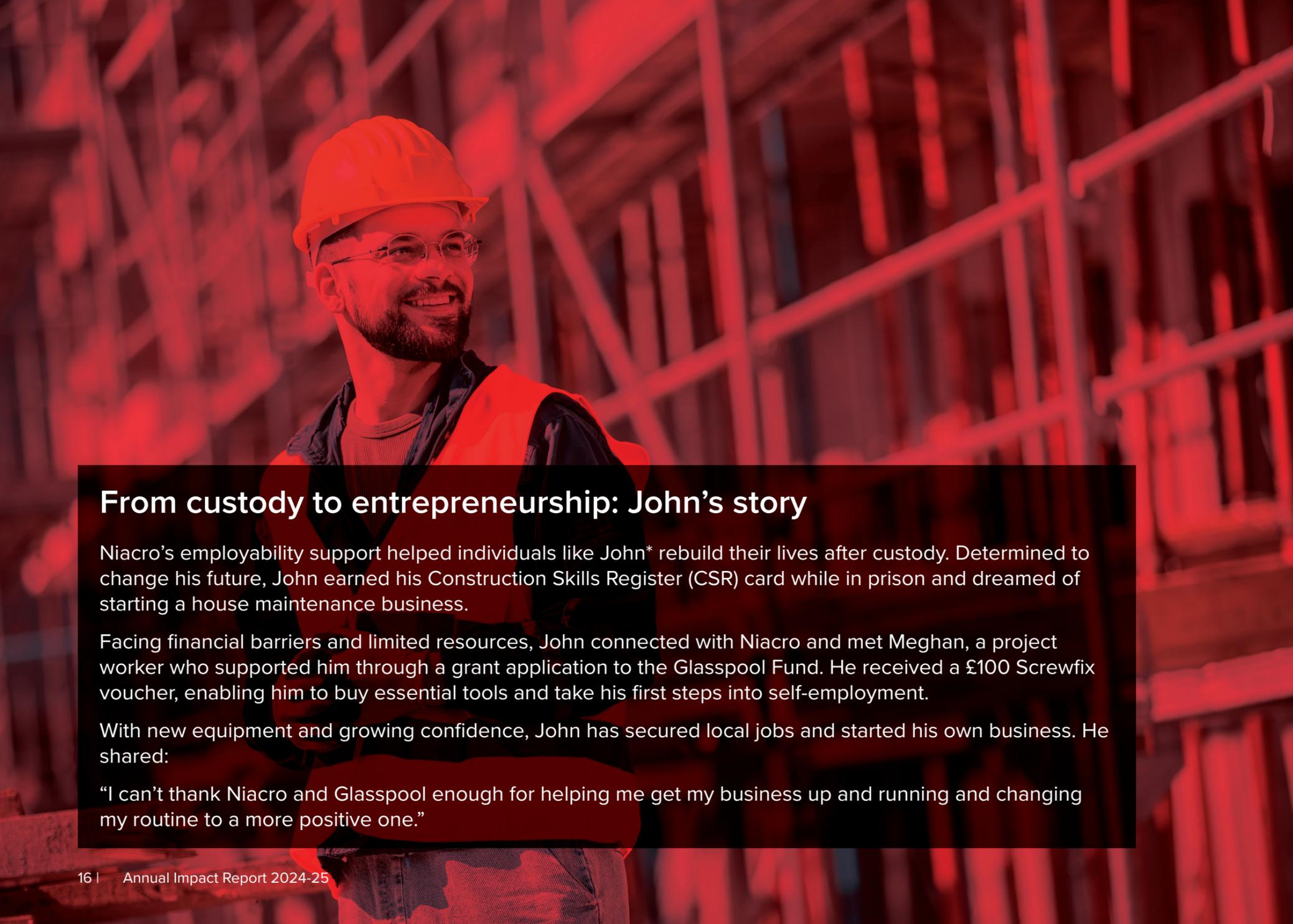


Supporting women through Connections and accredited training

Between April 2024 and March 2025, Niacro's Connections programme supported 112 women affected by the criminal justice system. Recognising the need to evolve the existing women's group, Excell was developed, a 12-week, trauma-informed programme shaped by the participants' most requested support needs.

It offers informal education, the opportunity to gain an OCN Level 1 qualification, and a personalised workbook to track progress and build resilience. This development reflects Niacro's commitment to responsive, impactful support for women in the justice system

"I can't express how much Connections support has impacted my life; the staff are a positive influence and make you feel that you can be and do more with your life. They have made me feel, my life is worth something."



From custody to entrepreneurship: John's story

Niacro's employability support helped individuals like John* rebuild their lives after custody. Determined to change his future, John earned his Construction Skills Register (CSR) card while in prison and dreamed of starting a house maintenance business.

Facing financial barriers and limited resources, John connected with Niacro and met Meghan, a project worker who supported him through a grant application to the Glasspool Fund. He received a £100 Screwfix voucher, enabling him to buy essential tools and take his first steps into self-employment.

With new equipment and growing confidence, John has secured local jobs and started his own business. He shared:

"I can't thank Niacro and Glasspool enough for helping me get my business up and running and changing my routine to a more positive one."

Goal 2: Safer and inclusive communities

We will work in partnership and support those with lived experience of the criminal justice system, and others affected by crime, to achieve and sustain settled lives.



2,620 people were supported including:

- 166 people were supported through **APAC ASB & STEM** to prevent homelessness linked to anti-social behaviour or intimidation.
- 1,190 people received services from **Base 2** with crisis intervention, support, and mediation for those at risk of violence or exclusion.
- 106 people were supported through **Belong2**, providing tailored support and cultural competence training for foreign nationals and minority ethnic individuals in the justice system.
- 34 people received **Counselling** sessions delivered in partnership with Ascertain.
- 413 people received **Disclosure** advice on sharing conviction information with employers, colleges, and other institutions.
- 78 people who have been victims of paramilitary-style violence were supported with mentoring and counselling through the **Insync** service.
- 212 people received specialist **Welfare Advice** tailored to those in contact with the criminal justice system.

Supporting recovery through Insync's trauma-informed approach

In 2022 Niacro launched Insync, the first trauma-informed counselling and mentoring programme in Northern Ireland designed specifically for adults targeted by paramilitary-style attacks. Funded through the Executive Programme on Paramilitarism and Organised Crime (EPPOC) Insync combines trauma counselling with practical mentoring to address challenges such as fear of retribution, community stigma, housing instability, addiction, and debt.

An independent 2024 evaluation "Grounded" by Dr Colm Walsh, QUB shows clear, measurable impact from 117 referrals: average PTSD checklist scores fell from 58 to 47, mental health outcomes improved, and participant retention exceeded that of traditional services. Service users report that the twin-track model - therapy paired with targeted practical support - unlocked progress they had not achieved before. One participant, who had been beaten and shot, described finally making therapy work when counselling was matched with a mentor who helped restore routine and manage daily challenges.

Insync delivers services across Northern Ireland and offers remote counselling and mentoring for those unable to travel. Open to anyone affected by paramilitary-style attacks regardless of age, gender, or background, Insync demonstrates a cost-effective, holistic pathway to recovery and makes a compelling case for sustained investment and scaling to meet rising demand.

"I have tried counselling twice before, but it just didn't work for me. This time around my counsellor has explained to me why I feel the way I do, and this has made a huge difference. She explained that while I have many different negative emotions, they are all coming from the same trauma, and this has helped me manage my emotions. Insync has been such a positive experience for me."

Supporting positive change through disclosure advice

At Niacro, we help individuals navigate life with a criminal record by offering tailored advice and one-to-one support. Our Disclosure service empowers people to move forward with confidence, reducing barriers to employment, education, volunteering, and travel.

In 2024-25, we trained 92 individuals across 22 organisations in safe and fair recruitment practices. Through our helpline and outreach, we increased knowledge and confidence among both individuals and practitioners - contributing to safer, fairer opportunities across Northern Ireland.

"The information you provided me with, made a life changing difference for my son, who as a result of this support was able to gain access to university."



Supporting people when they need help the most

In its first year, Niacro's Glasspool Flexible Frontline Fund delivered over £50,000 in direct support to individuals facing financial hardship - £21,286 of which was allocated in the final quarter alone. This vital resource helped service users reduce financial stress, improve wellbeing, and experience renewed dignity and hope.

The impact has been profound, with heartfelt feedback from service users highlighting how even modest support can transform lives. Across our teams, this fund has become a powerful tool for restoring stability and confidence. It's more than financial aid - it's a lifeline that empowers people to move forward. Year one has laid a strong foundation, and we're proud to continue building on its success.

“Thank you for the support - having a cooker and washing machine will make daily life easier and help me build better self-care skills.”



A lifeline for a family in need

A family with several young children was facing serious difficulties. Both parents have a range of health needs. After relocating to a new area with little support and mounting financial strain, they found it increasingly difficult to care for their children's basic needs.

When referred to Niacro, the family lacked a suitable fridge/freezer, making it hard to store food, leading to waste, and requiring frequent, costly trips for essentials.

Through the Glasspool Flexible Frontline Fund, Niacro provided a larger fridge/freezer, easing financial pressure and restoring dignity. This simple intervention made a profound difference - helping the family build stability, improve wellbeing, and take a hopeful step forward.

Goal 3: Reduction of young people entering the criminal justice system

We will help prevent children and young people entering the criminal justice system by delivering early intervention services as well as working to influence the development of diversionary approaches.



847 children were supported including:

- 73 families with children (aged 8-13) facing significant difficulties received intensive support through **CAPS** (Southern HSC Trust area).
- 209 families in Belfast and 197 families in the Southern HSC Trust were supported through **EISS**, providing early help before the need for statutory intervention.
- 173 children impacted by imprisonment were supported through **Family Links**.
- 327 families accessed early intervention support via the **Family Support Hub** (Craigavon & Banbridge).
- Weekly visits to young people in Lakewood Secure Care Centre took place, to provide advocacy and support through the **Independent Representation** Scheme.
- 41 young people in care were befriended and supported by volunteers through the **Independent Visitors** Scheme.

Celebrating 20 years of the CAPS programme

In 2024 Niacro celebrated two decades of the Child and Parent Support (CAPS) programme - a proven early-intervention service for 8-13 year-olds and their families. Delivered in homes, schools and communities, CAPS strengthens protective factors with a focus on providing timely support to prevent issues from escalating and to promote positive outcomes for children and their families.

Across 20 years CAPS has supported more than 1,000 children and families, turning vulnerability into opportunity. Personal testimonies - from Toni and her son Blake, who rebuilt confidence and family bonds, to Roisin, who still credits CAPS Senior Project Worker Shirley Wells two decades on - show the programme's lasting impact.

To mark the anniversary a short film was produced featuring CEO Fiona Greene, Education Project Worker Annaleise Hunter and families who have used the service. Premiered at the November 2024 AGM, the film captured the quality of the support over years, with relationships sustained and futures improved.



“The relationship the CAPS worker and my son developed was strong. She was always on his side and she helped me to see things differently. It became easier to see him more positively.”

Changing lives of children affected imprisonment

Since June 2023 Niacro's Family Links service has offered play therapy to 25 children affected by imprisonment. Generous funding from St Stephen's Green allowed us to scale trauma-informed, intensive support through a partnership between Family Links and specialist play therapists.

Our play therapy opened a safe space for children to name feelings and for parents to reflect on how adult choices shape child behaviour. The results have been remarkable. It reduced anger and shame, increased stronger emotional language, improved school attendance and engagement, and calmer, more positive behaviour at home and in the community. Schools reported measurable gains in wellbeing and academic progress. By centring relationships, practical supports and creative therapy, this programme is rewriting futures - restoring stability, strengthening families and giving children the chance to thrive.

"I can talk about the bad things that happened and ask adults for what I need now."

Supporting families through trauma and recovery: Sarah's story

In 2024-25, Niacro's Early Intervention Support Service (EISS) supported families facing the impact of substance misuse. Sarah, a mother reached out during a crisis - coping with separation, mental health struggles, and her son Tom's* behavioural challenges.

Distrust of statutory services added pressure, but EISS responded with empathy and sensitivity. Through gentle engagement, Sarah and Tom began to open up. Sarah was connected to mental health support, and Tom received tailored behavioural help. Sessions focused on healing together, rebuilding trust, and reducing shame.

With time, Sarah felt more confident engaging with services, and Tom's behaviour improved as he learned to manage his emotions. Sarah described the space to talk as "instrumental" in her recovery.

Her story highlights the power of early intervention - and Niacro's commitment to walking alongside families as they move from crisis to resilience.

Goal 4: Insight driven change

We will effect meaningful change through service user based research, influencing, and awareness.

Strategic influence & sector leadership

Niacro continues to play a pivotal role in shaping justice and social policy by representing the Voluntary and Community Sector on a range of strategic and advisory bodies, including:

- **Youth Justice:** CYPSP Youth Offending Sub-Group and the Strategic Framework for Youth Justice Implementation Group
- **Restorative Practice:** Restorative Practices Forum NI (Co-Chair), and DoJ Restorative Justice Working Group.
- **Justice System Reform:** ASFO Chair, DoJ Single Community Order Consultation Group, DoJ/DfC ASB Expert Group, and Northern Ireland Prison Service VCSE Forum.
- **Cross-Sector Collaboration:** NICVA Joint Forum, NICVA Economic Inactivity Group, Belfast VCSE Advisory Panel, Dept of Health Workstream 9 Family Support and Co-Chair of the Homeless Prevention Forum.

Consultation submissions

- Response to DoJ call for Views on Victims and Witness Strategy 2025-30.
- Response to Dept for Communities consultation on Fuel Poverty Strategy.
- Response to YJA draft Corporate Plan.
- Response to the Executive Office consultation on a Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls.

For more detail on our consultations: niacro.co.uk/consultation-responses

Research & evidence-based advocacy

Niacro have advanced the commitment to research-informed practice through several key initiatives:

- Restorative Justice Project in partnership with Victim Support NI.
- Finalised reports on:
 - » Ethnic Minority Experiences in the Criminal Justice System.
 - » Financial Impact of Imprisonment on Families.
- Supported academic research via Family Links and Visitor Centres, including a PhD study on prisoner visitation.
- Provided input to DoJ research on cross-departmental approaches to reducing offending, helping shape future strategy and Programme for Government delivery.



Effective public engagement

Niacro's visibility and impact were amplified through key events, publications, and stakeholder engagement:

- Publishing our new Strategy 2024-2029 and Annual Impact Report.
- Celebrating 20 years of CAPS at our 2024 AGM, with video and presentations.
- Developing a submission to the Public Accounts Committee Inquiry into Reducing Adult Re-Offending in Northern Ireland (in collaboration with Extern).
- Hosting and participating in events including:
 - » ASFO network meeting at Maghaberry Visitor Centre.
 - » NIPS VCSE Forum hosted at Niacro.
 - » All-Island Women in Justice panel hosted by NI Prison Service.
 - » NICVA/ Labour Market Partnership Conference presentation on Social Inclusion and Partnership.
 - » Legal Aid Panel at the Long Gallery hosted by Law Society.
- Delivering presentations and workshops including:
 - » The experiences of Ethnic Minority children in the Criminal Justice System to CYPSP youth offending sub group.
 - » Single Community Order legislation (with CLC, Include Youth, VOYPIC).



Providing evidence to the Public Accounts Committee

In early 2025 Niacro, alongside Extern, were invited to provide evidence to the Public Accounts Committee as they looked into the matter of reducing adult reoffending; the written submission called for a cross departmental strategy, trauma-informed rehabilitative programmes, strengthened community sentencing, improved data linkage, and more certain, multi-year funding for the voluntary sector.

Drawing on decades of front-line work - from SkillSET employability pathways to Family Links and Transitions mentoring – our submission demonstrated how targeted support for housing, health, employment and family ties reduces reoffending and supports lasting reintegration.

We prepared for further evidence at the Public Accounts Committee in April 2025 to advocate for legislative and resourcing changes that will enable systemic reform. We remain committed to working with government, justice agencies, employers and communities to turn evidence into policy and to give people genuine, supported opportunities to build safe, productive lives.



Researching the cost of imprisonment on local families

Working with the Visitor Centre Family Forum and other service users, Niacro centred families in research to deepen understanding of the financial impact of imprisonment on Northern Ireland households. Funded by the Department for Communities and led by consultant Ilias Lambrou, the research project used a co-productive approach to better understand and highlight the unseen burden on families affected by imprisonment.

We carried out in-depth interviews with 15 family members, ran an anonymous survey of current and recent supporters of people in custody, and convened a stakeholder session with families, ex-prisoners and frontline staff from our Visitor Centre, Welfare Rights and FAMM teams. Their lived testimony shaped the findings, exposed hidden costs and informed final recommendations.

The full report, *The Unseen Sentence*, will launch in 2025-26 and will provide evidence to drive policy and practice change to relieve these financial burdens.

Unlocking potential through partnership

Fiona Greene, Niacro CEO presented at the NICVA/Labour Market Conference in June 2024, exploring the personal, circumstantial, and systemic challenges faced by our service users, and how social inclusion can be achieved by collaboration with statutory partners. The conference highlighted the importance of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund in supporting vulnerable groups engage and participate in the economy, as well as providing Niacro with an opportunity to demonstrate that partnership is at the heart of service delivery and creating impact.

“Niacro’s SkillSET programme is a living example of how statutory providers, informed employers and the VCS can come together to support rehabilitation and resettlement for safer communities. We are pleased that people in our care can start their employability journey while in custody, with support into the community to gain and sustain training and jobs, making them less vulnerable to re-offending and making them more included in society.”

Maria Watson, Department of Justice

Goal 5: An effective and efficient organisation

We will remain resilient and agile, using our resources efficiently and effectively to deliver quality, innovative and value for money service solutions.

Our people

- Events Planning Group meetings took place to support with the delivery of two staff development days held in May and December 2024.
- Preparations were commenced on the upcoming Investors in People re-accreditation in July 2025.
- Two volunteer events took place, and Volunteers' Week was celebrated in June 2024.
- A comprehensive training plan was delivered and included programmes on mental health and wellbeing, WRAP training, sessions on anxiety, personality disorders, and trauma-informed practice as well as cultural diversity, financial wellness, food hygiene, and managing challenging behaviours.
- 140 members of staff were active across all activities and departments during the year, and we had 27 active volunteers.

Quality standards and compliance

- Additional appointed persons were put in place to support our Safeguarding procedures.
- We maintained accreditations in Investing in Children, Investing in Volunteering as well as Investing in People; we were approved as a Belfast Business Promise supporter, and achieved accreditation as a Living Wage Employer.
- We retained our SFJ award status, CPD and OCN certifications.
- Retained Cyber-essentials Plus accreditation.

Business development

- Successful annual grant applications were submitted e.g., Family Links, SkillSET and Core Funding.
- Funding application to UKSPF for SkillSET for 2025-26 was successfully completed.
- Successful tender bid for Visitors Centres was completed.

Centre for development

The Centre for Development delivered the following qualifications:

- Accessing Benefits: Supporting People with Benefit Issues During Custody and On Release (CPD).
- Safe Fair and Consistent Recruitment Practice when Employing people with Convictions in NI (CPD).
- Supporting Women Through and Beyond the Criminal Justice System (SFJ award).
- Debt and Prison: Best Practice in Supporting People with Debt issues during Custody and on Release (CPD).

The Centre also provided quality assurance and support for standardisation, to staff and service users in the delivery of OCN NI approved courses and awards as part of programme delivery.

Financial

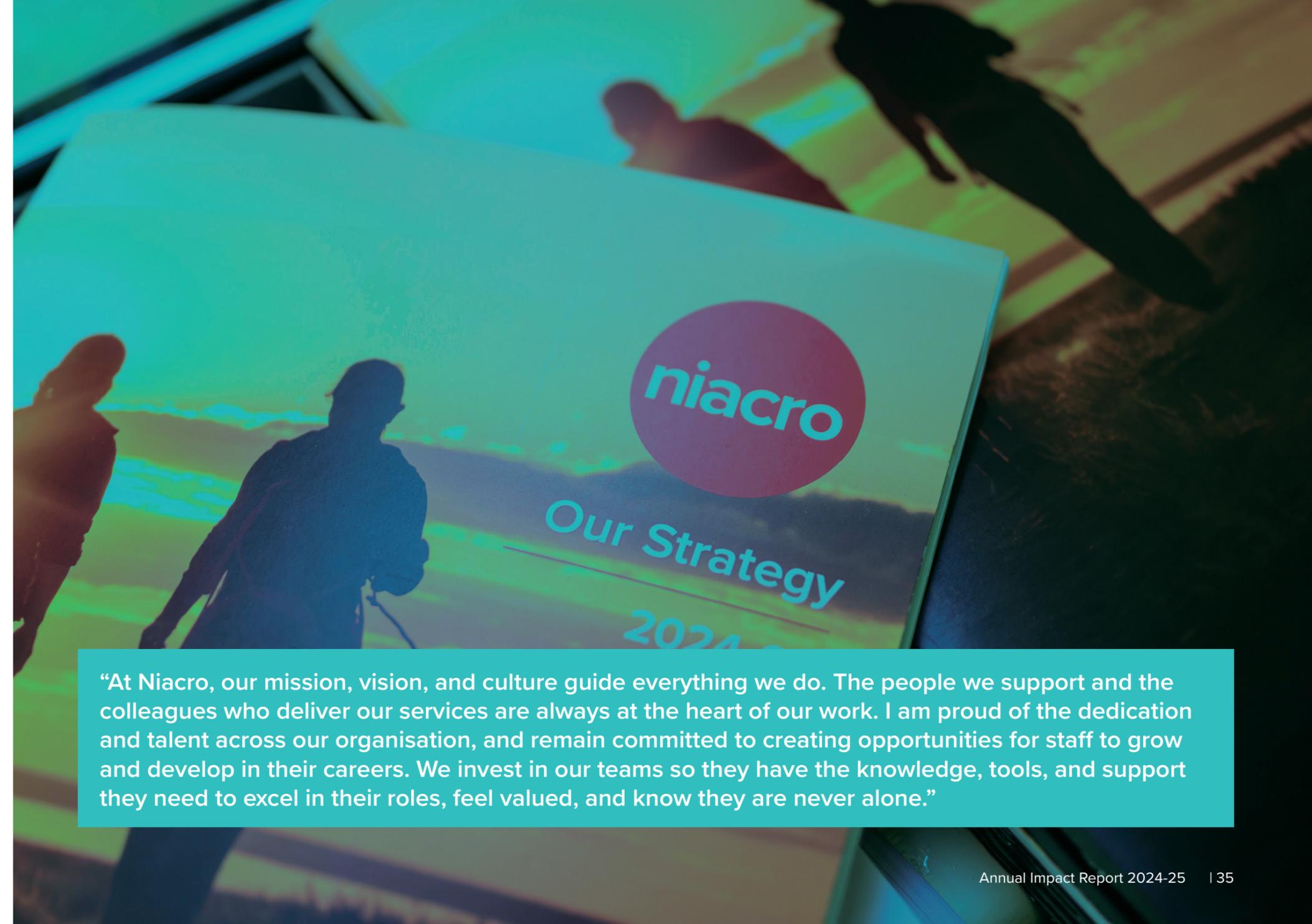
- New internal auditors were appointed; field work was carried out and a rating of satisfactory awarded (top rating).
- Four Finance, Audit and Risk Committee meetings were held, to include scrutiny of funding position, risk register, and progress against goals.
- New Niacro Pay Award Policy and Procedure is now in place and will be applied from the year 2025-26. This follows extensive development and consultation with staff and the recognised union.

Best practice in governance

- The internal audit field work referred to above focused on governance. Overall rating of satisfactory, and numerous areas including the Risk Register and information packs referred to as examples of best practice.
- Annual conflict of interest exercise carried out for members of the senior team and an additional annual declaration introduced for Executive Committee members to ensure fitness to be a trustee.
- The Executive Committee held six board meetings during the year, in addition to the AGM; they attended induction meetings, a development day, staff and volunteer events, and acted as ambassadors for Niacro.

Legal requirements

- Annual returns including audited accounts submitted to Charity Commission NI and Companies House on time.
- Executive Committee (Board) meetings held in line with articles of association.



“At Niacro, our mission, vision, and culture guide everything we do. The people we support and the colleagues who deliver our services are always at the heart of our work. I am proud of the dedication and talent across our organisation, and remain committed to creating opportunities for staff to grow and develop in their careers. We invest in our teams so they have the knowledge, tools, and support they need to excel in their roles, feel valued, and know they are never alone.”

Safeguarding at the heart of good governance

At Niacro, safeguarding is not just a policy - it's a core commitment. We believe that protecting children, young people, and adults at risk is fundamental to everything we do. Our staff and volunteers are trained to recognise signs of abuse or neglect and respond with care, urgency, and professionalism.

Safeguarding is embedded across our services, ensuring that wellbeing and safety are prioritised at every level of engagement. We take a proactive, preventative approach - creating safe environments where individuals feel supported and empowered.

We recognise that safeguarding is a shared responsibility. By fostering a culture of vigilance and accountability, Niacro continues to uphold the highest standards of governance and care.



2025 Staff excellence awards

At our May 2025 Staff Day, we celebrated the dedication, talent and teamwork that drive Niacro's work. One hundred nominations poured in from across the organisation, underlining the deep commitment of colleagues and volunteers. Everyone nominated is a winner; below are the staff and teams singled out for exceptional contribution in 2024-25.

| CEO Award for living the values - Emma Winter

Emma exemplifies Niacro's values in every interaction. She places service users and families at the centre of her work, champions equality and dignity, and supports colleagues with approachability and care. Her leadership nurtures potential and strengthens our collective impact.

| Recognising new talent - Robbie Nimmons

Robbie joined the SkillSET team with outstanding energy and professionalism. His attention to detail, commitment to service users and ready willingness to help make him a valued colleague and a real asset to the team.

| Leading and inspiring others - Bernie Carleton

Bernie leads with integrity and courage, consistently championing her team and securing fair outcomes under pressure. Her combination of clear direction and compassionate support defines strong, trusted leadership.

| Involving others - Claire Morrison

Claire was the organisational heart of many events and welcomed every new colleague with warmth. Her ability to make people feel included and at ease - balanced with lively, morale-boosting humour - made her indispensable colleague. Claire took well deserved retirement in June 2025.

| Innovation and creativity - Lauren O'Malley

Lauren's Life Stories project in custody has had a measurable positive impact on participants. Her creative approach to engagement and rehabilitation has strengthened Niacro's work and reputation with people in custody as well as prison staff.

| Service excellence team award - Central Services (admin and finance)

Cheryl Cowden, Fee Jamison, Tracy Okoro, Pody Shortt, Valerie McGreevy, Tom Lennon, Pam Walker, Katie McConn and Maggie Butler deliver dependable, warm and professional support that underpins everything we do. From reception to finance and administration, this team keeps services running smoothly and staff supported, often going above and beyond.

These awards reflect everyday acts of professionalism, compassion and creativity that sustain Niacro's mission. We thank every nominee and winner for their remarkable contribution to safer, stronger communities.

Celebrating Niacro volunteers

Across 2024–25, Niacro's volunteers delivered practical support, steadfast presence, and life-changing connections. From trustees shaping strategy to 27 Independent Visitor (IV) volunteers matched with young people in care, they offered friendship, stability, advocacy, and life skills - helping young people budget for their first holiday, attend sporting events, and navigate major transitions. Volunteers also amplified voices, challenging care decisions so young people could stay supported where it mattered most.

Our reaccreditation with Investing in Volunteers recognises this commitment and the leadership of volunteer champions on our board. Volunteering created mutual growth: several gained experience leading to paid roles supporting care-experienced young people, while many described new purpose and renewed outlooks through matches.

As we thank every volunteer for their time, reliability, and compassion, we renew our commitment to recruit, support, and celebrate the people whose generosity makes Niacro's work possible.



Niacro achieves Living Wage accreditation

In 2024, Niacro proudly became a Living Wage accredited employer, reaffirming our commitment to fairness, dignity, and respect in the workplace. This milestone reflects our belief that everyone deserves a wage that meets the real cost of living - not just the government minimum.

By joining the UK-wide Living Wage movement, we are investing in our staff's wellbeing and financial security, ensuring that every team member is valued not only for their contribution but also through meaningful pay. This accreditation strengthens our culture of respect and inclusion to support our mission.

We are proud to stand alongside other organisations championing decent work and look forward to continuing our journey as a responsible and compassionate employer.



Niacro joins Belfast Business Promise to champion sustainability

We're proud to be accredited as a supporter of the Belfast Business Promise, a powerful initiative driving responsible and inclusive business across the city. At Niacro, we're committed to fair pay, secure jobs, and meaningful community engagement - values that align with the Promise's pledges.

We were assessed on key principles including:

- Paying the Real Living Wage and offering secure contracts.
- Partnering with communities to create positive change.
- Removing barriers to employment.
- Paying suppliers promptly.

In addition, we've taken bold steps toward environmental responsibility. Partnering with Climate Essentials, we measured our 2023 carbon footprint - laying the foundation for future action under Pledge 3: Protect Our Environment.

Looking ahead, we're ambitious about deepening our commitment to these pledges, continuing to lead by example and champion best practice in everything we do.

Partnership and sustainability

Stronger together: Collaborations and alliances

We forged purposeful partnerships across statutory, voluntary, community and corporate sectors to reduce the harm of crime and rebuild safer lives. Over the past year we have deepened longstanding alliances and launched new collaborations to expand our reach and increase our impact.

| Our partners and funders

We would like to thank all our partners and funders for their continued support.



CGI and Niacro: Bridging the digital divide - transforming access through skills, jobs and technology

Launched in February 2025, CGI has partnered with Niacro to deliver a targeted social value programme that equips marginalised citizens with the digital skills, equipment, and paid employment pathways needed to participate fully in modern life. The initiative sits alongside CGI's 20-year "Themis" digital transformation contract with the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunal Service and focuses on those most likely to be excluded by digitisation, including people with experience of the justice system.

The programme will establish an IT skills hub, provide devices and mentorship, and create paid roles to build confidence, employability and community contribution. By aligning training with employer demand and practical job preparation, the partnership tackles the reality that most new jobs require digital literacy, turning access into sustained opportunity.

Niacro and CGI will launch a dedicated social value team later in 2025 to implement the delivery plan, monitor outcomes, and scale successful interventions. This collaboration demonstrates how corporate investment, expert delivery and community partnership can close the digital divide and create lasting social impact. We look forward to sharing many updates on the success of this partnership across the years.

A financial overview

Thank you to our funders and partners

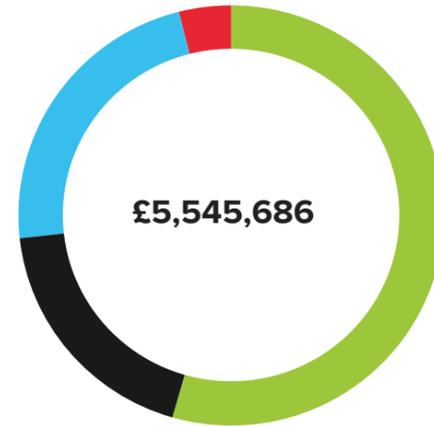
We are deeply grateful to the funders and partner organisations whose trust and collaboration have powered Niacro's work this year. Your support has helped protect victims, support families, and reduce the harm of crime across Northern Ireland.

Our funders	Value
Advice NI	86,846.02
All-Island Fund IRPT	3,350.00
Belfast HSC Trust	82,742.26
Construction Industry Training Board NI	34,901.60
Department of Justice	418,903.70
Dept of Health (SPPG)	242,898.30
Dept of Health Mental Health / The Community Foundation	12,925.93
Glasspool Charity Trust	49,331.91
LFT Charitable Trust	7,851.19
MEDF	26,857.96
Nationwide Charities	11,420.46

Our funders	Value
Northern Ireland Prison Service	£905,181.00
Probation Board for Northern Ireland	£1,022,503.00
Public Health Agency	£532,702.90
Red Cross Client Support	£1,000.00
South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust	£21,112.89
Southern Health & Social Care Trust	£150,775.00
St Stephen's Green Trust	£14,015.23
The Austin Hope & Pilkington Trust	£800.00
The Gallaher Trust	£44,627.07
The Housing Executive	£443,479.00
The National Lottery	£144,835.70
The National Lottery Community Foundation	£28,253.52
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	£901,109.40
Western Health & Social Care Trust	£12,583.03
Services Income	£281,450.00
Donations, Membership Fees & Other Income	£48,060.30
Investment Income	£34,544.95
Total	£5,565,062.00

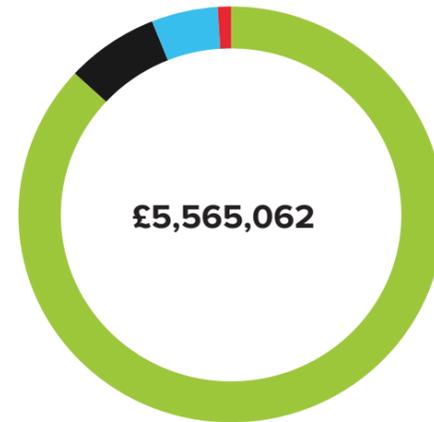
Breakdown of resources expended

Adults in Prison & the Community	£3,044,418	55%
Children & Young People	£1,030,182	18.5%
Families Affected by Imprisonment	£1,273,473	23%
Fundraising and Governance	£197,613	3.5%
Totals	£5,545,686	100%



Breakdown of income sources

Statutory Agencies	£4,808,816	86.5%
Charitable Trusts & Foundations	£392,191	7%
Services Income	£281,450	5%
Other	£82,605	1.5%
Totals	£5,565,062	100%



You can request a copy of the full Financial Statements by emailing us at: niacro@niacro.co.uk

Our people

Niacro Executive Committee

Directors during the year ending 31 March 2025 were as follows:

- Les Allamby, Chair
- Majella McCloskey, Vice Chair and Finance, Audit and Risk Sub-Committee - resigned November 2024
- Janet Wray - appointed to Vice Chair and Finance, Audit and Risk Sub-Committee November 2024
- Tony Glover, Treasurer, Finance, Audit and Risk Sub-Committee
- Mark Walker, Finance, Audit and Risk Sub-Committee
- Helen Dunn
- Paul Farrell
- Conor Murray
- Justin Kouame
- Roisin Muldoon
- Claire Martin - appointed November 2024

| Senior Leadership Team

Fiona Greene – Chief Executive

Rachel Long – Director of Operations

Maggie Butler – Finance & Corporate Services Manager

Ciara Corrigan – Programme Manager

Gareth Eannetta – Programme Manager

Paul Fleming – Programme Manager

Patrick Anderson – Programme Manager (until November 2024)

| Key Charity information

Key information Company Registration Number: NI 018121

Charity Registration Number: NIC101599

Registered Office: Amelia House, 4 Amelia Street, Belfast BT2 7GS

Company Secretary: Fiona Greene



Get involved

Help build a fairer society where everyone's rights and needs are respected. Since 1971 Niacro has worked to reduce crime and its impact across Northern Ireland - but we can't do it alone.



Here's how you can help



Become a member

Join individuals and organisations committed to safer communities and better resettlement outcomes.

Visit: niacro.co.uk/membership



Donate

No matter how big or small your donation, it will help fund our vital work to reduce crime and its impact on people and society.

Visit: niacro.co.uk/contact-details



Volunteer

Share your time, skills and lived experience to support people, families and young people in need.

Visit: niacro.co.uk/volunteering



Partner with us

We are keen to work with companies and organisations who share our values and vision to reduce crime. If you are interested in us supporting your social value responsibilities or you would like to join us for training, contact us and together we can make real and meaningful change.

Visit: niacro.co.uk/enquiry-form



Belfast

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Portadown

26 Carleton Street
Portadown
Craigavon
BT62 3EP
Tel: 028 3833 1168

Derry/Londonderry

Holywell Trust
10-14 Bishop Street
Derry/Londonderry
BT48 6PW
Tel: 028 7126 1941



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