



NIACRO ANNUAL REPORT

2015-2016

Working to reduce crime and its impact
on people and communities



NIACRO

**Amelia House
4 Amelia Street
Belfast
BT2 7GS**

**028 9032 0157
www.niacro.co.uk**

 @niacro_

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Welcome to the first Annual Report of our 2015-2018 Corporate Plan which we launched in August 2015. As a result of this as well as our in-year registration with the Northern Ireland Charity Commission which requires a detailed Directors' report, we have refined the content of this publication. If you would like a copy of the full report, please email us on niacro@niacro.co.uk or write to us at the address on page 15.

This year has been one of mixed emotions: we entered April 2015 under the shadow of the events of the last few days of March, where we learned of the loss of our European funding. The weeks that followed were defined by organisational and personal loss as many of our talented and committed colleagues left us due to the closure of associated projects.

Responding to this loss has perhaps overshadowed what was actually, in many ways, a good year for our organisation and our service users. In the face of funding cuts, we discovered just how resilient we are, manifest in our successes in winning new contracts, our staff team adapting to change, our innovation in identifying and filling service delivery gaps, and our commitment to communicating our learnings and experiences to influence change. The recruitment at year end of a Business Development Manager will further strengthen our ability to respond to the changing environment and ensure our service users continue to receive the support they need.

Throughout the year, we worked with partners in the statutory sector to develop services for people leaving custody to support resettlement, with pilot projects like Reset and ACCESS demonstrating effectiveness for service users whilst also helping to re-develop our portfolio of work with adults. Both were subject to thorough evaluations which showed the value of the models, and the NIACRO Reset team was recognised at the Justice in the Community Awards in early 2016.



Former Justice Minister David Ford with members of the Reset Team

We also expanded our work with children and young people, securing the contracts to deliver the Early Intervention Support Service in both the Belfast and Southern Health and Social Care Trust areas and solidifying our position as Chair of the Craigavon and Banbridge Family Support Hub. More information about these projects is included later in this report.

It was both humbling and encouraging to receive so much support from all sectors as we, like so many voluntary organisations, have dealt with funding challenges. Arguments made by both politicians and our sector colleagues highlighted that we are not alone and our work is valued and recognised as important.



NIACRO's Chair, Chief Executive and Deputy Chair launch the new Corporate Plan.

As we embrace the move to Outcomes Based Accountability, we are confident that we will continue to show that we are making a real and positive impact.

As well as engaging on funding issues, we continued to work with policy makers on issues important to our service users. In March, we welcomed the introduction of the independent Criminal Records Filtering Review Scheme, which was informed by our Off The Record campaign the previous year. This campaign won the Gold award in the Best Public Affairs Campaign category at the Chartered Institute of Public Relations PRide awards in October 2015.



Olwen Lyner and Julia Kenny at the Pride awards ceremony

We would like to thank all our staff, service users, volunteers, members and Executive Committee for the support and dedication they have shown the organisation throughout the year. We are entering 2016-17 stronger and more confident than we could have imagined this time last year.

Olwen Lyner, Chief Executive

Sid McDowell, Chair

Our Work: Children and Young People

We believe: children and young people can be diverted from the criminal justice system through support designed to meet their needs and the needs of their families.

We aim: to reduce anti-social and offending behaviour among those perceived to be vulnerable to offending, through our work with children, young people and their families.

In recent years, we have moved to consolidate our work in the area of early intervention, and this year saw this element of our work grow considerably with the addition of the Early Intervention Support Service (EISS).

The project offers short term support delivered promptly to families in the Belfast and Southern Trusts, where a child or young person of any age up to 18 may be facing particular problems at home, at school or in the community. These are situations where there is little or no other support, and the statutory services are not involved.



Out and about with Caps

EISS is very much complementary to our long-running Child and Parent Support project, Caps, which continues to be a key source of support for families in the Belfast and Southern Trust (where we partner with the community organisation SPACE) areas.



"I feel happier – safer, less angry – less grumpy"



We successfully applied for an extension to our Big Lottery funded project MOVE, which will allow us to continue providing this service, to young people experiencing difficulties, until April 2018. The additional funding will allow us to increase our work capacity, particularly in the Southern area with the appointment of a second project worker, and extend the support from the 13-18 age group, to include young people from the age of eleven.



Recognising the prevalence of young people in care entering the youth justice system, we remain committed to supporting looked after children and young people with the help of our trained volunteers through our Independent Visitor Scheme.



"I would tell other people to go coz it's really helpful"



Advocacy and consistent support for young people in secure care also remains key to our work with children who are looked after: our Independent Representative made 56 visits to Lakewood Regional Secure Care Centre during the year, dealing with 21 issues raised by the young people who live there and facilitating participation through events and workshops, including a hip-hop dance workshop.

Our youth forum Voice Box met five times during the year, engaging more than 40 young people in participation work and activities.

Our involvement in the Family Support Hubs continues to provide an important link to our colleagues working with children and young people across the voluntary, community and statutory sectors.



"I've become more mature"



Title	Key result	Funder
CAPS (Southern Trust)	69 families engaged with.	HSCB, SHSCT
CAPS (Belfast Trust)	71 families engaged with.	HSCB
Intensive support services to families whose children aged 8 – 13 are at risk of engaging in anti-social/offending behaviour.		
EISS (Southern)	52 families supported.	PHA
EISS (Belfast)	55 families supported.	PHA
New service in 2015-16 which supports families when difficulties arise, before they need involvement with statutory services.		
Family Support Hub	206 referrals; 9 hub meetings held.	SHSCT
NIACRO chairs a group of voluntary, community and statutory bodies in the SHSCT area who provide family support.		
Independent Representation Advocacy and support for young people in Lakewood Secure Care Centre.	56 visits to centre.	SEHSCT
Independent Visitor Volunteers befriend and support “looked after” young people.	27 young people engaged; 1620 hours’ worth of events and workshops.	BHSCT, SEHSCT
MOVE Volunteers give one-to-one mentoring for young people at risk of offending/ experiencing significant difficulties.	18 young people engaged; 44 took part in 5 Youth Forums; 17 people volunteered for the project; expanded to include 11/12-year-olds.	Big Lottery

Our Work: Families

We believe: people in prison and their families have the right to maintain relationships in prison and in the community; by helping families to access services, their ability to cope and to support effective resettlement is strengthened.

We aim: to reduce offending and its impact through services which provide effective support for families and children affected by imprisonment.



"Family Links were the only ones who understood"



Our Family Links service was established in 2007, building on work with families which had been going on since the establishment of the organisation. Time and again over the years we have seen the value of helping people in prison, children and other family members to stay in touch. This work has been recognised by countless awards and invitations to share good practice with others, locally and



internationally - and most of all by heartfelt thanks from the service users. We have offered transport, emotional support, financial advice, home visits, signposting and access to relevant services.

In October, the loss of our contracts to run visitors' centres in Hydebank and Magilligan brought to an end over 40 years of service to visitors (and a similar abrupt end to the Quakers' management of the centre at Maghaberry for the same time period) and the award of the contract to a private company with no such experience.



Throughout this time, staff proved that using existing skills flexibly meant that we could link family services into those in other strategic areas. By year end, we had secured funding for FAMM, a debt and money management advice service to families, including research into people's attitude to mainstream services.



"I couldn't have coped without the emotional support"



Title	Key result	Funder
Family Links Emotional and practical support for families affected by imprisonment.	961 referrals to the project; 924 information packs sent to families; 89% received a phone call within 48 hours.	NIPS, HSCB, WHSCT
Transport Service Affordable and accessible transport to all three NI prisons to support family contact.	2728 passengers carried; 52 volunteer driver journeys.	NIPS
Visitors' centres (to 31.11.15) Quality visiting arrangements for families at Magilligan and Hydebank Wood.	21818 visitors supported at visitors' centres.	NIPS

Our Work: Adults

We believe: supporting people who have offended or who are at risk of offending to make positive choices contributes to reducing offending and anti-social behaviour.

We aim: to contribute to a reduction in offending and re-offending through appropriate and effective support for adults in the community and those leaving prison.

The year began with the loss of Jobtrack funding, which, ironically, coincided with a highly positive analysis of the project by the newly-established NISRA Northern Ireland Data Lab. This showed that people who completed the project were significantly (20% compared to 32%) less likely to have reoffended after a year.



"My outlook on life is different. I'm more laid back and settled now"



Monitoring and reporting on our work is critical to our own accountability and to ensuring our services are effective. We have continued to develop first-class monitoring procedures, evidenced for example by our work with the Data Lab. This commitment to precise and thorough monitoring procedures ensures we consistently deliver the services needed to a high standard, and that we can evidence our impact.

However, during the year we established and delivered a wide range of varied services:

- Reset – intensive 12-week mentoring support for people who are high/medium risk on release from prison, delivered in partnership with the Probation Board and with support from Housing Rights. The project was "Highly Commended" in the 2016 Justice in the Community awards. An interim evaluation emphasised its effectiveness and noted overwhelmingly positive feedback from service users and from Probation Service colleagues.



- ACCESS – helping people under the supervision of the Probation service on release from prison to develop their employability and access mainstream services.
- Placement programme – supporting prisoners near to release by identifying potential placement opportunities with a long term goal of helping to secure employment on release. A key part of the programme is developing our long-established engagement with local employers.
- We expanded our work with women under the supervision of the Probation service to the rural South and the North East and involved service users in several confidence-building arts projects.



"I love my support worker. She is always there for me and my children. She is one in a million."



The APAC family of projects continued to offer support and assistance to people living in the community including those whose tenancy may be at risk due to harassment or intimidation because of their ethnicity, the APAC STEM project. Our welfare rights advice service helped people clarify their entitlement to benefits and other financial issues – which this year led to service users accessing £913,000 of the benefits to which they were entitled.



Relaxing at Corrymeela

Title	Key result	Funder
ACCESS Short-term employment support and signposting.	286 referrals received; 80% of leavers put in touch with training and employment providers.	PBNI
APAC Floating support Support for people to keep their tenancy and prevent homelessness as a result of anti-social behaviour.	Dealt with 141 cases, 94% of whom retained their right to tenancy; became Chair of Belfast Floating Support Hub.	NIHE/Supporting People
APAC Banbridge	6 referrals received.	Banbridge PCSP
APAC STEM Support for people whose tenancy may be at risk due to harassment or intimidation because of ethnicity.	Dealt with 68 cases; 86% retained their tenancy.	NIHE/Supporting People
Base 2 Crisis intervention service for individuals and families at risk of violence or exclusion from their communities.	Dealt with 1174 cases. Took part in 32 relevant meetings including with Victims Commissioner and Panel for Disbanding Paramilitary Organisations.	NIHE
Employment Placement Service Placement identification and support with employability ahead of release.	Received 97 referrals; created 184 placement opportunities; 15 people began a placement.	NIPS
Reset Intensive 16-week mentoring for people leaving prison in partnership with Probation and with support from Housing Rights.	Received 292 referrals; 185 participants; 122 completed programme; positive interim evaluation; received DOJ Justice in the Community award.	PBNI
Welfare Rights Advice Benefit uptake – accurate, up-to-date and relevant advice for people in prison and their families.	Nearly £1M generated for services users through benefit checks.	SSA
Women's Project Support PBNI management of women in the community who have previously offended.	Received 129 referrals; expanded work into North-East and rural South.	PBNI, Pilgrim Trust

Our Work: Influencing Others

We believe: 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 aim: to have an impact on policy and practice by communicating our key messages and engaging with relevant publics.

We have always worked to translate what we learn from our service users and our projects into workable policy to influence change at legislative and societal levels. This year, we continued to contribute to and shape discussions about effective ways to reduce crime and its impact, through our Justice Series seminars and other events, policy engagement and public affairs, and internal and external communication with key stakeholders.

In the run up to the Assembly elections in 2016, we developed a succinct policy manifesto outlining five key policy areas we believe the next Assembly Programme for Government should progress to reduce crime. Proposed pledges included removing barriers to resettlement, raising the age of criminal responsibility, and supporting families and children affected by imprisonment. We were encouraged by the positive reaction from parties across the spectrum and will pursue these policy areas during the next Assembly.

Similarly, it was reassuring to hear our 2015 AGM guest speaker Lord Chief Justice Declan Morgan, whose keynote speech focused on the need to divert

those involved in low-level offending from court. Such alternatives to prosecution are something we have long called for – including in our recent manifesto.

An event to launch our comprehensive research publication *New Directions: Understanding and Improving Employment Pathways in Youth Justice in Northern Ireland* saw stakeholders from across the youth justice sector come to Amelia House to hear key findings from the five research papers, including practice and policy recommendations. In addition, independent research into the value of NIACRO and our contribution to Northern Ireland's criminal justice sector reflected on how our holistic approach to people affected by the justice system helps reduce crime, and demonstrated the positive external perceptions of our organisation and our resilience in an ever-changing funding context.

In early 2016 we launched our new website, providing information on all our services as well as our policy positions, organisational background, and news releases.



New Directions Launch

Title	Key result
Public Affairs	Published manifesto of key policy asks for new Assembly and discussed with parties; held Justice Series Seminar on addressing offending behaviour; attended selected party conferences.
Communications	Redesigned website; published two NIACRO News; won CIPRNI Gold award for "Off the Record" campaign; reviewed Intranet and published five internal e-newsletters The Niacron.
Policy development	Submitted four consultation responses; produced nine policy briefings.
Reporting and research	Produced annual report; streamlined and integrated reports to funders; commissioned and published research report on NIACRO's approach, impact, image and future.

Our Work: Applying Resources Effectively

We believe: we must use our resources efficiently and effectively to bring maximum benefit to our service users.

We aim: to achieve our goals through support for our staff and volunteers and through securing and managing the necessary resources.

The loss of one third of our anticipated income just before the start of the financial year meant that significant time and energy had to be spent on sourcing other income streams. It is pleasing to report that by year end we had won a number of new contracts offering services in resettlement, women's issues, tenants experiencing harassment and early intervention.

We agreed to trial the post of Business Development Manager to provide us with a dedicated resource to respond to tendering opportunities and develop new funding bids. The role will also support staff to develop and produce progress reports to funders and other related communications.

The lease of our Derry office was transferred to Include Youth and VOYPIC. We now share the premises with these colleagues, maintaining our long-standing presence in the North West.

Title	Key result
Staff support and training	Training plan prepared, approved and delivered; integrated HR software purchased and embedded.
Volunteers	Pool of 124 volunteers maintained and utilised.
Financial management	Financial Procedures manual reviewed; all accounts produced as per business plan; positive cash flow maintained.
Securing resources	Income for the year was £2,559,680.
Quality standards and controls	Investors in People and Investors in Volunteers reviewed.

We registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland and now make a full Directors' return which includes a statement of governance policies. These are:

- Conflicts of interest
- Fraud prevention & reporting
- Insurance for Directors
- Investment policy
- Reporting
- Reserves policy
- Risk management
- Whistleblowing

Members of the Executive:

Sid McDowell (Chair)
Brendan Fulton (Deputy Chair)
Paddy Farry (Treasurer)
Nicola Carr (from 12.11.15)
Jimmy McClean

Majella McCloskey (from 12.11.15)
Christine McLaughlin
Gillian McNaul
Frank Mulhern
Ricky Rowledge

Management team

Olwen Lyner, CEO
Pat Conway, Operations Director (to 31.07.15)
Donnie Sweeney, Programmes Director
Mary Stewart, Finance Manager

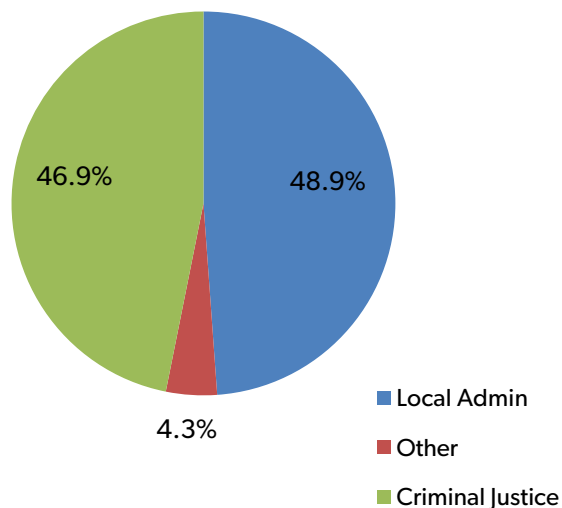
Key information

Company Registration Number NI 018121
Charity Registration Number NIC101599
Registered Office: Amelia House, 4 Amelia Street BT2 7GS
Recognition by HMRC Number XN 48280

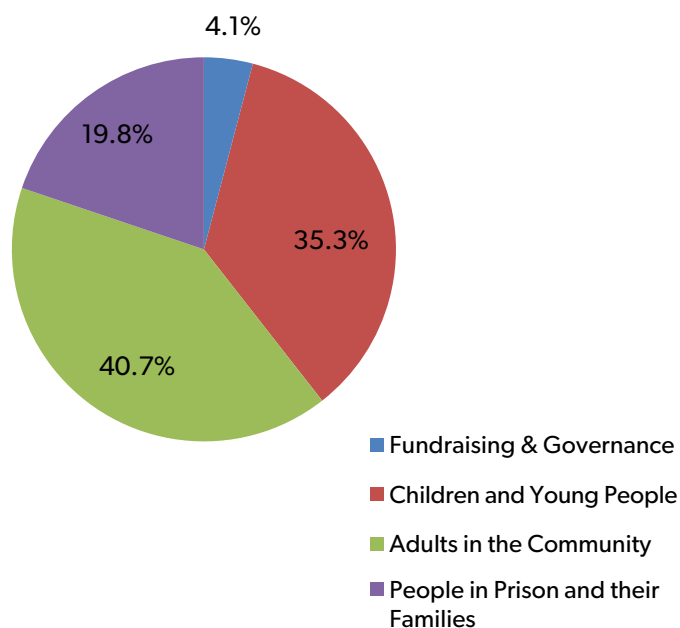
Company Secretary: Mary Stewart (retired May 2016)
Olwen Lyner (appointed May 2016)

If you would like a copy of the full Financial Statements, please email us on nicaro@niacro.co.uk or write to us at: Amelia House, 4 Amelia Street, Belfast BT2 7GS

Income



Resources Expended



Our funders

We are grateful to the following funders who supported our work in 2015-16:

Description	Classification	2016 £
Banbridge District PCSP	local admin	7,000
Belfast Health & Social Care Trust	local admin	77,641
Belfast City Council	local admin	4,012
Big Lottery Fund	other	86,033
Community Relations Council	other	2,348
Department of Justice	criminal justice	327,075
Health and Social Care Board	local admin	446,262
Northern Ireland Housing Executive	local admin	367,074
Northern Ireland Prison Service	criminal justice	415,695
Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister	local admin	31,168
Pilgrim Trust	other	3,175
Probation Board for Northern Ireland	criminal justice	456,481
Public Health Agency	local admin	201,920
Social Security Agency	local admin	20,000
South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust	local admin	21,636
Southern Health & Social Care Trust	local admin	64,077
Voluntary agencies	other	18,212
Western Health & Social Care Trust	local admin	9,871
Total		2,559,680



Service Locations

Belfast

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

☎ 028 9032 0157

Portadown

26 Carleton Street, Portadown, Craigavon, BT62 3EP.

☎ 028 3833 1168

Derry/Londonderry

9 Queen Street, Derry/Londonderry, BT48 7EG.

☎ 028 7126 4555

We also deliver services in Probation Board offices and all custodial institutions in Northern Ireland.



Find out more about NIACRO:



www.niacro.co.uk



028 9032 0157



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