

The niacro logo is a red circle with the word "niacro" in white lowercase letters. The background of the entire page features a series of overlapping, light gray circles of various sizes, some of which have a subtle drop shadow, creating a layered, organic effect.

**niacro**

# ANNUAL REPORT

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**2021-2022**

Working to reduce crime  
and its impact on people  
and communities

## CONTENTS

Introduction .....	3
Children & Young People .....	5
Families Affected by Imprisonment .....	8
Adults in Prison & in the Community .....	10
External Engagements .....	14
Applying Resources Effectively .....	17
Governance .....	18
Financial Overview .....	19
Organisational Highlights .....	20

## OUR VISION

Our vision is of a society in which the needs and rights of all citizens are equally respected. This includes victims of crime, adults and children who have offended, and those who are at risk of offending, and their families.

## MISSION STATEMENT

Working to reduce crime and its impact on people and communities



## SERVICE LOCATIONS

### Belfast

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

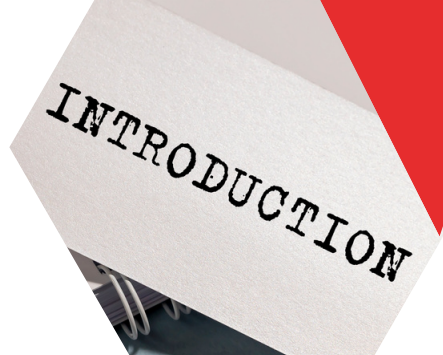
### Portadown

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



## **2021-22 was a significant milestone year for NIACRO as we marked our 50th anniversary.**

In the words of our former Chair, Sid McDowell, writing in our special 50th anniversary edition of NIACRO News, NIACRO has become

***"...a vital part of the overall criminal justice scene with constructive and cordial partnership arrangements with partners across the statutory and voluntary, community and social enterprise sectors. We pay tribute to all of our staff and volunteers who have been part of our journey."***

Because Covid restrictions remained in place through much of the year, our anniversary planning revolved around creating several 'legacy' pieces, telling the story of the organisation, the people we have supported and the changes within the landscape in which we work. These were:

### **An article published in The Irish Probation Journal, November 2021: 'Mapping 50 years of NIACRO'**

The article was authored by (outgoing) CEO, Olwen Lyner alongside three long-standing members, Brendan Fulton, Prof Shadd Maruna and Dr Gillian McNaul. It reflects on NIACRO's birth during the early years of the conflict and its growth to maturity through 50 years to become one of Northern Ireland's largest and most significant crime-reduction and community building organisations.

It explores NIACRO's longevity from the perspective of four key qualities: responsiveness; diversification; surety of mission; and partnership working.

### **A Special 50th Anniversary Edition of NIACRO News**

A more accessible 'easy read' review of the organisation through the decades, from its inception and through its decades of consolidation and growth in service delivery and policy content in response to ever-changing needs and the broader landscape.

### **Recordings of Staff and Service Users' Experiences**

We recorded a series of interviews with longer-standing staff members and people we had supported over the years, from a wide range of projects. These were released over social media throughout the year and gained good traction and initiated interesting conversations with our followers.

### **Howard League for Penal Reform Organisation of the Year Award**

We were also delighted to receive this prestigious award from the Howard League in our 50th year; further external recognition of all the organisation has achieved in the past and continues to achieve on behalf of people across Northern Ireland who have been in contact with the justice system.

## 5 Asks at 50

Members of staff and our Executive Committee engaged in a year-long process to review our previous policy asks and identify 5 new policy priorities, or '5 Asks at 50'. The resulting asks which emerged as most pressing with the greatest potential to affect change over the next three years were to:

- 1 Address delays in justice
- 2 Reduce the use of remand & better resource bail alternatives
- 3 Modernise the Rehabilitation of Offenders legislation
- 4 Raise the age of Criminal Responsibility
- 5 Commit at Executive and inter-departmental level to sustained resourcing of early intervention services

Our briefing document setting out each ask and its context is available to view on our website.

Within our staff team, the special year was marked with several staff initiatives and online conferences, including the notable achievement of walking a combined 50,000 miles throughout the year, expertly planned by our Staff Wellbeing Group, complete with awards for those staff who went the extra mile!

The year was, of course, also marked by many significant developments within our organisation and beyond, many of which are reflected throughout this report. Our ongoing success and track record of delivery is only made possible by our ever-committed staff team and volunteers, as well as the commitment of the people we've supported to engage.

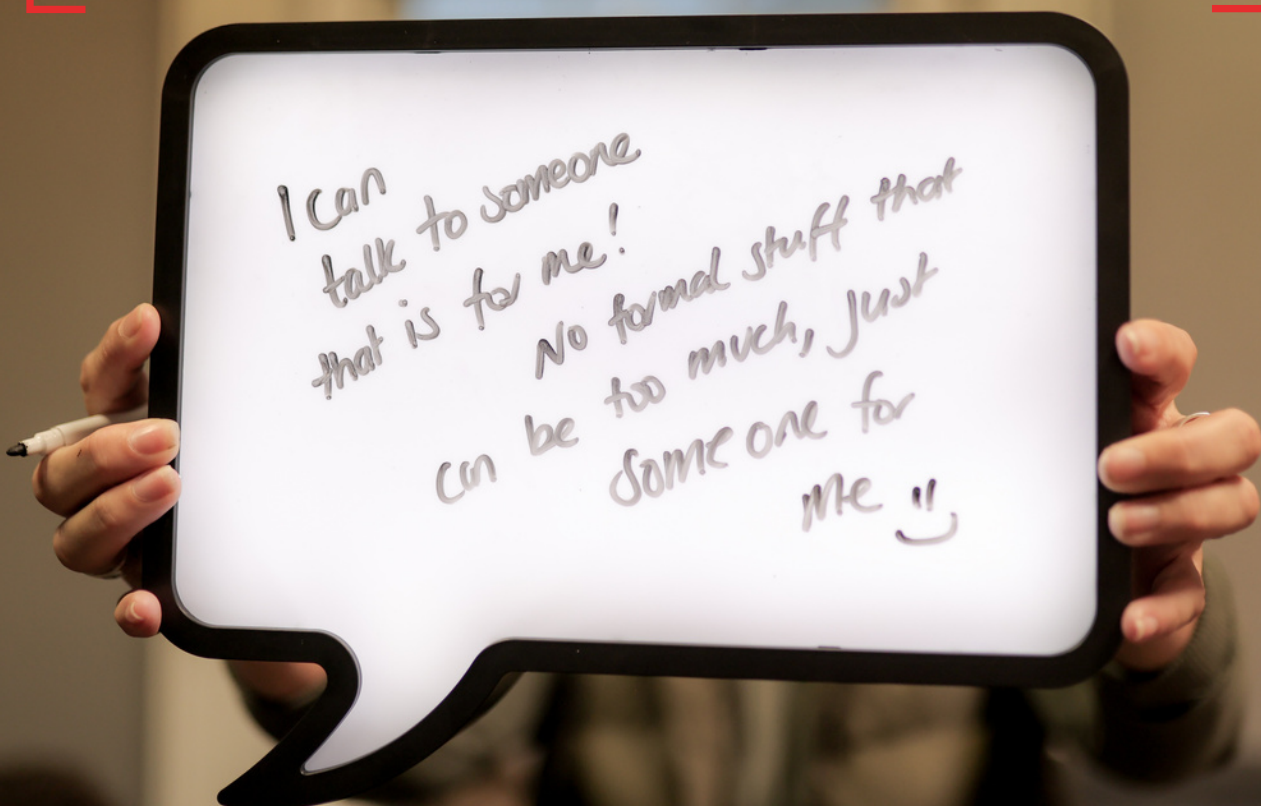
Having both been appointed to our new roles as CEO and Chair over this momentous year, we acknowledge our gratitude to all who have been instrumental in bringing NIACRO to this significant milestone, and to our many valued friends and partners across the criminal justice, community and voluntary sectors with whom we continue to work.



**Fiona Greene, Chief Executive**



**Les Allamby, Chair**



### 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.***

#### Highlights from 2021-22 work:

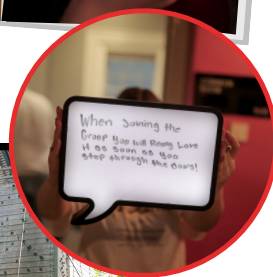
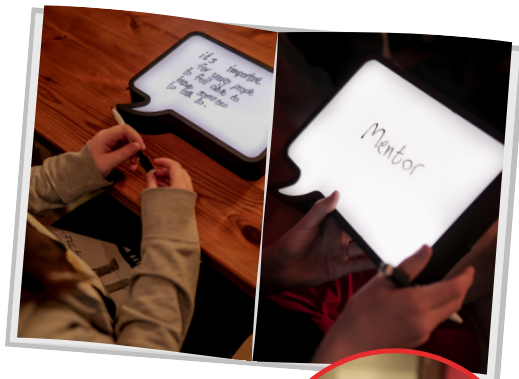
- We were awarded two quality standards in recognition of our work with children and volunteers – the Investing in Volunteers and Investing in Children standards.
- Connect, a project funded by Hobson's Fund, provided opportunities for the children and young people from our Independent Visitor (IV) and Independent Representation (IR) projects to connect with each other post-lockdown; participants within our IV scheme attended a two night residential to Jungle NI in July 2021 and equipment and resources for young people in Lakewood Regional Care Centre were supplied.
- A promotional video was created for IV to support our ongoing volunteer recruitment campaign.



## Children and Young People

### What Children and Young People told us

**"Being on the IV project helped with my confidence and independence. I've learned to cope with situations, like how to get the bus, I've tried new food, and learned new skills. I hope to return as an 'IV ambassador' when we get the role up and running."**



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**I enjoy volunteering because...**

I can be a positive role model in a young person's life and instil the values and attributes to help the young person to achieve the best in life

## Children and Young People

### Evidence of our Impact

Service	Activity	Primary Funder
<b>Independent Visitor</b> Volunteers befriend and support "looked after" young people.	32 matches made. 408 activities completed over 1564 hours.	BHSCT / SEHSCT
<b>Independent Representation</b> Advocacy and support for young people in Lakewood.	52 connections/visits to Lakewood raising 57 issues.	SEHSCT
<b>EISS (Early Intervention Support Service)</b> Support for families when difficulties arise, before they need involvement with statutory services.		
<b>EISS (Southern)</b>	88 families supported	PHA
<b>EISS (Belfast)</b>	87 families supported	PHA
<b>CAPS (Child and Parent Support/Southern Trust)</b> Intensive support for families, whose children, aged 8-13, are experiencing significant difficulties at home, school or in the community.	55 families supported	HSCB
<b>Family Support Hub</b> NIACRO Chairs a group of voluntary, community and statutory bodies providing family support in SHSCT area	324 referrals; virtual hub meetings with additional enquiries signposted	SHSCT
<b>Scope</b> One-to-one support to children and young people who have a family member in prison	48 children benefitted from the service	BBC Children in Need

# 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.***

### Highlights from our 2021-22 work:

- 2021-22 saw increased activity within the Visitor Centres compared with the previous year. Whilst visits were still not running to the full pre-Covid levels and were ceased at times in response to infection rates we worked closely with the Northern Ireland Prison Service to keep families connected as well as improving the visiting facilities across all prison sites.
- We introduced an extension to Family Links, in support of people in prison and their families. The new 'Family Links Plus' dedicated Project Worker has been doing valuable intensive relationship building with women and young men in Hydebank Wood, their families and professionals with whom they are engaged (primarily Social Services). This is helping the Prison Service staff to better meet family needs and is also helpful for personal development planning and release planning.
- The FAMM team built up a partnership with Clonard Credit Union, which has allowed us to address the financial barriers that our clients face. CCU have agreed to allow NIACRO to confirm a client's ID and address,

removing this common barrier to getting a bank account quickly and give accounts to those with a history of fraudulent activity. The impact this has for those who otherwise wouldn't have one is substantial and significant in terms of their rehabilitation and ability to access mainstream services and employment.

### What Families told us

***"I loved being able to talk to someone who knows daddy isn't bad and had just made mistakes."***

***(A child accessing our Family Links Children Services)***





## Families Affected by Imprisonment

### Evidence of our Impact

Service	Activity	Primary Funder
<b>Family Links</b> Emotional and practical support for families affected by imprisonment.	1154 referrals to the project; engaged 162 children and provided 2094 family support interventions.	NIPS, HSCB, WHSCT
<b>Visitor Centre services</b> Hospitality, childcare, and welcome services to prison visitors at all three prisons	Service provided across all 3 sites subject to COVID restrictions and lockdowns.  Provided a tailored programme of seasonal / monthly virtual activities to families who engaged.  NIPS undertook work at all three prison sites to upgrade facilities which will support the welcome for families.  Hospitality Service provided snack packs in all three sites for visitors.	NIPS
<b>FAMM</b> Providing debt advice to families and those in the community.	247 referrals	Advice NI

## Adults in Prison & 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 adults leaving prison and in the community.***

#### Highlights from our 2021-22 work:

- Following recommendations emerging from research we published in 2020 about support for women completing custodial and community sentences, we secured funding from DOJ's Assets Recovery Scheme to refresh an accredited qualification delivered prior to 2016, to professionals outside of the justice system supporting women's resettlement. This refresh work was completed alongside members of our Women's Group and secured accreditation with the awarding body Skills for Justice. We look forward to being able to deliver it later in 2022-23.
- Funded by The National Lottery Awards for All we introduced a 'navigator' role to support women coming into NIACRO with particularly complex needs. This proved to be highly impactful, and the experience was rich in learning for all; we have applied the learning to an extended and expanded application for further funding.

## Adults in Prison & in the Community

- With the support of Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, Base2X went live in June 2021. The service is providing practical support to people indebted to paramilitaries/criminal gangs, mapping their experiences, and, seeking to identify longer term solutions. It is a much in-demand service.
- In February 2022, Working Well was inspected by the Education & Training Inspectorate. Following four very positive days with the Inspection Team, we were awarded the highest outcome of Highly Effective.
- In partnership with EXTERN and with funding from the Housing Executive Homelessness Prevention Fund, we developed an online homelessness prevention training tool. The (free to access) online tool, and website, enables anyone supporting people at risk of losing tenancies - private and social landlords, frontline workers and the general public – helping them to understand and recognise early warning signs and know what action to take to help. The website and training tool are available to view [www.homelessnesspreventionforum.com](http://www.homelessnesspreventionforum.com)

### John's story



21-year-old John\* was referred to Aspire Mentoring Service while on probation. He is a young person with diagnosis of ADHD, depression and anxiety. He has a child but contact had stopped recently. He has become homeless and was residing in a hostel.

After an initial assessment, the mentor discovered that he hadn't been submitting his sick note for his Universal Credit claim.

After contact with the GP, he was issued with a sick note. The mentor helped him to put dates of his sick note to his Universal Credit journal.

John's scheduled appointment for the ADHD clinic had been cancelled due to Covid. No appointment has yet been offered but medication has been prescribed as an interim measure.

The mentor established a positive relationship with John's housing adviser. John, has been on the waiting list since he was 17, had 122 points but no offers. A letter of support and a review of the length of the time he has been in the hostel resulted in additional points being awarded. Within weeks he was offered a flat, which he accepted.

### OUTCOME

John was waiting to receive keys to his new accommodation. He has completed an Ascert program in relation to his addiction and referred to the Daisy Project from Start 360. He made steps towards having contact with his child. He is still waiting for an appointment with ADHD clinic.

\*\* Not his real name

## Adults in Prison & in the Community

### Evidence of our Impact

Service	Activity	Primary Funder
<b>Base 2</b> Crisis response	1378 referrals	The Housing Executive
<b>Base2X</b> Floating support service for individuals who have illegal drug debt, to remain safe from harm and maintain their tenancy	34 referrals	Joseph Rowntree Charitable Foundation
<b>Welfare Advice</b> For people who have been affected by the criminal justice system and their families	515 individuals supported. 54% received support and benefit checks	Charles Hayward Foundation
<b>Aspire – made up of two services: Aspire Mentoring and Aspire Community Engagement.</b>		
<b>Aspire Mentoring</b> Support for young men referred by PBNI	250 participants supported	PBNI
<b>Aspire Community Engagement</b> Support for young men not in the formal criminal justice system	318 participants supported	PBNI
<b>Transitions</b> Mentoring Support for PBNI Referrals not fitting Aspire criteria (men and women)	103 participants supported	PBNI
<b>Working Well</b> – Employment support for people with convictions, in prisons and in the community and including disclosure advice for individuals and employers		
<b>Working Well Community</b> Employability support based in Probation and NIACRO offices	661 referrals received	ESF/PBNI
<b>Working Well Prisons</b> Providing support to those in prison by connecting them with services and programmes to enhance skills and support individuals towards release and resettlement	971 referrals received	ESF/NIPS
<b>Disclosure Hub</b> Advice on how to disclose a conviction and support if discrimination is experienced advice to employers for compliance with legislative requirements	328 enquiries received; Training delivered to 907 people across 61 sessions.	ESF/NIACRO

## Evidence of our Impact

Service	Activity	Primary Funder
<b>Women's Project</b> Support PBNl in the management of women in the community who have previously offended.	25 referrals with average weekly attendance of 5.5 participants	ESF / Pilgrim Trust
<b>APAC - Support for people to keep their tenancy and prevent homelessness</b>		
<b>APAC ASB</b> Support for people to keep their tenancy and prevent homelessness because of anti-social behaviour	48 referrals 92% of leavers retained their right to tenancy	The Housing Executive-Supporting People
<b>APAC STEM</b> Support for people whose tenancy may be at risk due to harassment or intimidation because of ethnicity	21 referrals	The Housing Executive-Supporting People
<b>Belong</b> Drop in advice and support for people from BAME and migrant communities to access services	820 cases supported	The Housing Executive



### Belief

*The knowledge and experience we gain from our work give us the obligation, and authority and the responsibility to seek to influence decision makers, service providers, community leaders and the wider public. We will continue to have an impact on policy and practice by communicating our policy asks and engaging relevant publics.*



### Evidence of our Impact

Service	Activity
<b>Communication</b>	<p>NIACRO NEWS – There were two publications in the year with the second focusing on the 50th anniversary.</p> <p>Our Annual General Meeting took place live online, and focussed on marking our 50th year.</p>
<b>Policy Development</b>	<p>Our 5 Asks at 50 Policy Manifesto was developed and produced.</p> <p>We secured an Ulster University Leadership Programme graduate placement during which time we catalogued and summarised key themes emerging from consultations responses over recent years which will prove to be a valuable resource moving forward. We partnered with Irish Penal Reform Trust to secure an All Island Fund award, to elevate issues of policy concern across the island of Ireland. A programme of events will commence formally with a Knowledge Sharing Event in Stormont in May 2022, highlighting the experiences of women in custody whose children are in care.</p> <p>As part of our response to the Department of Justice Strategic Framework for Transitioning Youth Justice for Northern Ireland, our CEO also addressed the Justice Committee meeting in early July 2021 with respect to this work which provided our reference group with a helpful reference point for re-focused efforts on our campaign to Raise the Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility.</p>

Service	Activity
<b>Policy Development Cont.</b>	<p>Consultation and policy responses included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TEO Draft Consolidated NI COVID Recovery Plan</li> <li>• Department of Justice Strategic Framework for Transitioning Youth Justice for Northern Ireland</li> <li>• Department of Justice Consultation on Victims and Witnesses and establishment of Victims Commissioner for NI</li> <li>• Department for Economy Skills Strategy for Northern Ireland: Skills for a 10x Economy</li> <li>• Consultation on Advice NI Manifesto 2022</li> <li>• Contributed to Review of Welfare Mitigation Reform</li> <li>• Call for evidence on access to debt advice during the Covid-19 pandemic (MaPS)</li> <li>• Review of PBNi's status and governance</li> <li>• Charlotte's Law Consultation (DoJ)</li> </ul>
<b>Reporting and Research</b>	<p>2020-2021 Annual Report was completed.</p> <p>We submitted a research report to the DoJ in 2021 highlighting the impact of custodial sentences for women defaulting on fine payments.</p> <p>In January we were asked by the Consumer Council NI to prepare a research paper entitled 'Barriers to Inclusion? Debt, Accessing Credit and Illegal Money Lending: Exploring the issues facing people in Northern Ireland'. NIACRO engaged an independent researcher to conduct research with staff from relevant services and we delivered our draft report of the findings to the Consumer Council in March 2021.</p> <p>We commissioned and published research alongside the Children's Law Centre, VOYPIC and Include Youth, entitled 'Tracing the Review: Developments in Youth Justice in NI 2011-2021'.</p>



Organisation of the Year Award

# 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.*

Throughout the year the Central Services Support team which includes our Finance, HR and Administrative teams worked tirelessly to support project delivery and maintain a robust infrastructure.

## Evidence of our Impact

Service	Activity
Staff Support and Training	<p>The internal Wellbeing group focused on a wide range of connecting and supportive activities, including a comprehensive online team and whole organisation events with local community involvement.</p> <p>Staff Training included: Lone Working training; Safeguarding Children, Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults; Public Protection NI; Statutory Partners Overview (NIPS); Working with Young People on Substance Misuse; Working with Remote Volunteers and Play Therapy Training, Children and Families, and GDPR and Records.</p>
Volunteers	30 active volunteers
Securing Resources	See financial results (Page 19)
Quality Standards and Controls	<p>Work completed secured the renewal of both Investors in Volunteering and Investing in Children awards.</p> <p>Review of our Investing in People accreditation took place.</p> <p>Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation was completed.</p> <p>Howard League Organisation of the Year Award 2021.</p> <p>Business in the Community's Responsible Digital Innovation Award for our Site IT Project.</p> <p>Not for Profit IT Project in Belfast Telegraph's IT Awards for our Site IT Project.</p> <p>ETI Inspection completed successfully.</p>

## 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

NIACRO Directors during the year ending 31 March 2022 were as follows:

- Les Allamby, Chairman (*appointed November 2021*)
- Sid McDowell, Chairman (*resigned May 2021*)
- Majella McCloskey, Vice Chair
- Tony Glover, Treasurer
- Christine Hunter
- Frank Mulhern (*resigned May 2021*)
- Gillian McNaul
- Paul Farrell
- Karen Collins (*resigned January 2022*)
- Conor Murray
- John Patrick Clayton
- Mark Walker (*appointed January 2022*)
- Helen Dunn (*appointed February 2022*)

### NIACRO Senior Leadership Team

- Olwen Lyner, Chief Executive (*Retired February 2022*)
- Fiona Greene, Chief Executive (*from March 2022*)
- Rachel Long, Director of Operations
- Ruth Walker, Business Development Manager
- Ciara Corrigan, Programme Manager Children and Families Services
- Gareth Eannetta, Programme Manager Adult Services
- Patrick Anderson, Programme Manager Adult Services - Working Well
- Maggie Butler, Central Services Support Manager

### 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

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

[niacro@niacro.co.uk](mailto:niacro@niacro.co.uk)

or write to us at the Registered Office address above.

*"The Connections project has been very helpful and enjoyable. I am doing things I wouldn't have done. I felt lost when I left prison. So having support so quickly was good."*

**Connections Client**



## Financial Overview

Our Funders	Value £	Classification
Belfast City Council	40,613	Other
Belfast Health & Social Care Trust	79,657	Local Admin
Charles Hayward Foundation	18,750	Other
Children in Need	36,058	Other
Christmas Sitout	750	Other
Community Foundation NI	15,000	Other
Construction Industry Training Board	6,632	Other
Department for Communities (Advice NI)	71,369	Other
Department of Justice	275,617	Criminal Justice
European Social Fund	801,456	European
Health and Social Care Board	232,190	Local Admin
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	44,508	Other
Northern Ireland Prison Service	759,649	Criminal Justice
Pilgrim Trust	8,475	Other
Probation Board for Northern Ireland	1,029,689	Criminal Justice
Public Health Agency	311,140	Local Admin
Red Cross	23,063	Other
South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust	22,069	Local Admin
Southern Health & Social Care Trust	122,393	Local Admin
The Housing Executive	460,716	Local Admin
The National Lottery	6,324	Other
Ufi Vol Tech Trust	12,111	Other
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	63,783	Local Admin
Voluntary Agencies	16,492	Other
Western Health & Social Care Trust	10,902	Local Admin
Services Income	10,708	Other
Membership Fees	40	Other
Donations	3,690	Other
Investment Income	1,985	Other
	4,485,828	

## Organisational Highlights

### Breakdown of Resources Expended

Breakdown of Resources Expended	£	%
Children & Young People	818,887	18.02%
Adults in Prison and the Community	2,762,870	61.03%
Families Affected by Imprisonment	772,759	17.01%
Fundraising and Governance	154,504	3.04%
	<b>4,509,020</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Breakdown of Income Sources

Breakdown of Income Resources	£	%
Criminal Justice	2,064,955	46.0%
European	801,456	18.0%
Local Admin	1,203,850	29.0%
Other	316,567	7.0%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4,485,828</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Our services reached:**  
**5403 people**  
**across 27 projects**



3466  
adults

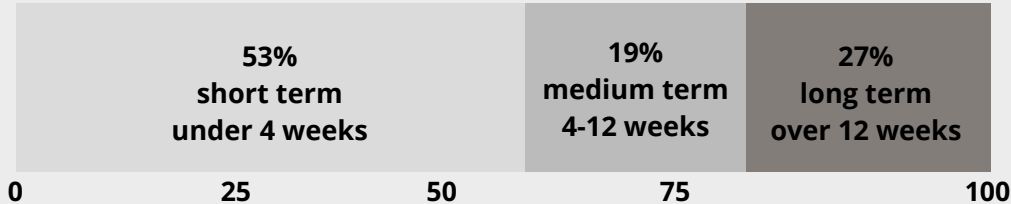


1353  
families



584  
children &  
young people

599 people were on more than one project



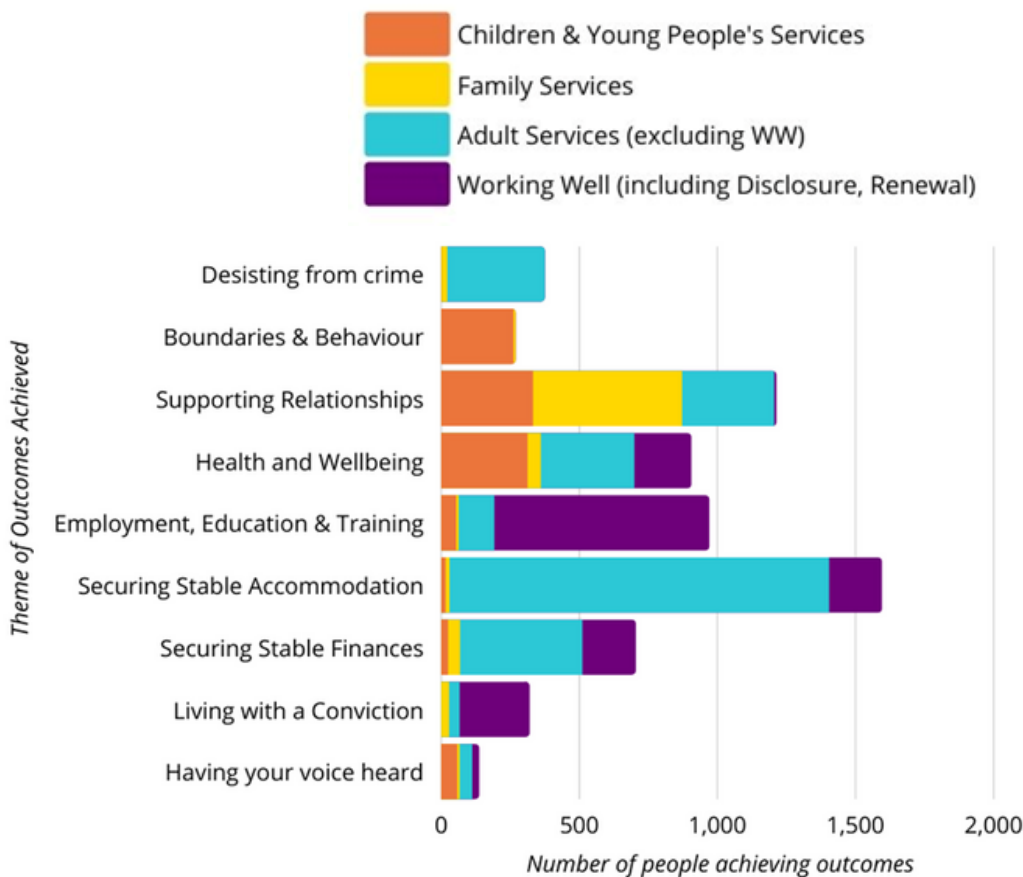
2021-22

# Organisational Highlights

## Overview of Impact

Our Corporate Plan commits us to **“identifying the positive changes (or outcomes) our service users achieve and ... test these against our organisational outcomes framework. By helping service users to achieve positive change, NIACRO aspires to support people to lead healthy and constructive lives and to desist from crime.”**

The 5,403 people supported chose to engage with us and, by so doing, received support to make changes to their lifestyles and circumstances that will equip them for leading more fulfilling lives, free from crime. The chart below summarises the main outcomes people we’ve supported have achieved over the year, plotted against the themes in our organisational Outcomes Framework.







NIACRO is grateful for all the funding it has received over the years from both public and private organisations.

Below are some of our current funding partners and/or streams.



Find out more about NIACRO:



028 9032 0157



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