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The voluntary sector in Transforming Rehabilitation

April 2018

A partnership between



Clinks supports, represents and advocates for the voluntary sector in criminal justice, enabling it to provide the best possible opportunities for individuals and their families. Our vision is of a vibrant, independent and resilient voluntary sector that enables people to transform their lives.

NCVO champions the voluntary sector and volunteering because they're essential for a better society. Each day, millions of people make a difference through voluntary organisations and volunteering. Our vision is a society where we can all make a difference to the causes that we believe in.

The **Third Sector Research Centre** works to enhance knowledge through independent and critical research. In collaboration with practitioners, policy makers, and other academics, we explore the key issues affecting charities and voluntary organisations, community groups, social enterprises, cooperatives and mutuals.

The **Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research (CRESR)** at **Sheffield Hallam University** is a leading and longstanding policy research centre in the UK, specialising in research and evaluation on the voluntary and community sector, welfare reform and labour markets, and housing and homelessness.

The **Centre for Voluntary Sector Leadership (CVSL)** at **The Open University Business School** is a new research centre established with a generous philanthropic gift from Anthony Nutt. The centre seeks to network and collaborate with academics, practitioners and policy makers interested in the voluntary sector in general, and in particular leadership of and for voluntary organisations. We are involved in a wide range of research projects that reflect an interest in the leadership challenges facing smaller organisations; undertake a range of collaborative activities with national and local agencies; and provide voluntary sector organisations with access to free leadership development courses.



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Clinks has joined up with the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) and Third Sector Research Centre (TSRC) to track the voluntary sector's involvement in and experience of recent changes to probation and prison services under Transforming Rehabilitation.

A partnership between



Executive summary

EXEC UTIVE SUM MARY



TrackTR is a partnership project between Clinks, the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) and the University of Birmingham's Third Sector Research Centre (TSRC) and the Open University's Centre for Voluntary Sector Leadership.

The intention of trackTR is to build a picture of the voluntary sector's experiences of the changes to probation services brought about under the Transforming Rehabilitation reforms, and the impact this has had on their services, their organisations and the people they support.

Transforming Rehabilitation

The Transforming Rehabilitation reforms have replaced the previous 35 Probation Trusts with a single National Probation Service (NPS), responsible for the management of high risk offenders; and 21 Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) responsible for the management of low to medium risk offenders across England and Wales. The CRCs also have a new responsibility for supervising short-sentence prisoners (those sentenced to less than 12 months in prison) after release. From 1 February 2015 the successful bidders in the competition for CRCs began to deliver probation services.¹

The government claimed that the role of the voluntary sector was central to the government's promotion of the Transforming Rehabilitation reforms. When the new CRC providers were announced, the Ministry of Justice stated that "75% of the 300 subcontractors named in the successful bids are voluntary sector or mutual organisations".² In our work we have found that the voluntary sector has not been central to these reforms, and that very few voluntary organisations have found themselves involved as subcontractors.

The aims of trackTR

Successful transformation: trackTR aims to support the improvement of services for people under probation supervision by advocating for the successful transformation of probation.

We believe that includes the effective

involvement of the voluntary sector in co-producing services and delivering better outcomes.

Understanding the role of the voluntary sector:

trackTR aims to understand what role the voluntary sector is undertaking to support the rehabilitation and resettlement of people under new and emerging probation services.

Supporting the wider ecosystem of services:

the voluntary sector supports a vast range of people in need across England and Wales, all of which add to the wider eco-system of services. TrackTR aims to gather the experience of the widest possible range of voluntary sector organisations working alongside probation services.

Increasing transparency:

trackTR aims to increase transparency, to shed light on which services are being commissioned from the voluntary sector by CRCs or the NPS.

Informing procurement practice: the changes to probation under the Transforming Rehabilitation reforms represent one of the biggest public procurement exercises in recent times. TrackTR aims to support improvements in future procurement trends by listening to the views of the voluntary organisations involved.

Methodology

This report has been informed by three main sources of information.

- **A survey was designed to capture the views of voluntary organisations** delivering rehabilitation and resettlement services in the criminal justice system (CJS). It was open between February and April 2017 and gathered the views of 132 voluntary organisations. The survey results were analysed by TSRC between May and December 2017. By using the same questions posed in our 2015 survey we have been able to record changes over time.
- **Six in depth interviews were undertaken with six case study organisations.** Clinks worked with the Open University to identify a diverse range of voluntary organisations and write up case studies of their experiences, based on a series of interviews.

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- **Informal conversations with providers and policy makers** were held over the course of the project to better understand the data we were receiving from the voluntary sector, and to place it in the context of wider changes to policy and practice. This includes a range of voluntary sector organisations, CRCs, the NPS and relevant government departments and agencies.

Key findings and recommendations

This survey has uncovered seven key findings, and we make 11 recommendations as a result. We still believe that all the recommendations made in our 2016 trackTR report, *Change and challenge*,³ remain relevant and require action to improve our probation services. This report's key findings and recommendations are listed below.

KEY FINDING 1: Voluntary sector involvement is low and reserved for larger organisations

Only 35% of the 132 organisations we heard from receive any funding from CRCs and only two organisations got any direct funding from the NPS. Voluntary organisations with an annual income of over £10 million were the only group more likely to be funded by a CRC than not. Smaller voluntary organisations are much less likely to be funded by probation despite their significant contribution to resettlement and rehabilitation services. Whilst much of this might be explained by a general under-resourcing of probation services, many smaller organisations have not been engaged in any meaningful way by probation services.

RECOMMENDATION 1: Provide transparency of supply chain partners

CRCs and the NPS should publish, ideally on a quarterly basis, full details of their supply chains, including: the names and company/charity numbers of tier two and three providers; the amount of funding passed down to sub-contractors; a summary of the service being provided; and where appropriate

the contribution that these organisations have made to Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

RECOMMENDATION 2: HMPPS should conduct an annual audit of the supply chain

Contract managers in Her Majesty's Prison and Probation service should conduct (or commission) an annual audit of the supply chain to assess the involvement of any organisations funded by CRCs and the NPS. The audit should collate anonymised feedback, assessing their experiences and look for good practice to share as well as poor practice to learn from. The audit's findings should be made public.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Involve the voluntary sector

The Ministry of Justice and Her Majesty's Prison and probation service should work with Clinks, CRC owners, the NPS, and prisons to develop approaches to engage more voluntary organisations. These approaches should be tested in local areas and evaluated with a view to scaling them across England and Wales.

KEY FINDING 2: The voluntary sector's role in Probation services is unsustainable

Just over a half of all respondents suggest a negative or very negative impact of TR on their organisations. Voluntary organisations suggested that probation services are under-funded, leading to lack of investment in rehabilitation and resettlement services and staff with high caseloads which are often unmanageable. Half of the voluntary sector-led services that are funded by CRCs say they are unsustainable, one in three think their funding agreement is at risk of failure before the end of the contract or within the next six months. One third of these services are subsidised by charitable reserves or other funding sources. Over half the voluntary organisations not funded by either a CRC or the NPS have subsidised their services with reserves or other funding sources. This is an unsustainable situation. Probation services delivered by voluntary organisations are under-funded and more investment is needed to ensure the health of the probation system.



RECOMMENDATION 4: The MoJ probation review must set out an acceptable level of services

The Ministry of Justice are leading a ‘probation review’. This review must consider the services that probation services need to deliver and assess, with partners, an acceptable level of services to ensure quality and a suitable level of funding to ensure the service can be delivered. This must include an assessment of the services required to meet the needs of people with protected characteristics.

KEY FINDING 3: The probation system relies on the work of voluntary organisations

People under probation supervision are regularly supported by voluntary organisations, but these organisations are frequently not paid for by probation services. Up to 65% of voluntary organisations we surveyed are not funded by probation providers. These organisations regularly receive referrals from probation services and prisons. Up to 70% of these organisations think their services should be funded by the probation system.

RECOMMENDATION 5: Develop local provider networks

As a minimum requirement, to nurture local partnerships, each CRCs and NPS region (preferably in collaboration) should develop a multi-agency network that brings together key partner organisations to inform the design and delivery of services for people under probation supervision.

KEY FINDING 4: The rate card does not work for the NPS or the voluntary sector

Current policy dictates that the NPS has to commission all services through a CRC’s ‘rate card’. This restricts the NPS’s ability to purchase services that support people under their supervision, limits their choice, and restricts their ability to engage strategically with stakeholders. This policy has actively discouraged voluntary sector engagement with the NPS and their service users.

RECOMMENDATION 6: The ‘rate card’ system should be abandoned

The rate card system has been shown not to work and should be abandoned. The NPS should have its own commissioning function that allows it to purchase appropriate services. It should not be restricted to using services listed on a CRCs ‘rate card’. This change should be supported by the Ministry of Justice’s Commissioning Directorate and its implementation supported by Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service working alongside the NPS to ensure a smooth transition.

KEY FINDING 5: Voluntary organisations believe Transforming Rehabilitation has had a negative impact on their services and service users.

Worryingly 60% of the voluntary organisations we surveyed say that TR has had a negative or very negative impact on their service users. Very few suggest that the changes have been positive for either their organisation or people under probation supervision.

RECOMMENDATION 7: Openly consult on changes to probation

The Ministry of Justice should conduct an open consultation on the purpose and structure of probation services in 2018/19, ahead of the end of current contractual arrangements. The results should feed into the ongoing Ministry of Justice-led ‘probation review’. This should include consideration as to whether one single probation service may be a more efficient and/or effective delivery option.

RECOMMENDATION 8: Assess quality through new research grants

HM Inspectorate of Probation perform a vital function in assessing the quality of probation work. This should be complemented by more research into what ‘good’ looks like in probation services. The Ministry of Justice should support this development by setting up an annual grant fund for researchers to assess a broad range of rehabilitation and resettlement activities. The research papers should be published.

RECOMMENDATION 9: Collect and publish feedback from service users

The Ministry of Justice and Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service should develop (or commission) a mechanism to gather views from a representative sample of probation service users and their families to assess the state of services. This analysis should be published and used to improve services.

has been negatively impacted because there is a lack of clarity surrounding what services CRCs and the NPS should be funding. The fact that the probation system is now more complicated, caused by the split in probation services between the NPS and CRCs, was also given as a reason for some of the ongoing confusion.

KEY FINDING 6: A volume-based target driven culture is eroding partnerships

The voluntary organisations that have the closest relationships with CRCs – those funded by them – have become increasingly pessimistic and negative. Many of the organisations we heard from do not believe that their ethos and values align with that of CRCs. Voluntary organisations blame the erosion of their relationship on unhelpful targets that are focused on volume and a lack of meaningful outcome-driven targets.

RECOMMENDATION 11: Clearly set out what probation services do

The Ministry of Justice needs to produce clear and accessible public guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the main agencies involved in rehabilitation and resettlement, including CRCs, the NPS, and prisons.

RECOMMENDATION 10: Develop new targets and outcome measures

The system of meeting volume targets needs reforming to provide greater emphasis on the quality of work delivered and what it achieves. A Ministry of Justice-convened working group should be established to assess current targets and outcome measures, with the aim of developing proposals for improved measures that could be adopted by CRCs, the NPS and other stakeholders. As a minimum requirement this working group should include representatives from the MoJ, HMPPS, HM Inspectorate of Probation, CRCs, the NPS, voluntary organisations, Police and Crime Commissioners and other statutory services with responsibility for health, housing and education or employment outcomes.

KEY FINDING 7: Confusion about Transforming Rehabilitation could be leading to disinvestment

TR has negatively affected the level of funding for voluntary sector-led rehabilitation and resettlement services. Many organisations say their ability to raise funding from other sources



1 / Introduction

INT ROD UCT ION



This report details the results of Clinks' final survey into the voluntary sector's experience of Transforming Rehabilitation (TR), also known as trackTR. This project is delivered through a partnership led by Clinks, involving the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), the Third Sector Research Centre (TSRC) at the University of Birmingham and the Centre for Voluntary Sector Leadership (CVSL) at the Open University Business School.

The aim of trackTR is to provide the best possible data on how the changes to probation and prison resettlement services under the TR reforms have impacted on the voluntary sector working in criminal justice, as well as its impact on the wider eco-system of support for people in contact with the CJS and their families.

Background

The Transforming Rehabilitation reforms

Transforming Rehabilitation (TR) is the name given to the government's programme for how offenders are managed in England and Wales from February 2015. The programme has involved the outsourcing of a large portion of the probation service in England and Wales.

The reforms have replaced the previous 35 individual Probation Trusts with a single National Probation Service (NPS), responsible for the management of high-risk offenders; and 21 Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) responsible for the management of low to medium risk offenders in 21 areas across England and Wales. The CRCs also have a new responsibility for supervising short-sentence prisoners (those sentenced to less than 12 months in prison) after release.

From 1 February 2015 the successful bidders in the competition for the CRCs began to deliver the programme, with new prison resettlement services (Through the Gate) starting from May 2015. The successful contractors were expected to build supply chains that consist of organisations from the public, private, and voluntary sectors through which they will subcontract delivery of some of their services.⁴

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The NPS is a public sector organisation that supervises people who are assessed as posing a high risk of harm to the public. In addition they provide advice to the courts, such as pre-sentence reports, and deliver the Victim Contact Service. The NPS also works with the voluntary sector: 10% of all probation hostels (or approved premises) are run by voluntary organisations, and it is able to purchase services through the 'rate card' which is effectively a list or menu of the services which CRCs contract to deliver services.

The TR reforms have been under considerable scrutiny since their inception. The reforms have had significant attention from HM Inspectorate of Probation and the National Audit Office, various parliamentary Select Committees, unions, think tanks and a great number of voluntary organisations. Increasingly it has become evident that the reforms have not produced the improved practice or innovation that the original policy had intended to bring about. There are considerable concerns as to whether the level of funding for CRCs is adequate. This led the Ministry of Justice and HM Prison and Probation Services (HMPPS) to conduct a review of all CRC contracts which has led to further payments to all CRCs.

There are also real questions about the quality of what is being offered to people under probation supervision, and the public that rely on this vital service. There are concerns about the quality of services delivered by CRCs, which need to be improved in a number of areas, particularly the quality of supervision and the delivery of 'through the gate' services - which support someone's resettlement from prison and back into the community. Whilst the NPS has been shown to deliver adequately, there are also concerns about the quality of rehabilitative activity that it provides.

The trackTR survey

A major part of the TR reforms, and the policy intention, was to attract a greater number of voluntary organisations (of all shapes and sizes) to play a bigger role alongside probation services. Clinks and our partners set out to uncover what the level of voluntary sector involvement was, and what the sector's views on the reforms are.

There have been three trackTR surveys since 2015, in total we have received more than 450 survey responses and had ongoing conversations with a large number of voluntary organisations. This informed our first report in August 2015, *Early doors: the voluntary sector's role in Transforming Rehabilitation*,⁵ and our second report in May 2016, *Change & challenge*.⁶

Methodology

The findings from this report are primarily based on an online survey designed to capture information on the voluntary sector's involvement in the new probation services brought about by the TR reforms. The survey was open between February and April 2017 and covered a number of issues, asking 79 questions that allowed organisations to fully explain their role in and around the new probation services. The survey utilised both open text and closed, fixed response questions. The questions covered the following issues:

- The size, client group, services and location of voluntary sector organisations.
- Their overall experience of the changes in probation services brought about by the TR reforms.
- Whether organisations had a funding relationship with CRCs, the NPS, or were funded through other sources.
- The impact of these reforms on relationships and partnerships.
- The impact of these reforms on their service(s) and clients.

A full summary of the questions asked in this survey can be accessed through the Clinks website.⁷

The survey was promoted through Clinks and NCVO networks and was advertised to organisations both inside and outside of 'supply chains' developed by CRCs. Our intention was to capture the views of the widest possible range of voluntary sector organisations working in the CJS. In total 132 organisations responded to the survey. The data was analysed by the TSRC between May and December 2017. All information about

survey respondents has been kept confidential to allow them to be completely honest.

In-depth conversations with a range of service providers (from the voluntary, public and private sector) and policy makers were held over the course of the project to better understand the data we were receiving from the survey, and to place it in the context of wider changes to policy and practice.

This was supplemented by six case studies that were conducted by the Open University over the course of 2017-18. We wish to draw particular attention to these case studies which provide further information of how the findings of our survey are having a wide ranging affect on a diverse range of organisations. When read together, alongside the survey findings, they highlight in detail the impact of transforming rehabilitation on the voluntary sector. These organisations have given us permission to publish their views and attribute them to their organisations – therefore they are not anonymised.

Note on the data and limitations

The sample of 132 voluntary sector organisations is not directly representative of the whole voluntary sector working in criminal justice. For that reason caution must be exercised when making generalisations about the whole sector when referring to the results of this research. Information about the size, location and specialism of organisations that responded to our survey is contained in the report, but we have not attempted to directly compare these organisations with what we know of the whole voluntary sector working with people in the criminal justice system. However, we are reasonably confident that we have been able to make contact with many, if not most, of the voluntary organisations funded through CRC supply chains.

We have not attempted to summarise the views of the voluntary sector on a regional basis, or attribute differences between CRCs, for this reason we represent a view that is compiled from the experience of organisations from across England and Wales to provide one view of the voluntary sector's engagement in TR.

The low response rate from organisations directly funded by the NPS has made it difficult to draw any detailed conclusions on the nature of the voluntary sector working with offenders that are assessed as posing a high risk of harm to the public.

Where we have made conclusions based on the research findings, we have been clear about the percentage and number of organisations that provided that view. The response rates to some of the survey questions vary because some questions will have been skipped or were not relevant for the respondent. Where we received very low response rates we have been unable to make broader generalisations about the voluntary sector's experiences.



2 / The findings

THE FIND INGS



At the time of publication, the data presented in this document is the most comprehensive assessment of the voluntary sector's experience of the recent changes to probation services across England and Wales; how it has impacted on their organisations, their services and their service users.



The information in this report is presented in the following categories:

- **The voluntary sector's engagement in Transforming Rehabilitation:** Who responded to the survey, what services they deliver, their service users, and where they are based.
- **The impact on services and service users:** The impact of the TR reforms on voluntary sector services and their service users.
- **The impact on relationships and partnership:** The effect of the TR reforms on the way in which organisations work together, partner, and talk to each other.
- **Working with Community Rehabilitation Companies:** The experiences of voluntary sector organisations that are directly funded by CRCs.
- **Working with the National Probation Service:** The experiences of voluntary sector organisations that are directly funded by the NP.
- **Working outside the supply chain:** The experiences of voluntary sector organisations that are not funded by CRCs or the NPS.
- **The sustainability of the voluntary sector:** An assessment of the sustainability of the voluntary sector working alongside, or delivering, probation services.

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2.1 / The voluntary sector's engagement in Transforming Rehabilitation

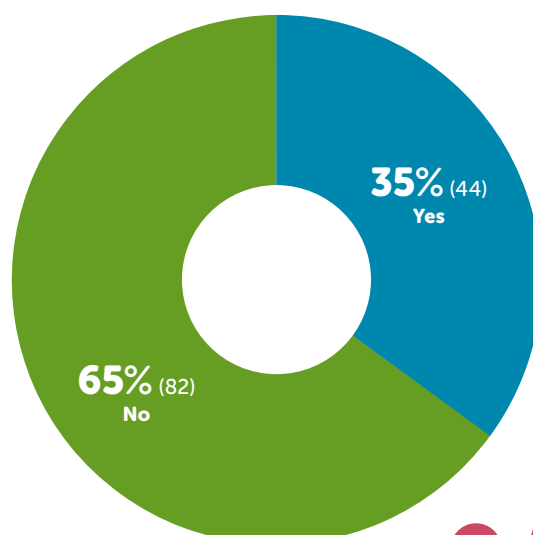
We received 132 valid responses to our survey. These voluntary organisations provide a range of services and work across England and Wales. Given what we know of the size and scale of the voluntary sector working in criminal justice, we can tell that the organisations responding to our survey are disproportionately large in size.⁸ Over the course of our three surveys we have seen a slight dip in the number of smaller organisations responding and an increase in the number of larger organisations.

In this survey we were able to provide some analysis of sub-sectors, with a good number of specialist women's organisations responding. We have used that data to provide some analysis of that sector within this report.

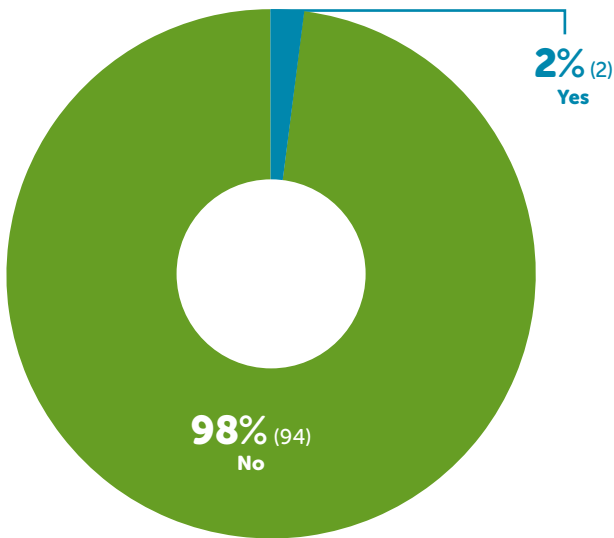
Funded involvement in probation supply chains

Although we have seen a small rise in the proportion of voluntary organisations responding to our surveys that are funded by CRCs from 25% to 35%, it is still the case that 65% of all respondents are not part of TR supply chains. Only 2% of respondents are directly funded by the NPS. Significantly, 78% are delivering services to people under probation supervision which are not directly funded by either CRCs or the NPS.

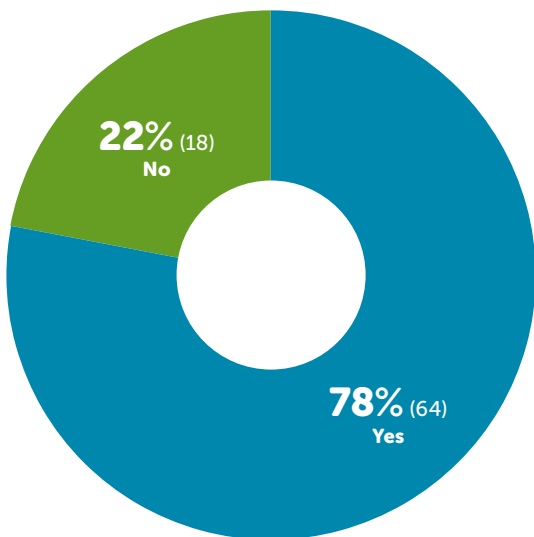
Graph 1 / Is your organisation funded by a Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) to provide resettlement and/ or rehabilitation services? n=126



Graph 2 / Is your organisation funded by a National Probation Service (NPS) to provide resettlement and/or rehabilitation services? n=96



Graph 3 / Does your organisation provide resettlement and/or rehabilitation services to people in the criminal justice system that are not directly funded by a CRC or the NPS? n=82



Of the 44 organisations that were funded by CRCs, 23 said they delivered 'tier 2' services, meaning that they deliver a core service, usually to a large number of people over a big geographical area. Thirteen organisations described their services as 'tier 3', providing smaller and more specialist services to a small group of people usually in a specific location. A further six organisations told us that they deliver a range of services

at both tier 2 and 3, usually working with a range of different CRCs, or providing different services across different areas within the same CRC.

The Ministry of Justice reported that there were at least 225 voluntary sector organisations in supply chains when CRC contracts were awarded.⁹ Yet, it appears from these findings that very few voluntary organisations have been funded to deliver services by CRCs, and a negligible amount have received funding from the NPS. Most organisations report that their funding for community resettlement and rehabilitation services come from other sources, such as other government funding, private investment, or funding from charitable sources such as trusts and foundations or public giving (see table 14, page 40).

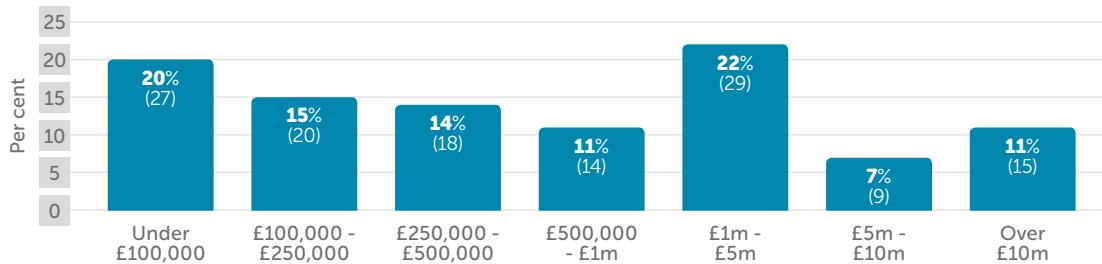
The size of the voluntary organisations

Just over 35% of organisations had an annual income of less than £250,000, slightly less than a quarter fell between £250,000 and £1 million, and almost 40% had an income of more than £1 million. Twelve organisations had no paid staff, just over 60% had fewer than 50 employees, and a further third had more than 50 paid staff. This survey did highlight that a number of much larger organisations responded, just over 11% had an annual income of more than £10 million and 14% employed over 250 staff.

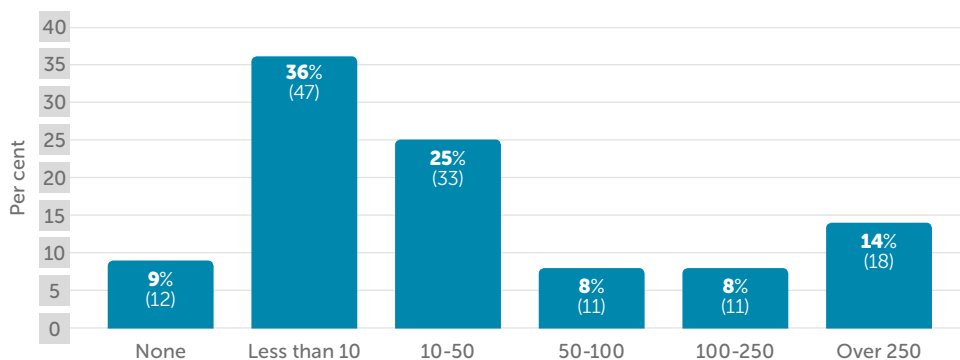
Compared to the voluntary sector as a whole, in which around 50% of organisations have a turnover below £10,000 and less than 1% receive more than £10m income a year,¹⁰ our sample is skewed towards larger organisations. Clinks' 2017 state of the sector report found that 76% of organisations specialising in criminal justice services had an income of £1 million or less. Only 3.3% had an income of over £10 million.¹¹

Voluntary organisations in this space continue to involve volunteers in their work. Just over 1/3 saying they manage 50 or more volunteers, just over half involve between 10 and 250 volunteers, and just 4% say they do not have any volunteers.

Graph 4 / What is your organisation's overall income in the last financial year? n=132



Graph 5 / Approximately how many full time equivalent staff does your organisation currently employ? n=132

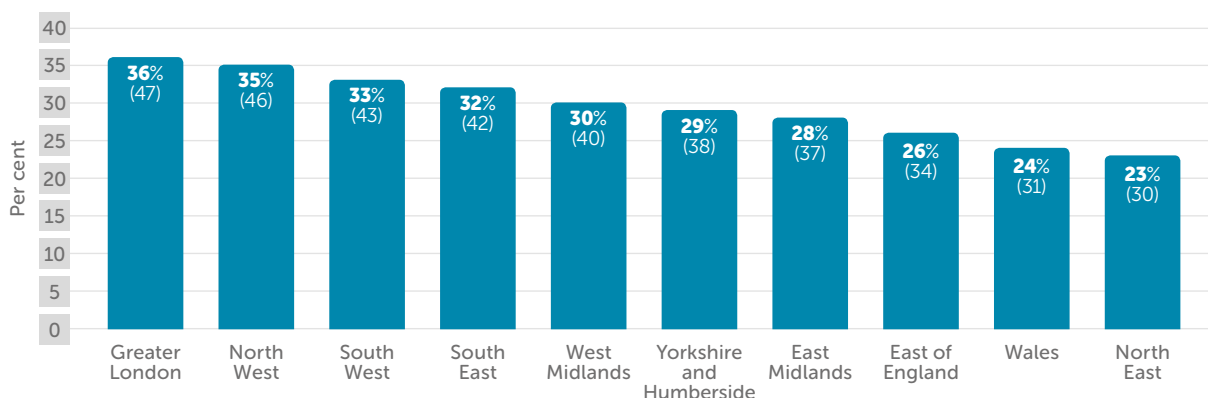


The location of services

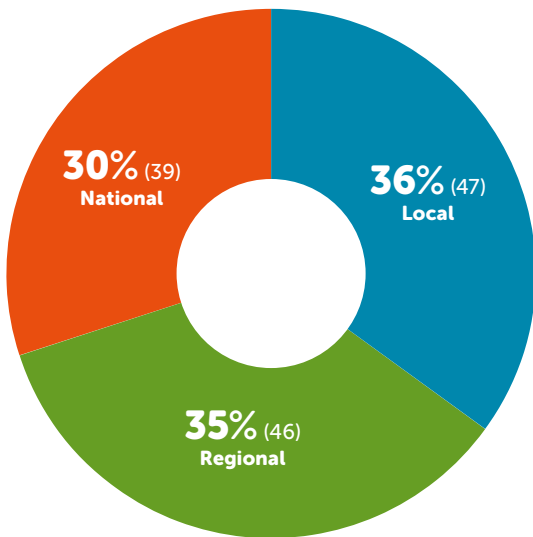
As with our first two surveys we gathered a wide range of views across England and Wales. On average we heard from 39 organisations working in each English region and in Wales. There was some variation, with the highest response rates

coming from London and the South East, and the lowest from Wales and the East of England. We did find that in comparison to previous surveys, a higher proportion of organisations now say that they work across multiple regions.

Graph 6 / Where do you deliver services? (n=132 / tick all that apply)

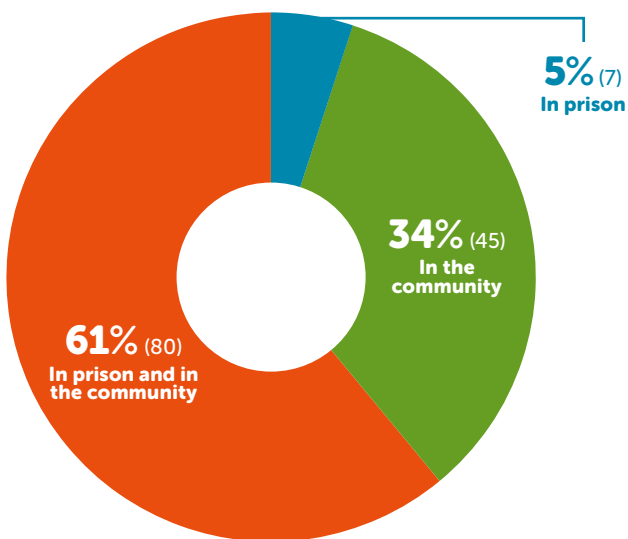


Graph 7 / What is the operational footprint of your organisation's delivery? n=132



The voluntary organisations we heard from work primarily in both prison and community settings (61%); 5% just worked in prisons and 34% solely in the community. This is consistent with findings from successive Clinks state of the sector reports and is unsurprising. It indicates that many organisations are involved in rehabilitation within prison as well as resettlement back into the community. The services these organisations deliver would seem well placed to support the aims and objectives of probation.

Graph 8 / Which of the following best describes where you work? n=132



The service users

Offenders and ex-offenders, women and men are identified as the most frequently cited main beneficiaries of the voluntary organisations we heard from. The majority report their main beneficiaries as being male (67%), just over half work with women (52%). Other main beneficiaries include people with mental health needs (34%), addiction problems (37%), young adults (35%), the homeless (30%), those in poverty (30%), the families of offenders (24%), and young people (24%). Table 1 shows us in more detail the range of services on offer. This reflects the diverse needs of people in the criminal justice system. Some respondents cited other beneficiaries such as ex-service personnel, victims of domestic violence and young carers.

Specialist services

We asked if organisations delivered 'specialist' services to particular groups which are frequently identified as requiring specific approaches because of their diverse needs, such as women, young adults and people from black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities.

- 40% did not provide any specialist services to these groups
- 42% provided specialist services to women
- 32% provided specialist services to young adults
- 11% provided specialist services to people from BAME communities.

Because of the higher rate of response from organisations supporting women we have been able to analyse their responses separately.

The responses from young adult specialist services were also analysed but no significant differences were found.

We were unable to analyse the responses from specialist BAME services due to the low rate of response. Given the importance of tackling racism and discrimination in our criminal justice system, highlighted again recently by David Lammy's review into racial bias in the criminal justice system,¹² it was disappointing and worrying to see only 15 organisations (11%) say they deliver specialist services to people from BAME communities.



Table 1 / Who are your clients/service users/beneficiaries? (n=132 / tick all that apply)

Category	Main beneficiaries	Beneficiaries also include	Either
	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)
Offenders and ex-offenders	74 (98)	19 (25)	93 (123)
Men	67 (89)	15 (20)	83 (109)
People with mental health needs	34 (45)	48 (63)	82 (108)
Women	52 (68)	30 (39)	81 (107)
People with addiction problems (e.g. alcohol, drugs)	37 (49)	40 (53)	77 (102)
Young adults (aged 18-25)	35 (46)	36 (48)	71 (94)
People from Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME)	20 (26)	50 (66)	70 (92)
Homeless people	30 (39)	39 (51)	68 (90)
People with a particular financial need (including poverty)	30 (40)	37 (49)	67 (89)
People with learning difficulties	14 (19)	42 (56)	57 (75)
Families of offenders	24 (32)	27 (35)	51 (67)
Older people	16 (21)	32 (42)	48 (63)
Young people (aged 16-18)	24 (31)	24 (32)	48 (63)
People with physical disabilities and/or special needs	13 (17)	35 (46)	48 (63)
Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender people	9 (12)	38 (50)	47 (62)
Victims of crime	17 (23)	25 (33)	42 (56)
Carers/parents/families	16 (21)	24 (32)	40 (53)
Care leavers	12 (16)	25 (33)	37 (49)
Asylum seekers/refugees	7 (9)	27 (36)	34 (45)
Other charities, social enterprises and/or voluntary organisations	11 (14)	21 (28)	32 (42)
Children (aged 15 or under)	13 (17)	17 (23)	30 (40)
Faith communities	5 (4)	24 (32)	28 (37)

Specialist women's services

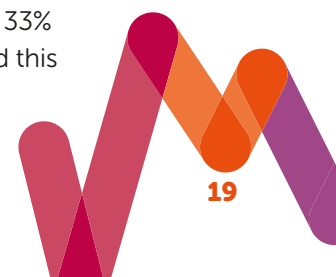
The notable differences presented by these organisations are listed below. Given the number of responses these figures should be treated with caution.

56 respondents indicated that they were providers of specialist women's services. There is a higher proportion of larger organisations delivering specialist women's services – 27% have annual incomes of £5m or more, compared with 18% for the survey

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as a whole. The geographical distribution of these organisations is similar to other respondents.

- **Poorer relationships with CRC owners:** A lower proportion have good or very good relationships with CRC owners (29%) as compared with the survey as a whole (35%)
- **Their funding is different:** 41% are funded by CRCs, compared with 33% of all organisations that answered this



question (n=126). Those not in CRC supply chains are more likely to receive funding for their work through charitable trusts and foundations (65% against 59%), the Big Lottery Fund (46% against 34%), and Local Authorities (42% against 25%)

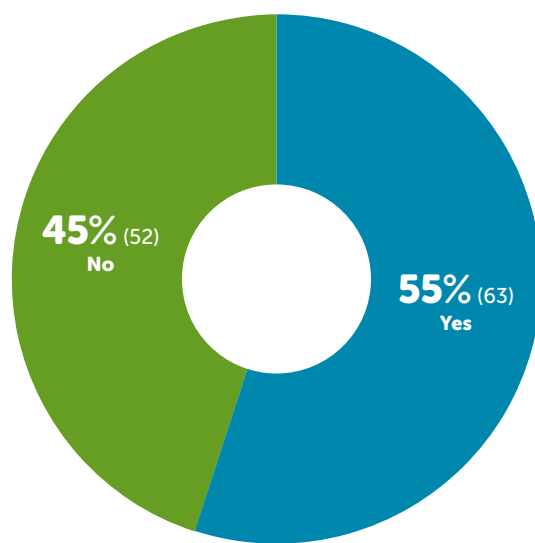
- **They are more likely to have to subsidise CRC services:** CRC funded women’s services are more likely than other CRC-funded services to report having to subsidise services with their own reserves (41% against 35%), or with other funding sources (46% against 37%). Those outside of the supply chain are also more likely to subsidise services with their own reserves (65% against 53%), or with other funding sources (46% against 38%)
- **They are more sceptical about sustainability:** CRC funded women’s services are less likely to consider the agreed financial terms of CRC contracts to be sustainable (32% against 40%), and more likely to report that the funding agreement with the CRC is at risk of failure before the end of the contract period (41% against 28%). Those outside of the supply chains are less likely to consider the funding of their services to be sustainable (23% against 30%)
- **They are less confident about CRC contract management:** They are less likely to agree or strongly agree with all of the following statements:
 - » ‘contractual risk is being appropriately managed by the CRC’
 - » ‘there is an alignment of ethos/values between your organisation and the CRC’
 - » ‘there is clarity about how the CRC will pay for the work that is delivered’ and
 - » ‘there is transparency of refresh or re-tendering of the service(s) you deliver’.
- **Less keen to be funded by Transforming Rehabilitation:** 70% of all organisations outside of the supply chain think their services should be funded by CRCs or the NPS. However, only 54% of specialist women’s services that are outside of the supply chain think they should be funded through TR.

2.2 / The impact of services and service users

In this section we present the views of voluntary organisations on the impact that TR has had on the services they deliver and the people that access them.

Impact on services

Graph 9 / Has Transforming Rehabilitation changed the service(s) your organisation delivers? n=115



One of the key aspects of the TR policy was to foster innovation and do things differently. In our 2016 trackTR report only 35% of respondents said that TR had changed their services, and 60% were delivering the same services as before. This survey showed the majority of services had changed as a result of TR (55%), although 45% had seen no change to the services they offer as a result of the reforms.

“The funding was halved, the service specification changed to mainly group work which did not meet all women’s needs. We have now decided not to tender for CRC services due to the lack of funding available to meet the service specification and women’s needs in a way that fits with our women-centred approach.”

Many voluntary organisation we heard from reported that their services were under-funded or that significant cuts had been experienced.



“We have had to move away from a preferred model of high quality, longer term mentoring, to short interventions which are of limited value in my opinion.”

Respondents also commented that services were being diluted because of a focus on volume-driven targets rather than outcomes.

“Our focus has shifted from client facing one-to-one support to delivering workshops and surgeries so that we can generate the volumes required.”

This led some organisations to focus their limited resources on seeing more people in a short space of time rather than delivering a quality service.

“The need for lots of admin has changed the way we design and deliver, with a lot of resource going to servicing the admin.”

For example, some organisations have focussed on group work or short interventions to meet their targets. Many felt that services were having to become more prescriptive, with a heavier administrative burden and that this was taking time away from face-to-face work with services users.

“The quality and scope of what we can do with women in CJS has reduced – although we have more contracts.”

All of this was felt to be having a negative effect on quality of services. Some organisations refer to giving serious considerations about withdrawing from TR-related work for these reasons.

Voluntary organisations have become pessimistic about TR. Half of all respondents think the reforms have been either negative or very negative for their organisation. Only 5% see it as very positive and 17% as positive. Just over a quarter think it has had a neutral impact (neither positive nor negative).

Table 2 / How has Transforming Rehabilitation impacted on your organisation? (n=111)

Impact on organisation	
	% (n)
Very positively	5 (5)
Positively	17 (19)
Neither positively nor negatively	28 (31)
Negatively	33 (37)
Very negatively	17 (19)

The survey allowed respondents to explain their answers. We analysed these responses and highlighted a number of themes, these are listed below. The range of reasons why people see TR as a failure or a success is likely to be a result of the scale and pace of the change. This seems to have had a diverse range of consequences across the voluntary sector, most of which have been negative.

- **A small number of organisations have experienced positive change**, including enhanced or expanded work, better working relationships with probation services, raising the profile of their organisation, and new opportunities.

“The CRC work well with [us] and all of our criminal justice projects. They refer their cases to us, embrace and promote our services. It has created opportunities for organisations such as ours.”

- **A small number of organisations report a negligible impact**, mainly because they have been unable to develop any sort of relationship with CRCs or the NPS.

“It is a complete non-event for us! They all seem too busy with delivery over vast contract areas and we run a small project in one prison. We don’t feel relevant to them.”

- **Many have experienced negative impacts**, including a worsening of relationships and communication, loss



of previously funded work, being used as bid-candy by prospective CRC owners, low morale and overworked staff, and a sense that organisations have wasted staff time and other investments to bid for services with no positive results.

“We invested huge amounts of time engaging with TR over two years but, in spite of being told we would be contracted, eventually were not.”

- **Fundraising has become more complex.** Many respondents say that funders, primarily charitable trusts and foundations or local authorities, are withdrawing from the sector in the belief that TR should be investing or funding the services they previously supported. Furthermore some organisations believe TR has increased competition and decreased collaboration between local services.

“It has increased demand on the support we provide. It has reduced the number of charitable funders. It has increased the competition amongst charities. It has decreased the willingness of orgs to work together in an informal manner.”

- **There are concerns about the quality of work** that they were being asked to deliver, in particular the intensity of work and the size of the workloads, and concerns about risk management arrangements.

“...we have lost the quality resettlement work that was previously being carried out. The approach is not individual focus but process focused. It is admin heavy which prevents face-to-face contact.”

Impact on service users

We asked voluntary organisations to tell us what impact TR had on their service users. In previous surveys the response has been relatively neutral, apart from areas such as accommodation which was identified as an area in need of improvement.

Only 15% of respondents saw a positive or very positive impact on service users, compared with 60% who thought the reforms had a negative or very negative impact. In the last trackTR report 43% of respondents felt that the impact was neither positive nor negative, that has reduced to 26%.

Respondents also gave their views on the impact of TR on services for specific groups of people (see Table 4, p23). Respondents appear to have ‘come off the fence’. In our last survey 60% said they didn’t know what the impact was, no one responded in that way in this survey. On average almost half (48%) thought that services have worsened for all types of service users, in the last survey only 21% thought this was the case. A minority of organisations were more likely to say that services had improved for some user groups (from 6% to 14%).

The service users who were frequently thought to have been most negatively impacted by TR were:

- People with a particular financial need (64% worsened, 7% improved)
- Homeless people (63% worsened, 14% improved)
- Young adults (60% worsened, 9% improved)
- People with addiction problems (62% worsened, 18% improved)
- Black, Asian and Minority ethnic offender (58% worsened, 7% improved).

Table 3 / How have the changes brought about by Transforming Rehabilitation impacted on your service users? (n=105)

Impact on service users	
	% (n)
Very positively	5 (5)
Positively	10 (11)
Neither positively nor negatively	26 (27)
Negatively	41 (43)
Very negatively	18 (19)

Table 4 / From your experience what impact has Transforming Rehabilitation had on the delivery of services for the following groups? (tick all that apply)

Category	Improved	No change	Worsened
	%	%	%
Women	22	20	58
Men	22	20	58
Older people	19	42	39
Children (aged 15 or under)	11	67	22
Young people (aged 16-18)	10	60	30
Young adults (18-25)	9	32	60
People with physical disabilities and/or special needs	11	46	43
People with learning difficulties	11	42	47
People with mental health needs	16	27	57
People from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities	7	36	58
People with a particular financial need (including poverty)	7	29	64
Asylum seekers/refugees	8	63	29
Homeless people	14	23	63
People with addiction problems (e.g. alcohol, drugs)	18	21	62
Faith communities	8	67	25
Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender people	13	57	30
Victims of crime and/or their families	17	33	50
Offenders, ex-offenders and their families	24	16	60
Care leavers	9	34	56
Carers/parents/families	17	45	38
AVERAGE	14	39	48

Analysis of the open-text responses provides a number of recurring themes to explain survey respondents views about the impact of TR on services and service users, they were:

- **A lack of capacity and resources** were often referred to as the cause of worsening services. This was thought to be partly because of a lack of adequate investment, with probation staff simply being too busy.
- **Fragmentation of the 'probation system' has caused a breakdown of integrated and coherent services** according to some respondents. They note that the split between the CRCs and the NPS has made the system more complex to understand for voluntary organisations and more difficult for service users

"Probation staff are more stretched (higher workloads), seem to have less autonomy, and morale is generally low."

to navigate. Respondents felt that many service users and other stakeholders simply do not understand what is being delivered and by whom.

“Although our experience has been generally positive in our CRC relationship, I have yet to meet another partner who shares a similar story. The broader consensus is that the new structure encourages competition over KPIs/attribution and not collaboration where it is much needed when tackling a complex, systemic issue.”

- **The nature of services has changed**, with far less face to face or intensive case work being carried out. Instead this has been replaced with more programme-orientated, short term, or group work.

“Our previous models of long term, meaningful mentoring, has been reduced to 'short term interventions' on release and in the community, where very little work to ensure sustainable change and support has been provided”.

- **Service users were ill-equipped for release from prison.** Respondents pointed to a lack of pre-release and post-release supervision and support as a major contributing factor.

“Service users report very little, if any, value in the resettlement support given to them by their CRC and it seems to be a lot about assessments, rather than actual face-to-face time. Some service users have reported being confused over what they are receiving and from whom.”

- **A culture of monitoring** was felt to be having a negative impact on flexible support for services users. With probation services focussed on information gathering, assessment, and what some referred to as a tick-box culture.

“We are paid to see them face to face, not get them into accommodation or reduce debt, so they sit there unnecessarily and we all tick the boxes. More than half our work does NOT need the offender to be present ... what a waste of all our resources.”

- **Wider cuts to the funding of public services** was also raised as a contributing factor as to why outcomes for specific services users may be worsening.

“It is hard to dissociate TR from other issues e.g. benefits cuts, debt, joblessness, and housing shortages. However, there is no evidence that TR has been able to effectively support people through these challenges and sometimes things seem to have got worse.”

2.3 / The impact on relationships and partnerships

In this section we explore the effect of the TR reforms on the way in which voluntary organisations work with key partners and stakeholders. This includes how they work with the NPS, CRCs, prisons, other statutory partners, or other voluntary organisations.

Although many relationships have been significantly challenged by the TR reforms, compared to our previous trackTR report there have been improvements in relationships between the voluntary sector and the NPS, CRCs, and prisons.

Relationships with CRCs and their owners

Table 5 / How would you describe your organisation’s relationship with the Community Rehabilitation Companies and owners that you work with?

Relationship with the Community Rehabilitation Companies and owners	The Community Rehabilitation Company/Companies you work with?	The owner of the Community Rehabilitation Company/Companies you work with?
	%	%
Very good or good	54	35
Neither good nor poor	36	39
Poor or very poor	10	26
	n=118	n=107

Relationships with CRCs

Over half of all voluntary organisations felt that their relationships with the CRCs they work with were very good or good. Only 10% felt that they had poor relationships with them, and just over a third (36%) thought their relationship was neutral (neither good nor poor). This is an improvement from our last survey.

The reasons respondents gave for their answers can be broadly categorised as follows:

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- **Some relationships between voluntary organisations and CRCs had improved**, leading to clearer collaboration agreements. For those organisations there was a sense of improvement as relationships developed and embedded in.

“We have found over the past six months particularly that CRCs are in a better position to be able to work with us on this and an increasing appreciation of and willingness to work with supply chains as partners and valued professionals”.

- **Some relationships had deteriorated**. We heard from organisations that were very critical of CRCs and their owners, some stating that CRCs seemed “removed” and unwilling to engage with voluntary organisations. Others stated that increased competition between the CRC and voluntary sector staff had created a barrier to better relationships, often caused by staff trying to meet their targets.

“For a small organisation like us it seems impossible to have any relationship with them. We have tried to make contact with our local CRC and although they all sit literally across the car park we have no relationship with them”.

- **There are variations between CRCs**. We heard from organisations that the quality of their relationships differ dramatically between CRCs, even those that have the same owner.

“We work with Sodexo delivering in tier 3, have a partnership with Purple Futures but limited funds as yet; Some CRCs are better than others... We work across five CRCs and each one is very different”

- **Non-payment for services is eroding relationships**. Many voluntary organisations felt they were being ‘used’ to help CRCs meet their targets, often accepting referrals without the prospect of any payment for their services.

- **Are there warning signals for future relationships?** Some



organisations talked of a possible challenge to future relationships, citing examples of possible re-negotiations of contracts or potential decisions to scale back or cut contracted services.

“I have an excellent relationship with the Chief Officer of the CRC; was very good, but declining fast as they look for cuts/ savings and bring activities in house”.

Relationships with CRC owners

For the first time we asked voluntary organisations to tell us about their relationship with CRC owners. These are the organisations that in many cases run multiple CRCs, although some have only one area. These results were less positive than was the case for the CRCs. When compared to their responses for the CRCs, voluntary organisations were less likely to say that they had a good or very good relationship with CRC owners (34%), more likely to say they had a poor or very poor relationship with them (26%), but a similar amount of respondents were neutral about their relationship (39%).

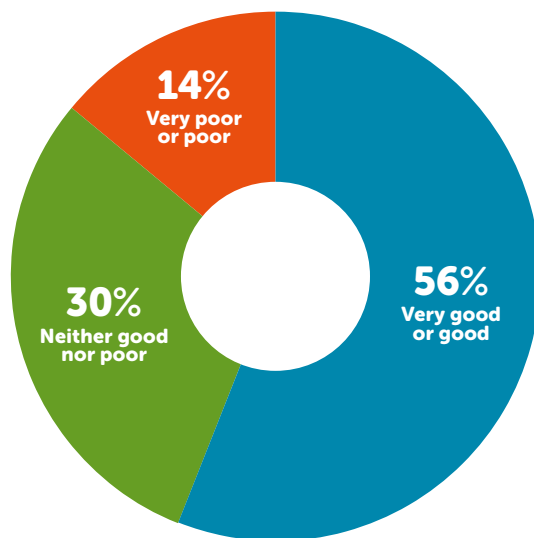
The reasons respondents gave for their answers can be broadly categorised as follows:

- **Voluntary organisations have much less contact with CRC owners**, which may contribute to their sense that relationships are less positive. It was noted that in some areas there appeared to be a “blurred boundary” between the CRC and the owners, which sometimes made it difficult for voluntary organisations to know who to engage with.
- **Voluntary organisations were more critical of relationships with CRC owners.** Although some excellent relationships were reported, more frequently respondents were critical. Many reported that CRC owners had not fulfilled promises made at the early stages of TR, and the opportunities or “promises” of work had not materialised. This was compounded by reports of poor communication, intensive contract monitoring and what was seen as being overly focussed on meeting volume targets rather than outcomes.

Relationships with the National Probation Service (NPS)

Over half of the respondents (56%) said that they had a good or very good relationship with the NPS. Only 14% thought it was poor or very poor and just under a third thought it was neither good nor poor. These results are similar to feedback we received about relationships with CRCs.

Graph 10 / How would you describe your organisation’s relationship with the National Probation Service? n=116



The reasons respondents gave for their answers can be broadly categorised as follows:

- **Relationships with operational staff are positive.** Voluntary organisations reported good access to, and some very positive relationships with operational staff.
- **Relationships with senior staff are less positive.** Respondents were clear that their relationship with the senior NPS staff was problematic, with poor communication and a lack of strategic engagement cited by a number of organisations as contributing to poorer relationships.

“Operationally it is fine, we have an existing relationship with NPS staff and local managers. Strategically (county level) the director is too busy to engage in any meaningful way, despite a previous good relationship. Higher level strategic relationships do not exist.”

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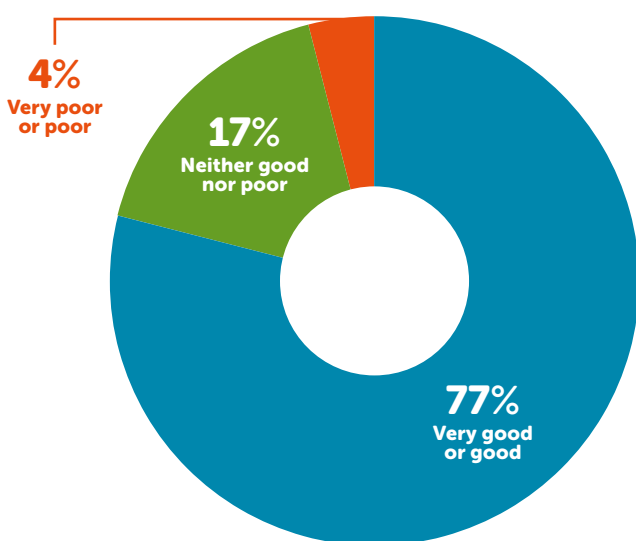
- The 'rate card' is damaging relationships.**
 The 'rate card' refers to a system whereby the NPS can only commission voluntary sector services if they are on the CRCs approved list of services (often contracted services / supply chain providers). Voluntary organisations felt the rate card created an artificial boundary between themselves and the NPS, often causing confusion between providers, complicated referral procedures and issues with payment for services.

"... our service to the NPS are commissioned through the CRC (rate card) at a price not determined by us. This exposes us to financial risk, we are not involved in any decisions about quality or capacity, this is hugely frustrating. Nobody seems to know whether NPS can commission services directly with us. I have no idea what the budgets are for purchasing interventions."

Relationships with the prisons you work with

In our last survey we found that relationships with prisons tended to be better than with probation providers. This continues to be the case, with the vast majority (79%) describing their relationships as good or very good, only 4% describing them as poor.

Graph 11 / How would you describe your organisation's relationship with the prisons you work with? *n*=116



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The reasons respondents gave for their answers can be broadly categorised as follows:

- Relationships have been disrupted less,** with many organisations being able to maintain relationships with prison staff at operational and strategic levels.

"Our organisation is held in a high level of regard in the prisons where we work – perhaps as a result of the long history of partnership working with them."
- Relationships change from prison to prison.** Whilst relationships overall are more positive than with CRCs or the NPS, voluntary organisations often worked across multiple prisons and described their relationships as variable. This was thought to be compounded by frequent policy changes and the overall structure of the prisons estate.

"The landscape is continually changing with the on-going reforms. It's difficult to pitch a service to prison commissioners when they don't know what their budgets are yet, how their populations will change in the coming year, which potential clustering prisons will remain in their region, all with reducing budgets and increasing accountability. It's a little chaotic at the moment for all."

- Prisons are increasingly hard places to work.** Many organisations gave examples of difficulties in establishments, such as a high turnover of staff, pressures on their budgets, poor conditions, disruptions and violence caused by what was often termed a 'chaotic' environment.

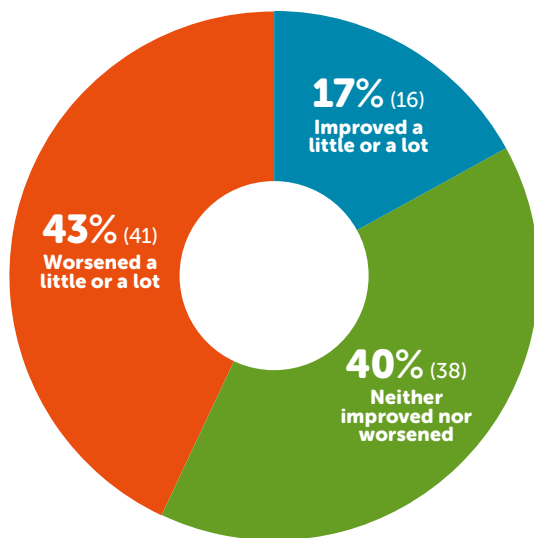
Partnerships with the wider statutory sector

We asked how voluntary organisations felt TR had impacted on local partnerships with other statutory bodies, this includes a range of organisations such as local authorities, police and crime commissioners, health services, or institutions with devolved responsibilities as part of Welsh government. Worryingly 43% felt that partnerships had worsened either a little or a lot.



A further 40% were neutral, saying that TR had neither improved nor worsened partnerships, but only 17% thought that it had a positive impact. This is similar to our previous survey, which suggests that partnerships with a range of statutory partners remain difficult since the introduction of TR.

Graph 12 / How has Transforming Rehabilitation impacted on local partnerships in your area with the wider statutory sector? n=95



The reasons respondents gave for their answers can be broadly categorised as follows:

- **Many respondents note little change.** In some instances this is positive, with relationships maintained. In other examples voluntary organisations were frustrated by a lack of greater partnership working between probation and other statutory services.
- **A 'toxic environment' of competition is damaging relationships.** Respondents report that increased competition was working against information sharing and good partnership work – described as a toxic environment. Some thought that partnerships had become more 'supply chain orientated', making partnerships a closed shop between commissioners and commissioned services – leading to a sense of insiders and outsiders. Others reported that cuts across public services had led to a general reduction in partnership, not necessarily because of the TR reforms.

“Everyone is competing, instead of co-operating, and it seems as if ‘commercial interest’ is paramount, not the interests of ex-offenders.”

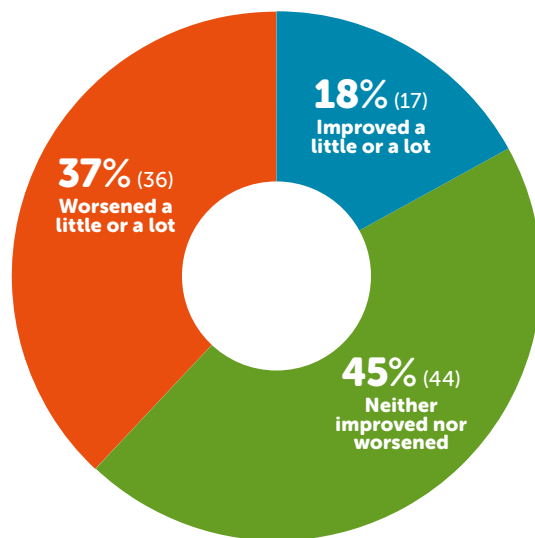
- **CRCs and NPS are less engaged locally.** Although this was not always the case, some organisations reported that both CRCs and the NPS appeared to have limited capacity to engage in local partnerships and forums because they were felt to be 'over-stretched'. In some areas this was causing relationships to fragment, and causing some agencies to work alone or work in silos.

“There is limited representation from either CRCs or NPS multi-agency fora – perhaps illustrating demoralisation on the part of staff, but also an absolute lack of time/ resources to invest.”

Partnerships with other voluntary organisations

The quality of the partnership work between voluntary organisations in the context of TR remains unchanged for 45% of respondents. However, 37% say TR has worsened local partnerships with the wider voluntary sector, whilst only 18% say they have improved. This is similar to the findings from our last trackTR survey.

Graph 13 / How has Transforming Rehabilitation impacted on local partnerships in your area with the wider voluntary sector? n=97



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The reasons respondents gave for their answers can be broadly categorised as follows:

- **Increased competition has hampered partnerships.** Voluntary organisations are generally pessimistic about the future of partnerships. Most frequently they blame increased competition for fewer resources.

“It introduced an element of competition into our sector where previously there had been a culture of cooperation.”

- **Organisations have sought partnerships outside of the Criminal Justice System.** Some respondents reported that TR had pushed them to look for new partners outside of traditional criminal justice circles, and to seek new partnership elsewhere.

2.4 / Working with Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs)

This section summarises the experiences of voluntary sector organisations that are directly funded by CRCs.

44 respondents indicated that they are directly funded by CRCs, which makes up 40% of all the organisations we heard from. This is higher than the 25% that were reported to be funded by CRCs in our previous trackTR report.

The shape and size of organisations funded by CRCs

Table 6 / How would you describe your organisation’s role? (n=44)

Type of organisation	
	% (n)
Tier 2 (provider of large-scale services)	52 (23)
Tier 3 (provider of small-scale or specialist services)	30 (13)
Other	14 (6)
Not specified	4 (2)

Most of the organisations that are funded by CRCs are delivering larger scale services (52%), frequently referred to as ‘tier 2’ services; Tier 2 services include through the gate provision. The rest are largely delivering smaller scale and specialist services, described as ‘tier 3’.

We can see from Graph 14 (p30) that over 60% are expecting to work with more than 250 service users per year, and a third of those are working with more than 1,000. Almost a quarter (24%) are working with 50 or fewer clients. This tells us that the majority of voluntary organisations funded by CRCs are delivering services on a large scale. This is in contrast to our last survey where half of all respondents that were funded by CRCs expected to support less than 250 service users over the next year.



Graph 14 / In the next 12 months, approximately how many service users are you expecting to support as a result of this funding? (n=43)

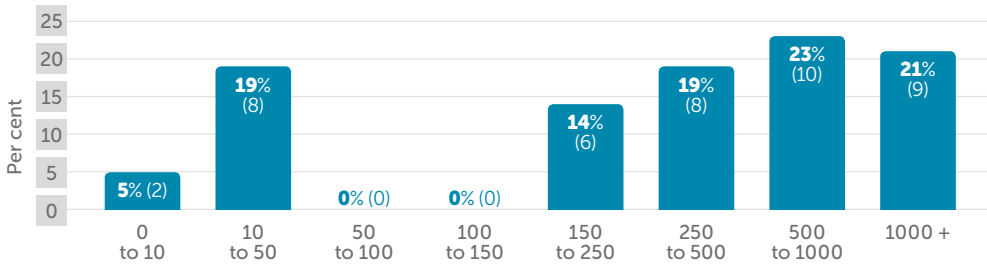


Table 7 / The income of respondents as a whole compared to the CRC funded respondents

Income	Respondents as a whole	CRC-funded respondents
	% (n)	% (n)
Under £100,000	21 (27)	5 (2)
£100,000 - £250,000	15 (20)	14 (6)
£250,000 - £500,000	14 (18)	9 (4)
£500,000 - £1m	11 (14)	14 (6)
£1m - £5m	22 (29)	27 (12)
£5m - £10m	7 (9)	9 (4)
Over £10m	11 (15)	22 (10)
	n=132	n=44

Table 7, above, compares the income of respondents funded by CRCs to all the respondents in this survey. Respondents that are in CRC supply chains were twice as likely to have an annual income of over £10,000,000, and they were almost four times less likely have an income of under £100,000. This shows us that organisations in CRC supply chains have disproportionately larger incomes than those who are not funded by CRCs.

Clinks’ 2017 state of the sector report found that 76% of organisations that work specifically in a criminal justice setting had an income of less than £1,000,000, and the remaining quarter have an income of more than £1,000,000. Yet the trackTR survey found that of the voluntary organisations funded by CRCs, 58% had an income of over £1 million.

This data strongly suggests that only a small percentage of the voluntary sector have been successful in working with CRCs on a

funded basis. Furthermore it also suggests that the majority of smaller voluntary organisations have been far less successful than their larger counterparts.

The services being delivered for CRCs by the voluntary sector

The voluntary sector reported delivering a range of services, a list of which is provided below. The most frequently mentioned services were ‘Through The Gate’ resettlement (people being released from prison), mentoring support, or housing (either provision of accommodation or housing advice).

- Rehabilitation Activity Requirements (RARs)
- Prison resettlement (Through the Gate services)
- Rehabilitation courses in prison
- Community Payback / Unpaid Work placements
- Accommodation support and housing advice
- Mentoring services

- Employment, training and education support
- Mental health support
- Finance and debt support
- Women-only support services
- Family support services
- Domestic abuse services
- Domestic violence/abuse services.

These services are being delivered to a wide-range of people facing different needs. A mix of clients were reported by voluntary organisations, including men and women, young adults, people with protected characteristics, people with mental health needs, people who are homeless, and people with finance or debt issues.

In our last survey we found that CRCs were funding pre-existing services (ones that were delivered by Probation Trusts) rather than new innovations. The results from this survey suggest that this is still the case. Just over 60% are delivering pre-existing services and just under 40% are delivering new services. This suggests that innovation or the development of new services are not the norm, despite this being one of the original intentions behind the Transforming Rehabilitation reforms.

Table 8 / Is this a new or an existing service? (n=43)

New or existing service		% (n)
It's a new service	39	(17)
It's a service that existed prior to the TR reforms, but you are a new provider of it	5	(2)
It's an existing service that you previously provided before the TR reforms	56	(24)

The location of services

Due to the small sample of organisations working across England and Wales it has not been possible to make judgements on the differences between CRC areas. We did ask organisations to identify which CRC, or CRCs, they worked with. Many organisations worked across a number of CRCs, seven organisations worked in five or more CRC areas, which reflects the larger size of organisations and the number of people they are supporting.

We heard from organisations funded by each of the 21 CRCs across England and Wales. The number of funded organisations working in each area ranged from two to nine. The areas with the highest reported number of funded voluntary sector organisations were West Yorkshire, Cheshire and Greater Manchester, Humberside, Lincolnshire and North Yorkshire (run by Purple Futures/Interserve), and Staffordshire and West Midlands (run by the Reducing Re-offending Partnership/Ingeus).

Table 9 / Which Community Rehabilitation Company area(s) are you working in? (tick all that apply)

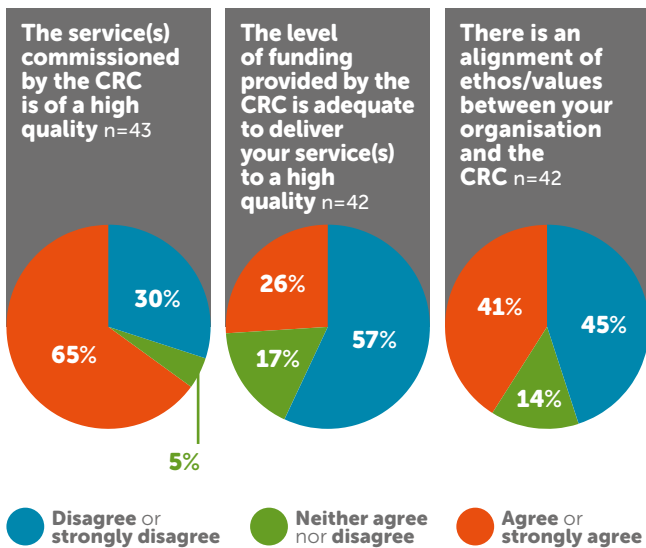
CRC area	Frequency
West Yorkshire	9
Staffordshire and West Midlands	9
Cheshire and Greater Manchester	8
Humberside, Lincolnshire and North Yorkshire	7
Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire	6
Northamptonshire, Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire	6
London	6
Northumbria	5
South Yorkshire	5
Hampshire	5
Merseyside	4
West Mercia and Warwickshire	3
Norfolk and Suffolk	3
Essex	3
Cumbria and Lancashire	2
Durham and Cleveland	2
Wales	2
Gloucestershire, Avon, Somerset and Wiltshire	2
Dorset, Devon and Cornwall	2
Thames Valley	2
Kent Surrey and Sussex	2



The quality of services being delivered

Throughout the survey respondents raised concerns about their ability to deliver quality services with the resources available to them.

Graph 15 / Based on your experience, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



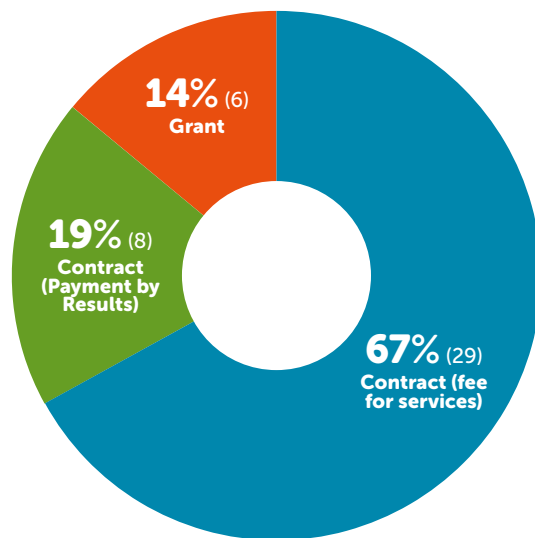
Around two-thirds (65%) believe that the services commissioned by the CRC are of a high quality, and only 3 in 10 disagree. This is a positive reflection of the majority of the services that are being commissioned. However, respondents do not believe that the level of funding is adequate to deliver a high quality service – 57% indicate this and only a quarter believe that it is adequate. In comparison to our last survey the voluntary sector has become more pessimistic about the level of funding provided by CRCs.

In our last survey we asked to what extent voluntary organisations thought their ethos and values were in alignment with the CRC. Last time 64% of organisations believed there was an alignment of ethos and values between them and the CRC, this has now declined to 41%. 45% now disagree with this statement, compared with only 14% last time. This is a worrying shift in the relationship and dynamic between organisations that need to have a good relationship if they are going to be able to deliver quality services.

The funding for service delivery

The reported value of funding for services varied considerably. Some reported small amounts such as £12,000 per year or month-by-month contracts of £6,000. In contrast others had seven year contracts worth £16,000,000 or annual incomes of £2,500,000. Just under a third of all agreements are for 12 months or less, 75% were for three years or less.

Graph 16 / How is the service funded? (n=43)



The vast majority of services are paid under contract (86%), but only 19% are subject to payment by results. Six organisations, or 14%, told us that their funding is in the form of a grant. Given that grant funding is widely regarded as more suitable for smaller voluntary organisations, the lack of grant funding may be a reason why small organisations are less likely to be funded by CRCs.

The proportion of CRC-funded respondents that had signed an Industry Standard Partnership Agreement (ISPA) has risen dramatically since the last survey: from 46% to 77%. A further 16% are in negotiation. Only three organisations responded that they did not know what the ISPA is. It is worth noting that most responses are critical of the ISPA; only one quarter of CRC-funded respondents believe that 'the Industry Standard Partnership Agreement has protected' their organisation, while two-fifths disagree. The main criticisms are that it is onerous, over-bureaucratic and disproportionate (for small organisations and contracts), time consuming to negotiate and largely a costly distraction.

Organisations commented that their funding agreements are often quite complex, including contracts with claw-back elements, those which are moving from 'fee for service' to 'payment by results', and some with elements of both. Thirteen respondents were able to identify a payment by results element in their contracts, as follows:

- Three cases of 10% (or less) of the contract value being at risk through payment by results
- Six cases of 15-30% at risk
- Four cases where 100% of the contract is at risk if specified results are not produced.

Table 10 / Has the level of funding for your service changed over the last 12 months? (n=44)

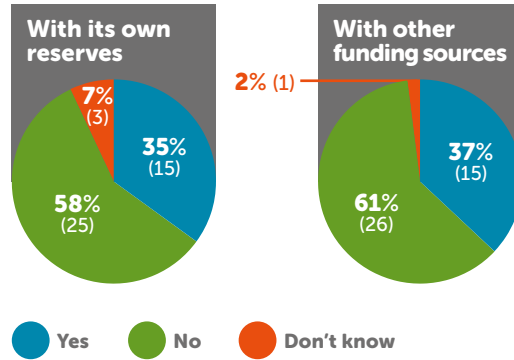
Level of funding		% (n)
Increased a bit or a lot	17	(8)
Stayed the same	53	(23)
Decreased a bit or a lot	30	(13)

Just over half (53%) of voluntary organisations in receipt of CRC funding told us that that their funding had stayed the same. Whilst 17% said it had increased, 30% said they had experienced a decrease in funding. The reasons given for these fluctuations do vary but can be broadly categorised. Those with an increase in funding had generally expanded their services into new areas, increasing the cost of their work. Those with reduced funding mentioned two things, firstly cuts to contracts (in one case by 70%), and secondly because of financial penalties incurred for not meeting volume targets primarily because the organisations were not receiving sufficient referrals from CRCs to meet the set targets.

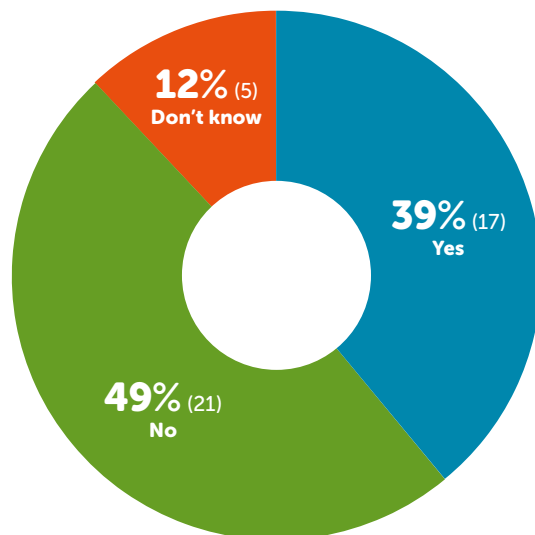
A significant number of organisations still say that they have had to subsidise their CRC-funded service with other sources of funding; 35% have had to subsidise services with their own charitable reserves and 37% have had to use funding from other sources. Approximately three fifths of respondents said they did not have to subsidise their services. These figures raise questions about the sustainability of CRC-funded services and the sustainability of the organisations running them.

Under represented, under pressure, under resourced: the voluntary sector in Transforming Rehabilitation

Graph 17 / Has your organisation had to subsidise service delivery with its own reserves or with other funding sources? n=43



Graph 18 / Do you consider the financial terms you have agreed with the CRC to be sustainable? (n=43)



Nearly one half do not think the financial terms they have agreed with CRCs are sustainable, and 39% think they are sustainable. In comparison to previous surveys voluntary organisations appear to have become more certain about the sustainability of their financial agreements with CRCs. The proportion indicating that they 'don't know' has fallen to just over 1 in 10 – it was 29% in the previous survey.

Even though there is clarity about how the CRC will pay for the work that is delivered (73% of respondents agree with this statement), many were concerned that the high expectations put upon them by CRCs,



within a small funding envelop was unrealistic. Many were concerned this would affect the viability, quality, and ultimately outcomes of their service.

“We are being asked to deliver more hours with skeleton staffing. We are now covering four counties with two staff working four days per week, trying to cover seven community locations and four prisons. This is simply not possible. We have proposed a new service delivery model to deliver group work in the community to try and make it sustainable ... I think we need to look to other funding sources and position TR within our overall offer to offenders and their families.”

Voluntary organisations complained that the number of people they were expected to support varied quickly from too few to too many, making the resourcing of services almost impossible (for example, how many staff to employ or allocate to a service).

“The ‘goal posts’ are constantly changing, we are required to provide above and beyond our contractual requirements on many different levels.”

Table 11 / Which of the following statements would you most agree with? (n=43)

Level of risk to CRC funding agreement	
	% (n)
Our funding agreement with the CRC is viable for the whole contract period	56 (24)
Our funding agreement with the CRC is at risk of failure before the end of the contract period	28 (12)
Our funding agreement with the CRC is at risk of failure within the next 6 months	5 (2)
Don't know	12 (5)

Over half of all organisations think they will be able to deliver their contract for the whole of the funding period (which is on average between 1-3 years). But one third thought that it would be at risk of failure before the end of the contract period (five organisations said that could happen within the next six months); this has increased from 17% in the last survey.

“Our Trustees constantly consider ... ‘why are we continuing to be involved?’ To date the answer has been, ‘our charity was established to reduce offending and hopefully the current TR arrangements will change.’”

Respondents raised concerns about the quality of what they were funded to do, cuts to contracts, dependence on often erratic levels of referrals, the possibility that the terms of their agreements could change, and that staff attrition would all increase the likelihood that their funding agreement might end.

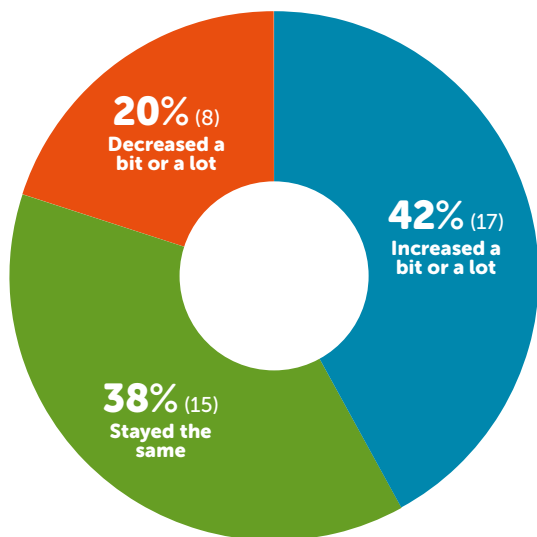
These results may be compounded by the fact that just under one third of respondents believe there is transparency of contract renewal or re-tendering for the services delivered (compared with a very low 5% in phase 2). The proportions disagreeing with this statement have fallen (from 47% to 24%). In addition there is mixed opinion as to whether contractual risk is being appropriately managed by the CRC. Although 40% still believe that contractual risk is being appropriately managed (down from 50% in the last survey), just over a third disagree (up from 14% last time).

Referrals

The issue of referrals from CRCs is raised frequently in the open text responses. Respondents often described the number of referrals they would receive as unpredictable. This was particularly hard to manage for organisations that were paid per referral. However, 63% of respondents told us that they were ‘clear about the volume of service users you’re expected to support’, meaning that a sizable number of organisations got the referrals they planned for. On the other hand just over a quarter (27%) disagreed with the statement. Only 7% of respondents reported that they did not receive any referrals.



Graph 19 / In the last 12 months has the number of referrals you have received from CRCs gone up or down? (n=40)

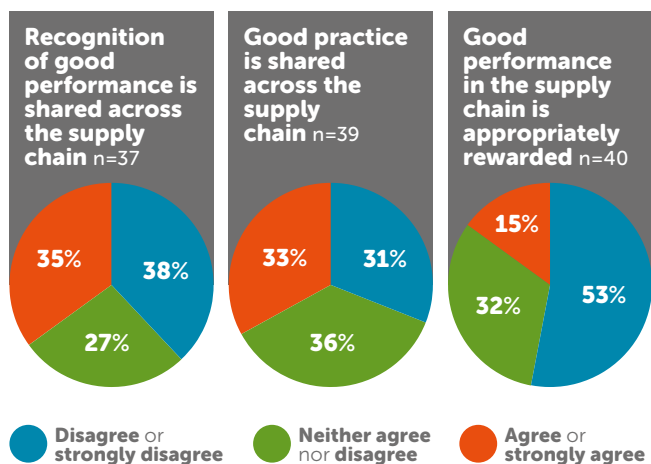


This fluctuation in last year’s referrals can be seen from graph 19. This shows that two fifths (42%) have seen an increase in referrals and one fifth (20%) have seen a decrease, whilst the situation has stayed the same for under two fifths (38%) of all respondents.

Sharing good practice, reward and recognition

One central aim of trackTR is to promote better probation services. We asked voluntary organisations funded by CRCs to let us know whether they thought that good performance and practice was shared and/or rewarded.

Graph 20 / Based on your experience, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



Just over one third (35%) of respondents agree or strongly agree that recognition of good performance is shared across the supply chain. However a similar amount of organisations (38%) either disagree or strongly disagree that this is the case. Based on these results there is likely to be significant local variation in the way good performance is recognised. A similar number of organisations agree or disagree that examples of good practice are shared between organisations working in the same area.

Over half of respondents (53%) do not believe that good performance in the supply chain is appropriately rewarded. This is a firmer negative view compared with our last survey, where the figure was 35%. Only 15% think there are appropriate rewards for good performance.



2.5 / Working with the National Probation Service (NPS)

The trackTR survey in 2016 only received one response from an organisation that was directly funded by the NPS, our survey in 2017 only received two responses. Therefore no analysis has been possible for questions related to its funding of voluntary sector organisations. However, we know that voluntary sector organisations do work with and support high risk offenders that the NPS manage; the survey also highlighted that many organisations still have a good working relationship with NPS staff.

We found that 58% of voluntary sector services which are not funded by either probation services regularly receive referrals from the NPS (see graph 20, p35). Sometimes these referrals are made regularly and in large quantities. In addition we know that relationships between the NPS and the voluntary sector are often good, 56% reporting that they are good or very good.

There are pre-existing services which voluntary organisations continue to deliver, such as a number of 'Approved Premises' for the NPS, providing specialist accommodation for people being released from prison. These services are often held in high regard and deliver a valuable service.

NPS engagement with the voluntary sector

Voluntary organisations reported good relations but also said that their relationship was primarily with local NPS staff, and that they were rarely engaged at a strategic level. Voluntary organisations tended to report that despite good local relationships there appeared to be a lack of national strategy in how the NPS engaged with external stakeholders.

"The NPS has become very inward looking – focussed on internal changes and this has impacted on communication and liaison with other statutory organisations."

In our previous report we referred to the national improvement programme called E3. This stands for **effectiveness** in better

delivering on performance targets and securing the outcomes of reduced reoffending and public protection, **efficiency** in ensuring that every penny spent by the NPS makes the greatest impact, and **excellence** in the way that the NPS operate as an organisation and the outcomes they deliver.

"The current E3 agenda does not take account of the importance of relationships and continuity."

Some organisations commented that the E3 programme may have led the NPS to prioritise internal change to the detriment of external stakeholder engagement. This is potentially damaging the NPS's ability to work effectively with voluntary organisations.

The commissioning of services through the rate card

As with much of the probation system we recognise that there is limited funding to commission third party services. However, a majority of the comments we received about the NPS related to frustrations with the 'rate card' system. The rate card is a list of services produced by the CRC, which the NPS can purchase from. At the time of publication we understand that central policy requires the NPS to purchase services through the 'rate card'.

"The NPS having to purchase our services from the CRC causes confusion and problems, issues of payment get in the way."

Voluntary organisations told us that the 'rate card' system has had the following consequences:

- It restricts the range of services the NPS can purchase
- The services on the CRC rate card are not specifically designed to meet the needs of people assessed as high-risk of harm to the public
- Using CRCs as an intermediary through which services are commissioned may artificially inflate their price
- The NPS is restricted from developing a strategic relationship with their commissioned services
- The NPS is restricted from negotiating directly with their commissioned services.

The 'rate card' system continues to create an unhelpful barrier between the NPS and local or specialist providers. In this report we recommend that the system is abandoned in favour of a new system which allows the NPS to commission its own services.

“The NPS has not really engaged with the sector, conversations around rate card purchase of services are focused on discussions with the CRCs rather than with individual providers. We are getting referrals for support which are then pulled once they discover that there is a fee.”

The split in probation services

We asked voluntary organisations to tell us what they would change about the probation system. Many respondents replied stating that the splitting of the probation service into CRCs and the NPS, and allocating service users based on the risk of harm that they posed to the public had been a mistake.

“The fractured nature of probation mean that many beneficiaries don’t know if they are CRC or NPS.”

The split in services has made the probation system more complicated to navigate for organisations in the voluntary sector, and some report that it has had a negative impact on local partnership arrangements. As a result many organisations called for a wholesale re-design of the probation system, bringing it back under the control of one entity that can oversee the whole process from conviction through to the end of someone’s sentence.

2.6 / Working outside of supply chains

This section summarises the experiences of voluntary sector organisations that are supporting people under probation supervision, but are doing so without funding from either CRCs or the NPS. These are referred to as being 'outside of supply chains'.

The majority, 58% of all respondents indicated that they deliver services to people under probation supervision without financial support from probation services. Many of these services are being delivered alongside probation and with other partners, they are supporting a range of different service users with a range of different needs.

The shape and size of organisations outside of supply chains

Table 12 / Comparison of income between CRC-funded voluntary organisations and those outside supply chains

Income	CRC-funded respondents	Respondents outside supply chains
Under £100,000 (n=27)	7%	93%
£100,000 - £250,000 (n=19)	32%	68%
£250,000 - £500,000 (n=15)	27%	73%
£500,000 - £1m (n=14)	43%	57%
£1m - £5m (n=27)	44%	56%
£5m - £10m (n=9)	44%	56%
Over £10m (n=15)	67%	33%



As with previous surveys we have found that voluntary organisations working outside of supply chains are smaller in size, usually delivering smaller scale services. Approximately two thirds of all the organisations we surveyed that had an annual income of over £10,000,000 are in a CRC supply chain. In contrast 93% of all organisations with an income of under £100,000 are outside of supply chains. This suggests that the structure of TR does not support or enable the participation of smaller organisations.

Service users and referrals

Table 13 / In the next 12 months, approximately how many service users are you planning to support? (n=60)

Number of service users	
	% (n)
0 to 10	7 (4)
10 to 50	15 (9)
50 to 100	17 (10)
100 to 150	0 (0)
150 to 250	30 (18)
250 to 500	13 (8)
500 to 1,000	8 (5)
1,000+	10 (6)

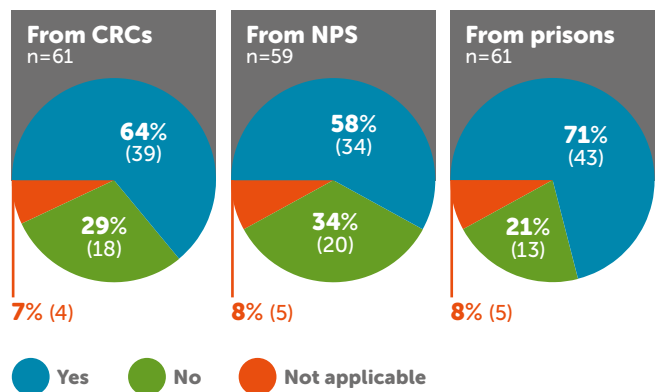
Organisations outside the supply chain are likely to be supporting fewer people, for example 68% expect to support less than 250 service users in the next 12 months and 32% expected to support more than 250. This is in contrast to CRC funded organisations, 37% of which expect to support less than 250 service users and 63% expect to work with 250 or more.

These services are being delivered to a range of people. Both men and women receive a range of support. Young adults, families, people who are homeless as well as people with mental health needs were all listed as service users.

This includes a number of organisations that supported people with protected

characteristics. Notably voluntary organisations that are outside of supply chains were more likely to be delivering more specialised services, such as supporting asylum-seekers and refugees, care leavers and LGBT people. It is possible that this is because neither CRCs nor the NPS have commissioned these sort of specialist services.

Graph 21 / Have you received referrals from the CRC, the NPS or from prisons?



Around two thirds (64%) of organisations outside the supply chain receive referrals from CRCs, 58% from the NPS, and just over 70% receive referrals from prisons. Compared to our last report these figures show that voluntary organisations are about 10% more likely to receive referrals from CRCs and the NPS when they are outside of supply chains, with roughly the same level of referrals from prisons.

The reasons respondents gave for an increase in referrals can be broadly categorised as follows:

- **Referrals from CRCs vary considerably.** The majority receive a low number of referrals, however some report receiving up to five referrals a week, that they are "inundated" and "over-subscribed", or even that they make up to 65% of their whole caseload. It is worth noting that many of these organisations are small, so a small amount of referrals may have a disproportionate impact on their capacity.

"Some CRCs are great and others are very poor. We provide over 2000+ placements for CRCs with no financial return."

Those organisations that do not receive referrals are usually trying to set up procedures to encourage more referrals to be made by CRCs. Some report referrals being blocked due to a desire by CRCs to 'bring services in-house'.

- Referrals from the NPS tend to be smaller in volume. Similar to CRCs, the majority receive a low level of referrals. There was a small number of organisations whose work is primarily NPS related, one agency said 98% of its clients were referred to them by the NPS and another received upwards of seven or eight referrals a week. There were some practical problems mentioned, such as setting up complex referral and data sharing mechanisms. One organisation had not received any referrals despite being one year into a two year contract with the NPS.
- Referrals from prisons are far higher but mostly prisoner-led, these are not sent to voluntary organisations by prison staff, but gathered because voluntary organisations have a presence in the prison and mechanisms for people to self-refer to services. The small number of organisations that did not receive referrals were actively trying to find a way to work with various prisons.

"Some will be referred via our volunteers in prison, some through family services, chaplaincy or health and others will be direct contact through word of mouth."

The services being delivered outside of supply chains

As with our previous findings, many of the services delivered by organisations outside of the supply chain were strikingly similar to those that CRCs are commissioning, with little to no difference between the two. The services that were frequently being delivered outside of supply chains are as follows:

- Prison resettlement (Through the Gate services)
- Community based resettlement support
- Support for high risk offenders (people assessed as being high risk of harm to the public)
- Mentoring services

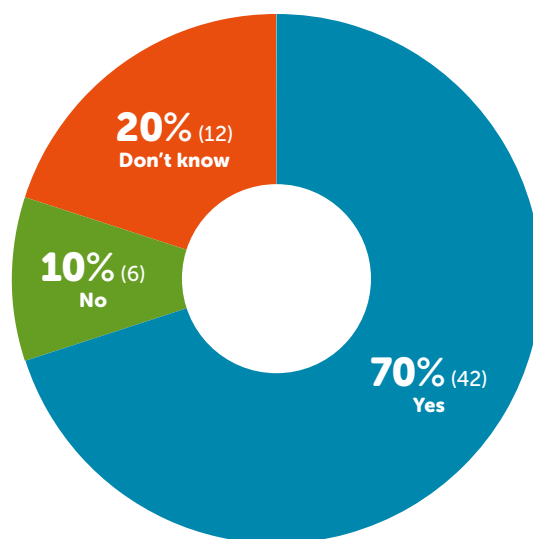
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- Accommodation support and housing advice
- Employment, training and education support
- Mental health support
- Family support services
- Women-only support services
- Support for people who are LGBT
- Support for people from BAME communities
- Support for older people
- Domestic violence/abuse services.

The funding for service delivery

In our previous survey, 77% thought that their service should be funded by either a CRC or the NPS. This time a similar proportion (70%) thought that their services should be funded through TR.

Graph 22 / Do you think your service(s) should be funded through Transforming Rehabilitation? (n=60)



The reasons respondents gave can be broadly categorised as follows:

- **Voluntary organisations deliver vital rehabilitation and resettlement services**
Organisations often noted the impact of their service on improved rehabilitation and resettlement outcomes, such as securing accommodation, re-connecting with families, or improved mental health.

These services believe that they are supporting CRCs and the NPS to meet their overall targets to reduce re-offending, but not receiving any recognition or payment for their contribution.

“A contribution should be made to assist clients coming out of prison. On many occasions they have no money or food and need help to find accommodation. It is not unusual to put them up in a hotel overnight before taking them to housing. Making phone calls to commence benefit claims, making and chasing up appointments with other agencies.”

- **Smaller organisations get over-looked and under-funded.** Organisations note that they are often overlooked because they are small and cannot deliver services at scale. Many also expressed serious concerns that TR had led to the withdrawal of their traditional funding-base, in anticipation that CRCs or the NPS would fund their work. This includes charitable trusts and foundation as well as other local government and other statutory agencies.

“What we do is pretty unique, but the fact that we are a small grassroots organisation seems to go against us in so many ways.”

- **Some reject funding to maintain independence.** A small percentage indicated that their services should not be paid for through TR. They were clear that this allowed them to retain their valued independence. Others said they chose not to engage, thus “avoiding the chaos of TR”, stating that they thought the system was flawed and underfunded. Some also said they did not want to be tied into strict targets, because the complex needs of their clients required them to take a more flexible approach.

“Our current services are open to all women or women with specific needs – e.g. domestic abuse and financial resilience – so should not be funded by TR. We would have tendered to provide these service to women under probation license if the funding available [from the CRC] had been realistic.”

Table 14 / Who funds this service? (n=64 / tick all that apply)

Funder	% (n)
Charitable trust and/or foundation (excluding Big Lottery Fund)	59 (38)
Big Lottery Fund	34 (22)
Public donations	34 (22)
Local authority	25 (16)
Police and Crime Commissioner	17 (11)
HM Prisons and Probation Service	13 (8)
Prisons	11 (7)
Other Government Departments	8 (5)
The Ministry of Justice	6 (4)
Clinical Commissioning Group	6 (4)

Clinks’ 2017 state of the sector report showed that voluntary organisations working in criminal justice settings receive a significant proportion of their funding through grants. The trackTR research has consistently shown that organisations outside of supply chains are frequently funded by charitable trusts and foundations to undertake their resettlement and rehabilitation work – 69% had a combination of funding from charitable trusts and the Big Lottery Fund.

Despite the fact that public donations make up a very small percentage of the overall income for the voluntary sector working in criminal justice settings, 34% said they did receive funding from the public (a rise from 26% in our last survey). Suggesting that over time this source has become more important. We also heard from a number of organisations that are generating more funding through ‘earned income’.

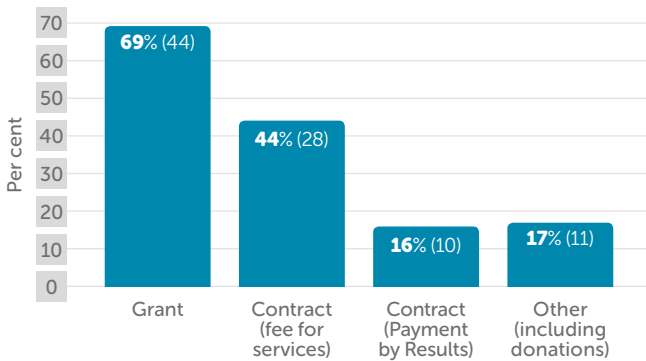
Only one quarter of all respondents are funded by Local Authorities, compared with 42% in the last trackTR survey. Although these two figures are not directly comparable, this might be evidence of a reduction in funds from this source for work with people on probation.

These organisations infrequently received funding from central government such as the Ministry of

Justice (6%) or other government departments (8%). They are slightly more likely to receive funding from HM Prison and Probation Service (13%) and Police and Crime Commissioners (17%). However, all these figures have risen since our last survey.

Graph 23 / How is the service funded?

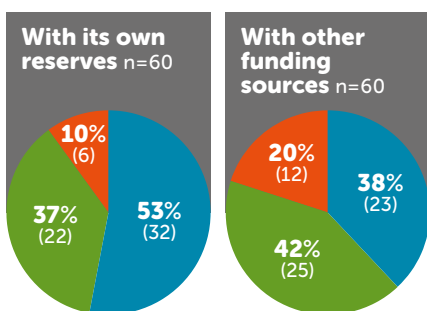
(n=64 / tick all that apply)



Just over two thirds of services are funded by grants, this is in contrast to only 14% of CRC-funded services. Contractual funding is still important for these organisations, with 60% in receipt of a contract. Nine respondents were able to identify a performance percentage element in their contracts, as follows: 25%, 40%, 45%, 50% (two cases) and 75%.

- Three cases of 10% (or less) of contract value being at risk through payment by results
- One case of 25%
- Three cases of 40-50%
- One case of 75%.

Graph 24 / Has your organisation had to subsidise service delivery with its own reserves or with other funding sources?



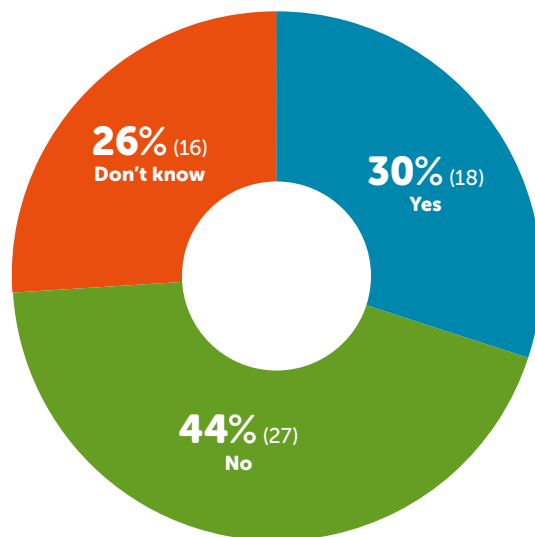
● Yes ● No ● Don't know

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The sustainability of voluntary sector services in probation settings remains questionable. Over half of respondents have had to subsidise delivery with their own charitable reserves, a further 38% have subsidised delivery with other funding sources (down from just over 50% in our last survey).

This situation compares strikingly with that for CRC-funded services, where the figures are reversed. One third of CRC-funded organisations have had to subsidise services with reserves or other funding sources, while over half have not had to. This makes these service appear more sustainable. This finding is exactly the same as our previous trackTR report.

Graph 25 / Do you consider the funding of your service(s) to be sustainable? (n=61)



Voluntary organisations that are funded by CRCs are more likely to think their services are sustainable (40%), whereas only 30% of organisations outside of supply chains believe that to be the case. Interestingly a similar percentage, between 44%-49%, believe that their services are unsustainable, which is a change from previous surveys, showing a growing degree of pessimism about the future across voluntary organisations.

“Secure for 12 months only but only because Trustees have agreed to use reserves. We have secured to date £237k of £307k for our 2017/18 budget. We only have around £100k secured for 2018/19.



We now have limited cash reserves of £160k and £115k of this is the proceeds of a building we sold this year to support sustainability.”

A greater proportion of organisations outside of the supply chain are uncertain about the future, with just over a quarter saying that they don’t know whether or not their services are sustainable. The comments we received suggested that many are unclear about the future, citing rapid changes to policy, short-term funding, or budgetary pressures elsewhere in the system.

Organisations reiterated their concern that some traditional funders continued to withdraw from funding offender-related services because they felt the government or probation services should be investing more in voluntary sector services.

“It has become very hard to secure funding ... Funders believe that the TR model is providing the relevant support, however at the grassroots level this is not happening for the most chaotic individuals.”

2.7 / The sustainability of the voluntary sector

This research demonstrates some of the voluntary sector’s significant contribution to the delivery of resettlement and rehabilitation, showcasing its importance to the people it supports and the overall outcomes of probation services delivered by both CRCs and the NPS.

The TR reforms had the positive intention of involving more voluntary organisations in the probation system. Yet many remain on the fringes and a significant number report cuts to funding, concerns about their sustainability, and significant uncertainty about their future involvement.

Impact of Transforming Rehabilitation on overall funding

Table 15 / How has Transforming Rehabilitation affected the overall funding for your services? (n=109)

Change in overall funding	
	% (n)
Increased a lot	7 (8)
Small increase	17 (18)
Not at all	40 (43)
Small decrease	19 (21)
Decreased a lot	17 (19)

We find that 40% of all organisations have seen no impact in their funding yet, this is a decrease of 8% from our last survey. More organisations say that TR has led to an increase in overall funding – 24% of organisations compared with 13% last time. But a higher number of organisations say that funding has decreased – 36% of organisations compared with 27% last time. It is worth noting that more than twice as many organisations reported that their funding has ‘decreased a lot’ (n=19), compared with those that said it had ‘increased a lot’ (n=8).

“It has muddied the waters and I spend significantly more time on fundraising than previously.”

Under represented, under pressure, under resourced:
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The respondents to our survey report a mixed picture of gains and losses of varying sizes. Those that have seen an increase in funding tend to report that their contracts have been extended to cover a larger geographic area. Those that report a loss tend to cite cuts in contracts as well as a reduction in funding from other sources.

Impact of Transforming Rehabilitation on funding from elsewhere

Table 16 / Has Transforming Rehabilitation increased or decreased your ability to access funding for offender services from other sources? (n=98)

Change in overall funding		% (n)
Increased a lot	4	(4)
Small increase	7	(7)
Neither increased nor decreased	46	(47)
Small decrease	9	(9)
Decreased a lot	32	(33)

Many organisations perceived a growing reluctance amongst a range of funders to invest in their services. Only 11% say that TR has increased their ability to draw down other funding, and although 47% have seen no change, 33% said it had dramatically decreased their ability to access other sources of funding. The most common reason given was that funders, from a variety of sources are of the opinion that their services should be funded by government or probation services.

“It is clear that some local authorities view CRCs now as having full responsibility for offenders, including some services (such as supported accommodation) that they have historically been funded to deliver.”

One voluntary organisation described the situation as being ‘stuck in the middle’ of disagreements between different funders who can’t agree who should be responsible for funding what.

Under represented, under pressure, under resourced: the voluntary sector in Transforming Rehabilitation

This has left voluntary organisations wondering where future funding is likely to come from.

“Charitable trusts were reluctant to fund anything which was perceived as the responsibility of TR. This has changed over the last year due to people becoming aware of the gaps within provision and the limitations of the CRC.”

The sustainability of voluntary sector involvement

We asked voluntary organisations to reflect on their experiences and asked what, if anything, they would change about the current system. Their responses can be categorised as follows:

- Splitting the probation service between CRCs and the NPS has created worse outcomes.** Many voluntary organisations proposed that the probation system should be returned to one service. These comments largely referred to the confusion and fragmentation caused by splitting the probation service into two agencies. The split was thought to have made partnerships, referral mechanisms, and commissioning arrangement more complex and more resource intensive.
- The targets, outcomes and incentives are wrong.** Many organisations, especially those funded by CRCs were highly critical of a focus on volumes (the number of people seen and the hours spent with them) rather than outcomes (for example getting a house, a job, or addressing health needs). This focus, along with payment by results mechanisms was thought to be counter-productive and provided a perverse incentive to see lots of people quickly rather than actually tackle their needs.
- It is an under-resourced system, more investment is needed.** Many noted that there simply isn’t enough investment in probation services to make it a success. Organisations pointed to inadequate funding for commissioned services, too few probation and voluntary sector staff, caseloads that are too high to manage safely, and a general lack of quality rehabilitation services on offer.



“Big regional bidding contracts drive a coach and horses through the localism agenda that the original strategy espoused; The objectives of TR in terms of increasing supervision after custody and support for resettlement were laudable, but we have yet to meet anyone who believed they would be achieved at the same time as cutting costs. The project has completely demoralised a group of people who were committed to rehabilitation and put in place a system dominated by box-ticking. If I could, I would go back to what we had before, but that is probably not practicable. There is, however, an urgent need for a rehabilitation regime which is designed by people who understand the process of reforming offenders rather than budget management.”

- **There needs to be more engagement of smaller organisations.** Smaller, local and specialist organisations often felt squeezed out or ignored by probation services. Although they realise that funding may be hard to come by, they also want to develop relationships but do not feel that there are adequate opportunities to do that. In many instances voluntary organisations just needed someone to be able to engage with.
- **Any future reforms need careful consideration.** Organisations noted that the system was introduced too quickly, and although some felt it still needed time to stabilise, others were of the opinion that the design suffered from fundamental problems. This included aforementioned issues about structure and targets, but also comments that the IT infrastructure did not work, poor or erratic information sharing protocols, confusing commissioning processes, and that local partnerships between a number of statutory and voluntary sector services had been seriously harmed.

3 / Case studies

CASE STU DIES

As part of our research we conducted six in depth interviews with diverse voluntary organisations working in the probation landscape. The following case study organisations were interviewed.

Circles UK is the national organisation which leads and oversees local Circles of Support and Accountability providers across England and Wales. Circles is an intervention programme for sex offenders, mostly after their release from prison. Local Circles deliver services to NPS clients. **Page 47**

Nacro is a longstanding social justice charity that supports vulnerable people in society. Their work is divided into four service areas: justice, health, housing, and education. Nacro are contracted to deliver work for multiple CRCs, but they also deliver other non-contracted services such as housing. **Page 49**

Switchback is a mentoring scheme aimed at young men between the ages of 18-30 that have been in the criminal justice system. They aim to build resilience in a range of aspects of their 'trainees' lives, with a particular focus on supporting them into employment. Switchback work with CRCs but are not funded by them. **Page 50**

User Voice exists to improve the criminal justice system and enhance rehabilitation by channelling the voice of service users. User Voice have contracts with multiple CRCs to deliver service user 'councils'. **Page 52**

WomenMATTA is a women's centre in Manchester that provides intensive and holistic support to women affected by the criminal justice system and is part of the national charity Women in Prison (WIP). WomenMATTA are one of a larger partnership that deliver services to women in Greater Manchester which is partly funded through probation services. **Page 54**

YSS provide community based support services for people who are vulnerable, have complex needs and face difficult life challenges. They work in a holistic way, with the individual at the centre, helping them to navigate challenges and get the services they need. YSS are contracted by Warwickshire and West Mercia CRC, and they are funded to work with NPS clients. **Page 56**

3.1 / Circles UK

Interview with Riana Taylor, CEO

A brief description of Circles UK

Circles UK is the national organisation which leads and oversees local Circles of Support and Accountability Providers across England and Wales. Circles is an intervention programme for sex offenders, mostly after their release from prison. A Circle is made up of four to six fully trained volunteers who meet regularly with the offender over 12-18 months, helping to address their risk to the public, and providing them with support in a range of areas. Research has shown that this helps reduce their reoffending and prevent further victims.

Circles UK supports the development of new Circles Providers, helps them meet the criteria for Circles UK membership and monitors their quality against standards. Circles work closely with Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), the National Probation Service (NPS), the police, Police and Crime Commissioners, prisons, health services and others. In addition to this, Circles UK has also secured Big Lottery funding to roll out 188 new Circles. The majority of Circles are commissioned by the NPS, as Circles are mostly provided to high risk sex offenders.

Early experiences of Transforming Rehabilitation

Circles UK feel that TR was introduced too quickly without enough testing, they described the first 18 months as “very chaotic and disorganised.” The creation of two new organisations (the NPS and CRCs), was felt to have caused significant problems, especially because it created a fractured system and in effect resulted in two separate organisations which had to “be designed from scratch” with little time.

Current experiences of Transforming Rehabilitation

As time progressed a more significant problem arose, the overall scarcity of funding affecting both the NPS and CRCs. This had a knock on effect for some local Circles Providers. Besides an actual reduction in funding, there was confusion about how

services could be funded; the NPS were required to buy from a CRC rate card. It became increasingly unclear as to whether the NPS could commission services outside of those listed by the CRCs’ rate card. As a result, Circles provision stalled in some areas because funding was not made available or there was a lack of clarity on how funding should be accessed by the NPS to pay for services outside the rate card. As Circles are for high risk offenders, payment for them sits outside the CRCs’ rate card.

Circles UK also felt that the new through the gate (TTG) service – resettlement from prison – had been rushed through and poorly planned. Although it was positive that it brought thousands more offenders (who had never received any service before) into the system, the fact that this was introduced with no additional resources and to unrealistic time scales, put even more strain on already over-stretched staff and resources. TTG service specifications were also thought to be very restricted and limited, primarily because they lacked sufficient funding.

However, Circles UK felt that the probation system had started to stabilise in 2017, particularly for the NPS who had embedded new systems and some of the technical issues around accessing funding from their shared services seems to have been resolved. Even so, Circles UK still reported that the overall probation system appeared to be very fragmented. They described a mixed picture, experiences of CRCs differed (some working quite well but others struggling).

Circles UK did not think that TR has benefited the voluntary sector.

“It [TR] didn’t really benefit the voluntary sector. The idea was that CRCs would commission services from the voluntary sector, but actually it’s been very minor because there was no money.”

They did express some sympathy for CRCs, because the financial model proved to be flawed, CRCs were expected to come to grips with considerable complexity in a short space of time, and some of the new CRC owners had limited experience of the criminal

justice system. They thought that the impact of these difficulties were being felt by many voluntary sector providers and service users.

Thoughts about the future of transforming rehabilitation

Circles UK reported concerns about the future resourcing of probation services, expressing that it had been under-funded to date. Both the NPS and CRCs were thought to be overstretched as a result of funding restrictions, with staff generally covering very large areas, with too many responsibilities.

“TR resulted in both the CRCs and the NPS being under-resourced. I mean Probation Trusts were never swimming in money... it was never very well resourced but I’d say looking back over it now they actually had reasonable resourcing.”

The split in probation services between the NPS and CRCs was thought to have caused unhelpful fragmentation in the system, including the duplication of systems and processes. For a charity like Circles UK, splitting the probation services along the lines of someone’s risk of harm to the public was thought to be misguided.

“I always found the split between high risk and medium/low risk cases problematic, because it’s an artificial split. We are dealing with complex individuals - what is low risk today could be high risk tomorrow. I also thought that it would just massively fracture the system.”

Circles UK’s funding was not directly affected by TR, there have been cuts to its grant from central government, but this was not thought to be a direct result of TR. However, TR diluted funding for both the NPS and the CRCs, which had a knock on effect on the voluntary sector. Most local Circles Providers supplement NPS funding which they mostly obtain from applications to charitable Trusts and Foundations. This is not ideal as many if not most charitable funders do not want to fund work which they consider to be a government or statutory responsibility.

“Both Circles UK and local Circles had funding applications turned down for exactly that reason. Some funders were saying to us this is the Government’s responsibility because you work with high-risk sex offenders and we cannot pick up the responsibility for that. I know that this applies to other voluntary sector organisations too. But that has left the voluntary sector with a huge financial risk.”

3.2 / Nacro

*Interview with Joanne Drew,
Director of Housing and Wellbeing*

A brief description of Nacro

The aim of Nacro is to promote social justice for the most vulnerable within society. Their work is divided into four services: justice, health, housing, and education. Nacro's justice services include resettlement interventions (accommodation, education, training and employment, finance benefit and debt); delivery of in custody and through the gate (TTG) mentoring schemes, community group work programmes that assist with reintegration and resettlement post-release from prison.

Nacro is a strategic partner to Sodexo in the TR programme, and they are a service delivery partner within the supply chain of four Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs): for Sodexo in Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire and Herefordshire (BeNCH), Essex and South Yorkshire; and for Seetec in Kent.

Nacro have funding from other sources (not probation) to support people who are being supervised by CRCs or the National Probation Service (NPS) in London, Durham Tees Valley, Northumbria, Staffordshire and West Midlands, Cheshire and Greater Manchester. For example, they run an enhanced through the gate (TTG) service for people with mental health concerns leaving HMP Belmarsh, HMP Thameside and HMP Isis; this work is funded by Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust.

Early experiences of Transforming Rehabilitation

In the initial stages of the TR reforms both Sodexo and Nacro were looking for potential partners to bid for the delivery of Community Rehabilitation Companies in a number of areas. Government had indicated that private organisations may benefit from partnering with voluntary organisations. As a national charity, Nacro felt they offered a strong brand, reputation, and a breadth of services and capabilities. They secured a strategic partnership with Sodexo and commitments to make Nacro a Tier 2 and/or Tier 3 provider of services.

Current experiences of Transforming Rehabilitation

Prior to the TR reforms Nacro worked in around a quarter of all prisons across England and Wales (30 establishments). Following the reforms Nacro delivers services in 15 prisons, of which 12 are services funded by a CRC. Whilst Nacro still retains a relatively large proportion of justice related work compared to other charities the volume of its work in this area has reduced overall since the introduction of TR.

The justice aspect of Nacro's work is now relatively small in comparison with other areas of its work. Nacro describes itself as a social justice charity, as such it has a remit beyond criminal justice. Nacro has managed to be sustainable by growing in other areas of work, this has had an impact on the overall emphasis of the charity's work and its strategic focus.

As part of the CRCs TTG services, Nacro's are contracted to provide housing advice, funded as a fee for service, with a small element of Payment by Results. The contract is strictly limited to providing housing advice, and referrals into the statutory housing system – the service is not funded to address the wider barriers that prison leavers face in accessing accommodation. Nacro stressed that having a place to live when you leave prison is vital, without it people can't be expected to change their lives. However, there are many barriers to getting accommodation, including local authorities not classing them as being in 'priority need', and in some cases classifying them as 'intentionally homeless' due to the crime they committed (in which case they are not obligated to house them). Accessing the private rented sector was also described as very challenging for people leaving prison.

Separate to its work in TR, Nacro does work with a number of CRCs to provide transitional accommodation via its National Homes Agency. This accommodation is funded through housing benefit, but new social housing arrangements are due to come into force in April 2020 which could affect the level of funding for Nacro's housing services. Nacro were clear that the supply and access to accommodation is a major issue that needs to be addressed both in national government reviews and through the TR contract.

Recently the Ministry of Justice and CRC owners agreed “enhanced outcomes” for the TTG service, but at the time of the interview these had not been fed through into Nacro’s delivery contracts. It was felt that this could signify a positive change, but that the service specification needed significant improvements.

Thoughts about the future of Transforming Rehabilitation

Nacro was in a very strong position to play an important role in the TR agenda. Its purpose, expertise and track record were well matched to support better rehabilitation and resettlement of vulnerable people in the criminal justice system. They had great hopes for the programme seeing it as “a once in a generation opportunity to reform the way in which we reduce crime and reoffending in our communities.”¹³

Nacro had been gearing up for a greater role in probation services for over 10 years. During that time they frequently promoted the voluntary sector as being uniquely placed to deliver innovation and cost-effective solutions, which were key aspects of the government’s vision for TR. They believed that the ‘Rehabilitation Revolution’ would finally open the door to allow the voluntary sector to reach its full potential and reduce stubborn reoffending rates in the process. However, the changes have not yet delivered what they set out to achieve.

3.3 / Switchback

Interview with Leah Selinger, Interim CEO, and Richard Hurst, Head of Delivery

A brief description of Switchback

Switchback’s core service is a mentoring scheme aimed at young men between the ages of 18-30 that have been in the criminal justice system. The aim is to build resilience in a range of aspects of their ‘trainees’ lives, with a particular focus on supporting them into employment. The Switchback mentor and trainee meet a number of times in prison, as soon as they are released trainees are offered a voluntary placement scheme at one of Switchback’s partner cafés. Switchback have no time restriction to how long this support is provided. Typically, Switchback will work with 40 trainees per year, for about nine months each.

Switchback mentors are highly trained paid professionals. The trainee has the same mentor throughout the intensive process, they have face-to-face contact three times a week out of which weekly action plans are developed and followed.

Switchback has refrained from seeking public/statutory funding because they think it could limit the intensity and flexibility of support they provide. This approach has allowed Switchback to avoid being set targets or outcomes by other agencies, which they believe could negatively affect their model. They have been successful in diversifying their funding, which includes charitable trusts, individual donations and corporate funding.

Early experiences of Transforming Rehabilitation

When Switchback initially heard about the TR reform there were rumours that the policy would provide a mentor to everyone leaving prison. This caused some concern about the future role of the organisation, with TR looking likely to replace their services by providing through the gate support, tailored individual plans, but primarily delivering a mentoring scheme on a much larger scale. By only supporting 40 ex-offenders, Switchback felt they would not be able to compete against larger organisations with more substantive capacity.

At the time of tendering Switchback was only contacted by one organisation bidding for the London area Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) to discuss being part of their bid. Switchback were keen to be included as a named provider, in order to not be replaced by other providers, and to make sure they still had access to the prisons they already worked in. Switchback accepted an agreement as tier 3 provider, meaning that they would be delivering smaller scale or specialist services. However they were aware that they may not gain any financial benefit from this agreement, and accepted this in lieu of maintaining access to prisoners. They felt, like many other small voluntary organisations, they were being used as 'bid candy' to make the tender more appealing to the Ministry of Justice.

“So we did start to think, okay, do we need to engage with this process? How might we do so? What would that look like? What’s the risk? And we had conversations, we were introduced [to the bidding organisation] ... And we had a conversation with them about being a partner ... Small organisations often get called into new things, like ‘bid fodder’, [to become a] partner in their application to be the CRC for the London region.”

Switchback viewed their bid into the TR process as a fact finding experience, to understand the processes and changes of the reform, and to ensure they would be included in the mix of providers to promote the continuation of their service delivery. Switchback were not contacted by other organisations competing for London CRC and the bid that they were a part of was unsuccessful, this was the full extent of their experience of the TR reform process.

“You know, it was never a big thing for us either. ... We’ll hedge our bets ... it was useful to learn ... How the bidders were approaching it and what they were thinking. So really for us it was partly a fact-finding opportunity. We didn’t see it as a way to get money. It was let’s try and just do everything, as much as we can to work out what’s going on and how we can communicate.”

Current experiences of Transforming Rehabilitation

None of Switchback’s initial concerns came to light, therefore, the organisation claim to have experienced little impact on issues such as accessing other funding sources, relationships with other voluntary organisations, and the continuation of service delivery.

“... essentially all those worries that we had, none of them have borne out. And we’re still working exactly the same way we were working four years ago. It is just some of the faces have changed”.

Switchback have a positive view on not being part of the TR reforms, mainly because they have kept their independence, autonomy, and they are not dependent on statutory funding.

“... historically we’ve never really had a voice or challenged anything, and we’re only now at a point where we feel able to do that so, I guess it’s giving us the freedom to do that as we go forward ... we’re not beholden to government contracts. We’re not trying to kind of kick up a storm, but if we can challenge government on decisions which negatively affect our work, then we have the freedom to do that without worrying about our funding.”

Several concerns about the TR reforms were raised by Switchback. Firstly there was a concern that charitable trusts and foundations, or other independent donors, might refuse to invest in criminal justice services if they perceived it as subsidising CRCs or the National Probation Service (NPS). Secondly, they had difficulties trying to form a relationship with MTC Novo (the owner of London CRC); on several occasions they had tried to contact the CRC owner to develop a relationship, but with no response.

Switchback reflected that they did have strong working relationships with the local CRC staff, many of whom accepted and welcomed Switchback’s approach. In some instances this had also helped to streamline their work in prisons.

“What I experienced was that before TR happened, people came out, they had nothing. No job centre appointment, no idea about their debts, no court fines paid. And actually where it works well, those things are getting done a lot more.”

Thoughts about the future of Transforming Rehabilitation

Switchback were not involved in the delivery of the TR reform, but are also not against the idea of being part of it in the future. They would only do so if it was in line with their approach – keeping their approach to mentoring, setting realistic targets and outcomes, and being paid in full for their services (not as part of a payment by results contract).

3.4 / User Voice

Chief Operating Officer, Daniel Hutt

A brief description of User Voice

User Voice was established in 2009 and exists to improve the criminal justice system and enhance rehabilitation, through channelling the voice of service users. They “build the structures that enable productive collaboration between service users and service providers”; and their work is led and delivered by people with lived experience of the criminal justice system.

User Voice have been contracted by 14 of the 21 Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) to deliver service user opinion and feedback on services in prisons and community, through their Council model. A Council is an “elected group of people in prison, on probation, who then go out and canvass the views and opinions of their peers and develop proposals” for improved policy and reforms.

The Councils are independent and are facilitated by former service users employed by User Voice.

Early experiences of Transforming Rehabilitation

At the outset organisations bidding to deliver CRCs were interested in working with User Voice because they wanted to build in the experiences of people going through the system to better understand what works, and assists with monitoring and reporting systems. In some cases User Voice were already involved with Probation Trusts, therefore their work with new CRCs would have been a continuation of their existing work.

User Voice said their central appeal to CRCs was its brand and track record; User Voice is known as a specialist organisation with particular expertise in listening to and amplifying the voice of service users. More critically, they thought some potential CRC owners could have used them as ‘bid candy’. User Voice felt this opened them to an element of risk, namely that the CRC might choose not to purchase services from them, so they put in place clear agreements to prevent this from happening.

User Voice were approached by a number of bidders early in the TR process, and they had been working with around ten Probation Trusts for some years. So the Primes tended to come to them, and User Voice were clear about what they could offer.

“We knew what we did, we knew the value of that...we costed it all up and essentially said to the bidders this is our offer, this is what we do, and if you want it, take it, and if you don’t then that’s fine. We did not want to enter into too much of a negotiation around that, because we are very confident in the model and in the value of it.”

User Voice made an offer to most of the organisations bidding for CRCs and many included them in their supply chains.

Current experiences of Transforming Rehabilitation

User Voice works with 14 of the 21 CRCs, although at the time of the interview they had not formally signed contracts with a number of the CRCs they are working with. It is notable that there is no Payment by Results element attached to their funding – CRCs have agreed to fund the service in its entirety as a ‘fee for service’.

“... most of them [contracts with CRCs] are three-year agreements ... one, maybe, is five years, but that was obviously something that was really beneficial around all of this, having that level of security ... it’s just a fee for service, so it’s very straightforward.”

A key issue for User Voice has been the extent to which there has been ‘push-back’ or ongoing negotiation that the agreement they have reflects the content of the service being delivered (i.e. the Council). This provides some explanation as to why contracts with certain CRCs have not been signed to date.

“In the ongoing negotiations we’ve really pushed back when they’ve been requiring us, or asking us, to do certain things or report on certain things. We’ve been saying, well that’s just not

applicable to the Council model, and a lot of the time it’s because the standard contracts are more in tune for the kind of volumes of people, like a mentoring service or a drug treatment service.”

User Voice’s experience has been largely positive, they have good relationships with various CRCs and they have managed rapid growth whilst maintaining good service delivery. However, User Voice is a relatively small organisation, with limited administrative capacity, so their ability to ‘push-back’ about reporting requirements linked to multiple contracts has been an important aspect of their success.

In the process of running the Councils, User Voice mentioned that they are told about issues with the probation system, such as difficulties accessing appropriate housing, employment and training. The identification of these issues is at the heart of User Voice’s Council model.

“Everyone might be saying there’s a lack of support around housing, for example, it’s a big one that always comes up... what they then have done is developed a proposal off the back of that to say, well what we suggest is that we create a directory of agencies who support service users with housing and work with the CRC to do that. So it’s not so much that we report on all of the issues that come up, it’s the service users identifying what the main issues are and then putting forward solutions off the back of that.”

Thoughts about the future of transforming rehabilitation

User Voice’s aim is to embed service user engagement as an integral part of the ongoing CRC model and that the Council model continues to be used by them beyond existing contracts. There is a real opportunity to bring in other stakeholders including the National Probation Service and other service providers.

User Voice have shown that their model can work in the new probation landscape. It is possible that this sort of approach becomes the norm, equally there is

the possibility that tight budgets could reverse the trend of increased user involvement.

“Two-thirds of the CRCs have embraced service user engagement through our Council model as a critical component of their delivery model. Considering the huge unknowns through the TR process this is amazing and shows they see the real value of listening to service users. The hope is that this is only the start and the foundation to continue to build on as the CRCs continue to develop their own ways of working. Equally the fear is that as budgets get squeezed then services like this feel the impact. However, so far this has not been our experience, so we are optimistic for the future.”

3.5 / WomenMatta

Hannah Morowa, Manager

A brief description of WomenMATTa

WomenMATTa is a women's centre in Manchester that provides intensive and holistic support to women affected by the criminal justice system and is part of the national charity Women in Prison (WIP). Starting in 2010, this was Women in Prisons' first women's community project and was initially funded by the Ministry of Justice, later by the National Offender Management Service, and then by Greater Manchester Probation Trust (GMPT). The centre provides women with a safe space in which to access gender-specialist support services, providing practical and emotional support to women involved with the criminal justice system.

Early experiences of Transforming Rehabilitation

WomenMATTa did not have much direct contact with organisations bidding to deliver the Cheshire and Greater Manchester Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC), although at the national level discussion was carried out by WIP. Much of the preparation for Transforming Rehabilitation (TR) in Greater Manchester was facilitated by the Public Service Reform team within Greater Manchester's combined authority. This team with its role in coordinating services and funding pots across the ten local authorities. Much of this was done in the context of their wider preparation for devolution – so-called 'Devo Manc', or the 'Northern Powerhouse'.

Prior to TR, WomenMATTa was delivering services for women offenders, and there were similar organisations in Bolton (Eve's Space) and Salford (Together Women Project). Initial contact with the organisations bidding to deliver the Cheshire and Greater Manchester CRC was described as "very brief", and amounted to:

“... this is what you're doing now; we have to have provision for women within our TR contract – would you be happy to carry on doing that, under TR?”

Once the tendering was complete, and Purple Futures (led by Interserve) came out as the owner of the CRC, the transition was managed by the Public Sector Reform team. WomenMATTERA described the transition as being led by a principle of continuation – ensuring there were still women’s specific services that could provide coverage across Greater Manchester.

“... whilst there were examples of good practice across Greater Manchester, this was patchy and inconsistent. For the purposes of Devolution and TR, it seemed to be in our interest to help try and get consistent services across the whole of Greater Manchester.”

The aspiration in Greater Manchester was to ‘join up’ and roll out a consistent level of women’s services across the area. A key part of achieving this was to bring existing voluntary organisations together in an ‘alliance’ in order to create a “consistent level of provision” across the ten local authorities. This led to an informal alliance between seven voluntary organisations. The alliance does not have a ‘lead partner,’ although for practical purposes some of the funding is held and managed by Stockport Women’s Centre.

The alliance was able to bring together a diverse package of funding that has provided additionality (extra resource) to TR contract. This includes Big Lottery Funding and funds from the ‘tampon tax’. TR coincided with, and contributed to, significant input from a range of agencies. This led to an expanded level of service provision.

“So much has changed, so quickly. And some of that is to do with TR, and some of it has nothing to do with TR.”

Current experiences of Transforming Rehabilitation

WomenMATTERA’s overall experiences of service delivery and partnership working over the past few years have been positive, but it is hard to say how much of this is because of, or in spite of the changes related to TR.

There is clearly a lot of positivity about the partnership working and commitment to maintaining and

developing women’s services. WomenMATTERA recognise and value the contributions made by all key partners and the constituent members of their alliance. Yet the funding from Cheshire and Greater Manchester CRC has remained relatively static, services have been expanded thanks to the match-funding from other partners.

Certain initiatives which were highly valued locally appear to have survived the “upheaval” of TR because there has been goodwill and commitment from partners and key individuals. For example, the Problem Solving Court for female offenders which was considered to be an innovative and successful example of restorative justice, and was initiated through the former Probation Trust in Greater Manchester. Following the ‘split’ between National Probation Service (NPS) and the CRC, it took considerable partnership work and commitment from the “NPS, the magistrate’s court, the women’s centre, and various other organisations” to keep it going. Although the future of this approach is in question despite these efforts.

The Cheshire and Greater Manchester CRC has shown commitment to provision of women-specific services in the community. For example, the CRC has understood the importance to WomenMATTERA of the women-specific services in the community.

“[WomenMATTERA] was gender specific; therefore, it was safer ... And we were bringing other professionals in, to try and make that into a multi-agency one-stop shop approach.”

WomenMATTERA report that referrals are often lower than they could be. This was a complicated issue to unpick but seems to be caused by two factors – communication and staff turnover. Firstly, not everyone who could make referrals had clear information about the agreed model for female offenders; either because it was not always shared between staff or agreed on by all staff. Secondly, because of high staff turnover, particularly in the CRC, it has been a challenge to make sure everyone understands the distinct approach that has been developed for women in Greater Manchester.

Other teething issues had been caused by the 'split' in probation services, for instance the CRC and NPS had thought it problematic for NPS referrals to 'mix' with CRC referrals within the centre, and although this has now been resolved (and clients do mix), it temporarily impacted on the women's centre's ability to offer a seamless and inclusive service to all women.

"We've always worked with ALL women, this was never influenced by level of risk before the CRC/NPS split. So the practice of doing so post-split is meaningless for us; the irony is, our 'riskiest' service users are often those who aren't on probation at all anyway!"

Thoughts about the future of Transforming Rehabilitation

Currently the picture is largely positive, not least because of the range of funding sources that the Greater Manchester alliance has been able to raise in addition to the CRC funding. The alliance of Women's Centres have a good relationship with key stakeholders – particularly at management level – and the partnership between voluntary organisations has been positive.

A key risk is that voluntary sector organisations operate with a mixed funding model. If a funder withdraws this can put existing services at risk or significantly affect their capacity. It is important that this delicate balance of funding, and the associated risk, are fully understood by all partners.

3.6 / YSS

Interview with Lorraine Preece, CEO

A brief description of YSS

YSS is a charity with over 30 years experience of providing community based support services for people who are vulnerable, have complex needs and face difficult life challenges. They work in a holistic way, with the individual at the centre, helping them to navigate challenges and get the services they need.

YSS worked alongside probation services for over a decade to develop their Enhanced Supervision and Support (ESS) service. The service provides intensive and holistic support for people under probation supervision in the community, both in an office environment and through home visits. ESS supports some of the most complex needs, often those supervised under Integrated Offender Management arrangement who are assessed as posing a high risk of re-offending.

YSS employs and trains highly skilled key workers who provide a single point of contact for service users. They offer emotional and practical support, and assist service users to access key services such as housing or finance and debt advice. Weekly meetings, regular phone calls and text messages and a 24 hour helpline all form part of a support package that enables people to overcome the barriers to their rehabilitation and resettlement, whilst also providing motivation and encouragement.

Early experiences of Transforming Rehabilitation

Prior to the Transforming Rehabilitation reforms YSS were contracted to deliver ESS and other services for West Mercia Probation Trust. These contracts were transferred to Warwickshire and West Mercia Community Rehabilitation Company (owned by People Plus) as a result of the TR reforms, providing some continuity in the day-to-day working with operational staff.

YSS signed a three year Industry Standard Partnership Agreement (ISPA) to deliver aspects of the work. Their experience of working with the former

Probation Trust had been very positive, having developed a strong collaborative relationship:

“West Mercia Probation Trust was regarded as one of the innovative Trusts. It was almost like they were practising TR before TR came in.”

YSS approached TR with a sense of caution – they felt particularly wary of some aspects that they considered to be risky, such as the tight timeframe for implementation, the lack of piloting, and the consequences of the ‘split’ between CRCs and the NPS.

YSS had been pleased with their initial contract with the CRC, it was a fixed fee-for-service contract which was a continuation of their existing relationship with the former Probation Trust. When they signed an Industry Standard Partnership Agreement (ISPA) with the CRC they had to incorporate a Payment by Results element to their contract which allows them to earn up to an additional 5% if certain targets are met. YSS achieved their targets and got their additional payment.

“So, that was a good incentive to us because it meant that we didn’t have to compromise on the quality of what we were delivering and we could really focus on getting the best possible outcomes, which we’d do anyway.”

YSS were happy with this model. Initially they felt that they had been listened to, and considered that they were well supported by the CRC in the early stages of TR. Indeed, on the whole, they have continued to have good relationships with CRC, especially at an operational level with local CRC staff.

However, it was felt that the experience of the initial set-up period had unduly raised expectations. There were lots of impressive conferences and events, warm words about growth and the continuation of existing relationships.

“In the early stages people were saying all of the right things and ‘we’re throwing money at this, we’re taking it really seriously,’ ‘we want to make a difference’ ... we did feel there was

maybe a sense of naivety about maybe them going into this with their eyes fully open in terms of what they were actually taking on.”

Current experiences of Transforming Rehabilitation

As TR has matured there has been a discernible shift in YSS’s experiences. YSS has experienced “massive cuts” that has made YSS question the strategy being adopted by the CRC – “it seems to be about money and not the service user”. People Plus only deliver one CRC contract, YSS expressed concern that this might mean they could not achieve the same economies of scale that other CRCs could. It was assumed this might affect the overall cost of services and impact on their strategy and delivery model.

YSS have experienced a number of cuts to their services, one such example is the senior attendance centre service which was brought ‘in-house’ by the CRC. This was done without warning and the decision caused operational difficulties, for example the transition period had to be extended because the replacement service wasn’t ready in time. A significant issue for YSS was the lack of transparency in decision making processes, the dialogue they were accustomed to with the Probation Trust and the early days of the CRC seemed to be dissipating. YSS said they weren’t ‘in the room’ or given the chance to contribute their views before these decisions were made.

The ESS contract has experienced similar cuts – this includes through the gate service (TTG) provided by YSS. After one year, the CRC cut the through the gate element of YSS’ work by two thirds. YSS said they were not consulted with or included in the decision making process behind these cuts. This was followed by a two thirds cut to the main ESS service (from January 2018) despite continually operating at capacity with waiting lists to access the service. YSS were consulted as part of this decision, and the main reasons behind the cut were: that the Ministry of Justice’s payment mechanism only recognising accredited programmes and unpaid work, and that lower than expected numbers of people under the CRCs supervision had affected the amount of money received by the CRC.

“[YSS are] very disappointed because we feel we bring a lot to the table, we feel in terms of what TR should’ve been about: collaboration, a role for the voluntary sector, innovation, creativity, going the extra mile, putting the offender at the heart of service delivery, added value, evidenced outcomes - that’s absolutely what we give them, and so if that goes, what’s left, actually? We are not blaming the CRC ... the goal posts moved in terms of their funding and then there is the ineffective structure of the payment mechanism.”

Thoughts about the future of Transforming Rehabilitation

Although YSS continue to have a “positive” relationship with the CRC, the cuts have put pressure on them to try and identify other funding to fill the gaps that the reduction in service has created for those service users with multiple and complex needs. Despite this YSS have maintained their collaborative approach.

“Before TR there was genuine collaboration with Probation, Police, the Youth Offending Service, PCC, and voluntary sector organisations [in West Mercia]. There was appropriate challenge, we worked together to achieve the best outcomes, we’d try and avoid duplication ... that’s been lost. Splitting NPS and the CRC, it’s fragmented everything and, ultimately, it is the service user who is suffering.”

YSS reported that there had been significant changes to the CRC’s Senior Management Team. YSS are now working closely with the newly appointed Chief Officer and Supply Chain Manager and were waiting to hear what will happen when their current contract (ISPA) expires in July 2018.

4 / Conclusions, key findings and recommendations

CON
CLUS
IONS

Clinks, NCVO and TSRC have been able to gather a substantial amount of information from the voluntary sector to gauge their experiences of, and involvement in, new probation services. Through this we have been able to come to some conclusions about the voluntary sector’s current involvement as well as make constructive recommendations for change.

Key findings and recommendations

This survey has uncovered seven key findings, and we make 11 recommendations as a result. We still believe that all the recommendations made in our 2016 trackTR report, *Change and challenge*, remain relevant and require action to improve our probation services. This report’s key findings and recommendations are listed below.

KEY FINDING 1: Voluntary sector involvement is low and reserved for larger organisations

Only 35% of the 132 organisations we heard from receive any funding from CRCs and only two organisations got any direct funding from the NPS. Voluntary organisations with an annual income of over £10 million were the only group more likely to be funded by a CRC than not. Smaller voluntary organisations are much less likely to be funded by probation despite their significant contribution to resettlement and rehabilitation services. Whilst much of this might be explained by a general under-resourcing of probation services, many smaller organisations have not been engaged in any meaningful way by probation services.

RECOMMENDATION 1: Provide transparency of supply chain partners

CRCs and the NPS should publish, ideally on a quarterly basis, full details of their supply chains, including: the names and company/charity numbers of tier two and three providers; the amount of funding passed down to sub-contractors; a summary of the service being provided; and where appropriate the contribution that these organisations have made to Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

RECOMMENDATION 2: HMPPS should conduct an annual audit of the supply chain

Contract managers in Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service should conduct (or commission) an annual audit of the supply chain to assess the involvement of any organisations funded by CRCs and the NPS. The audit should collate anonymised feedback, assessing their experiences and look for good practice to share as well as poor practice to learn from. The audit’s findings should be made public.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Involve the voluntary sector

The Ministry of Justice and Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service should work with Clinks, CRC owners, the NPS, and prisons to develop approaches to engage more voluntary organisations. These approaches should be tested in local areas and evaluated with a view to scaling them across England and Wales.

Under represented, under pressure, under resourced:
the voluntary sector in Transforming Rehabilitation



KEY FINDING 2: The voluntary sector's role in Probation services is unsustainable

Just over a half of all respondents suggest a negative or very negative impact of TR on their organisations. Voluntary organisations suggest that probation services are under-funded, leading to lack of investment in rehabilitation and resettlement services and staff with high caseloads which are often unmanageable. Half of the voluntary sector-led services that are funded by CRCs say they are unsustainable and one in three think their funding agreement is at risk of failure before the end of the contract or within the next six months. One third of these services are subsidised by charitable reserves or other funding sources. Over half the voluntary organisations not funded by either a CRC or the NPS have subsidised their services with reserves or other funding sources. This is an unsustainable situation. Probation services delivered by voluntary organisations are under-funded and more investment is needed to ensure the health of the probation system.

RECOMMENDATION 4: The MoJ probation review must set out an acceptable level of services

The Ministry of Justice are leading a 'probation review'. This review must consider the services that probation services need to deliver and assess, with partners, an acceptable level of services to ensure quality and a suitable level of funding to ensure the service can be delivered. This must include an assessment of the services required to meet the needs of people with protected characteristics.

KEY FINDING 3: The probation system relies on the work of voluntary organisations

People under probation supervision are regularly supported by voluntary organisations, but these organisations are frequently not paid for by probation services. Up to 65% of voluntary organisations we surveyed are not funded by probation providers. These organisations regularly receive referrals from probation services and prisons. Up to 70% of these organisations think their services should be funded by the probation system.

RECOMMENDATION 5: Develop local provider networks

As a minimum requirement, to nurture local partnerships, each CRCs and NPS region (preferably in collaboration) should develop a multi-agency network that brings together key partner organisations to inform the design and delivery of services for people under probation supervision.

KEY FINDING 4: The rate card does not work for the NPS or the voluntary sector

Current policy dictates that the NPS has to commission all services through a CRC’s ‘rate card’. This restricts the NPS’s ability to purchase services that support people under their supervision, limits their choice, and restricts their ability to engage strategically with stakeholders. This policy has actively discouraged voluntary sector engagement with the NPS and their service users.

RECOMMENDATION 6: The ‘rate card’ system should be abandoned

The rate card system has been shown not to work and should be abandoned. The NPS should have its own commissioning function that allows it to purchase appropriate services. It should not be restricted to using services listed on a CRCs ‘rate card’. This change should be supported by the Ministry of Justice’s Commissioning Directorate and its implementation supported by Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service working alongside the NPS to ensure a smooth transition.

KEY FINDING 5: Voluntary organisations believe Transforming Rehabilitation has had a negative impact on their services and service users

Worryingly 60% of the voluntary organisations we surveyed say that TR has had a negative or very negative impact on their service users. Very few suggest that the changes have been positive for either their organisation or people under probation supervision.

RECOMMENDATION 7: Openly consult on changes to probation

The Ministry of Justice should conduct an open consultation on the purpose and structure of probation services in 2018/19, ahead of the end of current contractual arrangements. The results should feed into the ongoing Ministry of Justice-led ‘probation review’. This should include consideration as to whether one single probation service may be a more efficient and/or effective delivery option.

RECOMMENDATION 8: Assess quality through new research grants

HM Inspectorate of Probation perform a vital function in assessing the quality of probation work. This should be complemented by more research into what ‘good’ looks like in probation services. The Ministry of Justice should support this development by setting up an annual grant fund for researchers to assess a broad range of rehabilitation and resettlement activities. The research papers should be published.

RECOMMENDATION 9: Collect and publish feedback from service users

The Ministry of Justice and Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service should develop (or commission) a mechanism to gather views from a representative sample of probation service users and their families to assess the state of services. This analysis should be published and used to improve services.



KEY FINDING 6: A volume-based target driven culture is eroding partnerships

The voluntary organisations that have the closest relationships with CRCs – those funded by them – have become increasingly pessimistic and negative. Many of the organisations we heard from do not believe that their ethos and values align with that of CRCs. Voluntary organisations blame the erosion of their relationship on unhelpful targets that are focused on volume and a lack of meaningful outcome-driven targets.

RECOMMENDATION 10: Develop new targets and outcome measures

The system of meeting volume targets needs reforming to provide greater emphasis on the quality of work delivered and what it achieves. A Ministry of Justice-convened working group should be established to assess current targets and outcome measures, with the aim of developing proposals for improved measures that could be adopted by CRCs, the NPS and other stakeholders. As a minimum requirement this working group should include representatives from the MoJ, HMPPS, HM Inspectorate of Probation, CRCs, the NPS, voluntary organisations, Police and Crime Commissioners and other statutory services with responsibility for health, housing and education or employment outcomes.

KEY FINDING 7: Confusion about Transforming Rehabilitation could be leading to disinvestment

TR has negatively affected the level of funding for voluntary sector-led rehabilitation and resettlement services. Many organisations say their ability to raise funding from other sources has been negatively impacted because there is a lack of clarity surrounding what services CRCs and the NPS should be funding. The fact that the probation system is now more complicated, caused by the split in probation services between the NPS and CRCs was also given as a reason for some of the ongoing confusion.

RECOMMENDATION 11: Clearly set out what probation services do

The Ministry of Justice needs to produce clear and accessible public guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the main agencies involved in rehabilitation and resettlement, including CRCs, the NPS, and prisons.

End notes

- 1 To find out more about Transforming Rehabilitation visit Clinks' website: www.clinks.org/criminal-justice-transforming-rehabilitation/what-transforming-rehabilitation
- 2 Ministry of Justice press release www.gov.uk/government/news/voluntary-sector-at-forefront-of-new-fight-against-reoffending
- 3 Clinks (2016), *Change and Challenge: the voluntary sector's role in Transforming Rehabilitation*. www.clinks.org/resources-reports/change-challenge-voluntary-sector-role-transforming-rehabilitation
- 4 A list of the successful bidders can be found here: www.clinks.org/sites/default/files/table-of-new-owners-of-cracs.pdf
- 5 Clinks, NCVO, TSRC (2015), *Early doors: the voluntary sector's role in Transforming Rehabilitation*. www.clinks.org/sites/default/files/basic/files-downloads/early_doors_tracktr.pdf
- 6 Clinks, NCVO, TSRC (2016), *Change & challenge: the voluntary sector's role in Transforming Rehabilitation*. www.clinks.org/sites/default/files/basic/files-downloads/clinks_track-tr_changechallenge_final-web.pdf
- 7 To download the survey questions please visit: www.clinks.org
- 8 Clinks (2017), *The state of the sector: key trends for voluntary organisations working with offenders and their families*. www.clinks.org/sites/default/files/clinks_state-of-the-sector-2017_final-web1.pdf
- 9 Ministry of Justice press release www.gov.uk/government/news/voluntary-sector-at-forefront-of-new-fight-against-reoffending
- 10 NCVO UK Civil Society Almanac (2017). <https://data.ncvo.org.uk>
- 11 Clinks (2017), *The state of the sector: key trends for voluntary organisations working with offenders and their families*. www.clinks.org/sites/default/files/clinks_state-of-the-sector-2017_final-web1.pdf
- 12 Lammy review (2017), *An independent review into the treatment of, and outcomes for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals in the Criminal Justice System*. www.gov.uk/government/organisations/lammy-review
- 13 Nacro (2013), *Nacro's Response to the MOJ's Transforming Rehabilitation Consultation* [online] Available at: <https://3bx16p38bch132s0e12di03h-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Nacro-s-response-to-the-MOJ-s-Transforming-Rehabilitation-consultation.pdf>

Notes



Notes







trackTR, a partnership project of Clinks,
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