



RR3 Special Interest Group on the effective implementation of the Sentencing Act 2026:

Background:

The Reducing Reoffending Third Sector Advisory Group (RR3) has established a 2026-27 Special Interest Group (SIG) on the effective implementation of the 2026 Sentencing Act.

The Group will explore the increased demand on the voluntary sector, as a result of key provisions within the Act, with a focus on post-release resettlement and support in the community following the imposition of Community Orders.

Purpose:

This Special Interest Group (SIG) was established to advise the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) officials on the successful implementation of the Sentencing Act. The Group will focus on gathering evidence and leveraging the expertise of voluntary organisations who support people in contact with the criminal justice system in the community.

The Group will focus on (but will not be restricted to):

- The resettlement support required for people coming out of prison (within the context of increased demand on voluntary services due to measures such as the Progression Model)
- How to ensure effective support for people on Community Orders (with a specific focus on drug and alcohol treatment)
- The role of lived experience in the delivery of resettlement support
- The implications for groups with different protected characteristics (which will run across each of the Group's areas of focus)

The evidence gathered will then be utilised to develop practical recommendations for the MoJ and HMPPS on how the voluntary sector working in criminal justice can respond to the implications of the Sentencing Act's implementation. Particularly:

- What is needed to most effectively support people in the community given the increased numbers created by the Sentencing Act
- What the voluntary sector needs to meet the increased demand for their services
- How resettlement support, drug and alcohol provision, and lived experience expertise can be strengthened across the system.

The specific provisions within the Sentencing Act that will be considered include:

- The Progression Model
- The presumption to suspend short custodial sentences
- Extended timeframes for suspended sentence orders
- Extended periods of deferred sentences.

This group's terms of reference sit alongside [the terms of reference for the main RR3](#).

Membership:

Sam Julius (Clinks Director of National Influencing & Networks) will chair the SIG, with the support of Lisa Strelnikova (Clinks Specialist Policy Officer). The SIG sponsors will be the following RR3 seat holders:

- Vicki Markiewicz (drugs and alcohol)
- Richard Knibbs (resettlement)
- Dave Higham (lived experience)
- Paula Harriott (lived experience)

Additional members of the RR3 will be co-opted to join the SIG depending on the content of the sessions. Wider membership will then be drawn from representatives of voluntary sector organisations with relevant experience and knowledge of resettlement, sentencing reform, drug and alcohol provision, probation, criminal justice, and lived experience expertise.

These will be recruited through Clinks' communications channels, supported by the SIG's sponsors.

Frequency:

Initially, the SIG will run three sessions covering:

- Broader resettlement support
- Drug and alcohol service provision
- The role of lived experience in delivering resettlement support.

Communications:

Officials will be open with information when they can, with the caveat that some information shared with the group may not be in the public domain yet and must not be shared publicly. Products discussed will be subject to further development and senior official approval through the relevant HMPPS governance structures.



All SIG outputs will be published on the Clinks website, with comments from participants not attributed. Both SIG members and officials will have the opportunity to review outputs prior to them being published.