UNIVERSITY of STRATHCLYDE
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Rehabilitating Scotland: Exploring the impact of mentoring-based throughcare

November 2022

Introduction

In recent years, a pressing issue for both the UK and Scottish Governments has been the steadily increasing prison population and, in particular, the rise in the male prison population.

In Scotland, whilst there are a number of factors that play into high prison populations, one of the reasons is the relatively high reoffending rate. In 2019, the latest year of data, 28.3% of individuals sentenced were reconvicted within a year of their original sentence. This rate has been relatively flat since the late 1990s[1].

There is, therefore, strong interest in understanding the extent to which the right support and interventions, including adequate throughcare[2] upon release from prison, can break a cycle of reoffending.

Figure 1 shows throughcare's role in Scotland's criminal justice system. For prisoners on long-term sentences, prisoner throughcare is provided as a statutory service through Criminal Justice Social Work. For individuals on a short-term sentence (less than four years), taking part in a throughcare programme is voluntary.

New Routes is a Public Social Partnership (PSP) with the Wise Group, a social enterprise, acting as lead partner in collaboration with Apex, Families Outside, Sacro and the Scottish Association for Mental Health. It offers a voluntary throughcare programme, providing one-to-one Mentoring for men of all ages who are coming to the end of short-term custodial sentences in prisons across Scotland.

This report is the first output as part of a three-year project commissioned by the Wise Group to evaluate the effectiveness of the New Routes programme in reducing reoffending and improving societal outcomes.

The report is structured as follows:

- Section 1 provides a brief overview of New Routes and where it fits into the criminal justice system

- Section 2 details the types of individuals the programme targets and their needs

- Section 3 looks at the reported success of the programme based on mentor and individual assessments

Within this report, we also include a couple of case studies provided by the Wise Group to illustrate how the programme operates.
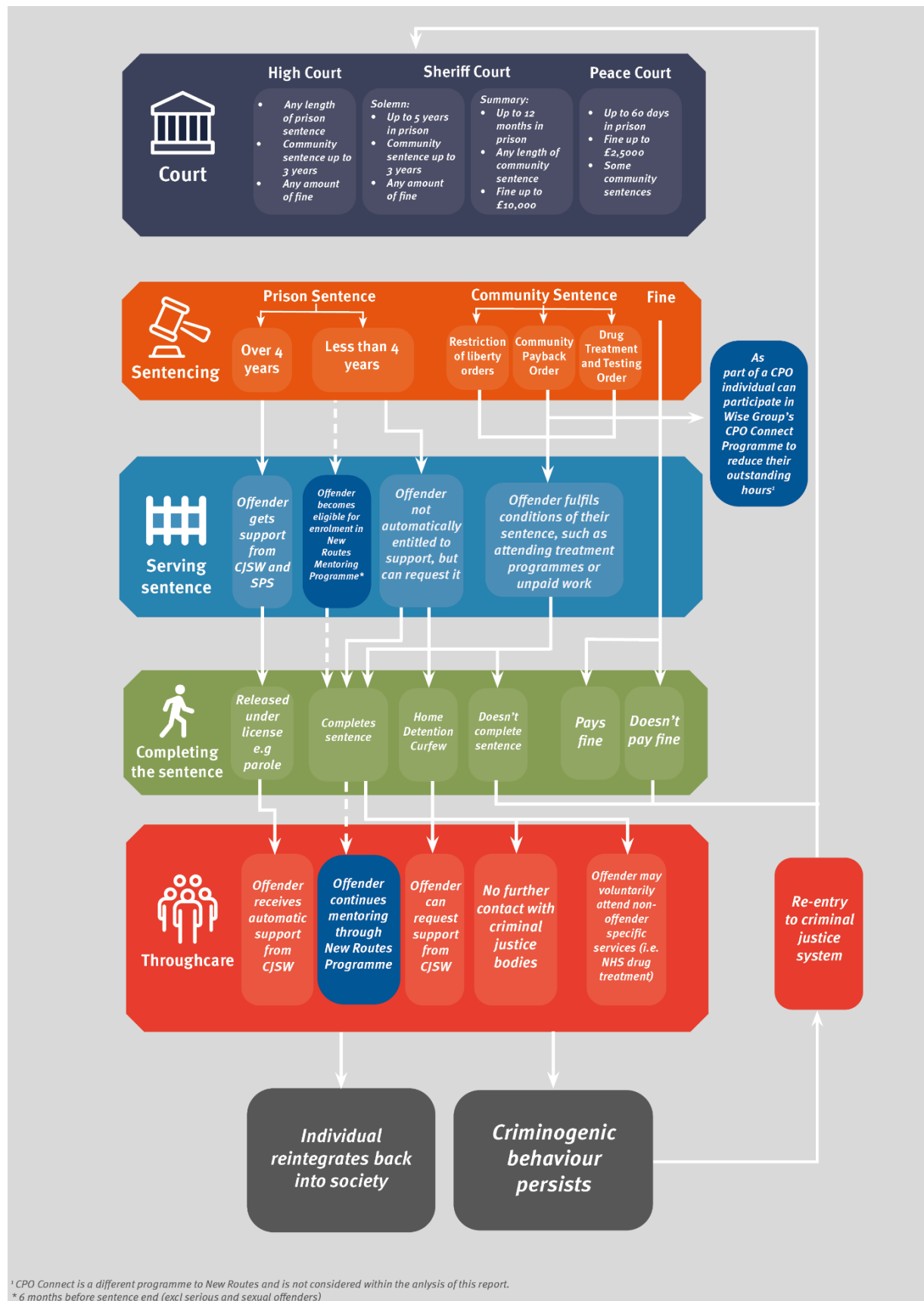
At the end of this report, we provide an overview of the next steps of this research in which we will use external data to look at the role of the New Routes programme in a broader context.

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[1] See Scottish Government

[2] Throughcare is the process of providing services to all prisoners both during and after their sentences. It can be either statutory or voluntary depending on sentence length.

Figure 1: Scotland's criminal justice system

¹ CPO Connect is a different programme to New Routes and is not considered within the anlysis of this report.
* 6 months before sentence end (excl serious and sexual offenders)

Source: FAI, adapted from an Audit Scotland report graphic

Overview of the New Routes programme

The main aim of the New Routes programme is to reduce reoffending in Scotland by supporting individuals to reintegrate into their communities beyond their prison sentence and build a sustainable future through inclusion in society. The scheme provides mentoring and support six months pre-release and post-release from prison.

New Routes is offered to individuals serving short term sentences – under 4 years – which are not serious crime or sexual offence related. In the first seven years of the programme (2013 – 2019), only males under 25 were eligible to join the programme. In 2019, the programme was opened to males of any age.
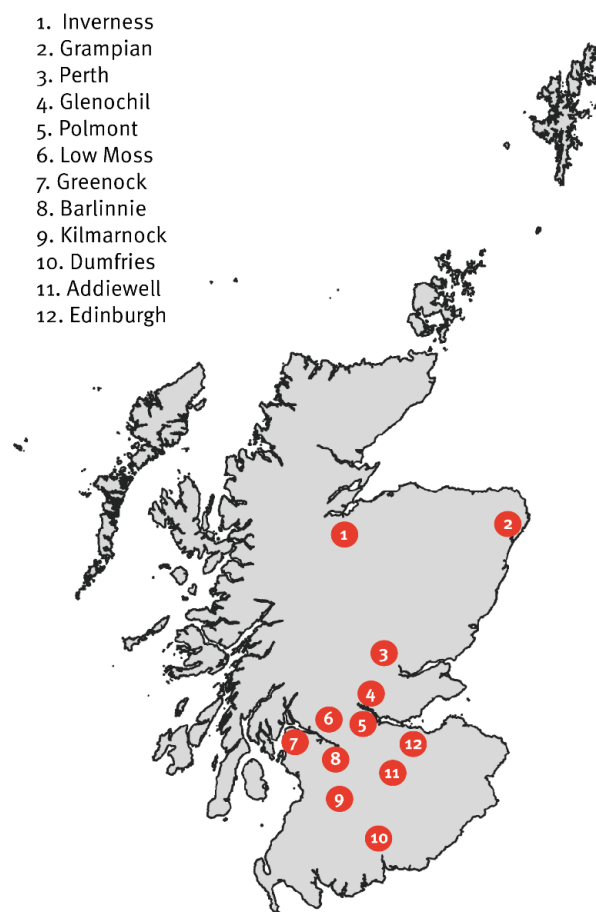
New Routes is a national programme in Scotland with local delivery. There are 12 prisons in Scotland where New Routes operates[3] (*Figure 2)* across 32 local authorities. The PSP has mentors in each part of the country and is able to provide a consistent service to individuals who move within Scotland during their time on the programme. It can also accommodate individuals who do not live in the same region as their former prison once they are liberated. As *Figure 3* shows, although it is often the case that liberation regions are aligned to former prison locations, there are many individuals for whom this is not the case.

In addition, the New Routes programme engages with specialist support organisations across Scotland. Between 2013 and 2019, the programme interacted with 8,800 support services, with the average local authority engaging with 46 support services *(Figure 4)*.
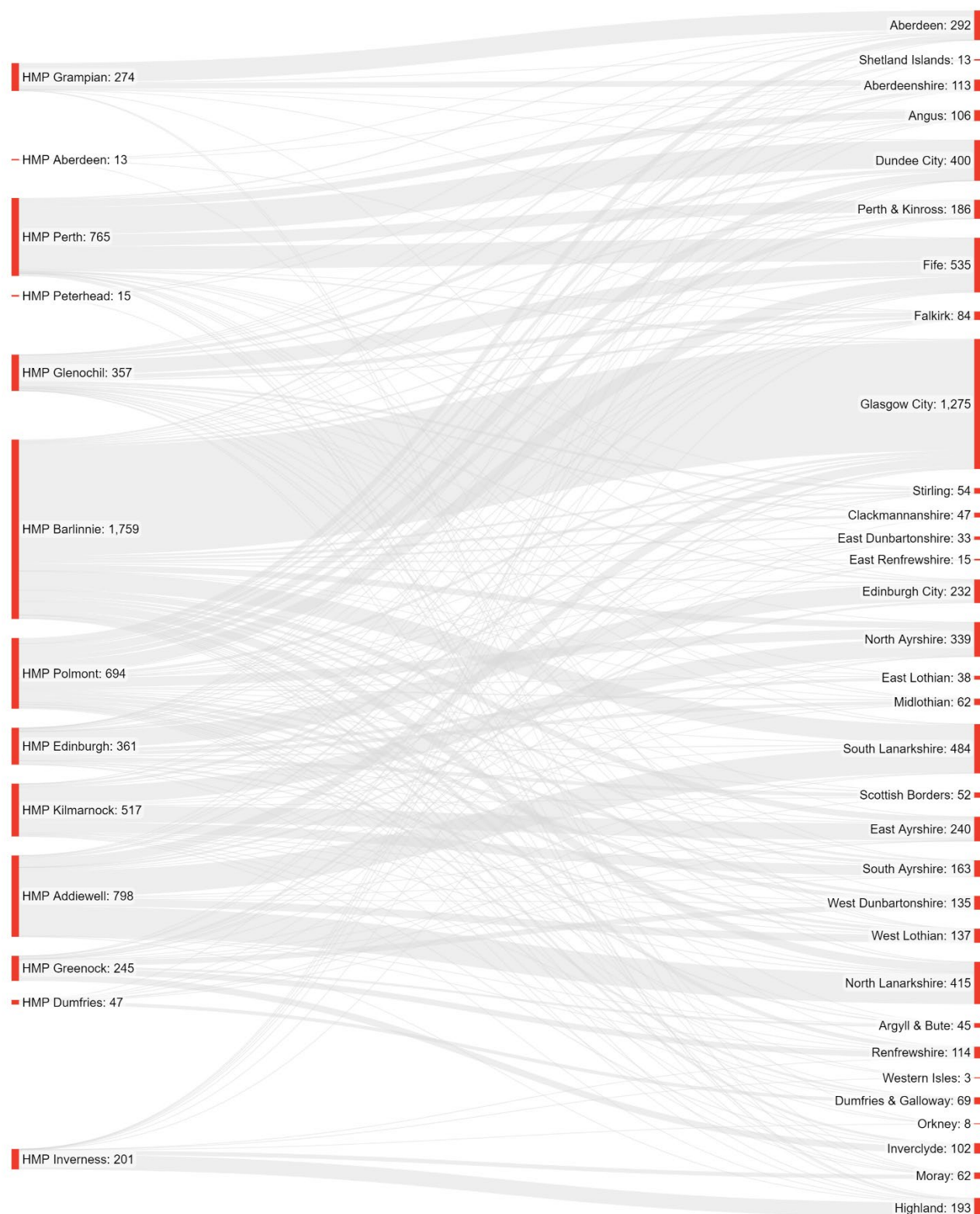
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[3] There are a total of 15 prisons in Scotland. 12 accommodate individuals that are eligible for New Routes.

Figure 2: HMP prisons in Scotland where New Routes operate

1. Inverness
2. Grampian
3. Perth
4. Glenochil
5. Polmont
6. Low Moss
7. Greenock
8. Barlinnie
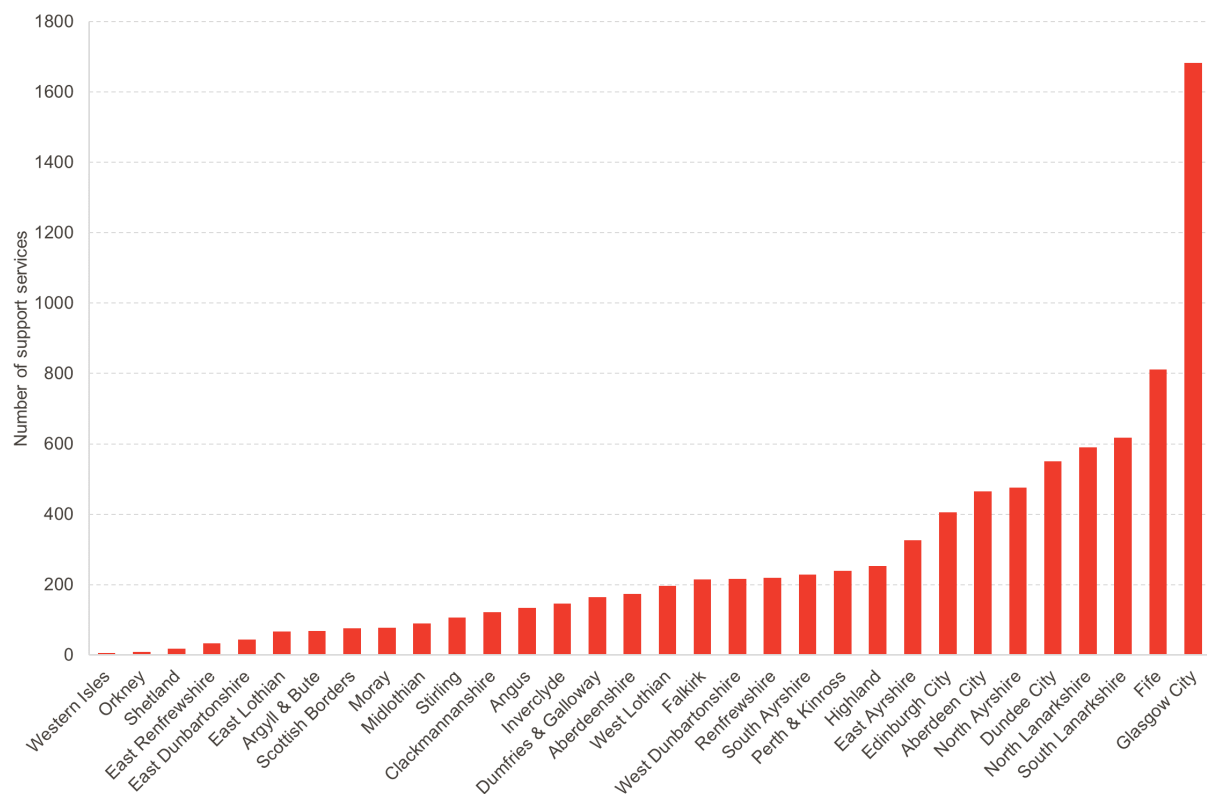9. Kilmarnock
10. Dumfries
11. Addiewell
12. Edinburgh

Source: HMIPS

Figure 3: Liberation local authority and prison location, 2013 – 2021

Source: Wise Group

Figure 4: Number of support services engaged with by local authority, 2013-2019

Source: Wise Group

The programme had 187 mentors operating in Scotland between 2013 and 2021, with each mentor having caseloads of 25-30 individuals each year.

The mentoring service is provided in two parts:

- The first part supports motivation and change in attitudes and behaviours. Individuals are supported to identify their needs and create a personal release plan.

- The second part addresses the barriers the individual seeks to overcome in order to re-integrate into the community. Services are tailored to individual needs and can include, for example, helping an individual to secure accommodation, enrol with a GP, gain employment, set up bank accounts and access addiction services.

Between 2013 and 2021, 57% of individuals were met at the prison gates by their mentor on release, i.e., day of liberation. Some individuals prefer to be met by friends or family. Mentors provide immediate support at this critical juncture, knitting together vital services such as transport, accommodation, Universal Credit, addiction and health and social care.

Individuals usually spend around 12 months on the programme, but some require less time than this. Exit from the programme is planned and agreed with each individual. Support does not stop abruptly unless the individual chooses to disengage.

Between 2013 and 2019, there were 4,137 individual New Routes user journeys[4], with 3,331 individuals participating[5]; i.e., some individuals could have more than one journey over this six-year period

After the eligibility change to include those over age 25 in 2019, the number of individual journeys rose significantly, with 1,450 journeys and 1,413 individuals participating in 2020. Participation further increased to 1,543 journeys in 2021, with 1,501 individuals participating over the year (*Figure 5*).

The uplift in New Routes user journeys seen in 2020 was primarily driven by an increase in the new cohort of individuals, with those aged 26 and over accounting for 85% of participants. After the entry criterium change, only 15% of individuals were males of the original cohort, i.e., those aged between 16 and 25.

The majority of users for the earlier cohort were eligible individuals who were approached by New Routes between 2013 and 2019. Whilst this was still the case after 2020, some individuals were also referred by the Scottish Prison Service or referred themselves to the programme whilst serving their sentence. The average individual was serving a 13-month sentence whilst enrolled on the programme.

Figure 6 presents the New Routes journey highlighting how many individuals are engaged at each stage of assessment and how they exited the programme. From here on, our analysis focuses on those who are reported as 'Customer Starts' on the programme (7,116[6] user journeys).

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[4] See glossary on Page 22.

[5] Years refer to the year they were referred to the programme

[6] The total number of recorded user journeys was 7,130 for 2013 – 2021 based on records at the beginning of the programme; however, 24 individuals did not make it to customer start. Therefore, the number of user journeys drop to 7,116 for our period of evaluation.
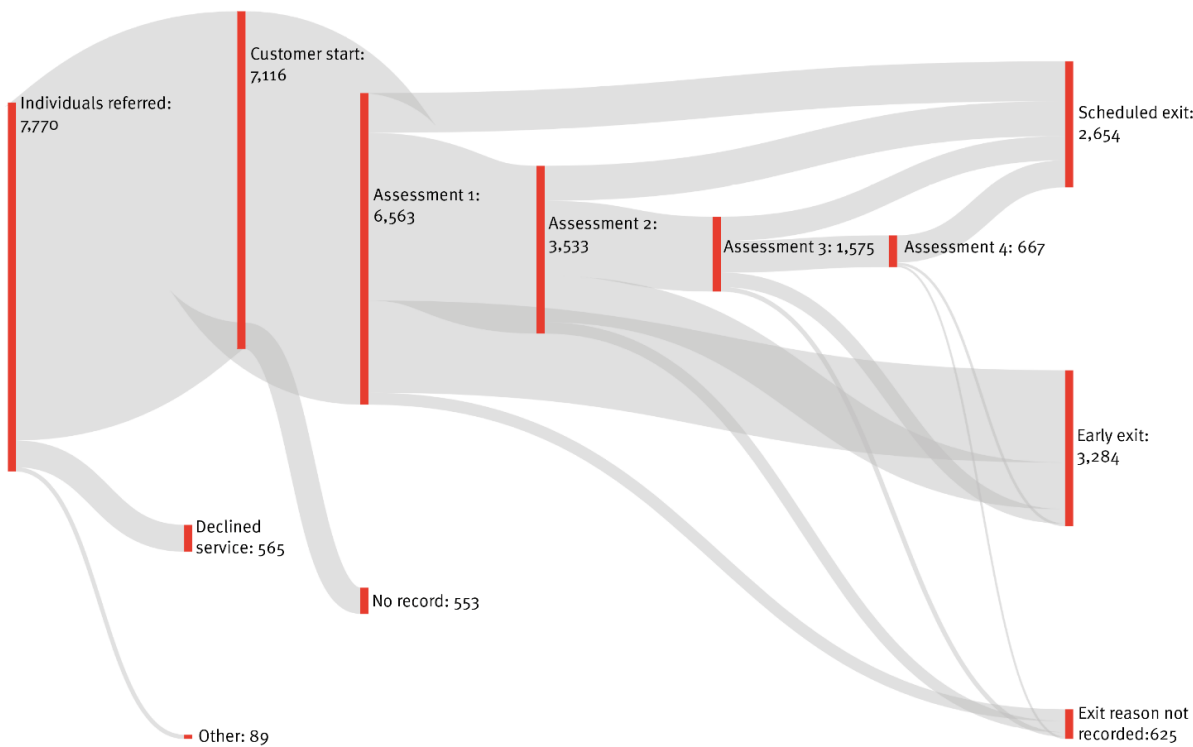
Figure 5: Number of individual user journeys per year, 2013 – 2021
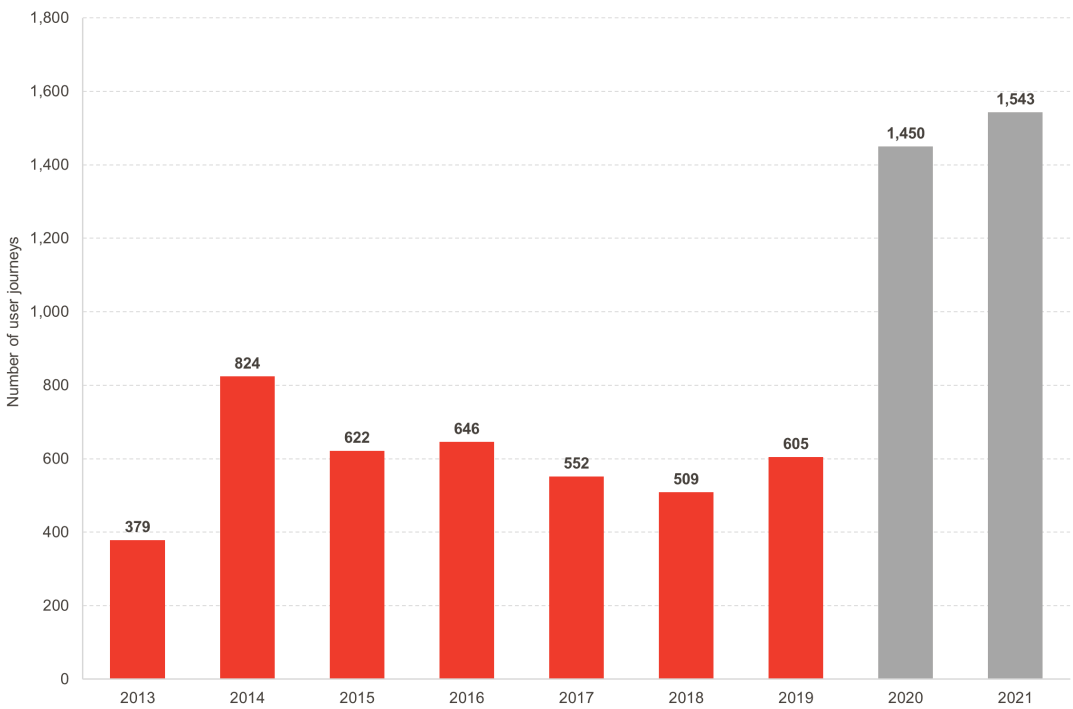
Source: Wise Group

Figure 6: Number of user journeys, 2013 – 2021

Source: Wise Group CRM

Identifying needs

The programme contains up to four 'pillar' assessments. Assessment 1 takes place when the individual enrols; Assessment 2 takes place just before they are released from prison; Assessment 3 takes place after they have been released, and Assessment 4 takes place at the end of the 12-month programme.

Needs Categories

In their assessments, individuals assess their personal needs with their mentor. There are 10 main need categories (*Figure 7*).

Individuals self-report a score of 1-4 depending on how they feel about their circumstances and how that fits with the identified needs matrix. If an individual scores 1, 2 or 3, then this will be identified as a need and appropriate support will be put in place. A score of 4 means that the individual does not require support in this area.

For example, let's consider the Housing need category. A score of 1 might relate to a homeless individual who requires crisis-level intervention. A score of 4 might relate to an individual living in safe, secure, affordable and well-located accommodation. A score between 1 and 4 could mean that there are elements that need to be improved – for example, their housing may be too expensive for the individual to live in long-term or too far away from support networks.

Figure 7: 10 Need categories
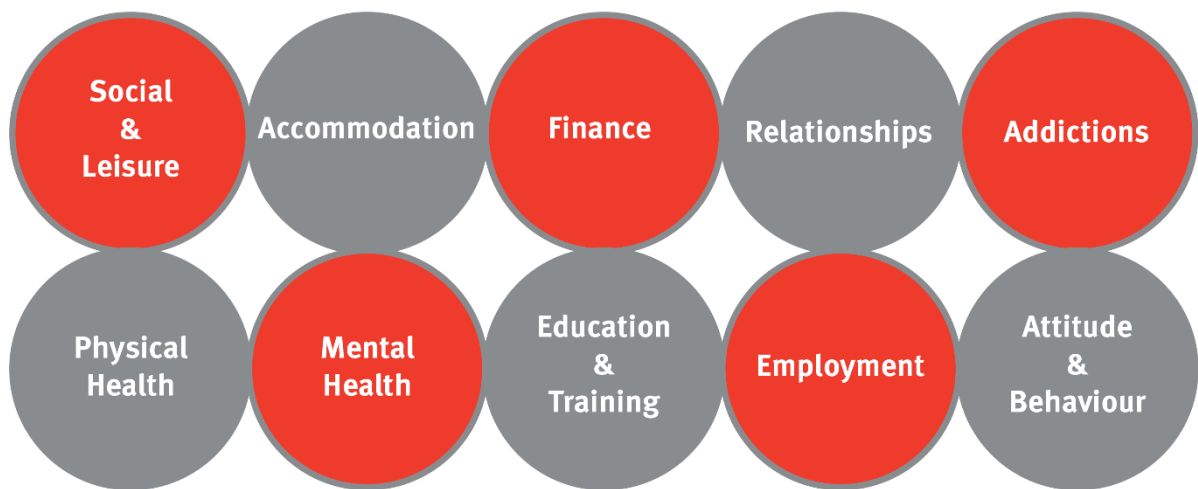
Individuals may also see changes in their circumstances between assessments which means an issue that was once not identified becomes an identified need for the individual. For example, an individual may become homeless during their time on the programme.

For the 2013-2019 cohort:

■ The most common needs identified for individuals on the programme were employment (94%), finance (91%) and education and training (89%) (*Figure 8*).

■ Accommodation was another common need (78%). Indeed, only 17% of participants reported a permanent tenancy when enrolling in the programme.

For the 2020-2021 cohort:

- The most common needs identified for individuals on the programme were finance (91%) and employment (86%).

- 81% of individuals also identified mental health and accommodation as a need.

Figure 8: Number of individuals with a need identified during the New Routes programme
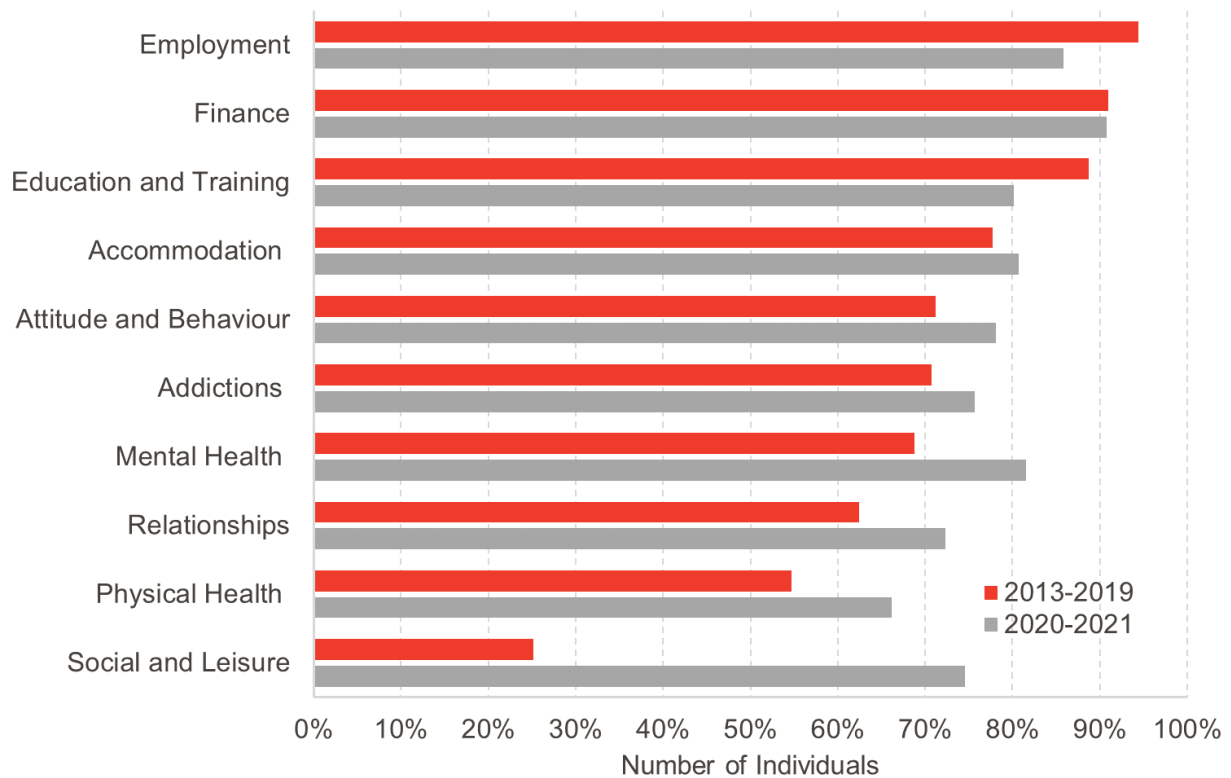
Source: Wise Group

Individuals may tend to reveal more once enrolled on the programme as trust and confidence in the relationship with the mentor develops. This may mean a need is identified later in the programme for an individual that they have not previously disclosed.

For example, over 70% of individuals in the 2013-2019 cohort identified addiction as a need, but only 60% of the sample reported that they suffered from addiction issues at the referral meeting.

69% of individuals also identified mental health as a need, with only 51% of individuals reporting struggles with mental health upon enrolment to the programme.

Case Study: Amy and Dylan

Dylan was diagnosed with Schizophrenia and ADHD prior to meeting me but was not receiving treatment for this. He had struggled with substance misuse and ended up returning to prison.

During his time in prison, we discussed his short-term and long-term plans. This included getting a house, a job and a car. Dylan was going to be homeless upon release, so we completed a housing application in advance. We also completed a Welfare Grant application to ensure he was financially secure enough to purchase food and clothes before his benefits had been set up.

Dylan was initially very dependent on illegal substances to regulate his mood - this resulted in his arrest. I referred Dylan to Hillcrest Futures for regular substance use support. He was supported to change his substance use habits, and thankfully has not used Valium since. Following this, I registered Dylan with a GP and ensured a referral to a psychiatrist was made. Dylan now meets with the psychiatrist every few months and is on appropriate medication, and is feeling much, much better mentally.

We completed the appropriate applications to ensure Dylan was receiving Universal Credit, Personal Independence Payment, and Lower Rate Work Capability. This ensured Dylan was in a stable financial position and ended his financial dependence on his family. This massively reduced the strain on their relationship.

Dylan was keen to get into work, so we created a CV, covering letter and an 'Indeed' account. Dylan had very few qualifications from school as he left early and had not completed college. I put him in touch with HELM training and he successfully completed the training programme. HELM organised an interview with CJ Laing in which he was successful. This is his first job, he loves it, and is doing exceptionally well. I also completed an ILF Transition fund application and Dylan was awarded funding to cover driving lessons, his provisional and practical test.

Dylan has now signed for his own tenancy, which he is ecstatic about, and welcomed a baby with his partner in 2022. He is looking forward to spending all his wages on his partner, baby, and a new car when the time comes.

Measuring the programme's success

In this report, we utilised information generated by the New Routes PSP that monitors the progress of individuals engaged with New Routes. Needs scores and outcomes are agreed upon between mentors and individuals during their time together on the programme.

Engagement

Whether or not people engage in the programme for the full four assessments depends on the individual; therefore, 'completing' the full 12-month programme is not a good barometer of success.

Instead, to provide a framework for analysis, we identified whether or not people had a 'scheduled' or 'early' exit so we can analyse outcomes for individuals who engage in the programme as intended versus those who choose to disengage from the service early without the agreement of their mentor.

An 'early' exit does not mean that the individual has not received benefit from their time on their programme, and we will separately analyse outcomes for this group of individuals.

We looked at two different metrics:

1. Improvement of agreed scores over the course of the time on the programme (distance travelled)

2. Self-assessed achievement of Wise Group outcomes, set by individuals at the start of the programme

Distance Travelled

We analysed individual programme records to identify where an individual has an improved score at their last assessment compared to their score at their first assessment.

For example, if an individual enters the programme, scores 1 at their first assessment for the Addiction category and then leaves the programme after their **last** assessment in which they received a score of 2, we denote this as an improvement.

Table 1 shows the share of programmes where an individual showed any improvement (i.e., had a score higher in their last assessment than their first assessment) and the success rate as a percentage of those who had this need identified at their first assessment[7].

Finance was the need category in which the highest share of individuals improved their circumstances for both the 2013-19 and the 2020-21 cohorts. For 2013-2019, 38% (16- to 25-year-olds) with a scheduled exit improved their circumstances and 11% of those who exited early. During 2020-21, 64% of individuals (over 16 years old) with a scheduled exit and 15% with an early exit showed an improvement in circumstances. This demonstrates 49% in 2013-19 and 79% in 2020/21.

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[7] This only includes those scoring 1-3 in their first assessment, i.e., those with a need identified

Table 1: Share of programmes where an individual with a need identified improved their circumstances compared to first assessment, by exit type[8], 2013 – 2021

	2013 - 2019				2020 - 2021			
	% with improved score				**% with improved score**			
	# of individuals with identified need	*Total*	*Scheduled*	*Early exit*	*# of individuals with identified need*	*Total*	*Scheduled*	*Early exit*
Accommodation	3,048	26%	37%	14%	1,866	37%	62%	25%
Addictions	2,782	25%	35%	14%	1,734	27%	52%	15%
Attitude & Behaviour	2,799	23%	32%	12%	1,789	23%	43%	15%
Education & Training	3,539	16%	23%	10%	1,839	13%	27%	7%
Employment	3,826	15%	22%	9%	1,987	14%	27%	8%
Finance	3,646	26%	38%	15%	2,124	36%	64%	25%
Mental Health	2,688	25%	36%	12%	1,875	26%	49%	16%
Physical Health	2,076	22%	31%	9%	1,503	24%	47%	14%
Relationships	2,389	19%	27%	9%	1,645	22%	42%	14%
Social & Leisure	1,025	3%	4%	0%	1,712	19%	38%	12%

Source: Wise Group CRM

Next, by looking at how scores have changed between each assessment, we can also measure the distance an individual has travelled at different points when on the programme.

We analysed individual programmes where an individual has an improved identified need score at a later assessment compared to their score at the previous one.

We analysed the share of individuals who both complete the next assessment **and** have an improved score, i.e., if an individual scores 2 at their first assessment and a 3 at the following assessment then this is an improvement.

At each stage of assessment, we consider only those who have the need identified and have recorded a score at that stage. For example, for the accommodation category, despite 3,048 programmes having individuals with this need identified at stage 1, only 1,562 recorded a need score at stage 2. We take those improving as a share of this latter figure to accurately capture improvement rates and to discount those who drop out of the programme between assessments or where records are incomplete.

This analysis can also only be done at an individual programme level as opposed to an individual person level. This is because individuals completing the programme more than once will have a new set of assessments and scores every time they complete the programme.

The results suggest that individuals in both the 2013-19 and 2020-22 cohorts tend to make consistent levels of improvements throughout their time on the programme (***Table 2***).

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[8] Exit type data exists for only 72%, on average, of individuals in the 2020-2021 cohort.

Table 2: Share of programmes where an individual with identified improved on need score at each assessment stage, 2013 - 2021

	2013 - 2019			2020 - 2021		
	Stage 1 to Stage 2	Stage 2 to Stage 3	Stage 3 to Stage 4	Stage 1 to Stage 2	Stage 2 to Stage 3	Stage 3 to Stage 4
Accommodation	27%	50%	36%	43%	62%	42%
Addictions	32%	35%	32%	30%	42%	38%
Attitude & Behaviour	29%	31%	30%	24%	37%	39%
Education & Training	19%	21%	24%	14%	18%	21%
Employment	13%	26%	32%	13%	24%	21%
Finance	25%	54%	42%	38%	75%	51%
Mental Health	32%	33%	30%	27%	39%	37%
Physical Health	27%	28%	34%	27%	34%	39%
Relationships	25%	26%	23%	23%	34%	35%
Social and Leisure	1%	6%	7%	18%	30%	34%

Source: Wise Group

The other way we have looked at reported progress is by looking at outcomes achieved towards reducing offending and building a sustainable future.

Achievement of outcomes should be reasonably consistent with the distance travelled data but is specific to goals individuals set for themselves at the start of the process with their mentor that are agreed to be most appropriate for that individual.

Outcomes are split into both short-term and medium-term outcomes (***Figure 9***).

Short-term outcomes relate to 'internalised changes' in an individual's behaviour, such as a change in their attitude, beliefs and motivations, with the aim to alter the individual's immediate attitude towards criminogenic behaviours.

Medium-term outcomes are designed to be worked towards over longer time horizons and tend to be identified early in the assessment process and worked towards for the duration of the programme.

For both short and medium-term outcomes, outcomes 1 & 2 relate to attitudes and interaction with New Routes, whilst outcomes 3 - 8 refer to aspects of an individual's situation.

All data in this section is taken from Wise Group collected data via the New Routes Mentoring PSP.

Short term outcomes

2013 – 2019 cohort

Over the 7-year period, the most common outcomes worked towards by individuals were S1: Engaged with service and motivated to change behaviour (77%) and S2: Increased motivation to engage with interventions (55%).

These were also the outcomes that had the highest success rate, with 85% of individuals achieving outcome S2 and 80% achieving S1.

Individuals with a scheduled exit achieve a greater improvement in their circumstances across all outcomes, i.e., the longer individuals engage with the programme, success rates tend to be higher.
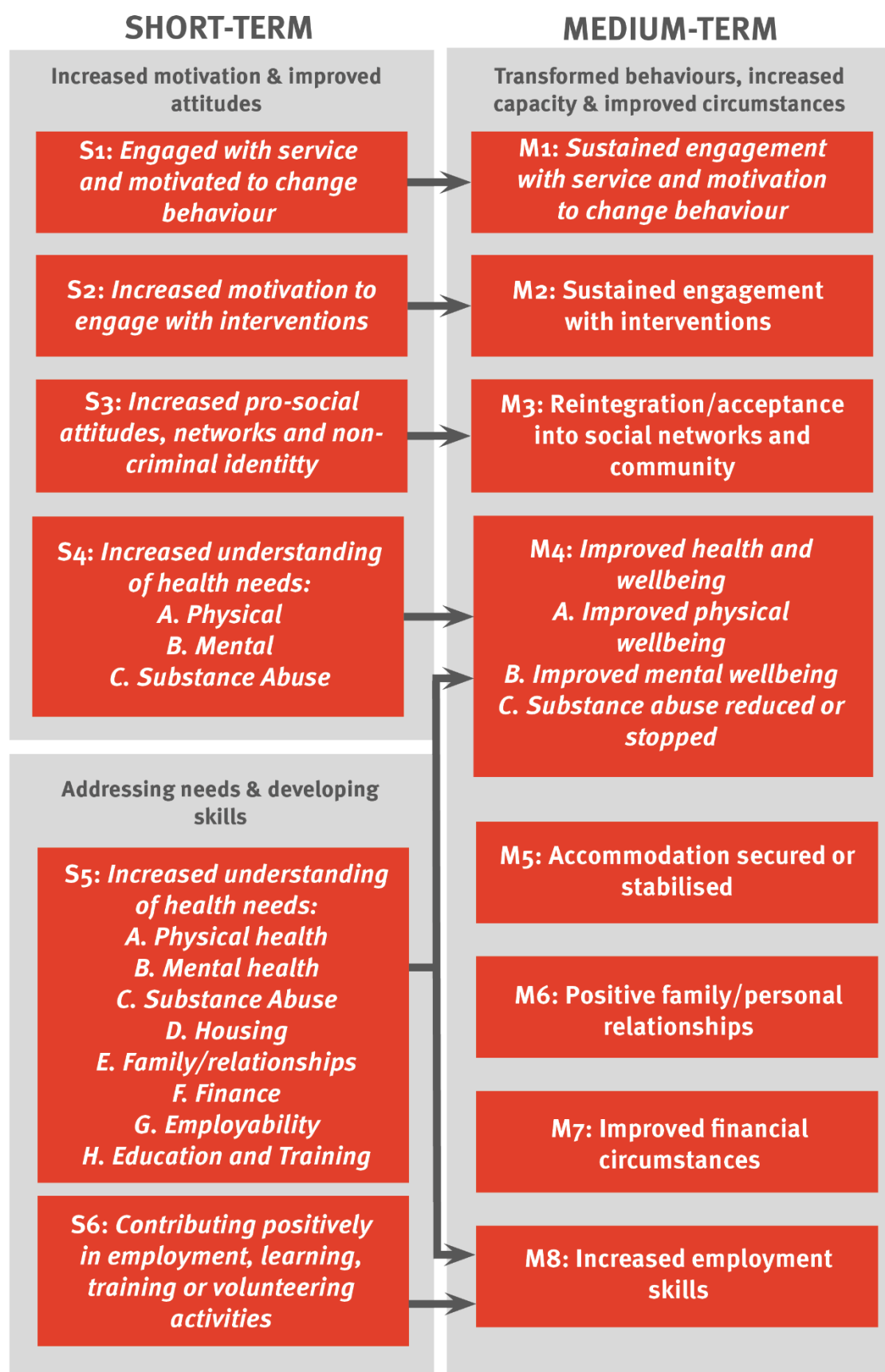
For those individuals who had an early exit from the programme, there were still a high number of outcomes achieved, with an average improvement in circumstances rate of 61%. **Table 3** provides a breakdown of short-term outcomes worked towards and achieved for the 2013-19 cohort.

2020 – 2021 Cohort

For the later cohort of individuals, the most common outcome worked towards was S3: Increased pro-social attitudes, networks, and non-criminal identity, with 80% of individuals working towards and 77% achieving this outcome.

However, despite having a slightly lower number of individuals working towards them, 97% achieved outcome S2: Increased motivation to engage with interventions, with 77% of respondents working towards this outcome. This was the same for S1: Engaged with service and motivated to change behaviour: 73% of individuals worked towards this outcome, with a success rate of 89%.

Figure 9: Short- and medium-term outcomes

SHORT-TERM

Increased motivation & improved attitudes

S1: *Engaged with service and motivated to change behaviour*

S2: *Increased motivation to engage with interventions*

S3: *Increased pro-social attitudes, networks and non-criminal identitty*

S4: *Increased understanding of health needs:*
A. Physical
B. Mental
C. Substance Abuse

Addressing needs & developing skills

S5: *Increased understanding of health needs:*
A. Physical health
B. Mental health
C. Substance Abuse
D. Housing
E. Family/relationships
F. Finance
G. Employability
H. Education and Training

S6: *Contributing positively in employment, learning, training or volunteering activities*

MEDIUM-TERM

Transformed behaviours, increased capacity & improved circumstances

M1: *Sustained engagement with service and motivation to change behaviour*

M2: Sustained engagement with interventions

M3: Reintegration/acceptance into social networks and community

M4: *Improved health and wellbeing*
A. Improved physical wellbeing
B. Improved mental wellbeing
C. Substance abuse reduced or stopped

M5: Accommodation secured or stabilised

M6: Positive family/personal relationships

M7: Improved financial circumstances
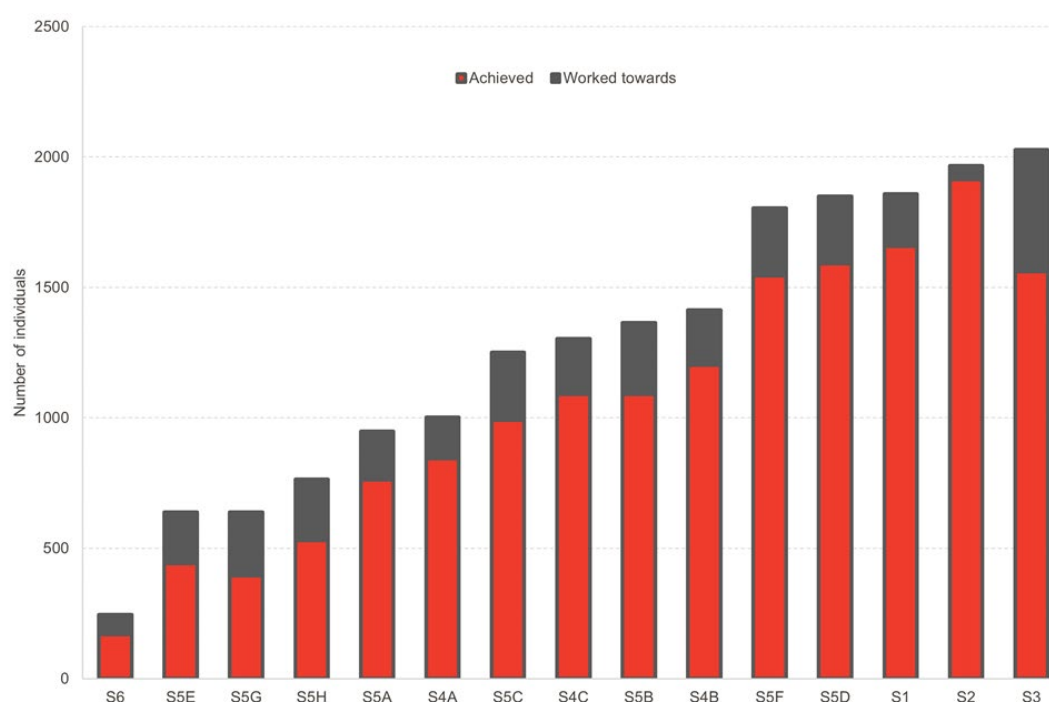
M8: Increased employment skills

Figure 10: Number of individuals working towards and achieving short-term outcomes, 2013 - 2019
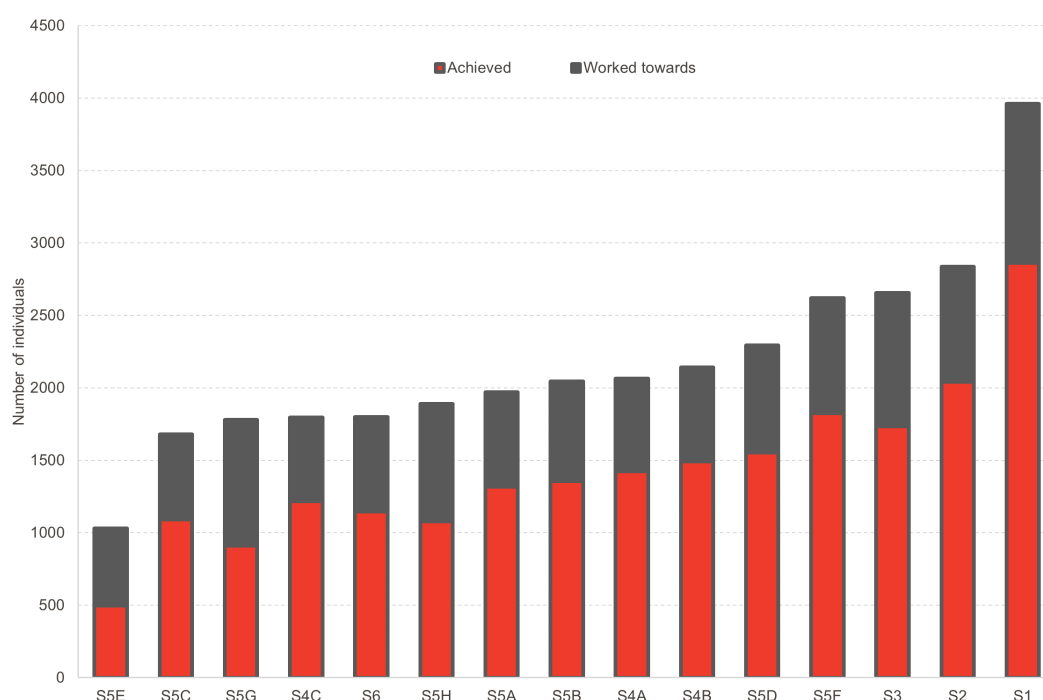
Table 3: Number of individuals working towards and achieving short-term outcomes by exit type (not available for all records), 2013 – 2019

	Description	Scheduled		Early exit	
		Worked towards	*% achieved*	*Worked towards*	*% achieved*
S1	*Engaged & motivated: behaviour*	2062	77%	1909	67%
S2	*Engaged & motivated: interventions*	1663	74%	1174	70%
S3	*Improved attitudes, networks and identity*	1609	70%	1045	59%
	Increased understanding of:				
S4A	*physical health needs*	1315	71%	750	65%
S4B	*mental health needs*	1305	72%	836	66%
S4C	*substance abuse needs*	1104	70%	693	64%
	Engaged with services to support:				
S5A	*improve physical health*	1257	68%	712	65%
S5B	*improve mental health*	1265	67%	780	66%
S5C	*improve substance abuse*	1047	66%	632	63%
S5D	*improve housing*	1419	69%	874	65%
S5E	*improve family/relationships*	697	51%	332	44%
S5F	*improve finance*	1599	73%	1021	64%
S5G	*improve employability*	1155	54%	626	47%
S5H	*improve education and training*	1208	60%	681	52%
S6	*Contributing positively in work-related activities*	1209	67%	591	57%

Figure 11: Number of individuals working towards and achieving short-term outcomes, 2020-21

Table 4: Number of individuals working towards and achieving short-term outcomes by exit type (not available for all records), 2020 – 2021

	Description	Scheduled		Early exit	
		Worked towards	*% achieved*	*Worked towards*	*% achieved*
S1	*Engaged & motivated: behaviour*	469	90%	952	86%
S2	*Engaged & motivated: interventions*	534	98%	947	96%
S3	*Improved attitudes, networks and identity*	534	90%	1001	70%
	Increased understanding of:				
S4A	*physical health needs*	320	91%	403	80%
S4B	*mental health needs*	380	92%	645	85%
S4C	*substance abuse needs*	330	90%	604	83%
	Engaged with services to support:				
S5A	*physical health*	300	88%	381	75%
S5B	*mental health*	367	90%	614	77%
S5C	*substance abuse*	315	88%	573	78%
S5D	*housing*	491	93%	910	84%
S5E	*family/relationships*	207	81%	238	68%
S5F	*finance*	504	96%	809	83%
S5G	*employability*	186	77%	229	59%
S5H	*education and training*	239	85%	296	68%
S6	*Contributing positively in work related activities*	112	74%	82	66%

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Case Study: Mike and John

John's history of offending had been prolific over many years, and he aligned this to his chaotic drug use. In his own words, he used this as a coping mechanism to block out "years of pain due to broken family relationships and trauma". I met whilst John was still in custody, together we identified his areas of needs.

I helped John secure accommodation with City of Edinburgh Council on liberation following 7 years of homelessness. Following this, we liaised with the Council and his solicitor who helped him move from a hostel environment, which he struggled with due to unaddressed underlying trauma. He was transferred to self-contained accommodation which allowed him to feel safe and secure, and in turn he was able to address other areas of need identified, partially stemming from a discussion around Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. With this in mind, I made a referral to The Access Practice for support with a broken neck John suffered in 2017 and a hip replacement he required. Additionally, John received emotional support when hospitalised with an abscess caused by previous intravenous drug use.

Based in a more secure environment, I applied for and was successful in securing a laptop and free data from Connecting Scotland for John. This allowed John to improve his IT skills and, in turn, assisted in his search for employment.

With the assistance from addiction counselling service and experiencing family relationship improvements, John's positive outlook on life improved and he now no longer uses any illegal substance and is drug free. This achievement was very significant for John as he had previous addiction to heroin and was on the Methadone programme. Referred support and repaired family ties was pivotal to reach this destination.

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Medium-term outcomes

2013 – 2019 Cohort

The most common medium-term outcomes worked towards by the early cohort were M1: Sustained engagement with service and motivation to change behaviour, and M5: Accommodation secured or stabilised.

However, whilst the most worked towards outcome was M1, both M5 and M7: Improved financial circumstances had the highest success rates, with 76% of individuals achieving M5 and 79% achieving M7.

2020 – 2021 Cohort

The results were similar for the later 2020 – 2021 cohort. The most common outcome worked towards by individuals was M1: Sustained engagement with service and motivation to change behaviour.

However, common outcomes also included M3: Reintegration/acceptance into social networks and community, and M5: Accommodation secured or stabilised.

These outcomes also had the highest share of individuals achieving them, with 68% of individuals claiming both of these outcomes.
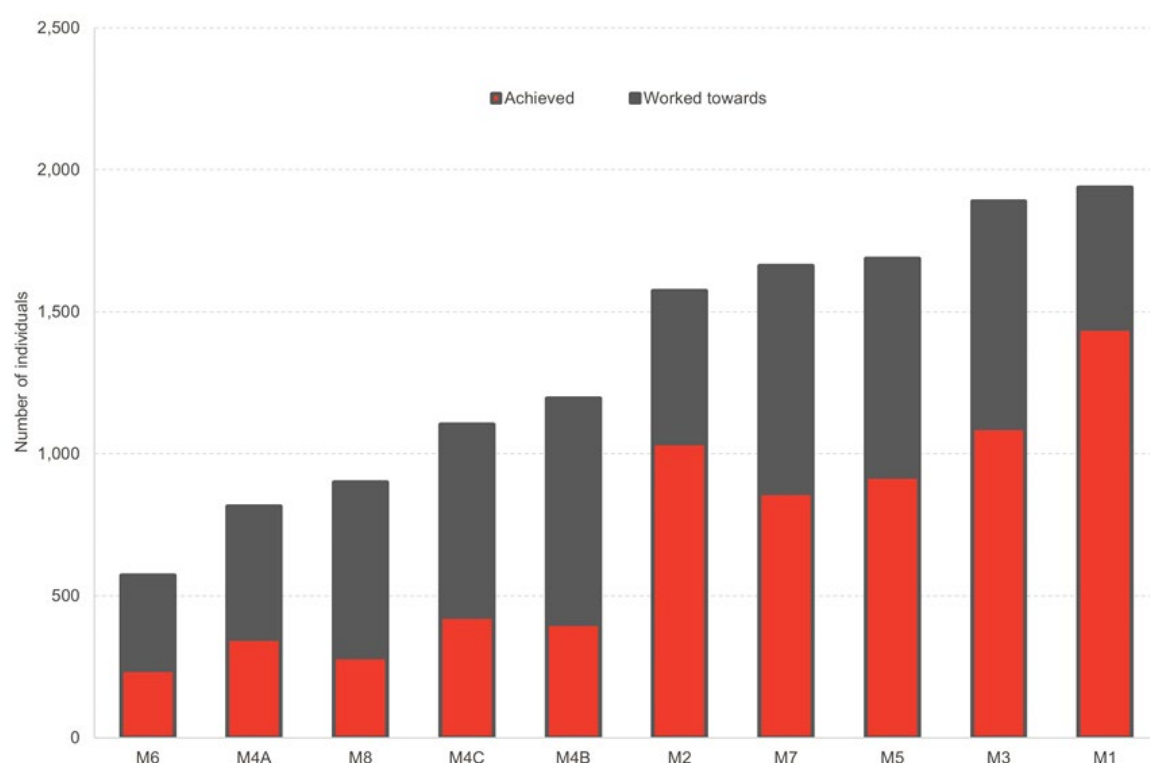
Figure 12: Share of individuals working towards and achieving medium-term outcomes, 2013 - 2019
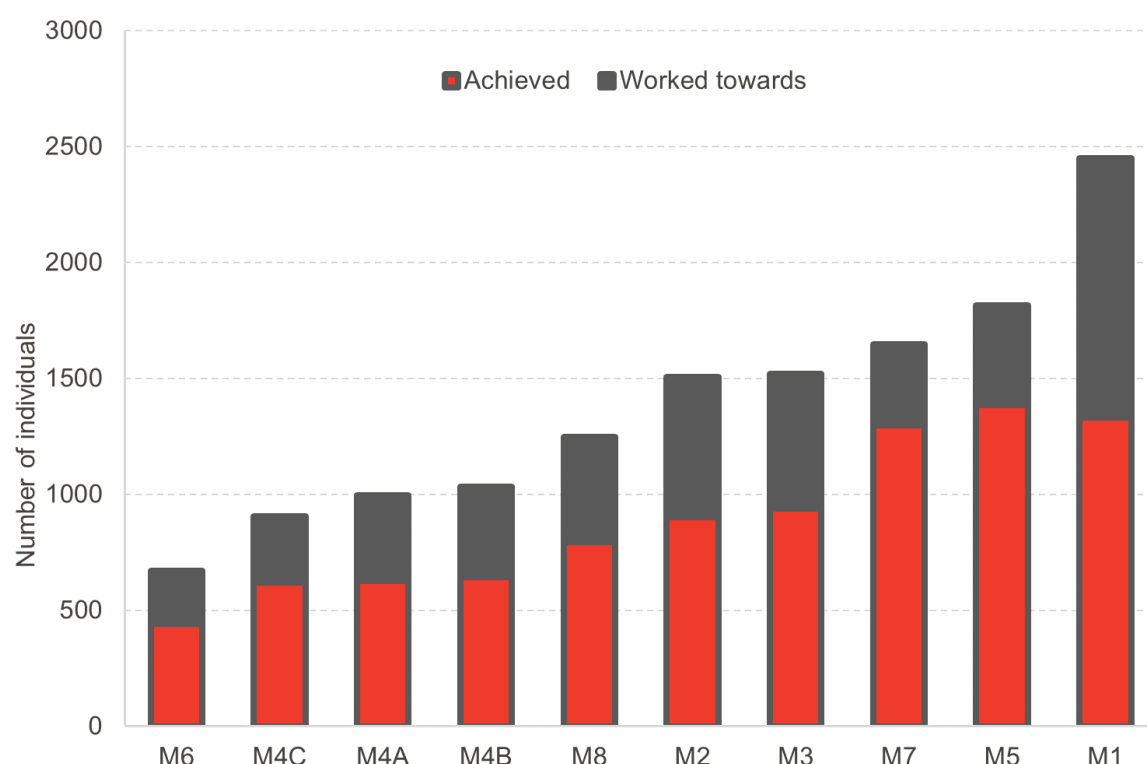
Table 5: Number of individuals working towards and achieving medium-term outcomes by exit type, 2013 – 2019

	Description	Scheduled		Early exit	
		Worked towards	*% achieved*	*Worked towards*	*% achieved*
M1	*Sustained engagement & motivation: behaviour*	1534	63%	916	40%
M2	*Sustained engagement & motivation: interventions*	1079	63%	426	52%
M3	*Reintegration/acceptance in networks/community*	1101	65%	417	54%
M4A	*Improved physical wellbeing*	773	64%	222	61%
M4B	*Improved mental wellbeing*	797	64%	235	57%
M4C	*Substance abuse reduced or stopped*	669	68%	237	70%
M5	*Accommodation secured or stabilised*	1201	77%	613	76%
M6	*Positive family/personal relationships*	521	67%	148	62%
M7	*Improved financial circumstances*	1180	81%	468	74%
M8	*Increased employment skills*	917	65%	331	61%

Figure 13: Share of individuals working towards and achieving medium-term outcomes, 2020-2021

Table 6: Number of individuals working towards and achieving medium-term outcomes by exit type, 2020-2021

	Description	Scheduled		Early exit	
		Worked towards	*% achieved*	*Worked towards*	*% achieved*
M1	*Sustained engagement & motivation: behaviour*	532	90%	912	67%
M2	*Sustained engagement & motivation: interventions*	463	82%	708	55%
M3	*Reintegration/acceptance in networks/community*	497	83%	908	44%
M4A	*Improved physical wellbeing*	266	56%	311	35%
M4B	*Improved mental wellbeing*	330	55%	497	25%
M4C	*Substance abuse reduced or stopped*	284	61%	474	30%
M5	*Accommodation secured or stabilised*	454	70%	806	48%
M6	*Positive family/personal relationships*	189	58%	189	35%
M7	*Improved financial circumstances*	480	74%	702	44%
M8	*Increased employment skills*	281	51%	320	23%

Conclusions

Our analysis of the New Routes PSP records concludes that:

■ Between 2013 and 2019, individuals were eligible for the New Routes Voluntary Throughcare Programme 7,770 times. 92% (7,116) of them began a user journey on the programme, i.e., agreed to participate voluntarily. Of those 7,116, 92% completed a first stage assessment (base line monitoring) and fully enrolled on the programme.

■ New Routes has outreach in all 32 local authorities and operates in all prisons with eligible individuals in Scotland and our analysis shows that individuals do not necessarily live in the same area as the prison they are liberated from. The PSP provides the New Routes service at a national scale with local delivery. If consistency of service provision is a priority of throughcare support across Scotland, the PSP model followed here has advantages over a local scale model.

■ Those that stayed on through the whole programme saw considerably greater improvements compared to those who left the programme early. When comparing individuals leaving the programme early against those who left with a scheduled exit:

  o On average, 78% of individuals with a scheduled exit from the programme achieved short-term outcomes across both age cohorts, compared to a success rate of 69% for individuals with an early exit.

  o For medium-term outcomes, 68% of individuals with a scheduled exit achieved outcomes compared to 51% of individuals with an early exit.

■ When looking at specific outcomes:

  o The most successful short-term outcomes were engagement with the service and motivation to change behaviour, increased motivation to engage with interventions and increased pro-social attitudes, networks and non-criminal identity.

  o This indicates that the programme is successful in achieving its short-term aims: i.e., to increase motivation and improve attitudes.

  o Both employment and finance were the most common identified needs for both cohorts along with high reported success in achieving the employment and finance related outcomes. This indicates a good matching of outcomes to needs and relevant support.

  o For outcomes related to substance misuse, the 2013-2019 cohort (aged under 25 only) reported high success in reducing or stopping substance misuse regardless of exit type (68% and 70% respectively for scheduled and early exits)

  o Individuals in the later cohort (all ages) reported much lower achievement rates for medium-term outcomes related to substance abuse if they left the programme early (70% and 30% respectively for scheduled and early exits). At this point, we do not know whether this is due to the altered age profile or the timing of the later cohort where support took place during the Covid pandemic.

This is the first stage of the work and has been focussed on Wise Group collected data via the New Routes Mentoring PSP.

Future stages will use data to look at other outcomes that can be externally measured, such as rates of recidivism.

One of the main issues with an assessment only using records for prisoners engaged in the service is that it is difficult to fully evaluate the success of the programme. For example:

1. The Wise Group collected data via the New Routes Mentoring PSP currently tracks an individual's progress whilst they are enrolled on the New Routes programme, so there is no information available on their outcomes beyond the programme unless they re-enrol in the programme during a subsequent custodial sentence.

2. Of the individuals who do return to the programme, we cannot tell whether they returned to prison and the programme due to an offence they committed after being on New Routes or prior to enrolling on the programme.

3. It is difficult to estimate the true reduction in reoffending that the programme has given the lack of counterfactual, i.e., a group of individuals who have not gone through the programme and what their outcomes are.

Overcoming these issues is the key part of our next phase of analysis, conducted through a 3-year PhD programme at the University of Strathclyde.

Users of the criminal justice system are tracked using a unique S number, a variable that is recorded in the Wise Group CRM database. For our next phase of research, we hope to link the Wise Group's database to the Scottish Prison Service database (and ideally other available data i.e., NHS data), which will allow users to be tracked from their entry into the prison system, enrolment in New Routes and any subsequent re-entry into the prison system beyond their time on the programme.

Having this much larger database of those who have been through the criminal justice system will then allow for the creation of a control group, i.e., individuals with similar characteristics who have not gone through New Routes. This will enable us to provide a robust analysis of the success, or otherwise, of the programme in achieving longer-term aims, including recidivism, but also in estimating the impact of the potential reduction in crime and improved health and wellbeing of those that have benefited from New Routes.

Further analysis and reports will be released over the next few years as this work progresses.

User Journey/Programme – *describes a person's 0- to 12-month experience on New Routes. Every time an individual participates, they complete a programme or user journey*

Individual – *describes each person who participates in New Routes, one individual can complete multiple user journeys.*

Identified need – *individuals are assessed multiple times during a user journey where their needs are assessed. An identified need refers to an individual needing help in a particular area, i.e., a score between 1 and 3.*

Outcome – *during a user journey, individuals work towards outcomes, both short and medium term noting where their circumstances merit them to achieve these outcomes.*

Scheduled/Planned – *when an individual comes to a mutual end to the programme and goes through the procedure to finish their New Routes journey, their exit is marked as planned or scheduled.*

Early exit – *when an individual leaves the programme unexpectedly, disengages with the service or their time on New Routes comes to an abrupt end then their exit is marked as early exit.*

This project is the first report as part of a 3-year partnership, commissioned by the Wise Group.