



# Strategic Plan 2016-2019

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# Introduction

Women's Breakout is the only organisation that exists to shape national and local approaches to working with women who present with vulnerabilities and are in contact with, or at risk of becoming involved in, the Criminal Justice System. We are a dynamic and robust national umbrella organisation, and we hold a unique position in providing a collective voice for the women who are working to support this cohort of women - using their collective knowledge and experiences to bring strategic change in respect of women impacted by the Criminal Justice System.

Working closely with its membership organisations, Women's Breakout aims to prevent women from entering a cycle of offending behaviour and involvement with criminal justice, including prison. We recognise that the causes of offending are multifaceted and that a holistic response is therefore a prerequisite for success in reducing offending but also in enabling women to lead successful lives more broadly. This will include reuniting families, reducing substance abuse, securing accommodation, facilitating training and employment, and accessing mental health treatment.

Our member organisations have extensive track records in providing services to women who present with vulnerabilities and complex needs, and they use a proven successful model to provide services to women offenders across England and Wales. They are doing an extraordinary job of providing vital services to women. Many of them are very small organisations, stretched to the absolute limit in vital direct service delivery, and Women's Breakout has a unique and valuable role as a central organisation in providing advocacy and support to our members.

This document sets out our plans for the next three years. We hope you find it interesting and if you would like to know more, or if you would like to work with us, then please do contact us.

Jackie Russell  
Director



Roma Hooper  
Chair



# A brief history

Women's Breakout was established in 2010 to bring a strategic focus to what was a fragmented approach to funding and embedding services that work for women in the Criminal Justice System.

Our member organisations have been delivering holistic, gender-specific services for women with vulnerabilities for many years. Following the publication of the Corston Report in 2007, it was recognised that the models of delivery in Women's Community Centres could also provide effective solutions for women in the Criminal Justice System. Since that time, the network of organisations delivering these services has grown, but funding for such services continues to be under threat.

When it became clear that these valuable interventions were not being embedded into mainstream service delivery Women's Breakout grew from a forum that shared good practice into a strategic and co-ordinating organisation.

The last four years have been characterised by a changing local and central government context and we have worked hard to ensure that the expert and collective voice of Women's Community Services has been heard during major reorganisation. There have been huge changes in the organisation and delivery of local, community based services for women with vulnerabilities and complex needs; and Women's Breakout has been able to represent and speak for the sector, translate these changes for our membership, and support our members through these difficult times.

We have developed our focus to respond to the needs of our members over this time. Initially, the focus was in sharing good practice, providing networking opportunities and developing our presence in strategic arenas. We developed opportunities to speak out for the sector, and to promote the impact of the work of our member organisations. We developed the collective voice of women who have been impacted by the Criminal Justice System and continued to develop our work in representing the sector in the transfer of funding to local commissioners. We have grappled with the Transforming Rehabilitation agenda to ensure that the impact of this initiative on our sector, key stakeholders, and the women we serve is understood by government; and to ensure that new providers in the private sector understand the quality and benefits of the services provided by our member organisations. At the same time, we have been working to develop a Social Impact Bond funded network of service providers – an exciting and innovative development that could signal a step change in embedding gender specific services into local delivery through a whole system approach.

# Our vision and purpose

## Our Vision

To see holistic, gender specific approaches for women who present with vulnerabilities and complex needs (including those impacted by the criminal justice system) integrated into local mainstream provision; thereby contributing to a significant improvement in the health and well being of women and their families and a reduction in the number of women coming into contact with the criminal justice system.

## Mission statement

We will achieve this vision by focusing on two areas:

1. Keeping close to the needs and aspirations of our member organisations and developing the tools and delivering the support that are a priority for our member organisations
2. Acting as the strongest voice and advocate to influence policy making and delivery through collaboration with other strategic agencies and organisations

## What our members say

Feedback from our members (*Members Survey 2014*) evidences that Women's Breakout has been an essential and highly valued support for the Women's Community Services and in particular, our members' value:

- Women's Breakout representing the sector and keeping the issue of women offenders in the eyes of commissioners.
- The circulating of highly targeted, specific, useful information.
- Confidence that Women's Breakout is a reliable source of information.
- Networking and feeling part of something much bigger.

The two priority issues for 2015 were funding and Transforming Rehabilitation; and representing the sector was also seen as important. Our work and achievements for 2015/16 reflect these priorities (see Appendix Three).

# If Women's Breakout were not there

**A small but important piece of the national jigsaw for women who present with vulnerabilities would be missing.**

**The story about what is happening nationally to women with vulnerabilities and complex needs who have offended and are being managed in the community would not be told.**

**Our member organisations would need to look in more places to find the information that is relevant to their areas of work.**

**Smaller, specialist organisations would not get the help and support that they need to ensure that their voice is heard.**

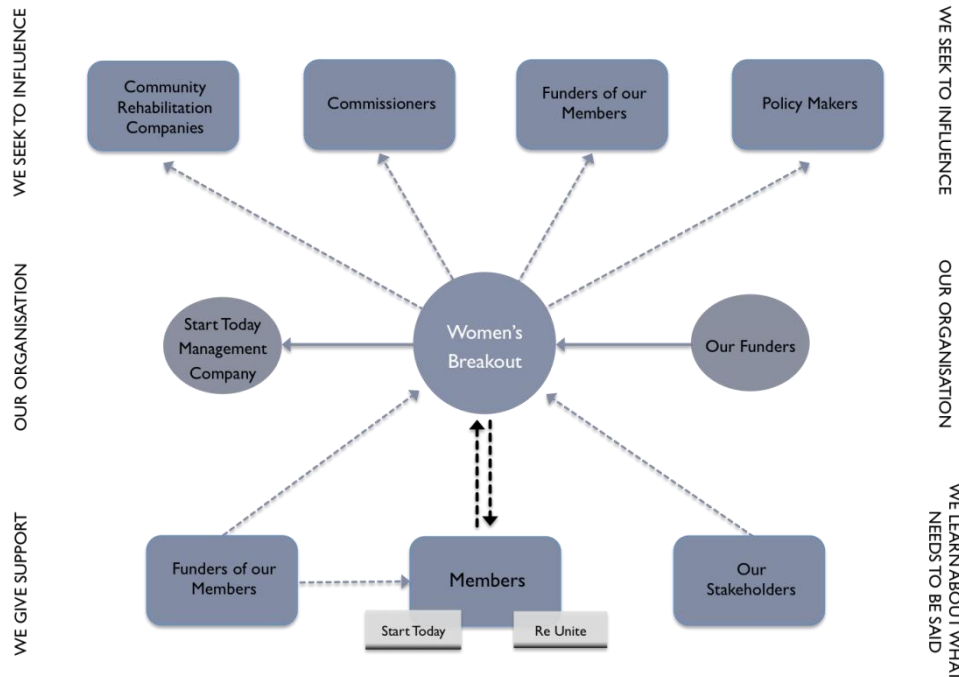
**Organisations would need to invest more of their precious time in attending national events and translating national messages thus reducing the level of direct service provision to women.**

# How we work

Women's Breakout is a membership organisation of 56 organisations that form a network of service providers across England and Wales. Within this network we have two specialist networks: (i) the Start Today Network of eight organisations supporting the development of a Social Impact Bond for the sector; and (ii) the re-Unite Network of twelve organisations delivering on a model of family reunification where children have been in care.

We work closely with our members to understand what is going on for them, so that we can seek their views and best support their needs. We also participate in key areas of strategic influence to advocate for our members, and women with vulnerabilities; and we engage with a range of key stakeholders who have an interest in improving outcomes for women.

Women's Breakout is funded primarily through a mix of donations, grants and contracts for services. We have a staff team of two and a board of ten Trustees.



Women's Breakout is a company limited by guarantee (Company Number: 8377494) and an independent charity (Charity Number: 1150996).

We are governed by Articles of Association and a Board of Trustees comprising senior representatives from member organisations, and others who are co-opted for specific skills and experience.

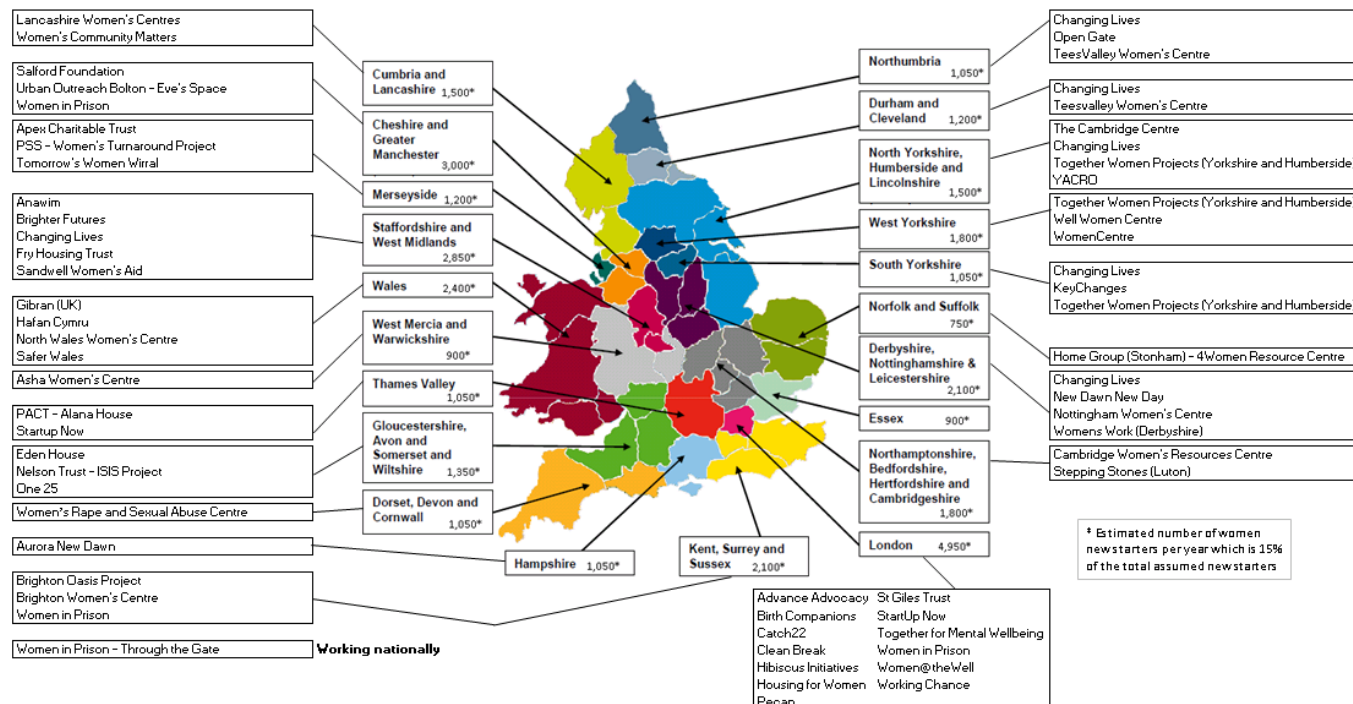
*(See Appendix Two for Trustees)*

# Our current membership

We know that there are many organisations providing services for female offenders; we are confident that a substantial proportion of service providers offering gender specific, holistic, community based services for women with vulnerabilities and complex need are Women's Breakout members. As a national organisation that draws staff and Trustees from across the country, we are uniquely placed to provide truly geographical representation. The membership of Women's Breakout is as follows:

	2014/15	2013/14
Full Members	30	31
Associate Members	19	16
Affiliate	7	6
Individual	7	6

(See Appendix One for membership criteria)



# A Changing Landscape

During the last four years there has been a considerable shift in the external landscape.

In 2008 services for women with vulnerabilities and complex needs, and a supporting infrastructure, were seen to be a priority with a national focus for government and for grant givers and in 2011 the membership of Women's Breakout consisted of the 31 organisations that received funding from the Ministry of Justice. Lines of communication were clear and simple for Women's Breakout acting at a strategic level.

However, ministerial interest was waning, and funding for enhanced community services for women in the criminal justice system transferred from the Ministry of Justice to the Women's Diversionary Fund, then to the National Offender Management Service (NOMS); then to Probation Trusts; then to Community Rehabilitation Companies owned substantially by the private sector. It has been challenging to retain a strategic/national focus on services for women with vulnerabilities in this context, and protected budgets for female offenders no longer exist at a local level.

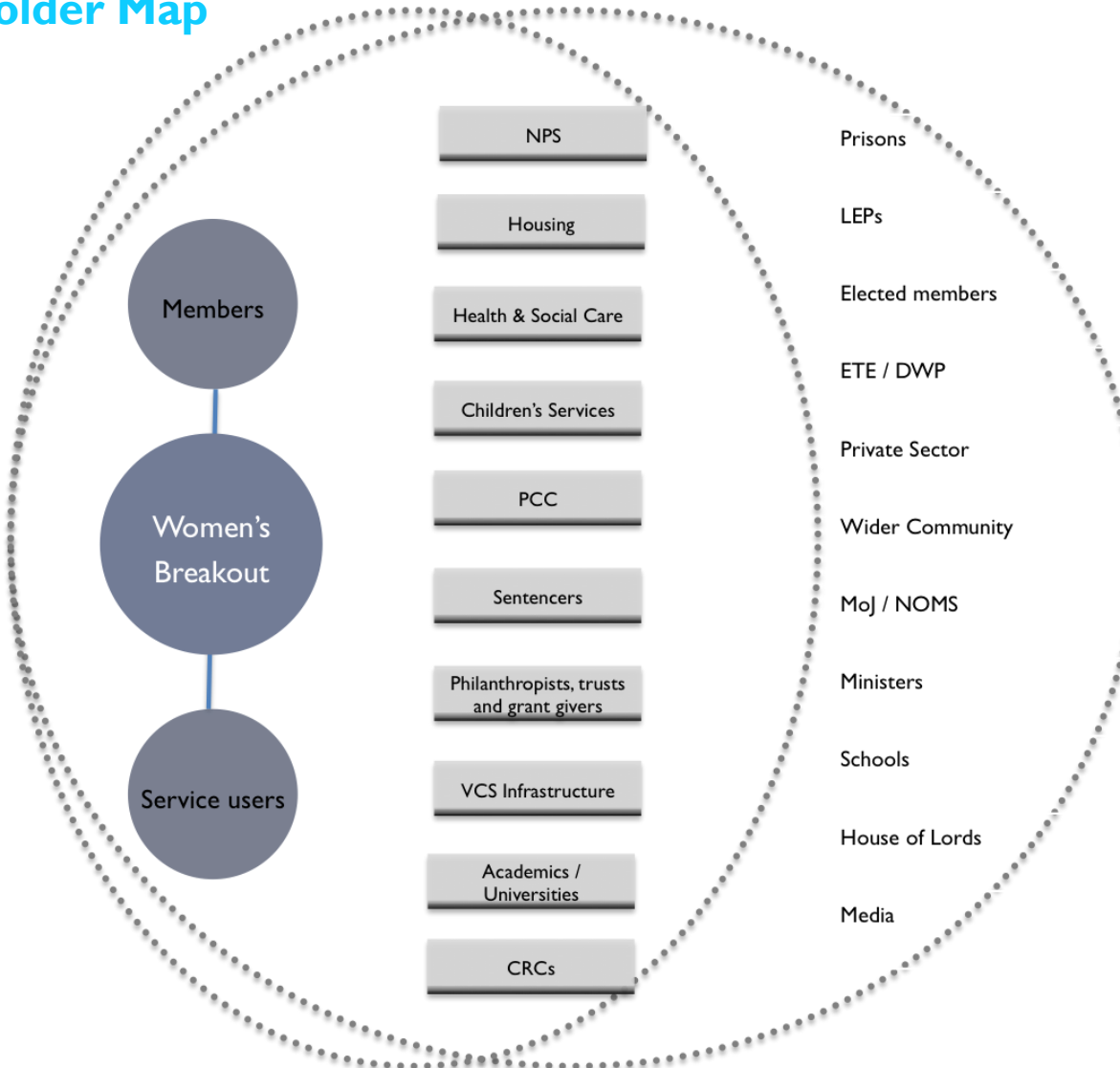
At the same time as strategic relationships have become very complex, it has become increasingly challenging to secure funding for national infrastructure organisations working in this arena. The government agenda has increasingly focussed on local and private sector providers; and grant givers appear reluctant to support provision so embedded in the private sector. As such, Women's Breakout is no longer funded by government or charitable grants, but has secured two major donations and two contracts for providing services.

But the world has also changed for our member organisations. Women's Breakout worked hard to support our members through the Transforming Rehabilitation journey, and this support is continuing today. Funding for both Women's Breakout and our member organisations has become even more uncertain and it is in this context that Women's Breakout has embarked on developing a Social Impact Bond funded delivery network.

As the landscape in which we operate has shifted and changed, so too has the stakeholder map. We have historically developed close relationships with criminal justice agencies in both the statutory and charitable sector, and this has also reflected on our sources of funding. While our stakeholder network in criminal justice will remain important, our shifting focus on complex needs and vulnerability on one hand, and other commissioners who benefit from our members' services on the other hand will take us closer to stakeholders with an interest in housing, children, community governance and health.

# A Changing Landscape

## Stakeholder Map



This stakeholder map illustrates the wide range of organisations and agencies that Women's Breakout works with, and attempts to influence. The agencies closest to Women's Breakout includes those that we want to develop closer working relationships with as we move into delivering this strategic plan in 2016-2019.

# A Changing Landscape

Over the last three years the key changes to the sector that Women's Breakout has a role in supporting include:

- **Context**

Localism has become a dominant government agenda.

Competition for reducing resources has increased and in this context there has been less appetite for collaboration.

Community Rehabilitation Companies are an important commissioner and new relationships are being worked through.

- **Funding and delivery models**

In general direct funding for female offenders has been significantly reduced and this has impacted on the potential to deliver holistic models.

Restricted funding streams have led to diversification, and alongside that the potential loss of specialism of working at points of early intervention and with women who are at risk of coming into the criminal justice system.

Community Rehabilitation Companies appear to favour a universal offer, less intensive support, group work and mentoring - which is cheaper but not proven to be more effective.

Funding of services has become more complex.

- **Data and influence**

Projects have been challenged to communicate their worth and they need to further improve data systems to meet the needs of commissioners.

The historical struggle for the sector to be heard in a socio political context has continued and many member organisations have not been able to find opportunities to advocate their work and steer the thinking. In this changing context, influencing at new levels requires a different skill set and new ways of networking.

- **Organisational change**

Member organisations operating in the new world of Transforming Rehabilitation will be subject to target driven models which many organisations will find challenging and resource intensive to support the required change.

Projects have to manage/build a mixed funding economy which will require organisational change and adaptation to achieve, including extending organisational infrastructure.

# Key challenges and opportunities for the future

## Challenges

- Lack of vision and commitment to securing holistic services for women by MoJ/NOMS, and distancing from women's community services and Women's Breakout.; we are no longer a member of the ministerial group for female offenders.
- Reluctance of funders to fund services that the private sector are responsible for; CRC's expectation that organisations will find match funding.
- Government stability for next four years.
- Difficulty for members in retaining organisational purpose and values while securing funding.
- Uncertainty of future priorities for charitable grant funders given significant reduction of statutory funding and increase in applications. Many are reviewing their strategic direction and criteria. This is a challenge for both WB as well as members.
- Local Authority cuts placing additional pressures on sector. This is especially impacted by budget reduction to Public Health.

## Opportunities

- The sector needs support through this period of change.
- To tell the story of the impact of the Transforming Rehabilitation initiative on members and their service users, and influence funders.
- Working with housing providers to support women to maintain tenancies, thereby saving the housing provider money.
- Tracking the impact of the decisions of major funders and emerging funding streams on our sector.
- Evidencing the economic argument.
- Above cuts in statutory funding mean that Commissioners will need to find ways to meet outcomes with reduced costs. The women's sector is well placed to make significant cost benefits to a number of commissioning priorities.

# Future Role and Purpose

Women's Breakout is responsive to a national membership and to changing and emerging models of delivery. We develop a relationship with each of our member organisations and we know about the challenges that each of them face. We provide capacity building support and we are best placed to identify and develop solutions with them, and we are able to put organisations in touch with other organisations for support.

We now need to:

- Continue to influence on matters for the sector, clarifying the national argument in relation to appropriate and potentially extended use of centres for women, and re defining our vision so that Women's Breakout becomes the organisation of choice for stakeholders to refer to, and members to go to, for support and advice.
- Support the sector to understand and respond to the shift in their strategic landscapes and offer practical and realistic tools to help members to position themselves better in their local strategic environments.
- Steer the conversation for the sector, and change our strategy from 'infrastructure' to 'enable and empower'. This requires enabling and supporting member organisations to behave in a different way through the development of their knowledge and skills.

Our core activities will be focussed on:

- 1 Representation, voice and influence
- 2 Communication, leadership and partnership
- 3 Capacity building and quality
- 4 Organisational development

# Key Work Area 1

Objective	Goals 2016/2019	Priorities 2016/2017
Representation, voice and influence	<p>Build a strong and influential local voice.</p> <p>Ensure that the contribution of our member organisations to work with female offenders is promoted in strategic arenas.</p> <p>Provide platforms for experts by experience to be heard by people in positions of influence and power.</p> <p>Identify and prioritize our current stakeholders at a local and national level.</p> <p>Encourage grant funders to review their grant strategies.</p> <p>Identify how and where we need to focus our energy to influence, including extending our engagement with Community Rehabilitation Companies.</p>	<p>Support member organisations to become more agile, to present themselves positively to funders, to position themselves and influence at a local level while at the same time staying true to their values and ethos.</p> <p>Develop a set of tools that support organisations to develop their organisation and voice. See tool kit (Objective 2)</p> <p>Advocate on behalf of our members.</p> <p>Ensure that the impact of the Transforming Rehabilitation initiative on the women's sector is heard in government.</p> <p>Develop and promote our work on Mothers in the Criminal Justice System and supporting family re-unification.</p> <p>Revise, undertake and promote the Annual (Performance) Survey.</p> <p>AGM 2016 to showcase the work of our members.</p> <p>Develop organizational key messages in line with identified stakeholders.</p> <p>Build relationships with PCC's, Housing and Children's commissioners in targeted areas.</p> <p>Host a funders roundtable.</p> <p>Establish an Advisory Board.</p> <p>Organise a sharing event on TR – what has gone well, what has not.</p>

# Key Work Area 2

Objective	Goals 2016/2019	Priorities 2016/2017
Communication, leadership and partnership	<p>Develop our membership.</p> <p>Provide 'consultancy' based support to our member organisations.</p> <p>Pilot the development of a local/regional approach to working with women with vulnerabilities and complex needs</p> <p>Encourage sharing of success, innovation and quality.</p> <p>Extend communication, including social media tools and technology to become more visible and responsive.</p> <p>Work with other voluntary and community sector infrastructure organisations to ensure impact and effectiveness.</p>	<p>Increase our full and associate membership by identifying other organisations that are working on gender specific, holistic solutions for women with vulnerabilities and complex needs.</p> <p>Visit 10 member organisations. Translate national policy direction for our members. Take the questions of our members to other experts in the sector and feedback answers.</p> <p>Working with four of our member organisations to explore a whole system approach and increase potential commissioners.</p> <p>Complete and pilot the WB quality standard. Provide opportunities for member organisations to come together around specific topics. Share the learning from the SIB across the wider membership.</p> <p>Strengthen our social media presence. Publish 10 e-bulletins and ensure circulation is targeted and extensive. Regular tweeting. Update of website and exploring funding to improve website to target potential funders. Develop a case study template for the website.</p> <p>Continue close working with Women in Prison, Clinks, Revolving Doors, Prison Reform Trust, Women's Resource Centre.</p>

# Key Work Area 3

Objective	Goals 2016/2019	Priorities 2016/2017
Capacity building and quality	<p>Develop a set of tools that enable projects to diversify their funding sources and service offers and to become confident to collaborate and to build partnerships with broader stakeholders.</p> <p>Improve the evidence base of effectiveness and impact of women's community services.</p>	<p>Produce 7 Fact sheets: findings from our members, key findings from research, the world post TR, selective funding applications, understanding the new customer/ stakeholder environment, delivering the services we want to deliver, the future of centre based work.</p> <p>Develop an impact measurement tool. Effective use of data and learning from the Social Impact Bond. Develop and market defined quality processes to the sector and with potential commissioners.</p>

# Key Work Area 4

Objective	Goals 2016/2019	Priorities 2016/2017
4a: Project management and delivery undertaken in pursuit of objectives 1, 2 and 3	<p>Work with eight of our member organisations and Bates Wells Braithwaite to bring a Social Impact Bond to market and establish and oversee the Management Company. (25% of organisations effort)</p> <p>Host the Re-Unit Network and deliver the obligations set out in the contract. (10% of organisations effort)</p>	<p>Provide leadership to the Expert Reference Group. Provide expert input on developing the quality standards and the procedure manual. Support the selected projects in a whole system approach and engagement with local commissioners. Develop the management company to support the SIB work. Participate in the SIB Board. Lead on extending the network organisations involved in the SIB as appropriate.</p> <p>Deliver on the Re-Unit plan. Exit strategy for the Re-Unit brand. Monitor and promote work on children in care as a result of maternal imprisonment. Develop good practice guidance on family reunification. Offer three learning events.</p>
4b: Organisational Development	Focus on 5 internal core pillars: sustainability, communication, quality, governance and risk, reputation/credibility.	<p>Identify Trustees to champion some key priorities. Set up a Women's Breakout Advisory Group to support the trustees and project.</p> <p>(i) Sustainability: Implement the fund raising strategy, specifically generating new income streams.</p> <p>(ii) Communication: Clarify Women's Breakout 'brand' so that organisations want to identify with it. Keep the Board of Trustees engaged and supportive, confirm the best way to communicate, and provide opportunities for team building. Revise and undertake the Annual (Satisfaction) Survey.</p>



# Appendices

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## Appendix One – Membership

Women's Breakout has four categories of membership as follows:

### *Full membership*

Open to voluntary and community sector organisations that divert women from the Criminal Justice System through the provision of holistic, women centred, community based services. These organisations must be either:

Women only voluntary and community sector organisations, being organisations that are established for the purpose of providing services for the benefit of vulnerable women and their families; and where a majority of services provided are exclusively for women; or:

Voluntary and community sector organisations that are running women only projects, being projects providing services for the benefit of vulnerable women and their families; and where a majority of services provided by the project are exclusively for women;

### *Associate Membership*

Open to organisations that provide alternatives to custody for women, divert women from the Criminal Justice System and reduce reoffending by women; **or** deliver women only services; **and** support the aims of Women's Breakout.

### *Affiliate Membership*

Open to any organisation that supports the aims of Women's Breakout.

### *Individual Membership*

Open to any individual wishing to support Women's Breakout. Executive Board may, from time to time, confer honorary membership on individuals who have made a significant contribution to advancing the agenda of Women's Breakout.

## Appendix Two – Trustees

Roma Hooper	Independent Chair
Grace Stevens	Treasurer, Director of Group Tax, Legal & General
Lisa Dando	Director of Brighton Women's Centre
Lorraine Gelsthorpe	Professor of Criminology & Criminal Justice, University of Cambridge
Michelle Nicholson	Director of Key Changes
Jessica Southgate	Head of Policy at 4Children
Natausha van Vliet	Head of Communities Development at PACT
Laura Seebohm	Director of Women and Criminal Justice Services, Changing Lives
Ellen Harris	Freelance education, training and development consultant
Leila Mezoughi	Paralegal at Corker Binning

### Advisor to the Board

Juliette Green	Independent
Kirsty Mooney	Independent

## Appendix Three – Priorities and Achievements for 2015/16

### Our current role

Our core aim is two fold: to ensure that a collective, expert voice is being heard in places where something can change (strategic influence); to support organisations in the sector to articulate what they are trying to do and to understand and engage with the world they are in (capacity building). Central to our work is leadership, sharing good practice and fostering innovation.

### Our priorities and achievements 2015/16

#### **Priority 1: Networking and mutual support**

- To deliver a high quality communications function for our membership and maintain a flow of targeted information around our member organisations;
- To improve the visibility of our member organisations in national and local work on health, children, and complex families;
- To identify and represent the widest range of organisations working with vulnerable women;
- To provide expert one to one support to organisations providing services to vulnerable women.

#### **Achievements:**

- Built a network of 56 organisations with a shared agenda and model of service delivery.
- Provided a platform for our members and for their service users to speak and be heard in national arenas, eg APPG on the Magistracy, our Annual General Meeting.
- Supported our membership to understand and participate in a significantly changing commissioning landscape through targeted communications, one to one visits and discussions, themed meetings and events.
- Provided network opportunities for the wider membership and the Re-Unite Network, including a highly successful conference/AGM for eighty-two participants focussing on mothers in the criminal justice system and including speakers and showcasing opportunities; an event on monitoring and sustainability.
- Developed and implemented high quality, targeted communications that includes the use of regular e-bulletins, website management, blogs and social media.
- Visited member organisations, providing support, advice, information sharing, and networking possibilities.

## Our priorities and achievements 2015/16 continued

### **Priority 2: Influence, voice and collaboration**

- To represent the Women's Community Services sector nationally at key meetings;
- To work with other voluntary sector infrastructure organisations;
- To support a push for systemic change in the way services for women are currently delivered across administrative areas;
- To continue to work with Community Rehabilitation Companies for the benefit of our member organisations and thereby vulnerable women.

### **Achievements:**

- Engaged the direct participation of our membership in many opportunities to influence.
- Provided leadership to the sector
  - Provided consultancy through the Transforming Rehabilitation journey.
  - Developing a Social Impact Bond funded network for vulnerable women that goes beyond criminal justice, encompassing preventative work with women at risk that we expect to launch in April 2016.
  - Developing a body of knowledge relating to quality, cost and impact of services for vulnerable women.
- Represented the sector
  - Raised awareness with the Minister and MoJ officials about the impact of their privatisation programme on our member organisations; and with prime providers of probation services about the role and impact of our member organisations in delivering services for women.
  - Contributed our members expertise and experience to responses to consultation papers eg Probation Inspectorate Call for Evidence, contribution to a paper for the Social Justice Select Committee on the relationship between debt/finance issues and women's offending, the impact of TR.
  - Influenced the direction of funding programmes, specifically the Lottery funded Women and Girl's Initiative and the Young Foundation.
  - Participated in enquiries and studies relating to women in the criminal justice system, eg Mental Health Provision in Women's Community Services, maternal imprisonment.
  - A member of: Advisory Board for 'One Small Thing'; Violence Against Women And Girls External Consultation Group; the Bradley Group; Ministerial Advisory Board for Female Offenders 2013-2015; Influential CJ Tweeters.
- Collated and presented monitoring data that tells the story of women on a national scale (Annual Performance Report).

## Our priorities and achievements 2015/16 continued

### **Priority 3: Project delivery**

- To develop the Social Impact Bond
- To host the Re-Unite Network

#### **Achievements:**

- Social Impact Bond:
  - Developed and supported a network of eight organisations working to build a Social Impact Bond funded network of providers.
  - Secured funding for the development stage of the work.
  - Developed a quality assurance model for the Social Impact Bond.
  - Delivered awareness raising events with six different stakeholder groups.
- Re-Unite
  - Sustained the network following transition, and improved the monitoring and communications work.
  - Organised two themed events: monitoring and sustainability, and mothers in the criminal justice system.

### **Priority 4: Management, governance and strategic development**

- To support the development of a strong and effective Board of Trustees.
- To recruit an independent Chair.
- To determine the future direction of Women's Breakout.

#### **Achievements:**

- Recruited an independent chair and a Treasurer, and have increased the Board of Trustees to ten and undertaken a skills audit.
- Undertaken a refocussing exercise for Women's Breakout and developed a new vision and mission appropriate to this three year plan.

### **Priority 5: Securing funding for Women's Breakout**

#### **Achievements:**

- Secured funding until November 2016 despite challenging times for umbrella organisations.
- Advising on Women and Girls Initiative (Lottery) with 11 member organisations going through the next round; and on the Young Foundation's Gender Futures work, yet to be completed.