

**Sex Offender reintegration and  
Community Engagement  
Conference - Bristol - 18<sup>th</sup> June 2013**

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**Workshop 3:**

**Community engagement and involvement in sex  
offender reintegration**



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# NIACRO

... working to reduce crime and its impact  
on people and communities

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# Work with Communities

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- Experience of Community Development work
  - Providing supportive, early stage intervention to young people and their families
  - Supporting families of people in prison
  - Helping people sustain their tenancies by dealing with problems that have led to anti-social behaviour
  - Providing services which support the integration of adults in the community
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## Work with Communities cont'd

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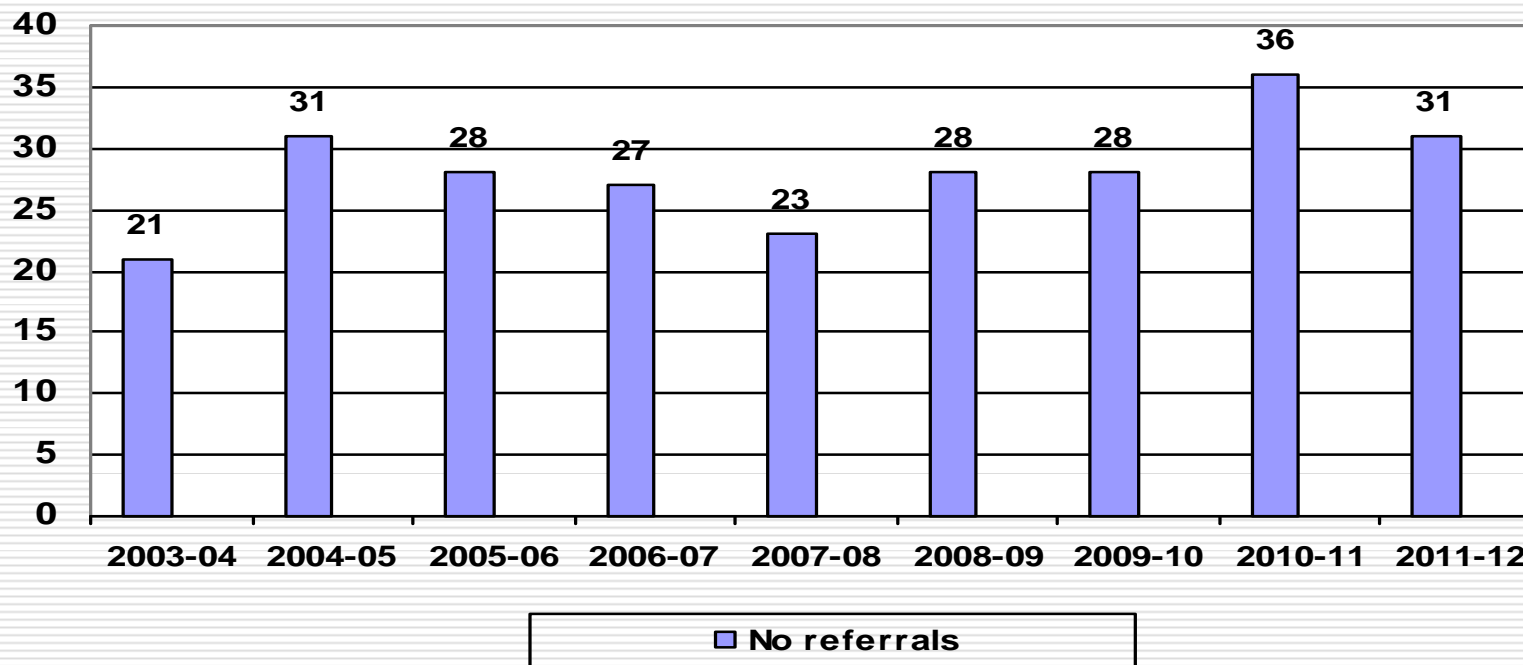


- Base 2 provides a clarification and support service for people at risk of exclusion from their community
  - Established in 1990
  - Deals with between **900** and **1,000** cases each year
  - Since GFA – increased number of referrals but lower percentage at risk of physical harm
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# Referrals to Base 2



## No of Referrals of Alleged Sex Offenders



# Analysis of referrals on alleged sex offenders 2004 to 2012

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- 253 referrals (average 27 pa)
  - 4 were shot
  - 26 were victims of physical assault
  - 146 had their property attacked / defaced
  - 60% referrals came from loyalist communities
  - Base 2 also experienced increasing pressure from communities to respond to such threats at earlier stage
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# Issues relating to alleged sex offenders

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- Greater risk of being attacked
  - Community reaction likely to be more intense
  - Increased community activity involving protests at hostels
  - Protest outside Niacro
  - Efforts to engage with communities such as  
Stop-it-now; leisurewatch; child protection training
  - Statutory arrangements for Public Protection were in place - PPANI
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# Rationale for Niacro's engagement on the issue

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- Communities wanted dialogue and attention paid to their concerns
  - Were reacting in the heat of the moment and Base 2 frequently involved
  - Community perceptions about the housing of high risk offenders
  - The need to encourage communities to take account of the wider impact of any alleged offence
  - Look at the negative impact of current community responses
  - Help communities be interested in, receptive to, information about statutory arrangements for public protection
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# What did we do?



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- Identified key host within the community to facilitate access to people with concerns and agreed the approach
  - Delivered awareness-raising session in the community
1. Information about sexual offending in Northern Ireland
  2. Disclosure: research on implementation of Sarah's law
  3. Outline of PPANI arrangements in NI
  4. Examined some of the responses that had been made by communities in the past
  5. Considered how communities might positively contribute to statutory arrangements
  6. Explored issues such as how to protect the credibility of people giving leadership in the community
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## What did we find?

- People who attended willing to participate in follow-up training in more specialised areas eg Parents Protect; PPANI
- Concerned about the responsibilities placed on individuals by the disclosure arrangements of Sarah's Law
- Communities don't want to take responsibility of policing offenders in the community
- Community 'ownership' of hostel
- Community has strong resistors to being manipulated, particularly by media

# What do we want to achieve?

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Assist people in self-defined communities to make a positive contribution to the safe management of people who sexually offend and to support those who may be vulnerable to sexual abuse.

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# Where do we go from here?

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- Revising our material
- Return and deliver to wider group of people in community – drill down
- Facilitate establishing lines of communication with statutory services
- Develop approach with key contacts in other communities
- Participate in researching effectiveness

Thank-You

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