



**ACJRD**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**2011**

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## **Executive Summary**

The Association for Criminal Justice Research and Development Ltd (ACJRD) has hosted a wide array of events, seminars and publication launches during 2011. These included our annual conference entitled *Mental Health in the Criminal Justice System – The deliverables of the Government’s ‘Vision for Change’* and working group events at which attendees had the opportunity to contribute their opinions and share perspectives.

Research has continued to be a focus of the ACJRD activities with several projects underway during 2011.

Throughout the year the association has contributed to Government consultations as appropriate and continues to maintain memberships and relationships with other not-for-profit organisations who share common ground with the objectives of the ACJRD.

This report provides a summary of the events and activities for 2011 under the following headings: Research, Events, Membership, Working Groups, Newsletter, Database, Commitment to Achieve Change, Governance and Associations Memberships.

## **1. ACJRD Research**

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The ACJRD Research-Sub-Committee are currently overseeing the following projects:

### **Research in Justice Research Project**

The Association believes that quality research findings are essential to a more effective and responsive criminal justice system. To assist future research efforts, the Association wishes to explore how collaboration between criminal justice policy makers, practitioners and researchers might be further enhanced to their mutual benefit. To this end a study has been commissioned to consider what works best in conducting criminal justice research projects, what difficulties arise in terms of data, access, etc., and what actions might be taken to support efficient and effective research projects into the future. The study will involve compilation of the views of policy makers, practitioners and researchers who have recent experience of criminal justice research projects.

This study has been funded by a grant from The Children's Act Advisory Board. The ACJRD appointed researcher began work on the project in August 2011, it is anticipated that this study will be completed during 2012 when a final report will be published.

### **Tracking the needs and service provision for women ex-prisoners**

This project will identify the multiplicity of needs of women ex-prisoners as they leave prison after serving short sentences (12-24 weeks). These women have been targeted as they often leave prison before they have had the opportunity to engage with services. The aim is to identify the gaps in services available to the target group and to present the findings to the service providers with the objective of analysing how this group of ex-prisoners, who are often homeless, can have their needs met.

This project is being funded by a grant from the St Stephens Green Trust. A researcher has been recruited and at 31.12.11 we are awaiting approval of the research design from the Prisoner Based Research Ethic's Committee.

### **Follow up to the Dublin Children Court Pilot Project**

In 2005, ACJRD (formerly IASD) published a study of 50 young persons who had been charged with offences before the Dublin Children Court between January and October 2004. This research is a follow-up study to the 2005 pilot project with the aim of establishing the whereabouts and development of the 2005 study sample.

This study was funded by a grant from The Department of Justice & Law Reform, Policy Planning Research Unit.

The data collection phase of the project has been completed and the final report submitted for approval to the ACJRD Research sub-committee.

## 2. ACJRD Events 2011

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Below is a summary of ACJRD events during 2011, please note the following outputs do not include the ACJRD Working Groups outputs which are profiled separately on page five.

### **2010 Conference Report Launch, 16th February 2011**

The 2010 Conference Report: *Women in the Criminal Justice System* was launched by the Hon. Mrs Justice Catherine McGuinness. We were delighted to have several of our conference speakers and workshop coordinators in attendance for this launch.

### **4<sup>th</sup> Annual Martin Tansley Memorial Lecture, 11<sup>th</sup> May 2011**

Dr. Shane Kilcommins of the Faculty of Law, University Cork gave the lecture: *Where is Our Criminal Justice System Going?* at the Criminal Courts of Justice on Parkgate Street. Once again this was a successful event with representatives from many of the main government agencies including the Irish Probation Service, and non-profit organisations in attendance.

### **ACJRD 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference *Mental Health in the Criminal Justice System – The deliverables of the Governments ‘Vision for Change’* 14<sup>th</sup> October 2011**

The ACJRD Annual Conference 2011 was held at the Camden Court Hotel, Dublin 2. This one-day event was launched by Brian Purcell, Secretary General of the Department of Justice and Equality. An array of workshops and plenary sessions were provided for participants. The esteemed plenary speakers included:

- Jimmy Martin, Assistant Secretary, Department of Justice & Equality
- Bairbre Nic Aongusa, Director, Office for Disability & Mental Health
- Prof. Harry Kennedy Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist and Executive Clinical Director, National Forensic Mental Health Service, Central Mental Hospital
- Deborah Alred, Lead Occupational Therapist, Secure and Forensic Services, Sussex Partnership Foundation NHS Trust
- Dara Robinson, Partner, Sheehan & Partners
- Fergal Black, Director of Healthcare, Irish Prison Service
- Dr Andrew Fraser, Director of Health and Care, Scottish Prison Service

Workshops were presented by individuals with expertise and/or experience of Mental Health in the Criminal Justice System. Participants were invited to choose two of the eight available workshops on the following themes:

- Child and Adolescent Psychiatry – Interface with the Criminal Justice System
- ‘Girls Behind Bars: Female Experiences of Criminal Justice’ exhibition
- Prison In-reach and Court Liaison Services in Ireland
- Making the Vision Visible
- Recovery & Growth within the Criminal Justice System
- Mental Health Law & The Criminal Justice System – When Two Worlds Collide
- A Northern Perspective on Mental Health Care & Legislation
- Youth Mental Health: Prevention and Early Intervention

Throughout the conference, delegates were encouraged to share information, present their own perspectives and network with colleagues who engage in similar and related areas of work. Chatham House rules prevailed throughout the conference.

This was a successful event for which the association received much positive feedback. A report containing the papers from this Conference will be launched early in 2012.

### **Seminar: Juvenile Justice 2001-2011 – Criminal & Welfare Concerns, 8<sup>th</sup> Nov**

To mark the 10 year anniversary of the Children's Act 2001, the ACJRD and Barnardos held a joint seminar to examine the legislative developments since 2001 which have impacted on children and young people involved with the criminal justice and State welfare system. A full house enjoyed presentations from:

- Minister Frances Fitzgerald TD (Opening address)
- Gerard Durcan, Senior Counsel
- Michelle Shannon, National Director, Irish Youth Justice Service
- Supt. Colette Quinn, Director of the Garda Office for Children and Youth Affairs
- Geoffrey Shannon, Solicitor, Special Rapporteur for Children

### **Irish Not for Profit Knowledge Exchange**

Irishnonprofits.ie is a free searchable website with detailed information on more than 8,000 nonprofit (limited by guarantee) companies in Ireland, and summary information on a further 3,700 unincorporated charitable entities. It promotes visibility, transparency and accountability for Irish non-profit organisations. The ACJRD was invited to take part in the Irish Not for Profit Knowledge Exchange pre-release. We updated our pages on the site so that our information became available with the launch of the site May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2011.

## **3. Membership**

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Three categories of ACJRD membership are on offer, - student €20.00, individual €30.00 and organisational membership €150.00. Organisational membership is based on a flat rate: this includes all members of that organisation, with up to five members able to attend any one ACJRD event.

Benefits to ACJRD members include: special rates on ACJRD conferences, seminars and other public events, publications on research and conference/seminar proceedings, priority bookings at all ACJRD events, circulation of the newsletter, the option to become involved in the ACJRD working groups and access to a range of peer networks.

Membership rates for 2011 are 19% up on 2010 figures, and 12% up on 2009 figures. An increase in Organisational memberships of 25% (from 20 to 25) has played a big part in this. In total there are 62 individual members and 25 Organisational members (where all Organisational memberships are counted as five members).

## **4. ACJRD Working Groups**

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The ACJRD has established working groups through which members can input into the activities of the association. Current groups include Education, Mental Health, Reintegration, Restorative Justice and White Collar Crime.

Working Groups activities for 2011 are detailed below. The association was facilitated throughout by the generosity of Council members who chaired each seminar and provided venues free of charge.

### **Seminar: Innovation in Literacy, 29<sup>th</sup> September 2011**

The ACJRD and its Education Working Group held this seminar at the Law Society of Ireland. The event featured: Professor Mark Morgan, Cregan Professor of Education and Psychology, St Patrick's College Drumcondra, who spoke about Literacy in Irish Prisons and the findings of the 2003 Prison Adult Literacy Study he completed with Mary Kett; Stephen O'Connor Organiser, City of Dublin VEC Educational Service to Prisons and his team of Robbie Robinson (Wheatfield Education Unit – tbc), and Jimmy O'Rourke (Arbour Hill & Wheatfield Education Unit) who spoke about the work being carried out in relation to literacy in prisons. They also profiled their Literacy Assessment Tool and Interactive Literacy Package. David Ahern of the Shannon Trust spoke about the *Toe by Toe* reading plan, an award-winning peer mentoring programme which encourages and supports prisoners who can read to give one-to-one tuition to prisoners who struggle to read. Finally Brian Kenealy (Mountjoy Education Unit) spoke about the pilot of *Toe by Toe* in Ireland.

### **Seminar: White Collar Crime 30<sup>th</sup> March 2011**

The ACJRD and its White Collar Crime Working Group in conjunction with the Irish Women's Lawyers Association (IWLA) held a joint seminar on White Collar Crime at the Law Society of Ireland. The seminar was co-presented by: Dave McFadden, Solicitor, Competition Authority speaking on Competition Law and White Collar Crime; Shelly Horan, Barrister, author of Corporate Crime: A Guide to Irish Law speaking on Key Issues in Investigating, Prosecuting and Sentencing Corporate Crimes; and Mary Kiely, Solicitor, Revenue Commissioners speaking on Prosecution of Serious Tax Offences.

### **Submissions**

The White Collar Crime working group and the Mental Health working group contributed to ACJRD submissions to the White Paper on Crime and Criminal Law (Insanity) Act 2006 Review respectively. Further details on this work can be found in the commitment to achieve change section of this report (page seven).

## **5. Newsletter**

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The ACJRD Newsletter is produced quarterly. It is delivered via email to members and interested parties of the Association and is also available on the ACJRD website. The newsletter keeps members informed about current and forthcoming events and includes news from our members and developments in other agencies and relevant organisations.

As well as promoting the ACJRD, the Newsletter is designed to attract and encourage new members. This service is produced in-house and there are no printing or postage costs. It promotes the creation and development of, an online community for the ACJRD.

Four newsletters were produced in 2011: Winter, Spring, Summer and Autumn.

## **6. Database**

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The ACJRD Database contains published information by Government Departments, information on projects, published research and journals, it is regularly updated. The Database is currently held on the ACJRD office computers with hard copies of some database documents also available. It is intended that database information will eventually be available on the ACJRD website.

## **7. Commitment to Achieve Change**

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ACJRD makes appropriate submissions in satisfaction of its mission and vision in areas where there is relevant expertise and interest. All submissions made by the ACJRD are available on our website [www.acjrd.ie](http://www.acjrd.ie).

In February 2011 the ACJRD made a submission to the White Paper on Crime – Organised and White Collar Crime consultation. In September 2011 the ACJRD was invited to make a submission to the Department of Justice’s Criminal Law (Insanity) Acts 2006 review. The Mental Health working group has agreed to compile a submission, which on completion will be submitted to the ACJRD Council for feedback and approval in accordance with ACJRD governance protocols. It is expected that the submission will be completed, approved and forwarded to the Department of Justice in early 2012.

## **8. Governance**

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### **The following ACJRD Council meetings took place during 2011:**

25<sup>th</sup> January 2011, at the Barnardos offices, Christchurch Square  
8<sup>th</sup> March 2011, at the Probation Service, Smithfield  
12<sup>th</sup> April 2011, at Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, Smithfield  
24<sup>th</sup> May 2011, at the Irish Prison Service, Psychology/Probation Building  
12<sup>th</sup> July 2011, at the Law Society of Ireland, Education Centre  
20<sup>th</sup> September 2011, at the Probation Service, Smithfield  
8<sup>th</sup> November 2011, at Garda Siochana offices, Harcourt Square  
30<sup>th</sup> November 2011, at the Garda Siochana Inspectorate offices, Stephens Green  
The ACJRD Council celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> meeting since incorporation on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2011.

### **Staff Handbook**

The ACJRD Council officially adopted the Staff Handbook at their meeting on May 24<sup>th</sup>. This considerable document outlines the association’s policies and procedures in relation to staff and the good governance of the ACJRD.

### **AGM 2011**

The ACJRD Annual General Meeting was held at the Camden Court Hotel on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October, following the close of our annual conference. At this meeting of ACJRD members the associations Auditors, Browne Murphy and Hughes presented the ACJRD audited accounts 2010 for adoption. Updates to the associations Memorandum and Articles of Association were also adopted.

### **Council representation**

The Council of the ACJRD also represented the association at the following events:

- Maura Butler, (ACJRD Chairperson) made a presentation on the work of the ACJRD to students of a Finuas/Law Society programme on Social Policy at the Law Society of Ireland on October 24<sup>th</sup>.
- Maura Butler made a presentation on the work of the ACJRD to students at NUI Maynooth, as part of their Criminal Law Fortnight on November 30<sup>th</sup>.

## **9. Associations and Memberships**

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### **The Children's Rights Alliance**

*The Children's Rights Alliance is a coalition of over 90 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working to secure the rights and needs of children in Ireland, by campaigning for the full implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. It aims to improve the lives of all children under 18, through securing the necessary changes in Ireland's laws (strengthening children's rights in the Constitution), policies and services.*

The ACJRD maintained its membership of the Children's Rights Alliance in 2011.

### **The Irish Penal Reform Trust**

*The Irish Penal Reform Trust (IPRT) is Ireland's leading non-governmental organisation campaigning for the rights of people in prison and the progressive reform of Irish penal policy. Established in 1994, IPRT has a well-established role as an independent voice in public debate on the Irish penal system. IPRT is committed to reducing imprisonment, respecting the rights of everyone in the penal system, and progressive reform of the penal system based on evidence-led policies.*

In 2011 the ACJRD Chairperson Maura Butler met with the IPRT Executive Director Liam Herrick to discuss the common ground of the two organisations and how we can support each other. ACJRD regularly promotes the events of the IPRT in our newsletter and visa versa. The ACJRD maintained its membership of the IPRT in 2011.

### **The Wheel**

*The Wheel is a support and representative body connecting community and voluntary organisations and charities across Ireland. Established in 1999, The Wheel has evolved to become a resource centre and forum for the community and voluntary sector.*

The ACJRD maintained its membership of the Wheel in 2011.

### **Prisoners and Housing**

Maura Butler was invited, as the chairperson of the association, to take part in discussions on Prisoners and Housing being organised by Bob Jordan, Executive Director of Threshold, Senator Aideen Hayden, Chair of Threshold and Dublin City Councillor Mannix Flynn. The purpose of the discussions is to bring together all of the stakeholders in relation to housing and prisoners (on Temporary Release or coming to the end of their sentences). Maura has been in communication with the group and has contributed information to assist with their efforts, she will continue to work with them into 2012.