



External Communications Strategy 2020 - 2023

CCRC EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY 2020–2023

CONTEXT

1. The CCRC aims to be recognised for the excellence of our work and to be considered an exemplary professional organisation in the criminal justice system.
2. Our communications function has always promoted this aim by engaging with a range of stakeholders. This new strategy for 2020 to 2023 builds on and enhances that work and extends our ambition in this area.
3. The strategy sets out our high level aims and ambitions in relation to external communications¹. It covers the same period as the CCRC Corporate Plan (which can be found at this [link](#)) and is driven by the strategic aims there and reflects our ambition to take a bolder, more proactive approach to raising our profile and having our voice heard.
4. It is designed particularly to achieve Corporate Plan Strategic Aim 2 - Enhanced Engagement with Stakeholders and Media - by engaging with and positively influencing the many groups and organisations we consider to be our stakeholders from our service users to journalists, campaigners and policy makers.
5. We recognise the importance of engaging stakeholders throughout the area of our jurisdiction – England, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

THE AIMS OF THE STRATEGY

Build trust in and recognition for our work

6. By being transparent, open and proactive, we will demonstrate that the CCRC and its staff have integrity, are highly professional and passionate about the work we do, and that we carry out a crucial function with skill, diligence and care.
7. We will create and take opportunities to publicise our work and provide as much information as we can about cases and issues of interest. We work with all media to get fair, accurate and positive coverage for CCRC cases and other matters.
8. We will build positive relationships with stakeholder groups by discussing issues and explaining CCRC cases and decisions. We will do so through variety of means including attending events and

¹ The CCRC Communication Plan for the same period sets out more specifically the operational steps that the Commission will take in relation to these high-level aims.

meetings and creating CCRC content for a range of publications including Inside Time and the legal press.

9. We will shed light on the work of the CCRC and its impact on the lives of individuals by helping successful CCRC applicants to tell their stories.
10. We will challenge incorrect information and ill-informed opinion about the CCRC in order to promote better understanding of our work.

Build and maintain strong relationships with key influencers

11. This will be achieved by CCRC Commissioners and staff identifying, engaging with, and building positive relationships with a range of stakeholders within the miscarriage of justice community, the criminal justice system and government. We will provide honest and accurate information about who we are and what we do in order to build trust and confidence and present the CCRC in a positive light.
12. We will develop an ambassadorial role for Commissioners in particular so that they can contribute to enhancing the reputation of the CCRC and build positive relationships. They will achieve this through activities such as attending and speaking at conferences and other events, taking part in our outreach work in prisons and contributing articles and blogs for publication.
13. The CCRC Stakeholder Forum will continue to meet regularly and develop its role. We will also aim to host occasional events for stakeholders on areas of interest to build relationships and provide accurate information.

Position the CCRC as a leading voice in debate and discussion

14. The CCRC is an important and necessary part of public debate regarding miscarriages of justice and related issues. We will engage with and contribute to the debate in the media and elsewhere by using our experience and expertise to contribute to and initiate public discussion.

Improve reach with social media and online resources

15. We will create and distribute messages such as vines (short videos) specifically targeting hard to reach groups such as women and young people with convictions² using relevant social media platforms. We will continue to raise the profile of the CCRC and our work using social media such as Twitter and explore other opportunities presented by new media and technology. We will continue to develop our own

² Communications designed for CCRC applicants and potential applicants are principally the responsibility of the CCRC's Customer Services Manager who works closely with the Head of Communication on a range of issues.

website as a vehicle to providing news and information about the CCRC.

Shine a light on lessons from CCRC casework

16. We will ensure that the lessons learned from our work are shared so that our experience can help improve the criminal justice system and build public confidence that safeguards against miscarriages of justice are working properly.
17. We will explain when and why the CCRC has had cause to raise concerns within the criminal justice system; we will make public when and how we respond to consultations and other information gathering exercises; and we will publicise the outcomes of research conducted by the CCRC or facilitated through the work of our Research Committee.

Engage with critics and criticisms

18. We will do this by engaging with individuals and organisations with negative views about the CCRC. We will be willing to discuss matters in good faith and answer questions and criticisms with facts and information.

Be resilient in the face of critical voices

19. The cases we work on and the decisions we make will sometimes be controversial and we will inevitably be subject to criticism from applicants, their supporters, and others who disagree with us. We will aim, without being complacent, to keep criticism in perspective.

CONCLUSION

20. This strategy for 2020-2023 represents an increase in the CCRC's appetite and ambition in this area. We will monitor the resourcing of this closely to ensure we have the right level of support in place to achieve our aims.
21. Pursued with vigour over the life of the strategy, it will significantly enhance the CCRC's profile and reputation among a wide range of important stakeholders.