

## Remand Meeting – May 2021

In this meeting we focused on the problem of remand in Scotland, which was introduced by Fiona (CYCJ) and Tracy (Partners in Advocacy).

### Issues identified

- 27% of prison pop is remand at the moment (highest in Europe)
- 32% of female prison pop
- 94% of YP under 18, in custody have not been sentenced
- A high volume of custodial journeys beginning in remand result in an individual departing custody directly from remand: 6,544 in 2019-20, or 57% of all completed custodial journeys that began in remand. These remand journeys are usually short, averaging 21 days in 2019-20. <https://www.gov.scot/news/supplementary-prison-population-statistics-2019-20/>
- There is a lack of understanding and poor communication about the cause of delays
- There are difficulties accessing legal advice and lawyers, especially now it is all online - people “feel left to rot”
- When put on remand support in community is cut off, medication often reduced or stopped and causes issues with housing
- Women on remand are held all over country away from family, friends, support
- Revolving door, gaps in access to addiction services and limited provision during pandemic means people are likely to relapse
- When going to court people don’t know if they are going back to prison or being released
- It is harder to work with the remand population because so transient, disconnected information sharing and speaking to lots of different people
- Remand being used for things other than holding the most at risk
- A lot young people are on remand for breaches of bail
- Sheriffs have different thresholds, some will remand when someone is up repeatedly and other won't (also supervised bail not available everywhere)
- Through lockdown, remand is the equivalent of solitary confinement as defined by UNCRC
- Children in custody have been repeatedly left out of covid legislation
- There is a lack of accessible data on remand that make critical conversations about it difficult

### Actions

We shared our lack of success in spurring parliamentarians into action on this issue and the judiciary is ringfenced, which makes it difficult to influence their decision making. Therefore, we decided to focus on the general public through a social media campaign. We created a Google Doc where people could contribute ideas for tweets and the hashtag was decided on. We then commissioned some images and ran the [#DemandLessRemand](#) campaign on Twitter from May 24th - May 28th 2021. This was picked up with lots of retweets, people posting their own messages and images and some media coverage.