

ESRC-funded seminar series on the 'Third Sector in Criminal Justice'

Aims

The purpose of this seminar series is to bring together leading academics, postgraduate students and early career researchers, policy makers, criminal justice providers and representatives from third sector organisations to facilitate interdisciplinary and inter-organisational discussions, which critically explore third sector (voluntary, charitable and non-governmental organisations) involvement in the criminal justice system and consider how it might develop in future.

The aims of the seminars are:

- To review the current evidence and understandings of the role of third sector organisations (TSOs) in the criminal justice process
- To consider explanations for the growth in TSOs' involvement in criminal justice
- To explore the potential for, and challenges to, integrating TSOs into the criminal justice process
- To explore the impact of TSOs' involvement in the provision of core criminal justice services on their traditional roles and values
- To examine the contradictions between TSOs as providers of core criminal justice services and as campaigners for penal reform
- To explore the challenges for TSOs of addressing social inclusion and diversity arising from their involvement in the provision of criminal justice services
- To examine the use of research in evaluating the role of the third sector in criminal justice and consider the benefits and limitations of such research
- To identify gaps in existing knowledge about third sector involvement in criminal justice; and
- To develop a future agenda both in terms of social research and policy and practice.

Key themes affecting TSOs who work in the criminal justice field, such as funding, diversity, workforce, expertise and infrastructure issues, will run through the seminars.