



**Clean Sheet  
Impact Report 2021**

## **A word from the Chief Operating Officer.**

We're so pleased that you've joined us for this review of 2021.

Clean Sheet creates social change by helping men and women with convictions to find work or training. We work with talented people who, with the right opportunity and support, are able to move forward and start again. Government research shows that over 80% of employers of ex-offenders positively rate their reliability, motivation, attendance and performance.<sup>1</sup> Helping people with convictions to get back into employment is a win all round – for the individual, for the employer and for society.

We are delighted that in 2021, we helped over 250 men and women start again in this way through finding work or training. As you read through this report, we hope you will be inspired by the stories, challenged by the stats and stirred up to become part of this social change revolution.

Are you ready?

Then let's go!

Sam



Samantha Graham, COO

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/unlock-opportunity-employer-information-pack-and-case-studies/employing-prisoners-and-ex-offenders>



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# THE PROBLEM



**Reoffending costs the UK  
£18 billion every year.\***

**If people leaving prison secure a job after  
release, the rate of reconviction reduces  
from between a third to a half. \*\***

**16% of prison leavers released between April  
2021 and March 2022 were in employment six  
weeks after they left custody, while only 23%  
had a job six months after they left prison. \*\*\***

**Half of respondents to a 2016 YouGov  
survey said that they would not  
consider employing an ex-offender. \***

**Without employment, people with  
convictions lack a stable income, and can  
lack purpose and a sense of belonging. \***

\*(Bromley Briefings, Winter Factfiles 2021)

\*\* (The Case for the Rehabilitation of Offenders Bill, 2010)

\*\*\* Ministry of Justice data

# WHAT WE'RE DOING TO ADDRESS THIS

Clean Sheet provides tailored remote employment support to people with convictions for as long as it takes them to find work. Our dedicated Employment Team will work with between c.200-300 people at any one time. Importantly, our support empowers people to take ownership of their own job search journey.

We are able to flex our support depending on what else is going on for our Members - pausing with them when other things have to take priority (like housing, mental health issues or family situations) and re-starting the employment support when they're ready.





# Our support



1

## **Employment Team Adviser support:**

Remote tailored advice, support and guidance to help someone in their job search. This includes providing advice around interviews, CVs and signposting to disclosure.

2

## **Clean Sheet Employers Directory:**

With over 100 employers committed to assessing someone based on their merit and their skill rather than their convictions.

3

## **12-months post-employment support and check in:**

Resources and check-in for the crucial 12 months after someone finds work.

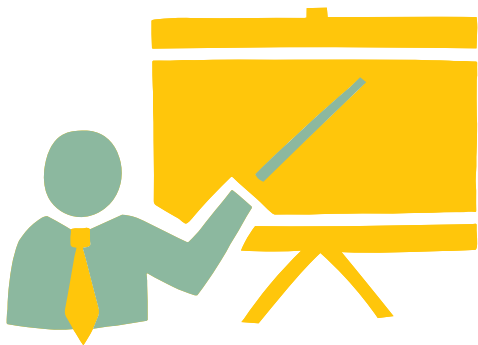
# WHAT THIS ACHIEVED IN 2021



**209 people found  
employment**



**Including 12+  
people who started  
their own business**



**45 people  
undertook  
training**



**21,439  
minutes of support  
provided on the  
phone**

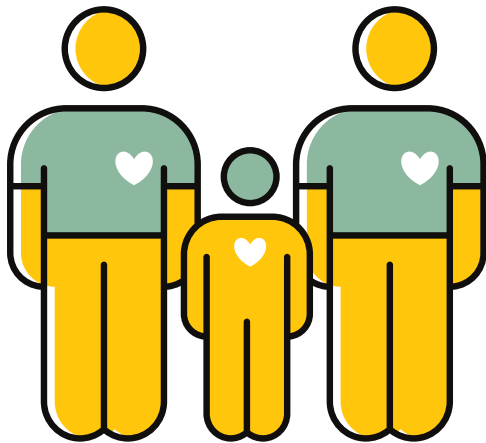




**209 job  
vacancies filled**



**Over £9 million  
saved from the  
public purse**



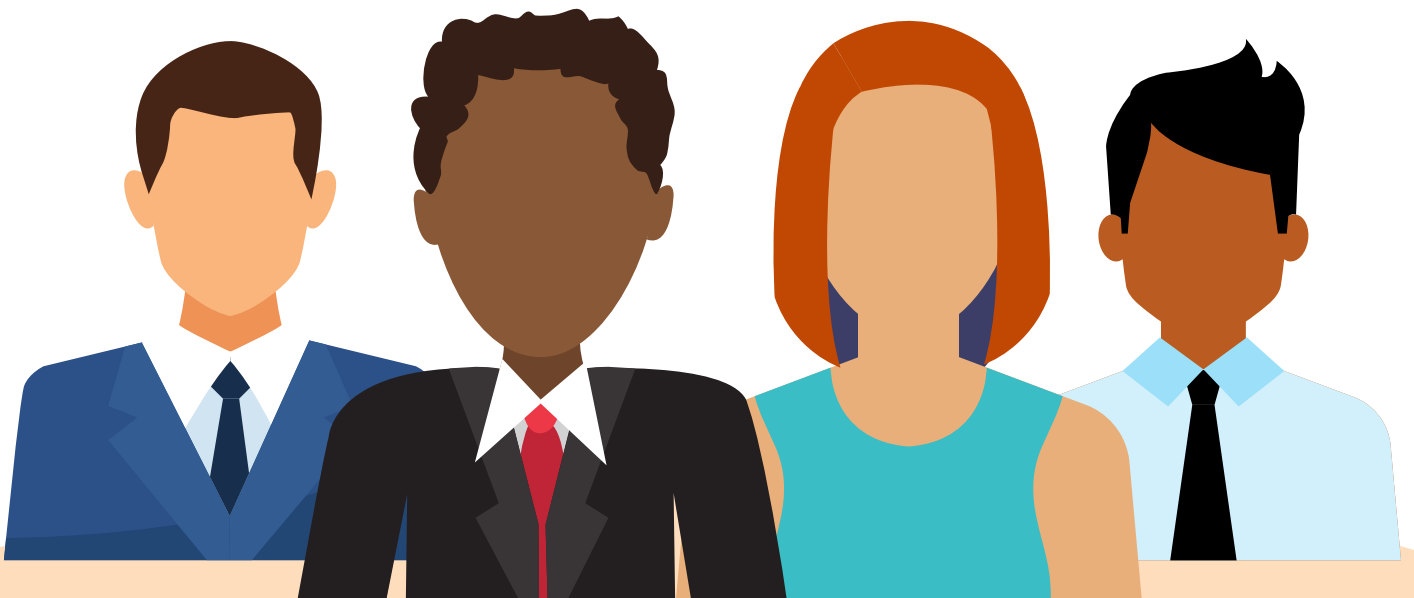
**Families with  
more stability**



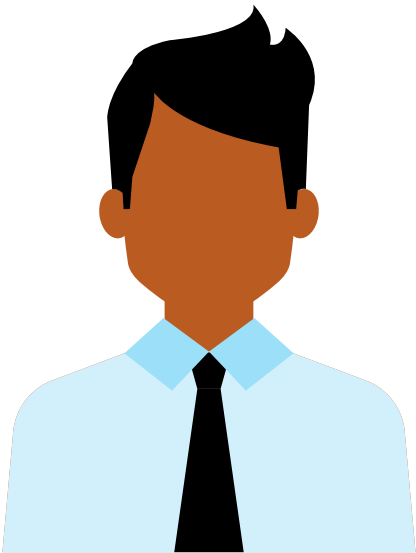
**Members secured roles  
from entry level to  
management level**

# OUR IMPACT

**“You gave me hope.  
I’m so grateful.”**



Some names have been changed to protect Members' identities.



"I applied for over **1,150 jobs in 3 years**. I just kept repeating to myself some advice I got as a kid - **the door to success is labelled 'PUSH'**."

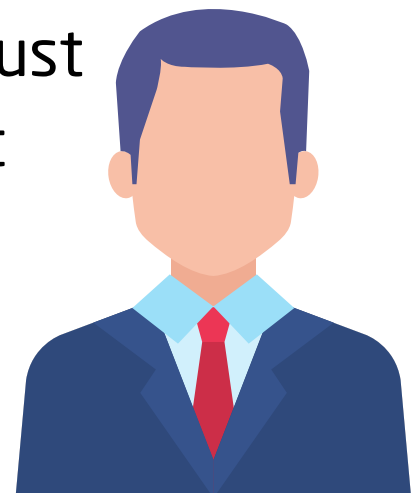
"My Employment Team Adviser was just tremendous. She really made time for me. That support was amazing."

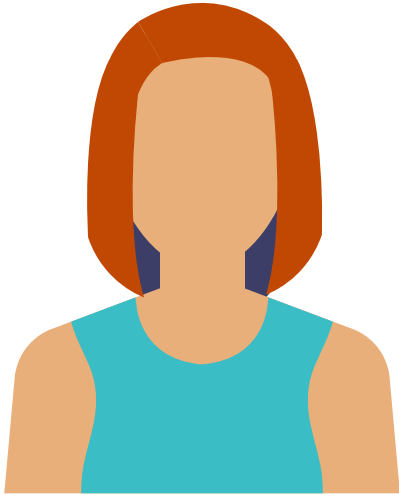
- Shafak, Clean Sheet Member

"It was a huge morale boost to have Clean Sheet's Employers Directory. Seeing all those companies who were understanding and supportive, just knowing there were options out there was huge.

The Directory was like a **path through the minefield**."

- Dennis, Clean Sheet Member





## Catherine's story

"I came out the day after the first lockdown was introduced, I'd had more freedom in prison than I did when I got out! Job hunting during COVID was tough, it definitely made the process harder.

"Having said that, it's impossible to find the words for how Hannah helped me. She was calm and non-judgmental, **she was just a really strong support structure for me.** I hated not being in work, so to have found such a great job is amazing. I can move on now. **Clean Sheet should be something all ex-offenders have access to."**



# David's story

"My childhood was a mixture of ups and downs. My family moved from Uganda to Tanzania when I was quite young, and we lived with one of my dad's aunts who was cruel - it wasn't an easy start to life. I first went to prison when I was 18. It was horrible. I ended up going back inside 10 years later and I just kept thinking to myself 'how the hell did I end up back here?!'



"When I got out, I found Clean Sheet. I didn't want to waste any more of my life. There were times where I thought 'what's the point?', but my Employment Team Adviser was really good. The fact that there was a person there to talk to really helped."

# LOOKING AHEAD



I first started working in Criminal Justice 10 years ago. I never thought I would be part of an organisation that transformed hundreds of people's lives through helping them to find work. It's incredibly humbling and a real privilege. As Clean Sheet goes forward, we are as committed as ever to changing and transforming lives, helping people with convictions to create a different future through work.

Practically, this means a number of things, including engaging with more employers. Employers play such a key role in reducing reoffending - simply by opening up their vacancies to people with convictions they can create social change. Research shows that "over 80% of employers of ex-offenders positively rate their reliability, motivation, attendance and performance". If employers giving people a second chance means that they end up with hard-working, loyal and dedicated employees, that's surely a win all round!

We have over 100 employers who have chosen to partner with us already and we are looking for more. If you are an employer - or know of an employer - who is looking for talented people, then please get in touch!

We also want to develop how we support people in prison. Two things that people can lose when they're imprisoned are hope and self-belief. Bravado and hardiness often mask things but deep down, people can feel worthless and incapable of change which can impact their recovery. We want to build self-belief and hope for people while they're still in prison to help them put their best foot forward once they're on the outside.

Lastly, our focus will be on building a great volunteer network, tapping into our Christian heritage. Clean Sheet is a Christian charity, working with people of all faiths and none. Our relationship with Jesus is the motivation for loving, caring and going the extra mile - working with those that others perhaps wouldn't and creating a safe space where people can feel capable of change. Building a volunteer network with like-minded individuals will greatly benefit our Members and increase the impact we can have.

As we look ahead to the next 12 months, I certainly know it's not going to be quiet! But I am hopeful about what the future holds - and the fact that we can impact hundreds more lives in this coming year and beyond.

## Join us

We would love for you to join us on this social impact journey. Easy ways of doing this include:

- Sponsoring someone's job search journey for a year
- Opening up your vacancies to people with convictions

If you're feeling the stirring of a tug to get involved, then now just might be the time... Let's see how far we have travelled by this time next year...!

Yours,  
Sam

Samantha Graham, COO

[www.cleansheet.org.uk/getinvolved](http://www.cleansheet.org.uk/getinvolved)





**"I am more than my past,  
so it was nice that Clean Sheet's sole  
focus was on helping me find work..."**

- Clean Sheet Member

Clean Sheet is a registered charity with one simple purpose - to offer people with convictions the hope of a better future by finding sustainable employment.

Our mission is to help people with convictions find work to enable them to reach their full potential.



Winners of the Queen's Award for Enterprise 2022: promoting opportunity through social mobility

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