

Prison: the facts

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Facts and figures provide a better basis than tough political rhetoric or media scaremongering for policy and practice change. The facts chart the extraordinary rise in prison numbers over the last twenty years, inflation in sentencing and the social and economic consequences of overuse of custody. Revealing as they do the state of our overcrowded prisons and the state of people in them, the impact of drastic budget cuts and the pace and scale of change in the justice system these figures, drawn largely from government sources, indicate the scope for community solutions to crime.

Opinion polls show strong public backing for measures that reduce crime and disorder from better supervision of young people by their parents to making amends to victims, from mental health and social care to treatment for addictions. It's time to put prison back where it belongs – as an important place of absolute last resort in the justice system.

On 23 May 2014, the prison population in England and Wales was 84,305.¹ Between June 1993 and June 2012 the prison population in England and Wales increased by 41,800 prisoners to over 86,000.²

The prison system as a whole has been overcrowded in every year since 1994. At the end of March 2014, 77 of the 119 prisons in England and Wales were overcrowded.³

Prison has a poor record for reducing reoffending – 46% of adults are reconvicted within one year of release. For those serving sentences of less than 12 months this increases to 58%. Over two-thirds (67%) of under 18 year olds are reconvicted within a year of release.⁴ Reoffending by all recent ex-prisoners in 2007-08 cost the economy between £9.5 and £13 billion.⁵

37,527 people entered prison in 2013 to serve sentences of less than, or equal to, six months.⁶

Court Orders (Community Orders and Suspended Sentence Orders) are more effective (by nearly 7%) at reducing one-year proven reoffending rates than custodial sentences of less than 12 months for similar offenders.⁷

The average annual overall cost of a prison place in England and Wales for 2012-13 was £36,808.⁸ This has fallen since 2008-09 from £45,000.⁹

40% of prisoners are now held in prisons of 1,000 places or more.¹⁰

The ratio of prison officers to prisoners in 2000 was 1:2.9, by the end of September 2013 this had increased to 4.8 prisoners for each prison officer.¹¹

According to the National Audit Office, there is no consistent correlation between prison numbers and levels of crime.¹²

Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales had a parent in prison at some point in 2009.¹³ This is more than double the number of children affected in the same year by divorce in the family.¹⁴

Fewer than 1% of all children in England are in care,¹⁵ but looked after children make up 33% of boys and 61% of girls in custody.¹⁶

1 Ministry of Justice (2014) Population and Capacity Briefing for Friday 23 May 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

2 Ministry of Justice (2013) Story of the prison population: 1993 - 2012 England and Wales, London: Ministry of Justice

3 Ministry of Justice (2014) Monthly Population Bulletin March 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

4 Tables 18a, 18b, 19a, Ministry of Justice (2014) Proven re-offending statistics quarterly July 2011 to June 2012, London: Ministry of Justice

5 National Audit Office (2010) Managing offenders on short custodial sentences, London: The Stationery Office

6 Table A2.1a, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender Management Statistics Annual Tables 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

7 Table A1, Ministry of Justice (2013) 2013 Compendium of reoffending statistics and analysis, London: Ministry of Justice

8 Table 1, Ministry of Justice (2013) Costs per place and costs per prisoner by individual prison, National Offender Management Service Annual Report and Accounts 2012-13: Management Information Addendum, London: Ministry of Justice

9 Table 2a, Ibid. and Hansard HC, 3 March 2010, c1251W

10 Prison Reform Trust (2013) 'Nearly half of all prisoners to be warehoused in 1,000 plus super sized jails' available at <http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/PressPolicy/News/vw/1/ItemID/198>

11 Hansard HC, 23 July 2007, c785W and Deposited paper - DEP2014-0327

12 National Audit Office (2012) Comparing International Criminal Justice Systems, London: National Audit Office

13 Ministry of Justice (2012) Prisoners' childhood and family backgrounds, London: Ministry of Justice

14 Office for National Statistics (2011) Divorces in England and Wales 2009, Fareham: Office for National Statistics

15 Department for Education (2013) Children looked after in England year ending 31 March 2013, London: DfE, StatsWales website, and Office for National Statistics (2013) Population Estimates Total Persons for England and Wales and Regions - Mid-1971 to Mid-2012, London: ONS

16 Kennedy, E. (2013) Children and Young People in Custody 2012-13, London: HM Inspectorate of Prisons and Youth Justice Board

In 2013 there were 215 deaths in custody, the highest number on record.¹⁷

Prison population and sentencing trends

Use of custody

On 23 May 2014, the prison population in England and Wales was 84,305. On 16 May 2014 Scotland's prison population was 7,777 and Northern Ireland's prison population was 1,895.¹⁸

England and Wales have an imprisonment rate of 149 per 100,000 of the population. Scotland has a rate of 146 per 100,000, Northern Ireland and France have rates of 100 per 100,000, and Germany has 77 per 100,000.¹⁹

Between March 2013 and March 2014, the prison population in England and Wales increased by 1,496. Largely due to an increase in adults held on custodial remand awaiting trial, reversing the decrease over the past two years.²⁰

Between June 1993 and June 2012 the prison population in England and Wales increased by 41,800 prisoners to over 86,000. Almost all of this increase took place within those sentenced to immediate custody (85% of the increase) and those recalled to prison for breaking the conditions of their release (13% of the increase).²¹

The recall population grew rapidly between 1993 and 2012, increasing by 5,300.²²

From 1999 to 2013, the average time served in prison, including time on remand, increased from 8.1 to 10 months for those released from determinate sentences.²³

Average sentence length has also been increasing, it is now 3 months longer than in 2002. The average sentence is 15.4 months.²⁴

37,527 people entered prison in 2013 to serve sentences of less than or equal to six months.²⁵

17 Table 1.1, Ministry of Justice (2014) Safety in Custody Statistics Quarterly Update to December 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

18 Ministry of Justice (2014) Population and Capacity Briefing for Friday 23 May 2014, London: Ministry of Justice, Scottish Prison Service website, and Northern Ireland Prison Service website

19 www.prisonstudies.org/info/worldbrief/

20 Table 1.1a Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender Management Statistics Quarterly Bulletin October to December 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

21 Ministry of Justice (2013) Story of the prison population: 1993 - 2012 England and Wales, London: Ministry of Justice

22 Ibid.

23 Table 4.11, Home Office (2000) Prison Statistics England and Wales 1999, London: The Stationery Office and Table A3.1b, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender Management Statistics Annual Tables 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

24 Table Q5.6, Ministry of Justice (2014) Criminal Justice Statistics Quarterly update to September 2013, London: Ministry of Justice and Quarterly update to September 2012

25 Table A2.1a, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender Management Statistics Annual Tables 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

Taking determinate sentences of 4 years or more together with indeterminate sentences, the population serving these long sentences increased by 26,600 between 1993 and 2012, representing 66% of the total population increase over the period.²⁶

Life and indeterminate sentences

The proportion of the sentenced prison population serving a life or indeterminate sentence for public protection (IPP) increased from 9% in 1993 to 19% in 2013.²⁷

The average time spent in custody for people serving mandatory life sentences for murder increased from 13 years in 2001 to 17 years in 2013.²⁸

At the end of March 2014 there were 12,625 prisoners serving indeterminate sentences.²⁹ Within the indeterminate sentenced population, 41% were serving an IPP (5,206) while 59% were serving life sentences (7,419).³⁰

Among those serving IPPs, most had a tariff length of four years or less (954 people had a tariff of less than two years).³¹

A total of 3,575 (69%) IPP prisoners had passed their tariff expiry date as at 31 March 2014.³² On this date there were 48 prisoners serving a whole life sentence.³³

People on remand

On 31 March 2014 there were 11,800 people in prison on remand, over 1,000 more than the year before. 48,875 people were remanded into custody during 2013 to await trial.³⁴

In the 12 months ending September 2013, only 27% (10,600) of those defendants remanded in custody went on to receive a custodial sentence at magistrates' courts. 26% (10,100) were given a non-custodial sentence and 19% (7,600) were

26 Ministry of Justice (2013) Story of the prison population: 1993 - 2012 England and Wales, London: Ministry of Justice

27 Ministry of Justice (2013) Story of the prison population: 1993 - 2012 England and Wales, London: Ministry of Justice and Table A1.1, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender Management Statistics Annual Tables 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

28 Hansard HC, 19 October 2012 c485W and Table A3.4, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender Management Statistics Annual Tables 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

29 Table 1.1, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender Management Statistics Quarterly Bulletin October to December 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

30 Table 1.9, Ibid.

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid.

34 Table 1.1, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender Management Statistics Quarterly Bulletin October to December 2013, London: Ministry of Justice and Table A2.1a, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender Management Statistics Annual Tables 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

acquitted or not proceeded against. 25.4% (10,000) were committed to the crown court for sentence or trial.³⁵

At the Crown Court, 36,300 defendants were remanded in custody in the 12 months to September 2013. 73% (26,300) of these defendants went on to receive a custodial sentence and 12% (4,300) were acquitted or not proceeded against.³⁶

People in prison - a snapshot

Children and young adults

The number of children in custody has fallen by 55% in the last five years.³⁷ There were 98,837 proven offences committed by young people on the Youth Offending Team caseload in 2012/13, a reduction of 50% since 2009/10.³⁸

At the end of February 2014 there were 1,183 children (under-18s) in custody in England and Wales – a decrease of 108 from the same point last year. There were 54 children aged 14 and under in the secure estate.³⁹

The minimum age that a person can be prosecuted in a criminal trial in England, Wales and Northern Ireland is 10 years. This compares to, for example, 12 years in Canada, 13 years in France, 14 years in Germany and China, and 15 years in Sweden. In Scotland the age of criminal responsibility is eight years, but the minimum age for prosecution is now 12.⁴⁰

At the end of March 2014 there were 5,939 young adults aged 18-20 in prison in England and Wales - 10% fewer than the previous year.⁴¹

39% of children in custody in 2012-13 were there for non-violent crimes. 7% were there for a breach offence.⁴²

In 2013 children spent an average 7 months in custody, including time on remand.⁴³

25% of children in the youth justice system have identified special educational needs, 46% are

35 Table Q3a, Ministry of Justice (2014) Criminal Justice Statistics Quarterly update to September 2013, London: Ministry of Justice
36 Ibid.

37 Table 2.1, Youth Justice Board (2014) Monthly Youth Custody Report - February 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

38 Table 4.2, Ministry of Justice (2014) Youth Justice Statistics 2012-13 England and Wales, London: Ministry of Justice

39 Table 2.1 and 2.8, Ibid.

40 Jacobson, J. and Talbot, J. (2009) Vulnerable Defendants in the Criminal Courts: a review of provision for adults and children, London: Prison Reform Trust; and <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2009/03/27140804>

41 Table 1.1, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender Management Statistics Quarterly Bulletin October to December 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

42 Table 7.5a, Ministry of Justice (2014) Youth Justice Statistics 2012-13 England and Wales, London: Ministry of Justice

43 Table A3.1c, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender Management Statistics Annual Tables 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

rated as underachieving at school and 29% have difficulties with literacy and numeracy.⁴⁴

In March 2011, 30% of children were held over 50 miles from their home, including 10% held over 100 miles away.⁴⁵

Fewer than 1% of all children in England are in care,⁴⁶ but looked after children make up 33% of boys and 61% of girls in custody.⁴⁷

Use of restrictive physical interventions (or restraint) on children is intended 'as a last resort, for example to prevent them causing harm to themselves or others.' There were 6,455 incidents of restraint used in the youth secure estate in 2012-13.⁴⁸

Prison Reform Trust research found that one in eight children in prison had experienced the death of a parent or sibling. 76% had an absent father, 33% an absent mother. 39% had been on the child protection register or had experienced neglect or abuse.⁴⁹

193 young people (aged 15-24) have died in penal custody between 2002 and 2013.⁵⁰

16-24 year-olds are more likely than any other age group to become a victim of crime.⁵¹

Women

On 9 May 2014 there were 3,826 women in prison in England and Wales, 67 fewer than the previous year.⁵² In 1995 the mid-year female prison population was 1,979 and in 2010 it was 4,267, an over 80% increase in 15 years. A total of 9,083 women were received into custody in 2013, a fall of 8% from the previous year.⁵³

Most women entering prison serve very short sentences. In 2013, 60% of sentenced women (4,134) entering prison were serving six months

44 Youth Justice Board (2006) Barriers to engaging in education, training and employment, London: Youth Justice Board

45 Summerfield, A. (2011) Children and Young People in Custody 2010-11, London: HM Inspectorate of Prisons and Youth Justice Board

46 Department for Education (2013) Children looked after in England year ending 31 March 2013, London: DfE, StatsWales website, and Office for National Statistics (2013) Population Estimates Total Persons for England and Wales and Regions - Mid-1971 to Mid-2012, London: ONS

47 Kennedy, E. (2013) Children and Young People in Custody 2012-13, London: HM Inspectorate of Prisons and Youth Justice Board

48 Tables 8.2 and 8.3, Youth Justice Board (2013) Youth Justice Statistics 2012-13 England and Wales, London: Ministry of Justice

49 Jacobson J. et al (2010) Punishing Disadvantage: a profile of children in custody, London: Prison Reform Trust

50 Table 1.6, Ministry of Justice (2014) Safety in custody statistics quarterly update to December 2013

51 Table D1, Office for National Statistics (2013) Annual Trend and Demographic Tables - Crime in England and Wales, Year Ending March 2013, London: ONS

52 Ministry of Justice (2014) Population and Capacity Briefing for Friday 9 May 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

53 Table A2.1c, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender Management Statistics Annual Tables 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

or less.⁵⁴ In 1993 only a third of women entering custody were sentenced to six months or less.⁵⁵

On 31 March 2014 there were 715 women in prison on remand.⁵⁶ During 2013, 3,653 women were remanded to custody to await trial.⁵⁷

Most women entering prison under sentence (83%) have committed a non-violent offence In 2013, 40% of women entering custody under sentence were there for theft and handling stolen goods.⁵⁸

The average distance adult women in prison are held from their home or committal court address is 60 miles.⁵⁹

49% of women prisoners in a Ministry of Justice study were assessed as suffering from anxiety and depression, compared to 19% of the female population in the UK.⁶⁰

46% of women in prison report having suffered a history of domestic abuse.⁶¹

53% of women in prison reported having experienced emotional, physical or sexual abuse as a child, compared to 27% of men.⁶²

If alternatives to prison were to achieve an additional reduction of just 6% in reoffending by women, the state would recoup the investment required to achieve this in just one year.⁶³

Mothers and fathers, prisoners' children

Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales had a parent in prison some time in 2009.⁶⁴ In the same year more than double the numbers of children were affected by the imprisonment of a parent than by divorce in the family.⁶⁵

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Hedderman, C. (2012) Empty cells or empty words, government policy on reducing the number of women going to prison, London: Criminal Justice Alliance

⁵⁶ Table 1.1, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender Management Statistics Quarterly Bulletin October to December 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

⁵⁷ Table A2.1c, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender Management Statistics Annual Tables 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

⁵⁸ Table A2.2b, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender Management Statistics Annual Tables 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

⁵⁹ Women in Prison (2013) State of the estate - Women in Prison's report on the women's custodial estate 2011-12, London: Women in Prison

⁶⁰ Ministry of Justice (2013) Gender differences in substance misuse and mental health amongst prisoners, London: Ministry of Justice

⁶¹ Baroness Corston (2007) A Review of Women with Particular Vulnerabilities in the Criminal Justice System, London: Home Office

⁶² Ministry of Justice (2012) Prisoners' childhood and family backgrounds, London: Ministry of Justice

⁶³ new economics foundation (2008) Unlocking value: How we all benefit from investing in alternatives to prison for women offenders, London: new economics foundation

⁶⁴ Ministry of Justice (2012) Prisoners' childhood and family backgrounds, London: Ministry of Justice

⁶⁵ Office for National Statistics (2011) Divorces in England and Wales 2009, Fareham: Office for National Statistics

During their time at school an estimated 7% of children experience their father's imprisonment.⁶⁶ It is estimated that more than 17,240 children were separated from their mother in 2010 by imprisonment.⁶⁷

Only 9% of children whose mothers are in prison are cared for by their fathers in their mothers' absence.⁶⁸

Children of prisoners have about three times the risk of mental health problems and/or anti-social behaviour compared to other children.⁶⁹

Over half (54%) of the 1,435 prisoners interviewed for a Ministry of Justice study had children under the age of 18 at the time they entered prison. The vast majority felt they had let their family down by being sent to prison (82%).⁷⁰

40% of prisoners stated that support from their family, and 36% that seeing their children, would help them stop reoffending in the future.⁷¹

Ministry of Justice research indicates that the likelihood of reoffending was 39% higher for prisoners who had not received visits whilst in prison compared to those who had.⁷²

Foreign national prisoners

At the end of March 2014 there were 10,649 foreign nationals (defined as non-UK passport holders) held in prisons in England and Wales, 12% of the overall prison population.⁷³

These prisoners come from 159 countries, but over half are from 10 countries (Poland, Ireland, Jamaica, Romania, Pakistan, Lithuania, Nigeria, Somalia, India and Albania).⁷⁴

Currently 14% of women in prison, 556, are foreign nationals, some of whom are known to have been coerced or trafficked into offending.⁷⁵

⁶⁶ Department for Education and Skills (2003) Every Child Matters, London: The Stationery Office

⁶⁷ Wilks-Wiffen, S. (2011) Voice of a Child, London: Howard League for Penal Reform

⁶⁸ Baroness Corston (2007) A Review of Women with Particular Vulnerabilities in the Criminal Justice System, London: Home Office

⁶⁹ Social Exclusion Unit (2002) Reducing reoffending by ex-prisoners, London: Social Exclusion Unit, and Murray, J., & Farrington, D. P. (2008) 'The effects of parental imprisonment on children'. In M. Tonry (Ed.), Crime and justice: A review of research (Vol. 37, pp. 133-206). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

⁷⁰ Ministry of Justice (2012) Prisoners' childhood and family backgrounds, London: Ministry of Justice

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² May, C. et al. (2008) Factors linked to reoffending: a one-year follow-up of prisoners who took part in the Resettlement Surveys 2001, 2003 and 2004, London: Ministry of Justice

⁷³ Table 1.8, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender Management Statistics Quarterly Bulletin October to December 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

One in ten foreign national women serving a sentence in prison is there for fraud and forgery offences (usually possession of false documents), and nearly one in three (31%) is there as a result of drugs offences.⁷⁶

4,765 foreign national offenders were removed or deported in 2012.⁷⁷

As of 9 September 2013, there were 979 immigration detainees held in prison.⁷⁸

Black, Asian and minority ethnic people

On 31 March 2014, 26% of the prison population, 21,769 prisoners, was from a minority ethnic group.⁷⁹ This compares to around one in 10 of the general population.⁸⁰

Out of the British national prison population, 11% are black and 6% are Asian.⁸¹ For black Britons this is significantly higher than the 2.8% of the general population they represent.⁸²

According to the Equality and Human Rights Commission, there is now greater disproportionality in the number of black people in prisons in the UK than in the United States.⁸³

HM Chief Inspector of Prisons has said that Gypsy, Roma and Traveller prisoners are a significant but often unrecognised minority in many prisons.⁸⁴

Prison Inspectorate surveys conducted in 2012–2013 found that 5% of prisoners said they considered themselves to be Gypsy, Romany or Traveller.⁸⁵ However, ‘there is evidence of a possible reluctance by many Gypsy, Romany or Traveller prisoners to identify themselves as such.’⁸⁶

76 Table A1.9, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender Management Statistics Annual Tables 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

77 Hansard HC, 25 November 2013, c94W

78 Hansard HC, 31 October 2013, c546W

79 Table 1.4, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender Management Statistics Quarterly Bulletin October to December 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

80 Table A3.5.2, Equality and Human Rights Commission (2010) How fair is Britain? Equality, Human Rights and Good Relations in 2010, London: Equality and Human Rights Commission

81 Table A1.10, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender Management Statistics Annual Tables 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

82 Table 4, Office for National Statistics (2011) Population Estimates by Ethnic Group 2002 – 2009, London: Office for National Statistics

83 Equality and Human Rights Commission (2010) How fair is Britain? London: Equality and Human Rights Commission

84 HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (2013) Annual Report 2012–13, London: The Stationery Office

85 HM Inspectorate of Prisons (2014) People in prison: Gypsies, Romany and Travellers, London: HMIP

86 Department for Communities and Local Government (2012), Progress report by the ministerial working group on tackling inequalities experienced by Gypsies and Travellers, London: CLG

Older people

On 31 March 2014, there were 10,749 prisoners aged 50 and over in England and Wales, including 3,577 aged 60 and over. This group makes up 12% of the total prison population.⁸⁷

People aged 60 and over are the fastest growing age group in the prison estate. The number of sentenced prisoners aged 60 and over rose by 130% between 2002 and 2013.⁸⁸

42% of men in prison aged over 50 have been convicted of sex offences. The next highest offence category is violence against the person (25%) followed by drug offences (11%).⁸⁹

Some older prisoners will have a physical health status of 10 years older than their contemporaries in the community.⁹⁰

Health and wellbeing

Disability

An estimated 36% of 1,435 prisoners interviewed in a Ministry of Justice study were considered to have a disability when survey answers about disability and health, including mental health, were screened.⁹¹

18% of prisoners interviewed were considered to have a physical disability.⁹²

People with learning disabilities and difficulties

20–30% of all offenders have learning disabilities or difficulties that interfere with their ability to cope with the criminal justice system.⁹³

23% of young offenders have learning difficulties (IQs of below 70) and a further 36% have borderline learning difficulties (IQ 70–80).⁹⁴

87 Table 1.3, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender Management Statistics Quarterly Bulletin October to December 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

88 Table A1.5, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender Management Statistics Annual Tables 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

89 Table A1.4, Ibid.

90 Cooney, F. with Braggins, J. (2010) Doing Time: Good practice with older people in prison – the views of prison staff, London: Prison Reform Trust.

91 Ministry of Justice (2012) Estimating the prevalence of disability amongst prisoners: results from the Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction (SPCR) survey, London: Ministry of Justice

92 Ibid.

93 Loucks, N. (2007) No One Knows: Offenders with Learning Difficulties and Learning Disabilities. Review of prevalence and associated needs, London: Prison Reform Trust

94 Harrington, R., and Bailey, S. (2005) Mental health needs and effectiveness of provision for young offenders in custody and in the community. London: Youth Justice Board

Over half of prison staff believe that prisoners with learning disabilities or difficulties are more likely to be victimised and bullied than other prisoners.⁹⁵

Prisoners with learning disabilities or difficulties are more likely than other prisoners to have broken a prison rule, five times as likely to have been subject to control and restraint, and over three times as likely to report having spent time in segregation.⁹⁶

The government announced its intention to invest £50 million by 2014 in liaison and diversion services at police stations and courts wherever possible to divert offenders with mental health needs and learning disabilities away from the justice system and into treatment and care.⁹⁷ However, the deadline for full roll out of services has slipped from 2014 to 2017.⁹⁸

Mental health

49% of women and 23% of male prisoners in a Ministry of Justice study were assessed as suffering from anxiety and depression. This can be compared with 16% of the general UK population (12% of men and 19% of women).⁹⁹

25% of women and 15% of men in prison reported symptoms indicative of psychosis.¹⁰⁰ The rate among the general public is about 4%.¹⁰¹

26% of women and 16% of men said they had received treatment for a mental health problem in the year before custody.¹⁰²

In the 12 months ending December 2013, there were a total of 23,183 incidents of self-harm in prisons, 25 more than in the previous 12 months.¹⁰³ 27% of self-harm incidents occurred within the first month of arriving in a prison - 10% in the first week.¹⁰⁴

Women accounted for 26% of all incidents of self-harm in 2013 despite representing just 5% of the total prison population. This has fallen sharply over the last four years when women

95 Talbot, J. (2007) No One Knows: Identifying and supporting prisoners with learning difficulties and learning disabilities: the views of prison staff, London: Prison Reform Trust

96 Talbot, J. (2008) Prisoners' Voices: Experiences of the criminal justice system by prisoners with learning disabilities and difficulties, London: Prison Reform Trust

97 Hansard HC, 15 February 2011, c811

98 Department of Health website, accessed on 27 March 2014, www.gov.uk/government/news/extra-funding-for-mental-health-nurses-to-be-based-at-police-stations-and-courts-across-the-country

99 Ministry of Justice (2013) Gender differences in substance misuse and mental health amongst prisoners, London: Ministry of Justice

100 Ibid.

101 Wiles, N., et al. (2006) Self-reported psychotic symptoms in the general population, *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 188: 519-526

102 Ministry of Justice (2013) Gender differences in substance misuse and mental health amongst prisoners, London: Ministry of Justice

103 Table 3, Ministry of Justice (2014) Safety in Custody Statistics Quarterly Update to December 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

104 Table 2.5, Ibid.

accounted for nearly half of all incidents, but reflects rising incidents amongst men.¹⁰⁵

46% of women prisoners reported having attempted suicide at some point in their lives. This is more than twice the rate of male prisoners (21%) and higher than in the general UK population amongst whom around 6% report having ever attempted suicide.¹⁰⁶

Deaths in custody

In 2013 there were 215 deaths in custody, the highest number on record. Of these 123 were due to natural causes, and 74 were self-inflicted (34%).¹⁰⁷

In 2013, 32% of self-inflicted deaths were by prisoners held on remand, despite comprising 13% of the prison population.¹⁰⁸

A Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) study found that in 92 cases of prisoners dying from natural causes restraints were used during final inpatient stays in outside hospitals on 29 out of 52 occasions.¹⁰⁹

Between January and October 2012, the PPO published 23 reports into natural deaths where the restraints used were regarded as inappropriate.¹¹⁰ Recently the PPO raised concerns about the overuse of restraint stating that there needed to be a balance of "security with humanity when assessing the use of restraints on very ill, often low risk and frail prisoners."¹¹¹

Between 2007 and 2012, 8% of self-inflicted deaths investigated by the PPO were of prisoners on the basic regime, considerably higher than the national average percentage of prisoners on the basic regime (2%).¹¹²

Boys aged 15-17 are 18 times more likely to take their own lives in prison than boys in the community.¹¹³ Men recently released from prison are eight times more likely, and women 36 times

105 Table 2.1, Ibid. and Table A1.2 (2014) Offender Management Statistics Annual Tables 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

106 Ministry of Justice (2013) Gender differences in substance misuse and mental health amongst prisoners, London: Ministry of Justice

107 Table 1.1, Ministry of Justice (2014) Safety in Custody Statistics Quarterly Update to December 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

108 Table 1.8, Ibid. and Table A1.1, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender Management Statistics Annual Tables 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

109 Ryan-Mills, D. (2010) Review: fatal incidents reports from September 2008 to August 2009, London: Prisons and Probation Ombudsman for England and Wales

110 Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (2013) Learning Lessons Bulletin: Restraints, London: PPO

111 Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (2013) Annual Report 2012-2013, London: The Stationery Office

112 Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (2013) Learning Lessons Bulletin: Basic regime, London: PPO and Table 10, National Offender Management Service (2012) NOMS Equalities Annual Report 2011/12 - Annex C, London: Ministry of Justice

113 Fazel, Seena et al, (2005) Suicides in male prisons in England and Wales, 1978-2003, *The Lancet*, Vol. 366

more likely, than the general population to take their own lives.¹¹⁴

Drugs

Levels of drug use are high amongst offenders, with highest levels of use found amongst most prolific offenders. 64% of prisoners reported having used drugs in the four weeks before custody.¹¹⁵

At the end of March 2014, 15% of men and 13% of women in prison were serving sentences for drug offences.¹¹⁶

Over half of prisoners (55%) report committing offences connected to their drug taking, with the need for money to buy drugs most commonly cited. 48% of women prisoners said they committed their offence to support the drug use of someone else, compared to 22% of men in prison.¹¹⁷

Of those prisoners who had used heroin on a daily basis, on average women spent £50 per day on heroin compared to £30 for men.¹¹⁸

Reconviction rates more than double for prisoners who reported using drugs in the four weeks before custody compared with prisoners who had never used drugs (62% vs. 30%).¹¹⁹

19% of those prisoners who said they had ever used heroin reported having used heroin for the first time in a prison.¹²⁰

Alcohol

In 47% of violent crimes the victim believed the offender(s) to be under the influence of alcohol.¹²¹

46% of female prisoners surveyed compared to 37% of men stated that they perceived their drinking to be a big problem. 58% of women (compared to 72% of men) saying that drinking contributed to their offending behaviour.¹²²

114 Pratt, D. Piper, M, Appleby, L. Webb, R. Shaw, J. Suicide in recently released prisoners: a population-based cohort study, The Lancet - Vol. 368, Issue 9530, 8 July 2006

115 Ministry of Justice (2013) Gender differences in substance misuse and mental health amongst prisoners, Results from the Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction (SPCR) longitudinal cohort study of prisoners, London: Ministry of Justice

116 Table 1.2a, Ministry of Justice (2013) Offender Management Statistics Quarterly Bulletin, July to September 2012, London: Ministry of Justice

117 Ministry of Justice (2013) Gender differences in substance misuse and mental health amongst prisoners, London: Ministry of Justice

118 Ibid.

119 Ibid.

120 Ibid.

121 Table 7.10, Office for National Statistics (2012) Crime Statistics, Period Ending March 2012, London: ONS

122 Alcohol and Crime Commission (2014) The Alcohol and Crime Commission Report, London: Addaction

Men and women prisoners who reported drinking daily drank an average of 20 units per day. This was equivalent to drinking four bottles of wine or ten pints of beer in a single day.¹²³

Social and economic disadvantage

Education and skills

In 2012 47% of prisoners said that they had no qualifications. This compares to 15% of the working age general population in the UK.¹²⁴

21% of prisoners reported needing help with reading and writing or ability with numbers, 41% with education, and 40% to improve work-related skills.¹²⁵

41% of men, 30% of women and 52% of young offenders were permanently excluded from school.¹²⁶

Some 9,700 prisoners are employed in workshops across the prison estate from printing to commercial laundry, textile production, manufacturing and distribution. In 2012/13 they worked 13.1 million hours.¹²⁷

The most recent annual report by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons found that both “the quantity and quality of purposeful activity in which prisoners are engaged [has] plummeted” in 2012-13, reporting the worst outcomes in six years. In over half of prisons results were judged to be not sufficiently good or poor.¹²⁸

Housing and employment

15% of newly sentenced prisoners reported being homeless before custody. 9% were sleeping rough. 44% of prisoners reported living in their accommodation prior to custody for less than a year and 28% for less than six months.¹²⁹

12% of prisoners released from custody in 2012/13 had no settled accommodation.¹³⁰ However, HM Chief Inspector of Prisons remains “concerned that in too many cases release addresses were not stable and that prisons made

123 Ministry of Justice (2013) Gender differences in substance misuse and mental health amongst prisoners, London: Ministry of Justice.

124 Ministry of Justice (2012) The pre-custody employment, training and education status of newly sentenced prisoners, London: Ministry of Justice

125 Ibid.

126 Stewart, D. (2008) The problems and needs of newly sentenced prisoners: results from a national survey, London: Ministry of Justice

127 Table 20, Ministry of Justice (2013) NOMS Annual Report 2012/13: Management Information Addendum, London: Ministry of Justice

128 HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (2013) Annual Report 2012-13, London: The Stationery Office

129 Ministry of Justice (2012) Research Summary 3/12, Accommodation, homelessness and reoffending of prisoners, London: Ministry of Justice

130 Table 15, Ministry of Justice (2013) NOMS Annual Report 2012/13: Management Information Addendum, London: Ministry of Justice

insufficient attempts to interrogate arrangements prior to release”, and that “obtaining suitable accommodation for young people on release continued to be a major problem.”¹³¹

32% of prisoners reported being in paid employment in the four weeks before custody. 13% reported never having had a job.¹³²

In 2012-13 just 26% of prisoners entered employment on release from prison.¹³³

In 2010 only 12% of employers surveyed said that they had employed somebody with a criminal record in the past three years, and around one in five employers (19%) said they did exclude or were likely to exclude them from the recruitment process.¹³⁴

Financial exclusion and debt

Assessments for 2005 suggest over 23,000 offenders had financial problems linked to their offending.¹³⁵ 48% of people in prison have a history of debt.¹³⁶

Almost three-quarters (72%) of prisoners interviewed for a 2010 report by Prison Reform Trust and UNLOCK said they had not been asked about their finances while in prison. A third said they did not have a bank account; of whom 31% had never had one.¹³⁷

Most families interviewed said they were in debt, of whom two thirds said their debts had increased since the imprisonment of their relative.¹³⁸

Over four in five former prisoners surveyed said their conviction made it harder to get insurance and four-fifths said that when they did get insurance, they were charged more. The inability to obtain insurance can prevent access to mortgages and many forms of employment or self-employment.¹³⁹

The amount of discharge grant has remained fixed at £46 since 1997.¹⁴⁰

131 HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (2012) Annual Report 2011-12, London: The Stationery Office and HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (2013) Annual Report 2012-13, London: The Stationery Office

132 Ministry of Justice (2012) The pre-custody employment, training and education status of newly sentenced prisoners, London: Ministry of Justice

133 Table 13, Ministry of Justice (2013) NOMS Annual Report 2012/13: Management Information Addendum, London: Ministry of Justice

134 Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2010) Disadvantaged Groups in the Labour Market, London: CIPD

135 Home Office (2005) The National Reducing Re-offending Delivery Plan, London: Home Office

136 National Offender Management Service (2007) Signposting Offenders to Financial Capability Training, Debt Advice and Financial Services, London: Ministry of Justice

137 Bath, C., and Edgar, K. (2010) Time is Money: Financial responsibility after prison, London: Prison Reform Trust

138 Ibid.

139 Ibid.

140 Prison Service Instruction 72/2011 Discharge, Annex B

Performance and outcomes

Reoffending

Prison has a poor record for reducing reoffending – 46% of adults are reconvicted within one year of release. For those serving sentences of less than 12 months this increases to 58% - 3.5% higher than in 2000.¹⁴¹

Figures for 2010 show that 45% of women leaving prison are reconvicted within one year.¹⁴² Figures for 2009 show that for those women who have served sentences of 12 months or less the rate increases to 62%.¹⁴³

58% of young adults (18-20 year olds) released from custody in the first quarter of 2008 were reconvicted within a year.¹⁴⁴ **Over two-thirds (67%) of under 18 year olds are reconvicted within a year of release from custody.**¹⁴⁵

Prisoners who reported being homeless before custody were more likely to be reconvicted upon release than prisoners who didn't report being homeless (79% compared to 47% in the first year and 84% compared to 60% in the second year after release).¹⁴⁶

Prisoners who reported having been employed at some point in the year before custody were less likely to be reconvicted in the year after release than those who were unemployed (40% compared with 65%).¹⁴⁷

68% of prisoners thought that 'having a job' was important in stopping reoffending.¹⁴⁸

In 2012, there were 485,000 releases on temporary licence (ROTL) with 428 failures, most for failure to return, late to return, or other breach of licence. Just 26 involved the prisoner being arrested on suspicion of committing an offence - this equates to five failures in every 100,000 releases.¹⁴⁹

141 Tables 18a and 19a, Ministry of Justice (2014) Proven re-offending statistics quarterly July 2011 to June 2012, London: Ministry of Justice

142 Table S5.28 Ministry of Justice (2012) Women and the Criminal Justice System, London: Ministry of Justice

143 Table A5(F) Ministry of Justice (2010) Adult re-convictions results from the 2009 cohort, London: Ministry of Justice

144 Hansard HC, 17 January 2011, c653W

145 Table 18b, Ministry of Justice (2014) Proven re-offending statistics quarterly July 2011 to June 2012, London: Ministry of Justice

146 Ministry of Justice (2012) Research Summary 3/12, Accommodation, homelessness and reoffending of prisoners, London: Ministry of Justice

147 Ministry of Justice (2012) The pre-custody employment, training and education status of newly sentenced prisoners, London: Ministry of Justice

148 Ibid.

149 Ministry of Justice (2014) Statistical Notice: Releases on temporary licence, 2012, London: Ministry of Justice

Costs

The National Offender Management Service has to make overall resource savings of almost 25% in real terms by 2014-15.¹⁵⁰ The 2013 Spending Round confirmed that the Ministry of Justice budget would be cut by a further 10% from 2014-15 to 2015-16, a reduction of £2.4bn since 2010-11.¹⁵¹

The average annual overall cost of a prison place in England and Wales for the financial year 2012-13 is £36,808.¹⁵² This has fallen significantly since 2008-09 from £45,000 and by 3.7% since the previous year.¹⁵³ This includes prison related costs met by the National Offender Management Service, but excludes expenditure met by other government departments such as health and education.

In 2013-14 the cost per place per year in a secure children's home is £209,000; in a secure training centre it is £187,000 and in an under-18 young offender institution £60,000.¹⁵⁴

In 2008-09, the cost of looking after short-sentenced prisoners (sentences of less than 12 months), not including education and healthcare, was £286 million.¹⁵⁵

Imprisoning mothers for non-violent offences carries a cost to children and the state of more than £17 million over a 10 year period.¹⁵⁶

In 2007-08, reoffending by all recent ex-prisoners cost the economy between £9.5 and £13 billion. As much as three quarters of this cost can be attributed to former short-sentenced prisoners: some £7-10 billion a year.¹⁵⁷

The average daily meal cost across all public sector prisons in 2012-13 was £2.20. This is set to reduce a further 11% during the contract and will be £1.96 per prisoner per day in 2013-14.¹⁵⁸

Prison overcrowding and pressure on resources

The prison population was 113% of the 'in use Certified Normal Accommodation (CNA)' (84,443) at the end of March 2014. CNA, or uncrowded

¹⁵⁰ Ministry of Justice (2013) NOMS Business Plan 2013-14, London: Ministry of Justice

¹⁵¹ Table 1, HM Treasury (2013) Spending Round 2013, London: HM Treasury and Table 1.3a, HM Treasury (2012) Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2012, London: HM Treasury

¹⁵² Table 1, Ministry of Justice (2013) Costs per place and costs per prisoner, National Offender Management Service Annual Report and Accounts 2012-13: Management Information Addendum, London: Ministry of Justice

¹⁵³ Table 2a, Ibid. and Hansard HC, 3 March 2010, c1251W

¹⁵⁴ Hansard HC, 27 June 2013, c368W

¹⁵⁵ National Audit Office (2010) Managing offenders on short custodial sentences, London: The Stationery Office

¹⁵⁶ new economics foundation (2008) Unlocking value: How we all benefit from investing in alternatives to prison for women offenders, London: new economics foundation

¹⁵⁷ National Audit Office (2010) Managing offenders on short custodial sentences, London: The Stationery Office

¹⁵⁸ Hansard HC, 25 November 2013, c96W

capacity, is the Prison Service's own measure of accommodation and represents "the good, decent standard of accommodation that the Service aspires to provide all prisoners".¹⁵⁹

In 2012-13 an average of 19,626 people were held in overcrowded accommodation, accounting for 22.8% of the total prison population. Within this total the average number of prisoners doubling up in cells designed for one occupant was 19,129.¹⁶⁰

Private prisons have held a higher percentage of their prisoners in overcrowded accommodation than public sector prisons every year for the past 15 years. In 2012-13 the private prisons average was 29.3%, compared to 21.8% in the public sector. Forest Bank, Birmingham, Doncaster and Altcourse have particularly high rates of overcrowding, with 41%, 47%, 66% and 67% of prisoners held in overcrowded accommodation respectively.¹⁶¹

HM Chief Inspector of Prisons found that overcrowding remains a significant barrier to ensuring that people have access to the necessary activities, staff and that other resources are available to keep them purposefully occupied and reduce the likelihood they will reoffend.¹⁶² "Resources are now stretched very thinly [...] there is a pretty clear choice for politicians and policy makers - reduce prison populations or increase prison budgets."¹⁶³

Estimates of future prison numbers vary widely.

By the end of June 2019 the demand for prison spaces is projected to be between 77,300 and 86,600.¹⁶⁴ This is lower than in previous years in part due to the abolition of the IPP sentence and restricting the use of remand. These figures do not yet take account of the projected impact of the Offender Rehabilitation Act 2013 or new measures proposed in the Criminal Justice & Courts Bill.

Prison performance and staffing

The UK has the most privatised prison system in Europe. In England and Wales there were 13,449 people (16% of the prisoner population) held in private prisons at the end of March 2014. The United States holds 8.7% of its prisoners in private prison facilities.¹⁶⁵

¹⁵⁹ Ministry of Justice (2014) Monthly Population Bulletin March 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

¹⁶⁰ Ministry of Justice (2013) Prison Performance Digest 2012-13, London: Ministry of Justice

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (2013) Annual Report 2012-13, London: The Stationery Office

¹⁶³ HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (2012) Annual Report 2011-12, London: The Stationery Office

¹⁶⁴ Table 1, Ministry of Justice (2012) Prison Population Projections 2012-2018, London: Ministry of Justice

¹⁶⁵ Ministry of Justice (2014) Prison Population Monthly Bulletin March 2014, London: Ministry of Justice, and US Department of Justice (2013) Prisoners in 2012: <http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbdetail&iid=4842>

In 2013 there were 10,996 recorded prisoner on prisoner assaults, falling by 2% since 2010, however, there has been a 14% rise in serious assaults during the same period. In 2013 there were 2,731 recorded prisoner on officer assaults.¹⁶⁶

Prisoners in large prisons were more likely to say that they had been assaulted or insulted by a member of staff or by another prisoner than those held in small prisons.¹⁶⁷

The number of occasions Prison Service Gold Command, the national group convened during serious incidents and disturbances, has been opened over the last three years has increased by 153% since 2011-12. In 2013-14 it opened on 81 occasions.¹⁶⁸

The National Tactical Response Group, a specialist unit assisting in safely managing and resolving serious incidents in prisons, was called out 151 times during the first nine months of 2013, compared with 129 times throughout 2012.¹⁶⁹

40% of prisoners are currently held in prisons of 1,000 places or more, and government plans could see close to one in two people behind bars held in prisons of 1,000-plus.¹⁷⁰

There has been a 25.9% reduction in the number of directly employed NOMS staff since March 2010, Prison Officers (Band 3) accounted for the largest reductions, falling by 4,550 (23%). 2,690 of these job losses were in the last year alone. Strict controls on recruitment, the closure of 15 prisons, the transfer of a further two prisons to the private sector and review of NOMS Headquarters functions have all contributed to this.¹⁷¹

Since December 2010 the number of staff employed by probation trusts has fallen by 15%, there are now nearly 1000 fewer Probation Officers.¹⁷²

The ratio of prison officers to prisoners in 2000 was 1:2.9, by the end of September 2013 this had increased to 4.8 prisoners for each prison officer.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁶ Table 3.8, Ministry of Justice (2014) Safety in Custody Statistics Quarterly Update to December 2013

¹⁶⁷ Prison Reform Trust (2008) Titan prisons: a gigantic mistake, London: Prison Reform Trust

¹⁶⁸ Hansard HC, 14 May 2014, c714W

¹⁶⁹ Hansard HC, 25 November 2013, c88W

¹⁷⁰ Prison Reform Trust (2013) 'Nearly half of all prisoners to be warehoused in 1,000 plus super sized jails' available at <http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/PressPolicy/News/vw/1/ItemID/198>

¹⁷¹ Ministry of Justice (2013) National Offender Management Service Workforce Statistics Bulletin 31st December 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

¹⁷² Table 1, Ministry of Justice (2014) Workforce Information Summary Report: Quarter 3 2013/14, London: Ministry of Justice and Workforce Information Summary Report: Quarter 3 2010/11, London: Ministry of Justice

¹⁷³ Hansard HC, 23 July 2007, c785W and Deposited paper - DEP2014-0327 available at http://data.parliament.uk/DepositedPapers/Files/DEP2014-0327/Copy_of_181117_-_Khan_-_TABLE_for_MP_Library.xls

The Prison Service is faced with high sickness levels amongst prison officers. The average number of working days lost due to staff sickness in 2011-12 was 9.8 days, this increased to 10.5 days in 2012-13.¹⁷⁴ This compares with an estimated 9.7 days for NHS workers in England¹⁷⁵ and 8.7 days in the public sector as a whole.¹⁷⁶

The average tenure of a Governing Governor in a public sector prison is around three years and four months.¹⁷⁷

In 2011 the average gross salary for a private sector prison officer was 23% less than public sector equivalents.¹⁷⁸

In March 2004 the European Court of Human Rights ruled in the Hirst case that the UK's current ban on all serving prisoners from voting contravenes Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights. The *Voting Eligibility (Prisoners) Draft Bill* Committee's final report recommended prisoners serving sentences of less than 12 months and those in the last six months of their sentence should be allowed to take part in elections. The government has said it will respond in early 2014.¹⁷⁹

Joint working in prisons

St Giles Trust offers training and a recognised qualification to prisoners who deliver housing advice in a number of prisons. The Toe by Toe reading plan run by the Shannon Trust enable prisoners to act as peer mentors to support other prisoners who are learning to read.¹⁸⁰

The National Grid offender training and employment programme works with people coming to the end of their sentences and provides training and a job on release for those selected. Over 2,000 prisoners have completed the scheme which has a reoffending rate of just 6%.¹⁸¹

Timpson actively recruit ex-offenders to work for them. It has set up a full time training facility at HMP Liverpool and HMP Wandsworth in

¹⁷⁴ Table 18, Ministry of Justice (2013) National Offender Management Service Annual Report 2012/13: Management Information Addendum, London: Ministry of Justice and Table 18, Ministry of Justice (2012) NOMS Management Information Addendum, London: Ministry of Justice

¹⁷⁵ Table C4, Department of Health (2013) Annual Report and Accounts 2012-13, London: The Stationery Office

¹⁷⁶ CIPD website, <http://www.cipd.co.uk/pm/peoplemanagement/b/weblog/archive/2012/10/09/sickness-absence-falls-by-nearly-a-day-annual-survey-reveals-2012-10.aspx>, accessed on 9 October 2013

¹⁷⁷ Hansard HC, 18 July 2013, c854W

¹⁷⁸ Hansard HC, 9 November 2011, c393W

¹⁷⁹ Joint Committee on the Draft Voting Eligibility (Prisoners) Bill (2013) Draft Voting Eligibility (Prisoners) Bill Report, London: The Stationery Office and 'Prisoners serving less than a year should get the vote', BBC News Online, 18 December 2013

¹⁸⁰ Clinks (2011) Service User Involvement: A Review of service user involvement in prisons and probation trusts, London: Clinks

¹⁸¹ www.nationalgrid.com/corporate/Media+Centre/Press+Releases/Global+Press+Releases/2000th+YO.htm

London, and the women's prison HMP New Hall. A Prison Excellence Centre also runs at HMP Forest Bank in Salford. Timpson colleagues train people in a prison workshop environment.¹⁸²

The Samaritans' Listener Scheme is active in most prisons across the UK. In 2012 there were around 1,650 active listeners in place. Listeners play an invaluable role in making prisons safer by offering emotional support to fellow prisoners in crisis. Listeners were contacted more than 86,000 times during 2012.¹⁸³

Solutions to crime

Court Orders (Community Orders and Suspended Sentence Orders) are more effective (by nearly seven percentage points) at reducing one-year proven reoffending rates than custodial sentences of less than 12 months for similar offenders. People serving court orders also committed fewer re-offences per person than those given a short custodial sentence.¹⁸⁴

In 2011 a greater proportion of women than men completed both community orders (70% vs. 65%) and suspended sentence orders (74% vs. 66%).¹⁸⁵ In 2012/13 over 74,000 unpaid work requirements were imposed by the courts, with 76% completed successfully. Approximately 7 million hours were worked by offenders on projects which benefited local communities. Calculated at the national minimum wage the value of this work exceeds £40 million.¹⁸⁶

An evaluation of three Transition to Adulthood pilot projects working with young adult offenders in the community and prior to release from prison found that, over six months, only 9% were reconvicted of a new offence (all non-violent); 9% breached the terms of their community order or licence; numbers in employment trebled; and numbers classified as not in education, employment and training halved.¹⁸⁷

The Crime and Courts Act 2013 allows courts to defer at pre-sentence stage in order for the victim and offender to be offered restorative justice at the earliest opportunity.¹⁸⁸

182 Timpson website, <http://www.timpson.co.uk/timpson-academy.php>, accessed on 1 May 2014

183 Samaritans (2013) Annual Report 2012/13, Surrey: Samaritans

184 Table A1, Ministry of Justice (2013) 2013 Compendium of reoffending statistics and analysis, London: Ministry of Justice

185 Ministry of Justice (2012) Statistics on Women and the Criminal Justice System 2011, London: Ministry of Justice

186 Ministry of Justice (2013) National Offender Management Service Annual Report 2012-13: Management Information Addendum, London: Ministry of Justice

187 Catch 22 (2012) Supporting Transitions, A summative evaluation of the Transition to Adulthood pilots, London: Catch 22

188 Prison Reform Trust (2012) Crime and Courts Bill, House of Lords Committee Stage briefing - October 2012, London: PRT

85% of victims surveyed as part of a government funded £7 million seven year research programme were either 'very' or 'quite' satisfied with their restorative conference. 80% of offenders in the Justice Research Consortium's (JRC) conferences were 'very' or 'quite' satisfied.¹⁸⁹

27% fewer crimes were committed by offenders who had experienced restorative conferencing, compared with those offenders who did not.¹⁹⁰

Restorative justice approaches are cost-effective. As a result of reductions in the frequency of offending Restorative Justice Council projects saved nine times what they cost to deliver.¹⁹¹

Public opinion

In an ICM survey commissioned by of the Prison Reform Trust conducted one month after the riots in August 2011 the overwhelming majority of those surveyed (94%) supported opportunities for offenders who have committed offences such as theft or vandalism to do unpaid work in the community, as part of their sentence, to pay back for what they have done.¹⁹²

Almost three quarters (71%) believe victims should have a say in how the offender can best make amends for the harm they have caused.¹⁹³ From a range of measures to prevent crime and disorder, most people (84%) consider that better supervision of young people by parents would be effective.¹⁹⁴

There is widespread support for 'better mental health care' (80%); 'making amends to victims' (79%); 'unpaid community work' (76%); and 'treatment to tackle drug addiction' (74%). Around two-thirds (65%) consider that a prison sentence would be effective in preventing crime and disorder.¹⁹⁵

In August 2012 a Populus poll of victims of lower level crime showed that 63% support community sentences as an alternative to prison for lower level offenders.¹⁹⁶

189 Shapland, J et al (2007) Restorative Justice: the views of victims. The third report from the evaluation of three schemes. Ministry of Justice Research Series 3/07. London: Ministry of Justice

190 Restorative Justice Council (2011) What does the Ministry of Justice RJ research tell us? London: RJC, available at http://www.restorativejustice.org.uk/resource/ministry_of_justice_evaluation_of_restorative_justice/

191 Ibid.

192 Prison Reform Trust (2011) Public want offenders to make amends briefing paper, London: Prison Reform Trust

193 Ibid.

194 Ibid.

195 Ibid.

196 Victim Support and Make Justice Work (2012) Out in the open: What victims really think about community sentencing, London: Victim Support

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Prison Reform Trust, London EC1V 0JR 020 7251 5070 prt@prisonreformtrust.org.uk
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