



BROMLEY BRIEFINGS

PRISON FACTFILE

May 2007

For more information about the work of the
Prison Reform Trust e-mail: prt@prisonreformtrust.org.uk
call 020 7251 5070 or visit www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk
www.innocentuntilprovengUILTY.com
www.smartjustice.org

These 'Bromley Briefings' are being produced in memory of Keith Bromley, a valued friend of PRT and allied groups concerned with prisons and human rights. His support for refugees from oppression, victims of torture and the falsely imprisoned has made a difference to many people's lives. The Prison Reform Trust is grateful to the Bromley Trust for supporting the production of this briefing paper.



Contents

Introduction.	3
Prison overview.	4
Prison overcrowding.	7
Prison suicide.	9
Sentencing trends	10
Remand prisoners.	12
Women in prison	14
Mothers and fathers in custody, prisoners' children.	16
Social characteristics of prisoners	18
Young people in prison (18-20 year olds).	19
Children in prison.	21
Minority ethnic prisoners.	22
Foreign national prisoners.	23
Elderly prisoners (aged 60 and above).	24
Mental health needs of prisoners.	26
Drugs.	28
Alcohol.	30
Health and wellbeing.	31
Homelessness and unemployment.	32
Education	34
Prison work and volunteering.	35
Recalls to prison.	36
Prison Service performance and staffing.	36
Private prisons.	37
Long term trends and future prison building.	39

Introduction

Few governments and no prime minister can have spent so much time talking about crime and punishment. For the last ten years Home Office bills have become the stock of parliament, and peal after peal of crackdowns and new initiatives are still ringing in our ears. Now that the prime minister is stepping down after ten years of unrelenting focus on crime and punishment, what has been the result of ten years of hard Labour?

Addressing the House of Commons in October last year, John Reid said that the government had come into power to find the prison system just 223 short of total capacity. Ten years later, after a frenzied prison building scheme adding 20,000 places, the government was 248 short of overall capacity. In fact, the government has also had to hire unsuitable police and court cells and order its prison governors to oversee them, all at enormous expense.

Who are all these people that the government has locked up, at such high cost? By the NHS's own estimate, between five and eight per cent of the prison population have 'severe and enduring' mental illness. The inquest which closed on 24th May into the death of Raymond Blowers in Norwich prison shone a brief light on a tragic story. Here was a man incarcerated for the first time following an arson attempt in which he tried to burn himself to death. Prison staff, it was said, had done all they could in that setting for Mr Blowers, a careworker, who had suffered from mental illness and recurring bouts of depression since the age of 15. The death follows at least three court cases in the last two years in which senior Norfolk judge Peter Jacobs has criticised the lack of resources for mentally ill offenders who he has been forced to send to prison.

It simply does not have to be like this. Moves are afoot to drive reform if government can, this time, keep its nerve. The Department of Health is preparing to make mental health court diversion and liaison schemes a top priority for primary care trusts. The government-commissioned Corston

report calls, at last, for a definitive end to the incarceration of huge numbers of vulnerable women, far from their families. A sensible plan for an inter-ministerial group on women at risk, a commissioner for women and the development of local women's centres will bridge the yawning gap between policy and practice. The Prison Reform Trust has just announced a five year strategy to reduce child and youth imprisonment building on the success of youth offending teams up and down the country, initiatives by children's charities to support vulnerable children and their families and public support for SmartJustice for Young People.

Meanwhile, runaway sentence inflation, sponsored and talked up by the government, has ensured longer prison sentences, but all too often longer sentences in which less is done, thanks to chronic crowding. A larger and larger group is building within the prison population of people who face the prospect of growing old in prison.

The 1997 Labour manifesto promised a new way forward on crime. It talks of 'better ways of tackling crime', of early intervention and crime prevention delivered at the local level, a new focus on victims and a 'drugs tsar' to be a 'symbol of our commitment to tackle the modern menace of drugs in our communities.'

These were brave words, offering leadership on how to address the causes of crime. But instead the government has gradually ossified into talking tough and tinkering with sentencing policy. Meanwhile home secretaries, prison ministers and governors themselves, have tenures better measured in months than years. The setting up of a new Ministry of Justice, must prove itself to be an act of leadership, not just a new variation on the theme of musical ministerial chairs. We look to a new prime minister and his minister of justice to bring back proportionality into sentencing, join at last social policy with criminal justice policy and introduce authoritative measures that will hold the prison population within safe limits.

Prison overview

The total UK prison population on 13 April 2007 was 88,583. On 13 April 2007, the prison population in Scotland was 7,113.¹ The prison population in Northern Ireland on 13 April 2007 was 1,474.² On the same date, the population in custody in England and Wales was 79,996.³ In France, with the same population as the UK, the figure is 52,009 and in Germany with over 20 million more people, 76,629.⁴

On 25 May 2007, the prison population in England and Wales was 80,803, including 318 held in police cells under operation safeguard.⁵

In 2005/6 the average daily population in Scottish prisons totalled 6,857, an increase of 1% on 2004/5, and the highest level ever recorded.⁶

Since reaching a low point of 926 in 2001, the prison population in Northern Ireland has risen steadily.⁷

England and Wales has the highest imprisonment rate in western Europe at 149 per 100,000 of the population. France has an imprisonment rate of 85 per 100,000 and Germany has a rate of 93 per 100,000.⁸

The additional 8,000 places that the Home Secretary, John Reid announced in July 2006 will take Britain's rate of imprisonment to 161 per 100,000 of population. That is beyond Bulgaria (148) and approaching rates in Romania, Hungary and Slovakia.⁹

61% of victims of crime do not think that the use of prison stops re-offending for non-violent crime, such as shoplifting, stealing cars and vandalism.¹⁰

Only 29% of victims of crime think that sending drug addicts to prison is an effective way of reducing the risk of their re-offending. 72% wanted more drug treatment programmes in the community to fight crime.¹¹

The number of prisoners in England and Wales has increased by 25,000 in the last ten years. In 1996, the mid-year prison population was 55,256.¹² When Labour came to government in May 1997, the prison population was 60,131. Previously it took nearly four decades (1958-1995) for the prison population to rise by 25,000.¹³

132,058 people entered prison in England and Wales in 2005.¹⁴

The average age of those sentenced to custody in 2005 was 27. A quarter was aged 21 or under.¹⁵

The number of people found guilty by the courts has remained largely constant over recent years, it was 1,645,831 in 1995 and 1,783,396 in 2005. The number given custody at magistrates' courts has risen from 25,016 in 1993 to 57,250 in 2005. The number of people awarded a custodial sentence at the Crown Court has risen from 33,722 in 1993 to 43,986 in 2005.¹⁶

1. <http://www.sps.gov.uk/default.aspx?documentid=7811a7f1-6c61-4667-a12c-f102bbf5b808>
2. Northern Ireland Prison Service, <http://www.niprisonservice.gov.uk/module.cfm/opt/11/area/Situation%20Reports/page/situationreports/srid/213>
3. NOMS, Prison Population and Accommodation Briefing for 13 April 2007
4. International Centre for Prison Studies, <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/depsta/rel/icps/worldbrief/europe.html>
5. NOMS, Prison Population and Accommodation Briefing for 25 May 2007
6. Scottish Executive, Statistical Bulletin, Criminal Justice Series, Prison Statistics Scotland 2005/06
7. Northern Ireland Prison Service, <http://www.niprisonservice.gov.uk/pop-arch.htm>
8. International Centre for Prison Studies, <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/depsta/rel/icps/worldbrief/europe.html>
9. *ibid* 10. SmartJustice 2006, Briefing: Crime victims say jail doesn't work. <http://www.smartjustice.org.uk>
11. *ibid* 12. Home Office, Offender Management Caseload Statistics 2005
13. Home Office, Prison Statistics England and Wales 2002, London: Stationery Office.
14. Home Office, Offender Management Caseload Statistics 2005
15. *ibid*
16. Home Office, Sentencing Statistics 2003 and 2005

The number of women in prison has more than doubled over the past decade. On 11 May 2007 the women's prison population stood at 4,390.¹⁷ In 1995 the average female prison population was 1,998. In 1999 it stood at 3,355. In 2005, 12,275 women were received into prison.¹⁸

Home Office research has found that 66% of women prisoners are mothers, and each year it is estimated that more than 17,700 children are separated from their mother by imprisonment.¹⁹

It is estimated that 150,000 children have a parent in prison. During their time at school 7% of children experience their father's imprisonment.²⁰

At the end of March 2007 there were 9,311 young adults in prisons in England and Wales.²¹ There were 2,413 children in prison. The number of children in prison has nearly doubled in the last ten years.²²

The prison system as a whole has been overcrowded in every year since 1994.²³

The average number of people held two to a cell certified for one in 2006/7 was 17,974,²⁴ up from 9,498 in 1996/7. The number held three to a cell designed for two was 1,113.²⁵

It costs an average of £40,992 to keep a person in prison.²⁶

According to the government, the overall cost of the criminal justice system has risen from 2% of GDP to 2.5% over the last ten years. That is a higher per capita level than the US or any EU country.²⁷

Since Labour came to power in 1997, more than 20,000 additional prison places have been provided, an increase of 33%. 8,000 more are planned for 2012.²⁸

The average cost of each prison place built between 2000 and 2004 is £99,839.²⁹ The cost for 940 places added in 2005/6 was £119,000 each.³⁰

Research by the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit highlighted in the Carter report ('Managing Offenders, Reducing Crime', December 2003) says that a 22% increase in the prison population since 1997 is estimated to have reduced crime by around five per cent during a period when overall crime fell by 30%. The report states: 'There is no convincing evidence that further increases in the use of custody would significantly reduce crime'.³¹

Prison has a poor record for reducing re-offending – 64.7% are reconvicted within two years of being released - for young men (18-20) it is 75.3%.³²

The Social Exclusion Unit has concluded that re-offending by ex-prisoners costs society at least £11 billion per year. Ex-prisoners are

17. NOMS, Prison population and accommodation briefing for 11 May, 2006

18. Home Office, Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2005

19. Hansard, House of Commons written answers 16th May 2003

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

21. Home Office, Population in Custody, March 2007

22. Home Office Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2005

23. Home Office, Digest 4: Information on the Criminal Justice System in England and Wales, 1999, London: Home Office

24. Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 28 March 2007

25. Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 9 January 2007

26. Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 18 April 2006

27. Rt Hon Lord Falconer, the Today Programme, BBC Radio 4, 23 January 2007

28. Hansard, House of Commons, Statement by the Minister of Justice, 9 May 2007.

29. Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 30 June 2005

30. Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 26 March 2007

31. Carter (2003) Managing Offenders, Reducing Crime, London: Strategy Unit.

32. Home Office, Re-offending of adults: results from the 2004 cohort

responsible for about one in five of all recorded crimes.³³

7.5% of the male population born in 1953 had been given at least one custodial sentence before the age of 46. 33% of men born in 1953 had at least one conviction for a 'standard list' offence before the age of 46.³⁴

Research by the Citizen's Advice Bureau found that on average, prisoners interviewed had been moved four times. It is concerned that this disrupts links to family and the continuity of work and training in prison.³⁵

The number of people under pre or post release supervision by the Probation Service was 181,211 in 2005.³⁶ Under the provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 2003, license and supervision will run to the end of the sentence for those who receive over 12 months (as opposed to ending three-quarters of the way through as is now the case). The public protection sentences will carry extended periods of supervision.

According to the NHS plan, around 5,000 prisoners, at the time between 5-8%, have severe and enduring mental illnesses. The plan also said that, by 2004, "all people with severe mental illness will be in receipt of treatment, and no prisoner with serious mental illness will leave prison without a care plan and a care coordinator."³⁷

The average time out of cell on a weekday for each prisoner is 10 hours exactly in 2005/2006, a fall from 11.2 in 1996-7.³⁸

At the end of 2006 there were 30 prisoners in England and Wales serving a 'whole life' tariff.³⁹

33. Social Exclusion Unit (2002) Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners, London: Social Exclusion Unit

34. Home Office (2001) 'Criminal careers of those born between 1953 and 1978'

35. Citizens' Advice Bureau, Locked Out: CAB evidence on prisoners and ex-offenders, March 2007

36. Home Office, Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2005

37. Department of Health, 2000: the NHS Plan: a plan for investment, a plan for reform

38. Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 9 January 2007

39. Home Office FOI release 4595, 27 October 2006

Prison overcrowding

Prison overcrowding is defined by the Prison Service as a prison containing more prisoners than the establishment's certified normal accommodation (CNA). "CNA, or uncrowded capacity, is the Prison Service's own measure of accommodation. CNA represents the good, decent standard of accommodation that the service aspires to provide all prisoners."⁴⁰

The limit to overcrowding in prison is called the operational capacity. The Prison Service defines it as: "the total number of prisoners that an establishment can hold without serious risk to good order, security and the proper running of the planned regime."⁴¹

At the end of April 2007, 86 of the 141 prisons in England and Wales were overcrowded.⁴²

On 4 May 2007, the total prison population stood 105 below the ceiling of Useable Operational Capacity for the prison system in England and Wales. Police cells, used as an overflow under the terms of Operation Safeguard added a further 400 places.⁴³

The average number of people held two to a cell certified for one in 2006/7 was 17,974,⁴⁴ up from 9,498 in 1996/7. The number held three to a cell designed for two was 1,113.⁴⁵

On 13 April 2007, 2,603 prisoners on life or indeterminate sentences were in local prisons. The majority were waiting for transfer to first stage lifer prisons.⁴⁶

The ten most overcrowded prisons in England and Wales, April 2007

Prison	In use CNA	Operational Capacity	Population	% overcrowded
Shrewsbury	181	340	336	186
Altcourse	614	1,108	1,100	179
Leicester	206	385	361	175
Swansea	240	428	418	174
Preston	429	750	734	171
Lincoln	314	545	531	169
Dorchester	147	260	245	167
Durham	591	981	974	165
Northallerton	153	252	248	162
Usk	150	250	239	159

NOMS (2007) Monthly Bulletin – April 2007, London: Prison Service

40. The Prison Service, Prison Service Order 1900, Certified Prisoner Accommodation

41. *ibid*

42. NOMS, Monthly Bulletin – April 2007

43. NOMS, Prison population and accommodation briefing for 4 May 2007

44. Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 28 March 2007

45. Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 9 January 2007

46. Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 10 May 2007

A study by the Prison Reform Trust and the National Council of Independent Monitoring Boards in September 2002 examined the impact of overcrowding. Of the 103 Independent Monitoring Boards (the watchdogs appointed by the Home Secretary to monitor prison conditions) who responded, 77 expressed concern that overcrowding was threatening prison safety, leading to prisoners being held in

inhuman, degrading and unsafe conditions and damaging attempts to maintain family support and reduce re-offending by prisoners.

Prison overcrowding in England and Wales in the last eleven years (mid-year)

Year	Number of places(CNA)	Number of prisoners	Percentage occupation
1994	48,291	48,929	101%
1995	50,239	51,086	102%
1996	53,152	55,256	104%
1997	56,329	61,467	109%
1998	61,253	65,727	107%
1999	62,369	64,529	103%
2000	63,346	65,194	103%
2001	63,530	66,403	105%
2002	64,046	71,112	111%
2003	66,104	73,627	111%
2004	67,505	74,468	110%
2005	69,394	76,079	110%
2006	70,085	77,962	110%

Prison suicide

The suicide rate for men in prison is 5 times greater than that for men in the community. Boys aged 15-17 are even more likely, 18 times more likely, to kill themselves in prison than in the community.⁴⁷

There were 67 apparent self-inflicted deaths among prisoners in England and Wales in 2006 – a ten year low. The rate is 90.3 per 100,000 prisoners.⁴⁸

However, the number of self-inflicted deaths so far notified to the Prison Reform Trust since the beginning of 2007 is 30. Clearly this raises fears that the year's toll will be higher than last year's.

Men recently released from prison were eight times more likely, than the general population, to commit suicide. Women were 36 times more likely to kill themselves.⁴⁹

Of the 67 suicides in 2006, 3 were women, down from 12 in 2004. Two young people aged 18-21 took their own lives as against 10 in 2005, and no children, as against 2 in 2005.⁵⁰

Almost one third of suicides occur within the first week of someone arriving in custody and one in seven within two days of admission.⁵¹

Nearly two-thirds of those who commit suicide in prison have a history of drug misuse and nearly a third have a history of alcohol misuse.⁵²

One study found that 72% of those who commit suicide in prison had a history of mental disorder. 57% had symptoms suggestive of mental disorder at reception into prison.⁵³

More than half of suicides are in male local prisons and one in five are in prison healthcare or segregation units.⁵⁴

75% of suicides in prisons between 2000 and 2004 took place in prisons that were overcrowded in that month.⁵⁵

In all, 20% of men and almost 40% of women entering custody say they have previously attempted suicide. According to the government's Social Exclusion Unit, more than 50 prisoners commit suicide shortly after release each year.⁵⁶

Number of self-inflicted deaths in Prison Service establishments 1997- 2005

Year	Number	Rate of suicides per 100,000
1997	65	111
1998	76	127
1999	89	140
2000	80	124
2001	73	110
2002	95	130
2003	94	126
2004	95	127
2005	78	103
2006	67	90
Total	748	

47. The Lancet, Vol 366, 2005, Suicides in male prisoners in England and Wales, 1978-2003, Seena Fazel et al

48. NOMS, Safer Custody News, Jan/Feb 2007

49. Suicide in recently released prisoners: a population-based cohort study, Pratt D, Piper M, Appleby L, Webb R, Shaw J, The Lancet - Vol. 368, Issue 9530, 08 July 2006, Pages 119-123

50. NOMS, Safer Custody News, Jan/Feb 2007

51. Joint Committee on Human Rights, Deaths in Custody, Third Report of Session 2004-2005

52. ibid

53. Shaw J, Appleby L and Baker D (2003) Safer Prisons, A National Study of Prison Suicides 1999-2000 by the National Confidential Inquiry into Suicide and Homicide by People with Mental Illness. London: Stationery Office

54. Joint Committee on Human Rights, Deaths in Custody, Third Report of Session 2004-2005.

55. House of Commons, Hansard 7 November 2005

56. Social Exclusion Unit (2002) Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners, London: Social Exclusion Unit

Sentencing trends

The number of people found guilty by the courts has remained largely constant over recent years, it was 1,645,831 in 1995 and 1,783,396 in 2005. The number given custody at magistrates' courts has risen from 25,016 in 1993 to 57,250 in 2005. The number awarded custodial sentence at the Crown Court has risen from 33,722 in 1993 to 43,986 in 2005.⁵⁷

The number of people sentenced for violence against the person was 37,649 in 1994 and 40,754 in 2005. The number awarded custodial sentences increased from 8,270 to 12,842. The average sentence rose from 16.7 to 17.8 months.⁵⁸

Average custodial sentence from a crown court has risen from 20.5 months in 1995 to 25.5 months in 2005. Custody rate at crown court has risen from 51.6% in 1993 to 58.2% in 2004.⁵⁹

Use of prison in magistrates' court has risen from 2.5% in 1994 to 4.1% in 2005, meanwhile the use of the fine for indictable offences has shrunk from 83,450 to 56,618.⁶⁰ In 2004 18.6% of shoplifters were sent to prison from magistrates' courts, compared with 4.7% in 1994.⁶¹

The number of life sentenced and indeterminate sentenced prisoners has increased considerably in recent years. There were 8,997 people serving indefinite sentences at the end of March 2007, a rise of 31% on the year before.⁶² This compares with fewer than 4,000 in 1998 and 3,000 in 1992.⁶³

The number sentenced to life imprisonment a year has almost doubled over the past ten years from 252 in 1994 to 570 in 2004.⁶⁴

England and Wales has the highest number of life sentenced prisoners in Europe. It has more than Germany, France, Italy and Turkey combined.⁶⁵

On 20 April the number of prisoners serving indeterminate sentences for public protection was 2,547.⁶⁶ That is an increase of 1,000 since 20 October 2006, when the number of indeterminate sentences for public protection stood at 1,575 since their introduction in April 2005. The average tariff length was around 30 months.⁶⁷

By 9 May 2007 the government said that over 2,200 people had received indeterminate sentences.⁶⁸

Men in prison serving 4 years or more were the fastest section of the population between 1995 and 2005, increasing by 86%. The population of men serving between 12 months and 4 years increased by 39%, those serving under a year by 22%.⁶⁹

Those serving sentences of 6 months or under make up over half of the 92,452 received to prison under sentence in 2005. Those serving a year or under make up 65% of those received to prison under sentence.⁷⁰

Theft and handling accounted for the largest number of immediate custodial receptions at over one fifth.⁷¹

75% of those sentenced for theft and handling received sentences of less than 6 months.⁷²

57. Home Office, Sentencing Statistics 2003 and 2005

58. Home Office, Sentencing Statistics 2005

59. Home Office, Sentencing Statistics 2005 and 2004 60. *ibid*

61. Sentencing Guidelines Council and Sentencing Advisory Panel, 'The sentence: sentencing trends at a national and local level', January 2006

62. Home Office Population in Custody, March 2007

63. Home Office (2003) Prison Statistics England and Wales 2002, London: Stationery Office

64. Home Office (2005). Sentencing Statistics 2004, London: Home Office

65. Aebi, M (2003) Council of Europe Annual Penal Statistics, Survey 2003

66. Hansard, House of Commons written answers 10 May 2007

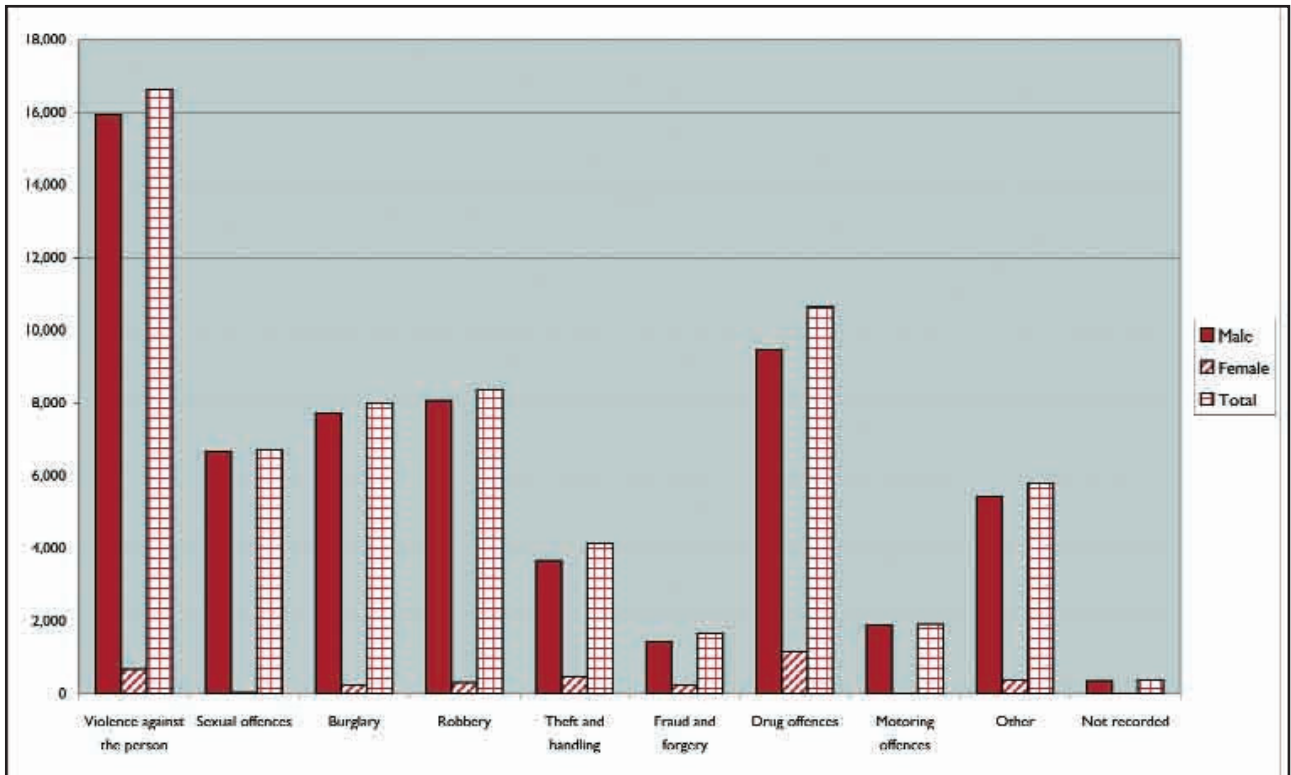
67. Prison Reform Trust information from NOMS

68. Hansard, House of Commons, Statement by the Minister of Justice, 9 May 2007

69. Home Office Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2005

70. *ibid* 71. *ibid* 72. *ibid*

Sentenced population by offence (February 2007)⁷³



73. NOMS, Population in Custody, February 2007

Remand prisoners

One in five (19%) of men and 18% of women held on remand before trial in 2005 were acquitted.⁷⁴ The vast majority received no compensation for this period of incarceration.

Only half of all remanded prisoners go on to receive a prison sentence. In 2005, 53% of men on remand received an immediate custodial sentence and 41% of women.⁷⁵

The remand population in prison decreased by 4% to 12,739 in February 2007 compared to February 2006.⁷⁶

Two-thirds of people received into prison on remand awaiting trial are accused of non-violent offences. In 2005, 16% were remanded into custody for theft and handling of stolen goods.⁷⁷

In 2005, 54,455 untried people were remanded into custody. In the same year 49,104 people were remanded into prison convicted but awaiting sentence.⁷⁸

At the end of February 2007 there were 893 women on remand, 1 in 5 of the population.⁷⁹

Women on remand have been one of the fastest growing groups among the prison population. There was a 105% increase in the number of women remanded into custody between 1995 and 2005, compared to a 24% increase for men.⁸⁰

According to research by the Office for National Statistics, more than a quarter of men on remand have attempted suicide at some stage in their life. For women remand prisoners the figure is even higher. More than 40% have attempted suicide before entering prison.⁸¹

On 30 June 2005 there were 1,900 people on remand awaiting trial for over three months – 23% of the total.⁸²

A significant proportion of those held on remand have been in prison previously. One study found that 65% of respondents had been remanded into custody before.⁸³

Remand prisoners suffer from a range of mental health problems. According to the Office for National Statistics more than three-quarters of male remand prisoners suffer from a personality disorder. One in ten have a functional psychosis and more than half experience depression. For female remand prisoners, nearly two-thirds suffer from depression. Once again these figures are higher than for sentenced prisoners. Research has found that 9% of remand prisoners require immediate transfer to the NHS.⁸⁴

Remand prisoners are more likely than sentenced prisoners to have a history of living in unstable or unsuitable accommodation. Research by the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (Nacro) has suggested they are five times more likely to have lived in a hostel prior to imprisonment.⁸⁵

74. Home Office Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2005

75. *ibid*

76. NOMS, Population in Custody, February 2006

77. Home Office Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2005

78. *ibid* NB, the same person can be remanded before and after trial, so counting twice

79. NOMS, Population in Custody, February 2007

80. Home Office Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2005

81. Singleton, N et al (1998) Psychiatric Morbidity among Prisoners in England and Wales, London: Office for National Statistics

82. Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2005

83. Nacro (2000) Prisoner Resettlement Surveys, Unpublished

84. Singleton, N et al (1998) Psychiatric Morbidity among Prisoners in England and Wales, London: Office for National Statistics

85. Nacro (2000) Prisoner Resettlement Surveys, Unpublished

More than two in three of all prisoners are unemployed when they go to jail. But research by Nacro has found that remand prisoners are less likely than sentenced prisoners to have had a job before prison. The minority of remand prisoners who do have jobs are very likely to lose them whilst in prison.⁸⁶

One in four men and half of all women on remand receive no visits from their family.⁸⁷

Prisoners on remand are half as likely to have received advice on resettlement than sentenced prisoners,⁸⁸ and will receive no discharge grant.

Research by the Prison Reform Trust has found that prisons are failing to equip remand prisoners to prepare for trial. The study found that only 48% of prison libraries in jails holding remand prisoners stock the standard legal texts that under Prison Service regulations they must provide.⁸⁹

Remand population by offence type (February 2007)⁹⁰

Offence group	Total
Violence against the person	3,145
Other	1,871
Drugs offences	1,668
Burglary	1,439
Robbery	1,309
Theft and Handling	1,129
Sexual offences	790
Not recorded	752
Fraud and Forgery	481
Motoring offences	155

86. *ibid*

87. Social Exclusion Unit (2002) Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners, London: Social Exclusion Unit

88. *ibid*

89. Ruthven, D and Seward, E (2002), Restricted Access: Legal Information for Remand Prisoners, London: Prison Reform Trust

90. Home Office Population in Custody, February 2007

Women in prison

On 11 May 2007 the number of women in prison stood at 4,390, 45 less than a year before.⁹¹ In the last decade the women's population has more than doubled. In 1995 the average female prison population was 1,998. In 1999 it stood at 3,355. In 2005, 12,275 women were received into prison.⁹²

Over a third of all adult women in prison had no previous convictions – more than double the figure for men.⁹³

At the end of February 2007 there were 893 women on remand, a fifth of the female prison population.⁹⁴

There was a 105% increase in the number of women remanded into custody between 1995 and 2005, from 3,727 to 7,660.⁹⁵

64.3% of women released from prison in 2004 were reconvicted within two years of release.⁹⁶ This compares to fewer than four out of ten (38%) ten years ago.⁹⁷

At the end of December 2005 there were 911 foreign national women in prison, 22% of the female population.⁹⁸

Of the sentenced female prison population, the majority are held for non-violent offences. At the end of February 2007 the largest group 31%, were held for drug offences. Theft and fraud accounted for 20%.⁹⁹

More women were sent to prison in 2005 for theft and handling stolen goods than any other crime. Just over 2,500 women were received into custody for this offence. They accounted for almost a third (31%) of all women sentenced to immediate custody in 2005.¹⁰⁰

The majority of women serve very short sentences. In 2005 nearly two-thirds (63%) were sentenced to custody for six months or less.¹⁰¹

Most of the rise in the female prison population can be explained by a significant increase in the severity of sentences. In 1995, 8.9% of women convicted of an indictable offence were sent to prison, in 2005 it was 15.2%.¹⁰²

At the end of September 2006 the average distance female prisoners were held from their home was 58 miles.¹⁰³

The Corston Report quotes findings from a forthcoming University of Oxford report on the health of 500 women prisoners, saying that: 'women in custody are five times more likely to have a mental health concern than women in the general population, with 78% exhibiting some level of psychological disturbance when measured on reception to prison, compared with a figure of 15% for the general adult female population. 58% of women had used drugs daily in the six months before prison and 75% of women prisoners had taken an illicit drug in those six months. Crack cocaine, heroin,

91. Prison population and accommodation briefing for 11 May 2007 and 12 May 2006, NOMS

92. Home Office, Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2005

93. Home Office, Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2005

94. NOMS, Population in Custody, February 2007

95. Home Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2005

96. Home Office Statistical Bulletin, Reoffending of adults: results from the 2004 cohort

97. Home Office Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2003

98. Home Office Population in Custody, Quarterly Brief Sept to Dec 2005, London: Home Office

99. NOMS, Population in Custody, February 2007

100. Home Office, 2005 Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 101. *ibid*

102. Home Office, Sentencing Statistics 2005

103. Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 9 January 2007

cannabis and benzodiazepines were the most widely used drugs. The Oxford researchers also found that women coming into prison had very poor physical, psychological and social health, worse than that of women in social class V, the group within the general population who have the poorest health.¹⁰⁴

Of all the women who are sent to prison, 37% say they have attempted suicide at some time in their life.¹⁰⁵

One in four women in prison has spent time in local authority care as a child. Nearly 40% of women in prison left school before the age of 16 years, almost one in ten were aged 13 or younger.¹⁰⁶

Over half the women in prison say they have suffered domestic violence and one in three has experienced sexual abuse.¹⁰⁷

The Corston Report said: “The government should announce within six months a clear strategy to replace existing women’s prisons with suitable, geographically dispersed, small, multi-functional custodial centres within 10 years.”¹⁰⁸

Around one-third of women prisoners lose their homes, and often their possessions, whilst in prison.¹⁰⁹

Women prisoners are often inadequately prepared for release. According to the Social Exclusion Unit report only 24% of women with a prior skill had the chance to put their skills into practice through prison work. Just 11% of women received help with housing matters whilst in prison. Home Office research has found that 41% of women in prison did not have accommodation arranged on release. Only a third of women prisoners who wanted help and advice about benefits and debt received it.¹¹⁰

104. The Corston Report, Home Office, March 2007

105. *ibid*

106. Social Exclusion Unit (2002) Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners, London: Social Exclusion Unit.

107. *ibid*.

108. The Corston Report, Home Office, March 2007

109. *ibid*.

110. *ibid*

Mothers and fathers in custody, prisoners' children

Home Office research has found that 66% of women in prison have dependent children under 18. Of those, 34% had children under 5, a further 40% children aged from 5 to 10.¹¹¹ Each year it is estimated that more than 17,700 children are separated from their mother by imprisonment.

Just 5% of women prisoners' children remain in their own home once their mother has been sentenced.¹¹²

At least a third of mothers are lone parents before imprisonment.¹¹³

Only half of the women who had lived, or were in contact with, their children prior to imprisonment had received a visit since going to prison.¹¹⁴

One Home Office study showed that for 85% of mothers, prison was the first time they had been separated from their children for any significant length of time. It also showed that 65% of mothers in prison were receiving their first custodial sentence.¹¹⁵

There are currently 84 places in mother and baby units in prisons reserved for mothers who have children under the age of 18 months. In 2004, 114 women gave birth while serving a prison sentence.¹¹⁶

HM Prisons Inspectorate has found that 25% of women prisoners had their children's father or a spouse or partner caring for their children. 25% were cared for by their grandmothers; 29% were cared for by other

family members or friends and 12% were in care, with foster parents, or had been adopted.¹¹⁷

In 2004, for the first time the government announced that a record will be kept of prisoners' children. Information will be recorded on the National Offender Management Information System. This commitment has yet to be implemented.¹¹⁸

Just over half (55%) of male prisoners described themselves as living with a partner before imprisonment¹¹⁹ and a third of female prisoners described themselves as living with a husband or partner before imprisonment.¹²⁰

Research has found that 59% of men¹²¹ in prison and two-thirds of women in prison have dependent children under 18.¹²²

It is estimated that 150,000 children have a parent in prison. During their time at school 7% of children experience their father's imprisonment.¹²³

Prisoners' families, including their children, often experience increased financial, housing, emotional and health problems during a sentence. Nearly a third (30%) of prisoners' children suffer significant mental health problems, compared with 10% of the general population.¹²⁴

During their sentence 45% of people lose contact with their families and many separate from their partners.¹²⁵ Charles Clark, when Home Secretary, stressed the importance of family. "As we consider the practical steps

111. Home Office Research Study 208

112. Prison Reform Trust (2000) Justice for Women: The Need for Reform, London: Prison Reform Trust

113. Social Exclusion Unit (2002) Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners, London: Social Exclusion Unit

115. Home Office Research Study 162 (1997), Imprisoned Women and Mothers, Home Office: London

116. Hansard, House of Commons written answer 13 July 2005

117. HM Prisons Inspectorate (1997) Women in Prison: A Thematic Review by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for England and Wales, London: Home Office

118. Hansard, House of Commons written parliamentary answers, 12 September 2004, Column 2635W.

119. Home Office (2001) Criminality Survey: Drugs Follow-Up, London: Home Office

120. Hamlyn B and Lewis D (2000) Women prisoners: a survey of their work and training experiences in custody and on release, Home Office Research Study 2000, London: Home Office

121. Hansard, House of Commons, 28th April 2003

122. Hamlyn B and Lewis D (2000) Women prisoners: a survey of their work and training experiences in custody and on release, Home Office Research Study 2000, London: Home Office

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

124. Social Exclusion Unit (2002) Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners, London: Social Exclusion Unit and Action for Prisoners' Families (2001) No-one's Ever Asked Me, London: Action for Prisoners' Families and Young Voice (2001) Parenting Under Pressure, London: Young Voices

125. Nacro (2000) The forgotten majority, London: Nacro

114. ibid

intended to equip offenders with the means to avoid re-offending we also need to remember the vital role of family, friends and community. I believe that we sometimes fail to give enough emphasis to the powerful impact of supportive relationships to prisoners – to realise that offenders often care deeply about letting down those closest to them, and want to show that they can change, but somehow just never get there. An offender is much less likely to re-offend if he feels part of a family and community, from which he receives support as well as owes obligations.”¹²⁶

Home Office research has found that maintaining family contact is associated with successful resettlement. It found that prisoners who had at least one visit from family or partners were twice as likely to have an employment, education or training place arranged on release and three times more likely to have accommodation arranged as those who did not receive any visits. The frequency of visits also increased the likelihood of having a job or accommodation. The research report concluded that ‘opportunities for involving families in the resettlement of prisoners should be increased.’¹²⁷

However, many prisoners are still held a long way from their homes. At the end of September 2006 the average distance women in prison were held from their home or committal court address was 58 miles. Men were held an average of 50 miles from their home or committal court address. Around 10,700 prisoners were held over 100 miles away.¹²⁸

In recent years the number of prison visits has fallen despite an increasing prison population.¹²⁹

The government’s Social Exclusion Unit has found that many families have considerable difficulty getting through to prisons to book visits.¹³⁰

¹²⁶ PRT Annual Lecture 2005, Rt Hon Charles Clark MP

¹²⁷ Niven, S and Stewart, D (2005) Resettlement outcomes on release from prison, Home Office Findings 248, London: Home Office;

¹²⁸ A prisoner’s home area is defined as their home address on their reception into prison. For prisoners with no address, the address of the relevant committal court is used as the home address. Hansard House of Commons written answers, 9 January 2007

¹²⁹ Social Exclusion Unit (2002) Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners, London: Social Exclusion Unit

¹³⁰ *ibid*

Social characteristics of prisoners

Social characteristics of prisoners

(Source: Social Exclusion Unit Report 'Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners', July 2002)

Characteristic	General population	Prison population
Ran away from home as a child	11%	47% of male and 50% of female sentenced prisoners
Taken into care as a child	2%	27%
Regularly truanted from school	3%	30%
Excluded from school	2%	49% of male and 33% of female sentenced prisoners
No qualifications	15%	52% of men and 71% of women
Numeracy at or below Level 1 (level expected 11 year-olds)	23%	65%
Reading ability at or below Level 1	21-23%	48%
Unemployed before imprisonment	5%	67%
Homeless	0.9%	32%
Suffer from two or more mental disorders	5% men and 2% women	72% male 70% female
Psychotic disorder	0.5% men and 0.6% women	7% of male and 14% of female sentenced prisoners
Drug use in the previous year	13% men 8% women	66% of male and 55% of female sentenced prisoners
Hazardous drinking	38% men and 15% women	63% of male and 39% of female sentenced prisoners

Young people in prison (18-20 year olds)

In February 2007 there were 9,286 young people aged 18-20 in prison in England and Wales, a rise of 7% on the year before.¹³¹

The Chief Inspector of prisons has said in her annual report for 2004/5: “Our reports continue to document the inadequate provision for young adults (18-21).”¹³²

In 2005 12,644 young people were sent to prison under sentence. In the last ten years the number of sentenced young adults entering prison has increased by 14%. Over that time the number of sentenced young women imprisoned has more than doubled.¹³³

Two-thirds of young people are sentenced to less than 12 months in custody. The average time spent in custody for young adult prisoners serving less than 12 months is eight weeks and one day.¹³⁴

A study published in November 2004 by the Prison Reform Trust based on interviews with young people and information supplied by Independent Monitoring Boards revealed that whilst in custody many young adults are frequently moved around the prison estate causing great disruption and distress. It also showed that, in general, they experience impoverished regimes.¹³⁵

In January 2007, 2,647 young offenders, approximately a quarter of the total, were held more than 50 miles from their home.¹³⁶

Reconviction rates are particularly high for young people. 74.8% of young men released from prison in 2004, were reconvicted within two years of release.¹³⁷

Nearly half (42%) of first time offenders are young adults.¹³⁸

Young offenders have poor literacy and numeracy skills. Just under a third have basic skills deficits compared to under a quarter of those aged 25 and over in custody. Nearly three-quarters were excluded from school at some stage, and 63 % were unemployed at the time of their arrest.¹³⁹

In 2004-5, 54% of those leaving young offender institutions had no recorded education, training or employment place. 13% left with no recorded accommodation.¹⁴⁰

Many young people in prison have housing problems and the majority are out of work. Nearly two-thirds (63%) were unemployed at the time of arrest.¹⁴¹

More than a third (35%) of sentenced young men say they have gained a qualification whilst in prison.¹⁴²

Mental health problems, drug and alcohol abuse are common amongst young people in prison. They are more likely than adults to suffer from mental health problems and are more likely to commit or attempt suicide than

131. Home Office (2007) Population in Custody, x, London: Home Office. This figure includes some 21 year-olds not classified as part of the adult population

132. Annual Report of HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for England and Wales, 2004-5

133. Home Office, Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2005

134. Solomon, E (2004) A Lost Generation: the experiences of young people in prison, London: Prison Reform Trust

135. Ibid

136. Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 15 March 2007

137. Home Office Statistical Bulletin, Re-offending of adults: results from the 2004 cohort

138. Social Exclusion Unit (2002) Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners, London: Social Exclusion Unit

139. Ibid

140. Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 2 October 2006

141. Ibid

142. Home Office (2001) Jobs and Homes - a survey of prisoners nearing release, Findings 173, London: Home Office

both younger and older prisoners (see below for statistics relating to 16-18 year olds).¹⁴³

Up to 30% of young women in custody report having been sexually abused in childhood.¹⁴⁴

It is estimated that a quarter of young men in prison are fathers and four out of ten young women in prison are mothers.¹⁴⁵

Young offender institutions and juvenile establishments have the highest assault rates of any prisons in England and Wales.¹⁴⁶

143. Singleton, N et al (2000) Psychiatric Morbidity among young offenders in England and Wales, London: Office for National Statistics

144. Solomon, E (2004) A Lost Generation: the experiences of young people in prison, London: Prison Reform Trust

145. A survey carried out by Young Voice in 2001 found that 51 % of men in prison under the age of 23 and 79 % of women in the same age group were parents, Young Voice (2001) Parenting Under Pressure, London: Young Voice

146. Solomon, E (2003) A Measure of Success: An analysis of the Prison Service's performance against its Key Performance Indicators, London: Prison Reform Trust

Children in Prison

In March 2007 there were 2,413 15-17 year olds in prison and 229 12-15 year olds in privately run secure training centres. There were 209 children in Local Authority Secure Children's Homes.¹⁴⁷

The number of 15-17 year olds in prison increased by 86% in ten years from 1995 to 2005.¹⁴⁸

In 1992 only 100 children under 15 were sentenced to penal custody, sentences were all awarded under the 'grave crimes' provision (Section 53 of the 1933 Children and Young Persons Act) for children who had committed serious offences such as robbery or violent offences. In 2005 - 2006, 824 children under 15 were incarcerated but only 48 of these came into the same grave crimes sentencing framework (now Section 90/91 of the Powers of Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000.)¹⁴⁹

Twenty-nine children have died in penal custody since 1990 most by self inflicted death but one following restraint.¹⁵⁰

In August 2004, 14 year old Adam Rickwood became the youngest child to die in penal custody in recent memory.

Every year an estimated 70,000 school-age children enter the youth justice system.¹⁵¹

11% of prisoners involved in assaults classified as serious are children, despite being only 3% of the prison population.¹⁵²

In 2005/6 around a quarter of boys in custody were held over 50 miles away from their home. Almost half of girls were.¹⁵³

Reconviction rates are very high for children. 68.6% of all children aged under 18 discharged from prison in 2004 were reconvicted within 1 year. For boys aged 10-14, the figure rises to 71.4%.¹⁵⁴

At the end of February 2007 more children were in prison for robbery than any other offence.¹⁵⁵

Many children in prison have a background of severe social exclusion. Of those in custody of school age, over a quarter have literacy and numeracy levels of an average seven-year old. Over half of those under 18 in custody have a history of being in care or social services involvement and studies have found that 45% have been permanently excluded from school.¹⁵⁶

Two fifths of boys and a quarter of girls in custody say they have experienced violence at home. A third of girls and one in twenty boys say they have been subject to sexual abuse of some form.¹⁵⁷

Just over a third of boys and girls have felt unsafe at some time in custody. One in ten boys and girls in prison say they have been hit, kicked or assaulted by a member of staff.¹⁵⁸

Behavioural and mental health problems are particularly prevalent amongst children in prison. Of prisoners aged 16-20, around 85%

147. NOMS Population in Custody, March 2007

148. Home Office, Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2005

149. Youth Justice Board Annual Statistics 2005/6 150 <http://www.inquest.org.uk/>

151. HM government - Reducing re-offending through skills and employment, CM 6702, December 2005

152. NOMS, Safer Custody News, Jan/Feb 2007

153. Youth Justice Board Annual Statistics 2005/6

154. Home Office Statistical Bulletin, Re-offending of juveniles: results from 2004 cohort, 10/06

155. NOMS Population in Custody, February 2006

156. Youth Justice Board Information, 2003

157. Social Exclusion Unit (2002) Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners, London: Social Exclusion Unit.

158. HM Inspectorate of Prisons and Youth Justice Board, Juveniles in Custody, 2003-2004, London

show signs of a personality disorder and 10% exhibit signs of psychotic illness, for example schizophrenia.¹⁵⁹

Drug and alcohol abuse are major problems.

Of prisoners aged 16-20, over half reported dependence on a drug in the year prior to imprisonment. Over half the young women and two-thirds of the young male prisoners had a hazardous drinking habit prior to entering custody.¹⁶⁰

The number of children assessed as vulnerable in custody was 1,148 in 2007, a rise of 12% on 2006, which rose by 12% on 2005.¹⁶¹

The National Audit Office has highlighted the high number of movements of children between jails to make way for new arrivals, disrupting education and training courses and leading to inconsistent support and supervision. The NAO reports that there were 2,400 movements between April 2002 and January 2003.¹⁶²

Minority ethnic prisoners

At the end of December 2005, one in four of the prison population, 19,549 prisoners, was from a minority ethnic group.¹⁶³ This compares to one in eleven of the general population.

Of all those sentenced to custody in the last quarter of 2005 more than one in five was from a minority ethnic group.¹⁶⁴

Overall black prisoners account for the largest number of minority ethnic prisoners (57%) and their numbers are rising.¹⁶⁵ Between 1999 and 2002 the total prison population grew by just over 12% but the number of black prisoners increased by 51%.¹⁶⁶

At the end of June 2005, 35% (6,863) of minority ethnic prisoners were foreign nationals.¹⁶⁷

Out of the British national prison population, 11% are black and 5% are Asian. For black

Britons this is significantly higher than the 2% of the general population they represent.¹⁶⁸

In 2002 there were more African Caribbean entrants to prison (over 11,500) than there were to UK universities (around 8,000).¹⁶⁹

Black people are five times more likely than white people to be stopped and searched. Once arrested, black people are more likely to be remanded in custody than other offenders charged with similar offences. Results from five police pilot areas on magistrates' court decisions indicated that black and Asian defendants were less likely to be found not guilty than white defendants. Research also suggests that black prisoners are likely to be given longer sentences than either white or Asian prisoners. Once in prison, black people are more likely to be found guilty of disciplinary offences and less likely to have access to constructive activities.¹⁷⁰

159. Singleton, N et al (2000) Psychiatric Morbidity among young offenders in England and Wales, London: Office for National Statistics

160. *ibid*

161. Hansard House of Commons written answers 28 March 2007

162. National Audit Office (2004) Youth Offending: The delivery of community and custodial sentences, London: Stationery Office

163. Home Office (2005) Population in Custody, Quarterly Brief Sept to Dec 2005

164. Home Office (2005) Population in Custody, Quarterly Brief Sept to Dec 2005

165. *ibid*

166. HM Prison Service and Commission for Racial Equality (2003) Implementing Race Equality in Prisons - a shared agenda for change, London: HM Prison Service

167. Population in Custody, Quarterly Brief Sept to Dec 2005

168. *ibid*

169. HM Prison Service and Commission for Racial Equality (2003) Implementing Race Equality in Prisons - a shared agenda for change, London: HM Prison Service

170. Social Exclusion Unit (2002) Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners, London: Social Exclusion Unit

Foreign national prisoners¹⁷¹

At the end of Dec 2005 there were 10,089 foreign national prisoners (defined as non-UK passport holders), 14% of the overall prison population.¹⁷²

In February 2007, approximately 1300 foreign nationals were held in prison or immigration detention beyond the length of their sentence.¹⁷³

More than one in five women in prison, 873, are foreign nationals.¹⁷⁴

Foreign national prisoners come from 168 countries, but over half are from just six countries (Jamaica, the Irish Republic, Nigeria, Pakistan, Turkey and India). A quarter are Jamaicans, by far the largest single group.

There has been a 152% increase in foreign national prisoners in the last ten years compared to a 55% increase in British nationals.

In two prisons, the Verne in Dorset and the women's prison Morton Hall in Lincolnshire, foreign national prisoners make up half or more of the population. In sixteen prisons they make up a quarter or more.

A recent Prison Service survey found that nearly 90% of prisons holding foreign national prisoners are not making regular use of the translation service available.

The vast majority of foreign national prisoners, four out of ten sentenced men and eight out of ten sentenced women, have committed drug offences, mainly drug trafficking. Six out ten foreign national prisoners are serving sentences of more than four years.

171. All the figures in this section, unless otherwise stated, are from Prison Reform Trust briefing paper (May 2004) *Forgotten Prisoners: the plight of foreign national prisoners in England and Wales*

172. Home Office, *Population in Custody, Quarterly Brief Sept to Dec 2005*

173. Letter from Lin Homer of the IND to the Home Affairs Select Committee, 19 Feb 2007

174. Home Office, *Population in Custody, Quarterly Brief Sept to Dec 2005*

Elderly prisoners (aged 60 and over)

On 20 March 2007 there were 2,080 prisoners aged over 60 in England and Wales, including 1,036 over 65. The number of sentenced prisoners aged 60 and over rose by 169% between 1995 and 2005.¹⁷⁵

More than one in ten older prisoners belong to a minority ethnic group, far higher than the proportion of the general population.¹⁷⁶

The majority of men in prison aged 60 and over (57%) have committed sex offences. The next highest offence is violence against the person (20%) followed by drug offences (10%).¹⁷⁷

In March 2007, the number of prisoners over 60 serving sentences of 1-5 years was 541. 551 were serving sentences of 6-10 years. 749 were serving sentences of over 10 years.¹⁷⁸

The number and proportion of men aged over 60 sentenced to prison by the courts has increased significantly. Between 1995 and 2000 the number of elderly males given custodial sentences increased by 55%. In 1995 fines accounted for the majority of sentences (31%). By 2000 imprisonment accounted for the majority of sentences (31%) and fines accounted for 24%.¹⁷⁹

The significant rise in the number of male prisoners aged over 60 is not matched by a corresponding rise in the number of men convicted by the courts for indictable offences. Between 1995 and 2000 the number

of convictions for this age group increased by only 8%.¹⁸⁰

The increase in the elderly prison population is not explained by demographic changes, nor can it be explained by a so-called 'elderly crime wave'. The increases are due to harsher sentencing policies which have resulted in the courts sending a larger proportion of criminals aged over 60 to prison to serve longer sentences. This has particularly been the case in relation to sex offenders and drug traffickers. The courts are also tending to imprison those older offenders whose crimes most challenge society's age-related stereotypes.¹⁸¹

A Department of Health study conducted in 1999/2000 of 203 sentenced male prisoners aged 60 and over in 15 establishments in England and Wales (about one-fifth of the total population) reported that 85% had one or more major illnesses reported in their medical records and 83% reported at least one chronic illness or disability when interviewed. The most common illnesses were psychiatric, cardiovascular, musculoskeletal and respiratory.¹⁸²

More than half of all elderly prisoners suffer from a mental disorder. The most common disorder is depression which often emerges as a result of imprisonment.¹⁸³

In 2003, 21 people aged over 65 died of natural causes whilst in prison.¹⁸⁴

175. Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 20 March 2007 and Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2005

176. Prison Reform Trust (2003) Growing Old in Prison, London: Prison Reform Trust

177. Home Office, Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2005

178. Hansard House of Commons written answers, 15 March 2007

179. HM Inspectorate of Prisons (2004) 'No problems – old and quiet': Older prisoners in England and Wales A thematic review by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, London: Stationery Office

180. *ibid*

181. *ibid*

182. Prison Reform Trust (2003) Growing Old in Prison, London: Prison Reform Trust.

183. *ibid*

184. Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 10th February 2004.

Most older prisoners are held more than 50 miles from home, causing particular problems for visitors, many of whom are themselves older people.¹⁸⁵

A thematic review of older prisoners by HM Inspectorate of Prisons published in December 2004 found little evidence that their individual needs were being assessed or provision made for them. It concluded 'Prisons are primarily designed for, and inhabited by, young and able-bodied people; and in general the needs of the old and infirm are not met.'¹⁸⁶ A number of academic studies

and a report by the Prison Reform Trust and the Centre for Policy on Ageing have also concluded that the health, social care, rehabilitation and resettlement needs of older prisoners are not being satisfactorily met.

Despite the dramatic rise in the number of elderly prisoners the Home Office has no plans to put in place a separate national strategy for elderly prisoners.¹⁸⁷ The Department of Health is developing a health policy for older prisoners and the Disability Discrimination Act (2005) now applies to prison.¹⁸⁸

185. HM Inspectorate of Prisons (2004) 'No problems – old and quiet': Older prisoners in England and Wales A thematic review by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, London: Stationery Office

186. *ibid*

187. Hansard, House of Commons written answers May 1 2000

188. Personal communication between PRT, CPA and Department of Health

Mental health needs of prisoners¹⁸⁹

“On the wing there was plenty of evidence of behaviour brought on by mental distress... one young man only ever wore the same pair of jeans and a green nylon cagoule. He never wore shoes or socks, never went out on exercise, hardly ever spoke to anyone and was understood to have been taken advantage of sexually by predatory prisoners. He was in his early 20s with many years in prison still ahead of him. Another had a habit of inserting objects into his body: a pencil in an arm, matchsticks in his ankles.”¹⁹⁰

Many prisoners have mental health problems. 72% of male and 70% of female sentenced prisoners suffer from two or more mental health disorders. 20% of prisoners have four of the five major mental health disorders.¹⁹¹

Neurotic and personality disorders are particularly prevalent - 40% of male and 63% of female sentenced prisoners have a neurotic disorder, over three times the level in the general population. 64% of male and 50% of female sentenced prisoners have a personality disorder.

According to the NHS plan, around 5,000 prisoners, at the time between 5-8%, have severe and enduring mental illnesses. The plan also said that, by 2004, “all people with severe mental illness will be in receipt of treatment, and no prisoner with serious mental illness will leave prison without a care plan and a care coordinator.”¹⁹²

A significant number of prisoners suffer from a psychotic disorder. 7% of male and 14% of female sentenced prisoners have a psychotic disorder; 14 and 23 times the level in the general population.

A total of 22,324 self-harm incidents were recorded in the year 2005/6 by the Prison Service. That is a rise of 14% on the previous year. It puts the prevalence at 294 per 1,000 prisoners.¹⁹³

A high proportion of prisoners have been treated in psychiatric hospitals - 20% of male and 15% of female sentenced prisoners have previously been admitted for in-patient psychiatric care.

The number of restricted patients under the Mental Health Act in England and Wales was 3,395 at the end 2005, the highest for a decade. 779 of the patients were transferred from prison to hospital. Those released from restricted hospitals in 2003 have an 7% reconviction rate after two years.¹⁹⁴

In the quarter ending December 2006, 38 prisoners had been assessed and were waiting three months or more before being transferred to hospital. Many prisoners also have long waits before an assessment takes place.¹⁹⁵

Mental health in-reach teams are operating in 102 prisons.¹⁹⁶

189. All the statistics in this section are taken from Singleton et al (1998) Psychiatric Morbidity among Prisoners in England and Wales, London: Office for National Statistics, unless otherwise stated

190. Erwin James, Foreword to 'Troubled Inside: Responding to the mental health needs of men in prison', Prison Reform Trust, 2005

191. Paul Goggins, minister for prisons and probation speaking in a debate on prisons and mental health, Hansard, 17 March 2004

192. Department of Health, 2000: the NHS Plan: a plan for investment, a plan for reform

193. NOMS, Safer Custody News, the Safer Custody Group, 2006

194. Home Office Statistical Bulletin, Statistics of Mentally Disordered Offenders 2005, 1 March 2007

195. Hansard, House of Commons, 27 March 2007

196. Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 19 February 2007

Prison regimes do little to address the mental health needs of prisoners. Research has found that 28% of male sentenced prisoners with evidence of psychosis reported spending 23 or more hours a day in their cells - over twice the proportion of those without mental health problems.

Prisoners with severe mental health problems are often not diverted to more appropriate secure provision. The Chief Inspector of Prisons has estimated, based on visits to local prisons, that 41% of prisoners being held in health care centres should have been in secure NHS accommodation.¹⁹⁷ Research has found that there are up to 500 patients in prison health care centres with mental health problems sufficiently ill to require immediate NHS admission.¹⁹⁸ The government has committed itself to a programme of standardising court diversion schemes across the country.¹⁹⁹

The resettlement needs of prisoners with mental health problems are not being met. Research found that 96% of mentally-disordered prisoners were put back into the community

without supported housing, including 80% of those who had committed the most serious offences; more than three quarters had been given no appointment with outside carers.²⁰⁰

Mental health issues amongst prisoners are often linked to previous experiences of violence at home and sexual abuse. About half of women and about a quarter of men in prison have suffered from violence at home while about one in three women report having suffered sexual abuse compared with just under one in 10 men.

Half of all those sentenced to custody are not registered with a GP prior to being sent to prison.²⁰¹

197. HM Inspectorate of Prisons (2004) Annual Report of HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for England and Wales 2002-2003, London: Stationery Office

198. Reed, J. (2003) Mental Health Care in Prisons, British Journal of Psychiatry 182, p287-288

199. Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 12 September 2005, column 2570W.

200. Melzer et al (2002) Prisoners with psychosis in England and Wales: a one-year national follow-up study, The Howard Journal 41, p1-13

201. Social Exclusion Unit (2002) Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners, London: Social Exclusion Unit

Drugs

The number of people in prison for drug offences is high and growing. At the end of February 2007, 16% of male sentenced prisoners had been convicted of drug offences. In 1995 drug offences accounted for 10% of male sentenced prisoners. For the sentenced female prison population at the end of February 2007 drug offences accounted for 31% of prisoners, by far the largest proportion. In 1995 they accounted for 27% of the sentenced female prison population.²⁰²

There is a much wider group of prisoners whose offence is in some way drug related. Shoplifting, burglary, vehicle crime and theft can be linked to drug misuse. Over half of prisoners (55%) report committing offences connected to their drug taking, with the need for money to buy drugs the most commonly cited factor.²⁰³

In 18% of violent crimes reported to the 2004/5 British Crime Survey, the victim believed that the offender was under the influence of drugs. More than a quarter (29%) of robbery victims believed their attacker to be under the influence of drugs.²⁰⁴

Epidemiological studies show that round 55% of those received into custody are problematic drug users. That is annual throughput of 70,000 a year, or 39,000 at any one time. According to the Home Office that means around one sixth of problematic drug users are in prison at any one time.²⁰⁵

A study for the Home Office found that almost half of recently sentenced male

prisoners (47%) had used heroin, crack or cocaine in the 12 months prior to imprisonment. Heroin was the drug most likely to be used on a daily basis. Overall, 73% of respondents had taken an illegal drug in the year before entering prison.²⁰⁶

Half of Scottish prisoners have reported that they had used drugs in prison at some point in the past. 76% of these said that their use had decreased while in prison.²⁰⁷

In some inner city local prisons as many as eight out of ten men are found to have class A drugs in their system on reception²⁰⁸ and in the local women's prison, Styal, the same number of new arrivals are thought to have drug problems.²⁰⁹ However a range of studies places the mean figure at 55% – this equates to approximately 74,250 people who use class A drugs entering prison each year (based on annual receptions of 135,000).²¹⁰

Many prisoners have never received help with their drug problems. According to the Social Exclusion Unit officers at HMP Manchester have estimated that 70% of prisoners come into the jail with a drugs misuse problem but that 80% of these have never had any contact with drug treatment services.²¹¹

Drug use amongst prisoners in custody is reported to be high. A recent Home Office study found that four out ten prisoners said they had used drugs at least once whilst in their current prison, a quarter had used in the past month and 16% in the past week. Cannabis and

202. Home Office, Offender Management Caseloads Statistics 2005 and NOMS Population In Custody February 2007

203. Ramsay, M. (ed) (2003), Prisoners' drug use and treatment: seven studies, Home Office Research Findings 186, London: Home Office.

204. Home Office Statistical Bulletin, January 2006: Violent Crime Overview, Homicide and Gun Crime 2004/5, 2nd edition February 2006

205. Home Office FOI Release 4631, 6 Dec 2006

206. *ibid*

207. Scottish Prison Service, Annual Prison Survey, 2005

208. Interview with Prison Service Director General, Phil Wheatley, Independent, 1 December 2003

209. HM Prisons Inspectorate (2004) Report on a full unannounced inspection of HMP and YOI Styal 19-23 January 2004, London: Home Office

210. Government reply to the first report from the Home Affairs Committee on the Rehabilitation of Prisoners Session 2004-2005, HC193

211. Social Exclusion Unit (2002) Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners, London: Social Exclusion Unit

opiates were the drugs most often used. Almost a third of prisoners reported cannabis use and one in five opiate use in their current prison, while 9% and 10% respectively reported using these drugs in the past week.²¹²

All prisoners are subject to random mandatory drug tests. Recorded drug use in 2005-2006 was 10.3%, down from 11.6% the year before.²¹³ But a recent Home Office study found that 'mandatory drug testing results generally underestimate the level of drug misuse as reported by prisoners'.²¹⁴

In the year April 2005 to March 2006, 53,323 prisoners went through detoxification and 10,743 prisoners entered intensive rehabilitation programmes, with 8,011 completing.²¹⁵

Concerns have been raised about the quality of detoxification, especially for prisoners who have been dependent on crack cocaine.²¹⁶ Research has found that arrangements for detoxification appear to vary considerably between different prisons.²¹⁷

In 2005-2006, 7,280 prisoners completed Prison Service drug treatment programmes exceeding a target of 5,250.²¹⁸

Nine out of ten young adult prisoners say they used drugs prior to imprisonment but only one in three young offender institutions provide intensive drug treatment programmes.²¹⁹ **Transfers between prisons due**

to overcrowding often disrupt drug treatment. Recent research found that a third of prisons were unlikely to be able to continue the treatment of prisoners transferred to them.²²⁰

Drug use on release from prison is very high. One survey of prisoners who had mostly served short sentences and had used drugs in the 12 months before imprisonment, found that 77% admitted taking illegal drugs since release.²²¹

The Social Exclusion Unit found that the 'chances of continuing drugs programmes and support on release are very slim' and concluded, 'prisoners are often viewed as 'new cases' when they are released and have to join the back of the queue'.²²² The Home Office has no comprehensive tracking systems in place to monitor access to community drug treatment but is currently developing work in this area.²²³

A Home office study has found that the risk of death for men released from prison is forty times higher in the first week of release than for the general population. This is ascribed largely to drug-related deaths. 342 deaths were recorded among their sample group of men in the year after release whereas in a sample matched for age and gender in the general population, only 46 deaths would be expected.²²⁴

The total funding for prison drug treatment in prison is £60.3m in 2005/6, rising to £77.3m in 2006/7.²²⁵

212. Singleton et al (2005) The impact and effectiveness of Mandatory Drugs Tests in prison, Findings 223 London: Home Office

213. Prison Service, Annual Report and Accounts 2005/2006, London: Stationery Office

214. Singleton et al (2005) The impact and effectiveness of Mandatory Drugs Tests in prison, London: Home Office

215. Prison Service, Annual Report and Accounts 2005/2006, London: Stationery Office

216. HM Inspectorates of Prisons and Probation (2001) Through the Prison Gate: Thematic Review by HM Inspectorates of Prisons and Probation, London: Stationery Office

217. Home Office; (2003) Differential substance misuse, treatment needs of women, ethnic minorities and young offenders in prison: prevalence of substance misuse and treatment needs, Home Office Online Report 33/03

218. Prison Service, Annual Report and Accounts 2005/2006, London: Stationery Office

219. Social Exclusion Unit (2002) Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners, London: Social Exclusion Unit

220. National Audit Office (2002) Reducing Re-offending, London: National Audit Office

221. Social Exclusion Unit (2002) Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners, London: Social Exclusion Unit 222. *ibid*

223. Government reply to the first report from the Home Affairs Committee on the Rehabilitation of Prisoners Session 2004-2005, HC193

224. Drug-related mortality among newly released offenders 1998 to 2000, Home Office online report 40/05

225. Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 15 March 2007

In almost half of violent crimes (48%) the victim believed the offender or offenders to be under the influence of alcohol.²²⁷

Nearly two-thirds of sentenced male prisoners (63%) and two-fifths of female sentenced prisoners (39%) admit to hazardous drinking which carries the risk of physical or mental harm. Of these, about half have a severe alcohol dependency.

34% of prisoners in Scotland have indicated that their drinking was a problem outside, 23% that they drank alcohol in the morning, 30% that drinking affected their family relationships, 20% their ability to hold down a job. Two in five (40%) reported that they were drunk at the time of their offence.²²⁸

44% of young adults (18-24) are binge drinkers. 27% of binge drinkers admitted committing an offence in the past 12 months – compared with 13% of drinkers who did not binge.²²⁹

It is common for prisoners who have alcohol problems to also have drug problems. Just over a quarter of male prisoners and about a fifth of female prisoners who are hazardous drinkers are dependent on at least one type of illicit drug.

In 2002/2003 an estimated 6,400 prisoners undertook alcohol detoxification programmes, and an estimated 7,000 more prisoners

undertook detoxification for combined alcohol and drug misuse.

There are no specific accredited alcohol treatment programmes with ring-fenced funding in prisons in England and Wales.

A Prison Service survey conducted in 2003, that received responses from half of all prisons in England and Wales, identified only one prison that had a dedicated alcohol strategy.

In December 2004 the Prison Service published its long awaited Alcohol Strategy for Prisoners, which focuses primarily on improving consistency of measures to prevent future hazardous drinking across the prison estate and builds on existing good practice. But it has not been supported by additional resources.

The annual estimated cost of alcohol-related crime and public disorder is up to £7.3 bn.

226. Unless marked otherwise, all the figures in this section are from Prison Reform Trust briefing paper (January 2004) Alcohol and re-offending: who cares?

227. Home Office Statistical Bulletin, 02/06, January 2006: Violent Crime Overview, Homicide and Gun Crime 2004/5, 2nd edition

228. Scottish prison service, Annual Prison Survey, 2005

229. Home Office, Findings from the 2003 offending, crime and justice survey: alcohol-related crime and disorder- 261

Health and wellbeing

20 to 30% of men and women in prison have learning disabilities or difficulties that interfere with their ability to cope within the criminal justice system.²³⁰

Studies suggest that 7% of prisoners have very low IQs, of less than 70.²³¹

80% of prison staff say that information accompanying people into prison is unlikely to show the presence of learning disabilities or difficulties that had been identified prior to arrival. Once in prison there is no routine or systematic procedure for identifying prisoners with learning disabilities or difficulties.²³²

Most prisoner staff (66%) believe that the overall quality of support for prisoners with learning disabilities and difficulties is low.²³³

Across the prison estate only 40% of prisoners participate in exercise.²³⁴

The average daily food cost per person in public prisons was £1.93 in 2005-2006.²³⁵

The average time out of cell on a weekday for each prisoner is 10 hours exactly in 2005/2006, a fall from 11.2 in 1996-7.²³⁶

A survey conducted by the National AIDS Trust and the Prison Reform Trust among prison healthcare managers across the UK, found that a third of prisons surveyed had no HIV policy, one in five had no hepatitis C policy and well over half had no sexual health policy. This is despite the fact that the most recent survey of prevalence in prison found HIV was 15 times higher than in the community.²³⁷

230. Loucks, N. (2007) 'The prevalence and associated needs of offenders with learning difficulties and learning disabilities.' London: Prison Reform Trust.

231. Mottram, P G. (2007) 'HMP Liverpool, Styal and Hindley Study Report. Liverpool: University of Liverpool.

232. Talbot, J. (2007) 'Identifying and supporting prisoners with learning difficulties and disabilities: the views of prison officers.' London: Prison Reform Trust

233. *ibid*

234. House of Commons, Committee of Public Accounts, Serving time: prisoner diet and exercise, 56th Report of Session 2005-06

235. Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 28 March 2007

236. Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 9 January 2007

237. HIV and Hepatitis in UK Prisons: Addressing Prisoners' Healthcare Needs, Prison Reform Trust and National AIDS Trust, 2005

Homelessness and unemployment

Surveys indicate 30% of people released from prison will have nowhere to live.²³⁸ This is despite the fact that stable accommodation can reduce re-offending by over 20%.²³⁹ The Home Office claims that recent progress on supporting prisoners to find accommodation has led to significant improvements and that 90.1% of the total number of prisoners released in the year ending March 2006 reported having accommodation arranged.²⁴⁰

14% of men, 20% of women and 10% of young offenders were not in permanent accommodation before custody.²⁴¹

Home Office research into the resettlement of short term prisoners found that over half (51%) had housing problems prior to imprisonment.²⁴² Around one in every 20 prisoners was sleeping rough before they were sent to custody.²⁴³

Most prisoners depend on Housing Benefit to help with their rent before they enter custody. However, entitlement to Housing Benefit stops for all sentenced prisoners expected to be in prison for more than 13 weeks. This means that many prisoners have little chance of keeping their tenancy open until the end of their sentence and lose their housing.

The Home Office has found that women prisoners are particularly likely not to have accommodation arranged for their release. Just 62% of women had accommodation arranged, compared with 90% of young male offenders and 69% of adult men.²⁴⁴ Housing advisors have been recruited for all women's local prisons.²⁴⁵

The Revolving Doors Agency has found that 49% of prisoners with mental health problems had no fixed address on leaving prison. Of those who had a secure tenancy before going to prison, 40% lost it on release.²⁴⁶

The Big Issue conducted the largest survey of its vendors in 2001. More than one-third of Big Issue vendors are ex-prisoners. Only 13% received any form of resettlement advice before their release from prison.

A Home Office study found recently that only one in five prisoners who need help with accommodation get support or advice. It also found that two-thirds of prisoners with no accommodation arranged on release had not received any housing support. The same study found that only half of those who had received help had an address to go to on release. It concluded that 'many prisoners would like help looking for accommodation but do not receive it'.²⁴⁷

Research by the House of Commons Home Affairs Committee found that only 19% of prisoners received advice or guidance about accommodation.²⁴⁸

Getting ex-prisoners into stable housing can act as a gateway to effective resettlement. Home Office research shows that prisoners who have accommodation arranged on release are four times more likely to have employment, education or training arranged than those who do not have accommodation in place. Homelessness can also prevent ex-prisoners from accessing support services such as benefits or registering with a GP.²⁵⁰

238. Niven, S and Stewart, D (2005) Resettlement outcomes on release from prison, Home Office Findings 248, London: Home Office

239. Social Exclusion Unit (2002) Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners, London: Social Exclusion Unit

240. Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 9 January 2007

241. Niven, S and Stewart, D (2005) Resettlement outcomes on release from prison, Home Office Findings 248, London: Home Office

242. Home Office (2003) The resettlement of short term prisoners: an evaluation of seven pathfinder programmes, Findings 200, London: Home Office

243. Niven, S and Stewart, D (2005) Resettlement outcomes on release from prison, Home Office Findings 248, London: Home Office

244. *ibid.* 245 Hansard, House of Lords, 28th October, 2004, Column, 1480

246. Revolving Doors Agency (2002) Where Do They Go? Housing, Mental Health and Leaving Prison, London: Revolving Doors

247. Niven, S and Stewart, D (2005) Resettlement outcomes on release from prison, Home Office Findings 248, London: Home Office;

248. House of Commons Home Affairs Committee, Rehabilitation of Prisoners, First Report of Session 2004-2005, Volume 1 and 2

249. Niven, S and Stewart, D (2005) Resettlement outcomes on release from prison, Home Office Findings 248, London: Home Office; Home Office (2001)

Jobs and Homes - a survey of prisoners nearing release, Findings 173, London: Home Office

250. Social Exclusion Unit (2002) Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners, London: Social Exclusion Unit

The Prison Service states that in about 50 prisons some form of housing advice and support service is available.²⁵¹

Two-thirds of prisoners are unemployed at the time of imprisonment - around 13 times the national unemployment rate. A recent Home Office study found that 14% of prisoners said they had never had a paid job before custody.²⁵²

Around two-thirds of those who do have a job lose it whilst in custody.²⁵³

A survey by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development showed that people with a criminal record are part of the 'core jobless group' that more than 60% of employers deliberately exclude when recruiting.²⁵⁴

Research by the House of Commons Home Affairs committee found that two-thirds of prisoners have no job on release.²⁵⁵

A Home Office survey carried out in 2003 found that only a third of people released from prison had a job or a training or education place arranged.²⁵⁶

The same study found that of those who had an employment, training or education place to go to on release only 15% had arranged this through the Prison Service or a voluntary agency working in the prison. More than half said it had been arranged through family, friends or personal contacts. The study highlighted the value of personal contacts and support networks in helping prisoners find employment or training.²⁵⁷

In 2005-2006, 38,996 prisoners had a job, education or training place arranged on release, more than the Key Performance Indicator target of 34,890 prisoners, and about a third of all those people who leave prison in a year. Data is not collected to establish whether or not these prisoners accessed the places that they said had been arranged for them or for how long they held them.²⁵⁸

Prisoners face great difficulties finding employment after release. A criminal record, low educational attainment, health problems and a lack of stable housing can make it problematic for prisoners to find a job.

A Home Office study which followed up prisoners between two and 12 months after release found that only half had done some paid work; 2% were on a government training scheme, and 48% had not found any work.

Of those who had done some paid work, nearly two-thirds found it after leaving prison. Only 9% arranged a job whilst in custody.²⁵⁹

251. House of Commons Home Affairs Committee, Rehabilitation of Prisoners, First Report of Session 2004-2005, Volume 1 and 2.

252. Niven, S and Stewart, D (2005) Resettlement outcomes on release from prison, Home Office Findings 248

253. Home Office (2001) Through the Prison Gate: a joint thematic review by HM Inspectorates of Prisons and Probation, London: Stationery Office

254. Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, Labour Market Outlook, Summer 2005

255. House of Commons Home Affairs Committee, Rehabilitation of Prisoners, First Report of Session 2004-2005, Volume 1 and 2

256. Niven, S and Stewart, D (2005) Resettlement outcomes on release from prison, Home Office Findings 248

257. *ibid*

258. Prison Service, Annual Report and Accounts 2005/2006, London: Stationery Office

259. Stewart, D (2005) An evaluation of basic skills training for prisoners, Home Office Findings 260, London: Home Office

Education

48% of prisoners are at or below the level expected of an 11 year old in reading, 65% in numeracy and 82% in writing.²⁶⁰

More than half of male and more than two-thirds of female adult prisoners have no qualifications at all.²⁶¹

Half of all prisoners do not have the skills required by 96% of jobs and only one in five are able to complete a job application form.²⁶²

Nearly half of male sentenced prisoners were excluded from school.²⁶³

In 2002-2003 an average of £1,185 per prisoner was spent on education in jails. This is less than half the average cost of secondary school education at £2,590 per student per year, which many prisoners have missed.²⁶⁴ But government funding for prison education more than doubled in five years from £7.5m in 1999-2000 to £122m in 2004-2005.²⁶⁵

According to the Offenders Learning and Skills Unit in the Department for Education and Skills, just under a third of the prison population is attending education classes at any one time.²⁶⁶

Research by NATFHE and the Association of College Lecturers has found that only one third of education managers regularly receive prisoners' records following transfers.²⁶⁷

Prison Service targets for the number of prisoners achieving different skills qualifications were significantly exceeded in 2005-2006. Prisoners achieved 146,053 key work skills awards, and 42,520 basic skills awards.²⁶⁸ However, Home Office research found that improvements in literacy and numeracy were not significantly related to prisoners' chances of finding employment or re-offending after release. Factors such as links with previous employers and family contacts were more strongly related to employment outcomes.²⁶⁹

Research highlighted by the government's Social Exclusion Unit has found that prisoners who do not take part in education or training are three times more likely to be reconvicted. This research has yet to be tested empirically by the Home Office and the House of Commons Education and Skills Committee concluded that 'more research is needed to isolate the impact of education and training'.²⁷⁰

The Social Exclusion Unit also found that that basic skills learning can contribute to a reduction in re-offending of around 12%.²⁷¹ However, the House of Commons Education and Skills Committee has expressed concern that 'the heavy concentration on basic skills qualifications is based on little more than a hunch' and urged the government to undertake more research.²⁷²

260. Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 9 January 2007

261. Home Office (2001) Through the Prison Gate: a joint thematic review by HM Inspectorates of Prisons and Probation, London: Stationery Office

262. Social Exclusion Unit (2002) Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners, London: Social Exclusion Unit

263. Singleton et al (2000) Psychiatric Morbidity among young offenders in England and Wales, London: Office for National Statistics

264. Braggins, J and Talbot, J (2003) Time to Learn: Prisoners' Views on Prison Education, London: Prison Reform Trust

265. House of Commons Education and Skills Committee, Prison Education, Seventh Report of Session 2004-2005

266. *ibid*

267. Braggins, J (2002), Shared Responsibilities: Education for prisoners at a time of change, London: NATFHE

268. Prison Service. Annual Report and Accounts 2005/2006, London: Stationery Office

269. Stewart, D An evaluation of basic skills training for prisoners, Home Office Findings 260, London: Home Office

270. House of Commons Education and Skills Committee, Prison Education, Seventh Report of Session 2004-2005

271. Social Exclusion Unit (2002) Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners, London: Social Exclusion Unit

272. House of Commons Education and Skills Committee, Prison Education, Seventh Report of Session 2004-2005

Prison work and volunteering

Overall there are around 24,000 work places for prisoners across the estate in workshops, catering, cleaning, land based activities and day release programmes - the majority is low grade menial work.²⁷³ This means that a maximum of just under a third of the prison population is engaged in work activities at any one time.

An average of 10,000 prisoners are employed in nearly 300 workshops across the prison estate in a diverse range of industries that include; clothing and textiles, woodwork, engineering, print and laundries.²⁷⁴

40% of the 10,000 prisoners who work across these industries work for 'contract services' and are producing goods and services for an external, commercial market. This can range from laundry contracts for hospitals to manufacturing camouflage jackets for the Ministry of Defence.²⁷⁵

Clothing and textiles is the biggest employer in prison workshops with roughly 3,000 prisoners involved across 60 prisons. Almost all (95%) of textile products are for the internal market.²⁷⁶

A recent internal Prison Service review of workshops suggested that the focus should be almost totally on the internal market as demand for goods was so high due to the rise in prison numbers over the last decade.²⁷⁷

There are around 1,500 people in the open prison estate who go out to work in full time paid employment during the day on day release.²⁷⁸ They are, generally, long term prisoners who are in the final stages of their period in custody and preparing to return to the community.

The average rate of pay for employed prisoners is £8 per week. The Prison Service sets a minimum rate of pay which is currently £4.00 per week but each prison has devolved responsibility to enable it to set its own pay rates.²⁷⁹

The Prison Service has acknowledged that prison industries have 'rather got left behind by other developments within the system' and that providing work opportunities for prisoners is not currently a central and essential part of the of the prison regime.²⁸⁰

Since 1984, 2,100 serving prisoners have given in excess of 300,000 hours of service to the community through Community Service Volunteers.²⁸¹

One in 14 prisoners participate in an activity to help other prisoners, such as the Samaritan Listeners scheme.²⁸²

The Inside Out Trust runs charity workshops in the prison system. Work includes making benches, restoring bicycles, sewing machines or hearing aids. As at January 2005, it had over 1,000 men and women at work in 75 prisons.²⁸³

273. House of Commons, Home Affairs Committee, Rehabilitation of Prisoners, First Report of Session 2004-2005

274. 'Service on the verge of industrial revolution' Prison Service News, September, 2003

275. Ibid

276. Ibid

277. Prison Service (2003) Report of the Industries Review Team, An internal review of the strategic oversight and management of public sector prison industries in England and Wales, London: Prison Service

278. House of Commons Home Affairs Committee, Rehabilitation of Prisoners, First Report of Session 2004-2005

279. Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 23 March 2007

280. House of Commons, Home Affairs Committee, Rehabilitation of Prisoners, First Report of Session 2004-2005

281. PRT (2002), Barred Citizens, PRT: London

282. Ibid

283. <http://www.inside-out.org.uk>

Recalls to prison²⁸⁴

In the five years to 2005 there has been a 250% increase in the number of offenders recalled to prison for apparent breach of their conditions. This is despite the fact that the number of ex-prisoners on licence in the community has increased by less than 15%. Rates of recall for those technically eligible have risen from 53% in 2000, to 86% in 2004.²⁸⁵

Recalled prisoners now make up nearly 11% of the population of local prisons.²⁸⁶

The average daily population of prisoners in Scotland recalled from supervision or licence has increased by 12% over the last year, to 400 in 2005/06.²⁸⁷

Between April and June 2005, 2,100 people were recalled on a breach of their licence. Of

these the largest proportion, 30%, were 'out of touch', 18% were breached for problems with their behaviour, 8% for breaking their residency conditions and 18% for 'other reasons'. Only a quarter were recalled to face a further charge.²⁸⁸

In 2005, 54,616 people were released on Home Detention Curfew. The proportion recalled for breach of their HDC conditions went down to 5%.²⁸⁹ On 11 May 2007, 2,308 people were on HDC.²⁹⁰

Under the provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 2003, the time served under licence will increase hugely. Those serving long sentences will be under supervision for the whole sentence, instead of until the three-quarters point and the new public protection sentences will include long periods of licence.

Prison Service performance and staffing

The total full-time equivalent staff of officer grade employed throughout the prison estate was 24,272 in 2000 and 26,474 at the beginning of 2006. That is an increase of 9%, while over the same period, the prison population has increased by 24%.²⁹¹

In 2004-2005, the Prison Service met 13 of its 17 main key performance indicators.²⁹²

It just met its overcrowding target by having 23.7% of prisoners held in "accommodation units intended for fewer prisoners", the target was under 24%.²⁹³ In 2003-4 a lower target was

set of 18% of all prisoners held two for a cell designed for one. In that year the Prison Service failed to meet the target, instead putting 21.7% in such accommodation.²⁹⁴

Targets on sex offender treatment programmes, serious assaults, ethnic diversity among the staff and staff sickness were not met. Some progress towards them had been made in all areas.

The Prison Service is faced with high sickness levels amongst prison officers. The average staff sickness rate in 2005/6 was 12.2%. This is an

284. Unless otherwise stated, all facts in this section are drawn from the Prison Reform Trust's briefing paper, Recycling Offenders through Prison, May 2005.

285. HMCIP, Recalled prisoners, December 2005

286. *ibid*

287. Scottish Executive, Statistical Bulletin, Criminal Justice Series, Prison Statistics Scotland 2005/06

288. NOMS Recall newsletter edition 7, annex A

289. Home Office, Offender Management Caseload Statistics 2005

290. Prison population and accommodation briefing for 11 May 2007, NOMS

291. Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 20 March 2007. And, Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2005, and prison population and accommodation briefing, 30 March 2007.

292. Prison Service. Annual Report and Accounts 2005/2006, London: Stationery Office

293. *ibid*

294. Prison Service. Annual Report and Accounts 2003/2004, London: Stationery Office

improvement on in the previous year's rate of 12.7%. and 13.3% in the year before that.²⁹⁵

There has been a high turnover of prison governors. In the five years to March 2002 just under a third of all prisons (44) had had four or more governors or acting governors in charge.²⁹⁶ The average tenure for governing governors in an establishment is one year and nine months.²⁹⁷

The under-representation of staff from minority ethnic groups is particularly marked at a senior level in the Prison Service. Just 2.7% of

senior operational managers are from a minority ethnic group.²⁹⁸

The number of minority ethnic staff in the Prison Service overall is now 5.7%. It has grown steadily for many years.²⁹⁹

61% of black and minority ethnic prison staff have experienced direct racial discrimination while employed in the service. Over half chose not to report it.³⁰⁰

Private prisons³⁰¹

There are eleven privately run prisons in England and Wales. Nine prisons have been built and are run by the private sector under PFI contracts – Dovegate, Altcourse, Ashfield, Forest Bank, Lowdham Grange, Parc, Rye Hill, Bronzefield and Peterborough the only prison which accommodates both men and women on the same site. In addition there are two prisons (the Wolds and Doncaster) that were built and financed by the public sector but are run by private companies under management only contracts.

Serco PLC subsidiary, Premier Custodial Group, is the largest provider of private prisons, operating Dovegate, Ashfield, Lowdham Grange and Doncaster. Falck AS, formerly owned by Group 4, which is the holding company for GSL, operates Rye Hill, Altcourse and the Wolds. Kalyx is owned by the Paris based

multi-national corporation Sodexho, operates Forest Bank, Bronzefield and Peterborough. Securicor Justice Services (now owned by Group 4 Securicor) operates Parc prison.

According to a parliamentary written answer,³⁰² the comparable costs of private prisons per place are higher than public sector prisons in most categories:

Function	Contracted sector cost per place	Public sector cost per place
Male category B	26,813	25,881
Male category C	20,855	21,976
Female closed	44,400	34,617
Male juvenile	48,669	42,143
Male local	33,805	31,912

295. Prison Service., Annual Report and Accounts 2005/2006, London: Stationery Office

296. Hansard, House of Commons written answer 31 January, 2003

297. Hansard, House of Commons written answer 19 January, 2004

298. Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 23rd March 2007

299. Prison Service. Annual Report and Accounts 2005/2006, London: Stationery Office

300. Prison Reform Trust 2006. Briefing: Experiences of Minority Ethnic Employees in Prisons

301. For more information on the performance of private prisons, the companies and their profits see Prison Reform Trust (2005) Private Punishment: Who Profits?, London: Prison Reform Trust

302. Hansard, House of Commons written answer, 9 January 2007

Private prisons now account for 10% of the prison population holding around 8,243 prisoners.³⁰³

Pay and conditions for staff in private prisons are inferior compared to the public sector with estimates that staff in private prisons are up to 70% worse off than their public sector counterparts.³⁰⁴

Overall private prisons have far lower staff/prisoner ratios than public prisons, with an average of 17% fewer staff per prisoner than public prisons.³⁰⁵

The National Audit Office highlighted the extremely high turnover of staff in the seven PFI built and managed prisons. For example Dovegate lost nearly 30% of its staff in 2001-2002. The staff losses were far higher than in public prisons which on average lost just 6% of staff in the same year.³⁰⁶

55% of private sector staff at levels equivalent to operational support grades, officer and senior officer levels have less than two years service and only 20% have more than 5 years.³⁰⁷

In 2006 resignations of prison custody officers and detention custody officers in the private sector averaged 24%, with very large variations between establishments.³⁰⁸

In 2006, public sector prison officers had a 39% advantage in basic pay over their private sector equivalents. Taking a valuation of benefits

such as pensions and holiday into account, the advantage rises to 61%.³⁰⁹

According to the NAO, these staffing problems mean private prisons struggle to create a safe environment for prisoners. It noted the high level of assaults at Dovegate, Ashfield, Rye Hill, Forest Bank and Altcourse. It said that prisoners in these jails expressed concerns about their safety due to the relative inexperience of staff.³¹⁰

The overall average amount of time that prisoners spend in purposeful activity in private prisons is higher than in the public sector. In 2003-2004 in private prisons it was 26.7 hours, higher than the public sector average of 23.2 hours.³¹¹

England and Wales already have the most privatized prison system in Europe and in August 2006 the government announced that some 4,000 new prison places are expected to be provided by the private sector. Scotland currently has 10% of its prisoners held privately, although this is due to increase with the addition of a second privately financed, designed, built and run prison. Australia has 17.5% of its prisoners held in private prisons and the US has around 6.7%.³¹²

Of the eleven private prisons in England and Wales, 8 have contracted their healthcare out of the NHS. HMP Kilmarnock in Scotland has an inhouse medical team, using NHS specialists when necessary.³¹³

303. NOMS, Monthly population in custody bulletin, September 2006

304. Sachdev, S (2004) Paying the cost? Public Private Partnerships and the public service workforce, London: Catalyst

305. *ibid*

306. National Audit Office (2003) The Operational Performance of PFI Prisons, London: Stationery Office

307. Privately Managed Custodial Services, Prison Service Pay Review Body, MCG Consulting, September 2005

308. Prison Service Pay Review Body, Sixth Report on England and Wales, March 2007

309. Prison Service Pay Review Body, Privately Managed Custodial Service, September 2006

310. National Audit Office (2003) The Operational Performance of PFI Prisons, London: Stationery Office

311. Prison Reform Trust (2005) Private Punishment: Who Profits?, London: Prison Reform Trust

312. Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 8 May 2007

313. www.serco.co.uk

Long term trends and future prison building

The projected prison population for 2013 is as high as 106,550, according to the Home Office. The promise of an additional 8,000 places for 2012 will barely meet the very lowest prison population projection for that time.³¹⁴

The new Ministry of Justice's statement on Penal Policy states that there are currently 80,700 prison places, that prison capacity has increased by 20,000 since 1997 and that an additional 8,000 places will be commissioned by 2012. It says: "We also want to identify whether the resources in our current estate can be used to finance new accommodation, be that new, large state of the art prisons or smaller local provision for women and young offenders."³¹⁵

"NOMS owns sites for potential new prisons at Maghull near Merseyside, Belmarsh in south-east London and Featherstone near Wolverhampton in the West Midlands.

Potential sites for further new prisons located in the priority areas of London/Essex and South Wales, including the site already owned at Cwmbran, are currently being considered but no final decisions have been taken.³¹⁶

The Scottish prison population is predicted to rise to 9,300 by 2015.³¹⁷

The prison population is expected to rise in Northern Ireland by 6%, year on year for the next five years, and by 5% in the following years, with the population of life sentenced prisoners up by 50% within 10 years.³¹⁸

314. Home Office Statistical Bulletin, 11/06, July 2006. Prison Population Projections 2006-2013

315. Ministry of Justice, Penal Policy, May 2007 www.justice.gov.uk

316. Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 8 May 2007

317. BBC News online, 25 November 2005

318. Interview with Robin Masefield, Director General of the Northern Ireland Prison Service, 12 February 2006 – Belfast Telegraph

Recent Prison Reform Trust publications and briefings

- Just Visiting? A Review of the Role of Prison Visitors' Centres, 2002 - £6.00
- Prison Overcrowding: the Inside Story, 2002 - £7.50
- Restricted Access: Legal Information for Remand Prisoners, 2002 - £5.00
- Criminal Treatment: the Imprisonment of Asylum Seekers, 2002 - £5.00
- Barred Citizens: Volunteering and Active Citizenship by Prisoners, 2002 - £10.00
- A Measure of Success: an Analysis of the Prison Service's Performance Against its Key Performance Indicators 2003-2004, - £5.00
- Troubled Inside: Responding to the Mental Health Needs of Women in Prison, 2003 - £9.00
- The Decision to Imprison: Sentencing and the Prison Population, 2003 - £10.00
- Growing Old in Prison - a Scoping Study on Older Prisoners, 2003 - £9.00
- Time to Learn - Prisoners' Views on Prison Education, 2003 - £10.00
- Innocent Until Proven Guilty - a fairer deal for those accused of crime, 2003 (Briefing Paper)
- Prisoners' Information Book, Male Prisoners and Young Offenders, 2002
- Prisoners' Information Book, Women Prisoners and Female Young Offenders, 2003
- Prisoners' Information Book, Visiting and Keeping in Touch, 2004
- Alcohol and Re-offending - Who Cares?, 2004 (Briefing Paper)
- Having Their Say - The Work of Prisoner Councils, 2004 - £8.50
- Forgotten Prisoners - the Plight of Foreign National Prisoners in England and Wales, 2004 (Briefing Paper)
- Lacking Conviction: the Rise of the Women's Remand Population, 2004 - £9.50
- A Lost Generation: the Experiences of Young People in Prison, 2004 - £7.50
- Going The Distance - Developing Effective Policy and Practice with Foreign National Prisoners, 2004 - £7.50
- Young Parents - From Custody to Community, guide and resource pack 2004 - £25
- Private Punishment - Who Profits? 2005 (Briefing Paper)
- Keeping in Touch - the Case for Family Support Work in Prison, 2005 - £7.50
- Barred from Voting: the Right to Vote for Sentenced Prisoners, 2005 (Briefing Paper)
- Troubled Inside: Responding to the Mental Health Needs of Men in Prison, 2005 - £12.00
- HIV and hepatitis in UK Prisons: Addressing Prisoners' Healthcare Needs, 2005 - £7.50
- The Impact of Volunteering: a Review of the CSV national day release prisoner volunteering project, 2006
- Experiences of Minority Ethnic Employees in Prison, 2006 (Briefing Paper)
- Crime Victims Say Jail Doesn't Work, 2006 (SmartJustice crime victims survey - Briefing Paper)
- No One Knows - the prevalence & associated needs of offenders with learning difficulties & learning disabilities, 2007 (Briefing Paper)
- No One Knows - identifying and supporting prisoners with learning difficulties and learning disabilities, 2007 - £10

For more information about the work of the Prison Reform Trust e-mail: prt@prisonreformtrust.org.uk
or call 020 7251 5070 or visit www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk, www.innocentuntilprovengUILTY.com
or www.smartjustice.org

Prison Reform Trust, 15 Northburgh Street, London EC1V 0JR.

Registered in England, Charity No 1035525. Company Limited by Guarantee No 2906362