



BROMLEY BRIEFINGS

PRISON FACTFILE

November 2006

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

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	11
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.	24
Mental health needs of prisoners.	26
Drugs.	28
Alcohol.	30
Homelessness and unemployment.	31
Education	33
Prison work and volunteering.	34
Recalls to prison.	35
Prison Service performance and staffing.	36
Private prisons.	37
Long term trends and future prison building.	38

Introduction

In the April edition of this briefing the Prison Reform Trust warned that urgent action was needed to pull prisons back from the brink of their capacity limit. The Chief Inspector of Prisons has long documented the damaging impact of prison overcrowding. The government has repeatedly made the commitment to reserve prison for serious and violent offenders. This summer's Home Office announcement of 8,000 new prison places, wild promises of prison ships and new prisons for old army camps, were made in the heat of an avoidable overcrowding crisis. The decision may have been made in haste but it will have lasting significance for the whole country.

On the one hand, the promised extra 8,000 prison places will take England and Wales from the leading incarcerator in Western Europe into a new league, that of the former Warsaw Pact states in the east. On the other hand, these new places, each delivered at a cost of £100,000, will not be enough even to meet the Home Office's own prison population growth predictions. The social and economic costs of prison building, prison overcrowding and a dangerous addiction to the overuse of imprisonment will be felt for years to come.

At the same time, re-offending rates following release from prison have worsened dramatically. Two-thirds of those passing through prison now re-offend within two years. In the early 1990s it was just over half. This is partly because, as the National Audit Office has reported, the pressure of overcrowding and the 'churn' around the system blocks the education, employment, accommodation and family work that stops re-offending. However, it's also because the courts are now consigning people to prison for comparatively petty crimes or low level persistent offending, where prison could not conceivably do anything constructive, and more often adds chaos to an already troubled life.

Prison has become the cuckoo in the nest, monopolising all the resources that could be used

to fight the causes of crime and prevent re-offending. Residential drug treatment centres warn of losing places. Diversion schemes for mentally ill people caught up in the criminal justice system are patchy at best. Plans for dealing with hazardous drinking and alcohol-related violence in the community remain unrealised. Instead of dealing with these challenges in the community, they are swept temporarily out of sight and into prison.

However, victims of crime are calling for better solutions than a temporary respite. The SmartJustice and Victim Support survey of almost a thousand victims of crime, found that over half did not think that sending drug addicts to prison was an effective way to reduce re-offending. Findings reflected in this briefing reveal that crime victims overwhelmingly demanded more drug treatment in the community, improved mental health care for offenders, better parental supervision and more constructive activities for young people. There is little prospect of their wishes being met as long as the government continues to invest so massively in failure. And as long as politicians of all parties subvert much needed debate on criminal justice and crime prevention by turning it into an auction on who can build yet more prison places.

This edition of the Bromley Briefings prison factfile details the reality inside our packed prisons: the prevalence of mental illness, the growth of the imprisonment of children and young people and the relationships between alcohol, drugs and crime. It is this analysis that provides the basis for coherent policy and planning for the future. Clear, accurate information about prisons and prisoners should prompt decision makers to heal the schism between social and criminal justice policy. The choice is between building prisons that are full before they are even finished or looking at what works in the community to promote social inclusion, prevent crime and end the cycle of re-offending.

Prison overview

On 3 November 2006 the prison population in England and Wales stood at 79,829, a rise of 2,077 on the year before. That includes 30 people held in police cells because there was no prison place available.¹

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.²

The prison population in Northern Ireland on 16 October 2006 was 1,472.³ Since reaching a low point of 926 in 2001, it has risen steadily.⁴

England and Wales has the highest imprisonment rate in western Europe at 148 per 100,000 of the population. France has an imprisonment rate of 88 per 100,000 and Germany has a rate of 95 per 100,000.⁵

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.⁶

61% of victims of crime do not think that the use of prison stops re-offending for petty crime, such as shoplifting, stealing cars and vandalism.⁷

Only 29% of victims of crime think that sending drug addicts to prison is an effective

way of reducing their re-offending. 72% want more drug treatment programmes in the community to fight crime.⁸

The number of prisoners in England and Wales has increased by almost 25,000 in the last ten years. In 1996, the mid-year prison population was 55,256.⁹ 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 25,000.¹⁰

132,960 people entered prison in England and Wales in 2004.¹¹

The average age of those sentenced to custody in 2004 was 27. A quarter were aged 22 or under.¹²

The number of people found guilty by the courts has remained largely constant over recent years, it was 1,736,628 in 1993 and 1,816,676 in 2004. The number given custody at magistrates' court has risen from 25,016 to 61,384. The number awarded a custodial sentence at crown court has risen from 33,722 to 44,938.¹³

The number of women in prison has more than doubled over the past decade. On 3 November 2006 the women's prison population stood at 4,433.¹⁴ In 1995 the average female prison population was 1,998. In 1999 it stood at 3,355. In 2004, 12,554 women were received into prison.¹⁵

1 Prison population and accommodation briefing for 3 November 2006, NOMS, Estate Planning and Management Group.

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

3 Northern Ireland Prison Service, <http://www.niprisonservice.gov.uk/module.cfm/opt/3/area/Population/page/population/year/2006/month/10>

4 Northern Ireland Prison Service, <http://www.niprisonservice.gov.uk/pop-arch.htm>

5 International Centre for Prison Studies, <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/depsta/rel/icps/worldbrief/europe.html>

6 *ibid.*

7 SmartJustice 2006, Briefing: Crime Victims say jail doesn't work. <http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/temp/Layoutsp1.pdf>

8 *ibid.*

9 Home Office (2005), Offender Management Caseload Statistics 2004, London: Home Office.

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

11 Home Office (2005), Offender Management Caseload Statistics 2004, London: Home Office

12 *ibid.*

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

14 Prison population and accommodation briefing for 3 November, 2006, NOMS, Estate Planning and Management Group.

15 Home Office (2005) Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2004 London: Home Office.

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.¹⁶

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.¹⁷

On 3 November 2006 there were 11,862 under 21 year olds in prisons in England and Wales.¹⁸ Of these 2,736 are children under 18. The number of children in prison has nearly doubled in the last ten years.¹⁹

Over the last year more than half of all prisons have been overcrowded. At the end of September 2006, 92 of the 141 prisons in England and Wales were overcrowded.²⁰

The prison system as a whole has been overcrowded in every year since 1994.²¹

At the end of December 2004 just fewer than 16,000 prisoners were doubling up in cells designed for one.²²

It costs an average of £40,992 to keep a person in prison.²³

Since Labour came to power in 1997, more than 19,000 additional prison places have been provided, 8,000 more are planned for 2012.²⁴

The average cost of each prison place built since 2000 is £99,839.²⁵

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 5% 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'.²⁶

When he was Home Secretary, Charles Clarke said "Prison does not work in stopping re-offending".²⁷

Prison has a poor record for reducing re-offending – 67.4% of all prisoners are reconvicted within two years of being released - for young men (18-21) it is 78.4%.²⁸

The Social Exclusion Unit has concluded that re-offending by ex-prisoners costs society at least £11 billion per year. Ex-prisoners are responsible for about one in five of all recorded crimes.²⁹

7.5% of the male population born in 1953 had been given at least one custodial sentence before the age of forty-six. 33% of men born in 1953 had at least one conviction for a 'standard list' offence before the age of 46.³⁰

The number of people under pre- or post-release supervision by the Probation Service

16 Hansard, House of Commons written answer 16th May 2003.

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

18 Prison population and accommodation briefing for 3 November 2006, NOMS, Estate Planning and Management Group.

19 Home Office (2005) Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2004 London: Home Office.

20 NOMS (2006) Monthly Bulletin – September 2006, London.

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

22 Hansard, House of Commons written answers 15 March 2005 : Column 204W. The exact number is 15,786 prisoners.

23 Hansard, House of commons written answers, 18 April 2006.

24 Hansard: Oral Statement by the Home Secretary, Dr John Reid, on rebalancing the Criminal Justice System - 20 July 2006.

25 Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 30 June 2005 : Column 1669W.

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

27 Rt Hon Charles Clarke MP, Hansard, House of Commons debates, 9 February 2005.

28 Home Office (2004) Re-offending of adults: results from the 2002 cohort.

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

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

was 209,461 in 2004.³¹ Under the provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 2003, licence 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). Finally the public protection sentences will carry extended periods of supervision.

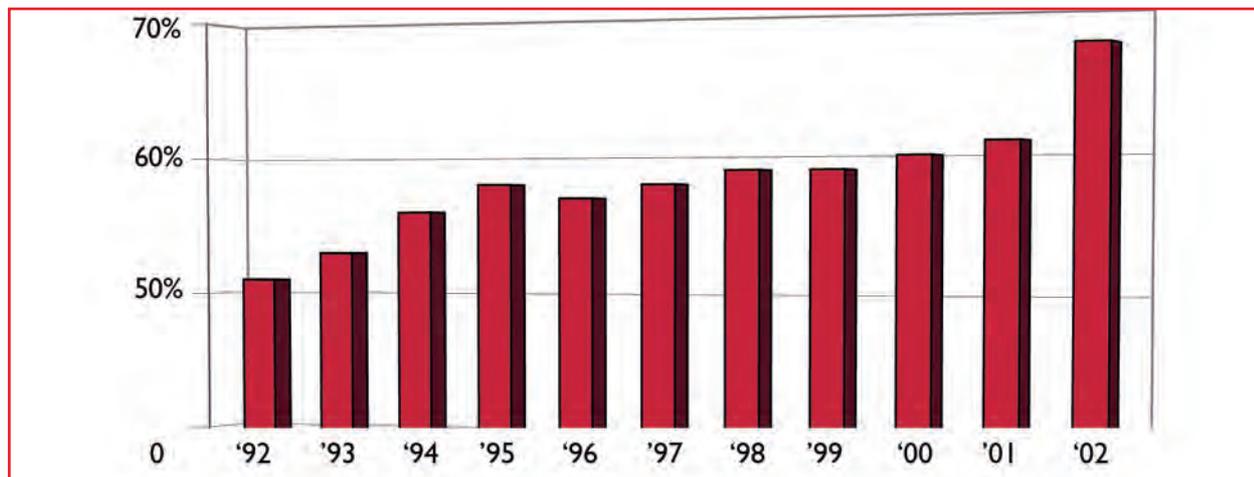
A survey conducted by the National AIDS Trust and the Prison Reform Trust among prison healthcare managers across the UK, found that a third of prisons surveyed had no HIV policy, one in five had no hepatitis C policy and well over half had no sexual health policy. This is despite the fact that the most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

found HIV was 15 times higher than in the community.³²

The average daily meal cost per person in Prison Service run prisons was £1.85 in 2004-2005 – split 20:40:40 between breakfast, lunch and dinner.³³

Across the prison estate only 40% of prisoners participate in exercise.³⁴

Percentage adult re-offending rates since 1992 (Home Office 2004)



31 Home Office (2005) Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2004 London: Home Office.

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

33 Hansard, House of Commons Written Answers, 12 Dec 2005.

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

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."³⁵

The limit to overcrowding in prison is call 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."³⁶

At the end of October 2006, 87 prisons, 62% of the estate, were overcrowded. Twelve were at more than 150% of their CNA.³⁷

On 3 November 2006, the total prison population stood at 247 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 230 places.³⁸

At the end of November 2004 17,677 prisoners were held in a cell designed for fewer people, for example two in a single cell, that was 23.5% of the prison population at the time.³⁹

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.

The ten most overcrowded prisons in England and Wales, October 2006

Prison	In use CNA	Operational Capacity	Population	% overcrowded
Shrewsbury	179	340	340	190
Swansea	240	428	428	178
Preston	382	690	666	174
Dorchester	147	260	253	172
Leicester	206	385	349	169
Altcourse	614	1,024	1,017	166
Usk	150	250	248	165
Northallerton	153	252	247	161
Durham	591	981	942	159
Lincoln	306	490	490	159
Exeter	316	533	498	158

NOMS (2006) Monthly Bulletin – October 2006, London: Prison Service

³⁵ The Prison Service, Prison Service Order 1900, Certified Prisoner Accommodation.

³⁶ *ibid.*

³⁷ NOMS (2006) Monthly Bulletin – October 2006, London.

³⁸ Prison population and accommodation briefing for 3 November 2006, NOMS, Estate Planning and Management Group.

³⁹ Hansard, House of Commons written answers 4 Feb 2005 : Column 1156W.

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.⁴⁰

As at the beginning of October 2006, there have been 50 deaths classified as self-inflicted this year. Three were on licence recall and 16 on remand. 19 were in health care.⁴¹

In 2005 there were 78 self-inflicted deaths in England and Wales, a large fall from 95 in 2004.⁴²

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.⁴³

There were 16 self-inflicted deaths during June 2005, the highest number of any calendar month on record.⁴⁴

Of the 78 deaths in 2005, 3 were women over 21, down from 12 in 2004. Ten young people aged 18-21 took their own lives, and two children, aged 15-17.

Almost one third of suicides occur within the first week of someone arriving in custody and one in seven within two days of admission.⁴⁵

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.⁴⁶

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.⁴⁷

More than half of suicides are in male local prisons and one in five are in prison healthcare or segregation units.⁴⁸

75% of suicides in prisons between 2000 and 2004 took place in prisons that were overcrowded in that month.⁴⁹

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
Total	748	

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.⁵⁰

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

41 Prison Reform Trust information from NOMS, October 2006.

42 Information supplied by Safer Custody Group in NOMS.

43 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.

44 NOMS, Performance Report on Offender Management Targets, April 2005– June 2005.

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

46 Ibid.

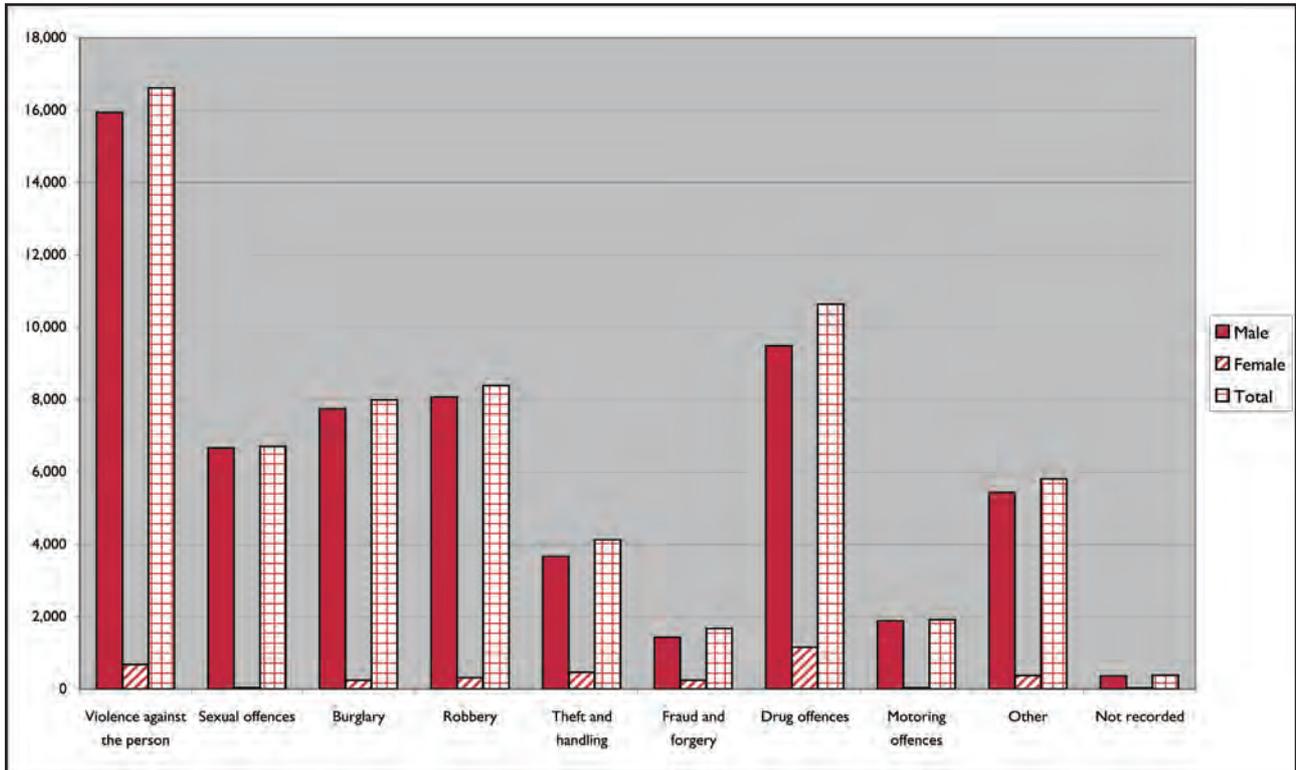
47 Shaw J, Appleby L and Baker D (2003) Safer Prisons, A National Study of Prison Suicides 1999-2000 by the National Confidential Inquiry into Suicide and Homicide by People with Mental Illness. London: Stationery Office.

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

49 House of Commons, Hansard 7 November 2005.

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

Sentenced population by offence (August 2006) ⁵¹



51 Home Office (2006) Population in Custody, August 2006, London: Home Office.

Sentencing trends

The number of people found guilty by the courts has remained largely constant over recent years, it was 1,736,628 in 1993 and 1,816,676 in 2004. The number given custody at magistrates' court has risen from 25,016 to 61,384. The number awarded a custodial sentence at the crown court has risen from 33,722 to 44,938.⁵²

The number of people sentenced for violence against the person was 38,923 in 1993 and 39,257 in 2003. The number of those awarded custodial sentences increased from 7,516 to 12,247.⁵³

Average custodial sentence from a crown court has risen from 20 months in 1993 to 27 months in 2004. Custody rate at crown court has risen from 49% in 1993 to 61% in 2004.⁵⁴

Use of prison in magistrates' court has risen from 6% in 1993 to 16% in 2004, meanwhile the use of the fine has shrunk from 46% to 30%. In 2004 9% of shoplifters with no previous convictions were sent to prison from magistrates' courts, against 2% in 1993.⁵⁵

The number of life sentenced and indeterminate sentenced prisoners has increased considerably in recent years. There were 7,628 people serving indefinite sentences at the end of August 2006, a rise of 27% on the year before.⁵⁶ This compares with fewer than 4,000 in 1998 and 3,000 in 1992.⁵⁷

The number sentenced to life imprisonment a year has almost doubled over the past ten years from 252 in 1994 to 570 in 2004.⁵⁸

England and Wales has the highest number of life sentenced prisoners in Europe. It has more than Germany, France, Italy and Turkey combined.⁵⁹

People serving mandatory life sentences accounted for 59% of all lifers received into prison in 2004.⁶⁰

On 20 October 2006, 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.⁶¹

Men serving determinate sentences of four years or more account for 40% of the total increase in the prison population between 1993 and 2003. Men serving between one and four years account for 27% of the increase. Men on shorter sentences accounted for 9%.⁶²

Those serving sentences of 6 months or under make up over half of the 93,326 received in prison under sentence in 2004.⁶³

Theft and handling accounted for the largest number of immediate custodial receptions at over one fifth.⁶⁴

75% of those sentenced for theft and handling received sentences of less than six months.⁶⁵

52 Home Office (2005). Sentencing Statistics 2004 London: Home Office.

53 *ibid.*

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

55 *ibid.*

56 Home Office (2006) Population in Custody, August 2006, London: Home Office.

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

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

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

60 Home Office (2005) Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2004 London: Home Office.

61 Prison Reform Trust information from NOMS.

62 *ibid.* 63 *ibid.*

64 *ibid.* 65 *ibid.*

Remand prisoners

One in five (20%) of men and 18% of women held on remand before trial in 2004 were acquitted.⁶⁶ 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 2003, 52% of men on remand received an immediate custodial sentence and 4% of women.⁶⁷

The remand population in prison decreased by 1% to 13,301 in August 2006 compared to August 2005.⁶⁸

Two-thirds of people received into prison on remand awaiting trial outcomes are accused of non-violent offences. In 2004, 17% were remanded into custody for theft and handling of stolen goods.⁶⁹

In 2004, 54,556 untried people were remanded into custody. In the same year 50,115 people were remanded into prison convicted but awaiting sentence.⁷⁰

At the end of August 2005 there were 896 women on remand, one in five of the population.⁷¹

Women on remand have been one of the fastest growing groups among the prison population. There was a 115% increase in the number of women remanded into custody between 1994 and 2004, compared to a 20% increase for men.⁷²

In 2002 the average age of a remand prisoner

was 29. More than one in five were under 21. Around 5% were between 15 and 17 years old.⁷³

In 2004 there were 32 people held in prison awaiting trial who took their own lives - a third of all prison suicides that year. Overall more than half of all suicides were committed by prisoners on remand.⁷⁴

Many remand prisoners harm themselves whilst in custody. In 2003 remand prisoners accounted for a third of all self-harm incidents in prison.⁷⁵

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.⁷⁶

On 30 June 2004 there were 2,200 people on remand awaiting trial for over three months - 29% of the total.⁷⁷

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.⁷⁸

According to the Office for National Statistics, nearly three-quarters of men on remand and nearly half of women on remand have used at least one drug in the year before coming to prison. Nearly a third of men

66 Home Office (2005) Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2004, London: Home Office.

67 *ibid.*

68 Home Office (2006) Population in Custody, August 2006, London: Home Office.

69 Home Office (2005) Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2004 London: Home Office.

70 *ibid.* The total number of people remanded into custody in a year cannot be calculated by adding together the two figures because there is double counting. A person may first enter the remand population awaiting trial. If subsequently convicted and then returned to custody to await sentence they will be counted in that category also.

71 Home Office (2006) Population in Custody, August 2006, London: Home Office.

72 Home Office (2005) Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2004 London: Home Office.

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

74 Figures supplied to PRT by Prison Service Safer Custody Group.

75 *ibid.*

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

77 Home Office (2005) Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2004 London: Home Office.

78 Nacro (2000) Prisoner Resettlement Surveys, Unpublished.

used heroin in that year and more than 40% of women. Overall these figures are much higher than for sentenced prisoners.⁷⁹

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.⁸⁰

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.⁸¹

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.⁸²

One in four men and half of all women on

remand receive no visits from their family.⁸³

Prisoners on remand are half as likely to have received advice on resettlement than sentenced prisoners⁸⁴, 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.⁸⁵

Remand population by offence type (August 2006)⁸⁶

Offence group	Total
Violence against the person	3,188
Other	1,999
Drug offences	1,685
Burglary	1,513
Robbery-	1,337
Theft and Handling	1,210
Sexual offences	961
Not recorded	736
Fraud and Forgery	458
Motoring offences	216

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

80 *ibid.*

81 Nacro (2000) Prisoner Resettlement Surveys, Unpublished.

82 *ibid.*

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

84 *ibid.*

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

86 Home Office (2006) Population in Custody, August 2006, London: Home Office.

Women in prison

On 3 November 2006 the number of women in prison stood at 4,433, 141 fewer than a year before.⁸⁷ 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 2003, 13,000 women were received into prison.⁸⁸

Over a third of all adult women in prison had no previous convictions – more than double the figure for men.⁸⁹

At the end of August 2006 there were 896 women on remand, a fifth of the female prison population.⁹⁰

Receptions of women remanded to prison increased from 3,714 in 1994 to 7,978 in 2004, an increase of 115%.⁹¹

65% of women released from prison in 2002 were reconvicted within two years of release.⁹² This compares to fewer than four out of ten (38%) ten years ago.⁹³

At the end of December 2005 there were 911 foreign national prisoners, 22% of the female population.⁹⁴

Of the sentenced female prison population, the majority are held for non-violent offences. At the end of August 2006 the largest group 32%, were held for drug offences. Theft and fraud accounted for 20%.⁹⁵

More women were sent to prison in 2004 for theft and handling stolen goods than

any other crime. Just under 3,000 women were received into custody for this offence. They accounted for more than a third (35%) of all women sentenced to immediate custody in 2004.⁹⁶

The majority of women serve very short sentences. In 2004 nearly two-thirds (64%) were sentenced to custody for six months or less.⁹⁷

Most of the rise in the female prison population can be explained by a significant increase in the severity of sentences. In the crown court in 1991, only 8% of women convicted of motoring offences went to prison. By 2001 that proportion had increased to 42%. Similarly, women convicted of theft or handling at the crown court are now twice as likely to go to prison as in 1991. At the magistrates' courts the chances of a woman receiving a custodial sentence have risen seven-fold.⁹⁸

At the end of September 2004 the average distance female prisoners were held from their home was 62 miles.⁹⁹ At the beginning of July 2004 just under half of all women in prison were held more than 50 miles from their home town or committal court address and nearly a quarter were held more than 100 miles away.¹⁰⁰

Women in prison suffer from numerous mental health problems. Two-thirds of women show symptoms of at least one neurotic disorder such as depression, anxiety and phobias. More than half are suffering from a personality disorder. Among the general population less than a fifth of women suffer

87 Prison population and accommodation briefing for 3 November, 2006, NOMS, Estate Planning and Management Group.

88 Home Office (2005) Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2004 London: Home Office.

89 *ibid.*

90 Home Office (2006) Population in Custody, August 2006, London: Home Office.

91 Home Office (2005) Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2004 London: Home Office.

92 Home Office Statistical Bulletin, Reoffending of adults: results from the 2002 cohort, 2005.

93 Home Office (2005) Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2004 London: Home Office.

94 Home Office (2005) Population in Custody, Quarterly Brief Sept to Dec 2005, London: Home Office.

95 Home Office (2006) Population in Custody, August 2006, London: Home Office.

96 Home Office (2005 Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2004 London: Home Office.

97 *ibid.*

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

99 Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 10 January 2005 : Column 342W; 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.

100 House of Commons, written parliamentary answer, Hansard 7 September, 2004.

from these disorders. Half of the women in prison are on prescribed medication such as anti-depressants or anti-psychotic medicine and there is evidence that the use of medication increases whilst in custody.¹⁰¹

Of all the women who are sent to prison, 37% say they have attempted suicide at some time in their life.¹⁰²

The number and rate of self-harm incidents is much higher amongst women than men. In 2003, 30% of women were reported to have harmed themselves compared with 6% of men. On average each woman who injured herself did so five times compared to twice for men. Hence while women make up just 6% of the prison population they accounted for nearly half (46%) of all reported self-harm incidents.¹⁰³

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.¹⁰⁴

Over half the women in prison say they have suffered domestic violence and one in three has experienced sexual abuse.¹⁰⁵

Around one-third of women prisoners lose their homes, and often their possessions, whilst in prison.¹⁰⁶

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.¹⁰⁷

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

102 Ibid.

103 Prison Service (June 2004) Safer Custody News, London: Prison Service.

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

105 Ibid.

106 Ibid.

107 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 10.¹⁰⁸ 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.¹⁰⁹

At least a third of mothers are lone parents before imprisonment.¹¹⁰

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.¹¹¹

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 period. It also showed that 65% of mothers in prison were receiving their first custodial sentence.¹¹²

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.¹¹³

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.¹¹⁴

For the first time the government has announced that a record will be kept of prisoners' children. Information will be recorded on the National Offender Management Information System.¹¹⁵

Just over half (55%) of male prisoners described themselves as living with a partner before imprisonment¹¹⁶ and a third of female prisoners described themselves as living with a husband or partner before imprisonment.¹¹⁷

Research has found that 59% of men¹¹⁸ in prison and two-thirds of women in prison have dependent children under 18.¹¹⁹

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.¹²⁰

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.¹²¹

During their sentence 45% of people lose contact with their families and many separate from their partners.¹²²

Charles Clarke, when Home Secretary, stressed the importance of family. "As we consider the

108 Home Office Research Study 208. 109 Prison Reform Trust (2000) Justice for Women: The Need for Reform, London: Prison Reform Trust.

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

111 ibid 112 Home Office Research Study 162 (1997), Imprisoned Women and Mothers, Home Office: London.

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

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

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

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

117 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.

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

119 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.

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

121 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.

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

practical steps 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.”¹²³

The link between maintaining good family ties and reducing re-offending is acknowledged in the Home Office national action plan.¹²⁴

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 concluded that ‘opportunities for involving families in the resettlement of

prisoners should be increased’.¹²⁵

However, many prisoners are still held a long way from their homes. At the end of September 2004 the average distance women in prison were held from their home or committal court address was 62 miles. Men were held an average of 51 miles from their home or committal court address. At the beginning of July 2004, 24,581 prisoners were held over 50 miles from their home town and 9,591 were held over 100 miles away.¹²⁶

In recent years the number of prison visits has fallen despite an increasing prison population.¹²⁷

The government’s Social Exclusion Unit has found that many families have difficulty getting through to prisons to book visits.¹²⁸

¹²³ PRT Annual Lecture 2005, Rt Hon Charles Clarke MP.

¹²⁴ Home Office (2004) Reducing Re-offending National Action Plan, London: Stationary Office.

¹²⁵ Niven, S and Stewart, D (2005) Resettlement outcomes on release from prison, Home Office Findings 248, London: Home Office.

¹²⁶ 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, 11 January 2005 : Column 490W; Letter from Paul Goggins, Minister for Prisons and Probation to Annette Brooke MP, 18th December 2003 and Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 7th September 2004.

¹²⁷ Social Exclusion Unit (2002) Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners, London: Social Exclusion Unit.

¹²⁸ 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)

On 3 November 2006 there were 9,136 young people aged 18-20 in prison in England and Wales.¹²⁹

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). They will shortly lose what limited protection they have, when their specific and separate legal status is removed. This is of concern, particularly as the poorest provision at present is to be found in establishments that hold young adults within an adult population.”¹³⁰

In 2004 13,092 young people were sent to prison under sentence. In the last ten years the number of sentenced young adults entering prison has increased by 21%. Over that time the number of sentenced young women imprisoned has more than doubled.¹³¹

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.¹³²

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.¹³³

Frequent movement means many young people are held long distances from home. At the beginning of July last year more than a third (35%) of all 18-20 year olds were being held more than 50 miles away from their home, just under a quarter (23%) were being held between 50 and 100 miles and more than one in ten (12 %) were being held over 100 miles away.¹³⁴

Reconviction rates are particularly high for young people. 78.4% of young men released from prison in 2002, were reconvicted within two years of release.¹³⁵

Nearly half (42%) of first time offenders are young adults.¹³⁶

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.¹³⁷

In 2004-5, 54% of those leaving young offender institutions had no recorded education, training or employment place. 13% left with no recorded accommodation.¹³⁸

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.¹³⁹

129 Home Office (2006) Population in Custody, 3 November 2006, London: Home Office. This figure includes some 21 year-olds not classified as part of the adult population.

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

131 Home Office (2005) Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2004 London: Home Office.

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

133 Ibid

134 Ibid

135 Home Office Statistical Bulletin, Re-offending of adults: results from the 2002 cohort; 2005

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

137 Ibid

138 Hansard, Written Answers, 2 October 2006

139 Ibid

More than a third (35%) of sentenced young men say they have gained a qualification whilst in prison.¹⁴⁰

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 both younger and older prisoners (see below for statistics relating to 16-18 year olds).¹⁴¹

Up to 30% of young women in custody report having been sexually abused in childhood.¹⁴²

It is estimated that a quarter of young men in prison are fathers and four out of ten young women in prison are mothers.¹⁴³

Young offender institutions and juvenile establishments have the highest assault rates of any prisons in England and Wales.¹⁴⁴

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

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

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

143 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.

144 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 August 2006 there were 2,528 15-17 year olds in prison and 269 12-15 year olds in privately run secure training centres. There were 233 children in local authority secure homes.¹⁴⁵

The number of 15-17 year olds in prison has more than doubled over the last 10 years.¹⁴⁶

In 1992 only 100 children under 15 were sentenced to penal custody, sentences were 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 2003 - 2004, 794 children under 15 were incarcerated but only 45 of these came into the same grave crimes sentencing framework (now Section 90/91 of the Powers of Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000).¹⁴⁷

Twenty-nine children have died in penal custody since 1990, most by suicide but one following restraint.¹⁴⁸

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 offenders enter the youth justice system.¹⁴⁹

At the end of July 2004 over a third of children in prison were held over 50 miles from their home town.¹⁵⁰

Reconviction rates are very high for children. 82% of boys aged under 18 discharged from prison in 2001 were reconvicted within two years.¹⁵¹

At the end of August 2006 more children were in prison for robbery than any other offence.¹⁵²

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 under 18s have a history of being in care or social services involvement and studies found that 45% were permanently excluded from school.¹⁵³

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.¹⁵⁴

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 assaulted by a member of staff.¹⁵⁵

Behavioural and mental health problems are particularly prevalent amongst children in prison. Of prisoners aged 16-20, around 85% show signs of a personality disorder and 10% exhibit signs of psychotic illness, for example schizophrenia.¹⁵⁶

Drug and alcohol abuse are major problems. Of prisoners aged 16-20, over half reported drug dependence 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.¹⁵⁷

In 2003 - 2004, 3,337 children in prison were assessed as vulnerable.¹⁵⁸ **The National Audit Office highlighted that the high number of movements of children between jails to make way for new arrivals, disrupts education and training courses and leads to inconsistent support and supervision.** There were 2,400 movements between April 2002 and January 2003.¹⁵⁹

145 Home Office (2006) Population in Custody, August 2006, London: Home Office.

146 Home Office (2005) Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2004 London: Home Office.

147 Youth Justice Board Annual Statistics 2003/4.

148 <http://www.inquest.org.uk/>

149 HM Government – Reducing re-offending through skills and employment, CM 6702, December 2005.

150 House of Commons, written parliamentary answer, Hansard 7 September 2005.

151 Home Office (2004) Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2003 London: Home Office.

152 Home Office (2006) Population in Custody, August 2006, London: Home Office.

153 Youth Justice Board Information, 2003.

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

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

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

157 Ibid.

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.¹⁶⁰ This compares to one in eleven of the general population. There are two prisons, Feltham and Brixton in London, where minority ethnic prisoners make up the larger part of the population.¹⁶¹

Of all those sentenced to custody in the second quarter of 2005 more than one in five were from a minority ethnic group.¹⁶²

Overall black prisoners account for the largest number of minority ethnic prisoners (57%) and their numbers are rising.¹⁶³ Between 1999 and 2002 the total prison population grew by just over 12% but the number of black prisoners increased by 51%.¹⁶⁴

At the end of June 2005, 35% (6,863) of minority ethnic prisoners were foreign nationals.¹⁶⁵

Out of the British national prison population, 10% are black and 4% are Asian. For black Britons this is significantly higher than the 2% of the general population they represent.¹⁶⁶

In 2002 there were more African Caribbean entrants to prison (over 11,500) than there were to UK universities (around 8,000).¹⁶⁷

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.¹⁶⁸

158 Hansard House of Commons written answers 7 June 2004.

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

160 Home Office (2005) Population in Custody, Quarterly Brief Sept to December 2005.

161 Phil Wheatley quoted in the Guardian, 17th December 2003.

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

163 Ibid.

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

165 Hollis et al (2003) Prison Population Brief England and Wales October 2003, London: Stationery Office.

166 Ibid.

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

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

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.¹⁷⁰

More than one in five women in prison, 911, are foreign nationals.¹⁷¹

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 of ten foreign national prisoners are serving sentences of more than four years.

¹⁶⁹ 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*.

¹⁷⁰ Home Office (2005) *Population in Custody, Quarterly Brief Sept to Dec 2005*.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid*.

Elderly prisoners (aged 60 and over)

In 2004 there were more than 1,528 prisoners aged over 60 in England and Wales, a rise of 185% over ten years.¹⁷²

Prisoners aged over 60 are the fastest growing age group in prison.

More than one in ten older prisoners belong to a minority ethnic group, far higher than the proportion of the general population.¹⁷³

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%).¹⁷⁴

The number and proportion of elderly prisoners serving long sentences has increased significantly. Between 1995 and 2001 the number serving sentences of over four years more than tripled, increasing from 318 to 966. In 2001 80% of elderly prisoners were serving sentences of four years or more.¹⁷⁵ For male prisoners aged 60 and over, the average sentence length (excluding life-sentenced prisoners) increased by 2.3 months between 1998 and 2002 to 39.3 months. This compares to a 4.3 month increase for women prisoners aged 50 and over to 26.1 months.¹⁷⁶

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%.¹⁷⁷

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%.¹⁷⁸

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.¹⁷⁹

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.¹⁸⁰

172 Home Office (2005) Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2004 London: Home Office.

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

174 Home Office (2005) Offender Management Caseload Statistics, 2004 London: Home Office.

175 Frazer, L (2003) Ageing Inside, Bristol: Bristol University.

176 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.

177 Ibid.

178 Ibid.

179 Ibid.

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

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.¹⁸¹

In 2003, 21 people aged over 65 died of natural causes whilst in prison.¹⁸²

Most older prisoners are held more than 50 miles from home, causing particular problems for visitors, many of whom are themselves older people.¹⁸³

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.'¹⁸⁴ 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.¹⁸⁵ However, the Department of Health plans to develop a health policy for older prisoners.¹⁸⁶

181 Ibid.

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

183 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.

184 Ibid.

185 Hansard, written answers May 1st 2000.

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

Mental health needs of prisoners¹⁸⁷

“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.”¹⁸⁸

Many prisoners have mental health problems. 72% of male and 70% of female sentenced prisoners suffer from two or more mental health disorders. Twenty per of prisoners have four of the five major mental health disorders.¹⁸⁹

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.”¹⁹⁰

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%. It puts the prevalence at 294 per 1,000 prisoners.¹⁹¹

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 was 3,282 in 2004, the highest for a decade. 831 people were transferred from prison to hospital. 485 of these were on remand. In 2003 there were 721 transfers. Those released from restricted hospitals have an 8% reconviction rate after two years.¹⁹²

At any one time there are likely to be at least 40 prisoners who have been assessed and who are then waiting three months or more before being transferred to hospital. Many prisoners also have long waits before an assessment takes place.¹⁹³

By 2005, mental health in-reach teams were operating in 102 prisons.¹⁹⁴

Prison regimes do little to address the mental health needs of prisoners. Research has found that 28% of male sentenced

187 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.

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

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

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

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

192 Home Office Statistical Bulletin, Statistics of Mentally Disordered Offenders 2004, December 2005.

193 Hansard House of Commons, 17th March 2004.

194 Hansard, House of Commons 2 February 2005.

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.¹⁹⁵ 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.¹⁹⁶ The government has committed itself to a programme of standardising court diversion schemes across the country.¹⁹⁷

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.¹⁹⁸

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.¹⁹⁹

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

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

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

198 Melzer et al (2002) Prisoners with psychosis in England and Wales: a one-year national follow-up study, The Howard Journal 41, page 1-13.

199 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 December 2005, 17% 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 December 2005 drug offences accounted for 35% of prisoners, by far the largest proportion. In 1995 they accounted for 27% of the sentenced female prison population.²⁰⁰

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.²⁰¹

In 18% of violent crime reported to the 2004/5 British Crime Survey, the victim believed that the offender was under the influence of drugs. 29% of robbery victims believed their attacker to be under the influence of drugs.²⁰²

A study for the Home Office found that almost half of recently sentenced male prisoners (47%) had used heroin, crack or cocaine in the year 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.²⁰³

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.²⁰⁴

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 reception²⁰⁵ and in the local women's prison, Styal, the same proportion of new arrivals are thought to have drug problems.²⁰⁶ 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).²⁰⁷

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.²⁰⁸

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 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.²⁰⁹

All prisoners are subject to random mandatory drug tests. Recorded drug use in 2004-2005 was 11.6% against a target of 10%.²¹⁰ But a recent Home Office study found that 'mandatory drug testing results generally underestimate the level of drug misuse as reported by prisoners'.²¹¹

In 2003-2004 there were more than 53,000 entrants to detoxification programmes for

200 Home Office (2005) Population in Custody, December 2005, London: Home Office.

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

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

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

204 Scottish Prison Service, Annual Prison Survey, 2005.

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

206 HM Prisons Inspectorate (2004) Report on a full unannounced inspection of HMP and YO1 Styal 19-23 January 2004, London: Home Office.

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

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

209 Singleton et al (2005) The Impact and Effectiveness of Mandatory Drugs Tests in Prison, Findings.

210 Prison Service (2005), Annual Report and Accounts 2004/2005, London: Stationery Office.

211 Singleton et al (2005) The Impact and Effectiveness of Mandatory Drugs Tests in Prison, London: Home Office.

drug misuse. This is nearly double the target of 27,000 entrants by April 2004.²¹² Detoxifications are not normally carried out in prison health care centres and the current practice is to recommend nine to 10 day programmes.²¹³ Information on the proportion of entrants who complete the programmes is not collated by the Home Office nor is there routine recording of what proportion of prisoners who have received detoxification enter one of the Prison Service's drug rehabilitation programmes.²¹⁴

Concerns have been raised about the quality of detoxification, especially for prisoners who have been dependent on crack cocaine.²¹⁵ Research has found that arrangements for detoxification appear to vary considerably between different prisons.²¹⁶

In 2004-2005, 7,119 prisoners entered Prison Service drug treatment programmes against a target of 6,200 entries, and 4,600 completed them.²¹⁷

Methadone maintenance programmes are in place in women's prisons and there are plans to expand provision in the male estate.²¹⁸

The Prison Service does not keep records of the percentage of prisoners with drug problems who receive treatment but according to Home Office research just 10% of prisoners with a drug problem were engaged in intensive drug rehabilitation. More than four out of ten prisoners who had used drugs in the previous year wanted drug treatment but were not yet receiving any.²¹⁹ The Home Office acknowledges that it is resourced

only to meet approximately 30% of the rehabilitation needs of drug misusing prisoners.²²⁰

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.²²¹

Transfers between prisons due to overcrowding often disrupt drug treatment. Research has found that a third of prisons were unlikely to be able to continue the treatment of prisoners transferred to them.²²²

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.²²³

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'.²²⁴ 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.²²⁵

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.²²⁶

212 Prison Service (2004) Annual Report and Accounts 2003/2004, London: Stationery Office.

213 Hansard, House of Commons, written parliamentary answer 25th June 2003.

214 Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 17th June 2003.

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

216 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.

217 Prison Service (2005), Annual Report and Accounts 2004/2005, London: Stationery Office.

218 Ibid. 219 183 Ramsay, M. (ed) (2003), Prisoners' drug use and treatment: seven studies, Home Office Research Findings 186, London: Home Office.

220 Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 12th February 2003.

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

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

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

224 Ibid. 225 Government reply to the first report from the Home Affairs Committee on the Rehabilitation of Prisoners Session 2004-2005, HC193

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

In almost half of violent crimes (48%) the victim believed the offender or offenders to be under the influence of alcohol.²²⁸

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.²²⁹

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.²³⁰

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 alcohol measures 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.

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

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

229 Scottish Prison Service, Annual Prison Survey, 2005.

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

Homelessness and unemployment

Surveys indicate 30% of people released from prison will have nowhere to live.²³¹ This is despite the fact that stable accommodation can reduce re-offending by over 20%.²³² The Home Office claims that recent progress on supporting prisoners to find accommodation has led to significant improvements and that currently only 19% of prisoners leave custody without an address to go to.²³³

14% of men, 20% of women and 10% of young offenders were not in permanent accommodation before custody.²³⁴

Home Office research into the resettlement of short term prisoners found that more than half (51%) had housing problems prior to imprisonment.²³⁵ Around one in every 20 prisoners was sleeping rough before they were sent to custody.²³⁶

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 very 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.²³⁷ Housing advisors have been recruited for all women's local prisons.²³⁸

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.²³⁹

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 some form of help had an address to go to on release. The study concluded that 'many prisoners would like help looking for accommodation but do not receive it'.²⁴⁰

Research by the House of Commons Home Affairs Committee found that only 19% of prisoners received advice or guidance about accommodation.²⁴¹

Getting ex-prisoners into stable housing can act as a gateway to effective resettlement. Home Office research has found 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.²⁴² Homelessness can also prevent ex-prisoners from accessing

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

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

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

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

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

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

237 Ibid.

238 Hansard, House of Lords, 28th October, 2004, Column, 1480.

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

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

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

242 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.

support services such as benefits or registering with a GP.²⁴³

The Prison Service states that some form of housing advice and support service is currently available in about 50 prisons.²⁴⁴

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.²⁴⁵

Around two-thirds of those who do have a job lose it whilst in custody.²⁴⁶

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.²⁴⁷

Research by the House of Commons Home Affairs committee found that two-thirds of prisoners have no job on release.²⁴⁸

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.²⁴⁹

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.²⁵⁰

In 2004-2005, 37,733 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.²⁵¹

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.²⁵²

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

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

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

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

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

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.

250 Ibid.

251 Prison Service (2005), Annual Report and Accounts 2004/2005, London: Stationery Office.

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

Education

More than half of all prisoners are at or below the level expected of an 11 year old in reading, two-thirds in numeracy and four-fifths in writing.²⁵³

More than half of male and more than two-thirds of female adult prisoners have no qualifications at all.²⁵⁴

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.²⁵⁵

Nearly half of male sentenced prisoners were excluded from school.²⁵⁶

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.²⁵⁷ But Government funding for prison education more than doubled in five years from £7.5m in 1999-2000 to £122m in 2004-2005.²⁵⁸

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.²⁵⁹

Research by NATFHE and the Association of College Lecturers has found that only one third of education managers regularly receive prisoners' records following transfers.²⁶⁰

Prison Service targets for the number of prisoners achieving different skills qualifications were significantly exceeded in 2004-2005. Prisoners achieved 162,966 key work skills awards, and 58,947 basic skills awards.²⁶¹ 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.²⁶²

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'.²⁶³

The Social Exclusion Unit also found that that basic skills learning can contribute to a reduction in re-offending of around 12%.²⁶⁴ 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.²⁶⁵

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

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

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

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

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

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

259 Ibid.

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

261 Prison Service (2005), Annual Report and Accounts 2004/2005, London: Stationery Office

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

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

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

265 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.²⁶⁶ 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.²⁶⁷

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.²⁶⁸

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.²⁶⁹

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.²⁷⁰

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.²⁷¹ They are, generally, long term prisoners who are in the final stages of their period in

custody and preparing to return to the community.

In 2000-2001, 21 prison farms were in operation, including 12 dairy units, with a total of 295 prisoners employed. The Prison Service plans to close 12 farms by the end of 2006 and focus instead on horticulture.²⁷²

The current 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.²⁷³

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.²⁷⁴

Since 1984, 2,100 serving prisoners have given in excess of 300,000 hours of service to the community through Community Service Volunteers.²⁷⁵

One in 14 prisoners participate in an activity to help other prisoners, such as the Samaritan Listeners scheme.²⁷⁶

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.²⁷⁷

²⁶⁶ House of Commons Home Affairs Committee, Rehabilitation of Prisoners, First Report of Session 2004-2005.

²⁶⁷ 'Service on the verge of industrial revolution', Prison Service News, September, 2003.

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

²⁶⁹ Ibid.

²⁷⁰ 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.

²⁷¹ House of Commons Home Affairs Committee, Rehabilitation of Prisoners, First Report of Session 2004-2005.

²⁷² Ibid.

²⁷³ Hansard, House of Commons written parliamentary answers, 8th June 2004.

²⁷⁴ House of Commons, Home Affairs Committee, Rehabilitation of Prisoners, First Report of Session 2004-2005.

²⁷⁵ PRT (2002), Barred Citizens, PRT: London.

²⁷⁶ Ibid

²⁷⁷ <http://www.inside-out.org.uk>

In the last five years there has been a 350% increase in the number of offenders recalled to prison for apparent breach of their licence 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 2004.²⁷⁹

Recalled prisoners now make up nearly 11% of the population of local prisons.²⁸⁰

The average daily population of prisoners in Scotland recalled from supervision or licence has increased by 12% over the last year, to 400 in 2005/06.²⁸¹

In 2003-2004 8,103 prisoners were recalled to custody for breach of their licence conditions. Over the last five years the number of recalls has more than trebled from 2,337 in 2000-2001.

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.²⁸²

Since the early release programme for prisoners, the Home Detention Scheme (HDC), was introduced seven years ago, more than 106,000 prisoners have been released early from prison. The proportion recalled for breach of their HDC conditions has remained at around 9 each year. There are currently 2,549 prisoners on HDC.

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.

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

279 HMCIIP, Recalled prisoners, December 2005.

280 Ibid.

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

282 NOMS Recall newsletter edition 7, annex A.

Prison Service performance and staffing

In 2004-2005, the Prison Service met 7 of its 11 main key performance indicators.²⁸³

The Prison Service managed a marked growth in the number of basic skills courses prisoners achieved. The total number has increased from 43,731 to 58,947, an increase of 35% over the year²⁸⁴. Overall, more than 10% of adults in England and Wales who received basic qualifications did so in prison.²⁸⁵

It also just met its overcrowding target by holding 23.7% of prisoners in “accommodation units intended for fewer prisoners”, the target was under 24%.²⁸⁶ In 2003-4 a lower target was set of 18% of all prisoners held two to a cell designed for one. In that year the Prison Service failed to meet the target, instead putting 21.7% in such accommodation.²⁸⁷

Targets on deaths in custody, drug use, ethnic diversity among the staff and staff sickness were also 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 2004-2005 was 12.7%. This is an improvement on 13.3% in the previous year and 14.7% in the year before that.²⁸⁸

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.²⁸⁹ The average tenure for governing

governors in an establishment is one year and nine months.²⁹⁰

The under-representation of staff from minority ethnic groups is particularly marked at a senior level in the Prison Service. Last year there were no senior operational managers in charge of prisons (governing governors) from a minority ethnic group and just 3% of senior operational managers are from a minority ethnic group.²⁹¹

The number of minority ethnic staff in the Prison Service overall is now 5.7%. The target is 7% of the workforce by 2009. The proportion was 5.69% in 2005 falling short of the interim target of 6%.²⁹²

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.²⁹³

283 HM Prison Service Annual Report and Accounts, April 2004, March 2005, Home Office: London.

284 *ibid.*

285 Rt Hon Charles Clarke MP, Where next for penal policy?, Prison Reform Trust Annual Lecture, 2005.

286 HM Prison Service Annual Report and Accounts, April 2004 - March 2005, Home Office: London.

287 HM Prison Service Annual Report and Accounts, April 2003 - March 2004, Home Office: London.

288 HM Prison Service Annual Report and Accounts, April 2004 - March 2005, Home Office: London.

289 Hansard, House of Commons written answer 31st January, 2003.

290 Hansard, House of Commons written answer 19th January, 2004.

291 Hansard, House of Commons Written Answers, 23rd March 2004.

292 Prison Reform Trust 2006. Briefing: Experiences of Minority Ethnic Employees in Prisons. <http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/subsection.asp?id=640>

293 Prison Reform Trust 2006. Briefing: Experiences of Minority Ethnic Employees in Prisons. <http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/subsection.asp?id=640>

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, 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.

Private prisons now account for 10% of the prison population, holding around 8,243 prisoners.²⁹⁵

Pay and conditions for staff in private prisons are inferior to the public sector with estimates that staff in private prisons are up to 70% worse off than their public sector counterparts.²⁹⁶

Overall private prisons have far lower staff/prisoner ratios than public prisons, with an average of 17% fewer staff per prisoner than public prisons.²⁹⁷

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.²⁹⁸

55% of private sector staff at levels equivalent to operation support grades, officer and senior officer levels have less than two years service and only 20% have more than five years.²⁹⁹

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.³⁰⁰

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.³⁰¹

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%.

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

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

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

297 Ibid.

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

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

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

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

Long term trends and future prison building

The projected prison population for 2013 is a high as 106,550, according to the Home Office. John Reid's promise of an additional 8,000 places for 2012 will barely meet the very lowest prison population projection for that time.³⁰²

The Home Secretary John Reid has said: "We now have 19,000 more prison places than in 1997 and there are around 7,000 more seriously violent offenders in prison behind bars. It is clear to me, and to many in the House, that there are people in our prisons who shouldn't be there, ranging from foreign nationals through to vulnerable women or those for whom mental health treatment, for example, would be more appropriate.

As we make available additional capacity, we will ensure these new resources are focused on the serious, violent and prolific offenders who ought to be in prison. We will ensure that we have the places we need to protect the public. We are presently embarking on 900 prison places by Autumn 2007. We will expand prison places by an additional 8,000 to keep dangerous offenders in for longer."³⁰³

The National Offender Management Service owns two sites, one in Merseyside and one in London, with outline planning consent to build two 600 place prisons.³⁰⁴

The Budget 2003 settlement provided funds to acquire at least two more sites in 2004-05 for the future development of 'large multi-function 1,500 place prisons'.³⁰⁵

The Scottish prison population is predicted to rise to 9,300 by 2015.³⁰⁶

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.³⁰⁷

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

303 Hansard: Oral Statement by the Home Secretary, Dr John Reid, on rebalancing the Criminal Justice System - 20 July 2006.

304 Hansard, House of Commons written answers, November 15th 2004.

305 Ibid.

306 BBC News online, 25/11/2005

307 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, 2003
- Prisoners' Information Book, Women Prisoners and Female Young Offenders, 2003
- Prisoners' Information Book, Visits 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 - £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)

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