

# CONTROL, ORDER, HOPE

A manifesto for prison safety and reform

April 2019



Control, Order, Hope: A manifesto for prison safety and reform  
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Published by the Centre for Social Justice  
Kings Buildings  
16 Smith Square  
Westminster  
SW1P 3HQ  
[www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk](http://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk)  
@CSJthinktank

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# About the Centre for Social Justice

Established in 2004, the Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) is an independent think tank that studies the root causes of Britain's social problems and addresses them by recommending practical, workable policy interventions. The CSJ's vision is to give people in the UK who are experiencing the worst disadvantage and injustice every possible opportunity to reach their full potential.

Since its inception, the CSJ has changed the landscape of our political discourse by putting social justice at the heart of British politics. This has led to a transformation in Government thinking and policy. The majority of the CSJ's work is organised around five 'pathways to poverty', first identified in our ground-breaking 2007 report, *Breakthrough Britain*. These are: family breakdown; educational failure; economic dependency and worklessness; addiction to drugs and alcohol; and severe personal debt.

In March 2013, the CSJ report *It Happens Here* shone a light on the horrific reality of human trafficking and modern slavery in the UK. As a direct result of this report, the Government passed the Modern Slavery Act 2015, one of the first pieces of legislation in the world to address slavery and trafficking in the 21st century.

The CSJ delivers empirical, practical, fully funded policy solutions to address the scale of the social justice problems facing the UK. Our research is informed by expert working groups comprising prominent academics, practitioners and policy-makers. Furthermore, the CSJ Alliance is a unique group of charities, social enterprises and other grass-roots organisations that have a proven track record of reversing social breakdown across the UK.

The 15 years since the CSJ was founded has brought with it much success. But the social justice challenges facing Britain remain serious. Our response, therefore, must be equally serious. In 2019 and beyond, we will continue to advance the cause of social justice in this nation.

# Foreword

The discourse on prison reform very often excludes the people who work face-to-face with prisoners in our criminal justice system. Front line prison staff are our greatest asset in the fight to bring safety and opportunity back to a prison system disfigured by years of underinvestment and poor leadership. All too often this vital role is rendered invisible by those who fail to understand or acknowledge the profoundly important duty they carry out.

Our addiction to cheap custody has entrenched the instability and extreme violence that makes it all but impossible for prisons to do the job we pay our taxes for. An obsession with managerialism and pious abstractions has done nothing to make English and Welsh prisons the engines of human transformation they could be. Many other countries manage to model this positive vision, and we should be no different.

Prisons don't have to be inherently harmful. Destruction of the spirit, all too common across the system, is not inevitable and it is not unfixable. It simply takes leadership, will and proper resources. Those who actually work in our prisons can do the rest.

This is a manifesto to get our violently disordered prisons back on their feet again. It deliberately avoids the tired rhetoric of a criminal justice 'commentariat' who too often confuse prisoner advocacy with public safety and are sometimes shamefully silent on the security and welfare of the men and women who work our prison landings.

We have been practical and straightforward about the changes needed *now*, to make prisons safe places capable of doing more than delaying the offending of the people inside them. It builds on the work already started by Prisons Minister Rory Stewart, one of the most intellectually and morally engaged holders of that post for many years.

Prisons manage human failure. Our aim is to put forward ideas that will help make custody productive – where confident and skilled staff can assist people in their care to break away from criminality and realise their potential. But without the foundation of security, order and control, no amount of warm words on hope and progress will make a jot of difference. In my experience at all levels of prison management and leadership, where you have well supported staff who feel valued, have dignity, have agency – anything is possible.

Order and control is emphatically not a recipe for state oppression as our detractors will inevitably suggest. It is in fact, as anyone who has ever walked a prison landing knows, the starting point of a journey to legitimacy and ambition for our citizens in prison. This manifesto, building on previous CSJ work on practical prison reform, describes that journey in detail.

There are big questions to answer about who we send to prison and the price we are willing to pay for it as a society. In the meantime, 82,000 prisoners, most of whom will be released back into the community and 23,000 uniformed staff who want to help keep them there deserve our respect and our help to succeed.

That key relationship and what it could achieve is at the heart of this work.

**Ian Acheson**

*Ian Acheson is a former prison Governor who led the landmark 2016 independent government review of violent extremism in prisons.*

# Executive summary

Our prisons are in a terrible state. This has not come about overnight. For decades our prisons and the public have been let down, just as those working and living in them, have been failed. The most recent failings have been driven by a reduction in the number of prison officers working in our prisons, but longer-term failings have included a defeatist attitude towards tackling drugs and addiction, and a failure to keep the prison estate up-to-date and fit-for-purpose.

Some of these failings can be pinned at the feet of particular governments, but the reality is that for decades politicians have failed to grasp the importance of ensuring that our prisons are adequately resourced. Our prison leaders need to be supported to and held accountable for creating safe regimes that move people away from crime, with employment and work-readiness too often being seen as an optional extra or else delivered in an ineffective fashion.

For several years running, the CSJ's Criminal Justice Award has gone to organisations working tirelessly to help prisoners turn their backs on crime with a focus on employment. This year, Tempus Novo, created by two former prison officers, demonstrates what can be achieved, and at the same time, the latest evidence emerging from Norway, points to the power of work and employment to fight crime. But the power of work and employment as a route out of crime is undermined when our prisons are in crisis.

If there is one resounding message that this and future governments must take on board, it is that control, order, and hope must be restored to our prisons. This means tackling the drugs, ending the violence, and supporting staff. For in prisons awash with drugs, brutality and disempowered prison officers, there can be precious little prospect of offenders turning their lives around. In fact, quite the opposite, with prisoners accelerated into addiction, violence, and worse criminal behaviour.

Finally, the answer to our prisons crisis is not simply to send fewer people to prison. Our own polling of UK adults found that while some (19 per cent) said the Government should send fewer people to prison to reduce overcrowding and improve staffing levels, the vast majority (70 per cent) said the Government should build more prison spaces and recruit more prison officers to reduce overcrowding and improve staffing levels.<sup>1</sup>

In the absence of effective community sentences in which the public and sentencers have confidence, and at a time when probation services are failing, we should not be surprised by this result and nor should we dismiss it.

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<sup>1</sup> In the most recent Annual Report from Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons it was noted that 'violence, drugs, suicide and self-harm, squalor and poor access to education' are recurring issues within our prisons. It has been suggested that part of the solution is to reduce overcrowding and improve staffing levels. Which of the following is closest to your view?, Survation poll of 1,006 adults in the UK, commissioned by The Centre for Social Justice. Fieldwork undertaken 10 April 2019.

But it is about more than resources, for the fundamental solution is to restore control, order, and hope to our jails – and to accompany this with a plan of action that delivers meaningful and, where appropriate, new intensive community sentences that help change behaviour, deliver punishment, and cut crime.

This paper focuses on how we can restore control, order, and hope to our prisons. We outline a total of 59 recommendations, but prioritise the following for consideration by this and future governments with a determination to ensure that our prison, and wider criminal justice system, works for victims, the public, and those who work in it, by keeping them safe and helping reduce, rather than generate crime:

## Select recommendations

### Chapter 1: Taking back lost ground

**Recommendation 1:** Government must recognise that restoring control, order, and hope to our prisons is a matter of critical national importance. The “restoration of control, order, and hope” are the terms by which the Government’s Spending Review should recognise the particular vulnerability of prisons and the need to adequately resource them.

**Recommendation 2:** As we set out in Chapter 3, the Government’s Spending Review should not shy away from the potential need for a total injection of £2bn, comprising up to £1.4bn in capital and £600m in recurring resource expenditure, to ensure that there can be no excuse for restoring control, order, and hope to our prisons.

**Recommendation 5:** Build on the ‘10 Prison Project’ outlined by Prisons Minister Rory Stewart OBE MP by developing Control, Order and Hope Action Plans for every prison, with the use of the relaunched Prison Reserve, and additional resource, prioritised on those Establishments at greatest risk.

**Recommendation 7:** Ensure that the Assaults on Emergency Workers Act 2018, providing for a maximum 12 month sentence for those who attack prison officers on duty, is effective, by ensuring that sentences are always consecutive, rather than concurrent, to the existing custodial sentences of a convicted assailant, and that time on remand is not counted against any such sentence. Government must ensure sentencing reforms do not dilute this important legislation.

### Chapter 2: Supporting the frontline

**Recommendation 8:** Create a new Dignity at Work Covenant – building upon the Operation Hampshire initiative used across police forces. It would set out clear expectations for how the assault and abuse of prison staff is handled and appropriately dealt with, including ensuring that the latest evidence-gathering technology, such as DNA kits and body worn video, is available in prisons to achieve best evidence and ensure that staff feel valued and have confidence in effective investigations.



**Recommendation 9:** Create specialist prison crime and intelligence leads within the local police and CPS, with staff embedded at establishment level, to ensure justice for assaulted staff through a co-ordinated, high quality, consistent and robust response to violence within prison. Good practice already exists in some areas and, where present, is already noted by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons.

**Recommendation 11:** Ensure Ministerial oversight of assault cases that are not proceeded with as “not in the public interest” or “not in the interests of justice”, to ensure that cases are not dropped by the Crown Prosecution Service on the basis that prisoners are already serving prison sentences.

**Recommendation 13:** As a uniformed service, the Government should identify improvements that can be made to the appearance and durability of the prison officer uniform, helping restore pride and provide the necessary level of practicality and safety. It should also require the introduction of this uniform for all senior operational grades who currently are ‘othered’ from the frontline by the absence of a uniform.

**Recommendation 14:** As a professional service, the Government should identify improvements that can be made to the quality of training provided to prison officers, with an emphasis upon practical skills and resilience. The current training programme of 10 weeks – one of the shortest in Europe – compares unfavourably to the three years of practical and theoretical training provided to new prison officers in Norway.

**Recommendation 15:** Create a new National Prison Officer and Staff Welfare Service, building on Recommendation 8, to bring in the skills and expertise required to support and rehabilitate staff who have been physically or psychologically injured through their work, and to support those officers at risk of exit or ill-health – and supporting line managers and governors.

**Recommendation 16:** Improve the visibility of national and local awards ceremonies for staff who have displayed bravery on duty or otherwise provided outstanding service. Governors should be encouraged and empowered to organise such awards ceremonies in conjunction with and the support of their local communities and partners, including elected politicians such as MPs, Mayors, and Police and Crime Commissioners.

### Chapter 3: A decent environment

**Recommendation 17:** Reinstate the ‘Head of Works’ post at every prison, as part of the senior leadership team, ensuring that a suitably qualified and skilled prison officer is directly accountable to the Governor for the maintenance and cleanliness of the prison. Every prison wing should have a dedicated, suitably trained and qualified Cleaning Officer who reports to the Head of Works and who is accountable for the state of his/her area.

**Recommendation 20:** In advance of the facilities management contracts ending in 2020, Governors should be provided with the opportunity to repatriate facilities management with the associated transfer of budget and as part of a wider plan to create more purposeful activity within the prison.

**Recommendation 21:** The Government's Spending Review must be built upon a sustainable approach to reduce overcrowding, to invest in robust community sentencing, to properly resource our prisons, and to set out a new-for-old programme that delivers decent, flexible, purpose-built secure accommodation to best protect local communities and facilitate reintegration.

#### Chapter 4: Drug-free prisons

**Recommendation 22:** The roll-out of proven body scanners and waste water analysis to all closed prisons in England and Wales was a core recommendation of our *Drugs in Prison* report from 2015 and we repeat it now. It has proven effective in reducing the flow of prohibited drugs and other items into establishments in other countries, and must now be rolled out across our entire prison estate for use on prisoners, staff, and visitors.

**Recommendation 25:** A key plank of drug demand reduction must be the restoration of fully functioning regimes and services to meaningfully and purposefully engage prisoners, coupled with a concerted effort as part of prison induction/reception procedures to educate prisoners on the risks and harms of drug use through compelling media, such as a movie with prisoners and staff.

**Recommendation 28:** Interdiction of organised crime groups through a new strategic partnership with the National Crime Agency and confiscation of assets both inside and outside prison. This should also be accompanied by assertive intelligence-led multi-agency action to completely incapacitate key drug supply-chain prisoners from users within the estate by placing them in separation units until their risk is sufficiently reduced or eliminated.

#### Chapter 5: Tackling the violence

**Recommendation 30:** Every establishment should have a Prison Violence and Crime Reduction Board, with senior representation from the local Crown Prosecution Service, the local police service, the POA, IMB, and local Police and Crime Commissioner. It should meet monthly, with minutes copied to the Area Manager and Ministerial Taskforce.

**Recommendation 31:** Establish two pilot control prisons – one in the North and one in the South – as Centres of Excellence for managing those offenders with a repeated history of serious non-compliance with regimes including assaultive behaviour. These establishments would have an emphasis on psycho-social and public health interventions to treat the causes of violent behaviour using the latest research from the UK and overseas.

**Recommendation 32:** The Director of Public Prosecutions should issue new guidance to the Crown Prosecution Service advising that a robust approach be taken to investigating and prosecuting violence and crime within our prisons, setting out prison-specific factors to address in weighing the public interest.

**Recommendation 33:** Overhaul Prison Officer Entry Level Training (POELT) and in-service training to include explanation of dynamics within prisons that can contribute to incivility, bullying, intimidation, and violence, both between prisoners and against staff – and strategies to tackle it. This should incorporate lived experience from ex-prisoners who

can convincingly explain the importance of tackling violence and low-level incivility. The training should dedicate substantial time to the tools and techniques that can be used to confront and police low-level incivility before it escalates into violence.

### Chapter 6: Better mental health

**Recommendation 35:** Create a set of minimum standards to ensure the readiness and availability of crisis management measures for prisoners at risk of self-harm and suicide. This should include a means of ensuring emergency family contact.

**Recommendation 36:** Ensure induction training and in-service training for prison officers/staff in relation to trauma-informed approaches to self-harm, including the creation of a prison-friendly menu of distraction techniques and approved professional practice.

**Recommendation 37:** The Spending Review must recognise that if prisons continue to be used as places of safety for suspects/offenders who are in mental health crisis, regional secure specialist units ought to be created, led by NHS clinicians who have the time, expertise and resources to keep prisoners safe and return them to health.

### Chapter 7: Strengthening families and relationships

**Recommendation 41:** Improve measures to identify family relationships and, in particular, dependent children by incorporating a family structure section within the Manual of Guidance (MG) for prosecutions to help identify dependent children at an early stage and to ensure identification when entering custody.

**Recommendation 42:** Create a Community Liaison Officer (CLO), if one does not exist, with a specific mandate to build relationships that reach out into the community and promote the message that the prison is part of the community. There would be an expectation that a CLO could and should be identifying and creating opportunities with employers, voluntary and third sector, and local transport providers (e.g. bus companies) to help facilitate visits.

**Recommendation 43:** Government should create a new form of Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL), built around earned release and community payback. This would be based upon the proposals outlined in *A Woman-Centred Approach* and help reduce pressure on prison while reinforcing positive behaviours and helping strengthen families and links to employment and education.

### Chapter 8: Work-ready offenders

**Recommendation 44:** Government should develop a genuine employment strategy within and beyond the prison gate, learning from the best approaches, including those at home and overseas, to ensure that the emerging evidence of effective rehabilitation and crime reduction linked to improving employment outcomes is rolled out across the prison and probation services. Where appropriate, this should connect with the Troubled Families Programme and a recognition that work remains the best way out of poverty, and one of the best routes out of crime.

**Recommendation 45:** Government should ensure that every offender with an identified financial need leaves prison with access to a minimum of the Core Allowance of Universal Credit, helping reduce crime and reinforcing the pro-social expectation of resettlement into the community and entry into employment.

**Recommendation 46:** Government should introduce a standardised process that ensures offenders leave prison as work-ready and financially independent as possible, with access to a basic bank account, an email account, an up-to-date CV, and a form of photographic ID.

### Chapter 9: Relationships, incentives, and legitimacy

**Recommendation 49:** Minimum safe staffing levels in all areas of each prison to be established and given legal status to add focus to the importance of maintaining an effective regime.

**Recommendation 50:** Fundamental reform of the discredited Incentive and Earned Privileges (IEP) scheme and its replacement by a system of rewards and sanctions that encourages good behaviour. Subject to review and within broad parameters, Governors to be given autonomy to construct their own incentives schemes which respond to their prison population and local capabilities.

### Chapter 10: Empowered accountable leaders

**Recommendation 51:** Independently led fundamental review of all HMPPS corporate senior manager roles commissioned by Secretary of State for Justice. All operationally qualified senior leaders based in HQ or regionally convert to Executive Governor status with the presumption that they and their teams will be based within prisons unless there is a compelling argument against.

**Recommendation 52:** Create a National Prison Governors' Council (NPGC), modelled on the National Police Chiefs' Council, and comprising Executive Governors, with responsibility for implementing and co-ordinating prison policies.

**Recommendation 55:** The Urgent Notification process introduced by the last Justice Secretary should be recognised as a welcome but temporary development. At the earliest opportunity, the Government should pass legislation to convert HM Inspectorate of Prisons into a legal regulator with statutory powers to inspect and require enforceable improvement in prison establishments.

**Recommendation 58:** HM Inspectorate of Prisons, and any future legal regulator, should present a prison dashboard incorporating the results of their inspections, surveys, and incorporate the data and reports generated through the Measuring Quality of Prison Life (MQPL) and Staff Quality of Life (SQL) surveys. It should also list recommendations and detail the status of each, and be resourced and tasked to incorporate, as a one-stop shop, data published by the Ministry of Justice, HMPPS, and Independent Monitoring Boards.

# Introduction

Everyone should want our prisons to work, and some of the latest evidence points to how they can. Our current criminal justice system is a dismal conveyor belt that delivers citizens to custody when they have offended against us to an extent or with such frequency that the judiciary have no choice but to lock them up. Prisoners find themselves on this path for a variety of reasons, but poor choices, personal chaos and social breakdown are very often factors in their failure.

The one unarguable feature of a prison is that it can incapacitate offenders in one reachable place: in doing so, it should at least arrest their offending and descent into worse criminality. Incapacitation from offending offers a unique opportunity for them to take responsibility for their criminal behaviour and to develop the social, educational and employment skills they need to become useful members of society, leading crime-free lives on release.

Unfortunately, our current prison system seems to catalyse rather than remedy the very conditions which create offending. Squalor, indolence and brutality have become normalised within the walls of many of our jails – particularly those local and medium security establishments that deal with short-term offenders.

Ruinous cuts, inflicted on front line staff as the prison population increased, have made a mockery of a rehabilitation culture when staff routinely suffer serious assaults and cannot themselves feel safe at work, let alone be able to deal with record levels of prisoner self-harm.

The discourse around the problems of and solutions for a deeply dysfunctional prison system follows a typical pattern which has become both too politicised and too simplistic. This is a crisis made both in Government and in Whitehall.

Staff cuts were manifestly far too deep and far too fast – acknowledgement of this mistaken strategy evidenced by the much trailed, but only recently fulfilled, promise to recruit 2,500 officers back into our prisons.

It is a goal that the government has now reached, but masks an enormous loss of experience in jailcraft and working with offenders. Moreover, the attrition rates of newly recruited staff, thrown into one of the most hostile work environments imaginable, many of whom never make it out of probation before leaving in despair, is a profound waste of public money and potential.

Meanwhile, a simplistic fixation from some on reducing the numbers of prisoners – held out by some as the only response to spiralling disorder – is extremely risky given the parlous state of community supervision and public reaction when inevitably something terrible happens involving offenders who should have been properly monitored and treated.

Moreover, calls for better use of community penalties often imply that custody is the first sentence given to offenders. The reality is that half of all those receiving immediate prison sentences last year had at least 15 previous convictions, and of the 69,247 immediate prison sentences handed out last year, just 6,171 went to first time offenders, of which 1 in 4 were sex offenders.<sup>2</sup> Other research has also found that large numbers of offenders have failed as many as 5 community penalties before exasperated magistrates reach for custody.<sup>3</sup>

Changing the ratios – more staff or fewer prisoners – has lately become a political and fiscal cul-de-sac. We cannot allow this inertia to smother the need for radical reform. Moreover, as we have seen from recent scandals, including the ‘worst inspection report ever written’ on HMP Liverpool, a remote, secretive and arrogant HQ management culture in Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service is also culpable in operating a system where fashionable ideology trumps common sense and it is sometimes easier to access illegal drugs than a bar of soap.

The restoration of decisive and effective leadership from top to bottom is long overdue. The appointment of a new Chief Executive of Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service and the commencement of the Prisons Minister’s 10 Prisons Project are both welcome, necessary, but not sufficient, conditions for improvement.

In the light of these realities, this manifesto seeks to put forward practical ideas and proposals for restoring our prisons to places where staff are able to look after people safely and decency is restored. The focus is deliberately away from abstractions and fads, and works from the fundamental premise that without order and control prisons cannot become places of hope where offenders can rescue their potential and future victims are prevented.

It is unapologetically rooted in a return to the basics of good prison management. It demands the restoration of the state’s authority and control within our prisons as a starting point.

Taking back control is the key to giving offenders back the chance to turn their lives around. It looks to empower confident and assertive professional Prison Officers as the leaders in this change. Not faceless managerial wonks or politically motivated pressure groups who have presided over what has been an offensive toleration of, and since 2010, near-universal deterioration in prison conditions.

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2 Offending History Data Tool, Criminal Justice System Statistics Quarterly, Ministry of Justice, February 2019 [Accessed on 4 April 2019 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/780205/criminal-history-pivot-table-2018-q3.xls](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/780205/criminal-history-pivot-table-2018-q3.xls)]

3 Where did it all go wrong? A study into the use of community sentences in England and Wales, Crest Advisory, April 2017 [Accessed on 4 April 2019 via [crestadvisory.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/community-sentences-report-where-did-it-all-go-wrong.pdf](https://crestadvisory.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/community-sentences-report-where-did-it-all-go-wrong.pdf)]

The human cost has not just been felt by prisoners. The men and women who put on uniforms every day and go on the wings and landings continue to face working conditions that no other workers would tolerate. They also happen to know more than anyone about the people in their care, but, despite their dedication, are rarely if ever consulted, recognised, or supported in the vital work they do.

The last annual report from the forerunner to the re-badged Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service sums up perfectly how we have come to find ourselves with an unsafe and unjust prison system:

... for prisons to be positive places in which to work there must be a strong rehabilitative culture across all activity within prisons.<sup>4</sup>

Pious declarations and empty rhetoric is no substitute for the decisive action required to return prisons to a state where real rehabilitation can actually happen. Frontline prison staff are the engine of the change we need to see in prisoners. Enabling them to do their jobs safely and effectively is the starting point for this to happen.

It is a grim paradox that in this supposedly progressive age, prisons, prisoners and staff have far less ability or appetite to take risks to change behaviour than at any time since the mid-90s.

Some of the ideas put forward have no cost and simply require greater and better co-ordination. Many have modest costs but will deliver the benefits of stable and productive regimes in terms of better staff morale and busy, productive prisoners.

A few have major cost implications and in relation to prisoner reaction are also risky. But the risks of doing nothing and dealing with the consequences of simmering discontent and intolerable conditions are unquantifiable in human misery – and staggering in economic terms.

Prison Minister Rory Stewart's appetite for action is matched by public opinion in our polling. We asked them what response they would most support in tackling the recurring themes of "violence, drugs, suicide and self-harm, squalor and poor access to education" in our prisons, identified by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons in his most recent annual report.<sup>5</sup> While 19 per cent said "The Government should send fewer people to prison to reduce overcrowding and improve staffing levels", the vast majority (70 per cent) said "The Government should build more prison spaces and recruit more prison officers to reduce overcrowding and improve staffing levels".<sup>6</sup>

4 NOMS Annual Report 2016–17, National Offender Management Service, July 2017 [Accessed on 1 March 2019 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/630533/6.3329\\_NOMS\\_AR\\_180717\\_19\\_July\\_web.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/630533/6.3329_NOMS_AR_180717_19_July_web.pdf)]

5 HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for England and Wales Annual Report 2017–18, HMIP, July 2018 [Accessed on 1 February 2019 via [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2018/07/6.5053\\_HMI-Prisons\\_AR-2017-18\\_revised\\_web.pdf](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2018/07/6.5053_HMI-Prisons_AR-2017-18_revised_web.pdf)]

6 In the most recent Annual Report from Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons it was noted that 'violence, drugs, suicide and self-harm, squalor and poor access to education' are recurring issues within our prisons. It has been suggested that part of the solution is to reduce overcrowding and improve staffing levels. Which of the following is closest to your view?, Survation poll of 1,006 adults in the UK, commissioned by The Centre for Social Justice. Fieldwork undertaken 10 April 2019.

This manifesto – like so many of the remedies put forward in the realm of social policy – can only truly work if all the measures described operate together.

Prisons, like any society, are complex. They are also, too often, volatile places. Managing and overcoming human failure – so often born of social breakdown and poor choices – is an enormous task. Changing the behaviour of individuals who have come to not just believe, but learn, that the threat or use of violence is how they get what they want is never going to be pretty or achieved overnight.

But the current state of prisons in England and Wales is neither inevitable nor unfixable. This manifesto can at the least open a new debate about how we achieve the ultimate prize for citizens in custody and some justice for their victims – hope for a safer, crime-free future for all.

Amid promises from the Prime Minister that austerity “is over”<sup>7</sup> as the next Spending Review looms, there is a slim hope that the criminal justice system may secure a more generous settlement. Even if it does, amid rising crime, we can expect the pressures, at least in the short term, to persist. And plainly, without restoring investment, status and purpose to existing crime prevention structures, like Youth Offending Teams, or taking forward the other recommendations we have called for in *It Can Be Stopped, Desperate for a Fix*, and *A Woman-Centred Approach*, the dismal conveyor belt will continue to roll, despite improvements on the prison end.

That is why this manifesto provides the starting point for a much bolder piece of work that sets out how we can create and support local communities – from statutory providers and public services, to civil society, and crucially parents and families – to intervene earlier and more effectively in the fight against crime.

For now, this paper seeks to identify some of the most pressing issues, summarise the problems and provide quick and practical measures to help restore control, order, and hope to our prisons.

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7 Theresa May's full speech to 2018 Conservative conference, BBC News, 3 October 2018 [Accessed on 22 October 2018 via [www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-politics-45733093/theresa-may-s-full-speech-to-2018-conservative-conference](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-politics-45733093/theresa-may-s-full-speech-to-2018-conservative-conference)]



# Voices from inside

This report is rooted in voices from within and with experience of working and spending time in our prisons. The following are all comments made to researchers about the prison environment in England and Wales as part of MQPL/MQPL+ activity, other comments attributed to prisoners and prison staff in this report are from the same MQPL/MQPL+ sources:

Why is there violence in here, miss? Because no-one's got any hope.

Prisoner

The number one problem in this prison is authority. Staff need it.

Prisoner

We used to excel. We were like a showpiece. But the Ministry of Justice, they cut us too thin.

Prison officer/staff

This prison is way understaffed and definitely isn't organised one little bit. Our wing is split regime which means we are behind our doors a lot of the day... Feel like an animal. Caged up.

Prisoner

The constant change of management and regime structure does nothing but damage to the good order of this prison... It does nothing to help those without, and only adds to the gap between 'haves' and 'have nots'.

Prisoner

The good staff on the ground, [that the prison] does have, lose morale and are frightened by the lack of support they receive from their employer.

Prisoner

Employing brand new staff and expecting two of them to run a wing is ridiculous and negligent, especially when they're younger than the vast majority of prisoners.

Prisoner

To me, these staff are scared. They're only the same age as us.

Prisoner

We want rules. If they say they're going to do something, this has to be followed through.

Prisoner

What's good about this prison? You can do whatever you want and staff do nothing. You can get stoned out of your head and still keep your serverly job.

Prisoner

No one searches your cell and the new staff don't even search your property, so you can have all of your gear stashed and they won't find it.

Prisoner

I can't switch off. I am in fight mode all too often as I am continually cross-deployed to badly run wings.

Prison officer/staff

I try my best to do my job to the best of my ability, but face consistent confrontation in doing this as most staff and management settle for lower standards. I am currently stressed and anxious.

Prison officer/staff

I'm sat in here selling burn, eating noodles and tuna every day. It's boring.

Prisoner

There is a lack of purpose in this prison. We're left to rot. We're just vegetating.

Prisoner

If you honestly asked staff, the vast majority would leave if they could. We are not in control, it's unsafe.

Prison officer/staff

Even though you're technically working you spend a lot of time just sitting around.

Prisoner

There's no relationship between staff and prisoners ... All they see of staff is when they're unlocking and locking again. That's not a relationship. There's nothing to build on.

Prisoner

## chapter one

# Taking back lost ground

A lot of the new people going in are young kids. They don't have enough life experience. They need to look after the people already there doing the job, with the experience.

Tessa Wale, ex-prison officer<sup>8</sup>

Order in prisons relies primarily on sufficient and suitable numbers of prison staff creating and maintaining authority with the time and skills to interact with prisoners. Unfortunately, too many of our prison establishments in England and Wales fail this basic test.

Staff must have the attributes, training, time and skills to interact with prisoners routinely and during times of crisis. They must feel confident in their environment, their training, their colleagues, and their leadership.

While overcrowding figures suggest we need a further 10,500 prison spaces, the system has edged towards breaking point, with prison officers and staff leaving the service at an unprecedented rate. In some prisons, the breaking point has not just been approached it has been reached.

The decision to use benchmarking exercises to cut prison costs by driving down the staffing levels within our prisons resulted in more than 17,000 prison officers and staff leaving the service.<sup>10</sup> As a consequence, the ratio of prisoners to prison officers has grown consistently from 2010 through 2014.

These trends and disparities were never going to be sustainable. The Government has taken some welcome steps in recognition of this. In November 2016, then Justice Secretary, Rt Hon Liz Truss MP, successfully secured £104 million to recruit 2,500 prison officers to reverse the downward trend in staffing levels and to tackle the rising tide of crime, violence and drug use within the prison estate.

This helped take back some of the ground lost through the cuts, but it would not be until early 2018 that these 2,500 prison officers had been recruited. This continues to represent a reduction on prison officer numbers compared to 2010 and of course fails to address the significant loss and lack of jailcraft experience amongst the current prison workforce.

**70,000**

fewer years of experience among prison staff since 2010<sup>9</sup>

8 The Independent. 2018. "I was treated like dirt": Former prison officer reveals how working conditions forced her to leave service" [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/prison-officer-jails-spice-sexual-harassment-tess-wale-long-lartin-a8513036.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/prison-officer-jails-spice-sexual-harassment-tess-wale-long-lartin-a8513036.html)]

9 Loss of senior managers led to UK's prison crisis, The Guardian, 25 August 2018 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.theguardian.com/society/2018/aug/25/staff-cuts-prison-leadership-crisis](http://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/aug/25/staff-cuts-prison-leadership-crisis)]

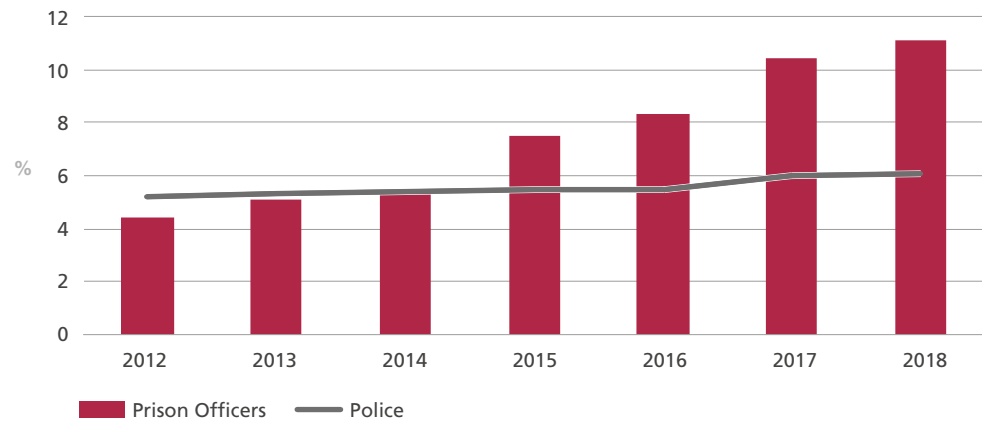
10 Loss of senior managers led to UK's prison crisis, The Guardian, 25 August 2018 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.theguardian.com/society/2018/aug/25/staff-cuts-prison-leadership-crisis](http://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/aug/25/staff-cuts-prison-leadership-crisis)]

# 10,085

assaults on staff  
in the 12 months  
to September 2018<sup>11</sup>

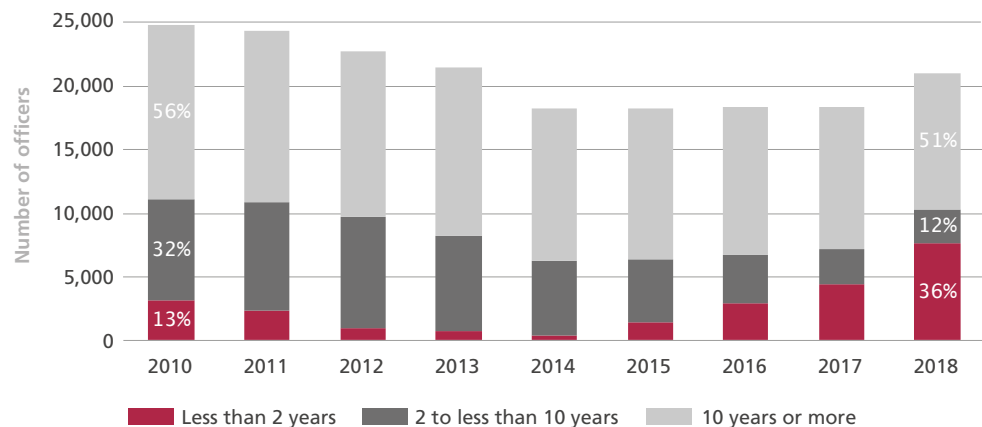
Prison officers are often subject to challenging and unnecessarily degrading working conditions, with limited training and support. The incentives to take the job and to remain in the position for longer than a year do not match the demands of the role. Comparing the leaving rate of prison officers with that of police officers, a group who themselves are under considerable strain, demonstrates the retention crisis in our prison workforce. Year on year, prisoner officers have been exiting the service at even faster rates.

Figure 1: Leaving rates for prison officers & police officers



Source: HMPPS Workforce Statistics<sup>12</sup>

Figure 2: Prison officers by years of completed service



Source: HMPPS Workforce Statistics<sup>13</sup>

11 Safety in custody summary tables to September 2018, Safety in Custody Quarterly: Update to September 2018, Ministry of Justice, January 2019 [Accessed on 2 March 2019 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/774892/safety-in-custody-summary-tables-2018-Q3.ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/774892/safety-in-custody-summary-tables-2018-Q3.ods)]

12 Data Workforce Turnover calculated by comparing percentage of leavers from total workers across the prison system and police force. Using the following data: HMPPS Workforce Statistics – Leavers and Joiners, Ministry of Justice, 16 August 2018 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hm-prison-and-probation-service-workforce-quarterly-june-2018](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hm-prison-and-probation-service-workforce-quarterly-june-2018)]; Police Workforce Statistics – Leavers and Joiners, Home Office, 31 March 2018 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-england-and-wales-31-march-2018](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-england-and-wales-31-march-2018)]

13 HMPPS Workforce Statistics – Leavers and Joiners, Ministry of Justice, 16 August 2018 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hm-prison-and-probation-service-workforce-quarterly-june-2018](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hm-prison-and-probation-service-workforce-quarterly-june-2018)]; Police Workforce Statistics – Leavers and Joiners, Home Office, 31 March 2018 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-england-and-wales-31-march-2018](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-england-and-wales-31-march-2018)]

The result is that too many of our prison establishments have disproportionately new and inexperienced staff. The latest data shows more than 1 in 3 (36 per cent) of all prison officers have less than two years' experience of working in prison, compared to 1 in 8 (13 per cent) in 2010.<sup>14</sup>

The Prison Service has, since 2010, lost more than 70,000 years of experience.<sup>15</sup> Alongside the reduction in numbers and the loss of experience have come record high levels of brutality. The normalisation of violence and incivility within too many establishments itself further fuelling issues of both recruitment and retention.<sup>16</sup>

Figure 3: Prison officer numbers and assaults on staff



Source: Ministry of Justice<sup>18</sup>

To help tackle the loss of experience the Government should relaunch the Prison Reserve, enabling experienced prison officers who left the service voluntarily and with good conduct, are able to return and be utilised across the prison estate to pass on their experience and jailcraft to those officers who have joined in recent years. The Prison Reserve is a concept that has been attempted on several occasions, but this time must be recognised as generating significant value in relation to the restoration of control, order, and hope.

## 1 in 10

of all assaults on staff are serious, meaning they involve one or more of the following: A&E/hospital treatment, a fracture, scald, burn, stabbing, crushing, extensive or multiple bruising, black eye, broken nose, lost or broken tooth, cuts requiring suturing, bites, temporary or permanent blindness, or sexual assault<sup>17</sup>

14 Loss of experienced staff leaves prisons unsafe, The Guardian, 29 April 2018 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.theguardian.com/society/2018/apr/28/loss-experienced-staff-leaves-prisons-unsafe](http://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/apr/28/loss-experienced-staff-leaves-prisons-unsafe)]

15 Loss of experienced staff leaves prisons unsafe, The Guardian, 29 April 2018 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.theguardian.com/society/2018/apr/28/loss-experienced-staff-leaves-prisons-unsafe](http://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/apr/28/loss-experienced-staff-leaves-prisons-unsafe)]

16 Safety in Custody Statistics, England and Wales, Ministry of Justice, 27 July 2017 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics)]

17 Safety in custody summary tables to September 2018, Safety in Custody Quarterly: Update to September 2018, Ministry of Justice, January 2019 [Accessed on 2 March 2019 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/774892/safety-in-custody-summary-tables-2018-Q3.ods](http://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/774892/safety-in-custody-summary-tables-2018-Q3.ods)]

18 Analysis of prison officer assaults and workforce using: Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) Workforce Statistics Bulletin, as at 30 June 2018, Ministry of Justice, (2018) [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/734018/hmpps-workforce-statistics-bulletin-30-june-2018.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/734018/hmpps-workforce-statistics-bulletin-30-june-2018.pdf)]; Safety in custody summary tables to September 2018, Safety in Custody Quarterly: Update to September 2018, Ministry of Justice, January 2019 [Accessed on 2 March 2019 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/774892/safety-in-custody-summary-tables-2018-Q3.ods](http://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/774892/safety-in-custody-summary-tables-2018-Q3.ods)]

Amid record levels of violence, 5,000 prison officers staged a ‘walk out’ in September 2018, citing the government’s failure to provide safe prisons to work in and demanding that the Government take the crisis in our prisons more seriously.<sup>19</sup>

Although the Ministry of Justice has belatedly recognised some correlation between numbers of staff and the level of violent incidents in prisons, little progress has been made to increase safety. Even the much vaunted introduction of PAVA incapacitant spray has been mired in bureaucratic delays and challenges from prisoner advocacy groups, driven by people with no or outdated operational experience. The latest data continues to show assaults on staff have continued to increase to record-breaking levels as the retention crisis continues.<sup>20</sup> Insufficient numbers of front line staff who are fearful for their own safety cannot be expected to look after the welfare of prisoners properly. The results, in the most recent Safety in Custody statistics are damning (see Table 1).

Table 1: Recent safety in custody statistics

Safety in custody measure	Volume	% YoY increase
Assaults on staff	10,085	29
Serious assaults on staff	997	27
Deaths in prison custody	325	10
Self harm incidents	52,814	23
Prisoner-on-prisoner assaults	24,138	18
Serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults	3,019	2

Source: Ministry of Justice<sup>21</sup>

Compared to 2010, the rate of total assaults per 1,000 prisoners has more than doubled, with prisoners 2.1 times more likely to be assaulted and almost 3 (2.8) times more likely to be seriously assaulted. At the same time staff have become 3.4 times more likely to be assaulted and 3.0 times more likely to be seriously assaulted.<sup>22</sup>

As with issues of crime and disorder in wider society, a key emphasis must be placed on the importance of challenging low-level disorder and anti-social behaviour within the prison environment. This requires staff to have the confidence and jailcraft to deal with such incidents and help ensure order. The failure to tackle such behaviour is a regular feature of prison inspection reports.

19 Protest on 14th September 2018, The Professional Trades Union for Prison, Correctional and Secure Psychiatric Workers, 17 September 2018 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.poa.uk.org/index.php?poa-news&newsdetail=20180917-981\\_protest-on-14th-september-2018](http://www.poa.uk.org/index.php?poa-news&newsdetail=20180917-981_protest-on-14th-september-2018)]

20 Prison Safety & Reform White Paper, Ministry of Justice, 3 November 2016 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/565014/cm-9350-prison-safety-and-reform-\\_web\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/565014/cm-9350-prison-safety-and-reform-_web_.pdf)]

21 Safety in custody statistics, England and Wales: Deaths in Prison Custody to December 2018 Assaults and Self-Harm to September 2018, Ministry of Justice, 31 January 2019 [Accessed on 2 April 2019 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/774880/safety-in-custody-bulletin-2018-Q3.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/774880/safety-in-custody-bulletin-2018-Q3.pdf)]

22 Safety in custody summary tables to September 2018, Safety in Custody Quarterly: Update to September 2018, Ministry of Justice, January 2019 [Accessed on 2 March 2019 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/774892/safety-in-custody-summary-tables-2018-Q3.ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/774892/safety-in-custody-summary-tables-2018-Q3.ods)]

Tellingly, prisoners themselves have described a desire to see the restoration of control and order:

I don't feel safe here. Staff are too soft with prisoners. My healthcare needs are miles away from being met. I've got fractures in my back and healthcare treat me poorly.

Prisoner

The Measuring the Quality of Prison Life (MQPL/MQPL+) survey seeks to capture the views of prisoners and the quality of their life in prison. It also elicits comments from prisoners on the "one primary area of concern for this prison", revealing comments from prisoners including "officers have little control", "aggressive behaviour gets rewarded", "too many prisoners [are] allowed to give abuse to staff and other prisoners", and "drugs, violence, safety, they all go together".<sup>23</sup>

The need to restore control, order, and hope to our prisons is about more than just taking back control from criminals who would rule through intimidation and unlawful violence, it is also vital to our national security, with the Government's Counter Terrorism Strategy recognising that "prisons are unique environments in which individuals may be vulnerable to extremism".<sup>24</sup>

Around 700 prisoners are under management at any one time as a result of being engaged in terrorism or extremism, or about whom there are extremism concerns.<sup>25</sup> Our unsafe prisons continue to provide a fertile breeding ground in which predators, peddling extremist and violent ideologies, can prey upon the vulnerable, creating significant risks to national security and the public at large.

On the present trajectory it is all too conceivable that a future terrorist will have been groomed and radicalised within our prison estate. These risks are even more serious when combat-experienced returning foreign fighters, who are likely to face prosecution and imprisonment, are factored in.<sup>27</sup>

Officials believe that staff should "identify, report and challenge extremist views and take action", however, at the very same time, prison officers report being unable to do so as a result of staffing and other practical issues.<sup>28</sup> This cannot be allowed to continue.

Finally, we have seen serious youth and gang violence increasing outside of prison. With gang members and the perpetrators of such violence often finding their way into prison – with more than 1,200 years of prison sentences relating to homicide in London handed

**158%**  
increase in assaults  
on staff over the  
past four years<sup>26</sup>

23 Prison Survey and MQPL/MQPL+ Survey Reports obtained from HMPPS/MoJ by Freedom of Information Act request in 2018.

24 CONTEST: The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism, HM Government, June 2018 [Accessed on 4 October 2018 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/716907/140618\\_CCS207\\_CCS0218929798-1\\_CONTEST\\_3.0\\_WEB.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/716907/140618_CCS207_CCS0218929798-1_CONTEST_3.0_WEB.pdf)]

25 CONTEST: The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism, HM Government, June 2018 [Accessed on 4 October 2018 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/716907/140618\\_CCS207\\_CCS0218929798-1\\_CONTEST\\_3.0\\_WEB.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/716907/140618_CCS207_CCS0218929798-1_CONTEST_3.0_WEB.pdf)]

26 Prison Reform Fact Sheet 2018, Prison Reform Trust, 2018 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/Bromley%20Briefings/Summer%202018%20factfile.pdf](http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/Bromley%20Briefings/Summer%202018%20factfile.pdf)]

27 *Prison Management of Terrorism-Related Offenders: Is Separation Effective?*, Henry Jackson Society and Centre for the Response to Radicalisation and Terrorism, March 2018 [Accessed on 20 March 2019 via [henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/HJS-Prison-Management-Report.pdf](http://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/HJS-Prison-Management-Report.pdf)]

28 'Terrorists being released from UK prisons could 'slip through net' and carry out attacks, government warned', The Independent, 23 September 2018 [Accessed on 8 November 2018 via [www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/terrorists-uk-prisons-released-anjem-choudary-islamist-extremism-slip-through-net-muslim-gangs-a8549376.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/terrorists-uk-prisons-released-anjem-choudary-islamist-extremism-slip-through-net-muslim-gangs-a8549376.html)]

out in 2017 alone and with many more handed out for other serious offending – it is vital that while in prison they are held in an environment that can support exit from, rather than further entrenchment in, a gang and or violent lifestyle.

The result is that it has become increasingly difficult – and too often impossible – for prison staff to protect either themselves or their charges. Prisons can and should be one of the safest places in our society. The visible collapse of the state’s authority within our prisons only compounds the state failure, social breakdown, and poor choices that conspire to see 82,293 individuals held in our prisons today – and the even larger number of victims who every year are victimised by those committing crime.<sup>29</sup>

**Recommendation 1:** Government must recognise that restoring control, order, and hope to our prisons is a matter of critical national importance. The “restoration of control, order, and hope” are the terms by which the Government’s Spending Review should recognise the particular vulnerability of prisons and the need to adequately resource them.

**Recommendation 2:** As we set out in Chapter 3, the Government’s Spending Review should not shy away from the potential need for a total injection of £2bn, comprising up to £1.4bn in capital and £600m in recurring resource expenditure, to ensure that there can be no excuse for restoring control, order, and hope to our prisons.

**Recommendation 3:** Formally relaunch the HM Prison Service Reserve, made up of skilled and experienced prison staff who have voluntarily left the service and can be deployed in support of full-time regular staff. The costs of operating such a Reserve should be set against the costs of detached duty and the significant costs associated with major disturbances and associated interventions. The Reserve would help boost staffing levels and help build confidence and jailcraft among less experienced staff, creating long-term benefit.

**Recommendation 4:** Establish a Prison Order and Control Taskforce reporting directly to Ministers and comprising external subject matter experts. This Taskforce should include representatives from the Prison Officers Association, National Crime Agency, Crown Prosecution Service and HM Inspectorate of Prisons.

**Recommendation 5:** Build on the ‘10 Prison Project’ outlined by Prisons Minister Rory Stewart OBE MP by developing Control, Order and Hope Action Plans for every prison, with the use of the relaunched Reserve, and additional resource, prioritised on those Establishments at greatest risk.<sup>30</sup>

**Recommendation 6:** Use the additional resource to review and commit to improve the numbers, training, status, pay and conditions of prison officers, recognising that they can and should be expected and encouraged to develop and use their special skills and knowledge to both restore order and play a leading role in the rehabilitation and reintegration of prisoners. Consideration should also be made of the retirement age of 68 against the operational demands of the prison officer role.

**Recommendation 7:** Ensure that the Assaults on Emergency Workers Act 2018, providing for a maximum 12 month prison sentence for those who attack prison officers on duty, is effective, by ensuring that sentences are consecutive, rather than concurrent, to the existing custodial sentences of a convicted assailant, and that time on remand is not counted against any such sentence. Government must ensure sentencing reforms do not dilute this important legislation.

29 Prison Population Bulletin: Monthly February 2019, Ministry of Justice, 22 February 2019 [Accessed on 9 April 2019 via [www.gov.uk/government/statistics/prison-population-figures-2019](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/prison-population-figures-2019)]

30 Supporting data available from: Prison Annual Performance Ratings 2016/17, HM Prison and Probation Service, July 2017, [Accessed on 9 November 2018 via [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/633052/hmpps-prison-ratings-2016-17.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/633052/hmpps-prison-ratings-2016-17.pdf)]



## chapter two

# Supporting the frontline

I'm fed up of hearing of my members receiving smashed eye sockets, broken arms, broken legs, broken jaws, being attacked, spat on, having excrement and urine thrown at them, and enough is enough now.

Stephen Gillan, POA General Secretary<sup>31</sup>

There is a widespread and well-founded belief amongst prison staff that they are a hidden service, out of sight and out of mind, viewed as numbers and often as little more than "prison guards", without the support, tools, or leadership to do their jobs safely.

Even when television cameras enter and the realities of prison are broadcast into the homes of millions, the flagrant drug use generates little or no meaningful reaction. There is something between a grudging tolerance and a fatalistic acceptance of the conditions.

The normalisation of extreme levels of violence through record levels of assaults by prisoners – on both prisoners and staff – is one of the most debilitating aspects of this professional isolation. The assaults themselves, and witnessing the aftermath, inflicts real physical and psychological damage due to their frequency and nature.

These attacks contribute to high levels of stress-related illness, with the levels of stress-related illness for prison officers growing to four times the national average. The scale of this issue is sufficient to impact on the service at large. The latest data for 2015/16 shows prison officers took over 32,000 days off work due to stress.<sup>33</sup>

At worst, the fear and reality of violence erodes the confidence and willingness of staff to challenge inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour, while cultivating a state of hypervigilance that can itself undermine the ability, particularly of junior staff, to invest time in the rehabilitation and resettlement of prisoners.

**1 in 3**

prison officers leave the service in their first 12 months<sup>32</sup>

**32,000+**

days of prison officer time lost due to stress in 2015/16<sup>34</sup>

31 Prison strike: Government seeks court injunction to stop officers walking out over 'unprecedented' wave of violence, The Independent, 14 September 2018 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/prison-jail-strike-prison-officers-association-poa-government-minister-injunction-court-a8537236.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/prison-jail-strike-prison-officers-association-poa-government-minister-injunction-court-a8537236.html)]

32 Third of prison officers who quit leave within a year of starting, figures show, The Independent, 29 August 2018 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/uk-prison-jail-crisis-officers-quit-violence-harassment-a8507951.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/uk-prison-jail-crisis-officers-quit-violence-harassment-a8507951.html)]

33 Prison officers' stress is four times average, The Times, July 30 2017 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.thetimes.co.uk/article/prison-officers-stress-is-four-times-average-mz3pcz3tc](http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/prison-officers-stress-is-four-times-average-mz3pcz3tc)]

34 Original data obtained by The Times using a Freedom of Information request [Accessed on 10 April 2019 via [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/640057/number-of-working-days-taken-off-by-prison-officers-due-to-stress-tables.xlsx](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/640057/number-of-working-days-taken-off-by-prison-officers-due-to-stress-tables.xlsx)]

## 1 in 3

prison service officers and staff believe poor performance is dealt with effectively<sup>35</sup>

It is important to drive home the appalling consequences of attacks on prison staff and the need for exemplary action to deter it. Richard Drax MP spoke in Parliament in late 2016 about attacks on prison staff in his constituency:

... a prisoner who was due to be released the next day “potted” a female prison officer. Potting ... involves urine and excrement being thrown over an officer. It is disgusting, demeaning and outrageous. That prisoner was released the next day, when he was arrested for assault, fined £200 and given a suspended sentence. That is farcical. In another case, another female officer was “potted” and the prisoner received a mere 21 extra days on his sentence. That officer was then goaded and teased by the prisoner when she returned to work.

Richard Drax MP<sup>36</sup>

## 1 in 4

prison service officers believe that when changes are made they are generally for the better<sup>37</sup>

Attacks on prison officers should be seen as attacks on all of us. Prison officers are public servants who work relentlessly to protect the public. All too often, an attack on officers is dismissed as an inherent part of their job – with various excuses used to undermine any sort of robust response.

We commend the recent work of the Government in this direction. The Assaults on Emergency Workers (Offences) Bill, given Royal Assent in September, has doubled the maximum sentence for assault on an emergency worker to a year and makes an assault on such a worker explicitly aggravated.<sup>38</sup> Although this is a step in the right direction, it still relies upon the Crown Prosecution Service making the case and for the Judiciary to sentence appropriately, and for the initial investigation to have achieved the evidential threshold to charge.

Alongside this tougher approach, the Government should create a new ‘Dignity at Work Covenant’ that ensures dignity at work for prison officers and staff. It should enshrine the rights of staff to see offences investigated and to see offenders sentenced appropriately. It must also set out the rights to welfare support for prison officers and staff.

This should include consideration of how to ensure the officer is able to return to work with confidence in their Establishment and the Service as a whole.

I can’t switch off. I am in fight mode all too often as I am continually cross-deployed to badly run wings. I try my best to do my job to the best of my ability, but face consistent confrontation in doing this as most staff and management settle for lower standards. I am currently stressed and anxious.

Prison officer/staff

35 Civil Service People Survey, Civil Service, 13 August 2018. [Accessed on 9 November 2018 via [www.gov.uk/government/collections/civil-service-people-surveys](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/civil-service-people-surveys)]

36 Prison Officer Safety Debate, House of Lords, 2 May 2018 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-05-02/debates/144C27EA-C959-4CFB-8BFF-B735A64D429F/PrisonOfficersWorkingConditions](http://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-05-02/debates/144C27EA-C959-4CFB-8BFF-B735A64D429F/PrisonOfficersWorkingConditions)]

37 Civil Service People Survey, Civil Service, 13 August 2018 [Accessed on 9 November 2018 via [www.gov.uk/government/collections/civil-service-people-surveys](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/civil-service-people-surveys)]

38 Assaults on Emergency Workers (Offences) Bill, UK Parliament, 2018 [Accessed on 9 November 2018 via [services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/assaultsonemergencyworkersoffences.html](http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/assaultsonemergencyworkersoffences.html)]

The Prison Service can learn something from policing – where Hampshire Constabulary and the Hampshire Police Federation developed an example of good practice in this field, with a 7-point plan setting out expectations for police officers who had been assaulted. This is now rolling out across the country under the banner of ‘Operation Hampshire’. It stresses the importance of the Victim Code for those assaulted and consistent welfare support. It explicitly acknowledges that the rights and entitlements of an assaulted officer should be no less than those afforded to members of the public.

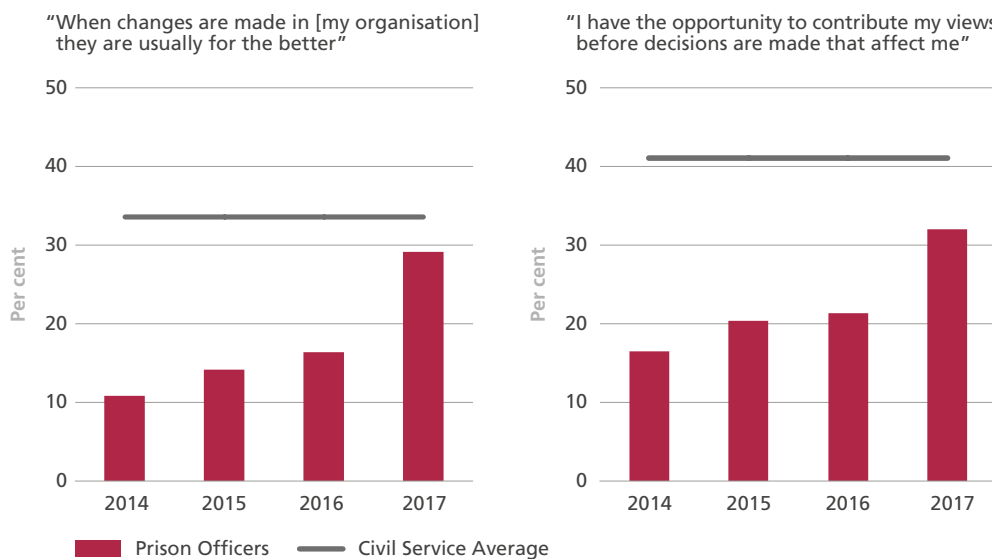
This Dignity at Work Covenant should also incorporate a state-owned, funded, and operated National Prison Officer and Staff Welfare Service that provides prison staff with online resources, a helpline service, and a minimum standard of welfare provision, such as counselling services to tackle trauma, anxiety, and related welfare issues. These services currently exist piecemeal and are outsourced to private companies with limited experience of the operational demands of the job. Looking after staff who are physically or psychologically injured in the line of duty ought to be a central moral responsibility of the Ministry of Justice. The Covenant should also extend to cover those officers who leave the Service and who find themselves in need of counselling relating to their service.

Her Majesty’s Prison Service is a uniformed, operational organisation carrying out one of the toughest jobs in law enforcement that has been presided over by a detached and remote civilian bureaucracy. Despite the grave demands of their jobs, prison officers often do not feel like they are given the authority necessary to regain a grip of our prisons.

**57%**

of the prison workforce feel their pay does not reflect their performance<sup>39</sup>

Figure 4: Civil Service and Prison Officers survey results



Source: Civil Service Survey<sup>40</sup>

39 HM Prison Service - Civil Service People Survey 2018, Ministry of Justice, December 2018 [Accessed on 20 April 2019 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/764475/hmps-ps-2018.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/764475/hmps-ps-2018.pdf)]

40 Civil Service People Survey, Civil Service, 13 August 2018. [Accessed on 9 November 2018 via [www.gov.uk/government/collections/civil-service-people-surveys](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/civil-service-people-surveys)]

34%

of the workforce believes their organisation motivates them to achieve their objectives<sup>42</sup>

Evidence from the Civil Service Survey shows widespread dissatisfaction with the way in which prison officers are managed. Barely one third (38 per cent) of prison officers would recommend their organisation as a great place to work. Fewer than 1 in 3 prison officers report having the opportunity to contribute to decisions that affect them or believe that when changes are made they will be for the better. These statistics point to the deepening fragmentation of the prison service. On all three measures, prison officers rated their satisfaction as consistently below the Civil Service average.<sup>41</sup>

The recent surge should be welcomed, though it may only correlate with an injection of new officers into the service, and must therefore be seen as something on which to cautiously welcome and build, rather than something to prematurely celebrate.

My wife worries that I'm not going to come home. If she could, she'd have me out of the job. It's because I care. I want to make a difference. I believe my staff want to make a difference. We're struggling, we haven't got the staff... I don't think people care about what's happening to my mental health. I think I'm probably the most stressed I've been in 24 years in this job. If I'm like my colleagues, I'll retire and I'll die early.

Andy Toppin, Prison Officer<sup>43</sup>

Senior management in prison establishments and Headquarters wear suits and manage upwards, while front line staff operate in confused roles with poorly designed uniforms which neither protect them nor promote pride or a sense of value in the service.

The removal of Senior Officers from prison wings has also been keenly felt:

Officers complained that they rarely saw Custodial Managers on the wings, and some were unclear about who their line manager was. Many felt abandoned, unsupported by middle managers and unable to make decisions, expressing a form of helplessness: 'it's like nobody is in charge anymore'.

MQPL Report

The visual distinction between un-uniformed leaders and a uniformed workforce does not exist in virtually any other uniformed public sector organisation in the UK: from the Border Force, to Ambulance Trusts and Fire and Rescue Services.<sup>44</sup> A recent study from New Zealand points to the change in attire from a 'uniform' to a 'suit', as supervisors are promoted, as undermining perceptions of their competence and ability to empathise with the frontline.<sup>45</sup>

41 Civil Service People Survey, Civil Service, 13 August 2018. [Accessed on 9 November 2018 via [www.gov.uk/government/collections/civil-service-people-surveys](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/civil-service-people-surveys)]

42 HM Prison Service - Civil Service People Survey 2018, Ministry of Justice, December 2018 [Accessed on 20 April 2019 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/764475/hmps-ps-2018.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/764475/hmps-ps-2018.pdf)]

43 BBC Exclusive: A look inside Wandsworth Prison, BBC News, 18 May 2016 [Accessed on 22 October 2018 via [www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-36327325/bbc-exclusive-a-look-inside-wandsworth-prison](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-36327325/bbc-exclusive-a-look-inside-wandsworth-prison)]

44 For example, Commissioner of the London Fire Brigade, Dany Cotton QFSM, is regularly interviewed and observed to be wearing the uniform of the London Fire Brigade and is routinely seen in the media to be wearing the operational equipment and uniform of the men and women she leads.

45 Each Day is Different: Prison Officers and Their Work, Napier, A.G, 2012 [Accessed on 4 April 2018 via [researcharchive.vuw.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10063/4535/thesis.pdf](http://researcharchive.vuw.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10063/4535/thesis.pdf)]

While a 'progressive' mindset can lead some to 'look down' on the status or attributes of uniformed staff, the importance of a common identity and uniform for a vital public service that goes largely unrecognised must not be underestimated. Such a mindset also impairs a proper understanding of and response to the crisis of morale amongst uniformed staff working in prisons.

Our polling of the public found that when asked whether senior prison staff and leaders should have to wear a uniform, two-thirds (66 per cent) of the public said that they should, while just 16 per cent said that they should not.<sup>47</sup> It is clear that what is obvious to the frontline and to the public has become harder for some to see. We therefore call for the introduction of an updated uniform and for senior operational grades to be required to wear it.

If we are to revitalise the prison system, it is essential that we award staff equal levels of respect for their unwavering dedication, help strengthen a shared sense of purpose and identity across the service, and reinforce it all with a commitment, in the form of a Dignity at Work Covenant, to take the wellbeing and welfare of prison staff seriously.

66%

of the public said senior prison staff and leaders should have to wear uniform<sup>46</sup>

**Recommendation 8:** Create a new Dignity at Work Covenant – building upon the Operation Hampshire initiative used across police forces. It would set out clear expectations for how the assault and abuse of prison staff is handled and appropriately dealt with, including ensuring that the latest evidence-gathering technology, such as DNA kits and body worn video, is available in prisons to achieve best evidence and ensure that staff feel valued and have confidence in effective investigations.

**Recommendation 9:** Create specialist prison crime and intelligence leads within the local police and CPS, with staff embedded at establishment level, to ensure justice for assaulted staff through a co-ordinated, high quality, consistent and robust response to violence within prison. Good practice already exists in some areas and, where present, is already noted by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons.

**Recommendation 10:** Each prison governor, Independent Monitoring Board, the Chief Executive of the HMPPS and HM Chief Inspector of Prisons to produce regularly-updated, establishment specific Impact Statements for inclusion in casefiles relating to the impact of prison assaults and related prison offending, including the smuggling of prohibited items.

**Recommendation 11:** Ensure Ministerial oversight of assault cases that are not proceeded with as "not in the public interest" or "not in the interests of justice", to ensure that cases are not dropped by the Crown Prosecution Service on the basis that prisoners are already serving prison sentences.

**Recommendation 12:** Sentencing Guidelines to be updated to include and reflect the specific aggravating and mitigating features that are present within the prison environment, with clear recognition that practices such as 'potting' or sexual assault on staff are recognised as being of significant seriousness and that sentencing for these offences must normally be consecutive in nature, and not concurrent to any existing sentence.

46 'Unlike some leaders in other uniformed public services (e.g. ambulance, fire, armed forces, police), senior prison staff and leaders do not wear a uniform. Which of the following statements is closest to your view?' Survation poll of 1,006 adults in the UK, commissioned by The Centre for Social Justice. Fieldwork undertaken 10 April 2019.

47 'Unlike some leaders in other uniformed public services (e.g. ambulance, fire, armed forces, police), senior prison staff and leaders do not wear a uniform. Which of the following statements is closest to your view?' Survation poll of 1,006 adults in the UK, commissioned by The Centre for Social Justice. Fieldwork undertaken 10 April 2019.

**Recommendation 13:** As a uniformed service, the Government should identify improvements that can be made to the appearance and durability of the prison officer uniform, helping restore pride and provide the necessary level of practicality and safety. It should also require the introduction of this uniform for all senior operational grades who currently are 'othered' from the frontline by the absence of a uniform.

**Recommendation 14:** As a professional service, the Government should identify improvements that can be made to the quality of training provided to prison officers, with an emphasis upon practical skills and resilience. The current training programme of 10 weeks – one of the shortest in Europe – compares unfavourably to the three years of practical and theoretical training provided to new prison officers in Norway.<sup>48</sup>

**Recommendation 15:** Create a new National Prison Officer and Staff Welfare Service, building on Recommendation 8, to bring in the skills and expertise required to support and rehabilitate staff who have been physically or psychologically injured through their work, and to support those officers at risk of exit or ill-health – and supporting line managers and governors.

**Recommendation 16:** Improve the visibility of national and local awards ceremonies for staff who have displayed bravery on duty or otherwise provided outstanding service. Governors should be encouraged and empowered to organise such awards ceremonies in conjunction with and the support of their local communities and partners, including elected politicians such as MPs, Mayors, and Police and Crime Commissioners.

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48 The Correctional Service of Norway Staff Academy, January 2014, [Accessed on 22 October 2018 via [www.krus.no/getfile.php/2520220.2204.pusywxcdx/KRUS\\_ENGLISH\\_JAN2014.pdf](http://www.krus.no/getfile.php/2520220.2204.pusywxcdx/KRUS_ENGLISH_JAN2014.pdf)]

## chapter three

# A decent environment

My instinct is we need to get back to basics. We need to absolutely insist that we are going to run clean, decent prisons. There have been too many very abstract conversations in the past two years about grand bits of prison policy.

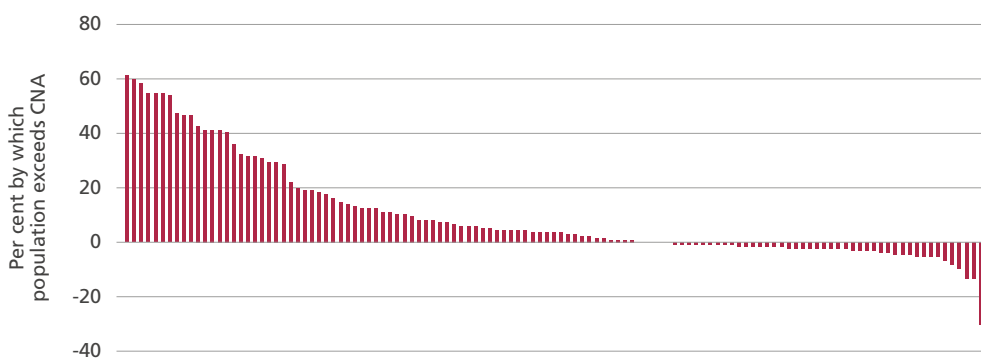
Rory Stewart OBE MP, Minister for Prisons and Probation<sup>49</sup>

The importance of a decent environment cannot be overemphasised. Whether from the perspective of seeking to ensure that our prison system embodies principles of decency and order, or recognising James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling's theory that "broken windows" creates further crime and disorder, there is no excuse for failing to provide a decent environment in our prisons.

"Overcrowding" has long been cited by some managers within HMPPS as a convenient excuse for the unacceptable physical conditions within our prisons. Austerity from 2010 onwards provided a further defensive cloak by which weak and ineffective management and leadership could continue to outsource the blame for the unforgivable physical state of many of our prisons. The reality is that while overcrowding and austerity present significant challenges, they do not excuse the abject lack of effective management or leadership.

**20,700**  
prisoners held  
in overcrowded  
accommodation<sup>50</sup>

Figure 5: Distribution of prison overcrowding by establishment in England and Wales



Source: Prison Population Bulletin<sup>51</sup>

49 Prisons minister Rory Stewart: we need clean jails, not abstract policy, The Guardian, 24 January 2018 [Accessed on 4 October 2018 via [www.theguardian.com/society/2018/jan/24/need-run-clean-decent-jails-prisons-minister-rory-stewart](http://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/jan/24/need-run-clean-decent-jails-prisons-minister-rory-stewart)]

50 Bromley Briefings Prison Factfile Autumn 2018, Prison Reform Trust, 2018 [Accessed on 4 April 2019 via [www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/Bromley%20Briefings/Autumn%202018%20Factfile.pdf](http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/Bromley%20Briefings/Autumn%202018%20Factfile.pdf)]

51 Prison Population Bulletin: Monthly February 2019, Ministry of Justice, February 2019 [Accessed on 9 April 2019 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/784700/monthly-pop-bull-feb-2019.ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/784700/monthly-pop-bull-feb-2019.ods)]

That being said, it is important to recognise that most of our prisons are overcrowded, failing to meet the Government's minimum standards of safety and decency. The current certified normal accommodation available within the estate is around 74,500 inmates, but this figure is exceeded with an additional 8,000 prisoners.<sup>52</sup> It comes as no surprise that two thirds of prisons are overcrowded.<sup>53</sup>

The consequences of overcrowding are all too evident. Almost one-fifth of prisoners are doubled up in single cells or tripled in cells for two, often sharing an open, unscreened toilet. Many spend up to 23 hours a day in these squalid conditions.

Lord Brown of Eaton Heywood<sup>54</sup>

**31%**

of prisoners report being locked in their cells for at least 22 hours a day<sup>56</sup>

The consequences of overcrowding do not just impact on individual prisoners, they have wider repercussions for the safe and effective operation of prisons. In Wandsworth, one of the most consistently overcrowded prisons, there are only enough work and training projects in place for one third of the current population: creating boredom and frustration.<sup>55</sup> Limited supply of opportunities can also create the conditions in which demand is moderated by corruption or intimidation.

As we set out in Chapters 4 and 5, boredom fuels interest and demand for drugs and substances, with frustration providing the source of ignition for violence within the combustible environment of our prisons.

The solution to the overcrowding problem is clear: either we must build additional prison capacity or reduce the use of prison. On the basis of equivalent costs to the most recent new-for-old spending commitment, we expect 10,000 new spaces to cost in the region of £1.4bn in capital spending.<sup>57</sup> This would be sufficient to cover the existing 8,000 shortfall, and allow for up to 2,000 older, unfit spaces to be closed.

While prison abolitionists use overcrowding figures to argue that fewer people should be sent to prison, the public hold a very different view. Our polling of UK adults found that in response to the current prison crisis, their preferred response is to build more prison spaces and recruit more prison officers (70 per cent), rather than sending fewer people

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- 52 Prison Population Bulletin: Monthly February 2019, Ministry of Justice, February 2019 [Accessed on 9 April 2019 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/784700/monthly-pop-bull-feb-2019.ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/784700/monthly-pop-bull-feb-2019.ods)]
- 53 Two thirds of prisons overcrowded prompting warnings UK penal system has reached 'toxic' levels, The Independent, 15 April 2017 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/prisons-overcrowding-prisoners-ministry-of-justice-howard-league-a7685641.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/prisons-overcrowding-prisoners-ministry-of-justice-howard-league-a7685641.html)]
- 54 Debate on Prison Overcrowding, House of Lords, 7 September 2017 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2017-09-07/debates/B1B642FA-F4EC-465C-881F-DB469CBF93C4/PrisonsOvercrowding](https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2017-09-07/debates/B1B642FA-F4EC-465C-881F-DB469CBF93C4/PrisonsOvercrowding)]
- 55 Report on an unannounced inspection of HMP Wandsworth, HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, 13 July 2018. [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisoners/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2018/07/Wandsworth-Web-2018.pdf](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisoners/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2018/07/Wandsworth-Web-2018.pdf)]
- 56 Life in Prison: Living Conditions, HM Inspectorate of Prisons, October 2017 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisoners/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2017/10/Findings-paper-Living-conditions-FINAL-.pdf](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisoners/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2017/10/Findings-paper-Living-conditions-FINAL-.pdf)]
- 57 Prison Safety and Reform White Paper, Ministry of Justice, November 2016 [Accessed on 20 June 2018 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/565014/cm-9350-prison-safety-and-reform-\\_web\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/565014/cm-9350-prison-safety-and-reform-_web_.pdf)]



to prison (19 per cent).<sup>58</sup> At a time when the public identify crime as the top issue facing the country after leaving the EU,<sup>59</sup> it should be all the more obvious and important for government to get behind a manifesto of delivering prison safety and meaningful reform.

The issue of overcrowding should be recognised as part of the Spending Review and while it necessitates a long-term commitment, we must not neglect taking more immediate action to tackle some of the dire living and working conditions in our prisons.

While the Government has tacitly accepted how austerity undermined conditions in our prisons, the creation and maintenance of a decent environment is not simply a question of resource, but of effective management and leadership. It is clear from prison visits and inspections that not all prisons fail to maintain a decent environment, and not all clean prisons are new prisons.

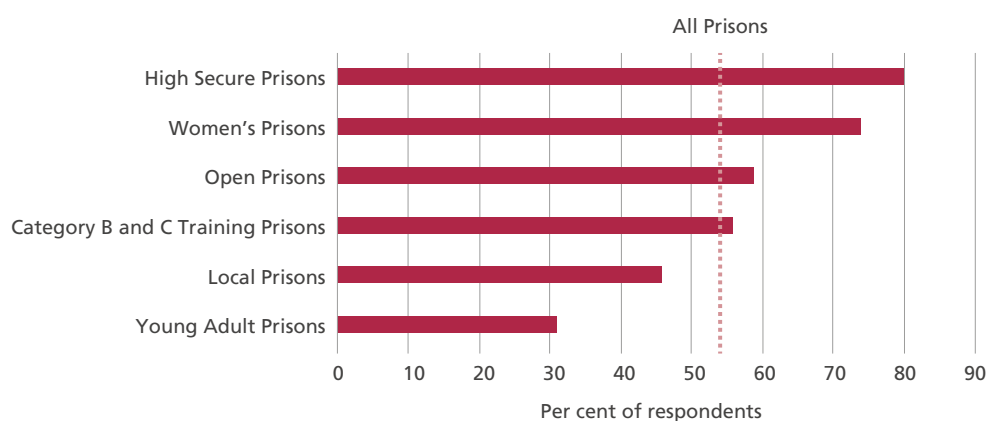
**I think that cleanliness is definitely within our gift. There is no excuse for an unclean jail.**

*Pia Sinha, Governor, HMP Liverpool<sup>61</sup>*

## 2 in 5

of prisoners believe the quality of living conditions is poor in prison<sup>60</sup>

Figure 6: Percentage of survey respondents who reported that they get cell cleaning materials every week (N=7,202)



Source: HM Inspectorate of Prisons<sup>62</sup>

On a very basic level, just over half of prisoners report receiving cell cleaning materials every week. Across the estate, there is considerable variability in this figure. While high security and women's prisons distribute cleaning materials weekly in 80 per cent and 74 per cent

58 In the most recent Annual Report from Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons it was noted that 'violence, drugs, suicide and self-harm, squalor and poor access to education' are recurring issues within our prisons. It has been suggested that part of the solution is to reduce overcrowding and improve staffing levels. Which of the following is closest to your view?, Survation poll of 1,006 adults in the UK, commissioned by The Centre for Social Justice. Fieldwork undertaken 10 April 2019.

59 Top Issues Tracker (GB) 'Which of the following do you think are the most important issues facing the country at this time? Please tick up to three.', YouGov, 2nd April 2019–3rd April 2019 [Accessed on 9 April 2019 via d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus\_uploads/document/1906ni7pfx/YG%20Trackers%20-%20Top%20Issues\_W.pdf]

60 Prison Survey and MQPL/MQPL+ Survey Reports obtained from HMPPS/MoJ by Freedom of Information Act request in 2018.

61 Q67 – Oral evidence: HM Inspectorate of Prisons report on HMP Liverpool, HC 751, Wednesday 24 January 2018 [Accessed on 8 January 2019 via data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/justice-committee/hm-inspectorate-of-prisons-report-on-hmp-liverpool/oral/77512.html]

62 Life in Prison: Living Conditions, HM Inspectorate of Prisons, October 2017 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2017/10/Findings-paper-Living-conditions-FINAL-.pdf]

49%

of young adult prisoners are not able to have a shower every day<sup>63</sup>

of cases respectively, in young adult prisons the figure is much lower at 31 per cent. These figures speak to some establishments failing to place due importance on the maintenance and promotion of standards of cleanliness and hygiene.

The only way of cleaning our cell floors is by using used T-shirts and pouring water on our floors, and mopping the water up with T-shirts as we do not get to mop our floors.

Prisoner<sup>64</sup>

Many prisons have failed to provide clear plans to deal with the abject squalor. This issue had been particularly acute in HMP Liverpool. The damning inspection report in 2017 described how inspectors could not recall witnessing conditions worse than Liverpool. Rat and cockroach infestations plagued the prison, electrical wires were left exposed and lavatories were filthy and blocked.<sup>65</sup> It spoke of a culture and environment in which a clean and decent environment was not prioritised or valued. Despite suggestions from HMPPS that this was a shortcoming of “above establishment level” management, we share the view of HMP Liverpool’s new Governor, Pia Sinha: “There is no excuse for an unclean jail.”<sup>66</sup>

It is telling that the Prisons Minister himself focussed on the issue of broken windows across the prison estate. The criminological theory of “broken windows” describes how visible signs of crime, anti-social behaviour, and civil disorder create an environment that encourages further crime and disorder.<sup>67</sup>

So it is in our prisons, where broken windows, cockroaches, rats, and more besides, create among staff and prisoners a sense of disorder, anxiety, and learned helplessness that itself facilitates and empowers those intent on more serious crime and disorder, while disempowering and undermining those prisoners and staff who want to live and work well.

Any place where a community – in this case prisoners or staff – tolerate squalor and incivility and feel no connection or obligation to their surroundings will suffer.<sup>68</sup> Ungoverned spaces are the first signs of this descent. There is huge evidence from the field of environmental psychology supporting the view that a well-maintained living space positively influences behaviour and wellbeing.<sup>69</sup>

The collapse of maintenance outsourcing through Carillion and the deficient service provided by their counterpart Amey – with a backlog of 1,000 maintenance jobs for HMP Liverpool alone in December 2016 – has created an opportunity for change in this

63 Life in Prison: Living Conditions, HM Inspectorate of Prisons, October 2017 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2017/10/Findings-paper-Living-conditions-FINAL-.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2017/10/Findings-paper-Living-conditions-FINAL-.pdf)]

64 Life in Prison: Living Conditions, HM Inspectorate of Prisons, October 2017 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2017/10/Findings-paper-Living-conditions-FINAL-.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2017/10/Findings-paper-Living-conditions-FINAL-.pdf)]

65 Conditions at Liverpool prison the worst ever inspected, says report, The Guardian, 19 December 2017 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/dec/19/hmp-liverpool-prison-conditions-inspectors-report](http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/dec/19/hmp-liverpool-prison-conditions-inspectors-report)]

66 HM Inspectorate of Prisons Report on HMP Liverpool, House of Commons Justice Committee, 7 February 2018 [Accessed on 4 October 2018 via [publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmjust/751/751.pdf](http://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmjust/751/751.pdf)]

67 ‘Broken Windows: The police and neighbourhood safety’, The Atlantic, March 1982 [Accessed on 9 April 2019 via [www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1982/03/broken-windows/304465](http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1982/03/broken-windows/304465)]

68 As evidenced by the work of James Q. Wilson and George Kelling in 1982 – The ‘broken windows’ theory.

69 No place like home: home tours correlate with daily patterns of mood and cortisol, Saxbe D. & Repetti, R. 2009 [Accessed on 9 November 2018 via: [journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0146167209352864](http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0146167209352864)]; Bedroom Poll, National Sleep Foundation, 2012. [Accessed on 9 November 2018 via: [sleepfoundation.org/sites/default/files/bedroompoll/NSF\\_Bedroom\\_Poll\\_Report.pdf](http://sleepfoundation.org/sites/default/files/bedroompoll/NSF_Bedroom_Poll_Report.pdf)]

area to 'repatriate' prison maintenance, to develop an effective professional relationship between provider and customer, and to create additional opportunities for meaningful activity by prisoners.

With a view to the current facilities management contracts coming to an end in 2020, we make a series of recommendations to help ensure that prisons offer a decent environment and that management and leadership by the establishment on these important issues is taken forward.

**Recommendation 17:** Reinstatement of the 'Head of Works' post at every prison, as part of the senior leadership team, ensuring that a suitably qualified and skilled prison officer is directly accountable to the Governor for the maintenance and cleanliness of the prison. Every prison wing should have a dedicated, suitably trained and qualified Cleaning Officer who reports to the Head of Works and who is accountable for the state of his/her area.

**Recommendation 18:** The Head of Works and the Cleaning Officers to be supported by the creation of prison cleaning teams, consisting of properly trained and equipped and rewarded prisoners, who are available to help maintain areas and respond to problems immediately during the working day and at weekends. They would receive additional pay, recognising the value of the role, with bonuses for particularly unpleasant work.

**Recommendation 19:** Outsourced contracts should be subject to more robust contract management, with greater public accountability outlining expectations, performance and penalties levied against the provider. If contractors are penalised for poor performance there should be an immediate and public notification of where, why, and by how much.

**Recommendation 20:** In advance of the facilities management contracts ending in 2020, Governors should be provided with the opportunity to repatriate facilities management with the associated transfer of budget and as part of a wider plan to create more purposeful activity within the prison.

**Recommendation 21:** The Government's Spending Review must be built upon a sustainable approach to reduce overcrowding, to invest in robust community sentencing, to properly resource our prisons, and to set out a new-for-old programme that delivers decent, flexible, purpose-built secure accommodation to best protect local communities and facilitate reintegration.

## chapter four

## Drug-free prisons

Drugs, mobile phones and knives. I have seen it all – spice, heroin, cocaine. I have been to Brixton and seen half a box of weed before... I have used five or six prison officers myself and I got them to bring me mobile phones or Spice.

Former prisoner<sup>70</sup>

All prisons operate a criminal economy where illicit items – drugs, mobile phones, tobacco are traded. The rhetoric of drug control mirrors a corporate approach to other problems in prisons where ‘harm minimisation’ and ‘suppression’ hold sway and limit ambitions.

Thus, despite government recognition of the serious issues caused by drugs in our prisons, little progress has been made towards a unified national approach. In the 12 months to March 2018 the number of incidents where drugs were found in prisons increased to 13,119 incidents from 10,666 in the previous 12 month period, an increase of 23 per cent – though still only representing the tip of the iceberg.<sup>71</sup>

With this trade comes some of the violence associated with the illicit drug economy outside. The problem in prison is magnified by the close and relentless proximity of suppliers to potential customers who have no means of escaping their attention even if they would wish to.

Far more often, drugs, particularly the novel psychoactive substances which jails are awash with, are the only available means for prisoners to overcome crushing despair, isolation and boredom. Boredom mixed with a lucrative black market in prisons has provided the platform for obscene acts of indecency as prisoners bid for more drugs.

In 2016, footage from Forest Bank showed naked, muzzled prisoners participating in dog fights under the influence of such drugs.<sup>73</sup> Other footage obtained by the CSJ depicts prisoners being violently assaulted, being spun in tumble dryers, and brushing their teeth with soiled toilet brushes, as prisoners are exploited in return for drugs.

13%

of male prisoners developed a problem with illicit drugs during their time in prison<sup>72</sup>

70 Breaking into Prison, BBC Three, 7 November 2016 [Accessed on 26 October 2018 via [www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/p04drqgd](http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/p04drqgd)]

71 Annual HM Prison and Probation Service Digest (2017–2018), Ministry of Justice, October 2018 [Accessed on 26 October 2018 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/729485/09a-finds-in-prison-data-tool.xlsx](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/729485/09a-finds-in-prison-data-tool.xlsx)]

72 Annual Report HM Inspectorate of Prisons, 11 July 2018 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2018/07/6.4472\\_HMI-Prisons\\_AR-2017-18\\_Content\\_A4\\_Final\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2018/07/6.4472_HMI-Prisons_AR-2017-18_Content_A4_Final_WEB.pdf)]

73 Shocking prison footage shows drug-fuelled violence and naked inmates pretending to be fighting dogs, Manchester Evening News, 12 October 2016 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/shocking-prison-footage-shows-drug-12016636](http://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/shocking-prison-footage-shows-drug-12016636)]

13,199

incidents where drugs were found in prisons in the 12 months to March 2018<sup>74</sup>

Supply interdiction through the use of technology and dogs is gaining ground but must be rolled out across the entire estate. For too long the prison system has sought to deny the value of tackling supply. Our own extensive report on the issue, *Drugs in Prison*, makes the case for tackling supply in the strongest possible terms – and this is no less true today.

We welcome the recent publication of the HMPPS Drugs Strategy but believe it does not go far enough, fast enough to tackle the vectors of supply. In particular we regret that there is no straightforward commitment to having technology in place in all closed prisons to search all staff and visitors entering 100% of the time. This commitment would have a profound impact on the supply chain and would do more to bring the small but corrosive problem of staff corruption under control than any other measure. The certainty of detection would destroy the current high-gain low-risk route for drugs into prisons carried by staff.

It cannot be right that some prisons have been working hard to tackle drugs, but have had to suffer resources being diverted around the prison estate, thereby undermining their own efforts to tackle drugs. A recent HMIP inspection report of HMP Durham, for example, highlighted the issue in relation to body scanners:

... the leadership of the prison was immensely frustrated by the fact that they had no modern technology available to them to help them in their efforts to stem the flow of drugs into the prison. We were told that they had been promised some modern scanning equipment but that it had been diverted to another prison. The scale of the problem at HMP Durham and the obvious linkage to all kinds of violence were such that technological support was urgently needed.

Peter Clarke CVO OBE QPM, HM Chief Inspector of Prisons<sup>75</sup>

In addition, the drug market is highly lucrative. Estimates suggest that the illegal trade in drugs in prison could be worth £60 million<sup>76</sup> or even as much as £100 million.<sup>77</sup> The methods of obtaining drugs range from smuggling by prisoners, visitors, and staff, both in and on their person, as well as through mail, throw-overs, and the use of drones.

While society views recall to prison as further punishment, it is well-known that some prisoners deliberately seek recall so that they can re-enter prison with drugs to sell.<sup>78</sup> Prisoners report being able to make up to £3,000 in the four-week recall period, profiting from satisfying and perpetuating addictions that many prisoners face, and that some prisoners only acquire once in prison.

74 Annual HM Prison and Probation Service Digest (2017–2018), Ministry of Justice, October 2018 [Accessed on 26 October 2018 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/729485/09a-finds-in-prison-data-tool.xlsx](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/729485/09a-finds-in-prison-data-tool.xlsx)]

75 Report on an unannounced inspection of HMP Durham (24 September–5 October 2018), HM Inspectorate of Prisons, 12 February 2019 [Accessed on 9 April 2019 via [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2019/02/Durham-Web-2018.pdf](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2019/02/Durham-Web-2018.pdf)]

76 Breaking into Prison, BBC Three, 7 November 2016 [Accessed on 26 October 2018 via [www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/p04drqgd](https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/p04drqgd)]

77 *Coming Clean: Combating drug misuse in prisons*, Policy Exchange, June 2010 [Accessed on 9 January 2019 via [www.policyexchange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/coming-clean-jun-10.pdf](https://www.policyexchange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/coming-clean-jun-10.pdf)]

78 Adding Spice to the Porridge: The development of a synthetic cannabinoid market in an English prison, Ralphs, R., et al, February 2017 [Accessed on 26 October 2018 via [www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395916303073](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0955395916303073)]

It is far too easy to smuggle contraband into prison without detection. Greater investment needs to be put into security measures to both deter and catch smugglers. The use of body scanners in prisons has been endorsed by the current HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (Peter Clarke) and the former Chief Inspector of Scottish Prisons.<sup>79</sup> This new technology has the potential to revolutionise detection upon entrance to prisons. Body scanners have been adopted in the United States with great success that has been recognised in evidence given to our previous *Drugs in Prison* report:

We recently purchased a body scanner for our jail – it made a real difference. It negated the need for many strip searches, which was very useful. Those using it need to be well trained but they can detect small quantities of drugs and small weapons. We wouldn't even think about running the jail without one now – it is very useful at keeping drugs and weapons out of prison.

Mesa County Sheriff's Department

The operational use of such technology must follow good practice that emerges domestically and in line with good practice from other jurisdictions. Limits on the number of times individuals can be subject to the technology must not be allowed to undermine the vital importance of these measures.

Increasing the risk of detection through such technology is a vital measure to help protect prison staff from conditioning and exploitation, but also to help protect family members or associates from being pressured into smuggling contraband into prisons during visits. The use of this technology must not be misunderstood or be misrepresented by critics as being harmful or undermining of prison conditions or prison visits.

It is also vital that we do not shy away from the need to tackle corruption and better protect staff against such threats. This means ensuring adequate resourcing of anti-corruption activity, but also the vital need to create new opportunities for prison officers to supply actionable intelligence to anti-corruption services, with the potential to deliver anything up to immunity against prosecution in return.

We believe there is scope to develop new opportunities and incentives to encourage this information flow and to help free compromised staff from entering the spiral of corruption. It is vital that steps are taken – within the law – to dramatically increase the risks for those who engage in corrupt behaviour and those who seek to corrupt those working in or visiting prisons.

As we set out in our past report, and in Chapters 7 and 8, it is also important to reduce the demand for drugs by ensuring prisoners are able to maintain and foster positive relationships and family links, and that their time in prison is able to be spent purposefully

**225kg**  
of drugs seized  
in our prisons in  
a single year<sup>80</sup>

79 Bring body scanners into our prisons, The Sunday Post, 15 June 2013 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.sundaypost.com/news/scottish-news/bring-body-scanners-into-our-prisons](http://www.sundaypost.com/news/scottish-news/bring-body-scanners-into-our-prisons)]

80 Crackdown on drugs, drones and mobile phones in prisons, Ministry of Justice, 9 July 2017 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.gov.uk/government/news/crackdown-on-drugs-drones-and-mobile-phones-in-prisons](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/crackdown-on-drugs-drones-and-mobile-phones-in-prisons)]

and productively, preparing for release. It is a damning indictment that new psychoactive substances have undermined these efforts – and little surprise that substances, like Spice, have become known as "bird killer".<sup>81</sup>

Solving the problem of drugs in prison and the horrendous violence and disorder associated with it requires a three-pronged response with as much effort going into psycho-social rehabilitation as efforts to tackle supply and demand.

**Recommendation 22:** The roll-out of proven body scanners and waste water analysis to all closed prisons in England and Wales was a core recommendation of our *Drugs in Prison* report from 2015 and we repeat it now. It has proven effective in reducing the flow of prohibited drugs and other items into establishments in other countries, and must now be rolled out across our entire prison estate for use on prisoners, staff, and visitors.

**Recommendation 23:** The Spending Review should accommodate the need to respond to any increase in the use of drones as body scanners displace supply routes. This should be through a combination of physical and technological measures, with evaluations of their effectiveness.

**Recommendation 24:** Waste Water Analysis should be enabled, as far as technically possible, to detect prohibited drugs specified under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and also the new psychoactive substances as defined by the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016, with results published.

**Recommendation 25:** A key plank of drug demand reduction must be the restoration of fully functioning regimes and services to meaningfully and purposefully engage prisoners, coupled with a concerted effort as part of prison induction/reception procedures to educate prisoners on the risks and harms of drug use through compelling media, such as a movie with prisoners and staff.

**Recommendation 26:** A clear anti-corruption strategy must be developed and resourced, including counter-conditioning strategies, increases in intelligence-led searching of staff by police and prison security staff, and the creation of new opportunities and incentives, making prisons actively hostile environments to corruption.

**Recommendation 27:** Consideration should be given to a time-limited amnesty for new entrant prison staff who are compromised by corruption with information and full disclosure in return for immunity from prosecution. Those found engaged in corruption after the amnesty period to be subject to exemplary custodial sentences on conviction of no less than 5 years save in exceptional circumstances.

**Recommendation 28:** Interdiction of organised crime groups through a new strategic partnership with the National Crime Agency and confiscation of assets both inside and outside prison. This should also be accompanied by assertive intelligence-led multi-agency action to completely incapacitate key drug supply-chain prisoners from users within the estate by placing them in separation units until their risk is sufficiently reduced or eliminated.

**Recommendation 29:** Support the development of the new Financial Crime Unit, and associated proactive prison crimefighting and anti-corruption activity, by allowing the new unit and the CPS to retain the entirety of assets seized in relation to criminals identified as linked to the prison drugs trade.

81 Spice: The Bird Killer: What prisoners think about the use of spice and other legal highs in prison, User Voice, May 2016 [Accessed on 4 October 2018 via [www.uservoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/User-Voice-Spice-The-Bird-Killer-Report-Low-Res.pdf](http://www.uservoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/User-Voice-Spice-The-Bird-Killer-Report-Low-Res.pdf)]

# chapter five

## Tackling the violence

If you honestly asked staff the vast majority would leave if they could.  
We are not in control, it's unsafe.

Prison officer/staff

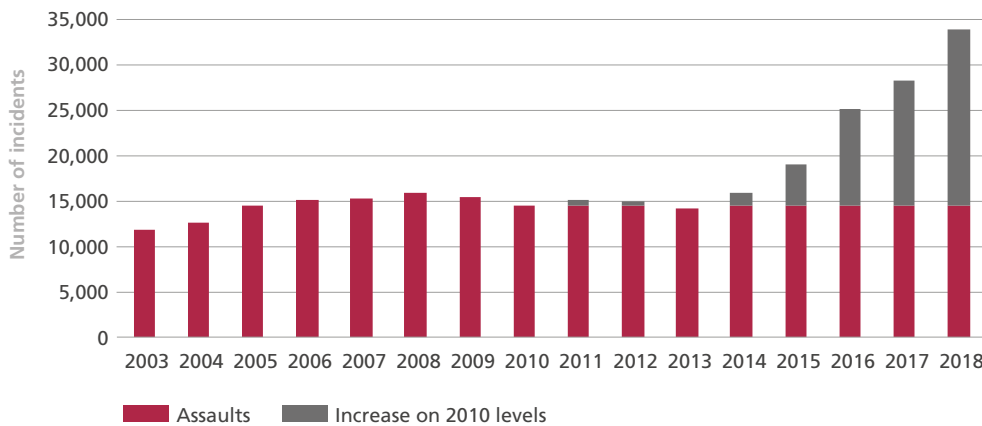
Every metric of interpersonal violence within prison has increased relentlessly over the last four years. Assaults and serious assaults against staff and prisoner-on-prisoner assaults stand at record high levels.

The latest data reveals the sustained surge in violence within our prisons, with every year since 2013 registering an increase in assaults. If the number of assaults had been maintained at 2010 levels, there would have been 50,000 fewer assaults in our prisons in the period to the end of 2018.

**33,803**

total assault incidents in the 12 months to September 2018<sup>82</sup>

Figure 7: Assault incidents and increases versus 2010



Source: Ministry of Justice<sup>83</sup>

82 Safety in custody summary tables to September 2018, Safety in Custody Quarterly: Update to September 2018, Ministry of Justice, January 2019 [Accessed on 2 March 2019 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/774892/safety-in-custody-summary-tables-2018-Q3.ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/774892/safety-in-custody-summary-tables-2018-Q3.ods)]

83 Safety in custody summary tables to September 2018, Safety in Custody Quarterly: Update to September 2018, Ministry of Justice, January 2019 [Accessed on 2 March 2019 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/774892/safety-in-custody-summary-tables-2018-Q3.ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/774892/safety-in-custody-summary-tables-2018-Q3.ods)]



Some prisoners believe that things are likely to get worse before they can get better. Speaking anonymously, one prisoner argued that the epidemic of violence was likely to become even more brutal before any serious action was taken:

I will say this, I see a prison officer dead. A screw dead in the next 18 months. I honestly believe that this whole situation is going to get worse before it gets better and it'll only turn around when a prison officer gets killed.

Prisoner<sup>84</sup>

Uncontrolled violence in prisons drives institutions into a self-sustaining vortex of disorder and undermines the social fabric of the prison. The consequences are stark:

- Prison staff adopt defensive tactics to stay safe themselves and cease to be effective.
- Dynamic security, the cornerstone of prison order formed by respectful relationships between staff and prisoners, is seriously impaired.
- Legal authority and supervision drains from areas of the prison and is replaced then subverted further by security threat groups.
- The possibility of large-scale disorder is dramatically increased as 'ungoverned spaces' proliferate and intelligence diminishes.
- Prisoners seek pragmatic but risky solutions for their own safety, e.g. gang membership or self-isolation.
- In relation to the potentially lethal and growing threat from Islamist Extremism, National Security is undermined.
- Recruitment and retention of staff in a competitive jobs market into an environment where violence is permissive becomes more difficult.
- Victimisation and its horrendous physical and mental consequences, in some cases including cases of self-harm and suicide.

The last point is particularly important: The high risk of being victimised exacerbates prison conflict.<sup>85</sup> Prisons which fail to take decisive action to stop victimisation are likely to be ones which experience high and entrenched levels of interpersonal violence.

Prisoners who have suffered trauma or adverse childhood experiences are particularly vulnerable to the effects of prison violence. All too often, prisoners are exposed to images of brutality, unavoidable triggers reminding many of their traumatic histories leading to further violence.<sup>87</sup> Unsurprisingly, these same prisoners can also be expected to resort to self-isolation, self-harm, self-medication through drug-taking, and in the most tragic cases, suicide.

**24,138**

prisoner-on-prisoner  
assault incidents in  
the 12 months to  
September 2018<sup>86</sup>

84 Inmate predicts prison officer will be dead within 18 months, Sky News, 19 September 2018 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [news.sky.com/story/inmate-predicts-prison-officer-will-be-dead-within-18-months-11502546](https://news.sky.com/story/inmate-predicts-prison-officer-will-be-dead-within-18-months-11502546)]

85 Prison Violence: The dynamics of conflict, fear, and power, Edgar, K, O'Donnell, I, and Martin, C, 2003. [Accessed on 9 November 2018 via [academic.oup.com/bjc/article-abstract/43/4/820/348527?redirectedFrom=fulltext](https://academic.oup.com/bjc/article-abstract/43/4/820/348527?redirectedFrom=fulltext)]

86 Safety in custody summary tables to September 2018, Safety in Custody Quarterly: Update to September 2018, Ministry of Justice, January 2019 [Accessed on 2 March 2019 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/774892/safety-in-custody-summary-tables-2018-Q3.ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/774892/safety-in-custody-summary-tables-2018-Q3.ods)]

87 Offending behaviour: the role of trauma and PTSD, Ardino, V, 2012 [Accessed on 4 April 2018 via [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3402156/](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3402156/)]

In responding to violent prisoners, the government needs to be mindful of the pressures of living in such an unsafe and ungoverned environment. Greater emphasis needs to be given to trauma-informed approaches to manage triggers and stabilise prisoners. The roll-out of trauma-informed approaches across the female prison estate can and should be rolled-out and built upon within the male estate.

It is deeply concerning that the latest guidance from HMPPS on violence reduction,<sup>88</sup> replete with systems and committees and structural responses to safety in prison, conflates self-harm with other forms of violence. It also reduces the focus on violence by prisoners on others to a chapter. The training for prison officers and the guidance available to staff responding to such violence must better equip them to understand and tackle the issues. Indeed, we should aspire to see proactive preventative actions taken in relation to violence within our prisons.

The de facto appeasement of widespread incivility is inevitably a function of not enough 'boots on the ground' to enforce standards of decent behaviour and again, this is a problem that any modern Government must face squarely irrespective of the economic constraints.

However, there is also an attitudinal change required in leadership which acknowledges that clamping down on prison violence is a matter of will as well as resources. Zero-tolerance of violence in the prison environment, much trumpeted by multiple HMPPS strategies and MoJ press releases is in scant evidence in our disordered prison system. Prison inspection reports are replete with examples of the opposite, including staff locking themselves away from prisoners.

A Government committed to social justice would recognise that failing to reverse the increase in violence is simply unacceptable, and would ensure that the resources and attitudinal shift is driven home as soon as possible. Failure to do so not only undermines the moral authority of our entire criminal justice system, but it also reinforces the normalisation of ever more extreme acts of violence and victimisation, which in turn leads to expensive suppression by the state when control breaks down.

We must also recognise the flawed approach of simply shuffling the most violent and disruptive prisoners around the prison estate. This approach undermines the running and safety of other establishments, while doing little to tackle the root causes. We therefore call for the creation of new Centres of Excellence to manage the most violent and disruptive prisoners, helping reduce the need for disruptive and often in-effective prisoner transfers.

Alongside the foregoing recommendations, we set out measures to improve accountability for driving down prison violence, taking positive action to prevent it, and ensuring that there is visibility across HMPPS and the Ministry of Justice of the very real issues facing the frontline in our prisons.

10,085

assaults on  
prison staff in  
the 12 months to  
September 2018<sup>89</sup>

18%

annual increase  
in number of  
prisoner-on-prisoner  
assaults<sup>90</sup>

<sup>88</sup> PSI 64 2011 Safer Custody

<sup>89</sup> Safety in custody summary tables to September 2018, Safety in Custody Quarterly: Update to September 2018, Ministry of Justice, January 2019 [Accessed on 2 March 2019 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/774892/safety-in-custody-summary-tables-2018-Q3.ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/774892/safety-in-custody-summary-tables-2018-Q3.ods)]

<sup>90</sup> Safety in custody summary tables to September 2018, Safety in Custody Quarterly: Update to September 2018, Ministry of Justice, January 2019 [Accessed on 2 March 2019 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/774892/safety-in-custody-summary-tables-2018-Q3.ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/774892/safety-in-custody-summary-tables-2018-Q3.ods)]

**Recommendation 30:** Every establishment should have a Prison Violence and Crime Reduction Board, with senior representation from the local Crown Prosecution Service, the local police service, the POA, IMB, and local Police and Crime Commissioner. It should meet monthly, with minutes copied to the Area Manager and Ministerial Taskforce.

**Recommendation 31:** Establish two pilot control prisons – one in the North and one in the South – as Centres of Excellence for managing those offenders with a repeated history of serious non-compliance with regimes including assaultative behaviour. These establishments would have an emphasis on psycho-social and public health interventions to treat the causes of violent behaviour using the latest research from the UK and overseas.

**Recommendation 32:** The Director of Public Prosecutions should issue new guidance to the Crown Prosecution Service advising that a robust approach be taken to investigating and prosecuting violence and crime within our prisons, setting out prison-specific factors to address in weighing the public interest.

**Recommendation 33:** Overhaul prison officer induction (POELT) and in-service training to include explanation of dynamics within prisons that can contribute to incivility, bullying, intimidation, and violence, both between prisoners and against staff – and strategies to tackle it. This should incorporate lived experience from ex-prisoners who can convincingly explain the importance of tackling violence and low-level incivility. The training should dedicate substantial time to the tools and techniques that can be used to confront and police low-level incivility before it escalates into violence.

**Recommendation 34:** Pilot the use of Virtual Reality (VR) to help equip prison officers and prisoners with skills and experience in de-escalating and responding to situations. This could be built into POELT for prison officers, with updated scenarios rolled-out through continuation training as new threats emerge or lessons are learned. For prisoners, this could relate to common flashpoints within prison and also, with an eye to release, situations beyond the prison walls.

## chapter six

# Better mental health

I can't take much more, Miss. I'm on the edge – one more thing and I'm going over, I swear ... I can't get my meds. I can't get in to see a nurse. I'm not sleeping ... I feel like I'm going crazy. I feel like I'm going to lose my head at any moment.

Prisoner<sup>91</sup>

We have built our system of imprisonment, quite rightly, on the value and benefit of interpersonal relationships to keep people safe and effect change. A demoralised and denuded workforce is not the best starting point for a safe prison environment for staff, visitors and prisoners.

Conversely, confident, well-trained and well-supported front-line staff can make a huge difference. One of the tragedies of a managerialist approach to deploying staff is that such systems know the price of everything and the value of nothing. The squeezing out of meaningful contact between staff and prisoners in pursuit of efficiency is a ruinously false economy. Contact is the human side of a safety culture.

While there is a welcome and substantial drop in fatal incidents, self-harm attempts continue to rise remorselessly.<sup>93</sup> Since 2008 we have seen a relentless increase in the rate of self-harm incidents. The prison service's bureaucratisation has not only removed the humane carer aspect of a prison officer's job but it has also created workforce divisions. Prison staff are reluctant to share responsibility for this vulnerable cohort. Instead, a culture of negative myths and scapegoating has emerged, further obscuring access to vital treatment.<sup>94</sup>

**49%**

of women prisoners have attempted suicide at some point<sup>92</sup>

**5.1**

times more likely to die from a self-inflicted death if you're in prison compared to the general population<sup>95</sup>

91 Prison Survey and MQPL/MQPL+ Survey Reports obtained from HMPPS/MoJ by Freedom of Information Act request in 2018.

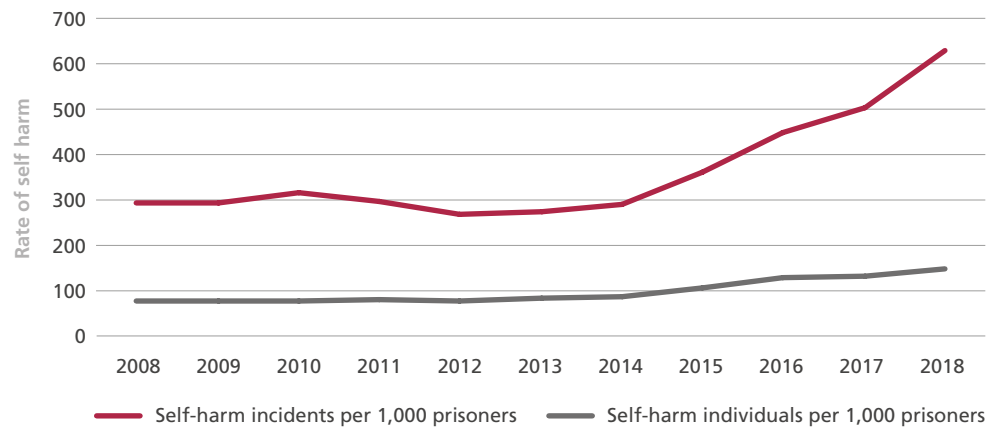
92 A Woman Centred Approach, Centre for Social Justice, 14 March 2018 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/library/a-woman-centred-approach-freeing-vulnerable-women-revolving-door-crime](http://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/library/a-woman-centred-approach-freeing-vulnerable-women-revolving-door-crime)]

93 Self-harm reached a record high of 42,837 incidents in the 12 months to September 2017, up 12% from the previous year. Safety in Custody Statistics, England and Wales. 2017. [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics)]

94 Self-harm by adult men in prison: A Rapid Evidence Assessment, Pope, L, 2018. [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/739521/self-harm-adult-men-prison-2018.pdf](http://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/739521/self-harm-adult-men-prison-2018.pdf)]

95 Prison Reform Fact Sheet 2018, Prison Reform Trust, 2018 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/Bromley%20Briefings/Summer%202018%20factfile.pdf](http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/Bromley%20Briefings/Summer%202018%20factfile.pdf)]

Figure 8: Rate of Self-Harm Incidents per 1,000 prisoners



Source: Safety in Custody Statistics, England and Wales<sup>96</sup>

## 1 in 4

prisoners believe their prison is good at providing care for those at risk of suicide<sup>97</sup>

Insufficient support exists for those prisoners struggling to adapt to the pressures of life behind bars. The bureaucratisation of support for those in despair in pursuit of auditable safety – by ACCT (Assessment, Care in Custody, and Teamwork) – spectacularly misses the point. In one analysis of the problem, a prisoner summed up the value of front-line prison staff who have the time to get to know their charges:

There is one particular officer who can tell just by talking to me how my mood is. He notices if I am down, if I don't eat, if I don't socialise. I rarely see my offender supervisor but if each officer adopted one side of one landing, got to know his or her prisoners and kept casual watch, warning signs could easily and quickly be detected.

Prisoner<sup>98</sup>

We have witnessed a shift to mechanised relationship structures in prison. This approach is epitomised in the recent invention of OMIC (Offender Management in Custody). This model suggests arbitrary meeting periods between prisoners and prison officers. Staffing levels are already severely overstretched, and thus prison officers are not afforded enough time to develop deep relationships based on trust and mutual respect and understanding with prisoners. Severe distress is not timetabled.

Self-harm may often be symptomatic of greater mental health issues lying underneath the surface, un confronted by prison officers. In a recent evaluation of 109 prison suicides in England and Wales, it was discovered that in over half of the cases the prisoner had self-harmed in the last month.<sup>99</sup> Crisis levels of self-harm spurred by mental health issues need to be confronted.

<sup>96</sup> Safety in custody summary tables to September 2018, Safety in Custody Quarterly: Update to September 2018, Ministry of Justice, January 2019 [Accessed on 2 March 2019 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/774892/safety-in-custody-summary-tables-2018-Q3.ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/774892/safety-in-custody-summary-tables-2018-Q3.ods)]

<sup>97</sup> Prison Survey obtained by a Freedom of Information request.

<sup>98</sup> Keeping safe – preventing suicide and self-harm in custody: prisoners' views collated by the IAP, Independent Advisory Panel on Deaths in Custody, December 2017 [Accessed on 5 February 2018 via [iapedeathsincustody.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Keeping-Safe-FINAL-Dec-2017.pdf](https://iapedeathsincustody.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Keeping-Safe-FINAL-Dec-2017.pdf)]

<sup>99</sup> Safety in custody summary tables to September 2018, Safety in Custody Quarterly: Update to September 2018, Ministry of Justice, January 2019 [Accessed on 2 March 2019 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/774892/safety-in-custody-summary-tables-2018-Q3.ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/774892/safety-in-custody-summary-tables-2018-Q3.ods)]

However, suicide is different from self-harm not just because of a difference of degree. Studies suggest that self-harm is often instrumental and a method that prisoners use to regulate their emotions whereas suicide cases in prison are normally tied to situational factors. Often, suicide is linked to wider despair surrounding family relationships or feelings of depression. As highlighted in this manifesto, family relationships are a golden thread capable of spurring much wider rehabilitation beyond the estate. The prison service needs to acknowledge the importance of emergency family contact in cases of crisis management.

52,814

reported incidents of self-harm in the 12 months ending September 2018<sup>100</sup>

**Recommendation 35:** Create a set of minimum standards to ensure the readiness and availability of crisis management measures for prisoners at risk of self-harm and suicide. This should include a means of ensuring emergency family contact.

**Recommendation 36:** Ensure induction training and in-service training for prison officers/staff in relation to trauma-informed approaches to self-harm, including the creation of a prison-friendly menu of distraction techniques and approved professional practice. This would embed and support the adoption of distraction and other techniques to help individuals better manage and reduce self-harm. These can include “phoning a friend”, a positive task or activity that occupies the hands, the use of ice buckets or elastic bands, and the ability to exercise.<sup>101</sup>

**Recommendation 37:** The Spending Review must recognise that if prisons continue to be used as places of safety for suspects/offenders who are in mental health crisis, regional secure specialist units ought to be created, led by NHS clinicians who have the time, expertise and resources to keep prisoners safe and return them to health.

**Recommendation 38:** Ensure that every wing of every prison has a network of listeners and mentors, or at least has specific time-bound plans to build and develop such networks.

<sup>100</sup> Prison Reform Fact Sheet 2018, Prison Reform Trust, 2018 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/Bromley%20Briefings/Summer%202018%20factfile.pdf](http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/Bromley%20Briefings/Summer%202018%20factfile.pdf)]

<sup>101</sup> Prisoners Self-Harm Factsheet, Rethink, 2017 [Accessed on 4 April 2018 via [www.rethink.org/resources/p/prisoners-self-harm](http://www.rethink.org/resources/p/prisoners-self-harm)]

## chapter seven

# Strengthening families and relationships

During my time in prison one of the hardest things I had to deal with was not having my mum and dad around. That trauma got to me so bad at times, I used to cry myself to sleep wishing they was there to support me through my sentence.

Former prisoner<sup>102</sup>

Families are often the main source of emotional and rehabilitative support for prisoners both during their sentence and after leaving the prison gate. Visits from relatives and loved ones can provide a foundation on which prisoners can build a new life when they leave prison.

As set out in Lord Farmer's Review, families of offenders offer a network of potential support that has been under-utilised. Families of offenders have personal motivations to encourage relatives to build a better life for themselves. Further, they are often best placed to offer consistent and meaningful support.<sup>104</sup>

Research by the Ministry of Justice has found that for a prisoner who receives visits from a partner or family member, the odds of reoffending are 39 per cent lower than for prisoners who had not received such visits.<sup>105</sup>

**63%**

of prisoners' sons went on to offend themselves<sup>103</sup>

102 The Importance of Strengthening Prisoners' Family Ties to Prevent Reoffending and Reduce Intergenerational Crime, Lord Farmer, August 2017 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/642244/farmer-review-report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/642244/farmer-review-report.pdf)]

103 The Importance of Strengthening Prisoners' Family Ties to Prevent Reoffending and Reduce Intergenerational Crime by Lord Farmer, Ministry of Justice, August 2017 [Accessed on 02/04/19 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/642244/farmer-review-report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/642244/farmer-review-report.pdf)]

104 The Importance of Strengthening Prisoners' Family Ties to Prevent Reoffending and Reduce Intergenerational Crime by Lord Farmer, Ministry of Justice, August 2017 [Accessed on 02/04/19 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/642244/farmer-review-report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/642244/farmer-review-report.pdf)]

105 Factors linked to reoffending: a one-year follow-up of prisoners who took part in the Resettlement Surveys 2001, 2003, and 2004, May C., Sharma N. and Stewart D, 2008 [Accessed on 4 April 2018 via [lemosandcrane.co.uk/resources/Factors%20linked%20to%20reoffending%2008.pdf](https://leamosandcrane.co.uk/resources/Factors%20linked%20to%20reoffending%2008.pdf)]

66%

of women in prison are mothers of dependent children<sup>106</sup>

Despite support for the remedial effects of family, imprisonment can put a great strain on these relationships. Understaffing and overcrowding is impeding consistency across the prison service with respect to family contact. Prisoners who are not given regular hours of out of cell activity struggle to maintain consistent contact with their loved ones on the outside.

If prisons are truly to be places of reform, we cannot ignore the reality that a supportive relationship with at least one person is indispensable to a prisoner's ability to get through their sentence well and achieve rehabilitation.

Lord Farmer<sup>107</sup>

We welcome the announcement for the increased availability of in-cell telephony for prisoners, allowing them greater contact with their family and loved ones.

However, far too little attention has been given to a coordinated approach across the estate. Family relationships are crucial levers of rehabilitation, familial bonds fundamentally underly self-reform. The government must explicitly acknowledge the priority of maintaining family contact in the context of the prison service. As Lord Farmer recognises, a single line of accountability with regards to prisoner contact with families does not currently exist in the prison service.

Families should be more involved in creating resettlement plans for prisoners. It is worth acknowledging that prisoners' families can be both negatively and positively affected by the use of Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL). Family members are the best positioned to evaluate how feasible it is to resettle an offender back into their previous community and the ripple effects that resettlement may have for the wider family unit. Therefore, greater integration should exist between families and governors to ensure that resettlement is based on thorough knowledge of offender circumstances.

Greater emphasis needs to be given to the importance of prisoner relationships with their children. There exists a high correlation between having a father in prison and sons offending in the future: 65 per cent of boys with a convicted parent go on to offend themselves.<sup>109</sup> Although we cannot induce causality from this statistic alone, the government should recognise that family relationships deserve focus and attention. Sustaining trusted relationships can give offenders a reason to avoid future engagement with the criminal justice system.

39%

lower odds of reoffending for prisoners who receive visits from families<sup>108</sup>

106 Mothers in prison: The sentencing of mothers and the rights of the child, Epstein, R, 2014 [Accessed on 28 September via [howardleague.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/HLWP\\_3\\_2014.pdf](http://howardleague.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/HLWP_3_2014.pdf)]

107 The Importance of Strengthening Prisoners' Family Ties to Prevent Reoffending and Reduce Intergenerational Crime, Lord Farmer, August 2017 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/642244/farmer-review-report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/642244/farmer-review-report.pdf)]

108 The Importance of Strengthening Prisoners' Family Ties to Prevent Reoffending and Reduce Intergenerational Crime, Lord Farmer, August 2017 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/642244/farmer-review-report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/642244/farmer-review-report.pdf)]

109 Children of offenders review: a joint Department for Children, Schools and Families/Ministry of Justice review to consider how to support children of prisoners to achieve better outcomes, Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2007 [Accessed on 29 October 2018 via [dera.ioe.ac.uk/7375](http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/7375)]



## Promising Programme: Routes2Change at HMP Brixton

Prison Advice and Care Trust (Pact) is building a new model of practice drawing on learning from a range of evaluated innovations it has invented and piloted over the past 20 years, including 'First Night' provision, Family Engagement Workers, prison-based relationship and parenting education programmes, and community-based support for prisoners' children and families.

Routes2Change brings all of this work together for the first time, and so rather than being an innovation per se, brings together models of service which Pact has already demonstrated to work into a strategic end-to-end approach, in partnership with HMP Brixton, which is London's only Category C Resettlement prison.

A team of 'Family Resettlement Practitioners' is being recruited, who will take a whole family approach, working within the prison and in the community. All prisoners will be invited to a Family Assessment interview, from which a dedicated Pact worker will identify those key relationships which are most likely to be a positive feature in a prisoner's resettlement journey, as well as identifying the risks and those relationships/social networks which are more likely to be harmful.

Prisoners with more than 3 months left to serve will be offered a Family Casework service. Family members will be contacted by the community-based team and offered support, through well-trained Family Befriending volunteers who will be supervised by the prison-based Pact worker.

Through Family Conferencing and Mediation, a Family Care Plan will be developed to support the whole family during custody, with an integrated plan delivered both in custody and community during sentence, and for up to 6 months after release. This will include support for families when Home Detention Curfew is offered as an alternative towards the end of custody.

Pact is also recruiting a Therapeutic Play Worker, who will train a small team of volunteers to identify prisoners' children who are in need of additional support or advocacy. The parents/carers of children who are identified as being in need of further support will be contacted by Pact and offered a bespoke package of family support. This might include accompanying parents to children's schools, seeking support from the local authority, GP or other agency, or an invitation to a peer support group. This will primarily be on a voluntary engagement basis, but where significant safeguarding, child protection and public protection issues arise these will be managed through formal procedures to minimise risk of harm.

Through intelligent casework and a whole family approach, Pact and HMP Brixton will work together to access a range of targeted family interventions, including Pact programmes such as 'Building Stronger Families' and 'Within My Reach' and 'Time to Connect', through accessing funding from the new Prison Education Framework. A key feature of the programme will be to build close collaboration with statutory services in the local London Borough of Lambeth, who, together with the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), will be represented on the project's Advisory Board.

**43%**

of sentenced prisoners lose contact with their families<sup>110</sup>

As the Routes2Change model recognises, when men enter prison, their duties as a father should not be negated. As a father, they still have a stake in their child's emotional, physical and educational wellbeing. It is worth noting that the necessary precautions need to be taken to ensure that the effect of paternal supervision does not pose a risk

<sup>110</sup> Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners, Social Exclusion Unit, 2002 [Accessed on 23 March 2019 via [www.bristol.ac.uk/poverty/downloads/keyofficialdocuments/Reducing%20Reoffending.pdf](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/poverty/downloads/keyofficialdocuments/Reducing%20Reoffending.pdf)]

to the family at large. With the necessary vetoes in place, fathers in prison should be given access to information about their child's performance in school so that they can provide continuous emotional support which is not hindered by the lack of physical contact. The Routes2Change programme at HMP Brixton promises to help build on what works in this space.

Families need to be willing and able to engage with the rehabilitation process, so harnessing the resource of good family relationships must be a golden thread running through the processes of all prisons.

Lord Farmer<sup>111</sup>

**312,000**

children affected  
by parental  
imprisonment  
each year<sup>113</sup>

Similarly, to help identify the children of prisoners we propose the incorporation of a family structure section within the Manual of Guidance (MG) for prosecutions. This would help improve identification of dependent children at an early stage, so that the appropriate authorities can be notified and the needs of children can be assessed. Recent analysis has suggested that as many as 312,000 children are affected by parental imprisonment each year, a number that is significantly in excess of previous estimates.<sup>112</sup>

We do, however, recognise that family relationships and contact are not universally positive. In cases where familial contact would put individuals in danger, greater caution needs to be taken. The assumption that all family contact is positive has potentially dangerous effects and thus must be tempered and accounted for in sentence planning and the management of offenders with sensitivity to relationship histories.

In conclusion, we reiterate the need for Government to continue to adopt and implement the recommendations set out by Lord Farmer's Review and to pay due regard to the forthcoming follow-on Review examining how to support women to engage with their families and reduce reoffending.

It is also right to recognise that the Ministry of Justice and HMPPS have both made significant progress in driving positive change, with two family conferences per year for Family leads in prisons as well as voluntary sector organisations.

We also look forward to Ministers continuing to emphasise the importance of family and other significant relationships in relation to effective rehabilitation and reintegration, given the power they have to motivate healthy and supportive change.

111 Final Report from The Farmer Review, Ministry of Justice, August 2017 [Accessed on 1 April 2019 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/642244/farmer-review-report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/642244/farmer-review-report.pdf)]

112 Children of Prisoners: Fixing a broken system, Crest Advisory, February 2019 [Accessed on 1 April 2019 via [crestadvisory.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Children-of-Prisoners-full-report-web-version.pdf](https://crestadvisory.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Children-of-Prisoners-full-report-web-version.pdf)]

113 Children of Prisoners: Fixing a broken system, Crest Advisory, February 2019 [Accessed on 1 April 2019 via [crestadvisory.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Children-of-Prisoners-full-report-web-version.pdf](https://crestadvisory.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Children-of-Prisoners-full-report-web-version.pdf)]

**Recommendation 39:** The Government's Spending Review should factor in a long-term new-for-old prison building programme that ensures the availability of local well-connected prison capacity, to ensure prisoners can build or maintain healthy and positive links with families.

**Recommendation 40:** With in-cell telephony on the increase, it is important that steps are taken to ensure that over time, the cost of making a call falls, particularly once a reasonable return on capital has been achieved. At present it is not clear that the current contract allows, encourages, incentivises, or requires the cost of calls to fall over time.

**Recommendation 41:** Improve measures to identify family relationships and, in particular, dependant children by incorporating a family structure section within the Manual of Guidance (MG) for prosecutions to help identify dependent children at an early stage and to ensure identification when entering custody.

**Recommendation 42:** Create a Community Liaison Officer (CLO), if one does not exist, with a specific mandate to build relationships that reach out into the community and promote the message that the prison is part of the community. There would be an expectation that a CLO could and should be identifying and creating opportunities with employers, voluntary and third sector, and local transport providers (e.g. bus companies) to help facilitate visits.

**Recommendation 43:** Government should create a new form of Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL), built around earned release and community payback. This would be based upon the proposals outlined in *A Woman-Centred Approach* and help reduce pressure on prison while reinforcing positive behaviours and helping strengthen families and links to employment and education.

## chapter eight

## Work-ready offenders

The blockages to successful rehabilitation ... [includes] the inability of prisoners to get out of their cells to purposeful activity, and for that activity and education to be actually linked to employment. I have seen far too much menial and frankly meaningless activity going on in jails.

Peter Clarke<sup>114</sup>

There is overwhelming and conclusive evidence that offenders who find stable and legitimate employment on release are much less likely to reoffend.<sup>115</sup> Getting offenders into work makes economic sense. It relieves the welfare and criminal justice system of an otherwise heavy burden and adds to the tax take but the real benefits lie off the balance sheet.

Many offenders are highly motivated to change their lives and desperate to put something back to repair the harm they have caused. Recovering dignity and self-esteem through work isn't just a selfish benefit – it stems the flow of future victims.

Getting prisoners work ready and skilled up for actual job vacancies ought to be the primary function of every prison after secure and ordered custody. In practice, it comes a poor third with dysfunction, low ambition and fragmentation dogging every step of the journey between offending and employment.

This fragmentation has been recognised by Parliament but with little obvious being done to put it right:

The problem of employment support in prison is partly one of coordination. Currently, there is no clear strategy for how different agencies, in different prisons, should work together to achieve the common goal of getting ex-offenders into work.<sup>117</sup>

83%

of prisoners are not in P45 employment a year after their release<sup>116</sup>

114 Justice Committee, Peter Clarke, 2018 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [parliamentlive.tv/Event/Index/2f0a047f-6ae5-4571-8782-6a045c589c24](http://parliamentlive.tv/Event/Index/2f0a047f-6ae5-4571-8782-6a045c589c24)]

115 Analysis of the impact of employment on re-offending following release from custody, using Propensity Score Matching, Ministry of Justice, 2013 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/217412/impact-employment-reoffending.pdf](http://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/217412/impact-employment-reoffending.pdf)]

116 Jobs strategy aims to cut reoffending, Ministry of Justice, 24 May 2018. [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.gov.uk/government/news/jobs-strategy-aims-to-cut-reoffending](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/jobs-strategy-aims-to-cut-reoffending)]

117 Support for ex-offenders, House of Commons Work and Pensions Committee, 14 November 2016 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmworpen/58/58.pdf](http://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmworpen/58/58.pdf)]

Far too often, the statutory authorities responsible for helping short term sentenced offenders through the gate from custody to employment are unable to assist offenders materially or psychologically in those vital few days when the possibility of a fresh start is overwhelmed by a return to offending either to provide for the basics of life or to cope with hopelessness.

Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) Responsible Officers in the community appeared to give very little thought to prisoners until they were on the brink of release.<sup>118</sup>

**50%**

of employers would not consider hiring an ex-offender<sup>119</sup>

Moreover, offenders are often considered only suitable for certain types of employment that reflect the availability and quality of skills and training in the prison they are located in. There is little focus on nurturing often latent entrepreneurial skills. There is not enough focus on the enormous potential of the digital world to connect the prisoner in his/her cell with online training and support to get them work ready by matching their skills to vacancies while still in custody. We have a buoyant jobs market with huge demands for labour, particularly in large infrastructure projects.

More of an emphasis should be given to sustainable models of employment in prison. We have seen examples of amazing practice, Census Group<sup>120</sup>, Tempus Novo<sup>121</sup>, Clean Sheet<sup>122</sup>, Recycling Lives<sup>123</sup> and The Clink<sup>124</sup> to name a few. These companies not only provide an incubator for skill development but also a tangible work opportunity outside of prison, offering coherence to an otherwise muddled system. Incentives should be offered to employers to work with prisoners as they can provide a loyal and conscientious workforce.

Rehabilitating people, getting them into jobs and contributing positively to the community is the best outcome for them, their families and all of us. It keeps us safe and gives offenders the chance to turn their lives around.

Rt Hon David Gauke MP<sup>125</sup>

The system as a whole is suffering from relentless confusion over the status and role of reform prisons and resettlement prisons where many short-term offenders leave custody.

It is not just a poverty of resource that has stifled efforts to rehabilitate, it is also a poverty of ambition. It does not have to be like this. Prisoners can and should leave prison with more than a £46 discharge grant. They can and should leave prison with the skills and confidence to secure and sustain employment, allowing them to support themselves and their loved ones without recourse to crime.

118 An Inspection of Through the Gate Resettlement Services for Short-Term Prisoners, Criminal Justice Joint Inspection, October 2016 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/cjji/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2016/09/Through-the-Gate.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/cjji/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2016/09/Through-the-Gate.pdf)]

119 YouGov Polling, YouGov, 2016 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus\\_uploads/document/42yrwvixdo/YG-Archive-160126-DWPwaves.pdf](https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/42yrwvixdo/YG-Archive-160126-DWPwaves.pdf)]

120 Census Group. [Accessed on 26 October 2018 via [www.censusgroup.co.uk](http://www.censusgroup.co.uk)]

121 Tempus Novo. [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.tempusnovo.org](http://www.tempusnovo.org)]

122 Clean Sheet. [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [cleansheet.org.uk](http://cleansheet.org.uk)]

123 Recycling Lives. [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.recyclinglives.com](http://www.recyclinglives.com)]

124 The Clink. [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [thelinkcharity.org](http://thelinkcharity.org)]

125 From Sentencing to Incentives, The Rt Hon David Gauke MP, 10 July 2018 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [medium.com/csj-criminal-justice/from-sentencing-to-incentives-how-prisons-can-better-protect-the-public-from-the-effects-of-crime-5ea3ce9184ba](https://medium.com/csj-criminal-justice/from-sentencing-to-incentives-how-prisons-can-better-protect-the-public-from-the-effects-of-crime-5ea3ce9184ba)]

In support of their reintegration into society and helping ensure that work can be a key pathway out of crime, a standardised process must be developed that helps ensure offenders leave prison as work-ready as possible, with access to a basic bank account, an email account, an up-to-date CV, and a form of photographic ID.

In 2017, 6,500 bank accounts were opened for prisoners and while this represents a record number, it clearly does not reflect every prisoner having a bank account and should be seen as evidence of the fact that it is possible to equip prisoners with the basics they need to be work-ready on release.

The New Futures Network and related work around employment, education, and tackling homelessness, are all vital steps towards ensuring that when prisoners walk back out through the prison gates they are in a work-ready position. There is a rich and growing ecosystem of charities – like Tempus Novo and Clean Sheet – that are already working hard to deliver employment and other positive outcomes, it is vital that these foundations are built on.

We should also go further and have the ambition, as part of the Spending Review, to ensure that work in prison pays – as it does in the community – with a commitment to the National Minimum Wage, with deductions made in relation to both ‘bed and board’ and compensation to victims. This could, with appropriate calculation, allow for the creation of a Prison Living Wage that would simultaneously recognise the unique conditions of prison, while also helping incentivise positive engagement with work and education, while also helping prisoners to save for release, or otherwise avoid entering debt while in prison.<sup>127</sup>

These steps – that can be realised – help lay the groundwork for the repetition of our calls from *A Woman-Centred Approach* and *Desperate for a Fix* in which we make the case for ensuring that every offender with an identified financial need leaves prison with access to a minimum of the Core Allowance of Universal Credit, helping reduce crime and reinforcing the pro-social expectation of resettlement into the community.

Finally, research in Norway has found that imprisonment can reduce crime and recidivism, but that this is driven largely by increasing participation in job training programmes for previously unemployed offenders, thus increasing employment and earnings:

Contrary to the widely embraced ‘nothing works’ doctrine, these findings demonstrate that time spent in prison with a focus on rehabilitation can indeed be preventive for a large segment of the criminal population.

Manudeep Bhuller *et al* (2019)<sup>128</sup>

**18%**  
of people coming out of prison had a job beforehand<sup>126</sup>

126 Bedford Prison, House of Commons, 13 September 2018 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2018-09-13/debates/BFA2E35C-5624-4637-964C-4B23590C1372/BedfordPrison](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2018-09-13/debates/BFA2E35C-5624-4637-964C-4B23590C1372/BedfordPrison)]

127 It is worth noting that while many prisoners get into debt within prison as a result of buying drugs on credit, other prisoners find themselves in debt simply as a result of obtaining permitted everyday items within prison. A Prison Living Wage, taking account of canteen prices, could help address this issue.

128 Manudeep Bhuller, Gordon B. Dahl, Katrine V. Løken & Magne Mogstad, ‘Incarceration, Recidivism, and Employment’, *Journal of Political Economy* (forthcoming) – NBER Working Paper No. 22648. [Accessed on 2 April 2019 via [www.nber.org/papers/w22648.pdf](https://www.nber.org/papers/w22648.pdf)]

It is therefore vital that turning around our prisons recognises the vital importance of increasing employability through job training programmes. There is much to build on, including looking at how successful charities like Tempus Novo and Clean Sheet, can be facilitated to scale or, as appropriate, be replicated across the country.

**Recommendation 44:** Government should develop a genuine employment strategy within and beyond the prison gate, learning from the best approaches, including those at home and overseas, to ensure that the emerging evidence of effective rehabilitation and crime reduction linked to improving employment outcomes is rolled out across the prison and probation services. Where appropriate, this should connect with the Troubled Families Programme and a recognition that work remains the best way out of poverty, and one of the best routes out of crime.

**Recommendation 45:** Government should ensure that every offender with an identified financial need leaves prison with access to a minimum of the Core Allowance of Universal Credit, helping reduce crime and reinforcing the pro-social expectation of resettlement into the community and entry into employment.

**Recommendation 46:** Government should introduce a standardised process that ensures offenders leave prison as work-ready and financially independent as possible, with access to a basic bank account, an email account, an up-to-date CV, and a form of photographic ID.

**Recommendation 47:** The use of secure mobile technology should be rapidly expanded in resettlement prisons to enable offenders to connect directly with remote training and skills providers who offer on-line courses and access vacancy websites.

## chapter nine

# Relationships, incentives, and legitimacy

There's no relationship between staff and prisoners... All they see of staff is when they're unlocking and locking again. That's not a relationship. There's nothing to build on.

Prisoner

Prisons only function with the permission of prisoners. This is an inescapable fact of penal life which is well understood by the people who live and work together inside our prison system. It also stands our system of imprisonment apart from other countries – including liberal democracies – that operate prisons laced with guard towers where the threat of lethal force against prisoners is used to maintain order.

In the British penal model, power, control and influence is exercised in a subtler way. It primarily depends on a blend of quality relationships between staff and prisoners and the existence of procedural fairness.

The general functioning of prison life, while at root coercive, must therefore depend on compliance of the established rules by the inmates, and indeed, by the prison officers in enforcing such rules in a fair and consistent way.<sup>130</sup>

Legitimacy also derives from the highest possible levels of autonomy where prisoners can take control of their own lives, consistent with the realities of security. We cannot expect offenders who are absolved of all personal responsibility in custody to perform well when through the gate and back into society.

Disorder engulfed HMP Birmingham in 2016 with at least 500 prisoners participating in a devastating 14-hour long riot. Reports later suggested that the riot, which cost the government roughly £6 million, could have been prevented.<sup>132</sup> This is just one high profile

20%

of prisoners spend less than two hours out of cell on a weekday<sup>129</sup>

2 in 5

disagree that the regime in their prison is fair<sup>131</sup>

129 Annual Report HM Inspectorate. 2018. *HM Inspectorate of Prisons*. [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2018/07/6.4472\\_HMI-Prisons\\_AR-2017-18\\_Content\\_A4\\_Final\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2018/07/6.4472_HMI-Prisons_AR-2017-18_Content_A4_Final_WEB.pdf)]

130 Prison Legitimacy and Procedural Fairness: A Multilevel Examination of Prisoners in England and Wales, Ian Brunton-Smith & Daniel J. McCarthy, 2016, DOI: 10.1080/07418825.2015.1023215

131 Prison Survey and MQPL/MQPL+ Survey Reports obtained from HMPPS/MoJ by Freedom of Information Act request in 2018.

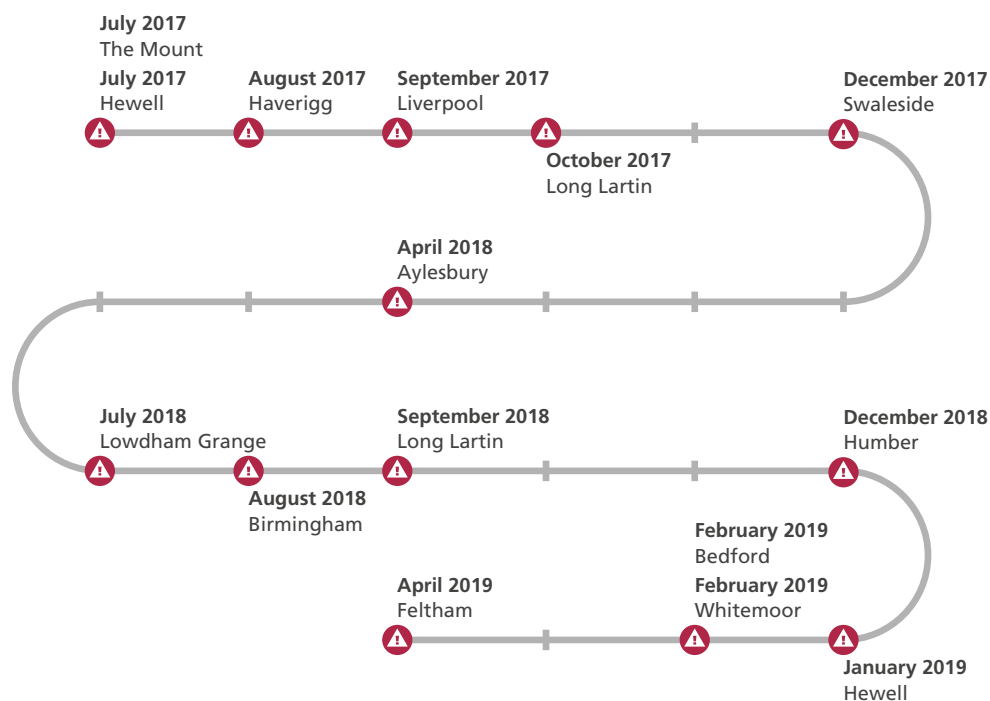
132 Birmingham Prison Riot Should Have Been Stopped Sooner, The Guardian, 20 August 2018 [Accessed September 2018 via [www.theguardian.com/society/2018/aug/20/birmingham-prison-riot-should-have-been-stopped-sooner](http://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/aug/20/birmingham-prison-riot-should-have-been-stopped-sooner)]



example of the dissent to violence our prison service is facing. Our analysis shows that over the last two years, the prison service has been blighted by a breakdown of legitimacy as evidenced by the frequency of riots across the estate.

**£6m**  
cost of prison riot at  
HMP Birmingham<sup>133</sup>

Figure 9: Timeline of prison disturbances reported in the media



**40%**  
agree that their  
prison is poor at  
treating prisoners  
with respect<sup>134</sup>

When legitimacy breaks down in prisons, the consequences for everyone in that community are severe. Moreover, the competence of the Government is brought into question as the public see prisons in their local communities struggle with the pressure of controlling severely dangerous unrest.

In many cases, legitimacy – that contract between staff and prisoners – dissolves into disorder because of a toxic mix of boredom, squalor, ineffectual authority and arbitrarily curtailed regimes and services. Maintaining order is less difficult, expensive and traumatic than regaining it. However, it is clear that traditional means of reinforcing and rewarding good behaviour in prisons – the Incentives and Earned Privileges (IEP) system has manifestly failed to do so despite attempts to beef up the punitive aspects of it.<sup>135</sup>

Prisons are uniquely sensitive environments to order. Maintaining it requires a complex and much underrated mixture of firmness, fairness, tact, tolerance and self-control by prison staff. It does not emanate from micromanagement imposed from above. It does not stem from written policies or fatuous managerialism. It is the expression of muscular humanity

133 Birmingham Prison Riot Should Have Been Stopped Sooner, The Guardian, 20 August 2018 [Accessed on September 2018 via [www.theguardian.com/society/2018/aug/20/birmingham-prison-riot-should-have-been-stopped-sooner](http://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/aug/20/birmingham-prison-riot-should-have-been-stopped-sooner)]

134 Prison Survey and MQPL/MQPL+ Survey Reports obtained from HMPPS/MoJ by Freedom of Information Act request in 2018.

135 Toughening up prisoner privileges, Ministry of Justice, 20 April 2013 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.gov.uk/government/news/toughening-up-prisoner-privileges](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/toughening-up-prisoner-privileges)]

on the landings. This much was clear in the aftermath of widespread prison disorder in 1990 and elegantly captured in a white paper on prison reform the following year by the then Home Secretary, Kenneth Baker:

The quality of the relationship between prisoners and staff is the key to a stable prison system. The right relations can be achieved only if the Service is managed at all levels in a way which enables such relationships to be sustained. Stable prisons require a mature relationship between staff and prisoners which ensures that both prisoners and staff are treated, and treat each other, as individuals, with dignity and with respect; and which encourages prisoners to make responsible choices and so retain and, if possible, enhance their confidence and self-respect.<sup>137</sup>

Fundamentally, it also requires busy purposeful regimes which operate consistently and predictably. Small things assume huge importance in places like prisons where the citizen surrenders much of their freedom to the state.

Unstable prisons become so in part because of frustrated expectations. So repeated failures to provide, post from home, a family visit, a gym session, decent hot food, time in the open air and to associate, or access to hot showers become the malign building blocks of widescale and hugely expensive disorder. In a whole spectrum response to the control and order crisis in our prisons, Ministers neglect legitimacy at their peril.

**Recommendation 48:** Restoration of association time to allow suitable and sufficient numbers of staff to have the time and space to get to know their prisoners through informal, unscripted contact, helping build trust among and between prisoners and staff alike.

**Recommendation 49:** Minimum safe staffing levels in all areas of each prison to be established and given legal status to focus importance of maintaining an effective regime.

**Recommendation 50:** Fundamental reform of the discredited IEP scheme and its replacement by a system of rewards and sanctions that encourages good behaviour. Subject to review and within broad parameters, Governors to be given autonomy to construct their own incentives schemes which respond to their prison population and local capabilities.

27%

of prisoners trust staff in their prison<sup>136</sup>

<sup>136</sup> Prison Survey obtained by a Freedom of Information request.

<sup>137</sup> Custody, care and Justice, The Way Forward White Paper, Secretary of State for the Home Department, 1991 [Accessed on 9 November 2018 via [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/250876/5074.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/250876/5074.pdf)]

## chapter ten

# Empowered accountable leaders

It's incredible what can be done if you have a very visible governor [and] if you have the right kind of management team.

Rory Stewart OBE MP, Prisons and Probation Minister<sup>138</sup>

The best of our prison Governors have a profound impact on their establishments. The most effective are highly visible in their prisons and set clear standards of behaviour and performance from staff and prisoners. They possess huge organisational acumen. They are resilient and inspiring 'moral managers' routinely making the right calls in high pressure circumstances where wrong decisions could result in serious injury or even death.

They are capable of switching from administrative to command mode and preside over one of the most complex communities imaginable despite scant resources and little public recognition or status.

The role of prison Governor is made admirably clear in the 1952 Prison Act. However, the Act makes no allowance for (nor could have conceived) the large bureaucratic structure which now sits on top of the Governor crushing the necessary autonomy for that role to perform effectively.

In 1952, albeit with a much smaller and less complex population, the Act required the appointment of no more than five Commissioners to oversee and scrutinise the governor and operation of the prison.

In 2017, the latest HMPPS workforce statistics reveal that, some 10,936 staff (23 per cent of the entire HMPPS workforce) are today employed in non-operational HMPPS HQ and Area Services roles.<sup>139</sup> The grand ambition of HMPPS' unlamented predecessor National Offender Management Service (NOMS), to '*challenge bureaucratic decision*

138 BBC News. 2018. "Prisons minister Rory Stewart: I'll resign if drugs and violence don't go down" [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-45214414](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-45214414)]

139 Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) Workforce Statistics Bulletin, as at 30 June 2018, Ministry of Justice, (2018) [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/638467/hmpps-workforce-statistics-30-june-2017.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/638467/hmpps-workforce-statistics-30-june-2017.pdf)]

*making, resourcing structures and processes across the department and Civil Service to create a lean, flat and effective organisation*<sup>140</sup> will ring hollow in the ears of serving prison Governors.

They have been subjected to years of risk averse micro-management, proliferations of bewildering supervisory roles, and interference from people without any experience of the realities of front line prison management.

Recent attempts to introduce greater independence for prison Governors largely foundered after reforms, introduced by Michael Gove who was clear about the scale of the problem, were scrapped.

... in order to make prisons work we need to allow Governors to govern. At the moment you are held back – by too many rules, too much bureaucracy and, to be frank, the fear that if something goes wrong – or even worse – gets in the papers – then that’s it – career over.

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP<sup>141</sup>

Of course, independence can only deliver good outcomes for prisoners if there are resources available for Governors to reallocate or mobilise. Moreover, the talent pool available within the prison service for tomorrow’s generation of operational leaders is a problem. There are troubling concerns from the field about the selection and deployment of in-charge Governors and their often serial inability to survive critical prison inspections.

There are outstanding leaders, some of whom have defected from the state service to the private sector to escape the dead hand of bureaucracy. There are also poor Governors who may manage upwards well but who do not project the necessary authority and charisma to drive their establishments. In the prison environment, the soft skills of moral management are hugely important.

The regular turnover of in-charge Governors whether for good or ill is such that it is often impossible to embed and achieve long term stability for the establishment. In HMPPS the value and status of senior leadership has drifted far too far away from the core task: *to govern*.

Leadership in the prison service has been relegated to compliance management suffocated by an audit culture which requires obeisance to process rather than outcome. The role and status of Governor in most prisons – one of the most complex and demanding in public life – does not even equate to Senior Civil Service rank or pay which is almost incomprehensible given the level of risk they carry and the 24/7 commitment required.

**64%**  
of Prisons  
Inspectorate  
recommendations  
ignored<sup>142</sup>

140 NOMS / Civil Service Competency Framework 2012–2017, NOMS, 2015 [Accessed on 9 November 2018 via [justicejobs.tal.net/vx/lang-en-GB/mobile-0/appcentre-1/brand-13/candidate/download\\_file\\_opp/20351/20709/1/0/17effee1e3f48287f75ea00b3cac47dbf29347e2](https://justicejobs.tal.net/vx/lang-en-GB/mobile-0/appcentre-1/brand-13/candidate/download_file_opp/20351/20709/1/0/17effee1e3f48287f75ea00b3cac47dbf29347e2)]

141 Michael Gove. 2016. “Making Prisons Work.” [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.gov.uk/government/speeches/making-prisons-work](http://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/making-prisons-work)]

142 Annual Report HM Inspectorate, HM Inspectorate of Prisons, 11 July 2018 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2018/07/6.4472\\_HMI-Prisons\\_AR-2017-18\\_Content\\_A4\\_Final\\_WEB.pdf](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2018/07/6.4472_HMI-Prisons_AR-2017-18_Content_A4_Final_WEB.pdf)]

Moreover, prison Governors have insufficient latitude or incentive to engage outwards beyond the prison walls and into local communities where most prisoners will eventually return. Where positive examples of community engagement exist, they are most certainly in spite of the system and tied entirely to the sheer determination of a Governor. The ability to harness and recruit local services is constrained by unwieldy, poorly-managed and often very unresponsive national contracts commissioned by the centre.

Examples of such flawed approaches litter the criminal justice field: stretching from the failed prison maintenance services provided by Amey and Carrillion to court interpreters and the long-standing failure of centralised electronic monitoring programmes. The centralised 'top down' nature of prison management has meant that local accountability, support and supervision is often much less than optimum.

Things must change and radically to enable the Governor *to govern*.

It is also clear that for far too long, senior officials within the Prison Service have paid scant regard to the recommendations of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons:

Another recurrent theme is the disappointing failure of many prisons to act on our previous recommendations – which are intended to help save lives, keep prisoners safe, ensure they are treated respectfully and to give a chance of returning to the community less likely to reoffend.

Peter Clarke CVO OBE QPM, HM Chief Inspector of Prisons<sup>144</sup>

The recommendations are designed to rectify deficiencies in the running of prisons which are measured and judged across the following "healthy prison domains".

Table 2: Healthy Prison Domains

<b>Safety</b>	Prisoners, particularly the most vulnerable, are held safely.
<b>Respect</b>	Prisoners are treated with respect for their human dignity.
<b>Purposeful activity</b>	Prisoners are able, and expected, to engage in activity that is likely to benefit them.
<b>Rehabilitation and release planning</b>	Prisoners are supported to maintain and develop relationships with their family and friends. Prisoners are helped to reduce their likelihood of reoffending and their risk of harm is managed effectively. Prisoners are prepared for their release back into the community.

Source: HM Inspectorate of Prisons<sup>145</sup>

143 Civil Service People Survey, Civil Service, 13 August 2018. [Accessed on 9 November 2018 via [www.gov.uk/government/collections/civil-service-people-surveys](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/civil-service-people-surveys)]

144 Annual Report HM Inspectorate, HM Inspectorate of Prisons, 11 July 2018 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2018/07/6.4472\\_HMI-Prisons\\_AR-2017-18\\_Content\\_A4\\_Final\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2018/07/6.4472_HMI-Prisons_AR-2017-18_Content_A4_Final_WEB.pdf)]

145 Expectations: Criteria for assessing the treatment of and conditions for men in prisons (Version 5), HM Inspectorate of Prisons, 2017 [Accessed on 6 November 2018 via [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2018/02/Expectations-for-publication-FINAL.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2018/02/Expectations-for-publication-FINAL.pdf)]

1 in 4

of the prisons workforce believe that change is well-managed with the prison service<sup>143</sup>

## 1 in 3

prisons had not properly implemented recommendations following deaths in custody<sup>146</sup>

HMPPS Chief Executive Officer is required to acknowledge each inspection report and the service then decides which recommendations to accept which the Inspectorate will judge again on subsequent visits to that prison.

The frustration of successive prison inspectors at the inability of prisons to address accepted recommendations with any urgency or enthusiasm is palpable. Peter Clarke, the current incumbent has said that prison reform is impossible until prisons become safer, a view this manifesto is built upon. His views are worth repeating:

I am concerned by the fact that this year we found – for the first time – that the number of recommendations that had been fully achieved was lower than the number not achieved. In many cases the response to previous recommendations has been unforgivably poor. We found across the entirety of our inspections that 42 per cent of recommendations on safety from previous inspections had not been achieved. Safety is the basis upon which any other constructive activity in a prison is dependent. Reform is overdue.

Peter Clarke CVO OBE QPM, HM Chief Inspector of Prisons<sup>147</sup>

This is a truly appalling situation which needs urgent attention. It is not acceptable that 64 per cent of the Inspectorate's recommendations are never implemented. At the same time, it remains worrying that one third of the prisons inspected by HMIP had "not properly implemented recommendations from the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman following deaths in custody".<sup>148</sup>

## 1 in 4

of the prison workforce believe senior managers will take action based on results of the workforce survey<sup>149</sup>

In 2018, the cost of running the prisons inspectorate in relation to prisons and court cells was £3.5 million. This is a small figure relative to the costs of dealing with the aftermath of prison collapse – the riot in Birmingham alone cost £6 million. We should not be accepting the prison crisis as an inevitable state of affairs. These recommendations are intended to save lives and keep public and prisoners safe, they cannot be ignored.

Finally, Independent Monitoring Boards (IMBs) have a role to play, to "monitor the day-to-day life in their local prison or removal centre and ensure that proper standards of care and decency are maintained."<sup>150</sup> In the wake of utterly unacceptable conditions across so many of our prisons, there must be questions about how effective IMBs have been at ensuring standards of safety and decency have been met.

146 Civil Service People Survey, Civil Service, 13 August 2018. [Accessed on 9 November 2018 via [www.gov.uk/government/collections/civil-service-people-surveys](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/civil-service-people-surveys)]

147 Prison reform impossible until jails become safer, warns Chief Inspector, HM Inspectorate of Prisons, 18 July 2017 [Accessed on 6 November 2018 via [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/media/press-releases/2017/07/prison-reform-impossible-until-jails-become-safer-warns-chief-inspector](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/media/press-releases/2017/07/prison-reform-impossible-until-jails-become-safer-warns-chief-inspector)]

148 Annual Report HM Inspectorate, HM Inspectorate of Prisons, 11 July 2018 [Accessed on 28 September 2018 via [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2018/07/6.4472\\_HMI-Prisons\\_AR-2017-18\\_Content\\_A4\\_Final\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2018/07/6.4472_HMI-Prisons_AR-2017-18_Content_A4_Final_WEB.pdf)]

149 Civil Service People Survey, Civil Service, 13 August 2018. [Accessed on 9 November 2018 via [www.gov.uk/government/collections/civil-service-people-surveys](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/civil-service-people-surveys)]

150 Independent Monitoring Board, 2019 [Accessed on 2 April 2019 via [www.imb.org.uk](http://www.imb.org.uk)]

There is also the reality that the public-facing output from IMBs is generally confined to an annual report that is often significantly out-of-date. We therefore call for Government to consult on how the role and effectiveness of IMBs can be clarified and enhanced to make greater use of what can be an important component within the system of prison governance, early-warning, and accountability.

**Recommendation 51:** Independently-led fundamental review of all HMPPS corporate senior manager roles commissioned by Secretary of State for Justice. All operationally-qualified senior leaders based in HQ or regionally to convert to Executive Governor status, with the presumption that they and their teams will be based within prisons unless there is a compelling argument against.

**Recommendation 52:** Create a National Prison Governors' Council (NPGC), modelled on the National Police Chiefs' Council, and comprising Executive Governors, with responsibility for implementing and co-ordinating prison policies.

**Recommendation 53:** Policy is created by a new National Institute of Corrections which incorporates MoJ policy development but also mobilises the best and brightest of prison leaders, researchers, and practitioners to adopt and develop world-class interventions and policies that work in the field.

**Recommendation 54:** 'Suitable to be in charge' courses which prepare prison governors for senior posts should be fundamentally redesigned to ensure mental toughness, staff motivation, and command leadership characteristics are given higher value and selection criteria reflects this.<sup>151</sup> All existing Governors should be required to complete this new Prison Governor Command Course, with an expectation that Governors will also communicate to the media and public proactively in relation to assaults on staff and other serious incidents.

**Recommendation 55:** The Urgent Notification process introduced by the last Justice Secretary should be recognised as a welcome but temporary development. At the earliest opportunity, the Government should pass legislation to convert HM Inspectorate of Prisons into a legal regulator with statutory powers to inspect and require enforceable improvement in prison establishments.

**Recommendation 56:** A review of the HMIP Healthy Prisons Tests should consider whether the importance of leadership, corporate support, continuous improvement, and good order are adequately reflected in the current assessment regime.

**Recommendation 57:** The inspection remit of the regulator should extend to all Headquarters functions either in stand-alone inspections of individual functions or thematic reviews.

**Recommendation 58:** HM Inspectorate of Prisons, and any future legal regulator, should present a prison dashboard incorporating the results of their inspections, surveys, and incorporate the data and reports generated through the Measuring Quality of Prison Life (MQPL) and Staff Quality of Life (SQL) surveys. It should also list recommendations and detail the status of each, and be resourced and tasked to incorporate, as a one-stop shop, data published by the Ministry of Justice, HMPPS, and Independent Monitoring Boards.

**Recommendation 59:** Government to consult on the role and effectiveness of Independent Monitoring Boards (IMBs) to help ensure that they can play their vital role within the wider system of prison governance, early-warning, and accountability.

<sup>151</sup> The Strategic Command Course for police is a possible model, with the content designed by the proposed National Institute of Corrections.

# Conclusion

The need to restore control, order, and hope in our prisons has never been greater.

Since 2015 it is clear that Government has sought to reverse some of the poor decisions that placed prisoners and staff alike in intolerable and unacceptable conditions. The last four Justice Secretaries have all tried to repair the damage. Michael Gove's radical reforms were supplanted by Liz Truss's focus on getting additional staff back on our dangerous prison landings. David Lidington's decent efforts to beef up the powers of the prisons inspectorate, have been replaced by David Gauke and Rory Stewart's welcome focus on the basics of order, control and decency.

The ideas contained in this manifesto, big and small, are supportive of restoring discipline and purpose in our disordered jails. The families of prison officers and prisoners alike have every right to expect that their loved ones are safe while inside custody and return to them no worse than they entered. Society pays the price for the failure of the prison system – broken staff, broken lives, lost potential.

Citizens have every right to expect that scarce resources are properly spent breaking the cycle of offending and reoffending that destroys lives and communities and creates further victims. It means ensuring that our prisons are model societies, not simply warehouses run by those who carry on their criminal lifestyles through violence and intimidation. Our prisons can and must be much more than a Hobbesian state of nature.

The failure of any state – least of all a modern democratic one – to act decisively in this situation is an affront to morality and an indictment of basic competence. For many who end up in our prisons – and for the victims beyond the prison wall – the state has already let them down, whether through failing to protect rights to life or property, or through the failure to tackle the social breakdown that sits behind so much of the crime in Britain today.

Nobody with a commitment to social justice, tackling poverty, or protecting the vulnerable should seek to oppose the restoration of control, order, and hope in our prisons.

Nor should anyone with such a commitment support artificial and unsustainable reductions in the prison population. Calls to ease the pressure on our prisons by reducing overcrowding and improving staffing levels through such reductions in the prison population are not popular, with 70 per cent of the public preferring to build more prison spaces and recruit more prison staff.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> In the most recent Annual Report from Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons it was noted that 'violence, drugs, suicide and self-harm, squalor and poor access to education' are recurring issues within our prisons. It has been suggested that part of the solution is to reduce overcrowding and improve staffing levels. Which of the following is closest to your view?', Survation poll of 1,006 adults in the UK, commissioned by The Centre for Social Justice. Fieldwork undertaken 10 April 2019.



At the same time, scrapping short prison sentences, while popular with 70 per cent of MPs in Westminster,<sup>153</sup> is less so with the public. Our polling found that while 17 per cent support the Government reducing the use of short prison sentences “immediately”, more than half (53 per cent) said “only when it has the new more effective community sentences in place”, and almost 1 in 4 (23 per cent) said “never”.<sup>154</sup>

The challenge ahead, and upon which the Prisons Minister has embarked, is significant. To truly restore control, order, and hope will require a long-term sustained plan across our prisons – but also that builds genuine public and sentencer confidence in new and more effective community sentences.

The absence of control, order, and hope is the presence of despair. We must make prisons places of transformation and this relies first and foremost on them being safe for all inside on either side of the bars. Ministers must seize the moment to empower the new Prison Service Chief Executive with the tools and support to get control back, restore order, and then create hope and purpose.

Ministers must arm this new leader with the tools and expect the visible leadership that is so desperately needed to reverse the tragic and avoidable disintegration of a once proud organisation. Brutality, despair and violence in prisons is not inevitable. It is not unfixable. Our manifesto is a bold call to arms in aid of a public service and public servants desperate for change. We must act now. Lives depend on it.

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153 YouGov poll conducted online with a representative sample of 100 MPs and commissioned by Revolving Doors Agency. The survey was completed between 16th and 28th January 2019.

154 The Government is currently considering reducing the use of short prison sentences of up to six months, and has talked about wanting to create new more effective community sentences. When should Government reduce the use of short prison sentences?’, Survation poll of 1,006 adults in the UK, commissioned by The Centre for Social Justice. Fieldwork undertaken 10 April 2019.

# Polling methodology

**Polling provider:** Survation  
**Sample size:** 1,006  
**Methodology:** People aged 18+ living in the UK interviewed online  
**Fieldwork dates:** 10th April 2019

In the most recent Annual Report from Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons it was noted that "violence, drugs, suicide and self-harm, squalor and poor access to education" are recurring issues within our prisons.

It has been suggested that part of the solution is to reduce overcrowding and improve staffing levels. Which of the following is closest to your view?

The Government should build more prison spaces and recruit more prison officers to reduce overcrowding and improve staffing levels	70%
The Government should send fewer people to prison to reduce overcrowding and improve staffing levels	19%
Don't know	11%

The Government is currently considering reducing the use of short prison sentences of up to six months, and has talked about wanting to create new more effective community sentences. When should Government reduce the use of short prison sentences?

Immediately	17%
Only when it has the new more effective community sentences in place	53%
Never	23%
Don't know	8%

Unlike some leaders in other uniformed public services (e.g. ambulance, fire, armed forces, police), senior prison staff and leaders do not wear a uniform. Which of the following statements is closest to your view?

Senior prison staff and leaders should have to wear a uniform	66%
Senior prison staff and leaders should not have to wear a uniform	16%
Don't know	18%



Kings Buildings  
16 Smith Square  
Westminster  
SW1P 3HQ

[www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk](http://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk)  
@csjthinktank