

A WOMAN-CENTRED APPROACH

Freeing vulnerable women from the revolving door of crime

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A Woman-Centred Approach
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The Centre for Social Justice, 34a Queen Anne's Gate,
London, SW1H 9AB
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 13 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 2018 and beyond, we will continue to advance the cause of social justice in this nation.

Foreword

Since being elected as a Police and Crime Commissioner, I have seen first-hand some of the vulnerable women who find themselves caught up in our criminal justice system and those who teeter on the brink of offending and subsequent entry into the system.

I have also seen how so many of these women – as this report makes plain – have had troubled beginnings, whether as victims of domestic abuse, sexual abuse and exploitation, or myriad other adverse childhood experiences. Many become addicted to hard drugs, many grow up in care or see their own children taken into care and many commit crime to support the drug habits of others.

Despite regular appearances in our court rooms and even our prisons, the pattern for many of these women is akin to a revolving door but such a pattern is not inevitable – as this report and frontline work, much of it supported by Police and Crime Commissioners, demonstrates.

The evidence around the value and benefit of gender-specific and trauma-informed approaches is clear. That is why, more than a decade on from Baroness Corston's Report, it is pleasing to see the Centre for Social Justice develop a set of proposals that would help transform outcomes among women offenders and women at risk of offending.

From the CSJ's own survey, we know that more than 60 per cent of my fellow Police and Crime Commissioners already have programmes working with female offenders – and that 89 per cent believe, like me, that they have a pivotal role to play in this area. The appetite for greater involvement, more intelligent commissioning and better outcomes is plain to see.

The proposals in this report, following on from the CSJ's *Growing the Local* paper, set out how a reforming government could help enable and empower Police and Crime Commissioners to commission the best possible services and achieve the best possible outcomes in relation to female offenders.

Police and Crime Commissioners have already evidenced their ability to commission services for victims, to demonstrate leadership across the local criminal justice system and to support the delivery of new and effective approaches, some of which are highlighted in this report.

I therefore commend this report and hope that a government committed to social reform will seize on this opportunity to harness Police and Crime Commissioners to drive real and positive change for some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged women in our country today.

David Lloyd

Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire

Chair of the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners

Criminal Justice Portfolio Lead for the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners

Executive Summary

Much of our female prison population can be traced to state failure and social breakdown. Successive governments have failed to firmly grip the issue of female offending. It is the sort of social problem that a government committed to reform can and should tackle.

As many other report authors – including Baroness Corston – have concluded: there is a way forward. However, it will take a clear commitment from the current Government, future governments, and Parliament if real progress is to be made. The remedies and proposals that we set out do not need huge new funding commitments, nor significant new legislation. They are, rather, a question of political will.

An exclusive survey of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) conducted by the CSJ for this report establishes that there is real appetite for taking a new approach to female offenders among this group of locally elected criminal justice leaders:

- 81 per cent of PCCs recognise there is clear evidence in favour of trauma-informed and gender-specific programmes in criminal justice;
- 89 per cent of PCCs believe they have a pivotal role to play in transforming the approaches to female offenders and reducing recidivism;
- 74 per cent of PCCs believe that the Government's Female Offender Strategy should allow for PCCs to take greater ownership of the female offender cohort;
- 74 per cent of PCCs believe that they could commission better services for female offenders and those at risk of offending than the centre; and
- 93 per cent of PCCs believe they could help leverage other funding sources and convene partners to help improve outcomes for the female offender cohort.

Building on the results of the survey, we call on Government to adopt ten key recommendations to help transform the approach to women offenders, to improve outcomes, reduce crime and improve community safety.

- **Recommendation 1:** Government should create a new Criminal Justice Transformation Fund for Women, recognising the need to develop a funding pool against which Police and Crime Commissioners can seek capital and revenue funding to support the provision of high quality community-based services for women at risk of offending.
- **Recommendation 2:** Government should suspend plans for Community Prisons for Women and allocate the £50 million capital expenditure to the Criminal Justice Transformation Fund, to support the development of capacity and infrastructure for women in the community.

- **Recommendation 3:** Government should redirect a sum equivalent to the Core Allowance of Universal Credit into the Transformation Fund for Women, creating almost £15 million of additional annual funding. This should be used to support high quality community based-programmes, helping move women offenders and women at risk of offending away from crime and dependency towards employment and independence.
- **Recommendation 4:** Government should commit to ensure that as the women's prison population declines and cost-savings are realised, 50 per cent of those savings should be allocated to the Justice Reinvestment component of the Criminal Justice Transformation Fund for Women.
- **Recommendation 5:** Government should encourage PCCs and the philanthropic sector to leverage other funds at a local level. Government should implement an evaluation of the Fund and conduct a Feasibility Study to consider the potential for the Fund to be outcome-based, helping leverage additional social funding and promoting the more effective use of limited resources.
- **Recommendation 6:** Police and Crime Commissioners, working with local Women's Centres and other partners, should develop a package of accommodation, monitoring, supervision and rehabilitation measures that can be attached to Community and Suspended Sentence Orders. This would provide sentencers with a credible and evidenced alternative option for offenders, helping prevent unnecessary imprisonment of female offenders and achieving better outcomes.
- **Recommendation 7:** Government should ensure that the National Probation Service is placed under a positive obligation to understand the range of services available locally for women offenders and ensure that, in relation to female offenders, reasons why referral to such services would or would not be appropriate should be provided to sentencers.
- **Recommendation 8:** Government should build on our proposals with pilots for problem-solving courts – making use of judicial monitoring – to focus and drive improved outcomes in relation to drug-addicted female offenders. Government should also welcome applications from PCCs to pilot services for female offenders that could replace the current CRC provision for female offenders.
- **Recommendation 9:** Government should ensure that every woman with an identified financial need should leave 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.
- **Recommendation 10:** Government should create a new Earned Release and Community Payback (ERCP) form of Release on Temporary Licence, harnessing the power of incentives to help foster desistance and encourage positive change. It is a proposal that would not require primary legislation. ERCP would provide a valuable means of releasing prison space within the female estate, with eligible women earning release into the support of an appropriate local service, such as a Women's Centre.

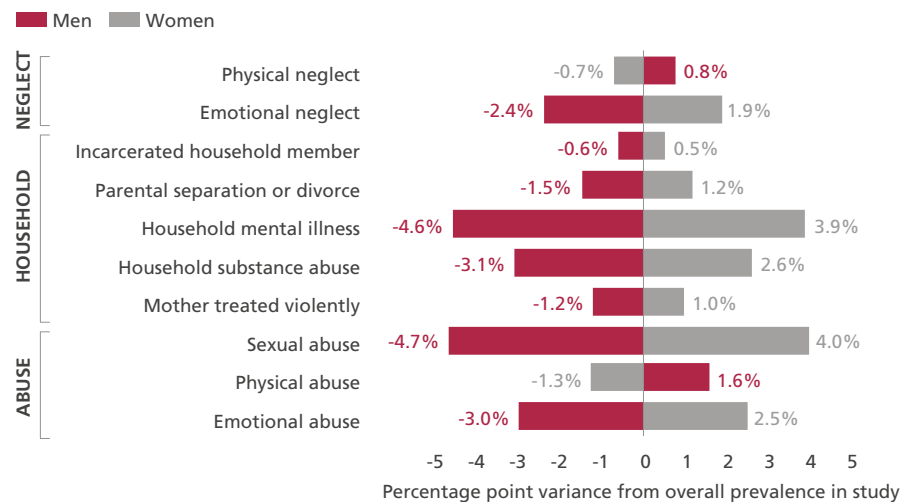
chapter one

From troubled beginnings

A significant proportion of the 86,000 prisoners in England and Wales have not been the sole masters of their destiny.¹ Many prisoners – male and female – are born of state failure and are the victims of social breakdown. While background cannot and should not excuse criminality, the troubled beginnings of some offenders can go a long way to explaining their offending behaviour.

The growing evidence around Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) points us to some of the explanatory variables in the lives of offenders. They also go part of the way to offering an insight to the different experiences of men and women as children. The largest study to date has found significant differences in the general population by gender, with women more likely than men to experience a number of adverse childhood experiences.

Figure 1: Variance in prevalence of adverse childhood experiences by gender vs overall prevalence in general population



Source: CDC-Kaiser Permanente Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study²

1 *Population Bulletin: Weekly*, 26 January 2018, Ministry of Justice [Accessed on 30 January 2018 via www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/676820/prison-pop-26-jan-2018.xls]

2 *Prevalence of ACEs by Category for CDC-Kaiser ACE Study Participants by Sex, Waves 1 and 2*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Kaiser Permanente. The ACE Study Survey Data [Unpublished Data]. Variance is the percentage point difference in prevalence of ACEs by gender, when compared against the aggregate total prevalence within the study. Atlanta, Georgia: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; 2016. [Accessed on 29 November 2017 via www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/about.html]

Even in the general population, women are more likely as children to have suffered emotional abuse, emotional neglect, sexual abuse, and to have observed within the household environment one or more of substance abuse, mental illness, or their mother being treated violently.³

Studies have shown that women in general are 50 per cent more likely than men to have a score of five or more adverse childhood experiences, contributing to increased risks of alcoholism, injecting drug use and suicide attempts.⁴

We also know that within the criminal justice system, a history of trauma is associated with alcohol and drug dependence, high-risk behaviours, sex work, self-harming behaviour and physical and mental health disorders among both women and men.

Understandably then, the female offender population – and especially the female prison population – contains some of the most disadvantaged, damaged and vulnerable people in our society. At once both prolific and persistent in their offending – and often repeatedly victimised by those who abuse and exploit them.

Across England, Wales and Scotland, most female offenders are themselves mothers. They also often have no work outside the home, had problems at school, gaining few (if any) qualifications, rely on state benefits and have problem debts, and accommodation problems. Many will have experienced some form of abuse, have suffered psychological distress and have serious problems with alcohol and drug misuse. Furthermore, a good proportion grew up in local authority care as children – with some losing the care of their own children to the state, in a repetitive cycle.⁵

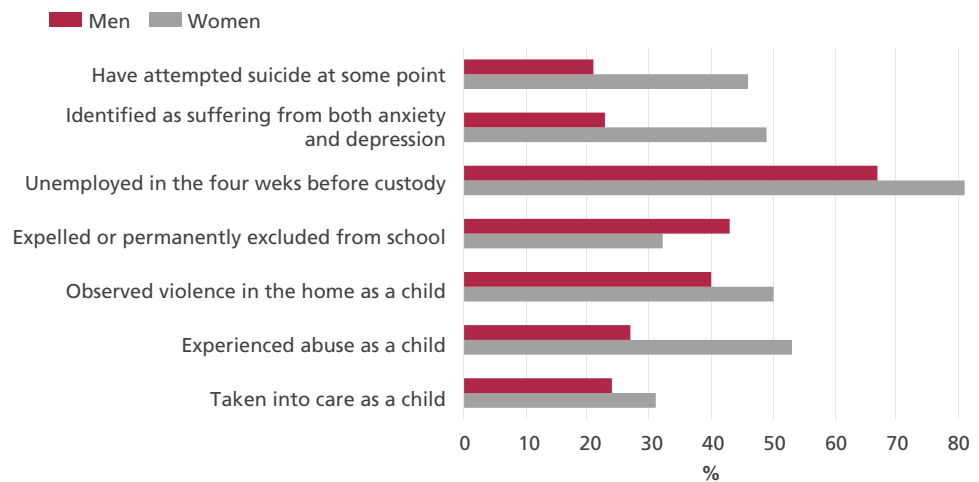
The Government's own study, published in 2012, explored the childhood and family backgrounds of prisoners and identified the much greater prevalence of abuse, violence and other key indicators in the backgrounds of those adults making up the prison population, with the adverse experiences among women being particularly pronounced.

3 *Prevalence of ACEs by Category for CDC-Kaiser ACE Study Participants by Sex, Waves 1 and 2*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Kaiser Permanente. The ACE Study Survey Data [Unpublished Data]. Atlanta, Georgia: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; 2016. [Accessed on 29 November 2017 via www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/about.html]

4 *Prevalence of ACEs by Category for CDC-Kaiser ACE Study Participants by Sex, Waves 1 and 2*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Kaiser Permanente. The ACE Study Survey Data [Unpublished Data]. Atlanta, Georgia: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; 2016. [Accessed on 29 November 2017 via www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/about.html]

5 Commission on Women Offenders, Scottish Government 2012 [Accessed on 18 Nov 2017 via www.gov.scot/Resource/0039/00391828.pdf]

Figure 2: Prisoners' childhood background survey



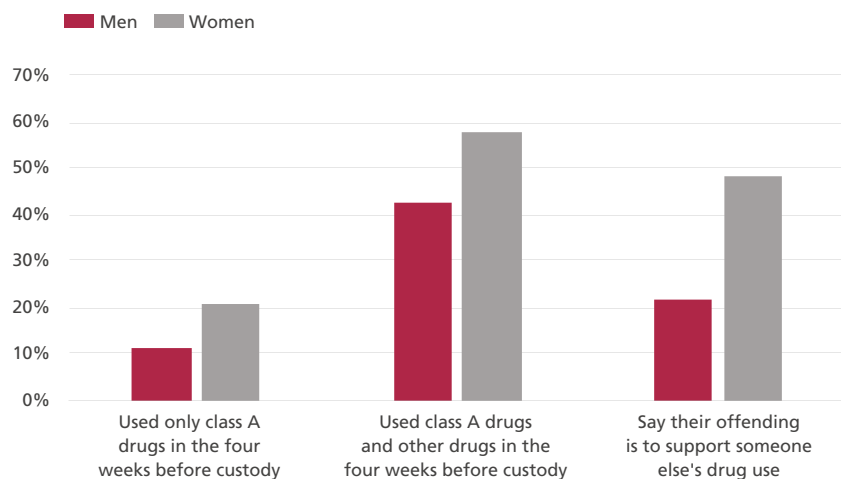
Source: Prisoners' childhood and family backgrounds, Ministry of Justice, 2012

Female prisoners have higher lifetime incidences of trauma, including severe and repeated physical and sexual victimisation, than male prisoners or women in the general population.⁶

Almost half of all female prisoners in England and Wales have attempted suicide at some point. More than half have experienced abuse as a child, with almost as many having observed violence in the home. There is a compelling moral case for seeking to tackle the state failure and social breakdown that afflicts so many of the women caught in the revolving door of crime.

Research on women's pathways into crime indicates that gender matters significantly in shaping criminality. Steffensmeier and Allan (1998) note that the "profound differences" between the lives of women and men shape their patterns of criminal offending. They specifically note that among women the most common pathways to crime are based on a need to survive abusive and exploitative relationships and substance abuse.

Figure 3: Gender differences among the prison population



Source: Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction (SPCR)

6 Borrill, J., Madden, A., Martin, A., Weaver, T., Stimson, G., Farrell, M., Barnes, T. (2003) Differential substance misuse treatment needs of women, ethnic minorities and young offenders in prison: Prevalence of substance misuse and treatment needs. Online report 33/03. Home Office via [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/index.htm]

The link between female offenders and substance misuse is pronounced. Surveys have found that women are more likely to have used Class A drugs prior to entering prison – and women spend more on heroin addictions than men, with a median daily spend of £50 compared with £30.⁷ We also know that almost half of women say their offending is to support someone else’s drug use.

The Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction Survey has also identified that while 38 per cent of male prisoners say they commit offences to get money to buy drugs, the proportion increases to 66 per cent of women in the survey.⁸ Indeed, on almost every question asked, female prisoners were more likely to associate drug use with their offending than male prisoners.

Given the role of drug addiction, it is unsurprising to learn that more women are sent to prison to serve a sentence for theft than for violence against the person, robbery, sexual offences, fraud, drugs, and motoring offences combined. Theft can also be fuelled by the need to materially provide for dependents, including children.⁹

There are some great charities and organisations providing services in support of women with drug addictions, but the reality that one in 40 children under the age of one lives with a parent addicted to drugs¹⁰ – together with stubbornly high re-offending rates and falling programme completion rates – speak to the fact that there is still much more to be done to ensure that effective community-based services tackling addiction and supporting recovery are accessible.

Recent research has also established that because of their gender, women are at greater risk of experiencing sexual abuse, sexual assault, domestic violence, and single-parent status. Pathway research has identified key issues in producing and sustaining female criminality as personal abuse, mental illness tied to early life experiences, substance abuse and addiction, economic and social marginality, homelessness, and destructive relationships.¹¹

It is reassuring then that the Government’s White Paper on Prison Safety and Reform, in November 2016, made clear that it recognised that “many female offenders are often vulnerable members of society”.¹²

There are now well-developed principles for working with women offenders, with the table below setting out a blueprint for an approach to effect positive change and to tackle what remain stubbornly high recidivism rates among women offenders.

7 *Gender differences in substance misuse and mental health amongst prisoners*, Ministry of Justice, 2013 [Accessed on 11 Dec 2017 via www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/220060/gender-substance-misuse-mental-health-prisoners.pdf]

8 *Gender differences in substance misuse and mental health amongst prisoners*, Ministry of Justice, 2013 [Accessed on 11 Dec 2017 via www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/220060/gender-substance-misuse-mental-health-prisoners.pdf]

9 Why focus on reducing women’s imprisonment, Prison Reform Trust, February 2017 [Accessed on 17 Jan 2018 via www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/Women/why%20women_final.pdf]

10 *Ambitious for Recovery: Tackling drug and alcohol addiction in the UK*, The Centre for Social Justice, 2014

11 Barbara Bloom et al. ‘Women Offenders and the Gendered Effects of Public Policy’, *Review of Policy Research*, Vol. 21 No. 1 (2004)

12 *Prison Safety and Reform*, Ministry of Justice, November 2016 [Accessed on 18 Dec 2017 via www.gov.uk/government/publications/prison-safety-and-reform]

Table 1: Six guiding principles for women offenders¹³

Gender	Acknowledge that gender makes a difference.
Environment	Create spaces of safety, respect and dignity.
Relationships	Develop policies, practices and programmes that are relational and promote healthy connections to children, family, significant others and community.
Services and Supervision	Address substance abuse, trauma and mental health through comprehensive, integrated services and supervision.
Socioeconomic Status	Provide women with opportunities to improve their socioeconomic conditions.
Community	Establish a system of community supervision and re-entry with collaborative services.

These principles help form the basis for “gender-responsive” or “gender-specific” programmes. Gender responsive is best understood to mean the creation of an environment “that reflects an understanding of the realities of women’s lives and addresses the issues of women”.¹⁴

The Government’s commitment to publish a strategy to “reduce the number of women offending and ending up in custody, including through early and targeted interventions” is to be welcomed.¹⁵ Unfortunately, it remains the case that women in prison and female offenders are still seen by some as “correctional afterthoughts”¹⁶ – even though a woman’s imprisonment is more likely to lead to the breakup of her family and the loss of her home.¹⁷

While the female prison estate is generally considered to be in better shape than the male estate, a fact acknowledged in HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for England and Wales’ most recent annual report, there remain significant causes for concern.¹⁸

The incidence of self-inflicted death and self-harm among women has risen dramatically. With 12 self-inflicted deaths in 2016, the highest figure since 2004.¹⁹

Of course, in considering the backgrounds of the women who find themselves caught up in a life of crime, we do not seek to minimise the harm that women offenders cause to the victims of their crimes. It should be readily understood that imprisonment remains an important sentencing option for women. More plainly, not all women in prison are victims, some are very clearly the victimiser whose actions cause distress and harm to others.

13 Gender-Responsive Strategies: Research, Practice, and Guiding Principles for Women Offenders, National Institute of Corrections, US Department of Justice 2003 [Accessed on 12 December 2017 via <https://s3.amazonaws.com/static.nicic.gov/Library/018017.pdf>]

14 Bloom and Covington (2000), ‘Gendered justice: programming for women in correctional settings’, Paper presented to the American Society of Criminology, San Francisco, California (November 2000)

15 Prison Safety and Reform, Ministry of Justice, November 2016 [Accessed on 18 Dec 2017 via www.gov.uk/government/publications/prison-safety-and-reform]

16 *Why Focus on Reducing Women’s Imprisonment?*, Prison Reform Trust, February 2017 [Accessed on 17 Jan 2018 via www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/Women/whywomen.pdf]

17 Gelsthorpe, L., and Sharpe, G. (2007) *Women and Resettlement* in A. Hucklesby and L. Hagley-Dickinson (eds) *Prisoner Resettlement. Policy and Practice*. Cullompton: Willan Publishing

18 *Annual Report 2016–17*, HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for England and Wales, July 2017 [Accessed on 28 November 2017 via www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmprisons/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2017/07/HMIP-AR_2016–17_CONTENT_11–07–17-WEB.pdf]

19 *Bromley Briefings Prison Factfile*, Prison Reform Trust, Autumn 2017

Nevertheless it is in the interests of both female prisoners and society as a whole that the treatment of the female prison and offender populations has regard to the differentially adverse experiences of the individual lives concerned, and offers treatment and programmes sensitive to the life experiences which, alongside poor choices, have been so instrumental to their offending and imprisonment.

chapter two

Progress is too slow

The desire to see a new approach to tackle female offending is long-standing. Countless reports, taskforces, strategies and plans have been published or created over the last two decades. Reviewing these past papers and proposals, it is hard not to be struck by the long-standing failure to make the sort of significant change of which Scotland has recently shown itself capable, by moving to smaller custodial and more community-based approaches.

The turn of the century saw the Government publish a strategy for women offenders, with further work from 2002 through to 2005 from the Social Exclusion Unit, the Women's Offending Reduction Programme, the First Action Plan, the Together Women Programme and plenty more besides. Despite these strategies – and increased expenditure – progress on achieving better outcomes proved inadequate.

Following the deaths of six women at HMP Styal between 2002 and 2003, the Home Secretary commissioned Baroness Corston to review the issue of vulnerable women in prison. It would prove to be one of the most thorough and exhaustive attempts to galvanise action.

Even at the time of publication, back in 2007, Baroness Corston openly remarked on the abundance of papers and the lack of progress:

There can be few topics that have been so exhaustively researched to such little practical effect as the plight of women in the criminal justice system. The volume of material might lead one to suppose that this is a highly controversial area, which might account in some way for the lack of progress and insight in the way women continue to be treated. This is not the case. There is a great deal of evidence of fundamental differences between male and female offenders.²⁰

Barely one year on from the Corston Report being published, more than 20 independent philanthropic foundations founded the Corston Independent Funders Coalition. They were concerned that their grant-making activity was part of a failing system, and the Coalition sought to encourage the government to implement the recommendations of the report.

However, in the years that followed the Corston Report there was much activity, but progress continued to fall short of delivering on the vision: a National Service Framework

20 *The Corston Report: A report by Baroness Jean Corston of a Review of Women with Particular Vulnerabilities in the Criminal Justice System*, Home Office (2007) [Accessed on 1 Nov 2017 via www.justice.gov.uk/publications/docs/corston-report-march-2007.pdf]

for Female Offenders was created; a Ministerial Champion for Women in the Criminal Justice System was appointed; and an Inter-Ministerial Group on Reducing Re-Offending with a Subgroup on Women Offenders was created. Yet despite the ostensible increase in focus from government, tangible change remained limited.

This situation deteriorated, with the 2010–2012 period being described by the Justice Committee as “a hiatus in efforts to make progress towards the vision set out by Baroness Corston”.²¹

Criticism of the lack of progress mounted, with the Prison Reform Trust describing how “the Government has failed to set out a clear strategy for women offenders, instead relying on the remaining legacy of the previous government”.²²

Having abolished many of the structures created by the previous government, in late 2012 a minister was finally reassigned responsibility for women offenders, with hopes that this would help rebuild some of the lost momentum.²³

The National Offender Management Service’s Guide to Working with Women Offenders, published in 2012, stated that: “Government broadly accepts most of [Corston]’s recommendations”.²⁴ But in the absence of real action, it remained little more than rhetoric.

Frustration with the lack of progress was shared by then Chief Inspector of Prisons, Nick Hardwick, who in 2012 remarked on how, during a visit to a prison for women, he observed, “too many cases of women, some of whom were clearly mentally ill, serving very short prison sentences which served little purpose except to further disrupt sometimes already chaotic lives.”²⁵

In the years that followed, came the promise of Transforming Rehabilitation – heralded as the means by which re-offending could be reduced and a regime under which innovation and the voluntary sector could both flourish, in happy co-existence with private businesses and large multinationals.

The retention of Dr Phillip Lee MP, with ministerial responsibility for female offenders, in the most recent reshuffle, along with the support for the Whole Systems Approach projects, offers a foundation on which a reforming government could build. A further period of stability would certainly be desirable, after no fewer than five Justice Secretaries within the space of three years.

21 *Women Offenders: After the Corston Report*, House of Commons Justice Committee, [Accessed on 11 Jan 2018 via www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-committees/justice/women-offenders.pdf]

22 *Prison Reform Trust response to Justice Committee Inquiry on Women Offenders*, Prison Reform Trust, 2012 [Accessed on 17 Jan 2018 via www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/PRTWomenOffenders.pdf]

23 *Government response to the Justice Committee’s Second Report of Session 2013–14: Female Offenders*, Ministry of Justice, October 2013 [Accessed on 11 Jan 2018 via www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/252817/response-jsc-female-offenders.pdf]

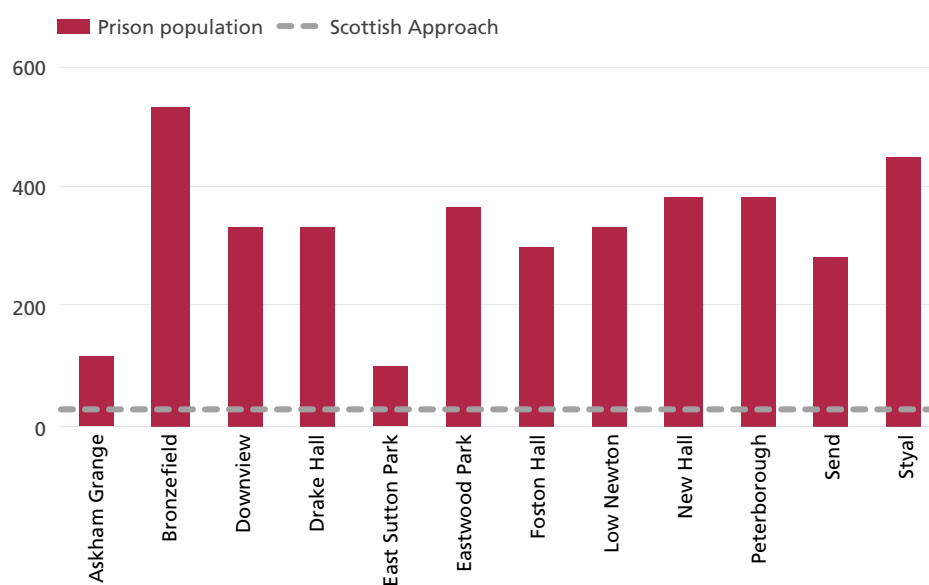
24 *Guide to Working with Women Offenders*, National Offender Management Service, 2012 [Accessed on 11 Jan 2018 via www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/publications/noms/2012/guide-working-with-women-offenders.pdf]

25 Lecture by Nick Hardwick, HM Chief Inspector of Prisons: ‘Women in Prison: Corston Five Years On’, University of Sussex, 29 February 2012 [Accessed on 21 Dec 2017 via <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130206124636/www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/about/hmipris/women-in-prison.pdf>]

The situation with women in prison and female offenders today

The current women's prison estate is a far cry from the local, smaller units envisioned by Corston in 2007. In England and Wales, our almost 4,000 women prisoners are spread across 12 prisons (see Appendix B for a map of women's prisons), with an average establishment size of more than 300. Indeed, the number of establishments has reduced from 19 in 2002. As a result, women are increasingly likely to be held further from home, undermining positive relationships with children, families, significant others and the community.

Figure 4: The size of women's prisons in England and Wales vs Scottish community custodial units



Recent developments in Scotland stand in stark contrast – with a clear commitment to community-based custody units (CCUs) holding up to 20 women. Housing women in these smaller, community-based units closer to their families, and providing additional support to address their needs, such as drug and alcohol programmes, is expected to better tackle the root causes of offending behaviour, reduce re-offending, and boost community safety.²⁶

Baroness Corston's report in 2007 called for women's prisons to be replaced with "suitable, geographically dispersed, small, multi-functional custodial centres" and for the Government to publish a strategy for transforming the estate to such a model within a decade. As we enter 2018, that deadline has passed.

²⁶ *Vision and priorities for justice*, Scottish Government, 11 July 2017 [Accessed on 5 Jan 2018 via <https://news.gov.scot/news/vision-and-priorities-for-justice>]

The role and status of Women's Centres

Local Women's Centres – many suffering through the combination of Transforming Rehabilitation and budget constraints – continue to work hard to provide a wide range of support services to female offenders and women at risk of offending. They also, of course, provide support to women with no criminal justice involvement at all.

Table 2: The range of potential services provided by Women's Centres

Information, advice and referrals for health	Access to community psychiatric nurse and mental health teams	Access to drug and alcohol misuse support	Family and parenting support
Housing advice and support	Education, training and employment	Finance, benefits and debt advice	Addressing attitudes, thinking and behaviour
Support for physical, sexual and emotional abuse	Support relating to domestic violence and abuse	Legal advice	Counselling and therapy
Improving self esteem	Advocacy	Volunteering and mentoring	Creche provision
Ante and post-natal support	A range of primary care services	Open access drop-in clinics	Safe and suitable accommodation

The Justice Data Lab has already conducted analysis of data supplied by 39 women's centres across England and found that the treatment group had a one year proven re-offending rate of 30 per cent versus a matched control group of 35 per cent. This difference was concluded to be statistically significant – there is a real difference in the re-offending rate for those persons that received support provided by Women's Centres throughout England and the matched control group of up to nine percentage points.²⁷

Similarly, a rapid evidence assessment of effective interventions for women offenders, conducted for the National Offender Management Service in 2015, identified that substance abuse treatment and gender-responsive cognitive behavioural programmes both reduce women's offending. It also highlighted that gender-responsive approaches "show promise relative to gender-neutral programmes".²⁸

Despite this recent evidence on the effectiveness of Women's Centres, their future remains uncertain – not helped by commissioning and contracting arrangements that fall foul of basic market stewardship principles. These arrangements significantly and negatively impact on the ability of the Centres to plan or provide meaningful job security to employees.

27 *Justice Data Lab Re-Offending Analysis: Women's Centres throughout England*, Ministry of Justice, 2015 [Accessed on 5 December 2017 via www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/427388/womens-centres-report.pdf]

28 Stewart and Gobeil, *Effective interventions for Women offenders: A Rapid Evidence Assessment*, NOMS, 2015 [Accessed on 12 Nov 2017 via www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/448859/effective-interventions-for-women-offenders.pdf]

As recently as 2016, the All Party Parliamentary Group on Women in the Penal System stated: “there is a real risk that women’s centres will be a thing of the past unless action is taken.”²⁹

The current number and extent of local Women’s Centres is severely limited, with approximately 45 estimated to be in operation and receiving referrals from the criminal justice system.³⁰ Clearly, this leaves large parts of the country without any service whatsoever and undermines the recommendation in the Corston Report to develop a network of local centres.

While Women’s Centres vary in size and the range of services offered, those working with offenders and ex-offenders generally follow the principle of seeking to make meaningful progress across the nine pathways to reducing recidivism, rather than a simplistic and exclusionary focus on reducing reoffending.

Table 3: The nine pathways³¹

1. Attitudes, Thinking and Behaviour	4. Abuse and Domestic Violence	7. Education, Training and Employment
2. Accommodation	5. Prostitution	8. Finance, Benefit and Debt
3. Drugs and Alcohol	6. Health	9. Relationships

A number of Women’s Centres – most notably, Anawim in Birmingham – provide residential accommodation for women. With between 6 and 10 beds, they present a large enough unit to present an economically viable proposition for the host organisation, but remain small enough to avoid being viewed – consciously or otherwise – by the residents as an institutional setting.

When set against the design principles emphasised by the Scottish Government’s own Commission on Women Offenders³² – published in 2012 – the local Women’s Centres appear to meet many of the criteria, with a requirement for services to:

- Be proactive and persistent in engaging with women, bringing services to women, rather than expecting them to access conventional pathways to support.
- Adopt an outreach approach and be flexible in working with women at a range of times and locations.
- Co-locate with multi-agency and multi-professional services as far as possible.
- Facilitate the development of life skills.
- Have a strong focus on the development of trusted, non-judgmental and respectful relationships.
- Take account of women’s previous histories of abuse and neglect, and encourage confidence, discipline, responsibility and self-esteem through trust and respect.

29 Howard League for Penal Reform (2016) APPG on women in the penal system: Is this the end of women’s centres? p.1 [Accessed on 1 Feb 2018 via <http://howardleague.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Is-it-the-end-of-womens-centres.pdf>]

30 Desk research conducted in February 2018 involving collation of information relating to local women’s organisations identified as receiving referrals from probation services, local police custody and/or other court referrals.

31 Adapted from *Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners: report by the Social Exclusion Unit*, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2002 [Accessed on 18 Jan 2018 via [webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/cabinetoffice/social_exclusion_task_force/assets/publications_1997_to_2006/reducing_summary.pdf](http://www.webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/cabinetoffice/social_exclusion_task_force/assets/publications_1997_to_2006/reducing_summary.pdf)]

32 Commission on Women Offenders, Scottish Government 2012 [Accessed on 18 Nov 2017 via www.gov.scot/Resource/0039/00391828.pdf]

- Encourage healthy family functioning between mothers and children.
- Build and maintain community links.
- Involve those using the services in the planning, development and reviewing of those services.
- Have in place robust performance management and evaluation arrangements to be able to demonstrate impact and value for money.
- Support and value their staff, treating them with dignity and respect, and invest time in developing their skills, knowledge and experience about what works to aid desistance among women offenders.

Progress on the population, diversion and a whole systems approach

While more than a decade has passed from the Corston Report – a fact lamented by numerous other papers – there has been some good news. The female prison population has, for example, remained largely stable, below 4,000 for several years.

There have also been some more recent successes in relation to the roll-out of Liaison and Diversion (L&D) programmes across England and Wales, following the approval by HM Treasury in July 2016 of an additional £12 million following a successful evaluation.³³

The success and roll-out of the L&D programme has demonstrated that where political will exists, progress can be made towards ensuring the vulnerable are provided with the support and services required, with the evaluation also noting that in some cases the L&D schemes were connecting with local Women’s Centres.

The data from the L&D programme demonstrates that on average – where a need has been identified 9 in 10 individuals in custody do engage with the service to address one or more needs: accommodation, alcohol and substance misuse, finances, mental health, physical abuse, suicide and self-harm.

The importance of relational work that builds trust and understanding is underscored by findings from the evaluation of the L&D programme, which cites the example of one female arrestee who initially declined to engage as she feared the involvement of social services. The relational approach of the support worker was instrumental to securing her engagement.

Another example of the importance of a non-criminal justice system actor engaging with vulnerable offenders can be evidenced in the story of one individual who said:

I knew straight away this person was here to help. I just knew the signals, I’ve dealt with people... being in custody before, and this person just seemed to be different in the sense of more sincerity... the eye contact, and the actual listening to my story, it didn’t, to me ... look like it was landing on deaf ears. ...I could tell that straight away ‘cause I have been let down enormously by the NHS, and I was at my wits’ end, basically ...I was in custody because of that reason... it was a case of this was the last chance... last chance for me, and all of a sudden [she] was there to actually... the catalyst for my recovery in a major way.³⁴

33 *Evaluation of the Offender Liaison and Diversion Trial Schemes*, RAND Europe, 2016 [Accessed on 11 Jan 2018 via www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR1200/RR1283/RAND_RR1283.pdf]

34 *Evaluation of the Offender Liaison and Diversion Trial Schemes*, RAND Europe, 2016 [Accessed on 11 Jan 2018 via www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR1200/RR1283/RAND_RR1283.pdf]

Alongside this has been welcome funding from the Ministry of Justice to local areas in support of developing Whole Systems Approaches to female offending.

Case study: Manchester and the Whole Systems Approach (WSA)³⁵

One of the most recent evaluations of the WSA in Greater Manchester has sought to model the benefits of the work across eight key outcome areas: mental health, emotional wellbeing, alcohol and drug dependency, homelessness, offending outcomes, reduced custodial sentences and children in care. The approach in Manchester has seen the development of an alliance of Women's Centres, working across and beyond the full range of criminal justice system.

The cost benefit analysis for WomenMATTA – part of an alliance of women's centres supporting the WSA to Female Offenders, covering Manchester and Trafford – has calculated that for every £1 invested in the project, £4.68 is saved.³⁶

The benefits of the project accrue to partners from across the whole system, with 22 per cent of benefits enjoyed by Health, 22 per cent by the Local Authority, 37 per cent by the Ministry of Justice and 19 per cent by the Police.

Coupled with the existing knowledge base relating to the work of Women's Centres and their potential to reduce re-offending and improve lives, the importance of sustaining and further developing the work in Greater Manchester is clear.³⁷

Given the progress in Manchester it is unsurprising that several local areas are now seeking to follow their lead – with London, Sussex and other areas all developing services for women. This links us to a broader point relating to what has been quiet progress in some parts of the country.

For example, 60 per cent of Police and Crime Commissioners operate a programme for female offenders within their police force area. These programmes range from services that work with women in police custody who have been arrested, through to more sophisticated referral and diversion programmes. There is a clear appetite on the part of PCCs to take on greater responsibility – in our survey 89 per cent of PCCs said they believed they had a pivotal role to play and that 74 per cent believed the Government's Female Offender Strategy should allow them to take greater ownership of the female offender cohort.

Whether one examines the most successful Women's Centres, the national Liaison and Diversion programme, the Whole Systems Approach projects, or the development of local programmes and appetite on the part of PCCs to improve outcomes for female offenders, there is – fortunately – much excellent work on which a reforming government can build.

³⁵ *Women Matta: Cost Benefit Analysis*, Greater Manchester Combined Authority, November 2017

³⁶ The long-term cashability of these savings has been modelled at £2.84 for every £1 spent. Furthermore, the same study estimates that for every £1 spent a total of £16.25 of economic value is created.

³⁷ *Evaluation of the Whole System Approach for Women Offenders: Interim Report*, Sheffield Hallam University, December 2015

chapter three

Building on what works

As Transforming Rehabilitation demonstrated, the big bang approach to the reform of public services and criminal justice carries significant risks. Transforming Rehabilitation represented a significant amount of change, disruption and confusion for offenders and those working in the field of women's justice.

What comes next must constitute a clear and long-term commitment to sustaining and building on what works with women in prison, women in the criminal justice system and women at risk of offending.

The Scottish Government's commitment to delivering on the Corston vision is itself built upon the recognition that there are effective interventions to reduce recidivism and improve the lives of women. These include: developing thinking skills that can help challenge antisocial attitudes in women; providing empathetic practitioners who develop good relationships with offenders to provide both practical and emotional support; and the importance of maintaining a focus on motivation; and supporting women offenders to find the self-confidence to change and develop.

Standalone tick-box interventions must give way to holistic relational interventions – of the sort delivered every day by the best Women's Centres. Basic needs must be addressed if there is to be any hope for making real progress on longer-term needs such as education or employment. Mentoring and coaching both have a valuable role to play in improving lives and reducing recidivism.³⁸

The relationship between drug use and offending, particularly for women, makes the provision of residential and gender-responsive drug treatment a vital component in the life-change that so many of these women deserve and that society should seek to support.

Accommodation – specifically safe and secure accommodation – is a crucial requirement. As our work on tackling homelessness demonstrated, it is vital to address accommodation needs.³⁹ The Government's adoption of our Housing First proposal, in the form of three pilots supported by £28m in funding, should be seized upon as an opportunity to further join up local services for women at risk with housing providers.⁴⁰

The Government should therefore ensure that the Homelessness Reduction Taskforce and Housing First pilots include representation from the criminal justice area in order to help join

38 *Meaningful Mentoring*, Centre for Social Justice, 2014

39 *Housing First: Housing-led solutions to rough sleeping and homelessness*, Centre for Social Justice, March 2017

40 'Government announces £28m funding for housing first pilots', *Inside Housing*, 22 November 2017 [Accessed on 4 Jan 2018 via www.insidehousing.co.uk/news/news/government-announces-28m-funding-for-housing-first-pilots-53329]

up work seeking to tackle both the unnecessary imprisonment of vulnerable women and the related issue of street homelessness.

It is also clear that families can provide an enormously positive support. As Lord Farmer's Review on the *Importance of strengthening prisoners' family ties to prevent reoffending and reduce intergenerational crime* acknowledged, positive family relations represent a "golden thread" which can be a key protective factor in reducing the likelihood of re-offending and helping reduce intergenerational offending behaviour.⁴¹

Interventions for women prisoners to forge and sustain positive bonds with their families and to improve parenting skills can both contribute to a reduction in substance misuse and improved outcomes in relation to recovery from addiction.

There is also emphasis placed on desistance factors, beyond the power of stable intimate relationships and meaningful employment, with some researchers emphasising the value of work that allows women to identify and choose 'hooks' – hooks for change – that can help maintain the motivation for pro-social choices.⁴²

Examples of work with women offenders and women at risk

Beyond the work of Women's Centres there are a number of other projects and programmes that have evidenced good results engaging with women offenders and women at risk.

Case study: The Re-Unite Project – Mothers in the criminal justice system⁴³

The Re-Unite project is a combined housing and support initiative, designed to support women leaving prison in gaining access to their children. At launch, the programme consisted of in-prison support to identify potential clients at an early stage and provide advice on housing and the reunification process; access to housing for women leaving prison, tailored to their needs; and family support to facilitate the successful reunion of the mother and children and development of the family. The goals of the Re-Unite Project are that children are kept out of the care system (where appropriate); that families can be reunited and supported in suitable, stable family housing; that mothers can lead less chaotic, healthier lives and desist from offending; and that children and young people can access sufficient support.

41 *The Importance of Strengthening Prisoners' Family Ties to Prevent Reoffending and Reduce Intergenerational Crime* (aka The Farmer Review), Ministry of Justice, August 2017 [Accessed on 29 October 2017 via www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/642244/farmer-review-report.pdf]

42 Giordano, P. C., Cernokovich, S. A. and Rudolph, J. L. (2002). Gender, crime and desistance: Toward a theory of cognitive transformation. *American Journal of Sociology*, 10, 990–1064

43 *Re-Unite: Ten Year Review: Mothers in the Criminal Justice System*, Commonweal Housing, July 2017 [Accessed on 20 November 2017 via www.commonwealhousing.org.uk/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Re-Unite-Report_Final.pdf]

Case study: The Nelson Trust⁴⁴

The Nelson Trust Women's Centre's in Gloucester and Swindon provide a women-only space where a wide range of support needs can be addressed in a safe and supportive environment. Their Women's Community Services are countywide across Gloucestershire, Swindon and Wiltshire. The services are trauma-informed and gender responsive providing holistic support to women and their families.

The Nelson Trust Women's Service has been developed to meet the needs of women wanting to access abstinence-based residential addiction treatment. Many women come to treatment with a history of trauma and with multiple and complex needs. The Trust therefore provides a contained therapeutic environment with a higher ratio of staff to clients, where women can work together to address their substance misuse and these underlying issues safely. Staff deliver a trauma-informed approach to supporting the clients to achieve long term recovery.

The Women's Houses are staffed by experienced female counsellors and trauma-informed recovery workers. They provide a children's visiting facility in a self-contained flat so that women who are mothers can have their children to stay overnight. Where there is a need to provide supervised contact with their children this need can be accommodated. Clients are also able to access a range of specialist support services at the Nelson Trusts' Women's Centres.

Case study: The Pause Programme

The Pause Programme works with women who have experienced, or are at risk of, repeat removals of children from their care. The Programme uses long-acting reversible contraceptives coupled with intensive holistic support to break this cycle and give women the opportunity to develop new skills and responses that can help them create a more positive future.⁴⁵

A recent Department for Education evaluation found that an estimated 21 to 36 pregnancies would have occurred had the cohort of 125 women not been engaged in the programme – creating significant direct, economic and social cost from subsequent removals:⁴⁶

Given our findings that Pause has had a significant, positive impact on the lives of a large proportion of women who engaged with the programme, and is highly likely to result in substantial cost savings over time, there is good reason to continue, and expand, provision of the service.

The evaluation also cited the example of the Pause programme co-locating with other local third sector women's organisations: presenting a safe, non-stigmatising venue, away from statutory, social care offices. The Pause Programme currently operates across 18 local authorities in England, with a further two local areas – Wigan and Rotherham – in development.

Become – the charity for children in care and young care leavers – has applauded the Government's backing for the programme and the success of the scheme in reducing multiple children being taken into care.⁴⁷

44 The Nelson Trust [Accessed on 11 Jan 2018 via www.nelsontrust.com/]

45 www.pause.org.uk

46 *Evaluation of Pause: Research Report*, Department for Education, July 2017 [Accessed on 28 Jan 2018 via www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/625374/Evaluation_of_Pause.pdf]

47 'Contraceptive scheme for vulnerable women receives £6.8m Government boost', The Independent, Monday 7 November 2016 [Accessed on 19 Jan 2018 via www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/contraception-pause-government-funding-vulnerable-women-a7402821.html]

Case study: Inspire Project and Women's Diversionary Project in Sussex⁴⁸

The Brighton Women's Centre operates Inspire receiving referrals from the local Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC). The Centre also operates a Women's Diversionary Project (WDP) that has now been rolled out to all custody suites within the Sussex Police force area.

Through the custody suite programme, 230 women have been referred to WDP with 64 women voluntarily accessing the service. Every woman engaged through community resolution. During the initial assessment, women were identified with the following needs:

- 79 per cent had drug or alcohol needs;
- 73 per cent had mental health needs;
- 60 per cent were experiencing domestic abuse; and
- 51 per cent had children in care or living with relatives.

Following engagement with their Inspire support worker, 85 per cent of women stated they felt better able to respond to their own needs and more in control of their lives. 91 per cent stated that their case worker was excellent at supporting them to identify the help and support they needed. At least 85 per cent of women were able to progress against all pathways of need. This rose to 94 per cent for women experiencing domestic abuse and 100 per cent for women with children.

Creating the funding mechanism to build and sustain what works

The development of a funding pool against which both capital and revenue expenditure can be made is critical to building and sustaining the provision of high quality community-based services for women at risk of offending and female offenders, like local Women's Centres and those programmes above.

The creation of a dedicated funding pool is particularly important for Women's Centres and other effective charities and social enterprises, many of whom have been hit particularly hard by the unintended consequences of Transforming Rehabilitation and the reduction of available funds in local authorities.

At the same time, as successive Justice Secretaries and Lord Chancellors have remarked, the prison system continues to carry the full burden of state failure and poor choices. These failings manifest in the form of: vulnerable individuals who the state fails to protect from predators, failing to ensure effective education for the most challenging young people, and failing to make sufficient progress in supporting individuals to become work-ready or to secure employment.

The Government's Universal Credit welfare reform has done much to help remedy the poverty trap and to help ensure that "work always pays", ensuring that work is the best way out of poverty. However, at present, there remain significant and persistent issues with respect to welfare, employment and the rehabilitation of offenders.

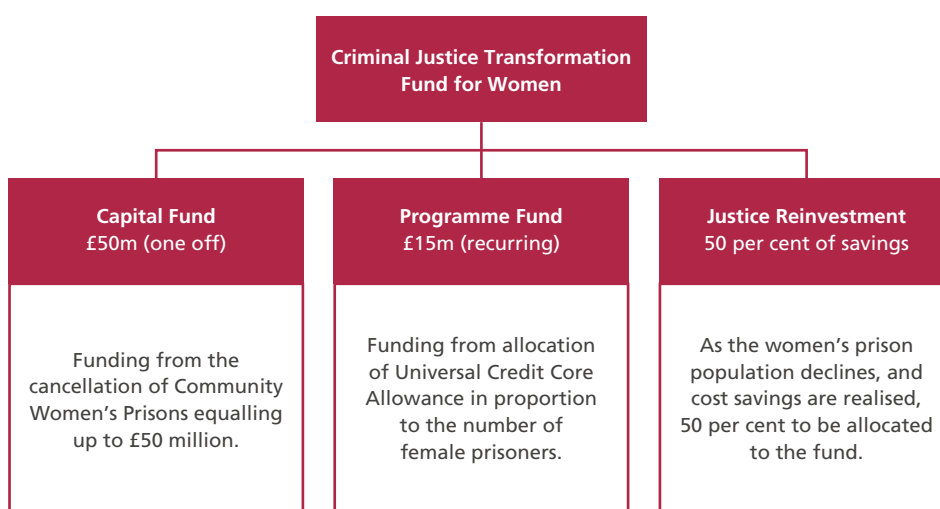
⁴⁸ *Report of the Trustees 2016–17*, Brighton Women's Centre, October 2017 [Accessed on 29 November via http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends90/0001003790_AC_20170331_E_C.pdf]

We therefore propose some simple measures to help alleviate these issues, beginning with the creation of a new Criminal Justice Transformation Fund for Women, made up of capital, programme and justice re-investment strands.

Recommendation 1

Government should create a new Criminal Justice Transformation Fund for Women, recognising the need to develop a funding pool against which Police and Crime Commissioners can seek capital and revenue funding to support the provision of high quality community-based services for women at risk of offending.

Figure 5: Proposed Criminal Justice Transformation Fund for Women



Our proposals would see up to £65 million of funding available for the transformation of the criminal justice system's approach to female offenders. It is a significant sum and would signal a clear commitment to building and sustaining what has been shown to work.

The creation of the Transformation Fund would help provide both local Women's Centres and local Police and Crime Commissioners with sufficient freedom and flexibility to direct resources towards gender-specific and trauma-informed services that focus on today's challenges and early interventions to reduce the incidence of female offending over time.

Bids to the Fund would come from local Women's Centres and similar services and organisations, working with the local Police and Crime Commissioner. They would develop services that connect with the key points of the criminal justice system, and that can live up to the well-established potential of both early intervention and effective community-based support: helping improve lives and reduce crime.

To help leverage further funds and make the best possible use of these funds the Government should also consider the potential to make the Transformation Fund outcomes-based, supporting the use of Social Impact Bonds.

This approach would see the funds used to help increase the number and scale of Social Impact Bonds (SIBs) available and operating in this area. By focussing the use of the funds

on improved outcomes for women offenders and women at risk of offending, it would help support the further development of the existing evidence base around what works.

This approach would ensure commissioners would only pay for what works, while supporting innovation and the leverage of new social investment into the sector. There are approximately 30 SIBs operating across the UK, across youth unemployment, mental health and homelessness and subject to a full feasibility study, should consider the use of an outcome-based approach in relation to women at risk of offending and women offenders.⁴⁹ We would also encourage the feasibility study to look beyond progress in relation to re-offending alone, and look to broader progress across the nine pathways.

Creating the Capital Fund

The Capital Fund of up to £50 million would be resourced from the suspension of plans to build new Community Prisons for Women. The proposals for these new prisons, as outlined to date, do not go far enough towards realising the vision set out by Baroness Corston and fall short of the local community custodial units being rolled out in Scotland.

Redirecting the £50 million of capital funding towards the Criminal Justice Transformation Fund for Women Fund would avoid a potentially costly mistake, and provide valuable funds for building capacity within networks of local Women's Centres and related charities, non-profits, and similar organisations that are evidenced to work.

These Funds should be focussed on the development of capacity and infrastructure – whether in the form of local Women's Centres or supported accommodation to sit alongside them.

Recommendation 2

Government should suspend plans for Community Prisons for Women and allocate the £50 million capital expenditure to the Criminal Justice Transformation Fund, to support the development of capacity and infrastructure for women in the community.

Creating the Programme Fund

At present, when women enter custody – whether on remand or following sentence – any Core Allowance of Universal Credit is withdrawn. We propose that the Government should instead redirect the Core Allowance into this new Transformation Fund for allocation towards services and programmes to aid the rehabilitation of women offenders and women at risk of offending, helping them move from dependency towards employment.

We go further, however, and suggest that to create an incentive for improved cross-government working on issues of employment and work-readiness, between the Ministry of Justice and Department for Work and Pensions, where a prisoner entering custody is not already on Universal Credit, an equivalent sum to the Core Allowance should be paid into the new Transformation Fund.

Adjusting for the age profile of the prison estate, in which 1 in 5 adult prisoners are aged under 25, we estimate that this measure would create almost £15 million of additional funding for real and meaningful community-based rehabilitation and support services.⁵⁰

Table 4: Universal Credit (Core Allowance) contribution to the Criminal Justice Transformation Fund for Women

Standard allowance	Monthly rate	Volume	Totals
Single claimant under 25	£251.77	800	£201,416
Single claimant over 25	£317.82	3,200	£1,017,024
Combined monthly total			£1,218,440
Annualised total			£14,621,280

Source: DWP and MoJ⁵¹

As with the Capital Fund, bids would be expected to involve a local community-based service supporting the rehabilitation of women offenders and women at risk of offending. Government should set an expectation that such bids should be made in conjunction with Police and Crime Commissioners or other local partners – helping cement improved collaboration locally.

The Fund would help support local Women's Centres, building on the six guiding principles of gender-responsive work, focussing on those women either caught in or at risk of entering the 'revolving door' of crime and criminal justice.

Consideration should also be given to how bids might work alongside other existing programmes that provide funding to charities and organisations that work with women, in particular exploring opportunities to dovetail programmes with both Housing First homelessness reduction pilots and domestic abuse programmes.

Recommendation 3

Government should redirect a sum equivalent to the Core Allowance of Universal Credit into the Transformation Fund for Women, creating almost £15 million of additional annual funding. This should be used to support high quality community based-programmes, helping move women offenders and women at risk of offending away from crime and dependency towards employment and independence.

Creating the Justice Reinvestment strand

The final component of the Fund seeks to address the recent controversy in which the proceeds from the closure of London's only women's prison, HMP Holloway in 2016, were not used to reinvest in either the female custodial estate or services supporting offenders in the community or at risk of offending.

⁵⁰ *Briefing Paper: UK Prison Population Statistics*, House of Commons Library, 20 April 2017 [Accessed on 5 December 2017 via <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN04334/SN04334.pdf>]

⁵¹ Calculations based on DWP Universal Credit rates for 2017–18 and Ministry of Justice prison population statistics.

We therefore propose a Justice Reinvestment strand to the Fund, by which cost-savings from future reductions in the women's prison estate – against a benchmark population of c.4,000 – would be shared equally, with a 50 per cent split, between the Fund and improved provision of services and reshaping of the remaining custodial estate.

We estimate that even a modest 10 per cent reduction in the female prison population would eliminate approximately 390 prison places, a sufficient number to enable the closure of a prison. This would release both the overall resource expenditure (estimated at £14.7 million annually) and the capital gain from any subsequent site sale.

Where the geographic origin of saved spaces can be identified, the resulting savings should be ringfenced for applications from the local Police and Crime Commissioner. We tabulate examples of the sums that could be realised based on the direct and overall resource expenditure relating to prison spaces in Appendix A.

Recommendation 4

Government should commit to ensure that as the women's prison population declines and cost-savings are realised, 50 per cent of those savings should be allocated to the Justice Reinvestment component of the Criminal Justice Transformation Fund for Women.

Leveraging other sources of funding at a local level

The opportunity would also exist for Police and Crime Commissioners to leverage other sources of income – such as locally administered Community Safety Funds – or other national funds such as the Police Transformation or Innovation Fund.

When surveyed, 93 per cent of Police and Crime Commissioners agreed or strongly agreed that they could help leverage other funding sources and convene partners to help improve outcomes for female offenders.⁵²

The philanthropic sector may also seek to increase their support, particularly where they have confidence that they are supporting what works rather than what is often an ineffective or damaging status quo. This uplift in funds could be particularly beneficial for boosting early intervention for women at risk of offending.

Recommendation 5

Government should encourage PCCs and the philanthropic sector to leverage other funds at a local level. Government should implement an evaluation of the Fund and conduct a Feasibility Study to consider the potential for the Fund to be outcome-based, helping leverage additional social funding and promoting the more effective use of limited resources.

52 CSJ Survey: Police and Crime Commissioners on Criminal Justice, Centre for Social Justice, 29 January–23 February 2018

Alongside the introduction of this Fund should be a meaningful evaluation, helping understand the benefits and impact of different interventions – looking beyond reoffending and considering the progress made in relation to the nine pathways. In the event that an outcomes-based approach was taken to the Fund, the evaluation would form a vital part of determining whether the outcome had been achieved and the funds should be released.

The results of such evaluations would help inform future applications and justify continued or increased investment in the Fund, whether from the Department for Work and Pensions, the Ministry of Justice, Local Authorities or other agencies. There also remains significant scope to develop equivalent approaches in relation to the male offender population.

Building on action against domestic abuse and violence

The Government are due to consult on domestic abuse and domestic violence in the coming months and we already know that a large proportion of female offenders and women in prison have experienced domestic abuse. The Transformation Fund provides an opportunity for the Ministry of Justice centrally and Police and Crime Commissioners locally to harness other funds made available by the Home Office and the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government for local authorities and others to tackle domestic abuse and violence against women and girls.

The Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy specifically sets out that “specialist support, including accommodation-based support, will be available for the most vulnerable victims, and those with complex needs will be able to access the services they need” and that “services in local areas will work across boundaries in strong partnerships”.⁵³

By creating a Criminal Justice Transformation Fund for Women, the Government would provide necessary resource to better support those women with some of the greatest vulnerability and complexity while leadership from Police and Crime Commissioners would also help ensure effective working across local authority, NHS and other commissioning boundaries.

Seizing the opportunities to intervene and engage women

Alongside the Fund, the Government should set out a positive expectation on Police and Crime Commissioners, and through them the criminal justice system, that every opportunity should be sought to intervene and positively engage with female offenders and those at risk of offending.

The L&D programmes – whether nationally or locally resourced – are demonstrating the significant potential that can come from earlier interventions. Local Women’s Centres have shown themselves, today and in the past, to be able to positively impact some of society’s most disadvantaged and vulnerable women through engagement in police custody, and there is no good reason why this same principle should not be reasserted across other key touchpoints: such as when women might answer bail (where used) or be required to attend court (whether in relation to civil, family or criminal matters).

⁵³ Ending Violence Against Women and Girls: Strategy 2016–2020, HM Government, 2016 [Accessed on 12 Feb 2018 via www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/522166/AWG_Strategy_FINAL_PUBLICATION_MASTER_vRB.PDF]

It is only by creating the funding mechanism to support the investment in building and sustaining local community-based Women’s Centres, that this vision for an expansive, voluntary programme of intervention and engagement can be realised. After decades of rhetoric, the relational, trauma-informed, gender-responsive approaches that we know can both work and work better than alternative programmes, require an explicit commitment and focus from Government.

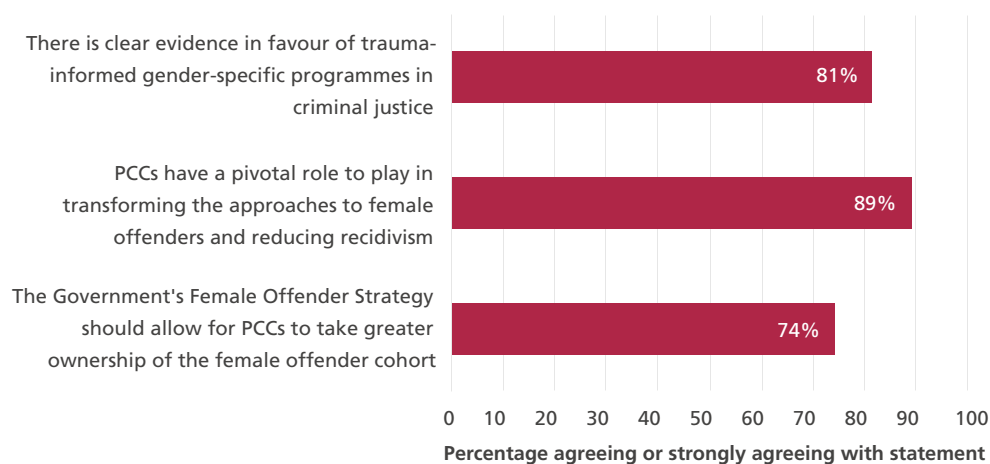
The Fund, coupled with a clear and declarative expectation being placed on Police and Crime Commissioners to support the creation of such an infrastructure, presents a real opportunity.

Recommendation 6

Police and Crime Commissioners, working with local Women’s Centres and other partners, should develop a package of accommodation, monitoring, supervision and rehabilitation measures that can be attached to Community and Suspended Sentence Orders. This would provide sentencers with a credible and evidenced alternative option for offenders, helping prevent unnecessary imprisonment of female offenders and achieving better outcomes.

It is an opportunity that Police and Crime Commissioners are keen to build on, with 60 per cent of PCCs already operating female offender programmes, and our own survey of PCCs on the subject of female offenders demonstrating a clear desire to play a greater role:

Figure 6: Support for the role of PCCs in relation to female offenders

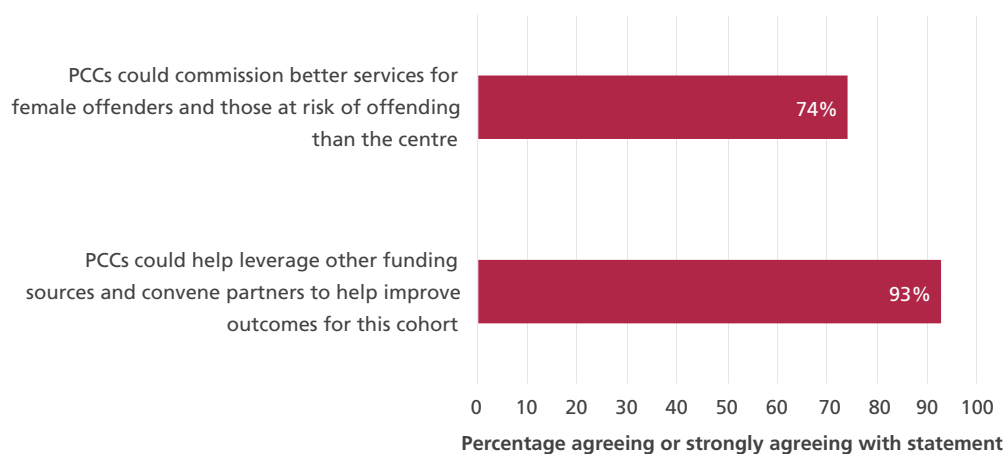


Source: CSJ Survey of PCCs

Furthermore, PCCs believe that they can commission better services, help leverage other funding sources, and convene partners to improve outcomes for the female offender cohort.

With these facts in mind, we propose that Government use the Fund to support those Police and Crime Commissioners with credible plans to transform the approach to female offenders, thereby improving outcomes and cutting crime. The Government should fully support such approaches and do all it can to ensure that the National Probation Service recognise the increased capacity and capability of newly commissioned programmes and services – and, where appropriate, recommend them to sentencers.

Figure 7: Opportunities to improve services and funding



Source: CSJ Survey of PCCs

Recommendation 7

Government should ensure that the National Probation Service is placed under a positive obligation to understand the range of services available locally for women offenders and ensure that, in relation to female offenders, reasons why referral to such services would or would not be appropriate should be provided to sentencers.

In practical terms, this can and should feed through into more effective interventions before a woman reaches court, and where a court may convict then the sentencing options available will be far more likely to include the gender-responsive, trauma-informed and community-based options that we know are most effective.

Public opinion has also been found to robustly support such sentencing disposals for non-violent women: 86 per cent of the public favour the use of local community centres where women are sent to address the root causes of their crimes and carry out compulsory work to pay back the community.⁵⁴

If such sentence disposals could be combined with problem-solving courts or a form of judicial monitoring, then the potential to help some of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable women in our society, particularly those with drug addictions, turn their lives around is significant.⁵⁵ We therefore call on Government to bring forward proposals to pilot problem-solving courts.

Problem-solving courts – a form of judicial monitoring – is the tried and tested route for reducing criminal behaviour among the 3 percent of serial offenders, most of them addicted to drugs or alcohol, who commit some 40 percent of crime.⁵⁶ There are already more than 3,000 PSCs in the USA and Canada but the UK government's past promises to create them have stalled, despite the strongest of recommendations by a high-powered Ministry of Justice working party.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ ICM Polling for Prison Reform Trust, 9–11 February 2007, 1006 UK adults aged 18+

⁵⁵ *What Happened to the Rehabilitation Revolution?*, Centre for Social Justice, 2017

⁵⁶ *Lord Birt's Review on Reducing Crime*, Home Office, 2005

⁵⁷ *What Happened to the Rehabilitation Revolution?*, Centre for Social Justice, 2017

In addition, recognising the value of gender-specific provision and the shortcomings of the Transforming Rehabilitation programme, the Government should welcome applications from PCCs to pilot services for female offenders that could replace the current CRC provision. Funding for these pilots could be drawn down from a combination of the additional spending set aside for CRCs, the Transformation Fund and the leveraging of additional funding sources by PCCs. This would help ensure a truly gender-specific approach embedded within the community and helping deliver improved outcomes.

Recommendation 8

Government should build on our proposals with pilots for problem-solving courts – making use of judicial monitoring – to focus and drive improved outcomes in relation to drug-addicted female offenders. Government should also welcome applications from PCCs to pilot services for female offenders that could replace the current CRC provision for female offenders.

Supporting women to live pro-social lives on release from prison

We must support the transformation of services for women in the community with a renewed determination to reconnect women in prison with the community and their families. We therefore propose Government ensure that prisoners are released from custody with a minimum level of welfare provision in place and to create a new strand of Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) to aid the safe and effective re-entry of women back into the community.

The long-standing problem of offenders leaving prison with no accommodation, with little or no meaningful supervision or support, and no meaningful financial arrangements in place is only fuelling the cycle of offending. Women, often with caring responsibilities, will find themselves committing shop thefts within hours, days or weeks of release in order to meet their essential needs, or the needs of their dependents.

We therefore propose that where a woman leaving custody has not had their benefit application to DWP processed and concluded, then one month of the Core Allowance of Universal Credit should be automatically provided on release from custody – replacing the £46 discharge grant.

Rather than provision of a cash sum, use of a modern pre-paid card, linked to hard-budgeting platforms to limit abuse, would ensure women have their immediate and short-term financial needs met on leaving custody.

The failure to process and conclude welfare applications prior to release is another area in which state failure can contribute to further or more frequent offending. Therefore, where the state fails to honour the terms on which our welfare state operates, then an emergency provision should be readily available in a straightforward package.

As with Universal Credit, access to this emergency funding provision should be conditional. Female prisoners in receipt of this support should be expected to either engage in efforts to secure employment, or to positively engage with the sorts of programmes built around

local Women's Centres or related services that we know can help achieve real progress and improvements across the nine pathways.

Recommendation 9

Government should ensure that every woman with an identified financial need should leave 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.

At present there are four types of ROTL, all of which are primarily designed for either regular day release, limited overnight release or another special purpose. They all require that the prisoner return to custody either the same day or within a matter of days and require that they spend a minimum amount of time in prison.⁵⁸

The Prison Rules governing the use of ROTL provide a wide range of authorities for the temporary release of prisoners, with three specifically providing a basis on which a reforming Justice Secretary could build:⁵⁹

- to engage in employment or voluntary work,
- to receive instruction or training which cannot reasonably be provided in the prison, and
- to assist her in maintaining family ties or in her transition from prison life to freedom.

We propose that the Justice Secretary create a new ROTL programme, initially piloted for women, which would enable women in prison to earn their release into the support of a local Women's Centre. The requirement to return to custody or to spend a specific amount of time in custody should both be relaxed to more effectively support the woman's re-entry into the community and engagement with the Women's Centre.

This new Earned Release and Community Payback (ERCP) form of ROTL – would build on the proposition of local Women's Centres and reparation to society that polling has demonstrated such significant public support for. The ERCP would be available for those women prisoners convicted of a non-violent offence and who have demonstrated good conduct within the prison, and where the overall or remaining sentence is 12 months or less.

Recommendation 10

Government should create a new Earned Release and Community Payback (ERCP) form of Release on Temporary Licence, harnessing the power of incentives to help foster desistance and encourage positive change. It is a proposal that would not require primary legislation. ERCP would provide a valuable means of releasing prison space within the female estate, with eligible women earning release into the support of an appropriate local service, such as a Women's Centre.

58 *Prison Service Order 6300: Release on Temporary Licence*, Ministry of Justice [Accessed on 11 Jan 2018 via www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/offenders/psipso/ps0/ps0-6300-rotl.doc]

59 The Prison Rules 1999 [Accessed on 12 Jan 2018 via www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1999/728/made]

The ERCP would place several conditions on the women, most notably their continued positive engagement with a specified local Women's Centre and their continued residency at a specified address, ideally accommodation supervised or otherwise associated with the Women's Centre. The women would be subject to recall in the event of a failure to positively engage.

The ERCP would – if combined with a problem-solving court and judicial monitoring – maximise the potential for both positive engagement and send a clear signal that the purpose of the criminal justice system is not simply to punish, but that it can and should also be about preventing crime and reducing recidivism.

The decision to grant ERCP would rightly require approval from the local Prison Governor and the consent of the organisation that would seek to support the woman – and, as with existing ROTL arrangements, the release could be rescinded in the event of objective concerns being identified either for the safety of the public or the woman herself.

The creation of an ERCP – built on earned release – would not just transform the lives of those women who accrued the benefits of the programme, it would also help restore hope to our women's prisons. It would free up resources within the custodial estate to focus on those individuals posing the greatest risks or with the greatest needs.

The ERCP would help ease the pressure within the women's prison estate by releasing eligible women into the community on an extended basis – with the terms of this temporary release combined with appropriate accommodation relaxing the requirement for the woman to return to the prison every evening or few days, helping focus all parties on rehabilitation in the community.

Case study: Tempus Novo

Tempus Novo is a charity based in Leeds, created and run by two former prison officers and seeks to connect prisoners with employment opportunities on release. Tempus Novo has also recently demonstrated how ROTL can provide real opportunities for female offenders to engage with work and other activities. One recent female prisoner, Karla, currently on ROTL, and in employment has secured a promotion at work – evidencing the opportunity that the appropriate use of ROTL can provide to helping deliver positive outcomes for society on release.

In assisting ex-offenders move from dependency and recidivism to employment and independence, charities like Tempus Novo, working with Women's Centres, could achieve even greater results for more female offenders through access to the Transformation Fund and a new strand of ROTL like ERCP.

The ERCP would naturally adhere to much of existing ROTL guidance in relation to monitoring, supervision and recall – with a Memorandum of Understanding between the local Women's Centre, partners, the prison governor, and probation services.

It would also help support women in the maintenance or rebuilding of positive relationships with their families and, crucially, their children – relieving some of the poorest in our society from costly and arduous prison visits and the fears they have for their loved ones while held in prison.

Coupling this earned release with community payback that makes a visible and tangible difference to the community is what makes this proposal the societally just, as well as individually compassionate, thing to do.

Following in Scotland's footsteps and delivering on Corston

Government should revisit the key recommendation of Baroness Corston's report and commit to publishing a strategy to deliver a reshaped prison estate within a decade. This work should be built upon cross-party support – it must, as far as possible, be a strategy that each and every major political party can commit to.

As outlined in Chapter 2, we remain a significant distance from this vision and the proposals for Community Prisons for Women remain a far cry from what either the Corston Report or the public consider acceptable for non-violent female offenders.

Meanwhile, the Scottish Government has developed a plan and begun to make real progress: opting for the creation of a single national prison and up to five smaller local community-based custody units.⁶⁰ Applying those same proportions to the female prison population in England and Wales would likely see the creation of one or two central prisons for women and no fewer than 20 or 25 smaller community-based custodial units.

This shift would not only allow for a much smoother transition back into the community, supported by such innovations as the Earned Release and Community Payback (ERCP) programme, but help support those positive relationships with family and children that can be so vital in motivating and sustaining change, as noted by Lord Farmer's Review.

The result of moving towards smaller community custodial units would be well-received by Police and Crime Commissioners, with 93 per cent of them agreeing or strongly agreeing that "holding prisoners close to the areas from which they come, and to which they will return, is desirable".⁶¹

More than two-thirds of Police and Crime Commissioners believe that by being involved in the commissioning or co-commissioning of prison services, they would help reduce crime and recidivism, further reinforcing the potential for a new way forward.

The Government should not shy away from building on their flagship reform to police governance. With more than 60 per cent of Police and Crime Commissioners already operating gender-specific programmes for female offenders, there is clear appetite on their part to help improve outcomes for some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people in society: reducing crime, making our communities safer, reducing the necessity for imprisonment, and helping families stay together.

60 *Vision and priorities for justice*, Scottish Government, 11 July 2017 [Accessed on 5 Jan 2018 via <https://news.gov.scot/news/vision-and-priorities-for-justice>]

61 *CSJ Survey: Police and Crime Commissioners on Criminal Justice*, Centre for Social Justice, 29 January–16 February 2018 (distributed to 42 PCCs/Mayors, with a 64% response rate, n = 27)

chapter four

The way forward

As so many – including Baroness Corston – have promised: there is a way forward. However, it will take a clear commitment from the current Government, future governments, and Parliament if real progress is to be made. The remedies and proposals that we set out are not in need of huge new funding commitments, nor significant new legislation. They are, rather, a question of political will.

It is a point that has been made by others, including the Chief Inspector of Prisons in 2012, who remarked in relation to women in prison and the lack of progress towards delivering on Baroness Corston's vision:

This is a responsibility that lies squarely at the door of successive governments and Parliament.⁶²

There is the potential – as the Scottish Government is already demonstrating – for a future in which women in or at risk of entering our criminal justice system are more effectively supported into lives that are free of crime and victimisation. This future will require the gradual roll-out across England and Wales of an approach that recognises the need to both tackle the current “stock” of female offenders in our criminal justice system, but also the “flow” of women and girls into the system.

The fact that all women in prison have come from the community, that virtually all women will return into the community, and that those women at risk of offending or entry into the criminal justice system and prison are in the community, emphasises the necessity of ensuring that community-based services exist to address both the stock and flow of women offenders and women at risk.

The experience of Women's Centres in general and the Whole System Approaches, for example are being piloted and evaluated in Greater Manchester and elsewhere, demonstrate the real potential to do things differently and to truly deliver the vision of the Corston Report.

Both the Justice Data Lab and recent independent evaluations show that these approaches can deliver both reduced re-offending and improved outcomes for the women they work with.⁶³

62 Lecture by Nick Hardwick, HM Chief Inspector of Prisons: 'Women in Prison: Corston Five Years On', University of Sussex, 29 February 2012 [Accessed on 21 Dec 2017 via <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130206124636/https://www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/about/hmipris/women-in-prison.pdf>]

63 *Justice Data Lab Reoffending Analysis: Women's Centres throughout England*, Ministry of Justice, 2015 [Accessed on 11 Jan 2018 via www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/427388/womens-centres-report.pdf]

The Government's Female Offender Strategy has the stated ambition:

to create a justice system that works to reduce crime and re-offending; responds to the particular needs of female offenders at all points of the system; and recognises that they have frequently been victims of abuse.⁶⁴

To achieve this ambition, the Government must now demonstrate real support for the creation and maintenance of intervention points right across the criminal justice system – from first coming to the attention of police, through any court processes and any sentencing disposals. However, to be truly effective and to intervene as early as possible, there is clearly a strong argument for ensuring the availability of support services for those women at risk of entry into the criminal justice system.

The costs of failing to make the commitment that is required should no longer be tolerable. Failing to provide some of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable women with the support and interventions that they need and that we know can work is wasteful for the individuals concerned and to society at large.

While much emphasis is placed on the cost of prison places, this is merely the tip of the iceberg. The direct and economic costs – to individuals, society and the taxpayer – are nothing short of eye-watering. The intergenerational nature of much offending and poverty should continue to be a source of great shame. As Baroness Corston herself remarked:

Too often costs are masked by a narrow focus on prison places and a failure to take a necessarily broad view across departments responsible for health, social services, housing and employment.⁶⁵

Local Women's Centres provide the foundations for an evidence-based grassroots platform through which both 'involved' and 'at risk' women can access gender-specific relational support. When such support is coupled with a form of Community Payback, they have the overwhelming support of the public too.

Our proposals to deliver real change also happen to build upon two major achievements, first delivered in the Conservative and Liberal Democrat coalition, and which are continuing to be refined and improved by the current government: Universal Credit and Police and Crime Commissioners.

More importantly than the mechanism however is the outcome. Just as Universal Credit has transformed the lives of many, ensuring that work can indeed be the best way out of poverty, so too this welfare reform can help secure the best possible start for women on release from prison, and the vital provision of services that support women moving away from a life of dependency and into recovery.

Finally, with so many women in our prisons born of state failure and the product of social breakdown, the unwillingness of successive governments to properly grip the issue make it today, more than ever, the sort of burning injustice that a government committed to social reform can and should tackle.

⁶⁴ *The Female Offender Strategy: Statement of Principles*, Ministry of Justice, 23 October 2017

⁶⁵ *The Corston Report: A report by Baroness Jean Corston of a Review of Women with Particular Vulnerabilities in the Criminal Justice System*, Home Office (2007) [Accessed on 1 Nov 2017 via www.justice.gov.uk/publications/docs/corston-report-march-2007.pdf]

Appendix A

Women's prison places by police force area

Approximate prison place usage per police force area and estimated cost-savings from reduction scenarios

Data from the Ministry of Justice based on the geographic origins of women, by police force area, held in prison on 30th June 2017. Where no home address is recorded the committal court address has been used. The calculations relate to the Direct Resource Expenditure (DRE – £24,664 per place) and Overall Resource Expenditure (ORE – £38,042 per place) for these spaces. The reduction scenarios relate to a reduction in the use of prison space by 10, 25 and 50 per cent respectively with the range based on the DRE and ORE figures.

The number of places shown for each area is a snapshot in time. It represents the stock of women in prison on a given day, rather than the flow.

Police Force Area	Places	DRE	ORE	10%	25%	50%
Avon and Somerset	85	£2.1m	£3.2m	£209–322k	£522–805k	£1.0–1.6m
Bedfordshire	41	£1.0m	£1.5m	£101–155k	£252–388k	£503–776k
Cambridgeshire	70	£1.7m	£2.7m	£173–267k	£433–668k	£866k–1.3m
Cheshire	68	£1.7m	£2.6m	£168–258k	£419–646k	£838k–1.3m
Cleveland	61	£1.5m	£2.3m	£149–230k	£373–576k	£746k–1.2m
Cumbria	46	£1.1m	£1.7m	£113–174k	£282–434k	£563–869k
Derbyshire	73	£1.8m	£2.8m	£180–278k	£450–695k	£901k–1.4m
Devon & Cornwall	78	£1.9m	£3.0m	£191–295k	£479–738k	£957k–1.5m
Dorset	56	£1.4m	£2.1m	£139–214k	£347–535k	£693k–£1.1m
Durham	36	£894k	£1.4m	£89–138k	£223–345k	£447–689k
Dyfed-Powys	11	£274k	£423k	£27–42k	£69–106k	£137–211k
Essex	80	£2.0m	£3.0m	£197–304k	£493–760k	£985k–1.5m

Police Force Area	Places	DRE	ORE	10%	25%	50%
Gloucestershire	31	£764k	£1.2m	£76–118k	£191–295k	£382–589k
Greater Manchester	168	£4.1m	£6.4m	£415–640k	£1.0–1.6m	£2.1–3.2m
Gwent	34	£848k	£1.3m	£85–131k	£212–327k	£424–654k
Hampshire	106	£2.6m	£4.0m	£260–402k	£651k–1.0m	£1.3–2.0m
Hertfordshire	54	£1.3m	£2.1m	£134–206k	£334–516k	£669k–1.0m
Humberside	73	£1.8m	£2.8m	£179–276k	£448–691k	£896k–1.4m
Kent	122	£3.0m	£4.6m	£301–464k	£752k–1.2m	£1.5–2.3m
Lancashire	118	£2.9m	£4.5m	£290–448k	£726k–1.1m	£1.5–2.2m
Leicestershire	53	£1.3m	£2.0m	£132–203k	£329–508k	£658k–1.0m
Lincolnshire	47	£1.2m	£1.8m	£117–180k	£292–451k	£584–901k
Merseyside	151	£3.7m	£5.8m	£373–576k	£933k–1.4m	£1.9–2.9m
London (Metropolitan)	672	£16.6m	£25.6m	£1.6–2.6m	£4.1–6.4m	£8.3–12.8m
Norfolk	51	£1.3m	£1.9m	£126–194k	£314–485k	£629–969k
North Wales	40	£992k	£1.5m	£99–153k	£248–383k	£496–765k
North Yorkshire	38	£943k	£1.5m	£94–145k	£236–364k	£471–727k
Northamptonshire	44	£1.1m	£1.7m	£107–166k	£268–414k	£527–828k
Northumbria	104	£2.6m	£4.0m	£258–397k	£644–993k	£1.3–2.0m
Nottinghamshire	60	£1.5m	£2.3m	£149–230k	£373–575k	£746k–1.2m
South Wales	174	£4.3m	£6.6m	£428–660k	£1.1–1.7m	£2.1–3.3m
South Yorkshire	116	£2.9m	£4.4m	£286–441k	£715k–1.1m	£1.4–2.2m
Staffordshire	66	£1.6m	£2.5m	£162–250k	£406–626k	£811k–1.3m
Suffolk	42	£1.0m	£1.6m	£103–159k	£258–398k	£516–795k
Surrey	43	£1.1m	£1.6m	£106–163k	£265–408k	£529–817k
Sussex	61	£1.5m	£2.3m	£152–234k	£379–585k	£758k–1.2m
Thames Valley	125	£3.1m	£4.8m	£309–477k	£772k–1.2m	£1.6–2.4m
Warwickshire	19	£457k	£705k	£46–70k	£114–176k	£228–352k
West Mercia	61	£1.5m	£2.3m	£150–231k	£374–577k	£748k–1.2m
West Midlands	261	£6.4m	£9.9m	£644–993k	£1.6–2.5m	£3.2–5.0m
West Yorkshire	193	£4.8m	£7.4m	£477–735k	£1.2–1.8m	£2.4–3.7m
Wiltshire	23	£559k	£862k	£56–86k	£140–216k	£280–431k
Total	3,868	£95.4m	£147.1m	£9.5–14.7m	£23.9–36.8m	£47.7–73.6m

Appendix B

The current female prison estate

Map of Women's Prisons in England and Wales



*HMP Bronzefield and HMP Peterborough are privately operated by Sodexo Justice Services.

Appendix C

Government's female offender strategy principles

How our recommendations map against the principles of the Government's female offender strategy.

<p>The Government has proposed that the strategy is based on the following principles:</p>	<p>We are proposing the following elements to address the various points:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-Government leadership at the national level and stronger co-operation between central and local government. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure criminal justice representation on the Homelessness Reduction Taskforce. • Secure Universal Credit Core Allowance funding for women on release from prison, and hypothecated funding into the Transformation Fund for women in prison.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-agency collaboration at local level, with the justice system working in partnership with other statutory and voluntary agencies to develop whole system approaches that provide the holistic support female offenders need, supported by a network of high quality Women's Centres. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create Fund to enable PCCs to make collaborative bids with local agencies and partners, in particular local Women's Centres. • Ensure Fund has mixture of revenue and capital funding streams to support development of high quality network.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better early intervention for vulnerable women at risk of offending, to steer them away from the CJS and into treatment and support where appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create clear expectation that PCCs should ensure early interventions are available from the point of arrest onwards, and encourage to also explore partnerships for referrals from GPs and other key services.

-
- Improving the provision of robust gender-specific sentencing options in the community, allowing women to receive a community rather than a custodial sentence where appropriate. This will include looking at the potential for improving residential based accommodation support for female offenders in the community.
 - Ensure the National Probation Service have knowledge of local services relating to female offenders and that, where appropriate, these are brought to the attention of the judiciary.
 - Collaborate with Housing First pilots in relation to female offenders and their accommodation needs when leaving prison with no accommodation.
 - Actively encourage bids to the Transformation Fund from PCCs and local Women's Centres looking to provide accommodation.

-
- Improving the women's custodial estate, including some smaller community prisons, allowing female offenders to be held closer to home and to meet women's physical, emotional, and social needs supported by suitably trained staff.
 - Government should commit to a strategy that reshapes the current prison estate within a decade, but abandon the Community Women's Prisons until community offerings have been established.

-
- Improving outcomes for women in the CJS who are at risk of self-harm and suicide. Our response to self-harm will be a multi-agency stepped approach, undertaken in partnership with the women themselves.
 - Free up staff and resource to focus on most challenging prisoners through adoption and implementation of Earned Release and Community Payback ROTL.

-
- A skilled workforce, trained to work in a trauma informed way with female offenders.
 - Continue to train staff in trauma-informed approaches and welcome secondments into community-based services.
-



The Centre for Social Justice
34a Queen Anne's Gate
London
SW1H 9AB

www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk
@csjthinktank