

ENHANCING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN INSTITUTIONAL AND COMMUNITY-BASED CORRECTIONS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM: RECENT EXPERIENCE AND FUTURE PLANS

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Presentation Overview

A word about the structure of this paper:

I will begin by looking at some common challenges – challenges which observation and discussion tell me are indeed common to a number of countries, including I suspect several of the countries represented in the 147th Training Course.

Secondly, I will address some of the potential benefits of Community Involvement, benefits which help to address the challenges I will outline, and some of the approaches to community involvement.

Following an introduction to NOMS, I then want to explore some of the major developments of the last decade or so. This has been a time of investment and change in our prison and probation services, including a significant growth in what is known as evidence-based practice or “What Works”. The major focus of this work is reducing reoffending, but enhancing public protection has been another very important aim. We know from evidence that we can achieve reductions of 10% or even 20% using the best approaches – or even significantly more in some cases involving a range of approaches and, importantly, community agencies and groups. Achieving these impacts is increasingly a key criterion for the next part of the paper – work in partnership across all sectors of society.

I will turn then to the most substantial part of my paper: the steps we have taken to involve communities in working with us, especially in support of the twin aims of reducing reoffending and protecting the public: I need to clarify that I have referred to many different kinds of partnership including public, private, civil, and the work of volunteers. I want to address all of these, in each case referring to strategy, some of the approaches, and some of the lessons.

Finally, I will conclude by coming right up to date. In particular I want to draw attention to four or five developments which reflect the lessons of recent years and the priorities of the new government. These include an increased focus on Commissioning and what we might call “Localism”, Payment by Results, Diversion, and Restorative Justice. It is no coincidence that every one of these involves closer work with communities and, as you will see from our use of the term “Big Society”, closer links with communities is central to the direction we are taking.

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This paper is about the experience of England and Wales – that part of the United Kingdom within which my organization, the National Offender Management Service – or NOMS – operates. I would like to emphasize the value that I, and my organization, places on the opportunity offered by UNAFEI to work in a way that is another kind of partnership – the partnership of international learning and collaboration. This paper references practice in Canada, Singapore, New Zealand and several other countries. That is a reflection of how we have wanted to learn from the experience of others. International dialogue speeds up the pace of learning and I very much hope that this paper will be relevant to the situations faced in other countries. What is entirely clear to me is that my own country will benefit from these exchanges – and I am extremely grateful to UNAFEI for making this possible.

The overall approach in this paper is therefore to start with the larger picture and then to move progressively to case examples and the detail.

B. Some Common Challenges

I suggest that the following are some of the most pressing - and common – challenges:

- Fewer resources (25% over four years in the case of NOMS)
- Increasing workload
- Prisons at or beyond full capacity
- Strong focus on, and public expectation of:
 - Reducing reoffending
 - Public protection
 - Effectiveness
 - Value for money
- Prison security and decency
- Offence trends/recognition (gangs, trafficking, family violence, hate crime, foreign nationals)

In the case of England and Wales, we are anticipating a budget reduction of about 25% over the next four years. Everybody will appreciate what a challenge meeting this target will be. At the same time we need to maintain, or even to improve, our effectiveness in reducing reoffending, in resettling offenders, in public protection. We all value what this means - fewer offences, fewer victims, more settled communities and the potential for ex-offenders to contribute more beneficially to society.

The benefits are not only personal and social: Financially, in the United Kingdom, we have estimated that the cost of offending by prisoners to be about £11 billion per year. We also estimate that offending, and the response to offending, by one individual can be as much as £1million over a lifetime. Therefore, increasing our effectiveness – focussing on what is most effective, and delivering this work in partnership with others - and efficiently, should lead to some of the savings we will be making.

Before commencing the major sections of the paper, I would like to draw attention to some of the benefits of involving communities. These include:

Flexibility and skill in meeting specialist needs, the strengths that partnership can bring to public protection, and the potential benefits of competition in raising standards and stimulating innovation. Of course there are others, which will be addressed later.

II. THE NATIONAL OFFENDER MANAGEMENT SERVICE

A. What is NOMS?

The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) is new. It was created in April 2008 as an executive agency of the Ministry of Justice with the goal of helping prison and probation services work together effectively and efficiently to manage offenders throughout their sentences.

The Director General of NOMS is responsible to the Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice and sits on the Board of the Ministry, chaired by the Permanent Secretary. The responsibility of the NOMS Agency, on behalf of the Secretary of State, is to deliver the sentences and orders of the courts of England and Wales by:

- commissioning adult offender services in custody and the community from public, private and civil society organizations;
- providing the public prison service; and
- overseeing the Trusts which provide the public probation services.

In operating through providers and partners in the public, private and civil society sectors, NOMS endeavours to manage offenders in an integrated way. What work needs to be done – and who does the work – is based on evidence and driven by ensuring value for money for the public.

NOMS manages offenders throughout both their custodial and community sentences, working with around 260,000 offenders a year. We carry out prison sentences in England and Wales: there are 135 prisons, of which 124 are run by the public sector and 11 by private contractors. This is the first area of engagement of communities I will discuss later – in this case the private sector. We also manage offenders on community sentences, and provide services to offenders, victims, witnesses and the courts. There are 35 probation areas – areas which became Trusts during 2010 – a change designed to provide an increased level of independence and clear accountability for delivery, whether by the Trust or through its partners.

NOMS aims to help offenders change their lives in order to reduce their chances of reoffending. In recent years, NOMS has had an impressive record in relation to target, meeting or exceeding 27 of 28 national performance targets (missing one slightly) and contributing to a fall in the number of reoffences committed of 11.1% between 2005 and 2007. The number of reoffences classified as serious fell by 9.8% over the same period. Like many government departments around the world we have been required to make efficiency savings even before the current large reductions brought about by the recession. We met an £81million efficiency savings target for 2008/09 and an even larger saving of about £171 million 2009–10.

NOMS announced a new structure in January 2011, designed to reduce senior level Director posts and costs by more than 40%. It is noteworthy too, in the context of partnership, that a combined post of Director of Probation and Contracted Services has been created, emphasizing the contractual nature of the relationship that has developed between Government and the local delivery of community sentences.

Close to 50% of NOMS services now fall in the area of contracted rather than direct Government delivery

III. THE SENTENCING FRAMEWORK

A. The Sentencing Framework

The England and Wales sentencing framework, like the effective practice and resettlement frameworks which follow, has had a relatively recent genesis. The framework was designed with a number of purposes of sentencing in mind, and these are set out in the 2003 Criminal Justice Act.

1. The Purposes of Sentencing

The 2003 Criminal Justice Act sets out the five purposes of sentencing:

- the punishment of offenders;
- the reduction of crime (including its reduction by deterrence);
- the reform and rehabilitation of offenders;
- the protection of the public; and
- making reparation by offenders to persons affected by their offences.

A number of important principles underpin the sentencing framework. These include the need to ensure that sentences are fair and proportional to the offence, and that sentences of imprisonment are delivered in a seamless fashion from prison to the community as a “*whole sentence*”. Purposes of sentencing should be addressed in both the *custodial* and *aftercare* stages of the sentence.

2. The Question of Offence Seriousness

Whilst courts are obliged to have regard to these principles, sentence will generally be determined according to *seriousness* of the offence. Seriousness is made up of:

- *harm* caused by the offence; and
- *culpability* of the offender in committing it.

There is also a presumption that recent and relevant previous convictions make an offence more serious. Thresholds of penalty are based on seriousness:

- offences that are so serious that only custody will represent a sufficient response;
- offences that are serious enough to warrant a community sentence.

In cases where neither of these thresholds is reached then a fine or a discharge will be appropriate.

3. Prison Sentences

The structure of a prison sentence depends on the sentence length. Implementation is progressive:

- (a) Under 12 months (currently no supervised licence): The intention of the act is:
 - Custody period of 2-13 weeks; Licence period of 6-9 months;
 - Court sets licence conditions;
 - Executive recall.
- (b) Sentences of imprisonment for twelve months or longer
 - Are served half in custody and half in community;
 - Case Manager agrees intervention plan and conditions;
 - Executive recall.
- (c) Intermittent and Suspended (court handles breach) options;
- (d) In the case of life, indeterminate and extended sentences for serious and public protection cases, the Parole Board decides the release date.

The intention of the Act is that many of the options applicable to community sentences are also available on post-release licence.

4. Community Sentences

Since the implementation of the Criminal Justice Act 2003, there has been a single community order for offenders aged 18 or over that can comprise up to 12 requirements depending on the offence and the offender. These are:

- unpaid work (formerly community service/community punishment) – a requirement to complete between 40 and 300 hours' unpaid work;
- activity – for example to attend basic skills classes;
- programme – there are several designed to reduce the prospects of reoffending;
- prohibited activity – requirement not do so something that is likely to lead to further offences or nuisance;
- curfew – electronically monitored;
- exclusion – not much used as no reliable electronic monitoring yet available;
- residence – requirement to reside only where approved by probation officer;
- mental health treatment (requires offender's consent);
- drug rehabilitation (requires offender's consent);
- alcohol treatment (requires offender's consent);
- supervision – meetings with probation officer to address needs/offending behaviour;
- attendance centre – three hours of activity, usually on Saturday afternoons, between a minimum of 12 hours and a maximum of 36 in total.

Typically, the more serious the offence and the more extensive the offender's needs, the more requirements there will be. Most orders will comprise one or two requirements but there are packages of several available where required. The court tailors the order as appropriate and is guided by the probation service through a pre-sentence report.

Whilst the 2003 Act continues to provide the main sentence framework for the work of the prison and probation services, the new Government has introduced a Green Paper (referred to later in this paper) which may lead to significant change, including an increased emphasis on restorative justice and changes to indeterminate sentencing.

IV. THE EFFECTIVE PRACTICE OR “WHAT WORKS” FRAMEWORK

NOMS has introduced three systems to reduce reoffending. All three have an impact on how the organization approaches communities:

- *An Offender Assessment System (“OASys”)* – designed to assess risk and needs and to inform case management;
- *The National Offender Management Model* – intended to manage offenders safely and effectively, including managing prisoners consistently from prison to the community;
- *Interventions* – including unpaid work, employability programmes, and accredited programmes to address a wide range of offending-related or “criminogenic” needs including “thinking skills”, domestic violence, sex offending, and drug or alcohol misuse.

The effective practice framework flows naturally from the sentencing framework.

A. The OASys Assessment System

OASys has been developed jointly by the prison and probation services. It is an IT-based system which assesses offending-related need and risk of reconviction and serious harm. There is on-going validation of accuracy against actual reconviction. The OASys tool also guides individual sentence planning, measures change, and provides management information. Data is aggregated centrally, regionally and locally to support analysis and service planning – of NOMS and stakeholders.

OASys measures a wide range of factors statistically shown to be relevant to offending. These include education, training and employability, accommodation, financial management and income, relationships, lifestyle and associates, drug and alcohol misuse, emotional well-being, and thinking skills and attitudes.

The risk assessment element measures harm to the public, children, staff, prisoners, offenders themselves, and to adults known to the offender, indicating whether risk is low, medium, high or very high. Action to manage risk is then triggered including through MAPPA arrangements described later.

OASys data may be analysed in many ways: Data is able to demonstrate the offending-related needs of a national probation sample by type of need and by gender. The data might also, for example, be analysed by prison or probation caseload or by region or city. Our OASys data shows that the most common needs of offenders, *related to their offending*, include education and employment, with a wide range of other needs including “thinking skills” (such as problem solving), accommodation and drug problems not far behind. This complexity of need makes our work more difficult, and influences consideration of the aims of community organizations, across all sectors, with whom we work. This point will be returned to later.

B. The National Offender Management Model

The National Offender Management Model is underpinned by a number of principles intended to support engagement with communities. These include:

- One Offender Manager, an individual probation officer, who manages the case throughout the sentence (including time in prison) to provide continuity;
- The Offender Manager is community-based – even for prisoners;
- One sentence plan is developed for the entire sentence;
- A system of resource “Tiers” allocates resources according to risk and needs;
- The concept of the “Offender Management Team” - all responsible agencies operate to common agreed goals.

The model provides the means by which NOMS ensures the right services are harnessed from within the service and from partners, and delivered to each offender according to risks and needs assessed through OASys assessment.

C. Interventions - The “What Works Core Curriculum”

The third system is referred to as the “Core Curriculum”. This is the suite of interventions most closely associated with “what works” – interventions based on tested independent research evidence of effectiveness.

NOMS “what works” interventions are based on a process of accreditation. Accreditation is carried out by an independent group of international experts – the “Accreditation Panel”. The panel has developed

Interventions Criteria against which new approaches are assessed. Key criteria are:

- A clear model of change;
- Specified offender selection criteria;
- Targeting of offending risk factors;
- Employment of effective methods;
- Skills orientated;
- Appropriate sequencing, duration and intensity of intervention;
- Motivation and engagement;
- Continuity of Services;
- Maintenance of Integrity;
- Evaluation and Monitoring.

The core curriculum contains more than twenty programmes, and is continuing to expand. The creation of NOMS provided an opportunity to rationalize programmes historically developed separately by the prison and probation services and to build continuity of programme design and delivery. For example, sex offender treatment begun in prison can be reinforced post-release.

The programme range includes cognitive skills, substance misuse, sex offender treatment, violence and emotional management, women offenders, drink impaired drivers, and resettlement. Most are designed for group delivery. However there are also programmes for delivery to individuals - who might for example live in an isolated area where it would be impractical to deliver to a group.

It is important to note that we know from experience and research that programmes are only effective when delivered as intended by well-trained, managed and supported staff. Delivery quality is so important that NOMS has developed detailed guidance, audit and support to ensure these standards are met in prisons and the community.

D. “What Works” Evaluation

Evaluation evidence is promising. The 2006 Evaluation Cohort allows comparison with year 2000 results. The frequency of reoffending was reduced by an average of 22.9%. For offences classified as most serious, the reduction was of 11.1%. Over the same period, the *proportion* of offenders reoffending fell by 10.7%.

This translates into significantly fewer victims and reduced costs associated with crime.

V. SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND COMMUNITY REINTEGRATION

A. Development of the Overall Approach

I would now like to touch briefly on the NOMS approaches to social exclusion, community reintegration and resettlement.

Genesis of the resettlement and community reintegration framework has followed a similar timescale to the sentencing and “what works” frameworks. In 2001 the Government’s Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) published a report on prisoner resettlement and social exclusion. The findings were startling and showed, for example, that prisoners were far more likely than the general population to be unemployed (67% of prisoners – pre-sentence – and 5% of the general public respectively), to have no qualifications, to be homeless, and to suffer from mental disorders.

The NOMS reintegration and resettlement framework is based on the Social Exclusion Unit’s work. The report, which was researched and prepared in close collaboration with the Prison and Probation Services, proposed a needs-based “pathway” approach through which offenders’ needs are addressed via cross-government agreement and action.

As noted by Maguire and Raynor (2006), the SEU’s location in the office of the Deputy Prime Minister gave the recommendations political weight and allowed development of a cross-departmental approach to

social inclusion and reducing reoffending. A national strategy and action plan on reducing reoffending (2004) extended the pathway approach to community sentences.

The resettlement framework comprises seven rehabilitation “pathways” for men and women. Each pathway addresses areas of work critical to prisoners and to work with offenders in the community. The pathways support close work between prisons and probation areas to ensure that pathways are continuous from custody to community. The pathways are:

- Accommodation
- Education, training and employment
- Health
- Drugs and alcohol
- Finance
- Families
- Attitudes, thinking and behaviour.

Two additional pathways have recently been added for work with women, including attention to abuse and domestic violence. The pathways are underpinned by four cross-cutting themes:

- Assessment and Case Management
- Diversity
- Public Protection
- Partnerships.

One of the most far-reaching recommendations of the SEU report encouraged prisons to think in terms of “*mainstream permeability*”, the idea that prison walls should not be barriers to prisoner access to mainstream services. Government departments have responsibility for developing policy on offender access to mainstream services. This recommendation has speeded up the introduction of mainstream staff working closely in prisons, often through a system of “in-reach” staff co-located with prison staff in resettlement units.

The pathway approach has enabled us to gain a national, regional and local picture of resettlement need and to involve other departments and partnerships based on this accurate picture. When OASys needs are placed within the pathway structure we see that education, employment, thinking skills, relationships (including family), substance misuse, and accommodation are at the top of the list. This provides us with clear and impartial evidence on which to base priorities in strategy, policy and practice, including our work with communities.

B. Lessons in Resettlement

In parallel to the work of the SEU, a number of evaluated development projects, including the Resettlement Pathfinders (1999- 2003), demonstrated some vital characteristics of effective resettlement. These also influence our approach to work with community organizations – in particular those engaged in social inclusion.

The pathfinders found resettlement was more effective when:

- The sentence plan is based on sound assessment of risks and needs;
- Intervention begins as soon as possible after sentence;
- Intervention includes attention to attitudes and thinking...;
- ...and attention to practical needs, with links to mainstream provision and community facilities
- Case management is delivered “through the prison gate” and includes work on motivation, ideally delivered by the same person or, if not possible, team.

C. The Importance of Personal and Social Factors in Inclusion, Reducing Reoffending and Resettlement

Before looking in detail at work to enhance community involvement, I want to conclude this part of the paper by describing some new and exciting developments in inclusion, reducing reoffending and resettlement. These focus on the interaction of personal and social factors in supporting change and integration.

1. Desistance

First I would like to draw attention to the rise in understanding of what helps offenders to desist from reoffending. Desistance theory emphasizes long term change over short term control, and the collective interest of the community in integration of offenders. The focus is on supporting offenders to see themselves in a new and more positive light with hope for the future. Desistance theory may argue that individuals need a combination of *motivation, human capital and social capital* in order to succeed. Human capital includes the capacity of individual to make changes and achieve goals. Social capital includes factors such as employment and supportive family or other relationships.

Successful resettlement therefore depends on helping offenders in all three areas, recognizing that progress in all is unlikely to be direct or continuous. It is said that 90% of offenders remain ambiguous about their future until and even beyond apparently stable reintegration.

2. Motivation

(i) *F.O.R. A Change*

F.O.R. A Change is a resettlement programme which draws on desistance theory, motivational theory, the proven effectiveness of cognitive behavioural work, and practical support to engage offenders in planning a new future. The aim is to create both confidence and commitment to change. The programme builds on the motivational cycle of change to move individuals through five stages of accepting the need for change, recognizing problems, defining how to overcome problems, developing their own plan for change, and controlling of risks of relapse.

The programme involves 12 × 2 hour sessions, delivered in groups and individual sessions, with support post-release offered by the probation service or the voluntary sector. One of the most successful and innovative features of the programmes is the “*Community Market Place*”. This innovative approach involves inviting representatives of public agencies and civil society organizations into the prison where they set up “*Market Stalls*” displaying the services they offer. Prisoners are able to walk around the “market place” and to approach organizations that would be helpful to them, making appointment to follow up these contacts once they are released. Prisoners therefore become active rather than dependent participants in their own resettlement and feel the rewards of their own positive action. This in effect building social capital, and taken as a whole, the programme aims to improve motivation, confidence and community opportunities.

The F.O.R. A Change programme has been run in several male and female prisons with good success and has received accreditation by the UK’s panel of independent experts.

3. Decency and Citizenship

One further area I would like to touch on before describing work with communities in detail is that of “Decency”. We increasingly see the benefits of treating prisoners with the values and respect that we hope they will demonstrate on release. Reasons why what we term the “Decency Agenda” is so important include:

- Prison staff, especially officers, are the “human face” of prisons;
- They are 24 hour role models, able to demonstrate “pro-social” behaviours;
- Prison staff have the opportunity to demonstrate judgement, consistency, appropriate fair authority, and leadership.

Other aspects of the approach include ensuring that communications, written and verbal, are clear and positively framed and worded. Benefits are that prisoners are better prepared for release in the qualities of respect and tolerance, and that staff too benefit from an improved work environment, staff morale, and performance.

Delivery is measured by “Quality of Prison Life”, Inspection and Independent Monitoring Reports.

Together with prison security and decency, “what works” and the pathway approach provide a framework for closer engagement across all sectors in the community. Commissioning and contracting aim to achieve impact in reducing reoffending and public protection, ensuring that attention is paid to needs, to effectiveness, and to representing best value.

VI. INVOLVING COMMUNITY PARTNERS: RECENT EXPERIENCE

I come now to the core of the paper which addresses a range of approaches to work with the private, public and civil sectors of society in order to meet those objectives of reduced reoffending and public protection.

A. Work with the Private Sector

1. Private Sector Contracted Delivery

As noted at the outset, NOMS is a commissioning agency. Whilst the large majority of prisons are directly managed by the agency, eleven out of 135 are privately operated. These eleven prisons are run by three companies. Nine are what are termed "Design, Build and Operate" contracts, whilst two were built and financed by the public sector but are managed by private companies. It is possible that further public prisons may be "market tested". It is important to note that the aim is competition – the public sector may bid too. Not only that, but bids may be cross-sector, for example involving a private company and a civil society organization or CSO. There is a further option in that internal services may also be delivered by private organizations. Examples include catering or cleaning.

What are the benefits of this approach to the opening of delivery? Some of the benefits which have been found include:

- Increased innovation in approach (the Social Impact Bond described later in this paper is run by one of the private prisons working with two civil society organizations);
- Reductions in cost per bed-space;
- Reduced reoffending, most noticeable in the case of younger offenders;
- Some improvements in staff relationships with prisoners;
- Evidence of motivation of improvement in public sector prisons.

However it is important to note that it is not always easy to get the contracting right (price, flexibility, outcome), and there have been instances of complex start up issues, of staff turnover, and also of degree of confidence of newly appointed staff.

Other areas of work that have been contracted to the private sector by NOMS include Electronic Monitoring, in this case two companies at the present time. EM can be regarded as tough, flexible, effective and efficient. It has been used with over 685,000 individuals, and at any one time about 21,000 individuals are being managed this way. Uses include bail (about 29%), court order (about 54%) and post-release (about 15%). From a contracting point of view it is important to note that the contract providers in the 69% of cases which are "single requirements" provide all of the functions from supply of equipment and monitoring to dealing with any violations and initiating breach action.

Although not a recent experience in terms of contracting, NOMS is also about to contract Community Service (known as Community Payback to emphasize the reparative aspect of the order). Benefits are intended to include cost savings and contractors will be expected to maintain the close ties with communities developed through "Justice Seen, Justice Done" during which more than 18,000 votes were cast by the public to help prioritize work they would like to see delivered, using methods such as internet voting or local panels. In some schemes local people engage in activities to identify needs and projects which will help reduce local reoffending.

Opportunities to vote are publicized through the local media.

Community Service has the highest profile of the all the community sentences in England and Wales. It attracts public awareness, media coverage and political interest. Although the main purpose is to provide punishment and reparation, for some offenders they are also rehabilitative benefits as Community Payback projects can provide an opportunity to develop life and vocational skills that reduce the risk of reoffending.

Up to 20% of the hours can be spent on skills and employment preparation. More than 62,000 offenders successfully completed Community Payback Sentences in 2008-2009. Work may take place in groups or

single placements. Projects benefit the community such as decoration and renovating buildings, tidying local areas, graffiti removal, recycling and working directly with local charities. Beneficiaries may be either in individual placements (such as a charity shop) where the Beneficiary provides the direct supervision or more typically in a supervised work group where a “Provider” (for example a probation service or third sector organization) employed supervisor oversees the work.

Opportunities to vote may be publicized through the local media.

2. Private Sector Involvement in work to Reduce Reoffending and Social Exclusion

Some of the most innovative and beneficial examples of private sector involvement in work to reduce reoffending and social exclusion have been in the field of improving prisoner employment.

The Corporate Alliance is a banner for the Government’s employment’s employer engagement activities for offenders. It includes partnerships with private, public and voluntary sector organizations to improve the skills and employment outcomes for offenders. It seeks to:

- encourage more employers to employ and support offenders during the process of finding and retaining employment;
- support and disseminate good practice involving employers improving the skills and employment of offenders; and
- use employers to ‘market’ the Corporate Alliance to other employers.

There are three levels of engagement that enable employers to get involved with offenders in ways that best suits them. These are:

- Level One – activities to support improvement in employability, focusing on donating materials that can be used to train offenders, and donating staff time for interview training, CV preparation, and for mentoring offenders;
- Level Two – activities in support of designing and delivering training programmes, including paid work placements; and
- Level Three – recruiting directly from prisons and probation.

Promotion of the Corporate Alliance at national and regional level has resulted in over 100 employers, who are already involved with offenders or planning to get involved, using their involvement to promote the case with other employers.

To ensure that developments to engage with employers are informed and steered by employers a Reference Group, chaired by a business leader, consisting of major as well as medium and small employers from the private, public and voluntary sectors has been established.

(i) Business in the Community

Business in the Community (BIC) is an independent business-led charity with more than 830 companies in membership. Through its “Unlocking Talent” programme, BIC aims to develop the skills and talents of the workforce and a part of its members work in support of Corporate Social Responsibility. BIC has a specific offender-employment initiative: This work is itself an example of partnership between NOMS and the private sector: work on employing ex-offenders is sponsored by the Barrow Cadbury Trust.

Business in the community has a clear offender-employment perspective: “Through its member companies, Business in the Community works to improve the ability of ex-offenders to find employment. A good stable job is the single greatest factor in reducing reoffending. Not only does it provide individuals with the necessary resources and self-esteem to improve their lives but benefits all sections of society through reduced levels of crime.”

Another perspective addresses direct benefits to the employer: “We share in common with most employers a recurring headache – the recruitment and retention of staff, and we have had to learn to think beyond the traditional recruitment routes. There is undoubtedly a large pool of under-utilised skilled men and women in our prisons who are due for release into your communities, and who are keen and willing to work. Those we

have employed have been exemplary employees.”

Business in the Community is clear about the business case for employing ex-offenders. Arguments in support of the case include

- (a) Savings to the private sector through crime reduction: Crime costs business £19 billion year, reoffending by ex-prisoners costs £11 billion year. Ex-offenders in work are 33% - 50% less likely to reoffend and some schemes reduce risk to 10%;
- (b) Recruitment cost savings of 40% – 60% have been identified;
- (c) Mentoring ex-offenders brings skills and experience benefits for existing employees, including in management, communication, listening and team building.

(ii) *Examples of Corporate Involvement in Training or Employing Ex-offenders include:*

- (a) NOMS prisoner retail contract with DHL/Booker (supply chain management) employs some 500 prisoners in DHL supervised facilities across a number of prisons;
- (b) Travis Perkins (tool hire and builders merchants) opened their first training centre in HMP Stocken just over a year ago and has already expanded into another workshop in the same prison with total employment of 90 prisoners. Travis Perkins are now employing prisoners on release around their many sites and are growing their partnership into a second prison, HMP Ford. The workshop in this prison was expected to employ around 50 prisoners by the end of 2010;
- (c) Timpson's (shoes) now have two “Academies” (at Liverpool and Wandsworth prisons), demonstrating a strong interest in the rehabilitation of offenders. The Director of the company has issued a statement of support for employing ex-offenders: “*I find the staff we've recruited from prisons are among the best colleagues we've got. We see this as a great way of not only helping people but of getting people to work for us. 75% of those who join us from prison are still with us after six months*”;
- (d) Morrisons (retail) runs a pre-release training course in three prisons leading to employment on release. Significantly, the company achieves a 80% success rate in retention;
- (e) The Compass Group “Rehab” project employs serving female prisoners in a defence establishment where they learn catering and related skills;
- (f) Toyota supports a purpose-built workshop for young offenders offering the “Toyota Modern Apprenticeship”.

(iii) *Private Sector as a Direct Manager of Employment Support:*

Private sector companies are now also to be found in the provision of specialist offender rehabilitation services such as employment. Working Links is a private company that describes its vision as “*to help the most socially excluded individuals to fully take part in society, creating brighter futures for them, their families and communities*” One of its projects is “Kormo Shadin” – or ‘freedom to work’ – a programme started in June 2007 which aims to guide and support jobseekers through a range of activities enabling them to become socially and financially better off. It aims to support positive relationships with local criminal justice services, drugs treatment agencies, youth and community organizations, housing associations and the faith sector, helping Bangladeshi ex-offenders in East London to overcome their barriers to find work and move into employment.

(iv) *Risk and Disclosure of Criminal Records*

Recognizing employers' needs and concerns in relation to risk is a fundamental aspect of gaining employer confidence. NOMS has adopted “Tiered Case Management” which allocates resources and level of punishment, help, support in making change, and control to four levels according to assessment, which will be multi-agency in the case of the highest risk levels. The four levels are:

- Punish
- Punish and help
- Punish, help and change
- Punish, help, change and control (including MAPPA).

Disclosure of Criminal Records is set out in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, updated by the

Criminal Records Bureau, launched in 2002. Both an Advisors Guide and an Offenders guide are available, providing information, and advice on CV preparation and interviews.

B. Work with the Public Sector

Community Safety Partnerships, or CSPs, are a new arrangement in place only since April 2010. They bring together Police, Local Authorities (including their responsibility for housing), Fire & Rescue, Health and Probation, together with suggestions for working with prisons, other parts of the Criminal Justice System including Youth Offending Services, and the voluntary sector to prevent crime and disorder, antisocial behaviour, substance misuse and to reduce reoffending. Budgets devolved from central government departments are then combined by agencies closer to the ground, working in partnership to meet identified patterns of need. CSPs are a good example of this model in operation:

CSR member organizations work together to deliver work according to the *ASPIRE* model, first developed by the probation service. *ASPIRE* provides partners with a relatively simple model for cooperation. The five cooperative *ASPIRE* steps are:

- Assess the profile of reoffending in the area *including social exclusion data*;
- Strategically Plan for action;
- Implement the plan, drawing on case managed intervention, mainstream and commissioned services;
- Review performance;
- Evaluate success to review outcomes and value for money.

CSPs place a statutory duty on organizations to cooperate. This duty is set out in Section 108 of the Policing and Crime Act 2009. I would like to quote the argument put forward in support of this approach: *“Success in reducing reoffending can only be achieved by local partners working beyond traditional organizational boundaries... More effective partnership working as a result of these changes will help to reduce crime and reoffending, protect the public and improve public confidence in the criminal justice system, the police and in other local partners, in a way that allows people to see and feel the difference in their local communities”*.

The CSP Executive Summary continues *“Adults and young people convicted of offences are often some of the most socially excluded within society. The majority of offenders have complex and often deep-rooted health and social problems, such as substance misuse, mental health problems, homelessness, high levels of unemployment and possibly debt and financial problems. Tackling these problems is important for addressing the offender’s problems and providing “pathways out of offending”, and to break the inter-generational cycle of offending and associated family breakdown”*. CSPs therefore give local expression to the national aim of reducing reoffending through reducing exclusion.

Because CSPs are so new, it is not yet possible to provide examples of completed projects. But I can provide examples of work delivered as a result of the preceding Crime and Disorder Act of 1998. The 1998 Act created Crime and Disorder Partnerships (CDRPs). A national dissemination programme, known as the Beacon Scheme, has subsequently celebrated and promoted some of the most successful and innovative partnerships. Four of the areas selected for Beacon status focussed on creating safer communities through reducing reoffending. All have had to demonstrate six “hallmarks” of excellence:

- Empowered and Effective Leadership
- Visible and Constructive Accountability
- Intelligence-led Business processes
- Effective and Responsive Delivery Structures
- Engaged Communities
- Appropriate Skills and Knowledge.

Examples of partnership practice, facilitated by the multi-agency community approach, and frequently involving the private sector too, include:

(i) Safer Sunderland Partnership

Sunderland is the largest city in the north-east of England. The Sunderland project aimed to improve the rate of young offenders engaged in education, employment or training. 60 local businesses were approached, many of them corporate victims of crime. Offenders were then placed with them to provide unpaid work and gain work experience, so contributing to restorative justice. As well as the skills specific to the employment sector, the offenders learnt basic aspects of employment including timekeeping and dress. By 2008 Sunderland achieved 91% of young offenders in education training or employment, exceeding the national average by 20%.

(ii) Mentoring in Leicestershire

A scheme in the city of Leicestershire involves companies in offering two weeks' mentored support to young offenders in what is often a first step in experiencing employment.

(iii) Youth Involvement in Sunderland

Another scheme in Sunderland engaged young offenders in the design and development of projects to reduce reoffending. This provided a positive learning experience as well as producing useful intervention materials including DVDs on the effects of substance misuse and knife crime.

(iv) Domestic Violence

The Sunderland partnership also piloted a scheme for the male perpetrators of domestic violence. A development of the multi-agency approach includes a hostel for 8 men who are removed from the domestic home and receive interventions to reduce violence, whilst at the same time agencies work with the victims, and the children in the 98% of cases in which children are also involved.

(v) Tower Hamlets London – Safe Exit Diversion Scheme

This scheme works with women involved in street prostitution through linking criminal justice services, Local Authorities and third sector organizations. Following an holistic assessment of needs, women can be referred to one of 12 agencies. Well over 50% of women referred completed the scheme and had their cases discontinued.

(vi) The “Be Safe Bolton” Scheme

This scheme demonstrated the benefits of information and intelligence gathering and was able to ensure police and reintegration resources were targeted at offenders with the highest risk of harm or conviction. Local agencies have identified “Single points of Contact” for prisoners approaching release. The intelligence focuses improvement work on localities with high crime rates, and helps identify the most successful approaches. It was one of the first to involve residents in deciding the focus of community service work by offenders. Known as “Community Payback”, more than 50% of community service work is targeted following “Community Walks” on which residents decide on priorities to improve local safety. “Alley-gaters” to prevent run-throughs by groups of young people were one of the first developments.

(vii) Others

Other schemes addressing offender employment include “Community Hubs” in Tower Hamlets, London which links employers and employment support. Prisoners are where possible met at the prison gate. Ex-offenders are engaged in the meeting service and in delivering the employment programme, a model which also develops their own skills and helps them make life changes. The scheme employs male and female ex-offender mentors, and also tries to address specific religious faiths. Other schemes map the offenders experience in gaining work and then involve partnership agencies in working together to improve the process.

CSPs are only one example of agencies working together at the local level. Other statutory partnerships work with specific groups of offenders including MAPPA partnerships to co-ordinate work with those offenders that present higher risk of harm, and PPO partnerships working with Prolific and other Priority Offenders. Others target drug misusers or deliver intensive case management with recently released prisoners who have served short sentences.

MAPPA (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements) have a statutory basis in the Criminal Justice

& Court services Act 2000. They involve the Probation Service, Prison Service, and Police (which together form the “responsible authority”) to work together:

- To establish arrangements for assessing and managing risks posed by sexual and violent offenders;
- To review and monitor the arrangements;
- As part of reviewing and monitoring arrangements, to prepare and publish an annual report on their operation.

A range of other agencies have a duty to cooperate locally. These include: the police, Local Authority Social Services, Primary Care Trusts, Jobcentre Plus, Youth Offending Teams, housing authorities and relevant providers, and electronic monitoring providers.

There is also a requirement to appoint two lay advisers to each of the strategic management boards that review the MAPPA.

MAPPA arrangements target Sexual, Violent and other Dangerous Offenders and arrange three levels of management according to risk:

1. Information sharing
2. Active Multi-Agency Management
3. Senior Management Oversight/Resources.

C. Work with Civil Society Organizations, Social Enterprises, and Volunteers

NOMS works with a wide range of civil society organizations working with offenders directly or providing support to other organizations delivering direct work.

1. Strategic Developments for NOMS – Work with Civil Society

In October 2008 the Ministry of Justice and the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) published the action plan ‘Working with the third sector to reduce reoffending – securing effective partnerships 2008–2011’. The plan sat beneath the Ministry’s overall Third Sector Strategy published in June 2008 and aimed to build on work to reduce barriers to the sector’s role in reducing reoffending, protecting the public, achieving safer communities, and tackling social exclusion. It also sought to enable and promote effective volunteering and mentoring with and by offenders and ex-offenders.

Progress against objectives and actions is being monitored by the Ministry of Justice/NOMS Reducing Reoffending Third Sector Advisory Group.

The strategy has three overarching aims:

- (a) to improve third sector “voice” and partnership working;
- (b) to transform services;
- (c) to drive up the quality and diversity of volunteering and mentoring.

(i) Action Plan Progress

(a) Improving voice and partnership working

A new *Reducing Reoffending Third Sector Advisory Group*, has been set up. The purpose of the Advisory Group is to provide advice to Ministers and senior officials on reducing reoffending from a civil society perspective and to present concerns and opinions about future priorities, issues and policies which might affect the sector. The Group has a key role in advising and overseeing progress on the implementation of ‘Working with the Third Sector to Reduce Reoffending 2008-2011’. The Chair will also sit on the NOMS Reducing Reoffending Policy Board.

The Advisory Group has indicated that it believes the success of the action plan will be judged by:

- *“An increase of front-line services to offenders by third sector organizations, including small and local organizations, and Black and Ethnic Minority organizations and faith groups, and*
- *An increased involvement in design and development of services, and ensuring effective partnerships between statutory, private and voluntary sectors drawing on complementary strengths”.*

The Ministry's *strategic funding to national third sector infrastructure* – Clinks, Action for Prisoners' Families, and the Development Trusts Association – is now in the second year. The funding has enabled these organizations to support and represent their members and a wider group of third sector organizations to government, NOMS, and the range of agencies working with and funding the third sector to reduce reoffending.

The independent *Arts Alliance* was launched in November 2008. The Anne Peaker Centre is jointly funded by the Ministry of Justice, Arts Council England, and the Indigo Trust to co-ordinate the Alliance. The Arts Alliance aims to provide a strong network and coherent voice for the arts sector working with offenders. The Ministry of Justice also set up a cross-departmental, cross-sector *Arts Forum* to engage with the Arts Alliance. The Forum enables dialogue between the responsible government departments, Arts Council England, and arts providers and funders with the aim of reducing barriers to and promoting the role of the arts in offender management and rehabilitation.

(b) Transforming services

NOMS has been developing its approach to commissioning in the civil society sector, reflecting out in the 2008 "Working with the Third Sector to Reduce Reoffending", including the importance of harnessing the potential of the third sector, alongside the public and private sectors, to deliver services for offenders. This work has included support to "market development" and ensuring a level playing field in which civil society organizations can compete individually or in consortia.

Funding is of course a critical aspect of work with civil society organizations in partnership. NOMS supports closer work through a combination of:

- Grants (supported by the NOMS National Grants Programme);
- Payment for contracts/service delivery (which may be competed alone or in partnership e.g. with private sector);
- Donations;
- Fund raising;
- Other initiatives, including, most recently – Payment By Results.

(c) Volunteering

A *Volunteering and Mentoring Network* has been set up to promote collaboration between delivery organizations and volunteering infrastructure, to encourage diversity and identify good practice, to collate evidence, and to promote all aspects of volunteering and mentoring to reduce reoffending. The steering group, chaired by "Volunteering England", is currently advising on the production of guidance for organizations involving volunteers and mentors in work with offenders and ex-offenders.

Since March 2009, a *Volunteering and Mentoring e-bulletin* for organizations working with offenders has been sent out from CLINKS (see page 148) on a monthly basis to a distribution list of over 2500 organizations from all sectors.

CLINKS *training and resource packs* have been further developed. The 'Volunteering in Prison' training pack has been updated and available since September 2008. The 'Volunteering with Offenders in the Community' training pack has also been updated and includes material on community safety and victim contact and support. It has been available since January 2009.

The most recent version aims to:

- Promote Volunteering nationally and locally;
- Overcome barriers to volunteering;
- Improve information e.g. volunteering whilst receiving benefits;
- Develop "factsheets" to promote good practice and the revised Compact;
- Develop "Peer Mentoring", including ex-service personnel.

(ii) Other work in Progress

Significant other work in conjunction with the civil society is in progress including in relation to diversion of offenders with mental health problems, with learning disabilities, which work with women, with black and

ethnic minority groups, and with faith-based organizations. In brief, this work includes:

In response to the *Bradley Review on the diversion of offenders with mental health problems or learning disabilities away from prison*, the Government set up a National Advisory Group of third sector representatives, with a third sector chair.

The Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) decided that it would not develop a Charter on funding *faith-based organizations*, but set up a *consortium of faith communities* to look at religious literacy training to improve the knowledge and skills of public agencies to work with faith communities. The Ministry's Third Sector Team worked with colleagues in CLG and the "Office of the Third Sector" (OTS – a Department located close to the centre of Government) to support and promote this work in relation to faith-based organizations working with offenders and to strengthen the engagement of faith organizations.

The Ministry also commissioned research into the support needs of the *women's organizations* and projects that deliver services to women offenders and those at risk of offending, the aim being to help to identify how to strengthen support for, and the engagement and sustainability of, the women's sector in reducing reoffending.

With funding from the Lloyds TSB Foundation and building on previous initiatives, NOMS ran a number of roundtables to identify key achievable actions that will strengthen diverse *Black and Minority Ethnic third sector* voice in reducing reoffending. This included looking at the role of infrastructure and what needs developing further to strengthen BME sector engagement at all levels.

A review of existing schemes that *broker the relationship* between third sector organizations and prisons and probation was put in progress.

2. Civil Society Organizations: Working with Prisons or Probation Services

NOMS works with civil society organizations at national level and locally.

(i) *CLINKS*

CLINKS, at national level, fulfils an umbrella organization role, supporting other third sector organizations that work with offenders and their families. Over nine hundred voluntary organizations are responsible for more than two thousand projects that provide services to offenders. *CLINKS* role includes to:

- Promote the work of the VCS;
- Provide representation and voice;
- Tackle racism and discrimination;
- Facilitate effective partnerships;
- Increase service user involvement;
- Undertake research and development.

As well as supporting civil society, including mentoring organizations, *CLINKS* estimates that about three quarters of prisoners would be willing to do voluntary work if it were available. Prisoners provide an increasingly rich source of volunteers – working as peer mentors sometimes alongside paid or other voluntary staff. In total, more than seven thousand volunteers contribute to the rehabilitation of offenders nationally.

(ii) *NACRO*

NACRO directly delivers a range of services which support the work of other organizations in the public, private or civil society sectors. Services include:

- (a) Resettlement consultancy in prisons – working closely with prison governors and other prison staff to help develop positive regimes with resettlement advice projects.
- (b) Resettlement training – regular training courses at the Prison Service College and at individual prisons, including training prisoners as peer advisers. *NACRO* has developed specialist training material, including on dealing with older prisoners and managing money.
- (c) The Resettlement Plus Helpline offers information and advice to professionals working with prisoners and ex-offenders – as well as to individuals and their friends and family members.

- (d) Resettlement Service Finder. This online database holds details of more than 10,000 community services for ex-offenders, creating a valuable resource for professionals working in the field
- (e) Resettlement provision in prisons. NACRO runs resettlement advice services in nearly 40 prisons.

(iii) SOVA

“Supporting Others through Volunteer Action” (SOVA) is a leading national volunteer mentoring organization working with those socially and economically disadvantaged in England and Wales. It delivers more than 60 projects:

- For clients in and leaving the care system;
- In the Criminal Justice sector;
- For young people on youth offending orders;
- For the socially and economically disadvantaged and long-term unemployed;
- For refugees and asylum seekers.

(iv) St Giles Trust

The St Giles Trust delivers a range of services to serving prisoners and also following release, including to short-term prisoners who do not receive statutory support from the probation service. One of the most innovative approaches is the Peer Advice Project. This meets demand for advice services amongst the prison population by using an under-used resource - serving prisoners. It trains serving prisoners to NVQ Level 3 in Information, Advice and Guidance and enables them to help other prisoners by gaining valuable practical experience as part of the vocational element of the course.

The course is externally verified by Advice UK and is an excellent way of improving the skills of serving prisoners and preparing them for employment upon release.

The Peer Advice Project was initially set up to address the high levels of homelessness amongst the prison population by training serving prisoners to act as housing advisors. However, in some prisons advisors cover other areas such as employment and training opportunities.

Peer Advisors often find that they are regarded as highly credible, trusted sources of support as they are serving prisoners themselves. This is a real strength of the project and one the St Giles Trust aims to replicate through our other services. Other prisoners in open prisons undertake the course on day release at the organizations Head Office in south London.

(v) Free As a Bird

Continuing the theme of peer support, “Free as a Bird” is a project for woman offenders and ex-offenders in London. The website is for women who have experience of the criminal justice system who can use the website to share thoughts. Peers advise each other on resettlement issues, and pass on practical information, drawing on the strengths that come from having shared some of the same experiences and found solutions.

Women register with Free As A Bird’s social network to discuss questions around family, housing, money, health, work and how to get back on their feet. The discussions are in a password protected space only for women offenders and ex-offenders.

(vi) Prisoners Abroad

Prisoners Abroad addresses the specific needs of British prisoners who are imprisoned abroad. It is a small, UK-based charity that provides assistance to those affected by imprisonment, and helps ex-prisoners start a new life free of crime after their release. Prisoners Abroad was formed in 1978 when caseworkers for the drugs charity Release noticed an increased need for support amongst Britons arrested overseas.

3. Social Enterprises

(i) What are Social Enterprises?

Social Enterprises have the following characteristics:

- They are independently constituted businesses, driven by a business agenda, and aiming to meet social as well as financial objectives.

- They make profits or surpluses that are re-invested into the business to support its social purpose.
- They are socially owned and accountable to a wider community through a membership and democratic structure.

The benefits of social enterprises include cost savings, building links with local communities, innovation and creativity. NOMS research has recently shown that 62% of probation areas are involved in Social Enterprise (about 40% of them connected with Community Payback). About 53% of Prisons are involved. However 47% of prisons and 95% of prisons would like to expand that number.

(ii) Examples of Projects operating at Local Level including Social Enterprises

The following provides an indication of the range of civil society and social enterprise projects working with ex-offenders.

(a) 'The Clink' – Catering

- 'The Clink' is a restaurant at HMP High Down.
- It provides training and employment experience in a high quality restaurant environment.
- Employs 16 serving offenders at any one time as trainees.
- Managed by social enterprise Eco-Actif CIC.
- Profits to pay staff, provide training and qualifications and follow up support.
- Employs ex-prisoners.

(b) Leeds City Credit Union – Financial

- Provides access to banking - addressing financial exclusion.
- Includes a simple process involving the prison to overcome the problem of personal identification.
- Operates 500 accounts for prisoners.
- A money management scheme addressing rent arrears, mobile phone contracts and any pre-existing debt.

(c) HMP Dartmoor Resettlement Unit

- This project is linked with a high profile public garden – the Eden project.
- Prisoners, guided by the staff of the Eden project, have turned unused open space in the prison into productive vegetable gardens.
- Boxes of vegetables are delivered free of charge to elderly and poor members of local community.
- The project has received many letters of thanks from local people.

(d) Reach – Prinknash Abbey Gardens

- This project provides activities to unlock the potential within people who feel socially excluded or who have committed offences.
- The project has transformed an ancient abbey garden which had become overgrown. The garden is now a centre for learning trades and for providing leisure for the members of public or disadvantaged people.

(e) Inside Job Productions

- Trains women on day release from prison in the professional media.

(f) "Cementaprise"

- Cementaprise brings together prisons, the probation service, employers, education and employment services, local authorities and the voluntary sector.
- Together they support offenders in gaining employment in construction industry.
- Offenders are able to "taste" a range of trades and to engage in craft training in short manageable courses, to develop personal skills for employment as well as practical skills and to gain the health and safety certificates that are a requirement for work in the construction industries.

(g) "Changing Directions"

High risk offenders will require special attention to ensure the risk they pose is managed. The Changing Directions initiative provides self-employment opportunities for sex offenders, or those who pose a risk to children. The programme involves:

- Delivery of a prison-based enterprise training programme;
- Drawing up of individual business plans;
- Development of a small business support network designed to empower beneficiaries to sustain small businesses.

VII. FUTURE PLANS: 2010 – 2011

There is no doubt that NOMS is at a turning point and this includes in relation to closer involvement with the community. The priorities of the new Government, very substantial reductions in funding, a different approach to society, indeed the "Big Society", increasing awareness of promising developments in other jurisdictions, and developments at home, including a broadening of "what works" to embrace desistance (strength-based) approaches, to staff engagement skills, and a focus on outcome rather than process, are clear evidence of change.

The latter has led to a trial of "Payment by Results".

England and Wales continues to have a large prison population in comparison to many other western European countries, although with signs of stabilization in recent months. Replacing short prison sentences with appropriate community sentences has become an aim, as has working more effectively with those who do receive prison sentences.

This final section of this paper looks at some of these recent developments, including the implications for closer engagement with communities.

A. The "Big Society"

"The Big Society is about a huge culture change, where people, in their everyday lives, in their homes, neighbourhoods and workplace, don't always turn to officials or government for answers to the problems they face, but instead feel both free and powerful enough to help themselves and their own communities." Prime Minister David Cameron, Liverpool, 19 July 2010.

The Government summarizes the key messages of the Big Society thus:

- About 'turning Government on its head';
- Giving increased power to people to solve problems closer to where they live;
- More responsive government with a new relationship to a more self-reliant participatory society;
- *Not* about 'doing it on the cheap' or expecting charities and volunteers to replace the state;
- We all have a part to play.

Key themes include Public Service Reform, Social Action and Community Empowerment, to be achieved by decentralizing power and breaking down the bureaucratic barriers, by making information more transparent, and by building the capacity of individuals, communities and organizations.

More specifically, in relation to Criminal Justice, the Big Society means:

- Elected Police and Crime Commissioners;
- Crime information made more readily and frequently available;
- Increasing volunteering opportunities;
- Looking at system reform;
- Opening up more opportunities for independent organizations to deliver services as part of a 'rehabilitation revolution'.

Whilst the Coalition Programme for Justice includes plans to:

- Introduce a ‘rehabilitation revolution’ that will pay independent providers to reduce reoffending, paid for by the savings this new approach will generate within the criminal justice system;
- Conduct a full review of sentencing policy to ensure that it is effective in deterring crime, protecting the public, punishing offenders and cutting reoffending. In particular, we will ensure that sentencing for drug use helps offenders come off drugs;
- Explore alternative forms of secure, treatment-based accommodation for mentally ill and drug offenders;
- Implement the Prisoners’ Earnings Act 1996 to allow deductions from the earnings of prisoners in properly paid work to be paid into the Victims’ Fund;
- Introduce effective measures to tackle anti-social behaviour and low-level crime, including forms of restorative justice.

The Governments Green Paper on sentencing and Rehabilitation points to:

- “Working Prisons”;
- Increased reparation to victims through Restorative Justice, implementing the previous administration’s Prisoners Earnings Act;
- Payment by Results;
- Simplifying the Sentencing Framework;
- Working with communities to reduce crime, including:
 - “Localism”, creating opportunities for other providers, increasing transparency.

The Green Paper coincides with a new Compact for work between Government and Civil Society which makes priorities of a strong, diverse and independent Civil Society; effective and transparent design and development of policies; responsive and high quality programmes and services; clear arrangements for managing changes to programmes and services and an equal and fair society.

B. Commissioning

Commissioning continues to be at the centre of the approach. However, commissioning reflects the principles of the “Big Society”. This means that commissioning will in future involve communities more closely by:

- Designing services “with” rather than “for” users;
- Motivating offenders to become active partners in their own solutions rather than recipients;
- Specifying outcomes rather than “what” and “how” a service is delivered.

Commissioning will be underpinned by a programme of Specification, Costing and Benchmarking. The SBC programme will specify 75 services delivered to offenders, defendants, victims and courts; support decentralization by specifying “what” but not “how”; and define expected costs if delivered efficiently.

C. Localism

Pilots are looking at how greater visibility of agency budgets locally can facilitate more effective spending.

1. Total Place

Total Place adopts an approach to community engagement which allows local organizations to work together in partnership to establish needs and priorities. They look at all the money spent and have permission to organize to deliver services according to their own priorities to achieve the best results and value. Pilots include work on offender management, substance misuse and employment.

2. Community Budgets

Community Budgets are going a step further and piloting, in 16 areas, pooled community budgets from April 2011. Community budgets will focus on families with complex needs, including justice.

D. Intensive Partnerships to Reduce Reoffending

These approaches adopt intensive partnerships to bring agencies together to divert offenders from custody (replacing short prison sentences with community alternatives).

1. Intensive Alternatives to Custody

Intensive Alternative to Custody projects work closely with courts. They may combine community service work (delivered at an accelerated rate), electronic monitoring, group work programmes, and police surveillance, the aim being to divert offenders from custodial sentences.

2. Integrated Offender Management

Designed for persistent high risk offenders, this approach involves intensive joint management and rehabilitation of offenders, delivered by a range of statutory and civil society partners. Work is aligned with local criminal justice agencies plans and addresses gaps. The London Diamond project, for example, includes police, local authorities and others delivering voluntary support after prison. The project is showing remarkable impact on reoffending rates.

E. Offender Engagement and Professional Judgement Projects

Both projects are taking professional discretion closer to the "front line".

1. Offender Engagement Project

This project acknowledges that the one-to-one relationship is an important factor in change. It builds on desistance evidence, increasing the quantity and quality of contact time between offenders and probation officers. Aims include to reduce bureaucracy, place time on front line staff, and to support the offender in being active in determining the focus of work. Staff have discretion on the amount of contact they have with offenders.

2. Professional Judgement Project

The project is piloting a new Probation Performance Framework which reduces the number of targets by 50%. The aims include to avoid over-prescription, to allow the right approach, by the right person, at the right time.

The expectation is that pilots will roll out nationally from 2011. They have already demonstrated a dramatic reduction in data collected and provided to the centre, and are delivering improved responsiveness at reduced costs.

F. Payment by Results

The Social Impact Bond, delivered at Peterborough Prison, is a pilot involving a private provider of prisons, two civil society organizations and a number of social financiers, backed by the Government.

The project involves a six year Bond and will involve three cohorts each of one thousand short term prisoners. Five million pounds of external funding initially pays for services, most of the money coming from social investors. Work is delivered by proven civil society Providers (the YMCA and St Giles Trust) who offer intensive intervention before and after release from prison. Services include housing, employment, drugs advice, and financial advice.

The payment by results funding model means that the pilot must reduce reoffending by at least 7.55%. If not, investors do not receive a return on their investment. A reduction of 7.5% - 10% means that investors receive the cost of services delivered from the Government. A 10% or more reduction means that investors will receive up to £3m return on their investment. In this initial pilot, lottery funding is providing some capital. However the overall aim of the model is that savings at local level resulting from reduced reoffending fund the delivery of service.

The aim is a "Win-Win" situation which reinforces reward for positive results, using investment where it counts, and involves all sections of society in working towards the common goals of safer societies, fewer victims, and increased prosperity, social inclusion and well-being.