

# Innovative new projects to tackle reoffending and protect the public revealed

- Specialist schemes targeting criminals likely to reoffend backed by Government funding
- Focus on care leavers, drug addicts, abused women and short-sentence offenders
- Projects will tackle drivers of crime – such as unemployment, addiction and homelessness – and help to cut £18bn cost of reoffending

Today, the Government has confirmed it will support a further 11 projects through the Prison Leavers Project – a £20 million cross-government initiative helping offenders move on from their life of crime once they are released from jail.

With reoffending costing the taxpayer £18 billion and around 80 percent of offenders having at least one previous caution or conviction, the Government is committed to giving offenders a second chance to make a positive contribution to society and cut crime.

All the projects set to benefit from the almost £7 million pot tackle key drivers of offending – including addiction, unemployment, housing problems and social isolation. Statistics prove that offenders who are released from prison with nowhere to live are around 50 percent more likely to break the law again. While those have a job within 12 months of release, are up to nine percentage points less likely to reoffend.

The 11 pilot projects include:

- A scheme in London specifically for offenders on short sentences which provides employment training and helps re-establish broken family ties
- A peer-mentoring project in the West Midlands providing mental health support and guidance on housing and finance for men who have grown up in care
- Creating realistic work environments in prisons in the North West, with the help of local employers, to boost job prospects once offenders leave
- Specialist support for female offenders with a history of abuse, in Wales and the South-West, to help them settle back into the community

Crime, Policing and Probation Minister Kit Malthouse said:

These schemes cut straight to the heart of the reasons for reoffending – allowing us to find new and innovative ways to keep some of the hardest-to-reform criminals on the straight and narrow.

We know that having a job on release, a safe place to stay as well as supportive family and friends are some of the vital ingredients for a crime-free life.

Our pilots will provide support and hope, while helping us to reduce the £18 billion cost of repeat crime and better protect the public.

One London-based project benefitting from the £6.7million of government funding will help those on serial short sentences to go straight. Prison-leaver charity Bounce Back provides job opportunities – training offenders in their painting and decorating academy – and re-establishes broken but vital family ties so they have the support they need to turn their lives around.

In the West Midlands, charity Change, Grow, Live is helping offenders who have grown up in the care system to live crime-free lives through peer-mentoring and support with housing and employment coaching. Former offender Ian Thomas is one of the mentors for the project who is inspiring others after leaving his life of crime, drugs and homelessness to return to university and become a qualified Social Worker.

Ian Thomas, social worker, Change Grow Live project in the West Midlands said:

I've experienced first-hand how leaving care without proper support can lead to a life of crime, addiction and homelessness.

Thousands of prisoners have been in the care system, which shows need for projects like Change Grow Live in the West Midlands, which is driving real change among hard-to-reach groups.

If we give prison leavers the support network they desperately need, we can reduce reoffending and give them the opportunity to thrive in the community.

In the North-West, New Futures Network and charity Antz Junction are working with local employers to tackle skills shortages in the construction and haulage industries. Offenders in HMPs Lancaster Farms, Kirkham, Liverpool, Thorn Cross will be trained-up in prison with the prospects of leaving for real jobs and crime-free lives.

While in Wales and the South-West, the funding will help addiction charity the Nelson Trust target female offending, which is often driven by domestic abuse. Around 400 female offenders with a history of trauma and abuse will be supported through women's centres to settle back into community life. The

pilot will offer access to housing and substance misuse support as well as facilitating contact between mothers and their children.

## Notes to editors

- The £6.7million government-funded Local Leadership and Integration Fund (LLIF) has been awarded to 11 pilots.
- Seven pilots received £3.9million in June 2021 and many have been running since autumn 2021:
  - Bounce Back
  - Catch22
  - Change Grow Live (Cheshire)
  - Change Grow Live (Midlands)
  - The Innovation Unit
  - NEPACS
  - New Futures Network/Antz Junction
- £2.8million has just been awarded to another four pilots which will begin in May 2022:
  - Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner for the Thames Valley (OPCCTV)
  - Llamau
  - Nelson Trust
  - St Giles Trust
- The pilots will be evaluated throughout their delivery, and up to 12 months after prison leavers are released, to learn which approaches are most effective in reducing reoffending.
- As part of the government Spending Review, £550 million was secured to help cut reoffending and protect the public.
- Further information on the wider [Prison Leavers Project](#)
- The remaining pilots include:
  - Catch22: Aims to reduce reoffending in East London by identifying prison leavers who are at risk of recall – providing a Recall Prevention Service both in custody and in the community. The pilot will work with offenders to identify the reasons why they might breach their licence conditions, and help them to access the right services, such as accommodation, and rebuild relationships to address those factors.
  - Change Grow Live (Cheshire): Aims to reduce crime in Cheshire by providing accommodation and support to prison leavers, including those with drug and alcohol addictions.
  - The Innovation Unit: Aims to reduce reoffending in the West Midlands by creating support networks for young prison leavers aged 18-25 who have been in care, planning their resettlement and helping them live independently.
  - NEPACS: Aims to reduce reoffending in young male prison leavers in County Durham with experience of the care system. With specialist therapy, , the pilot will focus on building their support network, help them to live independently, and improve literacy skills to boost job prospects
  - Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner for the Thames Valley: Providing a package of staff training and support for prison

leavers in the Thames Valley to reduce homelessness and improve employment outcomes.

- Llamau: Targeted interventions for young men in Wales, focusing on reducing homelessness, improving family relationships and community integration.
- St Giles Trust – Providing housing and mental health support for offenders in Yorkshire with complex needs who are released on Friday, when many services are shut.