

[Is the Prime Minister brave enough to allow common-sense prison reforms ask Greens](#)

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Responding to this morning's [NAO report on the crisis in Britain's prisons](#), Green Party MP Siân Berry said,

"The National Audit Office has revealed in stark terms the futility of a society trying to imprison away crime.

"However fast the Government builds prisons, at the current rates of offending and reoffending, the respite from the current crisis of overcrowding will only last a handful of years.

"The Government must face this reality and build not more prisons but a planned programme of prevention and more effective alternatives to incarceration, particularly for women, young people and offenders whose crimes are driven by poverty and destitution.

"We need wholesale reform of short prison sentences, a focus on providing a real new start for people leaving prison, including safe housing, and a clear-headed look at the many ways people can repay their criminal debts to society more constructively."

She continued,

"At the heart of this crisis is a continuous error from successive governments – amplified by misleading front pages – in assuming that the way to reduce crime is to keep locking up more and more of our citizens.

"Reducing crime means investing in services and job opportunities for young people, and I am confident that Justice Minister Lord Timpson knows this.

"The only question is whether the Prime Minister is bold and brave enough to allow him to bring forward common-sense reforms to bring prison populations back down, rather than trying to build their way out of this crisis."

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