

# 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.

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## UK government and Nobel Prize winner launch global code to tackle conflict-related sexual violence

- the UK government, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Nadia Murad and Institute for International Criminal Investigations to launch global code of conduct with focus on better gathering of information about conflict-related sexual violence from survivors
- the Murad Code aims to ensure survivors can have their experiences recorded safely, in a way that respects their wishes and human rights, improves the chance of justice and reduces trauma
- the government is committed to improving the global response to sexual violence in areas of conflict around the world, amid reports of rape following Russia's invasion of Ukraine

The UK government, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Nadia Murad and Institute for International Criminal Investigations will today (Wednesday 13 April) set out a new global code of conduct to improve the gathering and use of information about and pursuit of justice for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV).

The Murad Code – backed by UK funding and developed in partnership with campaign group Nadia's Initiative and the Institute for International Criminal Investigations – sets out minimum standards on how to safely and effectively collect evidence from survivors and witnesses on sexual violence in conflicts and other settings. The aim is for it to be recognised as the gold standard across the world.

Murad will make the announcement alongside Lord Tariq Ahmad, the UK Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict

at a meeting of the UN Security Council in New York.

The UK is President of the Security Council throughout April and invited Nadia Murad, herself a survivor of sexual violence in Iraq and a vocal campaigner for others, to address the Council.

It comes amid reports of sexual violence following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Last week, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy told the Security Council that Russian forces in Bucha had gang-raped women, including in front of their children.

Investigations and testimonies from survivors are essential to hold perpetrators of CRSV to account, but they must be undertaken in a safe and ethical manner.

The Murad Code brings together existing minimum standards into one code that reduces the risk of survivors suffering further trauma in providing evidence.

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said:

It is absolutely unacceptable that sexual violence and rape are happening in conflicts around the world, and ending it is one of my top priorities.

I am appalled by the growing number of reports of sexual violence by Russian forces emerging from the conflict in Ukraine. The launch of the Murad Code is a vital step towards helping and supporting survivors and bringing perpetrators to justice for their crimes.

Since 2012, the UK has committed over £50 million to preventing sexual violence in conflict globally.

In conflict settings, rape and other forms of sexual violence can be a war crime, a crime against humanity and a form of torture. It is prohibited under international humanitarian law, international criminal law, international human rights law and UN Security Council resolutions.

Lord Ahmad said:

I am proud and humbled to join Nadia's Initiative and the Institute for International Criminal Investigations in releasing the Murad Code.

It is a global code of conduct for the collection of information and evidence from survivors of conflict-related sexual violence.

It has been shaped by survivors, governments, international organisations and civil society groups.

As it is our responsibility to place survivors' needs at the heart of our work, I urge everyone involved in documenting and

investigating conflict-related sexual violence to follow the Murad Code. In fact, go further – it should become the gold standard for any NGO, government agency or charity in the field.

Nadia Murad said:

Efforts to end sexual violence are gaining momentum, in large part thanks to brave survivors around the world who have shared their stories. But too often, reporting sexual violence has negative consequences for survivors.

The Murad Code lays out clear and practical guidelines for centering the needs of survivors when collecting evidence, and ensuring that they receive justice and support, rather than repercussions. Survivors deserve at least that.

The Foreign Secretary has committed to step up UK action to tackle the scourge of conflict-related sexual violence and to leading a campaign to make sexual violence an international red line in war, on a par in abhorrence with the use of chemical weapons.

From 28 to 30 November 2022, the government will host an international conference London, marking ten years since the launch of the UK's Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative.

The conference will bring together the UK and its partners around the world to review progress made, identify shared challenges and agree further action.

The government is also exploring other options for strengthening the international response to conflict-related sexual violence, including a new international Convention that could help hold perpetrators to account.

### **Notes to editors:**

- Nadia Murad is the founder and president of Nadia's Initiative, a non-profit dedicated to rebuilding communities in crisis and advocating for survivors of sexual violence
- Nadia's life was brutally disrupted in 2014 when ISIS attacked her homeland in Sinjar, Iraq. Since Nadia's escape from ISIS captivity, she has become a powerful advocate for women in conflict settings and survivors of sexual violence worldwide
- In 2018, Nadia Murad and Denis Mukwege were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for "their efforts to end the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war and armed conflict". She is the first Iraqi and Yazidi to be awarded a Nobel Prize
- Nadia's Initiative's current work is focused on the sustainable re-development of the Yazidi homeland in Sinjar and pursuing holistic justice for survivors of ISIS atrocities
- the Institute for International Criminal Investigations (IICI) is an independent, not-for-profit, non-governmental organisation providing

criminal justice and human rights professionals with the training and knowledge necessary to investigate war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide and the most serious human rights violations

- the UK launched a £10 million civil society fund this month to support organisations in Ukraine, including those helping women and girls and people affected by conflict-related sexual violence. \*sexual violence in conflict leaves profound and lasting scars on survivors, their children and their communities. During a speech at 44th Session of the Human Rights Council, a survivor from the Democratic Republic of Congo said: “To be raped is synonymous with several words; it is to be dead in one’s own flesh, one’s soul, with a broken and irreparable heart”

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## Health experts share priorities for Women’s Health Strategy

Press release

Report published summarising written responses to the women’s health call for evidence from 436 organisations and experts in women’s health



- Government publishes report summarising written responses from 436 organisations and experts from the Women’s Health Strategy call for evidence
- Topics raised include the need for greater support for pregnancy loss and menopause training for clinicians
- Responses will help shape first government-led Women’s Health Strategy in England as part of plans to level up health care

Health experts have called for a greater focus on care for older women and improved support services for people experiencing pregnancy loss to help shape the government’s first-ever Women’s Health Strategy for England.

A total of 436 organisations and experts in women’s health – including from the charity sector, academia, professional bodies, clinicians and royal

colleges – responded to a call for evidence to inform the government’s approach to tackling gender health inequality.

In their submissions, published today (Wednesday 13 April), they called for a greater focus on the health needs of older women who can experience the same conditions as men in different ways, suggested improvements in training on menopause for healthcare professionals and highlighted the disparity in the provision of pregnancy loss support services.

The insight is in addition to nearly 100,000 responses from individuals, which together will inform the upcoming Women’s Health Strategy to create a healthcare system that prioritises care on the basis of clinical need, not gender.

Minister for Women’s Health Maria Caulfield said:

For generations, women have lived in a healthcare system primarily designed by men, for men. We are committed to tackling the gender health gap, and the publication of our strategy later this year will mark a significant step forward.

I want to thank the expert individuals and organisations who took the time to respond to our call for evidence. The insights you have provided have been stark and sobering, but will be pivotal to ensuring our strategy represents the first hand experiences of the health care system.

Topics highlighted were:

- Menstrual health and gynaecological conditions, including the impact of premenstrual syndrome (PMS) on someone’s quality of life.
- Fertility, pregnancy, pregnancy loss and maternal health, including women not feeling listened to during and after pregnancy and the provision of bereavement support services.
- Menopause, including suggestions for improvements in training and guidelines for healthcare professionals.
- Gynaecological and other cancers, including barriers to accessing high-quality, up to date information on risk factors for female cancers.
- Mental health, including its interaction with other health conditions across women’s life course.
- Healthy ageing, including the need to increase focus on the health needs of older women and emphasise women may experience the same conditions as men in different ways.
- Violence against women and girls, including the complications associated with hymenoplasty and barriers to accessing healthcare support for those who’ve been subject to years of violence and abuse

The call to evidence ran from March to June 2021 and generated 110,123 responses. The Women’s Health Strategy will be published later this year.



## Background information

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# Harsher sentences introduced for 'spiking' drugs

GHB, a drug that is used to spike drinks, has been reclassified as a Class B drug today (13 April) along with two related substances, GBL and 1,4-BD, meaning that those found in possession of them will face tougher penalties.

From today, those found in unlawful possession of these drugs face sentences of up to five years behind bars, while those involved in supply and production will face up to 14 years in prison.

GHB (gamma-hydroxybutyric acid), gamma-butyrolactone (GBL), and 1,4-butanediol (1,4-BD) have been found to facilitate serious crimes, including murder, rape, sexual assault and robbery. These tougher sentences recognise the harms these drugs do and are expected to deter possession and supply, so that the public are better protected from criminals.

Home Secretary, Priti Patel, said:

These drugs have been used to commit too many heinous crimes and it is right that sentences for those caught in possession of them reflect the damage they do.

I welcome the tightening of restrictions around these dangerous substances, introducing tougher penalties for possession sends a clear message to those who think they can get away with using it.

These changes will help ensure the people of Britain are kept safe and that we continue to tackle drug misuse and crime in all its forms.

Former Love Island contestant, Sharon Gaffka, was found unconscious in a toilet cubicle by her friends in July 2020 while out for lunch. She has no memory of the incident but her friend, who is a doctor, believed she was a victim of spiking. Thankfully Ms Gaffka recovered from the event but too much time had passed by the time she left hospital for any evidence to be gathered as to what she had been spiked with.

Ms Gaffka is now leading a campaign to boost awareness of the dangers of drink spiking, of which GHB is suspected to be one of the most commonly used

drugs, with the support of her local MP, David Johnston.

Member of Parliament for Wantage, David Johnston, said:

Spiking – and the fear of spiking – has been a blight on people trying to enjoy a night out with friends and family for too long.

The changes announced today are an important step towards ensuring that those who prey on people in order to try and take advantage of them are given the punishments they deserve.

For the police and Border Force, this change will support their ongoing efforts to tackle spiking.

The National Police Chiefs' Council lead for drugs, Deputy Chief Constable Jason Harwin, said:

We know that GHB is used by perpetrators to commit sinister crimes, including spiking, and we recognise the horrible impact these incidents can have on victims. As such, we are supportive of this change, which ties in with our ongoing coordination of the national policing response to needle spiking.

We continue to work with our law enforcement partners, including the National Crime Agency (NCA), to ensure there is a coordinated, national response to the supply of these types of drugs. If you have any information on the supply of these drugs, please report it to your local force or you can report anonymously via Crimestoppers.

The Home Secretary asked the independent Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) to expedite a review of controls on these drugs in January 2020 after becoming concerned about their use by criminals.

Following the recommendations by the ACMD, these drugs have now been moved from Class C to Class B under the Misuse of Drugs Act (1971), which has been welcomed by non-profit charity Stamp Out Spiking UK (SOS UK).

The charity was founded by Dawn Dines in 2019 to tackle the increasing incidents of drink spiking in the UK, as well as supporting victims of spiking.

Dawn Dines, CEO and founder of Stamp Out Spiking, said:

After nearly two decades campaigning against this crime I feel some sort of justice will be felt by the numerous victims of the disgusting crime. I recall young men and women breaking down, sharing their experiences.

Even though it's too late for those victims, this is going to help so many more people in the future.

We are delighted that the Home Secretary is giving a clear and concise message by the reclassification of the drugs used and that there is zero tolerance of this cowardly crime in our society.

The government will continue to tackle drug misuse as announced as part of the 10-year Drug Strategy, [From Harm to Hope](#), ensuring an even tougher response to criminal supply chains and the demand that fuels these illegal and violent markets, as well as supporting people through treatment and recovery.

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## [Russia's invasion of Ukraine: UK welcomes OSCE Moscow Mechanism independent expert report](#)

Mr Chair, I wish to make a statement in my national capacity, to supplement the statement just delivered by Ambassador Stelian Stoian from Romania on behalf of [the 45 participating States, including the UK, that invoked the Moscow Mechanism, with the support of Ukraine](#).

I would like to welcome Professors Wolfgang Benedek, Veronika Bílková and Marco Sassòli to the Permanent Council today and thank them for their professional and meticulous work in preparing this report. We greatly appreciate that we have, collectively, been able to call on your expertise, and independence, in preparing this important report.

Mr Chair,

The United Kingdom strongly supported the joint decision to invoke the Moscow Mechanism. We did so because of our grave concerns about the humanitarian impacts of Russia's invasion and the potential for war crimes and crimes against humanity. Since the invocation of the Mechanism on 3 March, we have spoken regularly in this Council about some of the truly shocking incidents that have come to light. We have spoken about the events in Mariupol, Bucha, Irpin, and Borodyanka. Earlier this week, [we expressed our horror about the tragic events in Kramatorsk](#): missile strikes on a crowd, reported to be over a thousand people, waiting for trains to escape Russia's onslaught. Over fifty people – innocent civilians – women, men, and children – reportedly killed in this barbaric attack, and over 100 injured.

The report presented today by Professors Benedek, Bílková and Sassòli makes clear that we, and the wider international community, were right to invoke

the Moscow Mechanism in response to our concerns about Russia's invasion. We read in the report about the human impact directly caused by Russia's actions – in sections covering deportations, sieges and humanitarian corridors, on targeted attacks on individual civilians and civilian infrastructure, and on the impact on vulnerable groups. The sections on two specific attacks, against the Mariupol Maternity House and Childrens' hospital, and Mariupol Theatre, remind us in detail of the terror of what is still happening – today – to that city's inhabitants, and the cost of Russia's aggression.

Mr Chair,

The report covers incidents between 24 February and 1 April. It does not cover the most recent atrocities in Ukraine, although we note the authors' comments that Bucha "deserves and requires a serious international enquiry". This report, the first independent report under the auspices of an international organisation, is important. It confirms our concerns, including "clear patterns of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) violations by the Russian forces in their conduct of hostilities."

This report is just the first of likely many. We must, as an international community, hold accountable those responsible for the atrocities that have been committed in Ukraine, including military commanders and other individuals in the Putin regime. Soldiers and commanders who issue or follow illegal orders need to understand that their actions will be documented, and they will be held to account. Justice will be served.

Mr Chair, we may hear today from the Russian Delegation. If so, we can probably expect the usual distortions, denials and disinformation. But, as we have said before – facts matter. That is precisely why a large majority of participating States, with the support of Ukraine, asked for this fact finding mission. It is with the facts that we can ensure accountability for all those that violate International Humanitarian Law.

We call on Russia in the strongest possible terms to end its attacks on civilians in all their forms, to pull back their troops from the entire territory of Ukraine and to stop this war. The United Kingdom will remain resolute in our support for Ukraine's sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence and unity within its internationally recognised borders.