

## A HANDBOOK FOR CHURCHES



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## PREFACE

Reverend Paul Cowley MBE, founder of Caring for Ex-Offenders

In the 1990s, as Alpha grew in churches and began running in many prisons across the UK, men and women started to come to Christ through Alpha in prison. One man told me he had become a Christian in prison through attending an Alpha course and that, upon release, he headed for a church, hoping they would support and help him. They didn't help him for lots of reasons, some good and some not so good. I knew in that moment that churches needed to be trained for this work, otherwise it wasn't fair either on them or the ex-offenders seeking support from them. And so, the idea for Caring for Ex-Offenders was born.

This work is close to my heart because among other things, I am an ex-offender myself. I was born in Manchester to alcoholic parents and my home life was filled with verbal and sometimes physical abuse. At the age of 16, after an altercation with my father, I left home to live on the streets for a while. I joined a gang, was expelled from school and moved into a life of crime which led to a prison sentence in Risley prison. My sentence convinced me that a life of crime was not for me and after seeing several recruiting posters for the Army upon release, I enlisted. It took another 19 years for God to grab my attention and lay hold of me, and that led me to take Alpha into the prison system. Shortly after that I was encouraged by my vicar, Sandy Millar, to train for ordination in the Church of England.

My vision for ex-offender ministry is that churches across the country (and the world) would get excited about welcoming men and women leaving prison into their communities and walk with them through all their challenges. My great desire is to see those men and women come to Christ, be filled with hope and experience the riches that Jesus talks about in John 10:10b: 'I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.' (NIV)

My prayer is that the bride of Christ becomes as passionate about the poor as Christ himself is. Thank you for your passion and for getting involved in this extraordinary ministry to prisoners and, especially, to ex-offenders.

With love,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul William Cowley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

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### MATTHEW 25:34-40 (NIV)

'Then the King will say to those on his right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me."

'Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?"

'The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

### ECCLESIASTES 4:9-10 (NIV)

'Two are better than one,  
because they have a good return for their labour:  
If either of them falls down,  
one can help the other up.  
But pity anyone who falls  
and has no one to help them up.'

# CHAPTER 1: ABOUT CARING FOR EX-OFFENDERS

## HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook has been created to help churches with a heart to support men and women who have served a prison sentence.

Over the years, the team at Caring for Ex-Offenders (CFEO) has worked out strategies to connect with people in prison and help them to readjust to life in the community, as well as helping churches prepare to be supportive, resourcing communities for those individuals. These processes are detailed here, from the first step of getting your church involved in the local prison, to the ultimate aim of welcoming ex-offenders to be part of your church community.

This handbook is divided into sections. If you have a heart to work with ex-offenders but are not currently doing so, we encourage you to read through all the material and begin by implementing the strategies outlined in the earlier sections. The information in the later sections will be more relevant as your knowledge and confidence grows, and you begin to work with individuals.

You will also find a list of contact details for useful national organisations in Appendix C.

## A BRIEF OVERVIEW

The Alpha Course has been running in prisons since 1995, and Caring for Ex-Offenders came into being when our founder, Paul Cowley, realised that men and women who came to faith in prison (either through the Alpha Course or the care of prison chaplains) wanted to join churches on their release. When confronted with the reality of dealing with the sometimes complex needs of an ex-offender, many churches felt they were ill-equipped for the task. CFEO recognises the need to equip and resource churches to care for ex-offenders, both practically and spiritually.

We aim to see individuals of any faith, or none, become integrated into a church-based community of support as they seek to rebuild their lives. While CFEO connects individuals directly to churches in the Greater London area,



we seek to support churches across the UK as they set up their own ex-offender ministries. Caring for Ex-Offenders runs training days in London which offer specific practical steps to churches wanting to welcome ex-offenders into their community.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Caring for Ex-Offenders' contact details are:

### Caring for Ex-Offenders

Holy Trinity Brompton

Brompton Road

London

SW7 1JA

Tel: 020 7052 0332

Email: [info@caringforexoffenders.org](mailto:info@caringforexoffenders.org)

Or visit: [www.caringforexoffenders.org](http://www.caringforexoffenders.org)

For more information about Caring for Ex-Offenders training days, contact the CFEO office directly.

## CHAPTER 2: GETTING READY TO WORK WITH EX-OFFENDERS

### GETTING INVOLVED IN YOUR LOCAL PRISON

There are several ways to get involved in your local prison:

- Contact the chaplain at the prison – with a phone call rather than a letter if possible. The general prison switchboard number can be found online. Ask to speak to Chaplaincy, introduce yourself and suggest that you meet to see if there are areas where you could support their team. The relationship with Chaplaincy is key in finding men and women your church could support;
- Ask the chaplain if there are opportunities for you to go into the prison and work alongside the Chaplaincy – it may be that there is a need for chaplaincy visitors. If they run the Alpha Course, ask if they have enough people on the team and whether you could help by providing volunteers to make drinks and help with a small group, a worship leader or someone to give a talk;
- If it's proving difficult to find your local chaplain, you could contact the Alpha for Prisons Office (see Appendix C for contact details) to ask if Alpha is running in your local prison and who you should contact;
- One of the most important, though often overlooked, ways of getting involved is by praying. Prison Fellowship organises prayer groups for prisons (see Appendix C for contact details) and you could see if they have one for yours. If not, you could set up a group of intercessors who pray for the work within the prison, the prisoners, Chaplaincy staff, and prison staff. If the prison is running the Alpha Course, find out the dates so that you can pray specifically on those days.

### BUILDING A TEAM

As your church prepares to work with ex-offenders it is a good idea to investigate your existing skills. Talk to people in the church who work in social services, the police or probation. They could offer valuable advice and contacts, and might want to join the team.

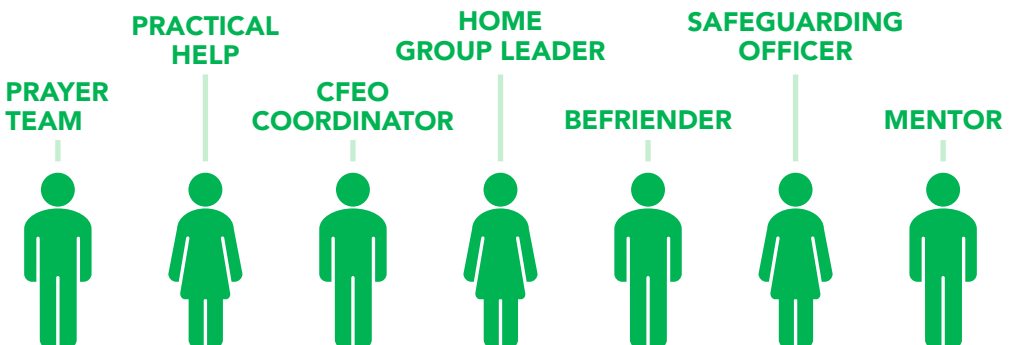
CFEO encourages churches wanting to support ex-offenders to take a team approach, in which a group of people unite around an individual to help address physical, emotional, spiritual and practical needs.

The team might be made up of:

- Church CFEO coordinator – this person heads up the team and is the key point of contact for both church members and external organisations involved with the ex-offender(s)
- Mentor – a person (trained through CFEO training or other mentoring training) who builds a sustained relationship with the ex-offender, offering practical help and supporting the individual towards their goals
- Befriender(s) – people who offer friendship, be it meeting up during the week socially or sitting with the individual at church
- Prayer team – a group who are dedicated to praying for the team and the individual, underpinning the whole ex-offender ministry

As an individual becomes more involved in the church, roles such as a small group leader may be relevant. If the expertise is available in your church, your team can be supplemented by roles such as:

- Someone to provide specific practical support (for example: budgeting adviser, housing officer, etc)
- Professional counsellor
- Addiction recovery specialist
- Safeguarding officer



The team should be carefully selected, taking into consideration the levels of maturity and expertise required to work in these areas. It is vital that all team members directly involved should have the following qualities:

- Mature Christian faith
- Reliable
- Non-judgmental
- Can be trusted to follow security and confidentiality policies
- Common sense
- Empathetic without getting too emotionally involved
- Strong sense of boundaries
- Accountable
- Honest with integrity
- Competent
- Team player

Another thing to bear in mind when selecting a team is creating a good mixture of people of different ages, genders, and cultural backgrounds. We would suggest selecting people of the same sex for any one-to-one mentoring, but this may not be necessary for the person providing practical support.

*Note: All sensible precautions should be taken for one-to-one contact. When meeting with an individual, it should be in a public place (homes should be avoided). The person meeting the individual should have a phone with them, other people should know where they are, and they should be able to get out of the situation safely and easily if the need arises.*

## UNDERSTANDING THE FEARS OF INDIVIDUALS IN PRISON

As an individual approaches release, their immediate concerns are likely to be:



Being in prison separates a person from society and reintegration can be a difficult and daunting task. Imagine being released from prison, unsure of how friends and family will react to you, perhaps having to find stable accommodation and a new job while carrying the stigma of a criminal conviction. Your church team will be able to help most effectively if you consider the pressures that might be on a person as they are released, and proactively address any that you can prior to the person's release.

People who became Christians in prison and hope to join a church on release are likely to have the added fear of feeling out of place at a church service. Common concerns may include:

What should I wear to church?

Will I know the songs?

How will I know what to do during the service?

Will I be asked to give money to the church?

Will there be special places to sit?

Your team (and church leadership if appropriate) should look at your church services and consider how user-friendly they are for people who have no church background and are attending for the first time. You may need to make some adjustments to make those people feel more welcome.

## UNDERSTANDING THE FEARS OF THE CHURCH

Your church community may well have unexpressed fears or concerns about welcoming people with criminal convictions into the church. As you start this ministry, it's wise to lay a good foundation with the congregation by addressing some of these issues.

Often the greatest barrier for people getting involved in working with ex-offenders is fear, and this is completely understandable. That fear can manifest itself in many ways, including questions such as:

Should we speak to them about being in prison?

Will it be dangerous to have ex-offenders in the church?

If we open our homes to ex-offenders will we be opening ourselves up to robbery and violence?

Will we be expected to find homes for them?

Will there be sex-offenders around children or those who are vulnerable?

Will the church finances be drained by supporting them?

Will they be different to us?

How will the congregation react?

The strategies and processes in this handbook aim to give advice on how your church can put the appropriate boundaries in place to protect both the church and the ex-offender, but it's good to address the fears proactively as well. You might consider:

- Inviting a team from the local prison / Prison Fellowship / CFEO to come and talk to the church about working in prison and working with ex-offenders
- Encouraging people who are already involved in prison ministry to share their testimonies on a Sunday and ask the church to pray for specific issues facing prisoners or those working with them
- Inviting the congregation to get involved in prisons themselves (see the section headed 'Getting involved in your local prison' on page 10)

Listen to the fears and concerns of the church, but also encourage them that this is a great way in which we can put Jesus' teaching into practice. We can demonstrate God's love, tell others of his grace and extend a warm welcome to those who may not have encountered a supportive community before.

## MAKING CONTACT WITH THE POLICE AND PROBATION SERVICE

If you are going to be working with people who have been in prison, it is important to have a good relationship with the police and probation service.

Find out where the nearest police station is, and ask if you can speak to the community liaison officer. Explain to them that you are hoping to welcome ex-offenders into your church and ask for their assistance with this. Make sure that you have a contact name and number so that you or members of your team will know who to speak to if they need to call for advice.

Find out the location and telephone number of the local probation office. If this is not in the telephone directory, you should be able to get it from the police station. Contact someone at the probation office, and explain to them what you are trying to do and how you hope to help individuals reintegrate back into the community. Explain what you can offer in terms of support, and ask the probation service how you can best work together.



In both cases, it is possible that you will be met with some resistance. But this is a chance to prove by our actions that the church is a safe, effective community of support, and to build bridges with these two statutory services.

## FINDING OUT ABOUT POSSIBLE ACCOMMODATION

One of the biggest problems facing men and women leaving prison is accommodation. If they are released on a licence, then the probation service may try to help find suitable accommodation by contacting the housing office and requesting forms on their behalf. However, this is not guaranteed and individuals often have to find their own accommodation. This means that many will be released from prison without a permanent address, and may end up on the streets.

There are a number of routes to search for accommodation. It's a good idea to find out in advance:

- If there are any rehabilitation houses or there is any supported housing in the area
- What help the local authority can give
- If there are hostels in your community, and what their conditions and referral processes are
- If there are bed and breakfast hotels in your local area that take clients on benefits
- What housing charities exist in your area

Try to build relationships with local hostels and with the housing officer at the borough offices. Ask if you can have copies of the housing benefit forms and a booklet explaining how to claim. Spend time looking through these forms if you have not used them before and clarify any points you are unsure about. This will help speed up the application process.

For more detailed advice on housing see the section headed 'Accommodation' on page 29.

## FINDING OUT ABOUT POSSIBLE EMPLOYMENT

Finding employment is another key area where somebody leaving prison may appreciate help.

You might like to speak with your local job centre manager to find out how to make the process of applying for Jobseeker's Allowance as straightforward as possible.

Other areas to consider might be:

- Voluntary work within the church, if this is suitable for the individual
- Possible employers within the church and its contacts
- Organisations which help ex-offenders to find work
- Helping an ex-offender with a self-employment scheme
- Organisations where people can get help with CVs / job applications (or set up something yourself)

For more detailed advice on employment see Chapter 5, titled 'Support in Finding Employment' on page 44.

## PRACTICAL PREPARATIONS

We would recommend that your church sets aside a small fund that can be used to help with practical issues. Examples might include buying someone a mobile phone and setting them up with a pay-as-you-go SIM card, buying a few days' worth of groceries, or giving the individual a loan until their benefits come through. It doesn't have to be a large amount of money – sometimes even £20 can be an important stop-gap after someone leaves prison but before the formal support systems kick in.

It might also be good for the church CFEO team to purchase a mobile for team use or for the mentor so that the individual can get in touch easily, especially outside church office hours. Having a designated mentoring mobile also helps facilitate boundaries – so you don't have to mix mentoring and your private life in the evenings or at weekends.

Consider what church events might be happening around the time the individual is released, so that you can invite them along, if appropriate, as an introduction to the church. Also consider whether there is somewhere on the church site that can be designated both a confidential and safe space for the individual to meet with their mentor or the team.

## Identification

The two most important forms of identification for an individual to have on release is their National Insurance number and photo identification in the form of a passport or driving licence, as these are required when applying for benefits, jobs and housing. Many people, however, are released from prison without any photographic ID and without knowing their NI number. Some might have had a passport or driving licence in the past, but it may have expired or been lost, and some may never have owned any photo ID. Applying for any of these forms of identification takes time, and can delay the process of resettlement, so it is good to encourage the individual to do what they can to obtain ID before release.

If this is not possible, below are starting points for each type of ID:

- National Insurance: call HMRC to request a new NI number or visit [www.gov.uk/lost-national-insurance-number](http://www.gov.uk/lost-national-insurance-number)
- Birth Certificate: contact the birth registry office of the country of birth. For England and Wales, you can apply at [www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/certificates/default.asp](http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/certificates/default.asp)
- Passport: follow the usual application process. The Post Office offers a fast track service if a passport is needed urgently

## WORKING WITH SPECIAL CATEGORIES OF EX-OFFENDER

It is important to consider the specific issues around working with young offenders, sex-offenders, those with addictions, or those with mental health problems. For detailed advice on working with these categories of people, see the relevant sections later in this handbook and the suggested reading material.

## FINALLY

We would encourage you that whilst this ministry does bring challenges, it is incredibly rewarding work. Although there may be setbacks and disappointments along the way, there will also be successes. Just as Jesus commends it to us in Matthew 25:31–46, who better than the church to come alongside the people often overlooked in society, demonstrate God's loving mercy that we ourselves have received and empower them to overcome their challenges?

### Case Study: Darren\*

CFEO learned about Darren just a week before his release date, and our caseworker worked incredibly hard to connect him to a church and mentor in that short timeframe. Darren was met at the gate upon release, and he began meeting regularly with his mentor as well as volunteering at a local church.

Darren's mentor went along with him to one of his first housing appointments, and this turned out to be one of the big issues they would have to face together, as Darren was told that he must leave the premises he was living in due to a breach of building regulations. For his part, Darren was keen to move somewhere offering a positive environment that supported his desire not to reoffend and to live a changed life, but this proved difficult as many landlords will not accept tenants who are on housing benefits. His mentor advocated on his behalf through the process and thankfully, in November 2016, Darren finally found a landlord, through a friend, who was happy for him to move into his property. Darren moved in and began the process of making it home, which included tackling a bed bug infestation with the support of his mentor and CFEO.

Having finally found housing, Darren moved his focus to getting employment and succeeded in landing a job with a Christian charity in April 2017. Darren has a history of alcohol abuse and was estranged from his children, but through the period of mentoring, and by showing that he really does want to make changes, he managed to get back into relationship with one of his children.

After nearly two years together, Darren and his mentor recently ended their formal relationship, but he knows the CFEO team is there if he ever needs mentoring support again. It has been incredible to see the changes in his life—a combination of his determination and the day-by-day support offered by his mentor.

\*Please note name has been changed.

## CHAPTER 3: FIRST STEPS

### CFEO CRITERIA

The CFEO office receives many referrals each year, and we are sometimes asked how we choose whether to accept a referral or not. For us, the answer is three-fold. Our criteria are:

1. Is the person resettling to London?
2. Is the person willing to be supported by Christians?
3. Does the person show signs that they truly want to make a change?

If the answer to these three questions is yes, then we will begin the process of trying to find support for them.

Although each church should certainly set their own criteria, we would suggest that it's easiest to support people in your local area, it's only possible to support someone if they are happy to be supported by you, and it's most likely that the support will be effective if the person really engages with it.

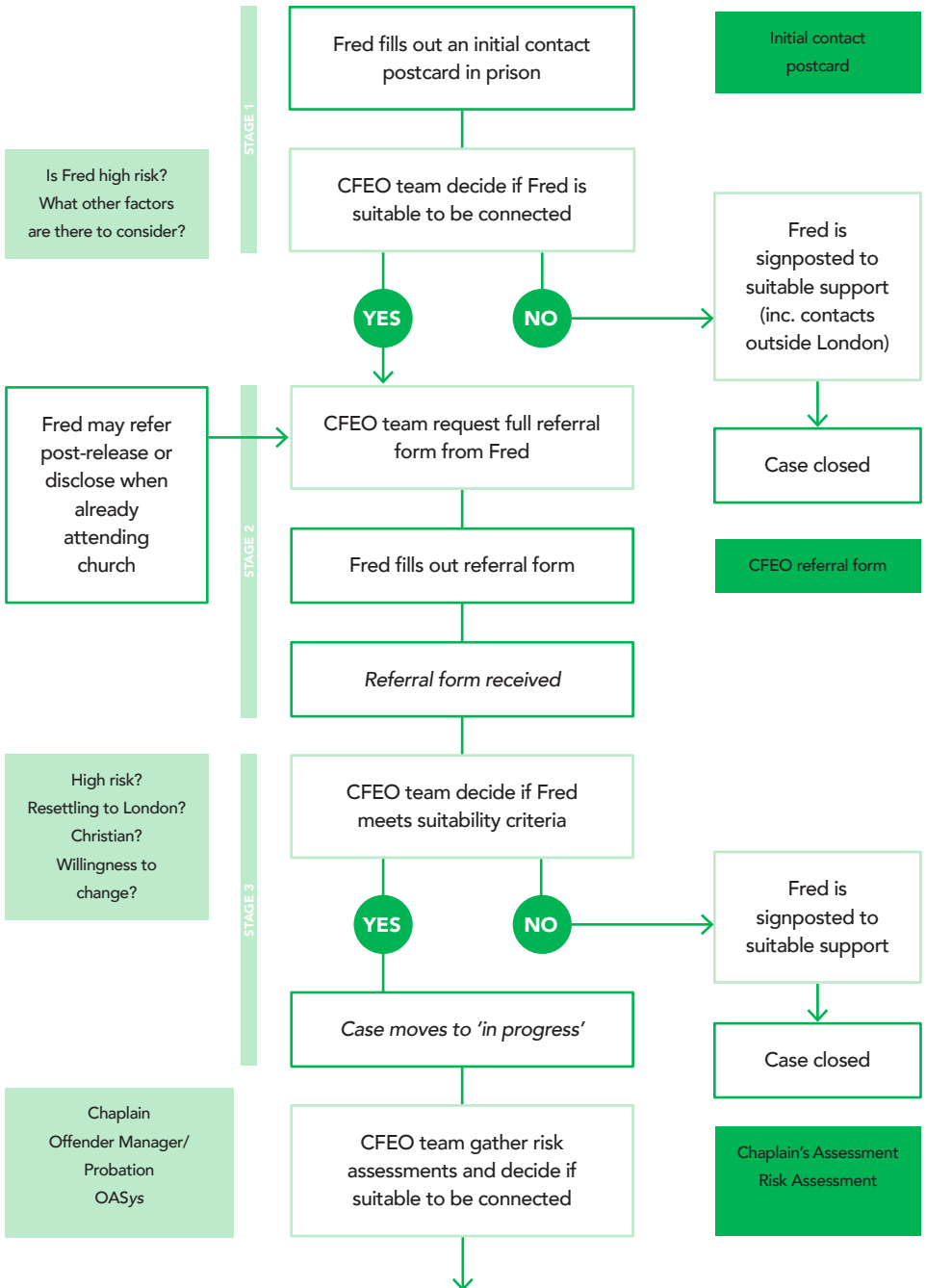
### THE CONNECTION PROCESS



The following is a step-by-step summary of the process Caring for Ex-Offenders uses when connecting a new referral to a church. You could tailor this process to your church's context.

1. **Self-Referral:** An individual who wishes to be connected to a local church in London upon their release from prison completes one of our referral forms to get help with resettlement. These are available at [www.caringforexoffenders.org](http://www.caringforexoffenders.org) or by request from the CFEO office.
2. **Assessments:** We obtain risk and needs assessments from the Chaplaincy team in prison and the individual's offender manager or probation officer.
3. **Contacting the Church:** We contact a church from our network that meets the needs of the individual and is near the area to which they are relocating. We ask the church if they are in a position at that time to support the person.
4. **Handing Over:** If they agree, we then pass on the individual's details (including information about risk). We also inform the individual that they have been connected to a church, and provide them with their church CFEO coordinator's name.
5. **Initiating Contact:** A member of the church CFEO team contacts the individual whilst they are still in prison, tries to visit, and on release personally meets them at the gate. Sometimes an individual will refer to CFEO after they have already been released, and in those cases, the mentoring relationship will develop in the community.
6. **Meeting your Mentee:** The church CFEO team meet regularly with the individual to help with the practicalities of resettlement, as well as for mentoring. The Caring for Ex-Offenders staff team are available to answer queries and assist the church in any way as they offer this support.
7. **Staying in Touch:** The CFEO team contact the church at intervals to check on the relationship and find out if they need any further support.

## CONNECTING AN EX-OFFENDER 'FRED' TO HTB







## MAKING CONTACT WITH THE PERSON IN PRISON BEFORE RELEASE

Once you have agreed to support someone, it is important to try to start building a relationship with them while they are still in prison. Ideally, you will be able to make contact several months before the release date to start to get to know them and their circumstances. Your church team will also be able to start praying for them.

Writing is the most straightforward way to be in regular contact with the person you are going to support. The referral form should provide all the information you need to write: the individual's name and prison number, the prison name and address, and the name of the prison chaplain or whoever is the contact in the prison.

When contacting the individual in prison for the first time:

- Remember to put the prison number clearly after their name
- Introduce yourself and explain why you are writing
- Say that you are looking forward to welcoming them to the church when they are released
- Give them some general information about the church such as service times, the style of worship, size of congregation and any other activities run by the church

*Note: In all communication with an individual in prison, be sure to use a church office or central address – not your home address.*

If you are not sure whether the individual has received your letter, an enquiry can be made via the Chaplaincy.

Email A Prisoner (EMAP) is an online service that makes it quicker to stay in touch. Although prisoners don't have access to email, the EMAP service allows you to send an email (for a small cost per message), which is printed out and taken to the person that same day. They can then write back to you, and it's even possible to pay for their return postage. When setting up the EMAP account, use the church's address as this will be visible to the individual. See [www.emailprisoner.com](http://www.emailprisoner.com) for more details.

Once you have begun building a relationship with the individual in prison, you can start to prepare together for what will happen upon their release.

## ARRANGING A VISIT

If possible, try to visit the prisoner before their release date to help build the foundations of a relationship. To do this, you will need to arrange a formal visit. Before the visit:

- Find out the times and arrangements for visiting at the prison;
- There are many ways in which you can visit someone in prison. Arranging a visit directly with the individual will involve sharing personal information. Please contact the CFEO team who will be able to provide support and advice on the best way to book a visit safely;
- If you are in contact with that particular prison's chaplaincy team please do speak to them as they will also be able to help;
- Via letter, arrange a suitable date to visit that you will definitely be able to keep.

## MEETING AT THE GATE

The moment of release is one of the most nerve-wracking for those who have spent time in prison.

Where possible, we encourage all churches to meet the individual at the gate on their release date. This helps to cement the relationship with the church by demonstrating the team's love and commitment towards that person, but it also can help to prevent that person from being met only by a potentially unhelpful acquaintance.

- Describe yourself in a letter so that the person knows who to look out for – a prison will often release multiple people at the same time so there could be a small crowd at the prison gate;
- Find out what time the individual is likely to be released – it is usually first thing in the morning and could be as early as 8.30am;

- Be prepared to wait, as the time is never definite. It is a good idea to factor in some contingency time and take a book;
- Useful items to take include a flask of tea or coffee, an umbrella, and a holdall for the individual to carry their belongings in, as they may be issued a clear plastic prison-labelled bag as they leave;
- If it is a long journey, be prepared to stop for coffee or lunch on the way back;
- Often the released individual will be expected to report to the local probation office on the same day. Just before release, the person should be told at the prison's reception where this is and when they need to report by. If you already have a relationship with their probation officer, you could also find out from them.

If it is not possible to meet the person at the prison gate (for example, if they were in a prison far from your town), they will usually be issued with a small allowance or a travel pass to the town they are going to. It would be good to arrange to meet them from the train or bus.

## CHECKING IN WITH THE LOCAL PROBATION OFFICE

Although the ex-offender should have been told in the prison, it is a good idea for you to have found out the address and office hours of the probation office in advance. If the number is not available online, you should be able to get it from the local police station.

It's crucial for an ex-offender to attend that first probation appointment because an individual out on licence can be re-arrested or recalled if they fail to report to probation at the set time.

For further information see Chapter 8, titled 'Individuals Out on Licence' on page 61.

## SEEING TO PERSONAL NEEDS

Perhaps you could put together a welcome pack including:

- Toiletries (shampoo, deodorant, a disposable razor, etc)
- Extra clothing or shoes suitable for the season (check sizes first)
- A Bible similar to those used in your church
- Pen and notebook
- A diary or calendar
- A travel card
- A sheet of paper with helpful contact details for your church, the mentor, and any support services that could be useful (refrain from using the words 'prison' or 'ex-offender' so that the individual will not feel shy about reading it in public)
- If the individual is in self-catering accommodation you might like to provide a basic food hamper/package

It is important that these things are handled sensitively, as many people will not want to accept charity, but will usually welcome gifts from friends.

## ACCOMMODATION

Although statutory services generally try to help people find accommodation before they leave prison, many leave with no fixed address (NFA).

One of the most important things in the early stage is to support the individual as they try to arrange accommodation.

If an ex-offender is managed by MAPPA (Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements) and has no other address on release, they will normally be expected to live at a probation hostel, and may be required by law to stay there for a specified period. Before making other arrangements, check with the individual or their probation officer for any requirements to live at a certain address.

*Note: Anyone who has been released from prison and who is on the sex-offenders' register will be required to keep the police informed of their address at all times.*

When an individual refers to CFEO asking for assistance with accommodation, we explain that we do not provide accommodation, but we are happy to help them with their search.

There are several routes that can be pursued in the search for suitable accommodation:

- Local authority hostels – the best way to find out about these is to contact your local housing authority, and in particular, the Homeless Persons Unit. Explain who you are, and that you are trying to help someone who is just out of prison;
- Hostels run by other organisations – Nacro's Resettlement Service Finder can be a useful resource in searching for hostels and other services for ex-offenders in your area;
- Council offices – the housing department at the council offices will be able to offer advice regarding housing benefits, local authority housing, etc;
- Citizens' Advice Bureau – they may be able to give advice if you are not sure where to start, need help with forms, or want to check someone's rights;
- Local libraries – they might have a copy of the UK Advice Finder available to use, and may have other useful information.

Because it is not unusual for someone to be released from prison without accommodation, we recommend that the mentoring team in your church put together a bundle for the individual. This can include items such as a torch, waterproof wallet for paperwork, mobile phone with credit, phone charger, contact details on paper for them to keep, sleeping bag, socks, gloves, underwear, hat, scarf, travel card, or some food. It is also wise to have a list of the homeless shelters in your local area, so that you can direct them somewhere they can get a hot meal or a place to sleep for the night.

We do not advise that you invite them to stay with you, as this does not solve the ultimate issue of arranging a permanent address and can put added strain on a new relationship as well as expose you to risk.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE CHURCH

It is quite daunting for any of us to go into a church for the first time, and even more so if we don't know anyone there.

Plan to meet the individual before the service on Sunday; arrange to pick them up or go for a coffee first. Try to plan this meeting at a mutually convenient location, and always make sure that you have a same-sex team member with you; in the first stages of relationship-building, two people are better for security and accountability.

It is also worth showing them in advance where they will be going. You could use this as an opportunity to tell them about what happens at your church service on a Sunday. This will help to relieve any fears they might have about not knowing what will happen – when to stand or sit, etc.

If you are the church leader and are therefore not able to sit with the individual during the service, try to arrange for another team member to sit with them: crucially, someone who is able to make new people feel welcome.

After the service, make sure that the individual has someone to chat with and feels welcome. Try to introduce them to others as you would any newcomer. You do not need to go into their history – let them tell people as and when they feel comfortable doing so. '[Fred] has just moved into the area' is a perfect introduction. (Let them know you are going to be doing this so they can plan how to answer any innocent questions – such as 'Ah, where were you before?' – that might follow.)

This might also be a good moment to introduce the individual to the leader of the Alpha Course (or equivalent) if you are running one. If the course has just started, they could arrange to join. If not, you could suggest that they come to the celebration supper, and then join the next course.

It is probably best to avoid the individual being invited along to a small group at this stage, until you have had the chance to sit down one-to-one and talk about the way forward and whether you need to work out any restrictions or licence conditions with them. (See the New Member Agreement found in Appendix A.)

## A Church's Story: St Aldates, Oxford

St Aldates in Oxford has always had active homeless and prison ministry teams and the church has been running Alpha in several local prisons for many years. In 2010, a large group of prisoners came to faith in one prison, and as a result, many of them expressed interest in coming to the church on their release.

The leadership embraced the idea of ex-offenders joining the congregation. St Aldates strengthened an existing group called ACT (Aldates for Community Transformation), that had been working with the vulnerably housed in Oxford. ACT was formed into a separate charity, with the prison ministry teams and the volunteers working with the vulnerably housed and homeless under ACT's umbrella. ACT also employed a full-time staff member to work with ex-offenders.

In 2011, ACT encouraged church members to allow ACT to manage their rental properties in Oxford. Within two years, ACT was managing three houses where men leaving prison were met at the prison gate and taken to an ACT house. There are currently four ACT houses, where ex-offenders are supported with daily living, employment and other needs.

Having many ex-offenders in the houses and in the congregation has necessitated working with the prisons to carry out risk assessments, and the development of behavioural agreements and safeguarding policies. The ministry now also works with the probation services in Oxford and is supported by a large pool of volunteers from the church.

Developing the ministry to ex-offenders began with the church going into the prisons. It has allowed the church to fulfil the biblical mandate to visit those in prison and to work with the marginalised and the very poorest in society. St Aldates has also had the wonderful experience of seeing lives transformed by the love of Christ, as those in prison have come to faith and been welcomed into the community by the church on release.



## CHAPTER 4: INTRODUCTIONS AND IMMEDIATE NEEDS

### MEETING THE TEAM

Try to introduce the individual to the team who will be working with them as soon as possible. This is best done at the church offices or another public meeting place in the interest of everyone's safety.

The individual may have several immediate needs when they are first released, and it is better for a small, dedicated team to deal with these, rather than involving lots of different people in the church.

As was outlined in the section 'Building a team' in Chapter 2 (details are on page 10), the team should ideally consist of:

- Church CFEO coordinator
- Mentor
- Befriender
- Prayer team

The team can be also supplemented with:

- Practical support
- Professional counsellor
- Addiction recovery leader
- Safeguarding officer

## THE NEW MEMBER AGREEMENT

There is a template of the New Member Agreement in Appendix A. Please do adapt it for your own use, in collaboration with your church leadership.

### Why have an agreement?

- An agreement sets out what the individual can expect from the church in terms of support and fellowship, and in turn, what the church asks of the individual upon joining the community;
- It is important to set boundaries for the safety of both the ex-offender and for the church family they are joining;
- The agreement is a useful way to set these boundaries and to be able to draw attention to them later if need be;
- Most of the expectations in the agreement are simply common sense, and are what the church would expect of every congregation member;
- An agreement makes it clear right from the start that both parties are working together to make sure the relationship works. Expectations on both sides are clear from the beginning and this may contribute to helping the individual reintegrate into society and not reoffend.

It should be noted that of course the agreement is not legally binding.

### Going through the agreement

This is best done at a time when you can sit down over a cup of tea with the ex-offender (called 'the new member' in the agreement) and the person who is going to be mentoring them. Allow plenty of time to explain the reasons for the agreement, and take the individual through it step by step. You might want to amend it as you go, but take care to stick to boundaries that the church and the probation officer feel are necessary. If the individual has concerns about any aspects of the agreement, encourage an open discussion and perhaps agree to review the conditions after a period of time.

Most of the points in the agreement template are self-explanatory; they stress the importance of accountability, meeting together regularly, and respecting one another's intentions. They show a level of commitment from the church and ask for a reciprocated level of commitment from the individual.

It is important to emphasise that the ex-offender has as much right as the mentor or church CFEO coordinator does to hold the other person accountable to the agreement.

### What happens if the agreement is broken?

It is important that the church's response matches the severity of the situation. If someone misses a mentoring session, the first response of the church should not be to pull out the agreement and remind them of their obligations, because that creates a legalistic environment rather than one of real relationship.

However, when boundaries are crossed, action should be taken immediately:

- The church CFEO coordinator should arrange to meet with the individual in person and talk to them about the situation;
- Listen to their side of the issue carefully and reiterate the boundaries. Explain again why these are in place and ask if they agree with them;
- Try to get to the bottom of why the boundaries were crossed;
- Do not say that what has happened does not matter. Treat it as an important issue;
- It may be necessary to inform the probation officer or even the police if the law has been broken. (In the best possible case, you would go with the individual to their probation appointment and be part of that disclosure.)

While treating boundary infringement as a serious issue, at the same time always be ready to give the person another chance. It may be that they are testing the relationship, and so we want to respond with as much grace as God shows each of us. Re-state the boundaries and discuss how you can help the individual to keep to them this time. There may be extra precautions you need to put in place within the church.

If an offence has been committed and the person ends up going back to prison, it can make a huge impact if you write or offer to visit. This will assure the individual of your continued support. Explain that though you do not condone the crime, you still care about them. It is a powerful opportunity to model Jesus' words in Matthew 18:22 about forgiving not seven times but 77 times.

## WORKING WITH THE AUTHORITIES

Always try to build good relationships with the authorities that the individual needs to work with. It's important to remember that the church team is not another authority over that person, but instead an ally, and that you can help build bridges between the individual and the authorities.

### The police

If you have ex-offenders attending your church, you will probably have contact with the police from time to time.

See the police as allies, not enemies, and try to encourage the individual to do the same. This may be quite a process, and can sometimes be hindered by the police themselves if they have a long history with the individual and do not believe that change is possible. If the police are harassing an individual, you can go and speak to the community liaison officer at the police station. Explain the work you are trying to do and ask for their support.

However, it's also important to make it clear to the individual that you will not hesitate to call the police if someone is in danger of harm or if a crime is committed. You owe that to them, to yourself, and to the wider community.

### The probation service

Most ex-offenders do not serve the whole of their sentence in custody. At a predetermined stage, they are released to serve the rest of their sentence in the community.

Generally speaking, anyone who receives a determinate sentence is released on licence after serving half the sentence in custody and is supervised by the probation service until the end of the sentence. Individuals given sentences

with no fixed length of time (i.e. an indeterminate sentence) must spend a minimum amount of time in prison (called a 'tariff') before they can be considered for release by a parole board. They will then be on licence upon release. (More information on this topic can be found in Chapter 8, 'Individuals Out on Licence', on page 61.)

This means that most individuals will have a probation officer when they leave prison and will probably be expected to report to the probation office upon release. It can be hugely beneficial to go along to that meeting with them and support them as they meet their probation officer.

The probation service recognises '7 Pathways to Prevent Re-offending', which are seven areas deemed to provide the strongest foundation for successful rehabilitation, resettlement and risk management.

These seven areas are:

- Accommodation
- Education, training and employment
- Health
- Drugs and alcohol
- Finance, benefit and debt
- Children and families
- Attitudes, thinking and behaviour

Church support can help the individual to tackle all seven pathways, and it may be worth communicating with the probation officer in terms that reflect these pathways and emphasise that the church can work in partnership with the probation service.

The individual may be required to attend offending behaviour courses in the first few months after they are released. Encourage them to attend these, and make sure that you are not arranging for them to attend a small group or anything else at the same time.

## SORTING OUT BENEFITS

### Housing benefit

The bureaucracy involved in claiming housing benefit, or trying to get re-housed by the local council, can be both confusing and frustrating. If the individual you are supporting needs to have contact with the housing office, it's important that someone from the church helps them throughout this process.

It's helpful to have gathered information on the application procedures beforehand, as this should speed up the process. Housing benefit and council tax benefit forms can be obtained from your local borough housing office. The phone number can be found online, or you can visit the housing department at the town hall.

When a visit to the housing office is necessary, arrange for someone to accompany the individual as this can help reduce stress in the situation. If you speak with someone over the phone at the housing office, explain that you are helping someone who has just come out of prison. You may need written authority to make enquiries on their behalf.

Guidance on applying for Housing Benefit can be found in Appendix D.

### Claiming benefits

Men and women coming out of prison are eligible for benefits while they are finding work.

To register for benefits, get assistance with finding work or help with benefit claims and to find helpful organisations, you can go to the GOV.UK website ([www.gov.uk/browse/benefits](http://www.gov.uk/browse/benefits)).

It is good for one of the support team or another volunteer to accompany the individual to the Jobcentre, as these times can be quite stressful.

- Find out the opening times of the nearest Jobcentre Plus office that has a benefits adviser;
- The applicant will need to go to the reception, take a ticket and wait to see a member of staff;

- They will be given a form to fill in to claim Jobseekers Allowance and will need to make an appointment to see the adviser with the completed form;
- They will need to attend an interview with the benefits adviser with the completed form and their prison discharge letter;
- Once the forms and interview have been completed, the Jobcentre Plus office will notify the claimant by post and benefits will start being paid. In theory, this should take about seven days;
- The claimant will need to report to the Jobcentre regularly to continue receiving benefits. This is commonly known as 'signing on'.

If the individual is unable to work due to sickness or disability or has a child under a certain age, they will also be entitled to benefits. The Jobcentre Plus office will be able to advise on this.

## OCCUPYING TIME

As you support an individual in their desire not to reoffend, filling time is a big consideration. In prison, they were told what to do and where to go, and acted largely on instruction, but outside they are in charge of making decisions, accepting responsibility and filling the day, which can be even more difficult if they are in a new place or if there have been big changes since they entered prison. (Technology alone can change hugely in a year!) Their mentor can help them plan how they are going to occupy their time.

If it is possible, a full-time job is often the best solution. It's a good idea to try and arrange for any employment to take place in daytime hours and during the week, so as to avoid having empty time on their hands during the day. See Chapter 5, titled 'Support in Finding Employment' on page 44 for more information on this.

If a full-time job is not a possibility, either in the short or long term, it is worth investigating other ways to occupy the individual's time.

- Make a regular time for them to meet with their mentor / prayer partner;
- Encourage the befriender in the team to meet with the individual at a regular time each week, perhaps an evening, lunchtime or Saturday morning to have a meal together, or go to football or the cinema – enjoying regular leisure activities together;
- If there are activities going on in the church community, such as a church lunch or quiz night, ensure the individual you are mentoring is invited and that the cost is covered if they have no income;
- If possible, it may be a good idea to offer the individual volunteering work around the church offices or grounds. This makes the relationship mutually beneficial and perhaps more balanced and rewarding for everyone. There may be photocopying or mailing jobs, or practical tasks such as window cleaning or gardening around the premises. The individual may also be able to volunteer with different church ministries as appropriate.



## SUNDAY WORSHIP

It is worth mentioning again that we at CFEO will work with people of any faith or none, so long as they are happy to be supported by a Christian church. Attending Sunday services is not compulsory and indeed in some cases it would be unhelpful. But if the individual you support would like to attend church, there are a few things to consider.

It's best to devote a specific time during the week to helping the individual deal with any practical or personal issues. This means it won't become the focus during Sunday worship and the pastoral team are free to see to the needs of the whole congregation during the service.

If you have more than one meeting on a Sunday, work out with the individual which would be the most appropriate service for them to attend. Worship style and the age of the typical congregation should be considered. You must also make sure that the service doesn't violate the conditions of their licence. For instance, if an offence has been committed against children, you should arrange for the individual to attend a service where there won't be any children. Other examples might include making sure the service times don't extend past the individual's curfew, or, if alcohol is a problem, ensuring there is an alcohol-free option for Communion.

Arrange for the person you are supporting to meet up with one of the team before church and sit together. Sunday is often a family day, and people can feel lonely if they don't have anyone around them. Encourage the team to invite the individual for lunch, perhaps at a local café in the case of licence restrictions on meeting in a home.

See also the section headed 'Introduction to the church' on page 31.

## HOME GROUP

Many churches have home groups or small, midweek teaching groups which are a fundamental part of church life. If this is the case, and if it's appropriate for that particular person, it may be good to encourage the individual to be part of one of these groups.

The choice of group will need to be considered carefully. Our Caring for Ex-Offenders home church has several ex-offenders who regularly attend the church. Since people coming out of prison often have many practical and emotional issues to address, the decision was taken not to concentrate all the ex-offenders in one group. Instead we try to identify which of the home groups are best equipped to welcome ex-offenders and feed new people into these groups. Groups are chosen where there is strong, confident leadership and we offer specific training and support to the leaders.

It may be more appropriate for the person to be part of a group that meets on the church premises or in a neutral café or office, rather than in someone's home, at least until the individual has settled in as part of the church. The group leader should be part of the team of people assigned to supporting the ex-offender. If this is not possible, the group leader should meet regularly with the ex-offender and the church CFEO coordinator to keep communication open and strong.

Generally speaking, it is probably not necessary for everyone in the group to be told about the person's history. It may be appropriate at some point for the individual to give their testimony, which will probably include reference to their time in prison. However, it may be necessary to tell the group if there are safety issues involved. (See also Chapter 8 on 'Working with Sex-Offenders'.) If you are worried about the reaction if the group finds out later, it is probably better to approach them before bringing the ex-offender into that group.

### Case Study: Richard\*

Richard referred to CFEO through another organisation. He had been released from prison a while before but was experiencing ongoing challenges, particularly with memory, due to a lesion on his brain. We were able to find him a mentor and he engaged quickly with other practical support available at our local church, as well as volunteering with the homeless shelter.

A few months into CFEO's support, Richard was arrested, bailed, and told to return a few weeks later. He was very concerned about receiving another custodial sentence and was unable to remember clearly what had happened at the police station. We were able to call the police to confirm the situation and what would happen when he answered bail, and reassure him. An advocate was arranged to accompany him on his return to the police station. Richard received a fine and the team is supporting him as he pays off this fine in instalments.

CFEO helped Richard to get involved with volunteering in community gardens. From having no prior gardening experience at all, Richard quickly moved up to gardening four days a week and really enjoyed it. CFEO nominated him for a volunteering award and he received it at the Westminster Volunteers Award Ceremony at the V&A Museum in November 2016. Richard was recently asked to assist someone in the church with redesigning their garden and successfully managed and completed the project by himself.

When Richard's mentor moved out of London, he had to be re-matched with a new mentor. They began building a relationship, and he has grown to trust his new mentor quickly. They are currently working on family separation and health matters as their top priorities.

Richard attends the mid-week service at the church monthly, and helps the volunteer team make the community lunch which the congregation share after the service. Richard said to us that being part of the church community and being able to volunteer has changed his life and he now feels as though he has a purpose.

\*Please note name has been changed.

## CHAPTER 5: SUPPORT IN FINDING EMPLOYMENT

# 12%

OF EMPLOYERS SURVEYED SAID THEY HAD EMPLOYED SOMEONE WITH A CRIMINAL RECORD IN THE PAST YEAR

Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2010) Disadvantaged Groups in the Labour Market, London: CIPD



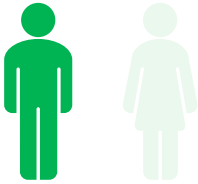
1 OUT OF 5 EMPLOYERS SAID THEY DID OR WERE LIKELY TO EXCLUDE THEM FROM THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Ibid.

# 47%

OF PRISONERS REPORT HAVING NO QUALIFICATIONS WHATSOEVER

Ministry of Justice (2012) The pre-custody employment, training and education status of newly sentenced prisoners, London: Ministry of Justice



MORE THAN HALF OF PEOPLE RELEASED FROM PRISON WERE CLAIMING OUT-OF-WORK BENEFITS ONE MONTH AFTER RELEASE—TWO-FIFTHS WERE STILL CLAIMING BENEFITS AFTER TWO YEARS.

Ministry of Justice (2014) Experimental statistics from the 2013 MoJ /DWP /HMRC data share: Linking data on offenders with benefit, employment and income data, London: Ministry of Justice

# 27%

OF PEOPLE HAD A JOB ON RELEASE FROM PRISON

Table 8, Ministry of Justice (2015) National Offender Management Service annual report 2014/15: Management Information Addendum, London: Ministry of Justice

The church team can be invaluable in offering practical help and moral support to an ex-offender trying to find a job, as well as providing opportunities to develop the skills needed for work and encouragement to persevere.

## INITIAL STEPS TO HELP AN EX-OFFENDER FIND EMPLOYMENT

### Local research

Before you begin supporting someone, take some time to find out about any local employment agencies and charities that may be able to help. Ask about their referral procedures so that you can have application forms handy when needed. Also, go along to your local Jobcentre Plus (where the individual will need to go to apply for benefits) to find out about their job searching procedure.

### Discuss goals and set expectations

When you start supporting an individual, discuss with them their goals for employment and work out a realistic action plan based on their skills, experience and available opportunities. If the individual has low self-esteem and has experienced setbacks in the past, offer encouragement and acknowledge their positive skills and characteristics. It may be that some voluntary work will help them to build confidence before applying for a paid role. On the other hand, do manage expectations and help the individual to see that they may need to complete smaller steps, such as training or work experience, in order to work towards their desired role.

### Spent and unspent convictions

The distinction between a spent and unspent conviction is based on the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, and is calculated from the sentence the individual was given by a Judge or Magistrate in court.

If conviction(s) are unspent, they will be disclosed on all types of criminal record disclosure (basic, standard and enhanced). If asked by an employer, the individual is required to disclose them, and could be prosecuted if they fail to disclose unspent convictions when asked.

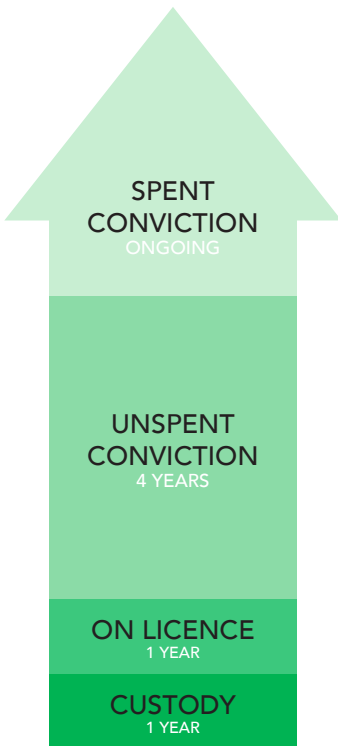
If convictions are spent, they will still be disclosed on standard and enhanced criminal record checks (unless filtered). For roles where only a basic disclosure is required the individual does not need to disclose spent convictions to an employer, but may need to disclose them when travelling or working outside the UK.

It should be noted that some convictions will never be spent.

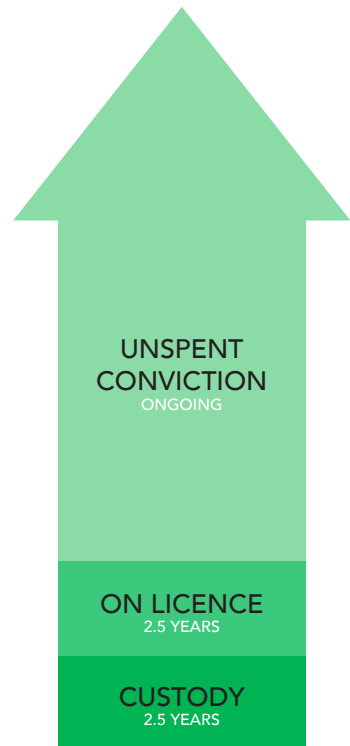
The disclosure period begins after the licence has expired, and will be longer than the sentence. To illustrate, if the individual received a two-year sentence and served half of it in custody and half in the community on licence, there would be a four-year period in which the conviction would have to be disclosed, starting from the day the licence expired.

For a sentence of five years or over, the conviction is never spent. In the below example, the individual receives a 5-year sentence and serves half of it in prison and half in the community, but the conviction will never be spent and will always have to be disclosed.

### EXAMPLE 2 YEAR SENTENCE



### EXAMPLE 5 YEAR SENTENCE



## CV writing

The person you are supporting might need guidance in creating a CV, and you or another member of the team can help them present their skills and experience in a professional way. If they feel they do not have any qualifications to show, help them to identify the skills that they have gained through their life experience.

## JOB HUNTING

### Jobcentre Plus

The first port of call for someone looking for employment is usually the Jobcentre Plus. As mentioned earlier, the individual you are mentoring may appreciate being accompanied by a member of their church support team as it can be a confusing bureaucratic process. Ideally you will have found out the procedure in advance and can offer the individual some guidance. There is also an online job search facility at [www.gov.uk/jobsearch](http://www.gov.uk/jobsearch).

### Probation

The individual's probation officer might be able to arrange for an assessment to try to match the ex-offender with suitable employment. It is worth speaking to the probation officer about this.

### Local agencies and organisations

Local organisations may be able to offer additional support in seeking employment. Try to build positive links with these organisations so that you can refer any individuals whom you are supporting to these services.

Employers may say that they will find it difficult to get insurance if they employ an ex-offender. There are solutions to these difficulties, and you can refer them to the APEX Trust (or similar organisation). APEX deal with issues surrounding employment for ex-offenders, and the APEX Fidelity Bond may help with insurance problems. They also offer training programs to ex-offenders to help them get back into the job market. Details for APEX Trust can be found in Appendix C.

## Church contacts

If you have the resources, it may be possible to help the individual find suitable work through contacts within the church. Try sounding out church members who run their own businesses, or who have information about possible employment opportunities. If a member of the church is considering employing an ex-offender, [Unlock \(unlock.org.uk\)](http://unlock.org.uk) is a good resource for sound practices and policies that protect both employer and employee.

## Job applications

The church can also offer to help the individual complete job application forms, or to assist with phoning a potential employer. A member of the team, or another volunteer working under supervision from a team member, could take responsibility for this.

Always encourage the individual to be completely honest about their prison record when applying for a job. It is better that this should be out in the open from the beginning. However, remind them of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, which enables certain convictions to be 'spent' after a set period. These therefore do not need to be declared when applying for a job.

Offer to give the individual an open character reference based on your knowledge of them within the church. It may be that commitment to a course like Alpha and to voluntary work around the church over several months will enable you to do this.

Always make it clear to an employer – church member or not – that your team is there to offer support and that they are welcome to call the church CFEO coordinator if they have any concerns. Always take employers' concerns seriously and be prepared to deal with them.



## TRAINING AND VOLUNTARY WORK

You might investigate whether church members could offer unpaid training opportunities. After a period of training, a reference could be given to show that the individual has undergone supervised training, kept good hours, been reliable, etc. This could help when they apply for a job on the open market.

Voluntary work within the church may also be an option. (See section headed 'Occupying time' on page 40.) However, individuals must not be placed in difficult situations where they are at risk of being wrongly accused of an offence, or where there may be temptations to reoffend.

*Note: Any paid work must be declared when benefits are applied for. You will be encouraging the ex-offender to break the law if you do not insist that they declare all money received. If travelling expenses are received they should be declared as such.*

Although the job hunting process can be long and frustrating, be encouraged: walking through all this with the ex-offender makes success more likely. You may even be the first person who has believed in them enough to do so and this alone can have a hugely positive impact on them.

### A Church's Story: St Thomas Norwich

St Thomas Norwich (STN) relaunched in 2013 with prison ministry at the heart of the church's vision. In response to this vision, two members of STN set up Prison Connect who met regularly in Britannia café – staffed by men preparing for release from Norwich Prison – to share food, pray and worship. Prayers centred around opportunities to begin ministry within the prison.

In 2014 our prayers were answered and STN was invited to lead services within the prison and then to begin an Alpha course, which ran on Wednesday afternoons in the Education Centre within Norwich Prison. STN also joined in with Prison Fellowship at Wayland Prison and helped to support an Alpha course running there. Norwich Prison Alpha was a great success and we continue to provide a regular six-week course using the Alpha videos. This ministry is led by a retired prison chaplain and a committed team of volunteers.

As the ministry within Norwich Prison grew, several men looked to STN for support upon their release. Our ministry to ex-offenders included providing initial shelter, support in attending appointments, volunteering experiences, help with financial matters and one-to-one mentoring.

The STN Trust was formed in January 2017. The ministries within the Trust include supporting individuals with refugee or asylum seeker status, individuals rescued from trafficking and people facing homelessness, as well as our care for ex-offenders. The need for training and equipping more mentors and befrienders became apparent and sparked our vision to build one transferrable mentoring and befriending scheme, removing the label from the individual and instead focussing on addressing their need(s). In September 2017, we launched our first 'Connect to Mentor and Befriend Course' which aims to build a team of mentors, befrienders and practical helpers trained and equipped to support the needs of all the individuals we are journeying with through STN Trust.

STN Trust works closely with several related charities in the local area. We find that collaborating with other charities allows us to provide a holistic range of support services, giving individuals the best chance of integration and flourishing. We are working in partnership with Hope into Action and three individuals moved into our newly refurbished house in November 2017. We also partner with Norwich Job Centre and are establishing our employability scheme.

We very much feel that our work in this area is in its infancy. One of our greatest challenges is building good structure at the same pace as the opportunities that God continues to provide. God's provision in this area of ministry is an incredible blessing not only to those receiving support and love but also to those able to contribute, putting their faith into action and expressing God's love to those we encounter.

'The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners'.

Isaiah 61:1 (NIV)

## CHAPTER 6: MENTORING



On our CFEO mentoring training, we use the acronym BRIDGE to teach mentoring skills and the mentoring process, because we feel that mentoring serves to help the ex-offender build a bridge between prison and their new life. The stages on the journey are as follows:

### Build Rapport

The aim of this phase is to put in the building blocks needed to create a positive, trusting and safe mentoring relationship, creating rapport and developing friendship. Ideally this stage should begin whilst the individual is still in prison, so arrange a visit or write to them. Mentoring sessions should take place weekly at a regular time, for an hour or an hour and a half. They should be confidential, and the goal is to really listen to your mentee. Establish your boundaries from the very start – and be encouraging! Resist the temptation to give advice, to assume you already know the answers, or to give them the impression that you are interviewing them or judging them. This stage probably requires the most persistence because it is the basis for all the growth that is to come.

### Invest

The aim of this phase is to invest in the relationship so you can move towards identifying and achieving goals. Part of this stage is helping them figure out what's holding them back and invest in building those things up, or dealing with serious issues such as addictions or broken relationships. Keep in touch regularly by email, phone call or text and meet for mentoring regularly. Remember that consistency is important, not only with your time but also your manner and attitude.

## Direction

Direction and its partner, Goals, function as two halves of the same stage. The aim of Direction is to begin to identify the direction your mentee wants to go. This phase's motto could be 'Work out where you want to be' – it's about mapping out the future they want for themselves, and working out what's really important to them. In this stage, you particularly want to ask open questions but you can also assist your mentee with research, as well as challenging their ideas in a supportive manner to enable them to be developed further.

## Goals

The aim of the Goals stage is to identify your mentee's specific goals and plan how to reach them. If the Direction stage's theme was 'Work out where you want to be', then this is 'Plan to get there', and how you get there is step by step. To do that, keep asking questions, and identify 'easy wins', or big steps that can be broken down into smaller steps. Crucially, take time to celebrate successes.

## Empower

At this stage, you are focusing on how independent your mentee has become and empowering them to continue their journey. Support your mentee in engaging with the church/local community on their own, introduce them to a home group, and stop referring to them as a 'mentee'! However, you are not abandoning them, and because the goal is for them to become a part of your community, you won't stop helping them if they need it.

In addition to practical tools to direct the conversation, mentoring involves communication skills, asking good questions, being aware of underlying issues, setting boundaries and being on the lookout for when your mentee is testing you.

We would advise that anyone acting as a mentor undertakes some mentoring training, whether that be from someone in your local area, or the CFEO mentoring training which is held throughout the year in London.

### Case Study: Kevin\*

Kevin was referred to CFEO by an organisation we partner with. Despite being from a different faith, he was very happy to engage with a Christian mentor, and they began meeting in October 2016.

Kevin volunteers weekly with the local volunteering centre and received an award from them which was presented at a ceremony held at the Victoria & Albert Museum. He has also applied for a course in furniture reclaiming run by a mental health charity, having secured a recommendation from his GP. He and his mentor hope that this may allow him to take on some work to help him keep busy.

Kevin was recently moved to a different hostel, where his room is smaller and doesn't contain a galley kitchen or a bathroom as his previous one had. This has been a serious setback for him, as he found the move difficult and doesn't like his new room. He spends a lot of time reading in the local park, but it is frequented by drug dealers. Kevin is addicted to both heroin and crack cocaine, and although his mentor has encouraged him to attend Narcotics Anonymous, he has not engaged much with it. His mentor is seeking other options that might help in tackling Kevin's addiction issues, as well as issues of grief and guilt stemming from his mother dying during one of his periods of imprisonment.

Kevin has recently been switched from weekly benefits to Universal Credit, which is paid monthly. Because of his addiction issues, this is a serious problem for him. He has asked his mentor to hold the money for him and give him a week's worth at a time so that the temptation to spend it all on drugs is less.

Kevin feels his mentor is a big part of his life, and his mentor says he considers Kevin a 'friend, more than anything'. It is a privilege to see Kevin and his mentor weather the ups and downs of life post-release together.

\*Please note name has been changed.

## CHAPTER 7: OTHER KINDS OF SUPPORT

Mentoring and support play a vital part in the resettlement of ex-offenders. As people of God, we believe in discipleship and in helping one another to grow in our relationships with him and with each other. People who have been in prison are no different from anyone else in the church, but they can often have chaotic lives and their need for support can be significant. It is helpful to remember that they may not have experienced healthy and loving relationships before. You, as a mentor and as a church body, may be modelling godly relationships to them for the first time.

If we can continue to provide good role models, show God's love for them in practical ways (from assisting with daily tasks to simply giving them time), and help them feel comfortable in and valued by a community, we will be impacting their lives more than we might imagine.

We take inspiration from William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army, who often used the motto of 'Soup, Soap and Salvation'. By that, he meant that when we encounter people in desperate need, we address the immediate, practical needs first, and then lead them to Christ. And that is what we seek to do as a church when we support an individual.

The following sections cover ways in which your church can support someone coming out of prison. They are by no means exhaustive but may help you explore options with the individual. As always, the different types of support should be discussed and agreed upon by the mentor and mentee. This helps to continue building accountability within that relationship.

### STEPS TOWARDS ENGAGING AN INDIVIDUAL IN CHURCH LIFE

#### Alpha

If your church runs the Alpha Course (or something similar), it is an excellent starting point for anyone new to the faith. If someone has done the course in prison, they will feel comfortable with the set-up and will have this in common with others on the course. Even if they have been a Christian for some time, it can be a brilliant tool for settling into the community and meeting other new people in a non-threatening and perhaps non-church setting. If the church is not running the Alpha Course, and you would like to

find out more about it, please contact the Alpha Office on [uk@alpha.org](mailto:uk@alpha.org). It's a good idea to think about a suitable group for the individual to join, and so it might be wise to consult the church CFEO coordinator about this.

## Post-Alpha

It's great to encourage the individual's full involvement in the life of the church, and you might be able to do this by inviting them to serve as part of the volunteer team on the next Alpha Course. There may be situations where this would not be appropriate because of certain licence conditions, so always discuss this with the probation officer or with the CFEO office if you are unsure.

## Pastorate / home group

For individuals who are not used to church and perhaps display signs of being anxious about attending services, a small group can be a great way for them to engage with the church, begin to feel more comfortable with other Christians, get to know others in the church, and feel part of the community. See the section headed 'Home group' on page 42 for more information and important considerations.

## Involvement in a ministry in the church

It's best not to rush straight into involving someone in a ministry when they have recently been released from prison. It is important that the individual settles into the body of the church, and as with any new member, there will be a need for equipping and training as well as monitoring, leading and encouraging.

Your church should already have a procedure for getting involved in ministries – particularly with children's or youth work – such as an Enhanced Disclosure Form from the Disclosure and Barring Service. Someone who has been through the Criminal Justice System should go through this process like any other volunteer. For further information regarding this procedure, contact the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) or the Caring for Ex-Offenders office. See Appendix C for CCPAS contact details.

With these things in mind, encouraging an individual to get involved in serving on a team with the church can be a real blessing, both for the person serving and for the wider church community.

### Leadership opportunities

This step may or may not be a long way down the line, but should not be dismissed. Many ex-offenders have grown into a leadership role within the Church. It may become appropriate for the individual to be involved in the pastoral, evangelistic, hospitality, or worship-leading aspects of church leadership.

### Involvement as a member of staff

This can often start with a practical or administrative role on the staff of the church, and may well come about following a period of voluntary work. It may involve some form of training for the ministry, which could be part or full-time.

### Sending out / moving on

Men and women may eventually move on to another church, for many good reasons. Send them out with the best kind of support, encouragement, help, commissioning and referral. Let them know that you will always be there for them and will be happy for them to get in touch if they want to at a later time.

## SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS WHEN SUPPORTING AN EX-OFFENDER

### Pastoral care

A team approach is important both for modelling community and so that the responsibility is adequately shared amongst each member. Everyone in the support team should know their individual roles. This ensures that pastoral care doesn't become solely the responsibility of the church leader or mentor.



## Liaison between church and hostel

Sometimes an ex-offender will be housed in a probation hostel or supported housing on release, so it is helpful to have a good working relationship with the hostel. It's particularly important to respect the house rules, especially concerning the anonymity of the hostel address, to protect others staying there.

## Telling the church

It may be necessary for all the leaders to know that someone has criminal convictions, but it's unnecessary and unhelpful for the whole congregation to know. In building a relationship based on trust, it's crucial to respect the privacy of the individual and to treat confidential information as such, no matter what the individual's offending history may be. There is a difference between confidentiality and secrecy, however, and this is why a designated team who are aware of a person's history and can pray through specific and private prayer requests is necessary. This removes the temptation to share confidential prayer requests, successes or failures with others in the church.

Upon signing the New Member Agreement in Appendix A, the individual also gives the church permission to share information when necessary.

## Personal responsibility

One of the end goals of support is that the individual will take responsibility for their own life and not be dependent upon continued help. We can help to empower the individual to re-integrate by allowing them the freedom to make mistakes so long as risk is managed.

## Education

Some ex-offenders will be facing problems with literacy and numeracy, and addressing these issues will help them as they look for work or just cope with day to day life. See if there are local community services that help with this, or if members of the congregation have the skills needed to help.

## Relationships

If someone comes from a background of broken relationships, welcoming them into your church can be a fantastic opportunity to model healthy relationships, and to offer support for past hurts. The individual may also benefit from counselling.

## Addictions

Drug and alcohol misuse is covered in the section headed 'Understanding Drug and Alcohol Misuse' on page 74.

## Recreation

It is important to address a person holistically, considering not just their spiritual needs but practical and social ones too. Recreational activities have a positive impact on mental health; perhaps the individual can join a sports club, play in a church team, or develop a hobby. If your church is able, it might be worth considering whether you can help pay for membership of a sports club or equipment for a hobby.

## PRAYER SUPPORT

Prayer support for the individual and for the team supporting them is of vital importance. Try to get together a small number of people who will commit themselves to praying regularly for the person. Aim to keep the prayer team regularly updated on issues to pray for, perhaps in the form of a confidential email.

If the individual would like to be prayed for in person, then a small team comprised of both the prayer team and the support team could do that as well.

Arrange for the prayer team to meet with the support team every so often, perhaps once a term, so that they can be encouraged by answers to their prayers. The work they do in covering everything in prayer is so important! This would also be a good opportunity for the support team to receive prayer ministry.

## Spiritual issues

There may be real issues of spiritual oppression in the individual's life, which will need to be dealt with appropriately by someone who is qualified and confident in dealing with such matters. If this is something you are concerned about, please do contact the CFEO team who may be able to connect you with other churches in your region that have experience in this area.

### Case Study: Jack\*

Jack originally referred to CFEO in 2016. As a habitual user of heroin and crack cocaine, and having been institutionalised by more than 30 years in and out of prison, he very quickly fell back in with old friends after release and his addictions got the better of him. He was rearrested within a few weeks and served almost another year. His CFEO mentor agreed to keep supporting him, however, and remained in contact while Jack was in prison.

Jack was released again in June 2017, and his mentor has been a constant support, helping Jack fight a wide variety of uphill battles. In addition to his addiction issues, Jack is a voices-hearer, and left prison homeless. Jack's mentor went with him to his GP to get him re-registered after he was thrown out of the surgery for arguing aggressively with the doctor. This was crucial because his mental health diagnosis from prison did not transfer automatically to the community, and so he needed his GP's referral in order to access mental health services in his borough. His mentor also accompanied him to get his prescription filled for Subutex, which he is on to control his heroin addiction, so that he wouldn't need to seek out drugs.

His mentor next accompanied Jack to his borough housing office to declare himself homeless. Although he is vulnerable because of mental health issues, drug issues and his status as an ex-offender, that is still not considered 'priority vulnerable' as the council's housing is overstretched. His mentor persisted on his behalf, and Jack was temporarily housed in an empty studio flat. The council has since ruled that Jack is not vulnerable enough to warrant support, and his mentor has asked for a review of his case. While this is happening, CFEO and his mentor are exploring other options with charities in the South East for supported accommodation and/or rehab.

Even despite his mentor's support, Jack relapsed into drug use in the first few days after release. His resolve to change is even more difficult because he has lived in his borough all his life and encounters unhelpful people from his past wherever he goes. Jack's relapse triggered a heart attack, and his mentor had to rush him to hospital. The incident seems to have made a big impression on Jack.

Jack's mentor is working on encouraging Jack that he can take control over his own life and make positive choices, rather than the learned helplessness that is his default response to circumstances. Jack is one of the more vulnerable cases CFEO has worked with, and it is a testament to the dogged support of his mentor that he is still out of prison 4 months after release, in housing, and not relapsing significantly. Success stories look different for each ex-offender, and CFEO is proud of these positive steps Jack has made with his mentor.

\*Please note name has been changed.

## CHAPTER 8: INDIVIDUALS OUT ON LICENCE

### WHAT IS A LICENCE?

Most individuals in prison on fixed sentences will be released half-way through their sentence and will spend the remaining months or years of their sentence 'on licence'. Being released on licence means that for the rest of their sentence the released prisoner must abide by specific conditions.

Any prisoner released on probation will be subject to the conditions of a licence at first, and prisoners who have been given a life sentence will be on licence for the rest of their lives. This means that their sentence is effectively for life, because if they default on the conditions of their licence at any time in the future they can be immediately recalled to prison.

The licence may state that a person must live in a certain area, be resident under probation supervision for a certain period in a probation hostel, or attend various offending behaviour courses. There may be curfew hours or a tagging system put in place to control the individual's movements.

Below is an example of a licence:

*The Secretary of State hereby authorises the release on licence within fifteen days of the date hereof of ....., who shall on release and during the period of this licence comply with the following conditions or any other condition which may be substituted or added from time to time.*

*He shall place himself under the supervision of whichever probation officer is nominated for this purpose or from time to time shall be placed over to him at any time. He shall on release report to the probation officer so nominated and shall keep in touch with that officer in accordance with that officer's instructions. He shall, if his probation officer so requires, receive visits from the probation officer where the licence holder is living. He shall reside only where approved by his probation officer. He shall work only where approved by his probation officer and shall inform his probation officer at once if he loses his job. He shall not travel outside Great Britain without prior permission of his probation officer.*

It is important to note that licence conditions are not set in stone. Over time, they can increase, decrease or be altered.

The licence and its terms are especially important in the case of sex-offenders. It will probably dictate that a person must live in a designated area, away from where the offence was committed, and they must not be anywhere where they may be tempted to re-offend. This might be a particular concern for registered sex-offenders who wish to join a church where there are families with children. For more information, see Chapter 9 on 'Working with Sex-Offenders'.

## WORKING WITH PROBATION

When supporting someone who has been released on licence, it is important that you work closely with their probation officer.

Find out who their probation officer is and make contact to advise that their client is attending the church. Let the probation officer know the types of meetings the individual may be attending and make sure that you give contact details so that probation can get hold of the CFEO team should the need arise.

Ask if the probation office is happy for you to speak directly to them, as some probation officers prefer always to communicate with the church team through their client.

## SETTING BOUNDARIES IN SUPPORT OF LICENCE CONDITIONS

Boundaries are important in any relationship, but especially so when supporting individuals who are on licence.

- If possible, try to meet with the probation officer and talk about how to put boundaries in place that will help the ex-offender abide by their licence conditions and encourage them that they are doing well;
- The New Member Agreement in Appendix A is a good way to set boundaries for the individual. It may be a good idea to go through this with the probation officer before doing so with the ex-offender, to ensure that important licence areas are covered. If this isn't possible and there are certain issues that you are concerned about, call the CFEO office who will be able to help you adapt the template agreement accordingly. Do talk through the agreement with the individual in a relaxed setting so that it works as a mutual agreement rather than just rules the church is laying

out;

- Make sure that you explain to the individual that these boundaries are there to protect them too – to help them comply with probation, not to be recalled, and not to re-offend;
- It may be helpful to pray through the boundaries outlined in the agreement with the individual. Assure them of the continued support from the team in maintaining these boundaries;
- It may be that the boundaries can be reduced gradually over the years as the ex-offender becomes integrated into the church. It is also important to note that if an ex-offender is on licence for life, or is a registered sex-offender, there will be boundaries that will never be able to be lifted.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF THE BOUNDARIES ARE CROSSED?

See 'What happens if the agreement is broken?' in Chapter 4, page 35.

## CHAPTER 9: WORKING WITH SEX-OFFENDERS AND OTHER HIGH-RISK OFFENDERS

'Sex-offender' covers a huge spectrum, so as with any other ex-offender, each case will be very different and will require different responses. Although press coverage often focuses on issues of child protection, sex-offenders may not necessarily have offended against children; their offences may have been against adult males or females. There are also severity levels within sex offending, so the resulting licence conditions and the best ways of supporting the individual will vary.

As with every ex-offender we work with, CFEO receives a full risk assessment from the probation officer or offender manager that provides detailed information on the potential risks, offending patterns and thought processes. We would suggest that your church do the same if you are connecting ex-offenders to your team or other local churches.

All registered sex-offenders, violent offenders, and non-registered sex-offenders sentenced to twelve months or more imprisonment (including mental health orders), as well as any other offender posing serious risk of harm, will be covered by MAPPA (Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements) assessment / management. These arrangements are put in place and managed by responsible authorities (police, probation and prison services). The key processes in these arrangements are:

- The identification of offenders
- Information sharing
- Risk assessment
- Risk management

It's important that someone within your church familiarises themselves with these basic principles and becomes the main contact with the responsible authorities. However, it is also important to remember that your church is not solely responsible for preventing the individual from reoffending, and for keeping the community safe. The church will be working in partnership with the authorities and support services.



Any sex-offender convicted today will have both licence conditions and a SOPO (Sexual Offences Prevention Order). Generally speaking, the licence is time bound and the SOPO is more likely to be for life. These restrictions are likely to pose extra restraints on resettlement and employment. They also form a useful basis for the New Member Agreement.

## USE OF THE NEW MEMBER AGREEMENT

When a sex-offender is connected to your church, you should inform the relevant church safeguarding officer for your denomination. They may want to be involved in writing the New Member Agreement.

The New Member Agreement is crucial for sex-offenders and other high-risk individuals because there will be a greater need for supervision and guidance, and it is an essential part of managing risk. The agreement should include specifics regarding the service that the individual can attend, limits on activities they can/ can't participate in, and limits around visiting homes of people in the congregation. These will be chosen in accordance with their SOPO/ licence conditions.

Some examples of additional statements that can be added to the New Member Agreement as applicable can be found in Appendix A. The church should also consider adding a statement on whatever specific support they can offer.

## WHAT ADDITIONAL SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE?

Alongside the support mentioned already, the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) run a 24-hour helpline (0303 003 11 11) and is always willing to give confidential advice. The CCPAS can advise churches about setting up a Child Protection Policy and working with sex-offenders. The organisation is recognised by the Department of Health and offers training and support to all denominations in the area of child protection.

Organisations such as Circles UK and the Lucy Faithfull Foundation help individuals and communities prevent sex offending against both adults and children, and are an excellent resource for information.

Communication is absolutely key when helping to support a sex-offender. Keep the authorities up-to-date on how the support is going or if the relationships are breaking down, and work in conjunction with probation to keep them informed of everything that is happening. This enables consistent support and ensures that nothing goes unnoticed.

## ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT INFORMATION

It has been suggested that part of what makes sex-offending so persistent is its underground nature and the stigma that is attached to it. This makes community and its support and accountability very difficult, which in turn makes reoffending more likely. So, although the model for supporting sex offenders is a tougher one, with tighter boundaries, it is precisely this model of care that makes community support both possible and effective.

Although there is a sex offenders register in the UK, not all sex-offenders will be registered. Those released pre-registration (1997) are not required to register.

Sex-offenders who receive a prison sentence of over four years are offered help from the Sex Offender Treatment Programme (SOTP). If they have not accepted that offer, ask for the reasons why the treatment was refused.

Licence and SOPO conditions will typically not allow sex-offenders to form friendships with other sex-offenders due to the risk of networking. The CFEO team can work with your church to ensure that you are able to manage this risk. The CCPAS website has further advice in this area at: [www.ccpas.co.uk](http://www.ccpas.co.uk)

## ESSENTIAL READING FOR THOSE WORKING WITH SEX-OFFENDERS

Patrick Parkinson, *Child Sexual Abuse and the Churches* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1997)

Gordon Read, Ed., *Sexual Offending: Re-integration and Public Safety* (Social responsibility committee, Exeter Diocesan Board for Christian Care, 1999)

Paul Rosier, *Sex Offenders, Pastoral Care and the Local Church: Caring for the Accused, the Abused and the Wider Community* (Grove Books, 2013)

Church of England report, Meeting the Challenge, 1999

[https://www.churchofengland.org/media/45451/meeting\\_the\\_challenge.doc](https://www.churchofengland.org/media/45451/meeting_the_challenge.doc)

CCPAS, Help...Sexual Offenders and Church Attendance, 2009

<http://files.ccpas.co.uk/documents/Help-SexualOffenderChurchAttendance.pdf>

## CHAPTER 10: WORKING WITH YOUNG ADULTS

According to government statistics, the reoffending rate for young people released from custody is 67.1%.<sup>1</sup>

Young people within the youth justice system are divided into two main groups: 'juveniles' aged 10–17 and 'young adults' aged 18–21. At CFEO we do not work with juveniles, but working with young adults has its own unique considerations, and we are going to look at a few of these here. If you do intend to support juvenile ex-offenders, we suggest you get in touch with organisations who specialise in this work. Reflex ([www.reflex.org](http://www.reflex.org)) is a good source of advice on working with juveniles.

Mentoring a young ex-offender can make all the difference between them leaving behind a difficult childhood or becoming trapped in an endless cycle of offending.

Working with young people who have offended has much in common with traditional youth work. The important thing is to focus on the positives – help them recognise the good things they have done and their achievements (perhaps in prison) and build on these things.

Mentoring young people who have offended can be one of the most rewarding things you will ever do, although it can be very challenging. But we believe in the God of the second chance, the twenty-second chance and the two-hundredth chance. It will often impact a young person most if you refuse to give up on them and never stop believing in them, especially when they don't believe in themselves.

Young people who have offended may have suffered rejection from communities such as school and family. They should not be rejected from church as well, even if they test the boundaries. We need to encourage them to make positive choices in their behaviour, rather than asking them to leave because they don't fit in. We need to give them the opportunity to look forward and dream dreams. We need to fill them with hope and belief – even when they doubt themselves.

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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Justice, Youth Justice Annual Statistics: 2014-2015 (2016). [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/495708/youth-justice-statistics-2014-to-2015.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/495708/youth-justice-statistics-2014-to-2015.pdf) [accessed 10 July 2017]

## SUPPORTING YOUNG ADULTS (18–21)

### Released from where?

Young adults are held in Young Offender Institutions (YOIs), which are different to juvenile establishments. Young adults will sometimes serve a custody sentence in an adult prison; however, they will not be allowed to share a cell with anyone over the age of twenty-one.

### What are their needs?

This is an age where most people have moved out of home or are looking to move out. This age group will need to develop independent living skills and they may look to you for support with practical things, such as finding housing, using time constructively, money-management and finding opportunities to develop employment skills. They will also need support with their relationships and self-esteem. It is possible that some young people leaving prison will be parents, and they may value your support with parenting.

It is very possible that the young person you are supporting has repressed pain which can manifest itself as depression, anger, self-harm, or drug and alcohol abuse. You may need to support a young adult by directing them to professionals to meet these needs. Encourage them to invest in positive peer relationships, supportive communities and support groups as well.

The good news is that at this age, young people are often willing to look at their choices and reconsider the path their life is on.

## Things to be aware of

Young adults will often find trust very difficult due to broken promises in their past. They will have low expectations of relationships and will sometimes feel unready for the intensity of a committed mentor. You'll need to be patient and take things at their pace.

You also need to be clear about the boundaries of your mentoring relationship. Young adults may look to you as a parental figure who can solve all their problems and meet all their emotional needs. Keep on empowering them to live independently. It can be hard to say no, but doing them lots of favours will only make them more dependent rather than independent.

## Approaches that work with young adults

Side-by-side conversations work best, rather than face-to-face. Avoid a counselling approach, as too much intrusive questioning may backfire. Instead, it usually works to find activities and common interests you both enjoy, like cooking, walking, playing sports or video games. Young adults find it easier to open up when under less pressure to do so. Try and be a friend to them, rather than a counsellor or a personal assistant. Simply come alongside them and help to explore their needs and their dreams, spend time talking and be part of their life.

## How best to support them

This age group considers change more seriously than teenagers would, but the well-worn patterns of behaviour, including crime and drugs, can be more deep-seated. They may be easily disheartened and defeatist, following years of perceived failure. You may hear phrases such as, 'I can't' or 'I tried that before'. Provide frequent and consistent words of encouragement and help them to recognise and celebrate their successes, achievements and breakthroughs – whether that's finding a job, holding down employment for a period of time, or completing a training course. Making sure they have a legitimate way to make money is a good first step, as is ensuring they hear praise and affirmation from a range of other adults.

## WHERE TO START

As with adult ex-offenders, young people need a team of volunteers (and often professionals) to give pastoral and practical support, as well as friendship.

Here are some things you can do to get off to a strong start:

- Treat the young person with respect, as you would another adult – stand up to introduce yourself and welcome them, shake hands. Treat them as an equal;
- Find out what positive relationships they already have in their life, especially among family, and encourage these as they will always be more significant in the young person's life than any mentoring relationship. It may be important to meet and gain the trust of these significant people to avoid any sense of competition that may undermine the development of the mentoring relationship;
- Encourage good role modelling, perhaps by getting someone in the congregation to come alongside the young person and encourage them in a hobby or skill – for example, playing the guitar, computer skills or car maintenance. Start by finding out their interests / hobbies and help them develop these – don't assume they don't have any;
- Show the young person that you have time for them. Be prepared to sit down for a chat over a cup of tea. Be enthusiastic about what they are achieving;
- Assume that the young person does want to do something positive with their life. It may take some time to unearth exactly what the young person would like to do, but it's worth pursuing;
- Encourage them to sign on at the Jobcentre, or to get good career / job advice from an agency such as the APEX Trust.

## HELPING THEM FEEL PART OF THE CHURCH

It is important to make church an accessible place for young people. Consider the type of service it might be best to invite them to, and be prepared to at least consider changes to make the services more welcoming.

- Some young people may have some odd ideas about Jesus, the Church and the Bible. Trying Alpha (or the Alpha Youth Series) with others from church is an excellent way to develop a better understanding;
- If a young person doesn't understand why the church does something, they will probably be quite open about saying so. Be prepared to discuss why things are done in a particular way;
- Be prepared to think about making changes. Often a new look at things can be refreshing for everyone;
- If it's appropriate, encourage the young person to get involved with worship (perhaps playing an instrument with the worship band), do a reading or take part in the prayers. Make sure not to give someone an inappropriate platform or embarrass them by asking them to do something they are not comfortable with.

## OTHER TIPS

- Although the term 'young offender' is sometimes used, it is better avoided since it's an unhelpful label. Reducing a young person to an 'ex-offender' in front of others can be hurtful. Imagine if somebody you trusted listed all your most embarrassing moments when introducing you to someone new;
- Try to encourage the young person to learn to do things and to provide for themselves. They will be used to having everything provided in prison, so will need to get used to achieving things for themselves, taking decisions and considering the consequences of their actions. This might mean you need to guide them as they look for employment or plan how they spend their time and money;



- Many young people will have missed out on a great deal of their education, so assistance with literacy will be important. It may be that the church could set up a volunteer-run literacy and numeracy scheme, which would benefit others as well as the young person;
- It is important to try and work with the young person's family. They may well have struggled for many years, and may need support from the church themselves. Alternatively, they may have difficulty understanding why their son / daughter has got involved with the church at all. Again, listening and spending time with people will be key;
- Assess what facilities you can provide for young people. Youth clubs, sports venues and suitable nightclub venues are all worth thinking about. It would be good to look at the lifestyle of young people in the area, and see how the church can tap into this in a positive way;
- As with adult offenders, remember that young people can also be sex-offenders, and if this is the case all the points made in the previous chapter should be taken into consideration;
- Model grace and patience. Congratulate them when they do something well, and work with them when they fail, helping them to learn from failure and always assuring them of your continued love and support.

*Our thanks to Reflex for their input into this chapter.*

## CHAPTER 11: UNDERSTANDING DRUG AND ALCOHOL MISUSE

We are not seeking to give expert advice in this section, but to raise awareness of potential issues tied to drug and alcohol misuse. We would recommend that you contact your local Drug Action Team for further information, advice and teaching. Details of your local team can be obtained from your local health authority or borough county social services department.

### ATTITUDES

Our attitudes will affect and colour the response we give to those who misuse drugs. You may wish to use the Attitudes Towards Alcohol and Drugs Questionnaire found in Appendix B to examine your own attitudes, and encourage others to do the same. This questionnaire can be reproduced. There are no right or wrong answers; it merely serves as a starter for discussion, and helps us consider our own responses.

### DEFINITIONS

The following definitions have been produced by the World Health Organisation:

Misuse: the 'use of a substance for a purpose not consistent with legal or medical guidelines'

Dependence syndrome: 'a cluster of behavioural, cognitive, and physiological phenomena that may develop after repeated substance [alcohol or drug] use, including:

- A strong desire to take the drug
- Impaired control over its use
- Persistent use despite harmful consequences
- A higher priority given to drug use than to other activities and obligations
- Increased tolerance
- A physical withdrawal reaction when drug use is discontinued'<sup>2</sup>

## WHY DO PEOPLE USE ALCOHOL OR DRUGS?

There are many reasons that lead people to take drugs. Some may be:

Personal factors:

- Brokenness
- Trauma or mental health issues
- Family and relationship breakdown
- Family patterns
- Spiritual attack and demonic influences – an aspect to consider when people are not responding to treatment

Environmental factors:

- The availability of drugs and alcohol
- The increasing acceptability of drugs and alcohol
- Peer group pressure
- Media pressure
- The effects of the drugs themselves

It's important to bear in mind that the individual is also a victim of their addiction.

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<sup>2</sup> World Health Organization, 'Lexicon of alcohol and drug terms' (2011). [http://www.who.int/substance\\_abuse/terminology/who\\_lexicon/en](http://www.who.int/substance_abuse/terminology/who_lexicon/en)

## SOME FACTS ABOUT DRUG MISUSE AND CRIME

# £581.1 MILLION

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EXPENDITURE ON DRUG MISUSE SERVICES FOR ADULTS IN ENGLAND IN 2013/14, WITH A FURTHER £74.9 MILLION BEING SPENT ON SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

National Health Service, 'UK Focal Point On Drugs, 2015 Edition' <http://www.nta.nhs.uk/uploads/2015-focal-point-annual-report.pdf>

# £10.7 BILLION

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ESTIMATED COST OF DRUG TRAFFICKING TO THE UK PER YEAR

<http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/crime-threats/drugs>



15% 14%

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15% OF MEN AND 14% OF WOMEN IN PRISON ARE SERVING SENTENCES FOR DRUG OFFENCES

Table 1.2b, Ministry of Justice (2016) Offender management statistics quarterly: April to June 2016, London: Ministry of Justice

# 30x

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THE NUMBER OF INCIDENTS WHERE NEW PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES (NPS) DRUGS WERE FOUND IN PRISONS IN ENGLAND AND WALES HAS JUMPED FROM 136 IN 2011 TO 4,261 IN 2015—A RISE OF MORE THAN 30 TIMES.

Smith, H. (2016) Press Association, 'Seizure of former legal highs in prisons has rocketed in last five years', London: PA

# 47%

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IN NEARLY HALF (47%) OF ALL VIOLENT CRIMES THE VICTIM BELIEVED THE OFFENDER OR OFFENDERS TO BE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL.

Table 3.10, Office for National Statistics (2015) Focus on Violent Crime and Sexual Offences: Year ending March 2015, London: Office for National Statistics

# 64%

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OF THE PRISON POPULATION HAVE USED CLASS A DRUGS, COMPARED TO 13% OF THE GENERAL POPULATION

Bromley Briefings Autumn 2016 Factfile <http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/Bromley%20Briefings/Autumn%202016%20Factfile.pdf>

# 70%

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OF PRISONERS SAID THEY HAD BEEN DRINKING WHEN THEY COMMITTED THE OFFENCE FOR WHICH THEY WERE IN PRISON. 38% OF PEOPLE SURVEYED IN PRISON BELIEVED THAT THEIR DRINKING WAS A BIG PROBLEM

Alcohol and Crime Commission (2014) The Alcohol and Crime Commission Report, London: Addaction

## **8621 HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS (ENGLAND)**

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IN 2015/16 THERE WERE 8,621 HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS WITH A PRIMARY DIAGNOSIS OF DRUG-RELATED MENTAL HEALTH AND BEHAVIOURAL DISORDERS. THIS IS 6% MORE THAN 2014/15 AND 11% HIGHER THAN 2005/06.

## **2479 REGISTERED DEATHS (ENGLAND AND WALES)**

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IN 2015 THERE WERE 2,479 REGISTERED DEATHS RELATED TO DRUG MISUSE. THIS IS AN INCREASE OF 10% ON 2014 AND 48% HIGHER THAN 2005. DEATHS RELATED TO DRUG MISUSE ARE AT THEIR HIGHEST LEVEL SINCE COMPARABLE RECORDS BEGAN IN 1993.

## **2.7 MILLION PEOPLE (ENGLAND AND WALES)**

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IN 2015/16, AROUND 1 IN 12 (8.4 %) ADULTS AGED 16 TO 59 HAD TAKEN AN ILLICIT DRUG IN THE LAST YEAR. THIS EQUATES TO AROUND 2.7 MILLION PEOPLE.

AROUND 1 IN 5 (18.0%) YOUNG ADULTS AGED 16 TO 24 HAD TAKEN AN ILLICIT DRUG IN THE LAST YEAR. THIS EQUATES TO AROUND 1.1 MILLION PEOPLE.

## **15% OF PUPILS (ENGLAND)**

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IN 2014, 15% OF PUPILS HAD EVER TAKEN DRUGS, 10% HAD TAKEN DRUGS IN THE LAST YEAR AND 6 PER CENT HAD TAKEN DRUGS IN THE LAST MONTH.

## SUPPORT FOR THOSE WHO MISUSE DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

There are many non-statutory agencies, both Christian and non-Christian, which help those in prison who have a drug and alcohol habit.

When someone is arrested, they can take advantage of the Drugs Arrest Referral System, where they will be referred to an adviser who will offer help and advice on how to end their dependency on drugs.

There are drug treatment and testing orders for small numbers of people who are given a community order rather than going to prison; they will remain in the community so long as they agree to, and continue in, a drug treatment programme.

In prison, CARATS (Counselling Advice Referral and Throughcare Services) serve prisoners with drug problems. CARATS are constantly overwhelmed by the number of people who need help. Most of the interventions in the criminal justice system are geared towards people with drug rather than alcohol problems, although the two are often linked in prisoners, especially young offenders.

The Church has a part to play in the rehabilitation of ex-offenders with drug or alcohol problems. It may not have the necessary expertise to deal with every situation, but it is possible to tap into the many organisations that can help with specific problems. (These can be found in Appendix C, 'Useful Contact Numbers and Addresses.')

At the same time, the church can provide the encouragement and support needed to help people engage with professional help.

## LOOKING AT THE DRUGS THEMSELVES

### Alcohol

Alcohol causes euphoria, loss of inhibitions and sedation.

Risks: The dangers are dependence, liver damage, brain damage, cardiac problems, convulsions and depression.

### Benzodiazepines - Class C

Benzodiazepines include diazepam (Valium), lorazepam (Ativan), nitrazepam (Mogadon). Known as sleepers, these are taken orally or injected to create a sense of relaxation or relieve anxiety.

Risks: They cause sedation as well as a high likelihood of dependence.

### Cannabis - Class B

Cannabis (also known as marijuana, hashish, weed and pot) can be smoked, eaten or drunk, and is used to create feelings of relaxation.

Risks: Cannabis causes various psychological symptoms, tolerance (and therefore withdrawal symptoms), and perceptual disturbances. Cannabis can also cause long-term psychotic illness, flashbacks and possible brain damage.

### Cocaine - Class A

Cocaine, which can be sniffed, smoked or injected, is a powerful stimulant which causes feelings of euphoria and invincibility. Crack cocaine is the chemically stable form of cocaine which can be smoked.

Risks: Cocaine causes nasal ulceration where it is sniffed, and can lead to paranoid psychosis.



## Ecstasy (MDMA) - Class A

Ecstasy is a stimulant, to be taken orally or snorted. It induces high levels of energy, over-confidence and a generally elevated mood.

Risks: The dangers are increased heart rate and blood pressure, dizziness, cardiac problems and convulsions. Ecstasy interferes with the body's temperature regulation so it's easy to overheat, but it also stops the body producing urine so too much water consumption can lead to brain damage.

## Hallucinogens - Class A

Some common hallucinogens include LSD and magic mushrooms, which are taken orally and cause changes in perception.

Risks: Hallucinogens can lead to flashbacks, acute and long-term paranoid reactions and emotional changes.

## 'Legal Highs' - Class A / B / C

So-called 'legal highs' are more accurately classed as New Psychoactive Substances, and all have been outlawed since the 2016 Psychoactive Substances Act. These are drugs which have not yet been classed as illegal drugs, or substances such as bath salts or plant food which have been used as drugs. They can be stimulants, sedatives or hallucinogens.

Risks: As with synthetic cannabinoids, the risks are not only the side effects of the drug themselves, but the fact that they are unregulated and might contain anything.

## Methamphetamines - Class A

Methamphetamines make users feel very alert and energised. The crystal form of methamphetamine (called Crystal Meth or Ice) is smoked, and is extremely powerful and addictive.

Risks: Methamphetamine use causes agitation, paranoia, confusion and aggression. It can result in severe psychosis and overdoses can cause stroke as well as lung, kidney and gastrointestinal damage.

## Opiates - Class A / B

Heroin (often termed smack, H, scag, brown), methadone, pethidine and codeine all induce a state of euphoria and are highly addictive.

Risks: Heroin use brings a danger of overdosing, complications such as collapsed veins and the spread of disease through injecting.

## Prescribed medication - Class A / B

While there is absolutely nothing wrong with using prescribed drugs for the purpose for which they were prescribed, improper use is dangerous.

Risks: Improper use of prescribed medication can be a gateway to addiction to illegal drugs.

## Synthetic cannabinoids - Class B

This class of drugs (including Spice, X, and Black Mamba) contain chemicals that mimic the main psychoactive chemical in cannabis, tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). Although some synthetic cannabinoids were originally classed as 'legal highs', all are now illegal.

Risks: Synthetic cannabinoids cause the same effects as cannabis but are more potent, so the side-effects are stronger, especially hallucinations. A further complication is that they are sold in 'smoking mixes' and it is difficult to gauge how strong a dose is.

## Volatile substances

Solvents – glues, lighter fuel, aerosols – are all inhaled. They cause euphoria, and can have hallucinogenic effects. These are the territory of the youngest misusers, children aged from six upwards.

Risks: The dangers include loss of inhibitions, perceptual abnormalities, liver and kidney damage, cardiac problems and respiratory depression.

## GETTING HELP AND ADVICE

### Helplines

- National Drugs Helpline: 0800 776600
- Narcotics Anonymous: 0300 999 1212 (10am – midnight)
- Drinkline: 0300 123 1110
- Alcoholics Anonymous: 0800 9177 650
- Release – Drugs, the Law and Human Rights: 020 7324 2989 (11am – 4pm)
- Re-Solv (for solvent misuse): 01785 817885
- FRANK: 0300 123 6600

### General practitioners

Try to build up a good relationship with your local GP so that if you need help in dealing with a situation, you can refer to them for advice. It is often good to do this before any problems arise.

### Local drug and alcohol teams

The police should be able to put you in touch with your local team.

### Local authority social services departments

Try to find out what help they have available before you need it, rather than waiting until the need arises.

### Christian agencies

Find information via your church, through personal recommendations, diocesan directories, or The Christian Handbook (available in all reference libraries).

## THINGS THE CHURCH SHOULD BE AWARE OF

### Recognising a relapse

Signs of someone who is relapsing include:

- Non-communication, or avoiding communication
- Weight loss
- Lapse in hygiene or efforts with appearance
- Mood swings
- Extra requests for money
- Not appearing at appointments
- Clearly being under the influence of drugs or alcohol

### Implications for mentoring sessions

The traffic light system is a good way to gauge how the individual is during a mentoring session or any interaction. It is based upon knowing the individual's own particular personality and demeanour. Once you feel confident that you know someone's 'normal' self with its usual ups and downs, the system is as follows:

*Green – typical behaviour from the individual*

Continue the session or interaction.

*Amber – unusual behaviour*

The focus of the interaction should now be on identifying and dealing with whatever is causing the unusual behaviour. It may not necessarily be related to drug or alcohol misuse, but could be because something has happened in another area of the individual's life. But if it is related to their addiction, work with them to identify how to help them get help.

*Red – behaviour that constitutes a risk of serious harm to the individual or anyone else*

You should stop the session and get help. This could be from the police or emergency services, but could equally be others such as the Samaritans,

counselling, a recovery course or the local GP. Once you have contacted the appropriate support service, seek support for yourself, whether that be from the CFEO team, someone in your church team, or pastoral support.

If someone turns up to a mentoring session under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the session should not take place. Instead, state that it would not be appropriate for the session to continue and let them know that they can contact you later that day by text or phone if they would like, once they are sober again. Tell them you will contact them the next day and assure them that this has not changed your support and you will continue to be there for them.

### Supporting the individual in a recovery programme

If the individual is on a prescription (script) of some sort, then they may be part of a recovery programme. In these cases, it's good to link in with that programme and find out how much the script is, how they take it and when, and what the detox plan is. If they would like support from a recovery programme, we would suggest speaking to one of the organisations listed in Appendix C.

## CHAPTER 12 – IN CONCLUSION

We hope that this handbook has given you useful advice and practical steps to work through as your church prepares to welcome and support ex-offenders. If you have any questions or would like to talk things through with us as you set up your ex-offender ministry, please do get in contact with the CFEO team.

Thank you for your heart for, and commitment to, people leaving prison. This can be difficult work, and over the years CFEO has learned a few important, and sometimes hard, lessons. We have learned that prayer must underpin everything, or all our best intentions founder. We have learned that sometimes it all goes wrong, even with care and wise processes in place, and that we need grace and forgiveness for both ourselves and the individuals we support. And we have learned that we have as much to gain from the people we support as they do from us.

The Bishop of Kensington and theologian Rt Rev Dr Graham Tomlin, has spoken about how prison is not just a place where prisoners find God, but that it's a place where all of us can find God.

The Bible tells us that God gives us specific places where he can be found. These include the bread and wine of communion ('this is my body', Matthew 26:26), in the fellowship of believers ('where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them', Matthew 18:20), in the preaching of the Word ('Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly', Colossians 3:16), and, perhaps most remarkably, among the poor and suffering, including those in prison.

In the parable in Matthew 25:39–40, Jesus is asked, 'When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' He replies: 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' Bishop Graham made the point that it's not so much that prisoners need us, but that we need prisoners, for in that place, Jesus has told us we can find him.

The Bible makes it clear that God does not forget about those in prison and that he feels there's something in prisons we need to invest in. We long to see prison become a loving place, a place on fire for God, rather than a dark place which hides people from society because they represent the most broken among us.

Our hope is that the Church would lead the way in loving people who are in prison and have been released, and in caring for them as they seek to lead transformed lives. We long to see church communities facilitate a loving and safe environment for each prison leaver to move forward in their life. And through this, we hope that ex-offenders will be raised up as leaders within their own communities, providing insight and leading ex-offender ministries across the nation. We believe that the local church is the best place to demonstrate God's message of love for the least, the last and the lost, a place where people from all walks of life pray and worship together, and live out the story of God's redemptive love towards the world.

Thank you for being part of this ministry, and God bless you.

## APPENDIX A NEW MEMBER AGREEMENT

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

An Agreement between [insert new member name] and [insert church name]

[Insert Date]

We, [insert church name], agree to the following:

1. To welcome [insert new member name] into the fellowship of our church, and to encourage him/her to grow in his/her faith.
2. To assist him/her in his/her desire not to reoffend.
3. To guard against [insert new member name] being wrongly accused of any offence.
4. To be truthful at all times.
5. To provide a mentor who will meet [weekly/fortnightly] with [insert new member name] to provide support and accountability.
6. Where appropriate, to provide a suitable small group which [insert new member name] can attend [weekly/fortnightly].
7. To provide practical support – including helping to seek accommodation, employment, counselling, benefit advice and other services as appropriate.
8. To work together with the statutory organisation responsible for [insert new member name] and to do all we can to co-operate with them and help them in their support of [insert new member name].

We acknowledge that our responsibility is to God, [insert new member name], and the congregation of the church and we will do our utmost to act in the best interests of all parties, with safety being the priority.



I, [insert new member name], agree to abide by the following boundaries set out in this agreement:

1. To meet with my mentor regularly.
2. To attend meetings/small groups as agreed with the church leadership [e.g. addiction recovery course, home church].
3. To engage with the supervision and guidance of my mentor, small group leaders and the following church leaders [insert name of leaders].
4. To abide by my licence conditions and to commit to discussing with my mentor any situations where there is a potential conflict with those licence conditions.
5. To be truthful at all times.
6. Not to enter certain areas of the building that are designated no-go areas by the church leadership.
7. Not to ask members of the congregation for money.
8. To understand that there may be certain people who will need to be informed of my circumstances.
9. To understand that if I do not keep these conditions there may be consequences and that the police or probation service may have to be informed.
10. To understand that the church will do its best to nurture my faith and help me in practical ways.

### Review of agreement

This agreement will be reviewed every [six months] and at other times as determined by the church leadership, or as requested by probation. [Insert new member name] may request a review at any time.

Reviews will take the form of a face-to-face meeting with [insert new member name] and at least two members of the following group and will be recorded. A copy will be given to [insert new member name] and a copy placed on the confidential file [and supplied to the diocesan safeguarding children adviser where required].

**Review group**

**[Insert names]**

Signed ..... (Church leader)

Date .....

Signed ..... (New member)

Date .....

In the presence of:

..... (CFEO team leader/mentor)

The CFEO mentor has the following responsibilities, which the CFEO Coordinator is responsible for clarifying at the beginning of any mentoring relationship and overseeing throughout:

- Meet the mentee in prison, prior to release to build trust and friendship
- Meet the mentee at the prison gate on release or in the first three days after release
- Meet for a mentoring meeting at least once a week thereafter, especially in the first six weeks after release. This is an important time for developing the relationship and the mentor should actively engage the mentee (this is different from inviting them to church)
- Continue to meet regularly with the mentee for 12–18 months for a suggested time of one hour
- Be contactable where possible; provide the church office phone number; consider providing an email address or buying a cheap phone to be available by text; be aware of boundaries
- Engage with the wider church team and remain accountable to the CFEO Coordinator and church leader
- Keep the CFEO Coordinator up-to-date with progress of the mentoring relationship; engage with CFEO where requested

- Carry out local research to gain knowledge about food banks, job centres, housing offices etc
- Undertake CFEO activity in line with the HTB data protection and safeguarding policies

## SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL CONTENT WHEN SUPPORTING A SEX OFFENDER

Below are some examples of additional statements, recommended by an Anglican diocese child protection officer, which you can add to your New Member Agreement in Appendix A as applicable:

**[Name of new member]** agrees to the following:

- To sit apart from children and young people at church services and meetings
- To stay away from areas of the church where children or young people meet
- To ensure that I am never alone with children or young people
- Not to accept any official role in the church which gives me authority over others
- Not to visit the homes of church members without invitation and giving prior notice to the church leader / church CFEO coordinator
- Not to volunteer for any role that would involve responsibility for children
- Not to initiate any unsupervised contact with children
- To inform the diocesan safeguarding children adviser of any jobs or volunteer work applied for at the church / other churches

### Review points:

- This agreement will be reviewed after three months, and thereafter every six months and at other times as determined by the diocesan safeguarding children adviser, or as requested by probation or police colleagues with the consent of the diocesan safeguarding children adviser.

Reviews will also take place at the following milestones:

- On completion of an approved sex-offender treatment programme and subject to the receipt of a satisfactory report, consideration will be given to **[name of new member]** to participate in **[name of activity]**
- When **[name of new member]**'s name is removed from the sex-offenders register

# APPENDIX B ATTITUDES TOWARDS ALCOHOL AND DRUGS QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire can be used to help the team understand your different attitudes towards alcohol and drugs. There are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers. Indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement by ticking the appropriate box.

Agree		Disagree			
1	2	3	4	5	
					Exporting heroin to maintain a country's economy is acceptable
					Smoking cigarettes is socially unacceptable
					Anyone caught experimenting with illegal drugs should be expelled from school or college
					Glue sniffing is only an adolescent phase of harmless experimentation
					You need alcohol to make a social occasion pleasurable
					Coffee and tea should be banned for children under fourteen
					Smokers should be made to pay for their own health care
					Getting drunk now and again is alright
					Alcoholics are a monetary and social drain on the community
					People should be discouraged from taking medication
					It is the duty of society to help heroin users give up drugs
					If you work with young people it is important to set them a good example through your non-use of substances
					Cannabis should be legalised
					Alcohol consumption should be modified if a person has a mental health problem
					The 'drugs' people take are only a matter of their cultural and social background
					Illegal drugs can help a person with a mental health problem get better
					There is no difference between taking prescribed medication and taking illegal drugs

## APPENDIX C USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS AND ADDRESSES

The following is a list of national organisations that would be able to support your work with ex-offenders. We have included contact numbers and web addresses, which were correct as far as we were able to ascertain at the time of print. The organisations are listed by topic, and generally in alphabetical order. It is not an exhaustive list, and you will be best placed to investigate specialised organisations in your local area.

### SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS

Alpha for Prisons – a practical introduction to the Christian faith, which can be run flexibly in the prison context.

Tel: 020 7052 0513 | Website: [www.alpha.org/prisons](http://www.alpha.org/prisons)

Bridging the Gap – information on services affecting ex-offenders.

Tel: 020 8090 1486 | Website: [www.btguk.org](http://www.btguk.org)

Missing People – service that helps track missing people.

Tel: 116 000 | Text Service: 116 000 | Website: [www.missingpeople.org.uk](http://www.missingpeople.org.uk)

Ministry of Justice – government department responsible for improvements to the justice system.

Website: [www.justice.gov.uk](http://www.justice.gov.uk)

NACRO Services – aims to prevent offending and assist in resettlement.

Tel: 0300 123 1999 | Website: [www.nacro.org.uk](http://www.nacro.org.uk)

Prison Fellowship – run prayer groups, Angel Tree (providing Christmas presents for prisoners' children) and Sycamore Tree (a victim awareness and restorative justice programme in prisons).

Tel: 020 7799 2500 | Website: [www.prisonfellowship.org.uk](http://www.prisonfellowship.org.uk)

Prisoner Location Service – to find an inmate who has been imprisoned for some time.

Website: [www.gov.uk/find-prisoner](http://www.gov.uk/find-prisoner) | Email: [prisoner.location.service@noms.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:prisoner.location.service@noms.gsi.gov.uk)

You will need to include the following information:

- Full name of person you want to contact
- Details of any known aliases
- His / her date of birth
- Sentencing details (if known)
- Your full address
- Your date of birth
- Reason for enquiry

If the person is in custody, your details will be passed to the prisoner who will be asked to give consent for the disclosure of his or her whereabouts. All replies and disclosures of information will be in accordance with departmental rules and data protection legislation.

Prison Reform Trust – an independent charity working to create a just, humane and effective penal system.

Tel: 020 7251 5070 | Website: [www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk](http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk)

Salvation Army – runs housing centres for men, women and families that offer activities and training to help improve self-esteem, mental health and employment prospects.

Tel: 020 7367 4500 | Website: [www.salvationarmy.org.uk](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk)

St Vincent de Paul Society – voluntary organisation dedicated to tackling poverty and disadvantage by providing direct practical assistance to anyone in need.

Tel: 020 7703 3030 | Website: [www.svp.org.uk](http://www.svp.org.uk)

UNLOCK – a charity started by ex-offenders to support people with convictions in moving on positively with their lives.

Tel: 01634 247 350 | Website: [www.unlock.org.uk](http://www.unlock.org.uk)

## ACCOMMODATION

Homeless Persons' Unit – every borough should have one of these; ask at the council offices for contact details.

Find your council contact details here: [www.gov.uk/find-local-council](http://www.gov.uk/find-local-council)

Centrepont – supports 16-25 year olds into homes and jobs.

Tel: 0808 800 0661 | Website: [www.centrepont.org.uk](http://www.centrepont.org.uk)

Depaul UK – helps people who are homeless, vulnerable and disadvantaged, with a focus on young people.

Tel: 0207 939 1220 | Website: [www.uk.depaulcharity.org](http://www.uk.depaulcharity.org)

Langley House Trust – provides resettlement accommodation for ex-offenders and those at risk of offending.

Tel: 03330 035 025 | Website: [www.langleyhoustrust.org](http://www.langleyhoustrust.org)

Shelter Housing Advice – a section of the homelessness charity's website dedicated to people in prison and ex-offenders.

Website: [england.shelter.org.uk/get\\_advice/Prisoners\\_and\\_ex-offenders](http://england.shelter.org.uk/get_advice/Prisoners_and_ex-offenders)

St Mungo's – provides emergency shelter, support towards recovery, and help to prevent rough sleeping.

Tel: 0203 856 6000 | Website: [www.mungos.org](http://www.mungos.org)

## BENEFIT ADVICE AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Christians Against Poverty – national debt relief charity.

Tel: 01274 760 720 | Website: [www.capuk.org](http://www.capuk.org)

Citizens Advice Bureau – aims to help people resolve legal, money and other problems by providing free, independent and confidential advice.

Tel: 03444 111 444 | Website: [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

Department of Work and Pensions – can give advice on various benefits and financial support.

Website: [www.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.dwp.gov.uk)

The Money Course – The Money Course is designed to help people explore their personal relationship with money and to take control of their finances.

Website: [www.themoneycourse.org](http://www.themoneycourse.org)



## EMPLOYMENT

Universal Jobmatch – national searchable database of jobs.

Website: [www.gov.uk/jobsearch](http://www.gov.uk/jobsearch)

APEX Trust – seeks to help people with criminal records to obtain appropriate jobs or self-employment.

Tel: 01744 612 898 | Website: [www.apextrust.com](http://www.apextrust.com)

Clean Sheet – helps to provide a pathway to employment for people with convictions.

Tel: 0300 123 3045 | Website: [www.cleansheet.org.uk](http://www.cleansheet.org.uk)

Spear – helps 16-24-year-olds into work or training in partnership with employers.

Tel: 0203 327 2070 | Website: [www.resurgo.org.uk/spear](http://www.resurgo.org.uk/spear)

## POLICE

Christian Police Association – supports Christians in the police service and promotes Christian values in the field of law enforcement.

Tel: 01933 409485 | Website: [www.cpauk.net](http://www.cpauk.net)

Local Police Stations (community liaison officer) – see telephone directory for contact number or see the website: [www.police.uk](http://www.police.uk)

## SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

Action for Prisoners' Families – works for the benefit of prisoners' and offenders' families by representing the views of families and those who work with them.

Tel: 0808 808 2003 | Website: [www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk](http://www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk)

PACT (Prison Advice and Care Trust) – supports prisoners' families.

Tel: 0808 808 3444 | Website: [www.prisonadvice.org.uk](http://www.prisonadvice.org.uk)

ROC (Redeeming Our Communities) Community Mentoring – trains and resources churches and mentors using the COACH programme to offer family mentoring to families in need.

Tel: 0161 393 4511 | Website: [www.roc.uk.com/roc-mentors](http://www.roc.uk.com/roc-mentors)

## CHILD PROTECTION

Churches Child Protection Advisory Service – the only independent Christian safeguarding charity.

Tel: 0303 003 11 11 | Website: [www.ccpas.co.uk](http://www.ccpas.co.uk)

Stop It Now! – advice for those sexually attracted to children.

Tel: 0808 1000 900 | Website: [www.stopitnow.org.uk](http://www.stopitnow.org.uk)

## YOUNG PEOPLE

Children's Society – a Christian charity committed to helping vulnerable and disadvantaged young people, including safeguarding children in care and young runaways.

Tel: 020 7841 4400 | Website: [www.childrensociety.org.uk](http://www.childrensociety.org.uk)

Message Trust – conducts youth work and other youth-orientated activities in schools, communities and prisons to help reduce crime and transform disadvantaged communities.

Tel: 0161 946 2300 | Website: [www.message.org.uk](http://www.message.org.uk)

Reflex – delivers informal education, outreach and mentoring to marginalised young people.

Tel: 0121 502 9620 | Website: [www.reflex.org](http://www.reflex.org)

Teen Challenge – operates nationally to help young people who have developed life-controlling problems, especially drug and alcohol addictions.

Tel: 01664 822 221 | Website: [www.teenchallenge.org.uk](http://www.teenchallenge.org.uk)

## DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

Addaction – provides services to help tackle drug and alcohol addiction, and offers support for those affected by a loved one's addiction.

Tel: 020 7251 5860 | Website: [www.addaction.org.uk](http://www.addaction.org.uk)

Alcoholics Anonymous – a fellowship of men and women who support and help one another to achieve sobriety.

Tel: 01904 644026 | Website: [www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk](http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk)

Cranstoun – provides treatment, rehabilitation and support with the aim of reducing the effects of drug and alcohol use.

Tel: 020 8335 1830 | Website: [www.cranstoun.org](http://www.cranstoun.org)

Forward Trust – works to help people with drug and alcohol dependence, both in prison and in the community, achieve and maintain drug-free and crime-free lives.

Tel: 020 3752 5560 | Website: [www.forwardtrust.org.uk](http://www.forwardtrust.org.uk)

Narcotics Anonymous – consists of groups of people for whom drugs are a major problem, who meet together to encourage abstinence and recovery.

Tel: 0300 999 1212 | Website: [www.ukna.org](http://www.ukna.org)

Nehemiah Project – works with men to deal with addiction. It also runs a project of supported housing.

Tel: 020 8773 7417 | Website: [www.tnp.org.uk](http://www.tnp.org.uk)

Phoenix Futures – provides interventions to enable people to address patterns of drug and alcohol misuse through services and personal development programmes.

Tel: 020 7234 9740 | Website: [www.phoenix-futures.org.uk](http://www.phoenix-futures.org.uk)

Release – provides advice on drug-related issues, including legal problems.

Tel: 020 7324 2989 | Website: [www.release.org.uk](http://www.release.org.uk)

Re-Solv – national charity solely dedicated to the prevention of solvent and volatile substance abuse.

Tel: 01785 817 885 | Website: [www.re-solv.org](http://www.re-solv.org)

Talk To Frank – national drugs education service.

Tel: 0300 123 6600 | Website: [www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

## MENTAL HEALTH ADVICE

Mental Health Foundation – mental health research, policy and service-improvement charity.

Website: [www.mentalhealth.org.uk](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk)

MIND – gives help and advice for people with mental health problems, and their family and friends.

Tel: 0300 123 3393 | Website: [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

Mind & Soul Foundation – a Christian charity that seeks to engage the church in mental health, sharing the best of theology and scientific advances, and helping people recover from mental distress.

Website: [www.mindandsoulfoundation.org](http://www.mindandsoulfoundation.org)

Rethink – works to help everyone affected by severe mental illness recover a better quality of life.

Tel: 0300 5000 927 | Website: [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org)

Samaritans – offers a listening ear to anyone about any problem.

Tel: 116 123 | Website: [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

SANE – raises awareness of mental health, conducts research and offers a helpline service to give advice.

Tel: 020 3805 1790 | Website: [www.sane.org.uk](http://www.sane.org.uk)

## APPENDIX D

# GUIDANCE ON APPLYING FOR HOUSING BENEFIT

Before claiming housing benefit, the individual needs to have found a place to live. This may be somewhere like the YMCA, a bed and breakfast hotel, a hostel run by Christians or some other sort of rehab hostel, or a room with a private landlord. For more information, see the section headed 'Accommodation' on page 29.

The housing benefit claim may take several weeks to be processed so it is good to be prepared for this. It may be helpful if the church puts funds aside to cover the rent for a week or two before the housing benefit is paid out. Once the benefit is paid the individual can refund the money, because the benefit is back paid from the date of application.

Making a housing benefit claim:

- Ideally, the individual needs to complete a housing benefit claim form and send it to the housing benefits office the week before the tenancy agreement starts. If you help with this, there is a section on the form that you will need to fill in to explain why you have completed the form on someone else's behalf;
- The form always includes a set of guidance notes to help you complete the form. If you are still unsure after you have consulted these notes, call the advice line indicated on the form;
- The required backing documents include proof of tenancy, a tenancy agreement, a letter from the landlord, and rent book or receipts for rent paid. These must include the name and business address of the landlord, the date the agreement started, the rent payable, what the rent includes and the period that the rent covers;
- The benefit can be paid directly to the landlord or the claimant;
- If the claimant is not eligible for a bank account it may be possible to open an account at the Post Office. To do this the individual will need to go into the local Post Office and mention that they are not eligible for a bank account but will be receiving benefits. The Post Office will contact the Benefits Agency and the money will be loaded onto a cash card which the claimant can access;

- The housing officer does not necessarily need to be involved with the landlord. Some landlords do not want to get involved with housing benefit or may be unwilling to accept someone who is on housing benefit;
- When the claimant gets a job, they will be expected to pay a portion of the rent, so a separate claim will need to be made at this stage. However, working fewer than sixteen hours a week will not affect the individual's benefit status.

## APPENDIX E GLOSSARY

### A-CAT

Category A prisoners are defined as those whose escape would be highly dangerous to the public or national security. They are held in high-security prisons.

### APPROVED PREMISES

Residential units that house offenders in the community. These are often referred to as probation hostels or bail hostels.

### B-CAT

Category B prisoners are defined as those who do not require maximum security, but for whom escape needs to be made very difficult. All prisoners on remand are automatically set as Category B.

### BAIL

The temporary release of an accused person awaiting trial, sometimes on condition that a sum of money is lodged to guarantee their appearance in court.

### C-CAT

Category C prisoners are held to be those who cannot be trusted in open conditions but who are unlikely to try to escape. It is the intention of the Prison Service that as someone's sentence progresses, they are downgraded along the categories.

### COMMUNITY REHABILITATION COMPANIES (CRCs)

Private Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) are responsible for the management of low to medium risk offenders in twenty-one areas across

England and Wales. This privatisation was part of the 2015 Transforming Rehabilitation programme. The National Probation Service manages high risk offenders.

## D-CAT

Category D prisoners are those who can be reasonably trusted not to try to escape, and are given the privilege of an open prison. Many prisoners serving long sentences are recategorized as D-Cat towards the end of their sentence to help them begin to reintegrate into society.

## FREE-FLOW

This is an allocated time in prison when prisoners are permitted to move from their cells to their approved activities or locations.

## EMPLOYMENT AND SUPPORT ALLOWANCE (ESA)

A benefit a disabled or ill individual can claim if unable to work or to make it possible for them to work.

## IMPRISONMENT FOR PUBLIC PROTECTION (IPP)

This was a form of indeterminate sentence intended to protect the public against criminals whose crimes were not serious enough to merit a life sentence but who were regarded as too dangerous to be released when the term of their original sentence had expired. It comprised a "tariff" intended to be proportionate to the gravity of the crime committed and an indeterminate period which lasts until the Parole Board judges the prisoner no longer poses a risk to the public and is fit to be released. Although it was abolished in 2012, thousands of IPP sentence prisoners remain in the prison system as of 2018.

## JIGSAW

The name given to police teams who manage sex offenders and dangerous offenders. Some boroughs have probation officers attached to the Jigsaw team.



## JOBSEEKER'S ALLOWANCE (JSA)

An unemployment benefit an individual can claim while actively looking for work.

## LICENCE

Most individuals in prison on fixed sentences will be released half-way through their sentence and will spend the remaining months or years of their sentence 'on licence'. Being released on licence means that for the rest of their sentence the released prisoner must abide by specific conditions.

## MULTI AGENCY PUBLIC PROTECTION ARRANGEMENTS (MAPPA)

This is the mechanism by which the Police, Probation Service and Prison Service meet to jointly identify, assess and manage offenders with a history of physical or sexual violence and who are considered to pose a current risk of serious harm to the public.

## NATIONAL PROBATION SERVICE (NPS)

The National Probation Service is a statutory criminal justice service that supervises high-risk offenders released into the community. This single service replaced the 35 Probation Trusts of England and Wales in 2015 as part of the Transforming Rehabilitation programme. Management of low-risk and medium-risk offenders was outsourced to Community Rehabilitation Companies.

## OFFENDING ASSESSMENT SYSTEM (OASys)

The system used by the Probation Service to assess an individual's risk of reoffending and risk of harm.

## OPEN PRISON

A prison in which the prisoners are trusted to serve their sentences with minimal supervision, perimeter security and are not locked up in prison cells. Prisoners may be permitted to take up employment while serving their

sentence. Open prisons are often part of a rehabilitation plan for prisoners moved from closed prisons and are intended to prepare inmates for release. They may be designated “training prisons” and are only for prisoners considered a low risk to the public.

## PAROLE

The release of a prisoner on licence by the Parole Board while his or her sentence is still ongoing.

## PAROLE BOARD

A panel of people who decide whether an offender should be released from prison on parole after serving at least a minimum portion of their sentence as prescribed by the sentencing judge.

## PRE-SENTENCE REPORT (PSR)

If an individual has pleaded guilty and is awaiting sentence, the judge may order a Pre-Sentence Report to give the sentencing court some idea of why they have committed the offence, an idea of their background and the most suitable punishment for the offence committed. It is an opportunity for the individual to defend themselves or their actions, or offer mitigating circumstances.

## RECALL

If an individual released on licence to the community does not abide by their licence conditions, their licence will be revoked, meaning that their licence to live in the community has been taken from them, and they must be returned to prison.

## REMAND

After an individual has been arrested and charged with a crime, being put on remand means they will be held in prison until their court date. This is used when the individual is charged with a serious crime, the police think they may commit another crime before the court hearing, or if they have been

granted bail in the past and have not abided by the conditions.

## SEXUAL OFFENCES PREVENTION ORDER (SOPO)

A SOPO contains prohibitions on particular behaviours, which might include having unsupervised contact with anyone under the age of 18 or being present in certain places such as schools or play parks. All prohibitions need to be justified in relation to the risk posed by the individual and must be capable of being policed effectively. A breach of any of the prohibitions is a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. The prohibitions contained in SOPOs are not standard and are drafted by local police or prosecutors dealing with an individual case.

## UNIVERSAL CREDIT

Universal Credit began to be implemented in 2013 and is a single monthly payment for people in or out of work. It replaces some other benefits and tax credits (Housing benefit, Child Tax Credit, Income support, Working Tax Credit, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance and Income-related Employment and Support Allowance).

## YOUNG OFFENDER INSTITUTION (YOI)

A type of prison intended to hold 18–21 year olds. These can be separate prisons or part of adult prisons.

## CONTACT US



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