

Local Crime and Offender Related Research

This research was scoped to provide statistics relating to criminal offenders in Cornwall (and Devon where relevant). Other areas of particular interest were re-offending behaviour (again locally) and offenders with an ex-services background. During the research other relevant information was also found which has been included - namely, useful context relating to the state of the prison system, and drug related crime cost statistics.

All sources used are included at the back of the document for further reading.

The Prison Crisis

At the time of writing the state of the prison system was an increasingly topical and reported issue. It felt appropriate to provide some of this information as relevant back-drop to the research about offenders.

In 2016-17 there has been consistent high profile stories reported in the media relating to the state of prisons - from large scale riots, escaped prisoners, deteriorating conditions to fear amongst staff and ongoing funding cuts.

In July, the Chief Inspector of Prisons 2016-17 Annual Report was published. The report highlighted significant increases in violence, drug use, overcrowding and staff shortages. Of increasing concern, is that these worsening challenges around safety and staffing often leads to more restricted regimes for prisoners. With less opportunity and access to the support proven to aid rehabilitation e.g. education and work placements, it is clear that for some prisoners the system is currently counterproductive.

A number of key statistics from the report are provided below¹:

- Of the 29 local prisons and training prisons inspected during 2016-17, 21 of them were judged to be 'poor' or 'not sufficiently good' in the area of safety.
- There have been startling increases in all types of violence, the biggest being assaults on staff which, in 2016, rose by 38% to 6,844 incidents. Of these, 789 were serious - an increase of 26%.
- There were 324 deaths in male prisons in England and Wales in 2016-17, an increase of 44 from the previous year. A third of these were deemed to be self-inflicted, a 10% rise on the previous year. Levels of self-harm had also risen, from 32,313 reported incidents in 2015 to 40,161 in 2016 – an increase of 24%.
- Time spent unlocked was particularly poor for young adults in prison – in a survey of prisoners, 30% said they spent less than two hours a day out of their cell. Only 7% were out of their cell for more than the recommended 10 hours a day.
- This year, around half of all prisons inspected, failed to use all of their learning, skills and work activity places, needlessly leaving prisoners without work, education or training.
- Too few prisoners had up-to-date assessments or sentence plans to help them plan constructively and progress towards a successful release. Prisoners did not receive enough support and guidance from offender supervisors to help them with rehabilitation and resettlement.
- Women's prisons still continued to perform better than most prisons for men, but women were held further from home and women's prisons were more crowded than previously.
- In Youth Offender Institutions it was found that there had been increasing violence, and measures to address this had reduced time out of cell, so many boys served most of their sentence locked up.

Local Offender Statistics

Recent statistics from Devon & Cornwall Police suggest a 9.7% increase in the number of crimes reported between 2015-16 and 2016-17 across Cornwall & Isles of Scilly², a similar rise to that seen nationally³. The figures show the largest annual rise in crimes recorded by the police in a decade. Importantly however, ongoing improvements to recording practices and expanded offence coverage are understood to largely be driving this increase. On a national level there are also believed to be some genuine increases in a number of specific crime types³.

The table below provides a breakdown of the reported crimes in Cornwall & Isles of Scilly for April 2016 to March 2017.

Crime Group	Recorded crime this year (2016-17)	Recorded crime last year (2015-16)	Recorded crime % difference
Homicide	4	4	0.0%
Violence with injury	3,443	3,375	2.0%
Violence without injury	3,989	3,325	20.0%
Rape	402	308	30.5%
Other sexual offences	556	488	13.9%
Robbery	93	85	9.4%
Burglary Dwelling	695	626	11.0%
Burglary Non-Dwelling	1,117	908	23.0%
Vehicle Offences	1,094	1,179	-7.2%
Shoplifting	1,958	1,694	15.6%
Other Theft	3,432	3,091	11.0%
Criminal Damage	4,223	4,040	4.5%
Public Order Offences	1,265	952	32.9%
Possession of weapons	165	162	1.9%
Trafficking of Drugs	133	218	-39.0%
Possession of Drugs	654	774	-15.5%
Other Offences	367	267	37.5%
Total	23,590	21,496	9.7%

The Reoffending Cycle

Much has been documented to show that prison, in the way it is currently delivered, is neither cost effective nor does it deliver sustainable benefits in terms of reduced harm to the community. Understanding and addressing the underlying social, health and economic issues that many offenders face is key to reducing re-offending behaviour.

The following information is based on latest available official data and has been provided by the Safer Cornwall Community Safety Intelligence Team⁴. It provides an updated evidence base from that published in the 2016-19 Safer Cornwall Reoffending Strategy⁵.

- In Cornwall between July 2014 and June 2015, a total of 3,271 offenders were cautioned, convicted or released from custody. 670 (20%) of these offenders reoffended, committing one or more proven re-offences within the following year: 1,963 reoffences or approximately 9% of all recorded crime in the monitoring period.
- 11% of the reoffender cohort were young offenders (under the age of 18 years) and their reoffences accounted for 9% of the total reoffences.
- Reoffending rates for both adults and young people are lower than national averages.



- The latest figures from the Ministry of Justice show that nationally 24% of adult offenders reoffend within 12 months of caution, conviction or release from custody and this rate has remained fairly flat, fluctuating between 24% and 25% since 2004.
- The highest rates of reoffending are amongst offenders convicted of theft offences.
- Young people are more likely to reoffend than adults - the current rate is 25% and this has seen a drop of 4% compared with the previous year, further to a fairly steady rate of around 30% for more than 5 years.
- Young offenders in Cornwall are significantly less likely to reoffend than the national average (38%). National juvenile reoffending rates have increased over the last ten years. Offenders convicted of robbery and public order offences are most likely to reoffend.
- Youth offending cohorts have shrunk considerably year on year and, at 284 young people, our local cohort is now around a quarter of the size it was ten years ago. This is due to a substantial decrease in the number of offenders with no previous offences and for those receiving out of court disposals (Youth Restorative Disposal, Youth Caution or Youth Conditional Caution).

In an attempt to reduce re-offending, the 2010-15 coalition government introduced resettlement prisons, moving prisoners near to where they live prior to release, strengthening family links and rehabilitation support. There are no prisons in Cornwall so the nearest resettlement prisons are Exeter, Channings Wood and Eastwood Park (for female offenders)*.

It is commonly found that those serving short sentences (less than 12 months) have the highest reoffending rates. Alarming in Cornwall, on average across the 3 resettlement prisons 63% of adult offenders released from short prison sentences in the year to June 2014 went on to reoffend within the next 12 months⁵.

The 2016-19 Safer Cornwall Reoffending Strategy⁵ provides evidence on a number of the underlying issues which can all affect the reintegration and rehabilitation of offenders. A selection of statistics associated with these issues is provided overleaf, and a fuller diagram of the needs profiles of adult and young offenders is provided in Appendix A. Statistics are based on a thorough evidence base collated by the Community safety Intelligence Team.

Accessing and maintaining stable accommodation

- National Offender Management Service (NOMS) guidance on evidence-based interventions highlights that support to secure, manage and maintain employment and suitable accommodation is effective in reducing reoffending across all segments of the offender population.
- In Cornwall, accommodation is a risk factor linked to reoffending and/or serious harm for 35% of the offender cohort and is one of the most commonly identified problems for offenders.
- 3 out of 4 offenders requiring housing support have support needs in at least 5 other areas, creating additional barriers and challenges. The most common are needs relating to alcohol, financial management and drugs.

Reducing drug and alcohol use

- Alcohol is the most prevalent risk factor amongst adult offenders - 56% of adult offenders have an alcohol problem that is linked to risk of serious harm and/or reoffending.
- 32% of offenders have a drugs problem that is linked to risk of serious harm and/or reoffending, with the majority using non-opiate drugs, mostly cannabis.

* Note: The nearest prison to Cornwall is HMP Dartmoor, a Category C training prison with capacity for 640 prisoners but this is not classified as a resettlement prison*.

- Offenders with criminogenic needs related to alcohol show higher levels of multiple need and reoffending risk than those that do not have alcohol-related needs, but they are less complex and chaotic than those with drug related needs.

Improving physical health & support to offenders with disabilities

- 35% of adult offenders are recorded as having a disability. Previous data indicated that dyslexia, mental health conditions and mobility issues are the most commonly disclosed.

Improving mental health & wellbeing

- 14% of adults had been assessed as having some or significant psychiatric problems, although national research indicates that prevalence may be much higher. 30% of adult offenders have a recorded history of self-harm and / or suicide attempts. This is higher amongst young offenders.
- There is little difference noted in prevalence rates of mental health problems or personality disorders amongst short or longer term prisoners, but higher prevalence is noted in women prisoners than men.

Improving skills, education, training & employment

- National Offender Management Service (NOMS) guidance on evidence-based interventions highlights that support in literacy, numeracy and life skills is effective in reducing reoffending in women offenders and male offenders at higher risk of reoffending.
- 2 out of 3 adult offenders are unemployed. Accommodation problems, drugs and alcohol, lack of qualifications/skills and health problems, as well as criminal record, are cited as reasons for unemployment.

Improving management of finances, debt and benefit support

- Just over a third of adult offenders have problems with their finances that are linked to their offending behaviour.
- The majority of short sentence prisoners were on benefits prior to going to prison; many were concerned about their financial situation on release and struggle with financial management.

Improving outcomes for women offenders

- 13% of the offender population is female. Female offenders are more likely to be involved in abusive relationships (69%), to be opiate users (20%) and to have parental responsibility (43%).

Improving attitudes, thinking & behaviour

- Thinking and Behaviour underlies most other risk factors for adult offenders and is the most common risk factor associated with a young person's reoffending.
- Research into short-sentence prisoners indicate that they want help to address offending behaviour but reoffenders demonstrate institutionalisation and fatalism about their ability to change.

Reducing reoffending impact on families & improving relationships

- 51% of adult offenders are in abusive relationships – 84% are perpetrators, but 30% identify as victims of abuse. 54% of female offenders are victims of abuse.
- 34% of male offenders and 43% of female offenders have parental responsibility.
- The combination of risk factors that make up the “toxic trio” (drugs/alcohol, mental health problems and domestic abuse) is evident for 17% of the adult cohort and around a quarter of young offenders identified as at medium to high risk of reoffending.

Increasing the contribution of Restorative Justice

- Restorative justice enables victims to meet or communicate with their offender to explain the real impact of the crime. Research shows a significant impact on reducing reoffending, at least 14%, through 'in depth' RJ

creating significant changes in offenders' attitudes and beliefs - contributing to their employability and desistance from crime.

The breadth and range of these issues, as well as the complexity and connected nature, highlights the significant challenges faced by those supporting offenders.

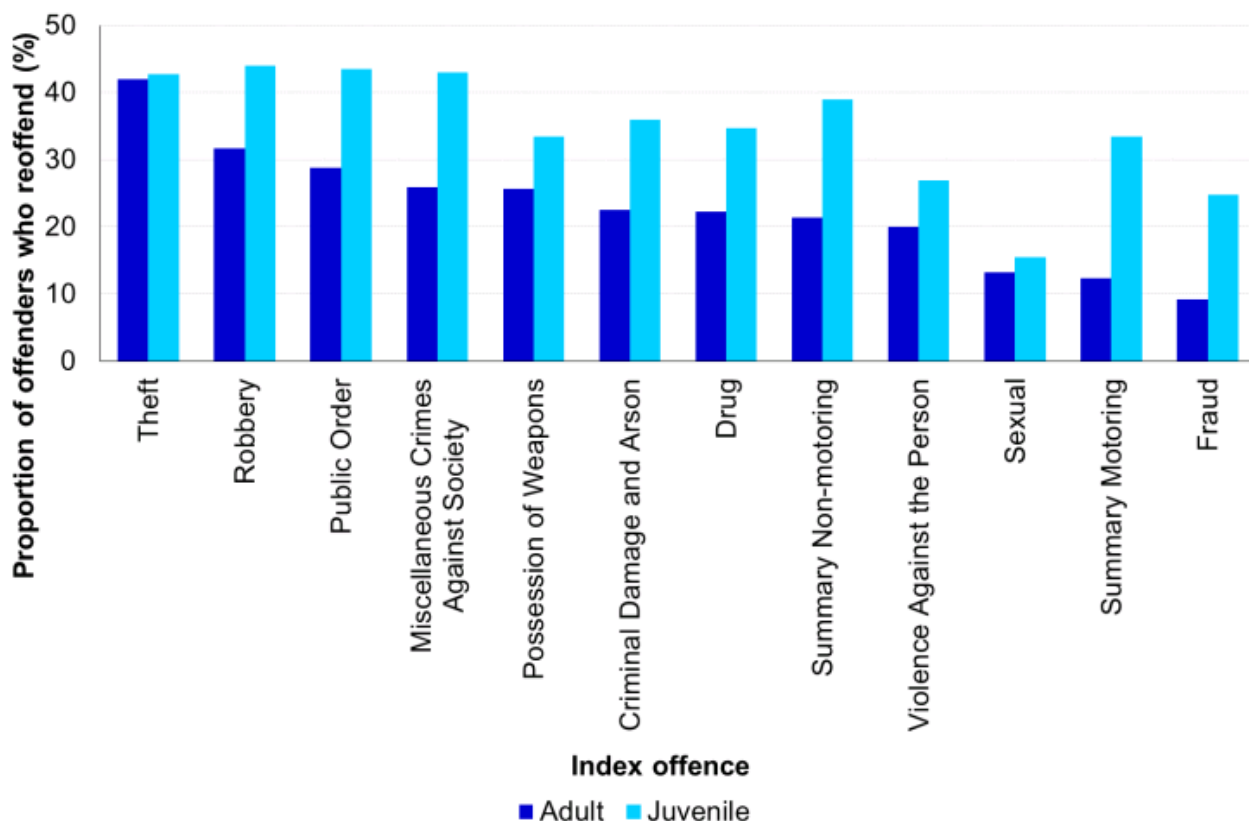
Evidence collated by the Cornwall Intelligence Group in June 2017 found there to be a rise in the number of individuals and families presenting to services with complex and overlapping problems with alcohol, drugs, homelessness, mental health conditions and/or an offending history. These individuals and families place high demands on services all of which are experiencing budget pressures⁶.

The evidence also acknowledged that changes in crime trends over the last few years had shifted the focus to tackling more complex crime and hidden harms (including sexual and drug-related exploitation, serious and organised crime, cybercrime), all of which impact on the most vulnerable in the community⁶.

Reoffending – by Crime Type

Although not local data, analysis has been carried out on the rates of re-offending by crime type. The chart below, taken from Office for National Statistics reporting⁷ highlights the proportion of offenders who commit a proven reoffence by offence type.

Proportion of offenders in England and Wales who commit a proven reoffence, by crime type and age (July 2014 to June 2015)⁷



The chart shows rates of reoffending to be greater than 40% for a number of offences, particularly amongst juvenile offenders.



Interestingly, amongst adults between 2004 and 2015 the offence category which saw the largest decrease in reoffending rates was 'Fraud' (-9.6 percentage points). In the juvenile cohort the largest decrease was against 'Summary Motoring' offences (-7.7pp)⁷.

The largest increase in reoffending rates amongst adults was for 'Public Order' offences (+5.8pp), whereas amongst juvenile offenders it was for those with a 'Theft' offence (+11.1pp)⁷.

Ex-service offenders

One area of interest for this research was offenders with an ex-service background. Much has been written on the prevalence of ex-service personnel in prisons and it has periodically received considerable media coverage. From a brief review of the literature it is clear that the underlying data used in the reporting has varied in its reliability, often relying on extrapolations, adding an element of uncertainty to the numbers.

The number of ex-service personnel in the UK is not recorded centrally, but estimates have suggested that there are approximately 3.8 million ex-service personnel in England, equating to 9.1% of the population⁸. The Ministry of Defence's Defence Analytical Services and Advice (DASA) estimated that, in the 12 months prior to September 2010, 18,240 service personnel left the regular forces⁹.

In 2010 the British Legion undertook a literature review of UK veterans and the criminal justice system¹⁰. The review highlighted a lack of truly reliable research on the subject of veterans and the criminal justice system. It also critiqued a number of attempts to identify the number of veterans in UK prisons with significantly varying estimates. It concluded that the most reliable evidence at the time (carried out by DASA) suggested there were 2,820 veterans in England and Wales prisons, 3.5% of the total prison population¹¹.

Using these figures, the review further concluded that veterans were 30% less likely than non-veterans to be in prison in England and Wales; a similar finding to comparative studies carried out in the United States.

In January 2014 the UK government announced a review into the rehabilitation needs of ex-Armed Services personnel convicted of criminal offences and given a custodial or community sentence. The review also concluded the estimate of 3.5% to be the most reliable figure for the number of ex-service personnel in prison^{Error! Bookmark not defined.}.

The review drew upon an additional 2010 DASA study which estimated that almost all (99.6%) ex-service personnel in prison were male, and over half (51%) were over 45 years old. It highlighted that ex-service personnel in prison were more likely to be serving their first custodial sentence and serving longer sentences than the general prison population. This is thought to be due to differences in offence type (more likely to be in prison for violence or sexual offences). The most common offence type that ex-service personnel in prison have committed is violence against the person (33%), followed by sexual offences (25%)¹².

The government's assessment of the specific needs of ex-service personnel in the justice system collates considerable evidence around issues described earlier in this report: mental and physical health, substance misuse, accommodation, finance, education and employment. The review also draws upon international case study evidence to explore what works in rehabilitating ex-service personnel. This review along with the Royal British Legion's own submission to government¹³ would both be worth closer study if planning rehabilitation activities specifically targeted at ex-service personnel.

Both documents are available here:

- UK government: The needs of ex-service personnel in the criminal justice system - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-needs-of-ex-service-personnel-in-the-criminal-justice-system>
- Royal British Legion: Response to government review - <http://media.britishlegion.org.uk/Media/2263/legion-submission-rory-stewart-review-of-veterans-in-the-criminal-justice-system.pdf>

Other Relevant information

Although now a little dated, statistics from the National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse provide some compelling insight into the cost/benefit relationship between treatment and crime¹⁴:

- A typical addict spends around £1,400 per month on drugs, 2.5 times the average mortgage hence the common associated with committing crime to pay for drugs.
- Heroin, cocaine or crack users commit up to half of all acquisitive crimes – shoplifting, burglary, robbery, car crime, fraud, drug dealing.
- Between them, every ten addicts not in treatment in 2010-11 committed: 13 robberies and bag snatches, 23 burglaries, 21 car-related thefts and more than 380 shoplifting thefts.
- It is estimated that any drug addict not in treatment costs society an average of £26,000 a year.
- Every £100 invested in drug treatment prevents a crime.
- It is estimated that every £1 spent on drug treatment saves £2.50 to society

Drug-related crime costs society

The annual bill for drug-related crime runs to billions of pounds

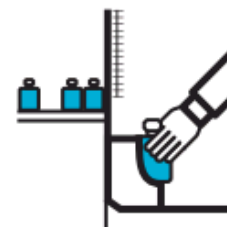
Between them, every ten addicts not in treatment in 2010-11 committed:

13 robberies and bag snatches
23 burglaries
21 car-related thefts
And more than 380 shoplifting thefts

Any drug addict not in treatment costs society an average £26,074 a year. This includes:



Robbery
£5,513



Shoplifting
£4,798



House burglary
£1,228

Source: 'Estimating the crime reduction benefits of drug treatment and recovery' NTA, 2012

Appendix A – Adult Offender Needs Profile

Drugs and alcohol

56% have an alcohol problem linked to risk of harm and/or reoffending, with **9% having "significant problems"** with alcohol.

Drugs are a risk for 35% and the majority are users of non-opiates, with cannabis and ecstasy the most common.

Much higher prevalence of complex needs, particularly offenders with drug-related problems

59% of offenders identified as having drug and/or alcohol needs are **not in contact with treatment services**.

Mental and physical health

30% have a history of self-harm and / or suicide attempts and 14% had been assessed as having some or significant psychiatric problems.

35% are recorded as having a disability. Previous data indicates that **dyslexia, mental health and mobility issues** are the most commonly disclosed.

Local data on physical health is scant. National research indicates higher rates of long standing illness or **disability, smoking and blood borne viruses (BBV)**. BBV is a particular risk for those with a history of drug injecting (12%).

Risk factors associated with reoffending

Locally, the most prevalent issues amongst adult offenders are **unemployment (65%)**, although this is a direct risk to reoffending for only 23%), **criminogenic alcohol problems (56%)** and **domestic abuse (51%)**. **Thinking and behaviour** underlies most other risk factors.

A third of offenders were identified as requiring support in five or more areas. **Complexity increases as the risk of reconviction increases**.

13% of the offender population is **female**. Female offenders are more likely to be involved in abusive relationships (69%), to be opiate users (20%) and to have parental responsibility (43%).

Housing, employment & finances

Just over a **third have problems with their finances** that are linked to their offending behaviour.

11% homeless or will be on release. Risk of reoffending linked to housing for 35%. **Lack of suitable housing is a severe risk** to an offender's ability to engage with any other kind of programme or service.

Education, training and employability issues are linked to risk of reoffending for just under a quarter. **2 out of 3 are unemployed**.

Family and relationships

National research indicates that offenders are significantly less likely to reoffend if they maintain family contact. **A third of male offenders and 43% of female offenders have parental responsibility**.

Support also needs to be given, however, to address any **safeguarding and parenting issues** and **break the intergenerational cycle** of criminality.

Evidence of domestic abuse for 51%, (mostly as perpetrators, 84%, but 30% identify as victims of abuse).

Appendix A – Young Person Offender Needs Profile

Drugs and alcohol

73% have an **alcohol** problem that is linked to **risk of reoffending**.

Illegal substances were a factor for nearly all young people in the cohort, with **persistent or heavy cannabis use** being the most commonly cited drug.

More complex needs – 76% require support in more than 5 areas.

63% of young people with an identified issue with alcohol and/or drugs have been **referred into specialist treatment services**.

Mental and physical health

Over half of the young people assessed have had **previous contact/ referrals with mental health services** although only 4 young people (11%) have had any formal diagnosis of a mental health condition.

With regards to **self-harm and previous suicide** attempts, analysis shows that 39% (15 young people) and 8% (3 young people) respectively have had these identified in their assessment.

Risk factors associated with reoffending

Locally, the most prevalent issues amongst young offenders are **thinking and behaviour, family and personal relationships** and **lifestyle**. These factors contribute to other causes related to a young person's risk of reoffending

National research suggests that three factors are highly **statistically significant** predictors of proven **(re)offending** within a 1 year period. These factors are **lifestyle, substance misuse and motivation to change**.

During 2014/15 there were 9 young females making up 12% of the cohort assessed. This proportion is **consistent with the adult offending cohort**.

Housing, employment & finances

Approximately 5% of the youth offending cohort has had **unsuitable accommodation during their order**, which is based around of risk of harm to the young person.

Analysis of assessment data indicates that 55% of the cohort have unauthorised absences from school and that nearly a **quarter of young people have special educational needs** (not stated).

Family and relationships

The family and personal relationship section is **consistently scored as a significant risk** for young offenders.

Where family and relationships was assessed as a problem:

- **Domestic abuse was present in 57%** (28 young people) of cases. Just over a quarter of young people had been the **perpetrator** of domestic abuse;
- Just over 1 in 5 of these young people has had a **family member engaged in criminal behaviour** over the last 6 months.

Information Sources

¹ HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for England and Wales, Annual Report 2016 –17, 18th July 2017

https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2017/07/HMIP-AR_2016-17_CONTENT_11-07-17-WEB.pdf

² Devon & Cornwall Police, Crime Figures April 2016-March 2017

<https://www.devon-cornwall.police.uk/your-right-to-information/our-people/our-performance/crime-figures/>

³ Office for National Statistics, Crime in England and Wales: year ending Mar 2017, July 2017

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/crimeinenglandandwales/yearendingmar2017>

⁴ Evidence provided by Strategic Intelligence and Performance Manager from Safer Cornwall Community Safety Intelligence Team [email dated Fri 18/08/17 16:38]. Data from Office for National Statistics, Proven reoffending statistics: July 2014 to June 2015, July 2017. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/proven-reoffending-statistics-july-2014-to-june-2015>

⁵ Safer Cornwall, Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Reducing Reoffending Strategy 2016-2019, June 2016

http://safercornwall.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2017/07/Safer-Cornwall-Reoffending-Strategy-2016-2019.pdf

⁶ Cornwall Intelligence Group, the Changing Face of Cornwall: Draft headline summary of local evidence, June 2017

⁷ Office for National Statistics, Proven Reoffending Statistics Quarterly Bulletin July 2014 to June 2015, published April 2017

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/611174/proven-reoffending-2015-q2.pdf

⁸ Office for National Statistics, Population Trends: Winter 2009, vol. 138, 2009

⁹ Defence Analytical Services and Advice, United Kingdom defence statistics, 2010

¹⁰ The Royal British Legion, Literature Review: UK Veterans and the criminal justice system, 2010

http://media.britishlegion.org.uk/Media/2280/litrev_ukvetscrimjustice.pdf

¹¹ Defence Analytical Services and Advice, Estimating the proportion of prisoners in England and Wales who are ex-Armed Forces - further analysis, September 2010

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/280048/15-september-2010.pdf

¹² Defence Analytical Services and Advice, Estimating the proportion of prisoners in England and Wales who are ex-Armed Forces – Further Analysis, 2010

¹³ Royal British Legion, Review of veterans within the criminal justice system – Submission to government, 2014

<http://media.britishlegion.org.uk/Media/2263/legion-submission-rory-stewart-review-of-veterans-in-the-criminal-justice-system.pdf>

¹⁴ National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse, Estimating the crime reduction benefits of drug treatment and recovery, 2012 accessed via <http://www.nta.nhs.uk/uploads/vfm-crimepresentationvfinal.pdf>