

New research shows short-term sentencing is costing society at least a billion pounds; poll shows business leaders swinging behind community sentences

A new report published today marking the launch of Make Justice Work, a major new campaign, reveals the massive cost and chronic inefficiency of short-term prison sentencing in Britain today.

The report, undertaken by Matrix Insight Ltd finds that:

- *Diverting one offender from custody to residential drug treatment would save society approximately £200,000 over the lifetime of the offender.*
- *Diverting one offender from custody to intensive supervision with drug treatment would save society approximately £60,000 over the lifetime of the offender.*
- *In 2007 alone – the most recent year where comprehensive data is available – the new research shows that had short-term prisoners who were drug-users been diverted to community based sentences society could have saved almost a billion pounds over the lifetime of the respective 7,873 prisoners (9.2% of all offenders given custodial sentences in that year).*
- *Overall, the research reveals that the majority of community sentences provide similar or better value for money and effectiveness than short-term prison sentences.*

In an independent poll by ComRes to assess the opinion of business leaders for the launch of Make Justice Work, the overwhelming majority polled believe community based sentences are both more cost-effective and more efficient at preventing re-offending. Three quarters also state that offenders with a community sentence are more likely to be able to find employment and re-enter the world of work than those with a custodial history.

- *68% agree that community sentences are more cost-effective and provide offenders with routes away from crime and re-offending*
- *77% believe community sentences are a more effective way of low-level offenders paying back victims and society*
- *72% think that low-level offenders are more employable if they have been subject to a community rather than prison sentence*

Roma Hooper, Founder and Director of Make Justice Work says:

“Rather than creating security against crime and justice for victims, the research shows that short-term prison sentences have a negligible impact on stopping re-

offending while sucking money away from investment needed in other areas of the criminal justice system.

“The amount of people receiving custodial sentences has risen inexorably in the past ten years. We are now locking up people that ten years ago would never have fallen under the prison net. This is another example of a punitive creep in our justice system and it must be reversed.

“Prison can be an important preventative and restorative tool for serious offenders but it is clearly not working for low-level, non-violent offenders – a group who make up a huge 65% of the prison population. Imprisoning them on short-term sentences of less than twelve months is simply taking resources away from prisons who should be dealing with more critical cases.

“Make Justice Work is about calling for a criminal justice system that works. The campaign aims to highlight to the public and media the fundamental flaws in the current short-term sentencing regime and help change attitudes towards this pivotal issue that has consequences for victims, offenders and the taxpayer alike.”

Editors Notes

To interview either Roma Hooper of Make Justice Work or Kevin Marsh of Matrix Insight or Martha Lane Fox, MJW Ambassador please contact:

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The Matrix Report

Matrix Insight Ltd was commissioned by the Make Justice Work campaign to undertake an independent assessment of whether short-term prisons sentences (12 months or less) are an effective and efficient use of public resources.

In response to this challenge, two sets of analyses are presented in this paper. First, the paper summarises the analysis of the costs and benefits of alternative sentences undertaken by Matrix Insight in 2007/8 (Matrix Insight, 2007; Marsh and Fox, 2008). Second, brand new analysis is presented for the first time that estimates the economic impact expected from diverting offenders from short-term prison sentences to community sentences.

For a full copy of the report please click here:

The ComRes Poll

ComRes surveyed 221 business leaders on LBLP (London Business Leaders Panel) online between 10th – 15th June 2008. All ComRes research is conducted according to the Market Research Society Code of Conduct. For full tables please visit the ComRes website at: www.comres.co.uk

For a full copy of the polling please click here:

Make Justice Work

www.makejusticework.org.uk

Make Justice Work is a dynamic, major new campaign aimed at changing public opinion towards short-term sentencing and ultimately government policy on the issue. Make Justice Work is not about being liberal or lenient; it is about calling for robust alternatives to custody, for less serious offences, which are proven to be more effective at reducing criminal behaviour, increasing public safety and offering much better value for money. In other words, it is about calling for a penal and criminal justice system that works.

The campaign is supported by over 100 ambassadors who have signed-up and acknowledged the campaign. They include former Law Lords, Politicians, Writers, Journalists, Business Leaders, Police Chiefs, Prison Governors, Probation Professionals and leading celebrities and sportspeople. A full list of ambassadors can be found at the bottom of this press release.

The Make Justice Work campaign is run by Roma Hooper. She has worked in and around the criminal justice system since 1992, when she was asked to set up Britain's first prison radio station. She has a Masters in Criminal Justice Policy from the London School of Economics, is Chair of the Griffins Society (supporting women in the criminal justice system), Vice-Chair of the Foundation Training Company (which runs a series of prison and community based resettlement and development programmes), as well as Chair and Founder of the Prison Radio Association (which was named Best New Charity at the 2008 Charity Times Awards and recently won 2 Gold Sony Radio Awards). Her pioneering work at Feltham Young Offenders' Institution and with the Prison Radio Association was recognised with a Lord Longford prize in 2006.

Ambassadors list here:

Alex Proud, Founder and CEO, Proud Galleries

Amir Khan, Boxer

Andrew Coyle, Professor of Prison Studies, School of Law, King's College London

Andrew Phillips, Solicitor

Andy Keen-Downs, CEO, Prison Advice and Care Trust

Angela Camber, JP Chair, The Griffins Society

Annabel Harris, Former Executive Director, Reprieve

Ashley Walters, Actor and musician

Baroness Neuberger, House of Lords

Baroness Linklater, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation

Baroness Anne Gibson, House of Lords

Barry Loveday Criminologist, Institute of Criminal Justice Studies
Basia Spalek, Criminologist Birmingham University
Benjamin Zephaniah, Poet
Bob Turney, Writer and probation officer
Carol Hedderman, Professor of Criminology, University of Leicester
Cathy Eastburn, Founder and Director, Good Vibrations
Charles Fraser, Chief Executive, St Mungo's
Claudia Webbe, Vice chair, Trident Independent Advisory Group
Clive Hopwood, Director, Writers in Prison Network
Danny Kushlick, Founder and Head of Policy, Transform Drug Policy Foundation
David Ahern, Chief Executive Officer, Shannon Trust
David Downes, LSE
David Howarth MP, Liberal Democrat Shadow Solicitor General
Debbie Scott CEO, Tomorrow's People
Deborah Cowley, Director, Action for Prisoners' Families
Dr Chris Fox, Principal Lecturer in Criminology, Manchester Metropolitan University
Dr David Scott, Criminologist, Department of Education and Social Sciences / Centre for Criminology and Criminal Justice, Univeristy of Central Lancashire
Dr Laura Piacentini, Criminologist, Strathclyde University
Eilís Lawlor, Head of Valuing What Matters, New Economics Foundation
Fay Selvan, Chief Executive, The Big Life group
Frances Cairncross, Rector of Exeter College, Oxford University and former managing editor, the Economist
Gary Lashko, Chief Executive, Carr-Gomm
Geoff Mulgan, Director, Young Foundation
Gordon Roddick, Social activist and social entrepreneur
Henry Tinsley, Former chairman, Green & Blacks
Howard Williamson, Professor of European Youth Policy at the University of Glamorgan
Humfrey Malins MP, House of Commons
Ian Loader, Oxford University
James Scudamore, Novelist
Jessica Asato, Acting Director, Progress
John Austin MP, House of Commons
John Samuels QC, Chairman, Prisoners' Education Trust
John Leech MP, House of Commons
Jon Collins, Campaign Director, Criminal Justice Alliance
Jonathan Heawood, Director, English PEN
Jonathan Myerson, Novelist, playwright, screenwriter and magistrate
Joy Doal, Anawim Project
Joyce Moseley, Chief Executive, Catch22
Katherine Rake, Director, The Fawcett Society
Keith Palmer, Director, The Comedy School
Leslie Morphy, Chief Executive, Crisis
Linda Jack, Youth Advisor, FSA
Lord Dubs, House of Lords
Lord Ramsbotham, Former Chief Inspector of Prisons – 1995-2001
Lord Woolf, Former Lord Chief Justice – 2000-2005
Lord Hastings, House of Lords/KPMG
Lord Bingham of Cornhill, Former Lord Chief Justice
Lord Carlile of Berriew QC, Barrister
Lord Thomas of Gresford, Shadow Attorney General

Marion Janner Bright Place
Martha Lane Fox, Entrepreneur
Martin Barnes, Chief Executive, DrugScope
Michael May, Chief Executive, Blue Sky
Mick Ryan, University of Greenwich
Neil Wragg, Chief Executive, Youth at Risk
Pat Jones, Director, Prisoners' Education Trust
Paul Rock, Professor of Social Institutions, Department of Sociology
Peter Francis, Lecturer in Criminology
Peter Sandford, Writer and Chair, Lord Longford Trust
Peter Tatchell, Human rights campaigner
Peter Woolf, Forgiveness Project
Polly Toynbee Columnist, The Guardian
Professor Ben Bowling, Professor of Criminology & Criminal Justice
Professor David S. Wall, Criminologist, Centre for Criminal Justice Studies, University of Leeds
Professor Kevin Stenson, Criminologist, University of Kent
Professor Lawrence Sherman, Wolfson Professor of Criminology, University of Cambridge
Professor Rod Morgan, Former Head, Youth Justice Board
Rachel Billington, Author
Rev Nims Obunge, Chief Executive, The Peace Alliance
Revd Paul Cowley, Executive Director of Alpha for Prisons, Caring for Ex-Offenders and Alpha for Forces
Rob Owen, Director, St Giles Trust
Roger Graef, Film producer
Rowenna Davis, Journalist
Rupa Huq, Sociologist
Saul Hewish, Co-director of Rideout
Simon Fanshawe, Broadcaster, writer and comedian
Simon Hughes MP, House of Commons
Simon Woodroffe, Entrepreneur
Sir Charles Pollard, Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police 1991-2001
Sir Louis Blom-Cooper QC, Leading barrister and campaigner
Stephen Bubb CEO, ACEVO
Stephen Howard, Chief Executive, Business in the Community
Suzanne Sibillin, Director, Women In Prison
Tim Desmond, NCCL Galleries of Justice
Tim Robertson, Chief Executive, The Koestler Trust
Tim Smit, Co-Founder and Chief Executive, The Eden Project
Trevor Philpott, Co-Founder and Director, Life Change UK
Uanu Seshmi, Founder & Director, From Boyhood to Manhood Foundation
Will Higham, Public Affairs Manager, Intellect and former
Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, Columnist, Independent