



W06 – Welfare Policy, Homelessness, and Housing Exclusion

**Meeting the housing needs of prisoners and ex-offenders
in the UK: opportunities and limitations.**

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ABSTRACT

Punishing criminals as a social policy sits uncomfortably with the integration of previous offenders into the community. How are these conflicting aims to be resolved in a humane society? The Social Exclusion Unit (2002) identified loss of liberty as a cause of homelessness and the need to find new accommodation at discharge has been the focus of recent UK government attention.

The UK has one of the highest rates of imprisonment in Europe (EU ICS 2005) and at any point in time there are about 80,000 prisoners resident in English prisons. A higher number are imprisoned every year, many serving short sentences or on remand pending legal proceedings. The process has considerable implications for housing policy. The UK Home Office (2004) and devolved parliaments have emphasised that the national priority is to protect the public and there is strong emphasis on the national policy of reducing repeat offending. Within the Home Office, the National Offender Management Service assesses the social needs of prisoners, including the need for accommodation, but there is a co-ordination issue between resettlement services and housing policy.

The Department for Communities and Local Government and counterparts in Scotland and Wales oversee the working of the homelessness legislation. The UK is distinct within Europe in the form of homelessness legislation, which places duties on local authorities to make decisions based on a legal definition of homelessness. In England, the 2002 Housing Act inserted for the first time a new priority group for inclusion in the housing obligations of local authorities:

‘vulnerable as a result of having been remanded or having served time in custody’

Has access to housing improved for ex-offenders since 2002? The paper explores how separate government departments and agencies mediate the intentions of government and the ways that ex-offender’s housing needs are met in the face of considerable barriers.

1 Introduction

Workers for housing and criminal justice organisations recognise that the offender group is unpopular and seen as ‘less deserving’ when competing for scarce resources with other people such as the elderly or disabled people (Henshaw and Mackinnon 2004:10). Yet there are substantial levels of housing need amongst offenders and other social support needs associated with this group. In addition, the policy direction for the criminal justice system in Britain has focused on the problem of re-offending and there is recognition that better co-ordination across housing and social support is the key to the reduction of offending. What is the UK context for the treatment of offenders through addressing their housing needs? Is there an enhanced homelessness safety net?

‘Criminal justice is a highly politicised and complex area of law’ writes Brammer (2003) and the separate provisions for Youth Justice and Adults create administrative complexity.

Criminal justice data for the European Union indicates that the highest rates of imprisonment are found in England and Wales (139) and Scotland (131) compared with the EU average of 98 prisoners per 100,000 people (EU 2006). English prisons in May 2007 were full to capacity and the prison population in the UK has been increasing particularly since 1998. There is pressure to limit the prisoner population. The question of resettlement of offenders is therefore a key contemporary social policy issue coinciding paradoxically with a fall in the overall level of crime since 1995.

From 2001, the thrust of formal policy from the Home Office has been to reduce re-offending through intensive efforts by the national Prison and Probation services in conjunction with other agencies. The aims of Probation cover both protection of the public and offender rehabilitation, but the main thrust of public policy has related to the former (Brammer 2003:408). New arrangements and new agencies have been established to develop public support frameworks across a range of support needs for prisoners, NOMS are considered in section 4 of this paper.

First the legislation on homelessness was amended (ODPM 2002) to include for the first time as a priority need group people who were ‘vulnerable because of time spent in care, the armed forces, prison or custody...’ (ODPM/Department of Health 2002). Broadly speaking, the legislation placed the duty on the local authority to secure accommodation to someone judged by the local authority in England to be vulnerable, unintentionally homeless and with a local connection. With these caveats, the accommodation needs of ex-prisoners might be met within the field of homeless legislation.

Second, the potential impact of the emergence of Supporting People (SP) Programme as a multi-agency funding network, launched by ODPM in 2003 as a replacement for Housing Benefit payments for specific projects covering all accommodation needs other than rent. Thus any accommodation project offering a range of training and personal services in addition to a tenancy would require Supporting People revenue grant responding to a local authority SP plan to cover the cost of running services to groups such as former prisoners.

This paper is a literature review in the United Kingdom concerning the housing needs of prisoners and ex-offenders in the context of new social policy and supporting frameworks emerging from 2001.

The paper is composed in four main sections. The first section covers the period 1991-2001 and unpacks the social complexity behind the belief in the association between a stay in prison and subsequent homelessness; the second section aims at evaluating the homelessness policy and the support offered to prisoners by the legislation and the third gauges the extent that resettlement was prioritised over the period 2002-2005 by the Home Office. This is followed by a discussion about the extent that there is ‘joined-up government’ in meeting the housing needs of ex-offenders and prisoners and a suggestions for further research.

2 What is the link between custody or prison and housing?

In the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) report (2002), the link between homelessness and offending was quantified and given a new emphasis by then Prime Minister, Tony Blair who had been previously the opposition shadow spokesman on Home Affairs. The context for the SEU study was the notion of ‘joined up government’ and a concern for co-ordination across government departments.

The SEU report stated:

‘But despite the importance of housing as a factor to prevent re-offending, up to a **third** of prisoners lose their housing due to imprisonment.’ (SEU 2002:94)

‘...around **one in three** prisoners are not in permanent accommodation prior to imprisonment.’ (SEU 2002:95)

The claims in these statements are based on two separate studies, (Home Office 2001 and Niven S. and Olangundoye J. 2002). The table below is a summary from 2002:

Table 1 Type of accommodation arranged on release by type of prisoner					
Accommodation	All females	All males	Young male offenders	Adult males	All prisoners
	%	%	%	%	%
Rented or owned property as the householder or joint householder	25	27	11	30	27
Rented or owned property with your parents	16	22	46	17	21
Rented or owned property with a friend or friends	5	6	6	5	5
Probation or bail hostel or DSS hostel	3	3	3	3	3
Other	3	3	3	2	3
No accommodation on release	41	31	23	34	33
Totals (number)	148	1,863	295	1,568	2,011

Source:

Niven S. and Olangundoye J. (2002:4)

The data shows that more than 33% were in expecting to be either in temporary accommodation or had no accommodation at release. However, the tenure categories used in both Home Office surveys of prisoners do not follow research practice as used

for example in the main government household surveys, including the UK Census of Population. These figures cannot be triangulated against household surveys as a result of the ways that tenure categories were constructed. To develop reliable questions concerning vulnerability to homelessness requires a very distinctive research methodology for prisoners to take account of the variability of previous housing circumstances and the huge range of conditions applying prior to imprisonment. If a measurement of housing vulnerability is the goal, then an empirical exploratory study is warranted to determine the sorts of categories that would be conducive to measuring changes in housing circumstances but may be the percentage is not the point. The crucial issue relates to what are the pathways for those prisoners without settled accommodation into settled accommodation. This question concerns the quality of housing assistance in prison and afterwards.

The basis of these assessments of housing need prisoners is questionable, because there was no completely reliable survey of housing need within prisons and homelessness assessments are very much definitionally bound. Secondly the SEU findings are consistent logically with the statement that prison has no effect on homelessness! Vulnerability to homelessness before incarceration applies to the same percentage as vulnerability at release. Whereas many authorities believe there is a relationship between offending and homelessness, the direct evidence is weak.

The strong belief in the deterioration of housing condition through custody and imprisonment emerged through dissemination of two evaluations both published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation; McIvor and Taylor (1995) in Scotland and Carlisle (1996) in England.

Supported accommodation was considered a key factor in enabling young offenders to resolve their often-complex needs; emotional, training/education and help to overcome substance abuse. The experiences of 128 ex-offenders, within the caseloads of 28 social workers in the Grampian region in the north east of Scotland were the subject of in depth investigation in 1995. Over half the clients were less than 20 years of age and many were homeless arising mainly from relationship breakdown. The research identified the lack of supported accommodation provision as a key issue and the knowledge base of social workers was found to be limited in terms of the aims and referral criteria of resettlement projects. Crucially, time periods for specific accommodation and programmes were limited to four months maximum support and one reason why some offenders' problems could only be addressed for a short period of time was the limitation of project funding.

Based on 175 interviews of offenders in four English prisons, Jane Carlisle devised a quasi-longitudinal study, following up the housing circumstances of 61 prisoners. She found that two-thirds of prisoners without satisfactory accommodation re-offended within twelve months of release. This finding underpinned subsequent policy discussions relating to the perception of re-offending aggravated by housing circumstances. There was unevenness between institutions in the way information was disseminated to prisoners about housing, which fed into concerns about the quality of resettlement.

The Jane Carlisle study, however also highlighted the importance of the role of the male prisoner's female partner in maintaining the home, but relationships were likely

to break down. A high proportion of homes were lost through relationship breakdown. Owner-occupiers were prone to lose their accommodation in the study because they were in employment prior to incarceration and unemployed as a result and lodgers housing was generally unstable. Those who rented privately also lost their tenancies with interruption of prison.

The women prisoners were typically accommodated in social rented accommodation and single parents. The study identified that the housing benefit period for supporting a rented tenancy was reduced in April 1995 from 52 to 13 weeks and that this rule change would inevitably reduce the financial support and therefore exacerbate the problem of homelessness for ex-prisoners. In addition, the income support rules for unemployment were changed to limit the support for owner-occupiers who became unemployed. Since at that time single people had no statutory right to housing (unless there was a specific vulnerability such as old age or mental health), Carlisle established that issues with housing exacerbated the already poor circumstances of ex-prisoners and government's reforms to the financial environment had weakened financial support. Carlisle's research was often quoted in Government policy documents, including the ODPM/Home Office Guide to Housing and Housing Related Support Options, setting out joint guidance for resettlement and for people at risk of offending (2005:8).

Taken together these studies succinctly summarise problems in resettlement and accommodation in the mid 1990s. Housing advice and assistance were part of a significant gap relating to the wider social needs of people within the criminal justice system. Writing in 2001, Anne Owens, the Chief Prison Inspector was highly critical of the apparent lack of systematic resettlement practices – employment and emotional support and counselling as well as accommodation needs-covering English Prisons.

Metcalf et al (2001) carried out large-scale data analysis of prisoners and their labour market prospects together with an employee survey, concluding that

‘Over 50 per cent of people under the supervision of probation and of those leaving prison are unemployed. Long-term unemployment is high. Unemployment rates for other people with a criminal record are unknown, but, for some groups, will also be very high.’

Metcalf et al confirmed that prisoners and people under the supervision of probation often face multiple barriers to work. These include: employer discrimination due to their criminal record; health problems; substance misuse; housing problems and homelessness; poor basic skills; low levels of qualifications, self-confidence and motivation to find work; and lack of work experience.’ The study added ‘ [T]he importance of tackling characteristics amongst some groups of people with a criminal record is illustrated by the following:

43 per cent of prisoners are without qualifications;

one in two prisoners have serious problems with literacy;

45 per cent of those under the supervision of probation are misusing alcohol or other drugs. ...

The most important ways to tackle unemployment amongst people with a criminal record would be to:

improve skills and qualifications;

tackle non-employment problems, such as housing and drug abuse;

reduce employer discrimination. ’

These policy statements, resulting from a wider sociological analysis of employment related needs formed the evidence for extending social support during and were re-emphasised in the Social Exclusion Unit (2002) report. Taken together with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation studies, a focus on the individual together with a range of structural factors emerge in the institutional arrangements over imprisonment and attitudes of the wider society which have negative impacts on the whole resettlement process.

From a consideration of the research, there is complexity in the precise relationship between offending behaviour and the labour market and housing market. It is unclear whether these are causal relationships, yet the thrust of policy was predicated on the basis that custody caused loss of accommodation. The basis of intervention in prison and afterwards related primarily to attributes of prisoners rather than the nature of labour and housing markets. This conclusion leads to a critique of government social policy which is re-addressed in the discussion.

3 Evaluation of homelessness provision in England for ex-offenders

The prisoner-specific provisions of the 2002 Homelessness Act have not been formally evaluated by successors to ODPM. The legislation was subject to detailed scrutiny in Parliament. On the needs of ex-offenders, the committee reported:

‘Although those vulnerable due to leaving prison were added to the priority needs categories in 2002, it seems that not only do they not gain access to the right services in sufficient quantities, but they are ruled intentionally homeless for committing crime in the first place. The Revolving doors Agency told us only 250 people had been re-housed as priority need under the new category since 2002. The Youth Justice Board for England and Wales told us that young offenders were being ruled to be intentionally homeless, regardless of the offence, by some local authorities...’

However, there are also general concerns from Citizen’s Advice, Women’s Aid and Shelter and, reporting to the Select Parliamentary Committee (ODPM 2005) that the caveats to the legislation were creating considerable unevenness in the forms of support offered. On vulnerability the Select Committee quoted from the Housing Law Practitioners that

‘[Legislation] involves the exercise of value judgments to the facts in order to determine whether an applicant is ‘vulnerable as a result of the reasons stated. This is emphasised by the Courts’ definition of ‘vulnerable’ as whether [the Applicant] is, when homeless, less able to fend for himself than an ordinary homeless person so that

injury or detriment to him will result when a less vulnerable person would be able to cope without harmful effects.

Concerning the funding rules in Supporting People, the same Select Parliamentary Committee (ODPM 2005) that that

‘Other criticisms surrounding the year on year nature of the programme grants. This leads to uncertainty and prevents long term planning. Projects, even short ones, which need planning over a year in advance may not be feasible. In addition, bids must be made each year, so in effect a body must begin to prepare its bid almost as soon as it received the previous allocation.’ Clearly the introduction of the Supporting People programme had not entirely removed short term financial issues from funding homelessness services’

Hughes (2003) argued that the Supporting People funding system offered an opportunity to increase the level of funding and ‘a more secure income flow’ for a range of accommodation projects and there was evidence from a small scale study in the north of England for expanded provision. On the other hand Hughes reported that consultation with community groups in the process of managing offender resettlement was highly ambivalent and this reflected perceived difficulties in activating the governments’ strategic notion of building balanced communities. So similar concerns about the institutions and actors making decisions on homelessness and resources emerge from assessment of the impact of specific legislation.

4 Background to the New Resettlement Policy

The SEU (2002) stressed the importance of cross-departmental working to reduce the rate of re-offending. Enhancing employment opportunities and preventing homelessness were each identified as key in a future rehabilitation strategy. Re-conviction by young offenders aged 18-21 was assessed at 75% within two years. In 2001, a new partnership was established between the Prison Service, Youth Justice Board and Probation in the English Home Office and the Department of Education and Skills (GOWM 2006). The aim was to reduce re-offending through a series of strategies involving enhanced support for resettlement, including access to training and education together with related personal skills. Prisoner’s needs across a range of social factors were assessed in a comprehensive way to enable their access to basic educational skills, employment training and other social skills.

The government were concerned at apparent gaps between the Prison and Probation Services and following from the Criminal Justice Act 2003, the Home Office integrated these in the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) in June 2004 (Alexander et al 2006:3). NOMS is a centralised comprehensive system of offender management with a five year strategy designed to tackle re-offending. The strategy is based on the premise that insecure housing increased the risk of offending.

As a corollary the NOMS Delivery Plan contains major housing co-ordination elements related to prevention of homelessness through early intervention through a standard housing need application and action at the prison or YOI to secure or close existing accommodation and ensure better collaboration between agencies to mitigate loss of housing arising from imprisonment (Taylor 2006).

Reducing Offending National Action Plan is a significant policy, depending on extensive co-ordination across government bodies and voluntary agencies. The Prison Service has accepted a new role that of identification of housing need (HM Prison Service Order 2005) and increasing the number of offenders released from custody with a known address and the creation of accommodation units within the prison population was included. However, the documentation of the assessment of housing is insufficient for establishing either existing housing circumstances or future housing requirements (See Appendix 1). A form is completed in 95% of new prisoners but this does not amount to a full housing needs assessment and in law a further assessment is required after release (Shelter 2007).

Have the rates of re-offending changed? Home Office data (2006) show no direct change in the rate of re-offending as a whole on the prison population over 2002-04 (58% re-offending within two years of release). However the research does indicate the mix of offenders released in 2002 contained fewer longer-term prisoners, and it is therefore suggested the statistics on re-offending, which are unchanged, could be interpreted as an improvement!

The Howard League (2005) examined in detail the resettlement needs of young adults released from young offenders institutions and argued that the restrictions to benefits on account of age and Housing Benefit limit for 13 weeks together with the limitations of the homeless legislation presented barriers to resettlement. Revolving Doors suggests that the funding of resettlement services under Supporting People for a maximum period of 2 years is an unrealistic expectation, as some clients require longer period of support. The rules governing welfare payments have not been the subject of reform despite the frequent citations in the research.

5 Discussion

The rules relating to control of liberty and giving support within the Criminal Justice System and the rules governing the duties of local authorities are both powerful forces over the lives of ex-offenders. They also interact and government departments have attempted to delineate overlaps or ambiguity through joint policy implementation processes, usually forms of guidance.

Cambridgeshire SHIP (2002:10) distinguished several criminal justice release categories which had a bearing on housing assistance:

1	Those under probation supervision
	Adults over 21 on licence following a sentence of more than one year and those 21 or under for any sentence
2	Those not under probation supervision
	Adults over 21 on licence following a sentence of less than 12 months.
	Those carrying out community service order or probation or having complied with a non-custodial sentence without probation.

Demarcation between Supporting People and Probation Service accommodation relates to special corrective or custodial accommodation. Whereas most provision of supported accommodation is funded through Supporting People, there is still a limited 'housing provision' role for Probation Service, which manages nationally about 100 approved premises otherwise known as 'bail hostels' (ODPM 2005:16). If the Probation Service supervises a released prisoner in the case of terms of more than 12 months, then it has primarily responsible for securing the accommodation (DCLG 2006).

The operation of the demarcation line between Supporting People and Probation does not appear to have been the subject of further research and there seems to be a case to develop social research on nature and extent of the provision and use of 'approved premises' and other supported accommodation to explore whether there is common national policy within these settings. Whereas the numbers released from prisons are countable, there are considerable losses and 'dark figures' concerning the total need. It can be estimated from 2000 data that about 65% of prisoners released from prison in any year had served sentences of less than 12 months (Elkins and Olagundoye quoted in Hughes 2003:3), so probably the majority of released prisoners do not have probation supervision. It is the release of 50,000 plus previous offenders without supervision in a year that is a dark figure in terms of potential housing need.

A group not easily identifiable are therefore 'ex-offenders, not in current contact with the criminal justice system but with a history of offending' (which impacts their housing prospects). This is a continuation of a dark figure.

Welfare benefits have been age differentiated for single people in England and Wales since 1988 in order to deter the potential incentive for 'leaving home'. This has a pervasive impact on young people, including those released from prison. There are important housing and income maintenance implications. The age-related Housing Benefit payments and Income Support rules relating to the local reference limit of payment for renting in single rooms (Single Room Rent Regulations) created a shortfall between the rent due and the housing benefit allowance. This and other benefit rules have been identified as a barrier by DWP research to enable single people under 25 years of age to sustain satisfactory accommodation (Harvey and Houston 2005:5).

'Going without essentials such as fuel or an adequate diet was widely seen as likely to result from HB shortfalls. It was pointed out that the lower levels of Income Support and Jobseeker's Allowance applicable to under 25 year olds exacerbated the effects of HB shortfalls.'

5 Outline Theoretical Model of Access to Housing by Vulnerable Groups and the relative power of agencies in a dualist housing system

There is a well-established literature concerning the notion of the structure of housing provision and how this forms a constraint framework over both the actions of agencies in the market and social housing agencies within an administered social sector. This leads to a mechanistic, but theoretically informed model useful as an analytic tool for exploring the behaviour of vulnerable groups facing a complex housing system.

Established in the 1980s the recent trend in England (shown as the simplest case within the UK) in Table 1 has been part of a longer-term, socio-economic polarization of households into the owner occupation and social sectors. This is a characteristic of a dualist housing system and a Liberal Welfare State typology as theorised by Jim Kemeny.

Table 1 Tenure Change (% of households) in England 1994-2004

	1994	1999	2004
Owner Occupation	67	69	71
Private Renting	11	10	11
Council Housing	18	15	11
Registered Social Landlords	4	6	8

Source: ONS Regional Trends 39:144 Table 6.4

Access to market produced housing is determined by ability to raise a loan for owner occupation. The average income in 2004 for first time buyers was £33,691 and for previous owners £42,128. Access to the private rented sector depends on a similar ability to raise a deposit and maintain an income sufficient to pay the economic rent and the average value is close to that of a mortgage payment.

Access to council and registered social landlord sector is determined in part by eligibility; whether the applicant is homeless or whether there is a housing need according to the criteria administered by the council for the Housing Register or the criteria of the RSL, (but client applicants can exercise limited choices allowed by the national allocation scheme). The eligibility rules for the social sector effectively govern the power relationship between tenants and the social housing sectors.

Table 2: Average Housing Costs in England 2003/04

	£ per week
Owner Occupation	98
Private Renting	126
Council Housing	58
Registered Social Landlords	70

Source: ONS Regional Trends 39:147 Table 6.9

This analysis leads to the conclusion that vulnerable groups such as ex-prisoners have little market power faced with the entry costs into a relatively rigid dualist housing system, dominated by private sector financial criteria and social sector housing need criteria. This picture is exacerbated by the weaknesses in the supply of housing falling behind the growth of households as demonstrated in authoritative Barker (2004) and Hills (2007) reports.

Potentially rights-based legislation can give specific vulnerable groups access to housing if the law conferring new legislation overrides the legal rights of local authorities in declaring someone homeless. It has been shown that the new rights allocated to vulnerable groups in England are not sufficient to command power over the housing duties.

What are the strategies to secure housing for vulnerable groups in the English context? The answer is that for homeless people, there is limited state provision, supplemented by forms of temporary accommodation and there is a small intermediate sector of hostels, private accommodation. All this low quality accommodation falls outside the main structure of provision. In addition, there emerges a new strategy for the local authority to co-ordinate the limited resources of this intermediate sector through several policy stands; providing rent deposits, co-ordination of private sector landlords and renting private properties on behalf of landlords.

There is little data relating this intermediate sector and one strand of potential research is the examination of pathways from prison to such accommodation types. The nature and extent of this intermediate sector can be hypothesized in a dualist system from a consideration of the paths of prisoners.

The extent that offenders are susceptible to homelessness over time feeds into the question of quality and permanence. A study in the county of Cambridgeshire stressed that homelessness did not necessarily coincide with prison release. Relationship breakdown and subsequent homelessness may occur many months after release from prison and suggesting the vulnerability to homelessness was a persistent tendency for the individual. However, as Alexander et al (2006) point out in their Offender Management Map (2006:4) there are considerable complications in the overall way that the criminal justice system works between initial stages such as 'arrested' and later stages such as 'post release supervision ' or 'voluntary aftercare' involving different impositions on an individual's liberty.

CONCLUSIONS

Studies published by both government and independent bodies after 1995 found that there were many identified but unmet social needs within persons in the criminal justice system. The period since the mid nineteen nineties has seen the same recurring issues within UK social policy indicating there is a considerable way to go to attune resettlement services closer to the needs of ex-offenders. Reconviction rates have not altered significantly since 2002. Research has emphasised that attention to resettlement would have a positive impact on the rate of re-offending. However, the full complexity of the support needs of those in prison may require consistent high rates of provision in terms of assets and suitably funded personnel and the prisoner population is increasing to capacity. In addition co-ordination between government departments does not necessarily address structural rigidities in housing system and lack of suitable accommodation.

This paper has questioned the evidence for the apparent relationship between offending behaviour and homelessness, which is more complex than the simplistic statements made in policy guidelines. The paper has highlighted the interfaces between specific government departments:

1 The Housing Benefit system and Supporting People accommodation funding (Department of Work and Pensions) and Prison Service and Probation (Home Office) applying to cases where the main residence is rented and the tenant has been admitted to prison.

2 Housing assistance through the operation of homelessness legislation (DCLG) and Prison Service and Probation (Home Office) where the applicant is homeless and released from prison.

3 Housing assistance through operation of housing management services (DCLG) and accommodation and support services where the applicant is homeless and released from prison.

The literature emphasised how various new organisations (such as NOMS) new legislation and new structures (Supporting People) and policy framework (Homeless Strategies at Regional and district level and procedures within prisons) have been devised. There are many new coordinated projects, but one of the emphases relates to public protection another to the individual circumstances of offenders. Although there is a housing policy for vulnerable ex offenders, this has led to a relatively small level of provision.

The focus has been offender management and control under criminal justice policies rather than expansion of provision and there is scope for considerable further research on exploring the ways that housing circumstances are changed through different punishment regimes, particularly for young offenders and the ways that housing support can be beneficial to offenders. Ultimately the issue is over resources and what is the state willing to give up in order to make provision for one of the least popular groups in society. Some of the structural issues such as Housing Benefit and age related Welfare funding and the attitudes of employers to offenders picked up in the earlier research have not been followed up.

Further research would improve our understanding of these problems. Two priorities may be sketched out; the quality of advice on housing given in prison and how this relates to actual experiences of the housing system and the interface between the intermediate housing sector and the ways in which the groups negotiate a housing career after leaving prison.

POST SCRIPT

In May 2007, the Home Office was split into two departments under considerable controversy so the extent that further resettlement reforms are possible will be dependent on the new arrangements with the new Justice Department and a smaller Home Office. Yet the formal rules applicable within these new bodies have not been seriously adjusted the ways in which the system as a whole has impacted on the rate of offending. The Prime Minister announced his resignation and paved the way for a new prime minister with a new cabinet after 27 June 2007, so new relationships may emerge to create a more expansive social policy for prisoners and former prisoners.

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Refer For Full Assessment? Yes	No	Prisoner Refused
Date.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Engage <input type="checkbox"/>

Housing Needs Initial Assessment Document

Establishment..... Date.....
 Prisoners Name..... Prison No.....
 Status.....(RX/Sent.) EDR.....Ethnic Code.....
 Next Court Date (If Known).....
 D.O.B.....

Date of 1st Reception..... Area of Residence.....

What accommodation did the prisoner have prior to custody? – Tick below

Type of Accommodation:			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rented	<input type="checkbox"/>	Temp	<input type="checkbox"/>
Owned	<input type="checkbox"/>	Traveller	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supported	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hostel	<input type="checkbox"/>
NFA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input style="width: 100px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	

Residing with:			
Family	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friend	<input type="checkbox"/>	Alone	<input type="checkbox"/>
Partner	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spouse	<input type="checkbox"/>

Is the Prisoner a Prolific or Other Priority Offender ?			
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Does the prisoner have a discharge address? rent/mortgage?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Who is responsible for paying
Does the property or contents require securing? Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parents Partner Friend Spouse
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Is the prisoner claiming Housing Benefit?

<p>Additional Information</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p><i>Immediate/Proposed Action Required</i></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
