

# Kent and Medway Strategic Plan for Reducing Re-offending

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2012 to 2015



# A) Introduction

As part of the Kent Community Safety Agreement 2011 – 2014 reducing re-offending is one of a number of cross cutting themes identified. As coordinating lead for this theme and with the agreement of the Medway Community Safety Partnership, Kent Probation has coordinated publication of a Strategic Plan for reducing re-offending in Kent and Medway bringing together and formalising the countywide ambitions and approach.

The current performance indicators for reducing re-offending show that there is room for improvement, and we should all take this opportunity to not only improve our performance but review our approach and principles as well. Preventing further offences reduces the number of victims and the damage done to local families and communities, and alleviates the cost to the tax payers and pressure on justice and support services

Although nationally and within Kent, crime rates are falling, the prison population is growing. A recent National Audit Office report estimated that re-offending by ex-prisoners cost the economy £9.5 to £13 billion per year, of which £7 to £10 billion a year can be attributed to former short-term prisoners. It also documents negative influences on the lives of offenders, families and communities including: homelessness, unemployment, mental and physical health problems and financial problems, and the long lasting damage that re-offending can have on individual lives, families and local communities. We know by tackling and focusing on these issues we can reduce the risk of re-offending.

# B) Strategic Aim

Our core aim will be to reduce re-offending of adults and young people in Kent in order to reduce crime and prevent further victims.

## C) Strategic Principles as to how we will Reduce Re-offending as a County

Rather than prescribe how we will reduce re-offending in Kent and Medway our approach is to adopt a number of principles. Those principles will then underpin discussions and decisions by individual agencies and in partnership and commissioning forums. We would expect them to be used by Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) and other partnership forums to inform their annual business planning process.

Our seven strategic principles:

1. **Localised:** drive this plan forward at a district level supported by countywide agencies when appropriate to reintegrate offenders back into their local communities
2. **Integrated:** working together to reduce re-offending using co-commissioning where possible to increase joint accountability
3. **Targeted:** to where we can make the most impact on re-offending (for both frequency and seriousness of offending) to make the best use of tax payers money
4. **Individualised:** recognising that all offenders are different and we should support those who are ready to change and manage those who are not
5. **Evidence based:** using data on crime, risk and need together with emerging research on why people desist from crime, to develop appropriate responses in localities
6. **Holistic:** working with not just those who offend but their families and the communities in which they live, who will be crucial in supporting them to stop offending
7. **Restorative:** where the offender comes to recognise the impact of their offending and makes amends both to the victim and the broader community

## D) Multi- Agency Priority Groups

We will use the new Integrated Offender Management (IOM) cohorts as our primary way of targeting to reduce re-offending.

This group fits well with our strategic principles as they are high risk of re-offending, require a multi- agency approach and are committed to change. As a county this is likely to be a group of around 150-200 individuals. These priority groups have been informed by the most prevalent priority groups with the Community Safety Partnership responses combined with countywide agencies priority groups.

The Integrated Offender Management cohort consists of adults, young people and other individuals fitting the following selection criteria:

- What are the benefits of multi-agency management
- Is there an opportunity to reduce re-offending?
- Is there a benefit to the community e.g. reduced harm?
- Is there any other form of multi-agency management in place?
- Does the individual have the potential to engage and change?

Our other target groups to be included are identified below :

- Troubled Families, particularly those including offenders
- Young people (ideally 16–24) looking to bridge the transition to adulthood
- Women offenders: who have complex and different needs to male offenders
- Anti-social behaviour (ASB) perpetrators: clearly a priority identified by the Community Safety Partnership's responses
- Domestic Abuse perpetrators: another priority for Community Safety Partners

There will be a continuation of the successful critical work currently in place through Multi- Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPAs) for the most dangerous offenders, in parallel with this Strategic Plan. Also Diversion of Young Offenders (DYO) has a plan overseen by the Integrated Offender Management Strategy Board.

All target groups will be reviewed on an annual basis to ascertain whether these continue to align with our principles and the over arching strategic aim to reduce re-offending.

## E) Multi- Agency Priority Interventions

The Multi- Agency priorities will be reviewed and agreed annually. Re-offending is a complex issue and research suggests there are a number of factors that are recognised key contributors to offending behaviour and the likelihood of re-offending as below:

- Accommodation
- Attitudes, Thinking and Behaviour
- Children and Families
- Drugs and Alcohol
- Education, Training and Employment
- Finance, Benefit and Debt
- Health

These factors were identified in the 2002 Social Exclusion Report on Re-offending as 'Pathways' to resettlement and out of offending. Using this research and applying the analysis from the individual Community Safety Partnership responses to how they are tackling re-offending at a local level, our priority multi- agency strategic deliverables for 2012-2013 are identified below:

- Accommodation
- Education and Employment
- Substance Misuse
- Mental and Physical Health

For each section we will detail the need, the current provision and our future goals in that specific area. The over arching forum for each section will also be identified, this is where we expect the delivery of these goals to be coordinated and championed.

# Accommodation

The coordinating key forums for accommodation are Kent and Medway's Joint Policy and Planning Board (JPPB) and the Integrated Offender Management Strategy Board (IOMSB)

## Need

Stable, suitable and affordable accommodation is essential to offenders to reduce their risk of re-offending, increase their equality of treatment within the Criminal Justice System, and enable inclusive and stable lifestyles within communities. Current data shows that between April 2010 and March 2011, 36% of offenders who started a community order in Kent or Medway were identified as having an accommodation need, this equates to 1,247 offenders.

## Current Provision

The Supporting People Programmes in both Kent and Medway provide a crucial mechanism to highlight and evidence the accommodation needs of offenders. Supporting People Programmes fund supported accommodation services for a range of vulnerable client groups, with specialist provision for offender bed spaces and offender floating support services.

Kent and Medway's Joint Policy and Planning Board co-ordinates the work of a range of relevant agencies, and provides the forum where strategic issues requiring joint working between health, housing and social care, can be raised and measures to address them.

## Goals

- All local authorities to strive to remove barriers to adopt a consistent approach to accommodation to include:
  - Following current protocols and policies already in place surrounding accessing and sustaining accommodation
  - Considering the implication of any housing benefit changes, ensuring that the possible increase of private unregulated housing is not detrimental to offering safe and suitable housing
  - Look at ways to introduce new service models for housing related support which are designed to provide more flexible and targeted services
- Ensure offenders are prioritised properly in order to meet their accommodation needs, especially the priority groups in section D
- Local authorities to continue to meet the specific accommodation needs of young people with the support of Youth Offending Services and Teams at a local level.

# Education and Employment

The coordinating key forum for education and employment is the South East Region Employment Offender Learning Skills

## Need

Employment plays an important role in the rehabilitation of offenders, ensuring that offenders have the skills, education and training necessary to help settle into sustainable employment is critical to reducing re-offending. From April 2010 to March 2011, 48% of offenders who started a community order in Kent or Medway were identified as having an employment or training need, this equates to 1,697 offenders.

## Current Provision

Once the initial skills assessment is undertaken for adults and young people, via the appropriate agencies, assistance is then provided with signposting to the applicable next step of support e.g. College, training provider or possible apprenticeships for young people.

The Work Programme via the Department of Work and Pensions, is also available to provide tailored support to help with effective job seeking via the local job centres, and to address basic skills gaps.

## Goals

- All agencies to improve signposting for young peoples services
- Increase number of offenders entering and completing education and training for employment
- Understand requirements and address lack of options for offenders with low level educational skills, literacy and numeracy
- Address how high risk offenders can be integrated safely into a learning environment
- Increase and improve links with local employers to drive up employment prospects
- Examine our respective organisations employment practices to remove barriers to employing ex-offenders wherever possible

# Substance Misuse (Drugs and Alcohol)

The coordinating forums for substance misuse are the Boards of the Kent and the Medway Drug and Alcohol Action Teams

## Need

Many offenders have very high levels of drug and alcohol related problems, with many also having mental and physical health issues as well. Appropriate diagnosis is key, before treatment and support can be provided. Offenders with substance misuse will also find it difficult to find and maintain employment and accommodation therefore increasing their likelihood of re-offending. Current data has identified 59% of offenders who started a community order in Kent or Medway between April 2010 and March 2011, had either a drug or alcohol need to be addressed, this equates to 2,073 offenders.

## Current provision

The Kent and Medway Drug and Alcohol Action Teams offer a wide range of services across Kent and Medway. There are also a number of interventions in place across Kent to address offenders needs to combat their drugs or alcohol problems.

## Goals

- Improved understanding of dual diagnosis issues between substance misuse and mental health problems
- Ensure demand and need is managed effectively to provide sufficient and accessible drug and alcohol services at a local level
- Introduce and roll-out Drug Test on Arrest across the county
- Understand impact of Payment By Results (PBR) on Drug and Alcohol Action Teams and consider implications for other areas

# Mental and Physical Health

The coordinating key forums for Mental and Physical Health are the Kent Criminal Justice Board and Integrated Offender Management Strategy Board (IOMSB).

## Need

As already identified, substance misuse for many offenders may be linked to or contribute to their mental or physical health problems, with knock on implications to both employment and accommodation. The effective diagnosis and management of their mental and physical health and wellbeing is critical to providing the appropriate treatment and support and ultimately helping them to stop offending. Recent data from April 2010 to March 2011, has shown that 27% of the Kent and Medway prison population were identified as having mental health problems of varying levels.

## Current provision

There are various agencies providing a range of treatments, help and support through the county currently, however it should be recognised that this is a complex topic in itself as multiple issues can be combined and often confused under mental and physical health. This area needs to be reviewed and improved in light of the recent and ongoing NHS health reforms, and a clear health strategy needs to be adopted for Kent and Medway.

## Goals

- Increase level of GP registrations from current level of 14% for statutory offenders in the community
- Introduce a clear provision of and routes into Mental Health Treatment Requirements
- Ensure a countywide Police Custody Liaison and Diversion Service with a Community Psychiatric Nurse to address the gap in this service in the Dartford Custody Suite
- Ensure a community provision for a Personality Disorder Unit to help offenders diagnosed with personality disorders or emerging personality disorders

These four key priorities will be reviewed on an annual basis to determine whether they still reflect the deliverables of the local Community Safety Partnerships and are indicative of the current research and findings.

# F) Assessment of Effectiveness

The Strategic Plan cannot be used as a scorecard against performance of reducing re-offending. However we can introduce a process to monitor progress and effectiveness against our strategic priorities and priority groups throughout the year.

There are currently various methods of analysis and performance measurements available across all agencies encompassing differing cohorts, criteria and time periods.

Therefore a basket of measures will be used to track performance as follows:

### i) National Indicator 18 (NI18) data

Published on a quarterly basis from the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) the NI18 data set covers adult re-offending rates for those under probation supervision.



## ii) Proven Re-offending data

Published on a quarterly basis from the Ministry of Justice, the Proven Re-offending data set covers a variety of cross sections, one of these data tables (Table 13c) provides key statistical information for adult and juvenile re-offending across Kent and Medway.

Integrated Offender Management data will not be used initially as it is currently in development, however we would want to also adopt this method in the future as it would be a clear indication of effectiveness against the primary priority group – see section H for future development work.

We will also include the headline measures for each of the strategic priority interventions as follows:

- Accommodation – % of statutory offenders in accommodation
- Education and Employment - % of statutory offenders in sustainable employment
- Mental and Physical Health - % of statutory offenders registered with a GP
- Substance Misuse - number of statutory offenders being discharged from treatment on completion of all their alcohol and/or drug interventions

It is important to also understand what each of the data sets is telling us in real terms. Higher reconviction rates may not necessarily point directly to greater re-offending but an increased detection rate of crime with more arrests and more crime being identified. This impact on the reducing re-offending rates would therefore need to be identified and accepted as part of the overall work that Kent and Medway are collectively doing to reduce crime across the county. The mechanism behind this and identifying other external influences needs to be more robust and holistic for this multi-agency strategic plan to be effective.

There will be a quarterly review of progress against this basket of performance measures, and this will be used as a check and balance with the annual review of the overall plan.

## G) Accountability

All Community Safety Partnerships have a statutory duty to reduce re-offending, and are required to formulate and implement their own strategies to reduce re-offending for both adults and young people. Because of this, Community Safety Partnerships should be able to demonstrate progress independently against this Strategic Plan. As such Kent's Community Safety Partnerships and Medway's Community Safety Partnership would therefore be accountable for the delivery of this plan. However to drive progress and coordinate delivery of goals and monitoring of performance the current Integrated Offender Management Strategy Board will broaden its remit to become the Reducing Re-offending Strategic Board.

This would allow this plan on a day-to-day basis to sit under that board's remit. The Reducing Re-offending Strategic Board will coordinate an annual 'stock take' against the strategic plan allowing an opportunity to ensure progress is monitored and measured, and areas of improvements can be captured and implemented where necessary. This will also allow a mechanism to communicate any changes of the key priority areas or target groups and enable a shift of focus for reducing re-offending both at a strategic and local level. It will report its findings annually to Kent and Medway's Community Safety Partnerships for decisions and escalations if necessary.

The terms of reference for the new Reducing Re-offending Board will need to be written, and consideration given to whether we need to broaden attendance.

In an effort to reduce duplication, the strategic priorities outlined in this plan that currently have an accountability and annual review process in place will maintain that accountability structure i.e.

**MAPPA** to MAPPA Strategic Management Board

**IOM** to IOMSB (which will become Reducing Re-offending Board)

**Young People** to Youth Justice Council

**Troubled Families** to Community Budget Multi-agency Steering Group

**Domestic Abuse Perpetrators** to Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy Group

Therefore Integrated Offender Management will now be a subgroup of the Reducing Re-offending Board.

The remaining priorities - Women offenders and Anti-social Behaviour Perpetrators could be channelled through the newly formed Reducing Re-offending Strategic Board unless people feel they should be allocated to a more appropriate governance forum.

## H) Future Development Work

The following are future emerging development areas:

- **Payment by Results (PBR):** There are currently a range of Ministry of Justice Payment by Results contracts underway that we could use to understand how best this new delivery model could help us to reduce re-offending
- **Police and Crime Commissioner:** The countywide strategic plan can be the initial understanding for the PCC on what Kent and Medway are doing to reduce re-offending. We also need to consider and understand the implications of the appointment of the new PCC to how we continue to deliver the goals of this plan
- **IOM analysis:** Kent Police and Kent Probation are currently joint funding a research analyst. As we move through the year, this extra research resource can help steer the addition of future target groups e.g hard to reach, diverse groups. It will also refine an IOM performance measure which can be added to the current measures of effectiveness in section F.



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Rescue Service



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