

# **COUNTY LINES AND THE CHALLENGES CONFRONTING HIS MAJESTY'S PRISON AND PROBATION SERVICE (HMPPS)**

A British Academy Funded Project



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# Overview of Project Aims and Findings

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This report is one of three site reports examining responses to County Lines criminal exploitation. County Lines is a criminal business model which involves the 'transportation of illegal drugs, by gangs and organised criminal networks, from one area to another within the UK, using dedicated mobile telephone lines (National Crime Agency, 2017). The decision to provide a separate report on HMPPS was the result of evidence uncovered in our early research that a significant amount of Child Criminal Exploitation emanated from within the Prison Estate and a realisation that there is a paucity of academic research on this phenomenon to guide policy and practice in this field. Our current findings suggest there is a clear need to formulate responses which do not underplay or overplay safeguarding and criminal justice interventions in and beyond the secure estate. The resulting recommendations detailed in this report seek to:

- Equip HMPPS staff to manage the security risk arising from County lines
- Inform the management of County lines offenders who have the potential to cause the highest harms
- Identify how County Lines activity emanating from within the Prison Estate might be effectively disrupted
- Help to reduce harm from illicit drug use in the secure estate
- Build multi-agency resilience and response.

## A SWOT Analysis

In our analysis of how these recommendations might be realised, we undertook a rapid SWOT analysis of the agencies and organisations responsible for containing the problem of CCE within the Prison estate. A SWOT analysis is a strategic planning and management technique used to help a person or organisation identify Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats related to core activities and management. The technique is designed for use in the preliminary stages of decision-making processes and can be used as a tool for evaluation of the strategic position of organisations of many kinds. It is intended to identify the internal and external factors that are favourable and unfavourable to achieving the objectives of the venture or project.

The **STRENGTHS** we observed include a dedicated workforce of committed professionals who are duty-bound by safeguarding policies and guidelines and a growing recognition amongst practitioners and managers of the County Lines brand and County Lines activity, and the dangers this brings.

The **WEAKNESSES** we observed involved the current knowledge and awareness of prison-based professionals of exploitation linked to County Lines drug distribution networks within and beyond the prison. Safeguarding policies for vulnerable adults are in need of updating to include exploitation from County Line distribution networks. Information sharing and intelligence cycles also are in need of further development.

**OPPORTUNITIES** have recently arisen as a result of Dame Carol Black's Independent Review of Drugs and the resulting commitment across the Government to reduce the supply and demand of illicit drugs. In light of this information and concomitant policy development in this area, HMPPS drugs policy needs to be updated with a focus on diversion from custody for drug misusers and a commitment to developing innovative treatments in both the in prison and the community. Reunification of probation could involve innovative community-based partnership approaches to supervision and resettlement of young adults.

The **THREATS** concern the further evolution and integration of prison based gangs into local organised crime networks, revealed in our other two research sites, which have the potential to corrupt prison and probation practices. Moreover, the high turnover of staff at both practice and policy levels threatens the progress made by Project Gand to reduce harm from County Lines exploitation in HMPPS.

## The Recommendations

All the recommendations are highlighted in bold in the **body** of the report. Below is a list of the recommendations made in the order they appear in the report and are not ranked in order of importance.

1. The MOJ should provide additional training to the Judiciary and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) regarding culpability and harm in prosecutions for possession with intent to supply controlled drugs, with a particular focus on potential criminal exploitation. The training should also focus on the benefits of Drug Rehabilitation Requirements (DRRs) and Alcohol Treatment Requirements (ATRs).
2. HMPPS should set national targets to increase the number of DRRs and ATRs supervised by the Probation Service.
3. Probation services should build capacity through Continuous Professional Development (CPD) of staff to enable the assessment and supervision for increased numbers of DRRs and ATRs.

4. Assessments for DRRs and ATRs in Pre-Sentence Reports should routinely include considerations of the HMPPS Adult Safeguarding Policy.
5. Injectable opioid treatments (IOT) should be part of demand reduction interventions in HMPPS drug strategy and should be prescribed for entrenched opiate users as part of individual treatment plans.
6. National Standards for resettlement should be amended to include more frequent Pre-release in-person supervision sessions. We recommend a minimum of 3 in-person supervision sessions in the final three months before handover to the Community Offender Manager, where relevant checks can be made more thoroughly to ensure resettlement packages and licence conditions are applied correctly.
7. Release day should be changed from Fridays to earlier in the week to ensure the availability of any additional services that may be required.
8. Enforcement agencies should prioritise actions against middle managers of drug markets who control the drug supply workforce. These actions should be utilised as a signalling event to send a deterrent message to the broader drug supply network to deter further exploitation (see Appendix 1).
9. On conviction, middle managers who exploit others should be assessed by HMPPS utilising Risk of Serious Harm Guidance.
10. According to the County Lines Information Control and Monitoring system (CLICM), Feltham Youth Offender Institution (YOI) has the highest number of gang nominals; the East and North West regions have the most significant regional footprint; HMP Parc in Wales appears to have the highest number of CL adult prisoners. Therefore these establishments should be prioritised for monitoring and disruption of criminal exploitation.
11. The progress and impact of Project Gand be reviewed by the MoJ and relevant and viable work-streams continue. Specifically, there is an imperative to develop a consistently applied County Lines 'Flag' for nominals which should be applied consistently across HMPPS.
12. HMPPS should develop standardised guidance on definitions of County Lines and criminal exploitation for common application across all criminal justice agencies.
13. HMPPS should initiate an action research process to investigate corrupt practices in prisons regarding the conveyancing of contraband. The research should actively involve stakeholders in the formulation of policy and activities to deter corruption and to critically analyse impacts and to develop place-based solutions to County Lines exploitation in Prisons.
14. Training regarding criminal exploitation of vulnerable adults should be rolled out nationally for Prison Governors and Regional Directors of Probation to assist them in establishing appropriate policies to meet duties of care to safeguard vulnerable adults subject to, or in danger of, criminal exploitation.
15. Focused situational prevention measures should be explored, developed and trialled to detect and block illegal mobile phone signals in prisons.
16. Our previous work suggests that established gangs engaging in crimes requiring a high level of planning and organisation, such as drug brokerage, should be treated as localised organised crime groups (Andell, 2019; Andell, 2023) and associations between prisoners imprisoned for their involvement in the illicit drugs trade should be carefully mapped as part of the effort to disrupt prison-based drug distribution and potential criminal exploitation.

17. HMPPS should ensure that all staff receive continuing professional development to recognise behaviours relating to County Lines drug distribution, criminal exploitation and links to serious organised crime.
18. The various stakeholders involved in intelligence cycles should produce a memorandum of understanding to map how intelligence and information moves between local, regional and national partners to inform deployed actions.
19. Daily Briefings in prisons should return to face-to-face hand-overs and it should be a requirement for all staff to attend briefings at the beginning of each shift. A particular focus of the briefings should be reported on any escalation of risk or harm regarding criminal exploitation.
20. HMPPS should develop the Risk Of Serious Harm (ROSH) policy guidelines mandating practitioners to apply these assessments in all cases where criminal exploitation is identified or suspected.
21. Appropriate application of prevention and risk orders appear to be a promising way to reduce harms and should be applied to deter offenders who are deemed to be a risk of exploiting others. However, similar considerations for Human Rights as with flagging (discussed above) in the application and review of orders should apply.
22. Arrangements for gang affected young adult offenders transitioning into adulthood should be planned in each probation area. The use of multi-agency delivery mechanisms via community hubs should be part of these arrangements.
23. In order to provide wider sources of information from criminal justice and community partners the OASys system should be utilised to input and record factors relevant for assessment and case management and be open to Prison Offender Managers.
24. PQiP (Professional Qualification in Probation) training should ensure that knowledge of partnership working, gangs, criminal exploitation, safeguarding vulnerable adults and serious organised crime, is part of the curriculum for trainees.

# Introduction and Background

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This report is one of three site reports examining the actions and responses to County Lines criminal exploitation. The National Crime Agency (NCA) defines County Lines as:

*a criminal business model which involves the 'transportation of illegal drugs, by gangs and organised criminal networks, from one area to another within the UK, using dedicated mobile telephone lines (NCA, 2018: 1).*

The research was sponsored through the British Academy Innovation Fellowship, our industry partner in obtaining this funding is the Eastern Region Special Operations Unit (ERSOU) and thanks goes to Detective Inspector Kelly Gray for supporting this work. As part of the research project, the Principal Investigator provided CPD training for Criminal Justice personnel and reflective practice sessions to identify gaps in policy and practice as part of an ongoing "action research" process. The study forms part of a co-production of knowledge with stakeholders by exploring understandings and responses to criminal exploitation. The decision to focus a separate report on HMPPS was a practical concern raised by stakeholders regarding the paucity of academic evidence to influence policy and practice in this field. The report focuses on the concerns of personnel from HMPPS regarding the criminal exploitation of vulnerable adults and children.

The organisers of County Lines drug distribution networks use dedicated mobile phone lines to take orders from buyers, and children and vulnerable adults are used to transport, store and deliver the drugs. County Lines organisers may use coercion, intimidation and violence (including sexual violence) to control this workforce.

In the UK, there are few studies examining gangs in prisons. Wood and Adler (2001) provided the first study, which suggested that gang-related activities are common occurrences in English prisons. A Prison Journal special edition suggests the prison gang problem be further acknowledged to enable interventions to curtail prison violence (Horan et al., 2015). In both reports, the reasons reported for gang affiliation in prison centred upon money; protection against victimisation, excitement, belonging, status and respect. Moreover, despite the policy focus on drugs in prisons (HM Gov, 2022), few studies have been undertaken to provide evidence of the nature of drug markets in the secure estate (Crew, 2006; Turnbull et al., 2008; Tompkins, 2016). Tompkins (2016) highlights the importance of understanding the impacts of drug policy, suggesting that supply methods adapt to, and are shaped by, these interventions.

In our accompanying community-based reports, it is argued that some well-established gangs have evolved into what we have termed local organised crime groups. This transition presents policy and practice challenges to disrupt accompanying harmful behaviours. Enforcement interventions have resulted in significant prison sentences for some senior gang members, and it has become apparent that, as a result, the County Lines business model is becoming established in the secure estate, impacting vulnerable adults caught up in the system. The current drugs policy from HMPPS focuses upon supply and demand reduction but was written in 2017 and since then much has changed. Drug supply and distribution methods inside prisons have adapted to accommodate those of the networks on the outside. Recently, Gray (2023) has highlighted issues of criminal exploitation relating to drug markets and County Lines in and from prisons. The current study builds on this work and makes a series of recommendations for HMPPS to reduce harm from criminal exploitation in these markets.

## Methodology

The research proposal was peer-reviewed by subject experts on behalf of the British Academy as part of an Innovation Fellowship Scholarship, the University of Suffolk provided ethical approval for the study. The project team underwent relevant checks with work in the safeguarding and crime fields. A focused literature review regarding gangs, County Lines and drug dealing networks informed the study, which also involved a rapid assessment of available data. In the absence of a substantial body of background research focusing on UK prison gangs to draw upon, the report relies heavily upon the relatively few UK academic studies and policy directives available. Given the sensitive nature of the research data, relatively few respondents had relevant knowledge to participate in interviews. Future research could be improved by involving a wider field of respondents, including those involved in exploitation. Data was collected from 7 semi-structured interviews with those involved in various policy and practice roles, both past and present, in HMPPS. The data collected was anonymised. The views of HMPPS practitioners, which emerged at training events, also clarified aspects of the report. The report draws heavily on data and analysis from 49 semi-structured interviews with respondents in the other two community-based research sites. The findings there, about the development of drug markets and gangs, were compared with data elicited from research respondents involved with the Prison Estate against the emergent themes of subjective viewpoints (experiential themes), experiences (inferential themes) and observations of participants (dispositional themes) from interviews. Thus, research endeavours focused on discovering whether the implicit and explicit beliefs and assumptions (i.e. theories) informing current interventions by HMPPS were valid and, if not, how they might be revamped to reflect an external reality. The following report potentially focuses on further discussion and training with different partners to reduce harm from criminal exploitation.

## Drug Demand Reduction in UK Prisons

In The HMI Prisons Annual Report (2023) commented on the increasing prison population and the conditions in which prisoners are kept:

*Many establishments were overcrowded, with prisoners sharing a small cell designed for one, with a poorly screened lavatory in the corner. In many cells we found insufficient ventilation or broken windowpanes that left prisoners cold in the winter. In the summer heatwaves, the top landings of some older prisons were stifling. With prison population figures only expected to increase, I will be monitoring the impact of overcrowding very closely, not least the effect it has on purposeful activity and time out of cell.*

The above report reveals that there are nearly 3,400 more people in prison since the start of the year and over 5,000 more behind bars compared with June 2022, as the prison population currently approaches 86,000. This expansion has led some to comment that the prison system is facing a capacity crisis. The Prison Reform Trust (2023) argues that one of the reasons for overcrowding is the overuse of prisons for petty and persistent crimes, such as drug misuse. Dame Carol Black's report Part 2 (2021) highlights a reduction in the use of community sentences with drug rehabilitation requirements (DRR) and alcohol treatment requirements (ATR) for drug-dependent offenders. She attributes this to same-day sentencing with no time for full pre-sentence reports and a lack of capacity and capability to supervise community sentences with treatment requirements. In these circumstances, she argues, the judiciary inclines towards short custodial sentences, leading to a pool of vulnerable drug users in prison.



Probation assessment and rehabilitation relies upon a Risk Needs and Response (RNR) model, which is supported by several studies and meta-analyses and has been influential in the development of assessment tools and intervention programmes across jurisdictions, including in England and Wales (Bonita, 2023). The main principles of the model include matching the level of risk to the intensity of intervention, treatment programmes, addressing the needs of clients, matching style and method of treatment to the client's abilities and professional discretion to deviate from set principles under specified circumstances. Principles outlined from the Evidence base of the RNR suggest that services are much more effective when delivered in the community. The model also emphasises the need for a skilled staff group to deliver the model because 'agency' or new staff are rarely versed in the skills demanded by RNR. Given these considerations, we recommend that:

**The MOJ should provide additional training to the Judiciary regarding culpability and harm in cases of prosecutions for possession with intent to supply controlled drugs to consider potential criminal exploitation. The training should also focus on the benefits of DRRs and ATRs.**

**HMPPS should set national targets to increase the number of DRRs and ATRs supervised by the Probation Service.**

**Probation services should build capacity through Continuous Professional Development (CPD) of staff to assess and supervise increased numbers of DRRs and ATRs.**

**Assessments for DRRs and ATRs in Pre-Sentence Reports should routinely include considerations of the HMPPS Adult Safeguarding Policy (see below for further detail).**

Prisoners have significantly higher levels of drug use than the general population, which is related to many underpinning features prior to, during and post-imprisonment (Norman, 2022). According to the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (2023), there were 45,096 adults in alcohol and drug treatment in prisons and secure settings between 1st April 2021 and 31st March 2022. Numbers in treatment had been decreasing year on year until 2023 this year, which saw a 3% increase from the 43,607 reported in 2020 to 2021. Of prisoners starting treatment, 46% said they had a problem with opiate use. Treatment services to reduce demand for illegal drugs in and beyond prisons are essential to harm reduction from illicit drug markets (McSweeney et al., 2002). Wakening & Lynch (2020) summarised a whole system approach to address drug use in prisons arguing:

*...the need to focus on 'recovery capital', and adopting a prison wide approach. Improving and strengthening staff and residents' relationships, a greater use of rehabilitation over a solely punitive stance, better training for staff, a focus on improving procedural justice, and improving communication between staffing groups regarding Substance Misuse Services (SMS) and healthcare services were also recommended.*

The Clinical Guidance on Treatment of Substance Misuse (Department of Health, 2018) recommends a range of psycho-pharmacological interventions to reduce the demand for drugs for prisoners with substance misuse problems. However, maintenance also plays an important part of intervention for more entrenched drug users in the prison estate. The guidance suggests:

*Continued maintenance prescribing in prison, along with plans for seamless follow-up in the community, is usually the most appropriate and evidence-based approach for those with severe dependence in receipt of a short sentence.*

Prisoners with opiate addictions are usually treated with Opioid Replacement Therapies (ORT's), as soon as possible and are usually prescribed methadone and sometimes buprenorphine. Slow-release oral morphine is also said to be reported as useful for patients who that cannot tolerate usual ORTs.



Evidence suggests that injectable opioid treatments (IOT's) of diamorphine (heroin) can significantly assist those who fail to make progress with other interventions to reduce risks (UK Guidelines on Clinical Management, 2017). A community-based pilot IOT project used in resettlement plans for some prisoners in Middlesbrough was commended at the Drugs Home Affairs Committee (2023). Unfortunately, the project has recently closed, primarily due to a lack of funding. One MP who visited the project commented:

*We also visited Middlesbrough and the diamorphine-assisted treatment facility there. Everyone on that visit was impressed with the work it was doing. It was closed, essentially, because it couldn't find funding. I think everyone on this Committee pretty much regrets that. It pretty much leaves England without any of these facilities at all. We have made the case in a letter to you for central pot funding for that type of facility, targeted in areas where it is most needed.*

(Home Affairs Committee, 2023).

It is recognised that the upfront costs of such interventions appear high but evaluative research undertaken by Byford et al. (2013) points to longer-term cost-effectiveness.

The types of drugs used in prisons tend to vary depending upon availability in any given geographical region according to availability (Norman, 2022); however, the use of synthetic cannabinoids (Spice) is acknowledged as a general contemporary drug problem in most prisons. Recent studies report that cannabis use is prevalent among patients who are opioid dependent, and this may be substituted by synthetic cannabinoids (Alias-Ferri et al. 2022). Some of the problems arising from the use of synthetic cannabinoids include poisoning, which can result in hallucinations and acute paranoia, sometimes lead to violent episodes. When mixed with opioids, fatalities can occur due to difficulties in estimating dosage (European Monitoring Centre on Drugs and Drug Addiction, 2018; National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2018). According to Duke (2023), synthetic cannabinoids were implicated in 62 (48%) of 129 non-natural deaths between 2015 and 2020 in English and Welsh prisons. These figures suggest a public health crisis regarding drug use in and after prison release. Such a crisis demands radical solutions. We therefore recommend:

**IOT should be part of demand reduction interventions in the HMPPS drug strategy and should be prescribed for entrenched opiate users as part of individual treatment plans.**

The Clinical Guidance for Drug Treatment (Department of Health, 2018) states:

*Professionals involved in reducing prisoner reoffending and in rehabilitation are encouraged to establish effective working relationships and open channels of communication with substance misuse providers and healthcare staff in custody and in the community to ensure that treatment requirements and conditions are met and that continuity of care arrangements are supported.*

A respondent in our current study mentioned that key workers and Prison Offender Managers had little opportunity to support drug rehabilitation as part of through and aftercare due to poor communication with drug agencies. Resettlement was said to be further complicated by release days usually occurring on Friday's, as this provides little time to resolve potential problems if plans for accommodation and prescriptions were interrupted. It was suggested by some respondents that poor planning could lead to increased risks of exploitation through inappropriate housing choices. Boyd & Andell, (forthcoming) argue:

*The needs of problematic drug users in prison frequently include the need for housing on release as it is suggested that treatment alone will not meet the needs of prisoners undergoing resettlement (Alemagno, 2001). It is argued that homelessness and drug use are closely entwined and drug use is often a factor in exclusion from social housing (Fakhoury, Murray,*

Shepherd & Priebe, 2002). To date, drug users are not listed as a specific category for priority need under the 2002 Housing Act and the overlaps between problem drug use and crime (Bennett & Holloway, 2004) often means there is a “revolving door” back to the secure estate for prisoners released into the community with housing and substance misuse needs as practices between housing, substance misuse agencies and probation are often not sufficiently joined up enough to provide an adequate resettlement package.

One of our respondents commented on a lack of integrated approaches to ensure people leaving prisons do not become vulnerable to exploitation by not having drug treatment. They said:

*I've seen people be like 10 days out of prison saying to me I still don't have my script. Most of them have returned to substance use because they haven't had that continued support through the gate and there was a through the gate scheme and process that was supposed to enhance that. I've never witnessed any real benefit in terms of the through the gate processes. There seems to be a big communication breakdown in that somewhere. But it's really difficult when you see people who are some of the most vulnerable.* (PP 3)

Other respondents mentioned a breakdown in communication between Court Services, and HMPPS regarding Serious Crime Prevention Orders made by which are orders from the Crown Court. These are made if a person has been convicted of a serious offence and is deemed to be likely to re-offend in a similar manner. The Orders place specified restrictions on the defendant, such as where they can live and what kinds of work they may do. They said:

*Some people can be released and the probation officers don't even know they've got a serious crime prevention (SCP) order. And that's not rare. And they've gone through probably five years in custody. Then the SCP gets activated, and it's only probably a year after release they'll get a call from someone and say, do you know he's subject to an SCP and we think he might have breached it? "No, I have no idea". So I think there's definitely areas where that falls down.* (PP 2)

Others mentioned problems with resettlement and opportunities for criminal exploitation. A respondent said:

*But it's about where's that person going? Are they going to be safe? Is there something we need to be putting in place so that doesn't have to be a covert opportunity? That's training offender managers to identify how to conduct what we need as police to effectively make sure that that person doesn't come out and go straight to the nearest drug dealer, or gets wrapped straight back into the same line they're running for. So it's looking about how we can just amend what's probably already happening just to make it a bit more efficient.* (PP 6)

To address some of the challenges in resettlement due to communication breakdown, we suggest that more thorough and consistent liaison should occur between partners to ensure “through the gate” re-entry and resettlement plans are in place for drug dependant and vulnerable prisoners. We recommend that:

**National Standards for resettlement should be amended to include more frequent Pre-release in-person supervision sessions. We recommend a minimum of 3 in-person supervision session in the last 3 months before handover to the Community Offender Manager where relevant checks can be made more thoroughly to ensure resettlement packages and licence conditions are applied correctly.**

**Release day should be changed from Friday's to the earlier in the week to ensure the availability of any additional services that may be required.**

## Gangs in Prisons

Enforcement sweeps in neighbourhood drug markets can bring about temporary respite for affected communities through targeted deterrence (Caulkins & Reuter, 2008) and may also assist potential harm reduction interventions such as enforced Drug Testing and Treatment Orders for those who sustain market demand (Stevens, 2013). However, it is also suggested that enforcement crackdowns in drug markets can have unintended consequences for market stability (Mayhar & Dixon, 1999). Schnider (2013) argues that increased violence can emerge in unstable drug markets. He further suggests violence is most likely to occur from middle managers of the market, who utilise violence to control the distribution workforce and build brutish reputations, which can increase their status and opportunities for employment elevation in the drugs business.

**Enforcement agencies should prioritise actions against middle managers of drug markets who control the drug supply workforce. These actions should be utilised as a “signalling event” to send a deterrent message to the broader drug supply network to deter further exploitation (see Appendix 1).**

**On conviction, middle managers who exploit others should be assessed by HMPPS utilising the Risk of Serious Harm Guidance (see below).**

The relative success of arresting gang associates who supply drugs in gang-affected communities has resulted in the incarceration of a noteworthy number of those involved in County lines drug distribution. At the time of writing, the National County Lines Co-ordination Centre reports there are 2,130 known prisoners serving sentences for County Lines offences (industry partner communication). Recent research (Gray, 2023) also suggests:

- Youth Offender Institution (YOI) Feltham has the highest number of gang nominals on the County Lines Information Control and Monitoring system (CLICM).
- The East and North West regions have the greatest regional footprint.
- HMP Parc in Wales appears to have the highest number of CL prisoners on the CLICM.
- Eastern Regional Serious and Organised Crime Unit currently have 556 people serving sentences for County Lines from the seven forces.
- The largest County Lines footprints are in Category B and C establishments.

**The above establishments should be prioritised for monitoring and disruption of criminal exploitation.**

Respondents in community sites describe opportunistic restructuring of drug markets at the street level following enforcement interventions. However, it was also noted that there were few changes to the overall County Lines business model. It was reported that drug availability, price and purity tended to remain consistent and that named dominant gangs had become more entrenched, remaining active in drug distribution. This stability suggests that key figures in organisational succession by the dominant gangs remain influential despite their even following imprisonment of gang elders. Maitra (2023) argues:

*...that the values learnt by gang members on ‘the street’ were often transplanted into prison, and there were, therefore, parallels between the composition of many of the region’s street and prison gangs.*

When asked about continuing communications between gang members in prison and those on the outside, one respondent said:

*They use pin phones to direct it through a third party which they're not permitted to do but they'll say as much in code as they can but it's often quite transparent. They will say can you tell \*\*\*\*\* this specific message and that would be something that the third parties then get to pass on via Snapchat.* (PP1)

Moreover, the incarceration of gang members can result in the importation of community gang conflicts or “beefs” to prison and probation environments. These conflicts can provide risk management problems for prison and probation staff. One respondent said:

*The difficulty with xxxx (local prison) is a lot of the prisoners and a lot of the staff are all brought together because it's such a local environment. And so, they may have some conflict from the community in terms of who knows them from the local area.* (PP 3)

The same respondent outlined conflicts that may occur in prisons between rival gang members competing for control of prison drug markets. They explained:

*So if I'm boss man on a wing and you move to a wing, you might be just as equally important in the community as me. But if I've already got the cannabis supply covered off on a wing and most of the prison we're either going to work together, if we get along, but if there's a bit of a rub in the community there's no chance you're touching cannabis because that's my business in here. So if you start coming in with cannabis, we're gonna have a problem.* (PP 3)

One respondent described how the prison system allocates known gang members to different wings. Often wings are colour-coded according to indicate where particular gang members can be accommodated to minimise the risk of conflict with others. However, this process depends on accurate, up-to-date knowledge of current conflicts, which is not always known, available or shared. One respondent mentioned that associations in prison could provide opportunities for new alliances and drug business opportunities that may have negative impacts both in prison and in the community. They said:

*Quite often, in prison, gangs that would never get on the outside will get on in prison. Whether it's for a common purpose, or it just so happens they might end up associating together. So then criminal networks come together, and it might be that when they come out they'll never speak to each other again, or they form a criminal network. So we almost create a new gang within the prison, because we're saying, well, actually these can mix on this wing.* (PP 6)

Waquant (2002), writing about gangs in the US, describes the process of importation of gang life from the neighbourhood to the prison and prison life to the neighbourhood as a “deadly symbiosis”, which consists of the ghettoisation of the prison and the prisonisation of the ghetto. Maitra (2023) argues that gang membership in prison can provide a source of camaraderie and protection. One of our community respondents who works with young people confirmed this. They said:

*I've got one inside at the minute, I'm not too worried about his safety as he is on a wing with others he knows.* (ERP L9)

However, safety and protection come at a cost. As Maitra (2023) attests, the principal way of ensuring safety is by the external signifying one's of hyper-masculine potential for violence. This he suggests, is achieved through attacking rivals or by violent retribution recriminations for breaches of security or loss of face internally or externally to the gang. Prisons are often noted to be risky and violent environments, often governed through diffuse mechanisms of staff and prisoner cooperation, often

appearing to, to establish an informal status quo which “keeps the peace” but in practice negotiating or demanding adjustments to these rules to but may sometimes have to accommodate illegal enterprises (Crew, 2006). One respondent said:

*We had information that there was a knife on the wing, and despite numerous and regular cell searches, we could not find it. We were approached by quite a well-respected long-term prisoner who said he could solve our problem if normality was restored. Within two hours, he knocked on my office door with the knife.* (PP 2)

The prevalence of reported weapon finds in prisons appears to be increasing. Inside Time (2022) reports on figures disclosed by Prisons Minister Damian Hinds. He indicated 8,057 finds of weapons in prisons in 2021/22, up 12 per cent from the previous year's total. Around half were classed as a “knife/ bladed article”, a quarter were “blunt instruments” and a quarter were other kinds of weapons. It was further revealed that firearms were found in prisons on 26 occasions during the 12 months to March 2022, the highest annual figure for at least five years. In the previous four years, between 15 and 21 firearms were found. During our fieldwork, a local prison serving one of our research sites was locked down following intelligence that a gun had been smuggled into the prison (Roffe, 2023).

According to HM Government data sources on prison safety (2023), recorded prisoner-on-prisoner assaults have increased from 123 per 1,000 prisoners in 2012 to 174 per 1,000 prisoners in 2022, and prisoner assaults on staff have increased from 38 per 1,000 prisoners to 90 per 1,000 prisoners. A recent staff satisfaction survey was conducted for the House of Commons Justice Committee to understand why high numbers of prison officers are leaving the prison service. The survey elicited responses from 6,582 staff and revealed that most staff working in Male Category A and B prisons and YOIs felt reported feeling unsafe at their prison.

The recent HMI of Prisons Annual Report (2023) mentioned high levels of violence, particularly in reception prisons, and that these were associated with drug markets. It reported that:

*Staff working in reception prisons often told me that they felt safer than they had before the pandemic when the unstemmed flow of drugs resulted in exceptionally high levels of violence. Rates of violence, however, continued to be too high with assaults on staff a serious problem in many prisons.*

Violence in prisons related to gangs and drug markets is recognised in Government Policy. The Serious Violence Strategy (2018) states:

*Harmful group behaviour, gangs and serious and organised crime has a negative impact on prisons as well as the wider community. Similarly, drug use and the related debts are significant factors contributing to violence and exploitation in prisons. We will take forward work across Government Departments and other partners to tackle the problems caused by gangs and drugs in prisons. By sharing intelligence about crime groups, we can identify prisoners who are gang members or those prisoners who are susceptible to becoming a victim of gang-related violence.*

This strategic aim is laudable, but from interview data, there appear to be gaps in awareness of exploitation linked to drug dealing by HMPPS staff. One respondent told us:

*They don't ever see the county lines offence. They don't ever see that someone could be there (prison) just purely because they were moving drugs around for an individual. So the biggest problem in prisons is that no one is recognised as a victim.* (PP 2)



Recently the Ministry of Justice set out a work program through Project Gand (2022) to effectively share intelligence to support local, regional and national responses to gangs and County Lines in the secure estate. This work included a stream to flag nominals with links to County Lines on intelligence and information systems. To date, there is not a consistent mechanism for HMPPS systems to identify nominals through intelligence flags on systems. One respondent said:

*Gang-related offences, or gang nominals are not routinely flagged within the criminal justice system and even when they are, information is not routinely shared. In prison, levels of violence and weapons that are associated with gangs are increasing. Without accurate systems for information gathering or staff who are knowledgeable about the context of what may appear as isolated prison offences or breaches of rules, we can't move forwards.* (PP 1)

Another respondent mentioned safeguarding and risk management difficulties without identification through a flagging system. They said:

*How can you manage someone when you, effectively don't know their background. But we can't get on this mark because we've not been able to flag that information effectively through the criminal justice system.* (PP 6)

One of the issues in flagging County Lines victims and offenders is that there is currently no statutory definition of criminal exploitation associated with County Line's drug dealing. The current research project has had evidence accepted for the Human Trafficking Committee recommending a statutory amendment. The same respondent above mentioned the difficulties arising from different definitions deployed between agencies. They said:

*So HMPPS I think has their own county lines definition or I think we've changed their minds now, but I never get it when there's national definitions (NCA) out there. It's just that they seem to have their own guidance.* (PP 6)

Another respondent mentioned developing a system for recording flags through Project Gand. They mentioned that flags would be helpful on the Probation Service information systems of nDELIUS and NOMIS. They said:

*There is currently no consistent mechanism on HMPPS systems to identify that a nominal has links to County Lines criminality. As part of Project GAND, we work with the nDELIUS Service Team and the HMPPS Digital Lead NOMIS to develop a County Lines 'Flag' for nominals. Key principles and processes will be mapped out and communicated across the National Intelligence Unit (NIU) and wider HMPPS front line staff which will include criteria for activation, justification and deactivation.* (PP 4)

The flagging of gang nominals on databases can be controversial as practices may involve unfair discrimination relating to racism in their application and review (Andell, 2023). Disproportionate representation of minoritised communities has been discussed in our accompanying community report (Palmer, 2023). Therefore, reasoned decisions about how practices and reviews may impact Human Rights should be a primary concern. Specifically, the Right to Liberty (Article 5) and the Right to Privacy and a Family Life (Article 8) should be given particular attention. A Guide to the Human Rights Act (British Institute of Human Rights, ndg) explains some of the issues of disproportionality. They state:

*It requires public body decision-makers to consider the individual's circumstances; choose the least restrictive option; and make a reasoned decision, including why they consider the restriction on human rights to be justifiable. There must also be a 'fair balance' between the individual's rights and the interests and rights of others (e.g. public safety).*

All work streams from the Ministry of Justice which undergo regulatory framework review and a cost-benefit analysis should form part of decision-making (HM Treasury, 2022). At the time of writing, allocated funding for Project Gand appears to have ended and uncertainty was expressed regarding the continuation of its work.

**We recommend that the progress and impact of Project Gand be reviewed by the MoJ and relevant and viable work-streams continue. Specifically, there is an imperative to develop a consistently applied County Lines ‘Flag’ for nominals which should be applied consistently across HMPPS.**

**HMPPS should develop standardised guidance on definitions of County Lines and criminal exploitation for common application across all criminal justice agencies.**

## County Lines Criminal Exploitation In and From Prisons

A respondent expressed their concerns regarding the criminal exploitation of vulnerable people in prison. They said:

They might be in prison as a completely vulnerable person and be recruited back into County Lines. When we talk to County Lines offenders they tell us we put them all on the same wing, we give the head of the line their runners because they’ve gone to prison with them, and then they send their runners out to organise County Lines within the prison wings. They only need to a room and a phone. We provide them a room, they get a phone and they’re running that enterprise while they’re in prison.

(PP 6)

According to Tompkins (2016) the two main modes of drug supply to prisons are “established enterprises”, which are profit-driven and conducted by organised networks, and “separate enterprises”, which are more opportunistic and exchange-based. Norman (2022), conducted a systematic review of international literature on drug supply in prisons and suggests three main types of drug supply in prisons: “enterprises”, “individual suppliers”, and “social sharing”. Depending on opportunity structures for supply and the breadth of demand, individual suppliers are less likely to sustain their activities drug enterprises because most drug enterprises sources of supply in prisons are operated as commercial enterprises, and these appear to involve gangs increasingly. One of our respondents referred to some of the organised pathways via which drugs are imported and transported into prisons. They said:

*Drugs are sold on a daily basis, hourly probably, mostly spice. That was the easiest thing to get in, because they could just spray pieces of paper and then staff can bring it in. Or it can be thrown around in a tennis ball, thrown into the prison like that. In the end they got a bit more savvy and used drones overnight to bring it in, but then they’ve got to organise pick up locations and things like that.*

(PP 4)

Another confirmed the current challenges of drug supply to prisons. They said:

*Throw-overs are common, drone activities are increasing, staff corruption, postal, it’s various different access points and I know that some prisons have lots of ongoing operations where they’re able to target such activity and intervene and disrupt such activity but then there are prisons that are struggling due to the sheer amount of activity that’s going on. We get intelligence we can try and disrupt throw-overs and pick up the packages but very rarely can the receiver be identified.*

(PP 6)



Prison drug markets can be lucrative. Turnbull et al. (2005) report that drugs in prison cost four times more than on the outside. Given the opportunities for large profits and the involvement of organised crime, attempts at corrupting criminal justice officials are inevitable. The Ministry of Justice (2022) issued the Counter Corruption and Reporting Wrongdoing Policy Framework to address such practices. The framework states

*HMPPS' efforts to tackle corruption are integral to deliver a safe and secure prison and probation service for the community, prisoners, supervised individuals and staff. Corruption in prisons facilitates the flow of drugs, mobile phones and other illicit items into prisons. These, in turn, fuel violence, debt and the illicit economy. Corruption puts the safety of prisoners, supervised individuals, visitors and staff in prisons at risk. Corruption in probation enables criminality, undermines the rehabilitation process and increases risk to the public.*

The majority of HMPPS staff are dedicated and hard-working. However, corruption of staff is not unheard of and appears to be increasing. In a recent question to the Secretary of State for Justice, the number of investigations and convictions for the conveyance of drugs by staff was published (20th June 2023). 39 officers were investigated in 2019, with seven arrested, but no charges were brought. In 2022, 197 officers were investigated, 24 were arrested, and seven were charged. For non-prison officer staff 2019, 31 were investigated, ten were arrested, and five were charged.

One respondent explained that prisoners are continually approaching staff to convey drugs. They said:

*Some of them probably have hundreds of thousands from their dealings outside so they can pay. Even offering ourselves as staff to bring things in, they say, it's only a little pouch I'll give you 6K for it, and some people do... there was two people caught and picked up by the police through random searches this morning. I had a good friend that I trained with who went to prison for 18 months. Because six months in, nine months in, he was caught bringing things in... Perhaps they've convinced themselves it was going to be a one off, and then they get trapped ...I would assume, they threaten you in any way they need to, because they got nothing to lose in prison. So that's what happened with that man. He said that they threatened his wife and kids in a parking lot.*

(PP 4)

Specific concerns were raised regarding private facilities inexperienced officers, and funding. A respondent said:

*We have quite a high staff turnover in custody with private prison officers and the high staff turnover, you know it means that you get a lot of brand new officers who are not experienced and therefore, you know, the greener the officer the more likely they're going to, maybe unwittingly, participate in certain activities and things, so it's difficult there's a lot of funding issues which is a much wider discussion I feel.*

(PP 1)

According to United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2019), corruption in the public sector is a complex issue and can take many forms. Amongst others, some of the reasons suggested as causes for corruption include:

*Wages: Low wages and the resulting poverty in the public sector are also believed to contribute to corruption in some countries.*

(Tanzi, 1998)

And

*Failure of governance: Shah (2006) argues that public sector corruption results from a failure of governance. Poor governance can arise from low quality public sector management, a lack of accountability, poor relations between the government and citizens, a weak legal framework,*

*a lack transparency regarding public sector processes, and poor dissemination of information. A lack of competence and capacity due to inadequate training also contributes to failure of governance.*

We were informed that HMPPS is currently developing comprehensive work-streams to address corruption. UNODC (2019) suggests that stakeholder participation should be part of an anti-corruption strategy.

**We recommend that HMPPS initiate an action research process to investigate corrupt practices in prisons regarding the conveyancing of contraband. The research should actively involve stakeholders in the formulation of policy and activities to deter corruption.**

A Government press release reported on contraband in prisons (2023). Since July 2020, 28,626 suspicious items have been identified by new prison X-ray body scanners. Once on the inside, drugs are distributed in prisons, often by drug-dependent inmates who are usually paid in drugs (Dillon, 2001). The vulnerability of adults involved in drug distribution is only slowly becoming recognised. According to Hansard (2023) the Victims and Prisoners Bill 2023 is making its way through the parliamentary process and sets out definitions for Child Criminal Exploitation in statute:

*Child criminal exploitation' means conduct by which a person manipulates, deceives, coerces or controls a person under 18 to undertake activity which constitutes a criminal offence.*

This definition may assist in child safeguarding interventions. However, the Bill does not define adult criminal exploitation, which can be particularly relevant in the prison environment. A respondent mentioned the challenges involved in improving the recognition of vulnerability and victimisation of prisoners. They said:

*Up-skilling with prison staff is quite an uphill struggle to change cultural assumptions. There's a lot of leadership values that we have to change. It's that information-sharing intelligence cycle, trusting each other, partnership work in that collaborative piece. If we don't share information, we're not going to be able to safeguard that person or even convict that person without the relevant information. Up-skilling and that intelligence circle has been quite a challenge, still is... we provide a lot of data every month to HMPS, but we still don't get anything back.* (PP 6)

Another respondent said:

*I've sat in front of Number 1 Governors, with cases of debts and everything else and said, do you realise that some people here could be in an exploitative situation? They have responded, no, no, no they are drug dealers. To convince people of governor grade and officers on wings is difficult. Drug dealers, that's all they see and that provides barriers to recording and information sharing regarding gang- related problems in prisons.* (PP 2)

**Training regarding criminal exploitation of vulnerable adults should be rolled out nationally for Prison Governors and Regional Directors of Probation to assist them in setting appropriate policies to meet the duty of care to safeguarding vulnerable adults subject to or in danger of criminal exploitation.**

Often drug dependency in prisons can result in accrued debt; this situation can quickly develop into debt bondage as a form of Modern Slavery. Previous studies of drug markets in prisons have highlighted debt-related violence linked to illicit markets (Turnbull et al., 2005). The recent Government White Paper on Prisons (MOJ 2021) recognises some of the impacts of drug markets in prisons, particularly from accrued debt. Community gang members control techniques through debt (Andell & Pitts, 2017). It is reported that similar control techniques are deployed in prison. For example,

when a vulnerable prisoner arrives on a new wing, they may be informed that the cell they have moved into has an outstanding debt from the previous occupant and the new arrival has inherited that debt. This racket is known as a “cell debt” scam. Debts can be repaid by working in drug delivery, testing new batches of imported drugs or using bank accounts to store, transfer and launder money from the drugs trade. In more extreme cases, families are threatened to coerce them to carry drugs into prison. Gray (2023) reports:

*Prison and probation practitioners have identified growing concerns regarding violence, vulnerability and exploitation linked to gangs and county lines in the secure estate. Frontline practitioners report that debts within prisons are utilised as a means of control in modern slavery (Home Office 2017). Cell Debt extortion scams are sometimes used to control more vulnerable prisoners. Therefore information regarding perpetrators and victims needs to be retained and shared in a more systematic way.*

The Prisons Strategy, White Paper( MOJ, 2021) reports that:

*Safety in prisons is constantly undermined by the presence of drugs, the trade of prescription medicine and other aspects of the illicit economy, which push prisoners into a cycle of debt. This system is often violently self-policed, including enforcing debt and ‘turf wars’ over lucrative markets, leading to assaults on staff and causing pressures which can lead to self-harm or even suicide.*

The Chief Inspector of Prison’s Annual Report (2023) refers to drug-related violence in prisons and YOIs.

*HM Prison and Probation Service has worked hard to reduce the supply of drugs, with better gate security, use of dogs and technology, meaning the risk of a return to pre-pandemic levels of violence is lower. The challenge for governors, the prison service and ministers must be to increase significantly activities on offer while maintaining good levels of control and safety.*

Norman (2022) suggests that:

*Reducing the availability of drugs in prison can lead to a reduction in the drug use of prisoners but requires knowledge of the different drug smuggling routes and adequate security measures. The main smuggling routes identified in the literature are through visitors; mail; prisoners on reception, remand, or work release; staff; and perimeter throw-overs, but they differ between prisons depending on various contextual factors and security measures in place.*

The current UK 10-year Drug Action Plan (2021) foregrounds prison supply reduction. However these aims are thought to be achievable mainly through generic techno-prevention (body scanners) at the prison gate. Despite recent investments in these types of preventative measures, drug supply continues to be a problem. The HMPPS Annual Report on Prisons (2023) observes that:

*Most prisons had a good understanding of their main security threats and benefited from major investment in technology, such as body scanners and airport-style security systems, to tackle the entry of illicit articles and combat staff corruption. Despite this, the availability of drugs and mobile phones continued to be a significant problem that led to prisoner debt and violence.*

Generalised situational prevention measures may be useful in the short term to deter individual opportunistic suppliers. However, organised enterprises tend to operate by designating supply to dispensable vulnerable associates, who, in some cases, are coerced into participation (Tompkins, 2016).

Mobile phone technology is key to the County Line drug dissemination model in and from prison. One respondent mentioned the lucrative trade in mobile phones smuggled into prisons, prices vary were said to range but a standard used phone can was said to fetch in the region of £5,000. Another respondent confirmed the centrality of illegal mobile phones to the organisation of the drug business outside of the prison. They said:

There's a lot of mobile phones which were used to orchestrate things outside. For the throw overs and things. So phones had a direct link with the drug network, I think as well. (PP 4)

Internet technology is also utilised to exploit children from prisons via Snapchat. One respondent said:

*So I've seen offenders who are in custody who have maybe a list of 20 to 30 Snapchat usernames which are mostly linked to children so they have access to Internet capable devices in custody and are still managing to kind of communicate effectively.* (PP 1)

Other respondents commented on the control of young people from prisons utilising social media from illegal smart phones. One respondent said:

*I've seen it (social media) used in logistics as a way to communicate with children. I've specifically seen that with vulnerable children who are known to children's social services when they get given phones, it's the first thing they download, they're all on Snapchat with various different usernames. Some of them will have multiple accounts and it's something that I've seen quite a bit when linked to child exploitation in child trafficking and county lines.* (PP 7)

Another said:

*From some of the illicit mobile phones that we find in our establishments, in the downloads, we have phone data. From that we've had many instances where we're seeing examples of people organising for people to be assaulted, people to be targeted. So I've seen instances of prisoners saying I need you to recruit a 16 year old to work for us.* (PP 2)

Even a cursory internet search of YouTube or Snapchat will find videos of illegal phone and drug use in UK prisons. When asked about blocking signals to illegal phones, respondents were doubtful that the technology to target these phones was available. situational prevention measures. Respondents expressed concern regarding interference with domestic signals, particularly in inner-city establishments. However, the University of Suffolk Cyber Security Group suggests focused preventative technology exists to block phone signals and this technology could be applied to prison environments without risking broader interference (see Appendix 2).

**Focused situational prevention measures should be explored, developed and trialled to detect and block illegal mobile phone signals in prisons.**

Situational preventative measures form only one strand of multi-modal strategic approaches to address drug markets (Andell and McManners 2002). Further knowledge of the context of prison drug markets need to be known to target effective interventions. To focus interventions, intelligence data needs to be collected systematically, analysed methodically and then utilised for protecting the vulnerable by tasking disruptions. Several respondents reported that HMPPS staff lacked professional curiosity regarding County Lines exploitation. One said:

*As you know, County Lines isn't a specific offence, it's a methodology. So most of the County Lines related offenders are in for Possession With Intent to Supply (PWITS). Occasionally they may get pushed through as a Modern Slavery case, but obviously as we know, prisoners avoid that because they don't want that on their record when they come into prison, so they'll take the*

*lesser option, which is Possession With Intent to Supply, and that's all the prison sees. Prisoners, prisons and prison staff will never recognise that victim-perpetrator thing, they don't ever see that someone could be there just purely because they were moving drugs around for an individual. So the biggest problem within prisons is that no one is a victim.* (PP 2)

Gray (2023) describes the ways women and children are coerced into conveying drugs into prison. Sometimes they share their bank details between several prisoners who will use it to launder the proceeds from prison drug markets. She also notes that some offenders deliberately re-offend to be imprisoned in, or be moved around, the prison system to conduct drug business.

Wakening and Lynch (2020), in their Ministry of Justice report, suggest that it would be worthwhile for future research to explore the impact of County Lines on the supply side of drugs in prisons.

**We recommend an action research project to hear the voices of stakeholders, including offenders and victims, to analyse impacts critically and to develop place-based solutions to County Lines exploitation in prisons.**

## **Gangs and Local Organised Crime: Information sharing**

Our accompanying community reports chart the evolution and overlaps between entrenched County Lines gangs and Organised Crime. We highlight some of the difficulties with topology and definition that create barriers to effective disruption and have suggested a more integrated strategy which treats embedded County Line gangs as “local organised crime groups” (Andell, 2019). The evolution of some gangs towards organised criminal networks on the outside of the prison is likely to be amplified by experiences and associations in prison.

Pearson et al (2001) in their Home Office study of drug “middle markets” commented on the importance of the prison in making new connections and forming networks beyond current spheres of influence. They argue that prison-based connections should not be ignored and that research should occur to enable better network mapping. They argue:

*One final possibility would be a network analysis of how the experience of imprisonment contributes to the development of an individual's expertise and cross-regional contacts in terms of the development of drug distribution systems. The importance of prison in generating drug networks was so much of an undercurrent in our research that we suggest that an investigation of this phenomenon could yield valuable data concerning the proliferation of knowledge contacts and pragmatic skills and competencies beyond the local parameters within which most crime networks are perceived to operate. We suggest that, after consultations with law enforcement personnel and immersion in specific cases, researchers could then interview offenders with a view to tracing the trajectories of individual careers and the dynamics of illegal enterprise.*

The opportunities for developing new criminal networks in prison were confirmed by a respondent in this study. They said

*I think people connect quite well in establishments, nominals from different areas can co-operate. So if we look at xxxx prison, for example. xxxx is an estate where sentenced prisoners would go to from the local area. So you might get people going in from Norwich or Bedford and Chelmsford when they're sentenced. But we also have a lot of transfers from across the country that can come into xxxx. So you might for example, sit in xxxx with someone who's a quite high profile nominal in Liverpool who transfers to xxxx, who doesn't really know anyone in xxxx so to speak. He's got a reputation, but he hasn't got the local connections in xxxx to organise throw-*



overs or other conveyancing routes. But if he makes friends with the right associates in xxxx, who are local lads, who are from Bedford or Luton, or Norwich, they can enable that to happen. Then those businesses can combine or they may never see each other again once they leave prison. (PP 2)

Breuer & Varece (2023) argue that the organisational structure of trade-based organised crime groups differ from governance-type groups, (those that wish to govern space) in as much as structure depends on aims and the line of business of the group. If the aim is to sell drugs in prison, relationships can be short-lived. However, if more established networks wish to expand into other areas to govern existing markets, local connections can be made in prison.

**Our previous work has suggested that more established gangs engage in organised criminal behaviours such as drug brokerage and therefore established gangs should be treated as localised organised crime groups (Andell, 2019; Andell, 2023) and associations in prisons should be carefully mapped as such for intelligence on how to disrupt potential criminal exploitation.**

Information sharing between community and prison settings is further discussed in the Probation section below. Intelligence and information sharing in the secure estate was reported as problematic. One respondent explained that any staff member can submit an intelligence report to the prison intelligence system, Mercury, which is then analysed and if appropriate, triaged and escalated for action by an analyst. They said:

*So, the process is you submit intelligence onto Mercury and anybody can do who is part of the prison service. So anybody who even visits prison for the day, or whoever can go onto the homepage and submit intelligence and you just put the context of your report in, and you can select that yourself, whether it's a standard report or if it's a corruption element report. And then that is sent to the establishment that you are making that report about and then, every day usually, establishments go through a triage process, the collators and the analysts at the prison will look at all of the reports that were submitted. And then certain reports that meet certain criteria can trigger a triage system.* (PP 1)

Our community reports identified a lack of analytical capacity nationally. However, despite capacity issues, respondents report some excellent practices in recognising and sharing gang-related exploitation information. However, much was said to be dependent on individual staff experience. One respondent said:

*Again it's real local pockets of good practice, but in my experience it's all dependent on who the people are that are working in those roles. It often relies on personalities rather than processes. For some of those things to work and that's why you see really good pockets of good practice locally where people have been doing that for some significant amount of time or they've got the right connections, they know the right people.* (PP 1)

There is on-going training for HMPPS staff through local and national training events. However, this tends to occur in a piecemeal fashion and largely depends on the commitment of overstretched practitioners and policymakers or through the provision of expensive conferences. Moreover, attendees at these events tend to be self-selecting, interested professionals opting to expand their knowledge. Part of the Ministry of Justice's previous work programme in County Lines was to support HMPPS staff in building their knowledge and skills to address local County Lines threats and risks. Unfortunately, this work programme was time bound and the future of HMPPS staff development in this field now appears less certain.

HMPPS should utilise network analysis to map associations to monitor and disrupt County Lines activities. Unfortunately, current systems to enable this kind of intelligence development is not always available or uniformly applied. One respondent mentioned difficulties when overlaps occur between County Line's drug distribution activity, County Lines exploitation of vulnerable people and mapping of organised crime activity:

*We do give the prison a list of County Lines nominals, and 20% of them are serious organised crime (SOC) offenders. Do SOC units know that they're County Lines related, those that are in for peewits (possession with intent to supply) offences? Do we know that there were aggravating factors of exploiting children? Probably not. So for us it's about feeding in that this person's a perpetrator likely to exploit others when they're in prison or this person was actually clearly exploited.* (PP 6)

**The Ministry of Justice should ensure that all HMPPS staff receive free continuing professional development to enable them to contextualise behaviours relating to County Lines drug distribution, criminal exploitation and links to serious organised crime.**

Some respondents mentioned issues with HMPPS intelligence cycles. Not only is there a need for increased practitioner awareness to assist recognition of gang-related problems which are exploitative or activities which constitute organised crime, but there is also a need for improved processes to enable better information flows, allowing stakeholders to act on intelligence promptly. One respondent mentioned a uni-directional flow of intelligence which prevents timely local action. They said:

*Local prisons have a security briefing once a month and they have to put together a local tactical assessment which is presented at the local tactical briefing the following week. So on Week 1 you have the local tactical assessment, which then goes to regional intelligence and then it's presented at the local tactical briefing on Week 2. So it's about everything that happened in the past. So, potentially, you might have had a couple more throw-overs or a couple more things happened. So the local tactical assessment, which they prepare then goes to the National Intel Unit, who then collate all that into a regional tactical assessment to say these are our threats in the region. This then goes up to all the Senior people within HMPPS and it never comes back down to the prison staff again.* (PP 2)

Difficulties with intelligence cycles were also mentioned by other partners external to HMPPS, who mentioned significant limitations placed upon their ability to estimate risks which emanate from prisons, regionally or nationally. They said:

*We're pumping information in. It's still not coming out because of a lack of information sharing through the MoJ. It's like regional, it's all different and we were kind of hoping when we started throwing the tactical assessments in, things would change, but we're still in that position of we don't know who's going to deal with the data and how it's going to be managed and how they can effectively feed out national and regional crime trends to us. We're not asking for personal information, we need to know what our risk is.* (PP 6)

Another respondent mentioned that actions were often taken without full intelligence. They said:

*So intelligence should drive the operational activity that targets what we're trying to target and then it feeds back round into the intelligence cycle and what we often see is tactical responses and operational responses are deployed, or they make their own decisions and do things without that firm intelligence basis to back it up.* (PP 2)



**The various stakeholders involved in intelligence cycles should produce a memorandum of understanding to map how intelligence and information move between local, regional and national partners to inform deployed actions.**

At a practice level on prison wings, information sharing between prison officers and offender managers is guided by national standards and data protection. Expectations of multi-agency management of risk require good information flows. However, respondents said it was common to have policies to prevent prison officers who have daily contact with prisoners from knowing the background of inmates. This practice was said to ensure equity of service delivery. One respondent said that sentence plans for rehabilitation were rarely shared, but thought they should be. They said:

*I never actually saw, possibly once, an actual sentence plan physically. Unless the prisoner gave it to me and said, look, this is what they expect of me. If there is some shared system to say this is the goal for them to achieve in prison, etcetera. Then we could have tried to influence them from our side.*

(PP 4)

Daily briefing meetings are systems for information exchange and provide opportunities to reinforce behavioural changes at an operational level. However, in practice, these meetings were said to be poorly attended and often not in-person. A respondent said:

*Officially, there's supposed to be a 15 minute briefing before you start where your line manager is briefing the team in person. This is what's going to happen today, It just became the email that got sent out. You don't always have the time to read the e-mail, and it could be quite lengthy and you've got to unlock and then you don't get around to reading it and a lot of the time it wasn't relevant for you to read anyway.*

(PP 4)

**Daily Briefings in prisons should return to face-to-face hand-overs and it should be a requirement for all staff to attend briefings at the beginning of each shift. A particular focus of the briefing should be reported on any escalation of risk or harm regarding criminal exploitation.**

HMPPS Risk of Serious Harm Policy (2020) states:

*They may also be people encountered under specific circumstances, such as staff and/or other prisoners or a particular motivation, such as exploitation that results in a broader risk to the public and strangers.*

Probation and Prison staff are therefore required to exercise "professional curiosity" in escalating any concerns. They should exercise an "investigative approach", which according to the policy, includes monitoring and asking partners for updates. Controls are recommended to reduce the risk of harm and these are said to include custody restrictions and licence conditions.

**HMPPS should develop the Risk Of Serious Harm (ROSH) policy guidelines mandating practitioners to apply these assessments in all cases where criminal exploitation is identified or suspected.**

## **Risk and Prevention Orders**

Civil orders are available in County Lines investigations which also apply in the secure estate. Many respondents we spoke to suggested that civil orders available under the Modern Slavery Act (2013) were a useful way to control people wishing to criminally exploit others and protect vulnerable people from being exploited.

The main civil orders are Slavery & Trafficking Prevention Orders (STPOs) and Slavery and Trafficking Risk Orders (STROs), which enable courts to restrict the activities of individuals believed to be at risk of modern slavery offending. It was argued by some that if these were also placed on those who

were exploited then they would become “too hot to handle” for the organisers of the drug lines. The National County Lines Coordination Centre (NCLCC) ‘Orders Team’ assist and advise on the appropriate use and application for these orders. The Orders Team review investigations and advise on charging for modern slavery offences. It was reported in practice guidelines (Mulholland, 2023. Unpublished) that:

*In county lines and drugs investigations, we frequently see clear signs of exploitation, often of young and vulnerable people, and civil orders can be a really useful way of protecting those being exploited and restricting the activities of suspected or known criminals.*

Practice guidelines state:

*The standard of proof required for such orders is an enhanced civil standard of proof, like the criminal standard of proof of being sure beyond a reasonable doubt. STPOs can be made on convicted or cautioned people who have previously been involved in slavery or human trafficking offending, or equivalent offences, abroad. STROs can be made on those at risk of offending, where an order is considered necessary to protect against the risk of harm to others from the defendant committing the offence. It is suggested that they could be considered a risk management tool for suspects presenting a criminal exploitation risk to others. Unlike a STPO, they do not require a conviction or a failed conviction. In addition, Interim orders can be applied for if the decision on the application has not yet been determined. Interim STROs can be used as an additional management tool during ongoing criminal investigations in addition to, or as alternative to, bail conditions.*

**Appropriate application of Prevention and Risk Orders appears to be a promising way to reduce harms and should be applied to deter offenders who are deemed to be a risk of exploiting others. However, similar considerations for Human Rights as with flagging (discussed above) in the application and review of orders should apply.**

## County Lines Exploitation and Probation.

The Probation Service has undergone a number of significant reorganisations in a relatively short period of time. The recent Transforming Rehabilitation reforms, introduced in 2013, created a two-tier organisational structure (effectively private and public) which has been the focus of sustained critiques (Millings et al., 2023). However, In June 2020, it was reported that the probation service would reunify, marking a reversal of the privatisation experiment (op cit, 2023). During this time, not only had the internal world of probation changed, but so had the external world of offending and victimisation. The blurring of boundaries between the victim/perpetrator distinction (Murphy, 2022) has been brought into sharp relief by gang-related offending and County Lines criminal exploitation. The reality of gangs has provided conceptual challenges to the accepted wisdom of young adult offending and how best to address it (Andell 2019).

Young adults make up a significant proportion of the probation caseload and are responsible for the high proportion of reoffending (MoJ 2023). One respondent described some of the changes to community supervision and support when gang-involved young people turn 18.

*Under 18, it would be children’s services and social care that consider the risk a person presents within gang activity and then looking at who’s gonna be the lead on it and what services and resource are available to try and support. When you’re looking at a youth case there’s lots of resources. At 18 on the dot all of a sudden someone decides they’ve become an adult, I would argue that this happens closer to 30. When they come across to probation all that support is stripped away. You’ve got gang mentors, those that have probably had lived*

*experiences which can really engage with these young people. I think there's been quite a lot of discussion and work around how we can make that transition stronger and better because I just think we lose the resources which are invaluable to those young people especially those that come under that umbrella around gangs and county lines.* (PP 1)

Wilson and Waterworth (2022) suggest that reunification of Probation provides new opportunities to reshape probation practice with young people transitioning from the youth to adult secure estate as well as for young people moving from the youth justice system into the adult probation system (Livingston et al. 2015). Pitts (2021) in his review of gangs and County Lines for HMI Probation, argues that:

*Evidence of this concentration of the organisers and children involved in County Lines suggests that place-based multi-agency interventions could be an important arm of any suppression strategy.*

Community based models of multi-agency intervention have been detailed elsewhere (Andell & Pitts 2018) and also in the accompanying community reports. Local authorities in collaboration with the third sector, have developed pilot programmes, which vary in terms of their emphasis and their component parts depending on the nature of the gang problem in their area. Although 'one size' does not fit all, a consideration of the component parts of these programmes may be suggestive in the development of a multi-agency gangs programme which include probation service users and address probation policy imperatives.

In his evaluation of three successful gang desistance initiatives in London, Pitts (2011) sketched out their key features (see Appendix 3). For Community Offender Managers, this would mean less office-based 'siloed' working and more partnership efforts organised by local Community Safety Partnership Teams. His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP, 2021) recognises the value of this approach and reports:

*Community hubs offer a multi-agency approach to supporting low to medium-risk of serious harm service users on probation, with a number of agencies working together to provide joined up services in one location. Within these hubs, those under supervision are potentially able to access a range of services, facilities and opportunities within a community setting, addressing the problems they face.*

One respondent mentioned the benefits of multi-agency work for supervising offenders by considering the wider context of offending. They said:

*We can monitor and be successful, but we don't speak to probation enough and we just don't identify that victim/ perpetrator relationship. We can say what they were when they were arrested. You need to make the assessment whether they're primarily a victim, or perpetrator. If they're going to be found with drugs, everyone's always going to say, well, they're perpetrators. they've committed a criminal offence and that's where it's gotta change. Could you consider that person as a victim, could we safeguard them?* (PP 6)

Respondents raised current dilemmas of prioritising investigation over safeguarding. One mentioned the case of a young man released from prison who was heavily monitored in the community by probation. He was suspected of exploiting his younger siblings but this was not shared with probation caseworkers. The respondent said:

*I mean it throws up an organizational dilemma as well because if he's putting children at risk and you are not receiving the full information because of the threat to an investigation what takes precedence? You know is that a common dilemma yeah particularly with the children*

*in the house that he was staying in so one of the things that we could have done was remove him under his licence conditions and not authorise that address so he couldn't live with his mum and the younger children. That would have stopped the potential threat to the younger children.* (PP 1)

Community-based multi-agency casework may resolve such issues as partners would meet regularly to discuss individual risks, similar to Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) or Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) arrangements as part of a multi-agency gangs strategy.

**Arrangements for gang-affected young adult offenders transitioning into adulthood should be planned in each probation area. Multi-agency delivery mechanisms via community hubs should be part of these arrangements.**

In modern slavery and County Lines drug dealing offences, there is not always a clear cut distinction between victim and perpetrator (Murphy 2022). Appropriate interventions post-conviction will rely heavily on practitioner assessment. According to the Risk, Need, Response (RNR) model (Bonita, 2023), the level of intervention should match the risk posed.

The use of risk prediction tools at various points of review as part of a dynamic assessment is usual. The tools utilise statistical methods and comparison to a group of similar individuals, utilising known factors or scores. Unfortunately, gang-related offending is rarely known, flagged or recorded. Therefore, any algorithms utilised to predict static risk through statistical probability from comparator groups are limited and unlikely to yield results as accurate as those for other offences. Professional judgment in assessing dynamic risk factors in gang-related offending, therefore, becomes vital.

Knowledge of the contextual variables which underpin initial offending or victimisation events is critical. Dynamic assessment should aim to fully understand past events in the context of their underpinning features or tendencies; this informs professional judgements about the likelihood of future events with or without similar underpinning tendencies. The degree to which thinking skills, emotional awareness, problem-solving, perspective-taking, offence-free relationships, goals and values (MoJ, 2010) are acquired during probation interventions should form part of this dynamic assessment. In short, Offender Managers should know the offending context, and establishing a professional relationship should either assist in changing the context of the offence or the range of possibilities open or chosen by the individual in that context.

HMPPS Risk Of Serious Harm Guidance (2020) suggests all sources of information are considered in making an assessment, and the focus is on factors known to have an impact on the type of risk. This approach relies heavily upon information systems such as the Offender Assessment System (OASys) and Delius, the Case Management system for the Probation Service. However, respondents were sceptical about how Offender Managers currently utilise these systems. One respondent said:

*What happens in probation and in prison? There's no system that talks to community partners other than OASys. We don't put county lines reality onto that. So are we notifying people of all the information they need for sentence planning, licence conditions and, safeguarding in prison networks? I think it's quite fraught with risk. Like everything that the prisoner tells the probation officer goes on OASys? So if we had standardized practice that you put information on there, their offending their aggravating factors, if they've got some form of civil order, it's going to get picked up by the POM and the COM and that would help them assess and inform what questions they're going to ask that person.* (PP 6)

**In order to provide wider sources of information from criminal justice and community partners, the OASys system should be utilised to input and record factors relevant to assessment and case management.**

In HMPPS Public Protection Group, Risk of Serious Harm Guidance (ROSH 2020), Child Safeguarding in County Lines is mentioned as an area of concern but safeguarding vulnerable adults is not.

HMPPS (2019) utilises statutory guidance issued under the Care Act 2014 to determine protocols for safeguarding vulnerable adults. Safeguarding aims for vulnerable adults are stated as:

- Protecting the rights of adults to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect
- People and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect
- People and organisations make sure that the adult's well-being is promoted, including, where appropriate, taking fully into account their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action
- Recognising that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances and therefore potential risks to their safety or well-being

The HMPPS protocol was written in 2019 and was due to be updated in 2021.

**HMPPS should update Risk of Serious Harm Guidance and Safeguarding Vulnerable Adult Protocols to account for the evolution of established gangs into local organised crime groups and the criminal exploitation of vulnerable adults associated with drug dissemination and trafficking through modern slavery and County Lines.**

The Probation Service has a responsibility monitor high-risk offenders involved in Serious and Organised Crime. According to His Majesties Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS, 2023), HMPPS participates in a multi-agency response to serious and organised crime (MARSOC); this is a regional capability, in partnership with the police and other organisations designed to identify and disrupt the highest harm serious organised crime offenders in the criminal justice system. MARSOC officers aim to build the capability of Community Offender Managers and Prison Offender Managers who work with individuals who are either convicted or linked to Organised Crime Groups. Intelligence Officers deliver training packages and provide one-to-one case management assistance to community or prison-based probation officers and share intelligence across multi-agency boards at a regional level. They also collect and feed data to the Ministry of Justice via the National Intelligence Unit (NIU).

According to an NIU job description (2020):

*The NIU exists to ensure that HMPPS has access to actionable intelligence on threats posed by individuals or groups to safe operations within prisons and probation. The Unit operates across all threats, including national security threats of Extremism and Radicalisation and Serious and Organised Crime, as well as operational security threats (e.g. supply of illicit items and escapes) and staff corruption.*

The evolution of some well-established County Lines gangs into local organised crime groups and the challenges this brings has been discussed previously (Andell 2019). Unfortunately, communications between prison and probation also suffer from definitional problems regarding County Lines Gangs and Serious Organised Crime. One respondent mentioned that problems occur with recognising, recording and sharing information concerning how offenders may be classified. Policing, prisons, and probation sometimes classify County Lines gangs using different risk systems. On the outside, enforcement agencies largely map entrenched County Lines gangs as Serious Organised Crime



networks to identify network nodes for intelligence development or disruption. Whereas HMPPS do not classify County Line offenders as organised criminals. One respondent said:

*So County Lines exploitation falls under serious and organised crime, really, but for them (HMPPS). County lines doesn't, but obviously under Regional Organised Crime Units, County Lines is part of the SOC threat. So I have asked the question what's the difference between their software and what's nationally recognised? If you're in prison for a trafficking offence, you'd be a SOC offender and you will be targeted for disruption. But if you're a County Lines, drugs offender you won't be dealt with under SOC.* (PP 6)

The mechanisms for intelligence gathering, analysis and sharing in HMPPS is still at an early stage. One respondent said:

*So, we work with the probation teams. Obviously, we are one HMPPS. So it's supposed to be prison and probation but quite a lot of intelligence is very focused on the prison service. So currently, although it is in train, the probation service don't have an intelligence function and an intelligence system for their own intelligence. Yeah, so they've just recently had one designed that's being rolled out currently in terms of corruption, intelligence. But they don't have any in terms of general intelligence that they might have access to, or they might become aware of that they can report and record anyway. So the prison system has Mercury, but the probation service doesn't have that.* (PP 1)

Another respondent said:

*An establishment (prison) has a security department with intelligence analysts recruited, and employed internally, who manage the submission of the intelligence. They triage it and Action appropriately, there's nobody who does that in the probation service. In terms of how that's managed and what the processes are for that, I'm not entirely sure of. I think that obviously that's something that a project team will be looking at. But if they're submitting intelligence, who's monitoring that? Who's actioning that? Who's sanitising? Who's putting the codes on it? You know the handling conditions and all of that kind of thing. I'm not sure what the next step is for the probation service for that, because the prisons certainly wouldn't be able to resource that. So that's an area I'm not too clear on.* (PP 2)

These challenges require up-skilling of the probation workforce to fully understand the context of offending and safeguarding in a relatively new context.

**PQiP (probation) training should ensure partnership work, gangs, criminal exploitation, safeguarding vulnerable adults and serious organised crime is part of the curriculum offered for trainees.**

## Conclusions.

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The overlaps and evolution of street gangs into organised crime has been explored in our community site reports and this report argues that drugs markets in prisons provide further opportunities for dominant gangs to make substantial profits and cement reputational capital needed to make them plausible players in the upper echelons of the drug supply chains.

Strategies to “cut off the heads” of drug supply networks in the community have had unintended consequences, generating increased violence as new contenders struggle to take over and entrenching gang organisation in the prison. Research findings suggest that prison supply chains largely mirror those on the outside. The establishment of prison gangs with close ties to communities can be viewed as a part of the evolution of dominant gangs into Organised Crime Groups. There is therefore an imperative for the Ministry of Justice to address the findings of this report.



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## Appendix 1. Reproduced from Andell & Pitts (2018\*)

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### Preventing the violent and sexual victimisation of vulnerable gang-involved and gang-affected children and young people in Ipswich (1913160033). A Report for Suffolk County Council).

#### Signalling

In a previous report (Andell and Pitts 2018\*) discussed the use of violence in drug distribution as signalling events. Innes & Fielding (2002) describes signal crimes or events in the following way.

In effect, the crime or incident is 'read' as a warning signal by its audience(s) that something is wrong or lacking, as a result of which they might be induced to take some form of protective action. In addition, the presence of this signal will shape how the person or groups concerned construct beliefs concerning other potential dangers and beliefs.

Andell and Pitts (2018\*) suggest there is a need to respond to such events to deter further criminal exploitation. Slovic (1992) suggests that if such events are not met by a robust official response, perpetrators could assume there is little risk of consequences and the signal event may assist escalation in the seriousness of these crimes. At this point, Slovic argues, a 'threshold' or 'tipping point' is reached. Signal events suggest a change in seriousness and there is a subsequent need to send back a signal that the response is changing too. This type of strategy was at the heart of Operation Ceasefire, the multi-agency Boston gang initiative developed in the 1990s. Launched in 1996, Operation Ceasefire drew upon Spergel and Grossman's Comprehensive Gang Model (see Appendix 3), to bring together stakeholders, including gang members, in gang-affected neighbourhoods to undertake an assessment of the youth homicide problem. Recognising the suspicion and hostility that many local people felt towards the police, prior to launching the intervention officers spent months working with community groups to improve local services and enhance youth provision. Having done this, they proceeded to implement what David Kennedy (2007) describes as a:

*... focused deterrence strategy, harnessing a multitude of different agencies plus resources from within the community.*

The objective of Operation Ceasefire aimed to save lives and reduce serious injury. It did not aim to 'smash' gangs, although defection from gangs was a side effect of the initiative. Serious assaults, would trigger highly publicised multi-agency crackdowns by organisations with enforcement responsibilities. This approach involved deterring chronic gang offenders' violence by reaching out directly to gangs, saying explicitly that violence would no longer be tolerated, and backing that message by pulling every lever legally available when violence occurred .

When gang violence occurred, a direct message (was sent) to gang members that they were under the microscope because of their violent behaviour.

The strategy had three elements:  
(Braga et al, 2001)

- Enhancing community relations to get local support for targeted crack-downs, thus stimulating community 'collective efficacy' in the development of informal social control and the reduction of incivilities.



- Engagement with gang members to elicit information, transmit consistent messages about targeted crackdowns and provide diversionary services for gang involved young people.
- Co-ordinated leverage on gangs through highly publicised multi-agency crackdowns on certain specified behaviours i.e. possession or use of knives and firearms, harassment and serious assaults.

An analysis of the impact of Operation Ceasefire's by the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard, which began in 1996, concluded that the programme had been responsible for a fall in youth homicides from an average of 44 per annum between 1991 and 1995 to 26 in 1996 and 15 in 1997; a downward trend which continued until 1999. However, with a change in project staff, and project philosophy, which resulted in the social intervention elements of the programme being abandoned, gang- related youth homicides began to climb again, reaching 37 in 2005 and peaking at 52 in 2010. The Manchester Multi-Agency Gang Strategy (MMAGS) modelled on Operation Ceasefire, was launched in 2002, in the wake of research undertaken by Karen Bullock & Nick Tilley (2001) which revealed that between April 2001 and March 2002, South Manchester gangs were responsible for 11 fatal shootings; 84 serious woundings and 639 other incidents of violence involving firearms. Although MMAGS was, in effect, a statutory partnership, it had an Independent Advisory Group including community representatives and it met regularly with Mothers Against Violence, Victim Support and several other local voluntary sector organisations.

MMAGS, based on Operation Ceasefire in Boston, USA, utilizing detached youth work, in-house educational/welfare programmes, peer mentoring and the development of customised educational, training and vocational opportunities had a remarkable impact upon the young people it targeted. From 2001 it played a major role in the steady reduction of gang-related firearms discharges, deaths and associated injuries.

They also suggest a hypothetical 'script' directed at the purveyors of illicit drugs via County Lines:

*We know you are using children to run drug supply lines.*

*You will stop using children NOW!*

*Drug suppliers using children will be singled out for special attention.*

*They will go to the top of the list for enforcement. Specialist techniques and extra police resources will be focussed on them until they are brought before the Courts.*

*These dealers will not be A priority for the police; they will be THE priority.*

*Not using children does not mean you have permission to supply drugs.*

*Supplying drugs is illegal.*

*Drug suppliers not using children will still face investigation and prosecution, but those using children will face a special response as they are the most harmful and deserve more attention.*

*Communities support what is being done and why it is being done: to protect children from violence and exploitation.*

*If you want to change your life you can get help with education, training employment and housing by calling 0800 XXX XXXX.*

*The new approach starts NOW! There will be no further warning.*

## Appendix 2

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### Focused Situational Prevention For HMPPS Secure Estates University of Suffolk Cyber Crime Research Group.

#### Mobile Phones in the UK

In the United Kingdom, the mobile phone or device will normally operate on band n78 (3500MHz) for 5G coverage, bands 3 & 20 (1800MHz & 800MHz) for 4G coverage and band 1 (2100MHz) for coverage on 3G and band 3 (1800MHz), and band 8 (900MHz) for coverage of 2G.

In many urban and suburban areas, there may be additional 4G coverage using band 1 (2100MHz), band 7 (2600MHz), band 8 (900MHz), band 32 (1500MHz) band 38 (2600MHz) band 40 (2300MHz) (depending on the service provider).

#### Detecting and Blocking Signals

At a fundamental level, there are four straightforward tried and tested techniques for the location and identification of mobile phone signals. In order of simplicity, these are listed as follows:

1. A portable frequency, selective field strength, meter with or without directional antenna can be used at relatively close quarters.
2. Signal triangulation using two or more radio, receivers/spectrum, analyser and directional antennas.
3. Spoof 3, 4, 5G Base Stations with false identifiers enabling signal inspection, decode and monitoring.
4. Base station mimicking (ping) to trigger the illegal units to reply (ping back) and therefore enable a (1 & 2) reply invisible to the user.

All of these (1–4) have been used by other agencies including the military and are therefore tried and tested. The single biggest unknown at this time is the impact of the prison building in terms of signal attenuation and reflections leading to false locating readings. To great extent these can be overcome by observations beyond the perimeter wall looking into the complex.

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## Appendix 3

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### Key Features of a Gang Desistance Model. Reproduced by from Andell and Pitts (2018\*)

In several gang-affected neighbourhoods in the major UK cities local authorities in collaboration with the third sector have developed gang desistance programmes. These programmes vary in terms of their emphasis and their component parts depending on the nature of the gang problem in their area. Although 'one size' does not fit all a consideration of the component parts of these programmes may be suggestive in terms of the development of a multi-agency gangs programme in Ipswich. In his evaluation of three successful gang desistance initiatives in London, Pitts (2011) sketched out their key features:

1. It would target gang-involved children and young people utilising a 'Traffic Light', Risk Assessment Instrument to establish the depth, nature and risks posed by young people's gang involvement. This would enable the programme providers to develop a range of interventions of the right type, intensity and duration. To succeed however, all the relevant agencies, schools, and local residents would need to be involved in the assessment, because some 'serious players' may be unknown to statutory agencies.
2. It would have an Outreach Function usually pursued by street-based youth workers skilled in making and sustaining contact with 'hard-to-reach' groups to draw them into the programme (Crimmens et al, 2004).
3. It would have an intensive Groupwork Programme which focused upon the development of alternative routes out of gang involvement and 'leadership' training. The effects of these programmes would be maximized if they had one or more residential episodes which took participants to an unfamiliar setting where they were required to engage in unfamiliar group activities.
4. It would have a Casework Function in which criminal justice, youth work and or social welfare professionals worked with the young person and their family to support involvement in the groupwork programme, address family problems and (re-)establish links with school and/or relevant social welfare agencies.
5. It would establish a Presence and a Base in a Gang-affected Neighbourhood and allow continuing contact with gang-involved young people beyond the life of any particular the intervention.
6. It would provide continuing practical and emotional support in the form of Mentors, 'Buddies' and/or a Drop-in function.
7. It would have access to the services of Education, Training and Employment Specialists who would work with gang-involved young people, to maximize their skills and knowledge and effect realistic choices about their futures; and with local employers, colleges and universities to open up alternative legitimate pathways for these young people.
8. It would have access to the services of a specialist Housing Professional who could, if necessary, enable young people under threat to move to suitable, and suitably supported accommodation in another area.
9. It would have a Mediation Team that would keep contact with all local gangs, and crews, enabling it to intervene to defuse inter-gang conflict and thereby reduce tit-for-tat violence.
10. It would have a Through-care Function involving regular visits to gang-involved young people in YOIs or prison by project staff in order to draw them back into the project/ programme on their return, which is often a point at which violence erupts.
11. It would also have a dedicated Girls and Young Women's Intervention Team.

