Newton | revolving doors

Preventing the revolving door

Data and voices for change

September 2025

About the organisations

revolving doors

Revolving Doors is a national charity that champions long-term solutions for justice reform that support people to reach their potential in a happier, healthier and fairer society by amplifying the voices and expertise of people who have experienced cycles of crisis and crime.
They focus on the 'revolving door' group of people, those who have repeat contact with the justice system whose behaviours are driven by unmet health and social needs, trauma, poverty and discrimination. This includes combinations of problematic substance use, homelessness, mental ill health and domestic abuse. Revolving Doors place lived experience at the heart of change. They empower their 'members' – around 60 people at any one time with current or recent personal experience of the system – to use their experience to influence policy and make services work better for the people using them.

Newton

Newton is a strategic delivery partner to public and private sector organisations. They work alongside central government and their delivery partners to turn policy and strategy into action and outcomes, building services that meet the needs of the people and communities that use them. Newton puts people and lived experience at the centre of its work. Through deep collaboration with service users, frontline professionals, and system leaders, they ensure that change is grounded in real-world insight and delivers meaningful impact.

Newton's approach combines rigorous data analysis with human-centred design to create solutions that are both evidence-based and empathetic. Newton's approach has delivered significant outcomes for central government, local authorities, and health systems, including driving billions of savings for the public purse whilst delivering critical operational outcomes, such as more hospital beds, more effective health and social care services, and national-level transformation in immigration, defence, and justice.

Xantura

A Newton Company

Xantura is a data and technology company, and is part of the Newton group. They empower public services to make smarter, earlier decisions that improve lives and reduce harm by enabling ethical, secure, and intelligent data sharing across agencies, helping professionals see the full picture of the people and communities they support. Xantura focuses on delivering prevention through the better use of data – supporting those at risk of poor outcomes due to complex, overlapping needs such as homelessness, domestic abuse, substance misuse, and mental ill health. Their work helps local authorities and partners shift from reactive to proactive services, using data to intervene earlier and more effectively. Xantura's flagship platform, OneView, brings together millions of data points from across public services to generate timely, actionable intelligence. This enables frontline professionals to design and deliver interventions that are tailored, targeted, and transformative.

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1. Introduction

1.1 The case for change

Somewhere between 30,000 and 50,000 people in England repeatedly cycle through short prison sentences, police custody and court appearances, often for low-level but persistent and prolific offences such as shoplifting and drug possession. This is the revolving door cohort.

This 'revolving door' of crisis and crime represents one of the costliest examples of how public services do not always best respond to individuals' complex, overlapping needs. Behind the statistics are people with complex lives, marked by trauma, poverty, neurodiversity, problematic substance use and a lack of stable housing or support. These are not isolated issues. They compound to drive patterns of behaviour and contact with the justice system which result in long-term and often prolific reoffending.

The impact of this is significant. The cohort is responsible for at least 130,000 crimes a year, which costs the public purse around £1bn every year. The wider socio-economic impact likely exceeds £2.2bn. Yet these costs are only the symptom of deeper systematic challenges: siloed services, late-stage interventions (or no interventions at all), over-reliance on criminal justice responses and a lack of trauma-informed, person-centred care. Despite constant contact with services throughout their lives, the core drivers of harm for individuals in the revolving door often go unaddressed.

Taking into account the implications for the UK's wider public services, the true cost could be over £5bn – suggesting that this small cohort could account for as much as a quarter of the entire national cost of reoffending.

This has profound implications. Not only does this cohort place a considerable and recurring strain on frontline services, including the police, courts, probation, and health and housing providers, but there is also a deep human and social cost.

Through new analysis, made possible by bringing together disconnected datasets, this report shows who the revolving door cohort are and why they matter. It highlights understanding of their unmet needs, their interactions with public services, and their impact on the justice system. It shows what change could look like, and how it could be delivered.

In doing so, this report presents the strongest evidence to date of both the human and economic imperative for change. Drawing on in-depth interviews from people with lived experience and powerful cross-service data analysis, it shows how unmet needs and missed opportunities mean that public services react to crisis, rather than prevent it, stunting individual opportunity and failing to make the best use of public money.

This cost is not just a matter of numbers. Understanding the individual experience is key to identifying clear and tangible opportunities for change. If Government can proactively identify and engage this cohort with the right support, at the right time, it could not only relieve pressure on an already overstretched criminal justice system, but drive meaningful outcomes for victims, people and communities. The scale of the challenge is significant – but so too is the potential for transformation and change.

Potential impact

Across the UK's public services, this targeted and proactive approach is expected to lead to:

- More time to invest in practice and in the human interactions that change lives.
- Opportunities to intervene earlier to divert people away from the justice system, strengthening Liaison and Diversion and Out of Court Disposals.
- Better collaboration between agencies, who can establish multi-disciplinary teams that intervene and support at the right time, through the partner or agency that is most trusted.
- Making greater use of peer support to establish that trust and where it is lacking.
- Smarter use of community assets and the voluntary sector.
- The ability to act further upstream when multi-agency data shows that unmet needs and life circumstances are putting someone at risk.

This report is intended to help politicians, senior officials and operational leaders make decisions to place resources that follow risk and need. The May 2025 Sentencing Review and the 2025 Leveson Review offer crucial recommendations. This report adds weight to the evidence-base and brings a deeper understanding of the realities of this cohort, and of how to design services and pathways for them in different geographies with diverse demographics. This allows for better judgements about which services are best placed to intervene and support at those critical moments.

The Sentencing Review proposes an end to sentences of under 12 months in all but exceptional cases. This will mean radical changes for the revolving door cohort to be managed and supported exclusively in the community. But if this change is not made, "exceptional cases" will become the norm. The Government will lose the opportunity to relieve pressure on prison places, to ensure that community alternatives work, and to create a justice system that rehabilitates and supports those who need it.

Recent polling suggests this is an idea with widespread public support.[1] Many of the potential solutions for this cohort have proven effective in health and social care. Revolving Doors' proposed solutions mirror the Government's vision for the NHS: prevention rather than intervention, support in the community rather than intensive and costly custodial settings, and better use of technology and data. By intervening earlier, before problems in childhood snowball, the proposed approach supports the Government's mission to break down barriers to opportunity.

A targeted, preventative approach for this cohort will reap wider system benefits, freeing up prison and court capacity, and police and probation officer time. Crucially, it will mean fewer victims, less anti-social behaviour and safer communities.

Whilst this report does not quantify all the impacts on the wider public service, based on knowledge of health inequalities and characteristics of the lives of people in the revolving door, it is expected that there would be a decrease of ambulance callouts and A&E use, easing pressure on emergency care.

[1] Rajah, Anouschka, Burns, Conleth (2025), Course Correction: Britons' expectations from criminal justice reform, More in Common and Common Ground Justice Project.

1.2 The purpose of this work

Despite decades of awareness, the revolving door of crisis and crime has continued to turn, with public services' energies and funds being placed on treating symptoms rather than the root causes. The debate has often been shaped by statistics that dehumanise, policies that criminalise vulnerability and systems that respond too late. This has, at least in part, been compounded by a fragmented picture of this cohort and their interaction with public services, from education through to welfare and housing. Through this research, the aim was to better understand the cohort to shift the narrative – away from punitive cycles and towards practical, person-centred solutions rooted in evidence and experience.

Revolving Doors led and commissioned this programme of work, drawing on their deep qualitative insight and experience. They partnered with Newton and Xantura to bring new cutting-edge data analytics to integrate previously disconnected datasets and provide a single view of the revolving door cohort. In doing so, the aspiration was to provide a richer, more honest picture of who the revolving door cohort are, what their lives look like, and how their interactions with services could be different.

The intention of bringing together personal testimony and service-level data was to challenge biases whilst demonstrating the scale of the opportunity presented to support a more intelligent and humane public response.

Revolving Doors has combined their qualitative evidence and experience with this quantitative insight to make the recommendations to Government set out in this report.

The report isn't about assigning blame or reinventing the wheel. It is about demonstrating what is possible and about offering something new to the debate, backed up by the practical evidence to show where, how and why change can happen.

It is hoped that this report will support policymakers, practitioners, the public and people with lived experience alike to push forward a smarter, more compassionate approach. An approach that breaks the cycle of reoffending and reduces the strain on public services, rather than investing in reactive, high-cost interventions that come far too late.

1.3 Who are the 'revolving door' cohort?

The revolving door group of prolific and persistent low-level offenders is responsible for a disproportionate impact on the justice system and the wider public service. They are:

- Among the heaviest users of public services at a substantial cost to the public purse across criminal justice, welfare, health and local authority spending.
- Most likely to serve short prison sentences (under six months) and cycle in and out of prison, adding to the churn and volatility in the system.
- Generally characterised as prolific shoplifters and drug addicts, impacting the sense of safety in communities.

Presented as such, the revolving door group can be perceived as a 'wicked problem' – a complex issue that is widely recognised yet remains unsolved, consequently reduced to a statistic that highlights the challenges of public services, or even interpreted as evidence that some people cannot be helped.

Those who know and work in the justice sector – including practitioners, people with lived experience of the system, victims, leaders and campaigners – have long understood that individuals caught in the 'revolving door' of the justice system often spend their lives navigating a complex system that often only worsens the very issues that led them there in the first place: trauma, poverty, and discrimination.

1.4 Methodology

This report is the result of a programme of work which has brought together two distinct but complementary approaches to understanding the revolving door cohort:

1. Deep qualitative insight grounded in the reality of people's lives.
2. Rigorous quantitative analysis driven by new integrations of cross-sector data and economic modelling.

Revolving Doors

Revolving Doors led the qualitative work, conducting 20 in-depth interviews with people who have experienced repeat contact with the criminal justice system. These interviews explored participants' early lives, drivers of offending, experiences with public services and what enabled or ultimately blocked meaningful change. The resulting narrative reveals consistent patterns of trauma, unmet need and system failure, as well as resilience, agency and hope.

Newton and Xantura

Newton and Xantura led the quantitative analysis and costings.

Data was aggregated across multiple public services to create a holistic, anonymised view of individuals and households. This included both **structured data** from offence records and **unstructured** case notes, which were analysed using advanced text analytics and AI to identify risks and vulnerabilities often missed in traditional datasets.

The analysis mapped patterns of offending behaviour and unmet need at both the individual and cohort level within a dashboard view, allowing an understanding of the revolving door cohort across the region and within each local authority that makes it up. This allowed us to determine the relationship between indicators of unmet need, crime data, reoffending, and wider socio-economic indicators.

Newton then used forecasting and modelling techniques, combined with published socio-economic indices, to scale nationally and show how the shape and size of the cohort might vary across geographies. Finally, the economic and social costs of the cohort were estimated using a HM Treasury-approved cost of crime methodology,[2] producing robust (but conservative) figures that align with the public sector's approach to assessing the impact of crime.

Conclusions and recommendations

Together, these approaches provide a powerful human centred evidence base. The qualitative insights ensure that the data analysis is grounded in real experience, while the quantitative modelling validates what people have long described and felt.

Revolving Doors has combined the two to make the recommendations contained in this report to Government. This mixed-methods approach gives policy makers and practitioners a fuller, more credible picture of both the problem and the potential for change.

Ethical considerations

The potential downsides of using existing justice system data to predict future patterns of offending and target cohorts and individuals are well understood. The lessons of the Metropolitan Police's gangs matrix are clear and important to reflect upon; without checks and balances, subjective assessments of individuals' level of risk can be laden with bias.

These may tend to reflect the system-wide and institutional biases that lead to disproportionate outcomes for some communities. These existing biases mean that 25% of England and Wales' prison population comes from Black, Asian or other Minority Ethnic communities which make up 14% of the England and Wales population.

[2] Heeks, M., Reed, S., Tafsiri, M., & Prince, S. (2018), The economic and social costs of crime (Second edition), Home Office; Home Office, (2011), Revised unit costs of crime and multipliers for use in the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) toolkit.

It is important to ensure that disadvantage in early life, trauma, or other markers of unmet need are not reduced to "risk factors". This could, perversely, lead public services and the police to over-criminalise or to see people through a narrow lens of propensity to commit crime and to enter the criminal justice system.

Conversations with people in contact with the justice system have been generally positive about the potential of data, with the caveat that data needs to be used for supportive, positive action, not to label or discriminate. Decisions about data need to be taken with these people.

1.5 Thanks and acknowledgements

Revolving Doors, Newton and Xantura would like to thank all who contributed to and reviewed this report, in particular:

- The 20 Revolving Doors members for their honesty and courage in sharing their life stories, revisiting sometimes deeply traumatic experiences. While Revolving Doors has previously asked members to use their experience and insight to shape solutions, they have never been asked to share those experiences in such detail. Several members reflected that they found it a helpful experience to 'join the dots' in their own stories. A small group of members also met with the project team to reflect on the emerging findings, which further enriched this report, guiding questions to be asked of the data.
- System partners in Kent for permission to use their data as the reference county, enabling the research to build an unprecedented level of detail about revolving doors patterns of offending and unmet need.
- Greater Manchester Combined Authority for their contribution to the work and their efforts to prioritise this cohort.
- The cross-government advisory group members for sharing their time and expertise, including representatives from the Ministry of Justice, Home Office, Department for Education and the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government who helped ensure that the research built on existing initiatives and produced genuinely novel insights to support their work.

Finally, Revolving Doors thanks the Newton Foundation, which generously funded the qualitative research presented in the report.

Section 02

Overview of findings and recommendations

2. Overview of findings and recommendations

2.1 Summary of findings

1. This report presents the strongest evidence to date of both the human and economic imperative for change. Drawing on in-depth interviews from people with lived experience and powerful cross-service data analysis, this report demonstrates how unmet need and missed opportunities create a revolving door effect – where public services often respond to problems after they've escalated (or are at crisis point), which limits outcomes for individuals and leads to higher costs. This research shows that there are at least 29,000 people in England and Wales with a level of unmet need and a pattern of offending behaviour or engagement with the criminal justice system that meet the definition of the revolving door. This cohort is committing at least 130,000 crimes a year. Their levels of unmet need are very high and tend to be clustered or layered together.

2. Over just one year (and constraining the lens to the justice system alone), this research found many examples of individuals whose interactions cost in excess of £100,000 per year, even where offending is of a lower level of seriousness. Lifetime costs for some single individuals run beyond £1.4m.

3. Analysis of reference data, open-source public service data and HMG's own cost-of-crime methodology estimates the national impact on the justice system alone (prisons, probation, courts, police) to exceed £242m every year.

4. The socio-economic impact is between £735m and £1.65bn. This is likely an underestimate due to unrecorded crime and other crime types not included in the initial analysis. The true figure is probably closer to £5bn and more than 23% of the overall cost.

5. There are common patterns of experience amongst the revolving door cohort represented in the archetypal personas developed through the work. These patterns can be found not only in the lives of those interviewed, but also in the data held by services. While there is nuance, the consistency of these experiences provides a clear blueprint for the person-centred, relational services (the how) and trauma-informed solutions (the what) that are needed. Delivering both the 'how' and the 'what' can be achieved by designing and delivering them in conjunction with people who have personal experience of the revolving door.

Reoffending has a £23bn[3] annual cost to the UK economy. Just a 1% improvement in reoffending rates is worth £65m annually.

Diverting people in the revolving doors group out of the justice system at the earliest opportunity and into effective support will support them to reach their potential, significantly reduce crime and reoffending, and ease the burden on the Exchequer.

[3] Newton, May, Eames, Ahmad (2019), Economic and social costs of reoffending, Ministry of Justice.

£735m-£1.65bn

socio-economic impact caused by the revolving door cohort annually

2.2 Detail behind the summary findings

2.2.1 About the revolving doors cohort and unmet needs

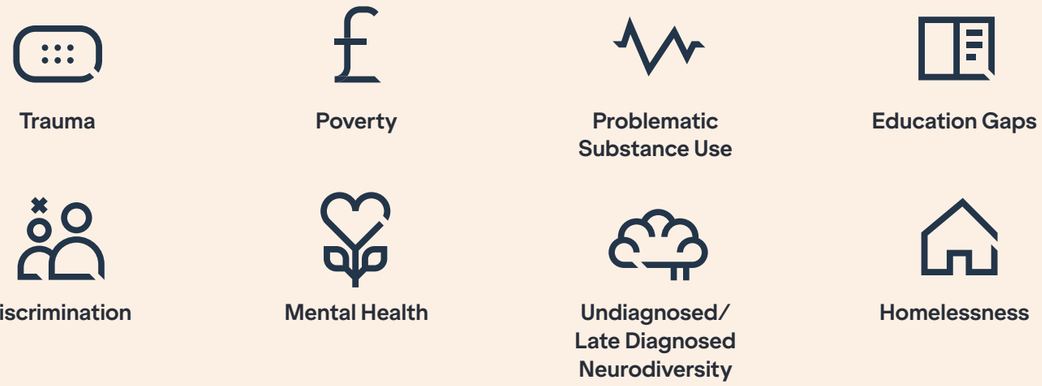

Figure 1: Example unmet needs identified from the qualitative research.

This research shows that there are at least 29,000 people (lower bound) in England and Wales with a level of unmet need and a pattern of offending behaviour or engagement with the criminal justice system that meets the definition of the revolving door cohort. Individuals in the revolving door cohort often struggle with reintegration into society, leading to re-offending and repeated incarcerations.

This reflects a relatively narrow group of those with the highest unmet need and patterns of reoffending. The overall size of the highly prolific, high unmet need, lower risk cohort may exceed 54,000 people (upper bound).

This research finds that levels of unmet need are very high and tend to be clustered or layered together in this cohort. This is supported by people's accounts of their lives and experiences of the justice system, and is reflected in both structured risk and vulnerability data held by public authorities, and risk factors present in unstructured data, such as case notes.

Mental health issues, housing challenges, poverty and financial exclusion, problems with drugs and alcohol, experience of trauma in early life, experience of social care interventions as a child, violence in the household and late diagnosis of neurodiversity all combine to present a cohort of individuals with diversity and a clear depth of need.

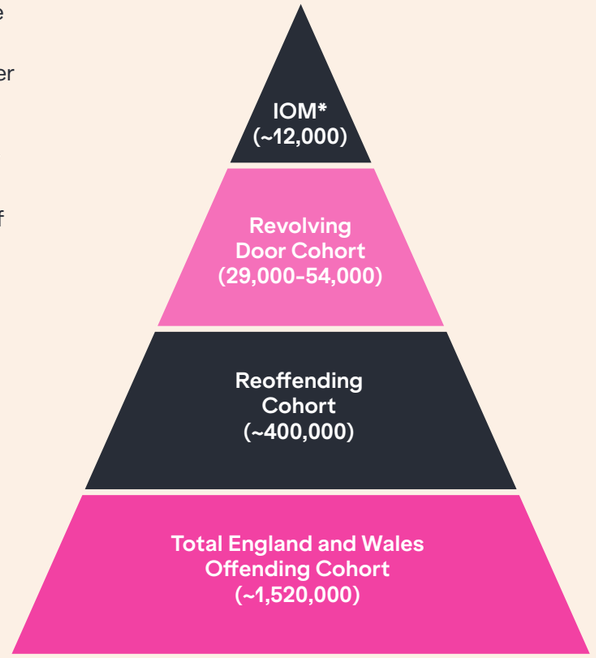

Figure 2: Illustrative diagram of relative offending cohorts.
*IOM – Integrated Offender Management

This tallies with the expectations of Revolving Doors' researchers and the practitioners they have worked closely with. Revolving Doors' members (those with lived experience of the justice system) were not surprised to see the degree of unmet need and the consistency of the patterns with which they present, nor the interactions with public services and the justice system that result. To see this corroborated in the data at both population and cohort level provides policymakers and operational leaders with strengthened evidence of the need to do things differently.

Just as striking is the positivity and resilience with which those with this personal experience meet these challenges: navigating public services and complex lives, often while negotiating the legacy of trauma and disadvantage in early life. Revolving Doors see people coming together in powerful and hopeful peer-led communities which support others to rebuild their sense of self, their lives, and to contribute back to society. This resilience, and the "protective factors" which are associated with it, serve as encouragement as well as opportunities for ways to frame future interventions.

2.2.2 Impact on the justice system and the public sector

The cost impacts of achieving change for this cohort are significant. At an individual level, the research conducted for this programme has synthesised both qualitative and service data to show costs that run into the millions for just one individual in the revolving door cohort across public services.

Over just one year (and constraining the lens to the justice system alone) many examples of individuals whose interactions cost in excess of £100,000, even where offending is of a lower level of seriousness, were found. Lifetime costs run beyond £1.4m.

At a whole system level, costs and corresponding potential for improvement are significant. Analysis conducted for this work programme using reference data, open source public service data and HMG's own cost-of-crime methodology, estimates the national impact on the justice system alone to exceed £242m every year. The wider socio-economic impact exceeds £1.65bn.

This impact is for recorded crime only. For crime that is not recorded by the police, but is reflected in the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and other data, the Government uses a series of multipliers to estimate real costs. Using the Government's own methodology, this, alongside additional crimes not accounted for in the initial analysis, would put the overall impact of the revolving door group up to **£4bn.**

This equates to almost a quarter of overall socio-economic impacts of reoffending each year, highlighting the potential benefits to the public purse, to victims, to the justice system, and to the more than 29,000 people in the highest impact cohort, their children, families, friends, neighbours and communities.

This is likely to still be an underestimate of impact, as current crime figures have been weighted conservatively. From the prediction methods used, it is assumed this would increase as more precise offending, crime, and unmet need data across multiple public services becomes available and can be brought together in the models developed for this work programme.

Figure 3: Relative offending costs.

2.2.3 Patterns of experience

This research found there are common patterns of experience that the revolving door cohort represented in the archetypal personas developed through the work.

These patterns can be found not only in the lives of the 20 individuals interviewed, but also in the data held by services. However, life circumstances are not deterministic. Whilst there are common patterns, there is also nuance. Starting points can be very different. Whilst school exclusion is a shared experience for many in the revolving door, some of the people Revolving Doors spoke to came from loving homes and did well at school.

Whatever the route in, once caught in the revolving door, transactional, low-impact interactions with public services are a common thread. Insights showed multiple interventions that serve only to escalate towards the criminal justice system at the expense of other needs which are left unmet. People shared that social services and policing responses can feel overbearing and end up harming trust in authority.

In general, the sense of being a burden on services and a perceived lack of caring and support from those that are meant to help is felt across the cohort.

Positive interactions were also seen – for example, the child advocate worker that fought someone's corner; the peer worker that managed to get an individual into accommodation, signed up with a GP and with a clear post-prison plan where others hadn't managed to; or the probation officer that's still in touch more than 30 years later. Again, there are clear patterns to these interactions. Better outcomes were found in circumstances where an individual's strengths and potential were perceived to be appreciated, together with support coming from those who want to address the root of the problem rather than treating the symptoms.

This illustrates the importance of understanding the 'whole person' as part of steering them towards a positive long-term outcome.

The consistency of these experiences provides a clear blueprint for the person-centred, relational services (the how) and trauma-informed solutions (the what) that are needed. Achieving both the 'how' and the 'what' can be accomplished by designing and delivering them in conjunction with people who have personal experience of the revolving door.

Example lived experience user journey

A male in his late forties, experiencing homelessness, negative peer influence and substance misuse.

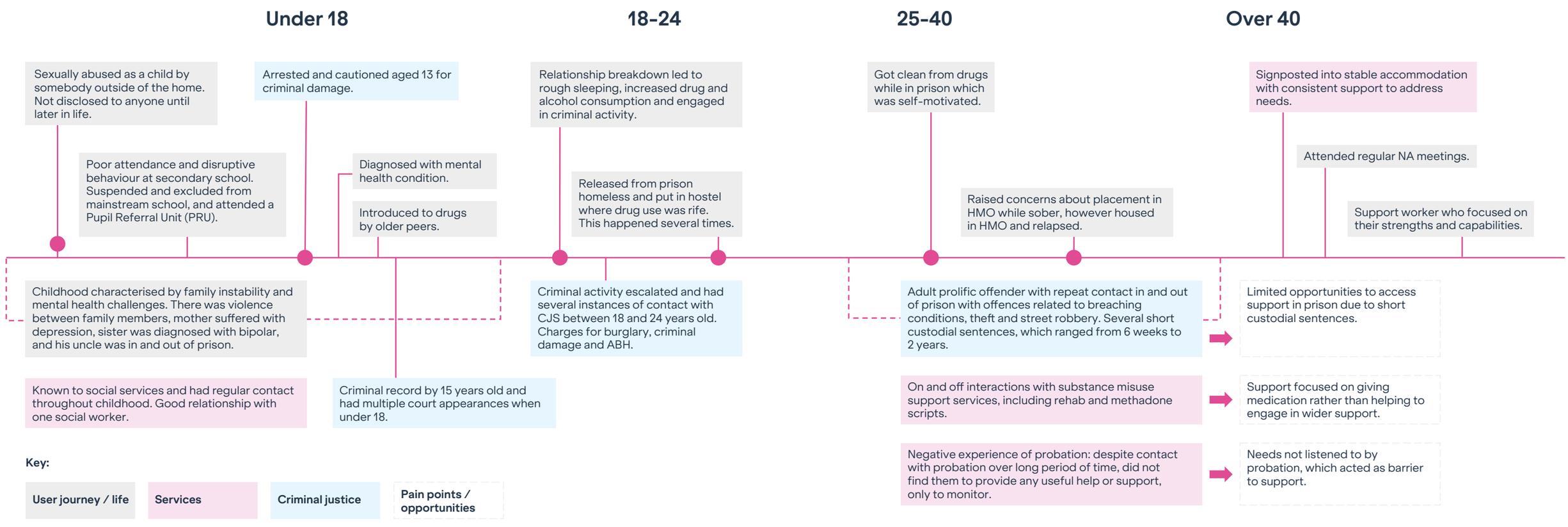

Figure 4: An example user journey from the qualitative research.

2.3 Recommendations

Revolving Doors has brought together their own qualitative analysis, with the insight provided through the quantitative phase conducted by Newton and Xantura, to make a series of recommendations to Government.

The solutions to these challenges, including the path to support the revolving door cohort and to reduce the impact on public services, are clear.

Ultimately, Government doesn't need to build new services from scratch, but to better coordinate, better target, better listen, and close gaps between siloes by reconsidering how individuals with complex, overlapping needs are supported. A smarter, more compassionate approach is not only effective but far more sustainable – an approach that will use shared data across services, lived experience, and cross-sector collaboration to intervene earlier, meet people's needs holistically, and break the cycle of crisis and crime early.

This work shows the potential of joining up data across public services by using both structured and unstructured data to identify and address unmet needs in the revolving door cohort.

There are significant efficiency and effectiveness opportunities at the system and service levels. Joined up data allows for better understanding of vulnerability, need, and risk. Through this research, it is possible to map needs at a population and cohort level, enabling mapping of the demand for, and supply of, crucial interventions.

The smoother flow and exchange of information can, alone, save probation officers, prison officers, police, social workers and voluntary sector service leads millions of hours of rekeying data, waiting on a partner service for information or a referral.

Revolving Doors is making nine core recommendations, summarised below (more detail on each recommendation and its rationale is detailed later in the report):

1. **Use joined-up public sector data to target cohorts and individuals.** Joining up data across services provides a 360-degree view of people's needs and risks, enabling earlier, smarter interventions. Better data sharing can reduce reoffending, save frontline staff time and help design more effective, coordinated services.

2. **Reinvest savings that flow from this into relational work that only humans can do.** Savings from improved data systems and AI must be reinvested in trauma-informed, relational work and the human connection that turns lives around. This is what both professionals and people in the revolving door say actually works.

3. **Divert people in the revolving door at the earliest opportunity.** Early intervention is key: first contact with the justice system should redirect people to support, not pull them in deeper. Pre-arrest diversion and reformed out of court disposals (OOCDs) can reduce crime, cut costs and offer people a real chance at recovery.

4. **Expand and strengthen community sentences.** Community sentences that address underlying mental health and substance use issues are proven to reduce reoffending. With better funding, combined treatment options, greater awareness among sentencers informed by high quality pre-sentence reports, and underpinned by a continuous peer support offer, they can offer a true alternative to short prison terms.

5. **Invest in peer support.** Peer support from people with lived experience is powerful, trusted and effective – especially for those hardest to reach. Scaling peer-led roles across services requires urgent reform of vetting processes to unlock their full potential.

6. **Train people throughout the system to work with and understand trauma.** The trauma that drives revolving door reoffending often manifests as aggression, anger or hostility. Frontline staff need trauma-informed training to understand and respond to this trauma response to break the cycle.

7. **Take a place-based approach and make better use of community assets.** Support must be rooted in local communities, not imposed from above. Funding grassroots organisations and co-producing services with people with lived experience builds trust and delivers support that genuinely works for the place it exists for.

8. **Multi-partnership work, including further upstream of the justice system.** The revolving door often begins in childhood. Coordinated, early multi-agency support for families and schools is essential to break the pipeline from exclusion to exploitation to prison.

9. **Leadership at the highest level.** Cross-departmental leadership is critical – the revolving door is everyone's problem, but it risks becoming no one's responsibility. A Cabinet Office-level focus would drive accountability and coordinated action across justice, health, housing and social care.

The changes being proposed don't need to be costly and don't require the creation of new services or agencies. The proposals build on the quality and impact of the interventions that are already in place and that already work.

The technology needed to bring the data together is also a reality – established and proven. The case for change speaks to the human need but also to the potential for significant savings.

The opportunity is there. Government can do things differently in the shape of robust and joined up data, proven interventions, and the voices of the people who have this experience and are using it to shape better outcomes.

The proposals build on the quality and impact of the interventions that are already in place and that already work.

Section 03

Qualitative research findings

3. Qualitative research findings

3.1 Purpose of and approach

This section provides an overview of the themes that emerged from 20 in-depth interviews with people who have experience of the revolving door of crisis and crime.

It covers their early life up until present day. It demonstrates how people's circumstances and interactions with public services often impact their ongoing criminal justice system contact, and highlights both common missed opportunities and good practice in helping people to lead crime-free and healthier lives. Importantly, by showing these detailed experiences, it aims to demonstrate how patterns of reoffending and harm can be broken.

WARNING: The detailed insights may be distressing for readers.

The interviewees have shared their experiences to shed light on the reality of the lives of people who are caught up in the cycle of crisis and crime to ensure that solutions are grounded in that reality. Ultimately, they hope this will prevent other people from ending up in this revolving door, end the status quo, and make better use of public money and individual opportunity.

Importantly, they show the detail of how patterns of reoffending and harm can be broken.

Although this is based on 20 interviews, the insights gathered for this report by Revolving Doors are not unique. It reflects and adds further depth to what people in repeat contact with the criminal justice system have been telling Revolving Doors through their work for many years.

3.2 Overview of the findings and conclusions

The analysis reveals a clear, consistent pattern of high unmet need among individuals caught in the 'revolving door' of repeat contact with the criminal justice system – often linked to overlapping challenges such as mental ill-health, problematic substance use, poverty, and early trauma.

These needs are reflected not only in structured service data, but also vividly in people's personal accounts.

While the cohort is relatively small in population terms – over 29,000 individuals with the most acute needs, and more than 50,000 with similar profiles – the depth and complexity of their needs have systemic implications.

The findings highlight a complex and interconnected set of factors that contribute to the experiences of the revolving door cohort:

- Childhood instability, trauma, and unmet needs, compounded by disrupted caregiving, abuse, and educational disengagement, create early vulnerabilities that often set individuals on a path towards the justice system.
- Gender differences emerged, with women generally experiencing more positive school engagement but facing additional challenges such as stereotyping and abuse.
- Negative early experiences with social services contribute to enduring mistrust and reluctance to seek help, highlighting systemic gaps that must be addressed.

- Regularly blurred lines between victim and offender in the first interactions with the justice system, with many interviewees initially coming into contact with police as victims of crime.
- Substance use, driven by unresolved trauma and mental health issues, is a key driver of ongoing offending, often exacerbated by negative peer influences and abusive relationships.
- The criminal justice system itself doesn't always provide consistent, individualised support, where short prison sentences and fragmented probation services disrupt progress and may reinforce cycles of reoffending.
- Missed opportunities to address mental health and substance use needs, both inside and outside of prison, perpetuate this cycle, with treatment requirements underused and interventions delivered in isolation rather than holistically.
- Barriers to effective engagement with services include a lack of coordination between mental health and addiction support, alongside a general lack of understanding and trust between individuals and professionals.
- Successful recovery and reintegration are closely tied to timing and readiness, with peer-led environments and empathetic healthcare providers playing an important role in building trust and progress.
- Exiting the revolving door requires a combination of personal motivation; trauma-informed and strengths-based support; and stable, tailored services—especially during critical transitions such as prison release. Strong social networks and community connections are vital in fostering resilience and sustaining long-term change.

Collectively, these insights demonstrate the need for integrated, person-centred approaches that address the root causes of offending and unmet need, leveraging lived experience to design more effective, compassionate interventions.

Breaking the cycle between crisis and crime is challenging, but these stories show that quality interventions that address unmet health and social needs can prevent individuals from reoffending, especially when this is accompanied by suitable housing. Being signposted to appropriate support can have a snowball effect and open opportunities, whilst having a support network provides people with the resilience to overcome challenges.

It is worth acknowledging the progress many interviewees have made. Many are now engaged in work, study, volunteering and advocacy, underlining their value as contributors to their communities and as powerful voices for change. Their lived experience is vital to shaping solutions that reduce reoffending, relieve pressure on the justice system, and build stronger, safer communities.

20 in-depth interviews

The following section shows people's lived experience of the revolving door of crisis and crime

3.3 People's experiences: detailed qualitative analysis

3.3.1 Childhood

Key findings: childhood

- Childhood was often marked by instability, trauma and unmet need. Interviewees experienced disrupted caregiving; domestic violence; parental mental health issues; and physical, emotional and sexual abuse.
- School suspensions and exclusions were frequently linked to undiagnosed ADHD or trauma-related behaviours. Exclusions were more common amongst men. In cases where women had been excluded, there was evidence of care contact.
- Where supportive adults were present, individuals were more likely to avoid school exclusion or contact with social services.
- Relationships with older peers formed in Alternative Provision or youth custody introduced individuals to crime and drug use. This was often underpinned by a need for love, respect and protection.
- Early interactions with social services shaped long-term attitudes. Most described these experiences as negative. This contributed to wider mistrust of professionals and reluctance to seek help.
- Women were more likely to have positive experiences of school. Where women had these positive experiences, criminal justice system contact was less likely. Most women had no formal contact before adulthood.
- Female interviewees from ethnic minority backgrounds were more likely to face bullying and stereotyping compared to their white counterparts.

Supporting children to achieve good outcomes in early childhood gives them a strong foundation for a happy, healthy and productive life.[4] Adverse childhood experiences, or highly stressful, and potentially traumatic events, or situations that threaten or breach someone's safety, security, trust or bodily integrity,[5] and undiagnosed neurodiversity were common. It is apparent from the interviews how multiple missed opportunities to intervene – at school, by social services and by the youth justice system – have led problems to 'snowball' into a range of unmet needs, increasing the likelihood of interactions with the criminal justice system in adulthood. It is also known that experiences of early life do not determine someone's life course. Ending up in the revolving door may be more likely for some, but it is not inevitable.

> **I'm a product of my environment. I'm not a bad person."**
>
> Male, aged 30-49

Experiences of school were mixed. Those with more positive experiences of education progressed into early adulthood with little or no criminal justice system contact and generally recalled enjoying school before going on to achieve qualifications and/or progress their careers. There was a gender split too, as this appeared more common amongst women who took part in the research. Typically, their criminal justice contact began later in adulthood and was linked to negative relationships.

> **My attendance was absolutely brilliant…I was quite clever, and I went to school all the time…I got a good job when I left school and worked my way up. I was a worker. I had a mortgage by the age of 25."**
>
> Female, aged 50+

For others, particularly men, school experiences were characterised by misbehaviour, struggling to concentrate and low attendance. Most interviewees had moved school at least once due to parental separation, domestic violence at home or moving between foster care placements.

> **So, my mum and dad divorced when I was quite young, so I got switched into different schools. I got moved from one Junior School to another and then back, so that was quite disruptive for me."**
>
> Male, aged 30-49

Being bullied added to negative school experiences and resulted in low school attendance. Interviewees often felt stigmatised because of their sexuality or ethnic background. In some cases, interviewees discussed being labelled as a bully and linked this back to their behaviour being misunderstood by teachers.

Among female interviewees, those from ethnic minority backgrounds spoke about being targeted by bullying or being seen as disruptive. This was not reflected in the accounts of interviewees from white backgrounds. One female interviewee spoke about moving schools to be around girls that were more like her.

School attendance rates were also influenced by what was going on at home, for example, if interviewees had caring responsibilities, or conversely did not have someone caring for them.

> **There was hardly no attendance [at school] because of my mum's mental health issues, so our attendance was really, really poor."**
>
> Male, aged 50+

> **I was so traumatised with stuff at home, going to school and having people being like, really mean and nasty, it was just overwhelming. And I couldn't do it…"**
>
> Female, aged 30-49

Getting suspended or excluded from school was a common theme from the interviews, usually due to involvement in fights, stealing or disruptive behaviour in lessons. The gender disparity is seen again here and reflects the wider evidence base,[5] with this mostly applying to men. Women experiencing school exclusions had also interacted with social care services. In addition, there appeared to be a pattern between individuals who were suspended or excluded and those who have been diagnosed with ADHD as an adult, or who suspect this.

> **I know I've got ADHD. But then in the 80s I was deemed a naughty kid."**
>
> Female, aged 30-49

It is worth noting that despite negative experiences of education, several people Revolving Doors spoke to have recently returned to further or higher education as adult learners.

Another theme in the research was negative peer influences. Interviewees explained how they started hanging around with the 'wrong crowd' – often older children or young adults – who they had met in Alternative Provision and/or youth custody. They recall feeling influenced by them to skip school and commit crimes, often in combination with giving them access to drugs/alcohol. A factor which sometimes drove these peer relationships was a desire for respect, love and attention, especially when this was lacking at home.

> **I then started hanging about with adults rather than kids because I was being expelled, suspended from school, so I had no kids to hang about with. So, I was hanging about with older kids, getting into more trouble getting into more serious crimes."**
>
> Male, aged 50+

[4] Early Intervention Foundation (2018), Realising the potential of early intervention.
[5] Young Minds (2018), Addressing childhood adversity and trauma.

> **A lot of the people, how I got into the gang, was actually from prison…when I first got in there, I got initiated in prison. I met certain people that were older than me. They were recruiting in prison."**
>
> Male, aged 30-49

Instability at home was commonplace. While some recalled supportive, family environments, these were the exception. For most, childhood was characterised by disrupted caregiving, exposure to violence and inconsistent adult support.

Physical, sexual and emotional abuse was common amongst interviewees. They explained how this trauma went either unrecognised or unsupported, such as not being believed or not disclosing their experiences to anyone until adulthood. Those who had experienced abuse explained how the resulting trauma and shame led to substance use and aggressive behaviour.

> **They both emotionally abused me, mentally and physically. My mum used to hit me quite a lot, so I was quite scared of her."**
>
> Female, aged 30-49

Other traumatic incidents in childhood that were experienced by interviewees included experiencing the death of a close friend or family member or experiencing significant physical health issues because of illness or an accident.

> **My mate died, he got killed and I thought, you know what? I'm not going out like that. He got [killed] in the middle of the road by about 15 guys with machetes. And I thought, you know what, I'm not letting that happen. So, I bought a gun [at] 16"**
>
> Male, aged 18-29

There was evidence that violence within the home was also common. There was also a pattern between parental separation and new partners who entered the home, who instigated and normalised this behaviour.

> **I believe that it was where the all the problems are raised. A guy that my mum was seeing after my mum and Dad split… we really go into it [fighting]"**
>
> Male, aged 30-49

In some cases, there was exposure to criminality and policing from a young age. Some grew up in households where parents or close relatives were involved in crime or had spent time in prison.

> **The police used to raid my house all the time…we got used to the door being kicked off."**
>
> Male, aged 18-29

A wider issue was that the parents of interviewees were not around to care for them. Reasons included parents experiencing mental health issues or having to work long hours, leaving kids unsupervised in the house, where friends could visit and use their home for risky behaviours.

> **My mum was always working. She worked nights…Dad worked the days, and my mum would expect me dad to be watching me overnight. But he wasn't."**
>
> Female, aged 50+

In some cases, parents' mental health issues became so prevalent that people had regular contact with social services or mental health teams. For example, one person explained how their mum would regularly get sectioned, but that nobody would talk to them about this or what was happening when she was not there.

> **They'd usually take her for like a month or two, and then they'd release her again and then come back a couple months later…None of her doctors or any of that would talk to me or fill me in on her situation or anything. They would just send police over to the house and then just come in and restrain her, take her and then that was it. They left me."**
>
> Male, aged 18-29

Those who had contact with social services as a child mostly spoke negatively about their experiences, which then went on to negatively impact their views of all authority figures. There was a sense that the multitude of interactions with social services invaded their family dynamic. Frustration also stemmed from individuals not being listened to or believed, for example about an abusive parent, with blame placed on the child. One person candidly spoke about how this impacted their behaviour.

> **But a lot of the time, social services wouldn't listen to me […] They wouldn't listen to when I was saying like she's abusive, when I'm saying she's an alcoholic. […] my mum was very intimidating because of the nature of her work, and she would literally intimidate them intellectually, threaten to sue them, threaten to do this […] And they [social services] were just too frightened to confront her. So basically, they just left her to kind of get away with stuff."**
>
> Female, aged 30-49

A protective factor in childhood was the presence of a supportive adult, either a relative or an advocate. There were positive examples where parental advocacy had prevented exclusion, or where grandparents or wider family had provided a 'safe space' to live so the individual wasn't placed into care, and good relationships with support services who advocated on their behalf and made them feel supported.

It is also known that experiences of early life do not determine someone's life course. Ending up in the revolving door may be more likely for some, but it is not inevitable.

3.3.2 First interactions with the criminal justice system

Key findings: first interactions with the criminal justice system

- Early interactions with the police often resulted from them being a victim of crime, demonstrating the overlap of victim and offender identities.
- All male interviewees were under 18 when they experienced their first police contact. Formal contact with the youth justice system was also common.
- For women, formal contact with the police often did not begin until they were in their 20s. In cases where there was formal contact before the age of 20, it resulted in either No Further Action or the individual being cautioned.
- Police contact in childhood often happened when they were not at school after being suspended, excluded or due to truanting.

For many, their first interaction with the police involved them being cautioned or receiving a conditional discharge after being caught stealing, being in possession of stolen goods, or committing criminal damage. There were also instances where individuals' early interactions with the police resulted in them being a victim of crime, demonstrating the overlap of victim and offender identities. For example, some people explained how they were attacked or had things stolen – or both – when they were at school and had contact with the police as a result.

> **"There were several interactions with the police as a victim in my first two years at secondary school. It wasn't because I'd broken the law, it was because I was a victim of crime. So, I nearly got killed outside school, I got punched in the chest..."**
>
> Male, aged 30-49

In addition, there were instances where people went to the police to ask for help because they were so unhappy with the situation at home.

> **"At the very end of the road was [the] police station...I'm pretty sure I walked all the way there and I said to them, I don't want to go home, and I refused to go home, and I got put in an emergency foster placement."**
>
> Female, aged 30-49

There was a clear gender divide in the age at which interviewees had formal contact with the justice system. All the men interviewed had experienced police contact by the age of 16 – with some as young as nine or ten years old. Most had formal contact with the youth justice system. There were also examples of boys being charged aged 17 but placed into a men's prison. For women, formal contact with the police often didn't begin until they were in their 20s. In the couple of instances where female interviewees had police contact as a child, there was 'No Further Action' or they were cautioned.

Early police contact often happened at school or through repeated encounters with local officers (that they sometimes knew by name). Several interviewees spoke of being familiar to the police from a young age.

> **"I got arrested in year nine because I was drinking alcohol in school. I'd drink before I went to school in the morning."**
>
> Male, aged 30-49

Interactions and experiences of youth justice services varied both based on someone's age and the relationship they were able to foster with staff. Younger interviewees spoke about receiving one-to-one support, whereas older interviewees recalled completing activities, such as woodwork or arts and crafts at the weekend or instead of school.

> **"I feel like they tried to set me up in a way... They would also keep tabs on me...I was chilling on the main road, and I saw this woman, helped with her bags, took them to her house and then I've gone to YOT like a couple of days later. And they were like I heard you helped a woman with her shopping bags..."**
>
> Male, aged 18-29

All the men interviewed had experienced police contact by the age of 16 – with some as young as nine or ten years old.

3.3.3 Patterns of offending

Key findings

- All interviewees had multiple contact with the criminal justice system, although the frequency varied.
- Over half of interviewees fit the Adult Prolific Offender definition.
- Repeat offending often involved the same type of crime – such as shoplifting, fraud or assault.
- In some cases, the nature of offences became more serious over time or grew in magnitude, such as moving from shoplifting to commercial or high-value burglaries.
- Offending was linked to substance use through funding a habit or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- All those interviewed who were in their 20s had fewer charges on their record. This was attributed to positive interventions they received as young adults.

The nature and frequency of interviewees' ongoing contact with the criminal justice system varied. Some respondents were familiar with their criminal record and shared the exact number of charges they had received, whilst others have had so many interactions and charges it made it hard to keep track. Over half of interviewees fit the Ministry of Justice's Adult Prolific Offender definition of having 16 or more previous convictions or cautions, at least eight of which happened aged 21 or older.

> **"In the hundreds [times in prison]... lots and lots of very short sentences. I think the longest one was seven months."**
>
> Male, aged 30-49

Some people continued to commit the same or similar types of offences repeatedly, but the type of offence being repeated varied significantly by individual. When this was the case, the offence type varied significantly. For example, one interviewee committed multiple fraud offences to fund their drug habit, while another had multiple common assault charges linked to an abusive relationship. Others had multiple shoplifting offences. Interventions by the criminal justice system or other services did not impact their behaviour.

> **"When I last looked at my record, which was 65 pages long...It was the same sentences all the time which weren't working."**
>
> Female, aged 30-49

For others, the nature of their offences became more serious over time or grew in magnitude. One interviewee explained that they continued to shoplift, stealing higher value goods over a wider geography. Another shifted from carrying out shoplifting to commercial burglaries. A different individual was charged with possession of cannabis and criminal damage when they were younger, which then escalated to charges for burglary, theft and assault when they got older and their needs remained unmet.

> **"Initially it was like on the bus or on foot, but then I got more organised. I've got someone who would drive me around and I paid them. I'd have, you know, thousands of, like, we travel from town to town [to steal goods]."**
>
> Female, aged 30-49

Some interviewees spent a decade or more in and out of the criminal justice system. For example, one person had 56 charges on their record. Another had served 20-25 custodial sentences, as well as other charges. In contrast, the interviewees who were in their 20s all had fewer charges on their record. The positive experiences of interventions they received whilst young adults, either in the community or in prison, had helped them to address their needs and break the cycle of offending before it became prolific.

Many interviewees also highlighted that there were also numerous instances where they 'did not get caught'. This included low level crime such as shoplifting, but also more serious offences such as burglary and car theft.

All interviewees had multiple contact with the criminal justice system.

3.3.4 Drivers of reoffending

Key findings: drivers of reoffending

- Substance use played a significant role in people's ongoing offending behaviour, driven by committing crimes while under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, or to fund their habit.
- Unresolved trauma, unaddressed mental health needs and relationship breakdowns were key drivers of problematic substance use.
- Negative peer influence played a role in behaviour, both during childhood and adulthood, which led to offending behaviour and drug and alcohol use.
- All women had a history of relationships involving physical and/or coercive abuse, which were often reasons for their police contact. However, there was a lack of referrals for onwards specialist support for women when this happened.

There were many, interlinked reasons for people reoffending, stemming from unmet needs and the context of their lives.

Substance use played a significant role in people's ongoing offending behaviour, whether they were committing a crime under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, or doing so to fund their habit. Negative peer influences into adulthood were often from those met during prison sentences or following release into a House of Multiple Occupancy (HMO) or hostel – environments rife with substance use. Addiction to harder drugs also came from these influences and environments, or led to people relapsing once they were released from prison where they had sometimes managed to detox.

> **"When I first moved into the flat, I was just smoking cannabis. Then somebody come out of prison who I grew up with. He was a couple years older than us, and he had nowhere to stay. So, I said he can stay at my flat…I didn't realise that he was a heroin addict…He asked me can he smoke it in my kitchen, and I agreed to that, and then I let it into my flat then. So, everybody started, my whole friendship group got hooked [on heroin]."**
>
> Male, aged 30-49

> **I've got so many sentences, whether it's multiple years or multiple weeks. I've got cleaned so many times to give myself the best chance of, you know, survival on release. And every time without fail I've had the same old story… I was never told about dry houses… You're just shoved in the worst HMOs in the worst areas"**
>
> Male, aged 30-49

Unresolved trauma, unaddressed mental health needs, and relationship breakdowns emerged as key drivers of problematic substance use. Interviewees described turning to alcohol and drugs as coping mechanisms in the absence of medication and clinical interventions. Substance use often intensified during periods of acute distress, particularly following significant life events, such as relationships ending or children being removed from their care.

> **I did my street robbery because I was off my head… me not realising that I had suffered with depression, trauma, complex PTSD, ADHD, all of these things that I was unaware of, and it's only been in the last few years that I'm aware of all these things and perhaps, maybe, if those things had got dealt with early on… I might not have been a criminal or might not have done these things"**
>
> Male, aged 30-49

All the women interviewed had a history of relationships involving physical and/or coercive abuse which was a significant reason for their police contact. Police would be called when they had a fight, or if they were committing crimes for or with their partner. However, aside from social services involvement, there was limited evidence of referrals for onward specialist support for women when this happened.

> **My fella was taking the heroin. And I was told that if you took it on the foil, it was all right, never taken drugs before. And I ended up taking heroin because I was so stressed with my job… It's really unusual for me to go on heroin, but I did and I ended up just escalating, losing everything and getting into a life crime with somebody else."**
>
> Female, 50+

> **"I had a nervous breakdown ended up [being sectioned] for three months because my head had fell off because I'd lost the wife, the kids, the house about everything had gone."**
>
> Male, aged 30-49

3.3.5 Experiences of the criminal justice system

Key findings: experiences of the criminal justice system

- Experiences of police contact felt "heavy handed" and disproportionate to their actions, particularly for women.
- Short prison sentences caused disruption to engagement with services, housing and family lives, creating more problems and needs.
- Probation was characterised as a 'tick-box' service. Support was inconsistent and often did not address individual needs.
- Most could recall at least one probation officer who had helped them, but in general, high staff turnover prevented people from forming trusting relationships.
- Where interviewees identified a helpful probation officer, they described good working relationships and access to support which contributed towards their progress.
- Instances of people being recalled after breaching their license conditions or community orders set people up to fail due to their unaddressed substance use needs.

Interviewees shared experiences of police contact that felt disproportionate and rooted in assumptions about their identity rather than their actions. Several interviewees explained how they felt stigmatised due to their criminal record. In some cases, this led to a disproportionate number of officers arresting them or individuals being arrested for crimes they had not committed, because they were known to the police. Some described being subject to disproportionate force, for example, having more than 10 officers come to arrest them. Women in particular spoke about traumatic encounters with police officers. Being roughly handled and subjected to inappropriate comments by male officers left them feeling vulnerable and degraded.

> **"[Police contact] was pretty horrific to be honest…I felt quite vulnerable and especially with male police officers… I've been roughly handled by male police officers… I've been tied up on the floor, I've been thrown in the back of a police car. I've had bruises like head to toe from the cuffs and from where they've been really aggressive with me"**
>
> Female, aged 18-29

One individual with neurodivergence also reflected the lack of awareness and understanding of their condition from police officers – both on the street and in custody. For example, an individual with autism described the distress and sensory overload faced by the police handling.

> **"Physical police contact causes me distress because of my autism… there was a spit bag over my face… it's really distressing it adds to the sensory overload… there's no understanding of neurodiversity."**
>
> Male, 30-49

Individuals' experiences of courts were often linked to the perceived 'fairness' of the sentence a judge handed down, as well as the extent to which they felt their circumstances and needs had been accounted for. Delays and surrounding uncertainty in waiting for court hearings caused significant distress for some people.

> **"The judge could see that I was being set up as well. And that was the same judge who gave me that chance a couple of years later… A bit later on, I had a judge who sent me away, was having none of it. He didn't care…You're a menace to society."**
>
> Male, aged 50+

It is known that short prison sentences are ineffective in addressing reoffending[6] and the research conducted for this report adds further weight to this argument. People interviewed were not in prison for long enough to be able to access support. Furthermore, the support they had been accessing in the community was interrupted or ended. Short sentences that interviewees received ranged from two or three weeks to between six and nine months. During this time, or whilst on remand, some interviewees lost their housing or were separated from their children (in some cases both occurred). One individual was separated from their newborn baby.

> **"I had no chance to engage with support [in prison]. I was withdrawing, I was ill. I'd start to come round and then I'd be released again"**
>
> Female, aged 30-49

There was also disruption during a single sentence or when people were awaiting sentencing. For example, an individual who moved to three different prisons during a six-month period whilst they were on remand.

Where interviewees had served multiple prison sentences or spent a longer time in custody, they shared experiences of feeling institutionalised by the prison system, where they were used to – and comfortable with – the sense of routine and stability it provided. This was echoed amongst individuals who had served shorter prison sentences and didn't have stable housing. Although prison did not address their needs, it provided 'respite' from being on the streets and their drug addiction.

> **"You know what, it [prison] was a relief. Yeah, it was a relief. Like I didn't have to go through the stress that I was going through on the street."**
>
> Female, aged 30-49

For some interviewees, time in custody demonstrated that they could "cope" without drugs or by taking reduced amounts. However, upon release, there was often a lack of support to continue their recoveries, which set them back into (or increased) substance use.

> **"So, I was clean in prison for eight months before I got released. And I got released from prison and the next day I relapsed."**
>
> Male, aged 30-49

The interviews found mixed experiences of probation. Some individuals recalled having multiple probation officers and inconsistent support. However, there were several cases where individuals identified a Probation Officer who they had found helpful and with whom they had developed a good quality relationship.

[6] Ministry of Justice (2023), Sentencing Bill Factsheet: Short Sentences.

> **I had more than 20 probation officers [who] I never found particularly helpful."**
>
> Female, aged 30-49

Where probation was viewed as helpful, interviewees received consistent and personalised support. Seeing the same officer over time enabled trust and rapport to be built, and an understanding of their circumstances and individual needs. There were examples of probation officers being described as caring and believing in them, which in turn developed confidence and an ability to move forward.

> **I'm still in contact with my probation officer from 1994. He's been a massive influence in my life. He knows my stories and the injustices from the system, because he worked in that field [and now he] works in rehabilitation."**
>
> Male, aged 50+

However, probation was often described as a 'tick-box' exercise, with a perception that probation officers were not providing helpful support, instead adhering to the administrative processes. Interviewees that had negative experiences of probation felt that staff did not help address their individual needs and did not care. The lack of understanding of addiction amongst probation officers was also felt to be a barrier in signposting to relevant support services, such as rehabilitation, substance use services, or dry houses.

Probation staff turnover was also a barrier to accessing support, making it challenging to build rapport and trust with new staff. Interviewees reported having to repeat themselves to each new person. Those that had multiple experiences of probation officers referenced knowing what to say to officers to ensure an easy and quick appointment.

> **I've felt a lot of the times when I was on probation, it was just all robotic … the so-called professionals that were textbook professionals …you've got a probation officer, and you go there and you try to build a rapport, you try to build up a trust – it takes a lot for you to open up to them. And then within a week or two, [you're told] 'I'm moving on' … then that new probation officers comes in … [you are] right at the very beginning again"**
>
> Male, aged 30-49

Furthermore, there were many instances of people being recalled after breaching their license conditions or community orders, and therefore feeling 'set up to fail', especially if this happened because they had unaddressed substance use needs but had not committed further offences.

> **If they're not committing crimes and they're trying to help themselves, they might have drug issues or whatever…maybe we shouldn't recall them so much…"**
>
> Male, aged 30-49

Pre-sentence reports (PSRs) are prepared by probation officers to aid judges and magistrates to decide on what action should be taken. Typically, they contain information on the offence, the person's background and circumstances, a risk assessment and a sentencing proposal. Interviewees' experience of PSRs was inconsistent, with concerns around accuracy, quality and the process being traumatic. Stories of shorter turnaround times for PSRs support existing evidence and strengthen Revolving Doors' call for high-quality pre-sentence reports.[7]

[7] Revolving Doors (2024), Pre-sentence reports: Why it's time to prioritise quality over speed.

The accuracy and attention to detail on PSRs was also raised by interviewees as a concern. For example, an interviewee's PSR included incorrect personal information, such as their name, age and mental health diagnoses – damaging trust in the process and making them feel misrepresented at a critical point in their journey through the justice system.

> **My pre-sentence report …got so many things wrong… whoever read that probably thought I was a completely different person… It's so dangerous, that these false psychiatric reports are being given and read out loud in court and believed… They don't care that it's wrong because they don't have time to really sit there and write a decent one."**
>
> Female, aged 18-29

PSRs that were completed in court by an assigned probation officer weren't always of high quality. For example, an individual noticed a diminishing difference in the quality of the reports over the years. Those written by a known probation officer prior to sentencing were also perceived as better quality. By comparison, a PSR completed on the day of their hearing often felt rushed, impersonal and was sometimes based on outdated information from previous PSRs.

This research identified that the sensitivities of PSRs may be overlooked. They have the potential to be highly sensitive due to the vulnerabilities and trauma covered. An interviewee described the process as difficult, recounting how they had to relive painful experiences multiple times across different PSRs.

> **Your past is not going to change, it's going to still be the same… you shouldn't need to go through it and say all of these things again when you've already said it 1,000 times…Whatever it might be, it's going to be difficult"**
>
> Female, aged 30-49

This lived experience of the probation system by interviewees highlights a fundamentally flawed probation system. The limited capacity of officers, staff turnover, poorly prepared PSRs and high levels of administration demonstrates the multiple missed opportunities to support individuals caught in the revolving door. The research found that meaningful engagement to understand individual needs and circumstances, as well as signposting to relevant support services, were helpful.

3.3.6 Missed opportunities to break the cycle

Key findings: missed opportunities to break the cycle

- Opportunities were missed both in the community and at every stage of the justice system.
- Interviewees felt their mental health needs were not adequately addressed due to long waiting lists, minimal service contact, and being prescribed medication without being provided any support.
- Mental Health Treatment Requirements were rarely used, representing a missed opportunity to provide targeted mental health support within the justice system.
- Drug Rehabilitation Requirements and Alcohol Treatment Requirements were often ineffective in isolation, as they failed to address the mental health issues or trauma at the root of the addiction.
- People in the revolving door were not in prison for long enough to access support or to effectively plan for support post-release.

The research found that interviewees felt like there were missed opportunities to address their mental health needs in the community and through the justice system, such as provision of a Mental Health Treatment Requirement. Interviewees spoke about having minimal contact with services, being prescribed anti-depressants but not being referred for additional support, and experiencing long waiting lists. In one example, an interviewee disengaged from telephone-based mental health support as the time-bound nature of the sessions made them feel misunderstood.

Drug Rehabilitation Requirements (DRRs) and Alcohol Treatment Requirements (ATRs) in isolation did not appear to enable people to exit the revolving door. Reasons for this included the perceived quality and suitability of the support available on these orders, and because they did not address the reasons why people were drinking or using drugs in the first place, which often linked back to their mental health needs and unaddressed trauma.

> **ATRs [Alcohol Treatment Requirements] were [given to me] quite early on…what they failed to see was why was I drinking in the first place, [which was] because of my mental health"**
>
> Female, aged 30-49

In instances where DRRs or ATRs did not influence interviewees' drug or alcohol use, a primary reason cited was that individuals did not feel ready to make changes. Other reasons included a reluctance to engage because the interviewee had already had a negative experience of the service, or the group nature of the support, which some didn't feel comfortable with. Multiple people highlighted that attending group treatment sessions could sometimes be a way to meet people who could help them access substances.

In addition, limited or no support within prison was cited as a missed opportunity to address unmet needs and to break the cycle of crisis and crime. Interviewees did not have access to psychiatrists, counsellors or therapists to address the mental health needs that were often driving their offending behaviours.

> **My mental health wasn't getting addressed [in prison]. Because when I was in jail I started self-harming, and I remember them putting me on Prozac. But I've never had anyone […] someone to talk to, like a psychiatrist or counsellor or psychotherapist or anything like that."**
>
> Female, aged 30-49

A lack of support around prison release, when making the transition back to the community, was another missed opportunity to connect people into services to address their needs. For example, one individual was released from custody in January, in the snow, with just a t-shirt and given half an hour to visit three services post-release or risked being recalled. Another didn't get support to continue their prescription medication upon release, which led to them going back into hospital due to their mental health needs.

> **You gotta go and see a drugs agency, probation, then registered at a hostel. And it's always by the same time 2:30. And you get into town at 2:00, and you've got to choose one, so you're terrified that you're going to get recalled straight away, and there's a lot of people, like the guys that got off the bus with me were like, right, I'm going to go to spend my money and I'll be back in prison later…you've got to really try not to go straight back to prison."**
>
> Male, aged 50+

Limited or no support within prisons was cited as a missed opportunity to address unmet need and break the cycle of crime.

3.3.7 Barriers to engaging with services and accessing support

Key findings: barriers to engaging with services and accessing support

- Co-occurring mental health and substance use needs were a barrier to accessing help. Interviewees described being trapped between mental health and substance use services, neither prepared to help until the other issue had been addressed.
- Barriers to effective support included a lack of understanding among support staff on how addiction works and not feeling listened to.
- Reducing consumption without addressing the issues driving the substance use was viewed as ineffective.

The research showed that when people were entrenched in their addiction, it was difficult for them to accept support and engage with services.

> **So, most of the street homeless teams they was brilliant…they would try and help. But I was so entrenched in my addiction at the time, I didn't want that help."**
>
> Male, aged 30-49

Interviewees also highlighted examples of 'dual diagnosis', and how having co-occurring mental health and substance use needs was a common barrier to people being able to access help. Interviewees recalled being turned away from mental health services because they had problems with drugs and/or alcohol, but also not being able to access substance use services because of their mental health needs. Revolving Doors' work has shown how services operating in silos perpetuate cycles of trauma and disadvantage, and risk further harming vulnerable people.[8]

> **It was like your alcohol's a problem. Then you go to mental health and mental health's problem…you'd be passed from pillar to post…I went into a room to see a triage nurse in mental health. And it's the second I mentioned drugs. Her face dropped and she may as well have put the pen down and turned around, honestly."**
>
> Female, aged 30-49

Negative experiences with substance use services meant that people disengaged and/or continued to use drugs or alcohol. Barriers to effective support included a lack of understanding among support staff on how addiction works and not feeling listened to. For example, one person explained how their substance use worker forgot to put their methadone prescription request in before they went on holiday. As a result, they couldn't collect it for over three days. The pharmacy stopped their prescription, and they started taking heroin again.

Some interviewees felt the methods used to address problematic substance use focused heavily on reducing consumption without addressing the underlying issues. Meetings with substance use services were criticised for being short and too focused on testing rather than why someone was struggling with addiction.

> **[The course] could really use that time to find out what was going on in your life. Why you were using the drugs, how you got started, not just sort of like, oh, this is how you stop smoking dope, blah blah blah."**
>
> Male, aged 50+

Although some found opiate substitute therapy helpful, others felt that methadone scripts kept people addicted to drugs and prevented recovery. Interviewees described how a script was often viewed as a back-up if they could not access their usual drugs, rather than taken as a substitution as intended.

> **They slap you on a methadone script because it's the cheapest of all the medications to give you… they maintain the individual, day after day, given methadone… no detox, no nothing… and when they get released, they got addictions. It's inevitable."**
>
> Male, aged 30-49

Most people who took part in the research have also had issues with unsuitable and unstable housing. There were several examples of people who had experienced street homelessness. This proved a significant barrier in preventing people from making progress with their life and engaging with support services.

> **While you're on the street you're not bothered about any other service. You want to know where you're getting your head down, where you're going to get fed."**
>
> Male, aged 30-49

[8] National Experts Citizens Group (2025), Exploring solutions to multiple disadvantage: A report from the National Expert Citizens Group (NECG), Revolving Doors.

3.3.8 Contact and experiences of wider services

Key findings: contact and experiences of wider services

- Timing is crucial for the success of support interventions.
- Interviewees needed to feel ready to accept support, which was often difficult in the grip of addiction or mental health struggles.
- If in the right headspace, interventions such as AA/NA meetings, rehab or dry houses were enablers of recovery. An environment with peer support and where alcohol or drugs were not present was particularly helpful.
- Supportive GPs could be effective. Good GPs listened and provided tailored support to address underlying issues, particularly around mental health.
- Negative experiences of social services fuelled wider distrust of the system.

Most interviewees who had children had experienced contact with social services and recalled negative experiences which fuelled their wider distrust of the system. On more than one occasion an interviewee complained about a social worker with damning consequences.

> **"I highlighted a social worker's incompetence...in front of her manager. She didn't like that, she was gunning for me after this. [It was] so personal, but that's just your job. This is my child. This is my whole life...And then she started to just make my life an absolute misery."**
>
> Female, aged 30-49

For many of these individuals, contact with social services was intertwined with abusive or coercive relationships. Current or ex-partners (and sometimes their families too) would use social service intervention against them. Police contact linked to the relationship would also result in social services getting involved.

Interviewees who had contact with social services as an adult felt like their criminal record was used against them. Interviewees described that the information on their file was inaccurate or did not account for their perspective. Trusting social services was also more difficult when there was fear of children being removed.

> **"You know they're supposed to be there to help, but people aren't honest with them because of the fear of the children being took."**
>
> Female, aged 30-49

> **"If you read some of the paperwork, you'd think I'm an animal and I was reading it and I'm thinking, who is this ******* person? I'll kill him myself, you know, because they don't put the truth in it. I mean, I've even. I've even pulled them up on, on, on certain stuff, even in the courtrooms... and the judges have dismissed what I have said. That's why I have lost a lot of trust in the system."**
>
> Male, aged 30-49

Participants often had multiple touchpoints with substance use services along their journey. The effectiveness of these interventions very much depended on what else was going on in their life at that time. Interviewees described needing to feel ready to accept support, which was often difficult amid substance use or mental health struggles.

If someone was in the right 'headspace', Alcoholics Anonymous/Narcotics Anonymous (AA/NA) meetings, rehabilitation and/or being in a dry house were considered effective in addressing their substance use. An environment where alcohol or drugs was not present and peer support was available helped with recovery. This was in stark contrast to accessing substance support while in hostels or HMOs, where rife drug use prevented recovery. Regular check-ins through meetings such as AA/NA provided accountability and were effective in maintaining recovering. Many interviewees continue to attend meetings to this day.

For those where rehab was helpful, group sessions and a supportive environment were cited as enablers for their recovery. Where it did not work, it was often accompanied by feelings of not wanting to recover, not getting on with the people in rehab, or not liking the environment.

In one case, parental financial and emotional support was a powerful protective factor. This support was always provided and enabled them to access substance use services and continued throughout their recovery journey.

> **"She's always financially supported me... My mum has always been my main – you know, when I was struggling... for all those years where I couldn't because I was ill and she, you know, completely supported me financially, emotionally, did everything for me"**
>
> Female, aged 18-29

People who faced ongoing problematic substance use and unmet mental health needs spoke about their experiences of being hospitalised frequently. Self-harm and overdoses resulted in being admitted to hospital, highlighting the extremes of unmet needs co-occurring and exacerbating people's circumstances.

Accessing healthcare that individuals needed and wanted was often driven by their experience of GPs. Those that had negative experiences of GPs described feeling dismissed and not receiving individualised care. Instead, they were prescribed antidepressants or provided sick notes without addressing the root of the problem.

When GPs took time to listen and offer tailored support, interviewees described feeling listened to and understood. Acknowledging mental health issues, problematic substance use, and supporting diagnoses were cited as reasons why they felt supported. In some cases, health diagnoses helped them with access to support or helped them understand their conditions.

> **My GP ... he's been really amazing. Like he's been there on my journey ... he's supported me when I was doing my detox, he listened to me when I said I wanted to come off of it and everyone else was like, no, you should stay on it... And he supported me through it because I was determined to come off of it."**
>
> Female, aged 30-49

This reflects positive experiences of support more generally, which are often driven by person-centred care and trauma-informed services. Interviewees who had a positive experience of a service spoke about feeling listened to and staff being caring and understanding.

In particular, women-only support services were viewed positively, including specialist charity support for women affected by the criminal justice system and women-focused residential community solutions.

> **What's amazing about [support service] is they genuinely care. Everyone who works there, they're not in it for the money, they care so much about what they do [...] whoever's hired them has made absolute certain that they are a good fit for the role and that's why it works."**
>
> Female, aged 18-29

Many interviewees complained about the struggles of obtaining suitable housing. One individual had been in temporary accommodation for over two years, which they should not have been in for longer than six months. Being placed in accommodation in unfamiliar areas away from support networks was also an issue.

It was evident that those who had multiple interacting needs required support and advocacy to make housing and benefit applications, and several interviewees spoke about the need for people to be supported to develop life skills, such as cooking and paying utility bills, which was often lacking, even in supported accommodation settings.

> **I've been [housed] in a different area...I just felt very depressed and isolated."**
>
> Male, aged 30-49

3.3.9 Exiting the revolving door

Key findings: exiting the revolving door

- Personal motivation was key to individuals exiting the revolving door. This was often driven by a recognition of the harm they were causing to themselves and others. Children could be a powerful motivator.
- Good examples of support through key transitions included Liaison and Diversion workers and Housing First.
- Strengths-based and trauma-informed support from professionals across services helped individuals grow in confidence and look to the future.
- Support networks played an important role in people's resilience to overcome challenges and in encouraging progress. This included family, friends and community-based support groups, including peer support.

Personal motivation played a key role in people's progression away from a cycle of crisis and crime. Across interviews, participants emphasised that meaningful change could only begin once they felt personally ready. This turning point was often recognising the harm their drug or alcohol use was causing and wanting something better for themselves.

> **"I gave up smoking cannabis, which had a huge effect on my mental health. I completely cut out drinking. A huge one for me was having something to fight against…I'm always very competitive. It gave me something to be like right, I'll show you."**
>
> Male, aged 30-49

For some, becoming a parent, or reflecting on the type of role model they wanted to be for their children, was also a driver behind wanting to change their behaviour. This provided motivation to detox from substance use and to accept support.

> **"I just had enough when I was using on top of my script and wasting my money buying drugs…just thinking like, what am I doing… and I was thinking like what kind of role model do I want to be for my son? …One day I just thought right I'm not using anymore, and I detoxed myself back onto my script and I haven't looked back since"**
>
> Female, aged 30-49

> **"I ended up getting pregnant. So, then that made me realise that all this had to stop. It was a chance, really, of sorting my life out. And I got rid of him [ex-partner] then."**
>
> Female, aged 50+

For others, this shift in mindset was influenced by significant life events relating to their health and wellbeing, and a realisation of how fragile life was. Participants described how being hospitalised made them realise the impact that the cycle of crisis and crime was having on their lives. Multiple people explained that being hospitalised proved a catalyst to them ending their drug use.

> **"I was in intensive care. I've been set on fire [in the homeless shelter]. That's put me in an induced coma, and I woke up and that's the only time that I thought that I actually felt scared and didn't want to die. So, from that day I've not. I've not touched drink or drugs since."**
>
> Male, aged 30-49

In addition, there were positive examples of services supporting people to address their needs and break the cycle of crisis and crime. For example, one individual had been into prison four separate times in a year for drunk and disorderly offences. When they met with a Liaison and Diversion peer worker and health professional, they were able to create a clear release plan, which meant access to suitable accommodation and a GP for the first time in years, helping them move forward with their life.

> **"The day before I was being released, they came to meet me and explain what was going on and what was going to happen…That's when I got involved in the mental health team in stuff like that. And they took me to the appointments 'cause I didn't register for the doctor for a few years…So, you know, registered with the doctors…Got involved with gym, Revolving Doors…"**
>
> Male, aged 30-49

Other examples where services were key included an individual being supported by Housing First, where the consistent support and stable accommodation provided helped them to address their needs. Another interviewee was referred to a psychotherapist whilst in supported accommodation, which led to them receiving mental health support for the first time. For another person, receiving proactive outreach from a service when they were at their lowest was crucial to engaging in support.

> **"They had phoned me, and I remember I was crying and I and like because I smoked all of my money…and they phoned me to ask me a question, and they started to come up with all these solutions…we can manage your money. We can do this. And then she was like, well, what about treatment? That's when the heavens started to open up."**
>
> Female, aged 30-49

Having a professional who believed in them was another important factor highlighted in helping people to make positive changes in their lives. Working with a staff member that focused on their strengths and capabilities helped individuals grow in confidence and look to the future.

> **The belief from someone else, like, you know, saying like you know what, you are capable. I wouldn't have got where I am today at all. I would still be in the same place."**
>
> Male, aged 18-29

> **With my probation officer, the one thing that really I liked about her was that she didn't just focus on me being the problem."**
>
> Female, aged 30-49

There were also examples of a restorative justice intervention which enabled interviewees to think differently about their past offending behaviour.

> **You look at the ripple effects of what happens now...The restorative justice course that I've done, it really made me think about, like, oh, my God, what have I done?"**
>
> Female, aged 30-49

Furthermore, support networks played an important role in people's resilience to overcome challenges and in encouraging progress. This included family, friends and community-based support groups. Several people found groups, including Alcoholics Anonymous and Cocaine Anonymous helpful in supporting their recovery. It was validating to meet those who had overcome their problematic substance use who could show that recovery was possible.

> **I think if anyone wants real recovery, you know, consistent recovery, they need to get a sponsor, they need to work for 12 steps...to go to fellowship meetings. And that is the only way they're going to get clean. Rehab is great, but it's when you get out of rehab that is the hard part. And if you can't afford to be in rehab for the rest of your life, which no one really can, then you need a programme of action"**
>
> Female, aged 18-29

This also reflects the importance of having people with this lived experience at the heart of support and people's recovery journeys. Revolving Doors has long advocated for peer support within services.

> **Like the wages are not high enough. No one really wants to be a probation officer ... few of them have real lived experience which is like number one if you want to help someone."**
>
> Female, aged 18-29

Section 04

Quantitative findings

4. Quantitative findings

4.1 Purpose of and approach

The quantitative part of the research identified the revolving doors cohort within the data to better understand the profile of individuals in the cycle of repeat offending.

To do this, Newton and Xantura brought together data from a range of services to create a single view of individuals and households. This required robust information governance foundations and demonstrated how cross-agency data can be meaningfully connected to inform systemic change.

The dataset used draws from both structured and unstructured sources and is powered by advanced machine learning and AI. Other efforts to understand vulnerability typically rely on structured data only, which typically only capture the presenting issue, and not the rich detail within the case notes that is only known to the case worker, police officer, or probation officer. This means that for analytical purposes, the overall quantity of known risk, needs or vulnerabilities are often underestimated and under analysed.

This programme's approach used text analytics from case notes – often where probation officers record the richest insights – enabling the true volumes and risk factors to be visible. It also captured issues that are never identified in structured 'drop-down' options and structured risk frameworks, for example bullying, self-harm or learning difficulties.

This advanced data analytics has also been able to map offender types to their unmet needs. These needs – such as problematic substance use; emotional and behavioural difficulties; and mental health challenges – mirror the recurring themes found in this programme's qualitative research.

It should be noted that the findings are based on access to two years' worth of data. As such, the insights presented should be seen as indicative rather than comprehensive, and the absence of lifetime data means some experiences or patterns may be underrepresented. While the themes identified are likely to reflect broader trends, caution should be exercised in drawing firm conclusions from specific figures. Additionally, as data collection was limited to a single reference location, care has been taken not to overextend assumptions to a national scale.

4.2 Identifying and understanding the revolving doors cohort

4.2.1 Overview of the findings

Data-led analysis of the revolving doors cohort indicates that:

- A higher number of offences is associated with a higher number of recorded, unmet needs.
- The three most prevalent unmet needs are:
  - Behavioural needs;
  - Problematic substance use needs;
  - Mental health needs.
- 97% of prolific offenders in the reference data have behavioural challenges flagged, and the most common combination of unmet needs is behavioural issues, problematic substance use, and discrimination.
- Lived experiences were reflected in the data, with the largest cohort archetypes being prolific violent crime offenders and prolific shoplifters.
- Violent crimes appear to be associated with a higher number of unmet needs compared to shoplifting, with all offenders in both cohorts having at least one unmet need recorded.
- Behavioural issues and problematic substance use are the most common unmet needs for both the prolific shoplifters and prolific violent crime cohorts, affecting over half of the group.

4.2.2 An introduction to the data

To identify the revolving doors cohort from data, (and better understand the profile of individuals in the cycle of repeat offending), a range of data sources and methods of analysis were used.

The qualitative interviews described in Section 3 produced a series of common patterns into and through the revolving door. These patterns were translated into 'archetypes', such as prolific shoplifters or violent crime offenders, rendered as journey maps through public services.

These maps were overlaid with the full range of unmet needs identified through all 20 of the interviews onto an integrated data set that combined criminal justice, welfare, social care, housing, and wider data on vulnerabilities such as education and family.

This allowed the prevalence, scale, and impact of these journeys on public services to be tested, and the shape and nature of demand to be quantified.

More detail on the graphs in this report can be found at **www.preventingtherevolvingdoor.com**.

4.2.3 Understanding the patterns of unmet need

Based on the qualitative interviews and previous work by Revolving Doors, there is a strong indication that an individual's unmet needs may influence their likelihood to commit a crime or patterns of offence. The aim of the analysis conducted for this programme was to test whether this was borne out by the data, and to quantify the scale and extent of this issue.

Finding 1: A higher number of offences is associated with a higher number of recorded unmet needs.

The reference data used for this programme indicates a correlation between number of unmet needs and number of offences associated with the revolving door cohort (shoplifting, drug offences, assault on an emergency worker, criminal damage, ABH, and to a limited extent, GBH).

The qualitative research showed that violent crimes were often linked to domestic violence and/or problematic substance use. They occurred as someone's pattern of offences escalated when their needs continued to be unmet and their situation worsened.

The proportion of offenders with high numbers of unmet needs increases with the number of offences. This could be due to increased recording of unmet needs when an offender is associated with a larger number of offences, as well as an increasing level of need with an escalation in offending.

Recorded Unmet Needs by Number of Offences

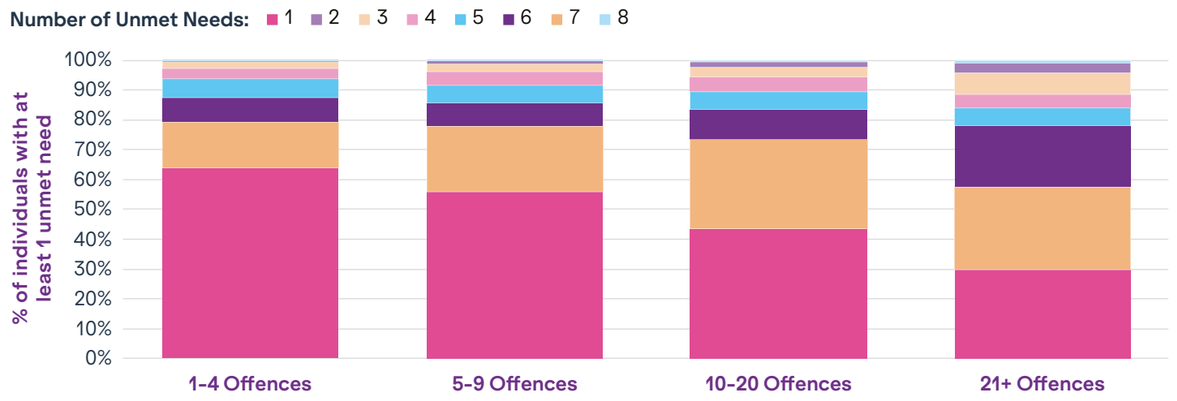

Figure 5: Graph showing the number of unmet needs associated with offenders committing 1-4, 5-9, 10-20, or 21+ offences with at least one unmet need.

	% of Individuals within Offence Grouping			
	1-4 Offences	5-9 Offences	10-20 Offences	21+ Offences
Average Unmet Needs per Individual	1.79	1.94	2.19	2.67

Table 1: Table showing the increasing average number of unmet needs with number of offences for offenders with at least one unmet need.

% of Individuals with a Number of Unmet Needs

1,925 individuals with 10+ offences recorded as Suspect with unmet needs

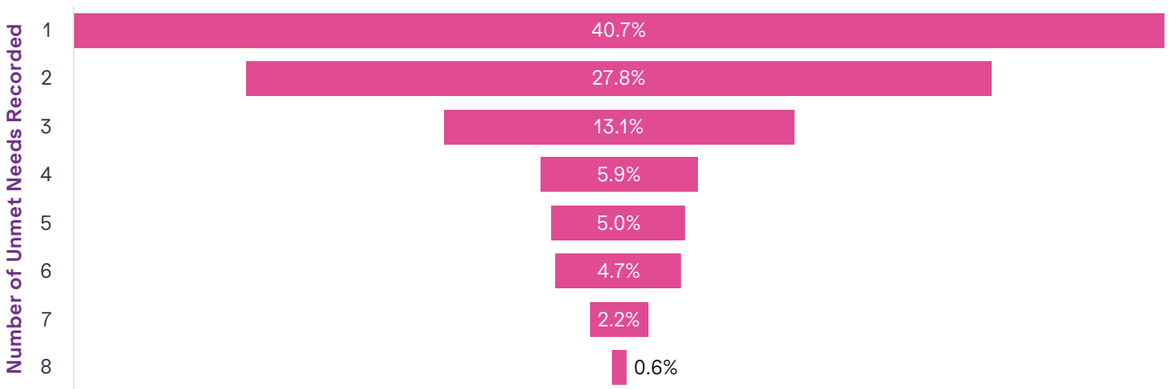

Figure 6: Graph showing the proportion of prolific offenders (10+ offences in the last 2 years) who are associated with 1 or more unmet needs. 1,925 of the 2,415 individuals with 10+ offences have at least 1 unmet need according to available data.

Table 1 mirrors the insights from the qualitative research, with many interviewees experiencing problematic substance use, mental health or trauma before going on to have contact with the criminal justice system. This demonstrates the importance of this work – being able to evidence interviewees' personal experiences with real life data, which here clearly shows the correlation between unmet needs and repeat offending.

Focusing on prolific offenders who have committed over 10 offences in the last two years (2,415 individuals in the reference data) has enabled this research to look in more detail at the associated unmet needs with this group.

A better understanding of the types of unmet health and social needs (for example, mental ill health, substance use and unstable housing), experienced by prolific offenders allows the consideration of more impactful interventions that could break the cycle of reoffending.

At least one unmet need is recorded for 1,925 individuals within this prolific offending cohort. Figure 6 shows the distribution of the number of unmet needs within this cohort and demonstrates that almost 60% of prolific offenders have more than two unmet needs, indicating the need for more systemic support to break their cycle of reoffending.

Finding 2:
The three most prevalent unmet needs are behavioural, problematic substance use and mental health.

Of this prolific offender cohort, those with three or more unmet needs (representing 31% of individuals) show a distribution of need that is reflective of what was heard from the qualitative interviews. Three of the largest risk factors identified which affected the majority of interviewees were behavioural needs, problematic substance use needs, and mental health needs.

From Revolving Doors' wider evidence base, it is known that neurodiversity and financial struggles can be prevalent amongst the revolving door cohort. In this data, due to the available sources and difficulty in reporting these risks, these potentially appear less prevalent than expected. In conjunction with user stories however, the importance of these factors is knowing that this is an area of development where having access to more data can help build a clearer picture.

Prevalence of Unmet Needs in Prolific Offending Cohort

3+ Unmet Needs, 10+ Offences (606 individuals)

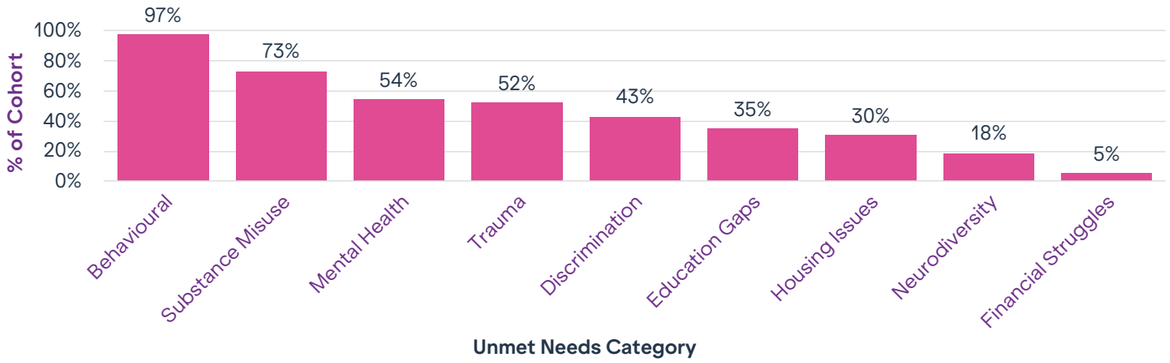

Figure 7: Graph showing the breakdown of unmet needs associated with prolific offenders. Unmet needs have been flagged from structured & unstructured data.

Finding 3:
97% of prolific offenders in the reference data have behavioural challenges flagged. The most common combination of unmet needs is behavioural issues, problematic substance use and discrimination.

97% (590) of the prolific offenders have behavioural factors highlighted in the available data. Furthermore, 78% (470) of this group have 'aggression' highlighted in their case notes.

The most common combination of unmet needs involves behavioural issues, problematic substance use, and discrimination.

The combinations of unmet needs across the group are helpful to be considered as this starts to build a pattern of experience that aligns with interviewees' stories. Within this prolific offending cohort, over 50% of individuals (136/252) with exactly three unmet needs highlighted have experienced the specific combination of behavioural issues, problematic substance use and discrimination.

With increased maturity and availability of data, a better picture can be built of the most prolific offenders, and how best to help them break the cycle.

4.2.4 Patterns of offending

Understanding the unmet needs of individuals is the first step to understanding how the revolving door cohort can be recognised using data. However, the pattern and shape of offending can provide additional insight.

Looking at the offences committed can provide a more detailed understanding of whether there is escalation in offending. This approach is completed by isolating an offence type and following those who go on to commit a specific offence type (for example, of the 1,905 individuals who shoplifted as their second offence, 1,236 offended a third time and 1,100 of those were charged with shoplifting). There are limitations to this approach, for example, where an individual is charged with multiple offences at one time – however, the indicative insights are still valuable.

Finding 1: Prolific shoplifting archetype

The data illustrates that 'gateway' minor offences such as shoplifting can be the beginning of a pathway towards more serious, sometimes violent, crimes.

In the reference data (2022-2025), 10% of first recorded offences (5,256) are shoplifting. By following the journeys of offending, the data shows that when individuals commit a further offence after a shoplifting offence, in most cases this will be another shoplifting offence. There is some escalation to violent crimes (ABH, GBH), or records of drug offences, however most reoffending is shoplifting. This allows the definition of a prolific shoplifting archetype.

Finding 2: Prolific ABH archetype

To a lesser extent, there is a similar pattern with ABH, defining a prolific violence archetype.

The qualitative research showed that ABH offences were often linked to unmet mental health needs and substance use.

Finding 3: Drug Offences

The data analysed does not indicate a cohort of individuals committing prolific drug offences. When this was discussed with a small group of the interviewees, it was felt this was representative, generally as drugs would be purchased and used in quick succession, and users were therefore less likely to be caught with drugs and more likely to be caught shoplifting to be able to afford the drugs.

Building on the qualitative analysis, the interviews found that when people are going through addiction, their behaviour is often erratic. This is also represented in the type and frequency of crime, which is typically less organised and specific – instead becoming more random. This may explain the lack of a clear pattern.

Identifying these patterns enables a clearer picture to be built of the subgroups of prolific offenders considered part of the revolving door cohort. This, in turn, supports the definition of thresholds to determine how many individuals fall into each subgroup, ensuring that public services can deliver a targeted and proportionate response.

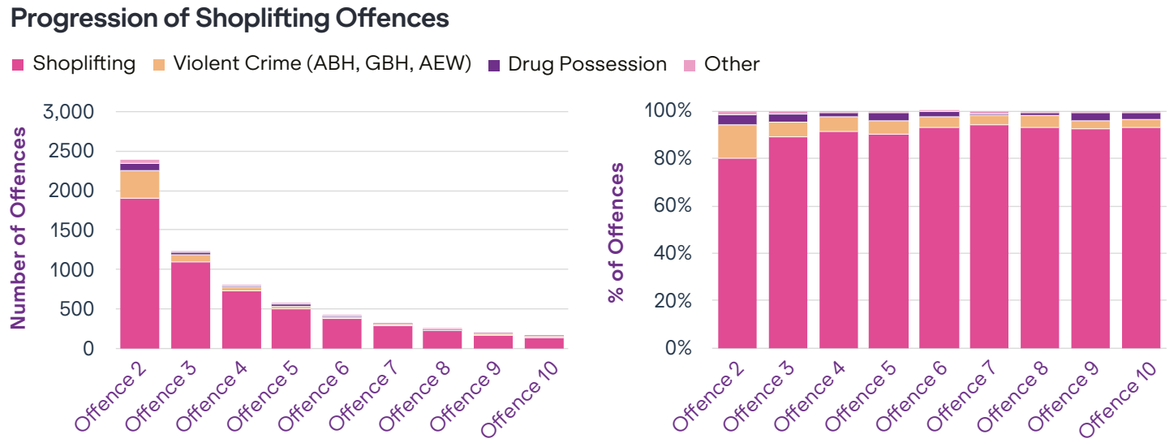

Figure 8: Graphs showing the progression of crime type, following those committing shoplifting offences.

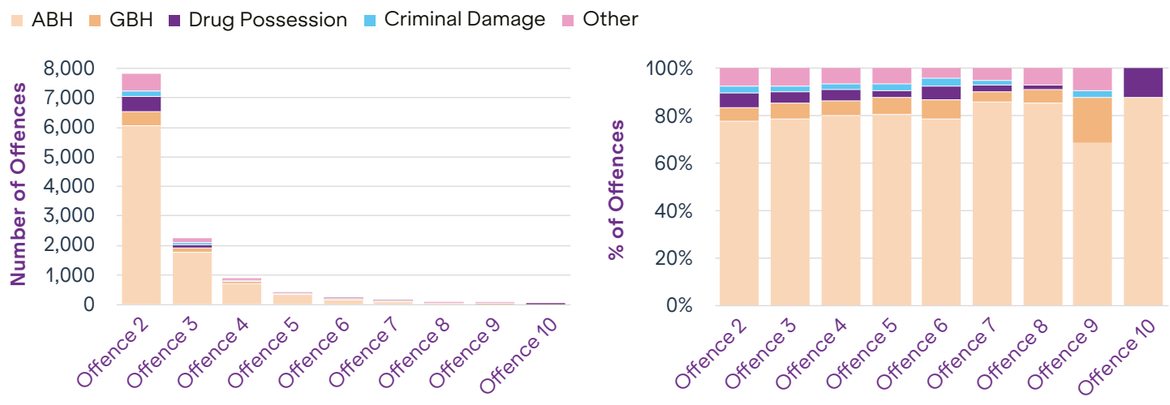

Figure 9: Graphs showing the progression of crime type, following those committing ABH offences.

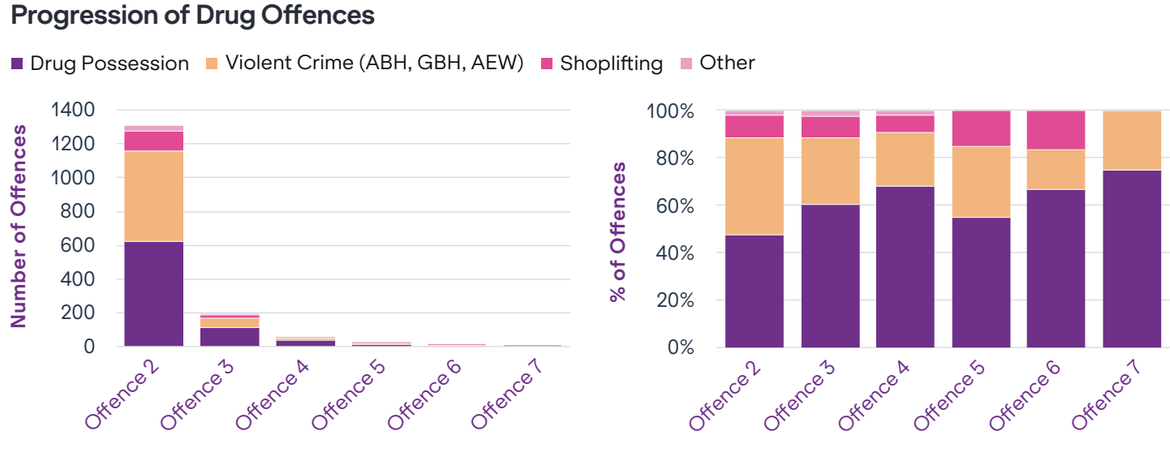

Figure 10: Graphs showing the progression of crime type, following those committing drug offences.

4.2.5 User stories

The following section outlines two examples of individual criminal justice journeys. These are real examples taken from reference data up to November 2024.

These findings highlight the strength of a combined lived experience and data-driven approach: despite not having interviewed these individuals, much can be learned with a sufficiently rich data set and an understanding of the patterns of offending across the cohort.

Person 1 (Male, 19)

This person is linked to 19 crime reference numbers between October 2022 and October 2024.

These offences span assault with injury, assault without injury, harassment, malicious communications, criminal damage, theft and threats to kill, and they are known as both suspect and victim across these offences, with their age at the time of the first offence being 16. All offences happened in the same city.

They are known in Police, Children's Social Care (CSC), and Youth Justice (YJ) data sets, with a combination of 6 risk categories: substance misuse, trauma, mental health, behavioural, neurodiversity and housing issues.

During this period (October 2022 – October 2024), the individual moved through different plans with Children's Services, receiving two youth conditional cautions, in the following order:

- Early Help
- Child Protection
- Looked After Children
- Child Protection
- Youth Conditional Caution
- Early Help
- Youth Conditional Caution
- Child In Need
- Early Help

While there are no dates for the above list of interventions in the data available, the offence list, mixed with the information about the individual's pattern of engagement with statutory services, suggests that there was an escalation in the individual's behaviour which they may have tried to curtail, leading to a reduced intervention from CSC.

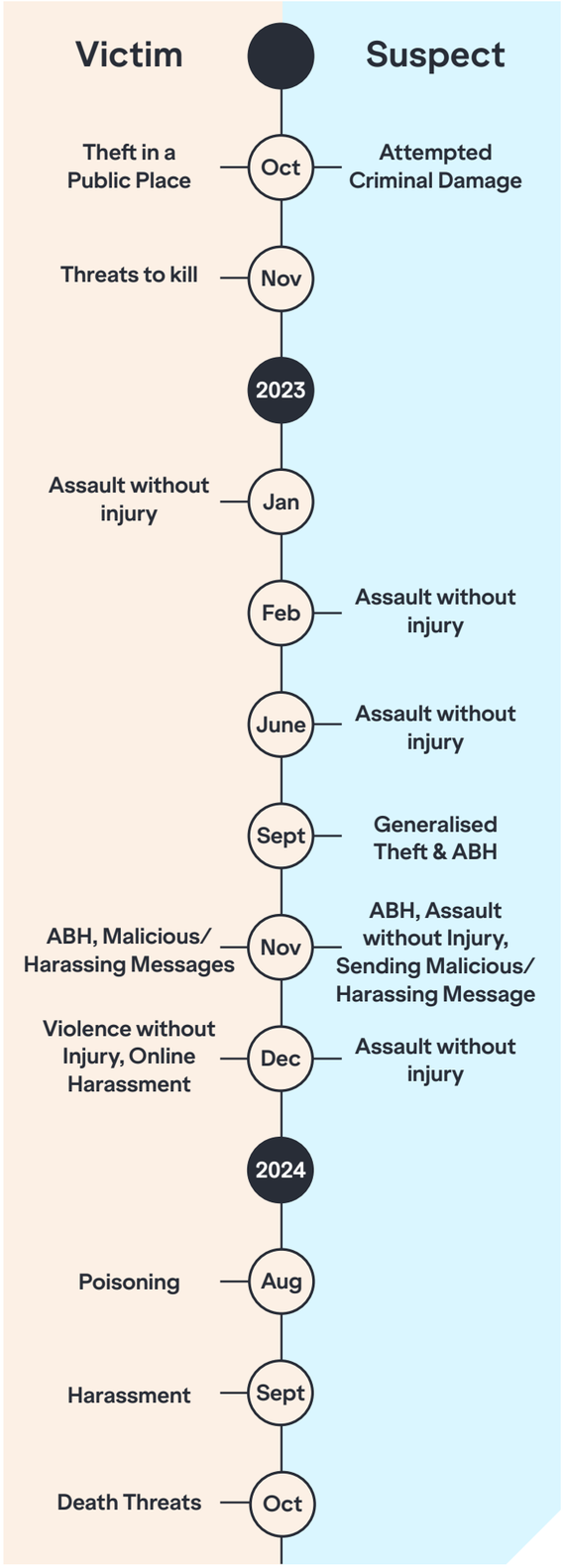

Figure 11: User Journey – Person 1 (Male, 19).

Person 2 (Male, 20)

This person is linked to 27 crime reference numbers between October 2022 and November 2024.

These offences span assault with injury, assault without injury, assault of an emergency worker, harassment, malicious communications, criminal damage and burglary. They are known as both suspect and victim across these offences, with their age at the time of the first offence being 17. Offences were predominantly in one area from October 2022 to March 2023, then from June 2024 onwards offences were liked to a different area.

They are known in Police, CSC, and YJ data sets, with a combination of seven risk categories: substance misuse, trauma, mental health, behavioural, discrimination, education gaps and housing issues.

During this time, they moved through different plans with Children's Services in the following order:

- Early Help
- Child Protection
- Child In Need
- Looked After Children
- Child In Need

While there are no dates for the above list of interventions in the data available, the offence list, combined with the information about their pattern of engagement with statutory services, suggests that there was an escalation in the individual's behaviour which was linked to them being taken into care. It is possible that this moved the individual from one area to another, where they continued to get into trouble, experienced violent offences committed against them, and consequently led to an increase in the seriousness of their offending. The individual may have become involved with other people, leading to a change in type of offending.

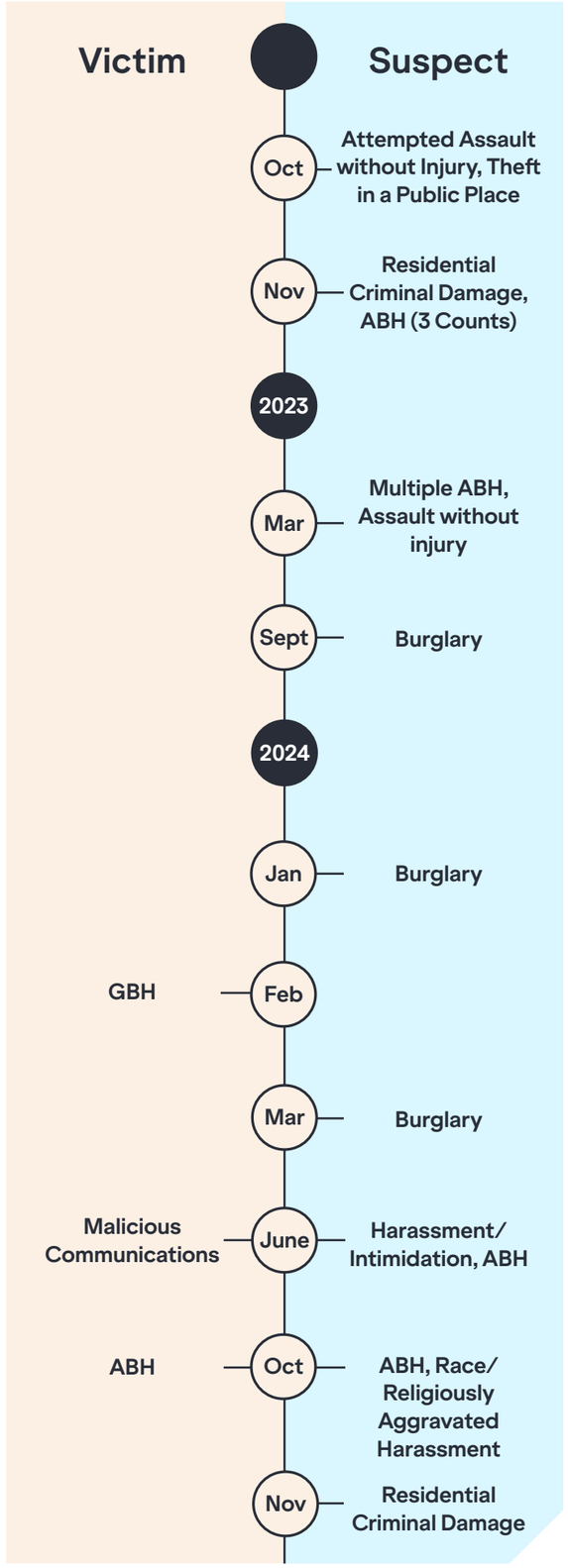

Figure 12: User Journey – Person 2 (Male, 20).

4.3 Sizing and scaling the revolving door cohort

To understand the cost impact across England of the revolving door cohort, findings from the reference dataset can be used to understand how this cohort will look for other local authorities, using their socio-economic similarities and differences to make predictions for their shapes and sizes.

4.3.1 Scaling the cohort across England

The aim of the analysis was to understand how socio-economic factors impact the levels of crime in local authorities so that predictions could be made about the revolving door cohort size and shape, nationally.

To identify the prolific offender cohorts in local authorities across England, open-source data was used and compared to the detailed Kent reference dataset, collected by Xantura. The open-source data consisted of crime rates, risk factors and deprivation indices across England; the reference county data collected both structured and unstructured data on crimes committed and related unmet needs.

To develop the scaling and cost model, revolving door cohorts were split by crime type, allowing for alignment with the cost methodology. From the reference data, individuals who have committed 5 or more offences over the two-year data period are grouped and defined as the revolving door cohort.

Whilst in the archetype and sizing of the cohort section of this report, offenders were fully disaggregated into individual groups by crime type committed, when considering the cost, this must reflect the total amount of offending across the cohort. This means that individuals may appear in multiple offence groups. For example, if an individual has committed 10 offences, five of which are shoplifting and five are ABH, they will appear in both prolific shoplifting and violent crimes groups.

A regression model was developed to create a link between crime rates and socio-economic factor trends across England to understand how deprivation, education, health and income indices – along with risk factors such as substance misuse – affect the number of offences committed. The model generated a multiplying factor for each local authority and crime type, including shoplifting, violent crimes, criminal damage and drug offences, which were combined with a population scaling factor. This allowed for cohort scaling using socio-economic factors, not just population size.

Previously, the figures demonstrated describing archetypes, patterns of behaviour and unmet need have looked at Kent as an entire county. When applying the cost model, it was done at a more granular, local authority level. In this case Medway, Maidstone, Canterbury and Thanet Councils (the four largest local authorities in Kent), were used as the reference locations for the model. This provided a range of cohort sizes and therefore an upper and lower bound for the cost benefit.

The predictive output of the models was tested using R2 techniques, with an accuracy between 0.66 and 0.74 across the four offence types. An average of the resulting cohort sizes was then taken to estimate the size of the revolving door cohort.

The resulting model outputs were used as multiplier factors as in the calculation:

Output Cohort Size = **Reference Cohort Size** * **Socio-Economic Multiplier** * **Population Scale Factor**

Figure 13: Cost model showing how cohort sizes are calculated.

Offence	# Repeat Offenders, Canterbury (Reference)	Socio-Economic Multiplier	Population Scale Factor Canterbury <> Birmingham	Total # Repeat Offenders, Birmingham (Output)
Shoplifting	93	0.590	7.273	399
Violence with Injury	58	1.264		533
Drug Offences	22	1.091		175
Criminal Damage	8	1.183		69

Table 2: An example of the inputs and outputs for the calculation of a single cohort size is shown in the table above.

An example of the inputs and outputs for the cohort size calculation calculation of a single authority is shown in the table above. It uses Canterbury (one of the four local authorities), which provided the upper bound of the opportunity, and the largest output cohort, Birmingham, to understand how the logic works for different repeat offender cohorts.

Estimated Offender Cohort Sizes

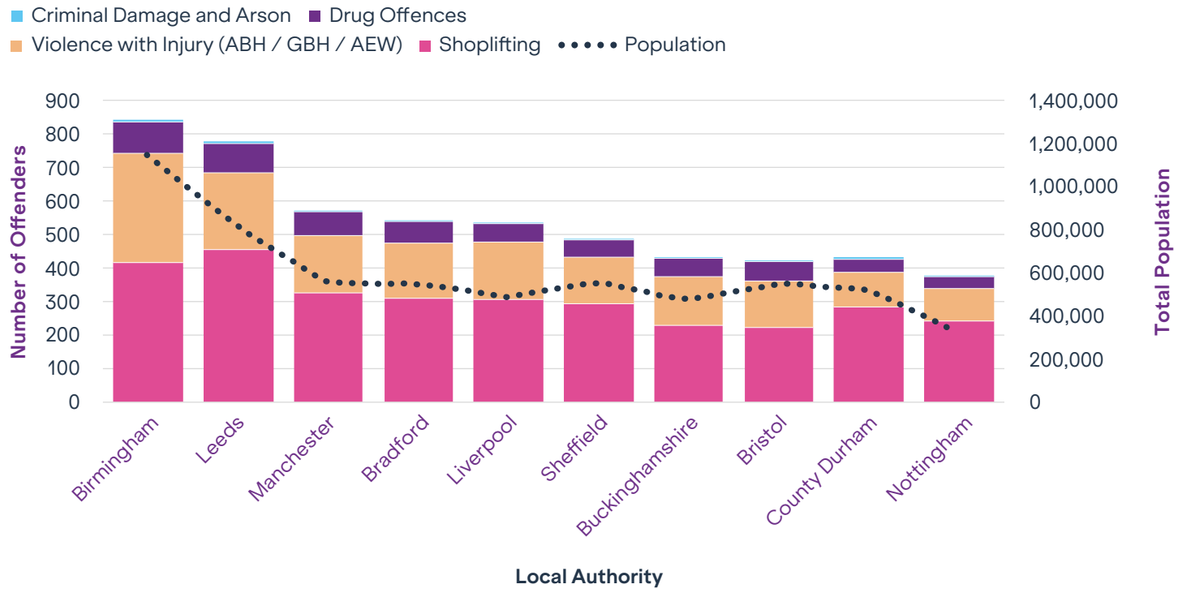

Figure 14: Graph showing the 10 largest RD cohort sizes for the four crime types.

The graph above shows the 10 largest prolific offender cohorts across England, and which LA they correspond to. As anticipated, cohort size in many areas is closely linked to population size, alongside other socio-economic factors. These figures enable the cost of the revolving door cohort in each police force area to be estimated, and the likely location of the most prolific groups of offenders to be identified. These projections also help to highlight outliers – for example, areas where the estimated cohort size is notably higher or lower than what the population alone would predict – prompting further exploration of local context and system response.

4.4 Cost analysis and impact of the revolving door cohort

This section of the report outlines:

- The methodology used to estimate the social and economic cost of crime associated with the revolving door cohort.
- The individual cost incurred across a typical user journey.
- The findings from analysis of the national cost implications.

Through this analysis, both the wider systemic burden and the personal impact of persistent offending and reoffending are evidenced.

4.4.1 Cost methodology

Throughout this programme's quantitative analysis, a consistent cost methodology has been used from a Home Office cost report[9] that disaggregates the unit costs of crime into three broad cost categories as described in Table 3 below.

There is a key assumption made that all offences of the same type, whether they are a first-time offence or a case of reoffending, have the same size of social and economic impact. **Table 1** in the appendix shows the costs associated with each major crime type that have been used within this report's analysis.

The analysis has also been adjusted for inflation from 2018 to April 2025 figures, to align with when this analysis was undertaken.

Costs in anticipation of crime	This covers costs associated with the actions taken by individuals and businesses to reduce the chance or risk of becoming a victim of crime.	This includes defensive expenditure such as CCTV, alarms and insurance administration costs.
Costs as a consequence of crime	This covers the direct costs to individuals and services because a crime has taken place.	This includes the human and emotional cost, value of property stolen, lost output at work, and NHS and victim service costs.
Costs in response to crime	This covers all costs associated with the Criminal Justice System.	This includes police, CPS, court, defence, prison and probation. Also includes NHS staff costs.

Table 3: Showing how the cost impact of committing a crime is separated into three categories.

When calculating the cost of crime against a certain group within the revolving doors cohort, both the number of offenders and the number of crimes committed have been used. This provides the following equation which can be used to obtain a cost to society for each group of offenders:

Economic & Social Cost of Crime Type = **Number of offenders within crime cohort** * **Average number of offences committed per annum** * **Total cost of crime** (Split by anticipation, consequence and response)

Figure 15: Cost model showing how Economic & Social Cost of Crime Type for a certain cohort is calculated.

[9] Heeks, M., Reed, S., Tafsiri, M., & Prince, S. (2018), The economic and social costs of crime (Second edition), Home Office.

4.4.2 An individual user journey and their cost to the criminal justice system

Before turning to national estimates, it is vital to understand what the revolving door looks like at an individual level, through the lived reality of someone who has repeatedly had negative experiences of a system that was intended to support them. The following anonymised case study traces the life of a man now aged 56, whose persistent contact with public services illustrates not only a significant cost to the state, but the deeper personal and social costs of missed opportunities for early intervention.

When calculating the cost of individual journeys, open-source data has been used to draw unit costs for certain interactions with the criminal justice system.

From an early age, this individual exhibited signs of distress and vulnerability. He was first arrested at the age of 10 for criminal damage and then cautioned.

By 14, he had committed armed robbery, and by 15, he had appeared in court 5 times. Despite brief contact with a child psychologist and the involvement of a youth liaison officer, support was fragmented and short-lived. He was excluded from mainstream education, placed in Alternative Provision, and eventually attended an education service attached to probation.

At age 15, he entered the care of the local authority for three months (at an expected cost of up to £450,000) before being placed in a youth detention centre. He received two further custodial sentences before the age of 18, culminating in a four year sentence for GBH served largely in youth custody. Throughout his late teens and early twenties, multiple opportunities for sustained psychological or social intervention were missed. He later served a further 3 periods in prison, each lasting between 30 to 45 months.

Figure 16: Showing the cost impact of an individual's interactions with the Criminal Justice System throughout their life.

It was not until 2010 that this individual was diagnosed with and treated for ADHD and Borderline Personality Disorder.

This individual was last known to probationary services between 2017 and 2019 when they were in supported accommodation at a cost of at least £60,000 over the 2-year period.

By aggregating the known interventions and sentences served, a conservative estimate of the financial cost to the public across this individual's life exceeds £1.4 million (see the appendix for the calculation).

This cost for just one individual is substantial, not just fiscally but also in human terms. Early signs of vulnerability were evident, but interventions were not made available or delivered effectively. Every court appearance, every sentence served, and every breach represents a lost chance to address the root cause of harm.

When viewed alongside national patterns, this case is not exceptional. It is representative. People caught in the revolving door of the justice system are not unreachable. This was clearly seen in the qualitative research – younger members had benefited from early intervention that supported them to exit the revolving door by young adulthood. With the right data and targeted place-based interventions that this research has started to collate within the reference data set, individuals can be reached at the earlier stages of their offending careers. In this case, the argument is not just morally compelling, but economically critical.

4.4.3 National socio-economic cost of revolving door cohort

To estimate the national cost of the cycle of reoffending, a national scaling methodology has been applied to estimate both the size of the cohort and the volume of offences they commit across four key crime types:

1. Violence with Injury (Actual and Grievous Bodily Harm, and Assault Against an Emergency Worker)
2. Shoplifting
3. Drug Offences
4. Criminal Damage

These categories have been selected based on their prevalence within this programme's reference cohort and the robustness of the available data. The analysis focuses specifically on individuals who have committed the following crime mixes, shown here as an aggregated total of the input cohort sizes across the 4 local authorities, with the values of the scaled cohorts, taken as an average of the 4 outputs.

Whilst it is recognised that other offence types are also prevalent within the revolving door population, this grouping allows for the generation of a conservative national estimate based on available reference data.

As discussed in the previous section, the scaling methodology has been used to estimate the size and scale of the national cohort. For the four key crime types these are outlined below:

Offence Group	Number of Total Offences	Number of 'Offence Group' Offences	Size of Cohort from Reference Data Set
Shoplifting	5+	5+	322
Violence with Injury	5+	5+	197
Drug Offences	5+	3+	98
Criminal Damage	5+	2+	25

Table 4: Showing the thresholds used for defining the prolific offender cohorts who are affected by the revolving door.

Offence	# Revolving Door Cohort Individuals in Kent Reference Data	# Offences in Kent Reference Data	# Revolving Door Cohort Individuals Scaled Nationally	# Offences Scaled Nationally
Shoplifting	322	1,890	20,685	121,401
Violence with Injury	197	657	13,491	44,963
Drug Offences	98	169	8,342	14,384
Criminal Damage	25	29	1,589	1,840
TOTAL	-	-	**44,108**	**182,588**

Table 5: Showing the national scaled sizes of the offender cohorts for each of the four crime types.

From the projections above, it is estimated that the revolving door cohort contains at least 44,000 individuals who committed over 180,000 crimes last year alone.

Using the cost methodology and applying the unit cost framework, it is estimated that these four offence types alone generate over £1.18bn in social and economic costs every year. This includes not only the direct costs to the criminal justice and health system such as NHS staff, policing, courts and prisons (£246 million of the £1.18 billion) – but also the wider societal costs linked to healthcare, victim support, lost productivity and community disruption.

To put this into context, the revolving door cohort represents 5% of the total £23 billion that the UK spends nationally on reoffending. And this is likely a significant underestimate.

Breakdown of cost by offence type

Offence	# Offences Scaled Nationally	Anticipation Costs	Consequence Costs	Response Costs	Total Costs
Shoplifting	121,401	£39m	£94m	£46m	£178m
Violence with Injury	44,963	£23m	£764m	£170m	£958m
Drug Offences	14,384	-	£6.2m	£16.6m	£23m
Criminal Damage	1,840	£0.69m	£6.8m	£9.7m	£17m
TOTAL	182,588	£62m	£871m	£242m	**£1.18bn**

Table 6: Showing the national costs associated with offences committed by the RD cohorts for the different crime types.

Breakdown of CJS & NHS costs (response costs) by offence type

Offence	NHS	Police	Courts & Legal Aid	Prisons	Other CJS	Probation
Shoplifting	-	£21.6m	£6.0m	£12.4m	-	£6.0m
Violence with Injury	£98.2m	£30.1m	£16.4m	£9.7m	£11.4m	£4.5m
Drug Offences[9]	£2.8m	£2.8m	£2.8m	£2.8m	£2.8m	£2.8m
Criminal Damage	-	£5.8m	£1.2m	£0.5m	£2.0m	£0.2m
TOTAL	£101m	£60m	£26m	£25m	£16m	£13m

Table 7: Showing the breakdown of response costs to public agencies across England.

Response costs of crime by agency

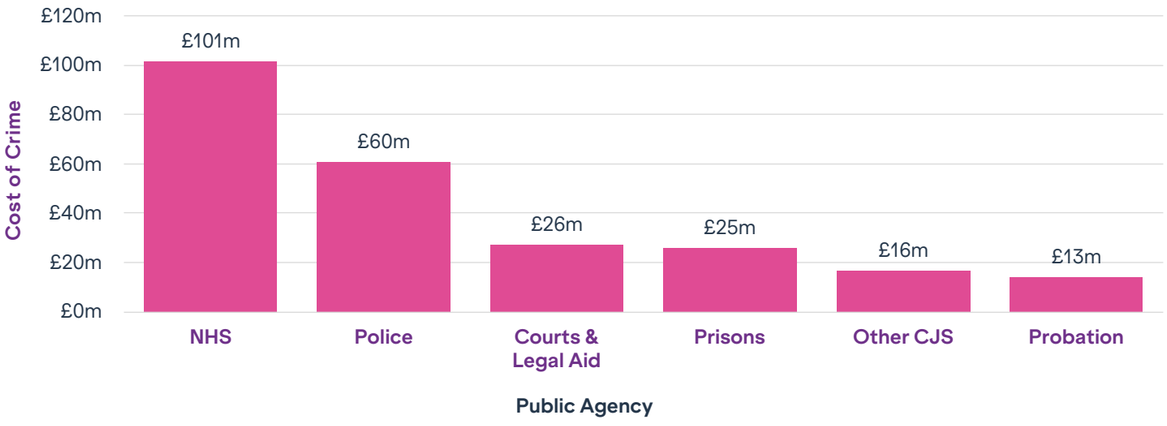

Figure 17: Graph showing the breakdown of costs to public agencies across England for all four offender cohorts.

A note on data availability

Due to the limitations in available data and the prescriptive nature of the offence selection, the true cost could be up to £4 billion more – suggesting that the revolving door cohort could account for as much as 23% of the entire national cost of reoffending. This is accounted for partly through additional crimes that have not been included in this programme's initial analysis (for example, car theft and burglary), but also the increased number of crimes that take place that are not accounted for, as interviewees have attested to. The actual crime to recorded crime multiplier is as high as 16x for crimes such as shoplifting. This implies vastly larger but hidden costs in the system.

This has profound implications. Not only does this cohort place a considerable and recurring strain on frontline services – including the police, courts, probation, health and housing providers to name a few – but the human cost to the public is also immense. Individuals caught in the cycle of persistent reoffending often face multiple and compounding vulnerabilities, captured in this programme's data through risk factors.

Homelessness, mental-health issues, substance misuse and trauma are some of the factors that have been identified from both the structured and unstructured data. Each return to custody or court represents a missed opportunity for early intervention and recovery.

It is important to recognise that this cost is not just a matter of numbers – understanding each individual experience is key to identifying clear and tangible opportunities for change.

If services can proactively identify and engage this cohort with the right support at the right time, pressure could be relieved on an already overstretched criminal justice system and meaningful outcomes for people and communities could be achieved. The scale of the challenge is significant – but so too is the potential for transformation and change.

Section 05

Recommendations and conclusions

5. Recommendations and conclusions

5.1 Recommendations

Revolving Doors led and commissioned the programme of work, drawing on their deep qualitative insight and experience. They partnered with Newton and Xantura to bring new cutting-edge data analytics and integrate previously disconnected datasets to provide a single view of the revolving door cohort.

In doing so, the aspiration was to provide a richer, more honest picture of who the revolving door cohort are, what their lives look like, and how their interactions with services could be different.

Revolving Doors has combined their qualitative evidence and experience with this quantitative insight to make the recommendations to Government contained in this report.

This project started with Revolving Doors' members – their lives, their stories, their experiences. As such, it goes back to those members for the solutions. They do not just hold insights into how systems and policies have failed them; they also hold insights into how they can be transformed.

Thanks to those members, it is possible to see what works.

The proposed solutions emerge from the qualitative and quantitative findings set out in this report but also echo findings from across Revolving Doors' forums and consultations with people in repeat contact with the justice system. They are therefore supported by a much wider qualitative evidence base.

Crucially, the research is not proposing major investment in radical new services and interventions. This report argues that what is needed is smarter implementation, as well as recognition and expansion of existing good practice. Most importantly, approaches are needed that:

1. Harness the assets and strengths of people with lived experience of the revolving door.
2. Are designed and delivered in partnership with these people.
3. Make the most of their power and potential to engage and inspire others still stuck in the cycle.

This is what can be done about it.

Recommendation 1: Use joined-up public sector data to target cohorts and individuals

- **Invest in solutions to join up existing public sector data sets and mine the wealth of untapped information available in unstructured data.**
- **Coproduce information governance principles with people with lived experience.**

This project has shown the potential of joining up public sector data and using both structured and unstructured data to identify and address unmet needs in the revolving door cohort.

There are substantial efficiency and effectiveness opportunities at the system and service levels. Joined up data allows partner organisations to understand vulnerability, need, and risk to a level of depth not previously seen. It is now possible to map needs at a population and cohort level in a way that brings together a '360-degree' perspective across public services.

This allows for matching the demand for and supply of crucial interventions, and helps politicians, senior officials and operational leaders make decisions to push resources to follow risk and need. It's possible to see where individuals have struggled to engage with services or escalated through services at moments of crisis, which gives a better understanding of how to design services and pathways for this cohort.

Better judgements can be made about which services are best placed to intervene and support at those critical moments. The smoother flow and exchange of information can, alone, save police, court staff, the judiciary, prison officers, probation officers, social workers and voluntary sector service leads millions of hours of double-accounting data, waiting on a partner service for information or a referral.

Following work with Probation Delivery Units, HMPSS Strategy and Performance Directorate in 2024, Newton's case reviews alongside senior probation officers found that every single outcome under review would have been improved by better inter-agency communication and data exchange. Many people are recalled to prison because probation officers judge that the level of risk has increased to a level that cannot be managed in the community. At a time when the UK's prisons are stretched beyond their capacity, a clearer picture of interactions with other non-justice public services, of risk, need and vulnerability can help to reduce the number of people recalled and reduce pressure on governors, wing officers, Offender Management Units, and the overall custodial estate. Newton's studies suggested at least 10% of cases could have resulted in an alternative outcome that would have avoided a return to prison.

But this is also something that matters at the individual level.

People in contact with the justice system want to tell their story as few times as possible, ideally once. They don't want to risk re-traumatisation by having to re-tell it every time they meet a new worker. They want their data to be shared.

As heard in the qualitative research, people actively wanted more data sharing, more joint working, more 'joining-the-dots' as early as possible as things were starting to go wrong. Lack of data sharing means that opportunities to intervene and change a life course are missed. In one case, a parent changed their name every time they moved in an effort to "lose the trail" and frustrate information sharing. Interviewees particularly wanted better coordination between social services, police and probation. Several interviewees expressed the hope that things had changed since their childhoods – that the sector can now finally do things differently.

However, people want to know what is being shared, at what level of detail and with whom. They need to be able to trust that information will be recorded accurately (an issue for at least one of the interviewees), shared responsibly, and acted on positively.

There is a huge amount of well-founded distrust in services amongst the revolving door cohort. People with that personal experience therefore need to be in the room when information governance discussions are had. They need to be part of the group setting the principles for data sharing.

Joined up data allows partner organisations to understand vulnerability, need, and risk to a level of depth not previously seen.

Recommendation 2: Reinvest savings that flow from this into relational work that only humans can do

- **Reinvest some of the cost savings from better data sharing and smart use of AI in the justice system workforce, notably probation.**

Early studies alongside probation officers suggested more than 35%[10] of their time each day can be occupied updating systems and chasing partners for information of action – much of which can be automated, freeing up practitioners to spend more time with the people they are supervising and supporting.

It is widely understood that human interactions are what make the difference. Many interviewees described the moment that someone believed in them and recognised their potential. This marked their turning point – the start of their recoveries.

Whilst the imperative to "bank" savings is recognised, cost savings from better data sharing and smart use of AI need to be reinvested in the system. As one interviewee put it, "this is about saving lives, not just saving money." Savings need to be invested to reduce waiting times in the courts and for community sentences, to reduce caseloads, and to support and empower staff to do the relational, trauma-informed, multi-agency work that succeeds in changing lives. This is what people in the revolving door want. It's also what staff want and need. There is significant evidence of the disconnect between the roles that staff apply for and were trained for and the reality of the job, driving burnout and retention problems across the system.

[10] Newton Probation Delivery Unit (PDU) study, November 2024.

Recommendation 3: Divert people in the revolving door cohort at the earliest opportunity

- **Design a national cross-departmental framework for diversion from every stage of the justice system, including pre-arrest diversion.**
- **Review the requirement for an admission of guilt for out of court disposals to remove this barrier to their use.**
- **Formally recognise Outcome 22 as a legitimate and effective resolution and incentivise and support police to use it more widely.**
- **Review Liaison and Diversion services with a view to provide additional investment to enable them to work effectively with people whose repeat offending is driven by unmet health and social needs.**

This report has shown the need for earlier interventions in people's lives. First contact with the justice system should be an opportunity to set people on a different path, not on a downwards cycle. Where offending is driven by unmet health and social need, the system needs to recognise and address the needs that have led people to this crisis point.

This report has also shown that taking people in the revolving door cohort out of the justice system will reduce demand and flow through the system, with significant time and cost savings. The GBH and ABH revolving door cohort alone has an estimated economic and social cost of over £2.5bn each year. Even a conservative estimate to tackle 10% of the revolving door cohort would free up 4,000 probation spaces and prison beds. The multi-billion-pound benefit to the overall economy will be felt not only in the police, prison and probation services, but across health and local government.

There are also wider community benefits associated with reduced crime, particularly shoplifting, drug offences and anti-social behaviour associated with the cohort, including reduced spending on the anticipated costs of those crimes such as additional security and surveillance.

Revolving Doors is calling for a national cross-departmental framework for diversion. Out of court disposals (OOCDs) have proved transformative for some individuals in the revolving door. Lord Leveson's 2025 Review into the Criminal Courts,[11] highlighted the need to remove procedural barriers that prevent access to diversionary options: for OOCDs to work for more people, the requirement of an admission of guilt needs to be reviewed. This is a barrier for people in the revolving door, and particularly for people from racially minoritised groups who are well evidenced to receive harsher treatment and disproportionate sentencing. Solicitors also need to be made aware of the consequences of giving a "no comment" interview, so that they can better advise their clients.

However, diversion schemes need to be strengthened at every stage. This includes pre-arrest diversion before any arrest, charge or prosecution occurs. Outcome 22, a police disposal that allows prosecution to be deferred while someone engages in a diversion, doesn't require an admission of guilt. However, it is under-utilised as there is little incentive or support for police to use it. Local, early diversion programmes within a national framework would give police more discretion pre-arrest and enable areas to build on existing services where they exist. Lord Leveson's 2025 Review supported the expanded use of such alternatives, noting that where appropriate, conditional and deferred disposals can reduce reoffending, lower court demand, and address underlying causes of crime.[12]

Liaison and Diversion (L&D), the all-vulnerabilities service that operates across England in custody and the courts should offer multiple opportunities to identify and divert people in the revolving door. A 2021 evaluation found that L&D contributes to criminal justice savings of between £13.1 million and £41.5 million.[13] However, for it to realise its potential for the revolving door group, L&D needs additional investment. Currently, services simply don't have capacity to respond to all that could benefit from it.

Diversion scheme examples

The **Crossroads programme** in North Yorkshire, delivered by Waythrough, puts a tailored support package in place for adults at point of arrest or voluntary attendance. Revolving Doors members supported the original service design.

The LEAD programme (Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion/Let Everyone Advance with Dignity), which originated in the US, is a particularly well-evidenced approach to pre-arrest diversion. It takes an ambitious whole-system approach to addressing the needs of people in the revolving door. It's proven to drive down criminal justice costs and demand, achieving a 58% decrease in arrest rates, 87% decrease in prison admissions, 89% increase in permanent housing, and a 33% increase in legitimate income.

[11] Ministry of Justice (2025), Independent Review of the Criminal Courts: Part 1.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Disley, E., Gkousis, E., Corbett, S., Morley, K. I., Pollard, J., Saunders, C. L., Sussex, J., & Sutherland, A. (2021), Outcome evaluation of the national model for liaison and diversion. RAND Corporation.

Recommendation 4: Expand and strengthen community sentences

- **Take a targeted approach to sentencing for the revolving door group: a combination of problem-solving courts, comprehensive pre-sentence reports, combined community sentence treatment orders, and a continuous offer of peer support.**
- **Additional investment is needed for community sentences, especially mental health treatment requirements.**
- **There needs to be a substantial increase in the use of combined treatment orders.**
- **Adopt a whole-court approach to training to improve knowledge about and confidence in community sentences.**
- **Produce full pre-sentence reports as standard to place offending and the sentence recommendation in context.**

Where diversion isn't an option and a sentence is required, a targeted approach is needed, drawing on a combination of well-evidenced solutions.

Community sentences are a well-evidenced solution for the revolving door group. Community sentences, done well, deliver trauma-informed, multi-agency support to address mental health issues and problematic drugs and alcohol use. There is evidence that they work to reduce reoffending.[14] In this study, there are examples of how community sentence treatment requirements can be transformative. They helped address the problems and behaviours that drove individuals' offending, setting them on a path of recovery and self-discovery, ultimately helping them to begin to rebuild their lives and to contribute to society.

There needs to be additional investment for community sentences to work for all who could benefit from them, as the independent Sentencing Review has recognised and calls for. There are long waiting lists for mental health treatment requirements in many parts of the country, with the risk that people go on to reoffend even before they've accessed treatment. For community treatment orders to have the best chance of success, they need to be better tailored to individual needs and planned with the person receiving the order. Otherwise, they risk setting people up to fail. This will further undermine sentencer confidence in community sentences, making the Sentencing Review recommendation to ban short custodial sentences unworkable in all but exceptional cases.

Crucially, there needs to be more use of combined orders for mental health and problematic substance use, and providers should be ready to deliver them in tandem. The experience of Revolving Doors' members demonstrates that it is relatively rare for people in the revolving door group to have problems with substance use or mental health in isolation. Too often, drugs and alcohol are used to self-medicate for trauma and mental health issues. The evidence for the effectiveness of mental health treatment requirements is stronger than for drug or alcohol requirements. More research is needed to unpick this. This research has shown that progress in recovery from addiction is not always linear, and where interviewees had unsuccessful DRR or ATRs, a key reason for this was that the order did not address why they were drinking or using drugs in the first place.

Another reason why some interviewees had unsuccessful community sentence treatment requirements (CSTRs) was that the model proved too light touch to address their entrenched substance use and could not address their range of interacting needs in the time available. Problem solving approaches offer a way to address some of these shortcomings because of the intensive wrap-around support and treatment combined with judicial supervision. There is a growing evidence base on the benefits of problem-solving approaches, and they should be expanded beyond the current Intensive Supervision Courts pilot[15] and stand-alone initiatives, such as Manchester's women's problem-solving court, to work with people whose repeat offending is driven by unmet needs. This would enable more people to be diverted from custody and has the potential to create long-term cost-savings. In the United States, specialist Drug Courts that applied the problem-solving model had a net economic benefit of approximately $2 for every $1 invested.[16]

Alongside investment to increase capacity and quality of treatment, and support services, sentencers and court clerks need to know about and have confidence in the various community sentence options. This is crucial. For example, it is anecdotally known that magistrates are not always aware of a mental health treatment requirement as an option. And if they do know about it, they may not trust that it works. The long waiting lists are a further deterrent – and a deterrent to probation recommending a community treatment order. Training for everyone working in the court – magistrates, court clerks and probation staff – on the options and the impact of community sentences, ideally led by people with lived experience, is part of the solution.

Another solution is to produce full pre-sentence reports as standard and focus on improving their accuracy and quality. Evidence suggests that magistrates generally follow the advice of probation. Full pre-sentence reports should therefore be the default requirement unless there is a good reason not to, such as having had one produced in the last six months. Accurate pre-sentence reports are particularly important for placing the behaviour of repeat offenders in context. Otherwise, they risk being seen only through the lens of a lengthy list of previous convictions, unlikely to ever change course.

[14] Chalam-Judge, R., & Martin, E. (2024), Impact of being sentenced with a community sentence treatment requirement (CSTR) on proven reoffending, Ministry of Justice.

[15] Ministry of Justice and HM Prison and Probation Service (2023), Pioneering initiative to force offenders to get clean or face jail-time.

[16] Downey, P. M. et al. (2014), A guide for drug courts and other criminal justice programs, U.S. Department for Justice.

Recommendation 5: Invest in peer support

- **Integrate peer support into community sentence and post-sentence supervision for the revolving door group to provide continuity of care.**
- **Review and overhaul vetting procedures to remove this critical blocker to peer support.**

This research repeatedly heard about the importance of peer support – support delivered by someone with a similar life experience, who understands where people are coming from, what it feels like to be in their shoes, and who can role model that change is possible. Evidence shows that peer support workers are particularly good at working with people characterised as "hard to reach" or "difficult to engage" – people whose lifestyles make it difficult for them to comply with orders. In other words, peer support would have great impact when working with the revolving door group.[17] The Sentencing Review has recognised this value.

Peer support can add value at every stage of the justice system for people in the revolving door. Thanks to the sustained advocacy of Revolving Doors' members, it's already core to liaison and diversion and RECONNECT, its sister service for people leaving custody. A social cost benefit analysis for the original liaison and diversion peer support pathfinder site suggested a positive social value return on every £1 invested, in the range of £1.04 to £3.58, with a central estimate of £2.28.[18] Peer support also needs to be integrated into community sentences and post-sentence supervision for the revolving door group. Peer support can help bridge transitions between services, or the gap between an order being made and the treatment starting.

But it's about more than just supporting engagement with treatment.

Formal, structured treatment is a small part of someone's recovery. Peer-led recovery and mentoring programmes are a relatively cost effective but highly effective way to deliver relational, holistic and trauma-informed support that meets people where they are at. Precisely the sort of support that works for the revolving door group.

For peer support to deliver on this promise, there needs to be a thorough review and overhaul of vetting, which is currently blocking peer workers – and indeed any worker with lived experience of the justice system – from taking up posts. Month-long delays in vetting are unhelpful, inefficient and disruptive from a service point of view. It's also damaging to the prospective peer workers, putting off people from applying for roles, and causing anxiety and stress when they do, potentially risking a setback to their own recoveries.

Recommendation 6: Train people throughout the system to work with and understand trauma

- **Train frontline staff to work with and understand how trauma manifests.**

The interviews highlighted the significant trauma experienced by many people caught in a cycle of repeat offending. This trauma often manifests as aggression, anger, or hostility—behaviours that frequently mask underlying anxiety. Unfortunately, these responses are often met with punitive reactions, which can escalate the situation, leading to further offences at the point of arrest (such as assault or threatening behaviour), breaches of conditions, or disengagement from probation and other services.

This cycle reinforces exclusion rather than addresses root causes. That's why it is vital that everyone working with individuals in the revolving door is equipped with trauma-informed training, so they can respond, not only with more empathy, but crucially more effectively.

[17] Disley, E., Gkousis, E., Corbett, S., Morley, K. I., Pollard, J., Saunders, C. L., Sussex, J., & Sutherland, A. (2021), Outcome evaluation of the national model for liaison and diversion, RAND Corporation.
[18] Revolving Doors Agency and NEF Consulting. (2018), NHS England Liaison and Diversion peer support: a review of pathfinder sites.

In police custody for example, officers are expected to identify people who need liaison and diversion and refer into the service. Perhaps understandably, they tend to focus on people in custody for the first time, looking visibly vulnerable and overwhelmed, or people that are deemed to be at high risk of self-harm and suicide. People in the revolving door group know the system, with many in and out of custody frequently. Being under the influence is viewed as a disruptive nuisance, rather than a potential sign of trauma and vulnerability.

Training to build understanding of the root causes that lead people into the revolving door, and curiosity about and empathy for their lives, delivered by facilitators with lived experience of the revolving door, offers one solution. As one interviewee explained, "the question shouldn't be, 'what drugs are you on?', but 'why are you on those drugs?'" The qualitative research showed clearly that when people feel listened to and the support offered responds to their personal circumstances and underlying needs, they are more likely to take up that offer.

Recommendation 7: Take a place-based approach and make better use of community assets

- **Empower local commissioners to work with existing assets, including non-statutory services to meet local need and gaps.**
- **Design and commission services with people that have experience of using those services.**

Peer-led recovery programmes are another key part of the solution for people trapped in the revolving door. The system needs to look beyond statutory services to grassroots groups and other community assets. These are the spaces where people will begin to find connection and meaning, to begin to feel part of a community again, and to realise that they have something to offer back. The solution has to be "place-based". This could be enabled through devolved or mayoral models. "Place based" in this context means that commissioners need to recognise, fund and otherwise support the grassroots community groups that are already in a local place, not seeking a blanket approach across the whole country, nor roll out services that replicate existing local solutions. This includes sustainable funding for Women's Centres, which deliver a nearly threefold return on taxpayer investment through providing wrap-around support that reduces long-term, or crisis-point demands on the criminal justice system and services such as health, housing and social care.[19]

Another aspect is the "postcode lottery" of good quality treatment and services. Commissioners need to work with the people, services and groups already in a specific local authority, neighbourhood or community, collaborating with those groups to identify and respond to local needs. And where there are inevitably gaps in treatment and support, services must be designed and commissioned with the involvement of people who have first-hand experience of the revolving door. This approach builds trust and delivers support that genuinely works for the people and places it exists for. There are some exciting examples around the country of commissioners doing just that.

Coproduced commissioning

Greater Manchester has coproduced its integrated rehabilitative services for people on probation with a Revolving Doors "lived experience team", in which commissioners and people with lived experience worked alongside each other in 50:50 spaces.

The Essex Recovery Foundation is setting new standards for coproduced commissioning with people that have lived experience of drugs and alcohol use.

[19] Women in Prison (2022), The value of Women's Centres.

Recommendation 8: Multi-partnership work, including further upstream of the justice system

- **Take a coordinated, early multi-agency support for families and schools to break the pipeline from exclusion to exploitation to prison.**

It is clear, from both the qualitative and quantitative research, that the problems started very early in life for most people who go on to become trapped in the revolving door. Interviewees identified countless missed opportunities as children and teenagers from teachers, social workers and others to step in and make a difference.

Outside of this research, Revolving Doors' members are passionate about breaking the 'school to prison pipeline,' the link from school exclusion to child criminal exploitation and cycling in and out of the justice system. Undiagnosed neurodiversity was a clear pattern for men in the research, driving school exclusions. The Government's announcement of an extension to the Partnership for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS) programme, which trains teachers to better support neurodiverse pupils, is welcome, although it is not yet rolled out nationally.

Data offers one potential solution – the ability to join the dots and spot the families and children in need of extra support.

But data isn't a silver bullet. Often the patterns are easy to spot. Most seasoned teachers working in "tough" schools can name the children likely to end up in the revolving door. What is needed is investment to wrap support around families and children before they start out on the path. Coordinated, early multi-agency support for families and schools is essential to break barriers to opportunity. This is also recognised in the NHS 10 Year Health Plan that outlines the need to act early and collaboratively in the context of prevention. SureStart generated widespread and long-lasting benefits for children, improving educational outcomes and health, and reducing school absence. The Young Futures hubs may also provide a solution and could consolidate and build on the existing patchwork of early support hubs across the country, and the community based National Health Centres proposed in the NHS 10 Year Plan could play a critical role in reaching people with multiple needs who struggle to access fragmented services. But all such solutions need sustainable funding.

Recommendation 9: Leadership at the highest level

- **Cabinet Office-level focus is needed to drive accountability and coordinated action across justice, health, housing and social care.**

This project has shown the degree of interest across Government in this cohort. They are of course a group that matters to the justice system. But they are also a "problem" group for health, education, child services, adult social care, welfare and housing. This means that there is a distinct risk that the response lands between departments and agencies – it's acknowledged as everyone's problem but ultimately no-one's responsibility – or it's left for justice, as the system of last resort, to carry the can. There therefore needs to be leadership of this agenda at the highest level across all key services.

Just as the Social Exclusion Unit (1997-2006) sought to coordinate government action on the combination of problems that led to social exclusion, Revolving Doors has called for a Cabinet Office-level focus on addressing root causes for the wider 'multiple disadvantage' group, of which the revolving door is a distinct cohort. This is aligned to the Government's missions of breaking down barriers to opportunity, and would ensure cross-departmental coordination for a holistic approach to the problems faced by those with unmet health and social needs who end up in the justice system. In Greater Manchester the Combined Authority are already taking this sort of leadership through their partnership with Government to become the "Prevention Demonstrator" for the whole of the UK. This aims to provide the blueprint for a joined-up approach to preventing social harms and costs, wrapping public services around people in their community.

Multi-agency support for families to improve long-term outcomes

The Blackpool Better Start programme, funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, demonstrates how a multi-agency approach can improve outcomes in early-life. Led by NSPCC, the partnership includes local community and senior leaders from the local authority, ICB, and police, as well as a team of trusted local parents. These "community connectors" are seen to be better at winning the confidence of families than official agencies. Adult services are encouraged to think about their clients in the context of family and support them in their roles as parents. The programme has led to improvements in speech and language, diet and nutrition and social and emotional development of 0–3-year-olds, and improvements in maternal health.[20]

The Parent Infant Relationship Service, which is part of Blackpool Better Start, has been sustained following Government Start for Life and ICB funding. It has considerable cost savings in the long-term: for every £1 invested in parent-infant relationship teams, an estimated £13 is saved in public costs and £59 saved in social value over the life course of the infant.[21]

[20] Blackpool Better Start (2025), Annual Dashboard Report: Year 9, 2023-2024.
[21] Ibid.

5.2 Refining understanding and future focus

As the analysis has evolved, so too has the understanding of the size, composition, and cost impact of the revolving door cohort. Early iterations of this work, guided by expert judgement and initial data modelling, suggested that the cohort could include up to 100,000 individuals.

Further data refinement, cohort definition and methodological development has enabled a more targeted estimate. This reflects a deliberate decision to take a more cautious and conservative approach to avoid overstating the scale of the opportunity and to focus attention where the impact is greatest. The current estimates centre on a core cohort of 29,000 – 54,000 individuals with the highest levels of unmet need and reoffending. There is evidence that this cohort will respond to targeted, early interventions and are likely to generate the greatest return on investment for public services.

Importantly, Revolving Doors' lived experience members consistently state the problem may be broader. There remains a strong sense, supported by service level experience and patterns emerging from wider public service data, that the true scale of need and cost is likely larger than the current estimates can fully capture. This suggests that future iterations of this work may well drive out higher cost estimates as more complete and joined-up data becomes available.

Further work with partners including the Ministry of Justice, HMPPS and the Greater Manchester Combined Authority is underway to deepen understanding of the cohort. Additionally, this approach has clear potential to support other population groups disproportionately affected by criminal justice and systemic inequality. This includes, but is not limited to, women, young adults, and racially minoritised communities. Work by the Youth Justice Board, Women's Justice Board and the Lammy Review highlights the importance of this kind of analysis far beyond the revolving door cohort alone.

Targeted: early interventions are likely to generate the greatest return on investment for public services.

5.3 Conclusions

The findings presented in this report have profound implications for policymakers, operational leaders and practitioners in the justice system and the wider public service. Revolving Doors and Newton stand ready to support colleagues across the justice system to make the most of this opportunity.

The recommendations of the May 2025 Sentencing Review, led by former Lord Chancellor David Gauke, aim to re-evaluate the sentencing framework to reduce pressure on overstrained prison capacity and avoid the need for future early release schemes. Conversely, the recommendations of the July 2025 Leveson Review of Criminal Courts intend to reduce the pressure on the Crown Court by retaining more cases in the lower courts.

The implications for the justice system are not yet fully understood. But it is expected that that there will be fewer sentences of under 12 months, earlier release for many offenders, and greater use of community sentences and diversion. This will mean radical changes for the way risk is managed and support is provided to offenders in the community. UK probation services will have to change accordingly and rethink the way they prioritise resources to follow risk and drive changed behaviour and reduced reoffending.

Limitations on the current data set have prevented delving into other areas of interest, such as how discrimination and racial disproportionality have affected the revolving door cohort throughout their life. From the wider evidence base, it is understood to be a significant challenge that many individuals face. Further research would ensure complete understanding of all unmet needs associated with the cohort.

This work highlights the real-world opportunity and offers practical solutions.

It will generate significant savings for the country that can be re-invested in other public services.

Focusing on the revolving door cohort in the ways recommended will improve tens of thousands of lives for people who, with the right support, will be able to make a bigger contribution to society and the economy.

It will reduce the pressure on the prison estate, so that the justice system can continue to fulfil the sentences handed down by courts to imprison those who are deemed too high a risk, and build public confidence in the justice system.

It will also create capacity for the probation service to manage those who pose a higher risk, allowing them to better protect the public and reduce reoffending across wider cohorts of offenders.

Finally, it will reduce some of the most visible crime in communities. People will feel safer. It will take steps towards a sustainable and fair justice system that protects the public, reduces reoffending, builds public trust, and helps people to change their lives.

Section 06

Definition of terms

6. Definition of terms

Term	Definition
Criminal Justice System	The collective term for public bodies, (e.g. police, Crown Prosecution Service, courts, HM Prison Service and Probation Service), that work to uphold the law, act against people who commit crimes and protect the innocent.
Revolving Door Cohort	Those who have repeat contact with the criminal justice system whose behaviours are largely driven by unmet health and social needs.
Unmet Need	Risk factors that did not result in preventing crime.
Trauma	Abuse, safeguarding, exploitation, family dysfunction, neglect.
Substance Misuse/Problematic Substance Use	Drug or alcohol misuse.
Education Gaps	Suspension, exclusion.
Discrimination	Less favourable treatment based on a protected characteristic (age, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation etc).
Mental Health	Diagnosed or undiagnosed mental health and behavioural issues.
Neurodiversity (Undiagnosed or Late Diagnosed)	Diagnosed or undiagnosed neurodivergent conditions (eg Dyslexia, ADHD, Autism).
Homelessness	Homeless or risk of homeless, issues with property.
Saturation	Data saturation is a term used in research to indicate the point at which sufficient data has been collected to draw necessary conclusions, and further data collection no longer yields new insights or information.
Structured Data	Highly organised and easily decipherable data (e.g. from a drop-down or a number).
Unstructured Data	Qualitative, more difficult to process data, but often more descriptive and nuanced (e.g. from case notes).
Linked Data	Sets of data that you can link together, typically using a person's name or identifier.
Synthetic Data	Artificial generated data that mimics what real-world data might show.
Pseudonymised Data	Anonymous data (names removed and replaced).

Section 07

Appendix

7. Appendix

Table 1 – Economic and Social Cost of Crime[22]

Crime Type	Anticipation	Consequence	Response	Total
Homicide	£92,521	£3,550,751	£1,231,604	£4,874,876
Violence with Injury	£515	£16,998	£3,788	£21,301
Violence without Injury	£182	£5,681	£3,121	£8,984
Rape	£1,485	£47,647	£10,514	£59,646
Other Sexual Offences	£242	£7,908	£1,742	£9,893
Robbery	£500	£9,560	£7,090	£17,150
Domestic Burglary	£1,076	£5,181	£2,727	£8,984
Theft of Vehicle	£2,621	£7,075	£5,909	£15,605
Theft from Vehicle	£182	£879	£273	£1,333
Theft from Person	£45	£1,409	£651	£2,106
Criminal Damage – Arson	£485	£4,712	£7,545	£12,741
Criminal Damage – Other	£106	£1,167	£773	£2,045
Fraud	£333	£1,273	£348	£1,954
Cyber Crime	£439	£394	£0	£833
Commercial Robbery	£3,485	£12,150	£7,090	£22,725
Commercial Burglary	£12,165	£7,060	£4,197	£23,422
Commercial Theft/Shoplifting	£318	£773	£379	£1,470
Theft of Commercial Vehicle	£8,969	£38,436	£5,909	£53,313
Theft from Commercial Vehicle	£364	£2,212	£273	£2,848
Commercial Criminal Damage – Arson	£2,788	£6,227	£7,545	£16,559
Commercial Criminal Damage – Other	£485	£894	£773	£2,151
Drug Offences	£0	£435	£1,160	£1,595
General Motoring	£0	£0	£290	£290

Individual User Journey Cost Calculation

- Residential care = 3 months at a cost of £5000 a week = £450,000
- Total time in youth custody = 13 months at a cost of £329 a day = £128,000
- Total time in custody = 168 months at a cost of £155 a day = £781,000
- Supported accommodation = 24 months at a cost of £570 a week = £60,000
- **Total cost = £1.419m**

[22] Heeks, M., Reed, S., Tafsiri, M., & Prince, S. (2018), The economic and social costs of crime (Second edition), Home Office; Home Office, (2011), Revised unit costs of crime and multipliers for use in the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) toolkit.

Not quantified but expected additional costs to the taxpayer:

- Fined and subject to community orders for alcohol related offences **>£10,000 probation costs**
- Ordered to complete 300 hours of community service **>£10,000 probation costs**
- Multiple drug rehabilitation and offender programmes **>£25,000 NHS and Local Authority costs**

Qualitative interview characteristics

The below tables outline the different demographics and needs of the 20 individuals who took part in the qualitative interviews. It purposefully does not show each interviewees combined characteristics in order to maintain anonymity.

Table 2 – Interviewee demographics and needs

Demographic/need	Category	Number of interviewees
Gender	Men	13
	Women	7
Ethnicity	Asian British	2
	Black British – Caribbean	2
	Black British – African	1
	Mixed Heritage	3
	White British	12
Age group	18-29	3
	30-49	14
	50+	3
Adverse childhood experiences and/or domestic violence	Experience of Adverse Childhood Experiences and domestic violence	7
	Experience of Adverse Childhood Experiences	11
Experience of suspension and/or exclusion	Had been suspended from school	6
	Had been suspended and excluded from school	3
	Has been excluded from school	2
Problematic substance use	Problems with alcohol	3
	Problems with drugs	3
	Problems with alcohol and drugs	14
Experience of mental health needs	Diagnosed mental health condition(s)	12
	Undiagnosed but suspected mental health condition(s)	5
Experience of neurodiversity	Diagnosed neurodiversity	6
	Undiagnosed but suspected neurodiversity	7

If you would like to discuss the findings of this report or have any questions, please contact:

Revolving Doors:
Katy Savage – Director of Partnerships
katy.savage@revolving-doors.org.uk

Newton:
revolvingdoors@newtonimpact.com

preventingtherevolvingdoor.co.uk

Images used are for illustrative purposes only and do not depict the individuals quoted.