



## A Consultation

### REDUCING CRIME AND REDUCING RE-OFFENDING

In order to improve our work on reducing crime, especially by known offenders, we want to gather your views about how we might reduce re-offending.

Crime is a problem for many communities, and the impact of crime can be hugely traumatic for its victims, as well as costly for the taxpayers. To help us direct the efforts of public services such as the probation, police, and prison services more effectively, we would like to know your priorities and what you think we should focus on at local, regional, or national levels to further reduce re-offending. We also need to make sure that our key partners, including education, health, housing, and other professionals, continue to work with offenders and their children and families. Re-offending impacts on victims and communities; effective work with offenders will help us to make communities safer.

### GOVERNMENT TARGETS

From April 2008, new government targets will be implemented. The *Make Communities Safer* agreement commits us to reducing re-offending, and it will monitor the frequency and the seriousness of re-offending. This will enable us to focus more closely on priority groups of offenders and measure the success of our work with them. The Ministry of Justice also contributes to a number of other targets – specifically those on *Reducing the Harm Caused by Alcohol and Drugs* and *Socially Excluded Adults*. Each of these national agreements will improve our work to reduce re-offending.

### A NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

New targets mean we need to identify the government's strategic approach to reducing re-offending over the next three years. In spring 2008, we intend to publish a new Reducing Re-Offending Strategic Plan, which will set out our contribution to the wider Crime Strategy and how our work to reduce re-offending can make a real difference to overall crime levels. It will also emphasise how integral reducing re-offending is to the work of Local Criminal Justice Boards, following the recent publication of the new Criminal Justice Strategy. The reducing re-offending plan will build on progress that has already been

made and on our existing work with partners, through schemes such as Prolific and Priority Offenders (PPOs) that focus on those who commit the most offences, and Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) that ensure plans are in place to manage those offenders who present the most serious risk of harm to the public.

We want our plan to be informed by the views of local communities. As a result, we are gathering views from many organisations and individuals during December and January on what our priorities should be. This consultation seeks to provide partners elsewhere in the government, in the regions, and in local communities, with an opportunity to help shape and agree new priorities to reduce re-offending which assist with reducing the overall level of crime. We would welcome your views.

Full copies of the consultation document can be found online at:

[http://www.noms.justice.gov.uk/news-publications-events/publications/consultations/RRSP\\_2008-2011](http://www.noms.justice.gov.uk/news-publications-events/publications/consultations/RRSP_2008-2011)

### THE WIDER PICTURE

Alongside this consultation, the government is also seeking your views on a number of other papers:

- The *NOMS Third Sector Action Plan* is looking at how the government links up with, and draws on the skills of, the voluntary sector in shaping and providing services to offenders
- NOMS and the Youth Justice Board are asking for your views on the role of faith based organisations in reducing re-offending in their Faith Alliance consultation paper *'Believing We Can'*
- The Ministry of Justice and the Department of Health are seeking your feedback on their proposed *Improving Health, Supporting Justice* strategy, which aims to improve the management of offender health

All consultations offer the opportunity for you to have your say in how the government could use its resources more efficiently to further reduce re-offending.

Further details about these consultations can be found online. The *NOMS Third Sector Action Plan* and the *Believing We Can* consultation document are available at [http://noms.justice.gov.uk/news-publications-events/publications/consultations/BWC\\_third\\_sector\\_08](http://noms.justice.gov.uk/news-publications-events/publications/consultations/BWC_third_sector_08), whilst the Offender Health Strategy can be accessed at [www.dh.gsi.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gsi.gov.uk).

## KEY QUESTIONS

We recognise that there are many specific, technical questions contained in our consultation document. Therefore, we have identified the following key questions which we think will most help shape our priorities on reducing re-offending:

- How do we ensure effective national management is in place to reduce the number and seriousness of offences committed by known offenders?
- What do we need to do to continue to ensure that the specific needs of diverse groups (including women, ethnic groups, and disabled populations) are met through the work taking place to reduce re-offending?
- How could local agencies (such as probation, the police, and health agencies) work more effectively together to reduce re-offending?
- We have achieved a 6.9% national reduction in re-offending since 1997. What do you think we need to do to improve further on this reduction?

- What do you think is the right balance between investing to reduce serious re-offending (which causes a great deal of harm to individual victims) against investing to reduce 'lower-level' re-offending such as criminal damage (which can have a big impact on communities)?
- How do we ensure that there is continuity of care between adult and youth justice services? How do we ensure that the young offenders of today don't become the adult offenders of tomorrow?

## RESPONDING TO THE CONSULTATION

The consultation period for our new Reducing Re-Offending Strategic Plan starts on **27 November 2007** and ends on **18 February 2008**. Responses should be submitted on the response form found on the NOMS consultation website:

[http://www.noms.justice.gov.uk/news-publications-events/publications/consultations/RRSP\\_2008-2011](http://www.noms.justice.gov.uk/news-publications-events/publications/consultations/RRSP_2008-2011)

They should be sent either electronically to [reducingreoffending@justice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:reducingreoffending@justice.gsi.gov.uk) or by hard copy to:

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