



Through the Gate resettlement services were introduced in 2015, to bridge the gap between prison and community. We reported in October 2016 on the poor quality of resettlement services for prisoners serving short sentences. We report now on services for those serving longer sentences.

"There were great hopes for Through the Gate, but none of these have been realised. There is no real prospect that these services as they are will reduce reoffending. The government and HMPPS need to look again at contractual arrangements with CRCs, improve IT systems and make sure processes and targets are joined up between prisons, CRCs and the National Probation Service so that effective work gets done."

HM Chief Inspector of Probation Dame Glenys Stacey - May 2017

## THROUGH THE GATE IN CONTEXT



Community Rehabilitation Companies launch Through the Gate resettlement services



89 prisons are designated as Resettlement Prisons

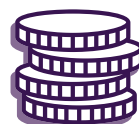
## THROUGH THE GATE IS MEANT TO HELP PRISONERS



Find somewhere to live



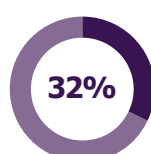
Get a job or training



Sort out any money problems

# 31,715

Number of prisoners released on licence from determinate sentences of 12 months or more between October 2015 and September 2016



Proportion of prisoners on custodial sentences over 12 months, who reoffend within a 12 month period after release (April 2014 to March 2015 cohort)

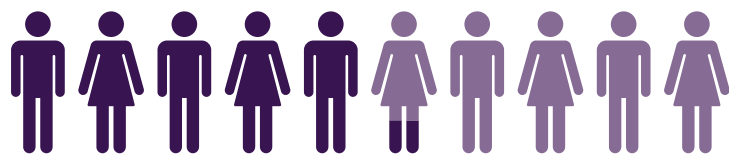
## THROUGH THE GATE RESETTLEMENT - OUR INSPECTION



Where help was required to find somewhere to live, it had been provided in **44%** of cases (which compares to **56%** in our last report for those serving short sentences)



Where help was required to find work or training, it had been provided in **53%** of cases (compared to **42%** in our last report)



Where help was required with money problems, it had been provided in **41%** of cases (compared to **26%** in our last report)

For many prisoners, the help they got towards finding accommodation consisted of no more than filling in forms. Too many prisoners left prison with pre-existing debts and without bank accounts. Many prisoners were not yet ready to gain employment without first dealing with substance misuse and mental health problems.

## WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?

None of the 98 prisoners in our sample had been found employment by Through the Gate services. For those prisoners without employment, establishing a claim for benefits was a major hurdle. Ten were homeless on release.



**10%** had been charged with new offences and sent back to prison within 12 weeks of release



A further **11%** had been sent back to prison for breaking the terms of their licences within 12 weeks of release

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The Ministry of Justice and Department for Communities and Local Government in England should work together to:

- recognise homeless released prisoners as a priority need for housing and ensure that supported accommodation for released prisoners is not impacted by the proposed Local Housing Allowance cap

The Ministry of Justice and Welsh Government Department for Communities and Children should work together to:

- recognise homeless released prisoners as a priority need for housing and ensure that supported accommodation for released prisoners is not impacted by the proposed Local Housing Allowance cap

The Ministry of Justice and Department for Work and Pensions should work together to:

- allow prisoners to submit their claim for benefit prior to release in order that payments can commence promptly once in the community

The Ministry of Justice and HM Prison and Probation Service should:

- consider whether CRC contracts are the best way to deliver effective resettlement services
- consider making the relevant local NPS and CRC responsible for securing accommodation for prisoners being released under their supervision
- ensure every prison provides services to meet the needs of their prisoners in respect of Education, Training and Employment, finance, benefit and debt and support for victims of domestic abuse and sex workers

The HM Prison and Probation Service should:

- provide guidance to prisons, CRCs and the NPS about how sentence planning and release preparation processes should integrate with Through the Gate arrangements

HM Prison Service should:

- ensure that arrangements for substance misuse and mental health treatment enable a smooth transition to community services at the point of release