

Closure of HMP Holloway

A proposal for the establishment of a women's centre on the site of the existing visitors centre

Background

1. On the 25 November 2015, the Secretary of State for Justice announced the Government's intention to *"close the inadequate and antiquated Holloway prison and invest in 21st century solutions to the problems of criminality"*.
2. Since that time NOMS have put in place transitional arrangements to move all women out of HMP Holloway by the end of June 2016. From mid-May 2016 around 80 places are scheduled to come into use at HMP Eastwood Park and HMP Downview will be re-opened providing approximately 350 spaces for women. We understand that the sale of the HMP Holloway site will be managed by the Ministry of Justice Estates Division working closely with the NOMS Prison Estate Transformation Team.
3. Since Monday 29 February 2016, the following court re-alignment has taken place for women offenders, a change that will see many women, already held on average 60 miles from their home, moved further afield.
 - All Greater London Courts will move from HMP Holloway to HMP Bronzefield.
 - All Oxfordshire Courts will move from HMP Bronzefield to HMP Eastwood Park.
 - All Essex Courts will move from HMP Holloway to HMP Peterborough.
 - Nottingham Court will move from HMP Peterborough to HMP Foston Hall.

Prison Reform Trust proposal

4. On the 1 December 2015, Juliet Lyon wrote to the Secretary of State for Justice following his announcement of the closure of Holloway with a challenging proposal to work with strategic partners including MOPAC, Islington London Borough Council, NHS London, the Metropolitan Police, London Community Rehabilitation Company and women's voluntary organisations to retain the HMP Holloway visitors centre (a purpose built space refurbished by the Tudor Trust) as a women's centre. This site would offer holistic support and supervision for women in the justice system, and provide a strategically important community disposal option for North London courts. A map of the HMP Holloway site along with a photo of the visitors centre interior is set out at **Annex A**.
5. To date the proposal has attracted both cross-party and pan-London support. In his response to PRT on the 16 December 2015, Secretary of State Michael Gove set out his commitment to reduce the women's prison population and confirmed at a Justice Committee meeting on the 16 March 2016 that the proposal was *'a good idea'* and was under consideration by the Ministry of Justice. In his response to a Parliamentary Question on the sale of HMP Holloway, Andrew Selous the Minister for Prisons, Probation and Rehabilitation made clear that, *"active discussions are underway with key partners and stakeholders to identify where support services for women offenders are most needed across London and what services will be most effective in reducing the number of women entering custody and reoffending"* (29 April 2016).
6. Since the original proposal was made to the Secretary of State, PRT has held a series of exploratory meetings with key strategic leads in London, including the CEO of Islington Council, Metropolitan Police Commissioner, London CRC, Islington Planning Authority, members of the London Women's Consortium and correspondence with local MP Jeremy Corbyn. These discussions have informed the proposal.

The Need for a Women's Centre in North East London

7. In January 2014, PRT convened a high-level roundtable at HMP Holloway with representation from women in HMP Holloway, the then HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, the Chief Executive of NOMS, Chief Executive of Islington Council and the Chairman of the Magistrates Association. Amongst other things the roundtable found that many women, particularly those in North East London, do not have access to a women's centre offering a range of services and supervision and support. Many have to travel a significant distance across London to gain access to services at either the Beth Centre in Lambeth or Advance Minerva in Hammersmith. This inevitably impacts upon both the range and quality of interventions that can be offered to women by the Local Authority, Health, Police, NPS / CRC in North East London.
8. A number of women's voluntary organisations and community groups currently support women in HMP Holloway some of whom provide through the gate services and support on release. While a few are in a position to transfer their services to HMP Bronzefield and HMP Downview, many are small specialist charities or members of the Friends Group established by former governor, Julia Killick, who will quite literally become 'unplugged' when Holloway closes. Through the new Women and Girls Initiative recently announced by the Big Lottery Fund, considerable investment is being made in support services for vulnerable women (see **Annex B** for a list of London grant awards). This offers an unparalleled opportunity for such services to link to, or operate from, the women's centre we propose. PRT is supported by the Big Lottery Fund in its work to reduce women's imprisonment and acts in an independent advisory capacity to the Fund.
9. PRT believes the case for a women's centre on the HMP Holloway site is compelling for three reasons:
 - a) **The legacy argument:** The closure of HMP Holloway sends a clear message to the courts that prison is not the place for vulnerable women who have committed low-level, non-violent offences and who have so often been victims of domestic violence and sexual abuse themselves. To secure a genuine legacy for the site, for staff and the women held at HMP Holloway, it is essential that those words are followed up with meaningful investment in women's services. As one senior figure at HMP Holloway put it a women's centre on the site 'would give us all heart' and offers a once in a generation opportunity for the government to realise its longstanding commitment to improve treatment of women in the criminal justice system.
 - b) **The justice re-investment argument:** Most of the solutions to women's offending lie outside prison walls in treatment for addictions and mental health problems, protection from domestic violence and coercive relationships, secure housing, debt and financial management, employment, education and skills development. The average cost of keeping a woman in HMP Holloway for one year is £45,972. In contrast, the average cost of a community order is £2,800 and approximately £1,500 for support in a women's centre. HMP Holloway is expected to generate a significant sale value and it would require only a small reinvestment of these proceeds to deliver effective community alternatives that enable women to take control of their lives, care for their children and address the causes of their offending.
 - c) **The operational argument:** If the government is successful in reducing the women's prison population and making greater use of non-custodial alternatives in London, there will be a pressing need for greater options in the community that command the confidence of the courts. At present these services do not operate at this scale in North East London and there is a real danger that, if the courts continue to make use of current levels of custodial sentences, more women will end up in prison further away from their homes causing disruption to family life and women's desistance from crime. Our initial analysis of the Holloway prison population suggests that a women's centre in North East London offering holistic services would contribute to the very small shifts in the treatment of remand prisoners, those serving very short sentences (particularly for those serving sentences of under three months) and use of electronic tagging for those serving 1-4 years required to fundamentally alter the criminal justice landscape for women in London. A detailed profile of women in the criminal justice system in London can be found in **Annex C**.

HMP Holloway: Remand receptions and sentenced receptions by sentence length

	Jan-Mar 2015	Apr-Jun 2015	Jul-Sep 2015
Remand receptions			
Untried	157	149	152
Convicted unsentenced	46	51	78
Sentenced receptions	92	94	98
Less than or equal to 3 months	14%	23%	29%
Greater than 3 months or less than or equal to 6 months	18%	14%	15%
Greater than 6 months to less than or equal to 12 months	21%	24%	21%
Greater than 12 months to less than or equal to 4 years	25%	28%	22%
4 years or more	22%	11%	12%

Source: Letter from Michael Spurr, Chief Executive National Offender Management Service, 12 April 2016

Transitional Arrangements

10. The sale of HMP Holloway will require a careful balance between the legitimate need to recoup maximum value for the tax payer, ensure adequate provision of social housing in the London Borough of Islington and provide for associated community services/infrastructure including a women's centre. At present no clear plans for the site have been made public although it is noted that Richard Heaton, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Justice, has written to the Justice Committee to suggest that the Department anticipate that the site will be opened up to build approximately 800 homes. We believe it is possible to balance these concerns by staggering the development of the HMP Holloway site as follows:
11. **Short-term:** It is likely that the sale of HMP Holloway and subsequent clearing of the site will take 12-24 months. While this is undertaken PRT proposes that the visitors centre is retained in the short term and converted into a women's centre to provide much needed gender-specific services for women in North East London as services transition to the women's cohort model established following the introduction of Transforming Rehabilitation. Reflecting wider learning from the Manchester 'whole systems approach', the IOM Cymru Women's Pathfinder, and recent MOJ 'whole systems' grant funding, this Centre could receive voluntary admissions, police referrals at the point of arrest, community orders and those on licence following their release from prison.
12. **Medium-term:** We propose that the visitors' centre, which is already physically split off from the main prison estate by an entry road through the site, is hived off and sold separately from the wider development. Housing in this part of the London Borough of Islington is dense and new developments tend to be 8-10 floors in height. Separating off the visitors centre site would allow for the site to be sold and developed as a distinct mixed use development incorporating a women's centre, sheltered accommodation and social housing for women on the upper floors. This could be achieved by way of the following legal and regulatory mechanism(s):
 - a) Insert a schedule into the contract/agreement for the transfer of ownership requiring the site developers to provide for a new women's centre on the site of the existing Visitors Centre.
 - b) Work with the Islington Council Planning Authority to introduce a Section 106 planning obligation into the planning brief making clear to prospective developers that a women's centre should be incorporated into the development of the Visitors Centre site.
 - c) The question of ownership still needs to be resolved. While any decisions should be taken in dialogue with key London decision-makers we believe there is a strong case for granting a long lease or other guarantee to a voluntary sector organisation or community interest company (CIC) with the flexibility to raise additional sources of revenue from non-governmental sources. Any transfer of ownership should include a restrictive covenant clearly stating that the site is to be used for the purpose of providing services to women.

13. **Long-term:** While the sale and development of the site is undertaken, it would probably be necessary to find an interim site for the 2-3 years that the site is being developed. On completion of the property a range of public sector and voluntary sector organisations would migrate into the new purpose-built building providing a range of gender-informed criminal justice, health and social care interventions. Options for the ongoing revenue funding of the site are discussed below.

Specification for the Women's Centre

14. Our assessment of the site suggests that the footprint of the HMP Holloway Visitors Centre is approximately 150 – 160m². This is comparable in size to the Anawim Centre in Birmingham that delivers a range of services to approximately 400 women per year and will shortly open a new sheltered accommodation facility on the site of the existing women's centre.
15. Given a site of this size we believe it would be possible to deliver a significant community hub providing a range of women's services alongside social housing for the wider benefit of the community. A detailed design specification for the Women's Centre is set out at **Annex D**. This is based upon data from comparably sized Women's Centres elsewhere in the United Kingdom and best practice evidence for delivering gender informed services to women.

The economic case

16. The economic case for this proposal is compelling. The annual cost of housing a woman in HMP Holloway for a year is in the region of £38,000 - £46,000, the average cost of a community order is £2,800 and approximately £1,500 for support in a women's centre. It is difficult to calculate the cashable savings from the sale of HMP Holloway with a high degree of confidence but at the 1 March 2016 MOPAC challenge meeting, chaired by then Deputy Mayor for Policing Stephen Greenhalgh, the financial costs associated with the closure of HMP Holloway were discussed at length. During his evidence Graeme Gordon (MOPAC Director of Services and Commissioning) confirmed that, *'on the basis of what a place in Holloway costs, which is £38,676 a year that would imply a potential saving of £5.4 million that could be reinvested elsewhere'*.
17. Moreover, there is now a well-established evidence base to suggest that outcomes for women who are sent to prison are significantly worse than for those given community orders. Recent research by Hedderman and Jolliffe (2015) found that 55.8% of women released from prison reoffend within a year, compared to 26% of those completing a community order. At present London compares extremely unfavourably with other major urban centres in the provision of holistic and gender informed services for women and currently lacks the operational capacity to provide additional women's services following the closure of HMP Holloway; in 2014/15 the 1,266 women sentenced to a community order in Greater Manchester had access to a network of ten local women's centres representing a caseload of 126 offenders per centre. In contrast the 2,528 women offenders issued community orders in London could notionally access the Beth Centre in Lambeth and Advance Minerva in Hammersmith. A caseload of approximately 632 offenders per centre which does not adequately reflect the limited catchment areas of these centres.
18. Put simply, there is a severe lack of physical capital in London (and North East London in particular) where women can access effective, gender informed services that get to the root causes of their offending. The sale of HMP Holloway offers a unique opportunity to reverse this legacy of underinvestment and ensure that women in London are able to access the same levels of community support that are now provided in Greater Manchester and elsewhere as a matter of course. The building could be paid for by private developers as part of the re-development of the site. There are good reasons to believe that such a site would be attractive to the London CRC, National Probation Service and other criminal justice agencies given their Section 10 responsibility laid out in the *Offender Rehabilitation Act 2014* to consider the particular needs of women offenders.
19. Such a site would also be an attractive proposition for non-criminal justice agencies. Recent analysis by the Women Centred Working project has found that a women's centre providing holistic, gender informed services is likely to be attractive to NHS England/Public Health England

and result in significant savings to local authorities working with the hardest to reach women and girls.

Costs per woman over two years		Local Authority savings over two years	
Engagement, advocacy and support work	£2,852	Drugs misuse services	£4,541
Supervision, risk assessment and management	£412	Retaining custody of child (avoiding care)	£52,676
Women Centre overhead	£640	Domestic violence-related services	£11,824
Freedom Programme	£200		
Multiagency steering group	£16		
TOTAL COSTS	£4,120	TOTAL SAVINGS	£69,041

Source: Women Centred Working: Taking Forward Women Centred Solutions (April 2016)

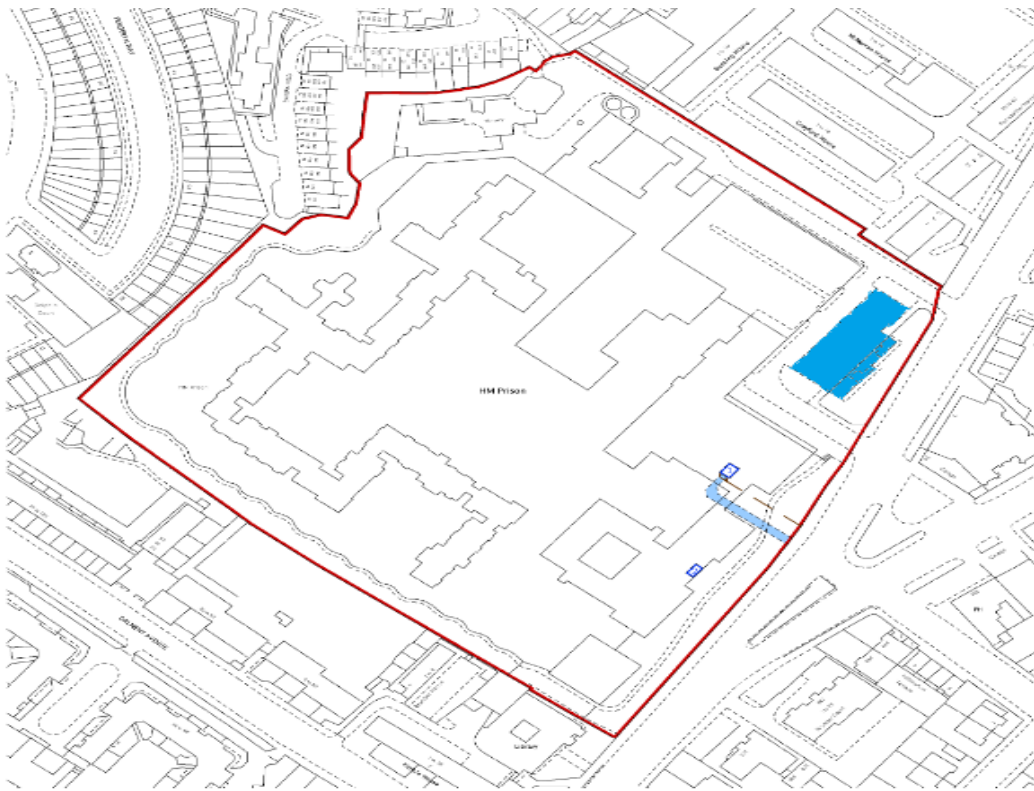
Conclusion

PRT is an advocacy charity with a key objective to reduce women's imprisonment. The opportunity exists to make a radical improvement in the services offered to a highly vulnerable group of women in the criminal justice system in London. Those responsible for commissioning these services, which in practice means the Ministry of Justice, should seize the opportunity set out here, to the benefit of offenders, victims, and taxpayers alike.

Prison Reform Trust
14 June 2016

Annex A: The HMP Holloway Visitors Centre

Holloway Visitors' Centre,
HMP Holloway,
1 Parkhurst Road, London,
N7 0NU



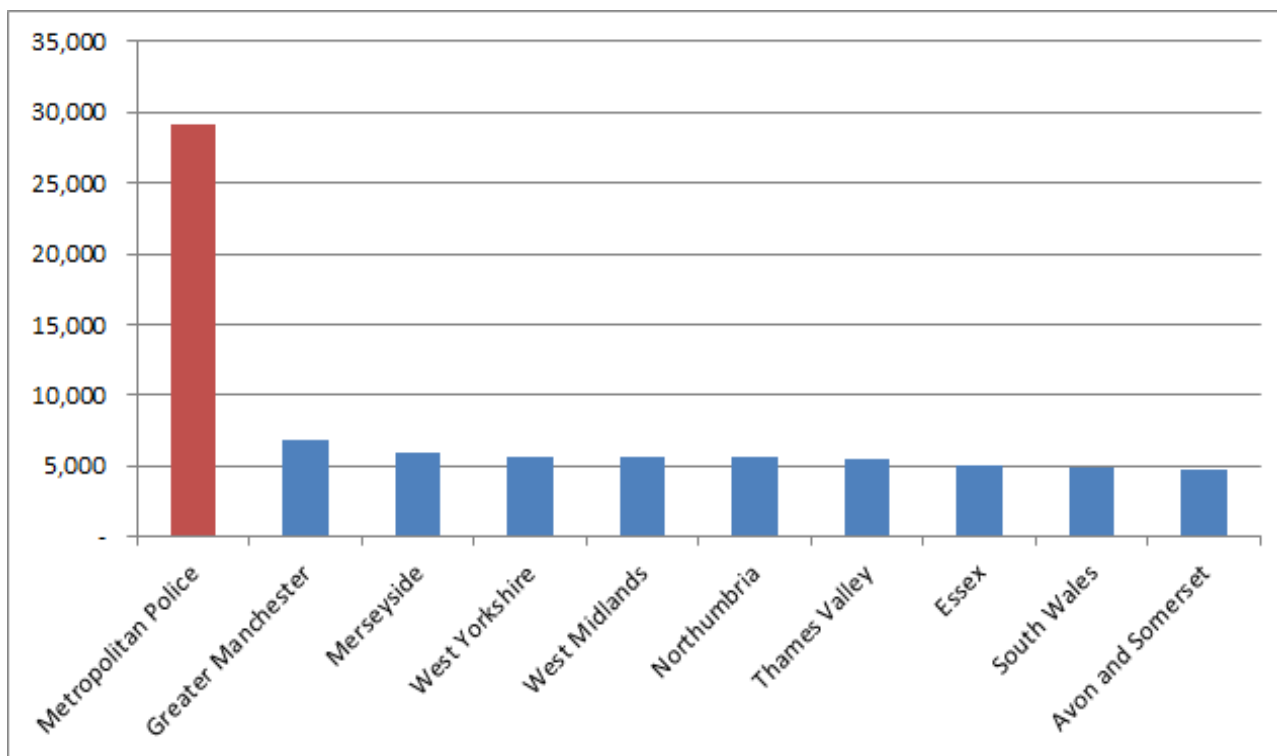
Annex B: Big Lottery Fund, Women and Girls programmes - Criminal Justice programmes based in London – announced May 2016

Organisation	Press Summary	Area in London	Amount awarded
Rahab Adoratrices	This project aims to enable them to proactively engage with more women involved in sex work in a range of new settings, particularly those who have been trafficked for the purposes of indoor sex work. The project also aims to build Rahab's capacity and operational infrastructure. Rahabs operations are focussed in Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster - the two London boroughs with the highest number of women working 'off street'.	Kensington and Chelsea	£660,720
Hibiscus	This project aims to set up a new woman only community based hub that will enable Hibiscus Initiatives to expand the range of support services they offer to foreign, Black, Asian and ethnic minority, refugee and migrant women affected by the criminal justice system. The project aims to help the women reduce instances of re-offending, and promote justice, respect and reduce inequalities.	Islington	£750,000
Birth Companions	This project aims to extend the support to vulnerable mothers in prison and in the community providing support for a greater number of women for a longer period of time; and to create new opportunities for their beneficiaries to gain skills and confidence, thereby reducing isolation and improving well being for vulnerable mothers.	Hackney	£660,720
women@thewell	The aim of the project is to support and empower women trapped in prostitution. The project will work with women involved in street-based prostitution including those trapped by organised crime and are enslaved within the sex trade industry. The ambition for the project is in response to the local need of the Metropolitan Police who require the support of an agency with experience of working with street sex workers and victims of trafficking.	Camden	£750,000
Housing For Women	The Re-Connect project is to provide a refuge for women leaving prison with issues including mental health, substance and alcohol misuse and safety from domestic abuse. The project will home women in London over a six month period, giving them accommodation and intensive practical and emotional support with the aim to improve self confidence and health, reduce re-offending and bridge the gap to independent living.	Lambeth	£697,819
Women in Prison	Health Matters will support mental and physical healthcare needs of women in two prisons, Bronzefield and Downview. Women in prison are often unaware of their healthcare needs including mental health, pregnancy, hepatitis & HIV and trauma. Women will receive 1:1 support and advocacy. They will also run in-custody workshops, offer advice and information, and distribute healthcare literature designed specifically for women in prison including articles written by women in prison.	Sutton	£499,706

Annex C: Profile of Women in the Criminal Justice System in London

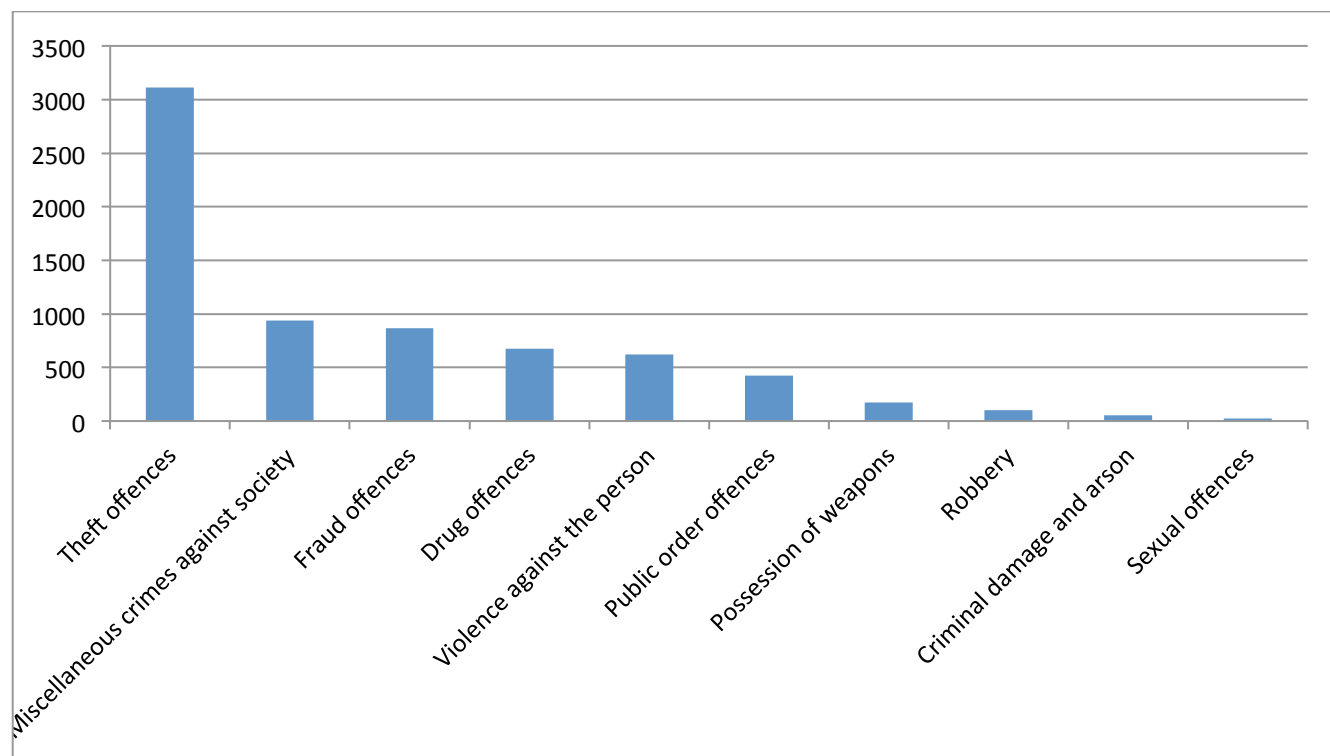
Arrests

The total number of women and girls arrested for **notifiable offences** in **2014/15** was **29,158**. This figure was down from **29,505** in **2013/14**.



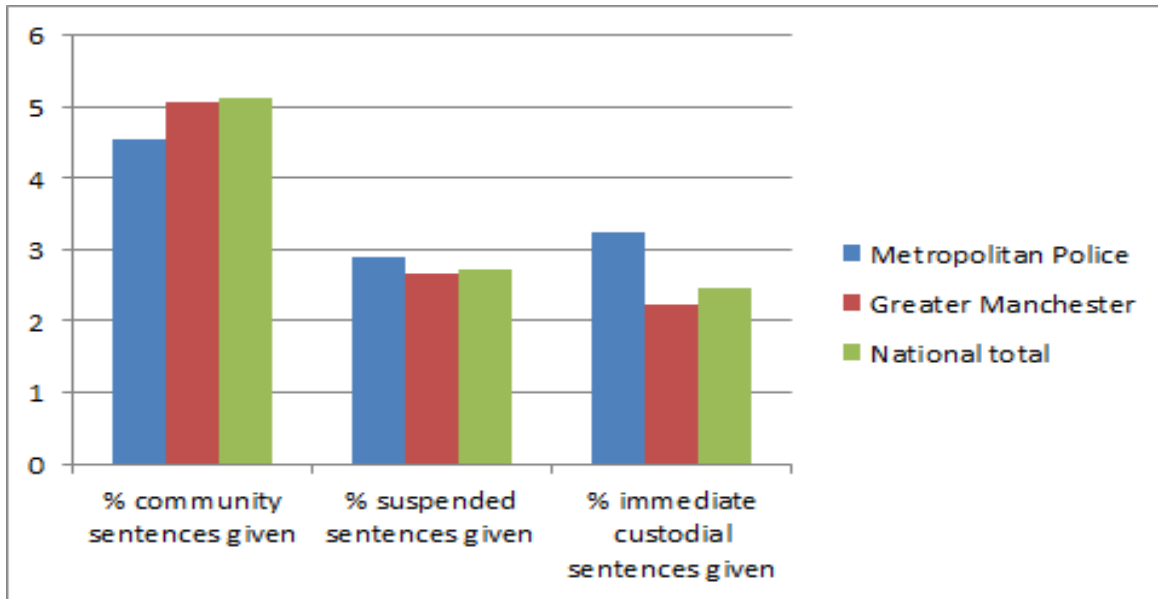
Prosecutions

A total of **6,986 women were prosecuted** for summary offences. Of these the vast majority of cases were brought for acquisitive crimes, fraud and drug offences. Very few cases were for violence against the person.



Sentencing

Courts in London were less likely to make use of community sentences than Greater Manchester and the National Average. London Courts were marginally more likely to make use of suspended sentences and immediate custody.



Community Rehabilitation Caseload: North East London

London Borough	Present caseload			5% increase in Community		10% increase in Community	
	Community	Custody	Licence	Community	Licence and Custody	Community	Licence and Custody
Barking & Dagenham	80	15	14	81	28	83	26
Hackney	100	10	28	102	36	104	34
Haringey	71	26	27	74	50	76	48
Havering	73	8	12	74	19	75	18
Islington	66	11	15	67	25	69	23
Newham	95	23	34	98	54	101	51
Redbridge	79	8	14	80	21	81	20
Tower Hamlets	66	23	13	68	34	70	32
Waltham Forest	83	13	14	84	26	86	24
Total	713	137	171	728	293	744	277

Annex D: General Design Specification for a Women's Centre

<p><u>General</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alarm system ▪ Phone line ▪ Reception area with desk, computer, chair, phone ▪ Leaflet stand/pin-board
<p><u>Kitchen</u> To provide women and children with warm, cooked food if it needed; Provide cooking lessons for women to learn the skills to provide for themselves and their families on a budget.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Oven ▪ Fridge freezer ▪ Microwave ▪ Kitchen appliances ▪ Kettle ▪ Counter-top space ▪ Large washing machine and tumble dryer
<p><u>Flexible space</u> An empty room allows flexibility for different classes and group work for instance, group counselling could be held there but so could exercise classes/creative workshops; Projector and screen would allow screening of movies or presentations; Group meals could also be served here</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 50+ chairs ▪ 20+ tables (fit for 6 people) ▪ Projector and screen
<p><u>IT and library room</u> Computer training sessions to help people find jobs and update CVS; Help women use the internet to contact vital services; Books available for all-ages to borrow; Complete education coursework</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Six computers ▪ Handy guides for using computers and the internet ▪ Books available for all ages: fiction, factual, and help/skill books ▪ Printer/photo-copier
<p><u>Counselling rooms</u> Could also be used by linked voluntary organisations providing debt advice, skills training etc</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Six counselling rooms ▪ Filing cabinets ▪ Three armchairs in each room
<p><u>Creche</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 4 cots for young babies ▪ Mat space for toddlers to nap ▪ TV with DVD for older children to watch TV ▪ Chairs and tables for 10 children
<p><u>Offices</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Three offices providing housing, debt, and other specific advice by officers
<p><u>Outside</u> Gates and intercom would allow women to feel safe and secure at the women's centre, it would also mean that children could play in the grounds without wandering off; Seating space and tables creates a social space outside for the women; Children's playground would allow children to play outside in a safe environment Women and children could gain gardening skills as well as learn about sustainability with an allotment and greenhouses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gates and intercom ▪ Outdoor seating space and tables ▪ Children's playground with sandpit ▪ Garden inc. allotments and greenhouses
<p><u>Bathroom (with separate toilet facilities)</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ With shower and bath ▪ Fresh towels ▪ Sanitary products and toiletries
<p><u>Lounge area</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sofas and arm chairs ▪ Television with DVD player