

The Howard

STOP BUILDING WOMEN'S PRISONS



Andy Atchison

MEMBERS of the Howard League for Penal Reform have sprung into action to oppose government plans to expand women's prisons.

Hundreds of the charity's supporters have urged their MPs to block a Ministry of Justice proposal for 500 new prison places. Almost 200 MPs have been contacted so far, with many receiving letters from several constituents.

Frances Crook, Chief Executive of the Howard League for Penal Reform, said: "The response to our call for action has been overwhelming.

"We want to see the money spent on community services that will help women escape domestic violence and abuse, get safe and decent housing, and deal with any mental health or addiction challenges they face

"That is the way to reduce crime, create safer communities and protect victims."

Full story: Page 2

The Howard Looking back and moving forward

THIS edition of The Howard marks the end of an era as we say goodbye to Frances Crook, who will be stepping down as Chief Executive later this year.

When Frances joined the Howard League in 1986, the charity was almost bankrupt. Today, we are on a firm footing, with our own headquarters, a dedicated staff team, and, most important of all, a long record of changing lives for the better.

None of this would have been possible without Frances's leadership (page 5), nor without the generosity of our members, whose fantastic support is helping us to challenge government plans to build more prison places for women (page 2).

In this edition, you can also read about how the Howard League is working to help people in prison, from raising awareness of the impact of Covid-19 restrictions and the unjust disciplinary system (page 6) to highlighting women's health (page 3) and the solitary confinement of children (page 8).

You can also read about how we are working to keep people out of prison in the first place, from reducing arrests of children (page 4) to celebrating successful projects across the country (page 7).

Many Howard League members stay up to date by visiting our website - howardleague.org - and The Howard is also available electronically.

If you would prefer to receive The Howard by email rather than in hard-copy format, please send an email to: info@howardleague.org

With your support, the Howard League will keep working for less crime, safer communities and fewer people in prison.

The Howard is published by Howard League for Penal Reform

1 Ardleigh Road, London N1 4HS Email: info@howardleague.org Web: www.howardleague.org Registered charity No 251926 ISSN 1753-7134

Howard League members call on MPs to oppose plans for hundreds more prison places

THE Howard League has urged the government to scrap plans to build more prison cells for women - after hundreds of the charity's members and supporters wrote to MPs with their concerns.

The Ministry of Justice is preparing to spend millions of pounds to create 500 extra places - even though the number of women in prison has reduced by more than 500 since the Covid-19 pandemic began.

The Howard League has encouraged people to write to their MPs. As The Howard went to press, 178 MPs had been contacted, of whom 53 had received emails from several constituents.

Several MPs have written to the Secretary of State for Justice, Robert Buckland, to relay the Howard League's concerns.

Frances Crook, Chief Executive of the Howard League for Penal Reform, said: "MPs from all parties are saying that they want to avoid women going to prison and that they support investment in women's community services, all of which is very encouraging."

"The problem comes in trying to pin them down to oppose the building of more prison cells."

"All the evidence shows that more cells means more prisoners. In fact, prisons get filled up before they are even built as it is the message to the courts that counts.

"Once filled, prisons are with us for generations. These new cells could house many thousands of women for the next hundred years - women who don't need



Ministers want to build more cells - but the number of women in prison is falling

to be in prison in the first place."

The plan to build more cells comes less than three years after the government published a strategy to reduce the number of women in prison - and as figures show a worrying rise in self-injury incidents. Although women account for only 4 per cent of the prison population in England and Wales, 21 per cent of all incidents of self-injury are

recorded in women's prisons. Frances Crook said: "The government's own policy of reducing the use of prison for women is the right one. The government should back its own policy and not spend money on an admission of failure."

"The cost of building extra places will run to millions and, of course, the extra costs will last for generations. The cost of

prisons is not simply in building them but also running them, year after year.

"These sums dwarf the money being given to women's centres and organisations working in the community to prevent crime and support women - work that the Ministry of Justice's own research shows reduces crime and turns women's lives around."

Arrested women are likely to be victims of crime themselves

THE Howard League's programme to reduce arrests of women has become even more important in light of the government's plans to recruit 20,000 more police officers and build extra prison places.

The majority of women who come into contact with the police need a safe space and support - not a spell in a cell - but tens of thousands of arrests are made unnecessarily each year. The Howard League is

working to change this by supporting police forces across England and Wales, encouraging them to use their discretion and promoting good practice that prevents women being drawn into the criminal justice system.

The charity also provides research and administrative support to the All Party Parliamentary Group on Women in the Penal System, which is conducting its own

inquiry into arrests of women.

Frances Crook, Chief Executive of the Howard League for Penal Reform, said: "We know that women who come into conflict with the criminal justice system are likely to be victims."

"We are about to publish research showing that nearly half of the 90,000 women who are arrested every year face no further action. This is often because they are clearly in need of help and are not serious criminals.

"Expanding women's prisons runs contrary to the government's own published policy of reducing the use of prison for women and stemming the flow of women into the toxic criminal justice system."

"The Howard League has been supporting this policy and working with police to reduce arrests and divert women to services that meet their needs and reduce crime."

Parliamentarians launch important inquiry into women's health in prison

A CROSS-PARTY panel of MPs and peers has launched an inquiry to look into growing evidence that prisons have a damaging impact on women's health and well-being.

The inquiry by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Women in the Penal System (APPG), which receives research and administrative support from the Howard League, will hear from expert witnesses and consider what steps should be taken to improve women's health and prevent harm.

As well as examining how imprisonment can affect physical and mental health, the APPG will investigate to what extent prisons promote healthy lifestyles and provide nutritious food.

It will also look at how prisons promote well-being and support the specific and diverse needs of women, many of whom have been victims of crime themselves.

Women account for about 5 per cent of the prison population in England and Wales. There were more than 7,000 receptions of women into prison in the 12 months to the end of September 2020. During this period, the number of incidents of self-injury recorded in women's prisons rose by 8 per cent.

Debbie Abrahams MP, Co-Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Women in the Penal System, said: "From the worrying rise in incidents of self-injury to

concerns about food, there appears to be wide-ranging and cumulative evidence that being in prison can have a damaging impact on a woman's health and well-being.

"Our inquiry will examine this evidence thoroughly and consider what changes could be made to ensure that women get the support they need to live healthier lives."

Jackie Doyle-Price MP, Co-Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Women in the Penal System, said: "Our wide-ranging inquiry will consider not only the healthcare that women receive, but also how the wider culture in prisons can affect their health and well-being."

"We want to learn more about what is happening and find positive solutions that will help to make women healthier."

Baroness Corston, Co-Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Women in the Penal System, said: "When I looked into the treatment of women in the criminal justice system almost 15 years ago, I found that imprisonment was harsher for women because prisons and the practices within them had for the most part been designed for men. The inquiry beginning today presents an opportunity to revisit this problem and establish whether prisons are now meeting the specific and diverse health and well-being needs of the women in their care."

The inquiry into health and



The APPG will investigate to what extent prisons promote healthy lifestyles

well-being in prisons is the latest in a long line of inquiries by the APPG on issues affecting women caught up in the criminal justice system.

In September 2020, a briefing published by the APPG revealed that police resources were being wasted on arresting thousands of women inappropriately, holding them in custody and releasing them without charge. They included women who had

contacted the police to report domestic incidents, only to end up being arrested themselves and then released with no further action.

In September 2019, the APPG reported that police were arresting women for trivial offences in the misguided belief that this would help them to get the support they needed from other services. The APPG had found that women who had

been victims of violence and abuse were over-represented in the criminal justice system.

In October 2018, MPs and peers called for prison sentences of less than 12 months to be abolished for women. An APPG inquiry into imprisonment had found that many women were being sent to prison unnecessarily - in spite of overwhelming evidence that being in prison made matters worse for them.

MPs and peers call on ministers to scrap outdated law that gives courts power to jail people 'for their own protection'

THE All Party Parliamentary Group on Women in the Penal System (APPG) has called on the government to abolish an outdated law that gives courts the extraordinary power to send people to prison for their 'own protection'.

Under the Bail Act 1976, the courts can remand an adult to prison for their 'own

protection', or in a child's case for their own 'welfare', without that person being convicted or sentenced - even in cases where the charge they face could not result in a prison sentence.

A briefing published by the APPG states that the use of prison in this way "has no place in a modern justice system" and the case for repeal is overwhelming.

The briefing explains how the power is not used heavily, but when it is, it tends to be employed to detain the most vulnerable of defendants, predominantly those who have been let down by failings of care and support in the community.

Prison is a damaging and unsafe environment for people in crisis, but scrutiny of the power

is virtually non-existent as the government does not collect data about how often adults and children are detained. The courts can use it to remove someone's liberty without expert evidence or any formal investigation into their circumstances, and without them having legal representation.

Baroness Corston, Co-Chair

of the APPG, said: "If someone is in crisis and at risk of harm, they need help and support, not months in an overcrowded prison that will only make matters worse. It is wrong in principle and damaging in practice for the most punitive sanction available to the state to be used to make up for failings in the community."

Child arrests reduced after decade of success

THE Howard League's major campaign to keep children out of the criminal justice system continues to have a positive impact, new figures have revealed, with arrests reduced by 71 per cent since the successful programme began.

For the last decade, the Howard League has been working with police forces across England and Wales to reduce arrests of children, helping to ensure that hundreds of thousands of boys and girls do not have their lives blighted by a criminal record.

The charity's latest research briefing, *Child arrests in England and Wales 2019*, shows a massive reduction in the number of arrests of children aged 17 and under, from 245,763 in 2010 to 71,885 in 2019.

Every police force in England and Wales has achieved a reduction in arrests over this period, with all but three reducing their arrest rate by more than half.

Now the Howard League is encouraging police to build on this success and focus on areas where even more could be done to prevent children being arrested unnecessarily – particularly Black children and children from minority ethnic backgrounds, victims of child criminal exploitation, and children living in residential care.

Academic research has shown that each contact a child has with the criminal justice system drags them deeper into it, leading to more crime. This is why the Howard League is working to keep as many boys

and girls as possible out of the system in the first place.

Frances Crook, Chief Executive of the Howard League for Penal Reform, said: "Every child deserves the chance to grow and fulfil their potential, and we must do all we can to ensure that they are not held back by a criminal record."

"The Howard League's programme to reduce child arrests has shown what can be achieved by working together. Police forces have diverted resources to tackling serious crime instead of arresting children unnecessarily, and this means hundreds of thousands of boys and girls can look forward to a brighter future."

"After a successful decade spent embedding good practice across England and Wales, the challenge now is to keep up the momentum and reduce arrests still further."

"The Howard League will continue to support forces to make communities safer and allow more children to thrive."

The figures reveal that, after eight successive years of significant reductions, the number of child arrests in England and Wales remained low in 2019, increasing only slightly from the 70,482 recorded in 2018.

Seven police forces recorded reductions of 10 per cent or more in 2019: Cambridgeshire (11 per cent); Derbyshire (10 per cent); Durham (27 per cent); Kent (13 per cent); Merseyside (12 per cent); Northamptonshire (15 per cent); and Nottinghamshire (10 per cent).

The largest police force, the



Andy Atchison

Seven police forces reduced arrests of children by more than 10 per cent in 2019

Metropolitan Police, made 14,183 arrests of children in 2019. This was a 3 per cent rise on the previous year, when 13,791 arrests were made, but a 69 per cent reduction on 2010, when there were 46,079.

Although 22 police forces recorded increases in child arrests between 2018 and 2019, their numbers were much lower than when the Howard League's campaign began in 2010. The charity has encouraged forces to analyse their data and investigate how arrests could be reduced in future.

A significant number of forces reported that the rise

was believed to be, at least in part, related to operations to tackle county lines. Instead of being treated as victims, some children are being arrested because they are suspected of having committed crimes as a result of their exploitation by others. Addressing this problem will be a key challenge for forces over the next few years.

The lack of experience and training of frontline officers also appears to be a significant issue. One chief constable told the Howard League that 80 per cent of his force's frontline response team had less than

two years' experience. This will be a problem for many forces given the current drive to recruit 20,000 more officers nationwide.

The data reveal continued inequalities for Black children and children from minority ethnic backgrounds. Government figures show that Black children are more than four times as likely as white children to be arrested.

The proportion of white children arrested has fallen by 13 per cent over the last 10 years, while the proportion of Black children arrested has doubled to 16 per cent.

Study reveals vital lessons for ending child imprisonment

RESEARCH published by the Howard League has shed new light on the reasons why child imprisonment rates are higher in some areas of England and Wales than others – offering lessons on what needs to be done to ensure fewer boys and girls are held in custody.

The study found markedly different outcomes for children even between areas with similar socio-economic, demographic and recorded crime profiles.

Researchers examined six youth offending team or local authority areas – three with low child imprisonment rates and three with high rates – and conducted interviews to learn more about how national policy is converted into local practice in different ways with different results.

The research sites – two in the north of England, two in the south of England, and two in Wales – are referred to as 'Lowertown' areas and

'Hightown' areas to protect their identity.

Report co-author Professor Barry Goldson, of the University of Liverpool, said: "It seems to us that the Lowertown penal cultures offer vital lessons in at least four key respects."

"First, they appear to succeed in sustaining lower rates of child imprisonment that hold firm over time irrespective of the vagaries of national trends."

"Second, they promise to mitigate the problematic

impacts and well-documented failings of child imprisonment.

"Third, they signal a means by which youth justice can be made and operationalised to best effect, both in accordance with evidence-based approaches and the provision of international human rights standards."

"Fourth, they provide the foundation for realising the application of the recommendation issued by the United Nations global study on children deprived of liberty

to develop strategies aimed at replacing the detention of children in penal facilities.

"We further submit the research might be taken to shape staff induction training and development programmes across the full range of youth justice agencies and to inform the criteria and assessment methodologies employed by the relevant national inspectorates."

For more on the findings, visit: [https://howardleague.org/publications/making-youth-justice/](https://howardleague.org/publications/making-youth-justice)

I've been a teacher and a councillor, but my life's work and my mission has been at this special organisation

After more than three decades of working for less crime, safer communities and fewer people in prison, **Frances Crook** reflects on her achievements as Chief Executive of the Howard League

I HAVE been at the helm of the Howard League for Penal Reform for more than three decades. I was once on Radio 4's Today programme when they joked that I was destined to do this job, as my name means 'free the prisoners'. And it feels exactly like that.

My working life has been spent in working for social justice. I started teaching children in Liverpool who faced challenges, did five years campaigning at Amnesty International for people who were tortured and imprisoned for their beliefs and am now working for less crime, safer communities and fewer people in prison.

Along the way, I have had some non-executive roles helping to sort out school food, being part of the governing body of Greenwich University and overseeing the NHS in Barnet, my local borough. I was elected twice as a local councillor.

But my life's work, my mission, has been at the Howard League. I want to pay tribute to the many people who have worked and volunteered with me at the Howard League. They are the most talented, hard-working and joyful people I have ever met.

The Howard League is a special organisation; it has always held a central place in the political and justice landscape of the country.

We contribute to the public discourse on the most important issues facing a government – how to keep people safe and how to respond to challenges to public order.

Since Socrates, the question 'What is Justice?' has characterised the nature of the state.

A country at ease with itself, with economic and social equality tends to use prison less. Sadly, that is not the case with the UK with its central focus on punishment.

In the face of challenges, the Howard League has an amazing track record of success.

During my tenure we have worked with the police to reduce child arrests by two thirds.

This means that hundreds of thousands – yes, I do mean that



huge number – of children have not suffered the trauma and life damage of arrest.

Contact with the police is a route into crime for children, so the reduction in arrests has reduced crime and prevented people becoming victims – as well as saving the public purse from unnecessary expense.

We set up an in-house legal service for children and young people some 20 years ago.

Hundreds have been helped with support on release from prison and getting justice inside prison in the face of systemic abuse.

We have taken test cases that achieved reform, forcing the government to recognise that

children in prison should have the same legal protections as all children and we are currently challenging the use of solitary confinement on children.

We have run successful campaigns that have changed public attitudes.

When the government tried to ban prisoners' access to books, we mobilised writers and actors to publicise our campaign.

In the last few weeks, hundreds of our members and supporters have contacted their MPs to oppose the building of more prison cells for women.

We use mainstream and social media to talk about prison use and conditions, community responses to crime

and better sanctions.

The charity's mission is primarily to achieve system reform and contribute to public education on penal issues, and we achieve this with a mixed toolkit of research, policy development, campaigns and legal help for individuals whose lived experience informs our work.

On a personal note, when I took over, although the charity was well respected, it was almost bankrupt.

I am grateful to the trusts and individuals who allow me to celebrate the fact that the Howard League is financially stable, owns a headquarters building and has a range of funding streams that means we

are not beholden to one source of funding.

People sometimes say that fundraising is problematic, but I have not found it so, as I have enjoyed working with donors who have been supportive and creative.

I have taken an organisation that was on the brink of being wound up, to one that is vibrant, benefits from an amazing staff team and is facing the future with energy and vision.

I am proud of what I have achieved and thankful to the many people who I have worked with. It has been an honour and a joy.

Thank you, it's been a blast, and I will miss you all.

Prisons should be places of justice and fairness

THE disciplinary system in prisons creates a pervasive sense of injustice, fuelling conflict and overcrowding, and should be overhauled, the Howard League has revealed as figures show that the number of formal hearings has risen to a record high.

In a new briefing, the charity explores how rule-breaking in prisons in England and Wales is managed through formal disciplinary hearings, known as adjudications, where prisoners can be given punishments including solitary confinement and additional days of imprisonment.

Illustrated with anonymised case-studies from the Howard League's legal work representing hundreds of children and young adults in prison, the briefing shows how adjudications have been used increasingly and unnecessarily as an everyday behaviour management tool – leading to punitive and arbitrary outcomes.

The Howard League has encountered a host of troubling cases through its work, including teenagers who were punished for attempting to harm themselves and a young adult with learning difficulties who was ordered to spend longer in prison at a hearing where he did not have legal representation.

Official statistics provided by the Ministry of Justice reveal that the number of adjudications rose to more than 210,000 in 2019 – an increase of 76 per cent in eight years, despite the prison population remaining relatively constant.

The briefing states that there is an overwhelming case for abolishing the imposition of additional days of imprisonment, which totalled more than 337,000 in 2019. This



Andy Aitchison

The number of adjudications rose to more than 210,000 in 2019 – an increase of 76 per cent in eight years

would bring England and Wales in line with Scotland, where the practice was ended to positive effect almost 20 years ago.

Although the number of adjudications rose in 2019, the total number of additional days imposed was lower than in 2018, when an all-time high of 380,169 was recorded. Recent figures suggest that the imposition of additional days has fallen sharply during the Covid-19 pandemic, which should prompt discussions about how policy could be reset and improved.

Francis Crook, Chief Executive of the Howard League for Penal Reform, said: "If we must have prisons, they should meet the very highest standards of justice, with disciplinary processes that are fair and proportionate. "Rather than solving problems, however, the current system creates new ones. Procedurally unjust and unduly punitive, it succeeds only in driving a pervasive sense of injustice that undermines trust and engagement and leads to more conflict.

"It is time to adopt a different approach. If we look beyond punishment and install procedurally fair processes built on communication, consent and respect, we can make prisons safer and guide more people away from crime."

The briefing is the second to emerge from the Howard League's Justice and Fairness programme, exploring how good order can be achieved in prisons in a just and fair way without resorting unnecessarily to punitive disciplinary processes.

It shows how the overuse of adjudications has placed excessive strain on the prison system's already-stretched resources, leading to inadequate investigations and inconsistent application of the procedures.

The number of adjudications that were dismissed or not proceeded with more than doubled between 2011 and 2018, and the proportion of all adjudications which were found proved fell from 73 per cent in 2011 to 64 per cent in 2019.

support and make complaints to the prison if they felt their rights were being ignored or they were being treated differently to others.

The charity produced 1,000 copies of the leaflet to be distributed in prisons, with further copies provided to children in secure training centres and secure children's homes.

Howard League submits evidence on inhumane restrictions

TENS of thousands of men, women and children have been living in intolerable conditions in prison during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Howard League has revealed in evidence to a parliamentary inquiry.

In a submission to the House of Lords Constitution Committee, the charity stated: "Prisons are managing the

virus through a strategy of containment, meaning tens of thousands of men, women and children are spending enormous amounts of time restricted to their cells – often in solitary confinement – with no purposeful activity. The approach is inhumane."

The charity's evidence, submitted as part of the committee's inquiry into the

impact of Covid-19 on courts, also explained how a backlog of cases and the extension of custody time limits have affected people in prison awaiting trial.

It stated: "Despite the hugely negative impact of Covid-19 on prisons, and the possibility of prisons becoming vectors of the virus, people are still being remanded to prison by the

courts. Not only that but the remand population is growing."

The charity produced a leaflet to help children understand their rights during the pandemic. The leaflet informed children that they could still get

Prestigious awards for projects that reduce crime and transform lives

SUCCESSFUL schemes that reduce crime and transform lives for the better have received national recognition after being crowned winners of the 2020 Howard League Community Awards.

The prestigious awards are presented annually by the Howard League to people and organisations whose innovative work helps to make communities safer.

From a large number of nominations, more than 50 projects were shortlisted. Their achievements were celebrated in an online event where the winners and commended entries were announced.

Catryn Yousefi, Programmes Manager at the Howard League for Penal Reform, said: "The Community Awards celebrate successful projects and pioneers who help people to turn away from conflict with the law and make everyone safer.

"The flood of entries from across the country reveals that many people are working with imagination and enthusiasm, inventing new approaches that have important lessons for us all.

"Only the very best schemes in the UK are honoured. We were delighted to receive so many high-quality nominations."

The 'Organisation of the Year' award was won by GamCare, a leading provider of free information, advice and support for anyone affected by gambling-related harm. The award recognises the progress that the organisation has made in its work to help gamblers who have become caught up in the criminal justice system.

The 'Women' category was won by Trevi, a charity that provides safe and nurturing spaces for women and their families to heal, grow and thrive. In its 27 years of operation, the charity has helped to transform the lives of thousands of women and their children. It runs three centres.

Another charity, Shekinah Mission, won the 'Restorative approaches' category. Make Amends is a restorative justice service delivered in partnership with Shekinah and commissioned by the Office for Police and Crime Commissioner (Devon and Cornwall).

Thames Valley Police won the 'Policing and children' category for its Drug Diversion scheme, which gives children an opportunity to learn about the dangers of drugs and offers them the support they need to make positive changes in their lives without ending up with a criminal record.

The top prize in the 'Children in care and care leavers' category was awarded to Norfolk Constabulary, Norfolk Youth Offending Team and Norfolk Children's Services, who have worked together to reduce the criminalisation of children in residential care.

Support with mental health, learning disabilities, substance misuse, homelessness and money problems are just some of the ways that the Birmingham & Solihull Liaison & Diversion Team helps people in need. The service, provided by Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust, won the 'Liaison and diversion' category for its work in police custody suites, courts, prison and the community.

The winner of the 'Policing

and adults' category was the Domestic Abuse Follow-Up project, run by Humberside Police.

As well as honouring the successful projects, the Howard League presented Criminal Justice Champion awards to two outstanding individuals – Emma Jones and Sofia Buncy.

Emma Jones has worked within the criminal justice system in Wales for almost 15 years, starting as a trainee psychologist at Swansea prison before moving on to join Gibran, a not-for-profit enterprise that now trades under the name Include. Emma has worked on projects that have supported and changed the lives of about 5,000 people, including the Include Hub, a drop-in service that has helped more than 1,000 members since it opened in 2017.

Sofia Buncy began her career as the researcher of the first-ever report into the experiences of Muslim women in British prisons. Sofia has gone on to produce further reports and submit evidence to landmark reviews, such as the Lammy Review and the Farmer Review.

and adults' category was the Domestic Abuse Follow-Up project, run by Humberside Police.

As well as honouring the successful projects, the Howard League presented Criminal Justice Champion awards to two outstanding individuals – Emma Jones and Sofia Buncy.

Emma Jones has worked within the criminal justice system in Wales for almost 15 years, starting as a trainee psychologist at Swansea prison before moving on to join Gibran, a not-for-profit enterprise that now trades under the name Include. Emma has worked on projects that have supported and changed the lives of about 5,000 people, including the Include Hub, a drop-in service that has helped more than 1,000 members since it opened in 2017.

Sofia Buncy began her career as the researcher of the first-ever report into the experiences of Muslim women in British prisons. Sofia has gone on to produce further reports and submit evidence to landmark reviews, such as the Lammy Review and the Farmer Review.

Pioneering work on links between crime and problem gambling presented to UN

THE Howard League has shared its work on the links between crime and problem gambling with an international audience by hosting an ancillary meeting at the United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

The charity delivered an online presentation to the congress, which was held in Kyoto, Japan, and followed by delegates across the globe.

In 2019 the Howard League set up the Commission on Crime and Problem Gambling to investigate the links between problem gambling and crime, assess the impact they have on communities and wider society, and recommend what should be done.

Two research projects – looking at sentencers' understanding of problem gambling and the lived experience of people caught up in the criminal justice system – are under way after the Commission found that little was known about the scale of the issue.

The Commission has submitted responses to two consultations – a review of the Gambling Act 2005 and the Law Commission's review of Confiscation under Part 2 of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002.

Frances Crook, Chief Executive of the Howard League for Penal Reform, told delegates that the Commission was keen to hear what was happening in other jurisdictions.

Frances Crook added: "The Commission on Crime and Problem Gambling is groundbreaking. It is the first of its kind. And other jurisdictions apart from England and Wales will start to understand what is going on in their countries as well because it will be similar.

"There will be national, cultural and historical differences, but the issue is international and is growing and will become a serious problem for criminal justice systems and criminal justice agencies around the world."



Organisation of the Year

Winner
GamCare

Commendation
The Skill Mill

Criminal Justice Champions

Winners
Emma Jones
The Include Hub

Sofia Buncy
Muslim Women in Prison Project (Khidmat Centre)

Children in care and care leavers

Winner
Norfolk Multi Agency Approach to Reducing the Criminalisation of Looked After Children
Norfolk Constabulary, Youth Offending Team, Children's Services

Commendations
Youth Justice Voices
Staf (Scottish Throughcare and Aftercare Forum) and CYCJ (Children and Young People's Centre for Justice)

Drive Forward Foundation
Policy Forum's campaign to 'decriminalise care'
Drive Forward Foundation

Young People's Circles of Support and Accountability Project (South West England)
Circles South West Youth

Liaison and diversion

Winner
Birmingham & Solihull Liaison & Diversion Team

Commendations
St Giles's Emergency Department/Trauma Centre
Intervention Service
St Giles

Getting It Right: Liaison and Diversion Services for young people
Peer Power Youth

Policing and adults

Winner
Domestic Abuse Follow-Up Project
Humberside Police

Policing and children

Winner
Drug Diversion
Thames Valley Police

Commendations
North Lincs Early Intervention Team
Humberside Police

Early Intervention Team
West Yorkshire Police

Restorative approaches

Winner
Make Amends
Shekinah Mission

Commendation
Itsup2u
CELLS Project CIC

Women

Winner
Sunflower Women's Centre
Trevi

Commendations
Dorset Female Out of Court Diversionary Scheme
Footprints Project Ltd and Dorset Police

New Chance
Office of the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner

Boy, 15, kept in solitary confinement for 55 days

THE treatment of a 15-year-old boy with serious mental health problems, who was kept in solitary confinement in a London prison for 55 days, is being considered by the highest court in the UK.

The boy, who is represented by the Howard League legal team and identified in court documents as AB, was locked alone in his cell for more than 23 hours a day for at least the first 55 days of his detention in Feltham prison, from December 2016 to February 2017.

Throughout this period, the boy received no education and had no access to gym, psychological treatment or any purposeful activity. He ate alone in his cell. He was not allowed to have contact with any other children and had only limited contact with adults working in the prison.

At a two-day hearing in the Supreme Court in January 2021, the Howard League argued that the conditions of his detention in Feltham were such as to constitute inhuman or degrading treatment, in breach of Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Judgment was reserved and will be handed down in due course.

In 2017, the High Court ruled that AB's treatment was unlawful because the prison had not followed the correct

procedures, in breach of Article 8 of ECHR, but that it did not breach Article 3.

The case then went to the Court of Appeal, where AB challenged the High Court's decision on Article 3. At the same time, government lawyers cross-appealed the High Court's decision on Article 8.

The Court of Appeal dismissed both the appeal and the cross-appeal in January 2019. Two years on, the case has come to the Supreme Court.

Frances Crook, Chief Executive of the Howard League for Penal Reform, said: "Every child needs fresh air, education and contact with other people if they are to grow, thrive and lead healthy lives. The practice of locking children in their cells for days on end is shocking and shameful."

"The Howard League has a long and proud history of working to prevent cruelty to children. This important and upsetting case is among the worst that we have seen."

Dr Laura Janes, Legal Director at the Howard League for Penal Reform, said: "In my work with children in prison and their families over the past 15 years, I have seen the devastating impact that solitary confinement can have."

"Awareness of the harm caused has grown since AB's case first began, and there is

now a consensus that children should never be kept in such conditions.

"Change is possible. I am aware from my ongoing work that, despite the pandemic, Feltham prison, where AB was detained, has made great improvements towards eliminating solitary confinement. I hope that other prisons will follow that example."

The case is being considered at a time of growing concern about the use of solitary confinement, with parliamentarians, medics and children's rights experts calling for change.

In 2020, a report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons on the separation of children in prisons concluded: "The weaknesses of current practice and oversight are of such a magnitude that we recommend an entirely new approach, and that current practice be replaced."

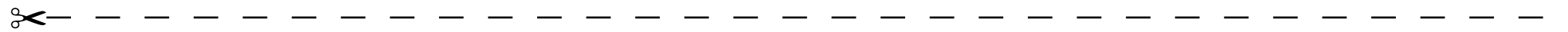
In 2019, a report by the Joint Committee on Human Rights pointed to "evidence over several years" that children in detention can "end up in what amounts to solitary confinement...which may be prolonged", adding: "This breach of children's rights is not a policy decision by the government, but it is within the power of government to prevent it."

In 2018, the Children's



Howard League Legal Director Dr Laura Janes has seen the harm that isolation can cause to children

Commissioner for England Paediatrics and Child Health raised serious concerns about the use of segregation while the British Medical Association, the Royal College of Psychiatrists and the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health issued a joint position statement calling for the solitary confinement of children and young people to be abolished and prohibited.



Support our work

By supporting our work, you add your voice to our movement and help ensure its success.

Our supporters are our strength, our advocates and our most important source of knowledge and financial support.

With your help, we can continue to achieve real and lasting change in the criminal justice system.

I would like to give a monthly amount to the Howard League for Penal Reform

£5 £10 £25 Other (minimum £2.00)

Your details

Name

Address

Postcode Tel

Email

I want to Gift Aid my donation and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to the Howard League for Penal Reform. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year, it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Please pay the Howard League for Penal Reform Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with the Howard League for Penal Reform and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society

www.howardleague.org

info@howardleague.org

Please collect my payment on the 1st/15th of every month (Please circle preferred date)

Instruction to your bank or building society to pay by Direct Debit

Name and address of your bank or building society

Name(s) of account holder(s)



Branch sort code

Bank/Building/Society account number

Reference (Office use only)

Originator's Identification No:

Signature _____

• This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay Direct Debits
 • If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit the Howard League for Penal Reform will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. If you request the Howard League for Penal Reform to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request
 • If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit by the Howard League for Penal Reform or your bank or building society you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society
 • If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when the Howard League for Penal Reform asks you to
 • You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us.

Return to: The Howard League
1 Ardleigh Road
London N1 4HS