

**A Scoping Review and Evidence and Gap Map**  
**about**  
**Women on Remand in the UK:**  
**What the Available Evidence Covers and What It Says**

**Appendices**

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These appendices relate to a full report with scoping review and evidence and gap map. The full report is available here <https://howardleague.org/women-on-remand-scoping-review-and-evidence-and-gap-map/>. The online interactive Evidence and Gap Map is available here <https://eppi.ioe.ac.uk/cms/Portals/35/Maps/womenonremand2025.html>.

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## Appendix 1: Detail of method

This was a scoping review to cover all existing evidence pertaining to women on remand in the UK. Therefore, this review was not restricted to any particular type of study. We included all studies related to women on remand in the UK, regardless of whether they discussed interventions, issues, experiences, prevalence, potential solutions, reasons for remand, costs of remand, or other relevant topics. The primary inclusion criterion was that the study provided specific information about women on remand in the UK.

**Population:** The primary population of interest for this study was adult women who have been remanded into custody in the UK.

The secondary populations included:

- Family members of remanded women.
- Professionals who interact with remanded women or their families, such as healthcare providers, police officers, magistrates, prison staff, probation and social workers, legal practitioners, community and voluntary organisations, and individuals working in forensic and related services.

**Figure 4: Criteria for including vs. excluding documents**

	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Population	Adult women on remand, their family members, professionals interacting with them (in the UK)	Other than adult women on remand, their family members, professionals interacting with them (in the UK)
Location	Studies from the UK	Studies outside the UK
Study Design	Evaluation reports, original article, inspection reports, technical reports and policy briefs with methodology, case studies	News article, short policy briefs without methodology explained, blog posts, opinions, editorials, magazine articles, conference proceedings, research summary, etc
Date Cut off	2014-2024	Before 2014
Language	English only	Other than English

After a round of pilot searches and screening, we refined our inclusion and exclusion criteria. This determined what we were looking for, and therefore how the search worked.

We were open to including studies of many designs, including:

- Original quantitative and qualitative research with primary data collection
- Secondary research (e.g., systematic reviews, meta-analysis)
- Inspection reports by HM Inspectorates. (As there are multiple inspection reports for each prison over time, we only included the latest published inspection. This was typically during 2023-24.)
- Technical reports and policy briefs with methodology
- Case studies
- Thesis, books, book chapters
- White papers, policy papers.

## **Search Strategy for our Scoping Review and EGM**

To identify academic literature, we searched Social Science Research Network (SSRN), PubMed, JSTOR and Google Scholar. For these database searches, we used the following search strategy:

("women" OR "female") AND ("remand" OR "pretrial detention" OR "custody") AND ("UK" OR "United Kingdom" OR "England" OR "Scotland" OR "Wales" OR "Northern Ireland")

To find non-academic literature, we manually searched the following sources:

- Relevant central government departments (Ministry of Justice, Home Office), His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) and His Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS).
- Parliament (e.g., select committees, House of Lords committees)
- HM Inspectorates
  - Prisons
  - Probation
  - Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services
  - HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS)
  - Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJINI)
- National Audit Office
- Independent Monitoring Boards
  - HMP/YOI Bronzefield, Surrey
  - HMP/YOI Eastwood Park, Gloucestershire
  - HMP/YOI Foston Hall, Derbyshire
  - HMP/YOI Peterborough, Cambridgeshire
  - HMP/YOI Low Newton, County Durham
  - HMP/YOI New Hall, West Yorkshire
  - HMP/YOI Styal, Cheshire
- Websites of the following charities:
  - The Howard League for Penal Reform
  - PACT
  - Prison Reform Trust
  - Revolving Doors
  - Transform Justice
  - Women In Prison
  - Centre for Justice Innovation

- Criminal Justice Alliance
- Nacro
- Prisoners Advice Service
- Websites of the following women-focused organisations:
  - Hibiscus Initiatives
  - One Small Thing
  - Working Chance
  - Advance
  - Agenda Alliance
  - Clean Break

For grey literature searches, we used individual search terms, including “Women in Remand”, “Remand” and “Women”.

We also:

- Reference chased.
- Forward reference chased.
- Search the thesaurus and categories in the four academic databases listed above.
- Conducted ‘pearl growing’ (when we found a relevant study in an academic journal, we looked at the categories and codes which that journal attached to it and searched for other articles which use those same categories & codes).
- Used EPPI Reviewer’s artificial intelligence system ‘OpenAlex’, which is a powerful search engine, to locate any further relevant articles.

## **Study selection process**

Firstly, articles were screened based on their title and abstract. Articles which appeared to meet our inclusion criteria were then screened based on their full texts. Articles which met our inclusion criteria after full-text screening were included in our EGM. For both the title and abstract and the full text stages of the review, we blind double-screened all articles. Screening was then compared to reach a final decision regarding inclusion/exclusion. Any disagreement was resolved through discussion between two reviewers or by involving a third reviewer if needed. We managed, screened and coded studies using EPPI Reviewer, which is software custom-built for this process.

The numbers of documents which were included at various stages of our process are documented in the PRISMA flow diagram in the main body of this document.

We were unable to locate the full texts of 12 documents (detailed in the appendices). Most of these were book chapters. Where we were unable to locate full texts through the Cambridge University, Bodleian (Oxford University) or UCL libraries, we contacted the Howard League and authors directly to try and retrieve full texts.

## Data extraction for the EGM

After conducting a round of pilot coding, we designed a coding framework to extract the data that we need from each document to create an EGM. We classified documents based on the information it provided such as judicial processes, healthcare services, social support structures, and policy interventions. We blind double-coded all documents and reconciled it just the way we did for the screening process as explained above. The coding framework used is as given below:

**Figure 5: Coding Framework**

Major Categories	Categories	Sub-categories	Description/ Definition
<b>Study Focus</b>	Population Focus	Did the study title include the terms "remand" or "women in remand" or another similar term?	
		Was "women in remand" explicitly mentioned in the study's aim or research question?	Find aim/research question, synthesis question, code when clear, no interpretation
		Did the study look solely at women on remand, or did it also look at other women in prison?	
		Did the study look at any specific groups of women in remand?	Choose the focus group (many if applicable)
	Thematic Focus (focus of study from method and results, not the intro)	Numbers/trends/prevalence/projections	Studies about numbers, like prevalence of mental disorders
		Laws/acts/bills/legal reforms/impacting women in remand	Studies about legal policies, act, reforms, etc
		Impact of remand/association of remand with outcomes	Studies about how remand impacts women and their families, or other systems. Association of remand with outcomes (like remand period was associated with higher risk of self harm)
		Characteristics of women in remand	Studies about what type of women were more often remanded; e.g. race, mental health status, early life experience
		Systemic issues/experience	Studies about systemic issues/experience (like access, navigation of services like resettlement after release)

		Reasons for remand	Studies about why women were remanded
		Interventions relevant to women in remand	Studies about interventions e.g. intervention to reduce the no. of women in remand, to help women in remand like trauma informed approaches
		Risk factors (like association of variable with remand status)	Studies about factors that can lead to remand like poor mental health condition, being a person of certain race, etc
		Other (Specify)	Mention in infobox if it does not fit any of the above
<b>Study Design</b>	Impact Evaluation	Experimental Impact Evaluation (e.g. RCT)	Method used to assess the causal impact of an intervention by randomly assigning participants into treatment and control groups.
		Quasi-Experimental Impact Evaluation (e.g. PSM, DID, IV, RDD, before-after)	Methods used to estimate causal effects when randomization is not feasible.
		Theory-Based Impact Evaluation (e.g. realist evaluation)	How and why an intervention works (or fails) by assessing underlying causal mechanisms rather than just measuring outcomes.
		Natural Experiment (e.g. Policy reforms where treatment and control groups emerge naturally)	Observational study where external events or policy changes create treatment and control groups without deliberate intervention.
		Economic Evaluations (e.g. cost effectiveness analysis)	Studies assessing value for money of an intervention by comparing costs and outcomes
	Process Evaluation	Will specify the type of PE if mentioned in the study	Process Evaluation assesses how an intervention is implemented, focusing on its delivery, reach, fidelity, and contextual factors influencing outcomes.
	Literature Review	Scoping Review	Systematic mapping of existing literature on a broad topic
		Systematic Review	A rigorous, structured synthesis of research evidence on a specific question
		Meta analysis	Statistical technique that combines results from multiple studies to estimate the overall effect size
		Rapid Evidence Synthesis	Systematic methods but with simplified steps to inform timely decision-making

		Targeted Review	Non-systematic review
		Others	Mention in infobox if it does not fit any of the above
	Descriptive Study (e.g. study that describe the population of women in remand, their characteristics, and the conditions they face)	Cross-Sectional (Snapshot at a single point in time)	Data at a single point in time to assess prevalence, patterns, or associations but does not establish causality.
		Case Study	An in-depth, context-specific analysis of a single case (individual, group, organization, or event)
	Analytical Studies (e.g. study that seek to establish relationships or differences within the data)	Case-Control Studies (e.g. comparing women in remand with women not in remand to identify factors contributing to their remand status)	Observational study that compares individuals with a specific outcome (cases) to those without it (controls) to identify associated risk factors or exposures.
		Cohort Studies (e.g. study following a group of women on remand to observe outcomes over time)	Observational study that follows a group (cohort) over time to assess the relationship between exposures and outcomes
	Policy Analysis		Study that evaluates the impact of laws or policies affecting the remand process
	Other - Please state		
<b>Research Methodology used in the study</b>	Qualitative Study (e.g. interviews, focus groups, ethnography, and thematic analysis)		Qualitative Study explores experiences, perceptions, and meanings using non-numeric data



	Quantitative Study (e.g. experiments, surveys, and observational studies with structured data collection)		Quantitative Study systematically collects and analyses numerical data to test hypotheses, measure variables, and identify patterns or relationships using statistical methods.
	Mixed Method Study (combining quantitative and qualitative approaches)		
<b>Data Source in the study</b>	Primary data (original data collected directly from subjects or systems)	Women in Remand	
		Family members (other than children)	
		Children of women in remand	
		Professionals (will specify)	
		Decision makers/policy makers	
		Others	
	Secondary data (analysis or synthesis of pre-existing data, literature, or records)		
<b>Publication Type</b>	Published journal Article		
	Whole Book		
	Book Chapter		
	PhD Thesis /Dissertation		

	Report (other than inspection reports and monitoring reports), policy papers, working papers		
	Research and Technical Briefs		Brief summarises key findings from a study in a concise, accessible format for policymakers, stakeholders, or practitioners.
	Inspection Report published by HM inspectorates	HM Inspectorate of Prisons	
		HM Inspectorate of Probation	
		HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)	
		HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS)	
		Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJINI)	
	Monitoring Report published by Independent Monitoring Boards		
	Other - Please state		
<b>Year of Publication</b>	2024		
	2023		
	2022		
	2021		
	2020		
	2019		
	2018		
	2017		
	2016		

	2015		
	2014		
<b>Target population/s for the study</b>	Women in Remand		Code as many as applicable
	Family members (other than children)		
	Children of women in remand		
	Professionals (will specify)		
	Decision makers/policy makers		
	Other - Please state		
<b>Studies featuring these systems</b>	Healthcare		Medical services provided through the NHS and private sector, covering physical and mental health treatment, preventive care, and specialist support, etc.
	Welfare and Social care		Government and community support services, including financial aid, housing assistance, and social care, aimed at ensuring well-being and reducing inequalities.
	Crime and Justice		Law enforcement, courts, prisons, probation, and rehabilitation services, working to prevent crime, deliver justice, and support offender rehabilitation.
	Housing Services		Support for housing needs, including social housing, temporary accommodation, and resettlement programs
	Multi Sector		Collaboration across different sectors
	General (not specific to a particular system)		Not specific to a particular system
	Other (Specify)		Mention in infobox if it does not fit any of the above

<b>Intervention (This code is used only for specific intervention that can be described, not for services in general like not used for overall healthcare services but used for a certain mental health program)</b>	Alternative Sentencing or Custody Options		Non-incarceration penalties, such as probation, community service, house arrest,
	Pre-trial Diversion Programs		Redirecting eligible offenders away from prosecution towards rehabilitation, support services, or restorative justice to address underlying causes of offending and reduce reoffending.
	Healthcare/Mental Health and Well-being Support		Any healthcare intervention including mental health services, substance misuse treatment, and trauma-informed care, etc.
	Gender-Sensitive Training for Prison Staff		This can equip officers with the skills to understand and respond to the specific needs of women
	Legal and Procedural Reforms		Changes to laws and justice system practices
	Rehabilitation and Reintegration Programs		Support to women on remand and post-release through education, employment training, mental health care, housing assistance, and community support to reduce reoffending and aid reintegration.
	Support for Families and Children of Women in Remand		Social services, financial aid, prison visitation support, parenting programs, and community-based care to support and maintain family

	Trauma-Informed Practices (other than mental health support)		Creating safe, supportive environments for women on remand by using respectful communication, minimising re-traumatisation, and considering past trauma in decision-making and rehabilitation programmes.
	Mentorship Programs		Providing guidance, support, and positive role models through peer mentors
	Bail Information Services		Providing courts with verified details on housing, support networks, and community alternatives to help secure bail and reduce unnecessary detention.
	Other - Please state		Mention in infobox if it does not fit any of the above
<b>Outcome (if applicable)</b>	Health		Physical and mental health, access to healthcare services, prevalence of chronic illnesses, or conditions arising during remand.
	Wellbeing		Psychological and emotional wellbeing, stress levels, social connectedness, and resilience.
	Legal outcomes		Sentencing decision, etc
	Safety		Incidences of violence or abuse within remand, security measures, and perceived safety.
	Family Impact		Emotional, social, and economic effects on family members, including children's wellbeing, education, and stability.
	Education		Access to educational opportunities, skill development programs, and literacy rates.
	Freedom		Duration of confinement, restrictions on personal agency, and pathways to reintegration post-remand.
	Economic Outcomes		Employment opportunities post-remand, financial independence, and loss of income during confinement.
	Social Reintegration		Stigma, community support, and participation in societal roles after remand.
	System level outcome		like cost of remand, healthcare cost, etc
	Other - Please state		Mention in infobox if it does not fit any of the above

<b>UK nation</b>	England Only		Studies where the intervention took place in England.
	England and Wales only		Studies where the intervention took place both in England and Wales. This code is also applicable to studies mentioning prisons in England and prisoners from Wales.
	Wales only		Studies where the intervention took place in Wales.
	Scotland Only		Studies where the intervention took place in Scotland.
	Northern Ireland Only		Studies where the intervention took place in NI.
	All four nations		When the intervention took place in all four nations of the UK
	Not specific		When it is UK but not clear which nation in the UK.
<b>Scale</b>	Multicountry		When the study intervention or the incident pertains to many countries
	National		When the study intervention or the incident pertains to the whole country
	Local		When the study intervention or the incident does not pertain to the whole country but only to a smaller place like a city, a state, etc.
<b>Institutional Setting (if data pertains to a particular setting)</b>	Prison	Private	Custodial facility operated by a private company under government contract
		Public	State-run custodial facility managed by His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS), funded by the government
	Court room	Magistrates' court	Handles lower-level criminal cases, preliminary hearings, and some civil matters, with magistrates or district judges making decisions rather than a jury.
		Crown court	Handles serious criminal cases, including trials by jury, sentencing, and appeals from Magistrates' Court, presided over by a judge.

	Healthcare facility		A medical institution, such as NHS hospitals, GP surgeries, mental health clinics, or prison healthcare units, providing treatment and care services.
	Forensic facility		A secure medical unit providing psychiatric assessment, treatment, and rehabilitation for individuals involved in the criminal justice system
	Community		A group of people in a shared location or with common interests, often supported by local services, social networks, and rehabilitation programs for reintegration and well-being.
	Women's centres		Specific centres providing gender-responsive support services, including housing assistance, mental health care, employment training, and rehabilitation programs, to help women in contact with the justice system.
	Home		Place of residence
	Other - Please state		Mention in infobox if it does not fit any of the above
<b>Ethnicity (if data pertains to a particular ethnic group)</b>	White British		Individuals of white ethnic background with British ancestry, including English, Scottish, Welsh, and Northern Irish heritage.
	Black		Individuals of African, Caribbean, or other Black heritage, including Black British, Black African, and Black Caribbean identities.
	Asian		Individuals of South Asian (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi), East Asian, or other Asian heritage, including Asian British identities.
	BAME		BAME (Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic)
	Other		Mention in infobox if it does not fit any of the above
	Not Mentioned/Not clear		Select this code when ethnic category is not mentioned/not clear in the study.

<b>Nationality</b>	British		Citizens or nationals of the United Kingdom, encompassing diverse ethnic backgrounds, including White British, Black British, Asian British, and other minority groups.
	Foreign national		Individual who is not a British citizen and holds citizenship of another country, including those residing, working, studying, or detained in the UK.
	Not Mentioned/Not clear		Select this code when nationality is not mentioned/not clear in the study.
<b>Reason for Remand</b>	Own protection/safety (where a woman is remanded for her safety, often due to risks such as domestic abuse, self-harm, or threats from others.)	Mental health	Remanded due to concerns about her mental health, such as risks of self-harm or suicide.
		Gang membership	Remanded for their safety due to proximity to gangs or risk of criminal exploitation.
		Other e.g. domestic abuse	
	Flight risk		Remanded as there is a concern she may abscond or fail to appear in court.
	Offence severity		Remanded due to the seriousness of the alleged offence.
	Risk to public		Remanded because she is considered a potential threat to public safety.
	Community needs e.g. lack of housing		Remanded due to unmet social needs, such as homelessness or lack of stable accommodation.
	Court processes (Remanded due to procedural factors, such as delays in case preparation, lack of	Lack of time	such as delays in case preparation, lack of available court dates,



	available court dates, or the need for further investigations .)		
		Lack of staff	such as HR unavailability
		Co-defendant status	Remanded due to her association with co-defendants in the same case.
		Pre-Sentence Report /probation input	Remanded while awaiting a Pre-Sentence Report (PSR) or input from probation services.
	Immigration Detainee		Remanded due to immigration-related concerns, such as uncertain legal status, risk of deportation, or pending immigration proceedings.
	Sentencer behaviour/ bias		When remand is influenced by judicial discretion, implicit biases, or systemic factors rather than legal necessity.
	Unknown		When the study mentions that reasons for remand were not known
	Well understood		When the study mentions that reasons for remand were well understood
	Poorly understood		When the study mentions that reasons for remand were only poorly understood
	Not Mentioned/Not clear		When reasons for remand are not mentioned or not clear from the study
<b>Exclude study during data extraction</b>			When we want to exclude study at this stage e.g. due to insufficient information, lack of details, clarity, etc

## Method of synthesis

We synthesised the findings of the included study using a narrative thematic approach. This approach allowed us to integrate and interpret the data from various studies in a cohesive manner. The main themes had already been identified during the earlier coding phase, where we carefully examined the data and grouped similar concepts together. In the synthesis stage, we organised the findings by systematically mapping them onto these pre-existing themes.

To enhance the clarity and structure of our synthesis, we also introduced some sub-themes within these main themes. These sub-themes helped us capture nuances and variations in the findings, providing a more detailed and comprehensive narrative. By maintaining consistency with the coding

framework while introducing these additional layers, we ensured that our synthesis remained both organised and flexible enough to highlight the diverse aspects of the data.

We found 109 documents containing material about women on remand in the UK. For this synthesis section, we excluded non-systematic reviews. That left 74 studies. Of those, 10 could not be used in the synthesis because their findings did not specifically address women on remand: they were included in the section above (and the EGM) because they either involved women on remand in their methodology or contained tentative references to them, but they do not have clear, specific findings suitable for synthesis. So this synthesis draws on 64 studies: including four systematic literature reviews and the seven documents which relate to effectiveness.

## Appendix 2: List of documents included on the EGM

Abbott L. (2015). *A Pregnant pause: Expecting in the prison estate*. Hook, Hampshire UK: Waterside Press, pp.185-210. Available at: <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/A-Pregnant-pause%3A-%3A-expecting-in-the-prison-estate-Abbott/f6ab83511746a43f18c5fc336a9171a04ae97fc3>.

Abbott J L. (2018). *The incarcerated pregnancy: An ethnographic study of perinatal women in English prisons*. UK. Available at: <https://uhra.herts.ac.uk/bitstream/handle/2299/20283/01013818%20Abbott%20Laura%20final%20version%20of%20submission.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y>.

Afia A, Sanjib G and Strydom A; Angela H. (2016). *Prisoners with intellectual disabilities and detention status. Findings from a UK cross sectional study of prisons*. United States: pp.189-97. Available at: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/26921526/>.

Agenda Alliance. (2023). *Tackling double disadvantage action plan: 'One year on' progress report*. London UK: Agenda Alliance. Available at: [https://www.agendaalliance.org/documents/146/Tackling\\_Double\\_Disadvantage\\_One\\_Year\\_On\\_Progress\\_Report.pdf](https://www.agendaalliance.org/documents/146/Tackling_Double_Disadvantage_One_Year_On_Progress_Report.pdf).

Ali A and Pittaway H. (2022). *Towards Race Equality, REPORT 3 - Exploring the effectiveness of Independent Monitoring Boards at monitoring outcomes for Black, Asian and minority ethnic women in prison*. London UK: Criminal Justice Alliance. Available at: <https://www.criminaljusticealliance.org/cja-resources/towards-race-equality/>.

Allen R. (2016). *Meeting the needs of young adult women in custody*. London UK: Transition to Adulthood. Available at: [https://t2a.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Young-Adult-Women-in-Custody\\_LR2.pdf](https://t2a.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Young-Adult-Women-in-Custody_LR2.pdf).

Annison J and Hageman A. (2015). *Older women prisoners and The Rubies project*. Bristol UK: Bristol University Press. Available at: <https://policy.bristoluniversitypress.co.uk/women-and-criminal-justice>.

Armstrong L M. (2023). *Remanding women: Exploring the scope for therapeutic jurisprudence as a framework in the bail and remand decision-making process*. Oxford UK: Routledge, pp.220-230. Available at: <https://www.routledge.com/The-Routledge-Handbook-of-Womens-Experiences-of-Criminal-Justice/Masson-Booth/p/book/9781032064314?srsId=AfmBOopXMbLAGVh4h11IZkAKYq-IoLDoeN5uQyEjdBzIY83tFL939x5t>.

Armstrong L M and Malloch M. (2024). *Therapeutic or therapunitive? Conceptualising community custody in Scotland*. London UK: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.387-409. Available at: [https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-031-61277-0\\_18](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-031-61277-0_18).

Bartlett A and Somers N. (2017). *Women in prisons*. London UK: CRC Press, pp.835-842. Available at: <https://www-journals-uchicago-edu.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/doi/pdfplus/10.1086%2F722105>.

Bebbington P, Jakobowitz S and McKenzie N; Killaspy H; Iveson R; Duffield G; Kerr M; (2017). *Assessing needs for psychiatric treatment in prisoners: 1. Prevalence of disorder*. Germany: pp.221-229. Available at: <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC5329095/>.

Bissell S. (2024). Literature review: Health needs assessment of individuals within community justice services and untried in custody (remand). UK: NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde. Available at: <https://www.stor.scot.nhs.uk/server/api/core/bitstreams/81040ebf-a1e8-4c0a-85e4-4b26b408d61d/content>.

Booth N and Masson I. (2021). Loved ones of remand prisoners: The hidden victims of COVID-19. UK: Centre for Crime and Justice Studies, pp.23-31. Available at: <https://www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/sites/default/files/PSJ%20253%2C%20Loved%20ones.pdf>.

Bright A-M Higgins, A and Grealish A; (2023). Women's experiences of prison-based mental healthcare: A systematic review of qualitative literature.: Emerald Publishing Limited, pp.181-198. Available at: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35192246/>.

Burman Michele, Malloch Margaret and McIvor Gill; (2015). A comparison: criminalized women in Scotland: Policy Press, pp.59-78.

Callender M, Scanlan M and Van Rooyen S; French M; (2024). Improving magistrates' awareness of vulnerable women in the criminal justice system: A pilot.: RCN Publishing Company Limited, pp.1-12. Available at: <https://journals.rcni.com/mental-health-practice/evidence-and-practice/improving-magistrates-awareness-of-vulnerable-women-in-the-criminal-justice-system-a-pilot-mhp.2019.e1363/abs>.

Campbell K. (2020). Transforming Lives: A study looking at the landscape of support for women who offend and ways to move forward in Northern Ireland. London UK: Prison Reform Trust. Available at: <https://prisonreformtrust.org.uk/publication/transforming-lives-a-study-looking-at-the-landscape-of-support-for-women-who-offend-and-ways-to-move-forward-in-northern-ireland/>.

Carr L J. (2016). Inside the revolving door: A study of the repeat short-term imprisonment of women at HMP New Hall. Sheffield UK. Available at: <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/42606045.pdf>.

Caulfield L S. (2016). Counterintuitive findings from a qualitative study of mental health in English women's prisons. England: pp.216-229. Available at: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/27921636/>.

Chaplin E, McCarthy J and Marshall-Tate K; Ali S; Xenitidis K; Childs J; Harvey D; McKinnon I; Robinson L; Hardy S; Srivastava S; Allely C S; Tolchard B; Forrester A; (2021). Evaluation of a liaison and diversion Court Mental Health Service for defendants with neurodevelopmental disorders. United States: pp.104103. Available at: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34628339/>.

Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice in Northern Ireland, HM Chief Inspector of Prisons; The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority; The Education; Training Inspectorate; (2024). Report on an unannounced Inspection of Hydebank Wood Women's Prison 21 MAY - 6 JUNE 2024. Belfast Northern Ireland: Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland. Available at: <https://www.cjini.org/getattachment/74df9583-c110-43f1-bc05-f13074ce60bc/report.aspx>.

Cox J and Sacks-Jones K. (2017). "Double disadvantage": The experiences of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic women in the criminal justice system. London UK: Women in Prison. Available at: <https://womeninprison.org.uk/media/downloads/double-disadvantage-1.pdf>.

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## Appendix 3: Summaries of studies which relate to effectiveness

This appendix has summaries of the seven studies which relate to effectiveness. In our view, none is a true 'impact evaluation'.

### **1. Supporting People After Remand or Conviction (SPARC): Works for men, but no impact related data on women on remand**

The effectiveness related findings from this study were restricted to male population only. We can only say that the SPARC service needs further research using female participants to know if it works for women on remand or not. We therefore did not assess the quality / reliability of this study.

Smith (2020) in her PhD thesis described the Supporting People After Remand or Conviction (SPARC) model of intervention, provided an overview of the first two years of population data, and provided evidence of the positive impact of supporting men transitioning into prison custody from court.

SPARC supports individuals who are sentenced or remanded by the courts in their transition into prison custody. It functions as an integrated service within court and prison systems. By addressing the fundamental needs of both men and women during their transition and early days in custody, SPARC supports individuals to engage with their prison sentences, address offending behaviour, and work towards reintegration into the community and a law-abiding life.

She used the data from 1,093 SPARC Keep Safe Interviews (collected from 1st December 2013 to 30th November 2015) to provide information about the needs and characteristics of people entering custody from court. In a second phase, 289 surveys were completed by individuals during their prison sentence which included the Clinical Outcomes Routine Evaluation (CORE) to assess mental health and wellbeing. Participants who received the SPARC intervention were compared with those who had not.

Most clients were male, with just 7% female. Women are reported to have different needs to males which require a specific response from agencies within the CJS. The author used a targeted literature review to investigate the different needs of women in CJS in general and also those on remand.

### **2. Gender-informed awareness raising sessions for court professionals including magistrates to increase their knowledge and understanding around vulnerabilities of women in CJS.**

**Callender (2024)**

**Quality Assessment:** Though the study tries to assess the impact of awareness sessions among the professionals, it lacks the methodological rigor of an impact evaluation. There is no control group and the findings are self-reported by professionals themselves with a very low response rate.

**We therefore have low confidence in the findings, as they relate to effectiveness for women on remand.**

As a gender-informed intervention 'Focus on Women' awareness sessions were used to increase knowledge and understanding of magistrates, around vulnerabilities for all those within the CJS including youths and women in areas such as: Mental Health, Learning Disability and Autism.

A team made up of the magistrate-led Vulnerable Person Focus group, third sector provider (Good Loaf Women's Centre) and Service Users, delivered seven 'Focus on Women' awareness sessions in Northamptonshire to approximately 100 staff in November 2016.

The sessions included presentations, written material and activities to allow participants to actively engage with the materials provided and reflect on their decision-making.

Participants were asked to complete an evaluation form at the end of the session and were contacted three months after the session to complete a follow-up survey to establish if they were putting any of the learning into practice.

**Findings:** Of the 50 participants, 98% (n=49) felt that it had met their expectations and the 2% (n=1) said it had somehow met their expectations. All participants indicated that they would be able to use their training in their role with 78% (n=39) reporting that the training would definitely be useful in their work, 18% (n=9%) stating that most of the training would be useful and 4% (n=2) suggesting that the content would somehow be useful.

Follow up survey - In total, 18 magistrates completed the post evaluation survey, representing a 26% response rate. Of those completing the questionnaire, 69% (n=9) of the respondents confirmed that the training had influenced them to seek information about the women's health and social care circumstances before sentencing. Furthermore, of the 18 magistrates who completed the questionnaire, 85% (n=11) stated that they were more likely to ask for professional opinion if they had a concern about a woman's health or social care circumstances.

### 3. Liaison and Diversion (L&D) Court Mental Health Service for Defendants with Neurodevelopmental Disorders

#### Chaplin (2021)

**Quality Assessment:** Though the study describes the impact of CMH+ND Service as compared to the CMH services through the initial assessment, this is more of preliminary feasibility research rather than a full impact evaluation. The study lacks the methodological rigor of an impact evaluation: e.g., it is not clear how the participants were selected and assigned to different groups. The findings are not gender disaggregated. **We therefore have low confidence in the findings, as they relate to effectiveness for women on remand.**

This study describes the introduction of a specialist service with expertise in Neurodevelopmental disorders (ND) into an existing court mental health liaison and diversion (CMH) service to determine if the service would impact the health needs or disposal outcomes of defendants. The key aim was to integrate a specialist ND component (referred to as the CMH+ND Service) in parallel with an existing CMH L&D service. The CMH+ND Service was designed to complement the existing court CMH service as part of an integrated service response and it was modelled using national arrangements for service design in this area (N. England., 2019). The ND component of the service was both multi-disciplinary and multi-agency and nurse-led. The service was provided on a full-time basis and also offered written or oral advice, evidence to the court, multi-disciplinary risk assessments (including self-harm and/or suicide & risk of future offending) and diagnosis of co-morbidities as required.



This study described the rates of mental disorder of court attendees and compares the CMH+ND Service with the previous CMH Service in one London Magistrates' Court. It also described the court pathway of the CMH+ND Service.

Though the participants included both men and women, the study found that female defendants with ND were significantly underrepresented with rates of 7.4%, (9), across both the CMH and CMH+ND services compared to the rates of 19% for females with no-ND, (220), ( $X^2$ , (1), = 10.281,  $p < .006$ ). Most of the study findings do not provide gender specific data on intervention's impact most likely because of very low numbers of female defendants with ND. However, as a remarkable finding it was seen that after the first court appearance, custodial remand for defendants with ND was 34.2% (25), which was a 10% decrease in custodial remands compared to 43.8% (14) in the CMH cohort. The 10% decrease in custodial remands following the introduction of the CMH+ND Service indicates that it may have had an important role in reducing custodial remands.

#### 4. Female Offender Strategy: Equalities Impact Assessment by Ministry of Justice (2017)

**Quality Assessment:** This was not an impact evaluation. Instead, it was an equality impact assessment (EIA) and policy justification. Key limitations include:

- No counterfactual or control group
- No measurable outcomes reported from the strategy yet (e.g., pre-post comparisons, effect sizes)
- Reliance on descriptive statistics, administrative data, and targeted literature reviews
- The document informs policy design rather than evaluates policy impact

**We therefore have low confidence in the findings, as they relate to effectiveness for women on remand.**

The intervention was the UK Ministry of Justice's Female Offender Strategy, launched to address the specific needs of women in the criminal justice system. Key components included:

- Early intervention to divert women from custody where appropriate
- Community-based alternatives to prison, including funding women's centres and piloting residential women's centres
- Whole System Approach (WSA): multi-agency, gender-informed, holistic support
- Improved custodial conditions and trauma-informed practices
- Targeted support for BAME women, women with disabilities, and those with experiences of domestic abuse

The Female Offender Strategy was developed in response to a wide body of evidence highlighting the distinct needs and poorer outcomes experienced by women in the criminal justice system. Key findings informing the strategy include the overrepresentation of women with histories of trauma, abuse, mental health issues, and caring responsibilities—particularly for children. Despite comprising only 4.6% of the prison population, women are more likely to serve short custodial sentences for low-level, non-violent offences and face significantly higher rates of self-harm and homelessness. Reoffending rates are also higher among women released from short sentences. The strategy emphasises that gender-informed approaches—such as trauma-informed care, community-based alternatives to custody, and holistic, multi-agency support—are more effective in addressing women's often complex needs and reducing reoffending, compared to gender-neutral interventions. These insights underpin the

strategy's focus on diverting women from custody where possible and providing targeted, supportive interventions to help them rebuild their lives.

## 5. Female Offender Strategy: Impact Assessment (IA) by Ministry of Justice (2023)

**Quality Assessment:** This study is based on modelling and secondary data. It uses assumptions and estimates (e.g., 5–7% reduction in reoffending) rather than actual observed effects of the intervention. It compares the intervention with a do-nothing comparison group. However, the cost of not doing anything is not clear from this study. Many costs and benefits are qualitatively described or not disaggregated by gender/remand status.

**We therefore have low confidence in the findings, as they relate to effectiveness for women on remand.**

This economic evaluation (a cost benefit analysis) study compared the costs and benefits of doing nothing against implementing the Female Offender Strategy (FOS) Delivery Plan.

**Cost of implementation:** The main monetised costs of the four priorities associated with implementation of Female Offender Strategy are as followed:

- Priority 1: Fewer women entering the criminal justice system and reoffending £15.5m (£15.5m).
- Priority 2: Fewer women serving short custodial sentences with a greater proportion managed successfully in the community £1m (£0.93m).
- Priority 3: Better outcomes for women in custody £11.4m – (£11.2m).
- Priority 4: Protecting the public through better outcomes for women on release £40m– (£30m).

The study also accounted for the non-monetised cost. The main non-monetised costs will fall on the Prison Services and the MoJ as it will face increased administrative costs due to the implementation of all the activities.

**Benefits of implementation:** FOS is expected to yield the monetised benefits through reduced reoffending (between £18m and £62m) and Improved wellbeing (between £8m and £26m). There were many non-monetised benefits like reduction in self-harm, improved education, employment, training prospects, etc.

**Net Benefit of implementation:** The net benefit was assessed to be between £27 million and £90 million over three years; best estimate: £58 million. It accounts for a projected 5–7% reduction in reoffending, especially for women accessing community services and Women's Centres, wellbeing gains valued at up to £26.9 million.

## 6. The Prison Reform Trust's Transforming Lives programme

**Sharrock (2020)**

**Quality Assessment:** This was not an impact evaluation in the traditional sense. There was no counterfactual or comparison group used. It relied on qualitative methods (interviews and observations) rather than measuring pre-post outcomes or statistical impacts. Impact was self-reported (e.g. on feelings, insights, and perceptions), with no long-term tracking of policy or behavioural change. The study did not quantify outcomes like reductions in remand or reoffending. Instead, the research was a qualitative exploration of process and perception, focused on



understanding how service user engagement “felt” and “worked”, rather than testing whether it produced measurable changes.

**We therefore have low confidence in the findings, as they relate to effectiveness for women on remand.**

The intervention was the Transforming Lives (TL) programme. It was run by the Prison Reform Trust (PRT), aiming to reduce the imprisonment of women in the UK. It focused on advocacy, research, collaboration, and direct engagement with stakeholders to promote community-based alternatives to custody, especially for women affected by trauma, domestic abuse, or socio-economic marginalisation.

This particular study specifically examined one aspect of the programme: how women with lived experience of the criminal justice system were meaningfully involved in shaping and delivering TL’s advocacy and messaging.

This qualitative study used three main methods to evaluate the TL programme: a targeted document review on service user involvement, observations of three Transforming Lives events held in 2019, and in-depth interviews with 6 women with lived experience of the criminal justice system and 7 professional stakeholders (referred to as programme intermediaries). The interviews explored participants’ experiences, perceived impacts of women’s involvement in the events, and suggestions for improving service user engagement. Data were thematically analysed using the Framework approach.

The study<sup>1</sup> found that women’s contributions—especially when they shared their personal experiences at national summits, roundtable events, and custody forums—were deeply valued. These testimonies gave professionals access to insights they might not otherwise encounter in their policy or operational roles and helped bring the realities of women’s justice experiences to life in a compelling and humanising way. Women who took part in these events reported feeling empowered, respected, and more confident. Speaking publicly about their journeys was not only therapeutic but also gave them a sense of achievement and purpose. For those in attendance—such as police, policymakers, and service providers—hearing these personal stories helped reinforce or shift existing perspectives on the justice system’s treatment of women, particularly around the impact of short custodial sentences, stigma, and the links between trauma and offending.

## **7. “Here and Now” - A specialist trauma, bereavement and loss service, delivered by Barnardo’s Scotland**

**Vaswani (2019)**

**Quality Assessment:** This was not a full impact evaluation in the conventional sense. Key issues included lack of a comparison group, small sample size for post-intervention interviews (only 4 women), use of adapted tools (e.g., modified TSCC), which reduced comparability and limited use of clinical cut-offs, some outcomes were self-reported, and data completeness varied.

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<sup>1</sup> The findings were not specific to women on remand. They concern women with any lived experience of the criminal justice system, including those sentenced, recalled, or diverted. That said, the programme’s overarching goal — to reduce the imprisonment of women — implicitly includes women on remand, especially given their vulnerability and frequent lack of sentencing.

**We therefore have low confidence in the findings, as they relate to effectiveness for women on remand.**

The intervention evaluated was the extension of the "Here and Now" trauma, bereavement, and loss service—originally designed for young men—to women in HMP & YOI Polmont, Scotland. Delivered by Barnardo's Scotland, this service included open-ended, psychotherapeutic support (up to 30 weeks), short-term release preparation support (the "Here and Now Link"), and tailored individual sessions focusing on trauma, grief, and loss. It was adapted to be age- and gender-responsive and aimed to help women in custody manage the emotional consequences of trauma and imprisonment.

This mixed-methods evaluation studied the implementation of the Here and Now trauma service for women in custody at HMP & YOI Polmont. Quantitative data were collected from 77 women referred to the service, using routine assessment tools: the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) questionnaire, an adapted Trauma Symptoms Checklist for Children (TSCC), and the Adult Resilience Measure (RRC-ARM). Pre- and post-intervention scores were analysed using non-parametric tests (e.g., Wilcoxon Signed Ranks, Spearman's Rho). Qualitative data were gathered through four interviews with women, three staff focus groups, and six interviews with key stakeholders. These were thematically analysed to explore implementation challenges, perceived impact, and contextual factors affecting delivery.

The study found high levels of need among women in custody, particularly in relation to trauma, bereavement, and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). Most women reported multiple traumatic events, including parental separation, abuse, and bereavement. Quantitative findings showed elevated trauma symptoms—especially intrusive thoughts, anxiety, and sadness—and lower-than-average resilience, especially in peer and familial support. Qualitative interviews and focus groups confirmed that both staff and women viewed trauma as central to women's offending and incarceration. Despite implementation challenges, the intervention was valued by women who accessed it, though systemic barriers—such as sentence length, staff training, and referral delays—limited its reach and consistency.

This study included women on remand as a major participant group, and in fact made up the largest single group of service users (30%). The report highlighted that short and unpredictable stays—characteristic of remand—complicated service delivery, making it difficult to build therapeutic relationships or complete interventions. The remand status often conflicted with the longer-term support model of the service, yet these women still presented with significant need for trauma support.

The study provided valuable mixed-methods evidence on need, feasibility, and perceived value, and triangulated qualitative findings with pre-post measures of trauma symptoms and resilience.

## Appendix 4: Research method in more detail

The search strategy and search were as described earlier. Data selection, extraction and synthesis for each study was performed independently by two review authors, with disagreements resolved by discussion with a third reviewer.

### Search results

- Searches of academic databases (which mainly contain journal articles) yielded 798 studies.
- Searches for non-academic (grey literature) identified 6637 studies: from websites including those of charities, government websites, and women-focussed websites.
- Google Scholar is neither a traditional database nor a source of non-academic publications on its own; it's rather a search engine or aggregator. Therefore, 13000 studies found through searches from Google Scholar included a mix of both academic and non-academic.
- We found 16 studies through looking for references included the included studies (known as 'snowballing').

### De-duplication

After merging all these studies in EPPI Reviewer software, 27 duplicate records were automatically identified and removed. Duplicates were removed manually during the screening and coding stages.

### Screening studies on just their Title and Abstract

We screened 20,424 studies using their title and abstract (T/A) or executive summaries. We excluded 20,154 studies through this. (Note that, whereas traditional academic journal articles each have a clear abstract (summary), many non-academic documents do not. Rather, they might start with a list of recommendations, or sometimes just dive straight in.)

### Screening studies on full text

We considered 270 studies for full text (F/T) screening and attempted to retrieve the full texts of them. We could not access full texts for 12 studies (listed in Appendix 5) and these studies were therefore not considered in this review any further. The remaining 258 studies were assessed for eligibility through F/T screening, of which 129 were included. We excluded the other 129 studies during F/T screening for several reasons. We excluded because they focused on the wrong target group, findings were not relevant to women on remand, they were based in a country outside of the UK or Northern Ireland, they used the wrong study design or intervention, were published before 2014 or they were identified as a duplicate (see PRISMA Flowchart below).

### Studies excluded during coding

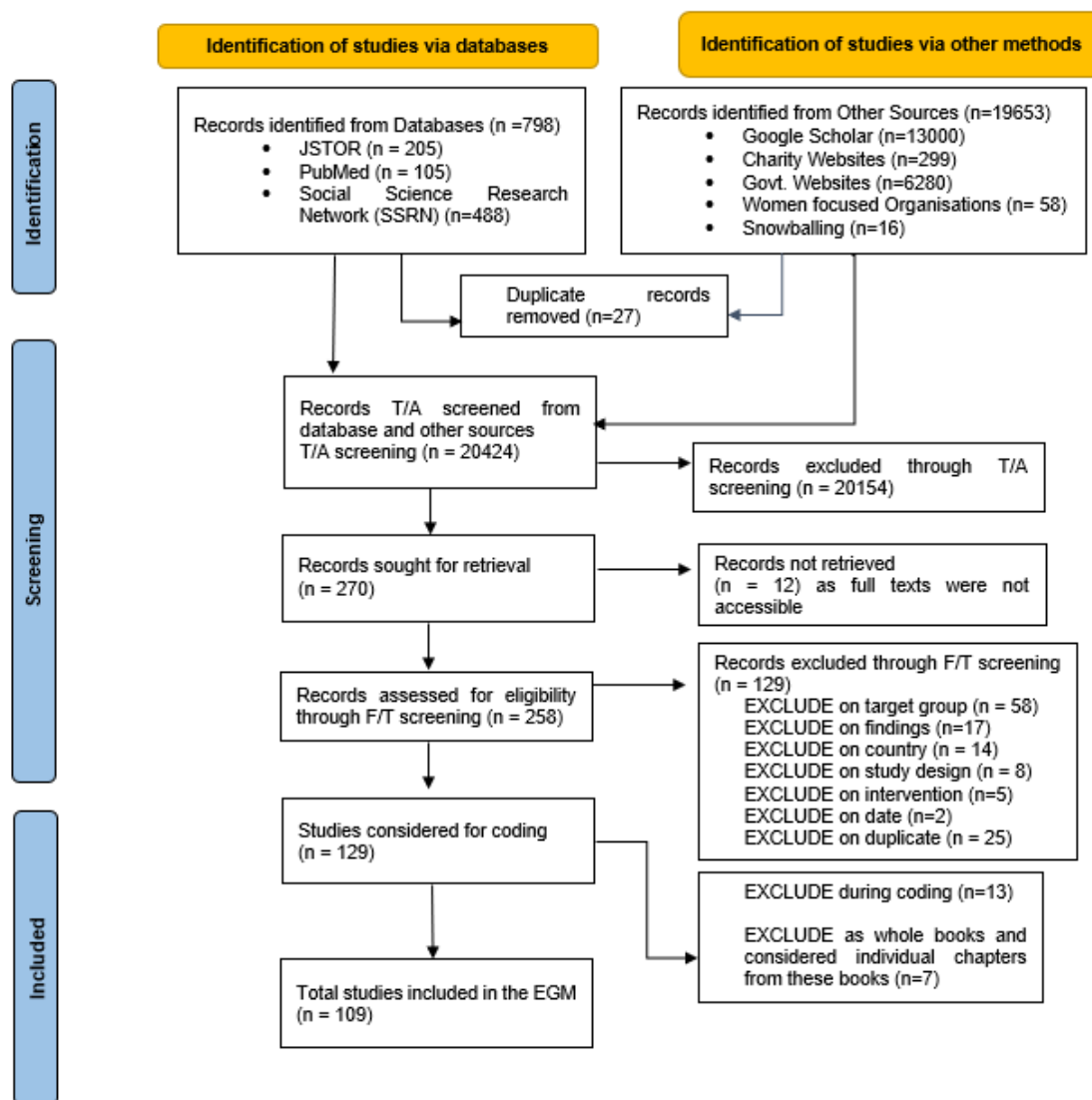
We then moved to coding the studies according to their topic and content - to place them on the Evidence and Gap Map. For coding, we considered all 129 studies but excluded 13 studies: they had initially been included because they appeared to have some relevance. However, during coding, we realised they contained either no or only minimal relevant information. Additionally, there were seven

book chapters which had been coded as both a book and a chapter, so duplicated: that duplication was removed to include just the relevant chapters.

## Studies included in this review

This gave us 109 studies which are included in this review. Full details of the study selection process and numbers at each stage are given in the PRISMA Flow Diagram given below (Figure 6).

Figure 6 PRISMA Flow Diagram\* of study selection



\*Source: Page MJ, et al. BMJ 2021;372:n71. doi: 10.1136/bmj.n71.

## Appendix 5: List of documents for which full texts were not accessible

1. Aitken Gill and McDonnell Kirsten (2020). The use of cognitive analytic therapy with women in secure settings. In: ed., *Cognitive analytic therapy for offenders*. Routledge, pp.121-138.
2. Anne-Marie McAlinden and Clare Dwyer. (2015). *Criminal Justice in Transition: The Northern Ireland Context*. Bloomsbury.
3. Anthea Hucklesby. (2023). A systemic approach to reducing custodial remands: the experience of England and Wales. In: ed., *European Perspectives on Pre-Trial Detention*.: Routledge, pp.57-80.
4. Jones Julie. (2017). Women in prison. In: ed., *The Social Context of Birth*.: Routledge, pp.265-275.
5. Julian Roberts. (2015). *Exploring sentencing practice in England and Wales*. Springer Nature.
6. Linda Moore, Phil Scraton and Azrini Wahidin; (2017). *Women's Imprisonment and the case for abolition*. Routledge.
7. Lucy Baldwin. (2015). *Mothering justice: Working with mothers in criminal and social justice settings*. Waterside Press.
8. Masson Isla. (2019). *Incarcerating motherhood: The enduring harms of first short periods of imprisonment on mothers*: Routledge.
9. Linda Moore Phil Scraton. (2014). *The incarceration of women: punishing bodies, breaking spirits*. Palgrave Studies in Prisons and Penology.
10. Peter Scharff Smith. (2014). *When the Innocent are punished: The children of imprisoned parents*. Springer.
11. Powell C. (2021). *Mothering from the inside: Research on motherhood and imprisonment*. SAGE Publications LTD.
12. Walker Tammi. (2021). Suicide, self-harm and imprisoned women. In: ed., *Forensic Psychology*. Wiley Online Library, pp.572-592.

The Walker article and Hucklesby chapter were later accessed, but only when this study was nearly complete and so are not included.