

Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) – Written evidence (NPS0155)

Introduction

I submit this evidence in my capacity as Head of Prison Industries, Catering Retail and Physical Education (PSPI) in the Central Operational Services Group of HMPPS. PSPI underpin the delivery of decent regimes across every public sector prison. We are risk owners of two of the top 3 critical services; providing food and prisoner retail (the third being healthcare) and accordingly, play a vital role in the delivery of decent regimes across the estate. Everything we do supports stability and rehabilitation and we also provide clothing, furniture and equipment, we serve nutritious meals, engage prisoners and young people in physical activity or engage them in real work - which combines the provision of the critical elements of a regime: purposeful activity, sector specific training, the development of a work ethic and the transference of interpersonal and social skills.

Executive Summary

The benefits of physical exercise are well documented but until its incorporation into PSPI the delivery of Physical Education (PE) had been seen as a leisure activity as opposed to an opportunity to change behaviour and reduce reoffending. I saw the potential of sport to engage the disengaged, improve health and change lives and set about promoting the work delivered in HMPPS to forge partnerships. Sport in the England and Wales Prison Service is now seen as an international beacon of excellence and Sport England are offering a grant of £1M in 2021/22 to develop the data, research, and evaluation of our work.

By seeking external partnerships with organisations such as the Premier League and Parkrun we are delivering sporting activity which maps through from custody to community. One such partnership with David Dein MBE, has seen the co-creation of the Twinning Project. In only two years we have 'twinned' 63 prisons with 61 of their nearest professional football clubs which enables their community teams to deliver football-based activities for prisoners at no cost to HMPPS. Delivery was interrupted by the pandemic but approximately 150 coaching certificates were issued. As prisons recover and regimes resume, the annual engagement is expected to be well over 3000 participants, increasing as more sites join the project.

As well as excellent English Football League clubs such as Plymouth Argyle and Birmingham City we are working with some of the biggest brands in the world like Manchester United, and Arsenal which has attracted requests for assistance from the prison services in Scotland, Ireland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Germany, Holland, France, Italy, Japan and Australia who all want to join the project and replicate the model. We are soon to expand into probation.

Other partnerships have produced ground-breaking interventions to help improve the health of the prison population. We are working closely with several national governing bodies including the Football Association, the Rugby Football Union, British Rowing, and British Cycling. We are partnering with the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme to develop a 5-year strategy to progressively expand DoE provision for young offenders, over the project term: 01 April 2021 – 31

March 2026. The hyperlink below details the sport for development projects that we have driven centrally over the last three years: [HMPPS Sporting Innovations](#)

Over the past year, we remained resilient in the wake of the COVID-19 outbreaks and quickly adapted our delivery to meet the changing need of prisons. We introduced mitigations and contingency plans around physical exercise so we could continue to allow some structured physical activities at all levels of the national restrictions. When the time comes to move away from these mitigations, we will need to carefully manage this transition within our PE facilities.

How do you know if sport for development programmes delivering in criminal justice settings are effective? How do you measure impact and what is good practice in this area?

1. We are developing an HMPPS Sports Strategy with the aim to increase participation in sport and well-being activity across the entire prison and probation population, working in collaboration with partner organisations to support the diverse needs and help to overcome barriers to access and engagement of physical and well-being services. Our custodial pilot of UPSHOT in 5 prisons will be used to help inform a wider rollout in both prisons and probation. UPSHOT is an online system which helps 3rd sector organisations better manage their data, improve performance, track progress, and report against outcomes - all with the aim of evaluating their impact. Linking with custodial systems is underway and will be completed in April to make this more accessible to staff.
2. Alongside the development of the HMPPS Sport Strategy we have composed a theory of change to encourage strategic thinking and planning, considering how research and evidence can be applied within the strategy to maximise the prospect of successful outcomes, but also critically, how to adapt and flex our delivery to meet the diverse and often complex needs of our population. This iterative approach will also enable us to respond and adjust to changes in policy and wider organisational developments.
3. Training in the UPSHOT system has taken place in 25 prisons in readiness for further rollout with a further 42 planned to be trained across all Twinning, Boats not Bars and Women's prisons this year.
4. We will use funding from Sport England to deliver this work at pace and further develop the system as it has the potential to be used to create a heatmap of activities linked to the plethora of activities available through our innovative partnerships with the Twinning Project, Parkrun and the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme amongst other things.
5. This map incorporates the planned 'Find and Book' Intervention Service to allow community and custodial offender managers to book offenders onto interventions and record their progress. This data can be extrapolated to understand whether participation in these activities has had an impact on recidivism through testing reoffending rates data. A unique identifier assigned at the time of booking will follow the person through the gate and will transfer with a person in custody if they are moved to another prison establishment during their sentence.

What is the evidence on the impact that sport and physical activity can have in rehabilitation, deterring or preventing engagement in criminal behaviour?

6. The evidence base for the impact of sport and physical activity in custody is growing and forms a key part in our developing HMPPS Sports Strategy. Some recent reports which highlight the benefits of participation in physical activity in custody include:
 - *Martinez-Merino et al (2017) 'physical activity incarcerated women systematic review'* offers early indication that female engagement with sports and physical activity in prison seems to be lower than male. The overall findings were positive, indicating that sports and physical activity in prison appear to have a number of benefits for women (similar to what the research has shown with men), such as: improved perceptions in relationships with other residents and staff, improved mental health, improved quality of life, reduced levels of stress, and so on.
 - *Woods et al (2017) 'Impact of sports-based interventions'* systematic review looked at sports-based interventions in prisons more generally. The findings of this review support the assumptions made in the our HMPPS Sports Strategy's theory of change (in that sports interventions improve psychological wellbeing for some people.
 - *Miguel A Sanchez-Lastra 'Effectiveness of Prison-Based Exercise Training Programs: A Systematic Review'*. The findings from this review were that prison-based exercise programs constitute a feasible and useful strategy for improving the physical and mental health status of prisoners.
7. We have commissioned three further pieces of research and initial findings about the impact of both the Twinning Project (conducted by Loughborough and Oxford Universities) and Parkrun (conducted by HMPPS and Sheffield Hallam University) indicate that participation in these programmes supports desistance and positively impact rehabilitative efforts (full findings are as yet unpublished) . Data applications are underway to study the longitudinal impacts on reoffending for Twinning and Parkrun up to 3 years after release. The third commission is in the early stages with Loughborough University which will seek to address an evidence gap by analysing the impact of prison led PE on the health, wellbeing and behaviour of people in prison by reviewing all activity taking place within prison physical education departments across 12 sites of varying function.

What are the main barriers or challenges to delivering high quality 'sport for development' programmes in criminal justice settings?

8. As outlined earlier in this submission we have some excellent examples of how sport for development is being delivered in custody. These projects are achieving personal development, health and wellbeing and relational outcomes as evidenced in our initial research findings for key projects such as Twinning and Parkrun. Some of the barriers that may be

experienced include funding and staffing of PE departments. We need to ensure there is enough resource to allow PE staff to conduct the work with the community coming into prison and with the 3rd sector. This work forms part of their job description but due to the impact of COVID 19 and current staffing levels this is not always maximised. HMPPS are considering this as part of the reform work with the objective to 'build back better' rather than simply re-introducing pre-COVID regimes. The PSPI –PE team are advising and supporting on design of the future regime and will consider as part of this how to reduce barriers further.

9. We have engaged with Clinks and with the Alliance of Sport who support the voluntary sector working within the Criminal Justice system to help improve communication around the activities that are available and creating a route for third sector partners to contribute.

What progress has been made on implementing the recommendations from Professor Meek's independent review of sport in prisons?

10. There has been a detailed internal strategic review of physical education in custody since 2018 '*A Sporting Chance: An Independent Review of Sport in Youth and Adult Prisons*' (Meek, R) was published. We have collated a central action plan and worked closely with the Youth Custody Service (YCS) to embed some of the recommended practices.
11. The development of our HMPPS Sport Strategy will build upon the positive work already being undertaken by PE staff and partnership organisations. This will allow for the development of services that are accessible to individuals serving sentences in the community and support those transitioning from custody back into the community to support their ongoing resettlement.
12. HMPPS work with people who are serving sentences in custody and the community, who often have complex offending histories along with a range of other needs that require targeted interventions to aid resettlement and to reduce the risk of re-offending. Participation in sport and well-being activities should be considered as an intervention when assessing needs and sentence planning.
13. International literature supports the theory that sport based activities within a custodial environment can improve physical and mental health, alongside additional psychological factors which includes exposure to pro social relationships and role models, positive sense of achievement and the shift towards a more positive identity. It is very likely that this approach would also work for those serving community sentences or on Licence.
14. All Young Offender Institutions created integrated physical activity and wellbeing action plans a result of R. Meek's review covering all relevant recommendations from the review.
15. The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme (DofE) welcomed our response to Professor Meek's review in 2018, and our commitment to 'encouraging involvement with activities like the Duke of Edinburgh award and Park Run

which develop teamwork and a sense of civic participation.’ We are seeking to build on this recommendation and believe that through establishing consistent, sustainable, and high-quality DofE provision across the UK’s justice system, we can provide life-changing opportunities for young people in custody. This will, in turn, support our focus on rehabilitation and supporting young people to ‘build productive and fulfilling lives.’

How do you ensure that programmes are delivering on duty of care and diversity and inclusion?

16. Our HMPPS Sports Strategy states that sport and well-being activities should be inclusive and accessible to all and can also be a conduit to successful engagement with other key strategic areas, including family engagement.
17. Our development and rollout of UPSHOT will allow monitoring of diversity and inclusion data of participants in all PE programmes, both recreational and accredited. This data will be automatically linked with our custodial systems (NOMIS) so that management information reports can be created and analysed. This will allow local and national teams to review and innovate based on this intelligence.
18. All PE programmes, whether delivered by our staff or by third parties must be risk assessed and delivered in line with safety and wellbeing considerations of those involved. We advise prisons on the quality and equality of their services through our programme of assurance visits.

How can adults of all ages and backgrounds, particularly those from under-represented groups, including women and girls, ethnic minorities, disabled people, older people, and those from less affluent backgrounds, be encouraged to lead more active lifestyles? If possible, share examples of success stories and good practice, and challenges faced.

19. We have secured £1million of funding from Sport England to help ensure that under-represented groups are monitored and we align with Sport England’s aim to increase the 30-minute threshold per week and/or 150mins per week activity threshold among lower socio economic groups. A high proportion of the prison population fall into this group and consequently are:
 - More likely to have lower income
 - Higher levels of smoking, obesity & poor diet
 - Index higher in terms of mental health
 - Higher levels of social isolation and exclusion
 - Substance Misuse (drugs and alcohol)
20. The prison population is not typical of the community in general. The Prison Reform Trust suggests that mental and physical health and social exclusion issues are far more prevalent amongst offenders. They found that those who attend PE in prisons have far more complex needs than those in sports centres/environments within the community. Our aim, along with that of Sport England is to ensure movement, sport and PE is accessible for everyone. To achieve this, innovation, flexibility, and an

understanding of the needs of the individual is crucial. This approach also supports the findings from the Lammy Review in 2017 which found that ethnic minorities are significantly overrepresented within the criminal justice system and made several recommendations for the MOJ, other areas of government and communities themselves.

21. Black men and boys reoffend at the highest rates¹, with 45% of black boys reoffending within a year of being released from custody, receiving a reprimand, a warning, or a non-custodial conviction at court. These figures for black men and boys present a major challenge to probation services, Youth Offending Teams and to communities themselves.
22. HMPPS are committed to supporting more people from ethnic minorities to take part in sport and physical activity. We will monitor the data created by the rollout of the UPSHOT system to address disproportionality in provision of sport and PE and the associated outcomes health and rehabilitative outcomes.
23. Through UPSHOT we will be able to map resettlement by post code from NOMIS data into areas of social deprivation.
24. Currently activity levels prior to entering prison are not captured. This poses a challenge to assess if a prisoner moves from inactive to active whilst in prison. We have aligned questions from the Sport England Active Lives question bank and recently included these are part of our pre and post project evaluation surveys. We are keen to develop our evaluation methods in line with the Sport England Framework to reflect on learning and adapt and improve delivery.
25. Whilst there is a pause on the Sport England campaign for 'Moving Healthcare Professionals' (due to COVID) which is designed to help support healthcare professionals in promoting physical activity to the public. We believe once this work recommences within Sport England, we can align our work to link social prescribing in prisons with the government aim to integrate sport and physical activity into care pathways. This creates a valuable opportunity for our partnership to improve health related outcomes such as:
 - Using sport/movement to help reduce dependence on anti-depressants and/or pain medication, social isolation etc. where deemed appropriate.
 - Activity programme/support plan bespoke to the needs and ability of the individual
 - Allocated qualified prisoner mentor (Gym Orderly) to support the individual
 - Variety of activities - Walking football, exercise to music, Parkrun, etc.
 - Develop a referral route for individuals who may benefit from social prescribing, working in collaboration with the social prescribing link worker, supporting the individual during their time in custody and transition upon release into the community.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/black-asian-and-minority-ethnic-disproportionality-in-the-criminal-justice-system-in-england-and-wales>

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26. The Twinning Project has been announced as an Inclusion and Delivery Partner in the Football Association 2020-2024 grassroots strategy. Ensuring grassroots football is accessible to everyone and is used to combat societal issues.
27. In 2020 a 3-year working group was set up, led by the Head of PE in partnership with the Women's Estate. It has seen significant developments in making sustainable and impactful changes to the delivery of PE in women's sites. We have engaged with the YCS to ensure that progression for girls into the adult estate is communicated as part of this strategy. Improvements include:
- Review of Induction Pack, Annual Delivery Plan, and Programme
 - 7200 free issue pedometers
 - PE Headquarters team are stakeholders in the 500 place Women's Prisons Design Programme
 - All women's sites added to the UPSHOT system
 - Trauma informed yoga with Prison Yoga Project² agreed/funded by Women's PGD and planned for October 2021 with 25 staff to be trained.
 - Sport England 'This Girl Can' Insights shared as part of PE Course on barriers for women
 - Suitable PE footwear (trainers) have been sourced and is due to be available to suit women's needs
 - Further plans are in place to create a bespoke training package for staff to support the needs of women as part of the PE training package.
28. A bespoke menu is being developed that considers the specific nutritional and calorific needs of women in prison. This menu is being developed with support from leading nutritionists at Oxford Brookes University and forms part of a new PHD study. It will be distributed for use before end of 2021.
29. There are now over 2,400 prisoners aged over 60 in England and Wales, including 493 over 70 (as at August 2008). We are working with Sporting Memories Network³ to focus on the needs of older prisoners to maintain activity and reduce isolation and are piloting this innovation which mirrors their community programmes in two prisons that hold a high level of older people with a view to further rollout. RECOOP⁴ are a well-established charity that work within the Criminal Justice Sector and delivers services for older service users including healthy eating and advice on keeping active. They work with their partner organisations to provide regime adaptations and interventions to help meet the differing needs that this cohort presents with.
30. PE staff deliver adjusted PE programmes in consultation with healthcare providers to ensure that those with disabilities can participate and keep well.

² <https://prisonyoga.org/>

³ <https://www.sportingmemoriesnetwork.com/>

⁴ <https://www.recoop.org.uk/>

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HMPPS

2 April 2021