



- accommodation
- education, training and employment
- health
- drugs and alcohol
- finance, benefit and debt
- children and families
- attitudes, thinking and behaviour.



*Excellence in  
Local Government*

# Reducing Re-offending Theme Guide



## Reducing Re-offending Beacon Learning Exchange

Date: Thursday 18 September 2008  
Venue: Holiday Inn, Bloomsbury, London  
The cost of the event is: £99 plus VAT, (totalling £116.32).  
Book online at the Beacons website:  
<http://www.beacons.idea.gov.uk>  
Contact: [beacons@idea.gov.uk](mailto:beacons@idea.gov.uk)

This event will bring the reducing re-offending beacons together for a focus on innovation, good practice and shared learning. The main focus of the day is on beacon workshops, providing an unmissable opportunity for networking and exchanging ideas.

## Reducing Re-offending

### Theme Guide

A guide to the theme and the Beacon authorities

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## Reducing Re-offending

### About the theme

Society pays a high cost for re-offending and a report by the Social Exclusion Unit in 2002 estimated the total cost of re-offending at over £11 billion per year. The government's Reducing Re-offending Plan of 2004 set out seven pathways that will help to end the cycle of offending behaviour. Access to services across the pathways is essential for ex-offenders if they are to start rebuilding their lives. The pathways are:

- accommodation
- education, training and employment
- health
- drugs and alcohol
- finance, benefit and debt
- children and families
- attitudes, thinking and behaviour.

LSPs and LAAs have an important role in joining up plans to tackle re-offending at a strategic level and bringing partners together. There is enormous potential in the voluntary and community sector to provide skills, support and mentoring for ex-offenders and there is much that can be done with the private sector.

This guide provides an overview of this excellence and innovation, and outlines the good practice the beacons can share with others.

### Beacon authorities are here to help

The Beacons have a key role in working with other authorities, Government Departments and the IDeA to support learning and improvement in this important agenda. Between March 2008 and June 2009 Beacon authorities for this theme will be sharing their good practice through events, case studies and toolkits and also providing bespoke support to councils to help drive improvement in 'reducing re-offending'.

There are many benefits in engaging with the beacon authorities. This includes networking, sharing of good practice, and the potential for focussed peer mentoring support.

### IDeA contacts and more information

For more details and the latest information on the 'Reducing Re-offending' Beacon year, please visit [www.beacons.idea.gov.uk](http://www.beacons.idea.gov.uk) or contact:

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# Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council

## Authority overview

Bolton has a well-developed and successful re-offending strategy underpinned by an evidence-based approach, community involvement and well-founded partnerships. The use of data and software is impressive, and supports the work of the co-located police and local authority Offender Management Unit. Housing partners and the voluntary sector provide a wide range of services for vulnerable groups such as sex workers, as well as impressive multi-agency partnership action with priority and prolific offenders.

## Service improvement and innovation

Much of Bolton's strength lies in its robust partnership approach to tackling crime, disorder and substance misuse. The partnership with the local prison (HMP Forest Bank) has been particularly effective. Bolton and partners have exploited Forest Bank's status as a private prison to commission innovative in-prison services and nurtured a truly seamless approach to offender management with improved access to services for offenders whilst in custody.

Bolton is a national leader in using intelligence and analysis to help reduce crime. Their work includes pioneering the use of the Greater Manchester Against Crime (GMAC) business model, and developing bespoke software to manage high-risk offenders. The Prolific Offender Management Information and Evaluation System

(POMIES) is a refinement of the j-track and OASys systems and is designed to act as a central hub of all information related to Bolton's prolific and other priority offenders (PPOs). POMIES has streamlined the PPO data collection process and facilitated effective sharing of information and deployment of resources. The system allows instant access to reports related to case management and a number of features have been incorporated into the system to permit evaluation of the impact of the PPO scheme. Developing the life-skills of offenders is central to the Reducing Re-offending Strategy. Through the Learning Skills Council, Bolton has delivered accredited vocational training to offenders at Bolton College providing an important stepping stone to NVQ level training. Bolton piloted the 'impact project' which equips offenders with thinking skills for the workplace.

## Authority contact details

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# Leicester City Council jointly with Leicestershire County Council, Melton Borough Council, Oadby and Wigston Borough Council and Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council

## Authority overview

There is coherent partnership working between the authorities involved in this joint award. Political commitment to reducing re-offending and working across boundaries gets the most out of resources. The authorities in this joint award are strong on the employment and skills and accommodation pathways for reducing re-offending. Activities to support skills and employment have had a real impact on employment opportunities for ex-offenders, and examples include the work of Leicestershire Cares, an umbrella organisation for local employers, the Work Wise scheme from the probation services, the Youth Offending Service (YOS) Basic Skills scheme and support from volunteer mentors.

## Service improvement and innovation

The sub-regional reducing re-offending board has developed a national toolkit, which encapsulates the wealth of excellent practice across the sub region. It seeks to help practitioners understand why the contribution of public sector agencies and communities in tackling re-offending is so important, and makes the business case for local authority's engagement in the agenda.

The Basic Skills Team was one of 10 short-listed schemes in the National Criminal Justice Awards for tackling youth offending and is also a YJB (Youth Justice Board) basic skills champion site. Independent research showed that young people who had gone through this programme were less likely to re-offend.

A YOS Early Interventions Team, developed jointly between Leicestershire and Leicester City (managed by Leicestershire) uses over 200 trained volunteers to provide mentoring and short-term interventions to young people who have committed low-level offences. The scheme has reduced reconviction rates from a predicted 49% to 30%.

The Melton Learning Hub is an innovative partnership between social services, the police, health organisations, the borough council, the youth service, Chamber of Commerce, Connexions and other schools and colleges. The hub offers day to day support and development of students at risk of exclusion, including young offenders, through alternative learning.

The Drug intervention programme covers the City and County and is led by the DAATs (Drugs and Alcohol Action Teams), local authorities, probation and police. This produces an end to end system of drug treatment for offenders, from the police station through bail, court community supervision, prisons and licence. This has made an important contribution to increasing the number of offenders in treatment, and is integrated with the PPO arrangements.

Work on Education Training and Employment has increased numbers of young people known to the YOS in full-time ETE (Education, training and employment) to 79.2%. The work was developed involving a wide range of voluntary and statutory agencies and has gained ESF (European Social Fund) funding and met PSA (Public Service Agreement) targets.

The city council has developed a tripartite partnership between the Community Safety Team, Youth Offending Service and Probation Service in order to create a range of initiatives and developments for young and adult offenders as part of their unpaid work and reparation placements. This work has been so successful because of the drive and full support of the Leader of the council.

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# London Borough of Tower Hamlets

## Authority overview

The London Borough of Tower Hamlets is an authority that has achieved widespread strategic commitment to reducing re-offending, and has linked this with plans to tackle social exclusion in a borough which is challenged by deprivation. Its vision, 'To ensure that every ex-offender in or returning to the borough gets the right services', is delivered through innovative services delivered in partnership, and the authority has a dedicated Resettlement Development Officer to lead and ensure a co-ordinated approach to reducing re-offending. Closing gaps in service provision is an important part of this approach, and Tower Hamlets has been innovative in its approach to meeting the needs of short sentence prisoners, those with ASBOs (Anti-social behaviour order) and ABCs (Acceptable behaviour contract), and women involved in prostitution.

Having recently agreed a reducing re-offending strategy, Tower Hamlets is continuing to develop this agenda, and will ensure that services across the resettlement pathways continue to develop in line with need.

## Service improvement and innovation

In Tower Hamlets the focus has been on delivering positive outcomes for all ex-offenders, through a holistic approach to meet their needs not just in terms of criminal justice. The council recognised this can only be achieved through joint working and is engaged in a strong range of partnerships, some of the most innovative being with the third sector.

Bespoke service development for key equalities target groups on the basis of robust data analysis, has resulted in some unique cutting edge services. A range of services have been commissioned specifically to support ex-offenders who are women:

- Historically the ratio of women to men accessing drugs services in Tower Hamlets was very low. A women-only service was commissioned by the DAAT (Drug and Alcohol Action Team) to offer structured treatment and a pathway into residential care.
- 'Looking Out' is a third sector partnership with St Mungos and Providence Row Housing Association which offers through-the-gate support to Tower Hamlets prisoners with sentences less than 12 months. The service also works with all women released from Holloway Prison returning to Tower Hamlets, rather than just those on the resettlement wing.

## London Borough of Tower Hamlets continued

- The Safe Exit partnership is a multi-agency approach to prostitution, acknowledged as a model of good practice by the Home Office. The leading initiative is the Diversion Scheme which addresses the underlying needs of women involved in prostitution, referring them to agencies for support, whilst moving them away from the criminal justice system.

Effective services have also been developed to address the needs of ethnic minority offenders:

- A St Mungos project links Muslim ex-offenders to services to support their reintegration back into their respective faith communities and families.
- The Harbour Recovery Centre is a culturally appropriate residential detox unit which supports predominantly young Bangladeshi drug-users, a group that has in the past been reluctant to access residential detox and rehabilitation facilities. In 2007/08 an impressive 70% of 163 clients completed detox.

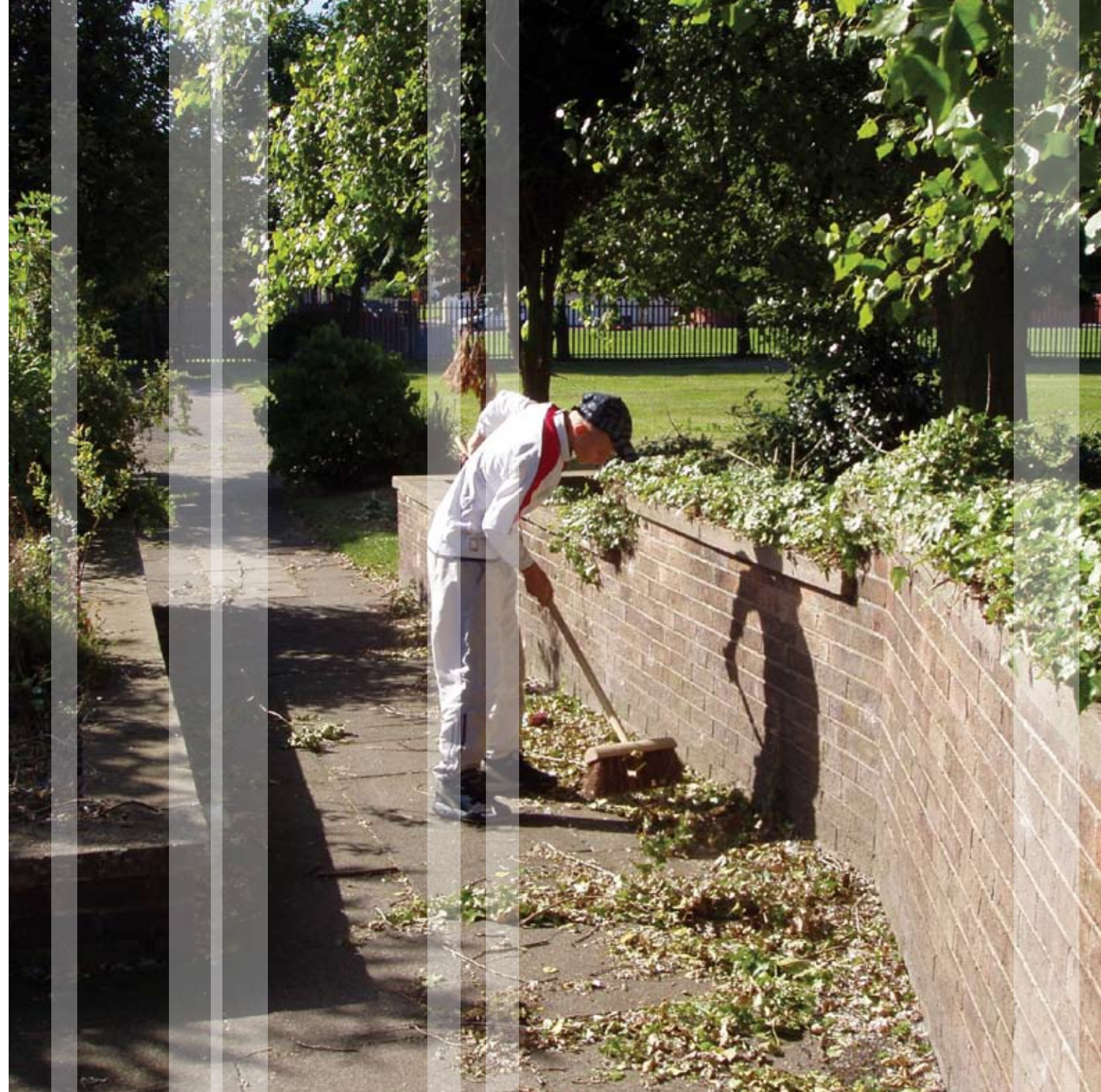
Tower Hamlets has worked hard to understand the reasons that ex-offenders do not access services, and has addressed these through the development of the resettlement pathways, and the provision of high performing services. The approach has proven effective as shown by the following data from 2007/08:

- Convictions for Priority Prolific Offenders decreasing by 31% in their first full year on the scheme.
- 98 ex-offenders having been in employment or training for over 4 weeks by the end of their probation licence.
- Only 13% of Drug Intervention Programme clients re-offending.
- Overall crime down by 24% since 2003/04.

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# Sunderland City Council

## Authority overview

Sunderland is a big city with big ambition. The crime rate is 5% lower than the national rate. There has been a 27% reduction in recorded crime since 2002 and Sunderland is one of the safest cities in the north. Worry about crime has fallen from 47% to 34% in the last 3 years and the authority has achieved a number of exceptional results in relation to reducing offending. Sunderland has 5 beacon exemplars:

- Partnerships
- Innovation
- Unique and creative data management
- Leadership
- Community engagement

The beacon assessors said "Sunderland has deservedly secured beacon status for reducing re-offending because they have demonstrated a positive commitment across the range of the theme and have turned their vision and strategy into highly positive outcomes for offenders and the wider community".

Sunderland has demonstrated improved outcomes on youth offending, and against the national trend, the rate of custody for young offenders has dropped from 12% in 1999 to a current figures of 2.8%, with no negative impact on levels of offending. This has been achieved through tackling issues such as access to accommodation and mental health services. There are also increases in the number of adult offenders

accessing services and the authority has demonstrated innovative actions for both adult and young offenders, and a willingness to reshape services to meet the needs of service users.

## Service improvement and innovation

Sunderland has delivered on the Reducing Re-offending Pathways across youths as well as adults and managed transitions. Reductions in the use of custody for young people have been achieved through innovative schemes including:

- Revolving Door Project in partnership with local Youth Offender Institutes to prevent young offenders revolving in and out of custody.
- ISSP (incorporating the award winning New Directions unpaid work scheme for long term unemployed offenders)
- Resettlement and Aftercare Programme engaging young substance misusers.

The council can share examples of positive management at the key point of transition from youth to adult services as well as our resource directory on researched and evidenced based offending behaviour programmes for work with children and young people, for example Be Safe Weapons. Successes include direct restorative justice approaches for looked after children, young people in custody and racially motivated offenders, as well as a range of unpaid work





## Sunderland City Council continued

schemes with partners in the statutory, voluntary and business sectors on schemes directed by local communities. Data segmentation is used to target services and resources, examples include (a) hate crime analysis to target perpetrators and (b) analysis identifying children and young people at risk of offending through their association with an adult offender subject to MAPPA (Multi-agency public protection arrangements).

Twice winner of the Youth Justice Board Communicating Youth Justice Awards for a turn around approach to negative media coverage, Sunderland has a positive media management strategy to ensure that the public are aware of what the council is doing to reduce crime and as a result worry about crime reduced.

A strong performance management and delivery culture exists across youth and adult services and, as a result, Sunderland can demonstrate improvement across the reducing re-offending pathways including key areas such as:

- 86% success in moving adults to independence without further offending. Young offenders with satisfactory accommodation improved from 92% to 99%.
- Young offenders in suitable ETE (Education, training and employment) has improved from 76% to 90%.
- The national waiting times target for the delivery of substitute prescribing (of methadone) is 3 weeks. Following

re-provision of its prescribing service the average waiting time in Sunderland is down to 2 days. On some occasions, where an individual's needs have been particularly acute, prescribing has been delivered within 2 hours. This reduced waiting time has contributed to an increase in the number of criminal justice clients accessing treatment via the Drug Interventions Programme (DIP), which in turn has seen an 18% reduction in arrests for drug related acquisitive crime.

The first national domestic violence perpetrators hostel was developed in Sunderland. Domestic violence repeat offences are down by 10%.

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## Find out more

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