

Adult and Youth Reoffending in Northern Ireland (2016/17 Cohort)

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### Summary Findings

- This annual bulletin provides information on the one year proven reoffending rate for offenders who received a non-custodial disposal at court, a diversionary disposal or who were released from custody during 2016/17 within Northern Ireland. Information is presented in relation to the full cohort and also disaggregated in relation to adults (those aged 18 and over) and youths (those aged 17 and under).
- Of the 21,493 people included in the 2016/17 cohort, 3,862 (18.0%) reoffended during the one year observational period (adults 17.3%, youths 28.7%). The overall reoffending rate is being used as an indicator for the Draft Programme for Government and the NICS Outcomes Delivery Plan.
- Of the 3,862 who reoffended, over two-fifths (43.7%) committed their first reoffence within the first three months (adults 42.8%, youths 52.8%).
- In terms of offending history, 61.3% of the 21,493 had committed previous offences, ranging from one to 590 distinct offences (adults 62.8%, youths 35.6%).
- Overall, 12.4% of females and 19.4% of males had reoffended (adult females 11.5% and adult males 18.7%, youth females 25.4% and youth males 29.7%).
- The one year proven reoffending rate for<sup>1</sup>;
  - o custody releases was 42.8% (adults 42.0% and 24 of 33 youths).
  - o court community disposal (supervision) was 33.7% (adults 31.1%, youths 58.6%).
  - o court community disposal (no supervision) was 17.7% (adults 17.3%, youths 50.3%).
  - o diversionary disposal was 15.1% (adults 12.8%, youths 24.5%).
- The highest reoffending rates were found amongst those who committed a baseline offence in the 'Burglary' category (42.4%), followed by 'Robbery' (40.7%). This was the same for adults only ('Burglary' 43.3% and 'Robbery' 42.3%). For youths, the highest reoffending rates were found amongst those who committed a baseline offence of 'Criminal Damage' (43.1%), followed by 'Public Order' (33.0%) and 'Drugs' (32.5%).

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Introduction

### 1.1 Adult and Youth Reoffending in Northern Ireland

In 2013, the Department of Justice's Analytical Services Group embarked on a project to revise the methodology used to calculate recidivism rates within Northern Ireland, bringing it more in line with established methodology in England and Wales. A brief summary of the approach used is detailed in Appendix 2 — Methodology and Counting Rules. For more detailed methodology refer to 'Northern Ireland Reoffending Methodology: Methodology and Glossary' Part 1 and Part 2, which can be found at the following link: https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/articles/reoffending

This report will provide information on the reoffending rates for the 2016/17 adult and youth cohorts. It should be noted that the figures reported throughout have not been adjusted to make allowances for factors known to influence reoffending, such as gender, age and criminal history. Therefore, it is inappropriate to compare these findings with other results from within Northern Ireland or other jurisdictions. The exception to this is section 2.1, which provides adjusted overall reoffending rates, alongside actual reoffending rates, for the 2010/11 to 2016/17 cohorts. This takes into consideration any differences in the underlying reoffending-related characteristics of those included in each cohort. The predicted scores, presented in this publication, have been calculated based on a model that was initially produced on the 2010/11 data, findings of which were published in December 2014 and revised in August 2015<sup>2</sup>.



### **About this Chapter**

The following section provides information on the reoffending rates of the total cohort along with a separate breakdown for adults and youths. Information is presented by overall reoffending rate, reoffending interval, number of proven reoffences, offending history, gender, age, disposal, baseline offence and specified and serious offences.

### 2.1 Reoffending Rate

### 2.1.1 Overall Reoffending Rate

A total of 21,493 offenders were included in the 2016/17 cohort. Overall, 3,862 (17.97%) committed a proven reoffence within the year following release from custody, receiving a non-custodial court disposal or a diversionary disposal. This represents a 0.50 percentage point decrease in the actual rate of reoffending from the figure for the 2015/16 cohort (18.47%), and a 1.27 percentage point increase in the actual rate of reoffending from 2010/11 (16.70%).

After controlling for offending-related characteristics, the decrease in reoffending from the 2015/16 cohort extends to 0.76 percentage points, whilst there is a decrease in reoffending of 4.84 percentage points from the 2010/11 cohort (Appendix 1, Table 1a).

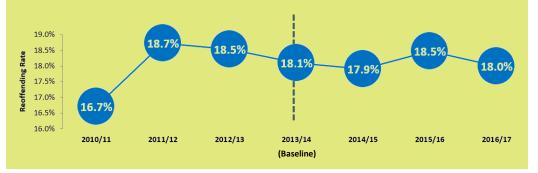
### **Draft Programme for Government & NICS Outcomes Delivery Plan**

**Outcome 7:** We have a safe community where we respect the law and each other

**Indicator 39:** Reoffending rate

This report provides the latest figure for the overall reoffending rate, which is a population indicator included within the draft Programme for Government and NICS Outcomes Delivery Plan 2018/19. Comparisons are drawn against the baseline; the overall reoffending rate for the 2013/14 cohort.

**Latest position**: The 2016/17 rate (17.97%) marks a 0.09 percentage point decrease from the baseline figure of 18.06% (Appendix 1, Table 1a).



### 2.1.2 Adult Reoffending Rate

A total of 20,267 adults were included in the 2016/17 cohort, with 3,510 (17.32%) reoffending; a 0.30 percentage point decrease from the 2015/16 cohort (17.62%). After controlling for offender-related characteristics this was a decrease of 0.56 percentage points. Between 2010/11 and 2016/17 there was a 1.38 percentage point increase in actual rates of reoffending; however, after controlling for offender-related characteristics, there is a decrease of 4.77 percentage points (Appendix 1, Table 1b).

### 2.1.3 Youth Reoffending Rate

Youths make up approximately six percent of the entire 2016/17 cohort. In total 352 (28.71%) of the 1,226 youths committed a reoffence within one year of being released from custody, being given a non-custodial disposal at court or a diversionary disposal. No appropriate model could be identified based on the 2010/11 cohort, most likely because of the small size of this group. Using additional information that is now available, a potential model is being explored that may assist in the comparison of reoffending rates for young people going forward. As more information becomes available, progress will be reported in future publications (Appendix 1, Table 1c).

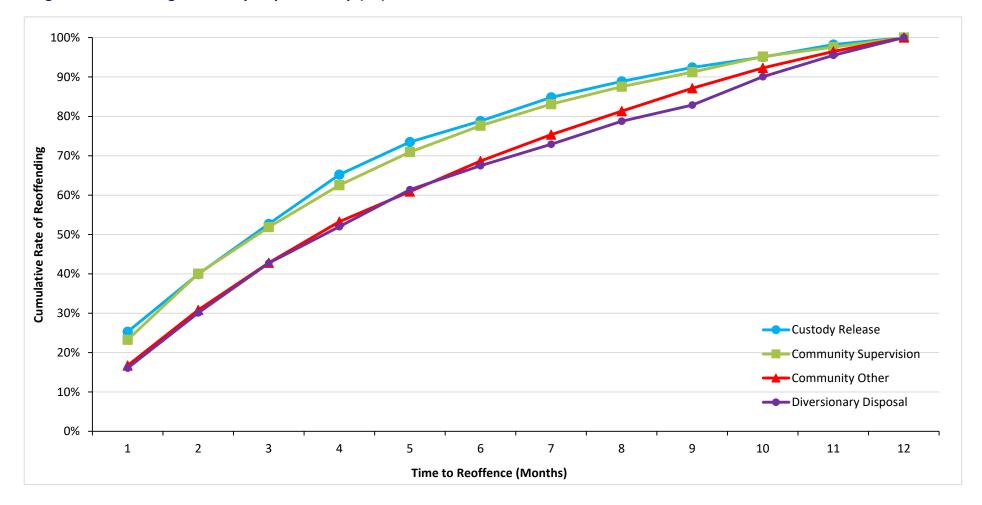
### 2.2 Reoffending Interval

Of the total 3,862 adults and youths who reoffended, 664 (17.2%) did so within the first month of being released from custody, receiving a non-custodial court disposal or a diversionary disposal. At 23.9% (84 of the 352 reoffenders), the proportion of youths committing an offence within the first month was higher than that for adults (16.5%; 580 of the 3,510 reoffenders).

By three months, 1,688 (43.7%) of all adult and youth reoffenders had committed a further offence. The comparative figure for adults only was 42.8%, compared to 52.8% for youths.

Although all disposal groups followed the same general trend, those released from custody were more likely to reoffend within the first month of release. Of those released from custody who reoffended, 52.7% had done so within the first three months of release, rising to 78.8% by the end of the first six months (Figure 1 and Appendix 1, Table 2a, 2b and 2c).

Figure 1: Reoffending Interval by Disposal Group (All)\*



### 2.3 Number of Proven Reoffences

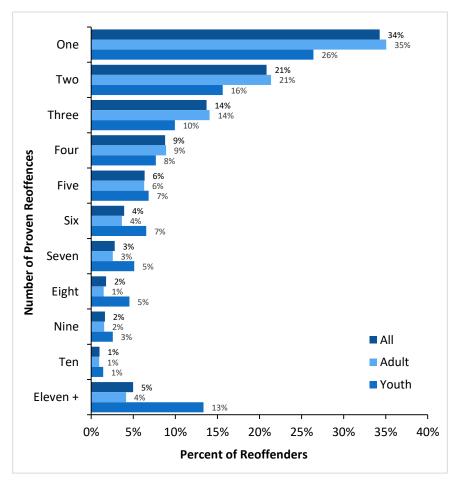
During the observation year, the 3,862 people who reoffended committed a further 13,361 proven offences, with adults committing 11,433 and youths committing 1,928 offences.

Overall this averages to just over three offences per reoffender and less than one offence per offender across the entire 2016/17 cohort. This was also true for adults, whereas youth reoffences equated to an average of five offences per youth who reoffended and less than two offences per offender across the youth cohort.

Just over one-third (35.1%) of adults committed only one further offence within the observation year and 4.1% committed 11 or more reoffences. In contrast, 26.4% of youths committed only one further offence, with 13.4% committing 11 or more.

Overall, the number of reoffences ranged from one to 36 for adults and one to 48 for youths (Figure 2 and Appendix 1, Table 3).

**Figure 2: Number of Proven Reoffences** 



### 2.4 Offending History

Of the 21,493 offenders included in the 2016/17 cohort, 8,320 had no previous offences. The remaining 13,173 (61.3%) had committed a total of 213,040 previous offences<sup>3</sup> within their lifetime, ranging from one to 590 offences (Appendix 1, Table 4).

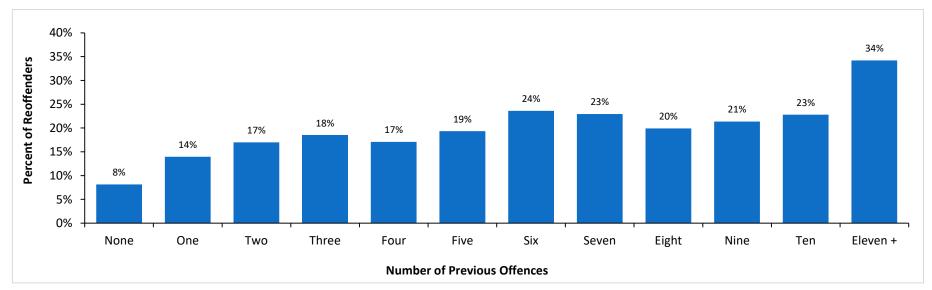
Of the 20,267 adults, 7,531 had no previous offences. The remaining 12,648 (62.8%) had committed 209,430

previous offences, ranging from one to 590.

Of the 1,226 youths, 789 had no previous offences. The remaining 437 (35.6%) had committed 3,610 previous offences, ranging from one to 100.

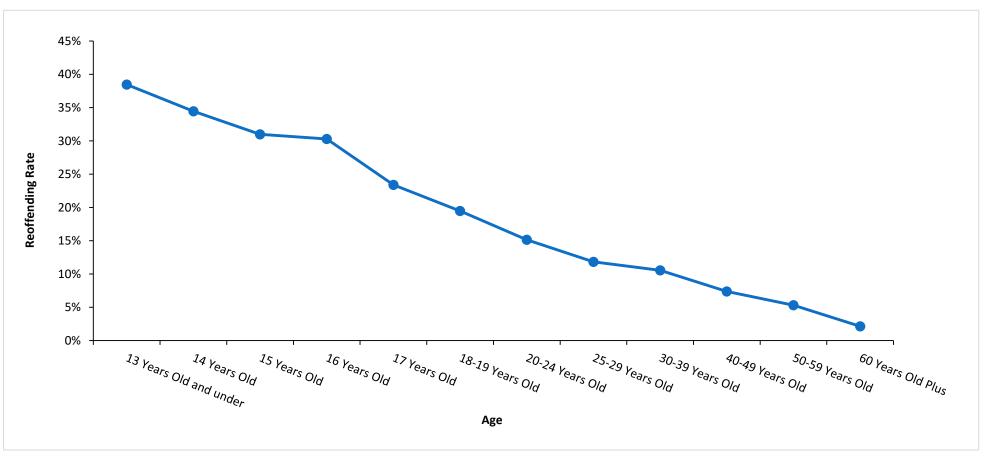
As shown in Figure 3, the reoffending rate overall tends to increase with the rate of previous convictions.





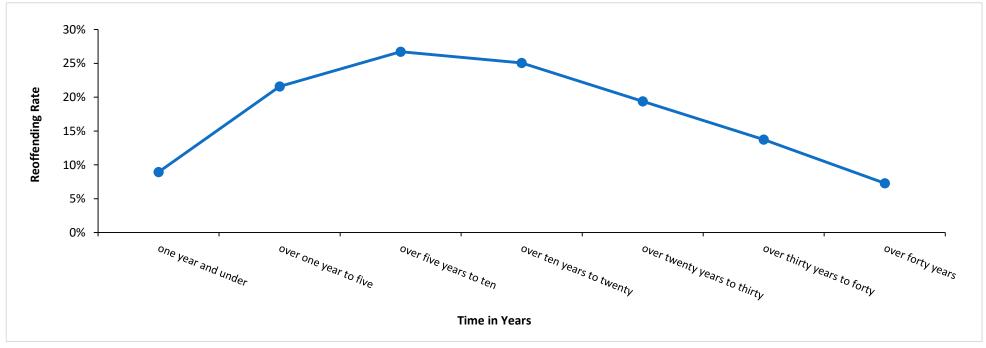
For each person in the 2016/17 cohort, their age at first recorded offence was calculated. As Figure 4 shows, the rate of reoffending appears to be generally higher for those who committed their first recorded offence in their early teenage years (Appendix 1, Table 5).

Figure 4: Reoffending Rate by Age at First Recorded Offence (All)



As well as age at first offence, the time between committing this first offence and entering the 2016/17 cohort (i.e. the baseline date) was calculated as an estimate of the length of time each person has been engaging in criminal behaviours (Appendix 1, Table 6). This represents a very simplistic measure and does not take into consideration the frequency or severity of offending during this period. However, as can be seen in Figure 5, although the rates of reoffending initially appear to increase as the length of time between first offence and the date they enter the 2016/17 cohort increases, after approximately 10 years the reoffending rate appears to consistently decline. This is likely an interaction between ageing and reoffending behaviours. As highlighted in section 2.5, reoffending rates appear to decline as age increases.





### 2.5 Gender and Age at Baseline

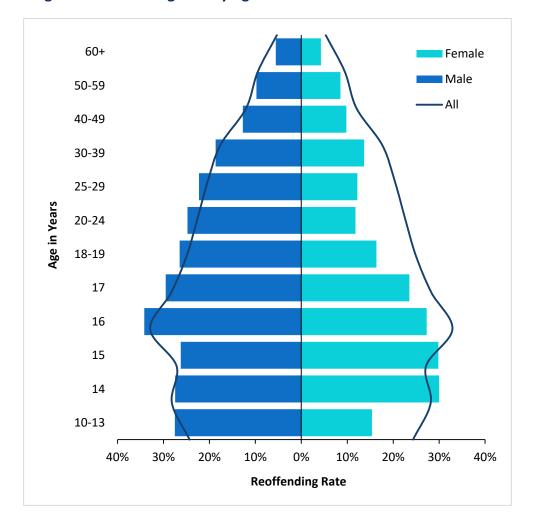
Of the 21,493 offenders in the cohort, 4,258 (19.8%) were female and the remaining 17,235 were male (80.2%). Overall, 527 females (12.4%) and 3,335 males (19.4%) had a proven reoffence within one year (Appendix 1, Table 7).

Of the 20,267 adults in the cohort, 3,982 (19.6%) were female and the remaining 16,285 were male (80.4%). Overall, 457 adult females (11.5%) and 3,053 adult males (18.7%) had a proven reoffence within one year.

Of the 1,226 youths in the cohort, 276 (22.5%) were female and the remaining 950 were male (77.5%). Overall, 70 youth females (25.4%) and 282 youth males (29.7%) had a proven reoffence within one year.

In terms of age, when looking at the entire cohort, the rate of reoffending remains fairly consistent throughout the early teen years, before peaking at the the age of 16, and then consistently declines thereafter. When looking at males and females separately however, the pattern appears to be different, with males following this overall pattern and females presenting a less consistent trend. This may be a result of the smaller number of female offenders (Figure 6 and Appendix 1, Table 7).

Figure 6: Reoffending Rate by Age at Baseline and Gender



### 2.6 Disposal

Appendix 1, Table 8 provides a breakdown of reoffending by baseline disposal. Although separate disposals are listed, disposals are grouped into four main categories:

- People released from custody or young offender centre during 2016/17. This group includes those released from serving a prison term only and those released under community supervision (such disposals include Determinate Custodial Sentences);
- People given a non-custodial disposal at court that requires supervision in the community (such as a Probation Order);
- 3. People given a non-custodial disposal at court that does not require supervision in the community (such as a fine or a suspended sentence); and
- 4. People given a diversionary disposal (such as a caution or an informed warning).

At 42.8%, those released from custody have the highest reoffending rate, followed by non-custodial disposal with community supervision (33.7%), non-custodial disposal without supervision (community other) (17.7%) and, finally, diversionary disposals (15.1%).

Adults released from custody had a one year reoffending rate of 42.0%, followed by non-custodial disposal with community supervision (31.1%), non-custodial disposal without supervision (17.3%) and, finally, diversionary disposals (12.8%).

Twenty-four of the 33 youths released from custody reoffended within one year, as did 58.6% of those who received a non-custodial disposal with community supervision, 50.3% of those who received a non-custodial disposal without supervision and 24.5% of those who received a diversionary disposal.

Please note that base reoffending rates should not be used to measure the comparative success of different disposal types in their own right. The reason for this is that different offender characteristics and histories and different offence types will themselves be related to the type of disposal given. Therefore, offender profiles may differ substantially between the different disposal types.

### 2.7 Baseline Offence

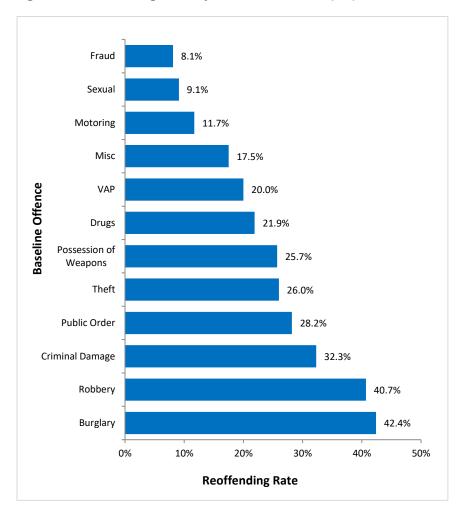
Figure 7 presents the reoffending rate by baseline offence category. Overall, reoffending rates were highest amongst those who committed a baseline offence in the 'Burglary' category followed by 'Robbery' (42.4% and 40.7% respectively).

For adults, the highest reoffending rates were for baseline offence categories of 'Burglary' and 'Robbery' (43.3% and 42.3%). For youths, the highest reoffending rates were found amongst those who had committed a baseline offence in the 'Criminal Damage' category (43.1%), followed by 'Public Order' (33.0%) and 'Drugs' (32.5%).

The lowest overall rates of reoffending for the 2016/17 cohort were committed by those with a baseline 'Fraud' offence (8.1%). This also held true for adults when viewed separately from youths (Appendix 1, Table 9).

Appendix 1, Tables 10a, 10b and 10c provide a breakdown of baseline offence category by first reoffence category. Although no definitive pattern emerged, it is interesting to note that, overall and for adults alone, for those who committed a baseline offence of 'Theft', 'Drugs', 'Public Order' or 'Motoring', the largest proportion of first reoffences were for offences in the same category. For youths, the same trend was noted across these four categories and for 'Violence Against the Person' offences.

Figure 7: Reoffending Rate by Baseline Offence (All)



### 2.8 Specified and Serious Offences

During September 2016 there was an internal Department of Justice exercise which made a small number of changes to offence classifications designated as specified or serious, as per the Criminal Justice (NI) Order 2008<sup>4</sup>. This had a limited impact on the number of offences designated as 'serious'. However, those offences designated as 'specified' have increased substantially. This should not be interpreted as an increase in such offences, but has resulted from the inclusion of additional offence types in this classification. As such, no comparison with years prior to the 2013/14 cohort can be made.

Overall, 1,882 (8.8%) of the 21,493 people in the 2016/17 cohort had committed a baseline 'specified' offence. Of these, 408 (21.7%) went on to reoffend, 82 committing a further 'specified' offence. When examined separately, 8.7% of the adult cohort (1,764 of the 20,267 adults), had committed a baseline 'specified' offence. Of these, 373 (21.1%) went on to reoffend, 73 committing a further 'specified' offence. For youths, 118 (9.6%) had committed a baseline 'specified' offence. Of these, 35 (29.7%) went on to reoffend, 9 committing a further 'specified' offence (Appendix 1, Tables 11a and 11b).

Overall, 661 (3.1%) of the 21,493 people in the 2016/17 cohort had committed a 'serious' offence, of whom 128 (19.4%) reoffended, 5 committing a further serious offence. In total, 614 (3.0%) of the 20,267 adults had committed such offences, of whom 115 (18.7%) reoffended, 5 committing a further serious offence. Of youths, 47 (3.8% of the 1,226 youths) had committed such offences. Of these 47, 13 reoffended, none committing a further serious offence (Appendix 1, Tables 11a and 11b).



### Appendix 1 – Tables

Table 1a: Reoffending Rate (Total Cohort)<sup>5</sup>

	Number of People in Cohort	Number who Reoffended within one Year	Actual Reoffending %	Predicted Reoffending %
2010/11	33,815	5,646	16.70%	15.70%
2011/12	31,343	5,869	18.73%	18.96%
2012/13	29,427	5,452	18.53%	19.41%
2013/14	27,069	4,890	18.06%	20.82%
2014/15	23,627	4,221	17.87%	21.44%
2015/16	21,982	4,059	18.47%	21.55%
2016/17	21,493	3,862	17.97%	21.81%
	Difference over and above predicted co	mpared to 2010/11		-4.84
	Difference over and above predicted co	mpared to 2015/16		-0.76
	Difference over and above predicted cor	mpared to 2013/14**		-1.08

<sup>\*\*</sup>The Overall Reoffending Rate has been identified as an indicator for the Draft Programme for Government and the NICS Outcomes Delivery Plan. The baseline comparison for this indicator is the 2013/14 cohort.

### 5Illustrative example of the method used to calculate change in reoffending between cohorts, taking into consideration predicted reoffending rates.

- The 2016/17 Actual Reoffending Rate equals 17.97% and the 2010/11 equals 16.70%. When subtracted (17.97–16.70) there appears to be a 1.27 percentage point increase in actual reoffending.
- Now we need to look at how we would have expected or predicted these cohorts to behave. The 2016/17 Predicted Reoffending Rate equals 21.81% and the 2010/11 equals 15.70%. When subtracted (21.81 15.70) there appears to be a 6.11 percentage point increase in predicted reoffending.
- We need to combine the actual increase and predicted increase to show reoffending behaviour over and above what we would have expected. Change in reoffending equals 1.27. From this we subtract the change in predicted 6.11 (1.27 6.11). This equals -4.84, suggesting that there has actually been a decrease in the rate of reoffending when characteristics related to reoffending are taken into consideration.

#### Equation:

Change in Reoffending Rate	=	(Difference in Actual Reoffending Rate)	_	(Difference in Predicted Reoffending Rate)
	=	(17.97 – 16.70)	_	(21.81 – 15.70)
	=	(1.27)	_	(6.11)
	=	-4.84		

Table 1b: Reoffending Rate (Adult Cohort)

	Number of People in Cohort	Number who Reoffended within one Year	Actual Reoffending %	Predicted Reoffending %
2010/11	30,576	4,875	15.94%	15.63%
2011/12	28,751	5,116	17.79%	17.90%
2012/13	27,130	4,760	17.55%	18.49%
2013/14	25,164	4,353	17.30%	20.69%
2014/15	22,064	3,718	16.85%	21.28%
2015/16	20,439	3,601	17.62%	21.52%
2016/17	20,267	3,510	17.32%	21.78%
	Difference over and above predicted co	mpared to 2010/11		-4.77
	Difference over and above predicted co	mpared to 2015/16		-0.56

Table 1c: Reoffending Rate (Youth Cohort)

	Number of People in Cohort	Number who Reoffended within one Year	Actual Reoffending %	Predicted Reoffending %
2010/11	3,248	772	23.77%	-
2011/12	2,592	753	29.05%	-
2012/13	2,297	692	30.13%	-
2013/14	1,905	537	28.19%	-
2014/15	1,563	503	32.18%	-
2015/16	1,543	458	29.68%	-
2016/17	1,226	352	28.71%	-

<sup>\*</sup>At present no model has been produced to calculate the predictive reoffending rate of the youth cohort, due to insufficient numbers.

Table 2a: Reoffending Interval by Disposal Group (All)

Disposal Group*					Time	e to Reoff	ence in Mo	onths					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Custoday Release	143	83	72	71	47	30	34	23	20	15	18	10	566
Community Supervision	183	132	93	84	66	53	43	35	29	31	19	19	787
Community Other	433	365	311	270	198	202	173	155	151	133	109	91	2,591
Diversionary Disposal	118	103	93	68	69	45	40	43	30	53	40	33	735
Total	664	550	474	396	329	279	240	215	202	217	163	133	3,862
Percent													
Custoday Release	25.3%	14.7%	12.7%	12.5%	8.3%	5.3%	6.0%	4.1%	3.5%	2.7%	3.2%	1.8%	100%
Community Supervision	23.3%	16.8%	11.8%	10.7%	8.4%	6.7%	5.5%	4.4%	3.7%	3.9%	2.4%	2.4%	100%
Community Other	16.7%	14.1%	12.0%	10.4%	7.6%	7.8%	6.7%	6.0%	5.8%	5.1%	4.2%	3.5%	100%
Diversionary Disposal	16.1%	14.0%	12.7%	9.3%	9.4%	6.1%	5.4%	5.9%	4.1%	7.2%	5.4%	4.5%	100%
Total	17.2%	14.2%	12.3%	10.3%	8.5%	7.2%	6.2%	5.6%	5.2%	5.6%	4.2%	3.4%	100%
<b>Cumulative Percent</b>													
Custoday Release	25.3%	39.9%	52.7%	65.2%	73.5%	78.8%	84.8%	88.9%	92.4%	95.1%	98.2%	100%	
Community Supervision	23.3%	40.0%	51.8%	62.5%	70.9%	77.6%	83.1%	87.5%	91.2%	95.2%	97.6%	100%	
Community Other	16.7%	30.8%	42.8%	53.2%	60.9%	68.7%	75.3%	81.3%	87.1%	92.3%	96.5%	100%	
Diversionary Disposal	16.1%	30.1%	42.7%	52.0%	61.4%	67.5%	72.9%	78.8%	82.9%	90.1%	95.5%	100%	
Total	17.2%	31.4%	43.7%	54.0%	62.5%	69.7%	75.9%	81.5%	86.7%	92.3%	96.6%	100%	

<sup>\*</sup>Individual disposals will not sum to overall total. For each of these groupings, only the first instance a person is included in this category is counted.

Table 2b: Reoffending Interval by Disposal Group (Adult)

Disposal Group*					Time	e to Reoff	ence in Mo	onths					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Custoday Release	135	77	69	69	45	30	34	23	19	13	18	10	542
Community Supervision	140	107	80	72	53	49	40	26	28	25	17	17	654
Community Other	405	346	303	262	196	194	171	150	150	130	109	89	2,505
Diversionary Disposal	71	74	59	39	46	37	28	28	23	36	30	28	499
Total	580	497	425	356	299	268	228	192	194	192	153	126	3,510
Percent													
Custoday Release	24.9%	14.2%	12.7%	12.7%	8.3%	5.5%	6.3%	4.2%	3.5%	2.4%	3.3%	1.8%	100%
Community Supervision	21.4%	16.4%	12.2%	11.0%	8.1%	7.5%	6.1%	4.0%	4.3%	3.8%	2.6%	2.6%	100%
Community Other	16.2%	13.8%	12.1%	10.5%	7.8%	7.7%	6.8%	6.0%	6.0%	5.2%	4.4%	3.6%	100%
Diversionary Disposal	14.2%	14.8%	11.8%	7.8%	9.2%	7.4%	5.6%	5.6%	4.6%	7.2%	6.0%	5.6%	100%
Total	16.5%	14.2%	12.1%	10.1%	8.5%	7.6%	6.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	4.4%	3.6%	100%
<b>Cumulative Percent</b>													
Custoday Release	24.9%	39.1%	51.8%	64.6%	72.9%	78.4%	84.7%	88.9%	92.4%	94.8%	98.2%	100%	
Community Supervision	21.4%	37.8%	50.0%	61.0%	69.1%	76.6%	82.7%	86.7%	91.0%	94.8%	97.4%	100%	
Community Other	16.2%	30.0%	42.1%	52.5%	60.4%	68.1%	74.9%	80.9%	86.9%	92.1%	96.4%	100%	
Diversionary Disposal	14.2%	29.1%	40.9%	48.7%	57.9%	65.3%	70.9%	76.6%	81.2%	88.4%	94.4%	100%	
Total	16.5%	30.7%	42.8%	52.9%	61.5%	69.1%	75.6%	81.1%	86.6%	92.1%	96.4%	100%	

<sup>\*</sup>Individual disposals will not sum to overall total. For each of these groupings, only the first instance a person is included in this category is counted.

Table 2c: Reoffending Interval by Disposal Group (Youth)

Disposal Group*		Time to Reoffence in Months											Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Custoday Release	8	6	3	2	2	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	24
Community Supervision	43	25	13	12	13	4	3	9	1	6	2	2	133
Community Other	28	19	8	8	2	8	2	5	1	3	0	2	86
Diversionary Disposal	47	29	34	29	23	8	12	15	7	17	10	5	236
Total	84	53	49	40	30	11	12	23	8	25	10	7	352
Percent**													
Custoday Release	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Community Supervision	32.3%	18.8%	9.8%	9.0%	9.8%	3.0%	2.3%	6.8%	0.8%	4.5%	1.5%	1.5%	100%
Community Other	32.6%	22.1%	9.3%	9.3%	2.3%	9.3%	2.3%	5.8%	1.2%	3.5%	0.0%	2.3%	100%
Diversionary Disposal	19.9%	12.3%	14.4%	12.3%	9.7%	3.4%	5.1%	6.4%	3.0%	7.2%	4.2%	2.1%	100%
Total	23.9%	15.1%	13.9%	11.4%	8.5%	3.1%	3.4%	6.5%	2.3%	7.1%	2.8%	2.0%	100%
Cumulative Percent**													
Custoday Release	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Community Supervision	32.3%	51.1%	60.9%	69.9%	79.7%	82.7%	85.0%	91.7%	92.5%	97.0%	98.5%	100%	
Community Other	32.6%	54.7%	64.0%	73.3%	75.6%	84.9%	87.2%	93.0%	94.2%	97.7%	97.7%	100%	
Diversionary Disposal	19.9%	32.2%	46.6%	58.9%	68.6%	72.0%	77.1%	83.5%	86.4%	93.6%	97.9%	100%	
Total	23.9%	38.9%	52.8%	64.2%	72.7%	75.9%	79.3%	85.8%	88.1%	95.2%	98.0%	100%	

<sup>\*</sup>Individual disposals will not sum to overall total. For each of these groupings, only the first instance a person is included in this category is counted.

\*\*Percentage cannot be shown where denominator is less than 50

Table 3: Number of Proven Reoffences

Number of Proven	А	II	Ad	ult	Υοι	uth
Reoffences	Number of Offenders	Percent of Offenders	Number of Offenders	Percent of Offenders	Number of Offenders	Percent of Offenders
One	1,324	34.3%	1,231	35.1%	93	26.4%
Two	805	20.8%	750	21.4%	55	15.6%
Three	529	13.7%	494	14.1%	35	9.9%
Four	339	8.8%	312	8.9%	27	7.7%
Five	245	6.3%	221	6.3%	24	6.8%
Six	151	3.9%	128	3.6%	23	6.5%
Seven	108	2.8%	90	2.6%	18	5.1%
Eight	68	1.8%	52	1.5%	16	4.5%
Nine	63	1.6%	54	1.5%	9	2.6%
Ten	38	1.0%	33	0.9%	5	1.4%
Eleven +	192	5.0%	145	4.1%	47	13.4%
Total	3,862	100.0%	3,510	100.0%	352	100.0%

Table 4: Reoffending Rate by Number of Previous Offences

Number of Previous		All			Adult			Youth	
Offences	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate**	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate*
None	678	8,320	8.1%	532	7,531	7.1%	146	789	18.5%
One	291	2,084	14.0%	243	1,954	12.4%	48	130	36.9%
Two	236	1,388	17.0%	208	1,325	15.7%	28	63	44.4%
Three	198	1,071	18.5%	176	1,023	17.2%	22	48	-
Four	143	837	17.1%	132	814	16.2%	11	23	-
Five	122	631	19.3%	112	610	18.4%	10	21	-
Six	131	555	23.6%	124	541	22.9%	7	14	-
Seven	112	488	23.0%	105	474	22.2%	7	14	-
Eight	81	407	19.9%	76	394	19.3%	5	13	-
Nine	75	351	21.4%	70	341	20.5%	5	10	-
Ten	78	342	22.8%	75	334	22.5%	3	8	-
Eleven +	1,717	5,019	34.2%	1,657	4,926	33.6%	60	93	64.5%
Total	3,862	21,493	18.0%	3,510	20,267	17.3%	352	1,226	28.7%

<sup>\*</sup>Percentage cannot be shown where denominator is less than 50

Table 5: Reoffending Rate by Age at First Recorded Offence

A#		All			Adult			Youth	
Age*	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate
13 years old and under	447	1,162	38.5%	290	743	39.0%	157	419	37.5%
14 years old	298	865	34.5%	231	638	36.2%	67	227	29.5%
15 years old	357	1,152	31.0%	301	922	32.6%	56	230	24.3%
16 years old	394	1,300	30.3%	348	1,093	31.8%	46	207	22.2%
17 years old	400	1,710	23.4%	374	1,567	23.9%	26	143	18.2%
18-19 years old	629	3,228	19.5%	629	3,228	19.5%	-	-	-
20-24 years old	591	3,900	15.2%	591	3,900	15.2%	-	-	-
25-29 years old	271	2,290	11.8%	271	2,290	11.8%	-	-	-
30-39 years old	289	2,738	10.6%	289	2,738	10.6%	-	-	-
40-49 years old	125	1,694	7.4%	125	1,694	7.4%	-	-	-
50-59 years old	50	942	5.3%	50	942	5.3%	-	-	-
60+ years old	11	512	2.1%	11	512	2.1%	-	-	-
Total	3,862	21,493	18.0%	3,510	20,267	17.3%	352	1,226	28.7%

<sup>\*</sup>This is the offender's age at the time they committed their first offence as recorded on the Criminal Record Viewer

Table 6: Reoffending Rate by Time Between First Recorded Offence and Baseline Date

The body series		All			Adult			Youth	
Time in Years*	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate
One year and under	680	7,600	8.9%	530	6,856	7.7%	150	744	20.2%
Over one year to five	877	4,062	21.6%	699	3,634	19.2%	178	428	41.6%
Over five years to ten	1,047	3,920	26.7%	1,023	3,866	26.5%	24	54	44.4%
Over ten years to twenty	845	3,372	25.1%	845	3,372	25.1%	-	-	-
Over twenty years to thirty	278	1,434	19.4%	278	1,434	19.4%	-	-	-
Over thirty years to forty	116	844	13.7%	116	844	13.7%	-	-	-
Over forty years	19	261	7.3%	19	261	7.3%	-	-	-
Total	3,862	21,493	18.0%	3,510	20,267	17.3%	352	1,226	28.7%

<sup>\*</sup>This is the time in years between the offender's first offence as recorded on the Criminal Record Viewer and the baseline date

Table 7: Reoffending Rate by Age and Gender

Age*		All			Male		Female			
	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate**	
10-13 years old	36	148	24.3%	30	109	27.5%	6	39	-	
14 years old	40	142	28.2%	28	102	27.5%	12	40	_	
15 years old	60	221	27.1%	43	164	26.2%	17	57	29.8%	
16 years old	98	298	32.9%	83	243	34.2%	15	55	27.3%	
17 years old	118	417	28.3%	98	332	29.5%	20	85	23.5%	
18-19 years old	361	1,448	24.9%	325	1,228	26.5%	36	220	16.4%	
20-24 years old	858	3,795	22.6%	784	3,167	24.8%	74	628	11.8%	
25-29 years old	754	3,695	20.4%	670	3,007	22.3%	84	688	12.2%	
30-39 years old	906	5,134	17.6%	766	4,109	18.6%	140	1,025	13.7%	
40-49 years old	397	3,298	12.0%	321	2,522	12.7%	76	776	9.8%	
50-59 years old	183	1,933	9.5%	144	1,476	9.8%	39	457	8.5%	
60+ years old	51	964	5.3%	43	776	5.5%	8	188	4.3%	
Total	3,862	21,493	18.0%	3,335	17,235	19.4%	527	4,258	12.4%	

<sup>\*</sup>Age at baseline date
\*\*Percentage cannot be shown where denominator is less than 50

Table 8: Reoffending Rate by Disposal

			All			Adult		Youth			
Disposal Group	Disposal*	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One Year Proven Reoffending Rate**	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One Year Proven Reoffending Rate**	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One Year Proven Reoffending Rate**	
	Life Licenses	0	1	-	0	1	-	0	0	-	
	Indeterminate Custodial Sentences	0	1	-	0	1	-	0	0	-	
	Extended Custodial Sentences	8	24	-	8	24	-	0	0	-	
	Determinate Custodial Sentences	107	409	26.2%	107	409	26.2%	0	0	-	
<b>Custody Release</b>	Custody Probation Order	2	17	-	0	15	-	2	2	-	
	Imprisonment	382	783	48.8%	382	783	48.8%	0	0	-	
	Young Offender Centre	59	82	72.0%	51	68	75.0%	8	14	-	
	Juvenile Justice Centre Orders	15	18	-	0	0	-	15	18	-	
	Total	566	1,323	42.8%	542	1,290	42.0%	24	33	-	
	Attendance Centre	15	16	-	0	0	-	15	16	-	
	Enhanced Combination Order	41	93	44.1%	40	92	43.5%	1	1	-	
	Combination Order	100	299	33.4%	98	294	33.3%	2	5	-	
Community	Probation Order	366	1,019	35.9%	343	988	34.7%	23	31	-	
Supervision	Community Service Order	225	817	27.5%	221	807	27.4%	4	10	-	
	Youth Conference Order	115	204	56.4%	12	24	-	103	180	57.2%	
	Community Responsibility Order	11	14	-	0	0	-	11	14	-	
	Total	787	2,332	33.7%	654	2,105	31.1%	133	227	58.6%	
	Suspended Imprisonment	870	3,050	28.5%	858	3,031	28.3%	12	19	-	
	Monetary Penalty	1,790	11,362	15.8%	1,774	11,309	15.7%	16	53	30.2%	
	Bound Over	18	83	21.7%	18	83	21.7%	0	0	-	
<b>Community Other</b>	Conditional Discharge	225	718	31.3%	167	633	26.4%	58	85	68.2%	
	Absolute Discharge	4	33	-	4	33	-	0	0	-	
	Other Disposal	20	161	12.4%	12	138	8.7%	8	23	-	
	Total	2,591	14,653	17.7%	2,505	14,482	17.3%	86	171	50.3%	
	Caution	572	4,051	14.1%	480	3,747	12.8%	92	304	30.3%	
•	Youth Conference Plan (PPS)	140	517	27.1%	15	70	21.4%	125	447	28.0%	
	Informed Warning	52	361	14.4%	5	88	5.7%	47	273	17.2%	
	Total	735	4,863	15.1%	499	3,898	12.8%	236	965	24.5%	
Overall Total		3,862	21,493	18.0%	3,510	20,267	17.3%	352	1,226	28.7%	

<sup>\*</sup>Individuals disposals will not sum to disposal groups or the overall total as an individual may experience multiple disposals. For each grouping, only the first instance a person is included in this category is counted
\*\*Percentage cannot be shown where denominator is less than 50

Table 9: Reoffending Rate by Baseline Offence Category

Baseline Offence Category		All			Adult		Youth			
	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate*	
VAP	660	3,293	20.0%	565	2,972	19.0%	95	321	29.6%	
Sexual	19	209	9.1%	16	192	8.3%	3	17	-	
Robbery	22	54	40.7%	22	52	42.3%	0	2	-	
Theft	384	1,477	26.0%	343	1,310	26.2%	41	167	24.6%	
Burglary	72	170	42.4%	68	157	43.3%	4	13	-	
Criminal Damage	307	950	32.3%	245	806	30.4%	62	144	43.1%	
Drugs	491	2,241	21.9%	465	2,161	21.5%	26	80	32.5%	
Possession of Weapons	78	304	25.7%	72	271	26.6%	6	33	-	
Public Order	479	1,697	28.2%	414	1,500	27.6%	65	197	33.0%	
Motoring	1,158	9,901	11.7%	1,123	9,722	11.6%	35	179	19.6%	
Fraud	15	186	8.1%	14	183	7.7%	1	3	-	
Misc	177	1,011	17.5%	163	941	17.3%	14	70	20.0%	
Total	3,862	21,493	18.0%	3,510	20,267	17.3%	352	1,226	28.7%	

<sup>\*</sup>Percentage cannot be shown where denominator is less than 50

Table 10a: Baseline Offence Category by First Reoffence Category (All)

						First Reo	ffence Cate	gory***					
Baseline Offence Category	VAP	Sexual	Robbery	Theft	Burglary	Criminal Damage	Drugs	Possession of Weapons	Public Order	Motoring	Fraud	Misc	Total
VAP*	100	1	0	49	3	57	93	18	123	137	2	77	660
Sexual	1	1	0	0	0	2	1		9	2	0	3	19
Robbery	2	0	0	0	1	2	2	2	2	7	0	4	22
Theft	20	0	1	122	9	27	49	5	28	72	3	48	384
Burglary	9	0	0	13	2	12	12	6	5	3	0	10	72
Criminal Damage	30	1	1	21	3	35	39	12	73	37	1	54	307
Drugs	26	0	0	28	3	12	182	10	47	138	0	45	491
Possession of Weapons	11	1	0	6	0	8	11	. 6	3	16	0	16	78
Public Order	47	0	0	19	3	42	43	10	137	91	1	86	479
Motoring	53	4	1	30	3	24	110	14	79	743	7	90	1,158
Fraud	1	0	0	4	1	2	1	. 0	0	4	1	1	15
Misc	15	0	1	11	0	20	21	. 5	23	51	0	30	177
Total	315	8	4	303	28	243	564	. 88	529	1,301	15	464	3,862
Percent													
VAP*	15.2%	0.2%	0.0%	7.4%	0.5%	8.6%	14.1%	2.7%	18.6%	20.8%	0.3%	11.7%	100%
Sexual**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	_	-	-	-	-	-
Robbery**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-
Theft	5.2%	0.0%	0.3%	31.8%	2.3%	7.0%	12.8%	1.3%	7.3%	18.8%	0.8%	12.5%	100%
Burglary	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	18.1%	2.8%	16.7%	16.7%	8.3%	6.9%	4.2%	0.0%	13.9%	100%
Criminal Damage	9.8%	0.3%	0.3%	6.8%	1.0%	11.4%	12.7%	3.9%	23.8%	12.1%	0.3%	17.6%	100%
Drugs	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%	5.7%	0.6%	2.4%	37.1%	2.0%	9.6%	28.1%	0.0%	9.2%	100%
Possession of Weapons	14.1%	1.3%	0.0%	7.7%	0.0%	10.3%	14.1%	7.7%	3.8%	20.5%	0.0%	20.5%	100%
Public Order	9.8%	0.0%	0.0%	4.0%	0.6%	8.8%	9.0%	2.1%	28.6%	19.0%	0.2%	18.0%	100%
Motoring	4.6%	0.3%	0.1%	2.6%	0.3%	2.1%	9.5%	1.2%	6.8%	64.2%	0.6%	7.8%	100%
Fraud**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	_	-	-	-	-	-
Misc	8.5%	0.0%	0.6%	6.2%	0.0%	11.3%	11.9%	2.8%	13.0%	28.8%	0.0%	16.9%	100%

<sup>\*</sup>Violence Against the Person

<sup>\*\*</sup>Percentage cannot be shown where denominator is less than 50

<sup>\*\*\*</sup>Highlighted figures indicate those baseline offences for which the largest proportion of first reoffences were for offences in the same category

Table 10b: Baseline Offence Category by First Reoffence Category (Adult)

						First Reo	ffence Cate	gory***					
Baseline Offence Category	VAP	Sexual	Robbery	Theft	Burglary	Criminal Damage	Drugs	Possession of Weapons	Public Order	Motoring	Fraud	Misc	Total
VAP*	81	1	0	44	3	39	82	15	106	127	2	65	565
Sexual	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	. 0	9	1	0	2	16
Robbery	2	0	0	0	1	2	2	2	2	7	0	4	22
Theft	17	0	1	113	8	20	43	5	24	66	3	43	343
Burglary	9	0	0	12	2	12	12	5	5	3	0	8	68
Criminal Damage	26	1	0	15	2	26	28	9	63	36	1	38	245
Drugs	25	0	0	26	3	11	172	10	43	136	0	39	465
Possession of Weapons	9	1	0	5	0	6	11	. 5	3	16	0	16	72
Public Order	40	0	0	17	3	32	38	9	122	79	0	74	414
Motoring	53	3	1	29	3	20	104	13	76	728	7	86	1,123
Fraud	1	0	0	4	1	1	1	. 0	0	4	1	1	14
Misc	11	0	1	11	0	19	21	. 4	21	46	0	29	163
Total	275	7	3	276	26	189	515	77	474	1,249	14	405	3,510
Percent													
VAP*	14.3%	0.2%	0.0%	7.8%	0.5%	6.9%	14.5%	2.7%	18.8%	22.5%	0.4%	11.5%	100%
Sexual**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-
Robbery**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-
Theft	5.0%	0.0%	0.3%	32.9%	2.3%	5.8%	12.5%	1.5%	7.0%	19.2%	0.9%	12.5%	100%
Burglary	13.2%	0.0%	0.0%	17.6%	2.9%	17.6%	17.6%	7.4%	7.4%	4.4%	0.0%	11.8%	100%
Criminal Damage	10.6%	0.4%	0.0%	6.1%	0.8%	10.6%	11.4%	3.7%	25.7%	14.7%	0.4%	15.5%	100%
Drugs	5.4%	0.0%	0.0%	5.6%	0.6%	2.4%	37.0%	2.2%	9.2%	29.2%	0.0%	8.4%	100%
Possession of Weapons	12.5%	1.4%	0.0%	6.9%	0.0%	8.3%	15.3%	6.9%	4.2%	22.2%	0.0%	22.2%	100%
Public Order	9.7%	0.0%	0.0%	4.1%	0.7%	7.7%	9.2%	2.2%	29.5%	19.1%	0.0%	17.9%	100%
Motoring	4.7%	0.3%	0.1%	2.6%	0.3%	1.8%	9.3%	1.2%	6.8%	64.8%	0.6%	7.7%	100%
Fraud**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Misc	6.7%	0.0%	0.6%	6.7%	0.0%	11.7%	12.9%	2.5%	12.9%	28.2%	0.0%	17.8%	100%

<sup>\*</sup>Violence Against the Person

<sup>\*\*</sup>Percentage cannot be shown where denominator is less than 50

<sup>\*\*\*</sup>Highlighted figures indicate those baseline offences for which the largest proportion of first reoffences were for offences in the same category

Table 10c: Baseline Offence Category by First Reoffence Category (Youth)

						First Rec	ffence Cate	gory***					
Baseline Offence Category	VAP	Sexual	Robbery	Theft	Burglary	Criminal Damage	Drugs	Possession of Weapons	Public Order	Motoring	Fraud	Misc	Total
VAP*	19	0	0	5	0	18	11	3	17	10	0	12	95
Sexual	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	3
Robbery	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Theft	3	0	0	9	1	7	6	0	4	6	0	5	41
Burglary	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	4
Criminal Damage	4	0	1	6	1	9	11	. 3	10	1	0	16	62
Drugs	1	0	0	2	0	1	10	0	4	2	0	6	26
Possession of Weapons	2	0	0	1	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	6
Public Order	7	0	0	2	0	10	5	1	15	12	1	12	65
Motoring	0	1	0	1	0	4	6	1	3	15	0	4	35
Fraud	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Misc	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	5	0	1	14
Total	40	1	1	27	2	54	49	11	55	52	1	59	352
Percent													
VAP*	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.3%	0.0%	18.9%	11.6%	3.2%	17.9%	10.5%	0.0%	12.6%	100.0%
Sexual**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Robbery**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Theft	-	-	-	-	-	-	_	-	-	-	-	-	-
Burglary	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Criminal Damage	6.5%	0.0%	1.6%	9.7%	1.6%	14.5%	17.7%	4.8%	16.1%	1.6%	0.0%	25.8%	100.0%
Drugs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Possession of Weapons	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Public Order	10.8%	0.0%	0.0%	3.1%	0.0%	15.4%	7.7%	1.5%	23.1%	18.5%	1.5%	18.5%	100.0%
Motoring		_	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	_
Fraud**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Misc	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	_

<sup>\*</sup>Violence Against the Person

<sup>\*\*</sup>Percentage cannot be shown where denominator is less than 50

<sup>\*\*\*</sup>Highlighted figures indicate those baseline offences for which the largest proportion of first reoffences were for offences in the same category

Table 11a: Reoffending Rate by Specified and Serious Offences

Criminal Justice (NI) Order 2008 List		All			Adult		Youth			
	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate*	
Specified Offences	408	1,882	21.7%	373	1,764	21.1%	35	118	29.7%	
Serious Offences	128	661	19.4%	115	614	18.7%	13	47	_	

<sup>\*</sup>Percentages cannot be shown where denominator is less than 50.

Table 11b: Proportion of Offenders with a Baseline Specified and Serious Offence whose First Reoffence was also Specified and Serious

Criminal Justice (NI) Order 2008 List		All			Adult		Youth			
	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate**	
Specified Offences	82	408	20.1%	73	373	19.6%	9	35	<u>-</u>	
Serious Offences	5	128	3.9%	5	115	4.3%	0	13	-	

<sup>\*</sup>Percentages cannot be shown where denominator is less than 50.

### Appendix 2 – Methodology and Counting Rules

The following section provides a brief summary of the methodology and counting rules used in the production of the Northern Ireland reoffending rates. For more detailed methodologies and glossaries providing definitions of key terms please refer to the two published methodology papers<sup>6</sup>.

#### 3.1 Who is included in the cohort?

The cohort is made up of all adults and youths who have been given a non-custodial disposal at court, a diversionary disposal or who have been released from custody<sup>7</sup> during the financial year 2016/17. An adult is defined as someone aged 18 or over at the time of community disposal or release from custody and a youth is defined as anyone aged 17 or under at this point. Information in the following bulletin is presented for the full cohort (adults and youths combined) and separately for adults and youths.

### 3.2 What are the baseline date, offence and disposal?

The baseline date is the date of entry into the cohort. This is the date that a non-custodial sentence is given at court, a diversionary disposal imposed or an individual is released from custody. This date forms the starting point for the observation period. The baseline offence is the principal offence associated with this baseline date. Following consultation, it has been agreed that an offender will be counted once within each relevant disposal category, including the initial baseline disposal associated with their entry into the cohort and also disposal categories associated within any subsequent proven reoffences.

### 3.3 What are the observation and follow up periods?

The observation period is the window of time over which a person is observed following receipt of a diversionary disposal or non-custodial disposal at court or release from custody. A balance needs to be struck between the need for timely information and the need to make the reoffending rate as informative and meaningful as possible. For one year reoffending, the observation period is one year and the follow up period is six months.

<sup>6</sup> https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/publications/r-s-bulletin-42014-northern-ireland-reoffending-methodology & https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/publications/rs-bulletin-162015-northern-ireland-reoffending-methodology of local loc

#### 3.4 What counts as a reoffence?

Under one year proven reoffending methodology an offence is counted as a reoffence if it:

- occurs within the one year observation period.
- has been committed within Northern Ireland.
- is prosecuted via the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and not a third party (e.g. the Department of Communities can bring some cases of benefit fraud).
- is not a breach offence (e.g. breach of a probation order).
- has been 'proven', meaning that a court conviction or diversionary disposal has been imposed within the observation year or by the end of the 6 month follow up period.

#### 3.5 Data Source

In Northern Ireland the main data source used to measure reoffending rates is supplied to the Department of Justice's Analytical Services Group from the Causeway Data Sharing Mechanism (DSM1). The information used is primarily created from an extract of records held on the Criminal Records Viewer (CRV). The CRV is held on Causeway and utilises data which originated from PSNI, along with data from Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service. Causeway is an interconnected information system, launched as a joint undertaking by the Criminal Justice Organisations (CJOs) in Northern Ireland. Information is also provided from the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) case management system (PRISM) and the Youth Justice Agency regarding releases from custody. Information on these offenders is matched to information taken from CRV.

### 3.6 Data Quality and Validation

While every care has been taken in collating the data, they are subject to the limitations inherent in any large-scale recording system and to variation in recording practice over time. While the relevant CJOs have a vested interest in maintaining the accuracy of the data within their management information systems, a number of accuracy, quality assurance/validation procedures have been conducted upon the dataset used to compile this data series, to ensure the data extracted are accurate, complete and fit for the statistical purposes for which they are to be used. Both automated and manual checks are carried out, at individual case level and, data corrected, where possible. Much of this validation is completed for the production of datasets in relation to the annual Prosecutions, Convictions and out of Court Disposals Publications<sup>8</sup>. Please refer to these publications for information on the validation process.

<sup>8</sup> https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/articles/prosecutions-and-convictions

Specific to this publication is the validation process completed on prison release data, to ensure that key fields are complete and logical and that all those who have been sentenced and released from custody can be identified. Validation exercises conducted have included comparing convictions data from Causeway with records from other agencies, including the Northern Ireland Prison Service, the Probation Board for Northern Ireland and the Youth Justice Agency, with amendments made where appropriate. For example, for the 2015/16 dataset, 1,515 cases were checked to ensure all sentenced prisoners were identified, with amendments made in 233 cases, relating to updates to the sentence release status of the offenders and updates to essential date fields. These changes are required due to the point in time in which the data has been extracted from the NIPS case management system (PRISM) and recording practices within NIPS that are not consistent with information required to produce the reoffending analysis.

Following guidance provided by the Office for National Statistics on the Quality Assessment of Administrative Data, information pertaining to data quality and validation is continually being assessed.

### 3.7 Interpreting Trends

The ability to compare and discuss trends in reoffending is important to its usefulness as a performance target within government. However, differences in the offending related characteristics of those included in each cohort make comparing reoffending rates problematic, across both time and jurisdictions. Although statistical techniques can be employed to control for differences within the cohorts, care should also be taken to understand the wider context within which the offending and reoffending has occurred. In this bulletin the overall and adult reoffending rates have been adjusted and compared to the 2010/11 and 2015/16 findings, in order to provide an estimate of change in reoffending. For more information on the methodological approach used to adjust these figures, please refer to 'Northern Ireland Reoffending Methodology: Methodology and Glossary Part 2 (New Edition: August 2015)' (Duncan, 2015) which can be found at <a href="https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/articles/reoffending">https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/articles/reoffending</a>.

In addition, reoffending rates should not be used routinely to measure the comparative success of the different disposal types. As no adjustments have been made to control for offender characteristics or factors relating to variations in sentencing, such comparisons would be misleading.

Since 2015, there has been a consistent decline in the number of cases prosecuted and also in corresponding guilty findings. This has resulted in a further reduction in the size of the reoffending cohort.

A further distorting factor for 2016/17 may be the significant reduction in disposals at the Crown Court. The introduction of new rules in May 2015 in relation to legal aid remuneration resulted in a number of solicitors and counsel withdrawing their representation from a range of court cases. This affected defendants' access to legal aid representation and had an impact on disposals and delay within the Crown Court process during the period.

### 3.8 Analysis and Presentation of Statistics

The data used in this report are validated, maintained and analysed using IBM SPSS, which is a statistical package commonly used within social science.

For ease of use, figures in charts are given as whole numbers, whereas percentages throughout the text and tables are reported to one decimal place. When reporting on the change in reoffending rates, figures are presented to two decimal places due to the small numbers involved.

Whilst tables of information have been included in Appendix 1, the tables are also published alongside this bulletin in Microsoft Excel and open data format for ease of use.

The data upon which the publication is based are used to inform policy decisions within the Department of Justice (DoJ), as well as to inform requests from other Government organisations, answers to NI Assembly questions and queries from the general public.