

CAPITAL CITY PARTNERSHIP



PRISON LEAVER SUMMARY (2008)

Compiled by Stephen McMurray

Introduction

This summary updates information presented in ‘The Position of Joined up for Jobs Target Groups’ report in 2005. This report considered each target group and in addition to the categories below included; overlaps between the different target groups, perceived gaps in service provision, information gaps, and conclusions and recommendations. This report is available from CCP.

Scope

The prison service state that **2,107** prisoners were released in 2007 whose home address originated in Edinburgh.

<u>TARGET GROUP</u>	<u>NUMBER IN EDINBURGH</u>	<u>NOT WORKING</u>	<u>SOURCES</u>
Prison Leavers	Likely to be around 2,000 in 2007.	Unknown	Scottish Government 2007

Employment

Home Office research has found that more than two thirds of the prison population were unemployed when sent to prison in England and Wales. **60%** of ex-offenders are refused jobs because of their criminal record – yet ex-prisoners with jobs are one-third to a half less likely to re-offend. Research by the NIESR as cited by Home Office (2002) found that having any kind of criminal record currently results in a likely rejection of around one in six applications. For most types of offence, a rejection is likely in about half of vacancies.

Barriers to Employment

- **20-25%** have severe literacy and/or numeracy problems.
- Ex-prisoners have low expectations.
- Low self-confidence.
- Poor mental health.
- Service provision issues around need to better co-ordinate employability services.
- Negative perceptions of employers.
- Employers have poor knowledge of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Employability Services

Most relevant are likely to be:

- **Apex Scotland** – Runs the Employment Guidance Unit, which offers a number of services, including; employability assessment and guidance.
- **Employment, Advice & Support Service** – Working with individuals with barriers ranging from criminal records, learning disabilities, mental health, physical disabilities and drug & alcohol issues. A benefits adviser is available to alleviate any concerns over benefits and support is given to the individual in the work place if required.
- **Links Centre at HMP Edinburgh** – Deals with; job seeking and self presentation skills, confidence building and motivational skills, literacy and numeracy support on a one-to-one basis if required, one week intensive RESTART course before release, focusing on job search and practical support, such as CV writing and job applications.
- **Passport** – Programme of personal support for those moving out of care, prison, drug use and homelessness. Clients will be supported, challenged and motivated to move on into training, education and employment within 4-6 months.
- **Spectrum** – Integrated service of guidance, learning and progression support for vulnerable people with complex needs.
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Further Reading

The Home Office (2002) Breaking the Circle, A Report of the Review of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, London

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