

STOP PRESS

Quakers welcome the Justice Committee report on Imprisonment for Public Protection

The long-awaited report on Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) sentences was published by the Justice Committee on 28 September. Members of the Quakers in Criminal Justice network welcome the conclusion that the IPP scheme is 'irredeemably flawed leading to 'profound psychological harm' and 'mental torture'. This distress continues on release, says the report, where ex-prisoners suffer a 'never-ending cycle of anxiety' due to the indefinite nature of licence conditions, leaving them 'traumatised and disconnected from society'. The new CCJS report *IPP: Psychic Pain Redoubled* picks up this issue.

Despite the sentence being abolished in 2012, it still affects around 3,000 people and their families. The failure to support the prisoners both inside and outside prison has led to a 'recall merry-go-round', with almost half (1,434) of current IPP prisoners being recalled to custody at some point. More than 600 offenders have been kept in prison for at least ten years more than their minimum sentence, of whom 188 received a tariff of less than two years. Resource problems in the Parole Board and the unavailability of mandated courses often lead to frustrating delays in progression.

The main recommendations are for an appropriate Action Plan and the re-sentencing of all IPP prisoners, which requires new legislation. Otherwise a legacy will remain, due to recalls to prison for anyone who breaches the terms of their licence.'

The Quaker statement on IPP (May 2022) called for a properly funded and bespoke welfare approach for this disadvantaged group, designed to support them to reintegrate into society. This issue has also been highlighted by the Independent Monitoring Board who point out current shortfalls in community probation services,

Melanie Jameson, co-clerk of Quakers in Criminal Justice, said she trusts that the government will accept the Justice Committee's conclusion that IPP must now be terminated but regrets the inevitable delays involved in drafting and introducing the necessary legislation, then moving the cases through the courts. This means that a successful resolution is still some way off.

The government is expected to respond to the report on November 28.

Report summary: _

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5803/cmselect/cmjust/266/summary.html>

Full version: _

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