

Improving the prison release process for people experiencing multiple disadvantage

Findings from the Fulfilling Lives programme

Rachel Moreton

Associate Director

CFE Research


National evaluation of Fulfilling Lives carried out by:



The
University
Of
Sheffield.



The Fulfilling Lives programme

- Aims to change lives, change systems and involve beneficiaries
 - National Lottery Community Fund investment in 12 areas over 8 years
 - Partnerships have worked with over 4,000 people
- 

Multiple disadvantage and offending

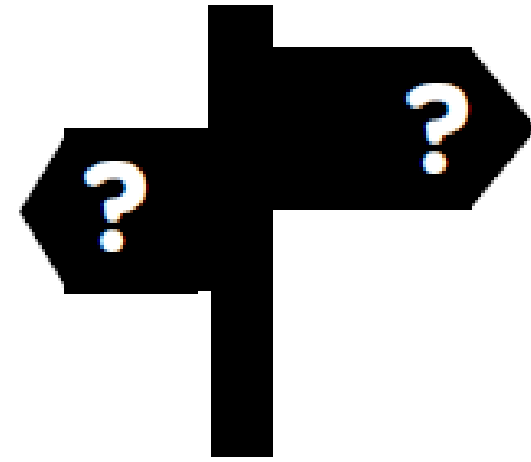
- Multiple disadvantage tends to be linked to **persistent, low-level offending** and **short sentences**
- Prison experience is linked with **worse outcomes** for Fulfilling Lives beneficiaries



Those with prison experience are less likely to have positive outcomes

Release day

- A lack of preparation
- Lots of things to do on day of release and not enough time to do them
- A lack of finances
- Limited positive support networks



**Release day
expectations
are unrealistic**

Accommodation challenges

- Finding suitable accommodation is the biggest challenge
- Referral to housing does not mean a place to stay on release
- Hostels can be unsuitable
- Particular challenge for women



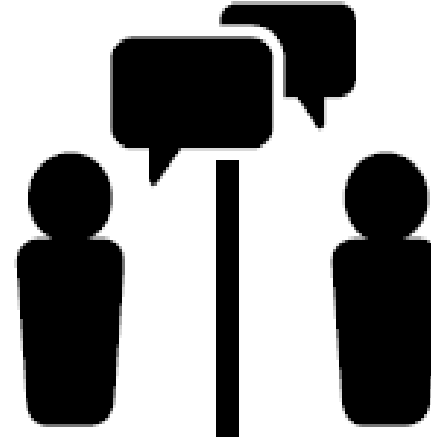
**Lack of suitable
housing increases
risk of reoffending**

I went straight back to drugs to be honest. The day I got out I went to see [my support worker] and then I thought that day would have been all sorted out, you know like, go see my house, move in... I had nowhere to stay so I ended up staying at another user's house, the only place I could find.

Male with lived experience

Good practice in supporting prison release

- Preparation in advance
- Co-ordination across services
- Involving the prison leaver in decision-making
- Meeting people at the gate



**Support staff need
access to prisons**

This needs...

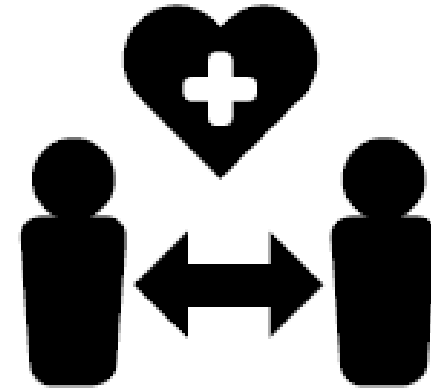
- Trusting and supportive relationships
- Small caseloads
- Realistic expectations of success
- Staff with lived experience
- Tailored response to women's needs



**Staff need the time
and resource to build
trusting relationships**


The importance of lived experience

- Support workers with lived experience of prison demonstrate that recovery and desistance is possible
- Peer support should be part of the release process




Peer mentors offer emotional support and hope of recovery


Women-specific support

- Particular support needed for those with children and/or experience of domestic violence
 - Gender-specific, safe accommodation with wraparound support needed
 - Work with social care to maintain contact with children
- 

Addressing system-wide challenges

- Raising awareness of multiple disadvantage
 - Multi-agency groups to co-ordinate support
 - Effective information sharing
 - Strategic collaboration
- 

Challenges remain

- Avoidance of negative networks on release is difficult to control but crucial to desistance
 - Time in prison is a 'window of opportunity' for change: support needs to be in place for prison leavers to capitalise on this
 - Ongoing support beyond release day can help meet logistical and emotional demands of readjustment
- 

I'd say this is probably the best chance I've ever had at [staying out of prison], I can't think what I'd want more... but it's not easy. I needed a bit of stability, and that's what they've helped me get.

Male with lived experience

Read the full report

<https://tinyurl.com/prisrelease>



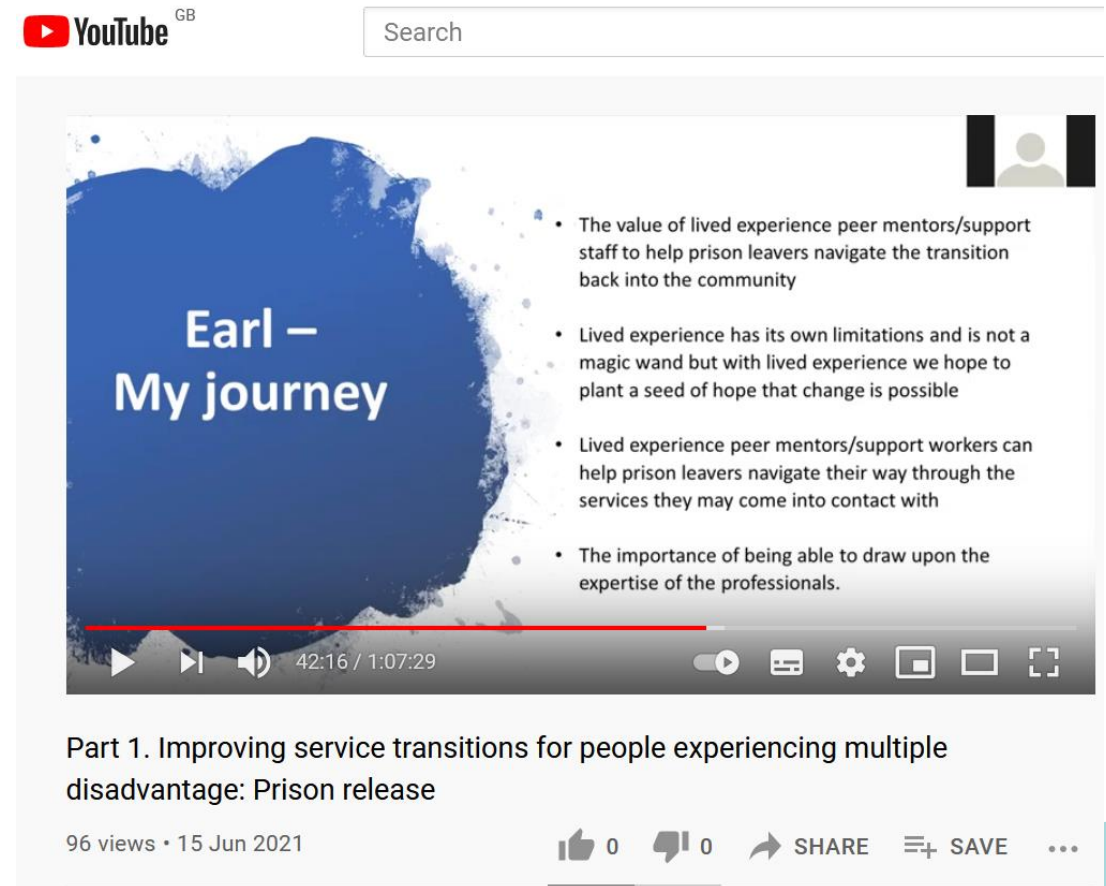
Watch our recent webinar and hear from people with lived experience

- Part one

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TVxUN2sjagE>

- Part two

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ovo80knLM4k>



The screenshot shows a YouTube video player interface. At the top left is the YouTube logo with 'GB' next to it. To the right is a search bar. The video player itself has a dark blue background with a white heart shape. Inside the heart, the text 'Earl - My journey' is written in white. To the right of the heart, there is a list of bullet points. Below the video player is a progress bar showing '42:16 / 1:07:29'. At the bottom of the player, there are icons for play, next, volume, and other controls. Below the video player, the video title 'Part 1. Improving service transitions for people experiencing multiple disadvantage: Prison release' is displayed. Below the title, it says '96 views • 15 Jun 2021'. At the bottom right, there are icons for like (0), comment (0), share, save, and a menu icon.

YouTube^{GB} Search

Earl –
My journey

- The value of lived experience peer mentors/support staff to help prison leavers navigate the transition back into the community
- Lived experience has its own limitations and is not a magic wand but with lived experience we hope to plant a seed of hope that change is possible
- Lived experience peer mentors/support workers can help prison leavers navigate their way through the services they may come into contact with
- The importance of being able to draw upon the expertise of the professionals.

42:16 / 1:07:29

Part 1. Improving service transitions for people experiencing multiple disadvantage: Prison release

96 views • 15 Jun 2021

0 0 SHARE SAVE ...

Find out more

- Read other reports from Fulfilling Lives
www.fulfillinglivesevaluation.org/evaluation-reports/
- Sign up for our newsletter to stay in touch
www.fulfillinglivesevaluation.org/sign-up/
- For more information about the national evaluation email rachel.moreton@cfe.org.uk