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Derek Patterson Inside and Innocent Yet Ten Years Over Tariff

In 2005, Derek Patterson was convicted of Attempted Murder. He received a six-year 56-day tariff on a discretionary life sentence. He is currently approaching his 16th year of incarceration, still maintaining his innocence, and ten years over tariff. He had no record of violent crime. The only prosecution evidence was the word of another. There was no forensic or DNA evidence to support the conviction. Both forensic and DNA evidence rule him out of the crime. The alleged assault weapon was also ruled out. Experts on both sides agreed the knife the defendant was supposed to have used was not the knife that cut the clothing or injured the victims. One of the victims even stated that Derek was not responsible.

Lincolnshire Police falsely claimed that Derek had admitted the crime when he had not. There is much on record to show the crime scene was not thoroughly investigated, rendering evidence inconclusive. While on remand and during the trial process, Derek was given the opportunity to be transferred to Broadmoor for assessment to see if he could be provoked into violent action after consuming alcohol or in a sleepwalking disorder. This was voluntary in the interests of truth, and at the Judge's suggestion, who was trying to be helpful. He was there for three nights. One night after being ordered to drink an excessive amount of vodka, he was provoked by electric shock treatment to see if he would react violently. The Consultant Psychiatrist and Medical Director reported as follows: 'Based on all the data I have examined and in addition on neurological testing including an EEG and three nights of overnight sleep studies, including one night that was provoked with alcohol, it is my opinion that Mr Derek Patterson does not have a diagnosis of sleepwalking disorder and the description of the event on the night (of the assault) does not fulfil the criteria for an automatism'. Disastrously, the report was not helpful in court, and no positive outcome at all, as the prosecution played on the fact that Derek had 'spent time' in Broadmoor and all the implications that could be drawn from this.

Derek's case went to the CCRC. They closed the file and refused to take the case further, saying they were asked to do work that should have been done before trial/appeal, but of course this was not possible because the information was not available. The appeal against conviction and sentence in 2012: At the Three-Judge Appeal stage the judges agreed that forensic and DNA supported the appellant, but the appeal was refused because 'it would be unfair to bring complainants back to court along with experts' to return to a case 7 years old. It is likely that the experts would not need to come back to court, as their reports are still available and the three judges agreed with them.

Derek had not given up hope, and in 2016 he managed to attract the attention of Bob Woffinden, an investigative journalist specialising in miscarriages of justice, who stated in correspondence 'I do think it is inconceivable that you could have carried out this attack'. Also 'stay feisty but keep calm! You can win this', and 'I do believe that your case is a compelling one'. Sadly, Mr Woffinden was ill with cancer and died before he could take Derek's case up with the authorities. The Leicester Law School Miscarriages of Justice Project has looked at and found significant discrepancies in Derek's case. Recently accessed police scene of crime photographs have confirmed contradictions in the prosecution evidence. His MP, Catherine

McKinnell (Newcastle North) has been supportive, as has Lord Ramsbotham, a cross-bench peer who was Chief Inspector of Prisons from 1991-2005 and is currently co-chair of the All Party Group on Penal Affairs. 'Derek is supported by 'Progressing Prisoners Maintaining Innocence', 'Leicester Law School Miscarriages of Justice Project' & MOJUK

Messages of Supportto: Derek Patterson A3948,HMP Frankland,Brasside,DH1 5YD

'Safe Space': Home Office Refuses to Reveal Public Law Review Submission

Monidipa Fouzder, Law Gazette: A Whitehall department dealing with nearly 1,000 judicial reviews a year has refused to reveal its submission to the Independent Review of Administrative Law's call for evidence, claiming there is no strong legitimate public interest in disclosure. The Gazette requested a copy of the Home Office's response under the Freedom of Information (FoI) Act last month after the department confirmed it submitted a response to the independent review being conducted by Lord Faulks QC. In 2019 the Home Office had the second highest number of judicial reviews lodged against it of any government department. The Ministry of Justice, which was at the receiving end of the largest number of JRs, is hosting the review with secretariat support and did not submit a response.

Responding to the Gazette, the Home Office's strategy directorate said it decided the information was exempt from disclosure under section 36(2)(c) of the act, which deals with the effective conduct of public affairs. The Home Office said disclosing material being actively considered by the panel, and in due course by the government, would adversely affect the panel's ability to meet its wider objectives, 'by removing the "safe space" it should have to consider the evidence and reach conclusions'. Disclosure would disrupt resources 'in relation to dealing with the consequences of disclosure (increased media attention etc)'. The Home Office said: 'All the information is exempt from disclosure under section 36(2)(c) of the FOIA, because in the reasonable opinion of the Home Office's qualified person, its release would prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs.' Section 36 of the act is a qualified exemption, subject to a public interest test. Considering factors in favour of disclosure, the Home Office said the review panel was considering issues of constitutional importance. 'There is therefore legitimate public interest in that evidence being released. Transparency is important to the panel's process. Release of the evidence would increase transparency.'

However, considering factors in favour of maintaining the exemption, the Home Office said: 'The panel has not yet reached any conclusions, and therefore the legitimate public interest in the release of the underlying evidence is not particularly strong at this time. 'The panel must have a safe space in which to analyse and consider the evidence collected (including the submissions), away from the public gaze and to reach its conclusions. The damage that would likely be inflicted by premature release of evidence collected would impact on the panel's deliberations and potentially their report. It is not a credible use of the panel or government's time if they spend time and effort defending and debating publicly options which are still being considered. 'Premature release of evidence collected also has the potential to interfere and/or distract the panel's process, by causing delay to the ultimate submission of their report to government.' The Home Office concluded that 'the balance of the public interest lies in maintaining the exemption and withholding the information'.

Several respondents to the panel's review have already gone public with their responses. The Gazette will request an independent internal review of the Home Office's decision. Robert Buckland QC MP told the commons public administration and constitutional affairs committee on 8 December that the panel was expected to report 'within the next couple of months' and any proposals will emerge in the spring.

Back to the Bad Old Days: Pre-Charge Engagement

Andrew Green, Justice Gap: Do new rules, which allow both prosecutors and defendants and their lawyers to meet and discuss what enquiries the police should make, mark the start of a cooperative search for truth and justice, or are they a means of returning to the old days when the police made deals with suspects who were kept in order by their own lawyers? Andrew Green reports The idea of pre-charge engagement seems to have arisen as a partial solution to the serious and continuing problems besetting the process of disclosure in criminal cases. The disclosure of evidential material (documents, digital records, video recordings etc.) to defendants by prosecutors of any material which might support the defence case or undermine the prosecution case, and the police enquiries which gather material relating to crimes, are governed by the Criminal Proceedings and Investigations Act (CPIA) 1996. The CPIA sets out the general rules, while the detailed application of the rules is governed by a Code of Practice (CoP), issued every five years. This Code of Practice is a statutory instrument, which means that it is drafted by the Ministry of Justice and then made available to Parliament so that MPs and members of the House of Lords can make proposals for changes. In September 2020 a new CoP was delivered to Parliament. It was due to come into force on 31 December 2020 (although it seems to be running late).

The new CoP is further supplemented by a new version of the Attorney General's Guidelines on Disclosure provided for the benefit of all concerned – investigators, prosecutors and defence practitioners (AG Guidelines). Annex B of the guidelines 2020 version includes a completely new subject: 'pre-charge engagement'. Pre-charge engagement is the meeting of police investigators, Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) prosecutors, defence lawyers and defendants (in likely order of importance) during the period between formal police interviews of suspects and the decision to charge which is made by the CPS. At this stage of the criminal process, the disclosure provisions of the CPIA do not apply (they kick in when a suspect is charged with a crime).

But the provisions of the CPIA which govern enquiries do apply, which means that the police are required to follow 'all reasonable lines of enquiry' which point to, and away from suspects' involvement in the crime under investigation. So pre-charge engagement provides an opportunity for suspects to ask the police to follow lines of inquiry which could help the defence case. The most obvious example of such co-operation between the two sides in our adversarial system (normally sworn enemies) concerns the searching of digital material, typically in cases of rape and other serious sexual assaults. Such material might radically affect issues such as, whether complainants had consented to the act which they now allege to be a criminal act, or other issues such as the identity of the assailant, or an alibi defence.

Any smartphone may contain vast amounts of data, and material relevant to the case may lie embedded anywhere within its memory. The data may be downloaded on to a DVD and copies made for both sides to peruse, but reading all of it would require human resources which are simply not available in any part of the criminal justice system. Fortunately powerful software exists which can search the data. The co-operation, now becoming standard between prosecution and defence, consists of agreeing the terms for which the software program should search.

No one could fail to welcome the outbreak of common sense which such voluntary cooperation heralds. Surely the provision for pre-charge engagement could be extended to other areas of enquiry which are beyond the capabilities of defendants and their lawyers, but which the police could carry out using their far greater powers, experience and resources? Every participant in the conduct of a criminal case has a common duty to further the 'overriding

objective' stated by the Criminal Procedure Rules, that is, to deal with the case 'justly' by 'acquitting the innocent and convicting the guilty' and 'recognising the rights of a defendant, particularly those under Article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights.'

Phew. But hasn't informal pre-charge engagement been happening in some form ever since the police started investigating crime and prosecuting cases? Somehow pre-charge negotiations involving the exchange of information, involving off-the-record disclosure of the strong points of the prosecution case in exchange for intelligence from the suspect, the reduction or dropping of charges in exchange for suspects agreeing to give evidence for the prosecution? The case of Pinnock and others (Pinnock and others [2006] EWCA Crim 3119) springs to mind (it often does) in which two suspects who torched a car used in a drive by shooting to murder someone, suspects who were at least guilty of a very serious attempt to pervert the course of justice, let off with warnings while others involved were given life sentences. Some suspects may have benefitted from such pre-charge engagement, but others did not. Nine people were convicted of joint enterprise murder in Pinnock, at least five of whom continue to maintain their innocence and are entering their 19th year in prison.

Do the new rules include this type of engagement? They do. 'Suspects who maintain their innocence will be aided by early identification of lines of inquiry which may lead to evidence or material that points away from the suspect or points towards another suspect ... Pre-charge engagement can help inform a prosecutor's charging decision. It might avoid a case being charged,' the Attorney General advises. Consider the difficulties over plea bargaining, in which the financial and administrative benefits of guilty pleas extend to every participant in criminal cases (apart from innocent suspects and defendants). The rules or practices which govern plea bargaining are obscure and inconsistent (see here), but the option of pleading guilty to a lesser offence than that for which the suspect was arrested is an essential part of plea bargaining. What better opportunity could exist within the structure of the criminal process than a meeting between those who may benefit from an early guilty plea and the suspect, who may need to be persuaded of the benefit, especially if they are innocent? 'The cost of the matter to the criminal justice system may be reduced, including potentially avoiding or mitigating the cost of criminal proceedings,' the Attorney General points out.

Decades ago, pre-charge engagements were common and, for defendants, dangerous. Teenagers, such as Ahmet Salih, 14, Colin Lattimore, 15, and Ronald Leighton, 18, could be bullied into confessing to murder and arson of which they were innocent. Or suspects could suffer beatings, threats to kill (the Birmingham Six) and torture (Derek Treadaway and Keith Twitchell, while held in custody by the West Midlands Serious Crime Squad, disbanded abruptly in 1989). While such practices may not be planned by modern advocates of pre-charge engagement, the problem was not that bullying and brutality were approved – they were always forbidden, of course – but that a lack of structure and surveillance made it possible for corrupt officers to do as they wished.

Two developments brought about change. The first was the 1984 Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) and its associated CoP (a statutory instrument still in force and regularly updated). PACE and its CoP required everything that happened to a suspect in custody to be recorded on a custody record, available to everyone concerned including defence lawyers. Informal practices, whether brutal assaults or bargaining over evidence and pleas, were not eradicated, but made more difficult to carry out. Plea bargaining became the responsibility of defence lawyers, theoretically a go-between for the court and the defendant, but in practice required to persuade the latter to accept what was offered by the former.

The second development was technical: the introduction of tape recorded interviews and CCTV surveillance in police custody suites. This brief history of pre-charge engagement is not intended to be an argument that malpractice, bullying and violence has been eradicated or even reduced in police investigative practice, but that increased surveillance has at least changed what happens to suspects in police custody, and the changes have been in the direction of increased recording and formalisation. At first sight, the new pre-charge engagement rules are an extension of the change.

Meetings are voluntary. Meetings may be called by either side. They can be prearranged, or just happen informally when police investigator, suspect and defence lawyer happen to be together, such as following the termination of a formal interview. The prosecution can be represented by a CPS staff member or a police officer. Suspects cannot be penalised for not agreeing to meet, nor can any refusal by them to answer questions be held against them in a trial, as can happen with an investigative interview. If they have already given a 'no comment' interview, that does not prevent a precharge engagement meeting from taking place. The record of the meeting cannot be disclosed to other defendants, in the same case or in any other case. (But if the defence brings its own material to a meeting, that material could be disclosed to other defendants by the CPS.) A full written, signed record of the pre-charge engagement discussions should be made. But pre-charge engagements are not recorded in any other ways. The record should be made by defence legal representatives, so the defence can determine the content of the record. That means that if negotiations take place in the meeting, they can be excluded from the record.

Plea bargaining can remain hidden. If a suspect passes information to the police about others who may become suspects, even replace the current suspect with another, that information may be added to the police's secret store of intelligence, or, if later in the process prosecuting lawyers think such information might help the case of another defendant, it can be protected by being given public interest immunity (PII) by a helpful judge and so remain undisclosed. So is that what a pre-charge engagement is for – secretive plea bargaining, hidden opportunities to pressurise unhelpful suspects into pleading guilty, or to offer opportunities for suspects to inform on others to avoid conviction (and find themselves becoming long term police informants)? – as much as it is for reaching agreements on lines of inquiry (which the police may ignore if they want) and terms to be fed into search engines. If so, perhaps precharge engagements are better avoided. There are other ways of telling the police about lines of inquiry, and consultation over search terms has already been developed and is in use.

We should ask what this proposal legitimates. After a formal, fully recorded police interview, instead of returning the suspect to their cell, the same group of people continue to talk in a meeting which, until now, was forbidden and which could not be accounted for on a custody record, but which can now be a pre-charge engagement. Until then, the suspect may have said nothing but 'no comment' on the advice of the lawyer, but now they can say anything without fear that it could be used against them in court. If the suspect really is a criminal, they can grass up their competition such as, for instance, other drug dealers, knowing they will be protected – that would be a really useful new line of inquiry for themselves and for the police. Or, if the suspect simply persists in being difficult by insisting on having their day in court, the legal representative can enjoy the support of the two police officers in persuading them to plead guilty and save them all time and money.

So enthusiastic is the Ministry of Justice that pre-charge engagements should be instituted that, despite the scandalous underfunding of the criminal justice system, it is prepared to pay defence lawyers an extra fee in addition to the usual fixed fee for police station attendance.

No wonder lawyers appear to have been won over to this bright idea.

A Duty of Care – Standard of Proof Deaths in Prison?

On the 11th of July 2016 a prisoner Mr James Maughan was found dead in his prison cell having hanged himself. The investigation into the factual circumstances surrounding his death found that he had a history of mental health issues and had previously made threats of self-harm. The evening before his death he had been in an agitated state. At the inquest, the Senior Coroner for Oxfordshire directed that the jury could not reach a verdict on the short form conclusion that Mr Maughan had committed suicide and therefore ordered that they deliver the narrative form.

In an inquest two types of verdict can be given: a short form conclusion or a narrative form. A short form conclusion is used when a single word is capable of expressing the conclusion of the inquest. A narrative conclusion is used when more explanation is needed to explain the conclusion as to the death. At the time of this case, in order to reach a short form conclusion on suicide and unlawful killing, the evidence needed to meet the criminal burden of proof. All other verdicts were required to be proved to the civil standard. The Coroner in this case directed that the jury only had to decide that Mr Maughan had committed suicide on the balance of probabilities.

As a result of this direction Mr Maughan's brother took the case to the High Court on the basis that the jury in the inquest should have applied the criminal standard of proof when deciding on whether Mr Maughan had committed suicide. They should not have been invited to consider the civil standard of proof. The issue was a matter of judicial review to the Divisional Court which upheld that the civil standard of proof applied to rulings on suicide in a ruling described by the Court of Appeal as "adopt[ing] a bold approach in departing from what had been regarded as settled law and practice" The case was then appealed to the Supreme Court and Judgment was handed down in the case of R (on the application of Maughan) (Appellant) v Her Majesty's Senior Coroner for Oxfordshire (Respondent) [2020] UKSC 46 on the 13th of November 2020. Lady Arden, Lord Wilson and Lord Carnwath all agreed that the standard of proof in inquests should be the civil standard stating: "The principle is clear and it is that in civil proceedings the civil standard of proof should apply." [69]

As noted above, prior to the landmark judgment, inquests were decided on the civil standard but for two notable exceptions. When a Coroner or Jury was considering a short form conclusion and if they wished to make a finding of suicide or unlawful killing, that had to be on the basis of criminal burden of proof rather than the civil. It seems that this was an historical throwback to the potential criminal ramifications of suicide; suicide was only de-criminalised in the 1960s. Furthermore, at paragraph 88, Lady Arden explains the Chief Coroner's position for the criminal burden of proof applying to unlawful killing in that "...coronial proceedings used to be a means for finding criminal liability." Similarly to the law on suicide, this has long since changed when in 1977 the Criminal Justice Act provided "...that a coroners verdict shall not make any finding that any person is guilty of murder, manslaughter or infanticide or charge any person with any of these offences" [89].

Since the introduction Human Rights Act 1997 (which enshrined the European Convention on Human Rights) inquests have become more investigatory. They are a frequent mechanism for discharging a state's obligations under Article 2 ECHR (Right to Life). Article 2 has two limbs. The first is that the state will not kill civilians and the second is that where the state may be responsible or involved in the death of a citizen, especially of those in custody, there is a procedural obligation to effectively investigate. This allows for wider conclusions to be drawn including conclusions as to the contributory factors towards a person's death, and which can lead to lessons being learnt on the part of the state and wider society. Where a Coroner considers that lessons can be learnt they can issue a

Preventing Future Deaths Report (PFD), recommending changes to procedure or policy.

At the conclusion of an inquest the verdict has to be recorded according to Form 2, provided for by the Coroners (Inquests) Rules 2013 (SI 2013/1616). There are notes which form part of Form 2, and Note(iii) was a particular source of examination and disagreement for the Supreme Court. Note (iii) states "The standard of proof required for the short form conclusions of unlawful killing and suicide is the criminal standard of proof. For all other short form conclusions and a narrative statement, the standard of proof is the civil standard of proof".

The Supreme Court in coming to their conclusion, disagreed as to the value of Note (iii) in determining the standard of proof for inquests, was it still governed by common law or had Note(iii) codified it? The Court in its majority verdict considered the legal basis of Note (iii) and found that its effect was not to codify the common law position. It was merely reflecting the position of the common-law at the time of writing the document. [56]

The majority judgement of the Supreme Court concluded that the correct standard should be the civil standard and gave the following points as to why a change was necessary: 1. On legal principle, the civil standard should apply, and the common law does not demonstrate any cogent reason for not applying that principle. 2. The criminal standard may lead to suicide being under recorded and to lessons not being learnt 3. The changing role of inquests and changing societal attitudes and expectations confirm the need to review the standard of proof. 4. Leading Commonwealth jurisdictions have taken this course.

The Court then considered, somewhat necessarily, that given the conclusions they had made as to suicide, the criminal standard could of course not be retained for unlawful killing. Lord Carnwath, agreeing with Lady Arden's judgment highlighted the importance of the inquest as a fact-finding exercise and not a method of apportioning guilt [101]. He further agreed with Lady Arden's conclusions in respect of Note (iii) writing at [106] that it "...is most naturally read as guidance as to what is understood to be the existing state of law, rather than as a prescribing a particular standard." The important emphasis in the majority judgment was an acknowledgement that attitudes towards suicide have long since changed and as a result the law needed to change with them.

Pub Bombings Campaigner Issued With Fine Over Anniversary Breach Allegation

Birmingham Mail: Julie Hambleton says she won't pay the £200 fine because she has done nothing wrong. Justice4the21 campaigner Julie has been issued with a penalty notice alleging that she breached Covid regulation on November 21 - the 46th anniversary of the Birmingham pub bombings. Five other campaigners have received similar notices following the Convoy for Justice event held on that date. It saw hundreds of supporters take part in a poignant cavalcade which slowly threaded its way through Birmingham to highlight the J4the21 pub bombings campaign. They turned out in cars, lorries and motorbikes in an event held on the 46th anniversary of the terrorist attacks. Campaigners, who pledged that social distancing rules would be observed, waved flags and banners, sounded horns, banged drums and used loud hailers during the event which was marshalled by police. It culminated outside West Midlands Police Headquarters at Lloyd House. The annual memorial event which would usually have taken place in the city later in the day had previously been cancelled because of Covid and was replaced by an online tribute.

Julie Hambleton from Great Barr who is standing to become the next West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner. She said: "My summons talks about 'without having a reasonable excuse,' implying I have done something wrong by remembering my sister who was blown up in the biggest unsolved mass murder in criminal history. "It says I must pay a £200 fixed penalty notice which

is reduced to £100 if I pay in 14 days. But I haven't done anything wrong and to pay up would be to imply I accept guilt and that I have done something wrong to the memory of my loved one. I feel there is an irony in that six of us have had the notices. We are the new Birmingham six. But we all remember what happened to the original Birmingham Six - they had their convictions quashed after 18 years behind bars in the biggest miscarriage of justice in British criminal history."

Ten of the families of those killed in the Birmingham pub bombings are represented by KRW LAW LLP (KRW). A spokesman said: "November 21, 2020 saw another anniversary of the Birmingham Pub Bombings and out of respect and in solidarity for those that have been tragically bereaved by Covid-19, the service and acts of remembering were cancelled. However, on the cancellation of these acts of remembering, supporters of the J4the21 Campaign Group contacted Julie Hambleton in large numbers to offer genuine support and offered to organise a carefully planned convey as a substitute to the annual important act of remembering.

J4the21 and the main organiser of the Convoy of Remembrance worked extensively with a specialist team from the West Midlands Police, Ops Events, Planning and Tasking Operations Department to ensure traffic disruption was at a minimum and most importantly at this time to ensure compliance with the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020. "A route for the Convoy of Remembrance was agreed as well as other operational matters and marshalls were on hand to assist the Convoy. "Once the Convoy reached the West Midlands Police Headquarters, Lloyd House, a number of persons from the Convoy had started to gather. At this point Julie Hambleton went to the small gathering who were wearing masks and distancing appropriately, to assist in the immediate dispersal and to thank them for taking time out of their busy lives to support the act of remembering. "Subsequently WMP issued six penalty notices on the basis that the convoy and the meeting breached the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020. Failure to pay the penalty could lead to prosecution.

"KRW wrote to the Chief Constable Sir Dave Thompson requesting that he review the processes and procedures which informed the decision to issue these penalty notices and to annul them on the basis that the actions of those we represent were in accordance with the regulations and that the Convoy of Remembrance was a well-planned event which attracted a large number of disciplined participants. "WMP have now responded to our representations and have confirmed that criminal proceedings to enforce the penalty notices will continue. "Those we represent who have received these penalty notices question the efficacy of the actions of the WMP in relation to the sensitivities around the pub bombings whilst respecting the need to protect the public health of the community at this time of pandemic."

Proposed Sex Work Reforms

In the last month of 2020, EachOther looked at the potential impacts of the Sexual Exploitation Bill for Britain's sex workers. The Bill, which is scheduled for a second reading on 5 February 2021, could have huge implications for sex workers. A private members bill put forward by Labour MP Dame Diana Johnson, if passed, it would decriminalise the sale of sex, while making it a crime for clients to pay for it. It would also create new criminal offences relating to "enabling or profiting" from another person's sexual exploitation. Those putting forward the bill argue it will "bust the model of sex trafficking" and dampen demand by punishing buyers. However, the distinction between sex work and sex trafficking is internationally recognised. "The difference is that the former is consensual, whereas the latter is coercive," the UN's Global Commission on HIV and the Law said in 2012.

Campaigners have highlighted that the conflation of sex work with modern slavery and trafficking is particularly common when it involves migrant women. To truly tackle exploitation in the sex work industry, as with other sectors, they call for broader reforms to reduce poverty and to increase trust between authorities and vulnerable people. This also means reforming hostile environment immigration policies which have made trafficking victims fearful of authorities – despite the introduction of modern slavery legislation – as they believe the Home Office wants to remove, deport and detain them. Without tackling these underlying issues, the industry stays underground and only further harms the already marginalised.

Sex work and the law - At present, sex work is partially criminalised in the UK. It is not illegal to sell sex but organisational aspects of sex work – such as soliciting in a street or public place, or working collectively in a brothel – are punishable offences. Organisations including Amnesty International, the World Health Organisation, UNAIDS, and the Royal College of Nursing have called for sex work to be fully decriminalised. They argue that criminalisation undermines the rights and safety of sex workers by pushing it underground.

National Policing Sex Work guidance states that "simple enforcement does not produce sustainable outcomes and can actually increase the vulnerability of sex workers to violent attack". It adds: "Brothel closures and 'raids' create a mistrust of all external agencies including outreach services. It is difficult to rebuild trust and ultimately reduces the amount of intelligence submitted to the police and puts sex workers at greater risk."

In 2016, the Home Affairs Select Committee recommended that the government fully decriminalise sex workers as the best means of ensuring their safety. However, the Home Office responded by arguing that there is not enough evidence to warrant a change in legislation. Last year, EachOther commissioned a poll which revealed that more people in the UK support sex work law reform than those who oppose it.

Kevin Lane Publishes Book in Hope of Overturning Murder Conviction

Duncan Campbell, Guardian: A man serving a life sentence for a controversial hitman murder committed nearly 30 years ago has taken the unusual step of publishing a book from inside prison with fresh evidence he hopes will lead to his conviction being overturned. With his book titled Fitted Up and Fighting Back, Kevin Lane believes he can finally prove his innocence of the contract shooting of Robert Magill in Hertfordshire in 1994. Lane, now 53, was convicted after two trials on a majority verdict of murdering Magill, who had been out walking his dog in Rickmansworth.

Witnesses saw two masked men fleeing the scene in a red BMW after shooting Magill, who was known to have a number of enemies because of his involvement in protection rackets. The BMW car allegedly used as the getaway vehicle was traced, and one of Lane's palm prints was found on a bin-liner in the boot. Within hours of the shooting the names of two men, Roger Vincent and David Smith, were being spoken of as those responsible. The following year Vincent and Lane were charged with the murder but Vincent was acquitted at the subsequent trial. In his book, Lane reveals documents held back under public interest immunity regulations that give details of Vincent's conversations with one of the key investigating officers, who would himself end up behind bars. Vincent was acquitted of the Magill killing, but he and Smith were back in court for murder in 2005 and were jailed for life. They were convicted of killing David King, who was suspected of being a police informer. Lane highlights the similarity of the two killings. "In the Magill murder a witness describes one of the men brazenly smiling as he drove away from the scene. In the King murder, a witness refers to one of the killers 'waving a salute' in her direction as he changed vehicle," he writes.

Both Vincent and Smith deny any involvement in the Magill murder.

Lane goes into great detail about the detective in the case, DS Chris Spackman. Lane claims that in a previous confrontation, when Lane was 21, he had met Spackman when he was briefly arrested in connection with a car-ringing operation. While in a police cell, Lane alleges Spackman came in and told him: "You think you're the daddy of this lot, don't you?" Spackman was jailed at the Old Bailey in 2003 for plotting to steal £160,000 from Hertfordshire police, money that had been seized from criminals. Spackman, who admitted conspiracy to steal, theft and misconduct in office, was the officer handling disclosure information in Lane's case. The judge sentencing Spackman remarked that "this was no fiddling of expenses, but was more suited to a seasoned fraudster who could conduct complicated deceptions in a police environment". Spackman's involvement in another case, involving cloned credit cards, led to the successful appeal of the two men convicted.

Robert Evans, counsel for the two men in that case told the court: "In my opinion, Mr Spackman's accounts in interview show a history of dishonesty and a history of tampering or falsifying police records in cases he was involved in." Lane notes that at his own trialone of the detectives told the court that "he is an extremely dangerous man who has undoubtedly committed other murders" although he had never been charged with any others. Lane has always proclaimed his innocence despite the fact that this inevitably slows down the possibility of release as a prisoner is deemed not to have come to terms with his offence. His case was initially covered in the Guardian in 2001 and was later the subject of a short film as part of the Guardian's Justice on Trial series. He was released in 2015 but returned to jail last year after his arrest on a common assault charge unconnected to the case. A parole hearing is due in March.

In his book, Lane acknowledges previous offences which landed him behind bars as a young man but is adamant that he is innocent of the Magill murder. He is scathing about the possibility that any professional hitman would use the battered old BMW car he was alleged to have used. "Wouldn't it be simply unbelievable that I'd choose a car I had been driving my family about in just a few days before?" His young son's fingerprints were also found in the car. In the book, Lane quotes everyone from Voltaire to Hunter S Thompson to Juvenal and is also revealing on the state of prisons today. "The Covid-19 crisis has reported concerns for the public's mental health due to being housebound," he notes. "Really! I think to myself what do they think being locked up in a concrete coffin for years and years does to a person?"

Call for UK Prisons to Trial Free Cannabis to See if it Cuts Drug Deaths

Mattha Busby, Guardian: Prisons should trial free cannabis schemes for drug-dependent inmates to ascertain whether it could reduce overdose deaths, bring down violence and help people overcome opioid addiction, a police and crime commissioner has said. The North Wales PCC, Arfon Jones, said that if justice authorities were serious about reducing harms and violence in prisons, "they should be addressing the causes" such as the cheap synthetic cannabinoid spice that is rife and can be deadly, as opposed to cannabis.

Many prisoners receive heroin substitutes such as methadone and buprenorphine, while others are commonly prescribed strong analgesics such as pregabalin and gabapentinoids – all of which are addictive and potentially dangerous drugs. Meanwhile, illegal drugs are widespread. "If they're on opioids, why can't they be prescribed cannabis?" said the former police officer, 66, who is not seeking re-election. "At the end of the day, opioids are a damn sight more dangerous than cannabis. It would be an improvement on the illegal spice

smuggled in by corrupt prison officers too."

More than 300 prison officers and outside staff have been dismissed or convicted for bringing prohibited items – which can include drugs, tobacco and mobile phones – into jails in England and Wales over the past five years, the Guardian revealed last month. Recreational cannabis remains illegal but the plant has been legalised for medical use in the UK, though access to full extract oil through the NHS remains almost impossible due to resistance from the medical establishment. Jones said a specific regime should be instituted to create a framework for cannabis trials at a number of prisons, including HMP Berwyn – near his home in Wrexham – where several staff have been punished for smuggling drugs, while there have also been recent deaths from spice. "Let's supply cannabis in controlled conditions and see if offences reduce," he added, saying the idea was first floated in 2018 by the pharmacologist Dr Stephanie Sharp. "The aim of the game is to make prisons safer. If they're serious about reducing violence in prisons they should be addressing the causes and that's psychoactive substances. Plus there's a whole range of issues that cannabis would be geared to reduce the risk of."

The number of recorded drug finds in prisons rose by 18% in 2019-20, to 21,575, with psychoactive substances fuelling the growth. There were 88 drug-related deaths in prisons between 2008 and 2016, mostly from methadone, heroin and benzodiazepines, according to the latest data from the Office for National Statistics. However, spice deaths have increased sharply in recent years. Across a number of US states where medical cannabis was legalised, opioid overdose deaths fell by 25%, research by Johns Hopkins University covering 1999 to 2014 suggests. Another American study suggests patients using cannabis to control chronic pain massively reduced their use of opioids, with the herb reducing the physical and psychological symptoms of withdrawal. A Prison Service spokesperson said: "We have a zero-tolerance approach to drugs and work closely with healthcare to support offenders through treatment and recovery."

Prisoner Electrocuted Vaping

Inside Time: Grant Alam, 28, was found dead in his cell at HMP Garth in February 2019. A post-mortem confirmed that he had died from an electric shock, while tests found that he had a Spice-type drug in his system. A former cellmate told the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman that since the smoking ban, prisoners would regularly attach vape machines to wires in plug sockets to create a flame to smoke psychoactive substances (PS). He said that smokers would sometimes receive a mild electric shock or burn while using the technique, but nothing more serious. The Ombudsman's report, published this month, found that drugs including PS were widely available at Garth, but that the prison had taken steps to tackle the problem. However, it also found that staff had failed to submit intelligence reports and refer Alam to the prison's substance misuse service on previous occasions when he had been suspected of using PS. It called on the governor to ensure that the prison's substance misuse strategy it followed in future.

Alam was jailed in 2012 and most of the following seven years in prison, barring a few weeks out on licence. He moved to Garth in 2015, where he was repeatedly caught brewing illicit alcohol and using drugs. Prison records showed that in the weeks before his death, an electrician was called to his cell on two occasions to reset the electrics because they had been been tripped. On one occasion it was found that he had put metal blades in the plug socket, and these were removed. A week before his death, he was put on the basic regime for repeated poor behaviour, and he was again caught with hooch and a distilling kit in his cell. On 21 February, 2019, CCTV showed him laughing with other prisoners as he was locked up at 7.15pm. An officer who carried out a roll check at

8pm reported that he seemed fine. He did not press his cell bell overnight.

Labour Facing Another Split Over Police Immunity in 'Spy Cops' Bill

Dan Sabbagh, Guardian: Labour is poised to split again over a controversial bill allowing undercover agents to commit crimes while infiltrating criminal gangs, after the party's leadership refused to back a Lords amendment from Shami Chakrabarti. The former shadow attorney general under Jeremy Corbyn's leadership says undercover police and informants could be immune to prosecution if the "spy cops" bill goes through parliament unamended. She has submitted an amendment for debate in the upper house on Monday, seeking to remove the immunity and saying that otherwise there would be "grave risk" of human rights abuses from agents acting undercover. But while Lady Chakrabarti is confident of winning Lib Dem support in the upper house, she has failed to win round the Labour leadership. Party sources said on Sunday that Labour would whip its peers to abstain. When told the leadership's intention, the Labour peer said she intended to press her amendment to a vote, even though it was now unlikely to pass. "This is too important to be left to deals involving the usual channels," Chakrabarti said.

Labour has already split twice over the proposed legislation as it passed through the Commons. Two frontbenchers resigned in October as part of a rebellion by 34 MPs on its third reading, unhappy that the party was not prepared to vote against. A fortnight earlier 20 Labour MPs had rebelled at a second reading. Keir Starmer, the Labour leader, had called on the party to abstain over the bill, arguing that statutory regulation of undercover operatives would have been necessary if the party had been in power, after the government only narrowly won a court case over the issue. Further concerns about the conduct of undercover officers resurfaced in November as a public inquiry opened into the work of the Met police's Special Demonstration Squad (SDS), which targeted left-wing, environmental, anti-war and black justice campaigners for more than 40 years.

Chakrabarti says the bill does more that codify existing policies used by MI5 and the police and, in effect, would give undercover informants and officers immunity against prosecution for crimes committed, if their actions were authorised. The legislation describes such as acts as "lawful for all purposes". "Total legal immunity means even less incentive for some of the most volatile and manipulative people — including 'turned criminals and terrorists' — to behave ethically," Chakrabarti said. "Blanket licence for crime without limit, is completely alien to equality before the law." The peer said she believed that a group of women who successfully sued the Met in 2015 after they had been deceived into forming "abusive and manipulative" long-term relationships with undercover police officers, would probably find it impossible to bring a similar action again. "The 'spy cops' scandal with undercover state agents inciting and perpetrating crimes they were supposed to prevent, has yet to be investigated fully," the peer said. It was unclear if the officers involved had their actions authorised, but Chakrabarti said it would be very difficult for future claimants to prove that either way.

Peers are debating the covert human intelligence sources (Chis) bill, which reaches its report stage on Monday and Wednesday this week, where amendments are typically taken for a vote. Labour sources complained that Chakrabarti was trying to inflame internal divisions between the Corbyn and Starmer supporting wings of the party. One said there had been "no real attempt" to engage with the party leadership on the issue. The party intends to support several other amendments limiting the scope of the bill, including an amendment from Lord Dubs, requiring a judge to approve the use of a confidential source except in the case of an emergency, which is due to be voted on Monday. Conservative ministers say that the use of secret operatives remains critical in tackling terror offences, helping, for example, to halt a plot to kill former prime minister Theresa May. But former undercover police say the power is

most frequently used in drug cases, where it can be at risk of abuse.

"Unwinnable" Cases Can Be Won

The so called "Unwinnable cases" are won on the basis of sound trial preparation, a genuine proactive defence and incisive cross-examination on the live issue at trial. So many Crown Court defences fail at trial because these 3 golden rules are simply not observed for a whole raft of reasons. It is critical for any trial advocate to get a focussed DCS (defence case statement) out at an early stage which seeks core secondary disclosure documents. DCS with bland denials and endless shopping lists of items are all too commonplace and rarely effective. A good DCS should be a weapon in the defence armoury that should immediately put the prosecution on the backfoot not one that has the CPS lawyer yawning and reaching for a cup of coffee.

A sound case strategy, knowledge of the best experts to instruct for the specific case facts, a clear understanding of crime scenes (via views), a detailed understanding of evidence, early case conferences with clients/experts to identify the weaknesses on both prosecution/defence sides are all essential for the advocate that is truly interested in securing an acquittal for the client. Defences which are put together as reactive last minute affairs are rarely robust and never immune from effective prosecution cross-examination. The defence should be the party that truly sets the parameters in which the trial is fought not the other way around. If these rules are truly adhered to experience shows again and again the unwinnable case on paper becomes the winnable case at trial. Those who ignore them will inevitably reduce the probability of an acquittal. (Joe Stone QC - Doughty Street Chambers)

Why Avoiding Prosecution Leads to Less Crime

Deferred prosecution is a slight misnomer since the idea of the programme is never to prosecute – if deferred prosecution is activated it hasn't worked for that individual. Deferred prosecution was the brain-child of Dr Peter Neyroud, a chief constable turned academic, who felt that the court system was broken. Two police forces – the West Midlands and County Durham – piloted this innovative approach. Those who had committed offences which were serious enough to be prosecuted (who also had to meet other screening criteria) were offered a "deal" – either agree to do a rehabilitation programme or opt to be prosecuted. Those who agree to a deferred prosecution don't have to admit guilt, but they do have to comply with the programme they are set. If they do, they are allowed to move on with their life, free of a criminal record for that offence. But if they don't comply, the sword of damocles comes down and they face court.

Last year the Cambridge University Turning Point evaluation team gave two presentations hosted by the Met police. The results are impressive – the approach is a game changer. And could make a huge difference to the court backlog if expanded beyond the pilot areas. Even before the pandemic, the delay from offence to completion in court was getting longer and longer – from 161 days in 2011 to 188 days in 2019. These figures are now shot to pieces due to covid-related court delays and alleged victims are apparently increasingly refusing to cooperate with the criminal justice process.

Justice needs to be done for victims, and deferred prosecution offers a brilliant way of "satisfying" victims without embroiling them in a lengthy court process. It's a myth that most victims want retribution – most want whatever happened to them never to happen again. The evaluators of the Birmingham programme (Turning Point) asked victims what they thought about not having their day in court. They were in general fine with it. In fact, as long as someone called them to explain why the deferred prosecution programme was recommended in their case, they were much more satisfied (23% more were satisfied/very satisfied) with it than those whose case went to court. And their respect for the justice system as a whole was more

positive if their crime went through deferred prosecution than if it was prosecuted.

Something that satisfies victims may still not work – they could just be persuaded by a good "salesman" to think that deferred prosecution is effective. But in fact it is. In stark reoffending figures, the difference between deferred prosecution and prosecution is not that big but, if the crime harm is measured, the difference is significant. So for those who went on the deferred prosecution programme, each offender on average created 34% less crime harm afterwards. Deferred prosecution also costs considerably less than the court process, for the police and everyone else.

A recent academic study looked at a drop in the diversion rate in the state of Victoria in Australia – this dropped by half over 10 years, from 25.6% to 12.5%. Based on previous International studies on the greater effectiveness of diversion than prosecution, the authors estimated that "at least 8 crimes per year per 100 offenders could have been prevented among the missed opportunity cases. Using a population rate of offending, the estimate equals 1474 crimes that could have been prevented. Using the offending population rate, we estimate that 37,050 offences could have been prevented". The diversion rate in England and Wales has also dropped significantly in the last ten years.

But there is another really positive aspect of deferred prosecution, for which the evidence has only recently been published – its positive effect on some BAME groups. The Turning Point evaluation shows that those from the Asian community who completed the deferred prosecution programme created significantly less crime harm (-61% crime harm index days) than those who were prosecuted. The difference versus prosecution was least for those from the black community, but still positive for white programme participants (-16%). As ever we need more research to understand these results, and to identify which aspects of deferred prosecution seem to work best – is it the diversion, the rehabilitation programme or the relationship with the "supervisor" (called a navigator in County Durham)? Does it work better for some crimes than others? Knowing this would help refine what is already proven to be a successful approach.

Mental Health Act Reforms Aim to Tackle High Rate of Black People Sectioned

Aamna Mohdin, Guardian: Reforms to the Mental Health Act will help tackle the disproportionate number of black people sectioned, the government has announced. Black people are more than four times more likely to be detained under the act and more than 10 times more likely to be subject to a community treatment order. The package of reforms includes piloting culturally appropriate advocates so patients from all minority ethnic backgrounds can be better supported to voice their individual needs and allow sectioned people to nominate family members to represent their best interests if they are unable to do so themselves. The proposed changes build on the recommendations made by Sir Simon Wessely's independent review of the Mental Health Act in 2018 and will ensure the act's powers are used in the least restrictive way, the Department of Health and Social Care said. The reforms will also ensure neither autism nor a learning disability are grounds for detention under the act and improve access to community-based mental health support to prevent avoidable sections.

Matt Hancock, the health secretary, said: "I want to ensure our health service works for all, yet the Mental Health Act is now 40 years old. We need to bring mental health laws into the 21st century. Reforming the Mental Health Act is one of our central manifesto commitments, so the law helps get the best possible care to everyone who needs it. "This is a significant moment in how we support those with serious mental health issues, which will give people more autonomy over their care and will tackle disparities for all who access services, in particular for people from minority ethnic backgrounds."

The proposals have been welcomed by mental health advocates, who have described it as an important step forward to treating people with respect and dignity. Abdi Gure, the coordinator of the Hayaan Project, which supports the London Somali community with mental health issues, said: "I am really happy to see the government recommending culturally appropriate advocates as part of their reforms. Our work has shown this to be an effective way of supporting black patients with mental health problems. When this is practised, it has a huge impact on the patient's recovery." Sarah Hughes, Centre for Mental Health chief executive, said: "The need for change could not be clearer. Every year, the number of people who are sectioned grows. While we know this can save lives, increasing use of coercion can also cause lasting trauma and distress. And we continue to see that black people are subjected to much higher levels of coercion at every stage of the system. "We cannot allow this to continue, and we welcome the government's commitment to change it," she said.

Extradition to Italy Barred by Fair Trial Rights' Considerations

District Judge Snow has refused a request from Italy for the extradition of G for offences of inter alia marital rape finding that extradition would not accord with fair trial rights' norms. G's extradition is sought by Italy to serve an aggregate sentence of 4 years and 6 months for offences of marital rape, "ill treatment" and failure to pay alimony dating from 2006. The Judge concluded that G was not informed by the Italian authorities about the most serious allegation of rape. Despite this, the Italian authorities continued to prosecute and convict G in his absence. The Judge found that extradition had to be refused as G was not deliberately absent from his trial in circumstances where Italy would not provide him with a retrial upon extradition. In so doing: The Judge dismissed Italy's arguments that there was a sufficient nexus between the allegation of "ill treatment" - about which G was aware - and the offence of marital rape, for him to be considered deliberately absent for both offences. The Judge accepted the defence expert evidence, provided by Professor Andrea Saccucci, that the Italian legal regime under which G was prosecuted breached Article 6 ECHR, which protects the right to a fair trial. In relation to the offence of failure to pay alimony, extradition was refused as this is not an offence contrary to the law of England and Wales. In relation to the offence of "ill-treatment", the Judge found that extradition would breach the Article 8 ECHR private and family life rights of G and his young children. G was immediately released from custody having been arrested in May 2020.

Deaths During Or Following Police Contact 2019/2020

There were 18 deaths in or following police custody, an increase of one from 2018/19, and in line with the average figure for over the last decade. One death took place within a police custody suite. Three people died at the scene of arrest, seven people were taken ill at the scene of arrest and died in hospital, and six people died in hospital after becoming unwell in a police cell. One person died in hospital after becoming ill in a police vehicle. There were three fatal police shootings, the same figure as the previous year. Two of the shootings were terrorism-related. This year 2020, there were 24 fatalities from the same number of police-related road traffic incidents (RTIs). This represents a reduction of 18 deaths and nine fatal incidents on 2018/19. Of the 24 deaths, 19 were from police pursuit-related incidents, a decrease of 11 from the previous year; three fatalities resulted from emergency response incidents, a decrease of two on 2018/19.

There were 54 apparent suicides following police custody, a decrease of nine on the previous year. The IOPC also investigated 107 other deaths following contact with the police in

'Inexcusable' Failures in Capacity in Forensics Market, Reports Watchdog

Jon Robins, Justice Gap: Failures in capacity in the forensics science market were 'inexcusable' and causing delays for complainants, suspects and witnesses, according to the watchdog. The forensic science regulator, Gillian Tully, in her final report, described her six years' tenure as 'fraught with financial, reputational and capacity problems'. Dr Tully flagged quality issues in a number of areas and , for example, pointed out that no providers in the area of image comparison held the correct accreditation and examples of poor practice were 'numerous and the risk of miscarriage of justice remains'. Digital media investigators had not yet made 'any significant steps towards implementing the required quality standards', the regulator also noted; adding that in some forces they were kept separate from their digital forensics colleagues 'presumably... in an attempt to avoid the adoption of quality standards'.

'If we are to achieve a fully functioning system, with enough capacity to ensure timely delivery, there is also an urgent need for more fundamental change,' said Dr Tully. 'It is inexcusable that the primary impacts of the shortfalls in capacity for toxicology and digital forensics, which have been clear for many years, still fall on the frontline forensic science practitioners. They bear the brunt of the stresses in the system, with consequent risks to their well-being and, potentially, to quality.' The impact on justice was 'even more inexcusable'. She quoted Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services on the rationing of toxicology services which led to 'the inescapable conclusion, that offenders who are suspected of driving while under the influence of drugs are being tolerated and allowed to present a continuing threat to communities. We don't believe that this is acceptable.' The Forensic Science Regulator and Biometrics Strategy Bill is currently making its way through Parliament and would give statutory enforcement powers to the next regulator.

Serving Prisoners Supported by MOJUK: Derek Patterson, Walib Habid, Giovanni Di Stefano, Naweed Ali, Khobaib Hussain, Mohibur Rahman, Tahir Aziz, Roger Khan, Wang Yam, Andrew Malkinson, Michael Ross, Mark Alexander, Anis Sardar, Jamie Green, Dan Payne, Zoran Dresic, Scott Birtwistle, Jon Beere, Chedwyn Evans, Darren Waterhouse, David Norris, Brendan McConville, John Paul Wooton, John Keelan, Mohammed Niaz Khan, Abid Ashiq Hussain, Sharaz Yaqub, David Ferguson, Anthony Parsons, James Cullinene, Stephen Marsh, Graham Coutts, Royston Moore, Duane King, Leon Chapman, Tony Marshall, Anthony Jackson, David Kent, Norman Grant, Ricardo Morrison, Alex Silva, Terry Smith, Hyrone Hart, Warren Slaney, Melvyn 'Adie' McLellan, Lyndon Coles, Robert Bradley, Thomas G. Bourke, David E. Ferguson, Lee Mockble, George Coleman, Neil Hurley, Jaslyn Ricardo Smith, James Dowsett, Kevan & Miran Thakrar, Jordan Towers, Patrick Docherty, Brendan Dixon, Paul Bush, Alex Black, Nicholas Rose, Kevin Nunn, Peter Carine, Paul Higginson, Robert Knapp, Thomas Petch, Vincent and Sean Bradish, John Allen, Jeremy Bamber, Kevin Lane, Michael Brown, Robert William Kenealy, Glyn Razzell, Willie Gage, Kate Keaveney, Michael Stone, Michael Attwooll, John Roden, Nick Tucker, Karl Watson, Terry Allen, Richard Southern, Peter Hannigan.