

# News story: ACMD: avoid Friday prison release to prevent drug relapse and deaths

In its report on the drug-related harms that occur when people move between custody and community, the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) found that many prisoners are released on a Friday, despite this making it more difficult for them to access stable housing, drug treatment and job centres – increasing the chances of a relapse, reoffending and death.

The report follows the ACMD's concern over high levels of harm in the custody-community transition and to find out to what extent previous recommendations had been implemented. It found that in 2017 to 2018 a third (34.5%) of prisoners in England are released without settled accommodation, that just less than a third (32.1%) of those who have drug problems enter community treatment on release, and only 12% of prisoners who have problems with heroin leave prison with naloxone (the medicine which reverses heroin overdose).

The Council's other recommendations include:

- the drug strategy board nominates a minister to lead on improving community-custody transitions for prisoners with complex needs
- the Secretary of State for Justice (England and Wales) and the Cabinet Secretary for Justice (Scotland) take steps to reduce the number of transitions in and out of prison, including by cutting short sentences and prison recalls
- the prison and probation service improve the level of face-to-face, individual support to prisoners preparing for release

Chair of the ACMD, Dr Owen Bowden-Jones, said:

This report identified the substantial harms suffered by those with drug dependency as they transition between custody and the community.

It is paramount that the government makes sure more is done to help prevent vulnerable people from relapsing after their release from prison.

The ACMD's full report can be found on GOV.UK: [Custody and community transitions](#)

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## ACMD: avoid Friday prison release to prevent drug relapse and deaths

Prison services could reduce drug-related harms by avoiding releasing vulnerable prisoners on a Friday, the ACMD has today advised the Home Secretary.

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## News story: CMA clears PayPal / iZettle deal

Both companies provide mobile point of sale (mPOS) devices that enable businesses to take 'offline' payments through a card reader connected to a smartphone or tablet. The 2 companies are also active in the emerging market for 'omni-channel' payment services, through which businesses can take 'offline' and 'online' payments through a single provider.

An initial, Phase 1, investigation by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) had raised concerns that PayPal's purchase of its rival might reduce competition in the supply of mPOS devices in the UK. This led to the deal being referred for a comprehensive, Phase 2, probe. The CMA then announced in April that it had provisionally found the deal should be cleared. Having consulted on this provisional finding, the CMA has now confirmed the merger has been cleared.

The payments services sector is dynamic and evolving. The CMA's investigation, led by an independent group of panel members, considered in detail how competition between the merging businesses would have been likely to develop in future. It reviewed extensive evidence relating to PayPal's rationale for the merger and what the commercial strategies of PayPal and iZettle would have been if the merger had not taken place. It also considered how customers choose between the more novel mPOS devices, and 'traditional' point of sale devices.

This revealed that, while iZettle and PayPal are 2 of the largest suppliers of mPOS devices, their customers are also willing to switch to 'traditional' POS devices. The 2 largest suppliers of payment services to smaller merchants, Worldpay and Barclaycard, account for almost 60% of the market at present and will continue to constrain the merged company.

The merged company will also face significant competition from other mPOS-only players, such as Square and SumUp, which have both grown significantly in recent years.

In omni-channel services, the CMA found that iZettle would only have been able to develop its offering slowly and would have remained a marginal player for the foreseeable future. The CMA also found that other significant competitors would be more important constraints on PayPal.

Further details, including the full text of the Final Report, are available on the [PayPal/iZettle case page](#).

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## **Press release: Fund opens to reduce waste from plastic packaging and textiles**

£4.7 million government fund launched to drive up the recycling of hard-to-recycle materials.

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The government is inviting organisations to apply for funding under a multi-million pound grant scheme to help boost the recycling of plastic packaging and textiles.

From today (Wednesday, 12 June), [organisations in England can apply for government funding](#) for innovative solutions to drive up the recycling of hard-to-recycle plastic packaging such as plastic trays, pots and tubs, plastic films and pouches, as well as funding for innovative projects that boost the recycling of textiles when they have reached the end of their life.

For plastics this could include innovative sorting or segregation equipment, and smarter systems to enable sorting of different polymers. For textiles this could include machinery for recycling textiles, technology for disassembling or sorting textiles, automated processes for removing items from textiles such as zips, and technology to sort textiles by fibre type and colour.

The UK generates around [2.4 million tonnes of packaging waste per year](#). [Around 40% of all plastic produced](#) in the UK is used in the packaging of

goods.

In 2015, there [were 300,000 tonnes of clothing in the UK](#) going to landfill or incineration.

Environment Minister Thérèse Coffey said:

We are committed to going further and faster to reduce, reuse, recycle and cut waste. Valuable waste ending up in landfill makes no sense environmentally or economically.

We are making progress but there is more to do, and I encourage organisations to apply for our multi-million pound grant to drive-up the recycling of these valuable materials.

Today's announcement builds on the [government's landmark Resources and Waste Strategy](#) – which sets out how following the [overhaul of the packaging regulations which will see producers pay the full cost of managing their waste](#) the government will place greater responsibility on producers to make their items easier to reuse and recycle. [Textiles is a key priority area for action](#).

The government has recently announced a range of measures to eliminate all avoidable plastic waste including [taking over 15 billion plastic bags out of circulation](#) with our 5p plastic bag charge with plans [to raise the charge to 10p and extend it to all retailers](#).

We have also [confirmed a ban on plastic straws, drinks stirrers, and plastic stemmed cotton buds in April 2020](#), introduced a world-leading ban on microbeads, and have [consulted on introducing a deposit return scheme](#) to drive up the recycling of drinks bottles and cans.

Earlier this year, [the government consulted on a world-leading tax on plastic packaging](#) which does not contain a minimum of 30% recycled content from April 2022 to cut the use of virgin plastics and encourage more sustainable packaging.

The [UK government has also committed a £61.4 million package of funding](#) to boost global research and help countries across the Commonwealth stop plastic waste from entering the oceans. Building on this, [the government's £20 million Plastics Research and Innovation Fund encourages researchers and businesses to develop new innovations](#) that can bring changes in the UK's plastics manufacturing and consumption patterns, which will be key to developing a cleaner, greener economy [through the Industrial Strategy](#).