

## **Press release: Repeat offender double glazing boss disqualified for 11 years**

Court bans Telford-based double glazing director for a further 11 years after running a company while already disqualified

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## **Press release: Period Poverty Taskforce – Minister announces next steps on Menstrual Hygiene Day**

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## **Press release: Offender rehabilitation drive boosted by new R0TL rules**

One year on from the launch of the prisons Education and Employment Strategy, 230 additional businesses, including Pret A Manger and Greene King, have joined the MoJ's flagship offender work placement scheme, the New Futures Network (NFN).

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## **Press release: Period Poverty Taskforce – Minister announces next steps on Menstrual Hygiene Day**



**On Menstrual Hygiene Day (28 May) Minister for Women and Equalities, Penny Mordaunt, has announced two co-chairs to help lead the government's new Period Poverty Taskforce.**

- Taskforce to be co-chaired by Plan International UK, Procter & Gamble and Minister for Women & Equalities, Penny Mordaunt
- Group to tackle stigma and education around periods, alongside accessibility of period products
- News comes after recent government announcements on free period products in schools, hospitals and police custody

Plan International UK, Procter and Gamble, and the Government Equalities Office (GEO) will work together with charities and businesses across a range of sectors to develop a comprehensive and sustainable response to period poverty in the UK.

In recent months the government has announced that period products in schools, hospitals and police custody will be free for women and girls. Taskforce will build on this work, looking at where accessibility is an issue for women and girls, but also seeking to tackle the issue of stigma and education around periods.

Research from co-chair of the Taskforce, Plan International UK highlights that tackling stigma and shame around periods is just as important as creating access to related products, the research shows:

- 71% of girls reported that they had felt embarrassed when buying period products,
- 1 in 7 even girls have also admitted that they "didn't know what was happening" when they started their periods
- 27% of girls have overused a sanitary product as they couldn't afford a fresh one

Minister for Women and Equalities, Penny Mordaunt said:

"For too long women and girls in the UK have faced unnecessary adversity around their periods, that is why we have formed this new Taskforce.

"Our two new co-Chairs, Plan International UK and Procter & Gamble, have

already produced impressive work around the country to improve access to period products and change old-fashioned attitudes to menstruation and break down taboos.

“Now, working together on the Period Poverty Taskforce, we can take action to create a strong and viable solution to period poverty in the UK.”

Tanya Barron, Chief Executive at Plan International UK, said:

“We warmly welcome the chance to co-chair the Government’s new Taskforce committed to tackling period poverty and stigma.

“This is a golden opportunity to tackle the root causes of period poverty here in the UK, namely the high-cost of period products, lack of education and the stigma and shame that surrounds periods.

“As co-chairs, we’ll be working hard to make sure the voices of UK girls are heard and that any course of action reflects their needs and concerns. Together we can put an end to period poverty and stigma once and for all.”

Aimee Goldsmith, Company Communications Director, Procter & Gamble Northern Europe said:

“Always aims to champion girls’ confidence through puberty education, access to products and tackling societal barriers. This ambition is in line with the Government’s new Taskforce initiative and we feel privileged to be able to work together to eliminate period poverty in a sustainable way.

“We look forward to co-chair the Taskforce and partner with all participants across sectors to build on the breadth of knowledge and experience, in order to empower girls in the UK to unleash their full potential. Without period poverty and taboos holding them back.”

The Taskforce will also look at the evidence and data around how period poverty affects different groups in society, as well as considering the role of education, access, costs, communications and role models in shifting social attitudes.

Alongside Plan International and Procter & Gamble the Taskforce will include members from grass-root organisations, businesses, public bodies and consult with academics, social enterprises, retailers and manufacturers, using their expertise to drive this vital work.

Further information:

Research by Plan International found that:

- 79% of girls and young women have experienced symptoms linked to their period that concerned them but they haven’t seen a doctor or health professional
- 27% haven’t seen a doctor or health professional about their concerns because they felt too embarrassed
- 22% in the UK feel comfortable talking about their period with their

teacher

- One in 10 girls have been asked not to talk about their periods with their mother

Notes to Editors:

- Announced shortly before International Women's Day, the Taskforce is the first of its kind in the UK. It will meet for the first time shortly
  - The Taskforce areas are: tackling stigma and shame through education, working on data and evidence, and improving access to period products for all women and girls
  - Minister for Women and Equalities, Penny Mordaunt launched the seed-funding for the Period Poverty Taskforce in March this year. Her speech can be found [here in full](#)
  - Plan International data comes from Opinion Research of representative weighted sample of 1,000 girls and young women aged 14-21, carried out online between 22-24 August 2017 and 23 February to 2 March 2018
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## **Press release: Offender rehabilitation drive boosted by new ROTL rules**

- One year since prison Education and Employment Strategy, 230 additional businesses have joined the New Futures Network to hire ex-offenders
- 81% of firms say employing offenders has helped their business
- New rules to widen prisoner access to employment through widened use of release on temporary licence (ROTL)
- Evidence shows ex-prisoners in work less likely to reoffend – cutting the £15 billion cost to the economy

Also announced today is a change in rules to allow prison Governors greater autonomy to grant Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) to offenders following a rigorous risk assessment. This will allow them more opportunities to work and train with employers while serving their sentence and increase their chances of securing an immediate job on release.

[Research shows](#) time spent working in the community before release significantly reduces a prisoner's likelihood of reoffending – cutting the £15 billion cost to the taxpayer each year and helping to keep the public safer. Ex-offenders in employment are up to nine percentage points less likely to commit further crime.

The drive to reduce reoffending through rehabilitation has worked alongside investment of hundreds of millions of pounds since the beginning of 2018 to increase stability in prisons – with latest statistics showing an 11% fall in violence in the last quarter of 2018 compared to the previous quarter.

Earlier this month, the Justice Secretary announced a fundamental reform of the probation system to ensure that rehabilitation, support into work, treatment and housing is continued for ex-offenders when they leave prison.

The changes to probation will also ensure that community sentences focused on security and rehabilitation and will enable a move away from ineffective short prison sentences – after which two thirds of offenders go on to commit more crime – and allow more effective treatment for issues such as addiction and mental health problems.

As part of the wider drive to enhance rehabilitation, the Education and Employment Strategy, launched in May 2018, set out a series of measures to boost prisoners' skills while in custody and improve their chances of securing work on release. One year on from this:

- More than 230 businesses have registered to work with prisons and set offenders on a path to employment. This is further to the 300 businesses around the UK already seeing the benefits of employing ex-offenders.
- Prison Governors have been given greater autonomy to grant Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) to offenders following a thorough risk assessment.
- The New Futures Network was launched in October 2018 as a new specialist part of the Prison Service, to build partnerships between prisons and employers. This is designed to fill local skills gaps in companies by providing job opportunities for men and women on release from custody. The Network will have an employment broker in every geographical prison group by July 2019.
- A new £250,000 construction academy opened at HMP Leeds last week – to equip offenders in Yorkshire with valuable skills ahead of release.
- Jails now have access to the Prison Education Dynamic Purchasing System – giving Governors power to commission services from a wide variety of educational providers, charities and businesses. So far more than 230 suppliers have successfully been added to the system and 30 contracts have been awarded by Governors.
- Suppliers will aim to drive more offenders into the classroom with nearly 88% of prisoners achieving a recognised award from educational bodies in the 2017/18 academic year.

New polling from YouGov suggests that businesses are supportive of employing those with a criminal record:

- 81% of employers agree that employing ex-offenders has helped their business
- two thirds of companies that employ ex-offenders would recommend others do the same
- 79% of people think that businesses employing ex-offenders are making a positive contribution to society
- three out of four people would be comfortable buying from a business that employs ex-offenders

Research shows time spent working in the community before release significantly reduces a prisoner's likelihood of reoffending – cutting the

£15 billion cost to the taxpayer each year and helping to keep the public safe. Ex-offenders in employment are up to nine percentage points less likely to commit further crime.

Justice Secretary David Gauke said:

Broadening access to training and work opportunities is a vital part of our strategy to steer offenders away from a life of crime and ultimately keep the public safe.

Many organisations are recognising the value of giving offenders a second chance, and we have carefully listened to their feedback before making these changes.

I urge more businesses to join this movement and help ex-offenders turn their backs on crime for good.

As part of the Education and Employment Strategy, prison Governors now have greater flexibility to get prisoners from open and women's jails into the workplace.

Offenders will now be eligible for paid work immediately after they have passed a tough risk assessment. Getting offenders into work earlier will boost their prospects of securing immediate work on release.

Leading hospitality and hotel business Greene King has committed to employing 50 offenders by the end of 2019, working with prisons in the North West and London.

Explaining how employing offenders through ROTL can benefit their business, Greene King's Greg Sage, said:

We've started working with ex-offenders and people coming towards the end of their sentence because it allows us to secure a pipeline of talent coming into our business, at the same time as helping people start again as they leave prison.

In the hospitality industry there is a nationwide shortage of kitchen staff – kitchen managers and chefs particularly – that we at Greene King are not immune to.