

Lord Chancellor sets out reform vision for justice

- work continues to increase confidence in criminal justice system
- landmark reforms already making progress to build back safer
- Prison White Paper to help cut crime and reduce reoffending

Speaking at the Centre for Social Justice, he set out how the government is transforming criminal justice and delivering on its promise to make the system safer and fairer.

Huge strides forward have already been made, Mr Buckland said, with landmark reforms including a bigger and better probation service, changes to the investigation and prosecution of rape and sexual assault, the largest prison-build programme in over a century, as well as a huge investment in victims' services and a commitment to deliver a Victims' Law.

Speaking at the event, Lord Chancellor, Robert Buckland QC MP, said:

Making change in a large, operational department like the Ministry of Justice – where there are so many moving parts – is like trying to turn a fleet of ships together at the same time. Our aim is to get each one of them into formation, moving in harmony, towards a more just Britain of tomorrow.

Despite Covid-19 – the operational challenges, the justice system's contribution to the national effort to save lives, and the sacrifices our many workforces have had to make – we are already beginning to make progress.

Announcing plans for a White Paper, Mr Buckland confirmed there was no going back to pre-Covid regimes as he described a better prison system which would play its role in cutting crime and reducing reoffending.

In his speech, Mr Buckland added:

With this White Paper we want to capture the moment. As we transition back to normality after the global pandemic, it will lay the groundwork for the future of our prison system.

Making a success of the White Paper can and should mean protecting the public from the effects of crime in the short and longer term, while at the same time giving those who want a second chance the opportunity to change their lives for good.

The forthcoming White Paper is anticipated to include trauma-based approaches

to rehabilitation in the women's estate, to support and treat the trauma so often linked to offending behaviour.

It could also explore a 10-year plan to create the next generation of prison places with technology to support prisoners' wellbeing and widen access to education; and a new drug strategy to stop gangs from getting substances into prisons and to help repeat offenders to kick their habits for good.

Further details of the White Paper will be released in due course.