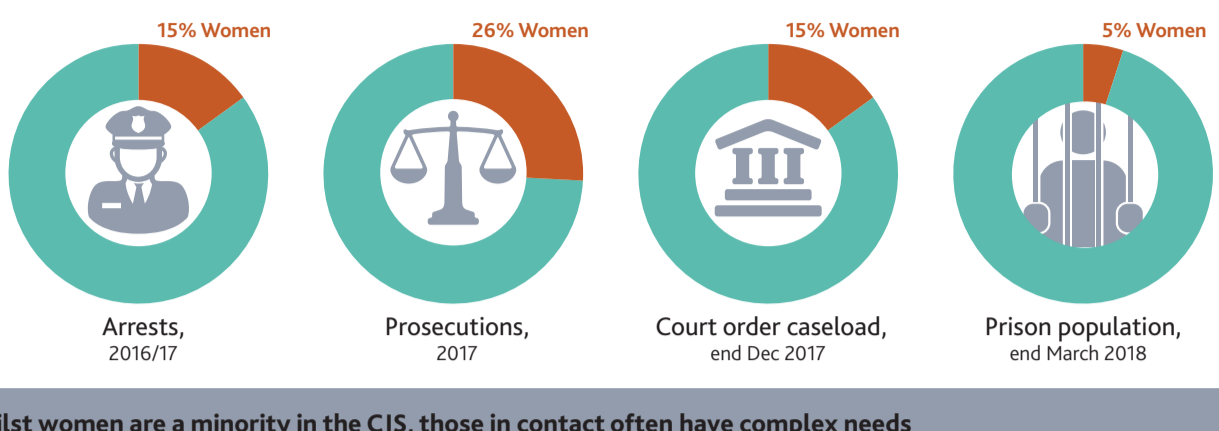


Women in the Criminal Justice System (CJS)

Overview

Women are a minority in each stage of the CJS.



Whilst women are a minority in the CJS, those in contact often have complex needs that criminal justice agencies cannot tackle alone.

Almost **60%** of women in custody and supervised in the community have experienced **domestic violence**.*

Women under community supervision and in custody with an assessment are **twice** as likely to have a **mental health need** than men*.

*of those with an assessment, 30 June 2017

An estimated **24-31%** of female offenders have **dependent children** (Women cautioned or convicted in 2012)

Almost **half (48%)** of female prisoners said they committed their offence to **support the drug use** of someone else compared with **22%** of male prisoners. (2005/06 prisoner survey)

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) women are over-represented in the CJS and experience even worse outcomes than those for other women; a 'double disadvantage'.

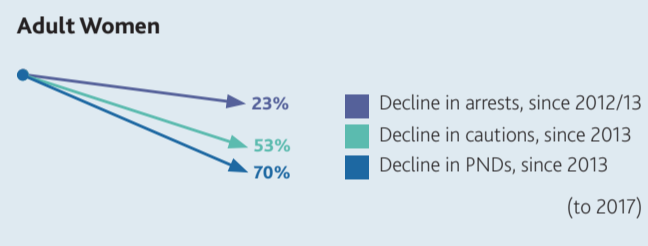
Both **black and mixed ethnic** women are more than **twice** as likely to be **arrested** than white women. (2014)

The odds of imprisonment are **28% higher** for **BAME** women compared to white women (**50%** higher for BAME men compared to white men). (2015)

Early Intervention: Fewer women coming into the criminal justice system

There are opportunities to intervene earlier to identify and address vulnerabilities that lead to offending and, where appropriate to do so, divert women away from the CJS.

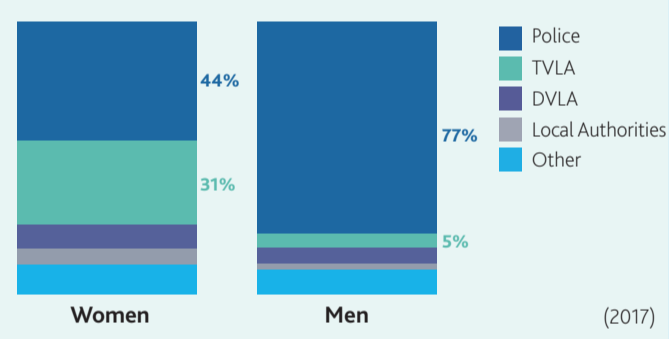
The number of female offenders given out of court disposals (OOCs) has **declined** at a **greater rate** than the fall in arrests (also the case for men).



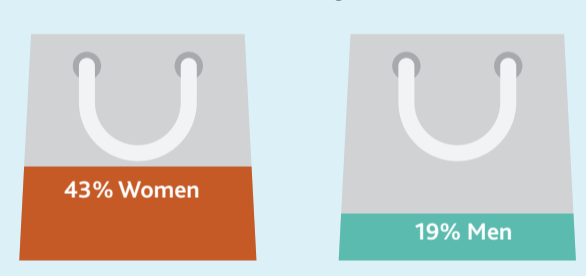
About **1 in 5** of those engaging with **liaison and diversion** schemes are women. (2016/17)



Over **half** of female defendants are prosecuted by bodies other than the police.



Shoplifting accounts for a **substantial** proportion of sentences given to women for indictable/triable either way offences. (2017)



Community Solutions: Fewer women in custody (especially on short-term sentences) and a greater proportion of women managed in the community successfully

There are a number of women who, provided they were given the right support, could be more safely and effectively managed in the community.

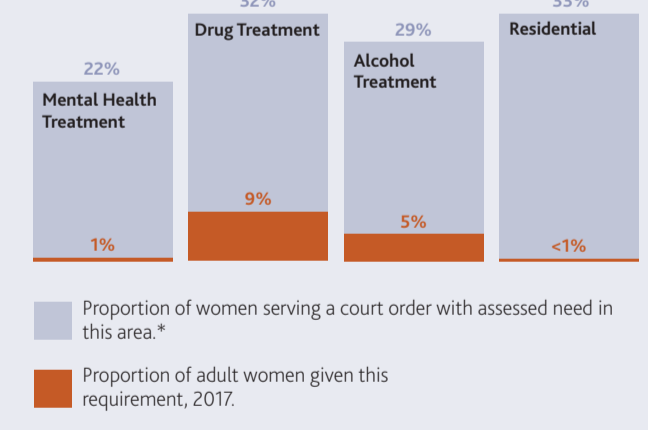
About **9 in 10** women in prison on remand or serving <12m are **low/medium risk of serious harm***.



Almost **three quarters (72%)** of women sentenced to custody were sentenced to **six months or less**, compared with **56%** of men. (2017)



Treatment and residential requirements appear **underused**, given assessed needs.



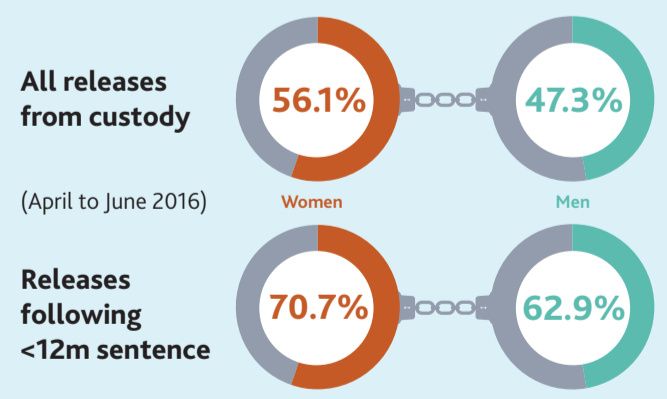
Among similar female offenders, those given a court order are **5 percentage points** less likely to reoffend **within one year** than those given a **short custodial sentence**.



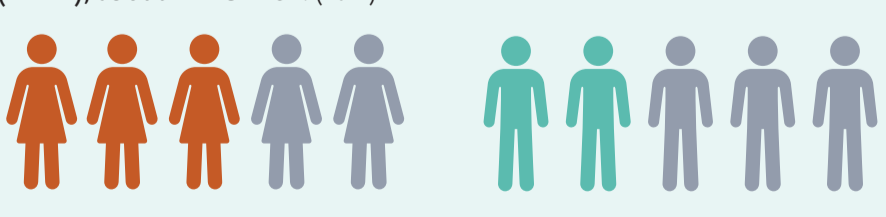
Outcomes on release from prison are poor.

Between April and end Dec 2017, **39%** of women allocated to **CRCs and NPS** were entering unsettled accommodation on release.

The **reoffending rate** on release from prison remains **too high**, particularly following short sentences.



Reflecting the type of sentences women receive, about **3 in 5 women recalled** are recalled after serving a short sentence (<12m), about **2 in 5 men**. (2017)



Better Custody: Better conditions for those in custody

The impact on women in custody and their families can be significant.

The rate of **self harm** incidents in prison is nearly **5 times** as high for women than men. (2017)

Only around **1 in 4** imprisoned **mothers** reported that their **children lived** with their partner during their imprisonment, compared with around **9 in 10** imprisoned fathers. (2003 and 2004 prisoner surveys)

About **650** women are held more than **100 miles** from home (out of a population of c.3,900). (31 May 2018)

