



**This analysis looked at the reoffending behaviour of 46 people who took part in the Amber Foundation programme. The results show that those who took part in the programme were less likely to reoffend than those who did not. More people would need to be available for analysis in order to determine the effect on the frequency of reoffending and time to first reoffence. However, this should not be taken to mean that the programme fails to affect it.**

The Amber Foundation aims to provide a safe and nurturing environment for young homeless people with complex needs at three community based residential centres located in Devon, Wiltshire and Surrey as well as providing 24-hour support across the UK. The programme's objective is to help young people find accommodation, gain employment and to reduce reoffending.

This analysis of the Amber Foundation programme measured proven reoffences in a one-year period for a 'treatment group' of 46 offenders who received support from the Amber Foundation between 2013 and 2015, and a much larger 'comparison group' of similar offenders who did not take part. These measurements were used to estimate the impact that the programme would be expected to have on the reoffending behaviour of **any people who are similar to those in the analysis**.

The 46 people who were eligible to be included in the main analysis were from a group of 99 records submitted to the Justice Data Lab. The effects of the programme on those who were not analysed may be different to the effects on those who were.

### Overall measurements of the treatment and comparison groups

For those in the **treatment** group, the equivalent of:

 **24** out of 100 people committed a proven reoffence within a one-year period (a rate of 24%). This is **22 people fewer** than in the comparison group, per 100 people.

 **111** proven reoffences were committed per 100 people during the year (a frequency of 1.11 offences per person). This is **54 fewer offences** than the comparison group, per 100 people.

 Time to first reoffence has not been included as a headline result, as the low number of reoffenders used to calculate the measure (11 people) could provide misleading results.

For those in the **comparison** group, the equivalent of:

**46** out of 100 people committed a proven reoffence within a one-year period (a rate of 46%).

**165** proven reoffences were committed per 100 people during the year (a frequency of 1.65 offences per person).

## Overall estimates of the impact of the intervention

For any **100** typical people who receive the intervention, compared with any **100** similar people who do not receive it:

 The number of people who commit a proven reoffence during one year after release could be **lower by between 9 and 35 people**. This is a **statistically significant result**.

 The number of proven reoffences committed during the year could be **lower by as many as 122 offences or higher by as many as 14 offences**. More people would need to be available for analysis in order to determine the direction of this difference.

### **What you can say about the one-year reoffending rate:**

✓ "This analysis provides evidence that, for every 100 participants, the Amber Foundation programme is likely to decrease the number of proven reoffenders during a one-year period by between 9 and 35 people."

### **What you cannot say about the one-year reoffending rate:**

✗ "This analysis shows that the Amber Foundation programme decreases the number of proven reoffenders during a one-year period by 35 people for every 100 participants."

### **What you can say about the one-year reoffending frequency:**

✓ "This analysis provides evidence that, for every 100 participants, the Amber Foundation programme may decrease the number of proven reoffences during a one-year period by up to 122 reoffences or increase it by up to 14 reoffences."

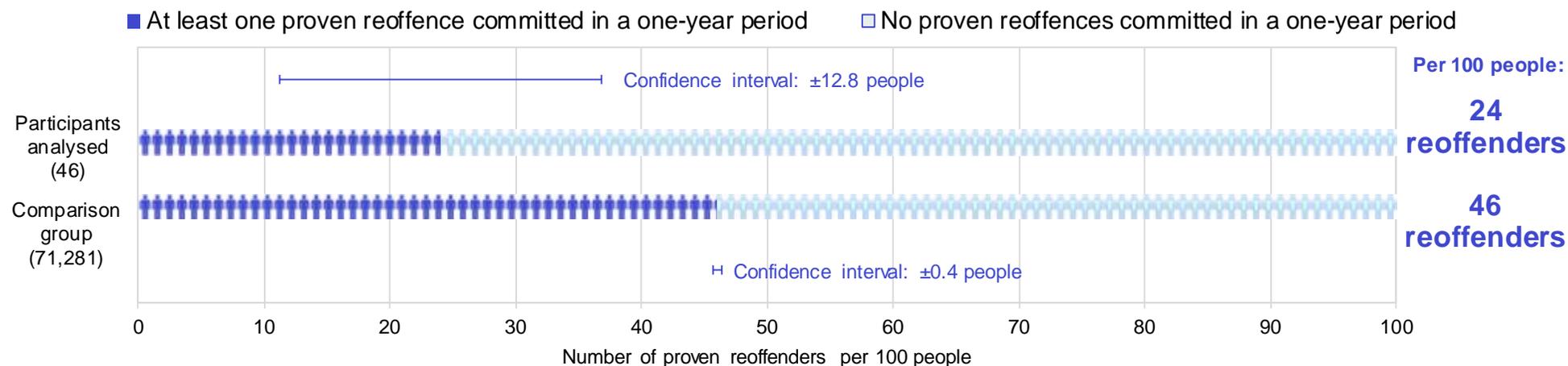
### **What you cannot say about the one-year reoffending frequency:**

✗ "This analysis shows that the Amber Foundation programme has no effect on the number of proven reoffences committed by its participants during a one-year period."

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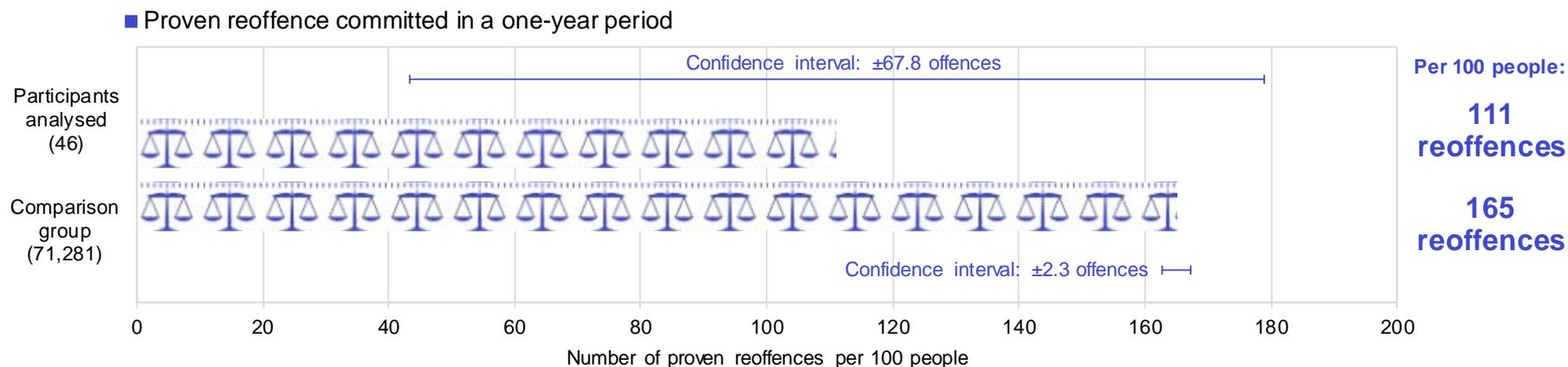
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## One-year proven reoffending rate after participation with the Amber Foundation



**Significant difference between groups**

## One-year proven reoffending frequency after participation with the Amber Foundation



**Non-significant difference between groups**

## **Amber Foundation programme: in their own words**

“Based at three regional centres, providing 24-hour support, Amber offers a safe and nurturing environment for homeless, unemployed young people. We encourage positive and lasting behaviour change through a mix of active participation in our programme, wider community engagement and a focus on residents’ strengths and interests. Where appropriate we also facilitate counselling and other bespoke support. Ultimately our aim is to help young people move on to sustainable work, a secure home and fulfilling lives that are free from crime.

We work in small teams and focus on four key areas – accommodation; employment; health and wellbeing; fun and participation. Within a core weekly timetable, our staff deliver a comprehensive programme of activities and training that includes practical life skills such as cooking, cleaning and budgeting and more creative activities such as art and music. We place a strong emphasis on peer support, personal fitness and outdoor activities and encourage all our residents to get involved in local community projects. In addition, when they are ready, many of them take part in volunteering projects – both at home and abroad.

We offer specific training and accreditation in adult literacy and numeracy, tenancy and housing related issues, health and safety and basic food hygiene etc. And for those nearing the end of their time at Amber we also concentrate on CVs, interview techniques and work experience with local and regional employers.

We have approximately 30 young people within each of our three centres at any one time, residents are divided into small teams (usually 7 or 8 maximum) with the support of a Team Leader who is a member of staff and acts as their key worker and mentor during their time at Amber. There are no fixed timescales at Amber as each young person has a unique set of needs and potential - the length of stay therefore varies from a few months to two years (with an average of 6 months). However, from the point of referral, Team Leaders take responsibility for the development and eventual moving on of each of their team members; they carry out a needs assessment and then work closely with Amberteers to create their individually tailored action plan - reviewed at weekly one to ones.”

## **Amber Foundation's response to the Justice Data Lab analysis**

“The Amber Foundation is grateful for the Ministry of Justice Data Lab's analysis of our residential programme. We are hugely encouraged by the data for the one-year reoffending rate that shows a significant reduction in reoffending (24% vs 46% for non- participants).

Behind any statistics, there is always a more complex story to tell and the hard work, determination and perseverance of young people to affect positive change in their life are key components of the success of any programme, as are our highly committed and resilient staff teams. We hope this report will be of great encouragement to our staff, as well as to our supporters, and to young people who are considering joining our programme.

Amber's starting point is to look not only at barriers to change but also, and perhaps more importantly, the aspirations and potential of young people who have found themselves in a position of great disadvantage. Amber has been around for 23 years and our experience has shown us that given the right level of encouragement, support, space and most importantly, time - many of the young people who attend our centres choose to build positive futures for themselves.

We would like to thank those organisations who encouraged us to explore our impact measurement more purposefully over the last few years as their advice was invaluable. With these very encouraging results, we will continue to look at more ways of developing and understanding our impact over the coming months and years to inform and expand our future provision.”

## The results in detail

This analysis controlled for offender demographics and criminal history and the following risks and needs: accommodation, employment history, education, relationships, drug and alcohol use, mental health and attitudes towards offending.

### Analyses

- 1. National analysis:** treatment group matched to offenders across England and Wales using demographics, criminal history and individual risks and needs. Whilst the Amber Foundation is based in the South and South West, they support young people across the UK so no regional comparison group has been drawn.

Size of treatment and comparison groups for reoffending rate and frequency analyses provided below (the 'time to first reoffence' analyses focus on those who reoffend only):

Treatment Group Size	Reoffenders in treatment group	Comparison Group Size	Reoffenders in comparison group
46	11	71,281	20,324

In each analysis, the **three headline measures** of one-year reoffending were analysed (see results in Tables 1-3):

1. Rate of reoffending
2. Frequency of reoffending
3. Time to first reoffence

### Significant results

#### One measure shows a significant result:

- The national analysis provides significant evidence that the intervention **decreases the number of people who re-offend** ([Table 1](#)).

Tables 1-3 show the overall measures of reoffending. Rates are expressed as percentages and frequencies are expressed per person. The average time to first reoffence includes reoffenders only.

*Table 1: Proportion of people who committed a proven reoffence in a one-year period after completing the Amber Foundation programme, compared with a matched comparison group*

Analysis	Number in treatment group	Number in comparison group	One-year proven reoffending rate				p-value
			Treatment group rate (%)	Comparison group rate (%)	Estimated difference (% points)	Significant difference?	
<b>National</b>	46	71,281	24	46	-9 to -35	Yes	0.001

*Table 2: Number of proven reoffences committed in a one-year period by people who completed the Amber Foundation programme, compared with a matched comparison group*

Analysis	Number in treatment group	Number in comparison group	One-year proven reoffending frequency (offences per person)				p-value
			Treatment group frequency	Comparison group frequency	Estimated difference	Significant difference?	
<b>National</b>	46	71,281	1.11	1.65	-1.22 to +0.14	No	0.11

*Table 3: Average time to first proven reoffence in a one-year period for people who completed the Amber Foundation programme and who committed a proven reoffence, compared with a matched comparison group*

The time to first reoffence between participants and the comparison group is based on a group of only 11 participants. A larger group of reoffenders (usually a minimum of 30) would be required to calculate a meaningful estimate of the time to first reoffence, and to more confidently determine any effect of the Amber Foundation programme on this measure.

Area	Number in treatment group	Number in comparison group	Average time to first proven reoffence within a one-year period, for reoffenders only (days)				p-value
			Treatment group time	Comparison group time	Estimated difference	Significant difference?	
<b>National</b>	11	20,324	133	150	-73 to +40	No	0.53

## Profile of the treatment group

The Amber Foundation programme is a community based residential programme working with those on community or probation orders and those who have been released from custody. The three residential centres are located in Devon, Wiltshire and Surrey but 24 hour support is also provided to help young people from across the UK. Information on those who were included in the treatment group for the analysis is below, compared with the characteristics of those who could not be included in the analysis.

### Participants included in analysis (46 offenders – national analysis)

- 87% male, 13% female
- 87% white, 11% black, 2% asian, 13% other/unknown ethnicity
- 98% UK nationals, 2% non-UK nationals
  
- Aged 19 to 31 at the time of index offence (mean age 23 years)
  
- Sentence type:
  - Prison sentence 43%
  - Community order 17%
  - Out of court disposal 13%
  - Fine 13%
  - Suspended sentence order 9%
  - Conditional discharge and other 4%

### Participants not included in analysis (44 offenders with available data)

- 89% male, 11% female
- 98% white, 2% unknown ethnicity
- 95% UK nationals, 5% unknown nationality

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Information on index offences is not available for this group, as they could not be linked to a suitable sentence.

For the **8 people** without any records in the reoffending database, no personal information is available.

Information on individual risks and needs was available for 30 people in the national treatment group (65%), recorded near to the time of their original conviction. Among these people, it is estimated that:

- 63% had some or significant problems with difficulties in coping
- 47% were unemployed
- 43% had significant problems with violent behaviour related to alcohol use at any time
- 37% had significant problems with suitability of accommodation

## Matching the treatment and comparison groups

The analysis matched a comparison group to the relevant treatment group. A summary of the matching quality is as follows:

- The majority of variables were well matched including mean age at index date, the court outcome and sentence type for the index offence and the number of previous criminal convictions and custodial sentences.
- The groups were reasonably well matched on several variables including ethnicity and some criminal history related variables.
- The two groups appear poorly matched on nationality and robbery and drug-related offences. However, these standardised differences can occur due to small numbers in the group. Hence, the standardised differences should be considered alongside the distributions of each characteristic.

Further details of group characteristics and matching quality, including risks and needs recorded by the Offender Assessment System (OASys), can be found in the Excel annex accompanying this report.

This report is also supplemented by a general annex, which answers frequently asked questions about Justice Data Lab analyses and explains the caveats associated with them.

## Numbers of people in the treatment and comparison groups

99 records, relating to 98 people, were submitted for analysis by the Amber Foundation



**98**

4 people (4%) were excluded because they could not be identified on the Police National Computer (PNC)



**94**

4 people (4%) were excluded because they did not have a record in the reoffending database at all. A further 35 (35%) were removed as they had started receiving support from the Amber Foundation more than 6 months after receiving a community sentence, which would bias the one-year reoffending period too much.



**55**

2 people (2%) were excluded because they had committed at least one proven sexual offence before starting the programme, so their reoffending patterns are expected to be different to others. 1 person (1%) was removed as the reoffending record matched was outside the confirmed age range that the Amber Foundation work with.



**52**

5 people (5%) were removed as they had reoffended before their time with the Amber Foundation had started. 1 person (1%) could not be matched to a suitable record in the comparison group. The treatment group contained 47% of the participants originally submitted.



**46**

**National treatment  
group**

(Comparison group:  
71,281 records)

## Contact points

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General information about the official statistics system of the United Kingdom is available from

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