



This analysis looked at the reoffending behaviour of 249 men participating with the Keyworking programme from Only Connect (OC). It covers those who began the programme between January 2018 and December 2021. The overall results do not show that the programme had a statistically significant effect on a person's reoffending behaviour. A previous analysis was published in April 2014, covering a separate cohort and a variation of the programme. This can be found in the Justice Data Lab statistics collection on GOV.UK.

Only Connect work with men and women in prison or in the community in London and the South East, with the aim of helping them to live crime-free lives. The Keyworking programme aims to help individuals ensure the key things are in place to help get them into employment following offending. This analysis only considers males as there were too few females within the cohort to analyse separately.

The headline analysis in this report measured proven reoffences in a one-year period for a 'treatment group' of 249 offenders who received support some time between 2018 and 2021, and for a much larger 'comparison group' of similar offenders who did not receive it. The analysis estimates the impact of the support from Only Connect on reoffending behaviour.

### Overall measurements of the treatment and comparison groups

For **100** typical men in the **treatment** group, the equivalent of:

**27** of the 100 men committed a proven reoffence within a one-year period (a rate of 27%), **1 man fewer** than in the comparison group.

**64** proven reoffences were committed by these 100 men during the year (a frequency of 0.6 offences per person), **9 offences fewer** than in the comparison group.

**184** days was the average time before a reoffender committed their first proven reoffence, **18 days later** than the comparison group.

For **100** typical men in the **comparison** group, the equivalent of:

**28** of the 100 men committed a proven reoffence within a one-year period (a rate of 28%).

**73** proven reoffences were committed by these 100 men during the year (a frequency of 0.7 offences per person).

**166** days was the average time before a reoffender committed their first proven reoffence.



## Overall estimates of the impact of the intervention

For 100 typical men who receive support, compared with 100 similar men who do not receive it:



The number of men who commit a proven reoffence within one year could be **lower by as many as 7 men, or higher by as many as 4 men**. More men would need to be available for analysis in order to determine the direction of this difference.



The number of proven reoffences committed during the year could be **lower by as many as 29 offences, or higher by as many as 12 offences**. More men would need to be available for analysis in order to determine the direction of this difference.



On average, the time before an offender committed their first proven reoffence could be **shorter by as many as 6 days, or longer by as many as 43 days**. More men 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 does not provide clear evidence on whether support from Only Connect increases or decreases the number of participants who commit a proven reoffence in a one-year period. There may be a number of reasons for this and it is possible that an analysis of more participants would provide such evidence.”

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

“This analysis provides evidence that support from Only Connect increases / decreases / has no effect on the reoffending rate of its participants.”

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

“This analysis does not provide clear evidence on whether support from Only Connect increases or decreases the number of proven reoffences during a one-year period. There may be a number of reasons for this and it is possible that an analysis of more participants would provide such evidence.”

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

“This analysis provides evidence that support from Only Connect increases / decreases / has no effect on the number of proven reoffences committed during a one-year period by its participants.”

### ✓ What you can say about the time to first reoffence:

“This analysis does not provide clear evidence on whether support from Only Connect shortens or lengthens the average time to first proven reoffence. There may be a number of reasons for this and it is possible that an analysis of more participants would provide such evidence.”

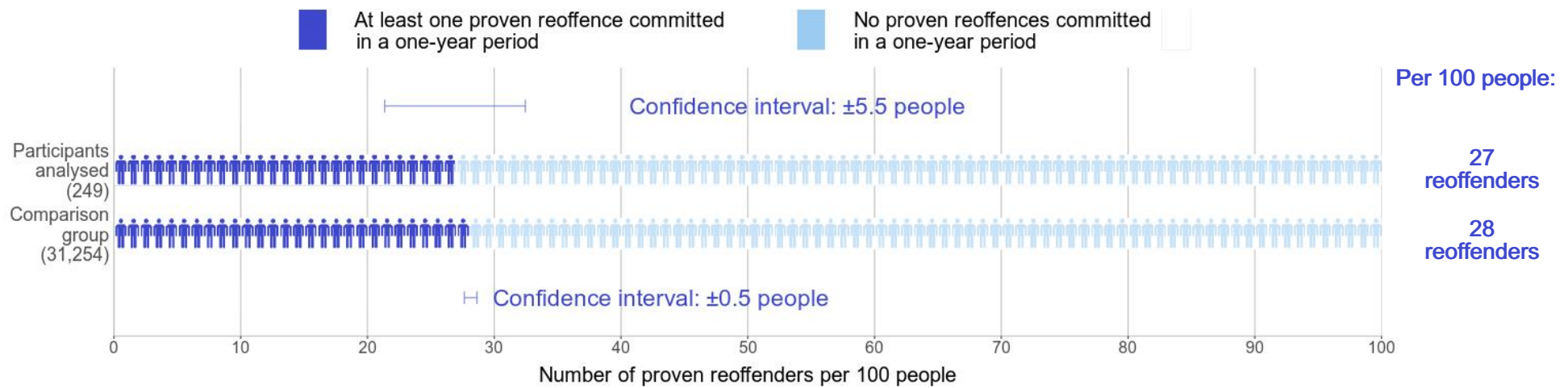
### ✗ What you cannot say about the time to first reoffence:

“This analysis provides evidence that support from Only Connect shortens / lengthens / has no effect on the average time to first proven reoffence for its participants.”

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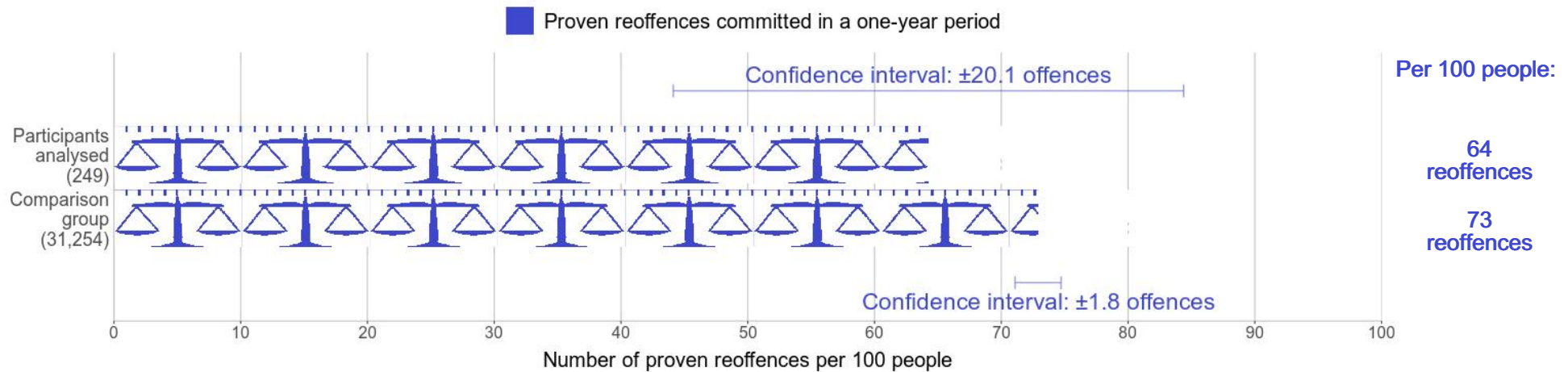
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# One-year proven reoffending rate after support from Only Connect



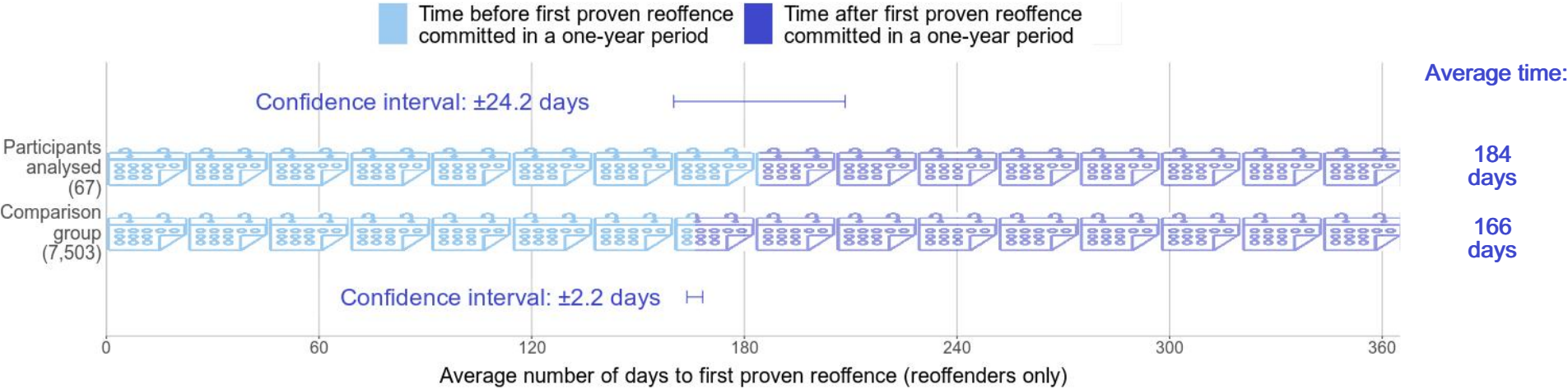
Non-significant difference between groups

# One-year proven reoffending frequency after support from Only Connect



Non-significant difference between groups

# Average time (days) to first proven reoffence after support from Only Connect



Non-significant difference between groups

## Only Connect in their own words

“ Only Connect aims to reduce reoffending for people leaving prison and for those on community sentences, and increase the opportunities and dignity of one of the most marginalised groups in society. Our vision is a connected society, where everyone has the means to make positive choices and live crime-free lives.

For those in prison, we start our programme in prison, about 10 weeks before release, with one-to-one mentoring support (keyworking). Our work continues in the community with one-to-one fortnightly sessions, aimed at supporting our members into good and sustainable jobs.

Our members use their time with us to reflect on the drivers and triggers behind their offences and the type of coping mechanisms that will provide motivation to avoid reoffending. During their one-to-one sessions, we provide practical support with obtaining ID documents, and producing an effective CV and disclosure letter. A striking number of prison leavers have been raised in poverty; we share our knowledge of the welfare system, so they know what they are entitled to, and we help them build a personal budget - especially how to handle debt after prison and court fines. Once the members feel ready, the keyworkers support them with job aspirations, life-work balance, and preparing excellent applications and interviews.

In addition, we deliver music courses in our premises. These courses increase our members' confidence and employability by developing collaborative skills as they work together in writing and producing music; they also gain insights into the music industry, be creative and meet new friends. ”

## **Response from Only Connect to the Justice Data Lab analysis**

“ We are grateful to the Justice Data Lab for their help in doing this analysis. We are a bit disappointed that the original large sample of 578 was reduced to only 249 people who could be analysed.

Since starting this study, we have reviewed our approach and introduced three changes which we hope will both increase engagement and improve outcomes. These improvements are:

- Running a short course called Love & Money at the start of our programme. This addresses both the issue of maintaining relationships in prison and how a couple handles money together.
- Improving the keyworking programme and tying it in with the Love & Money programme.
- Running a short course on employment close to release.

We hope to collect a new dataset and submit it to the JDL in the future. ”

## Results in detail

One analysis was conducted, controlling for offender demographics and criminal history and the following risks and needs: employment history, education, financial history, relationships, drug and alcohol use, mental health, thinking skills and attitudes towards offending.

1. **Regional analysis:** treatment group matched to offenders in London and the South East using demographics, criminal history and individual risks and needs.

The sizes of the treatment and comparison groups for reoffending rate and frequency analyses are provided below. To create a comparison group that is as similar as possible to the treatment group, each person within the comparison group is given a weighting proportionate to how closely they match the characteristics of individuals in the treatment group. The calculated reoffending rate uses the weighted values for each person and therefore does not necessarily correspond to the unweighted figures.

Treatment Group Size	Comparison Group Size	Reoffenders in treatment group	Reoffenders in comparison group (weighted number)
249	31,254	67	7,503 ( 8,795 )

**Three headline measures** of one-year reoffending were analysed, as well as four additional measures (see results in Tables 1-7):

1. **Rate of reoffending**
2. **Frequency of reoffending**
3. **Time to first reoffence**
4. Rate of first reoffence by court outcome
5. Frequency of reoffences by court outcome
6. Rate of custodial sentencing for first reoffence
7. Frequency of custodial sentencing



Tables 1-7 show the overall measures of reoffending. Rates are expressed as percentages and frequencies expressed per person. Tables 3 to 7 include reoffenders only.

**Table 1: Proportion of men who committed a proven reoffence in a one-year period (reoffending rate) after support from Only Connect compared with a matched comparison group**

Number in treatment group	Number in comparison group	Treatment group rate (%)	Comparison group rate (%)	Estimated difference (% points)	Significant difference?	p-value
249	31,254	27	28	-7 to 4	No	0.66

**Table 2: Number of proven reoffences committed in a one-year period (reoffending frequency - offences per person) by men who received support from Only Connect compared with a matched comparison group**

Number in treatment group	Number in comparison group	Treatment group frequency	Comparison group frequency	Estimated difference	Significant difference?	p-value
249	31,254	0.64	0.73	-0.29 to 0.12	No	0.40

**Table 3: Average time (days) to first proven reoffence in a one-year period for men who received support from Only Connect, compared with a matched comparison group (reoffenders only)**

Number in treatment group	Number in comparison group	Treatment group time (days)	Comparison group time (days)	Estimated difference	Significant difference?	p-value
67	7,503	184	166	-6 to 43	No	0.14

**Table 4: Proportion of men supported by Only Connect with first proven reoffence in a one-year period (reoffending rate) by court outcome, compared with similar non-participants (reoffenders only)**

Number in treatment group	Number in comparison group	Court outcome	Treatment group rate (%)	Comparison group rate (%)	Estimated difference (% points)	Significant difference?	p-value
67	7,503	Either way	69	72	-15 to 8	No	0.58
		Summary	25	19	-4 to 17	No	0.23

**Table 5: Number of proven reoffences in a one-year period (reoffending frequency) by court outcome for men supported by Only Connect, compared with similar non-participants (reoffenders only)**

Number in treatment group	Number in comparison group	Court outcome	Treatment group frequency	Comparison group frequency	Estimated difference	Significant difference?	p-value
67	7,503	Either way	1.45	1.68	-0.58 to 0.12	No	0.19
		Summary	0.76	0.68	-0.24 to 0.39	No	0.63

**Table 6: Proportion of men who received a custodial sentence for their first proven reoffence after support from Only Connect, compared with similar non-participants (reoffenders only)**

Number in treatment group	Number in comparison group	Treatment group rate (%)	Comparison group rate (%)	Estimated difference (% points)	Significant difference?	p-value
67	7,503	51	46	-8 to 17	No	0.46

**Table 7: Number of custodial sentences received in a one-year period by men who received support from Only Connect, compared with similar non-participants (reoffenders only)**

Number in treatment group	Number in comparison group	Treatment group frequency	Comparison group frequency	Estimated difference	Significant difference?	p-value
67	7,503	1.18	1.26	-0.52 to 0.36	No	0.72

## Profile of the treatment group

Only Connect offered one-to-one keyworking sessions to individuals. In custodial settings, these sessions lasted approximately an hour and were conducted weekly, typically for the last 8-10 weeks of the individual's sentence. In the community, the keyworking was offered fortnightly until the individual disengaged or asked to stop. The sessions offered support on employment, finance, benefits and debt.

	Participants included in analysis (249 offenders)	Participants not included in analysis (277 offenders with available data)
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	100%	96%
Female	0%	4%
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
White	16%	18%
Black	69%	68%
Asian	11%	11%
Other	2%	1%
Unknown	1%	1%
<b>UK national</b>		
UK nationality	89%	87%
Foreign nationality	8%	10%
Unknown nationality	3%	3%
<b>Index disposal</b>		
Community order	6%	
Suspended sentence order	6%	
Conditional discharge	1%	
Fine	3%	
Other	0%	
Prison	83%	

The individuals in the treatment group were aged 18 to 56 years at the beginning of their one-year period (average age 23).

**Please note totals may not appear to equal the sum of the component parts due to rounding.**

Information on index offences for the 277 participants not included in the analysis is not available, as they could not be linked to a suitable sentence.

For **52 people** without any records in the reoffending database, no personal information is available.

Information on risk was available for 211 males in the reoffending analysis treatment group (85%), recorded near to the time of their original conviction. This information is not complete for all 211 males across all risks considered for this analysis, but where it is known for specific risks, some key findings are shown below.

- 89% had some or significant problems with problem solving
- 92% had some or significant problems with awareness of consequences
- 95% had evidence that their thinking and behaviour linked to offending

## Matching the treatment and comparison groups

The analysis matched the treatment group to a comparison group. A large number of variables were identified and tested for inclusion in the regression models. The matching quality of each variable can be assessed with reference to the standardised differences in means between the matched treatment and comparison groups (see standardised differences annex). Over 95% of variables are categorised as green on JDL's traffic light scale, indicating that the matching quality achieved on the observed variables was very good.

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.

## Additional information on the dataset

### Index dates

The index date is the date at which the follow up period for measuring reoffending begins.

- For males with custodial sentences, the index date is the date they are released from custody.
- For males with a court order (such as a community sentence or a suspended sentence order), the index date is the date when an offender begins the court order.
- For males with non-custodial sentences such as a fine, the index date is the date when the offender received the sentence.

### Participants excluded from the analysis

Only Connect participants who were excluded from the analysis can largely be explained by individuals either not having a relevant adjudication result or not meeting the inclusion criteria for analysis.

Some individuals have participated in the Only Connect programme whilst on remand in prison, which means that they could have accessed the programme but were found not guilty of the offence. To be considered for analysis, the adjudication result must be guilty, as they need to have committed an initial offence to enable a reoffending rate to be measured. Individuals who have been found not guilty are therefore excluded from this analysis.

Some individuals have participated in the programme following their release from prison or after they have received a court order or non-custodial sentence. A maximum inclusion criterion of six months between the index date and intervention start date has been applied to these individuals to ensure the analysis captures any 'treatment effects'. Any participants with intervention dates more than six months from the index date are therefore excluded from the analysis.

### Other considerations

Part of the cohort within this publication overlaps with the COVID-19 pandemic including lockdowns and operational restrictions. It will therefore be affected by the continued recovery of the courts system. Particularly, continued delays in the processing of cases mean that increased numbers of reoffence convictions may fall outside of six-month waiting period and therefore not be counted in these statistics.

## Number of people in the treatment and comparison groups

578 records were submitted for analysis by Only Connect



578

32 (6%) records were excluded from the analyses because they could not be identified on the Police National Computer (PNC), or did not have the relevant adjudication result\*



546

53 (9%) records were excluded because they did not have a record in the reoffending database that corresponded to their period of participation with Only Connect



493

229 (40%) records were excluded because they did not meet inclusion criteria for analysis, or they had previously been convicted of a sexual offence \*\*



264

15 (3%) records were excluded because they did not match during the Propensity Score Matching stage or reoffended prior to intervention start date



249

**Regional treatment group:** 43% of the participants submitted  
(Comparison group: 31,254 records)

\*Adjudication results must be guilty to be considered for analysis, as an individual must have committed an initial offence and have been convicted for it in order for the reoffending rate to be measured.

\*\*Inclusion criteria such as setting a maximum of 6 months between index date and intervention start date and excluding females.

## Further information

### Official Statistics

Our statistical practice is regulated by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR).

OSR sets the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics that all producers of official statistics should adhere to.

You are welcome to contact us directly with any comments about how we meet these standards.

Alternatively, you can contact OSR by emailing [regulation@statistics.gov.uk](mailto:regulation@statistics.gov.uk) or via the OSR website.

### Contact

Press enquiries should be directed to the Ministry of Justice press office.

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