Project title:  **Long-term imprisonment from young adulthood: A longitudinal follow-up study**

Researchers: **Professor Ben Crewe and Dr Susie Hulley (University of Cambridge) and Dr Serena Wright (Royal Holloway, University of London)**

**PRISON-BASED PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET**

**Who are we?**

We are experienced prison researchers, who work at the Institute of Criminology, University of Cambridge, and at Royal Holloway, University of London. We do not work for Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service. Our study is funded independently, by the Economic and Social Research Council.

**Why are we doing this study?**

You might remember that around a decade ago (in 2013/2014) we interviewed you for a study about the experiences of prisoners who are given very long sentences (over 15 years) when they are aged 25 or under. It is also likely that you completed a survey. During this study we discovered a great deal about the experiences of long-term prisoners at a particular point in the sentence.

Now we would like to understand how the experience of long-term imprisonment changes over time. For example, we are interested in the problems you face, and how your relationships and priorities have changed since we last met. We would also like to ask in more detail about some of the interesting themes that emerged in the first study. All of this helps us get a really detailed sense of what it is like to serve a very long period of time in prison.

**What will participation involve?**

Participation will involve an interview in which we will ask you questions about the time since we last interviewed you – about your experience of prison during this period and about your feelings about yourself and your sentence. We will also ask you to complete a survey very similar to the one you filled in last time.

It is possible that, in a few years from now, we will try to interview you again, to see how your situation and feelings have changed. If we wish to contact you at this later date, we will do so by letter – you will then have the choice as to whether you participate in any further research.

**Do I have to take part in the study?**

Your participation is completely voluntary. If you do not want to take part, you do not have to, and this will not disadvantage you in any way.

**Are there any risks involved in taking part?**

During the survey you will be asked about the problems you currently face and in the interview you will be asked to discuss your experiences of your sentence since we last met. Some questions might make you think about things you have not thought about for some time, have not previously thought about at all, or have chosen not to think about. Depending on your circumstances, this might trigger some unhappy or upsetting thoughts. However, you do not have to answer any questions you do not wish to. Time will be given at the end of the interview to discuss anything you may have found difficult and when we collect the survey from you, we will ask you if there is anything you would like to discuss with us. If you find the interview or survey distressing, you can stop at any time. We will give you a note about the support that you can access, and we are happy to advise you on who in the prison you could talk to about your feelings.

**Are there any benefits in taking part?**

We are not allowed to pay you for taking part, but (whether you agree to participate or not) we would like to give you a copy of the book that we wrote, based on the experiences of all of you who took part in the initial study. If you agree to take part, and you are interviewed when you would normally be working or in education, you will not lose any pay. Taking part in the study will not affect your privilege level or any decision about your parole or release.

Many of you who took part in the last study said that you welcomed the chance to speak to someone neutral, who is willing to listen. You might find talking about your experiences useful or helpful. You will also be contributing to our understanding of prison life, including recommendations that we make to policy makers and to practitioners.

**Will what I say be kept confidential?**

The information that you share in the interview will normally be kept completely confidential. However, this does not apply to disclosures related to the following:

* A breach of prison security
* Any further offences you admit to that you have not yet been convicted for
* Any breach of prison rules that occurs during the interview
* Any disclosure that indicates a risk of harm to yourself or to others.

If any such disclosure is made, the researcher will be obliged to pass on any information related to this to a member of prison staff following the interview. In addition, if we are seriously concerned about your mental or psychological wellbeing, we will inform a relevant member of staff (e.g. offender manager, key worker or safer custody officer), without providing details of the content of your interview. In all other circumstances, everything you say will remain confidential. The information you provide will be stored securely, for an indefinite period. The only people who will have access to your interview and survey are the research team and the person who turns the recording of your interview into a typed file.

**Will my contribution remain anonymous?**

If you agree to the researchers using quotes from the interviews, this will normally be done in writing (with quotes written in documents, for example) and will be done in such a way that you cannot be identified. We would also like to ask your permission to use short excerpts from your voice recording, should we want to bring to life your quotes in presentations, for example. Whether we quote you in text or use an audio recording, we will give you a different name and will change any details about your life which would ‘give away’ who you are. In the consent form, you can give permission to us using text quotes only, if you do not feel comfortable with us using voice recordings from your interview.

Your survey results will be reported collectively with the results of all the other participants, so you will not be identified or identifiable.

**How do I agree to take part in the study?**

If you agree to take part, you will be asked to complete a consent form for both the interview and the survey, confirming that you understand what the study involves and have had a chance to discuss any questions with the researcher. For the interview, you will also be asked to state whether you are happy for it to be recorded.

**What if I want to withdraw from the study?**

You are free to stop the interview or decline to take part in any further interviews at any stage during the research process, without having to explain why you want to stop. You do not need to fill in the survey if you prefer not to. You can also insist that the content of your survey and interviews so far is excluded from the study, without having to explain why. You may make this decision at any point up until **31st MAY 2023**, when we will begin writing the research findings. If you make this decision, we will destroy your survey, interview recording and any associated material. Making this decision will not be held against you or disadvantage you in any way.

**Where can I go for support should participation in the research cause me anxiety or distress?**

If, once you have finished the survey or interview, you feel anxious or distressed about some of the things that you have talked about, there are a number of ways that you can access support:

* You can speak to a member of staff or ask the researcher to contact a member of staff who you would like to talk to.
* You can contact a peer support worker, such as a Listener, or we will contact on your behalf another prisoner in your establishment to let them know that you would like their support.
* You can contact the Samaritans, whose number will be printed on posters on your wing.

**What will happen to the results of the study?**

Your interview will contribute to various publications that we will write about the issues we are interested in, including another book, academic articles and articles aimed at people who work in prisons. The findings will also be discussed in other academic publications written by the researchers, and in discussions or presentations with members of Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service, as well as other university researchers. Again, this would be done in such a way that you could not be personally identified.

**What if I want more information about the study, or want to complain about some aspect of it?**

The study has been reviewed by the Ethics Committee of the Institute of Criminology, University of Cambridge. If you would like more information or have any questions or complaints about the research, please feel free to speak to us directly, or write to: HMPPS National Research Committee, 102 Petty France, London SW1H 9AJ.

Text, letter

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Description automatically generated with medium confidence**Thank you for your time in reading this information. If you have any further questions at any stage of the research, please do not hesitate to ask one of us.**

 **Professor Ben Crewe, Dr Susie Hulley and Dr Serena Wright**