

Third Sector Research Centre

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## **Scoping the involvement of third sector organisations in the seven resettlement pathways for offenders**

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# Abstract

## Abstract

The role of the third sector in the resettlement of offenders has become a prominent issue in recent years, and is increasingly recognised as being essential to efforts to reduce re-offending. A reasonable amount of knowledge already exists about public sector organisations which engage in work with offenders through the seven 'pathways' of resettlement: accommodation; education, employment and training; health; drugs and alcohol; finance, benefit and debt; children and families; and attitudes, thinking and behaviour. Determining the number and nature of third sector organisations involved in work with offenders is more complex. This paper aims to map out the landscape and extent of third sector involvement in the resettlement of offenders, with a specific focus on the seven pathways. Using existing datasets, it looks at the properties of third sector organisations working with offenders, more specifically their size, number, geographic area of operation and total income. It is estimated that nearly 20,000 third sector organisations work with offenders in England and Wales, and that they rely predominantly on public sector funding for survival. Compared to the figures for all third sector organisations there is over-representation of organisations providing accommodation services, health care and family-support services to offenders. The implications of these and other findings are also discussed.

## Keywords

Third sector; resettlement; offender; prison; charity.

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## Introduction

The role of the third sector and the scale of its activity in the resettlement of offenders have become considerably more prominent in recent years (Ministry of Justice (MoJ), 2010a). Services provided by third sector organisations (TSOs), such as employment, housing and drug and alcohol treatment, are recognised as being essential to efforts to reduce re-offending (MoJ, 2008, MoJ/NOMS, 2008a). This paper aims to map out the landscape and extent of the third sector involvement in the resettlement of offenders, with a specific focus on the seven ‘pathways’ of resettlement (Home Office, 2004). Using existing datasets, it estimates the size, number, geographical distribution and total income of third sector organisations involved in offender resettlement. The quality and variety of data sources and the operational definitions used for measurement by these datasets are also critically examined as these can provide varying estimates of the sector’s involvement in work with offenders.

## Background

Discussion regarding the definition of the third sector has developed considerably over the past two decades. A wide range of terms have been used, including ‘voluntary sector’, ‘charitable sector’, ‘not-for-profit sector’ and ‘community sector’; all of which draw our attention to different attributes of the sector and draw inter-sector boundaries along slightly different lines (Buckingham, 2009, Halfpenny and Reid, 2002). The term ‘third sector’ was largely promoted by the New Labour government as an inclusive term (Alcock and Kendall, 2010) but one that carries few assumptions about the characteristics of organisations or the origin of their funding sources. We have, therefore, chosen to use this term in order to best represent the variety of organisations that are involved in the criminal justice system (CJS), ranging from charities and social enterprises to non-profit organisations, cooperatives, faith groups and clubs.

In 2002, the Social Exclusion Unit’s (SEU) report on *Reducing Re-offending by Ex-prisoners* (SEU, 2002) concluded that prisons were failing to turn offenders away from crime, with 58% being reconvicted within two years, costing the state at least £11 billion per annum (for recorded crime). The report identified nine factors that influence re-offending, which were then transformed into the seven reducing re-offending pathways formulated by the Reducing Re-offending National Action Plan (Home Office, 2004), which would guide service provision and would be co-ordinated by offender managers<sup>1</sup>. Offender managers were established by NOMS to provide ‘end-to-end’ management of offenders for the duration of their sentence, with the aim of managing risk and addressing criminogenic needs to reduce re-offending. They work with 260,000 offenders every year, who are either in one of the 137 prisons in England and Wales or are serving a community sentence in one of the England and Wales’ 35 Probation Trusts. Out of the 86,000 people in prisons nearly 95% are men (MoJ, 2010b), and 27% are from Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority communities (MoJ, 2010c). Furthermore, 12% of people in

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<sup>1</sup> There are an additional two pathways for women offenders: Pathway 8 for women who have experienced violence; and Pathway 9: for women who have been involved in prostitution. Due to the nature of the data, the authors are unable to consider these pathways in the paper.

custody are young people (aged between 18 and 21), and 2% are juveniles under the age of 18 (MoJ, 2010b). In 2009, 76,000 adults and 15,200 young offenders were discharged from determinate sentences (MoJ, 2009). The latest estimates indicate that 50% of offenders released from custody re-offend within a year, and this figure is even higher for young offenders, where three out of four will re-offend within a year (MoJ, 2010a).

In order to tackle these high rates of recidivism, the Reducing Re-offending National Action Plan promoted partnership working with third sector organisations as means to achieving the best results and this has been supported by a myriad of further strategic documents (MoJ, 2008; MoJ/NOMS, 2008a; MoJ/NOMS, 2008b), reflecting the wider Labour government agenda of increasing the involvement of the third sector in service planning and delivery. The role of the third sector organisations (TSOs) in providing a range of services to offenders and their families, both in prisons and the community is historically well-established, but their involvement has been placed on a more formal footing as they can be commissioned to provide services at a local and regional level. The numerous benefits of TSOs' engagement with this population are well rehearsed in literature (Meek, et al., 2010) but to date no comprehensive estimates have been generated in terms of the extent of such involvement.

A brief summary of each of the seven resettlement pathways is presented below:

#### ***Pathway 1: Accommodation***

One in three prisoners are not in permanent accommodation prior to imprisonment, and as many as a third lose their housing on imprisonment (SEU, 2002). It is, however, estimated that stable accommodation can reduce the likelihood of re-offending by more than 20% as it provides the vital building blocks for accessing a range of other services and for gaining employment (SEU, 2002). There are now housing advisors in the majority of prison establishments with many opting for peer housing advice schemes to enhance offenders' skills, knowledge and self-esteem. Typical third sector providers in this area are housing associations and charities. Providers in this area also include local authorities who have a responsibility for homelessness strategies, which should include liaison with prisons, NOMS and TSOs on advice and accommodation services at the time of discharge from prison. Local authorities also work with families where accommodation is threatened on admission to prison, NOMS, housing associations, advice agencies such as Citizens' Advice Bureau and charities.

#### ***Pathway 2: Education, training and employment***

Half of all prisoners have reading skills at or below the level expected of an 11-year-old in reading, 65% in numeracy and 80% in writing. This is the level of skills which is required for 96% of all jobs (SEU, 2002). It is widely recognised that employment reduces the risk of re-offending by between a third and a half, yet over two in three prisoners are unemployed at the time of imprisonment (SEU, 2002). Recognising the importance of this problem, the Green Paper, *Reducing Re-offending through Skills and Employment* (MoJ, 2005) identified three key areas for action: 1. Engaging employees through the Reducing Re-offending Corporate Alliance by supporting employers' needs and equipping offenders with skills such as CV writing and interview skills; 2. Gaining skills and improving employability, by providing access to education and training for offenders and helping to prepare them for the job market; 3. Emphasizing skills and jobs in prisons and probation. These action points have

been reinforced in numerous government reports and papers (e.g. MoJ, 2007; Home Office, 2007; DWP, 2007), and typical providers range from public sector colleges and job centres, to private and third sector providers, many of which offer work placements to offenders.

### ***Pathway 3: Health***

Offenders are disproportionately more likely to suffer from mental and physical problems with 90% of prisoners suffering from at least one mental health problem (Singleton, et al., 1998) and 46% of prisoners having a long-standing illness or disability (SEU, 2002). *Improving Health Supporting Justice* (Department of Health, 2009a), the Government's delivery plan for health and criminal justice and Lord Bradley's report on mental health in prisons (Department of Health, 2009b) both highlighted the need to invest in this pathway in order to improve the lives of offenders, and emphasised the importance of partnership working. The mental health of offenders has typically been a greater concern for policy makers than physical health. Recently, the needs of patients with more than one mental health problem (i.e. dual diagnosis), which is typically a mental illness and substance misuse problem, and the needs of patients with a substance misuse problem and a physical health issue have received attention, blurring the boundaries between provider remits, and between Pathways 3 (health) and 4 (drugs and alcohol). Typical providers in this pathway range from the public sector (NHS) to third sector providers, with a substantial contribution from offender-led programmes such as Health Trainers and Listener schemes.

### ***Pathway 4: Drugs and alcohol***

Around two thirds of prisoners use illegal drugs in the year before imprisonment, double the rate in the general population. Furthermore, 66% of prisoners report that their substance use causes problems in areas such as employment and finances (SEU, 2002). The relationship between drugs and alcohol and offending is well-rehearsed in policy and research (e.g. Department of Health, 2009b; Brooker and Gojkovic, 2009) and it is therefore not surprising that this pathway is associated with a range of providers from all three sectors.

### ***Pathway 5: Finance, benefit and debt***

Ensuring that ex-offenders have sufficient lawful funds to live on is recognised as vital to their rehabilitation. The Social Exclusion Unit reported that more than two thirds of prisoners were in receipt of benefits prior to coming to prison and nearly a half had a history of debt. Furthermore, about 81% will claim benefits on release (SEU, 2002). Interventions by state-run services such as Job Centre Plus and the Department of Work and Pensions and third sector organisations such as Citizens Advice Bureau, Shelter and NACRO (National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders) are crucial and this is recognised by their presence in a large number of prisons. Increasingly, co-operatives, credit unions, banks and financial groups are becoming involved in providing not only advice, but also bank accounts for offenders. Moreover, prisoners who train to give others information, advice and guidance (IAG) on finance and debt can become accredited (e.g. NVQ3) in prison, thus improving their chances of employment on release.

### ***Pathway 6: Children and families***

The SEU report (SEU, 2002, p.111) states that 'maintaining family relationships can help to prevent prisoners re-offending and can assist them to successfully settle into the community'. Over 160,000

children are affected by imprisonment each year (Kids Visiting in Prisons, 2011) and nearly 50% of prisoners say they have lost contact with their families since entering prison. Having a parent or close relative in prison is a significant risk factor for children becoming involved in criminal activities and losing a parent to imprisonment can be an extremely damaging life event. Thirty per cent of prisoners' children suffer significant mental health problems compared to 10% of the general population (HM Government, 2003). The lack of statutory support for prisoners' families has led to the establishment of a number of voluntary family support groups. Numerous schemes offering emotional and practical support to prisoners and their families are in place across the prison estate, ranging from visitors centres, parenting courses and support for prisoners whose children are in care, to family learning schemes and mother and baby units.

### ***Pathway 7: Attitudes, thinking and behaviour***

Many people in prison come from the most socially excluded groups in society - yet committing a crime is an active choice (SEU, 2002). Offending behaviour programmes within prison and probation aim to change the way that offenders think about their actions and their effects on others, and to improve their self-control (HM Prison Service & Women and Young Peoples' Group, 2006). These include programmes delivered by both statutory and third sector organisations and range from programmes for short sentence prisoners such as the Short Duration Programme, restorative justice programmes and victim awareness, domestic violence, assertiveness and anger management as well as substance misuse programmes such as that delivered by Rehabilitation for Addicted Prisoners Trust (RAPT).

## **Aims**

A reasonable amount of knowledge already exists about the statutory organisations which engage in work with offenders through the seven pathways, because such work is normally specified in relevant national policies. Determining the number and nature of third sector organisations involved is, however, somewhat more complex. In order to examine what proportion of TSOs engage in resettlement work through the seven pathways and to identify their characteristics, we used two datasets; the Charity Commission dataset and the 2008 National Survey of Third Sector Organisations. These were supplemented and strengthened by information obtained through the Clinks<sup>2</sup> *Working with Offenders Directory*, a free online resource that aims to identify organisations that support offender rehabilitation in prison and in the community.

There were several aims to our inquiry:

1. to investigate the number of third sector organisations currently working with offenders;
2. to investigate the percentage of these organisations which work in each of the seven resettlement pathways;
3. to explore the main geographic areas of operation for third sector organisations which work with offenders;
4. to examine their annual income;

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<sup>2</sup> A national umbrella body that supports the involvement of voluntary and community organisations in the criminal justice system.

5. to examine their sources of funding and the nature of funding received (grants, contracts, etc.);
6. to investigate the number of third sector organisations working with vulnerable groups of offenders (women, young people and BAME community).

These five factors were examined to give a comprehensive picture of the involvement of TSOs in resettlement and to enable any gaps in provision to be identified.

## How many third sector organisations work with offenders?

Seeking to measure the number of TSOs working with offenders largely depends on which part of the sector is being measured and how 'work with offenders' is defined. The latest estimates of the size of the sector in criminal justice value it to be in the region of 1,200 organisations (Clinks, 2010), although as this paper will show, the number will vary greatly depending on three key factors:

1. which part(s) of the sector are measured (registered charities, or other third sector organisations);
2. whether the organisations consider offenders to be one of their main client groups;
3. whether we measure *only* the organisations whose area of work is the criminal justice system.

## Charity Commission dataset

Our first analysis focused on charities registered with the Charity Commission (CC) in 2008. The CC is a non-ministerial governmental body charged with the regulation of charities (Backus and Clifford, 2010). Charities are required to register with the CC and to submit their annual accounts, and the data analysed here are primarily drawn from the aims and objectives of the charities which they are required to submit as part of their annual accounts. It is estimated that in total, there were approximately 166,000 active charities in 2008, and another 111,000 which were inactive (those that had not filed a return to the Charity Commission for 3 years or more) or newly registered (meaning that they had not yet submitted their first annual accounts). It is important to highlight that there is no obligation to report to the CC for organisations below the reporting threshold (which in 2007 was raised from £1,000 to £5,000), although some do. For instance, in 2007 15.5% of charities had an income of less than £1,000 (Backus and Clifford, 2010), but there is no way of determining how many of these very small organisations were captured in the dataset.

One obvious disadvantage of using the CC dataset is that it only identifies charities. From this dataset alone, other third sector organisations such as social enterprises, community groups, non-charitable housing associations, cooperatives and mutuals, and faith groups cannot be identified. Another concern when using the CC dataset to investigate charities that work with offenders is that offenders are not specified as one of the client groups available for selection on the CC Annual Return. Similarly, when asked to state their primary purpose, working with offenders or in criminal justice is not one of the options offered to charities. It was concluded that the only way to identify



charities which have offenders as their client group was by utilising a keyword search in the charities' aims and objectives. However, as Clifford et al. (2010, p.4) have previously highlighted, the value of this approach will largely depend on how exhaustive the list of keywords is.

## National Survey of Third Sector Organisations (2008)

Similarly to the CC dataset, the National Survey of Third Sector Organisations (NSTSO) dataset has been used in previous research conducted in the Third Sector Research Centre (for a detailed critical appraisal of its properties and value, see Clifford, et al., 2010). The survey was commissioned by the then Office of the Third Sector and carried out by Ipsos MORI (Lyon, et al. 2010). The aim was to provide a measurement of contributions made by local authorities to meeting National Indicator 7: creating an environment for a thriving third sector (NCVO, 2009). The survey was also developed as an important contributor to the evidence base on the third sector in the UK. It encompasses charities, social enterprises, community groups, clubs and societies, non-profit organisations, voluntary organisations, housing associations, trusts, cooperative and mutuals, and faith groups (Ipsos MORI, 2009). After various exclusion criteria were applied, some 129,000 charities (compared to just under 170,000 on the CC register) were identified, plus some 40,000 companies limited by guarantee, Industrial and Provident Societies and Community Interest Companies (Clifford, et al., 2010). The sampling frame used national registers of TSOs so smaller organisations which are not registered charities or companies limited by guarantee were under-represented (Lyon, et al., 2010). The response rate was 47%, that is, 48,939 questionnaires were received from 40,692 charities, 5,622 non-charitable companies limited by guarantee, 271 community interest companies and 2,354 industrial and provident societies. The following analysis will use the weighting variable, which accounts for differences in sampling fractions and in response rates between different local authorities, to estimate population totals from the sample.

The survey enquired about beneficiary groups, and unlike in the CC dataset, 'offenders, ex-offenders and their families' are specifically identified as a category. The respondents were asked to name as many beneficiary groups as possible (e.g. children, people with mental health needs, homeless people, people with additional problems) and also to state which of these were their two or three main client groups. It is therefore possible to identify organisations which solely work with offenders, ex-offenders and their families if this was the only response offered by the respondent (Clifford, et al., 2010). Furthermore, the survey asked for the main areas of work (e.g. criminal justice, accommodation/housing, education, training, economic well-being, health and well-being) using the same principle as for identifying the beneficiary groups. In addition to these two questions, data on the main geographical area of work for the organisations and the total annual turnover was also collected.

## Findings drawn from the datasets

A preliminary search of the Charity Commission dataset of some 200 third sector organisations which work with offenders, identified several keywords that are used to describe their activities when reporting the aims and objectives. These are: prison, offen- (root of words such as offence and offender), inmate and legal restriction. The word 'probation' was also considered but it was discovered that organisations which used the term 'probation' in their aims and objectives also used one of the other four terms, so it was removed from the list. Aside from the charities' aims and objectives, the following other categories: the area of work; client/service user/beneficiary groups; and total income; were also searched. Organisations which work with prisoners of war and grant-awarding bodies were excluded from the analysis.

Using the four keywords and applying exclusion criteria immediately identified over 750 charities. These charities are likely to be the ones which consider work with offenders as one of their key aims and worth highlighting in their aims and objectives.

The analysis of the NSTSO dataset, as expected, revealed more varied estimates. Approximately 11% of TSOs identified offenders, ex-offenders and their families as one of their client groups, a total of 18,380 nationally, but only 3% (4,916) identified criminal justice as one of their areas of work. A more careful examination indicated that only 1% of organisations identified offenders, ex-offenders and their families as one of their main client groups, that is 1,744 nationally. As many as 40% of organisations which identified criminal justice as one of their areas of work did *not* necessarily work with offenders, ex-offenders or their families, as discussed below, so these have not been considered in this paper.

The marked variation in the findings presented above illustrates the need for caution in interpretation. Firstly, estimates are only as good as the respondents' interpretation of the questions asked. Thus, it is possible that the interpretation of criminal justice and what it means to work within it varied between respondents. Secondly, the findings demonstrate the inter-penetration of the criminal justice system and community work, where working with offenders and their families goes beyond the immediate boundaries of the criminal justice system. Working in the criminal justice system itself is no longer synonymous with addressing those directly affected by it, but extends to work with people who are otherwise associated with it (e.g. families and communities, victims and/or crime prevention).

## How many TSOs are engaged in the seven resettlement pathways?

Estimating how many TSOs work in each of the pathways is decidedly a more ambitious undertaking than estimating the number of all TSOs working with offenders, because the pathways' remits do not correspond directly to the categories used either by Charity Commission or by NSTSO. The analysis requires a careful combination of key words, in the case of the Charity Commission dataset, and categories in the case of NSTSO. We will look at each pathway separately, discussing the results as well as the analysis. The table with the summary of results is presented below. The results are illustrated in Figures 1 and 2.

**Table 1: Number and percentage of TSOs by Pathway**

| Pathway                                     | CHARITY COMMISSION*    |  | NSTSO DATASET**   |  |
|---|------------------------|--|-------------------|--|
|   | All charities<br>n (%) | Charities working<br>with offenders<br>n (%) | All TSOs<br>n (%) | TSOs working<br>with offenders***<br>n (%) |
| 1. Accommodation                            | 10,500 (6.3)           | 150 (20)                                     | 19,467 (11)       | 4,525 (25)                                 |
| 2. Education,<br>employment & training      | 103,500 (62)           | 550 (73)                                     | 136,361 (80)      | 14,272 (78)                                |
| 3. Health****                               |                        |  | 50,715 (30)       | 16,909 (92)                                |
| 4. Drugs and<br>alcohol****                 |                        |  | 21,561 (13)       | 13,983 (76)                                |
| 5. Finance, debt &<br>benefit               | 550 (0.3)              | 20 (2.7)                                     | 40,859 (24)       | 14,223 (77)                                |
| 6. Children & families                      | 4,000 (2.3)            | 150 (20)                                     | 88,063 (52)       | 13,710 (75)                                |
| <i>Just with children/<br/>young people</i> | 103,826 (62)           | 363 (48)                                     |                   |  |
| 7. Attitudes, thinking &<br>behaviour ***** | 780 (0.5)              | 65 (8.7)                                     |                   |  |

\* The numbers represented in the table are actual numbers and not weighted values, since they are based on a register not a sample.

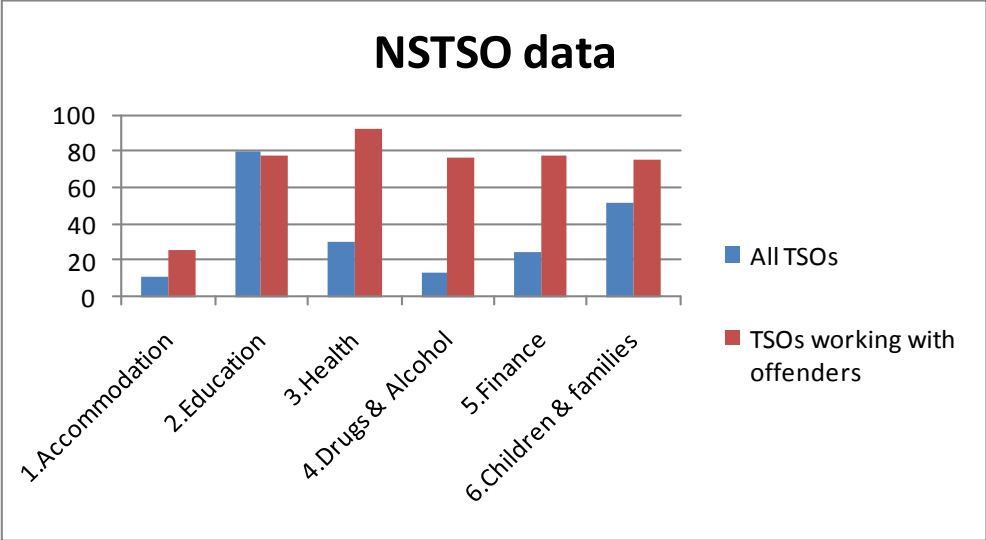
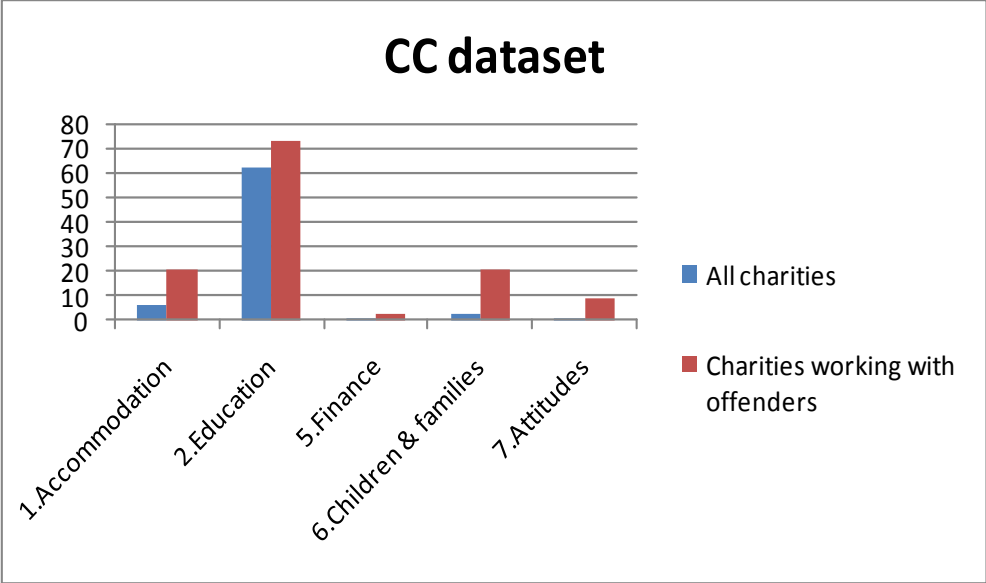
\*\* All values are weighted.

\*\*\*The population used is all TSOs which have offenders as one of their client groups, an estimated total of 18,380.

\*\*\*\* Due to the categorisation of data in the Charity Commission dataset, it was not possible to estimate the figures for Pathways 3 (Health) and 4 (Drugs & Alcohol).

\*\*\*\*\*Due to the categorisation of data in the NSTSO dataset, it was not possible to estimate the figures for Pathway 7 (Attitudes, thinking and behaviour).

**Figures 1 and 2: Percentage of charities by Pathway (Charity Commission and NSTSO data)**



**Pathway 1: Accommodation**

In order to estimate the percentage of TSOs involved in work with offenders that provide accommodation services, we selected the charities in the Charity Commission dataset which had declared accommodation/housing as one of their areas of work and looked at which of these charities had at least one of the keywords such as prison, offen-, inmate and legal restriction in their aims and objectives. Duplications, that is, a charity having more than one keyword in their aims and objectives, were counted only once<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> For example if we wanted to investigate how many charities work in housing or accommodation in prison we would compute the following formula:  
 Prison + accommodation/housing  
 If we then wanted to see how many use the word offen- in their aims and objectives, but do not want to count the charities which may have used both words prison and offen- in their aims and objectives, we would set up the following computation:  
 Offen – Prison + accommodation/housing

From the Charity Commission data, it was estimated that around 20% of charities that work with offenders provide accommodation services compared to only 6% of all registered charities. We also looked at the NSTSO data, combining categories 'housing and accommodation' and 'offenders, ex-offenders and their families' to estimate how many TSOs declared that they worked in the area of offender accommodation. The proportions were very similar to those in the Charity Commission dataset, despite differences in the sampling population and the fact that NSTSO was more likely to include housing organisations. The NSTSO data suggested that 25% of all TSOs which work with offenders, ex-offenders and their families provide accommodation or accommodation advice, as opposed to 11% of all TSOs. The over-representation of accommodation-focused agencies working with offenders compared to the national figure could indicate higher levels of need for interventions in Pathway 1 for this population. This is to be expected as incarceration is often associated with loss of accommodation.

### **Pathway 2: Education, employment and training**

Using the Charity Commission dataset, organisations were selected that reported education and training as one of their areas of work. Additional keywords: employment (this is not one of the distinct categories offered by the Charity Commission), prison, offen-, legal restriction and inmate were included, controlling for duplications. We estimated that while 62% of all charities work in education, training and employment (Pathway 2), over 73% of those working with offenders work in these areas. The figures obtained from the NSTSO dataset are similar to these, with 80% of all charities working in education, training and employment compared to 78% of those working with offenders. In order to obtain these figures we identified TSOs which declared working with offenders, ex-offenders and their families and also being involved in one or more of the following areas: economic well-being (economic development, employment and relief of poverty); education and lifelong learning; and training. Including economic well-being as a category in our sample instead of employment alone could have increased the number of organisations as relief of poverty and economic development may be interpreted rather broadly and consequently include organisations which provide accommodation or finance and debt advising. As with offender accommodation, these figures go some way in reflecting the strong emphasis on offender employment and training in recent Government policy and initiatives.

### **Pathway 3: Health (physical and mental)**

Due to the categorisation of the data in the Charity Commission dataset, it was not possible to identify charities which worked in health area alone. The only category available was Medical/Health/Sickness, which could include charities which work both in the area of physical and mental health as well as those which work with substance misuse. For this reason, we will only present the estimates from the NSTSO dataset, which enables us to make a clear distinction between these two areas. We identified TSOs which work both with offenders, ex-offenders and their families and which work in either of the following two defined fields: people with particular physical health needs or people with mental health needs. The figures indicated that as many as 92% of TSOs involved with offenders, ex-offenders and their families work in physical and mental health, making it the most represented of all seven pathways. This percentage is three times higher than the percentage of all TSOs working in this area nationally (30%). The over-representation of health-focused TSOs working with offenders as opposed to those working with general public is high, bearing

in mind healthcare in prisons is the responsibility of the NHS, but may be indicative of the high levels of health-related needs in the offender population, with 90% of prisoners suffering from at least one mental health problem (Singleton, et al., 1998) and 46% of prisoners having a long-standing illness or disability (SEU, 2002). It should be noted, however, that many organisations providing drug and alcohol services (Pathway 4) would have been likely to declare themselves as providing health-related services. Furthermore, 'health' is often used as an umbrella term to describe interventions which may only tangentially be associated with it, such as general well-being courses and life-coaching.

#### **Pathway 4: Drugs and alcohol**

As previously stated, we were only able to estimate information on the number of TSOs involved in drugs and alcohol from the NSTSO dataset due to the categorization of information by the Charity Commission. We identified TSOs that identify working both with offenders, ex-offenders and their families, and with people with addiction problems (e.g. alcohol, drugs). It was found that 76% of TSOs involved in work with offenders provide drugs and alcohol services, compared to 13% of all TSOs nationally. More notably, however, it was also discovered that at least 85% of TSOs working with offenders which provide drug and alcohol services also declared that they provide health-related services, that is, working in Pathway 3. For this reason, it is difficult to provide exact estimates for either of the two pathways other than concluding that both are well represented in the number of TSOs involved.

#### **Pathway 5: Finance, debt and benefit**

Determining the number of charities involved in this pathway was a complex process, due to the pathways' remit not corresponding directly to the categories used by either the Charity Commission or by NSTSO. In order to estimate the numbers from the Charity Commission dataset we used combinations of keywords to search the charities' aims and objectives. To determine which charities work with finance, debt and benefits, we investigated the aims and objectives of some 20 charities which are known to work in this area to identify the primary forms of terminology used to describe their activities. From this exercise we identified the following four search terms: debt; financial aid; financial need; financial relief. We combined these with the search terms used to identify charities working with offenders (i.e. prison, offen-, inmate, legal restriction) and controlled for duplication. From this it was estimated that 2.7% of charities working with offenders provide finance, debt and benefit services, compared to 0.3% of all charities nationally. These figures stand at stark contrast to the figures obtained from the NSTSO dataset, from which we estimated that 77% of TSOs working with offenders, ex-offenders and their families provide services in Pathway 5, compared to 24% of all TSOs nationally. It is likely that the discrepancy in findings between the two datasets was in part caused by the NSTSO capturing co-operatives, mutuals and financial groups which would not be necessarily registered as charities but which would be likely to provide services in Pathway 5. On closer examination, however, these high figures could have been reached because the category that we used in order to estimate the information [People with a particular financial need (including poverty)] was worded rather vaguely and this could have influenced how it was understood by the respondents. Indeed, when looking at the national figures for all TSOs, we discovered that 49% of TSOs that categorised themselves as working in this category, also declared to be working with economic well-being, including employment. Furthermore, 22% also provide accommodation/housing. When looking only at TSOs working with

offenders, ex-offenders and their families which were identified to work within Pathway 5, as many as 85% of these also provide housing. It is thus likely, that the wording of the category, referring to 'a particular financial need' may be too broad to be able to reach robust figures in this particular case.

### **Pathway 6: Children and families**

We first looked at the CC dataset, which asked charities to identify if they work with children/young people. Due to the nature of the category, it was not possible to determine which charities work only with children. Using our four keywords to identify those working with offenders (prison, inmate, offen-, legal restriction) we found that 48% of charities working with children and/or young people also work with offenders, compared to 62% of all charities nationally. We then combined this category with the keywords family or families, which were applied to the charities' aims and objectives, in order to estimate how many charities are likely to work with children AND families, as Pathway 6 stipulates. We decided against using the root of the word which would be 'famil' as this could erroneously include charities which used words such as 'familiar' in their aims and objectives. From the group of charities which identified working with children/young people AND family/families, we then selected those which also identified offenders in their aims and objectives using our four search terms). An example of the formula is given below:

(children/young people + family) + prison

It was estimated that around 20% of charities working with offenders work with children and families, compared to 2.3% of all charities nationally.

In the NSTSO dataset, we looked firstly at all TSOs nationally which work with children defined by the NSTSO as 'aged 15 or under' and also at the TSOs which declared to work with offenders, ex-offenders and their families and also with children. The figures for all TSOs nationally were reasonably similar to those obtained from the CC dataset, 52%, but considerably higher for TSOs working with offenders, ex-offenders and their families - 75%. We believe that due to the categorisation in the NSTSO dataset being closer to the Pathway 6 remit, this figure is more likely to be closer to the actual number. It could be said that the over-representation of children and families-focused TSOs working with offenders compared to the national figure could indicate higher levels of need for interventions in Pathway 6 for this population, but may also reflect the lack of statutory services for offenders' families, for whom TSOs are often the only source of support (Mills and Codd 2007).

### **Pathway 7: Attitudes, thinking and behaviour**

Similarly to Pathway 5, determining the number of charities involved in this pathway was rather problematic, due to the pathways' remit not corresponding directly to the categories used either by Charity Commission or by NSTSO. In order to estimate the numbers from the Charity Commission dataset we used combinations of keywords to search the charities' aims and objectives. The terms that were used were: attitude; behaviour; and thinking skills; and these were combined with the standard four keywords (prison, offen-, legal restriction and inmate). It was estimated that nearly 9% of charities working with offenders also work in the areas covered by Pathway 7. Compared to 0.5% of all charities nationally which work in these fields, this number is comparably large. It is likely however that the figure is an under-estimate due to rather vague wording of the keywords and broad remits of

the pathway itself. Due to the categorisation of the data, it was not possible to estimate the figures from the NSTSO dataset.

### Work with vulnerable groups

From the NSTSO dataset, we have also calculated the proportion of TSOs operating in the seven pathways which work specifically with women, young people and people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities, as these groups are likely to have specific needs which may not be adequately covered by mainstream services (e.g. Clinks, 2009; Gelsthorpe and Sharpe, 2007; Mills, 2009; Rungay, 2007; Stableforth, 2001; Taylor, 2008; Transition to Adulthood, 2009). The results are presented below in Table 2 and illustrated in Figures 3, 4 and 5.

The percentages of organisations working with the three vulnerable groups were calculated in the following manner: We firstly compared the percentage of all TSOs and the percentage of TSOs working with offenders, ex-offenders and their families in each pathway. Out of these two figures, we then calculated the proportion, which work specifically with women, young people or BAME groups. These three groups were identified in the dataset as separate categories of beneficiaries.

**Table 2: Percentage of TSOs in each pathway (area) working with vulnerable groups\* (NSTSO data)\***

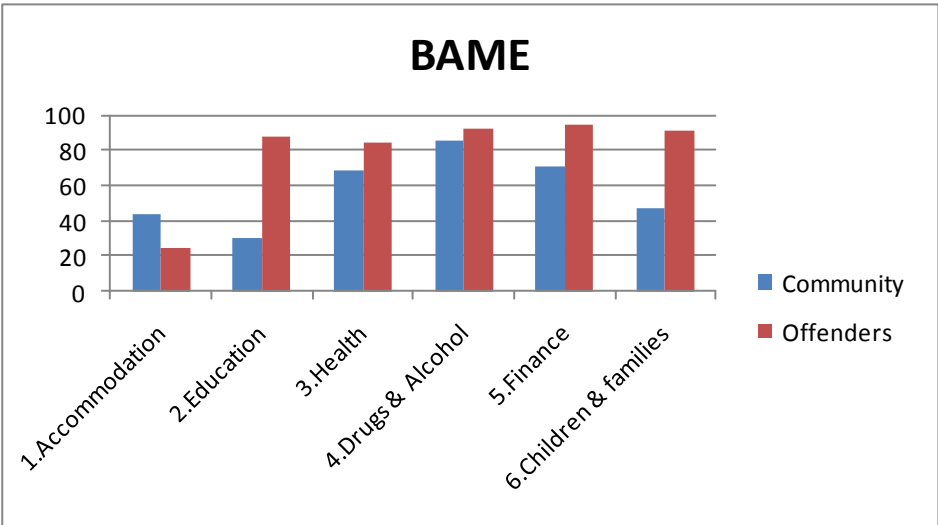
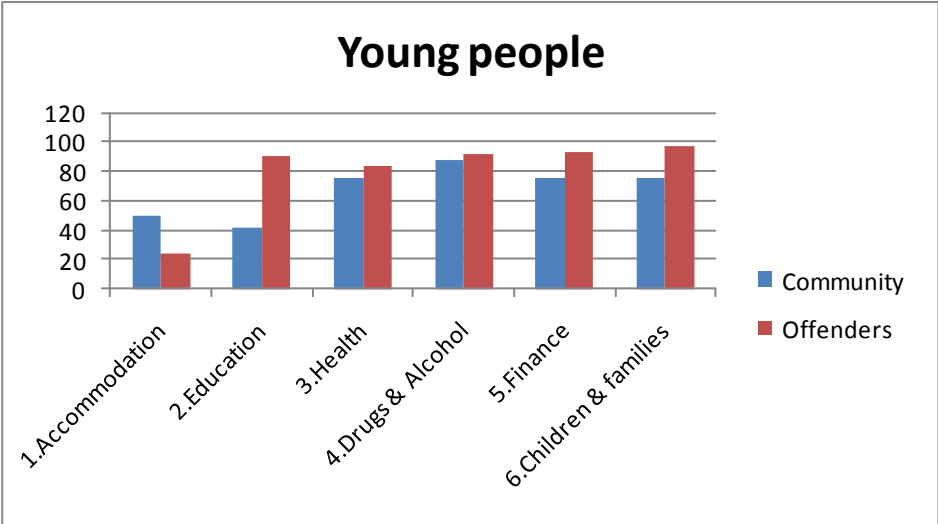
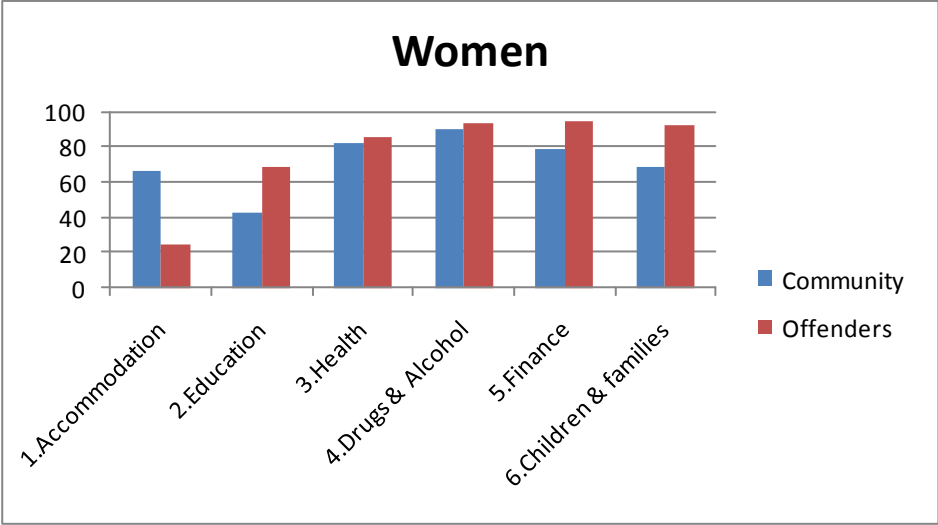
| Pathway (area)**                 | Target group | Women | Young people | BAME |
|----------------------------------|--------------|-------|--------------|------|
| Accommodation                    | Offenders    | 24    | 24           | 24   |
|                                  | Community    | 66    | 49           | 44   |
| Education, employment & training | Offenders    | 69    | 90           | 88   |
|                                  | Community    | 43    | 41           | 30   |
| Health                           | Offenders    | 85    | 84           | 84   |
|                                  | Community    | 82    | 75           | 69   |
| Drugs & alcohol                  | Offenders    | 93    | 92           | 92   |
|                                  | Community    | 90    | 88           | 85   |
| Finance, debt & benefit          | Offenders    | 94    | 93           | 94   |
|                                  | Community    | 79    | 75           | 71   |
| Children & families              | Offenders    | 92    | 97           | 91   |
|                                  | Community    | 68    | 76           | 47   |

\*All values are weighted. The population used is all TSOs which have offenders as one of their client groups, an estimated total of 18,380

\*\* Due to the categorisation of NSTSO data, it was not possible to estimate the figures for Pathway 7



**Figures 3, 4 and 5: Percentage of TSOs in each pathway for women, young people and BAME community**



As can be seen from Table 2, the percentage of TSOs working with vulnerable offenders is over-represented in each pathway compared to all TSOs. Considering the scope and diversity of their needs this finding is somewhat to be expected. The exception is accommodation, where the percentage of TSOs providing accommodation to vulnerable offenders is only about a half of the community figure, or in the case of women just over a third. Accommodation is, however, one of the essential links in the reducing re-offending chain, and in the case of women offenders who often have children and need accommodation to ensure they can care for their children, it can be especially important. We would therefore urge further action to improve accommodation opportunities for these vulnerable groups.

**Properties of the third sector working with offenders**

The source and nature of funding for TSOs working with offenders was also investigated. Analysis of the data obtained from the NSTSO indicated that as many as 56% of TSOs which work with offenders, ex-offenders and their families depend on public sources of funding as their primary source (i.e. funding from public bodies such as national and local government). This figure is slightly higher for TSOs with this group as the *main* beneficiary - 59%. Compared to other groups of users (Table 3), this figure is rather high. It is, however, possible that TSOs in receipt of public funding have a greater interest in returning completed surveys than those who do not receive such funding (Clifford, et al., 2010), and this may have influenced some of the estimates presented in this paper.

**Table 3: Percentage of TSOs dependent on public sources of funding by main beneficiaries (selection)**

| Category   | Total        | Received public funding | Percentage (%) |
|--|--------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| Socially excluded / vulnerable people                  | 7,743        | 5,309                   | 69             |
| People with mental health needs                        | 6,150        | 3,681                   | 60             |
| <b>Offenders, ex-offenders and their families</b>      | <b>1,743</b> | <b>1,034</b>            | <b>59</b>      |
| People with learning difficulties                      | 8,039        | 4,690                   | 58             |
| Victims of crime and their families                    | 1,184        | 687                     | 58             |
| Asylum seekers / refugees                              | 2,548        | 1,442                   | 57             |
| Homeless people  | 3,547        | 1,975                   | 56             |
| People with addiction problems                         | 2,420        | 1,307                   | 54             |
| People from black and minority ethnic communities      | 10,089       | 5,090                   | 50             |
| People with physical disabilities and/or special needs | 15,110       | 6,881                   | 46             |
| Children (aged 15 or under)                            | 50,309       | 22,894                  | 46             |
| Young people (aged 16 to 24)                           | 31,129       | 13,212                  | 42             |

[Source: Clifford, et al., 2010; Reprinted with the authors' permission. Proportion changed to percentage]

Furthermore, 50% of TSOs working with offenders, ex-offenders and their families receive public funding and benefit both from national and local funding sources<sup>4</sup>. The majority of TSOs working with offenders, ex-offenders and their families operate on a county level and/or below (Table 4).

**Table 4: Percentage of TSOs working with offenders, ex-offenders and their families, by area of operation**

| Geographic area                  | Percentage* (%) |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| International                    | 6.7             |
| National                         | 14.0            |
| Regional                         | 20.0            |
| County council area              | 7.0             |
| Borough or district council area | 13.0            |
| Local authority area             | 24.0            |
| Neighbourhood                    | 21.0            |
| Cannot say or no answer          | 23.0            |

[Source: NSTSO data]

\*All values are weighted. The population used is all TSOs which have offenders as one of their client groups, an estimated total of 18,380

Using the NSTSO data, we also investigated the main sources of income for TSOs whose main beneficiaries are offenders, ex-offenders and their families and it was found that nearly 40% of their funding comes from two sources: donations and fundraising activities (26%), and grants or core funding, including service level agreements (17%). Comparing these findings to the national picture, the proportion of income obtained from grants or core funding for TSOs working with offenders is almost twice as high as the figure for all TSOs, being 8%. The other notable source is the income from contracts, accounting for nearly 13% of TSOs' income. Comparing these to the national figures of only 6%, it can be concluded that TSOs working mainly with offenders, ex-offenders and their families are heavily reliant on grants and contracts for survival.

The final question to investigate relates to TSOs' approximate annual turnover or income from all sources. Looking at the NSTSO dataset, we estimated the annual income of TSOs whose *main* beneficiaries are offenders, ex-offenders and their families, as shown in Table 5. We found that 61% of these TSOs have an annual income of £100,000 or less, compared to 80% of all TSOs. Furthermore, 27% of TSOs whose main client group is offenders, ex-offenders and their families reported no income at all, compared to 17% of all TSOs. This suggests that the income pattern for TSOs working with offenders is a rather uneven one, polarized between those with very little or no income and those with a more substantial income.

<sup>4</sup> According to NSTSO, national funding sources include: Central Government department; Non-Departmental public body; other local funding sources include: local borough or district council; local county council; local NHS body; local police/fire authority; Regional Development Agency, other.

**Table 5: Percentage by annual income**

| Category                   | Percentage* (%) |
|----------------------------|-----------------|
| £1-£10,000                 | 39              |
| £10,001-£40,000            | 13              |
| £40,001-£100,000           | 9               |
| £100,000-£1,000,000        | 26              |
| > £1,00,000                | 9               |
| Other (e.g. not reported): | 4               |

[Source: NSTSO data]

\*All values are weighted. The population used is all TSOs which have offenders as their main client group, an estimated total of 1,743.

## Conclusions

Establishing the number of TSOs working with offenders in England and Wales is a complex and challenging task. Depending on what constitutes 'working with offenders' we arrived at three figures:

- those with offenders as their main beneficiary group (1,743 TSOs);
- those that identified offenders as one of their beneficiary groups but not necessarily the main one (18,380 TSOs);
- those that identified criminal justice as their area of work (4,916 TSOs).

The figures also varied considerably when we looked at charities alone or at all TSOs. For example, the NSTSO dataset included not only charities but also social enterprises, community groups, non-charitable housing association, cooperatives, etc., which can explain the difference in estimates between the two datasets.

These figures illustrate the mainstreaming of work with offenders, with nearly 20,000 organisations providing services to this population in some form. There are at least two interpretations for this finding. Arguably, there is a move to further integrate offenders into mainstream community interventions. An alternative view is that organisations report working with offenders and other vulnerable groups because this is likely to increase their chance of securing funding. Furthermore, Clifford et al. (2010) noted that organisations often over-estimate their remit and 'over-tick' the boxes when reporting their target groups and areas of work. All of these must be taken into account when interpreting the findings reported in this paper. It is worth noting that the categories in the two datasets that we used to estimate the information presented in this paper did not always correspond to the remit of the resettlement pathways that underpin our analytical focus. Furthermore, not all the TSOs that work with offenders necessarily fall into the seven pathways, and these have not been represented in this paper. Thirdly, a number of TSOs working with offenders operate in consortia with the private and/or statutory sector and these may not have been suitably represented here. Lastly,

when interpreting these findings, one should ask how representative the NSTSO respondents were and how different they may be in number and characteristics to the non-responders, The authors have sought to address some of the issues identified in this paper by conducting a national survey of nearly 700 prisoners to explore their knowledge of and engagement with TSOs which provide resettlement services in prisons. This survey is part of a larger project which consists of eight prison case studies and one probation area, and which aims to investigate the involvement of TSOs in work with offenders. A subsequent paper in this series will build on the findings presented here, by reflecting on the experiences of prisoners and how they perceive the relationship between demand and supply in relation to TSOs involved in resettlement.

This paper contributes a new perspective on the role and profile of TSOs involved in the seven Resettlement Pathways for offenders. The general over-representation of TSOs working with offenders in the seven areas compared to the national figures mirrors the level of need in this population, particularly in relation to its most vulnerable groups such as women, young people and BAME. It is therefore even more surprising that accommodation TSOs are less likely to work with vulnerable groups of offenders than vulnerable groups in the community and the reasons for this anomaly remain unclear. This could be due to definitional issues, whereby TSOs simply do not state that they work with vulnerable groups, even though they may. Alternatively, it is possible that there is less accommodation for women offenders, because they comprise such a small proportion of the entire offender population. The possibility of including other vulnerable groups such as foreign nationals and juveniles in the analysis was explored, but due to the way in which the data was categorised this was not possible.

According to the data available, it was found that TSOs working with offenders are much more reliant on grants and contracts than TSOs generally. Also their income tends to vary much more, concentrating around the extremes of no income and income over £100,000, with fewer TSOs in between than is the case for all TSOs. A high number of TSOs working with offenders are also dependent on public sources of funding, and are thus likely to be vulnerable to public sector funding cuts. A recent survey by Clinks has found that more than three quarters have had grant income cut, and just under half have experienced a decrease in earned income, with the majority expecting further cuts to come (Clinks 2011). Such decreases in funding are likely to have an impact on the services TSOs can provide to this high need group and may ultimately affect the degree to which re-offending can be reduced.

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Critical understanding service delivery by the third sector is important to policy making as the third sector now provides a major - and very different - option for public services, which may be more responsive to the needs of citizens and service users. At the same time, there are dangers inherent in the third sector becoming over-dependent on funding from service contracts – particularly in terms of a potential loss of its independence. The centre's research will help to inform the debate on the way in which service delivery is developing, the potential role of the third sector in commissioning as well as contracting, and the implications of different approaches to service delivery on the overall impact of the third sector.

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