**Press Release 01/2021**

**Making Prisons Safer Campaign**

The Criminal Justice Workers Union would like to introduce our Making Prisons Safer Campaign, we believe that there is a real opportunity to learn lessons from the COVID lockdowns, which by default has made our prisons safer for both staff and prisoner.  The regimes introduced to combat COVID infections resulted in offenders being unlocked in few numbers with increased staff supervision.

***In the 12 months to March 2020 there were 31,568 assaults in prison in England and Wales, with 9784 of those against Prison staff.  However, during the COVID restricted regimes, the latest HMPPS safer custody statistics released show a decrease in assaults by 40% to 18,895 on the 12 months to March 2021. Of those, assaults on staff have decreased by 24% to 7479 with serious assaults on staff decreasing by 54% to 692.***

The Criminal Justice Workers Union believes this is compelling evidence, which should not be ignored. If we want to make our prisoners safer, we MUST ensure that prison regimes are reviewed. If this opportunity is ignored, then Criminal Justice Workers Union is convinced that we will see a return of increased assaults on Prison Staff. The Criminal Justice Workers Union will be writing to HMPPS and the Prisons Minister to request that a full review of regimes takes place before any consideration is given to returning to establishment to the regimes which came with increased serious incidents of violence. We also stand by to assist in this process.

We will shortly also be starting a petition to this effect so that we can raise the profile of this very important issue and we are asking for your support to share this petition with everybody you know in the criminal justice sector. This will enable us to progress this most important issue before the opportunity is lost.

Please support our call, regardless of which union you belong, or even if you are not a union member at all. We need an urgent review of all prison regimes so that we can protect staff and the prisoners in our care effectively.

It’s time to act, review the facts and take action to change future outcomes and stop blaming inanimate objects as being the risk, when the evidence is clear to for those who truly understand our prisons.

The Criminal Justice Workers Union will be happy to offer any further information should you need it, a list of contact emails have been included, including their areas of responsibilities.

Regards

**Criminal Justice Workers Union**

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