

# Checkpoint Participant Information Sheet

(No requirement to read verbatim a copy should be given to the subject)



## Purpose

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you make your decision it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take your time to read the following information carefully. If you have any questions then please feel free to ask them. You may want to talk to others about the research study before taking part.

## Your Rights and Entitlement

You are entitled to free and independent legal advice. You can obtain legal advice in person or over the telephone.

You are also entitled to read a book call the Codes of Practice which governs Police Powers and Procedures, a copy is available in the Police Custody area or further Information regarding your rights and entitlements can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/police-and-criminal-evidence-act-1984-pace-codes-of-practice>

## What is the purpose of Checkpoint?

Checkpoint is a modern method of offender management based in County Durham and Darlington. It will compare the benefits of dealing with offenders via traditional criminal justice routes such as cautions, fixed penalty notices or a court appearance (and subject to qualifying criteria).

“Checkpoint” will offer a deferred prosecution and supported desistance via an individually tailored contract to engage with partner agencies based on your Critical Pathways of need.

The programme will initially split eligible cases into Treatment (Checkpoint) and Control (Prosecution) groups on a random basis. Checkpoint will be independently evaluated by Cambridge University and will compare the effectiveness of each group in reducing reoffending, the seriousness of any reoffending (Crime Harm Index), the effect on victim satisfaction and the overall cost benefits of each intervention.

The programme will also look to improve the life chances of participants and their awareness of and access to health-based interventions from a Police custody environment.

## What are the Benefits and Incentives?

If you participate in this research and are chosen for the Checkpoint Programme, you will have the following benefits:

You will meet with a specialist Navigator (not a Police Officer) who will conduct an in-depth needs assessment with you. They will ask you what you think your problems and issues are, and not only signpost you to the appropriate services to address these but may also take you there. The Checkpoint Programme is working in conjunction with Public Health England and seeks to improve life chances.

This means you have an opportunity now to change your life forever and access social, health, career and educational benefits which were previously unachievable.

If you successfully complete the Checkpoint Programme then you will not receive a criminal conviction; this will not prohibit or restrict you from anything listed above.

#### **What are the possible disadvantages?**

The participation in the research is entirely voluntary; if you choose not to participate then you will be released from Police Custody via the traditional methods such as a Police Caution, a Fixed Penalty Notice or a charge.

##### **What does a "criminal conviction" mean?**

A criminal conviction can have many long lasting negative effects on many areas of your life, some of which may be long-term. Having a criminal conviction can affect your earning potential, as employers are entitled to enquire whether you've been convicted of a crime and/or ask for a background check (known as a DBS Check).

A criminal conviction for certain offences can prevent you from obtaining employment in some sectors of commerce, law-enforcement, position of trust, patient and/or childcare, and a variety of management posts.

A criminal record can also have an affect with regards to your housing circumstances, as landlords and associates are entitled to perform background checks (as mentioned above). A criminal record may cause difficulty in obtaining a loan or when starting a business whilst financial institutions will always take into account the character of the person applying for their services.

A criminal conviction may affect your ability to travel to certain countries, for instance when applying for a travel visa; many countries ask whether you have a criminal conviction, therefore you will need to do some research before you travel, or ever consider immigrating.

If you decline to volunteer into the Checkpoint Programme, this may limit the opportunity to change your life forever.

#### **Unfamiliar Procedures**

As we do not know if the Checkpoint programme is proven to be better than the traditional methods of police disposal such as a caution, fixed penalty ticket or other disposal options for preventing reoffending we need to undertake research to compare the two. To do this, we will divide all the people taking part into the research into two groups. This research is being supported by Cambridge University. As an individual Durham Constabulary is utilising computer algorithms to determine if you are suitable in the first instance. Following on from this process individuals are selected randomly, as if by tossing a coin and this is controlled entirely by Cambridge University.

Participants in one group will be offered the Checkpoint Programme while the participants in the other group will be giving the traditional disposal options. It is important that neither you nor we know which of the two groups you are assigned to, and this is why Cambridge University are in control of this process. Data from the research project is completely confidential and will only be shared between the Police and Cambridge University. This is the best way we have for testing Checkpoint without being influenced by what we think or hope might happen. We will then compare which of the two has the best results overall.

If there is anything you are concerned about or that is bothering you about the research then please talk to me or Detective Inspector 1299 Andy Crowe.

If we find that the Checkpoint Programme does not have the desired effect, or not to the extent that we wish it to have, then we have the right to review the trial, but this will not affect your outcome from the Police Station.

### **Voluntary Participant**

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary; it is your choice whether or not to participate. All the services and support you receive from the Police Custody Environment will not change. You may wish to change your mind later and stop participation, even if you agreed earlier; however, this will result in another disposal option from the Police and will probably result in a criminal conviction.

### **What would taking part involve?**

You will be released from the Police Station under investigation, this means a decision to proceed through the criminal justice system is deferred subject to your engagement and successful completion of the Checkpoint programme.

You will be provided with an appointment to meet a Checkpoint Navigator within the next 3 days, which you must attend. The 3 days also allows for a "cooling off period" and provides you with the opportunity to reflect on your participation and also to discuss the matter with your family and support network. The appointment to meet your Checkpoint Navigator will usually take place at the Police Station nearest to your home address. This is a voluntary scheme and your Checkpoint contract is between you and your Navigator, based on your personal needs.

**The contract has two (2) mandatory conditions;**

**A condition is an agreement not to reoffend over the period of the contract**

A condition is an agreement to participate in Restorative Approach – where you make good the harm caused; this can take the form of a meeting with the victim, a letter of apology, or some other means of reparation. (subject to victim agreement)

Other conditions include your agreement to work and engage with agencies to support and deal with any issues you have that contributed towards your offending – for example, alcohol or drugs misuse, housing, physical/mental health, finances, employment, relationships, attitude, thinking and behaviour.

You may be asked to put something back into the community by undertaking some voluntary work (between 18 and 36 hours), this will be tailored to your needs and designed to give you some extra help and support where appropriate, random drug and alcohol testing may also form part of this process.

You may also be required to wear a GPS ankle tag. The tag will track your location 24/7 and is there to protect you from malicious allegations; it can negate you from crimes without the need for arrest, police interviews and a further period of detention. The tag stops the need for police to carry out

checks at your home address and reduces peer pressure from some of your negative associates; importantly it shows your family and loved ones that you want to change.

The **Checkpoint contract lasts for 4 months** and requires your engagement with your navigator and with appropriate services throughout this period of time. If you should breach the terms of your contract then the Police have the right to invoke a criminal prosecution at any stage.

#### **Confidentiality**

It is possible that if others in the community are aware that you are participating in this research, they may ask you questions. The information that we collect from this research project will be kept confidential. Where there is a requirement to share your personal information then you will be consulted and your written consent obtained.

The knowledge that we obtain from doing this research will be shared with other agencies such as the Home Office, Ministry of Justice, other police forces and partners associated with the project. The wider aims of the project seek to improve and influence improvements in the Criminal Justice system and services available to the wider community.

Your personal information will not be provided to Cambridge University, Durham Constabulary will control the identity of the individuals referred into the Checkpoint Programme.

#### **Right to Refuse, Withdraw or Alternative to Participation**

You do not have to take part in this research. If you do not wish to do so, refusing to participate will not affect your rights in police detention. You may stop participating in the research at any time that you wish to do so.

It is your choice and all of your rights will be respected. If you do not wish to take part in the research, you will be provided with the appropriate disposal from the Police Custody environment, this will invariably mean you will receive a criminal conviction.

#### **Commitments and Appointments**

If you have any commitments or pre-arranged appointments within the next 4 months please bring all this documentation with you for your appointment with your Navigator. This includes medical appointments or your **Claimant Commitment Book from the Job Centre (DWP)**.

#### **Who to contact**

If you have any questions you may ask them now or later, even after the study has started. If you wish to ask any questions you may contact the following:

**Detective Inspector 1299 Andy Crowe**

Bishop Auckland Police Office

Woodhouse Close Lane

Bishop Auckland

Co. Durham

DL14 6LB

Tel 101

Email: [checkpoint@durham.pnn.police.uk](mailto:checkpoint@durham.pnn.police.uk)

**Subject's Copy**