House, Home, and Hope: Exploring the Accommodation Needs and Experiences of People with Sexual Offence Convictions.

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Copyright Statement

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Abstract

Accommodation is a basic human need. For people with convictions, accessing accommodation is key to reducing reoffending. A wealth of research investigates the topic of accommodation for people with general convictions, yet less is known about accommodation for people with sexual convictions specifically. People with sexual convictions require distinct considerations, due to the unique reintegration challenges they face. Utilising a mixed methods approach, this thesis explored the accommodation needs and experiences of people with sexual offence convictions.

The first two empirical studies within this thesis were qualitative, interview explorations. Study 1 explored the views of relevant professionals, and established themes that captured issues surrounding the problematic housing landscape generally, as well as identifying challenges more specific to people with sexual convictions. The findings emphasised the difficulties and tensions that participants experienced within their professional roles. Study 1 situated this thesis within the context of wider political and societal considerations.

Study 2 interviewed people with sexual convictions who lived in the community. The findings reiterated the challenges highlighted by professionals. Beyond this, participant narratives reflected the feelings and emotions people attached to their dwellings, emphasising what they felt they needed from their accommodation. These needs were immaterial in nature, termed, *psychosocial home needs*. The analysis draws links to desistance, capturing how living environments may enhance or inhibit people's efforts to remain offence free.

The rationale for Study 3 stemmed from the findings of Study 2. Psychometric tests were used to explore the relationship between psychosocial home needs and desistance-based outcomes, such as hope and agency. This study identified how feelings of home may instil hope in people with sexual convictions, offering a foundation for further research.

This thesis makes original contributions to knowledge. It goes beyond the necessity of considering accommodation as a structural dwelling, to highlight the importance of the feelings attached to such dwellings. This thesis captures the significance of *home* for people with sexual convictions, offering considerations for future research and policy.

Dissemination of Empirical Findings

Oral Conference Presentations

Lomas, J., Winder, B., Blagden, N., Lievesley, R., & Saunders, L. (2017). The importance of accommodation; a fundamental human need. Presented at HMP Whatton Conference, Nottingham, June 2017.

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Lomas, J., Winder, B., Blagden, N., Lievesley, R., & Saunders, L. (2018). An exploration of accommodation issues, needs, and experiences, for people with a sexual offence conviction. Presented at Manchester Metropolitan Provoking Discourse Conference, Manchester, March 2018.

Lomas, J., Winder, B., Blagden, N., Lievesley, R., & Saunders, L. (2018). "A nettle that nobody wants to grasp": The views of professionals with experience related to accommodation for people with sexual offence convictions. Presented at Nottingham Trent University Department of Psychology PhD Conference, Nottingham, May 2018.

Lomas, J., Winder, B., Blagden, N., Lievesley, R., & Saunders, L. (2018). "People see them as devil incarnate": The views of professionals who assist with finding accommodation for people with sexual offence convictions. Presented at The Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers Conference, Canada, October 2018.

Lomas, J., Winder, B., Blagden, N., Lievesley, R., & Saunders, L. (2019). "People see them as devil incarnate". Discriminatory accommodation refusals towards people with sexual offence convictions, and practitioner's battles to overcome these. Presented at Nottingham Trent University School of Social Sciences Research Conference, Nottingham, February 2019.

Lomas, J., Winder, B., Blagden, N., Lievesley, R., & Saunders, L. (2019). "A nettle that nobody wants to grasp". Accommodation challenges for people with sexual offence convictions. Presented at British Psychological Society, Division of Forensic Psychology Conference, Liverpool, June 2019.

Lomas, J., Winder, B., Blagden, N., Lievesley, R., & Saunders, L. (2019). Homeless Not Houseless: Qualitatively exploring the accommodation experiences of people with sexual offence convictions. Presented at The Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers Conference, Atlanta, November 2019.

Conference Poster Presentations

Lomas, J., Winder, B., Lievesley, R., Blagden, N., & Saunders, L. (2017). Exploring the accommodation needs for individuals with previous sexual offence convictions. Poster, HMP Whatton conference, Nottingham, June 2017.

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Lomas, J., Winder, B., Lievesley, R., Blagden, N., & Saunders, L. (2019). "A nettle that nobody wants to grasp": Accommodation issues for people with sexual offence convictions. Poster, Nottingham Trent University School of Social Sciences Research Conference, February 2019.

Organisational Reports

Lomas, J., Winder, B., Lievesley, R., Blagden, N., & Saunders, L. (2019). Organisation specific research findings. Nottingham, UK.

Lomas, J., Winder, B., Lievesley, R., Blagden, N., & Saunders, L. (2019). Study one: Exploring the accommodation needs and experiences of people with sexual offences. A research summary for participants and organisations. Nottingham, UK.

Lomas, J., Winder, B., Lievesley, R., Blagden, N., & Saunders, L. (2019). Study two: Accommodation for people with sexual offences - the views of professionals. A research summary for participants and organisations. Nottingham, UK.

Papers in Preparation

Lomas, J., Winder, B., Lievesley, R., Blagden, N., & Saunders, L. (2020) "I don't want that dirty pervert". Practitioners' perceptions of accommodation rejections towards people with sexual offence convictions. Manuscript in preparation.

Lomas, J., Winder, B., Lievesley, R., Blagden, N., & Saunders, L. (2020). "A nettle nobody wants to grasp": Professionals' perceptions of accommodation challenges for people with sexual offence convictions in England. Manuscript in preparation.

Acronyms

BPS - British Psychological Society

CRC - Community Rehabilitation Centre

GLM - Good Lives Model

HMIP - Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation

HMIPP - Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prison and Probation

HMPPS - Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service

ITDSO - Integrated Theory of Desistance from Sexual Offending

MAPPA - Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements

MoJ - Ministry of Justice

NPS - National Probation Service

PIPE - Psychologically Informed Planned Environment

RSHO - Risk of Sexual Harm Order

SHPO - Sexual Harm Prevention Order

SLF - Safer Living Foundation

WHO - World Health Organisation

Terminology Notes

Labelling people with convictions according to their offence type could negatively impact rehabilitation efforts (G. Willis, 2018). The probation service recently announced their organisational transition to use person first language (Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service [HMPPS], 2020), something that has long been advocated for in the academic literature (Tannenbaum, 1938; G. Willis, 2018). Instead of the shorter term "sex offender", this thesis will refer to "people with sexual offence convictions". Although this language is perhaps somewhat cumbersome, importantly, it avoids labelling people according to their offence type.

It is also worth noting the use of the term "landlord" throughout this thesis. Although a gender-neutral alternative was sought, the term landlord was retained, to be able to distinguish clearly between private rented sector landlords and Registered Social Housing Landlords. The latter of which is an official and legal term, thus, for clarity, landlord was implemented throughout this thesis.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Accommodation for People Leaving Prison

Between April 2019 and March 2020, approximately 70,000 people were released from custody in England and Wales (Ministry of Justice [MoJ], 2020). For these people, community reintegration is essential. Community reintegration is defined as the transition from prison into the community (Moore, 2011). The attainment of accommodation is one key component within the broader remit of community reintegration (Boer, 2013).

Accommodation for people leaving prison can be conceptualised as both a risk factor, as well as a protective factor. Risk factors are defined as variables "that predict a high probability of later offending" (Farrington et al., 2012, p. 46); in this sense, accommodation instability has previously demonstrated links to increased reoffending (Makarios et al., 2010; O'Leary, 2013). Conversely, protective factors capture strengths and positive environmental factors that may reduce the likelihood of reoffending (de Vries Robbé et al., 2015). The Social Exclusion Unit (SEU, 2002) identified accommodation as one of seven major pathways to target to reduce reoffending. Both government (HMPPS, 2018) and academic researchers (Ellison et al., 2013; Makarios et al., 2010; O'Leary, 2013) have outlined the importance of attaining accommodation for people leaving prison. Beyond the attainment of accommodation, it is also necessary to consider the nature of the living environments that people are released into, as some types of facilities may increase a person's risk of reoffending (Clark, 2016).

In addition to conceptualising a lack of appropriate accommodation as a risk factor, it is also necessary to understand why people do not reoffend (McAlinden, 2016). This consideration requires an appreciation of *desistance*. Desistance describes the processes people go through to cease offending (Bottoms et al., 2004; Maruna, 2001; Weaver, 2019). Farrall et al. (2014) recognise the importance of a person's social context in terms of desistance. Hunter and Farrall (2015) have emphasised the need to consider how meanings instilled from places relate to an individual's behaviour. Weaver (2019) terms these emerging theories *situational theories of desistance*. Largely however, considering the nature of different environments, as well as the importance of place and space in desistance, are understudied concepts in comparison to other theories of desistance (Weaver, 2019). Throughout this thesis, multidisciplinary insights pertaining to the

meaning of *home* are consulted (Atkinson & Jacobs, 2016; Mallet, 2004) to enable further exploration regarding the nature of living environments, and the meaning attached to dwelling places.

Despite the importance of accommodation (whether it be conceptualised as a risk factor or protective one) accessing accommodation can be challenging for people with convictions (Maguire & Nolan, 2007). Some issues arise as a direct result of going into prison, such as losing accommodation and accumulating rent arrears (SEU, 2002). Other challenges occur upon release, for example, facing discriminatory allocations policies (Cooper, 2016; Preece & Bimpson, 2019). A third issue relates to the availability of housing and resources. Third sector (not-for-profit) organisations play a critical role in helping people with convictions attain accommodation (Mills & Meek, 2020), but such organisations experience challenges relating to service demand, funding reductions, and limited supply (Mills et al., 2013). To add to these challenges, there is currently no national, cross-government approach, to housing people with convictions (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation [HMIP], 2020).

Research has explored these issues for people with all offence types, yet there are fewer research investigations that specifically focus on challenges faced by people with sexual convictions (see Rydberg, 2018, as an exception). Inferences about accommodation challenges for people with sexual convictions are often drawn from US investigations that consider all offence types (for example, Clark, 2007). People with sexual offence convictions warrant distinct research investigations, because of the distinct community re-entry challenges they experience (Grossi, 2017). Such distinct re-entry challenges can be broadly conceptualised into two main categories: navigating necessary legal restrictions (Sexual Offences Act, 2002); and the hostile, stigmatising responses of communities (Harper et al., 2017; Williams, 2018). Exploring accommodation issues for people with sexual offence convictions is the central focus of this thesis.

1.2 Narrowing the Focus: People with Sexual Convictions in the UK

A sexual offence constitutes any offence that is prohibited under the Sexual Offences Act (2003). The term is expansive, incorporating a range of behaviours against a range of potential victim types (Crown Prosecution Service [CPS], 2017). Arguably, people with sexual offence convictions warrant distinct accommodation considerations for two

prevailing reasons (i) due to the unique legal restrictions they are subject to, and (ii) the stigmatising societal responses they elicit. Each of these issues will be considered in turn.

The Sexual Offences Act (2003) outlines the main statutory principles applied to people with sexual convictions in the UK. People convicted of a sexual offence are placed on the Sex Offender Register. At a minimum, this requires the person to notify the police of their name, date of birth, and address. Part 2 of the Sexual Offences Act (2003) outlines civil orders people may be subject to. These include Sexual Harm Prevention Orders (SHPOs, previously termed Sexual Offence Prevention Orders) and Risk of Sexual Harm Orders (RSHOs). SHPOs place additional restrictions on people with convictions to protect the public from sexual harm. RSHOs can also enforce additional restrictions, these differ from SHPOs in that they can be applied to people without a conviction. Examples of additional restrictions that might be applied include restrictions regarding internet use, employment, and where a person can live (Thomas, 2012).

People released from prison with sexual convictions who are categorised as high risk and still on licence are managed in the community by probation services. UK Probation services have witnessed a changing landscape over the past decade. In 2013, the UK government announced Transforming Rehabilitation, an initiative designed to "transform the way we rehabilitate offenders, to make progress in driving down reoffending rates" (MoJ, 2013, p. 6). This reform saw many probation services that previously operated within one National Probation Service (NPS), outsourced to private Community Rehabilitation Centres (CRCs). CRCs managed low and medium risk individuals and operated on a payment by outcomes basis. In 2018, it was announced that the probation service would again be renationalised (Strengthening Probation, HMPPS, 2018). The most recent government guidance (HMPPS, 2020) states that low and medium risk people, previously managed by CRCs, will be managed by HMPPS by June 2021. This thesis overlaps the two time periods, though most data collection occurred at the time of the Transforming Rehabilitation initiative.

Further management strategies within the UK relate to the centrality of multi-agency working (McCartan et al., 2018). People with sexual convictions are often subject to Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA; National MAPPA Team, 2019). The underpinning concept of MAPPA iterates that successful community management occurs when multiple agencies are involved, ultimately lowering re-offending, and enhancing

public protection (McCartan et al., 2018). Local authority housing providers are one example of an organisation central to this multi-agency approach (National MAPPA Team, 2019).

In addition to unique risk management considerations, people with sexual convictions are subject to more punitive attitudes than other offence types (Craig, 2005; Harper et al., 2017). They instil fear amongst the public (Comartin et al., 2009) and are often the subject of hostile vigilante actions (Cubellis et al., 2019). People endorse inaccurate myths and stereotypical assumptions about people with sexual convictions (Kleban & Jeglic, 2012). Some of the main stereotypes held towards people with sexual convictions are that they are unremorseful monsters (Pickett et al. 2013) who pose a constant threat due to their perceived "predatory" nature and an inability to be rehabilitated (Gakhal & Brown, 2011). Levenson et al. (2007) highlighted how public perceptions often directly contravene what empirical research shows. That is, members of the public may inaccurately perceive sexual recidivism as high; risk levels as homogenous; and rehabilitation efforts as ineffective (Levenson et al., 2007). Harper et al. (2017) offer a review of the plethora of research concerning attitudes towards people with sexual offences, summarising the detrimental impact of "media-proliferated and socially-constructed stereotypes about the types of people that sexual offenders are" (p. 38).

Unique risk management and negative public perceptions may be conceptualised as two distinct issues or viewed as two interlinked concepts. In terms of the latter, researchers consistently note the influence of punitive public attitudes towards dictating policy responses (Campbell & Newheiser, 2019; Mancini, 2018). Either way, both elements justify the focus of this thesis. People with sexual convictions represent a unique subpopulation of people released from prison who experience unique community reintegration processes relating to added risk management and added stigma. As such, people with sexual convictions require distinct considerations.

1.2.1 Accommodation Research Regarding People with Sexual Offences

Mills (2015) notes that research exploring life after prison for people with sexual convictions is much more limited than that available for people with non-sexual offences. This is also apparent when examining the literature regarding accommodation issues

specifically for people with sexual convictions. Research exploring accommodation for this population seemingly falls within two domains.

The first of these research domains focuses on the accommodation challenges people with sexual convictions face when trying to attain accommodation. These investigations largely expand on the issues documented above, considering how risk management and stigma impact accommodation attainment. Residency restrictions that limit where people can live (Tewksbury et al., 2016) mean that housing options are significantly reduced (Zgoba et al., 2009). In addition, landlords may demonstrate resistance when asked to rent their properties to people with sexual convictions (Evans & Porter, 2015; Furst & Evans, 2017). As Clark (2007) summarises: "sex offenders face an especially difficult time finding housing, not just because of the location restrictions placed upon them, but due to the landlord dislike of the type of crime, and landlord fear of the home being targeted by neighbours" (p. 24).

Beyond simply considering the challenges of attaining accommodation, other research has explored the experiences of people with sexual convictions who live within specific, individual, facilities. This represents the second broad domain of research exploration regarding accommodation for people with sexual convictions. For example, Reeves (2013) investigated the experiences of men living within a UK approved premise; Kras et al., (2016) document the views of those living within a US transitional facility; and Mills and Grimshaw (2012) report the experiences of individuals living within a charity-based housing project. Whilst these individual research insights offer in-depth findings in relation to the facility investigated, less is known about accommodation experiences more holistically for people with sexual convictions. That is, less is known about the broader accommodation experiences people endure across a variety of settings. This thesis seeks to address this gap, as well as offering research evidence from a UK perspective, in what is currently a US dominated field.

1.3 The Safer Living Foundation Accommodation Project

This PhD research was part-funded by the Safer Living Foundation (SLF). The SLF are a charitable organisation, that seek to prevent further victims of sexual offending by promoting the rehabilitation of people with sexual offences (SLF, n.d). This is achieved through delivering a range of rehabilitative and preventative projects. This PhD sought to

inform the development of a new initiative the SLF want to develop, an accommodation project for people with sexual convictions. As a result of the accommodation challenges often faced by people with sexual convictions (Rydberg, 2018), the SLF recognised the need for such service.

Although previous research has identified the benefits of attaining accommodation (O'Leary, 2013; SEU, 2002), less is known about the nature of the accommodation environments people are released to. Research has focused on the attainment or non-attainment of accommodation and the impacts of this (O'Leary, 2013), paying little regard to the suitability or nature of the environment itself (Weaver, 2019). As such, developing a greater understanding of accommodation needs for people with sexual convictions, seemingly under-reported within the literature, was a further objective of this thesis.

1.4 The Current Thesis

This thesis addresses a gap in the literature by considering the holistic accommodation experiences of people with sexual offence convictions living in the UK. It aims to achieve this by considering such topic irrespective of the type of facility the person lives within, and by consulting a range of peoples' views.

1.4.1 Research Aims

Due to the limited research in this area, the overarching aim of this thesis is broad and exploratory. The main aim of this thesis is to:

- Explore the accommodation needs and experiences of people with sexual offence convictions.

In addressing this main aim, the thesis will also:

- Examine theoretical links between living environments and desistance for people with sexual offence convictions.

To realise these broad aims, narrower research questions are addressed. Each of these research questions constitutes one empirical chapter:

- Q1: What are the views and experiences of relevant practitioners, in relation to accommodation for people with sexual convictions?
- Q2: What are the views and re-entry experiences of people with sexual offence convictions, now living within a community setting?
- Q3: Is there a relationship between psychosocial home needs, and positive, desistance-based outcomes, for people with sexual convictions?

Each individual research aim supplements the others. The first two research questions offer context and qualitative depth. Considering the perspectives of both practitioners and people with sexual convictions is necessary, so as to achieve an appropriate balance between considering what is appropriate for the individual, at the same time as considering essential risk aspects (Mills & Grimshaw, 2012). Multiple perspectives allowed for a balanced consideration of such issues. Research question three was developed in direct response to the findings of research question two, and as such, the development of research question three is discussed in more depth within Chapter 6.

1.4.2 Thesis Structure

This thesis comprises seven chapters.

Chapter 1 has introduced some of the main concepts that are central to this thesis to build a rationale, and justify the research aims.

Chapter 2 constitutes the literature review. This chapter explores the importance of accommodation; distinguishes between house and home; discusses concepts related to desistance; and offers a deeper discussion surrounding the distinct considerations for people with sexual convictions.

Chapter 3 explains the methodological approaches underpinning the research studies. The methodology chapter justifies the use of mixed methods, as well as discussing ethical considerations. This chapter incorporates some key methodological debates and the underpinning research paradigm philosophies.

Chapters 4, 5, and 6, are empirical chapters. Each of these empirical chapters outline the specific rationale underpinning the individual investigation, methods, findings, discussion,

and a conclusion. Chapter 4 addresses the first of the research questions outlined above: qualitatively exploring the views of professionals. Chapter 5 addresses the second research question, by qualitatively exploring the views of people with sexual convictions. Chapter 6 expands upon the findings outlined in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 explains how the findings of Study 2 led to the development of the final quantitative study. The third investigation reports quantitative insights about psychosocial home needs for people with sexual convictions.

Chapter 7 contains a general discussion. This synthesises the findings from each empirical investigation, to establish a holistic narrative regarding accommodation considerations for people with sexual offence convictions. Applications and future research considerations are suggested within the discussion. Chapter 7 closes this thesis by documenting personal reflections of the PhD process, and offering a concluding summary.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

Chapter Overview

This chapter examines the literature that is most relevant to the current thesis. It begins by highlighting the importance of house and home for all individuals, before emphasising the importance of accommodation from a public protection perspective, for people with convictions. The review then explores theories of desistance and discusses how these theories apply within the current context. The desistance literature leads on to considering the nature of the environments that people with convictions may live within. The different types of accommodation available to people with convictions will be explored, as well as the accommodation challenges faced by people with convictions. The review will then narrow in focus, discussing accommodation challenges and considerations specific to people with sexual offence convictions. As Mills (2015) notes "research about life after prison for those with a conviction for a sexual offence is sparse in comparison to the extensive treatment that resettlement in general has received" (p. 390). As such, literature from all offence types will be considered throughout this review. Where research has focused exclusively on people with sexual offences, this will be highlighted.

2.1 The Importance of Accommodation

Access to safe and secure shelter is a basic human need (Maslow, 1943; Holland, 2018). The United Nations emphasise that access to adequate housing is a human right, stating that people should have "the right to live somewhere in security, peace and dignity" (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2009, p. 3). The UK government have recognised the importance of accommodation, pledging to end homelessness and ensure that all people have a safe and stable place to live (Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government, 2019). In 2003, US federal government introduced a ten-year plan to end homelessness, which has since been implemented within 350 US communities and more than a dozen Canadian communities (Evans & Masuda, 2020). Policies targeted towards permanently ending homelessness are implemented by a range of countries throughout Europe, Australia, and North America (O'Sullivan, 2017; Parsell et al., 2013). The importance of accommodation is internationally recognised.

For people with convictions, attaining appropriate accommodation bears additional importance. The reasons for this are two-fold. A lack of stable accommodation could be a risk factor that contributes to an increased likelihood of reoffending (Makarios et al., 2010; O'Leary, 2013). From a strengths-based perspective, a suitable living environment could serve as a protective factor for the individual (Boer, 2013), enhancing their life circumstances and reintegration success (Heffernan & Ward, 2019).

This first section will consider the relevance and importance of accommodation. It will begin by acknowledging the necessity of accommodation for all people, clarifying the concept of *house* and *home*. Attention will then shift to the additional public protection considerations for people with convictions (SEU, 2002).

2.1.1 House and Home: A Basic Human Need for Everybody

Access to safe and secure shelter is a basic human necessity that serves as an essential foundation to achieving higher level life needs (Maslow, 1943). Cohen (2007) identifies numerous benefits associated with attaining suitable accommodation. These include physical and mental health benefits, reduced stress, improved self-esteem, and an increased sense of security. Conversely, the absence of such basic level need is associated with poor health outcomes (National Housing Federation, 2019).

The World Health Organisation (WHO) further acknowledge the adverse health implications of inadequate housing environments (WHO, 2018). Not only is the attainment of shelter important, but so too are considerations for the suitability of the internal environment. Howden-Chapman and Chapman (2012) draw attention to the interconnected nature between housing policies and health policies, stating that "physical aspects of housing and the indoor environment have a direct impact on health" (p. 414).

Numerous immaterial benefits might also be associated with housing (Atkinson & Jacobs, 2016). Here it is necessary to define the term *home*. Where a house provides the physical, material shelter, home is about the emotions and feelings associated with such physical place (Karjalainen, 1993). Defining the term home is complex, multi-faceted, and interdisciplinary. Sociologists, geographers, architects, historians, anthropologists, and philosophers have all contributed to the discourse pertaining to home (Mallet, 2004).

Psychological insights regarding home are also evident, particularly in relation to identity concepts and belonging (Sigmon et al., 2002). Graham et al. (2015) note how the notion of home has clear relevance to "social, developmental, cognitive, and other psychological processes" (p. 346). In Mallet's (2004) oft cited review, it is noted that home is conceptualised in various ways, usually interpreted according to individual researchers' own "disciplinary orbit" (p. 64). Since Mallet's review (2004), the way in which home is described is still just as varied (Atkinson & Jacobs, 2016). Some academics explore overlapping notions of *home comfort* (Ellsworth-Krebs et al., 2019), *home making* (Nasreen & Ruming, 2020) and *sense of place* (Bowe, 2012).

Kearns et al., (2000) note the psychosocial aspects of feeling a sense of home. They distributed postal surveys to residents of West Central Scotland, and highlighted that people understand home as a haven, a place to express autonomy, and a symbol of status. Participants described home as instilling feelings of privacy, safety, refuge, freedom, and control. These psychosocial aspects appeared relevant irrespective of the participants tenure type. Kearns et al. (2000) conducted their investigation in one region of Scotland, as such, their findings may lack generalisability to other areas in the UK. They note that people in the area they recruited from often live in flats without gardens. As such, conducting the investigation across different areas of the UK and indeed the world, will enable further knowledge about home environments. Since Kearns et al. (2000), many other scholars have added to the discussion of home, often corroborating the psychosocial constructs that they identified. Atkinson and Jacobs (2016) summarise the differing scholarly perspectives, adding considerations around identity, ownership, belonging, and wider societal relationships.

The expansive scope of these feelings has led some to criticise the definitional ambiguity of the term home, suggesting such construct is vague and inherently subjective (Rapoport, 2001). Academics have stressed the need for a conceptual framework and definitional clarity when researching such concepts (Coolen & Meesters, 2012). As such, this discussion serves to emphasise the distinction between *house* and *home*. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to offer a comprehensive review of the debates and nuanced conceptualisations within the inter-disciplinary home literature; though, it is at the very least necessary to distinguish between the physical dwelling (house) and the affective one (home); a distinction often neglected, when academics and researchers cite the importance of accommodation(/house) for people with convictions (SEU, 2002; O'Leary,

2013). To summarise, "home [is] more than bricks and mortar ... home occupies a space in which we imbue our feelings and aspirations in relation to self-identity and also in relation to others and the environment" (Atkinson & Jacobs, 2016, p. 44).

The environments that people with convictions live within vary greatly (M. Willis, 2018), thus the broader term *accommodation* is adopted throughout this thesis to convey the physical environment (as opposed to the more restrictive term *house*). The term *home* remains unchanged. The notion of home and the psychosocial feelings instilled from home, demonstrate interesting similarities to the desistance concepts that will be considered later in this chapter.

2.1.2 Accommodation Within the Context of Reintegration

Accommodation for prison leavers constitutes an "essential environmental ingredient" (Boer, 2013, p.8) for reintegration more broadly. Reintegration, resettlement, and re-entry are interrelated concepts, but essentially all centre around a person's return to the community after prison (Maruna et al., 2013). Attaining housing is one element to consider within the wider remit of reintegration.

Attempts to define reintegration, resettlement, and re-entry has often presented challenges for scholars (Bird, 2006; Moore, 2011), a debate which is beyond the scope of this review. Briefly, resettlement is largely a practitioner used term to describe a "systematic and evidence-based process…[that] encompasses the totality of work with prisoners, their families and significant others in partnership with statutory and voluntary organisations" (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons and Probation [HMIPP], 2001, p.12). Re-entry is a similar term but favoured within US contexts (Moore, 2011). Although there are disputes concerning the term reintegration, and arguments about whether people with convictions were ever *integrated* in the first instance (Ramsbotham, 2003) it is the term favoured throughout this thesis. The concept of reintegration is seemingly broader, as it incorporates consideration for wider societal issues and acceptance (McNeill, 2004).

The SEU, established by Tony Blair in 1997 (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2004), were tasked to explore ways to reduce reoffending by people leaving prison. The influential report published by the SEU acknowledged the need for reintegration for prisoners, and suggested ways to combat the social exclusion that such individuals may

face. The report "sets out the scale of the problem [of reoffending]; examines the causes and why the system doesn't work better; and makes recommendations for the way forward" (SEU, 2002, p. 1). The report identified accommodation as one of seven pathways that was important to target to reduce reoffending.

Further UK findings about the importance of reintegration factors are highlighted by May et al., (2008). They investigated which resettlement factors were most strongly associated with a decreased risk of reoffending. People close to prison release were issued resettlement surveys that requested information regarding education, employment, accommodation, substance abuse, family connections, prison interventions, and community resettlement plans. The findings revealed that, if an individual anticipated facing both accommodation and employment issues (i.e. not having a job or an address arranged for release), the likelihood of reoffending once released increased by 43%. Displaying issues with either of these factors in isolation did not demonstrate a significant increased likelihood of reoffending. Although accommodation is important, it appears that the relationship is not so clearly defined, in that other variables, such as employment, may interact to produce an increase in reoffending likelihood. McAlinden (2009) comments on this, noting that "employment issues…can not be so easily divorced from other social and personal variables which offenders may face on release" (p. 22). This issue is evident from the interaction effect identified by May et al. (2008). It is important to note however, that the data collected by May and colleagues was based on a participants' expectations before they were released from prison. As such, whether a person's expectations materialised into their actual accommodation or employment outcome, is not ascertainable from the data. This means that people who reported expecting problems upon release, may not have faced any issues (or vice versa). The data therefore may present an inaccurate portrayal of people's situations upon actual prison release.

The above investigations emphasise the importance of accommodation within the context of wider reintegration, yet research often considers this in relation to people with all types of offences. Fewer investigations consider reintegration issues for people with sexual offences specifically. As Mills (2015) notes "the idea that people who have committed serious harms against children should have any kind of life after serving their prison sentence is likely to be a difficult and uncomfortable notion for most to contemplate. So why does this matter?" (p. 392). The answer to this question is again about public protection.

In a series of research outputs, Willis and colleagues documented the importance of comprehensive reintegration planning upon prison release, for people with sexual offence convictions (Willis & Grace, 2008, 2009; Scoones et al., 2012). Willis and Grace (2008) developed a coding protocol that could be implemented to evaluate the quality of reintegration plans. Example concepts that were assessed within the protocol included accommodation, employment, and social support. They identified that the quality of reintegration plans was significantly lower for people who later reoffended, compared to the higher quality of reintegration plans for people who did not reoffend. Of note, recidivists had significantly lower scores in relation to accommodation on the coding protocol. Again, the importance of accommodation is clearly indicated when considered within the wider remit of reintegration. The authors concluded that high quality reintegration planning could contribute to reduced recidivism, though acknowledged that this relationship does not represent causality.

Willis and Grace (2009) later reasoned that "if reintegration planning is a causal factor for recidivism, then poor planning should be associated with an increased rate of reoffending (i.e., a decreased time to offense)" (p. 506). This hypothesis was supported. The combined protocol items that best predicted recidivism were accommodation, employment, and the social support in place. Willis and Grace's findings (2008; 2009) highlight the importance of community reintegration planning in reducing risk of reoffending. They also echo findings from May et al., (2008) who iterated the importance of having an address in place upon release, whilst also noting the interconnected nature of this variable with other resettlement aspects. Scoones et al., (2012) later found that considering the quality of release planning alongside already established risk assessment tools improves the predictive ability of risk assessment even further (Scoones et al., 2012).

The importance of reintegration planning for people with sexual convictions is clearly documented from the above research outputs (Willis & Grace, 2008, 2009; Scoones et al., 2012). However, successful community reintegration throughout these investigations was defined according to a lack of reoffending. Such quantitative figures are useful in terms of evaluating public protection outcomes, but they cannot offer depth regarding how the individuals themselves interpret their reintegration. Reintegration is a broad concept, that captures issues related to socialisation and community belonging (Fox, 2015), not just an

absence of reoffending. As such, considering the experiences of the individuals themselves is also necessary, to fully understand re-entry processes.

Russell et al., (2013) qualitatively explored the community reintegration experiences of nine individuals with sexual offences against children. Prior to release, participants noted the importance of securing pre-arranged accommodation, so that it was suitable to their individual needs. However, this was not always achieved, and some participants were uncertain about where they would live. Participants experienced challenges relating to: living with negative social influences; experiencing accommodation instability as a result of frequent moves; and, challenges adapting to greater levels of independence. Other reintegration problems concerned hostile community responses, the importance of social support and professional support networks, being able to build a new life, and gaining employment. The authors conclude that "unfamiliar and unstable accommodation arrangements" (p. 66) was a pressing reintegration issue for people with sexual convictions.

Russel et al. (2013) documented potential reintegration challenges for people with sexual convictions, such as the hostile community responses, uncertainty regarding accommodation procedures, and feeling a sense of instability. Conversely, Graffam et al., (2004) documented some factors influencing successful reintegration. They interviewed professionals and people with convictions. Their qualitative insights were able to offer further benefits of reintegration, beyond just considering risk and recidivism rates (Willis & Grace, 2008, 2009), to emphasise more greatly the protective nature of reintegration. Achieving stable housing was identified as an essential factor that would contribute to a person's successful transition towards a positive, offence-free life. Abstaining from future offending and leading an offence free life are concepts aligned with desistance, discussed further in Section 3 of this thesis.

2.1.3 Examining the Link Between Accommodation and Reoffending

As witnessed from the influential SEU report (2002), UK government acknowledge the importance of accommodation for prison leavers, although this has often been considered in relation to additional resettlement needs (e.g. May et al.'s, 2008, MoJ funded investigation). This section will explore the relationship between accommodation and reoffending more specifically. That is, it will consider research investigations that have

offered findings that are exclusive to accommodation considerations. These investigations often explore the impact of stable accommodation on reoffending rates for people with all conviction types (Ellison et al., 2013; Makarios et al., 2010; O'Leary, 2013; Wright et al., 2013).

Makarios et al. (2010) examined predictors of recidivism amongst a mixed sex sample of 1,965 people released from an Ohio prison. They found that for every one change in residence, risk of recidivism increased by 70%. Wright et al. (2013) reviewed evidence from various re-entry programme evaluations. They found that re-entry programmes incorporating residential and/or aftercare elements were most likely to reveal positive significant effects in reducing recidivism. However, Wright et al. (2013) note the importance of methodological rigour within these evaluations. The evaluation studies that implemented randomised control designs were less likely to demonstrate significant effects in favour of the re-entry programme treatment group. Furthermore, of the 35 evaluation studies reviewed by Wright et al. (2013), only 11 were conducted within the UK. This means that the cross-cultural applicability of some of their findings could be limited. May and colleagues (2008) re-entry investigation outlined in the prior section was conducted within a UK context, thus highlighting the importance of accommodation in UK settings, however, the exact influence of accommodation itself on reoffending was unclear. Other resettlement factors (especially employment) may be inextricably intertwined (McAlinden, 2009).

O'Leary (2013) reiterates the complex relationship in understanding the role of accommodation in reducing reoffending. O'Leary's (2013) review identifies two main areas of research that help to determine the influence of accommodation on reoffending. First, there is literature available that does use robust methodology and tries to infer causality (e.g. the randomised control trials of re-entry programmes reviewed by Wright et al., 2013). However, these investigations do not solely consider accommodation, other factors within the re-entry programme are also considered. It is important to recognise that this is not an issue in and of itself. In real world contexts, it is a positive thing that reintegration programmes target the various support needs of people who are leaving prison. However, it does represent problems when trying to determine the exact role that the attainment of accommodation has on reoffending, as the individual elements of the re-entry programmes are hard to separate.

The second area of research activity that O'Leary (2013) identified to try to better understand the link between accommodation and reoffending are investigations that focus more explicitly on accommodation, but the methods used are correlational and non-experimental. As such, they cannot assume that accommodation itself is a causal mechanism underpinning reduced reoffending. Whilst some research insights indicate possible links between accommodation and reoffending, the causal relationship between these two factors is unclear. As O'Leary (2013) concludes:

> It does appear that the evidence suggests that stable accommodation has a role to play in reducing the risk of recidivism. What is less than clear, though, is the nature and extent of this role. Does stable accommodation in of itself reduce the risk of someone re-offending? If so, how? (p. 10).

As such, more information is needed to infer any causal relationship between accommodation and reoffending.

Examining O'Leary's conclusion from a critical stance, perhaps the limited success in identifying any causal relationships is due to it being a somewhat limited question. An isolated focus on causal risk reduction mechanisms as O'Leary (2013) tries to establish could be insufficient in enabling a full understanding of the importance of accommodation. *What works* research investigates whether people who have taken part in an intervention reoffend less than those not receiving the intervention (Grimwood & Berman, 2012). Seemingly, the research discussed within this section aligns more closely with a what works method of research activity. It equates accommodation to an intervention as if it were some form of experimental condition (e.g. stable housing versus unstable/no housing), to establish whether the intervention produced any reduction in risk. Ellison et al. (2013) offer another example of this, by comparing the reoffending rates of those housed versus not housed. However, accommodation is not a discrete event that can be compared to the likes of taking part in a clinical trial; treating it as such may be overly reductionist. Such focus on risk reduction may come at the expense of considering accommodation as a multi-faceted factor within the individuals' life. It also ignores the concept of home, and the feelings attached to the places in which people live.

This thesis therefore argues that an appreciation of desistance processes is an equally important framework to approach accommodation processes from; particularly as desistance research tends to focus more on individual's life processes (Grimwood & Berman, 2012). As Maruna and Mann (2019) argue "methodological paradigm wars

[between what works and desistance] are a time-wasting distraction from the shared goal of helping people turn their lives around." (p. 9). The importance of considering accommodation as a risk reducing factor is not ignored, and insights from such evidence will still be considered throughout. Rather, this thesis compliments the already available literature, by implementing a desistance-based theoretical framework to the issue of accommodation for people with sexual offences.

2.2 Desistance

Desistance refers to the long-term abstinence of offending behaviour, and the processes in which previously offending individuals go through to reach this (Bushway et al., 2001; Maruna, 2001). Researchers have made a distinction between primary and secondary desistance (Weaver, 2019). The former relates to any crime free period in a person's life, and the latter is the process of moving towards a non-offending identity (Maruna & Farrall, 2004). McNeill (2016) has since added to this discussion with the introduction of tertiary desistance. This captures the need to feel a sense of belonging within society.

Desistance emphasises positive human change, stressing the importance of both social and structural factors, as well as personal and subjective factors important in leading an offence free life (McNeill et al., 2012). Some researchers have incorporated the term within their definition of reintegration (Davis et al., 2012) demonstrating how the two processes complement each other. However, desistance and reintegration are not synonymous, as a person may desist without full adjustment to community life (Davis et al., 2012). Although reintegration and desistance processes are not necessarily isolated concepts, they are separated within this review for clarity.

2.2.1 General Theories of Desistance

Numerous academics (criminologists in particular) have put forward their accounts of desistance, amounting to a "diversity of theoretical conceptualizations of desistance" (Weaver, 2019, p. 642). In a review of desistance theories, Weaver (2019) categorises the different theoretical approaches within four broad domains 1) *individual and agentic* theories 2) *social and structural* theories 3) *interactionist* theories, and 4) the more recently emerging, *situational desistance*. This section will discuss each of these in turn, before addressing desistance literature for people with sexual convictions more specifically.

2.2.1.1 Individual and Agentic Theories. These theories emphasise the importance of the individuals age, maturation, and internal cognitions (Weaver, 2019). Within these theories of desistance, ontogenic explanations stipulate that aging and maturation are sufficient in explaining a person's cessation of crime (Glueck & Glueck, 1940; Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990; Shulman et al., 2016). Ontogenic considerations are underpinned by the age-crime curve which shows that offending behaviour naturally declines as people get older (Blumstein & Cohen, 1987). However, stating that age in and of itself is a causal desistance process is overly simplistic, neglecting individual processes that occur within this aging state (Maruna, 1997).

Scholars have since recognised the importance of cognitive processes for individuals engaging in desistance, particularly feelings of agency and identity (Healy, 2013). These theories are still focused on the individual, but account for the importance of underlying cognitive mechanisms. They suggest that people rationally choose to pursue an alternative, non-offending future (Healy, 2013; Weaver, 2019). As these theories are based on the individual, little regard is given to the wider societal context, making their applicability within the current thesis only partially sufficient.

2.2.1.2 Social and Structural Theories. Weaver (2019) argues that social and structural theories of desistance "advance an association between desistance and circumstances 'external' to the individual" (p. 648). These theories emphasise the importance of family, peers, relationships, and employment (Laub & Sampson, 2003). Like individualistic and agentic theories, social and structural theories considered alone are reductionist and deterministic, attributing desistance solely to external events as opposed to considering the individual that is subject to such events. Considering either internal individual processes, or external societal influences alone is insufficient. Herein lies the argument for interactionist theories.

2.2.1.3 Interactionist Theories. Interactionist theories of desistance consider the individual within their social context, explaining desistance as "the outcome of an individual seeking to alter their socio-structural context … acquiring new behaviours and new pro-social roles … resulting in associated shifts in the individual's personal and social identity" (Weaver, 2019, p. 648). Agency and personal identity again play an important role in the desistance process here. People undergoing processes of desistance often

speak with a *language of agency* (Maruna, 2001), representing their perceived ability to change and demonstrating hope for the future (Healy, 2013). These individual changes are considered in relation to *turning points* (Laub & Sampson, 2003) that may happen within a person's life that offer *hooks* (Giordano et al., 2002) for such change.

There are variations between different interactionist theories, but largely, these theories of desistance account for social contexts that enable or inhibit positive identities and feelings of agency (King, 2013). Although interactionist theories are now generally accepted within the literature (Weaver, 2019), a methodological debate once existed that discussed whether subjective changes (e.g. a person's own self-concept and identity) or social changes (e.g. marriage or employment), happened first. LeBel et al. (2008) termed this issue "The 'Chicken and Egg' of Subjective and Social Factors in Desistance" (p. 131). They wanted to identify the sequence in which internal and external factors operated in the process of desistance. By examining data from 126 UK males with offences against property, the researchers proposed a subjective-social model. They concluded "subjective changes may precede life-changing structural events, and, to that extent, individuals can act as agents of their own change" (p. 155). Whilst LeBel et al. (2008) offer some clarity to the debate, the small sample size limits the rigour of their statistical analyses. A larger sample size would allow for more robust statistical inferences, enhancing the validity of their conclusion.

Whilst all three of these theoretical approaches have relevance to the current discussion, the consideration of accommodation has largely been ignored thus far within the desistance literature. The closest in which interactionist theories have considered accommodation comes from a paper by Farrall et al. (2010). Within their discussion, they consider housing at the sociological level, documented as a "macro-level structural issue" (p. 546). For example, the availability of housing might influence a person's living situation and ultimately impact their individual desistance efforts. Farrall et al. (2010) consider housing at the macro-level , but their discussion is limited in terms of considering the nature of a person's individualised accommodation environment. Given that a person's individual living environment contributes to their social context, it is argued in this thesis that further research into the relevance of accommodation and desistance is necessary. A newly emerging theoretical stance on desistance (termed by Weaver as *situational desistance*) aligns well to this argument.

2.2.1.4. Situational Desistance Theories. Situational desistance theories are relatively new and understudied (Weaver, 2019) but are particularly salient within the context of the current thesis. These theories emphasise the importance of spatial context and the places people inhabit (Bottoms, 2014). Hunter and Farrall (2015) explored the role of place and space in desistance from drug use. Their study outlined the importance of identity tied to place, structure, and goal attainment, thus echoing the concepts that interactionists draw upon. Interestingly, these constructs also bear resemblance to the emotive feelings attached to the notion of home (Atkinson & Jacobs, 2016). Hunter and Farrall (2015) concluded that "places are not just the locations within which desistance takes place. Understanding what certain places mean, underpins efforts to desist." (p. 964). Hunter and Farrall (2015) seem to identify the need to consider the emotions attached to place when considering a person's desistance efforts, and thus, without explicitly labelling it so, allude to the importance of home.

Pleggenkuhle et al. (2016) state that theoretical links between housing and desistance require further exploration. By exploring the narratives of individuals living within a housing re-entry programme, they compared the responses between individuals within this programme and individuals without the housing assistance programme. They identified that the combination of both material and emotional support within this programme helped the transition towards desistance. Their findings indicated how participants within the programme spoke about their personal agency. The authors comment that "housing services have important implications for structural changes, such as social relationships, and subjective, emotional outcomes" (p. 380). This again, indicates the importance of something beyond the dwelling itself. It also offers further support to interactionist theories of desistance (Weaver, 2019), in that both subjective and structural constructs are important within desistance. A strength of the research design implemented by Pleggenkuhle and colleagues (2016) is that they attempted to match participant samples, so that the samples were comparable in terms of offence backgrounds. This means that any differences observed between the groups could be more reliably attributed to whether a participant was subject to the housing programme or not. However, the research intentionally eliminated people with sexual offence convictions due to the residency restrictions they faced. The applicability of these findings to people with sexual convictions is limited.

Summarising the desistance theories covered here, interactionist theories and the newly emerging situational desistance theories are most relevant to the current context. These theories have so far been considered in terms of all offence types. The following section will discuss theories of desistance for people with sexual offence convictions.

2.2.2 Desistance from Sexual Offending

Recent theoretical and empirical investigations have considered the applicability of desistance concepts to people with sexual convictions (Göbbels et al., 2012; Hulley, 2016; McAlinden et al., 2017). Desistance concepts discussed in relation to sexual offending often overlap positive, strengths-based approaches to rehabilitation (Kewley, 2017). Such overlap is perhaps unsurprising. Instead of a focus on deficit driven risks that drive people to reoffend, desistance centres around strengths-based assumptions, attempting to understand what positive elements lead to a cessation of offending (Ward, 2017). As such, this section will also consider the closely aligned concepts of protective factors and the Good Lives Model (GLM; Ward, 2002; Ward & Stewart, 2003).

2.2.2.1 The Relevance of Desistance to Sexual Offending. First, it is necessary to address the relevance of desistance for people with sexual convictions. Some criminologists state that the study of desistance is most applicable to people who frequently engage in crime (Shapland et al., 2016). For Shapland and colleagues then, considering desistance for people who are unlikely to engage in multiple acts of crime may be redundant. People with sexual offence convictions are often cited as a cohort of individuals that are least likely to reoffend, with recidivism rates estimated to be between 5-25% (Hanson & Bussière, 1998; Harris & Hanson, 2004; Helmus et al., 2012). It is argued within this thesis that, taking the low documented rates of sexual recidivism, the remaining group of non-reoffending individuals require consideration. Other researchers have supported this stance. As Harris (2014) states, "the empirical reality of low sexual recidivism is essentially evidence of desistance" (p. 1555).

Adding to the discussion of desistance and low recidivism rates, Hanson et al. (2018) identified that, the longer an individual with a sexual conviction spends in the community offence free, the greater the reduction in sexual reoffending risk. From previously published statistics on sexual recidivism, Hanson and colleagues obtained a combined sample of over 7000 males with a reported history of sexual offending. The researchers

then modelled the long-term risk of sexual recidivism. Hanson et al. (2018) found that individuals' risk significantly reduced, the longer time they spent in the community offence free. At approximately 10-15 years living in the community offence free, people with sexual convictions were no more likely to commit another sexual offence, than those individuals convicted of non-sexual offences. It is of course important to consider that from the combined sample and follow up data, there could be instances of unreported sexual crime. This could mean that the actual rates of sexual reoffending are not accounted for within Hanson and colleagues' report, as some sexual crimes may go unreported. This is a common issue amongst data that relies on reoffending rates generally, thus warrants caution when interpreting the results of recidivism data. Nonetheless, the trend in risk reduction based on time spent offence free in the community offers further evidence of desistance amongst people with sexual convictions.

2.2.2.2 Applying General Desistance Theories to People with Sexual Convictions. Some of the main desistance theories in relation to general offending (Weaver, 2019) have also been applied to people with sexual offence convictions. In particular, the relevance of age (Lussier et al., 2010), agency, hope, and identity (Farmer et al., 2012; Farmer et al., 2016) have all been discussed in relation to people with sexual offending.

The importance of age and maturation in relation to desistance is outlined in ontogenic theories of desistance (Weaver, 2019), often with reference to the age-crime curve (Blumstein & Cohen, 1987). When considering the relevance of age and maturation in relation to sexual offending, findings from Lussier et al. (2010) are important to outline. Lussier and colleagues explored longitudinal data from 250 adult males convicted of sexual offences. From their analysis, they distinguished between four main offending trajectories of people with sexual convictions. These trajectories were termed: very low-rate, low-rate desistors, late bloomers, and high-rate chronics. Figure 1 offers a visual representation of these four offending trajectories posited by Lussier and colleagues.

Figure 1.

Offending trajectories of adults with sexual offence convictions from Lussier et al. (2010).
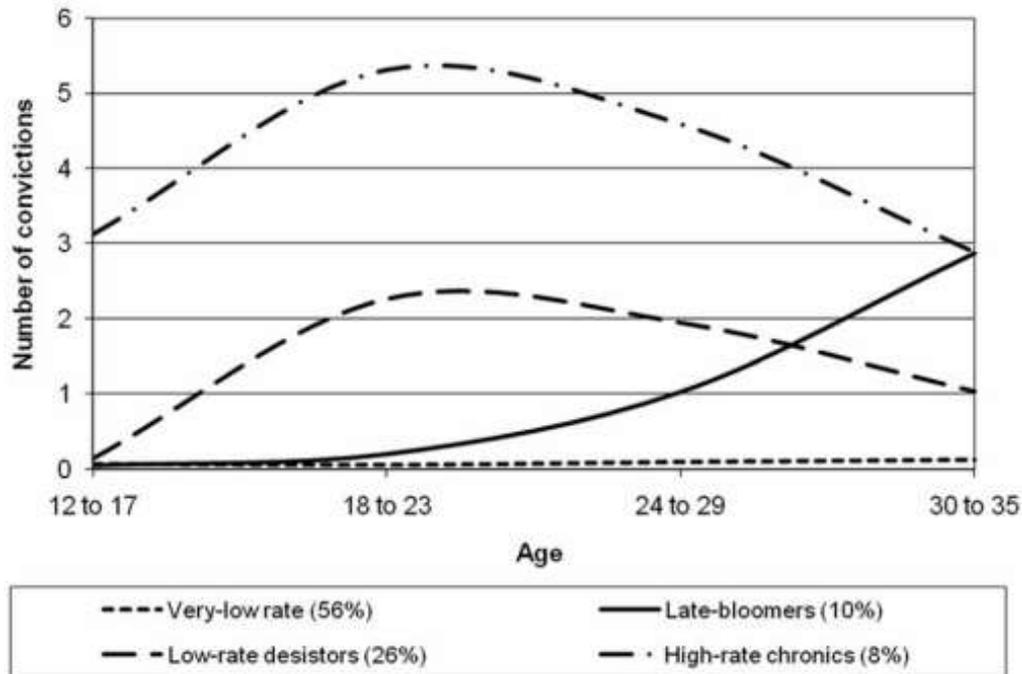
Note: This figure outlines the four offending trajectories identified by Lussier et al. (2010) where n = 250. Reprinted from "Criminal Trajectories of Adult Sex Offenders and the Age Effect: Examining the Dynamic Aspect of Offending in Adulthood" by P. Lussier, S. Tzoumakis, J. Cale and J. Amirault, 2010, *International Criminal Justice Review, 20*(2), p. 155. Copyright by Sage Publishing. Reprinted with pre-approved permission.

From Lussier et al.'s (2010) trajectory categorisations, people within the very low-rate offending trajectory category represented those people who had a low rate of criminal involvement throughout their life. This was the most common offending trajectory witnessed within Lussier et al.'s (2010) sample. The second most common category of offending trajectory was labelled as low rate desistors; representing those people who reach a peak in their offending at early adulthood, and then the rate in offending gradually declines. It is this offending trajectory that echoes the relevance of the age crime curve (Blumstein & Cohen, 1987) in relation to people with sexual convictions. The third trajectory, late bloomers, are described by Lussier et al. (2010) as "a group of offenders that have been neglected in the scientific literature until recently" (p. 160). These represent a cohort of individuals whose offending trajectory contrasts with that posited by the age-crime curve, representing those people who begin their offending in adulthood through to their late 30's. Finally, high-rate chronics represent those individuals who are most criminally active, yet their patterns of offending still align with the age crime curve in that

their offending behaviours will generally decline in middle age. Lussier et al. (2010) emphasise the heterogeneous nature of sexual offending trajectories, broadly categorising these trajectories into four distinct groups, whilst simultaneously documenting the relevance of maturation from desistance, particularly in relation to whom they term low rate desistors and high-rate chronics.

Further applications of general desistance theories to people with sexual convictions have also being examined from a qualitative perspective. Farmer et al., (2012) compared desisting individuals with sexual convictions, to non-desisting individuals. They found that a sense of personal agency, an internal locus of control, positive outlooks, and belonging within a social group were all factors present within desisting individuals. Farmer et al., (2016) qualitatively examined the applicability of "mainstream" theories of desistance, to adult males convicted of sexual offences against children. Through examining the life stories of 32 individuals, the authors highlighted the importance of work, relationships, hope, and identity in enabling successful desistance. Their research accounted for both structural and cognitive factors, offering support to the interactionist theories previously discussed (Weaver, 2019). Similarly, Harris (2014) attempted to establish the applicability of desistance theories to men with sexual convictions. From 21 life story interviews, qualitative data revealed support for theories of naturally occurring desistance and cognitive transformations.

Although empirical investigations (Farmer et al., 2012; Farmer et al., 2016; Harris, 2014) offer some support in terms of the application of desistance concepts to people with sexual convictions, the relevance of accommodation and situational desistance theories, have, to the best of the writer's knowledge, thus far being underexplored amongst people with sexual offences. The Integrated Theory of Desistance from Sexual Offending (discussed within the following section) is a theory specifically devised to account for desistance processes amongst people with sexual convictions (Göbbels et al., 2012). This theory does make reference to the challenges that people with sexual convictions face in terms of attaining housing, yet, there is little consideration as to the nature of the environments in which people live, and the feelings instilled from such environments (Hunter & Farrall, 2015). The types of facilities in which people live, and the appropriateness of these environments in terms of supporting desistance for people with sexual convictions is largely absent within the sexual-offending specific literature.

2.2.2.3 The Integrated Theory of Desistance from Sexual Offending. One theory explaining how an individual might desist from sexual offending was produced by Göbbels et al. (2012), termed the Integrated Theory of Desistance from Sexual Offending (ITDSO). The authors acknowledged that the criminology literature has heavily influenced ideas relating to desistance (Farrall et al., 2011), yet more could be done to account for the psychological processes an individual experiences at each stage of desistance. The ITDSO complements the existing desistance-based literature, taking account of psychological processes (e.g. cognitions and emotions), environmental processes (e.g. opportunities), social processes (e.g. marriage and employment), and individual agency.

The ITDSO consists of four phases (Göbbels et al., 2012). The first phase is termed *decisive momentum*. This is when an individual begins to realise the problematic nature of their offending and considers change as an option. Decisive momentum might be triggered by an external life event, but the cognitive processes initiating the choice to change are psychological in nature. A person needs to view themselves as capable and ready to change. The second phase of the ITDSO is the *rehabilitation phase*. It is necessary to introduce the GLM (Ward, 2002) here, as many concepts within this phase were drawn from the GLM. The GLM is a model of rehabilitation that stresses all individuals are motivated to achieve *primary goods* in life. Primary goods are defined as "states of affairs, states of mind, personal characteristics, activities, or experiences that … are likely to increase psychological well-being if achieved" (Laws & Ward, 2011, p. 184). It is thought that offending occurs when people try to attain these goods in anti-social ways. Rehabilitation focuses then on enhancing prosocial means for a person to attain the primary goods. It focuses on the attainment and formulation of goals, making agency a key component. The GLM also closely aligns with notions of identity. The attainment of primary goods, and the processes people implement to attain such goods, "is thought to result in the formation of more adaptive, practical identities" (Göbbels et al., 2012, p. 457).

Phase 3 of the ITDSO is the *re-entry stage*. This is when the individual is released from prison and attempts to reconnect with the wider community. Throughout this time, it is necessary for individuals to maintain their commitment to change and develop a non-offending identity, despite the re-entry barriers they may face. Such barriers may include difficulty accessing accommodation (Clark, 2007; Evans & Porter, 2015; Furst & Evans, 2017), challenges securing employment (Grossi, 2017; Social Exclusion Unit, 2002), navigating complex risk management processes (Sexual Offences Act, 2003), and facing

hostile community responses (Harper et al., 2017; Williams, 2018). Notably, these barriers are likely exacerbated for people with sexual convictions (Grossi, 2017), an issue that will be explored in depth later throughout this review. This phase is most closely aligned to the topics discussed throughout this thesis, as it is at this point of re-entry that a person must begin to consider their community accommodation. The final phase then relates to *normalcy* and reintegration, viewed as "an extension of the re-entry phase" (Göbbels et al., 2012, p. 460). Normalcy is when the person realises their offending behaviour is in the past and begins to see themselves as a non-offending member of society.

Göbbels et al. (2012) propose the ITDSO as an initial guiding framework. Further empirical research is necessary to test whether the ITDSO as a holistic theory represents a true account of desistance for people with sexual offence convictions. Despite this need for additional research to validate the ITDSO, qualitative explorations of individuals self-narratives have offered support to some of the general theories of desistance in their application to people with sexual convictions (Farmer et al., 2012; Farmer et al., 2016; Harris, 2014). More research is required to account for the role that accommodation plays in desistance from sexual offending, specifically, the nature of accommodation environments (Hunter & Farrall, 2015), beyond just the attainment of accommodation itself.

2.3 Types of Living Environments

This review will now turn to consider the types of accommodation environments people may live within upon release from prison. Research from Clark (2016) emphasises the need for this. Clark's (2016) US investigation suggests that the type of living environment a person resides within is important to consider, beyond just the attainment (or lack of) accommodation itself. For example; living within a private tenancy was associated with fewer licence violations; living within a transitional facility increased licence violations and re-arrests; those released to a work centre had fewer re-arrests; whereas people released to a housing shelter had more re-arrests; and individuals residing within a treatment facility showed positive correlations with an increased number of licence violations. It is necessary to stress that confounding variables such as a greater level of supervision could account for inflated recidivism rates. Nonetheless, Clark's (2016) research highlights the necessity of considering the different environments that people may live within upon release from prison. Similarly, from a UK investigation, a Welsh government funded research initiative stated that accommodation is "necessary but not sufficient" (Humphreys & Stirling, 2008, p. 1) in reducing reoffending. It is important that the living environment is suitable and stable (Golten, 2015).

Within the UK, there are a range of environments that people with sexual offence convictions may live within (McAlinden, 2009). Some of the main living environments that people live within post-prison release include: approved premises (HMIP, 2017), living with family or friends, privately owning or privately renting, living within a social housing property, supported accommodation, or temporary emergency facilities (M. Wilson, 2017). This section will briefly outline the types of environments available for people. Where possible, this section will also consider research associated with the different types of facilities. This section does not offer an exhaustive list of accommodation options, as the models of housing available to people upon prison release can differ greatly. The accommodation environments considered below are those that are deemed most relevant to this thesis.

2.3.1 Approved Premises

Within the UK, people released from prison assessed as presenting high or very high risk to the public, are often required to reside within an approved premise immediately after their release. Approved premises are usually operated by the probation service, but there are also some private sector facilities (HMIP, 2017). The HMIP report (2017) "Probation Hostels' (Approved Premises) Contribution to Public Protection, Rehabilitation and Resettlement.", stated that, at the time of writing their report, there were 90 approved premises run by the NPS, 11 were independent, and seven were classed as Psychologically Informed Planned Environments (PIPEs). PIPEs form part of the Offender Personality Disorder Pathway (NOMS & NHS, 2015) for high-risk individuals with personality disorder. Across all the approved premise services, there was approximately 2,267 bed spaces.

The MoJ service specification for approved premises (MoJ, 2017) defines the main service goals as; public protection, reducing reoffending, and enabling offender resettlement. They are 24 hour staffed environments that seek to "balance care with control" (HMIPP, 2017, p.7). Approved premises' foremost priority is that of public protection, and not as a means of offering housing to people released from prison. However, they do offer residential supervision, and form the beginnings of many prison leavers community resettlement. Given that approved premises are environments where prison leavers commonly live, they are included within the umbrella term of *accommodation* throughout this thesis.

Research regarding approved premises is limited (Cherry & Cheston, 2006). Davis and O'Meara (2018) noted that the absence of research was "surprising" (p. 228) given that such environments form the beginnings of many people's reintegration. Information can be gained from inspectorate reports (Criminal Justice Joint Inspectorate, 2008; HMIP 2017). Largely, these reports both outline the positive work undertaken within approved premises, suggesting that "the structured and contained environment offered by hostels does promote effective work by professionals and residents" (HMIP, 2017, p. 50). From an inspection of 10 approved premises, the HMIP (2017) report emphasises numerous positives. These include the helpful contributions of staff; the progress residents make in terms of resettlement and rehabilitation goals; and the maintenance of this progression upon leaving the facility. However, the report does also note that some people inevitably

relapse, and that the service delivery across approved premises varies greatly. The report concludes that learning from the approved premises that operate best, could improve outcomes across the approved premise estate.

As one way to improve approved premise service delivery, a new operating model was introduced by the NPS (2016). This operating model offered a "common framework" (NPS, 2016, p. 25) for approved premises to follow; one element of this stipulated that all approved premises must meet Enabling Environments standards. Enabling Environments is a concept that was introduced by the Royal College of Psychiatrists Centre for Quality Improvement, intended to develop environments that benefit mental health and foster good relationships (Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2019). The award assesses environments against ten standards. These are, Belonging, Boundaries, Communication, Development, Empowerment, Involvement, Leadership, Openness, Safety and Structure. A longitudinal study from Davies et al. (2018) identified that some approved premises are behind schedule in achieving the Enabling Environment accreditation. Whilst approved premises are recognising that the nature of a person's environment is important upon prison release, their ability to facilitate such organisational change could be restricted (Davies et al., 2018). It is important to recognise that Davies and colleagues only investigated Enabling Environment implementation within four approved premises in Wales. The successes of implementation across the approved premise estate cannot be inferred from their findings, rather, the researchers initiate discourse on Enabling Environments as an organisational change process and note the challenges with this. In response to a freedom of information request, the MoJ confirmed that, as of the 14th August 2020, 53 approved premises had achieved the Enabling Environments accreditation, and that all other non-accredited sites were actively working towards this (MoJ, 2020).

The research investigations and inspections undertaken in relation to approved premises have not offered much information regarding the experiences of residents themselves. One known exception is an investigation by Reeves (2013), who examined the experiences of people with sexual offences living within approved premises. Through observations and interviews, Reeves (2013) explored the aims and purpose of the hostel, hostel life, staff/resident relationships, attitudes towards the workings of the hostel, and future release planning for residents. Reeves (2013) identified a negative impact of the approved premise environment on the identities of people with sexual convictions. Social

groupings within the approved premise were the foundation for residents' identities. These groups were mainly static in nature and were constructed according to opposing labels. For example, *sex offenders* versus *non-sex offenders*, or *drug users* versus *non-drug users*. Reeves' (2013) findings echo the seminal work of social psychologist Henri Tajfel, who proposed that a persons' self-concept is derived from group memberships (Tajfel, 1978). Formally recognised as the social identity approach, it is deemed "one of the most influential theories of group processes and intergroup relations worldwide" (Hornsey, 2008, p. 205). Here, Reeves (2013) notes how such social groupings can occur within approved premise environments.

In contrast to the largely positive tone of the HMIPP report (2017), Reeves (2013) suggests that approved premises may not necessarily be conducive to rehabilitation efforts when looking specifically at people with sexual convictions. Reeves (2013) concludes that "the practice of the hostel both demonises and reinforces the personal and social identity constructs of residents convicted of sexual offences to accord with the dominant discourse of 'sex offender'" (p.383). This research emphasises how the environment that people with sexual offence convictions lived within could relate to desistance considerations and identity transformations. From a critical perspective, it is unlikely that the approved premise environment is solely to blame for this reinforcement of the "sex offender" label. Additional societal barriers likely contribute to this issue which will be expanded upon in Section 2.5. Nonetheless, the findings indicate the importance of considering potential desistance inhibiting environments.

Kras et al., (2016) developed similar conclusions to that of Reeves (2013) from their research with people living within US transitional facilities. Seemingly, transitional facilities share similar aims to UK approved premises, as they are for people classed as high-risk, and offer a structured environment to address peoples' risk (Kras et al., 2016). Participants within Kras et al.'s (2016) study experienced being "grouped under the sex offender label" (p. 525). Difficulties were also experienced when leaving the facility, mainly with regards to securing employment. Some participants felt that residing in the facility increased this barrier further due to associated stigma about living within a transitional facility. Rydberg (2018) adds to this discussion. From interviews with people with sexual and non-sexual offence convictions, Rydberg notes how people with sexual offence convictions were more likely to be residing within a transitional facility compared to people with non-sexual offences. Having to reside in these facilities opposed peoples' initial expectations for

release. For example, one participant was looking forward to independence, and another expected to be able to return home. None of these were possible, and the environment within the transitional facility was an unexpected one. As previously noted, these findings should be interpreted with caution within a UK context. Nonetheless, some negative accommodation experiences seem to share cross-cultural similarities, particularly issues relating to further labelling and stigmatisation that can stem from a person's living environment (Kras et al., 2016; Reeves, 2013).

2.3.2 Third Sector Organisations and Supported Facilities

There are various models of supported housing that help to facilitate reintegration for people leaving prison (M. Willis, 2018). Some facilities specifically exist to cater for people with convictions. A popular example of a UK based service is Nacro. Nacro are a social justice charity who offer various types of housing support. This support ranges from offering advice to people about housing, to the actual provision of accommodation in Nacro operated facilities (Nacro, 2019).

Some researchers have aimed to categorise the types of supported housing provision available. In Canada, Leviten-Reid et al. (2014) makes three distinctions between housing facilities for people leaving prison: *custodial* (linked with treatment and not a choice of the individuals); *supportive* (that focus on rehabilitation efforts and tapered supervision levels); and *supported* (recovery focused, independent living, flexible and tailored facilities). Parsell and Moutou (2014) examined different models of supportive housing in Australia, identifying two main approaches: (i) *Common Ground Models* describe a close congregated housing site with onsite support, and (ii) *Scattered-site Models* are dispersed accommodation units with support given by outreach services. Scattered-site models seem common to what is termed *floating support* in the UK (Sharples et al., 2002). Floating support is defined as "housing-related support that is not linked to accommodation and not normally provided by a person's landlord. It is usually provided face-to-face on an outreach basis" (HMIP, 2020, p. 26).

Although supported facilities and third sector organisations form a key accommodation option for people with convictions, Gojkovic et al. (2012) note some challenges associated with third sector housing provision. They utilised a mixed methods design to establish to what extent third sector organisations assisted people with convictions with housing, and

the barriers third sector organisations face. From an investigation within eight UK prisons, 37 housing specific organisations were identified. Thirty of these directly provided housing facilities, and the remaining seven dealt with housing advice and referrals. Although these links were in place in prisons, this was largely unknown to prisoners. Only 21% were aware of the organisations available to them, and only 4% reported using the services. Interview data revealed positive responses from prisoners involved with the organisations. Staff also viewed the involvement of third sector housing organisations positively, noting how they may improve housing outcomes for people with convictions. Although prisoners' knowledge regarding the third sector support was seemingly limited, those who were involved with the services expressed positive views towards them.

Nevertheless, numerous barriers to effective implementation were discussed, highlighting areas for service improvement and main issues for the public sector to consider (Gojkovic et al., 2012). These included the extensive demand for services, insufficient staffing levels, difficulties in securing local authority backing, difficulties in establishing local authority partnerships, and public sector cuts (Gojkovic et al., 2012). More recently, the HMIP (2020) accommodation report for people with convictions has echoed some of these issues, noting the absence of joined up approaches, as well as outlining the closure of many offender specific housing services across the UK.

When considering people with sexual offences specifically, there is a paucity of research examining what such supported facilities are like for this group of people. One report that does warrant discussion is from Mills and Grimshaw (2012). Mills and Grimshaw (2012) present findings of a qualitative study that considered people's experiences within a facility called Bridge House. Bridge House offered supported housing specifically for individuals with sexual offences, for periods of up to two years. Notably, the project is no longer operating, but the findings from the report offer interesting considerations pertinent to accommodation issues for people with sexual convictions.

Mills and Grimshaw (2012) conducted 19 semi-structured interviews on differing samples; individuals who were living or had previously lived at Bridge House; Bridge House staff members or volunteers; and representatives from external agencies (e.g. criminal justice professionals). The report revealed numerous reasons as to why Bridge House was valued as an accommodation facility. Resident participants described feeling safe due to not having to conceal their offence type. This contrasts the findings from Reeves (2013)

whereby people with sexual convictions had negative self-identities instilled from the approved premise environment.

Further positives of the Bridge House facility, as perceived by the tenants, is that they were guaranteed stable accommodation for up to two years. The importance of accommodation stability is commonly noted as important for people leaving prison, in terms of reducing reoffending (Makarios et al., 2010; O'Leary, 2013). From the qualitative data obtained by Mills and Grimshaw, people with sexual convictions valued this stability.

The importance of staff relationships was also iterated within the report (Mills & Grimshaw, 2012). Bridge House staff were knowledgeable about the resettlement challenges that residents may face because of their sexual conviction. However, Bridge House was not able to surmount all the barriers that people with sexual convictions might face in their re-entry. Although it provided a positive beginning where the person could live independently for a two-year period, moving on from Bridge House into social housing was described as a lengthy process. In terms of community reintegration, residents described feeling isolated with no real friendship networks. These issues again represent the complex and holistic nature of community reintegration for people with convictions, whereby accommodation is just one element within this wider remit (Boer, 2013).

Further findings within the Bridge House report related to important considerations regarding staffing of the hostel. Mills and Grimshaw (2012) describe that a greater balance between risk and rehabilitation was necessary. They explained boundary concerns between residents and staff and highlighted the lack of formal training staff were in receipt of. Partner organisations such as MAPPA representatives expressed their concerns regarding this matter (Mills & Grimshaw, 2012). The report provides practical considerations, in terms of what works well and is valued by the residents, and what areas required development. The report emphasises the importance of considering a range of perspectives, to develop a holistic understanding of accommodation provision for people with sexual convictions.

2.3.3 General Housing Options

In addition to specialist provision, people with convictions might also live within more generic environments that are available to all members of society. However, accessing such general provision can be challenging (HMIP, 2020) as will be highlighted in Section 4. This section offers an overview of the types of accommodation available. Largely, UK housing tenure options fall within three domains: renting a social housing property; renting a privately owned property; and homeownership (Hoolachan et al., 2017).

Social housing properties are classed as affordable accommodation for those with low incomes, managed by regulated, non-commercial, providers (Shelter, 2020). Local authorities (i.e. councils) and housing associations (or Registered Social Landlords) are responsible for such tenancies. Other tenancy options include privately renting, returning to their owned property, or accessing supported schemes (SEU, 2002; M. Wilson, 2018). Alternatively, people without a stable residency might fall under one of three categories of homelessness (Crisis, n.d.). This could include being street homeless, such as rough sleeping. Statutory homelessness is when people require access to short-term emergency assistance through their local authority. There are also issues of hidden homelessness, concerning people who are not captured within homelessness statistics as they are either unknown to their local authority, or denied help by their local authority (Crisis, n.d.).

Previous research has identified homelessness as an issue both for people entering the prison system (SEU, 2002; Williams et al., 2012) and upon leaving prison (Madoc-Jones et al., 2019). When considering people with sexual offences specifically, homelessness amongst people with sexual offence convictions in the US is notoriously problematic (Levenson, 2018), whilst issues of homelessness amongst people with sexual offences in the UK are not as well documented. A known exception is that of a recent BBC headline, which noted that 200 people with sexual convictions were released from prison homeless (Shaw, 2020). These housing challenges will be discussed in more depth throughout the following sections.

2.4 Accommodation Challenges for Prison Leavers

Despite the importance of accommodation for people leaving prison (Allender et al., 2005), the housing challenges present for this group are vast (Geller & Curtis, 2011). These

accommodation challenges present at three key timepoints; upon imprisonment, nearing release, and upon release (Reid Howie Associates, 2015). This thesis predominantly focuses on the third timepoint, yet all challenges are considered here for context.

The SEU report (2002) identifies some of the main ways in which a prison sentence can detrimentally impact a person's accommodation prospects. Upon prison entry, people may lose their property because of welfare benefit issues or poor communication to the landlord. Throughout a person's sentence, accumulation of debt and arrears may mean a person loses their existing accommodation. Once released from prison, there are issues with securing housing. Accessing the private rented sector can be financially unviable, and challenges to accessing social housing include inconsistent availability, local authorities' willingness to accept people with convictions, and policy exclusions (SEU, 2002). Furthermore, the problematic nature of reduced access to housing is not an isolated one. A lack of housing can then pose subsequent challenges related to accessing benefits, healthcare, and employment (SEU, 2002). The SEU report was published almost 20 years ago, yet publications since this time suggest that many of these challenges are still as present today (Reid Howie Associates, 2015). People released from prison are significantly more likely to face housing insecurity, compared to non-offending individuals (Geller & Curtis, 2011).

Housing policy still appears to be particularly problematic. Cooper (2016) explored criminal justice practitioners experiences of liaising with local authority providers. The "exclusionary function" (Cooper, 2016, p. 445) of housing allocation policies, paired with austerity measures has sustained the accommodation challenges faced by people with convictions. Muir and McMahon (2015) identify how housing policies may disfavour people with convictions, terming people with convictions as being deemed an "unwanted voice" (p. 6) by providers. Research from the US attempted to quantify the restrictiveness of housing policies against people with convictions (Purtle et al., 2020). Content analysis of 152 housing policy documents revealed that most housing policy documents were overly restrictive towards people with convictions. Housing organisations were imposing their own restrictions towards people with convictions, beyond that legally required.

Whilst policy documents (Purtle et al., 2020), housing professionals (Muir & McMahon, 2015), and criminal justice practitioners (Cooper, 2016) can offer valuable insights about the accommodation challenges facing people with convictions, the people with convictions

themselves are at the forefront of these problems. It is necessary to understand these challenges from their perspectives. Keene et al. (2018) interviewed individuals released from prison about the accommodation challenges they experienced. Beyond the more tangible issues linked to policy implementation and financial struggles, the interplay between stigma and accommodation was highlighted. Interviews revealed how stigma played a role in peoples' accommodation experiences in multiple ways. First, a lack of housing reinforced the stigma they already experienced because of imprisonment. Second, unpleasant places in which people may need to reside in can exacerbate the stigma further. Third, the stigma that manifests as actions either by landlords or by policy further restricts housing access. As summarised "incarceration becomes an enduring mark that serves to justify the ongoing denial of rights and resources for those who have been to prison" (Keene et al., 2018, p. 811). Not only are the challenges in accessing accommodation apparent from objective outsiders (e.g. practitioners and government departments), but also from the perspective of people with convictions themselves.

These barriers impact the people with convictions, as well as those whose role it is to assist with accommodation for prison leavers. Since the implementation of Transforming Rehabilitation, a UK reform to the probation service which saw many criminal justice services outsourced to private CRCs (see Chapter 1); accommodation has remained a governmental concern (MoJ, 2013). The "revolution" (MoJ, 2013, p. 9) in the way low and medium risk people were managed in the community still emphasised the importance of helping people to find accommodation to reduce reoffending. The extent to which this need was achieved however, is questioned in a report from Clinks and Homeless Link (2017). From interviews with 15 relevant stakeholders, the report authors identified some challenges that were a direct product of Transforming Rehabilitation, such as a lack of accommodation advice from CRCs. Other issues related to external factors including limited housing supply and limited funding for accommodation services. It is necessary to acknowledge that the changing landscape of probation services and renationalisation of the NPS (HMPPS, 2018; HMPPS, 2020) may see that some of the problems discussed in the report are overcome. Nonetheless, the findings indicate the importance of considering multiple perspectives when looking at accommodation issues for people leaving prison. People who are employed to assist with accommodation for people with convictions encounter challenges fulfilling their job role.

2.5 People with Sexual Convictions: A Distinct Group

This review will now turn to focus more explicitly on individuals with sexual offence convictions. The justification for this focus is two-fold. First, people with sexual convictions are subject to differing risk management and legislation (Sexual Offences Act, 2002). Second, people with sexual convictions often experience added stigma (Harper et al., 2017). Each of these unique challenges will be discussed in turn. Before doing so however, it is necessary to clarify the definitional scope of the term *sexual conviction* used throughout this thesis.

The Sexual Offences Act (2003) outlines offence types that constitute a sexual offence. The extensive range of offence types are vast, including; rape, assault, offences against children, downloading offences, and familial offences. As such, people with sexual convictions are a highly heterogenous group. This has called for some research considerations to distinguish the type of sexual offence a person is convicted of, perhaps particularly important when considering the reoffending patterns between people with differing sexual convictions (Sample & Bray, 2006). However, for the purposes of the current exploratory research investigations, narrowing the focus in this thesis seemed inappropriate and premature given the paucity of research in the area. This thesis considers people who are released from prison with any sexual offence type. The definition of a person with a sexual offence or sexual conviction throughout this thesis, refers to anyone for which the Sexual Offences Act (2003) applies.

2.5.1 Legal Restrictions and Management Differences

Within the UK, people convicted, cautioned, or released from prison with a sexual offence are subject to notification requirements under Part 2 of the Sexual Offences Act (2003). They are placed on a register that contains details of their name, address, date of birth, and national insurance number, to enable the police to keep track of them. Unlike the US register, the UK register is not publicly available (McCartan et al., 2018). Since the high-profile case of Sarah Payne, who was murdered by a known registrant, the Child Sexual Offender Disclosure Scheme was introduced in the UK (Kemshall et al., 2010). This enables members of the public to enquire about certain people under this scheme if they believe that a person poses a risk; but the full details of the register are only visible to risk management professionals (Kemshall et al., 2010).

When people with sexual convictions are released from prison, they are typically released on licence and subject to probation input (Thompson & Thomas, 2017). Their licence will have conditions attached. As a standard condition, people are required to live in an address approved by probation (Prison Reform Trust, 2015). Some additional conditions may also be implemented, such as restrictions on areas people can go to termed *exclusion zones*; restrictions on internet use; and not to be in contact with other prisoners or people with sexual convictions (Prison Reform Trust, 2015). UK community management strategies also centre around multi-agency approaches (McCartan et al., 2018). This is particularly evidenced through MAPPA. MAPPA engages professionals from a range of services, including police, probation, prisons, and other relevant organisations like local authority housing, to manage people with convictions and protect the public. According to MAPPA guidance (National MAPPA Team, 2019), local authority housing providers have a legal duty to comply with MAPPA. This means that identifying appropriate housing could be within a person's risk management plan, and that housing departments are involved in the risk management conversations for individuals with sexual convictions (Peck, 2011).

Process evaluations of MAPPA proceedings have demonstrated improvements in the initiative over the years (Kemshall et al., 2005; Maguire et al., 2001; Wood & Kemshall, 2007) and there is evidence to suggest that MAPPA processes could contribute to a reduction in reoffending (Bryant et al., 2015; Peck, 2011). A wide range of organisations and professionals work in tandem to reduce the risk of the individual; housing is one recognised aspect of this wider approach. However, the compatibility of MAPPA processes with desistance is questionable. As desistance emphasises positive change and the importance of hope, Weaver (2014) suggests that MAPPA processes somewhat restrict this ability for change:

> These restrictive interventions essentially control where someone can go, where they can live, what they can do, whom they can approach, contact or otherwise. Such exclusionary and controlling measures can reinforce or communicate a sense of being different, an outsider, someone to be kept away from other people. (Weaver, 2014, p. 17).

This has led to calls for a more blended approach, whereby risk management strategies are balanced with initiatives that foster capacity for individual change (Kemshall, 2008; McNeil, 2012; Weaver, 2014). Amidst this debate, issues with varying MAPPA processes have also been highlighted. Hudson and Henley (2015) argue that disparities in MAPPA

practices across different geographical regions raise concerns. Ultimately, they emphasise the necessity for more research into the efficacy of MAPPA processes.

As much of the research regarding prisoner re-entry and sexual offending stems from the US, it is necessary to briefly consider their laws. Like the UK, sex offender registration procedures are in place, with the intention for law enforcement to be able to track individuals in the hope this would reduce recidivism (McCartan & Gotch, 2020). In contrast to the non-public nature of the UK register, this registration information is publicly available (known as Megan's Law, 1996). The community are notified of people's names and addresses, and even photographs of people who have been convicted for a sexual offence are publicly visible (Bonnar-Kidd, 2010). Federal law versus state law in the US means that the degree to which each state publicly discloses information differs (Bonnar-Kidd, 2010). US laws also incorporate residency restrictions; *buffer zones* are implemented to inhibit people with sexual offences accessing areas within certain distances of schools, parks, and nurseries (Levenson, 2009).

Both US (Levenson et al., 2016) and UK academics (McAlinden, 2015) have raised concerns about the counter-evidenced based nature of risk management strategies towards people with sexual offences. Savage and Windsor (2018) conducted a review regarding the efficacy of residency restrictions for people with sexual offence convictions. Owing to the plethora of investigations in the area, they separated their review into five different questions. Their findings in relation to each of these questions, will be considered in turn:

1. Do restriction laws prevent sexual offences against children?

Savage and Windsor's review (2018) identified only one sufficiently rigorous study that tested this question (Socia, 2012). From a simple analysis, Socia (2012) found some level of support for the efficacy of residency restrictions preventing offences against children. Restrictions were negatively correlated with sexual offences or reoffences against children. In a more complex multi-variate model analysis, this association was not significant (Socia, 2012). Savage and Windsor (2018) describe other studies that were unable to offer evidence that restriction laws prevent sexual offences against children (Huebner et al., 2014; Merken, 2015; Nobles et al., 2012; Socia, 2015; Zandbergen et al.,

2010). Savage and Windsor (2018) suggest that more methodologically rigorous research is needed to fully understand the answer to this question.

2. Are sexual offences against children committed by people who are subject to residence restrictions?

Savage and Windsor (2018) identified three studies that could partially answer this question (Calkins et al., 2015; Colombino et al., 2011; Wunnebarger et al., 2008). Whilst sex crimes committed against children are at times by people who are subject to residence restrictions, Savage and Windsor (2018) concluded "the premise that chronic sexual offenders are responsible for most sex crime is not supported" (p. 19). As such, the logic of applying the residence restrictions are again questioned.

3. When restrictions are not present, do people with child convictions choose to live closer to child associated areas than would be predicted by chance?

Savage and Windsor (2018) suggested there was a paucity of evidence to indicate that people with sexual offences actively choose these areas more often. One descriptive comparison offered some support for this hypothesis (Walker et al., 2001) but when considering more robust analyses, the evidence for this was minimal. A person with an offence against a child was no more or less likely to live within a child associated area than any other member of the public.

4. Are sexual offences higher in areas where people with sexual convictions live?

This question tests the assumption that people with sexual convictions commit offences near to where they live. Savage and Windsor (2018) state that the findings for this question were mixed and less definite than the other questions posed by their review. Sexual offences are often committed within the home environment, making it challenging to disentangle the significance of geographical location. The authors suggest that "for many individuals the location of the offender's residence matters" (Savage & Windsor, 2018, p. 21)

5. Do sexual offences against children happen near restricted locations in the first instance?

The logic underpinning this question is that, even if sexual offences happen where a person lives, does this mean they happen in places that the restriction laws are aimed at excluding? Savage and Windsor (2018) wanted to identify whether the laws were effective in reducing sexual offences against children, in the areas in which people with sexual convictions were restricted from. The evidence reviewed by Savage and Windsor (2018) did not indicate any support for this, again questioning the logic of the restrictions imposed.

Taking each of these questions together, Savage and Windsor (2018) do not wholly dismiss the laws as ineffective, rather, suggest that there is insufficient evidence to claim that they are effective. The review answered indirect questions that were presumed to be logical proxy measures of zoning law effectiveness. Ultimately, more robust tests are needed, that directly and overtly test the efficacy of the restriction laws.

In addition to the absence of any empirical evidence suggesting residency laws reduce recidivism (Savage & Windsor, 2018; Socia, 2012), the policies in place could inadvertently increase the risk they are aimed at preventing. Such negative, counter-productive effects of the laws have been dubbed throughout the literature as *collateral consequences* (Levenson, 2008; Tewksbury, 2005). One major collateral consequence within the US that has received attention from both academics (e.g. Levenson, 2018) and the media (Zarrella & Oppmann, 2007) is that people are "legislated into homelessness" (Levenson, 2018, p. 1). In the US, people with sexual convictions are at an increased risk of becoming homeless more so than any other offence type (Levenson, 2018). Zoning laws greatly reduce the housing options available to subjected individuals, consequently rendering many people homeless. The irony of these laws that are intended to protect, is that they then become a facilitator of recidivism by forcing people into homelessness and subsequently increasing risk. Levenson (2018) argues that the laws do not adhere to evidence, and "may undermine the very factor shown by research to be associated with positive re-entry and reduced recidivism" (p. 1.). Levenson (2018) advocates for greater adherence to research when implementing policy.

Issues of homelessness amongst people convicted of sexual offences are particularly problematic within the US (Bonnar-Kidd, 2010; Levenson, 2018), yet the severity of this

within the UK is challenging to infer. MoJ official community performance statistics (2019) offer some context. Between April 2018 and March 2019, 31.7% of people with sexual offences were categorised as living within settled accommodation upon release from prison, and 5.5% were classed as homeless. Most people with sexual convictions were released into approved premises, as 37.7% were residing within probation accommodation. However, the accommodation situations after this period within approved premises are not shown by these government statistics. Furthermore, these statistics only document outcomes for people supervised by the NPS or CRCs. Those released at the end of their sentence who were no longer subject to MoJ proceedings are unaccounted for. A BBC headline recently revealed that almost 200 prisoners with sexual convictions were released from prison without anywhere to live, more than 100 of whom were high or very high risk (Shaw, 2020). However, these publications do not offer context or reasonings underpinning potential homelessness amongst people with sexual convictions. More UK research into issues of residency restrictions and the potential collateral consequence of homelessness are necessary.

In addition to the practical and tangible barriers associated with these laws, the detrimental psychological impacts have also been noted. Within the US, participants who reported higher negative perceptions and experiences of residency restrictions, also demonstrated significantly higher scores for depression and hopelessness (Jeglic et al., 2012). A sense of hopelessness, despair, and instability felt by people subject to residency restrictions may also contribute to an inadvertent increased risk of reoffending (Leonard, 2011). Owing to the importance of hopefulness in desistance processes (Healy, 2013), diminishing feelings of hope could thus prevent desistance efforts. Again, this issue represents a concern from a humanist perspective for the individual themselves, but also for wider public protection. Through inadvertent means, residence restrictions could be increasing the very risk they are aimed to prevent, through negative physical or psychological repercussions.

The legitimacy of restriction zones has further been questioned by professionals. Call (2018) investigated the views of professionals about their perceptions of risk management policy and collateral consequences. Not only do the people subject to these policies believe them to be detrimental, so to do professionals working with them. The findings once again question the rationality of these policies, this time from the perspectives of relevant professionals. Furthermore, even from a strictly spatial perspective, residency

restrictions seem irrational, since people with sexual convictions are mobile (Downs, 2016). If a person were restricted from an area due to the presence of a nearby school, other journeys that the person makes will mean the person encounters a school regardless. As one participant responded within Levenson and Cotter's research (2005): "if a person wants to offend, it doesn't matter how close he is to a convenient place to find kids" (p. 174). The efficacy of residency restrictions, particularly relating to strict zoning laws in the US, is seemingly limited.

2.5.2 Public Perceptions and Stigma

The second issue that separates people with sexual convictions from those with general convictions relates to that of public perception and stigma. People with sexual offence convictions are subject to more punitive attitudes than other offence types (Tewksbury, 2012). They instil fear amongst the general public (Comartin et al., 2009) and are the target of hostile vigilante actions (Cubellis et al., 2019). People often endorse inaccurate myths and stereotypical assumptions about people with sexual offences (Kleban & Jeglic, 2012), for example, that they are a homogenous cohort of individuals who pose a constant threat and an inability to be rehabilitated (Levenson et al., 2007). Such stereotypes like the "omnipresent predatory stranger" (McAlinden, 2014, p. 180) image associated with perpetrators of sexual crimes, then in turn influence policy. Attitudinal responses served as the second justification for the distinct focus of this thesis on people with sexual offence convictions.

Various researchers have investigated the issue of stigma and hostile public attitudes towards people with sexual offences. Willis et al.'s (2010) review demonstrates how negative public attitudes severely hinder the ability for successful reintegration and desistance. Harper et al. (2017) echo these issues, adding that such negative attitudes impede outcomes within both clinical and societal reintegration contexts. The resultant issues are two-fold. Ethically, people with sexual offence convictions are denied any form of human respect upon their re-entry; pragmatically, such negative attitudes could increase risk (Willis et al., 2010), for example by reducing access to important re-entry needs such as accommodation.

Some research insights highlight the interplay between public attitudes and accommodation issues. This is witnessed in relation to both the responses of community members as well as landlords. As Clark (2007) explains:

> Sex offenders face an especially difficult time finding housing, not just because of the location restrictions placed upon them, but due to the landlord dislike of the type of crime, and landlord fear of the home being targeted by neighbours (p. 24).

This conclusion highlights the added housing discrimination people with sexual convictions face and postulates reasons why. Clark's (2007) research considered US landlord attitudes towards all offence types. Narrower conclusions were then inferred towards people with sexual offences. Research which focuses exclusively on accommodation for people with sexual convictions could provide additional knowledge.

Evans and Porter (2015) implemented a quasi-experimental design to examine the effect that criminal convictions had on landlord rental decisions. People posed as prospective tenants to landlords. These prospective tenants were categorised within one of four conditions: no offending history (the control group); a child molestation offence; statutory rape offence; or drug offence. Prospective tenants phoned landlords to enquire about the viewing of their property. Findings indicated that callers without an offence were more likely to be accepted by the landlord, than those with an offence. When investigating the influence of different offence types, callers who disclosed a conviction for child molestation were significantly more likely to be rejected for a viewing than those with rape or drug convictions. From this naturalistic data, it appears empirically supported that people with sexual convictions may face more challenges than people with other conviction types.

Evans and Porter (2015) attribute landlord refusals to the influence of hostile attitudes, as they report:

> Stigma was apparent in landlords' initial reactions to hearing about the child molestation conviction. One landlord response summed up many of the others' responses: "You were convicted of what? (6-s pause). Yes, it will be a problem…(dial tone)." (p. 37).

However, interpreting this conclusion from a critical standpoint, it is challenging to infer or assume the landlords' own decisions for rejecting tenants with convictions against children. For example, there may have been the need to balance additional risk management issues, such as the presence of children nearby. In a later report, Furst and Evans (2017) offered a qualitative analysis of estate agent responses towards people

posing as prospective tenants with convictions. This later research alludes to the influence of risk concerns. Furst and Evans (2017) note that overt rejections towards people with offences against children were often justified by the proximity of other families, children, and day care centres. This later research output by Furst and Evans (2017) is not entirely comparable to that of Evans and Porter (2015), as Evans and Porter (2015) investigated the responses of landlords whereas Furst and Evans (2017) investigated the responses of estate agents. Nonetheless, the findings from Furst and Evans (2017) offer additional depth to the reasons underpinning overt rejections towards people with convictions against children, highlighting how risk concerns are often used to justify accommodation letting decisions.

Landlord and property manager responses act as immediate barriers to people with sexual offence convictions, often preventing them from securing accommodation in the first instance (Evans & Porter, 2015; Furst & Evans, 2017; Kunstler & Tsai, 2020). Responses from the community can be equally as hindering, particularly that of vigilantism (Cubellis et al., 2019). Woodall et al. (2013) qualitatively examined the barriers that prisoners would envisage to face upon release from prison. They highlighted the differences discussed between people with general convictions and people with sexual convictions, by interviewing 36 male prisoners across three UK prisons. Housing issues were not a dominant concern within the current sample of people with sexual convictions, as most were returning to their privately-owned properties. Nonetheless, these participants did feel they would face additional barriers above those encountered by people with non-sexual convictions. These included enhanced stigma, vigilante action and restricted employment opportunities. Though this sample did not envisage accommodation to be a barrier due to their private ownings, it is iterated that not everybody will have their own privately owned property to return to upon release. For such people, the perception of additional housing difficulties may be apparent (see, for example, Russel et al., 2013).

Further societal barriers related to housing people with sexual convictions have also been discussed in relation to political opposition. Stojkovic and Farkas (2014) outline the difficulties faced by a committee in Wisconsin, who were trying to establish a housing facility for people with sexual convictions. Their paper outlines the difficulties this committee faced in such efforts as community members were not supportive of the committees' efforts. Politicians then did not assist with the committee's efforts. Williams' (2018) book titled "The Sex Offender Housing Dilemma" emphasises how community

activism seeks to exclude people with sexual convictions from attaining housing. People with sexual offence convictions are often concerned about extreme incidences of vigilante action (Woodall et al., 2013). However, Williams (2018) argues that more subtle community activism efforts restrict housing prospects for people with sexual convictions, more so than extreme instances of vigilante action or violence. In summary, people with sexual convictions are subject to punitive, hostile responses, from both landlords and the wider community. This in turn may impact their accommodation prospects and experiences.

2.6 Chapter Summary

Access to suitable and stable accommodation forms an essential aspect of a person's wider reintegration. Although the link between accommodation and reoffending is challenging to establish, it has been argued throughout this review that such deficit-driven, risk-based approach is only one way to study the issue of accommodation for people with sexual offence convictions. Previous research has considered the importance of the attainment of accommodation, but less is known about the type of environments that people live within, and their needs within these environments. Discussions of home, and the relevance of place is limited, though constructs associated with home do seemingly resemble concepts discussed in the desistance field. Considering desistance issues within the context of accommodation for people with sexual convictions, could offer useful academic and practical insights.

Despite the importance of accommodation, people with convictions experience challenges in relation to this reintegration need. These challenges are mainly documented in relation to attaining accommodation, yet less is known about their experiences once they do attain shelter. Despite a few exceptions, even fewer research investigations consider these issues in relation to people with sexual offence convictions specifically. Arguably, such people warrant separate consideration due to the additional challenges they are subject to, such as restrictions and stigma.

This thesis seeks to address the above gaps. It will explore the accommodation experiences of people with sexual offence convictions specifically, focussing particularly on their needs within their living environments. To gain a holistic understanding of this

issue, the views of professionals and practitioners with relevant experience will also be considered. Desistance implications and applications will be considered throughout.

Chapter 3. Methodology

Chapter Overview

This chapter will outline and justify the methods used throughout the empirical investigations documented within this thesis. It will begin by offering a general overview of the studies, noting the philosophical underpinnings most closely aligned to the investigations undertaken. Then, a broad discussion of the methods used within each empirical investigation will be considered. This will include consideration of the qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques, sampling strategies, and analyses. The chapter will conclude by considering some of the main ethical considerations. Each empirical chapter will outline the finer details of the specific methods employed within each study. This chapter outlines and justifies the broader methodological choices.

3.1 An Overview of the Empirical Studies

The overarching aim of this PhD was to explore the accommodation experiences and accommodation needs of people with sexual offence convictions. This was investigated through adopting a mixed methods approach, whereby three interrelated studies were conducted. Each empirical chapter constitutes one of these studies.

Study 1 sought to qualitatively explore accommodation issues for people with sexual offence convictions, from the perspective of those with "practice-based wisdom" (Day et al., 2014 p. 171). Interviews were conducted with professionals who had relevant experience related to accommodation for people with sexual offence convictions. This exploratory investigation offered context and background to the topic of accommodation for people with sexual convictions in the UK.

Study 2 explored similar issues to that of Study 1, investigating this from the perspectives of people with sexual convictions themselves and focussing deeper on personal experiences. Interviews were conducted with people with sexual convictions, living within a community environment. Also acting as an exploratory phase, this investigation allowed for rich data to be obtained on a previously under-researched area, focussing more on the individual's experiences and their perceived accommodation needs.

Study 3 expanded upon Study 2 using quantitative, psychometric techniques. Concepts that people deemed important within a living environment identified from Study 2 (termed *psychosocial home needs*) were measured. Concepts related to desistance were also measured within the questionnaire, to identify any relationship between the attainment of psychosocial home needs and desistance-based outcomes.

Throughout each of the empirical investigations, practical recommendations were extracted from the data and communicated to the SLF. These did not constitute a focus of this thesis, and as such, are just highlighted for the reader within Appendix 7.

3.2 The Research Paradigm and Design

A research paradigm is defined as the researcher's philosophical stance on how knowledge is constructed; it underpins decisions about what and how a phenomenon is studied and interpreted (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Research paradigms differ in their ontology, epistemology, methodology, and axiology (Guber, 1990; Heron & Reason, 1997). These four elements prompt researchers to reflect upon their assumptions about reality (ontology); how knowledge is developed (epistemology); the methods used to construct knowledge (methodology); and the worth, as well as the ethics of different kinds of research (axiology) (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017; Varpio & MacLeod, 2020).

There are various paradigms, each with their own ontological, epistemological, methodological, and axiological underpinnings (Bonache & Festing, 2020; Scotland, 2012). The three main paradigms to consider within the context of this thesis are that of positivism, constructivism, and (though technically not a paradigm) pragmatism. Positivism adopts an ontological position that there is a single, objective truth, independent of the researcher. Aligning with the scientific method, positivism advocates that knowledge can be measured reliably, thus incorporates mainly quantitative and experimental techniques (Grix, 2010). The strengths of positivism lie in its replicable, precise, and generalisable methods (Hussain et al., 2013). This corroborates some of the risk-based literature regarding the impact of accommodation on reoffending. Previous research has assumed that the attainment of accommodation and its impact on risk and reoffending can be measured by outcomes such as recidivism rates, risk assessment measures, and quantitative evaluations of resettlement programmes (O'Leary, 2013). However, a

criticism of positivism particularly pertinent to this investigation is that it likens human nature to an objective and measurable construct, potentially denying the intricacies of human uniqueness (Bryman, 2008). A person's resettlement upon prison release is multi-faceted (Boer, 2013), capturing a wide range of individual and societal issues needing to be considered. As such, a purely positivist approach in this context was deemed insufficient.

Converse to positivism, constructivists (also known as interpretivists) argue that reality is created by individuals and explores how people make sense of their own world (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). As such, knowledge and research data are interpreted by the researcher, which often involves implementing subjective, qualitative methods (Bryman, 2008). This paradigm allows for "rich and elaborate descriptions of the phenomena under study" (Hussain et al., 2013, p. 2375) yet is often criticised for the subjective nature of the findings (Ernest, 1994). Historically, psychological research often employed one single research paradigm - either that of positivism by employing quantitative methods, or constructivism by employing qualitative methods (Alasuutari et al., 2008). Mixed methods approaches are now becoming more common (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

Mixed methods research situates itself within the research approach of pragmatism. Authors contest that pragmatism is not technically a research paradigm, rather, it is best conceptualised as a research framework (Hussain et al., 2013). This is because pragmatism does not clearly position itself within one philosophical position (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). Pragmatists endeavour to "[find] out what works for their ends" (Hussain et al., 2013, p. 2380), using methods that will best help to answer a research question. As an understanding of the accommodation needs of people with sexual convictions is largely underexplored in the literature, this thesis implemented methods most suitable to exploring such question. Thus, this thesis implemented a mixed methods approach to gain a holistic understanding of the topic.

3.2.1 A Mixed Methods Approach

Mixed methods research involves "collecting, analysing, and interpreting quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or in a series of studies that investigate the same underlying phenomenon" (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2009, p. 265). The latter half of this definition applies to the current thesis. Three single studies were conducted. Two

exploratory qualitative investigations underpinned the final quantitative aspect, yet the series of studies all investigated the same underlying phenomena surrounding living environments and accommodation.

A common justification for using mixed methods designs is that neither quantitative nor qualitative investigations alone capture the complexity of a research question (Ivankova et al., 2006). This justification applied within the current investigations. Accommodation for people with sexual convictions is a broad, multi-faceted resettlement concept. Adopting a mixed methods approach throughout this thesis allowed for an in-depth understanding of a previously under-explored, complex phenomenon.

Greene et al. (1989) offer additional justifications for utilising mixed methods. Additional purposes include; triangulation, complementarity, development, initiation, and expansion. All five of Greene et al.'s (1989) explanatory purposes were related in some way to the current investigation. The justifications for using mixed methods, and why they were chosen for this thesis, are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1.

Justification for the use of Mixed Methods Within the Current Thesis, Applying Greene et al.'s (1989) Five Purposes.

Purpose	Explanation	Application to the current thesis
Triangulation	To ensure validity and overcome biases from using one method in isolation.	Study 1 and Study 2 produced rich data about accommodation issues and needs, but these insights were based on small samples. Study 3 sought to increase the generalisability, objectivity, and validity of the qualitative findings.
Complementarity	Elaborating upon and clarifying results from one method using another method.	Each study complemented the next study. The two qualitative investigations elaborated upon each other by sampling different target populations. The third quantitative study expanded upon the qualitative findings using psychometrics.
Development	Using results from one method to inform the use of another method.	Salient findings from Study 2 informed the aims and methodology of Study 3. In Study 2, people spoke about the importance of psychosocial home needs such as feelings of safety and control. Study 3 quantified the attainment of these needs.
Initiation	Understanding data using different methodological perspectives.	The two qualitative studies both targeted different populations allowing for practitioner and resident perspectives. Obtaining quantitative data in Study 3 enabled statistical, correlational insights.
Expansion	Increasing the scope of the investigation.	A broad, in-depth, and holistic understanding of accommodation related issues was gained through researching different samples using different methodological designs.

Aligning with the triangulation justification outlined from Greene et al. (1989), the strengths and limitations of both qualitative and quantitative research designs used in isolation were recognised. Studying the complex issue of accommodation for people with sexual convictions first warranted an exploratory approach to offer rich, in-depth data. Gaining qualitative insights from both practitioners and residents developed understanding on issues from two central perspectives. Beginning with a quantitative design would have restricted the richness of these early insights. Although rich data was obtained, small, non-generalisable samples were obtained from Study 1 and Study 2, as is common to qualitative investigations. Furthermore, the analysis was subjective, reliant on my own interpretations as a researcher.

The quantitative design of Study 3 not only sought to develop the findings of Study 2, but also sought to overcome the methodological limitations inherent within qualitative research. A larger sample was obtained, and objective, statistical analyses were applied. Ultimately, the limitations of relying on one methodological design was minimised through employing a mixed methods approach.

3.3 Methods Employed in the Empirical Investigations

3.3.1 Sampling Strategies

The sampling strategies employed throughout all stages of this research were non-probability methods; participants were not randomly selected (Omair, 2014). Instead members of the target populations were approached because they met the research aims or were conveniently accessible. The target populations of interest were practitioners with experience related to accommodation for people with sexual offence convictions (Study 1), and people with sexual offence convictions (Study 2 and Study 3).

Purposive and convenience methods were the main sampling strategies implemented. Purposive sampling involves the deliberate choice and targeting of relevant participants based on the qualities they possess (Tongco, 2007). Convenience sampling is a method used to attain participants based on certain practicalities such as location, resources, and their willingness to participate (Robinson, 2014). Throughout the current studies, both sampling strategies were implemented. Organisations relevant to the aims of the thesis (e.g. prisons, probation services, and housing organisations) were purposefully

approached, as these services are made up of practitioners and service users relevant to the research aims. Convenience sampling techniques were used, as places that were closer in proximity to me as a researcher were contacted first.

Study 3 initially intended to recruit people with sexual convictions from a wide variety of living environments, including prisons (this is explained further within Chapter 6). When recruiting people with sexual offence convictions from prisons in Study 3, prisons that accommodated only people with sexual offence convictions were approached. The reasoning for this was two-fold. First, it was a purposive technique, as the population of the prisons met the research aims. Everybody living there had convictions for a sexual offence. Second, risk-based considerations were important. People with sexual convictions are at the bottom of offence hierarchies in prisons, often placed on vulnerable prisoner units (Maguire, 2019). By conducting the research in purely sex-offending prisons, the risk of harm from offence exposure was minimised, as all residents were aware that everybody was in the prison for a sexual offence. These risk considerations are expanded upon within Section 3.4.3.

It is important to acknowledge the potential biases within the data because of these sampling strategies. Unlike probability sampling techniques, the sampling methods implemented were not random, meaning that people did not have an equal chance of being selected for participation (Etikan et al., 2016). Non-probability samples are more subjective, demonstrating less scientific rigour, with reduced generalisability to the population of interest (Acharya et al., 2013).

Although there are biases from implementing these sampling strategies, they were deemed most appropriate to the aims of the current studies. People with sexual offence convictions arguably constitute a hard to reach population (Abrams, 2010). Hard to reach populations are defined as; "groups of individuals who may be involved in activities that are not socially acceptable and who fear stigmatization and incrimination if exposed" (Penrod et al., 2003, p. 100). Penrod et al. (2003) discuss challenges associated with identifying and recruiting such hard to reach participants. Challenges relate to societal intolerance; stigma; confidentiality issues; and fear of exposure. Each of these challenges resonate with the sampling and recruitment difficulties encountered throughout this research. To add to these barriers, safe and ethical recruitment of people with sexual convictions needed to occur via willing professionals. Public recruitment strategies such

as online advertisements and posters were ethically inappropriate to the current investigations, especially when considering the risks related to the stigmatised offence type.

3.3.2 The Qualitative Research Processes

3.3.2.1 Conducting Interviews. There are various data collection techniques used within qualitative research, ranging from interviews, to focus groups, to observations (Gill et al., 2008). The current qualitative investigations utilised one to one interview techniques. Although focus groups are an efficient means to gather a large amount of data in the least resource intensive way (Carter & Henderson, 2005), the sensitivity of the research and the need to adhere to any licence restrictions imposed on people with sexual convictions prevented the use of focus groups. Furthermore, it was important that participants felt comfortable to share their views in an open and honest manner. The presence of others in a focus group could have inhibited a persons' willingness to share their views. Interviews were chosen as an appropriate exploratory approach to gather rich data on a previously under-researched area, allowing for a holistic understanding of the topic.

Once the qualitative method of data collection was decided, the type of interview to implement was considered next. The types of interviews commonly used in qualitative research include structured interviews, semi-structured interviews, and unstructured interviews (Gill et al., 2008). Structured interviews implement a strict script and structure for all participants, whereas unstructured interviews are entirely participant-led (Carter & Henderson, 2005). The former was deemed too rigid for the research aims, as flexibility is restricted, whereas unstructured interviews were perhaps too open. Semi-structured interviews were considered most appropriate for Study 1 and Study 2 of the current thesis, as they allow participants to express the issues that are most pertinent to them (Cridland et al., 2015). This semi-structured approach not only allowed for elaboration of pertinent discussions, but also offered flexibility between participants. By this, if one participant was capable of freely speaking about their accommodation experiences, without the need for questioning prompts, then this was permitted. Conversely, prompts were helpful to some participants who were less forthcoming in sharing their accommodation experiences.

Kallio et al. (2016) offer guidance on the development of semi-structured interview schedules. The first step is making sure that semi-structured interviews are the most suitable choice of interview technique. Once semi-structured interviews were deemed suitable for Study 1 and Study 2, the next phase of creating an interview schedule involved drawing on previous knowledge. This was done by considering what was already known about accommodation and re-entry for people with convictions and implementing prompts that focused on exploring less well researched issues. This led to the development of prompts that aimed to explore more about what people need and want from accommodation. Kallio et al. (2016) suggest the next stages of interview schedule development are as follows: devising a preliminary schedule; piloting the schedule; and finalising a clear and complete product. Each of these stages were implemented. The final interview schedule used for each qualitative study are offered in Appendix 2.

Face to face and phone interviews were used to gather the qualitative data. There are strengths and weaknesses in using telephone interviews. A common criticism is that telephone interviews limit the development of rapport (Shuy, 2003). A strength is that they are less resource intensive, time efficient, and reduce travel requirements (Sturges & Hanrahan, 2004). For the current research, practitioner participants (Study 1) were offered the option of either a telephone interview or a face to face interview. They were offered this choice so that they themselves could decide which method of interview would suit them best, particularly when considering the demanding nature of their job role, where a phone interview would be perhaps more time efficient than arranging a face to face interview and a suitable location to complete this in. This resulted in 10 interviews being conducted via a university phone within a private university office.

For people with sexual convictions (Study 2) all interviews were conducted face to face. Klein et al. (2018) have previously noted that "in order to gain substantive data from sex offender samples, it is particularly important to establish credibility and rapport … to break through their levels of distrust" (p. 194). As previously noted, telephone interviews are often criticised for inhibiting rapport (Shuy, 2003). Face to face interviews were deemed a more appropriate and humanising way to instil this trust in people with sexual convictions. All interviews with people with sexual convictions were facilitated by appropriate risk management or housing professionals, and took place in a secure, private office, such as a probation facility.

With the permission of participants, all interviews were recorded on a password protected dictaphone and then transcribed onto a password protected Microsoft Word document.

3.3.2.2 Thematic Analysis Orientation. Thematic analysis was used to analyse both qualitative data sets within Study 1 and 2 (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis was chosen due to its flexible and iterative nature, as well as its accessibility (Nowell et al., 2017). The lack of epistemological assumptions meant that the analysis could be tailored in a way best suited to the data and research question, thus aligning well with a pragmatic and mixed methods research framework (Lodico et al., 2006). Despite the favoured flexibility of the approach, it is still necessary to outline the nature of the thematic analysis undertaken, to enable the reader to understand the theoretical position of the studies. Braun and Clarke (2020) offer a plethora of online resources that outline numerous approaches to undertaking thematic analysis. In their guidance for manuscript reviewers and editors, Clarke and Braun (2019) urge researchers to "clearly specify and justify which type of Thematic Analysis they are using" (p. 1). This section aims to offer such clarity by distinguishing between the different orientations of thematic analysis, mainly considering: an inductive versus deductive approach; semantic versus latent coding; and, a critical/realist way versus a constructionist way.

The first distinguishment in different orientations of thematic analysis is that of that of an inductive versus deductive approach (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Within the current investigations, inductive thematic analysis was implemented. This means that themes were derived directly from the data, with limited imposition of pre-existing theories (Nowell et al., 2017). This contrasts a deductive approach, whereby the "analytic process is informed or driven by theoretical concepts beyond the data" (Braun et al., 2016, p. 4). As the two qualitative studies within this PhD constituted exploratory investigations, approaching the data using the former, bottom-up approach, was deemed most suitable. It was deemed necessary to explore the content of the interview data freely and in-depth, without feeling an obligation to apply already established theoretical constructs (Nowell et al., 2017). Once themes were constructed, theoretical insights were then drawn upon to offer substance and interpretation to the analytical writeup.

It is necessary to recognise here how such inductive approach influenced construction of the literature review in Chapter 2. Due to the inductive focus, it was not clear until the analysis phase that concepts related to home and desistance would form such a central

component of this thesis. To account for this, and to aid the readers understanding of upcoming, key, theoretical constructs; the literature review was later updated following the analysis. Although concepts of home and desistance were initially considered briefly when writing the literature review prior to the analysis, these sections were later tailored to incorporate additional important insights prompted by the analysis.

This admission further warrants a comment on reflexivity. Reflexivity in qualitative research requires considering one's own beliefs and assumptions to understand the influence of these on the research process (Darawsheh, 2014). It is important to recognise that some existing knowledge was already present in relation to theories of desistance. Although inductive thematic analysis was core to the analytical processes within Study 1 and Study 2, my existing understanding of desistance theories could have influenced a "pure" inductive process. It is recognised by qualitative researchers that most thematic analyses will inevitably incorporate both inductive and deductive elements (Braun et al., 2016). Nonetheless, to limit the imposition of pre-existing ideas initially, theoretical insights were mainly consulted during the later writeup stages of the analysis, to minimise their influence on the coding process and initial creation of themes earlier on.

The second orientation of thematic analysis to distinguish between is that of semantic versus latent coding (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Semantic coding explicitly captures what the data says, whereas latent coding is concerned with underpinning meaning and concepts underlying the explicit data (Braun & Clarke, 2020). Again, the notion that these represent the need to adopt an either/or approach is a common misconception (Braun et al., 2016; Robertson et al., 2013). Braun et al. (2016) highlight how "coding [can] evolve as you get more analytically engaged" (p. 10). This was the case for the current qualitative investigations. Predominantly semantic codes were used throughout the early analysis stages, during the initial coding process. Re-examining codes then facilitated a more latent understanding of them. As such, the early coding processes largely adopted semantic coding. As the coding process evolved, and the themes were constructed, more latent meaning was sought.

The final orientation Braun and Clarke (2019) urge researchers to offer clarity on is that of critical realism versus constructionism. This requires the researcher to consider their epistemological stance. However, the definitions adopted within Braun and Clarke's (2006) initial paper seem somewhat limited within the context of this thesis. They note:

Thematic analysis conducted within a constructionist framework cannot and does not seek to focus on motivation or individual psychologies, but instead seeks to theorise the socio-cultural contexts, and structural conditions, that enable the individual accounts that are provided. (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 14)

In this sense, however, the qualitative investigations of Study 1 and Study 2 *did* account for both the experiences of individuals, at the same time recognising the wider societal context imposing on such individual. This was deemed especially important to recognise within this thesis due to the nature of the research topic. People with sexual offence convictions are subject to societal stigma and influences (Williams, 2018), which can in turn influence their individual self-perception. Furthermore, the resettlement need of accommodation is multifaceted, operating at both the individual level and the societal one (Preece & Bimpson, 2019). As such, the epistemological distinction between a constructionist framework and a critical realist one seemed too restrictive within this context. In order to offer a clear theoretical lens that aligns more coherently within the current qualitative investigations, it is instead recognised that the epistemology of phenomenology was more closely aligned to the investigations of Study 1 and Study 2. A phenomenological epistemology "is to study an individual's lived experience rather than finding a universal truth" (Cal & Tehmarn, 2016, p. 2). The theoretical lens of phenomenology allowed an understanding of individuals own personal experiences throughout the qualitative investigations; be this their unique employment experiences as professionals (Study 1), or unique accommodation pathways as an individual with a sexual offence conviction (Study 2).

3.3.2.3 Conducting Thematic Analysis. Within Study 1, thematic analysis was undertaken manually as opposed to utilising computer software. Having limited experience in conducting larger-scale thematic analyses, it was deemed appropriate to conduct the analysis manually to begin, to fully engage with the process. Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step process was followed. It is important to emphasise that this was a fluid process, whereby steps were not always rigidly sequential. Often, steps were revisited, revised, and refined, throughout the duration of the analysis phase. The necessity of fluidity has since been advocated in an interview with Braun and Clarke (Braun et al., 2018), represented in the fact that they now term their approach, *reflexive thematic analysis* (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

The first step, data familiarisation largely occurred when collecting the data and conducting the interviews. The data familiarisation stage was enhanced throughout listening and re-listening to interview recordings and further developed during the transcription phase. Engaging with the recordings and transcripts throughout all steps of the analysis continuously developed my familiarity with the data. During the transcription phase, the second step of the analytical process began. The recordings were listened to, and interviews were transcribed verbatim. Preliminary ideas about the data were noted at this stage.

The next step involved coding the data. Transcripts were typed onto Microsoft Word and then printed and annotated by hand with initial codes. These codes were then transferred from the printed, annotated transcripts, and typed into an electronic coding table created with Microsoft Word. Other researchers have described the use of *codebooks* (Ando et al., 2014), often to demonstrate rigour, transparency, and reliability. There is some contention about the use of codebooks. In a critical reflection of thematic analysis approaches, Clarke and Braun (2018) stress "we do not advocate, even though it is often claimed that we do (!), the use of codebooks and coding frames, an approach to coding based on developing a singular 'consensus' and coding reliability measures" (p. 108). The coding table developed for the current investigations were not intended as a codebook like others have used (Ando et al., 2014). That is, the coding tables were not created for replicability and reliability purposes, but just to provide a clear visual representation of the extracts and codes that could then be examined for patterns. Within the coding table, one column indicated the code, another column briefly explained the code and added additional analytical thoughts, and another column contained the extracts that represented such code. During the creation of this table, codes were refined and ordered to avoid duplication of similar coded concepts.

Once all of the codes had been transferred into the electronic coding table, the table was printed, and each code - with all participant numbers and extracts supporting the code - were cut out of the table, to be physically and manually grouped into themes (Step 3 of Braun & Clarke, 2006). Themes were generated by identifying patterns between the codes and associated extracts, which then continued to be refined (Step 4). Once initial themes were constructed, they were assigned names that captured the essence of the data within the theme (Step 5). During the write-up (Step 6) of these identified themes, superordinate and subordinate themes were merged further, and the names of the themes

were revisited to ensure that they best represented the data. This process highlighted the continuous, iterative, and reflexive process (Braun & Clarke, 2019) of the analysis.

The manual analysis implemented within Study 1, allowed me to gain a richer understanding of the processes involved with conducting thematic analysis. However, the manual process was laborious. Experiencing a new qualitative analysis technique for the first time, and trialling methods of manual analysis that worked best was a time-consuming process. Having learnt from this challenge, NVivo training was attended to see if the programme could be of benefit for analysis of Study 2. NVivo was utilised for part of the analysis of Study 2. It is important to stress that use of NVivo does not analyse data for the researcher, instead, it is there as an aid to facilitate the analytical process (Zamawe, 2015).

The same six steps as outlined above were followed. However, instead of printing and annotating transcripts, and then re-inputting handwritten codes into an electronic word file, codes were assigned using NVivo (termed nodes within the software). Coding the transcripts digitally allowed for quick identification of similar codes, instead of having to manually search for repetition. Steps 3 to 6 of Braun and Clarkes (2006) method was again conducted manually, in the same way outlined above by printing and physically grouping codes and associated excerpts.

3.3.3 Quantitative Measurement

The third empirical study within this thesis utilised quantitative survey techniques to identify the relationship between psychosocial home needs and desistance-based outcomes for people with sexual convictions (expanded upon within Chapter 6). Further discussion of *psychometrics* is warranted here.

Psychometric tools attempt to measure intangible, psychological constructs, and mental attributes (Guyon et al., 2018; Jones & Thissen, 2006). Measuring psychological constructs is heavily debated throughout the literature (Humphry, 2017; Trendler, 2013). Psychological investigations that align themselves within a positivist paradigm would consider mental attributes as an objective and true reality that can be measured using the same techniques employed in the physical sciences (Bringman & Eronen, 2016). For example, measurement in physics examines and locates objects in reality (Michell, 2003),

and some would argue that this objectivity and precision is required when investigating psychological attributes (Kyngdon, 2008). For others however, this is deemed unrealistic as mental attributes are much more complex, abstract, and harder to control than the objects studied in physics (Trendler, 2009). Stemming from these debates, previous researchers have suggested that psychology is in a measurement crisis, questioning the appropriateness of measurement tools to quantify mental constructs (Vautier et al., 2012). However, Guyon et al. (2018) conclude that psychological measurement is valuable and worthwhile, but that it requires a pragmatic and realist epistemological approach. They state "it is possible to measure a mental attribute as the objectification of reality. But this reality must be understood in the setting of social interaction" (Guyon et al., 2018, p.165). This is the position adopted within the third empirical investigation of this thesis.

Expanding upon the prior qualitative investigations, Study 3 employed a survey-based, questionnaire design, to measure the accommodation needs people deemed important from their living environment. Bearing resemblance to concepts of home (Atkinson & Jacobs, 2016), these needs were intangible in nature, representing the feelings instilled from place as opposed to physical requirements. Examples include feelings of safety, ownership, and control. These are all intangible mental constructs (Guyon et al., 2018). These feelings (termed *psychosocial home needs*) were measured, to identify their relationship to feelings of hope and agency - commonly cited desistance factors (Maruna & Mann, 2019). As such, measurement of these intangible constructs was required, and done so using psychometric techniques. It is recognised that more qualitative methods could have been implemented again in Study 3 to investigate these intangible mental constructs in more depth. However, for the purposes of triangulation, initiation, and expansion (Greene et al., 1989), quantifiably measuring the constructs meant that statistical relationships could be explored amongst a larger sample size.

The psychometric measures that were chosen for the current investigation are outlined and justified more specifically within Chapter 6. Appropriate psychometric tests to measure the variables of interest were mainly identified using the American Psychological Associations PsycTests database. Whilst developing a new psychometric measure of psychosocial home needs was considered, utilising already established and validated tools was deemed most appropriate within the time available. Constructing a new psychometric measure is time consuming and resource intensive (Boateng et al., 2018). When considering the added challenge of recruiting an already hard to reach population

(Penrod et al., 2003), utilising pre-constructed measures was deemed more feasible. A limitation of utilising already established measures is that they were not born directly from the qualitative data. As such, the relevance of the items within the preconstructed measures, may have been more limited than if a new psychometric measure was developed directly from the qualitative findings. Nonetheless, all psychometric measures were thoroughly considered to ensure they were appropriate. Elements such as the language used, length, and relevance to the data obtained, were all considered when making decisions about which psychometric tools to implement.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

The current research investigations involved collecting data from people with sexual offence convictions, and people who work with people with sexual convictions. As people with sexual convictions are a hard to reach population (Penrod et al., 2003) they are at risk of stigmatisation, fear exposure, and are potentially distrustful of researchers (Klein et al., 2018). Likewise, people who work with people with sexual convictions are often at risk of courtesy stigma (Goffman, 1963), whereby they may experience a "social taint … through direct association" (Asher, 2014, p. 4). Participants with convictions lived within a variety of settings, ranging from secure risk managed facilities, to their own place, and the practitioners interviewed were employed within a range of differing job roles. The complex samples meant that ethical considerations were paramount throughout the research process, and ethical dilemmas needed careful consideration throughout.

Ethical standards and norms govern the way research is conducted (Resnik, 2015). There are various documents available that guide researchers in making ethical decisions (e.g. British Psychological Society [BPS], 2014, 2018). By undertaking research in an ethically appropriate way, participants, researchers, and organisations are protected (George, 2016). As such, before the research commenced, ethical approval was sought to ensure each research investigation was appropriate to undertake.

Ethical approval for Study 1 and Study 2 was sought simultaneously. Ethical approval for Study 3 was sought upon completion of Study 1 and Study 2. HMPPS National Research Committee (ethics reference numbers 2017-097 and 2019-153) and Nottingham Trent University Ethics Board (ethics reference numbers 2017/65 and 2019/108) approved all stages of this research. The BPS Code of Human Research Ethics (BPS, 2014) and BPS

Code of Ethics and Conduct (2018) guided ethical decisions throughout the PhD process. Some of the most central ethical issues that were considered throughout each of the studies are outlined below. These are issues related to consent (BPS, 2014, p. 15), confidentiality (BPS, 2014, p. 22) and risk (BPS, 2014, p. 13).

3.4.1 Voluntary Informed Consent

BPS guidelines (2014; 2018) stipulate the importance of obtaining consent from participants to partake in research. Attaining this consent ensures that participants have sufficient information to make an informed decision about their participation (Bryman, 2016). Throughout all stages of this research, participants were given information in writing about the research being undertaken (see Appendix 3 and Appendix 6) . Participants were given information sheets that were tailored to each individual study. To check participant understanding, when collecting data face to face, participants were asked to summarise what they thought the research entailed to demonstrate they had understood. Participants initialled and dated a consent sheet to acknowledge they had been informed about the research and were willing to take part.

An important element of attaining consent is to ensure that it is voluntary (Cahana & Hurst, 2008). This was somewhat challenging to navigate within the current investigations, particularly within Study 2 and 3, with regards to potential issues of perceived coercion. The BPS Code of Human Research Ethics (2014) states that "it is crucial that participation in a research study is not coerced in any way… Investigators should realise that they are often in a position of real or perceived authority or influence" (p. 20). Particular attention was given to this, due to the collection of data from people involved within the criminal justice system and in prisons (Ward & Bailey, 2012).

Recruitment of people with sexual convictions was often aided by authoritative personnel (for example, offender managers and wing officers). On the information sheet, it was made explicit to participants that their (non)involvement with the research would not bear any implications regarding criminal justice proceedings, and as such, the voluntariness of the research was attempted to be clearly stressed. It must be acknowledged however, that despite these efforts, coercion could still have been perceived. This real issue of perceived coercion became apparent within Study 3, from one participant who volunteered to complete a questionnaire within the prison. The participant questioned whether their

engagement within the research would be recorded within their prison notes as, in their own words, "it looks good".

3.4.2 Confidentiality and Anonymity

In accordance with the BPS guidelines and the Data Protection Act (2018), principles of confidentiality and anonymity were considered throughout the research processes. The sensitivity regarding risk of offence exposure made these considerations ever more paramount, to prevent adverse outcomes for participants if their confidentiality or anonymity was compromised. However, the concept of confidentiality taken in its most literal sense, in that discussions will remain private, is contentious within research (Crow et al., 2006). The very nature of research is to share data and findings. The most viable method to negate such ethical concern is to clearly outline to participants how the data will be shared (BPS, 2014, 2018). For each of the studies in this thesis, participants were clearly informed from the outset that their data would be shared at conferences, in reports, and in journals, and they were required to consent to these dissemination caveats.

The information sheet also clearly outlined the limits to the persons confidentiality and anonymity. Ward and Bailey (2012) in particular stress the challenges of achieving this ethical principle in the context of prison settings, noting that "ethics of prison research are complex and require the balancing of individual rights with prison security requirements" (p. 149). In some instances, certain situations override processes of confidentiality and anonymity, particularly surrounding duties to prevent harm (BPS, 2014). Cowburn (2005) terms this *limited confidentiality* and outlines that participants must be notified of the clear boundaries for when confidentiality must be broken. As such, participants were clearly informed that any information they disclosed that posed a risk to themselves, others, or an undisclosed offence, would be passed on accordingly to police, probation, and/or accommodation professionals. As the focus of the investigations were around housing, participants were advised to stay on topic of the questions asked, as these should not prompt discussion surrounding offending behaviours.

Throughout the qualitative data collection phase in Study 2, Cowburn's (2005) idea of limited confidentiality materialised in practice. This was due to a duty of care concern. One participant became visibly distressed at recalling the loss of their pre-prison housing. This presented an ethical dilemma, whereby the welfare of the participant was balanced

against confidentiality limits. Following the interview, the participant would have returned to their flat alone. It was considered whether the need to override confidentiality was necessary, by informing a member of accommodation staff about the participant's distress. The practice of ethics is dynamic, meaning that is must be considered throughout the entire research process (Winder & Blagden, 2008). At this point, the ethical dilemma needed considering within the interview process with the participant. The interview was paused, the participant was asked if they wanted to discontinue the research, and I communicated my intention to alert staff about the participant's distress. This meant that confidentiality limits were still communicated clearly to the participant, but that as a concern for his welfare, such limits had changed to those outlined at the very beginning of the research. To minimise the impact of breaking this confidentiality, the specific nature of the conversation was not shared, and only one staff member was informed. This maintained confidentiality to a certain extent, whilst ensuring the participants well-being was prioritised.

Anonymisation is related to the concept of confidentiality, but more specifically means that the participant should not be identified (Wiles et al., 2008). This is of importance for people with sexual offence convictions who are highly stigmatised in society and at risk of vigilante action if they are exposed (Cubellis et al., 2019). Throughout the studies, no person identifiable information was recorded within the data collection documents (e.g. names, date of birth, addresses); this included only asking participants to initial their consent on the consent forms as opposed to writing their name. All qualitative interviews were recorded on a password protected dictaphone and transcribed on a password protected laptop within an encrypted word file. Throughout the transcription phases, potential anonymity compromising references were omitted (e.g. personal names, areas, organisations).

Within the quantitative questionnaire-based study, participants were required to make up a unique participant code to protect their identity. Explicit instructions advised people to complete the questionnaire in private, and to not include their address on the questionnaire. Within Study 3 however, participants could arrange a face to face meeting for any support they needed in completing the questionnaire. To access this supported meeting, the participant needed to de-anonymise themselves by indicating who they were so that a meeting could be arranged. For people in prison, this involved including their prisoner ID, name, and cell. It must be acknowledged that people who may have needed

support, might not have been comfortable with this lack of anonymity. As such, this method could have restricted participation for some people who needed support but were uncomfortable at offering their identity. Nonetheless, this was deemed the most ethical way to undertake such element, as it would not have been possible to offer support to anyone at all with full anonymity guaranteed.

3.4.3 Risk of Harm

Prior to any data collection, risk considerations were paramount. These risk considerations were in relation to both participants, me as a researcher, and organisations. All necessary precautions were taken to ensure that risks were minimised, though ethical dilemmas did still occur. These are discussed further in the following subsections. With the necessary precautions in place, it was deemed that the practical and academic benefits of the research mitigated the remaining risks. A risk assessment (Appendix 1) was developed at the commencement of this PhD research, and updated accordingly throughout the process.

3.4.3.1 Risk to Participants with Sexual Offence Convictions. The research focused specifically on people with sexual offences. As a vulnerable population at heightened risk of vigilante action (Cubellis et al., 2019), it was pivotal that the nature of their offending history remained concealed from other members of the public, to ensure the participants safety. This was particularly important to consider for participants living in shared environments with other people with convictions. Issues of *offence hierarchies* place people with sexual convictions at a greater risk of threat from people with other offences (Ricciardelli & Moir, 2013). This meant that the location of interviews, as well as recruitment methods, required careful consideration to minimise risk of offence exposure for the participant.

Measures taken to mitigate these risks were considered throughout every stage of the research process. Recruitment of people with sexual convictions was aided by professionals, and professionals were advised to gauge interest from people on a 1:1 private basis. Prior to participation, participants were informed about any risks and the importance of concealing the research aims from other people. Participants were instructed not to discuss the research outside of the research team or trusted staff members. Data collection took place in private locations. For Study 3, whereby people

living in prisons were recruited, it was deemed most ethically viable to recruit from prisons where all residents met the inclusion criteria. This meant that all residents knew that other people were in the prison for a sexual conviction. As such, if one resident was aware that somebody had taken part in the study, this did not place them at risk of harm due to offence exposure, as the offences were already common knowledge within the prison populations.

Within Study 3 when recruiting from the community (refer to Appendix 5), one dilemma that this did present was the need to balance openness and honesty about the research aims, with the need to protect individuals from harm and offence exposure (BPS, 2018). It was deliberated whether any of the data collection material should explicitly outline that the research was sexual offending specific. For example, if the data collection materials were found by other residents in the facility and such materials emphasised that the research was sexual offending specific, then the risk of offence exposure was potentially heightened. To mitigate this, there was no indication on any of the opening documents (e.g. the research invitation, or the information sheet) that the research focussed on people with sexual convictions. Any questions that might have conveyed this information were included later within the research documents, to minimise the risk of onlookers determining the research aims and the sample type.

A further area of risk to participants with convictions in Study 2 and Study 3 was the potential reinforcement of the *sex offender* label. Such a label can ostracise individuals, inhibit rehabilitation efforts and may have a negative psychological impact on the person (Lowe & Willis, 2020; Willis, 2018). The term *sex offender* was avoided throughout the research; from data collection progressing right through to the writeup phases. It was also highlighted to participants that the research was conducted to produce tangible benefits for those who have previously been convicted of a sexual offence. It was made clear that the research intended to aid resettlement for people like themselves, as opposed to hinder or stigmatise them further.

As previously mentioned in Section 3.4.2, it was also important to ensure that the risk of emotional harm was reduced. Some people disclosed experiencing accommodation challenges, for one participant this visibly led him to become distressed. In response, the interview was paused, the participant was offered the option to end the interview, ultimately deciding a short break was enough. Within each individual study, all participants

were directed to sources of support within the debrief information (Appendix 4, Appendix 5.2, Appendix 6), should any of the topics have caused them emotional distress.

3.4.3.2 Risk of Harm to the Researcher. It is now becoming more widely acknowledged in the ethics literature that risks posed to the researcher are equally as important to consider as are the risks posed to participants (Lee-Treweek & Linkogle, 2000). It is necessary for both physical and emotional risks to be addressed (Dickson-Smith et al., 2007). Whilst undertaking this PhD, I was visiting unfamiliar locations, where people with potentially risky behaviours were living. The sensitive nature of the research and the environments in which the current investigations occurred meant that considering risks to myself were pivotal.

Prior to commencing this PhD, HMPPS safety and security training was undertaken in relation to working within prisons. None of my personal contact details (other than my name and institution) were ever communicated to people with sexual convictions. All liaison occurred through trusted professionals. When meeting with people with sexual convictions in the community, this was done so in a private, yet secure location (e.g. probation offices). When meeting with people with sexual offence convictions in prison settings, HMPPS protocols were adhered to. These included wearing a personal alarm, and sitting closest to meeting room doors, as well as adhering to signing in procedures.

In addition to physical risks, there was also the potential to be exposed to emotional and psychological challenges throughout the data collection stages. This issue is particularly true of qualitative research (Dickson-Smith et al., 2008), as people are free to discuss issues in more depth. This risk of psychological harm did feel prominent at one point within the data collection process, when a participant unexpectedly shared the nature of their offence and offered details of this. To mitigate this risk, certain processes advocated by Elmir et al., (2011) were implemented. These included spacing interviews apart, engaging in processes of reflection, and debriefing with the supervision team.

3.4.3.3 Reputational Risks. Research ethics are not only in place to protect individuals, but also organisations (George, 2016). All research phases collected information related to living environments for people with sexual convictions, as such information damaging to certain professions or organisations needed considering. The risk of this occurring was mitigated by attempting to gain a balanced view within the

qualitative interview phases, for example, interview schedules placed equal emphasis on discussion of both positives and negatives within current accommodation practices.

It is also necessary to acknowledge that, especially for professional participants interviewed within Study 2, conflicts of interest could have occurred. Ghooi (2015) states that "a conflict of interest occurs when an individual who is involved in multiple interests has one interest that interferes with another" (p. 10). Applying this definition to Study 1, professional participants may have had an interest to take part in the research and offer their experiences and views. This interest could however have conflicted against their desire to protect the reputation of their organisation or their profession. To mitigate this potential conflict, participants were reassured of anonymity and confidentiality procedures, hopefully reassuring them that they could speak freely and openly without any negative repercussions to their job or organisation. Any reputation damaging information shared by participants would not be traced back to them. Furthermore, specific names of organisations were anonymised throughout the writeup of this research. Throughout the write-up of the research findings, care and precaution was taken to ensure that results were portrayed in a sensitive manner, whilst also remaining objective and accurately representing the data.

3.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has broadly outlined the methods employed within this thesis. It has considered the theoretical underpinnings and justification of the main methodological choices made throughout the three individual studies. The following chapters will discuss the empirical investigations and their individual methodologies more specifically. Taking the findings of each of these three interconnected studies together, the mixed method approach that was adopted, allowed for an in-depth understanding related to accommodation issues for people with sexual convictions.

Chapter 4. Study 1: Qualitatively Examining the Views of Professionals

Chapter Overview

This chapter presents the first of three empirical investigations undertaken as part of this PhD. The aim of this first study was to explore the views of practitioners in relation to accommodation for people with sexual offence convictions. The chapter begins by explaining the rationale for this discrete investigation, justifying why professionals and practitioners were targeted for the sample. Then, the methods employed specific to this first study are outlined. By implementing inductive thematic analysis, six themes were constructed from the data. These themes are each discussed in turn, and an interpretation of participant's accounts is offered. The qualitative themes outlined within this chapter ultimately situate the following chapters within a wider political and societal framework. The chapter offers a general discussion synthesising the main findings of this investigation, as well as some limitations to consider. A summary of Study 1 closes this chapter.

4.1 Rationale

The UK criminal justice system recognises the importance of accommodation for people leaving prison. It forms a core component of risk assessment and risk management (HMPPS, 2019), and is highlighted as an important factor in reducing reoffending (SEU, 2002). As stated in Chapter 2, people leaving prison may experience challenges in relation to accommodation (Geller & Curtis, 2011; SEU, 2002). Less is known about accommodating people with sexual offence convictions specifically. This thesis argues the need for separate considerations. People with sexual offence convictions face additional stigma (Harper et al., 2017), and are subject to different legislation (Sexual Offences Act, 2003). As such, accommodation considerations for people with sexual offence convictions could expose issues not yet identified when looking at general offending populations.

Some research has indicated the challenges present for people with sexual offences in the context of accommodation. US research investigations are more prevalent than UK based considerations, generally indicating a lack of public, political, and landlord support towards accommodating people with sexual offence convictions (Evans & Porter, 2015;

Stojkovic & Farkas, 2014). Strict location laws render many people homeless, ultimately increasing the risk that the laws intend to prevent (Levenson & Hern, 2007). Issues of homelessness amongst people with sexual convictions in the UK are less well documented. Through the process of MAPPA, housing organisations have a statutory obligation to help accommodate high risk people with sexual convictions (National MAPPA Team, 2019). Theoretically, this means that homelessness amongst people with sexual convictions (who are managed within the MAPPA framework) should be avoided. However, a recent BBC headline revealed that 200 people with sexual convictions were released from prison last year without anywhere to live (Shaw, 2020). More UK research into the accommodation issues and challenges facing people with sexual convictions is necessary.

One UK based investigation important to highlight is the work of Cooper (2016). Cooper (2016) investigated the views of accommodation practitioners and criminal justice practitioners, noting the challenges present in UK housing allocation policies for people with convictions. Social housing providers often deem people with convictions as ineligible for housing based on policy criteria, excluding them from accessing accommodation. Cooper's (2016) research demonstrates the wealth of experience and relevant views that practitioners can offer in this area. They represent a valuable sample with first-hand experiences and in-depth knowledge of housing issues. However, Cooper (2016) explored the views of practitioners in relation to accommodation for people with all conviction types. The current study outlined here concerned practitioner views of accommodating people with sexual convictions more specifically.

There is some UK research that explores practitioner views related more specifically to sexual offences and accommodation. Mills and Grimshaw (2012) wrote a report about a charitable housing project for people specifically with sexual offence convictions. This investigation considered practitioner and resident experiences within a facility called Bridge House. However, these findings were specific to the Bridge House project, and do not reflect wider accommodation issues. Cooper (2016) explored practitioner views about broad housing issues for people with convictions generally, whereas Mills and Grimshaw (2012) explored issues specific to one facility, yet with people with sexual offences. This chapter bridges a gap in the literature by investigating practitioner experiences of broader accommodation issues for people with sexual offence convictions.

Practitioners were chosen as research participants for the current investigation due to their daily experiences of working with people with sexual offence convictions. They can offer valuable "practice-based wisdom" (Day et al., 2014, p.171) because of their employment experiences. The work they do places them in a position where valuable and worthwhile insights are likely to be obtained, about a relatively underexplored topic.

Furthermore, Mills and Grimshaw's report (2012) alluded to the importance of gaining multiple perspectives in accommodating people with sexual offence convictions. Their report showed that residents expressed favourable views towards the accommodation facility, whilst stakeholders offered risk management perspectives beyond those that residents could give. Considering both perspectives is essential to present a balanced discussion. This thesis aims to achieve this, by investigating both practitioner (Study 1, Chapter 4) and resident (Study 2, Chapter 5) perspectives. The aim of this first investigation was to explore the views and experiences of relevant practitioners, in relation to accommodation for people with sexual convictions.

4.2 Methods

4.2.1 Sample

Practitioners interviewed included those from criminal justice settings, and people employed in specialist offending accommodation provision. Examples include offender managers, resettlement workers, and key workers. Purposive, convenience, and snowball sampling methods (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007) were used to recruit participants (N=19). The inclusion criteria stated that participants should have experience related to accommodation for people with sexual offence convictions.

Twenty people were interviewed in total, yet one person served as a pilot participant to test the semi-structured interview schedule (Kallio et al., 2016). Their data was not included for analysis. From the analysable data of 19 participants, 10 were males and 9 were females. Ages ranged from 36-61 years ($M = 49.26$, $SD = 7.29$). Professionals were recruited from a variety of public, private, and third sector organisations. These included: The National Probation Service (NPS; N=7), resettlement organisations (N=7), and offender specialist housing providers (N=4). One participant was employed within a more generic social housing provider organisation, but their role incorporated an offending focus

as they worked on a specific project targeted at marginalised groups. Time spent working within their current position ranged from approximately 1-23 years ($M = 7.39$, $SD = 6.52$). Some participants discussed experiences from previous employment (N=13). Table 2 outlines participant information to offer further context to the extracts presented throughout the findings.

Table 2.

Participant Information for the Sample of Professional Participants.

	Gender	Age	Time in position	Current Employment Information	Other/prior employment
P2	Male	36	5 years	Community Reintegration Project Coordinator	NPS Offender Manager
P3	Female	50	7 years	Offender Resettlement Charity, Director	Offender resettlement charity employee (10 years)
P4	Female	45	1 year 8 months	Community Reintegration Project Coordinator	Offender resettlement charity employee
P5	Male	61	12 years	NPS Offender Manager	Police Officer
P6	Male	49	2 years	Offender Specific Housing Charity (managerial)	Supported housing employee (8 years)
P7	Male	58	1 year	Community-based Resettlement Worker	High risk hostel employee (4 years)
P8	Female	59	9 years	NPS Approved Premise Employee	Homelessness charity employee
P9	Female	48	1 year 4 months	HMPS Custodial manager, Resettlement Specialist	Female prison employee
P10	Female	52	1 year	HMPS based Resettlement Charity Worker	None discussed
P11	Male	55	8 months	Housing Association, Specialist Support Director	Chief Executive of offender specific housing
P12	Male	41	8 months	Housing Association, Specialist Support Management	Offender specific housing provider employee (20 years)
P13	Male	42	8 years	Offender specific housing charity, Legal Officer	None discussed
P14	Male	51	3 years	Offender specific housing charity, Team Manager	Offender resettlement charity employee (20 years)
P15	Female	53	10 years	Housing association, Service Lead	None discussed
P16	Male	43	6 years	NPS Senior Probation Officer	NPS Offender Manager
P17	Female	59	16 years	NPS Offender Manager	NPS Offender Programme Delivery (8 years)
P18	Female	46	4 years	NPS Senior Probation Officer	NPS Offender Manager
P19	Female	50	23 years	NPS Offender Manager	None discussed
P20	Male	38	3 years 6 months	NPS Approved Premise Employee	None discussed

4.2.2 Procedure

Organisations relevant to the aims of the research were contacted via email. Permission was obtained from management to involve staff members from probation divisions and housing organisations. All individual participants provided informed consent to participate in an interview. The information sheet and consent form are attached in Appendix 3. Participants were offered a phone call interview or meeting in person. Ten participants were interviewed via telephone, from a private university office. The remaining nine interviews were conducted face to face, in a private location suitable to the participant (e.g. their working office).

Interviews ranged from 42-75 minutes ($M = 61.37$, $SD = 8.81$). A semi-structured interview schedule was devised to guide interviews. More information about how this was developed is outlined within Chapter 3. The schedule is attached within Appendix 2. It included prompts about the persons job role; views on different types of accommodation provision; any positive accommodation experiences; and any negative experiences in relation to accommodating people with sexual offence convictions. Questions remained deliberately broad to allow participants to speak freely about topics most pertinent to them. Participants were offered the opportunity to add anything they felt important. They were debriefed and allowed time to ask questions. Interviews were recorded on a password protected dictaphone and transcribed verbatim. Interviews were conducted between August 2017 and January 2018.

4.2.3 Ethics

The study was granted ethical approval from HMPPS National Research Committee (reference 2017-097) and Nottingham Trent University (reference 2017/65) in accordance with the BPS code of conduct (2018). Participants were required to give informed, voluntary consent. They were assured that the information they gave would remain confidential, and their anonymity would be protected throughout the writeup of the data. Participants were debriefed accordingly. Chapter 3 offers further depth regarding some of the main ethical considerations.

4.2.4 Analysis

Data were analysed from the nineteen participants. Inductive thematic analysis was undertaken following Braun and Clarkes six step method (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Within the current investigation, thematic analysis was undertaken manually as opposed to utilising computer software. The justification and process for this is outlined within Chapter 3.

4.3 Findings

Six themes were constructed from the analysis. Table 3 highlights these themes and corresponding subthemes.

Table 3.

Themes and Corresponding Subthemes Identified from Professional Participants Data.

Theme	Subthemes
1. A Challenging Field	The adversity of austerity
	Fragmented processes
	Streets or "slaughterhouse"
2. The "Nettle" in the Field	Magnified barriers
	"Where do they go?"
	Restrictions: "A totally different world"
3. Discriminatory Motivators	Personal attitudes, emotive decisions
	Subliminal influences
	External shields
	"The ones who scare people most"
4. "Catching Flies"…	With honey: Amicable approaches
	With vinegar: Force and threats
5. Needs Beyond Shelter	Recidivism, risk, and desistance
	Pursuing goals
6. Optimum Operations	Working as one
	Deinstitutionalising individuals

4.3.1 Theme 1. A Challenging Field

Numerous factors created a difficult landscape for participants to work within. This theme contextualises the challenges present within the housing sector. Participants noted issues that could affect many people, particularly general members of the public, as well as people with non-sexual offences. Participants were all aware that the research aims were to understand about accommodation for people with sexual offence convictions, but they did note the wider societal challenges present for all. They situated their response outside of the narrower research aims to set broader context and emphasise the current setting in which they were required to undertake their roles.

4.3.1.1 The Adversity of Austerity. Participants demonstrated a strong awareness of the accommodation challenges impacting all members of society. In the context of a current housing crisis; housing demand, funding cuts, and limited availability posed difficulties. Participants were keen to vocalise these issues, grounding the research investigation within the context of wider societal and political challenges.

Extract 1

For every one property, I would say at the minute there's probably a hundred chasing it … the accommodation isn't there for anyone, regardless of what you are … it's like shortage of housing, which you must be on a different planet if you don't know that. (P8, Approved Premise Keyworker)

Participant eight offered a hypothetical assumption to highlight the accommodation challenges faced by all members of society. Although their profession does not enable them to fully know the quantitative extent of housing demand, they inferred that the challenges surrounding accommodation are common knowledge. Indeed, current accommodation provision does not satisfy demand. The housing shortage within the UK has been termed a "national crisis" (Mulliner & Maliene, 2012, p. 397). For participant eight, an unawareness of these challenges deems you "on a different planet", out of touch with real world events and reality.

The challenges faced by practitioner participants because of these wider imposed challenges were discussed:

Extract 2

More well established urm, [*accommodation*] organisations are you know a god send to us … the frustration is that they're, they've got an ever-shrinking budget. So, you know, what we can get one year, we can't necessarily get the following year. (P18, Senior Probation Officer)

Established and reputable accommodation organisations were pivotal to practitioners and their service users. Such organisations, however, are scarce. Stating that reputable providers are a "god-send", highlights the desirable nature of them, whilst simultaneously inferring their rarity. The extract conveys a sense of uncertainty and irritation on behalf of the participant. They are operating within unreliable and unknown contexts as austerity measures seek to reduce the resources available to them. The participant perceives progressive worsening of the situation, a substantiated claim as government spending on public services is reducing (Stephens & Stephenson, 2016). More recently, HMIPs report (2020) notes the reduction in offending specific accommodation services. Extract 2 echoes these issues, this time musing the "frustration" it causes for them as a practitioner.

Extract 2 represents a domino-like effect of austerity. The organisation receiving the funding cuts is directly affected; then, practitioners needing to utilise the under-funded organisation are subsequently hindered; as such, this impacts a third victim of the cuts, the person in need of accommodation. Within this theme, it is important to consider some contradictions that arose in participants' narratives. Participant 16, speaking as a Senior Probation Officer, offers an unintended benefit of reduced housing availability, directly impacting people with sexual offence convictions:

Extract 3

Ten years ago, it might have been a blanket policy of well, he's a sex offender we can't allow him to live there. But now … accommodation has come under short supply that we are making decisions, possibly better decisions but certainly that we wouldn't've made ten years ago. So now, we're saying well, he's a sex offender, we're not entirely comfortable with a sex offender living in that accommodation, but

he only poses a risk in this situation and this situation won't arise there, so let's just do it. (P16, Senior Probation Officer)

Participant 16 highlights how austerity regimes have altered his way of working, specifically in relation to people with sexual convictions. According to participant 16, previous housing landscapes once allowed himself and other risk management professionals the scope to punitively refuse housing. The limited supply of accommodation has now forced him and others in his profession to acknowledge the heterogeneity of risks posed by people with sexual offence convictions. Due to current accommodation shortages, individualised appraisals are considered more thoroughly, not merely because they are "better" decisions but because they are forced to be. The participant may not be "entirely comfortable" with these decisions but puts aside their own apprehensions in favour of fairer outcomes. It represents a "dilemma between personal and professional attitudes" (Lea et al., 1999, p. 113). Whilst the participant acknowledges something may be the correct professional decision, particularly in the context of restricted choice, they still feel personal discomfort making such decisions.

This subtheme has highlighted the difficulty that practitioners face in attaining accommodation for their service users, due to external austerity measures that have reduced the availability of resources. As with Cooper's (2016) findings, the proceeding empirical findings within this thesis are thus situated within the framework of wider housing challenges: "If accommodating prison leavers and (ex)offenders was already beset with issues, housing policy and welfare reforms … have further restricted prison leavers' and (ex)offenders' access to social housing" (Cooper, 2016, p. 437).

4.3.1.2 Fragmented Processes. Procedural challenges were also noted as creating a problematic landscape. Disjointed practices led to a lack of coherency and consistency, creating further difficulties for practitioners and their service users.

Extract 4
If you end up living in [*area a*] you kind of get a golden ticket because they seem to not have the same restrictions as say [*area b*], who, you'd be on the bottom of the list if you're a single male … In [*area a*] you don't have that discrimination … we're all geographically so close yet also so divided. (P2, Reintegration Charity Coordinator)

Participant two recognises how disjointed housing processes are applied to his service users. The metaphor of a "golden ticket" simultaneously implies the desirability of a certain living area, combined with the necessity of luck. Fragmented operations dictate that what one person might be able to attain within one area, could be entirely unattainable in another, despite their convictions and demographic profile being the same. This claim is substantiated somewhat by the Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government (2020). Although central guidance exists regarding people who should be given priority in local authority housing, "the interpretation and application of reasonable preference will be subject to local definitions" (Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government, 2020, p. 25). The differing application and interpretation of policy guidance could thus account for the variation that participant two describes. The geographical proximity of areas contrasted with their "divided" practices underlines the illogical irony of this to the participant. There is a lack of uniform procedures, despite areas being close enough in distance to achieve this. People with convictions are frequently discriminated against and deemed an "unwanted voice" (Muir & McMahon, 2015, p. 6) by many providers; making those areas that do not discriminate highly sought after by practitioners and their service users.

Extract 5

We've not even got consistency across one county, urm, so consistency across the country I very much doubt … what I would want to see in terms of future [*provision is*] a more consistent level of service, and then I mean, it's going to be down to voluntary organisations to provide it, because there's no appetite urm for a statutory led service (P14, Specialist Housing Provider Team Manager)

Participant 14 highlights the issue of organisational fragmentation nationally. They acknowledge how effective future provision may look to them, with consistency playing a key role. Despite the desire for this, the participant displays some level of pessimism and scepticism in achieving such consistency. The variation witnessed between different local authorities is intended to encourage local councils to consider their individual areas needs and priorities (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2012). For participants however, such variation served as one more of many barriers towards attaining housing for people with sexual convictions. Despite the intention of variable

practices being to offer flexibility; within this context, such variation creates more restrictions, barriers, and challenges for professionals and their service users.

Extract 5 highlights the interplay between politics, housing, and public opinion. Housing provision is a political agenda, and political agendas are won with public support. As such, "politicians are inclined to follow popular opinion" (Thompson & Thomas, 2017, p. 13). In the absence of government willingness, participant 14 perceives that the only viable source to achieving more consistent provision is via voluntary organisations like his own. When such responsibility is averted by higher level government, the participant feels a sense of responsibility within their own role to better accommodation situations.

In addition to the variation between local authorities, disjointed procedures within the criminal justice system were noted. The following extract highlights specific issues in relation to Transforming Rehabilitation; the reformation of the probation service into public provision (NPS) and private provision (CRCs) (MoJ, 2013).

> *Extract 6*
> CRC resettlement departments always ask me what I'm doing to get my people accommodated before they leave prison, and when I say, "well I don't know what have you got to put in place?", they say, "well I can't help you … I'm not an NPS resource, I can't help you". So, I have to do the silly thing of speaking to an offender supervisor … he goes down the corridor knocks on the door tells the resettlement people who are CRC, tells them to do it, and then CRC come back to me … It is frustrating and it's something that I personally do not rely on … they [*CRCs and NPS*] are not compatible, no matter what the government says. (P5, Offender Manager)

As an employee of the NPS, participant five described how his work efforts were compounded by the clashing objectives of CRCs. The participant perceived non-compatibility and clashes at the structural, organisational level, which then manifested as clashing interactions between the participant and CRC employee at the inter-personal level. Dominey (2016) suggested that fragmentation between the NPS and CRCs could impede working relationships, an issue seemingly present from the hostility within Extract 5. Participant five demonstrated reluctance to engage with a governmental agenda that is perceived as non-sensical and disjointed. As such, not only do disjointed procedures

create a challenging landscape for participants, they may result in disengagement with procedures entirely. Since the governments' probation reform, other reports addressed issues associated with privately operating CRCs (Clinks and Homeless Link, 2017). With the renationalisation of the probation service (HMPPS, 2018) expected by June 2021 (HMPPS, 2020), some of the issues highlighted by participant five might be alleviated.

Ultimately, this subtheme has demonstrated that the policy and practices in place, both in terms of housing policy and criminal justice policy, dictated the way in which participants were able to undertake their role. Participants described their experiences of operating within the bounds of certain operational and systematic limits, that often led to a sense of inconsistency and fragmentation. Such disparate practices again, are not necessarily isolated issues specific to people with sexual convictions; but they further demonstrate the challenging landscape in which professionals described operating within.

4.3.1.3 Streets or Slaughterhouse. This subtheme highlights participant concerns regarding the types of accommodation placements they were required to utilise for their service users. In the context of limited other options, practitioners recounted the need to often settle for sub-standard placements.

> *Extract 7*
> It [*the accommodation placement*] might not be perfect but at least there's somewhere for them to stay. (P2, Reintegration Charity Coordinator)

> *Extract 8*
> [*The homeless shelter*] it was grim, but at least you got a roof over your head. (P8, Approved Premise Keyworker)

> *Extract 9*
> If they [*private landlords*] do accept a registered offender they often put them in the rougher shared accommodation, but that's ok, at least they're in. (P17, Offender Manager)

The extracts describe the accommodation options that practitioners accessed for their service users as "grim", "rougher" and far from "perfect". Participants were aware of the adverse conditions that their service users were subjected to but utilised the facilities

regardless, as it was better than the alternative being nothing. The extracts portray a sense of defeatism from participants, whereby settling for substandard options had become an unavoidable and accepted inevitability. As street homelessness has risen by 141% since 2010 (Homeless Link, 2020), participant discussions regarding the need to settle appear justifiable. They felt that resorting to accommodation below expected standards was positive in the face of other possible outcomes. Any placement option that negated street homelessness was ultimately viewed as desirable by participants.

The severity of this situation was outlined in a particularly emotive account:

> *Extract 10*
>
> People are like lambs to the slaughter going into some of these, urm, some of these night shelters. Urm, but if that's all that you can find … I wouldn't want anybody on the streets and if I could get them into a night shelter I'd be grateful for that for them, and for myself, to think that they were off the streets. (P17, Offender Manager)

The comparison of sending people to night shelters as "like lambs to the slaughter" implies the level of helplessness faced by the participants' service users. The metaphor conveys a strong sense of danger and threat regarding the places that people must live within. People in need of accommodation go without choice, potentially naïve to the environment that they will encounter. This issue represents a challenge to both the individual placed in the facility, as well as the professional participant who referred them to the facility. The participant demonstrated an awareness of the undesirable nature of the environment, whilst simultaneously justifying that it is often the only option that they have for their service user. The participant voiced their internal moral dilemma; seemingly attempting to reassure themselves that relative to street homelessness, sending a person "to the slaughter" was the best and only alternative. Summarising this, when asked what worked well regarding accommodation, participant 20 replied:

> *Extract 11*
>
> Really Jess, we're so limited resources it's not what works well, it's what works. Sorry that's not that helpful, but we've not got to a point where we have got a great deal of choice (P20, Probation Service Officer within Approved Premise).

Participant 20 conveys a sense of despondence and despair, appearing regretful that they are unable to offer an optimistic account. Considering what is best for their service user was deemed futile, whilst considering what would suffice was attainable. Within the context of limited accommodation supply, the bare minimum was viewed as the only viable option to participants, regardless of the placement's suitability. Participants felt restricted in their ability to exercise positive decisions for their service users, due to the restricting context they were operating in.

Concepts discussed throughout this theme embed this thesis within the context of wider political and organisational challenges; be this reduced government spending; fragmented and disparate practices; or the limited choice and availability in terms of accessing suitable accommodation. Political motives offer some explanation to the overarching challenges faced by people with sexual offence convictions. Indeed, the most recent HMIP (2020) report that investigates accommodation outcomes for people with convictions generally, has discussed funding issues and government spending cuts to offending specific provisions. Theme 1 provides macro-level context. The issues presented onwards are set within this framework, emphasising community level and individual level barriers that manifest within the context of these overarching challenges, specifically for people with sexual convictions.

4.3.2 Theme 2. The "Nettle" in the Field

Participants described the added challenges faced by people with sexual convictions specifically. In an already challenging field, participants perceived people with sexual offences as the "nettle" in such field. Within an already restricted pool of accommodation provision (as highlighted throughout Theme 1), accommodation options for people with sexual convictions were narrower still. The barriers faced by the participants and their service users with sexual convictions were perceived as heightened.

4.3.2.1 Magnified Barriers. Participants identified how people with sexual convictions face additional challenges compared to other members of the population and compared to people with other offence types. Participants distinguished people with sexual convictions from those with general convictions, segregating them as unique service users subject to distinct challenges. This subtheme supports the argument

outlined in the opening chapters, that people with sexual convictions warrant distinct accommodation considerations.

Extract 12

People have got onboard with the offender agenda outside a little bit, around housing and other services, but I think sex offenders is one of those things that, it's like a nettle that nobody wants to grasp yet, but actually, it's our reality. (P3, Resettlement Charity Director)

Participant three noted the resistance they perceived when working with multiple different accommodation organisations to get their service users accommodated. From the participants experiences working with all offence types, they singled out people with sexual offences as a distinct group. The participant implies that housing organisations are somewhat willing to accept the "offender agenda", although such terminology implies that this is not out of direct concern for the individual, but because it is an organisational, political objective that is necessary for them to comply with. Accommodation organisations may be engaging with the need for offender reintegration generally, but when the overarching "offender" term is narrowed down to "sex offender", increased hesitance occurs. Research has supported this interpretation, showing that landlords refuse tenancies to people with sexual convictions more so than other offence types (Evans & Porter, 2015; Furst & Evans, 2017). In an already challenging field, people with sexual convictions are likened to the "nettle" in the field; a source of discomfort that could elicit unpleasant reactions and harm. Housing organisations may then distance themselves from people with sexual convictions as a result of such discomfort.

Extract 12 represents participants three's perception of provider ambivalence. Providers do not wish to accommodate people with sexual convictions, yet they could experience "two (ambi) opposing forces (valences)" (Rothman et al., 2017, p. 35) as it is now a reality and a necessity. This reality is documented in official statistics. Highlighted by figures from the Office for National Statistics (2018), the number of police recorded sexual offences has risen dramatically since 2003. Between April 2002 and March 2003, the total number of police recorded sexual offences totalled 56,652. Over the past decade, this yearly figure has more than doubled; between, April 2016 and March 2017, 121,827 sexual offences were recorded by the police. Other participants expressed, there are "much increased

volume of cases been dealt with" (P14). Discomfort is felt in response to people with sexual offence convictions, yet the need to house such people is the "reality".

> *Extract 13*
>
> The challenges of getting accommodation affect all, but you add a sexual offence in it, and the challenge is hugely greater. Hugely, hugely greater. (P13, Resettlement Legal Advocate)

Generally, solving the problem of housing is difficult when considering all types of people. Reiterating the situational context offered in Theme 1; lack of affordable housing (Robertson, 2017), welfare changes (McKee et al., 2017) and private rented sector issues (Moore, 2017) make attaining accommodation difficult for most people. When "add[ing] a sexual offence in it", this challenging landscape becomes more difficult. Extract 13 contrasts the challenges between the general public and people with sexual offence convictions. Others contrasted the challenges apparent within offending populations to highlight the discrepancies:

> *Extract 14*
>
> I think all men with offences, all females, all offenders, have barriers to their accessing [*accommodation*], but the men with sexual offences have a whole other level of barriers. It's those barriers magnified significantly. (P17, Offender Manager)

> *Extract 15*
>
> It's a difficult area to find accommodation for offenders, whatever convictions they've been convicted of, but when they're, they've got the added label, well quite rightly, of been a sex offender, it probably, you know trebles that if not more. (P19, Offender Manager)

The opening elements of these extracts reinforce and corroborate the issues outlined within Theme 1. However, they are separated into their own theme as the extracts seek to emphasise that people with sexual convictions are distinctive and unique, in some way more problematic than that of other offence types that the participants work with. The term "magnified" implies that people with sexual convictions are under more scrutiny, being considered under a closer lens, with some issues potentially exaggerated.

Within Extract 14, participant 17 describes the challenges faced from their service user's perspective. Extract 15 on the surface reiterates the message of Extract 14. Somewhat distinctly though, Extract 15 discusses the issue in a manner that relates more to the participant as a practitioner. The language used focuses more on their challenges and the duties they need to fulfil, as opposed to discussing the challenge from the view of their service user. Participant 19 noted how the sexual nature of a persons' conviction makes their own job role of finding accommodation more difficult. This issue represents the challenging nature of accommodating people with sexual convictions from all angles.

Beyond this, Extract 15 further identifies the issue of the label. People with sexual convictions are defined by their offence, constantly needing to surmount the barriers associated with this. The label "offender" is problematic when attempting to attain accommodation (Muir & McMahon, 2015). According to Extracts 14 and 15, with the "added label" of "sex offender", challenges are magnified. Interestingly within Extract 15, suggesting people "quite rightly" have the added label, hints that such labelling may be justified from the perspective of the participant.

Within this theme, it is important to note some idiosyncrasies within the data. One participant identified other offence types as "most challenging" (P18), for example arson and drug offences. Curtis et al. (2013) also identified a higher prevalence of explicit housing bans towards people with drug taking behaviours above that of people with sexual offence convictions. Arguably, the challenges facing people with sexual offence convictions may relate more to implicit stigmas, labelling, and attitudes. These issues are unpacked further throughout Theme 3. Despite this, participants were keen to distinguish between the challenges facing the public; challenges facing people with non-sexual convictions; and challenges facing people with sexual convictions. The latter were recognised as a distinct group of people, for which accommodation challenges may differ.

4.3.2.2 "Where Do They Go?". The limited accommodation available to people with sexual offences constituted another challenge. Blanket rejections and offence disclosures restricted options. Previously suggested within Subtheme 4.3.2.1, the practitioners interviewed indicated that some accommodation providers could experience ambivalence towards people with sexual offence convictions (Rothman et al., 2017). Providers were viewed as disliking people with sexual offence convictions, but it is the "reality" that they need to house them. This subtheme brings this ambivalence into dispute.

For some organisations, there may be no simultaneously mixed response to people with sexual offence convictions. Practitioners also recounted experiences which would imply some providers do not want to house people with sexual offence convictions, therefore they do not.

> *Extract 16*
>
> I'd say 50% of my [*sexual offence*] cases are street homeless … We just don't have the resources here. We have nothing. Nothing. The, the homeless places we have, they're not allowed to go into because they take vulnerable people, could be vulnerable adults, could be vulnerable children, could be families, they're not allowed in to. We have a [*homelessness hostel*] here, they're not allowed into it. We have another place called [*facility name*]. They're not allowed in it. So, where do they go? (P17, Offender Manager)

The extract notes "we have nothing", which is contradicted by the list of available places. Whilst there is something for the public who are struggling to attain accommodation, there is "nothing" for people with sexual convictions, segregating and ostracising them further. Towards the latter half of the extract, the contrasting pronouns of "we" versus "they" demonstrates the process of *othering*. As Spencer (2009) argues; "othering casts him as non-human, different from, and outside the community of "normal" men" (p. 225). The resources available for the collective community group (represented by the "we") are not available to "them" as people with sexual convictions. They are othered, unaccounted for within the collective "we", portrayed as outsider's ineligible for community resources. The participants' rhetoric represents despair at the blanket bans from their perspective as an offender manager. Even facilities responsible for aiding those most excluded from society are unable to accommodate people with sexual offences. They are unwanted at every stage throughout their re-entry process.

Extract 16 does hint at a justification for these refusals. The need to balance the vulnerabilities of other residents within facilities creates difficulties in terms of risk management. For example, families may be given priority access within homeless shelters and homelessness services (O'Connell, 2003; Gubits et al., 2018). The differences between "can't" and "won't" were deliberated.

Extract 17

Even people working with offenders, urm, some of the other [*housing*] organisations working with offenders, won't or can't house them [*people with sexual offences*]. Urm, and generally those operating shared accommodation, again, they either don't, or they can't house them. (P14, Specialist Housing Provider Team Manager)

Extract 17 represents an internal debate as to whether providers refuse accommodation on the grounds of an unwillingness (won't house), or an inability to do so (can't house). It grapples with uncertainty, considering whether refusals result from legitimate reasons, or other factors meaning providers "won't" accommodate people with sexual offence convictions. The extract shows that even organisations amenable to accepting people with convictions, are perceived as less forthcoming towards people with sexual convictions. This distinctively separates people with sexual offence convictions from other offence types, re-enforcing that people with sexual convictions are at the bottom of offence hierarchies, amongst the least valued members of society (Ricciardelli & Moir, 2013; Dum et al., 2017).

Extract 18

Some communities almost see certain types of offenders almost acceptable, you know, nobody's going to see sex offending as acceptable … The difficulty you've got within that is where are they accommodated? Who's going to offer them accommodation? How do they disclose their conviction to move on in life? … Opportunities are massively reduced in you know, accessing accommodation, accessing social housing. (P6, Specialist Housing Provider Manager)

Noting that some offence types may be deemed "almost acceptable" again contrasts people with sexual offences to people with general offences. This position within society places the person in a frame of added challenges. The added stigma people with sexual offence convictions face is thoroughly noted throughout the literature (see Harper et al., 2017, for a review). When "no-one" is accepting towards people with sexual offence convictions, challenges arise in terms of where they can go, who will accept them, and how they disclose their offences. The repetitive questions posed by the participant emphasises the questionable and uncertain re-entry prospects that their service user will

face. The questions are rhetorical, the participant themself does not offer answers, instead, they seemingly accept the inevitability that options are limited.

Even when accommodation options are limited to begin with (Theme 1, Section 4.3.1), options available to people with sexual convictions are restricted even more so. Organisations may be unwilling or unable to accept people with sexual convictions. People's perceptions of the offence type, in addition to balancing the vulnerabilities and risks of other residents within a facility, seek to hinder and limit the accommodation options available to people with sexual convictions. This issue left practitioners questioning what options were available to their service users with sexual convictions. There was a sense of confusion, and unknowing, about where best to access, so that the accommodation needs of their service users could be met.

4.3.2.3 Restrictions: "A Totally Different World". Participants discussed the impact of various risk considerations when accessing accommodation for people with sexual offence convictions. Such restrictions pose challenges both to the person in need of accommodation, as well as the practitioner participants interviewed.

> *Extract 19*
>
> There's a whole layer of more restrictions that you have to successfully negotiate, and you have to successfully negotiate with two offender managers, one from police, and one from probation … it's a totally different world…We [*the probation service*] , would not put the same level of restrictions on a violent offender. (P16, Senior Probation Officer)

People with sexual convictions warrant distinct consideration due to the added statutory restrictions in place. In comparison to other offence types, they face unique and extraordinary risk management requirements, acknowledged by the participant here and documented within the Sexual Offences Act (2002). Whether an intentional metaphor or not, participant 16 describing these restrictions as "a totally different world" corroborates the potentially alienating effects of restrictions. People with sexual offences are treated as if they are from another world, isolated and ostracised because of the restrictions imposed on them. The added "layers" of restrictions people with sexual convictions may have, include; notification requirements, Sexual Harm Prevention Orders, and Sexual Risk Orders (Beard, 2017). People with sexual offence convictions face extreme differences

regarding restrictions, and where they can live. The extract identifies the need to "successfully negotiate" restrictions to satisfy different risk management professionals.

However, "successful negotiation" may not always be simple. Intra-organisational clashes pose another challenge in terms of accommodation and restrictions for people with sexual offence convictions:

Extract 20

He [*service user with the sexual conviction*] was offered a property that we thought was suitable, but the police said no, because there was a school at the top of the road. But where he lives now, in the hostel there's a school pretty much opposite … we clashed a little bit over that, but you know the police have the final say. (P4, Reintegration Charity Coordinator)

Extract 20 reiterates the interplay between accommodation challenges and risk management restrictions. The participant demonstrates some confusion towards the seemingly illogical accommodation refusal imposed by the police, portraying the police in a rigid, punitive, and inflexible way. Beyond this, the extract represents professional disputes between organisations. It highlights clear differences between professional judgements. This could arise because of differing organisational beliefs. Mawby and Worral (2011) suggest that police who detect and apprehend people likely differ in their views to organisations that emphasise rehabilitation. As Spencer and Ricciardelli (2017) suggest, police professions may construe people with sexual offences as "objects of fear and disgust" (p. 380). Another participant in the current study "regrettably" termed the behaviour of police as "risk-averse" and "prejudice" (P5). Nash (2016) noted that police officers themselves referred to other police officers responsible for the Sex Offender Register home visits as "scum cuddlers" (p. 411). The restrictions alone prevent people with sexual convictions attaining accommodation. That the people employing these restrictions are perceived as prejudiced, adds another barrier to attaining accommodation. Incorporating the dilemma of intra-organisational clashes further increases this challenge of negotiating these restrictions.

Extract 21

He had a 500 yard restriction for schools and parks, so I got a map out of [*area*] at the time, and measured, with a map sort of ruler, and found that he couldn't actually live anywhere in the town, because there was nowhere in the town, that isn't, that is actually 500 yards, not one single place from a school or a park or a nursery … The only place we could've actually resettled him, would've been a school-less, nursery-less type village. (P7, Community Based Resettlement Worker)

Participant seven recognised the extremity of the restrictions imposed on their service user, thus made physical efforts to visually represent the near impossibility of the restriction. The extremity of restrictions is also problematic within the US; with previous research identifying that only 5% of all residential areas were available to people with sexual convictions, after accounting for residency restrictions (Zandbergen & Hart, 2006). Participant seven demonstrates some level of sarcasm and discontent; "school-less, nursery-less type villages" are unlikely to exist, and if they did, would only intensify the isolation already heavily impacting people with sexual offences. Participants often questioned the practicality and rationality of some restrictions.

Further distinction of people with sexual offences concerns the risk they face from others. Accommodation challenges extend beyond merely finding accommodation. Living safely in the community with a sense of stability, presents an ongoing challenge for people, even after accommodation is secured. The holistic nature of risk management associated with people with sexual offences was summarised:

Extract 22

Risks do focus on not just the impact of them and their behaviours on others, but urm, are they at risk from other people … We've got neighbours that have jumped up and down before about housing sex offenders. (P12, Manager within Specialist Housing Association)

It is necessary to consider the all-encompassing nature of risk management. The practitioner participant must be mindful of risks posed both *from* and *to* the person they are trying to accommodate. Within their role, participant 12 had multiple viewpoints to consider; that of the person with the offence, and that of the wider community. The example used by the participant that neighbours may "jump up and down" identifies the

panic induced by people with sexual offences, as well as the community resistance towards such people (Williams, 2018). Chaotic responses and objections towards accommodating people with sexual convictions poses potential risks towards the person with the conviction. The need to balance this dual interplay between risks posed from and to people with sexual convictions adds to the difficulty in attaining accommodation. The accommodation challenges present for people with sexual offences do not cease once accommodation is attained.

Previous research has identified how risk management and restrictions may pose issues in terms of accessing accommodation (Levenson, 2018), limiting where a person with a sexual offence conviction can live (Zandergen & Hart, 2006). Beyond this, there are additional challenges resulting from the risk management considerations when accommodating people with sexual convictions. Varying professional opinions may result in intra-organisational disputes and clashes, highlighting how risk management procedures are not only problematic in terms of accessing accommodation, but also in terms of practitioners' abilities to fulfil their role. Furthermore, considering the risks posed to the person with the sexual offence conviction, as well as from the person with the sexual offence conviction is necessary. Risk management issues pose a complex and multifaceted challenge in relation to accommodating people with sexual convictions; challenges that extend beyond merely the (non)attainment of accommodation.

4.3.3 Theme 3. Discriminatory Motivators

This theme focuses on participants' perceptions of accommodation refusals towards people with sexual offences. Participants assigned causal reasons to refusals made by housing provider staff. Practitioner participants emphasised their perception of the discriminatory views and beliefs they encountered, that sought to disadvantage their service users with sexual offence convictions. This theme captures the interactions between participants, housing provider staff, and housing organisations. Many participants attributed rejections to discriminatory influences that operate at the level of individual housing staff. Preece and Bimpson (2019) have previously identified how structural, individual, and institutional factors serve as mechanisms for exclusion in housing. This theme captures how participants interpreted the sources of accommodation discrimination facing their service users with sexual convictions.

4.3.3.1 Personal Attitudes, Emotive Decisions. The extracts throughout this subtheme represent participant beliefs that personal and emotionally charged attitudes of housing provider staff influenced decisions. They emphasised that individual needs and impartial, unbiased procedures should dictate housing decisions, though this did not always occur.

Extract 23

You could just see on her [*the housing provider staff members*] face she was like "well we don't want to accommodate him". And it was like, well it's not about what you want, it's about what he needs, and you know, the police were there and everything and they kind of, urm, asked for her manager to come to the next one [*MAPPA housing meeting*]. Cus he'd, urm, he'd had spinal injuries, and a wheelchair, he needed a bungalow, urm, but he needed an extra room, so someone could care for him - it was just a nightmare. We got there in the end, but we had to really fight … They're there to provide a service [*accommodation providers*], and they've got all these E and D policies [*equality and diversity*], urm, so they need to kind of commit to that. But I think on a personal level people find it hard. That's being my experience of it. It's not a corporate thing, it's an individual (P4, Reintegration Charity Coordinator)

This extract shows tensions existing between individuals. The participant described battling against the personal views of housing provider staff when trying to get accommodation for their service user. The emotional response from the provider, created challenges for the participant as they were forced to "really fight" for the basic needs of their service user. Barriers imposed by one housing provider staff member required substantive effort from several professionals to help the service user obtain accommodation. The additional requirements of the service user exacerbated the problem, and even in the case of extreme need, the housing provider staff member was deemed unable to set aside their personal views. According to the participant, housing organisations should allocate properties in a fair and equal manner, but this does not always happen because of the attitudes of individuals working within the housing organisation. The housing provider staff member referred to here, reacted according to their personal and emotive attitudes which were incongruent with professional standards.

Extract 24 further highlights participants perceptions of personalised responses. It expands more on the tensions between professionals that can occur:

Extract 24

You can't have a view that you don't want somebody not on my back door. At the end of the day, that person, that's their only local connection, and you [*housing provider staff*] can't say, "well we don't want him to be here", that's very personalised … We're not really, you know, not asking your personal opinion here, we're asking you to do your job. (P3, Resettlement Charity Director)

Extract 24 highlights how participants encountered negative attitudes of housing provider staff, and how the participant interpreted this. A sense of annoyance and frustration comes across from the extract. Participant three did not care for the opinion of the housing provider staff member, but ultimately desired that they "do [their] job" and act upon impartial housing procedures to allow their service user to access accommodation. As Day et al. (2014) argue "barriers to the development of effective multidisciplinary practices arise when participating professionals hold different attitudes about those, they are responsible for managing" (p.12). Differing attitudes towards people with sexual offences are present within Extracts 23 and 24. The difference in attitudes are that, participants wanted to find accommodation for their service users, but the participants did not perceive housing staff as wanting to give their service users accommodation. The personal opinions of provider staff were a source of frustration to participants who wanted to help people with sexual offences attain accommodation.

Extract 23 and 24 captured participants' experiences and frustrations towards social housing providers. Participants reported the presence of emotive responses from all types of housing provision, including from private rented sector landlords:

Extract 25

I've had one [*private*] landlord say to me "I don't want that dirty pervert in any of my houses". So, it's just outright, and when they're private landlords they're not bound by any, you know, discrimination laws really. Urm, so it's outright sort of discrimination really. Urm, but they, and they're a businessperson at the end of the day, so I suppose, what they want to say they can say. (P19, Offender Manager)

Extract 25 presents a participant recalling one landlord's hostile response. The label "dirty pervert" highlights the landlord's disgust towards people with sexual offences. The landlord did not recognise the person as an individual needing accommodation, instead, as an abnormal deviant, dehumanising the person in need (Haslam, 2006). Other researchers echo the hostility that landlords have previously displayed towards people with sexual offences. For example, Evans and Porter (2015) described a hostile phone call conversation with one landlord who was asked if he would accommodate a person with a sexual offence (outlined in Section 2.5). This extract adds to this, as participant 19 recognised the discrimination displayed yet balanced this against the fact that private rented sector landlords will not be penalised for such responses. It is not merely the landlord's vocal opinion that mattered, but how such opinion manifested as a barrier that prevented the person with the sexual offence getting somewhere to live. Private rented sector landlords are not legally bound to cooperate with MAPPA procedures (MoJ , 2017). Thus, personal views that discriminate against those they dislike are unlikely to bear repercussions.

Extract 26 summarises the issue of personalised responses:

> *Extract 26*
> I think emotive decisions are made. Urm, I think, urm, that, that is a very key one, that is very important, and that's by those, either the landlord, the private landlord, or the local authority that is considering them. I also think, that you know, when somebodies in housing, one of the, the issues that, that kind of cover them really, is saying well what if somebody else was to know about them getting convicted. What they did. You know, and I think that is something which is quite unique to people convicted of sexual offences. (P13, Resettlement Legal Advocate)

The emotions of housing provider individuals were deemed to be a driving factor which led to accommodation refusals for people with sexual convictions. The *affect heuristic* states that a person's automatic emotional response can be a driving influencer in decision making (Harper & Hogue, 2017; Slovic & Peters, 2006), an issue seemingly represented within Extract 26 within the context of accommodation decisions. The extract expands upon the issue of emotive accommodation refusals, adding that housing provider staff may justify their reaction based on risk concerns. If community members discovered the nature of the person's offence, the public response could be severe. Not only is there a

potential for vigilante action (Cubellis et al., 2019; Williams, 2018) but also a tarnished reputation for the housing organisation. Suggesting that this reasoning "covers" housing provider staff implies that the participant doubted the legitimacy of this reasoning. Such response could have a protective function, excusing personalised refusals. The participant perceived this issue as unique to people with sexual offences. As the public endorse more negative views towards people with sexual offence convictions than any other offence type (Craig, 2005), the backlash against their relocation could be vast.

Participants' interpretations and experiences of overt and covert discrimination displayed by accommodation staff, meant that attaining accommodation for their service users with sexual convictions was challenging. People in need of accommodation rely on the willingness of housing organisations and landlords to accept them as a tenant. For people with sexual convictions, the emotional responses that the offence types elicit were perceived to detriment their accommodation prospects, because of such personal individual beliefs dictating housing decisions. The personalised reactions of housing provider staff could manifest as physical accommodation barriers towards people with sexual offences, meaning that they are refused accommodation on the basis of emotionally charged reactions, as opposed to fair and impartial procedures.

    4.3.3.2 Subliminal Influences. This subtheme captures the influences potentially underpinning housing providers discriminatory responses. There are many external sources of stigma against people with sexual offences. These include negative media portrayals (Harper & Hogue, 2017; Malinen et al., 2014), labelling (Willis & Letourneau, 2018), and dehumanisation (Viki et al., 2012). Participants acknowledged these influences and highlighted how housing provider staff are not immune from such influences. Attitudes that are influenced by external sources could underpin accommodation decisions.

    Extract 27

    [*Housing*] shouldn't be governed by individual prejudice, which, I'm not saying it is, but I'm not saying it's not … it's probably down to urm, perhaps the horror that's portrayed by the media, which is absolutely fair but it doesn't go for every single person. (P7, Community Based Resettlement Worker)

Extract 27 suggests that rigid generalisations born from stereotypical media portrayals could govern housing provider staff decisions. Participant seven is reluctant to tarnish all housing staff as acting upon individual prejudices but notes the possibility of this happening. The participant reasons that an individual's prejudices are born from higher-level damaging influences like the media, offering some element of understanding towards the prejudices displayed. The participant perceives that a lack of understanding is present amongst housing provider staff; housing staff are depicted as naïve members of the public that internalise and act upon the "horror" portrayed by the media. Research shows that media representations of people with sexual convictions are biased, disproportionately employing emotion-fuelled language (Harper & Hogue, 2017), and perpetuating inaccurate myths (Galeste et al., 2012). Although some media representations may be "fair", participant seven urges reconsideration of broad stereotypes applied by provider employees, as people with sexual offences do not form one homogenous group (Yoder & Farkas, 2016). The issue of housing providers endorsing this overgeneralised assumption was highlighted by others:

> *Extract 28*
> [*A private landlord*] said "oh well you know I don't think I want a sex offender". I said, "well what do you mean by sex offender?"… And he's like "well you know, somebody that snatches kids off the street and stuff like that"… I said "but the term sex offender is actually one of the broadest terms in the criminal justice legislation." The breadth of it is huge. (P3, Resettlement Charity Director)

Participant three explains their interactions within a meeting of private rented sector landlords. When the participant asked the landlord for their definition of a "sex offender", a stereotyped, typical depiction was offered. The landlord stereotyped them as people who "snatch kids off the street", viewing people with sexual offences as impulsive, predatory strangers. Research corroborates that individuals misapply broad stereotypes to people with sexual offence convictions; including that people with sexual offence convictions are predatory monsters (Spencer & Ricciardelli, 2020) and strangers that murder children (Quinn et al., 2004). Participant three was eager to reject these stereotypes, informing the landlord of the breadth of the term "sex offender". The participant acted as an educational source, attempting to counter the ingrained stereotypes of the landlord by discussing the heterogeneity of the term "sex offender". Refuting the inaccurate conjectures of provider employees is necessary, as "punitive

views may be tempered when respondents are prompted to consider the broader range of behaviours" (Harper & Harris, 2016, p.114).

> *Extract 29*
>
> I think it's harder to house sex offenders … They [*housing provider staff*] just talk like a sex offender is a paedophile. A sex offender is not just a paedophile, a sex offender is a rapist, a sex offender is the guy who flashes in the park, you know, you can't just say a sex offender is a paedophile. (P8, Approved Premise Keyworker)

Extract 29 lists other offence types categorised as a sexual offence, to counter mis-applied stereotypes. They note how the inaccurate beliefs of providers add to the challenges of housing people with sexual convictions. Ironically, the language employed by participant eight is also somewhat problematic. Participant eight states you cannot assume all sex offenders to be paedophiles. They seemingly say this is an inappropriate stereotype due to the varied range of other sexual offences. The participant labels people with sexual offence convictions according to their offence type; a possible detriment itself (Harris & Socia, 2016; Lowe & Willis, 2020; Willis & Letourneau, 2018). As Willis (2018) questions, "Why call someone by what we don't want them to be?" (p. 727).

Ultimately, people with sexual offences have a conviction for a certain type of offence, but in terms of access to housing, this should not matter. People should be managed appropriately according to the level of risk they pose, and the specific offence beyond these risk considerations ought not define the person and their accommodation prospects. Relating to labelling and stereotypes, participants also discussed issues of dehumanisation:

> *Extract 30*
>
> They are very much viewed as their offence, they're not viewed as a person, you know, they're viewed as what they've done. (P18, Senior Probation Officer)

Participant 18 explains how having a sexual offence conviction is viewed as a defining, internal feature of that person. They are no longer related to on a human level, instead seen as their offence. As Miethe and McCorkle (1997) highlighted, the so-called *master status* (Becker, 1963) of a person can impact decision making. Providers may see people

with sexual convictions as their master status (Becker, 1963), ultimately influencing decisions (Miethe & McCorkle, 1997) and hindering that person's reintegration (Willis & Letourneau, 2018). The sexual conviction hinges the person's identity on one single attribute (Willis, 2018).

As documented within Extract 30, the participant perceives providers as incapable of viewing people with sexual offences as human. This potentially explains the inability of people with sexual convictions to access a human need (accommodation). An alternate interpretation is one born from moral disengagement theory (Bandura et al., 1996; Osofsky et al., 2005). This states that certain mechanisms, like dehumanisation, may be employed by people to rationalise unethical behaviour. Applying this theory, perhaps it is easier for providers to strip a person of their human attributes using this dehumanisation as a means of justification for their accommodation refusals. Ultimately, whatever mechanism this serves, people with sexual offences are no longer related to on a human level. In turn, this exacerbated the accommodation refusals witnessed by practitioner participants.

> *Extract 31*
> People see them as devil incarnate, and they're about to jump on everything in sight. (P17, Offender Manager)

Extract 31 employs a metaphor-based dehumanisation example (Loughnan et al., 2009), likening the person to a non-human entity. The extract implies that people with sexual offences are viewed as the epitome of evil and display out of control, animalistic tendencies. Research has found that the more dehumanising people are towards people with sexual offences, the more punitive their views are surrounding rehabilitation, social reintegration, and ill-treatment (Viki et al., 2012). As such, if provider employees dehumanise people with sexual offences (in the way participants throughout this study perceived) the more punitive their views may be in terms of offering accommodation to a person with a sexual conviction.

Ultimately, landlords and people operating within accommodation provider roles are human individuals that are subject to the same sources of stigma as all members of the public. Negative media portrayals, issues of labelling, dehumanisation, and misapplied stereotypes are all sources of information that members of the public may base their views

on. People employed within an accommodation provider capacity are not immune to these influences, and as such they have the potential to dictate accommodation outcomes for people with sexual convictions. Although these stigmatising sources are a commonly identified problem within the area of attitudes towards people with sexual convictions (Harper et al., 2017), these findings have highlighted how such sources of information potentially manifest within the belief systems of accommodation providers and landlords, further hindering re-entry outcomes for people with sexual convictions.

4.3.3.3 External Shields. Participants discussed how wider-imposed external influences could affect accommodation decisions, such as policy, restrictions, and demand. This subtheme questions the application of external influences.

Extract 32

It doesn't meet our current need of getting them moved on in 12 weeks [*approved premise target*] … they have a policy [*housing association*] not to rehouse somebody coming out of custody for the first 6 months, urm, that is a standard policy that I've heard over a couple of housing associations. Urm, which is, makes it's really difficult for us [*NPS approved premises*] (P20, Probation Service Officer within Approved Premises)

Participant 20 conveys the challenges they face in their role. They are required to achieve organisational targets of moving their service user on from the approved premise within 12 weeks, yet they are hindered in doing so because of move-on providers' policies. There is disconnect between each organisations' needs, making it challenging for the participant, and challenging for their service user to access accommodation. People released from prison may need to satisfy arbitrary timing criteria from certain providers, meaning that these higher-level influences dictate accommodation refusals. Social housing provider policies across Europe often exclude specific groups, including people with criminal histories (Pleace et al., 2011), ultimately contributing to social exclusion (Pawson & Herath, 2017) whereby certain groups are denied full citizenship rights. Extract 32 concerns all offence types. For people with sexual offences, more specific challenges were discussed:

Extract 33

They're [*people with sexual offences*] always refused access to the [*accommodation*] service. Ostensibly, it's usually for, it's largely for, 12 months, can be up to 24 months, where they have to be 12 months offence free, after which point they can then start to go on to the listings to try and bid for properties locally. Now, again, urm, blocks seem to be put in place, where, the normal thing is you know they say they can't be right next to a school, near to a nursery all those sorts of things, I find that those sorts of exclusions are used religiously by the local service providers who will say, "well we have got a school within 300yards", well they may be 300 yards as the crow flies, but not in sight of the man … They'll say, "there's families in the area" and you say you know well, you know these people have committed offences but the idea is to reintegrate them. (P17, Offender Manager)

Extract 33 further highlights the issue of policy-based refusals. The participant notes the rigidity, and seemingly illogical and punitive nature of such barriers imposed by providers. The participants choice of terminology suggests that little thought is given to individual circumstances; instead, risk refusals are applied "religiously", consistently, and without fail. The participant lists the numerous refusal reasons as if they are commonly applied excuses implemented by providers. Participant 17 offers a counterargument to each of the refusal reasons given by the provider, ultimately noting how this leads to a further exclusion justification. The process of refusal is ongoing, regardless of the participants attempt to counter these. Consequently, people with sexual offences face repeated exclusion.

Extract 34

We always have a representative from the local housing services … she's very good and she's very helpful, but you know, often she has the sort of urm, what's the word, a script almost, that people will often be found intentionally homeless. (P16, Senior Probation Officer)

Extract 34 elaborates upon the implementation of policy refusals. *Intentional homelessness* refers to a deliberate action resulting in accommodation loss (The Housing Act, 1996). People with sexual offences commit crimes that lead to prison sentences, and such prison sentence then leads to accommodation loss. Their own actions are therefore

considered to leave them "intentionally" homeless, and thus vulnerable to refusals from social housing providers justified using this statutory language. Participant 16 suggesting that housing provider employees have "a script" implies that this policy exclusion is applied in a rigid and pre-determined manner. Guidance from The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2020) does offer examples of acts that may be regarded as intentional. Anti-social behaviour, violence, and threats of violence are included as acts that could be regarded as deliberate. The responses of housing provider representatives then are not necessarily illegitimate. However, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2020) guidance also states that the application of intentional homelessness should not be pre-defined, and housing authorities should consider each particular case. Extract 33 and 34 suggest individualised accommodation considerations for people with sexual offence convictions are lacking.

Participants questioned whether policies serve as an "excuse" or "loophole" (P13) to mask underlying prejudices. As Preece and Bimpson (2019) have previously highlighted, individual biases, socio-economic structures, and institutional level policies all offer explanations towards the exclusionary processes within housing allocation systems. The authors note that individual biases "may be conscious or unconscious, intentional or unintentional. It is difficult to separate individuals and their biases from the systems and institutions that they are a part of" (p.18). Participants within the current study questioned whether it was such individual biases, or higher institutional influences that served to exclude their service users with sexual convictions. Within Extract 34 however, there appears minimal misgivings towards the "helpful" accommodation employee. When strict, bureaucratic procedures are in place, professionals could risk becoming *passive agents* to systems (Howe, 1992). Strict allocation policies could make accommodation employees passively refuse cases as opposed to considering individuals. Another explanation is that the extensive demand for accommodation dictated refusals:

> *Extract 35*
> They're [*people with sexual offences*] not the most attractive client group are they, and there's a lot of vulnerable homeless people out there … they're not at the top of everybody's list, are they, to get housed. (P10, Prison Based Resettlement Worker)

Participant 10 described people with sexual offences as "not the most attractive client group". This description emphasises public aversion, portraying people with sexual offences as different to other "vulnerable homeless people" who elicit more sympathy. The *principle of least eligibility* describes that people with convictions are perceived to have the least entitlement to goods or services, compared to law-abiding others (LeBel, 2017). Dum et al. (2017) found that people were less supportive of offending populations receiving helpful housing policies, and that people with sexual offences received the lowest support for positive housing policies. Extract 35 outlines the volume of homeless people in need to clarify the greater issue at hand. In the context of a current UK housing crisis (Robertson, 2017), it is impossible to satisfy demand. As such, those "not the most attractive" are refused accommodation in favour of those more attractive. This once again indicates the interplay between individual level biases, acting in conjunction with higher level influences (Preece & Bimpson, 2019), that ultimately exclude people with sexual convictions.

It is not possible here to establish a single, causal mechanism of housing refusals towards people with sexual convictions. The interplay between individual level factors that combine with higher level exclusionary principles are seemingly complex. External societal and institutional structures are in place that exclude people with sexual convictions from housing, but whether these higher level exclusions are being used as a shield for individual housing staff to mask their own underlying biases was questioned throughout this subtheme.

4.3.3.4 "The Ones Who Scare People Most".

Having discussed the individual (Section 4.3.3.1), societal (Section 4.3.3.2), and institutional (Section 4.3.3.3) level factors that participants perceived excluded people with sexual convictions from housing, a more novel explanation was also offered by participants, arguably more unique towards people with sexual convictions. Participants attributed provider refusals to fear. Fear was not necessarily discussed in relation to fears towards the person with the conviction directly, rather, fear of public repercussions was thoroughly noted.

Extract 36

[*Providers*] will look at a sex offender and first of all think, most probably, litigation, if we put him in a shared accommodation with family units and things like that, quite

rightly there are concerns and there are risk issues to be taken into account. Urm, but they will use that on every occasion. (P5, Offender Manager)

Extract 36 discusses the legal fears instilled within providers when considering housing a person with a sexual offence. Risk issues are considered in relation to the person with the offence, as well as reputational and legal risks. Provider fears are not necessarily a direct product associated with the person or crime itself, but instead represent fears of public outcry. Within a risk-focussed society (Kemshall & Maguire, 2001), more than one type of risk was deemed to impact provider decisions. The participant further emphasised the inflexibly applied risk refusals. Risks should be considered, yet it is questionable whether such grounds for refusal are necessary in every circumstance.

> *Extract 37*
>
> There's no doubt that sex offenders are, your like, urm, the ones who scare people most, and they scare providers because of urm, they're worried about the comeback. (P14, Specialist Housing Provider Team Manager)

Participant 14 states with conviction that fear plays a key role within providers decisions to accommodate people with sexual offences. People with sexual convictions have previously being said to "evoke a significant threshold level of anxiety amongst the general public" (Willis et al., 2010, p. 551). According to participant 14, providers are therefore fearful in accommodating them, based on such public responses. Comartin and colleagues (2009) state that policy can be driven by public fear of people with sexual offence convictions, seemingly evidenced from the extracts presented.

> *Extract 38*
>
> People, I mean, including myself, I guess, don't know enough, urm, and that I think when people don't know enough, they're scared of what might happen, so, I mean, urm, even, since I've been talking to you it's made me think about the training we give to staff. (P15, Specialist Worker within a General Accommodation Provider)

Extract 38 conveys the inter-related nature between fear and knowledge, whereby a lack of knowledge can instil feelings of fear within providers. Somewhat distinctly from other participants interviewed, participant 15 spoke as an employee within a general social housing provider, whose role involved helping people from marginalised groups. The

participant is reflective and acknowledges their own limitations. The account offers optimism from the position of a more generic based provider employee, demonstrating that there are accommodation employees who recognise service weaknesses and find ways to overcome these. The current research prompted the participant to reflect on their own service, positing that increased education and training for their staff members could be beneficial. Positive effects of training on staff confidence working with people with sexual offence convictions has been documented (Craig, 2005; Gakhal & Brown, 2011), and as such may prove a beneficial route for participant 15 to pursue.

Fear of public responses, fear of legal repercussions, and fear of the unknown are possible contributing factors towards the challenges in accessing accommodation for people with sexual convictions. The interrelated nature of exclusionary mechanisms is again highlighted throughout this subtheme (Preece & Bimpson, 2019), whereby a potential fear response is elicited within providers, not merely as a direct result of fear of the sexual crime itself, but fear of societal repercussions.

4.3.4 Theme 4. "Catching Flies"…

Having highlighted the exclusionary issues that practitioners face within their daily roles when trying to accommodate their service users (Theme 3), this theme explores the methods used by participants to attempt to overcome housing refusals. Participants tried to counter the refusals from housing provider staff and attempted to instil acceptances amongst them. Participants within the current study noted two broad approaches to this. One aimed to work alongside the provider to educate and develop trust (Subtheme 4.1). The other utilised harsher, antagonistic methods opposing the provider (Subtheme 4.2).

4.3.4.1 …With Honey: Amicable Approaches. Participants discussed the need to instil trust within providers, through means of relationship development, awareness raising, and offering reassurances of support. Working alongside providers to gain accommodation for people with sexual offence convictions was one method participants used to overcome refusals.

Extract 39
When it comes to accommodation providers I will use, you know, urm, you catch more flies with honey than you do with vinegar (laughs), so I will be interested in

the care workers you know hobbies and things like that and what they're doing at the weekend, and I go "oh I like that as well, have you been so and so have you seen that film yet" and all this sort of thing to cultivate a relationship. So, they know me, they know I'm a probation officer, but they know *me*. If I can oil the wheels to get someone through the door I will do. (P5, Offender Manager)

Participant five suggests that the persuasion of housing providers is easier when adopting a polite and amicable approach. They are willing to adapt their own behaviours to better the accommodation circumstances for their service user. The extract implies that the participant needs to be viewed on a personable level by providers; seen as someone who is easy to relate to, trustworthy, and likeable by others. This relationship development on the part of the participant then "oils the wheels" to get their service user accommodated, making the process of accessing accommodation easier and smoother.

Extract 40

There needs to be more trust in the authorities … it's perhaps awareness raising with housing providers about what support, police, probation, and – even … floating support … it gives the housing association sort of more reassurance that there's another person involved. (P10, Prison Based Resettlement Worker)

Trust between statutory risk management authorities and accommodation providers was deemed as essential. Participants suggested that such trust may be developed through awareness raising techniques and offering reassurances about the level of support input for people with sexual offences. Research has highlighted that a lack of awareness amongst providers can lead to a lack of confidence to accommodate people with offences (Allen & Sprigings, 2001). As such, the suggestion offered by participant 10 holds value. Trusting in statutory risk frameworks is important, yet providers must first be clear on what their purpose is. Other participants echoed this, noting the need for "myth busting" (P3) around MAPPA processes and risk procedures, as well as "sharing best practice" (P13). Within a clinical forensic context, Henson and Riordan (2012) considered healthcare professionals views about MAPPA. They found that 96% of their participants agreed that "MAPPA was a good way to share risk" (p. 426). However, 69% of the healthcare professionals studied, admitted they were uncertain about the procedures. This highlights the need to increase awareness to professionals working with people with offences, especially for those who are not risk experts.

Trust between organisations is necessary, not merely because statutory agencies and accommodation providers must work together (MoJ, 2017), but to help reassure fearful providers (Section 4.3.3.4). Extract 40 and 41 note how floating support can also help:

> *Extract 41*
>
> Floating support gives landlords a bit more of an assurance and some understanding that housing needs have been looked at … it just gives landlords a bit more sort of confidence. (P12, Manager within Specialist Housing Association)

Participant 12 discussed their own positive opinions of floating support, as an employee within a service that offers floating support. The more external support in place, either from statutory bodies or support providers, the more reassurance this was deemed to give to providers. Egbu and Wood (2011) have previously identified floating support services as a positive, knowledge sharing initiative that can improve work performance, build trust, and offer a way for individuals to share their expertise, reiterating the participants narratives here. Participant seven however, offered a more unique suggestion on how to instil such confidence:

> *Extract 42*
>
> To make it easier for people to uhm, trust, uh the way that we handle sex offenders, I believe the polygraph was the best thing … it puts that confidence back into people, not over scrutinising, and not taking responsibility for managing offences. (P7, Community Based Resettlement Worker)

Extract 42 again reiterates the need to instil confidence and trust amongst providers. The novel suggestion of how this trust is achieved however, is more tangible in nature than awareness raising and offering assurances. Extract 42 places the responsibility of trust development directly on the individuals with sexual convictions, a somewhat controversial suggestion, particularly as the scientific accuracy of polygraph tests are disputed (Wilcox & Gray, 2012). Participant seven believes the "best thing" to instil confidence amongst providers that risk is being managed, is to rely on a potentially inaccurate source of information. Of course, the participant themselves may be unaware of the potential inaccuracies. They view it as a simple method that offers a simplistic reading that cannot be "over-scrutinised" by others.

The importance of trust, relationships, communication, and assurances were acknowledged by participants within the current study. These methods were implemented by participants in a way whereby they worked alongside the provider to develop their confidence housing people with sexual convictions. The ways in which to instil such confidence were deliberated, be this through relationship development, offering assurances of floating support, or, more uniquely, providing a polygraph reading. Ultimately, all of these suggestions centred around increasing the trusting relationships between professionals.

4.3.4.2 ...With Vinegar: Force and Threats. Contrary to cooperative communication methods, this subtheme highlights the forceful and antagonistic approaches participants used to instil accommodation acceptances. Participants utilised legalities as a way of inducing compliance.

Extract 43

Getting into people's faces and putting them on notice of their legal responsibility, that makes them sit up and take notice … not a nice way to go about it but it's the reality. (P5, Offender Manager)

Extract 43 outlines the forceful approach used by participant five to try to get their service user accommodation. The participant demonstrates an awareness of the legal obligations of housing providers, using this knowledge as leverage to access services for their caseload. Of note, participant five also described their method of relationship development within the previous subtheme (Extract 39), highlighting that such methods of instilling acceptances are not necessarily used in isolation, but there are perhaps times whereby more amicable approaches are unsuccessful. Implementing a forceful approach may be necessary to make accommodation providers "take notice" that a person with a sexual offence conviction needs accommodating. Whilst participants may not enjoy this, it was deemed necessary. Using legal reminders to quell accommodation professionals is difficult, though at times required. Legal threats sought to remind provider employees that they were under the control of higher authoritative systems. Perhaps it was the influence of this accountability inducing compliance.

Extract 44

Often, housing will become an issue that ends up with an offender needing to go through the MAPPA process, and that is so that we can get the senior managers of those, the relevant housing authority involved, and hold them to account really for that decision, and challenge it. (P18, Senior Probation Officer)

Extract 44 describes the benefit of MAPPA processes in enabling accountability within accommodation decisions. Accountability requires justification of actions (Frink et al., 2008). Providers could be made to defend their actions legally (Extract 43), or to higher level management (Extract 44). Holding provider professionals to account for their decisions must therefore require a defendable stance for refusals. MAPPA processes enable this accountability, offering a transparent process where all relevant persons can be clear on decision reasonings. It is worth considering here, that private landlords are not under any duty to comply with MAPPA proceedings (MoJ, 2017). Thus, such methods explained by participant 18 may only exert influence in certain circumstances.

In addition to legal and accountability threats, participants highlighted unfavourable alternatives to induce compliance amongst provider employees.

Extract 45

We just said, "if you don't do this, he will have to go to a private landlord and then you know, he won't have, you know, half of this support", and she was like "oh right". (P4, Reintegration Charity Coordinator)

Extract 46

You are trying to influence these housing providers on the grounds that it's much better to know who we've got, where they are, what they're doing, and we can monitor them, we can check them, we can go in and do announced and unannounced home visits than have men just sleeping rough on the street in their area where we can't … we can't monitor them effectively. (P17, Offender Manager)

These extracts outline other detrimental outcomes people with sexual offences may face, should providers refuse accommodation. Unlike legal or accountability threats that would directly affect the employee individual, these extracts demonstrate how participants needed to highlight the threats to wider society. Utilising the private rented sector could

be a less supportive, riskier environment for a person with a sexual offence conviction. Similarly, street homelessness makes risk management extremely challenging. Participants emphasised this to providers, to "influence" them in a way which enables them to see the benefit of housing a person with a sexual conviction. These extracts lead back to the matter of public protection (SEU, 2002). Above all, even if people do not choose to empathise with a person in need of housing, the advantages of accommodation in relation to public protection must be stressed.

The practitioner participants within this study needed to overcome the challenges, opposition, and resistance they experienced from housing provider professionals, when trying to obtain accommodation for their service users. Although utilising antagonistic means was not a desirable option for the participants, they were required to utilise whatever means possible to influence the decisions of housing professionals. Should trust enhancing and relationship development be unsuccessful, participants were forced to instil compliance through other means such as legal threats or emphasising the societal risks that could occur based on the provider's actions of housing refusals.

4.3.5 Theme 5. Needs Beyond Shelter

Accessing accommodation for people with sexual offence convictions was deemed to be challenging, yet the importance of gaining accommodation extended beyond merely the attainment of shelter. This theme captures how accommodation is about more than just having a place to live. Importantly, the stable, physical environment helped practitioner participants interviewed within the current study navigate risk management requirements. Beyond this, participants also identified how accommodation acts as a base for their service users to realise wider reintegration and resettlement needs, such as attaining employment and higher goals.

4.3.5.1 Recidivism, Risk, and Desistance. Practitioners noted the tangible benefit of accommodation in terms of managing risk. Having a stable address aids risk management processes, allowing professionals to know where to contact people, and conduct home visits.

Extract 47

This is about crime prevention more than anything, we don't have - you know - you don't have to care about that individual, but people will be more at risk by a person that's been released street homeless who's committed a serious offence. So, this is also about public safety. Take away the emotion. (P13, Resettlement Charity Legal Advocate)

Extract 48

If we don't know where they are, we're not really managing them (P19, Offender Manager)

Having a place to live has concrete risk management benefits for people with sexual offence convictions. In its simplest form, risk management is aided simply by knowing a person's location. As Extract 47 attempts to stress, stating the importance of accommodation to the public and housing professionals as a crime prevention matter is necessary. Ensuring people with sexual offence convictions can access accommodation represents more importance than just the satisfaction of an individual's basic needs. It is a public safety concern. It is about the safe reintegration and management of people for the benefit of the wider community. To appeal to communities and appease public outcry, emphasising this angle is perhaps one that can be best argued. It does not seek to empathise with the person who has committed a sexual offence, but instead places public protection as a priority concern.

Accommodation can reduce a person's risk by directly aiding external risk management processes. Having accommodation may influence risk through more indirect, internal processes. It may aid the process of desistance and reduce the risk of reoffending through instilling hope.

Extract 49

If somebody's got a roof over their head, if somebody's got a little bit of money in their pocket, if somebody's got hope in their life, they're less likely to offend. And if they're less likely to offend, they're less likely to create victims. And that's really what we're all about isn't it, it's about wanting to break that cycle. So, accommodation is absolutely vital (P9, Custodial Resettlement Manager)

Extract 49 identifies the importance of hope from the perspective of a resettlement worker participant. If a person with a sexual conviction is optimistic about their future, the desire to offend could decrease. As de Vries Robbé et al. (2015) note; "reformed ex-prisoners are characterized by hope and optimism" (p. 24) demonstrating the link between hope and desistance. This hopeful outlook enables people to believe that they can meet their goals (LeBel et al., 2008), reducing reoffence risk, and preventing further victims. The participant notes that is what "we're all about", emphasising their reasoning for undertaking their role, and hoping to contribute a positive change to society whereby cycles of offending behaviours are broken.

Where Extract 49 identifies the importance of hope to reduce reoffending risk, extract 50 highlights the converse of this. For people who feel hopeless, they would have nothing to lose if they were to reoffend. In some situations, reoffending to regain prison placement puts people in a better position than they would otherwise be if they were without accommodation:

> *Extract 50*
>
> They're just not wanted by society, and you can understand them saying I want to kill myself, there's nothing for me here, why would I live, or they offend in whatever form to get back into custody because there's a community there, there's a roof over their head, urm there's food, and, and, some company … For you and I, our loss of our liberty would be a significant thing, for people who have got family who want to take them back into the buzzum of their lives, it's a big thing. For men who've got nothing, it doesn't matter. Not at all, so why would they not offend? (P17, Offender Manager)

Here, participant 17 demonstrates an understanding of the desperation people with sexual offence convictions can feel, by comparing their own life and family connections to that of a person with a sexual offence. Some people are released from prison with nothing: no shelter; no sense of community; no company; and no basic resources. As Wakefield (2006) has summarised, "prisoners who perceive opportunities are blocked may develop a sense of hopelessness" (p. 145). In turn, this could heighten the risk of reoffending (Leonard, 2011). Such things like shelter and food, are accessible to people in prison yet can be harder to access upon return to a community where "they're just not wanted". As a result, people could turn to desperate alternatives such as suicide, or committing another

offence. For a person who has nothing to lose, there is little to feel hopeful for, and minimum motivation to remain offence free. The benefit of shelter, community, and food provided within the prison environment could outweigh the cost of freedom. Extract 50 gives attention to feelings of community and companionship. Feeling part of a social group or network is important to aid desistance amongst people with sexual offence convictions (Farmer et al., 2012; Fox, 2015), further emphasising the importance of participant 17's discussion.

Previous quantitative literature has tried to establish causal factors underpinning accommodation and reoffending, noting how such relationship is complex (O'Leary, 2013). This subtheme has highlighted potentially numerous contributing factors in terms of the interplay between accommodation, risk, recidivism, and desistance. Not only is accommodation important in terms of providing a space for tangible and operational risk management procedures, more symbolically, it affords people the opportunity to feel hopeful about their life, possibly contributing to desistance related outcomes.

4.3.5.2 Pursuing Goals. Throughout this subtheme, participants acknowledged how accommodation also acts as a base to achieve other goals from. It acts as a stabilising factor from which wider resettlement and reintegration needs can be met.

Extract 51
We have to understand that unless peoples' sort of basic needs are there and met, it's pointless sort of looking at maybe other goals. You know, there's not much point kind of pushing someone into work, or you know, trying to deal with their - get some rape counselling or whatever, if you know they haven't got anywhere to live. (P19, Offender Manager)

Extract 51 resonates with influential psychological theories of human motivation (Maslow, 1943). Until a person's basic needs are met, there is no desire to achieve higher level goals such as employment, or challenging offending behaviours. Attaining positive life goals is a dominant focus of Wards strengths-based approach to offender rehabilitation; the GLM (Ward, 2002). The GLM states that people with convictions are motivated to attain certain life goals, and the attainment of such goals helps people to adopt a pro-social, non-offending lifestyle. Extract 45 highlights the importance of considering the potential order of goal attainment. If basic, lower, level needs are not yet met, the desire

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for people with convictions to reach higher level goals, such as addressing offending behaviour, is potentially absent. The participant states the necessity that "we" understand the importance of attaining accommodation in relation to the achievement of higher-level needs. Such "we" could be interpreted as housing providers, employers, the probation service, or wider society more generally.

A specific goal that dominated participant accounts related to employment:

> *Extract 52*
> That's [*employment*] still a long way to go I think, because that's the next step for people ultimately, oh I've got my place now I want to get a job. (P12, Manager within Specialist Housing Association)

Extract 52 highlights common steps in a person's resettlement, describing a typical pathway of first attaining accommodation and afterwards seeking employment. Stating that employment has a "long way to go" hints that similar challenges are present in attaining employment as they are for attaining accommodation. It represents the next logical step for people leaving prison. Once accommodation has been secured, people have a stable base to find employment from and adopt a working lifestyle. Where Extract 52 highlights this as an almost sequential process, Extract 53 describes this from a different angle. The intertwined nature of accommodation and employment can prove problematic:

> *Extract 53*
> It's like the chicken and the egg. You've got to get an address to get a job, you've got to get a job to get accommodation, so its uh, it's very, very frustrating … I would hate to be in the position of anyone coming out of prison. (P5, Offender Manager)

Extract 53 uses a well-known causality dilemma to highlight the interrelated nature between accommodation and employment. Obtaining an address requires employment, yet employment relies on providing an address. The complexity and intertwined nature of these resettlement issues has previously been emphasised by McAlinden (2009) who suggests that such reintegration factors "cannot be so easily divorced" (p.22). It may be unclear which goal needs to be met first to be able to achieve the other. This not only results in a challenging cycle that is difficult to break, but also emphasises the importance

of considering a person's wider reintegration needs. The participant notes how frustrating this is for them as a practitioner, but ultimately acknowledges that they are themselves fortunate not to be in such a position.

Although the focus of this thesis centres around accommodation challenges, perspective must not be lost on the wider reintegration challenges beyond accommodation. The intertwined nature of wider resettlement factors adds to the pivotal importance of practitioners securing accommodation for their service users with sexual convictions.

4.3.6 Theme 6: Optimum Operations

The final theme developed from the current findings related to practical, operational, and systematic considerations that would improve outcomes and enhance the accommodation processes involved in accommodating people with sexual offence convictions. Many of these recommendations are widely acknowledged for people with all offence types (HMIP, 2020), and not just people with sexual offence convictions.

4.3.6.1 Working as One. This theme relates to the importance of agencies working together. It captures the necessity of joint approaches, effective communication, and information sharing between organisations. The importance of multi-agency management of people with sexual offence convictions is commonly noted (National MAPPA Team, 2019). This subtheme presents the importance of this multiagency approach specifically within accommodation scenarios.

> *Extract 54*
> You've got to have good links with, with your local probation service and the police and the public protection team in order to make it work, you've got to have a flow of information … if we felt that we were being stitched up by the local probation or police or PPU, we'd have to think again about delivering the service [*their accommodation service for people with convictions*], and fortunately that's not the case, but you're only as good as the information you've got. (P14, Specialist Housing Provider Team Manager)

Links, collaborations, and good information sharing were perceived as pivotal by practitioners when accommodating people with sexual offence convictions. Input from

multiple organisations was deemed as essential and non-negotiable. Reiterating concepts from Subtheme 4.3.4.1 there is an important element of trust. Practitioners must feel part of the same team, working in tandem. Participant 14 was offering their account from their perspective as a provider of specialist offending based housing services. Should a housing organisation feel that risk management agencies are not working in effective collaboration with them, the housing service could no longer operate. An accommodation organisation is only as good as the information they receive; the service delivered is dependent on the information available. With good information comes good service delivery, meaning that information sharing between public protection, risk management, and housing agencies, can contribute to best practice when accommodating people with sexual offence convictions.

Extract 55

I've worked with a lot of great people who have been really helpful, to get the right kind of accommodation. So, they've worked with everybody to make sure the risk is managed well (P7, Community Based Resettlement Worker)

Extract 55 equates good practice to collaborative practice. When agencies work together to get the "right" kind of accommodation, this is when best outcomes are achieved. From the above extract, it appears participant seven equates the "right kind of accommodation" to one that is appropriately risk managed, above anything else. This risk discourse was prevalent throughout participants narratives. Kemshall and Maguire (2001) argue that we live in a risk society, whereby risk considerations pervade organisational structures. *Risk penalty* refers to the growing focus of risk within criminal justice policy and practice (Kemshall & Maguire, 2001). Indeed, people with sexual offence convictions do require serious risk management input to ensure that societies are kept safe. However, this thesis is placed within the context of humanistic, strengths-based approaches (Maslow, 1943; Ward, 2002; Weaver, 2019), and argues that safer societies might also be fostered when exploring accommodation through these more positivist theoretical lenses. From Extract 55, it seems that the "right" kind of accommodation is one that focusses on risk, failing to mention the "right" kind of accommodation for the individual in terms of their needs.

Participants continually reinforced the importance of risk management. People are possibly more likely to respond to risk management benefits when they are aware that certain practices may benefit society, as opposed to considering the individual with a

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sexual offence conviction (see Section 4.3.4.2). An interesting consideration within the context of this risk focus; is whether the wants of the individual are considered, or at times overlooked due to an overfocus on such risk.

> *Extract 56*
>
> The only thing that works is the multiagency approach, urm, where the individuals considered as well. I think, what, what's happened in the past, is we've talked to other agencies and we've decided what's best for this person, but we've not asked them, urm, and I think that's important as well, about talking to the individual about what they want and what they need. (P15, Specialist Worker within General Accommodation Provider)

In line with previous accounts, Extract 56 notes that the multiagency approach is a non-negotiable component of attaining and maintaining accommodation placements for people with sexual offence convictions. Uniquely, this is the first extract to consider the individual in need of housing within the multiagency approach. The participant delivers an honest and perceptive account of their own previous practice, where the wants of the individual may have been overlooked. This extract shows the need to consider not just multi-*agency* approaches, but multi-*person* approaches. Agencies are key in managing risk, but the person in need of accommodation is an essential component of considering what is best for their community resettlement.

Participants noted that the key influential method of accommodating people with sexual offence convictions was for agencies to work in collaboration. As seen in Subtheme 4.3.1.2, practitioners often perceived fragmented processes. The reality of the efficiency of this multiagency approach is thus unclear. Calls for cross-government approaches to housing people with sexual convictions have also repeatedly being urged for throughout previous reports (HMIP, 2020; Mills et al., 2013). People recognise the pivotal need for this approach, but whether it is always achieved might be disputed between the two subthemes.

4.3.6.2 Deinstitutionalising Individuals. This final subtheme emphasises the need for individualised considerations. Participants explored people's immediate needs upon release from prison, particularly focusing on deinstitutionalisation. Some accommodation practices such as approved premises or supported providers can ease the gradual transition back into society. Within these accommodation practices, it is pivotal to consider that the requirements for one person, may not necessarily apply to another.

> *Extract 57*
>
> You'd have these individuals, they'd find this accommodation, they'd go from prison, to approved premise, to independent accommodation, and actually when they got to their independent accommodation it was such a shock to the system ... it should be kind of bridged, I think for someone that's been institutionalised (P2, Reintegration Charity Coordinator)

Participant two describes a typical post-prison release pathway, whereby a person progresses through typical stages of resettlement. The participant begins the example in a seemingly positive manner, particularly when considered in relation to previous themes concerning the difficulties attaining accommodation (Themes 4.3.1, 4.3.2, and 4.3.3). Within the example in Extract 57, the person has successfully attained accommodation, one of the first major barriers. Even once accommodation is attained however, problems can still arise. For a person who has mainly experienced the rigid, institutional prison environment, their adaptability to independent life becomes a daunting task (SEU, 2002). The participant notes that this should be overcome using a bridged, graduated approach. For those who have become institutionalised from a wealth of time spent in institutions in which they had little freedom or control, a bridge between these types of facilities is necessary.

> *Extract 58*
>
> We're [*approved premise worker*] there to help them out but who's gonna be there when they're in their own place? So, our job is all about empowering somebody, to do something for themselves, make the right decisions (P8, Approved Premise Keyworker)

Accommodation staff must work to instil feelings of empowerment, to overcome institutionalised regimes, and enable people to feel confident in making their own choices.

Extract 58 forces consideration of a hypothetical question that the participant must implement within their practice daily. They highlight their role as a supporter, simultaneously acknowledging that this support will inevitably end. It is paramount that the work done in approved premises is preparatory for independence. Accommodation staff should guide the person and their decisions, as opposed to making decisions for people. The approved premise, a risk management regime as opposed to accommodation provider (HMIP, 2020; Prison Reform Trust, 2018) ought not institutionalise the individual further by making decisions for people. Instead, the staff within approved premises should guide the person to achieve independent living, striking an appropriate balance between support and independence.

> *Extract 59*
>
> The APs [*approved premises*] are there really to manage that sort of short term stepping stone out of custody and into more independent living, but it provides that little bit more of a buffer, it helps the person to climatize to life on the outside a little bit. (P11, Director of Specialist Support Housing Service)

Participants in various roles acknowledged how approved premises served as a steppingstone for people with sexual convictions. Approved premises were perceived as a supportive aid to help the person cross from one stage of their life to the next. It helps the person re-establish what it is like to live outside of prison, whilst still maintaining a degree of support should this be a necessary safety net or "buffer".

> *Extract 60*
>
> Some people are quite independent, especially if you've had a home before, so they're quite pro-active, especially if they're not having a good time in the hostel, they can be quite proactive about getting themselves out. Urm, and then others, they haven't got a clue. (P4, Reintegration Charity Coordinator)

It is necessary to recognise that the notion of institutionalisation is not necessarily universal to all prison leavers. Some people will be capable of maintaining an independent lifestyle free from support upon release from prison. For another cohort of people, this may be more challenging. Extract 60 reiterates the need for deinstitutionalisation processes, at the same time recognising that not everyone will need this support. This point was reiterated throughout interviews, in relation to all kinds of housing needs.

Accommodation is an individualised matter where certain people will want and need different things (HMIP, 2020). This need for individualised considerations is paramount throughout the resettlement process, as what is right for one person may not meet the needs of another.

Extract 60 highlights two polarised stances to institutionalised individuals; those who are proactive and capable, compared to those who "haven't got a clue". It may be more beneficial to consider needs variance as a spectrum:

> *Extract 61*
>
> There's never a one size fits all for everybody, you know, some people can come out of prison, walk out of prison, walk back to their flat or the house they had before they went into prison, and live completely free from support. There'll be another group that needs some support, going into their own tenancies or living in supported accommodation, there'll be some then who have a greater level of oversight that's needed … some cohorts of offenders will need different things, and I don't think, I don't think we should ever get hung up on the new fad that comes in. (P11, Director of Specialist Support Housing Service)

Extract 61 focuses on the importance of considering all possible cohorts, making sure to avoid over reliance on one housing "fad" that may be suitable for some but not all. Drawing comparisons between independent individuals and those with greater support needs seeks to highlight individual differences between people, particularly prevalent to consider in relation to something as pivotal as accommodation.

The practitioner participants interviewed within this study recounted their experiences regarding accommodation for people with sexual convictions, drawing upon their own expertise to suggest what works well in accommodating people with sexual offence convictions. Deinstitutionalisation efforts are often required for people who are leaving prison after a substantial amount of time, yet participants also recognised that it is pivotal for accommodation needs to be considered on an individualised basis.

4.4 Chapter Discussion

This investigation explored the views of professionals with experience related to accommodation for people with sexual offence convictions. It uncovered some of the main challenges and considerations specific to accommodating people with sexual convictions, as well as the challenges faced by professionals in their daily roles.

As previous research has done (Cooper, 2016), the empirical findings began by situating accommodation issues for people released from prison within the wider context of the current housing crisis (Mulliner & Maliene, 2013; Robertson, 2017). The distinct considerations unique to people with sexual offence convictions were subsequently discussed (Rydberg, 2018), ultimately supporting the argument of this thesis to explore issues specific to people with sexual offences. Participants acknowledged that the housing field is already challenging for all members of the public, yet people with sexual convictions were perceived as the "nettle" in this field, with added barriers to attaining accommodation. The interplay between complex risk management needs and stigmatising responses were deemed to exclude people with sexual offences from housing further.

Preece and Bimpson (2019) outline a "typology of exclusionary mechanisms" (p. 17) capturing how structural, individual, and institutional mechanisms are all ways in which people may be discriminated against when trying to attain housing. These three mechanisms were evident throughout the participant discussions within this study. Socio-economic structures, exclusionary policies, and individual level biases were all discussed by participants, noting in particular how individual level biases are perhaps a key driver of housing exclusion for people with sexual convictions, due to the emotive reactions the offence type instils.

Not only are the people in need of housing hindered, but so too are the professionals whose role it is to assist with housing such group. Participants faced frustrations because of the imposed barriers to fulfilling their daily roles, many of which were perceived to be based on personal attitudes of housing providers as opposed to legitimate unbiased reasonings. Hostile attitudes from housing practitioners meant that the professionals interviewed within this study had to establish ways to overcome such refusals. Clashes and tensions between opposing professions were apparent, leading participants to identify ways to mediate these issues to overcome accommodation challenges for their service

users. Many of the practical considerations to improve practice echo conclusions of other reports (Gojkovic et al., 2012; HMIP, 2020; Mills et al., 2013), ultimately emphasising the importance of multiagency approaches and individualised considerations.

This study developed an understanding of accommodation challenges that are specific to people with sexual convictions. Additionally, it offered novel insights about how professionals responsible for assisting with accommodation for people with sexual convictions navigate the complexities of their role. It is important however, that these findings are considered in the context of some limitations, mainly, the sample obtained. The sampling methods used could have led to self-selection bias. Those who were responsive to the advertised research may hold stronger views about accommodation for people with sexual offence convictions. Most participants were recruited from the North and Midlands area. Participants outlined specific experiences that may be unique to that individual, within their own professional capacity and subject to their geographical location. Although the qualitative data obtained allowed for a rich and in-depth understanding of accommodation issues, cautioning against over-generalisations is necessary.

Within this investigation, participants spoke of their experiences and interpretations of housing provider responses. It is important to emphasise that the providers spoke of by participants, were not interviewed within the current study. The participants interviewed within this research were highlighting their perceptions of others, attempting to make sense of, and apply causal reasonings to providers' and landlords' behaviours. Future research could investigate participant accounts from different perspectives. Exploring housing providers' own views could offer further insights towards refusal reasons and accommodation challenges for people with sexual convictions.

4.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has explored the views and experiences of those with practical experience related to accommodating people with sexual offences. It has set the context for the following chapters of this thesis, outlining the political, organisational, and macro-level factors necessary to consider in terms of this topic. Additionally, it has offered novel insights about the professional challenges faced by practitioner participants in their daily roles, when trying to assist with accommodation issues for people with sexual convictions.

Chapter 5. Study 2: Qualitatively Examining the Views of Residents

Chapter Overview

This chapter presents the second empirical study. The aim of this second investigation was to explore the views of people with sexual convictions about their community accommodation needs and experiences. The chapter begins by explaining the rationale for this investigation, documenting some previous research investigations that have focussed explicitly on accommodation issues for people with sexual convictions. Then, the methods employed specific to this second study are outlined. By implementing inductive thematic analysis, four themes were created from the data. These themes are each discussed in turn. The qualitative themes outlined within this chapter echo some of the issues discussed in Chapter 4. More novel considerations about what people feel they need from accommodation are also explored. In particular, the importance of home, psychosocial feelings instilled within environments, and applications to desistance considerations, are more thoroughly discussed throughout the analysis. The chapter offers a general discussion synthesising the main findings of this second investigation, as well as some limitations to consider. A summary of Study 2 closes the chapter.

5.1 Rationale

As emphasised throughout this thesis, people with sexual offence convictions warrant distinct accommodation considerations due to the unique challenges they face in relation to risk management and stigma. Previous research has documented the challenges that people with sexual offence convictions feel they face in relation to accommodation (Grossi, 2017; Rydberg, 2018). Vigilante concerns (Cubellis et al., 2019), limited access to computers (Rydberg, 2018), and the interplay between risk management procedures and accommodation (Levenson, 2008, 2009, 2018) are deemed to negatively impact people with sexual offence convictions attaining accommodation.

In addition to identifying housing challenges, some previous investigations have been undertaken which documented the living experiences of people with sexual offence convictions. These findings are often considered in isolation, specific to one certain facility or reintegration project. For example, Kras et al. (2016) qualitatively examined the re-entry

experiences of people with sexual convictions within Missouri, US. Participants were living within a (US termed) transitional facility. Participants described three main pathways into the facility: that they lacked the resources to secure other housing; they were denied other accommodation due to residency restrictions; or they had violated their conditions of parole. One of the most prevalent findings about life inside the facility was its comparison to life inside the prison. Difficulties were also experienced when leaving the facility, mainly with regards to securing employment. Some participants felt that residing in the facility increased this barrier further due to associated stigma surrounding living within a transitional facility. This research highlights additional findings beyond just the challenges and barriers faced by people with sexual offences in attaining accommodation, instead, considering the issues present when people are within a certain facility.

Reeves (2013) reiterates some of Kras et al.'s (2016) findings from a UK perspective, investigating the experiences of men with sexual convictions living within an approved premise. The main finding of the study revealed that social groupings within the approved premise were the foundation for residents' identities (Tajfel, 1978; Hornsey, 2008). These groups were static in nature, and constructed according to converse labels, such as "sex offenders" versus "non-sex offenders". Reeves (2013) concluded that approved premises reinforced the negative, stigmatised, sexual offending identity of participants. Within the context of desistance from sexual offending, constructing a positive personal identity away from the stigmatised "sex offender" label is important (Paternoster & Bushway, 2009; Farmer et al., 2016). Reeves' (2013) findings indicate some potential overlap between living environments and important desistance concepts.

Mills and Grimshaw (2012) document further UK findings from a charitable housing initiative that once existed solely for people with sexual offences. Residents described a sense of safety from not having to conceal the nature of their offence. They were guaranteed stable accommodation for two years, offered employment advice, and given resettlement support within the facility. Some issues were also identified however, such as feeling that more employment assistance could be offered, as well as discussing feelings of isolation within the wider community.

Each of these individual research findings offer some insights into both positive and negative accommodation experiences for people with sexual offence convictions living within specific facilities (Kras et al., 2016; Mills & Grimshaw, 2012; Reeves, 2013). The

current research investigation sought to expand this knowledge, investigating the experiences of people with sexual offence convictions more broadly, who are living within a variety of community settings.

The rationale for the second investigation study followed similar logic to that of Study 1. People with sexual offence convictions warrant distinct accommodation considerations due to unique re-entry challenges. Having gained an appreciation of contextual issues from the perspective of professionals, understanding the views of people with sexual offence convictions was equally important. This enables a balanced consideration for risk and need (Mills & Grimshaw, 2012). The aim of the current investigation was to qualitatively explore the accommodation needs and experiences of people with sexual offence convictions, now living within any community setting.

5.2 Methods

5.2.1 Sample

Purposive and convenience sampling methods were used to recruit people with sexual offence convictions. The sample was obtained by contacting charities, offending specific housing organisations, and NPS divisions. Three NPS divisions (out of seven) were contacted about involving service users. Each division handled the request differently. The Midlands division directed the research request to select professionals. The North West division sent a global email to all probation staff within this area, resulting in the majority of responses. The North East division required passing a local approval process which extended beyond the data collection period. Other participants were recruited from known charities and housing organisations.

A total sample of 15 was obtained. This included one pilot participant, whose data was also included within the analysis. All participants were male and had served a prison sentence for a sexual offence. Ages ranged from 33-75 years ($M = 55.27$, $SD = 11.65$). Most were 50 or over ($n=11$). Participants lived in a variety of accommodation settings; approved premises ($n=2$), offending specific supported facilities ($n= 5$), social housing properties ($n=2$), private rented properties ($n= 3$), temporary emergency facilities ($n=2$), and a PIPE unit ($n=1$). Table 4 outlines participant information to offer further context to the extracts presented throughout the findings.

Table 4.

Participant Information for the Sample of People with Sexual Convictions.

	Age	Time since release	Current Accommodation	Further context regarding current accommodation	Previous accommodation experiences
P1	49	11 years	Private rented Property	Living with partner	Multiple approved premises
P2	54	1 year 2 months	Third-Sector Facility for People with Convictions	Self-contained bedroom with shared communal facilities	Approved premise
P3	75	1 year	Probation Approved Premises	Extended the usual 12-week stay rule	Never had accommodation stability prior to prison
P4	63	2 years 6 months	Local Authority Sheltered Housing	Independent living scheme for over 55's	Approved premise, third sector facility for people with convictions
P5	33	3 months	Probation Approved Premises	Recently released, only community experience so far	None
P6	49	2 years 4 months	Private Rented Property	Living alone	Approved premise
P7	62	4 years	Private Rented Property	Living alone	Approved premise
P8	62	1 year	Statutory Homeless - Temporary Facility	Legally defined as homeless, accessing local authority homelessness support. Potential offer underway	Was homeless prior to prison sentence
P9	50	3 months	Statutory Homeless - Temporary B&B	Legally defined as homeless, accessing local authority homelessness support; attending viewings	Maximum stay at approved premise
P10	61	2 years	Third-Sector Facility for People with Convictions	Own flat with private kitchen/bathroom/living	Extended approved premise stay for 8 months, then lived on family members sofa
P11	32	1 year	PIPE	Currently transitioning into private rented property	None
P12	57	3 years 6 months	Local Authority Property	Living alone in a one bed flat	Approved premise, house of multiple occupation, private rent mobile home
P13	63	1 year	Third-Sector Facility for People with Convictions	Own flat with private kitchen/bathroom/living	Approved premise
P14	53	Not disclosed	Third-Sector Facility for People with Convictions	Own flat with private kitchen/bathroom/living	Approved premise
P15	66	2 years	Third-Sector Facility for People with Convictions	Own flat with private kitchen/bathroom/living	Approved premises, homelessness shelters at sentence end date

5.2.2 Procedure

Interviews were facilitated by professionals (e.g. housing managers, charity managers, or offender managers). Liaison with the appropriate professional occurred to arrange a suitable time and location for participant interviews. Participants took part in a face to face interview, within a secure, private location. Upon meeting the participant, they were told about the aims of the research, and asked to provide informed consent (Appendix 3).

A semi-structured interview schedule was devised (Appendix 2.2). Further information about how the schedule was developed is offered within Chapter 3. The schedule included prompts related to the persons preparatory experiences in prison; immediate release experiences after prison; their accommodation history since leaving prison; and their likes and dislikes in relation to where they have lived post-prison release. Prompts regarding what people felt they needed from accommodation were also included. The schedule was deliberately broad to allow participants to speak freely about issues pertinent to them. Participants were given the opportunity to discuss additional topics they felt were important, and to ask questions. At the end of the interview, they were debriefed.

Interviews ranged from 55-95 minutes (M = 72.86, SD = 12.62). Interviews were conducted between August 2017 and February 2018.

5.2.3 Ethics

The study was granted ethical approval from HMPPS National Research Committee (reference 2017-097) and Nottingham Trent University (reference 2017/65). BPS guidance (2014, 2018) informed ethical decisions throughout the research phases.

5.2.4 Analysis

Inductive thematic analysis was undertaken (Braun & Clarke, 2006) due to its flexible nature, as well as being appropriate for the sample size. Unlike for the previous research phase, assistive computer software (NVivo) was used for some part of this analysis. Having gained experience of undertaking thematic analysis manually within Study 1, utilising NVivo within Study 2 allowed for further development of my analysis skills. Additionally, it made the analysis process more efficient and less time consuming. The justification for this, and the process of qualitative analysis are offered in more detail within

Chapter 3. Transcripts were coded initially within NVivo. The codes were re-ordered and subsumed within other codes, which were then exported into a coding table. Analysis was finalised manually. The coding table was printed to physically group coded extracts into themes. Themes and subthemes continued to be refined throughout the writeup phase.

5.3 Findings

Four themes were constructed from the analysis. These are outlined within Table 5, along with corresponding subthemes. Throughout the extracts presented within the following themes, information about where the participant currently lives is included alongside their participant number. As some participants experienced living within various facilities, this is not necessarily the place they may speak of within the exert. Table 4 above offers further context where necessary."

Table 5.

Themes and Corresponding Subthemes Identified from Resident Participants' Data.

Theme	Subthemes
1. Getting Housed at the "Mercy" of Others	Preparation and support
	Rejection and dejection
2. Empowering Transitions	Stepping-stone placements
	Humanising professional input
3. Psychosocial Home Needs	A safe haven
	My home my way
	Social base
4. The Reintegration Jigsaw	Motivating desistance
	Life goal facilitation
	Stigmatising societies and hostility

5.3.1 Theme 1. Getting Housed at The "Mercy" Of Others

Participants discussed the issues they had attaining accommodation post-prison. At the surface level, this theme captures the challenges faced by participants in terms of accessing somewhere to live. Beyond this, the theme represents the lack of power and control felt by participants. Accommodation barriers and challenges are externally imposed; higher level authority, organisational systems, and risk management professionals dictate participants accommodation prospects.

5.3.1.1 Preparation and Support. Participants perceived that the systems in place throughout their resettlement were at times inefficient in helping them attain suitable accommodation. Although participants desired help, this was often beyond their own control. They often explained feeling unsupported and underprepared.

Extract 1

A couple of lads did recommend see [*prison resettlement organisation*]. Uh, but trying to get hold of them in prison was impossible, no matter how many times a day, what time of day, or morning, you rang … So, that was like, very disappointing the fact that you couldn't actually get in touch with anyone about being rehomed or just starting to get rehomed for getting out … it was daunting, and not knowing where to go, who to turn to, urm, I did try and ask urm, the chaplaincy if they knew where I could go or what help I could get, and again they recommended [*prison resettlement organisation*]. Which, pft, to no availability. (P9, Classed as Statutory Homeless in Emergency B&B)

Participant nine explains the challenges he faced in accessing help pre-prison release. In the first step of the accommodation process, to access specialist advice, he encountered resistance. Despite clear efforts made on the participants behalf, any attempt to better his own situation was negated. Ultimately, he was powerless in the absence of any response from support organisations. The sense of powerlessness further impacted the participant's feelings of uncertainty surrounding their re-entry and accommodation. Previous literature has identified that a lack of prisoner awareness regarding accommodation support in prisons is problematic (Gojkovic et al., 2012). Here, the issue is not one of prisoner unknowingness, it is one of organisational inaccessibility, despite the participant's awareness and desperation to access the service.

Participant nine was re-entering the community subject to licence conditions. Accommodation situations could be even more challenging for those who leave prison at their sentence end date:

Extract 2

Another thing that's wrong, they don't tell you how to go about things when they release you. I came out, I had nowhere to go. Because my licence had finished, I can't go back to [*approved premise*], I was just literally homeless when I came out. I couldn't go back there, nobody had said what to do, where to go, anything.

Interviewer: So you sort of had no preparation for that release from [*prison*] then?

Participant: No, nothing at all … I wasn't prepared for homelessness, out on the street. Nobody said a word of where to go, or what. You know, there were places to go in that situation, but I didn't know. No one had said previous to me going out the gate, "Go here, they'll help you". You know, it was just lucky that someone at [*the approved premise*] I was friends with, had the same situation, and he'd gone to this little office [*emergency housing organisation*] … I'd luckily remembered where he said it was. (P15, Third-Sector Facility for People with Convictions)

Extract 2 reiterates the participant's sense of abandonment and unknowing, stemming from a lack of pre-release support. The participant felt that the lack of support was unjust and "wrong", ultimately leading to a severely detrimental situation for them upon release. Not only does the experience of homelessness impede the individual themselves, it also poses concerns for wider society in terms of risk (Rolfe et al., 2016). The lack of tangible advice offered by professionals left the participant reliant on "luck" and memory of past anecdotal experiences. Professional input was a key need for the participant to attain accommodation. In the absence of professional advice and support, people may lack the necessary resettlement knowledge, forcing them into unsettling, unsecure, positions, knowing that their attainment of accommodation is not guaranteed.

Conversely, when preparation was successfully achieved, participants recognised the benefits of this, praising the help that they received and displaying gratitude to those instrumental in their support:

Extract 3

Because my probation officer had been prepared, and said well, "If there's a chance of you getting out, I will make sure we've got a provisional date booked [*for an approved premise placement*]". Whereas the other fella I was just talking about, nobody was backing him for release anyway, so they hadn't bothered to book a date and so on and so forth, so I think, on the one side, its um, well, it's purely probation preparedness, and the willingness to go and uh to get a date and get it sorted. And uh, she did that wonderfully. (P5, Probation Approved Premises)

Extract 3 highlights an opposing experience, yet still indicates the importance of release preparation. There is some disjunction within the data. The perception of ambiguous and unclear support could make accommodation preparation more problematic for people with sexual convictions (Extracts 1 and 2). Conversely, clear, and effective preparation may relieve the stressful unknowns and uncertainty for the individual. Use of the word "willing" by participant five, implies it was the choice of the probation officer to prepare their accommodation prior to release. The participant conveyed a sense of appreciation towards their own probation officer, at the same time acknowledging that not everyone is so fortunate. The contrasting example offered by participant five indicates the differential accommodation assistances that people may receive. When preparatory accommodation support was received, the benefits of this were felt. However, participants are reliant on assisting professionals to "back" them and have faith in the possibility that they may be released. Without this, professionals may risk hindering a person's re-entry due to their belief that sorting accommodation would be futile. Again, an uncontrollable matter outside of the participant's own influence dictated their accommodation successes, as they themselves were physically unable to access providers or approved premises from within the prison.

The need for accommodation support and reliance on external systems was present throughout a person's resettlement, beyond just prison release and preparation.

> *Extract 4*
>
> There's a lot of the system that, cannot be changed. And it - you're not going to get help. And it is tick boxes, and I say that in the, I don't know, casual-ist way I could. It's, I don't resent it, it's just a fact. You know, tick box you're safe, tick box you've got a house, you've got a place, you know, it doesn't matter about where you're living, it doesn't matter about the situation you're living in. (P12, Local Authority Property)

The fixed nature of the "system" (referring here to probation procedures) indicates the uncontrollability the participant felt in relation to his accommodation situation. He succumbed to the "fact" that help would not be received - seemingly reduced to a passive bystander in his own resettlement. As Healy (2012) has recognised, probation helpfulness is in part categorised by the practical support that service users perceive they receive. Seemingly, participant 12 perceived a limited amount of practical support. He compared his resettlement experience to a box ticking exercise, indicating the participant's perception of a lack of care and interest from professionals involved in his resettlement. He felt that professionals were only willing to go as far as necessary to meet the minimum required criteria, regardless of the appropriateness of the situation to the individual. Genuine, caring relationships are essential indicators of good quality supervision to people on probation (Shapland et al., 2012), yet this was not perceived.

Beyond just the importance of support, Extract 4 captures a somewhat pessimistic account. Despite the participant's own recognition that he does not "resent" the issues, he displays a somewhat fatalist viewpoint, represented by his certainty that "you're not going to get help". He displays feelings of abandonment and hopelessness. Notably, an "optimistic attitude may be a necessary condition for desistance from crime" (Visher & O'Connell, 2012, p. 387). Such optimism is not present here. Reduced feelings of control, instilled from a lack of tangible accommodation support, could present implications for desistance considerations.

This subtheme has emphasised participant's need for preparatory help and support to attain accommodation. Though the level of support each participant perceived to receive

varied within the data, the extracts ultimately portray the limited ability of participants to influence their own resettlement outcomes. They need the support of agencies and professionals to search for properties and offer advice about community accommodation.

5.3.1.2 Rejection and Dejection. In addition to preparation challenges and a lack of support, participants noted the repeated accommodation rejections they experienced. These rejections were received from both housing providers and risk management organisations. Again, the sense of reduced personal control is exhibited throughout the extracts. Participants' own efforts to attain accommodation were futile in the context of the restraints they were operating within.

Extract 5

I was on all these waiting lists, and waiting for you know they phone you, a phone call you if they get anything, or it was mainly going on Rightmove, I was on Rightmove and just going on the computer every day, as well as looking for jobs, and I'd go house searching, put all my bids in and just wait. Check my bids. You know, which, it was mainly these uhm retirement places, because not many people bid on them. But I thought, yeh, that'll do me, you know, it's a place of my own, urm, so, yeh, even them I was getting refused for. (P10, Third-Sector Facility for People with Convictions)

Participant 10 described the constant waiting. The participant's emphasis on these waiting processes conveys their feelings of anticipation as well as their uncertainty. Once the participant had done everything within their own power, their accommodation situation was then taken from their hands, beyond their control. Participant 10 explains the lowering of their accommodation standards to maximise their chance of potential success. Even when employing this tactical based approach to their resettlement, outcomes were still unsuccessful. Discussion of the repeated persistence of the participant, paired alongside the discussion of the repeated rejections from providers, symbolises the repetitive and tiring nature of the process for the participant.

Sustained attempts to attain accommodation that ultimately did not lead to success, led some participants to feel hopeless:

Extract 6

I've now been through this stage three times, and each time the flat, the flat falls through you know, as soon as they find out either a) you're unemployed or b) you've got a criminal conviction. They say oh sorry we don't take criminal offenders, oh sorry you've got to be employed.

Interviewer: How does it make you feel then when they fall through?

Participant: Urm, pfft, honest - shit. Urm. There's no other, really, easy explanation than to say that. Yeh, it does. It disheartens you, urm. It makes you think, pft, I'm never going to get anywhere, how many times have I done this, how many times have I been looking at these flats and they turn round "oh no you've got to be working sorry" you know (P9, Classed as Statutory Homeless in Temporary B&B)

Continuous accommodation refusals led participant nine to believe that he would never attain accommodation. He felt hopeless in his ability to influence the situation, particularly when the repeated rejections were deemed to be a result of the unchangeable factors related to his offence. By this, the participant's conviction is irreversible, and gaining employment as a person with a sexual offence conviction is another resettlement challenge within its own right (Rydberg, 2018). As a result of such (largely) fixed, insurmountable obstacles, the participant felt hopeless, and that their efforts were meaningless. Ultimately, this participants self-perception is somewhat concerning for their rehabilitation efforts, as a person's low expectations often render negative outcomes, termed, the Golem Effect (Babad et al., 1982). Maruna et al. (2013) have also considered a "looking-glass element" (p.31) to this, arguing that when others demonstrate the belief that a person with a conviction can change, so too then does the person themselves. The opposite of this is reflected in Extract 6; accommodation providers may hold negative fixed perceptions of the person with the sexual conviction, ultimately then influencing the participants own beliefs about themselves. The participant displays feelings of dejection and exhaustion, worn out from their continuous efforts that they ultimately have nothing to show for.

Participant 12 expands upon the issue of the fixed nature of their offending history, emphasising the responses from providers in relation to his sexual offence specifically:

> *Extract 7*
>
> As a sex offender, you really are at the bottom of the runt … You've got to hide certain facts. You can't go in there and say oh you know, - you can't walk into, any, I don't care where it is, any private housing, "I'm a sex offender" – "Are you really? Fuck off". And that's what you'd have. And I've had that, literally have had those words said to me, oh don't want to know. And that's it. (P12, Local Authority Property)

The participant likening himself to being at the "bottom of the runt" is symbolic. It reinstates the notion of offence hierarchies (Ricciardelli, & Moir, 2013), that people with sexual offence convictions are deemed the lowest members of society, as well as suggesting an element of weakness; the runt of the litter is least likely to survive. Here, the runt is the "sex offender", they are the person least likely to be accepted as a tenant by providers, and the participant is powerless in terms of challenging such response. Extract 7 echoes issues from professional participants (Section 4.3.3); presenting as a "sex offender" to housing providers is met with anticipated hostility. They are viewed as their *master status* (Goffman, 1963), which ultimately overrides all other characteristics and hinges the persons' identity on one single attribute of their offence type (G. Willis, 2018). The participant seemingly accepted this as the way it is, unable to be changed and out of their control. The static nature of their stigmatised offence disadvantages them in accessing accommodation. As such, the only factor within the participants control was to what extent he now discloses his offence. Participant 12 had learnt from previous antagonistic responses, causing him to now "hide certain facts".

In addition to the repeated rejection faced from providers, accommodation rejections might also be imposed by risk management professionals, as addresses need to be approved by risk management organisations.

Extract 8

It's quite difficult. You might want to live somewhere, but you can't live there because of the school, or there's this or there's that, you know, it is like, so you're at, you're really at the, really at the – I don't know what to call it – really at the mercy of the police. (P8, Classed as Statutory Homeless in Temporary Facility)

There are numerous risk management issues that need to be considered when establishing where a person with a sexual offence conviction can live. These considerations are decided upon by risk management professionals, out of the control of the individual. Extract 8 indicates how people with sexual offence convictions are under the power and direction of others; they have limited influence over their situation and a lack of choice regarding their own accommodation. Regardless of a person's wants or efforts, the ultimate decision lies with professionals. The person's own desires are insignificant against risk management priorities. Some participants were frustrated by the risk management procedures that impeded their accommodation situations:

Extract 9

Another frustration I have with [*approved premise*], it is relevant, is that um, I couldn't go to the one in [*hometown*] because it was near a school. Ok. But the one in [*current approved premise location*] is 30 seconds if that, maybe 20 seconds away from a primary school. Across the road is a park, bloody great park, urm and, probably about a 2-minute walk is a nursery. (P1, Private Rented Property)

Participant one was angered that he was unable to live in his home-town approved premise due to it being near a school, when the approved premise he ultimately resided in was also near a school. He found it difficult to see the logic in the restriction. It appeared non-sensical to him and was just another means of reducing his own personal choice and freedom. The uncontrollable location of schools coupled with the (seemingly illogical) demands of risk management authority again meant that the individuals wishes were overridden, once more highlighting the powerlessness of individuals in influencing their accommodation situation.

Ultimately, for people with sexual offences who are subject to heightened risk management procedures, as well as negative public perceptions, their ability to exercise

choice and agency in terms of their accommodation situation is restricted. Without endorsement from necessary professionals, there is little that the people with the convictions themselves can do. Not only does this pose challenges in attaining accommodation for people with sexual convictions, but repeated accommodation challenges and refusals then manifest as deeper psychological problems related to feelings of hopelessness, powerlessness, and reduced control.

People who perceive some level of control over their future and opportunities, potentially have more positive desistance outcomes than those who display more pessimistic accounts and reduced feelings of control (Maruna, 2001; Visher & O'Connell, 2012). It is not the intention of this research to identify desisters and non-desisters within this sample, as others have done (Hulley, 2016). However, the extracts presented throughout this theme begin to indicate the inter-connected nature of accommodation issues and links to desistance concepts for people with sexual convictions.

5.3.2 Theme 2. Empowering Transitions

Participants discussed their accommodation pathways immediately upon release from prison. They noted the processes in place that helped them transition from prison to community. Although there were challenges to attaining accommodation (Theme 1, Section 5.3.1), some factors helped facilitate the community transition. It is a time where support is critical. This theme focuses on what people need to help facilitate this readjustment to community living, the main things being (i) gradual deinstitutionalisation efforts and (ii) humanising and supportive staff.

5.3.2.1 Stepping-Stone Placements. When people leave prison with a sexual offence conviction, they are most often required to reside at an approved premise (HMIP, 2017; Prison Reform Trust, 2018). Other temporary facilities (e.g. PIPE units, supported facilities) also help people resettle back into the community. These interim accommodation placements acted as "stepping-stones" (P2) to enable gradual transitions back into the community.

Participant two describes a typical accommodation pathway for someone released from prison, first residing within an approved premise, and then moving on to an interim supported facility specifically for people with convictions:

Extract 10
You're getting more and more freedom, more and more, you know you're expected to do more and more for yourself. And I think that's the progression with the housing, when you come out of prison well you know you go the approved premises … they quickly decide what you're like, you know see if you can cope, and if they feel you can cope, you move on - and I've used [*temporary housing organisation*] as a stepping-stone. (P2, Third-Sector Facility for People with Convictions)

Extract 10 highlights the gradually reinstated independence that this participant began to feel upon their release from prison. Participant two explains their accommodation pathway as a process of adaptation. They experienced a growth in autonomy and responsibilities. The participant likened this accommodation process to a test in which others make decisions about "what you're like" and how well "you can cope", highlighting the individualised nature of a persons' accommodation outcomes. Passing the test would enable the person to progress to further independence, again showing how resettlement and accommodation prospects rely on the perceptions of higher authority practitioners (as in Theme 1). Participant two viewed his current accommodation as a "stepping-stone". It is a place that precedes his next accommodation step, temporary and short term, yet stabilising at present.

Extract 11
Interviewer: Was there anything that you liked about living in the approved premise?
Participant: The independence partly. What the shock is – in prison, you haven't got to worry about your gas bill, electric bill, anything like that, television licence or anything. But when you come out and you have that to worry about, but been in the approved premises, you still haven't got your gas and electric, but you do have so much rent to pay to them, and you have to pay for your television licence … So, its breaking into it slowly. (P4, Local Authority Sheltered Housing)

Participant four explained becoming accustomed to a prison system where the responsibilities of daily life were taken control of. Consequently, the reinstatement of such responsibilities when leaving prison were a "shock" - unexpected, sudden, and challenging to face. The SEU report (2002) explains the damaging effect of institutionalisation; particularly in terms of reducing the sense of responsibility and confidence of prison leavers. Such issues are present within Extract 11. Participant four was required to undergo the transformation from a passive actor in his daily prison life, to a pro-active community member who takes charge of life responsibilities. However, the operations within the approved premise moderated the extent of this sudden change. The incremental increases in responsibility allowed the participant to gradually readjust, regaining responsibilities slowly. Participant four looked upon this process favourably. Others spoke of their perceived inability to cope without such transitional support:

> *Extract 12*
>
> Without this help that I've had from [*housing organisation*] … I don't think I could have coped … just coming out and it just being bang, I think I'd've just pff, it would have been all too much. (P13, Third-Sector Facility for People with Convictions)

Participant 13 again echoes the sudden, and overwhelming nature of community living for a person released from prison. The participant reflected upon a hypothetical alternative outcome of his resettlement, reiterating his need for deinstitutionalisation, and that without this, it "would have been all too much". The limited self-confidence previously spoken of is displayed within the extract (SEU, 2002), as participant 13 considers himself unable to have coped. He depended upon the support of the temporary housing organisation, further emphasising the importance of practical assistances (Shapland et al., 2013) and the importance of this in a persons' re-entry.

Other participants also considered how their outcomes may have differed, dependent upon their post-release accommodation situation.

> *Extract 13*
>
> [*Going to a PIPE*] it was more of a sort of like, a security blanket type thing . Yeh. Cus like, I didn't want to go to somewhere where basically, there's a door you're free crack on, cus like I've seen it in the past where you've seen lads get from, get released from prison and they've basically gone out to absolutely nothing. They've

struggled, and they've ended back in the system again cus there's no support out there for them. So, I thought, with this, it will be a good opportunity for me. (P11, PIPE)

Extract 13 demonstrates how accessing a PIPE unit offered a sense of safety and comfort to one participant. It was viewed as a form of protection, acting as a buffer between the prison environment and total independence. Like participant 13 in Extract 12, participant 11 considered the negative alternatives of his resettlement, based on witnessing the negative outcomes of others. The witnessing of others' failures forced the participant to consider more beneficial alternatives for himself. Participant 11 interpreted a lack of release support as a causal influence of repeat offending behaviours. As such, through choosing to access a supportive PIPE environment that would instil freedom gradually, the participant believed himself to be increasing his chances of re-entry success. As Preston (2015) states, PIPEs foster feelings of empowerment amongst previously institutionalised individuals. This is evident from the account of participant 11, who was open to the experience and grateful for the "good opportunity".

Although people's accommodation pathways may vary upon prison release, this subtheme has captured the importance and benefits of transitioning through progressive accommodation systems. Gradually reinstating levels of independence is necessary, particularly when such independence has been restricted within the prison environment. Such transitional accommodation environments enable people to readjust to community life slowly, potentially combatting issues of institutionalisation. These environments (be it approved premises, PIPEs, or supported facilities) offer a secure and stabilising "stepping-stone" for people with sexual offence convictions to move forward from.

5.3.2.2 Humanising Professional Input. Throughout participants' community re-entry, interactions with staff shaped their experiences. Positive staff relationships within accommodation facilities were deemed essential.

Extract 14

The staff treated me perfectly. There was one who used to walk, could hear her coming up, she goes "how's our [*name*] today?" … She'd stand at the door "you alright". You know. I was treated with respect and again that is something I don't suppose a lot of people get. Yes, I was a sex offender, but, I'm treated with respect, I'm treated as a person, and that is what made my time there bearable I suppose. (P7, Private Rented Property)

Extract 14 indicates the importance of staff relationships, particularly in the context of sexual offending. Irrespective of the tangible support that staff may offer within their role, staff attitudes and treatment towards the participant as "a sex offender" were most important. Participant seven does not recount a grand gesture to express their gratitude towards the staff member. Rather, small conversations were invaluable. Such interactions instilled a sense of normality, allowing the person to feel human and related to on a personal level; a feeling rarely achieved as a labelled and dehumanised "sex offender" (Spencer, 2009; Spencer & Ricciardelli, 2020). This corroborates a similar participant extract from Blagden et al. (2016) from a person with a sexual offence conviction who outlines the importance of feeling respected from staff members in prison. Through something as innocuous as interacting with the participant, staff relationships may foster positive self-narratives for individuals. Such experiences may counter competing information from society that regularly seek to dehumanise and stigmatise people with sexual convictions.

Participant three expands upon the need for humanising staff relationships, as well as noting the positive, tangible support in place:

Extract 15

Participant: They just treat me as a normal person.

Interviewer: Is that the staff?

Participant: Staff yeh yeh. Oh, yeh they're wonderful … they're helpful, they're a good support network. Because when I first came here [*the approved premise*], I had nothing I had no, no pension, no ID, nothing at all, and I've never had a birth certificate because I don't know where I was born. And they were so helpful. In little steps they helped me. (P3, Probation Approved Premises)

Staff support is viewed as positive in two ways, for practical guidance, as well as instilling feelings of humanity and normality. Participant three had evidently experienced hardships in his past. Earlier in the interview, he described that he was taken as a child, subsequently now unaware of his identity and birth date. He entered the approved premise identifying as a person who "had nothing". Supportive staff relationships and practical support overcame this, allowing the participant to feel a sense of normality that he was not previously accustomed to. This is pivotal, as such nurturing and positive relationships can assist with the desistance process (Rowe & Soppit, 2014). The extract conveys a sense of gratitude, appreciative of the efforts that staff made to help him gradually resettle.

Both Extracts 14 and 15 indicate how staff interactions can negate negative internalised identities through enabling participants to feel a sense of humanity and normality. Participant 13 highlights the converse:

Extract 16

The guy that I first spoke to, let's say he were less than helpful. Right. Uh, I got assigned a, uh, a lady worker, support worker whilst in there [*the approved premise*], and she were fine, but the guy who initially interviewed me, he made me aware that I was a sex offender and he didn't like me. Although he didn't actually say that, but, you get the feeling (P13, Third-Sector Facility for People with Convictions)

The participant himself obviously knows his offending past. However, stating that the staff member made him "aware" that he was a "sex offender" demonstrates how the participant perceived this label being further reinforced. This fractured the relationship, leading the participant to conclude that the staff member was unhelpful. As highlighted within Theme 3 of the professional participant findings (Section 4.3.3), people who work with people with sexual convictions may have negative personal attitudes that could influence their work. Although approved premises staff are required to work with people with sexual convictions, there could still be some personal discomfort at doing so (Lea et al., 1999). Participant 13 acknowledges this perception of staff hostility was a "feeling", possibly representative of internalised stigma (Tewksbury, 2012). The participant had become so used to the stigma he experienced within society; that he expected it even in the absence of any real evidence.

Additionally, the importance of staff honesty was iterated. Trusting and respectful relationships were desired by participants, represented by honest and transparent interactions.

> *Extract 17*
> Somebody actually doing what they say that they're going to do is quite important, urm, probably one of the most important things you could possibly do, urm is actually do what you say you are gonna do, so urm if you're not sure that you can actually do it well just say that – "I'm not sure I can do it but you know I will try". And urm, explain it if necessary. (P1, Private Rented Property)

At the surface level, participant one wanted transparency from staff. The importance of honesty is emphasised within the extract, as it is placed at the focus of the participant's needs, deemed to be "one of the most important" staff behaviours. Previous research has highlighted the importance of prison staff honesty (Crewe et al., 2014). The importance of staff honesty remains equally important in the community. Beyond this need for honesty, the extract arguably further represents a desire for respect. When a person acts in an honest manner to another person, this conveys respect for that person. As such, honesty and transparency afforded to the participant symbolise respectful interactions. Such transparency would allow the participant to maintain constant awareness of their situation and feel a sense of control, as well as feeling respected by others.

Although such honesty and transparency were highly desired, participant five noted potential impracticalities of this:

> *Extract 18*
> If you're constantly thinking people are putting you down and this that and the other, then you think people [*staff*] are talking about you behind your back, then the solution to that is for them to be open and honest in front of you all the time. But that might not really be necessary or proportionate, given that they could've just been talking their normal job stuff. In which case, is it practical or reasonable and proportionate to say, "well, will you fill me in every time you have a conversation about me"? Well no, you know, we'd spend all day filling bloody residents in about what we talked about. (P5, Probation Approved Premises)

Participant five suggests that when people believe others are against them, the desire for honesty is seemingly exemplified. As people with sexual convictions are so accustomed to stigma and hostility from community members (Williams, 2018), this may heighten their need for honesty from accommodation staff. Participant five acknowledges that the feeling of being talked about behind their back is an uncomfortable one, a feeling that may be relieved through staff openness. Constant transparency would serve as counterevidence to them being "put down" and disrespected. Extract 17 and 18 both highlight the importance and weight afforded to staff honesty, potentially representing a symbol of respect. It is perhaps such feeling of respect that is most being demanded, as opposed to the surface level desire of remaining constantly informed - particularly when the feasibility of this latter demand is questionable.

Ultimately, interactions with accommodation staff form a key component of the experiences of people with sexual convictions who live within a variety of community environments. Recognising that such staff relationships serve purposes beyond just offering practical support is necessary. The nature of staff interactions reflected deeper meaning to the participants interviewed here. Such staff relationships have the potential to increase (or inhibit) feelings of trust, normality, humanity, and respect amongst people with sexual offence convictions who are regularly stigmatised, ostracised, and dehumanised (Viki et al., 2012).

5.3.3 Theme 3. Psychosocial Home Needs

This theme captures the importance of internal, psychological feelings instilled from accommodation. It brings into question the meaning of home, by considering the feelings which participants attached to their living spaces (Mallet, 2004). Such feelings instilled intangible psychosocial benefits, representing a need to consider more than just the physical accommodation environments (Atkinson & Jacobs, 2016). The immateriality of material possessions was highlighted, and psychological needs instilled from having a home were prominent throughout discussions.

5.3.3.1 A Safe Haven. Feelings of safety were paramount. Vigilante concerns overlapped this discussion, potentially exacerbating safety needs for people with sexual convictions specifically. Participants needed to feel a sense of security and that they were living in a protective space.

Extract 19

It's knowing you've got somewhere safe, uh, somewhere safe so you can lock yourself away from the outside world if you need to, if you want to, you know, not being scared of, well, I'm on a park bench tonight, am I gonna get stabbed up. You read these things, you hear it on tele, uhm, alright they get mugged for what little they've got, some people, but, it's difficult, I don't want to be not sleeping proper. Urm, I think, it's more a security thing, knowing I can lock myself away and being safe behind four walls. (P9, Classed as Statutory Homeless in Temporary B&B)

Safety is a key need within a person's accommodation (Atkinson & Jacobs, 2016; Taormina & Gao, 2013). The extract above highlights how shelter acts as a physical barrier between the person and the "outside world". The "outside world" is viewed as a source of threat and danger that the participant wants protection from. The walls of their accommodation offer this protection. Fuelled by media scares, the participant imagined severe alternative outcomes associated with homelessness. These imagined alternatives convey a sense of unknowing, in these instances imagining the worst. These imagined possibilities are contrasted against the stability of "knowing" they have somewhere safe, and "knowing" they can lock themselves away. The physical space offers security both physically, as a structural shield, and mentally, as a constant, stabilising recluse.

Extract 19 reinforces Maslow's (1943) ideas, that having shelter can help to satisfy safety needs (Taormina & Gao, 2013). However, safety needs were not always met, even from participants who did have shelter. This represents the need to clearly divorce the concept of *house* from *home* (Mallet, 2004) in this context. Just because a person has physical shelter, it does not necessarily mean they have all the sufficient psychosocial needs from this shelter. In many circumstances, people with sexual offence convictions felt unsafe living within their accommodation facility. The presence of others and vigilante concerns influenced this:

Extract 20

You're in prison, and it's all sex offenders, you feel a bit sort of you know, safe, in a way. Urm, going out into a hostel you know where, it you know, you hear sort of rumours that they're all full of youngsters and there's trouble and, all this lot, and if they find out you're a sex offender you could be in trouble and all this lot … I was

urm, bit, bit nervous you know going to the hostel (P10, Third-Sector Facility for People with Convictions)

Where Extract 19 demonstrated the importance of safety generally, Extract 20 emphasises the interplay between feelings of safety, sexual offending, and experiences within the criminal justice system. Participant 10 recalls experiences living within a prison where everybody shared the same offence type. They viewed prison as a place of protection for them, not merely as a punishment for their crime (Blagden et al., 2016). The feelings of safety that the participant had become accustomed to were now no longer guaranteed upon release. They were being released into an environment that was unfamiliar and unknown, where the only knowledge of their future living arrangements was based on hearsay and horror stories. The participant aligned his expectations according to fear-inducing, potentially inaccurate information sources, in a similar manner demonstrated within Extract 19. Based on these information sources, participants are primed into a sense of fear, expecting, and anticipating dangerous release environments.

Vigilante concerns are prominent amongst people with sexual offence convictions re-entering the community (Cubellis et al., 2019; Woodall et al., 2013). Even if a person does have a place to live, considering the nature of the offence bears additional safety considerations for people with sexual offence convictions.

Extract 21

If you're a sex offender, you're a sex offender for life. So, it's different. Totally different. And if an – say – say, where I'm moving to now, say they found out, then my life could be made a misery, they'd move me, they'd move me again, and if they found out again they'd move me again. So, you know, it's never secure, you've got to be really secretive about everything and you know it's like (sighs). (P8, Classed as Statutory Homeless in Temporary Facility)

Extract 21 reiterates the constant feeling of unknowing and instability resulting from the threat of vigilante and offence exposure. The participants repetitive phrasing demonstrates the constant, and tiring instability that they felt subject to. They conveyed a sense of fatigue at the thought of this instability, unresisting to the constant accommodation disruptions, but instead accepting they may "never" feel secure. On top of this tiring sense of instability, the participant has the added pressure of offence

concealment. Previous research has identified how safety concerns often convey the vulnerability of certain individuals, for example, elderly people may feel safe within a nursing home, but possibly not within a general community environment (Johnson & Bibbo, 2014). Such vulnerability is witnessed here, by a participant who feels like others in the community pose a risk to him, due to his offence type. The extract represents a strong desire for security, at the same time outlining the potential limits to achieving this as someone who is "a sex offender".

Extract 22

My home to me is my castle, it's my - it might feel like a prison sometimes when it's all locked up, but, that's how I want to be, I don't want to be, feel as if I'm in a prison like I've been to prison so I don't want to feel that way, but I want to feel as if my home is protected and there's no way of entry for outsiders who could hurt me, so that's how, why I'm putting in place so much protection. You know, and that will enable me to live my life in comfort and how I want to and feel safe. (P14, Third-Sector Facility for People with Convictions)

Participant 14 uses prison as a frame of reference to illustrate their post-release accommodation needs. The participant valued some aspect of their prison experience, particularly the sense of safety that it instilled. This need for safety that was once valued within the prison setting then transcended across their community re-entry, manifesting as a post-release accommodation need. The participant reversed the intentional purpose of the facility, viewing it not only as a place where they were locked in, but where others were locked out. The participant notes how he wants to "feel", capturing the importance of considering home, and the emotions attached to environments for people with sexual convictions, beyond just the physical dwelling itself (Atkinson & Jacobs, 2016; Mallet, 2004). Considering home is to consider these feelings, and safety is an important feeling that people wish to attach to their living spaces. Although the participant did not want to feel as if they were living in a prison environment, there were some feelings within the prison environment that the participant did want to recreate. As Blunt and Dowling (2006) have suggested, "Home is a series of feelings and attachments, some of which, some of the time, and in some places, become connected to a physical structure that provides shelter" (p.10). Here, the feeling of safety was connected to the prison structure by the participant. Although institutional settings are often perceived as antithetical to the notion of home (Parsell, 2016), there may be some feelings associated with home that are more

attainable to people with sexual convictions living within a secure prison setting, than what are attainable to them in a community environment. The repetitive use of personal pronouns within Extract 22 emphasises the participants own wants and desires in their accommodation scenario, an issue expanded upon further in the upcoming subtheme.

The need for safety dominated participants' accounts of their current accommodation desires. The literature in relation to home often considers the need for feelings of safety within living spaces (Atkinson & Jacobs, 2016; Mallet, 2004; Parsell, 2016). Here, the level of which these feelings of safety were met differed between participant accounts and living environments; yet the importance of considering such safety need for a group of individuals who often feel threatened and fearful living within the wider community, is emphasised.

5.3.3.2 My Home My Way. Home represents a space whereby people can act freely, with independence and autonomy (Atkinson & Jacobs, 2016; Haak et al., 2007). Having a sense of ownership was important to participants. Accommodation environments can offer a sense of permanence and may instil feelings that relate to personal expression and freedom (Sigmon et al., 2002). Participants discussed these conceptualisations of home.

> *Extract 23*
>
> It could be, a basic shack, but as long as, it's your own, and you've got it how you want, you're comfortable there, it's ideal. If that's - if you're comfortable, it's ideal. If you're not comfortable somewhere you need something else don't you. (P6, Private Rented Property)

Extract 23 reinforces the notion of accommodation being more important than just the physical space. Physical properties are irrelevant, a person could live in a "basic shack" with very little material possessions, but if needs of ownership and comfort are met, little else matters. Home reflects how the person feels within their living environment (Blunt & Dowling, 2006). To participant six, feelings of comfort and ownership were pivotal. Of note, participant six was living in a privately rented property. Although they did not financially "own" the property, merely feeling a sense of ownership was enough. Previous research has examined the home-making practices of people living within different tenure types (Bate, 2018), and even for those people who do not legally own their property, there are

other ways in which to achieve feelings of ownership. This relates to feeling a sense of *psychological ownership* (Pierce et al., 2003; Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004), a term that captures to what extent people feel a sense of possession towards a given target. Participant six displayed such feelings of psychological ownership, represented by their use of personal pronouns and possessive language.

Extract 23 suggests that without this feeling of ownership and comfort, different accommodation is needed. However, such suggestion is not easy. People with sexual offence convictions have limited choice in where they can live, often required to access temporary facilities. Some participants did not perceive this sense of ownership, yet still desired it:

> *Extract 24*
> [*Keyworker*] said this to me other week, she goes, "you've not bought anything for here have you", I goes "no", she goes - I says, "cus this is not my home", and it's not. It's not my home. But, when I move into somewhere else then I will, you know, it's uh like, what's point in cluttering that place up, when, I'm only gonna have to move it out. So. Wait while I get somewhere and then I will.
> *Interviewer*: Mm. Why doesn't it feel like your home then?
> *Participant*: Because I know I've got to move on, it's no good, you can't like sort of say - I mean hopefully I'll get a place and then I can stay there, uhm, and to all intents and purpose be alright, and then I can like, put roots down, you know, get bits and bobs for myself. (P13, Third-Sector Facility for People with Convictions)

Participant 13 felt unable to settle within a place he knew was temporally limited. He viewed personalisation of the property as pointless and wasted efforts. In his mind, he was unable and unwilling to form an attachment to the environment he currently lived in as a "home", due to its non-permanence. Fowler and Lipscomb (2010) note how some people living within rented facilities may not construct their environment as a home if such place is viewed as transient and temporary. Participant 13 echoes this. The participant did not see the need for personalisation, viewing extra belongings as meaningless artefacts, "cluttering" a temporary space. When the participant refers to having his own home however, he spoke more positively about such belongings, interested in acquiring "bits and bobs". The participant seemingly views personal belongings in a more positive light when they are perceived within a frame that represents ownership. The desire to "put roots

down" indicates the participants need to feel a sense of permanence. Bowe (2012) has commented how such sense of rootedness instils feelings of continuity and belonging within places for people. Here, the metaphor also serves to illustrate the participants ability to grow and progress when they eventually "get a place". Extract 24 debates the semantic meaning of the word home, again demonstrating how home captures certain feelings that may or may not be tied to a physical space. Though short-term placements are essential for the gradual transitions back into society (Subtheme 4.3.2.1), they may delay the attainment of ownership needs and feeling a sense of home.

> *Extract 25*
>
> *Interviewer*: How does where you currently are now compare to where you've lived in the past, in terms of [*housing organisation*] and the approved premise?
>
> *Participant*: Well its right on top of the pile. It's up there with the shiny fairy on top of the Christmas tree. It is, excellent
>
> *Interviewer*: What makes it excellent?
>
> *Participant*: Well, it's mine! Its mine. Its urm, and I've got it decorated how I want it, I've got carpets down that I've paid for, and um, yeh its, generally, I've done it, it's mine. (P4, Local Authority Sheltered Housing)

Feelings of ownership, control, and freedom are reiterated in Extract 25. Participant four likened his accommodation to "the shiny fairy on top of the Christmas tree"; symbolic of something special, representing a defining and stand-out aspect of his accommodation experiences. In comparison to other living facilities the participant had resided in, their current social housing property was incomparable, deemed this way purely because of the ownership it instilled. Classic psychological theories denote the importance of control (Langer, 1983), highlighting the centrality of this need in terms of health and wellbeing. Here, the importance of control is considered in the context of the persons living environment, and a commonly noted feature throughout the interdisciplinary home literature (Atkinson & Jacobs, 2016; Mallet, 2004). The extract highlights the participant's sense of pride and achievement, as he has exercised his own personal choice and freedom to make his environment how he desired it. Participant four's reiteration of personal pronouns reinforces concepts of ownership even further, as well as demonstrating the self-accomplishment the participant feels about himself. The home is not only his own physical space, but also a symbol of his own efforts and achievements occurring throughout his resettlement.

Even for those who were not wholly satisfied with their living arrangements, the increased freedom and sense of ownership instilled some level of satisfaction:

Extract 26

I like the fact that I can just come and go as I've said. Urm that's about it to be honest (laughs) it's the fact that I guess, even though I don't like the place, it's still mine, you know it's my room, and you know I guess if I said to them can I decorate it they're quite happy to let me do it, you know which I wouldn't because its short term so yeh, that's the sort of thing, you know it's, it's still somewhere to live, it's still almost home. (P2, Third-Sector Facility for People with Convictions)

Whilst participant two is dissatisfied with his accommodation as a place, he is still able feel some sense of ownership and freedom within his environment. The distinction between house and home is truly emphasised here (Atkinson & Jacobs, 2016; Blunt & Dowling, 2006; Mallet, 2004), as his feelings of freedom override the need to like the accommodation building physically. The participant felt some element of autonomy. He could exercise some control over his space, knowing he at least had the option to decorate regardless of whether he acts on this freedom. It is not the ability to be able to personalise the facility that instils feelings of home, it is knowing that he has the freedom of choice, regardless of how this choice is exercised. Indeed, it has previously been argued that the mere belief of control is more important than the actual exercising of such control (Langer, 1983). Participant two's accommodation needs are partially being met. The term "almost home" suggests that there is still something absent, arguably, the sense of stability and permanence. Reiterating Extract 24, Extract 26 again highlights the feelings of people living within temporary spaces. The extracts represent some unwillingness on behalf of participants to allow themselves to become attached to a place that they know is temporary.

Psychological feelings of ownership, control, freedom, and autonomy are just some of the key desires iterated by participants that are important within their accommodation. Ultimately, physical living environments can offer more than a structural dwelling (Atkinson & Jacobs, 2016). Despite a person's material needs within their accommodation, non-tangible psychological needs were afforded much more weight to participant discussions. Certain environments that people with sexual offence convictions live within upon prison

release may be more conducive to attaining such psychosocial home needs than others. It is important to consider how such needs may be fulfilled within temporary spaces that people with sexual convictions are so often required to reside within.

5.3.3.3 Social Base.
Participants discussed the relationship between home, socialising, and the community. The home acts as a social space whereby friends and family visit, in addition to offering a stable base to return to. Accommodation acts as a moderator of social interactions and relationships (Boccagni & Kusenbach, 2020). However, the nature of a sexual offence conviction could hinder such feelings of home. This was emphasised particularly poignantly from participant five:

Extract 27

It's where everybody finds you. You know as in, where in the people you give a shit about find you - and you know - and they go this is [*participant's names*] house, we go round here to see [*participant's name*]. And that's why I'll never particularly have one, because nobody will go to see [*participant's name*], they will go to see that sex offender who lives there for any number of personal - er professional reasons even. So, your home is the centre of your social life, not just your room, and you know roof over your head and your kitchen. It roots where you are. (P5, Probation Approved Premises)

Extract 27 not only portrays the importance of socialisation needs within accommodation contexts, but also reflects how home captures the person's own sense of self and identity. Participant five felt incapable of achieving a home, as to him, a home represents the *person* who lives there, and he does not perceive himself as this person. This is signified from the repetitive use of his name. The reference to his own name humanised him; only then to be contrasted with the fact that he would not be viewed in this human, personable way, instead just as "that sex offender", whose only social interactions would be limited to visits from risk management professionals. To the participant, a human has a home, whereas a "sex offender" merely has a living space in which to be managed from. The participant stripped himself of personable, human attributes (dehumanisation), subsequently stripping his accommodation of positive homely qualities (de*home*inisation). Bate (2018) notes that "home is central to the human experience" (p. 3). Perhaps then, participant five was prevented from feeling at home as he was prevented from feeling human. People's social lives are mediated by, and structured around the home (Atkinson

& Jacobs, 2016). Boccagni and Kusenbach (2020) add that, research regarding home is particularly "revealing when it involves 'social margins' – that is, wherever an ordinary or taken-for-granted sense of home is missing or weakened" (p. 602). Identification as a "sex offender" represents such social margin, and Extract 27 highlights such weakened sense of home.

The narrative of participant five is meta; in that he explained his perceptions of other peoples' perceptions, again possibly representing internalised stigma. The dominating "sex offender" status seemingly nullified his feelings of home as his internalised feeling of dehumanisation transcended across the living space. Without social ties, feelings of home are therefore difficult to attain. This may be exacerbated by the inability to form social ties in the context of a person's sexual conviction. Participant eight indicated more optimism about his social relationships and what they represented to him:

> *Extract 28*
> *Participant*: This could be my forever home, or you know, fingers crossed.
> *Interviewer*: Yeh. You said that word home then, and your "forever home", what does that word home mean to you?
> *Participant*: a place where I can be relaxed, and I can invite my friends and my family you know. Its being hard with my family and myself as well, cus I didn't see them for thirty years. You know, and uh, and because it was a sexual offence as well some of them don't want to know me anyway, and a couple of have stuck by me, so it's like you know, be nice for them to come and see me settled, and for my mum to know I'm settled (P8, Classed as Statutory Homeless in Temporary Facility)

Participant eight was classed as statutory homeless at the time of interview, though he had undertaken some viewings and hoped to be settled in a property soon. Extract 28 reiterates numerous concepts previously highlighted regarding the importance of permanence, comfort, and socialisation needs. It again represents the interplay between home, self-perceptions, and personal identity. Although having accommodation provides a space to invite others, for participant eight, it is seemingly about what the inviting of these others represented. As a result of his offence, many social connections were severed, a known issue for people with sexual convictions (Tewksbury & Connor, 2012). For those who "stuck by", his permanent home would be symbolic of a settled lifestyle,

acting as a form of repayment to those who supported him. The extract conveys a sense of personal pride and achievement. The participant was eager to share his home with others as an indicator of his success. Within Extract 27, participant five represented acceptance and internalisation of his "sex offender" status which then influenced his feelings of home. This seemingly contrasts that of participant eight. Participant eight spoke in a manner that distanced himself from his offending status. He acknowledged that some relationships were lost because of his sexual offence, accepted this, and then spoke in a way that was future focussed.

Though socialisation needs were important within a person's accommodation, participants highlighted the potential practical challenges associated with this need. Extract 27 captures participant five explaining the socialisation limits within the bounds of his psychological, internalised stigma. Socialisation limits were also externally imposed:

> *Extract 29*
> My only niggle, is like, I've got a guy that side of me, and a guy that side of me, but, like, we're all in the same boat, we're all sex offenders, and yet you can't talk to them. You know. You're there, but, you've got neighbours that you can't talk too. Apart from like, good morning, good night, hello. Which, it's - I don't know, plays on your mind a bit, and your - they're there, but you're still lonely if you like. You know what I mean. (P15, Third-Sector Facility for People with Convictions)

Participant 15 discussed the externally imposed restrictions that inhibited his socialisation abilities, resulting from risk management stipulations. He identified shared commonalities between himself and his neighbours that would otherwise unify them, if it were not the very commonality that dictated their separation. His neighbours were an absent presence. Participant 15 was aware that the potential for social interaction was possible in terms of physical proximity, yet it was impossible due to his need to adhere to restrictions. These paradoxical experiences impacted the emotional state of the participant, increasing his feelings of isolation and loneliness. Once shelter and safety needs were met (Maslow, 1943; Taormina & Gao, 2013), the participant then desired social connections. These desires were restricted in the context of dictated living scenarios and risk management considerations.

Accommodation environments have the potential to offer a social base in which people display and represent their self to others. Yet, there are instances in which either internally imposed barriers (internalised stigma), or externally imposed barriers (risk management), restrict a person with a sexual conviction in their ability to fulfil such socialisation needs. The interplay between accommodation, home, identity, and social connections, is iterated throughout this subtheme. For a person with a sexual conviction, having a "home" may mediate such negative, internalised stigma associated with being a "sex offender", or, conversely, being a "sex offender" could mean that a person with such conviction is unable to ever achieve such sense of home.

5.3.4 Theme 4. The Reintegration Jigsaw

This final theme captures how accommodation is one aspect of a broader reintegration need. There are other elements beyond just accommodation that need considering. Like a jigsaw, once one part of the puzzle is solved (attaining accommodation), other solutions may follow, for example, achieving life goals like employment, or remaining offence free. Additionally, focussing on one piece of a jigsaw is inappropriate to achieve a larger solution. The wider picture (societal reintegration) must be considered to understand where the smaller piece (accommodation) fits. This theme considers the importance of accommodation in the context of wider reintegration factors. It considers the interplay between accommodation and offending (Subtheme 4.1), accommodation and life goal achievements (Subtheme 4.2), and accommodation within wider stigmatising communities (Subtheme 4.3).

5.3.4.1 Motivating Desistance. Participants highlighted the links between accommodation and offending (or non-offending) behaviour. Previous research has indicated possible links between accommodation and a reduction in reoffending (Ellison et al., 2013; Makarios et al., 2010; O'Leary, 2013; SEU, 2002). Extracts within this subtheme offer qualitative depth and context from the perspectives of those with lived experiences of the issue.

> *Extract 30*
> You get used to a [*prison*] system where basically everything's provided for you, and you're told what to do. So, you don't have to think. It might not be the best system, it may not be the most comfortable, but at the end of the day, you're shut

in overnight time, you're secure … if you're gonna go out, and you have the sort of situation that I was put through [*difficulty finding accommodation*], if you were of that mind, then, yes, you would've just said oh sod this, I'm not doing it, so you would have done something to reoffend … If you don't feel safe, as I said before, reoffending, you know, they're gonna go up quite high. And, the risk of, or the threat of prison, is no longer there (P12, Local Authority Property)

Extract 30 separates the concept of reoffending from a desire for crime itself. Participant 12 focused not on the offending behaviour directly, but the desire to receive the consequences associated with the offending behaviour. The institutional prison setting was perceived as offering a safe space, provisions, and security - needs that are not always met within certain accommodation scenarios. Should a person experience constant accommodation challenges, the motivation to remain offence free could diminish. As such, participant 12 reasoned that committing another crime to meet basic level needs would be more beneficial to the individual than their freedom. For participant 12, prison no longer represented a punishment, threat, or deterrence, in the way that society often intends it to be (Nagin et al., 2009). Instead, prison was viewed positively relative to the unfavourable accommodation situation the participant would otherwise be in. He no longer perceived the punishing aspect of prison when his community experiences had been more punishing. There is a greater incentive to commit a further crime to attain basic shelter and safety needs, than there is an incentive to remain offence free.

Converse to participant 12's account, a positive accommodation experience may influence a person's desire to not reoffend:

Extract 31
I know now, if I do anything wrong I could lose the tenancy. You know, this is on your mind as well, I mean, yeh, I'd hate to lose it. (P10, Third-Sector Facility for People with Convictions)

Extract 32
I don't want to lose where I've got now. I don't want to lose it. I've got my freedom. Yes, I can do what I went, when I want, how I want, uhm, I've got that. I'm liked by the people that I know around there, uhm, and, to lose it, and this is what I was going through when I ended up going to court [for breaching licence], I had to set

into plan, what's going to happen to all my stuff. This is the thing that people don't look at. What's going to happen to my things? Before, I didn't worry about that, I do now. (P7, Private Rented Property)

When positive accommodation environments were attained, this incentivised participant 10 and participant seven to remain offence free. The participants demonstrated a heightened awareness and fear of the consequences of reoffending when there is something they value, that could be lost. This something is their accommodation, and the freedom, autonomy, and socialisation needs it incorporates. The extracts demonstrate participant recognition of the fragility of their situation. Although this fragility instils concern and worry within the participants, fearing such loss intrinsically motivated them to remain offence free. Knowing that the accommodation ultimately does not legally belong to them, participant seven and 10 highlight the negative situational impact that reoffending would have.

Beyond the suitability of the facility itself, the presence of others within shared facilities may also influence reoffending intentions.

> *Extract 33*
>
> Before prison, I'd have been right at home [*in the approved premise*] because I was doing that sort of stuff myself you know selling the drugs and being a bit of a rogue and stuff. But now I've turned my life another direction, and urm, it you know I was, you know, it was a bit of a pull back to my old ways sort of thing. (P4, Local Authority Sheltered Housing)

Extract 33 demonstrates the impact of negative peer influences for participant four. The participant highlighted how the behaviours of others impacted his own mental state. The behaviours of others served as a reminder to the participant about his past, forcing him to remember his old behaviours that he was making active attempts to supress. Numerous dynamic risk assessments account for the impact of anti-social associates, emphasising the importance of peer influence (see Miller, 2006, for a review). Notably for participant four however, a change process had occurred for him. He acknowledged the negative behaviours of his old self, contrasting this with how he is now.

Of note, extracts presented throughout this subtheme do highlight the concept of individual motives. From Extract 30, participant 12 suggests they are no longer of "that mind". Within Extract 33, participant four discussed the active decision he made to take his life in "another direction". Personal choices are a key factor to consider, and people who view themselves as their "own primary change agent" (Marsh, 2011, p. 10) are likely to desist. As participant five summarised:

> *Extract 34*
>
> I don't have a need or desire to reoffend, and so nothing kind of stands in my way … If you want to go do some internet crime you'd do some internet crime, I'm out after dark, if I want to go and buy a balaclava and jump out of bushes you know I could do any of those things, because the same kind of agency that allows you to try and make positive life choices allows you to make negative life choices (P5, Probation Approved Premises)

When a person is granted their freedom, the way a person exercises such freedom can be pro-social or anti-social. Participant five highlights how the potential to reoffend is there for anyone who has physical access to resources that enable crime. As such, an individual's own motivations play a pivotal role in reducing reoffending. Ultimately, this subtheme has served to highlight that the relationship between accommodation and future offending is not deterministic. There is an element of free-will that moderates the relationship. There may be some influence of accommodation on desires to reoffend (specifically if the person feels they are better off in prison, or are exposed to negative peer influences), but an individual's own mind set is also important within this.

5.3.4.2 Life Goal Facilitation. Participants discussed accommodation in relation to other goals. They identified how once accommodation was secured, other goals could be achieved. Accessing accommodation offered a secure and stabilising base to be able to build.

> *Extract 35*
>
> When I actually move to my own place I'll have all my stuff, then I got my, I got my targets, that's to meet people, to do things, to go where, and I got my place to go back to. My place, nobody else's. (P3, Probation Approved Premises)

Extract 35 reiterates some of the main concepts discussed within Section 5.3.2. Feelings of independence and ownership were desired by the participant. Additionally, the extract highlights how accommodation acts as a foundation for other goals. Participant three expressed future focussed desires, intent on achieving personal objectives that would enable him to progress his resettlement efforts further. He communicated his plans with a language of agency (Maruna, 2001) expressing who he aims to become in the future, and how his accommodation will help him to achieve this. Extract 35 represents the foundational nature of accommodation as a basic need (Maslow, 1943), as well as echoing desistance concepts (Maruna, 2001). Once accommodation is secured, other needs can then be met, with accommodation offering a stable base for future goal achievement.

> *Extract 36*
>
> I've got a [*property*] viewing, go and view somewhere this afternoon at 3.30. So, I'm hoping, but uh, you know, just trying to rebuild myself as best I can … If I can get that, then that puts me, like I say, on a better keel of getting a job, uh, and that'll kind of normalise the situation, uh, i.e. I'll be going out to work in the day or maybe at night if I've got a night job I don't know, but probably day. But, it'll just put me in a position where I can try and build something, you know, uh, get a little bit put away in bank, maybe buy a little car…try and get back a bit of normality into my life. And uh, that's really all I can hope for" (P13, Third-Sector Facility for People with Convictions)

The notion of rebuilding implies that everything the participant once had was lost because of their conviction and prison sentence. The participant expressed now needing to overcome these losses, and accommodation acts as a starting block for this progression. Participant 13 listed the tangible benefits they could go on to attain once accommodation was secured. To most, having a job is beneficial for income, owning a car is useful for travel, and having savings is desired for financial security. For the participant however, these goals served additional symbolic importance beyond just the external benefits they offer. They instil internal feelings of "normality", a strong desire for a person who has not experienced such feeling since their conviction. Desistance concepts are once more reiterated. The participant expressed their "hope" for these things, recognising that their life can change (Maruna & Mann, 2019). For the participant, attaining accommodation was the necessary foundational basis for achieving such change.

In addition to life goals more generally, the interplay between accommodation and employment was thoroughly discussed.

> *Extract 37*
>
> I just wanted to do my time, get out of there [*approved premise*], and go find myself somewhere nice to live so I can start a real life, by getting a home and then getting a job with a bit of luck (P9, Classed as Statutory Homeless in Temporary B&B)

Participant nine echoes the discussion of Extract 36. For people with sexual convictions, attaining accommodation and securing employment represents a better life than what they are used to; one that feels "normal" and "real". The goal focussed discussion aligns with the GLM (Ward, 2002) in that participants displayed motivation to build their own capabilities and enhance their strengths. Beyond this however, it is arguable that the goals themselves are less important than what the attainment of the goals represent. Having a home is a symbol of transition and moving on. Participants wished to form a new life, representing a new identity that is distanced from their offending self (Maruna, 2001; McAlinden et al., 2017).

Many participants discussed the relationship between employment and accommodation. Participant six illuminates the complex relationship between accommodation and employment:

> *Extract 38*
>
> You could say having a property, or having your own property, even if it's council or whatever, you need somewhere to live before you can get a job, but then again you need a job before you can get somewhere to live. Sometimes. It's a catch 22 that can be. (P6, Private Rented Property)

Extract 38 identifies a challenging paradox to a person's reintegration. Practitioners within Chapter 4 also discussed this problem. People with sexual convictions are encouraged to gain employment and accommodation, but the paradoxical processes in place can present a challenge. Unlike previous participants, participant six suggested that accommodation and employment do not necessarily fall in a sequential order, both are interdependent. People need an address to secure employment, but people need money from employment to secure an address.

Other illogical ironies were present within the data:

Extract 39

My biggest problem at minute has being, because the rents are so expensive for [*current housing organisation*], it just wouldn't be feasible to take a, to get a job, because it's about £280 a week I think. (P13, Third-Sector Facility for People with Convictions)

Extract 40

200 and odd pound a week for one room and shared kitchen and shared bathroom. And um, if you started, got a job, whilst you were living in the [housing organisation], stayed there, you would have to pay that rent yourselves, so what's the point in getting a job (laughs), its gonna take all your wages up away from you, the rent. (P4, Local Authority Sheltered Housing)

Participant four and 13 were living within social housing properties, which meant that high rent costs must be covered by themselves if they were to gain employment. As such, participants were forced into a position where unemployment was financially more viable than employment. This issue demotivated and discouraged the participants from trying to achieve employment, an important resettlement need (Sapouna et al., 2011). Ironically, the resettlement need of accommodation was currently being met, but in turn prevented the attainment of employment needs. There was no incentive for the participants with sexual offence convictions to attain employment, when they would suffer more financially because of reduced housing benefit payments.

In summary, attaining accommodation enabled participants to consider their future goals. Securing accommodation offered people with sexual convictions a stable base in which to meet additional resettlement needs. Having accommodation may enable people the opportunity to rebuild themselves and enact normal daily routines. However, it is necessary to recognise the intertwined nature of two of the most important resettlement needs - accommodation and employment - and how the paradoxical relationship between such needs could result in a conflicting, "catch 22", scenario.

5.3.4.3 Stigmatising Societies and Hostility. Societal stigma and community rejections are a further element of the wider reintegration picture. Participants acknowledged the influence that other members of the community had on their resettlement experiences.

Extract 41

I think to be a member of society you have to have links with people, and um, I think it's just human nature, a lot of people see the sex offence first and then a person again very much second. So, you have the mental barrier of putting yourself out there and trying to make links, and um, I think the unfortunate reality that a lot of people will knock you back anyway. So, yeh, getting into a community, is more than just getting into a hostel, or getting released, you know, it's about, you know rubbing shoulders next to people who give a shit about you. (P5, Probation Approved Premises)

People need to feel a sense of belonging within the community they return to, however, the ability to achieve this sense of community belonging is arguably reduced for people with sexual convictions. Participant five explains his inability to feel related to on a human level. He anticipated failure and rejection from others, hyperaware of the stigmatising responses from communities. A sexual offence conviction is arguably a concealable stigmatised identity in that it is not immediately visible in interactions (Quinn & Earnshaw, 2011). However, the participants use of language that implies people will "see the sex offence first" highlights the internalised stigma that the participant has adopted. He assumes it is an obvious character trait and that rejection is inevitable. This internalised stigma then influenced how he interacted with the world around him, putting up a "mental barrier" that blocked him from achieving community links. Accommodation is one individual element of a bigger resettlement issue. People need to feel as though they can return to the community and belong within that community, associating with people who care about them. Participant five was unable to feel this way.

Stigma experienced from communities was profound within discussions. Participants reiterated the notion of offence hierarchies:

Extract 42

It's not easy out there, you know, and I'm not saying it's easy for anybody who commits an offence and gets released you know but, if you're a sex offender there's an automatic blemish on your character. (P14, Third-Sector Facility for People with Convictions)

Extract 42 highlights the participants heightened awareness of the stigma they are subject to as a "sex offender", above that of other offence types. The participant demonstrates an awareness that their offence type carries added challenges. Participant 14 captures the struggle associated with the tarnishing nature of his offence. In a similar way to participant five in Extract 41, the participant also used a visual metaphor to convey his feelings about the stigma he is subject to, describing his character as "blemished". Despite the concealable stigmatised identity (Quinn & Earnshaw, 2011), he perceived his conviction as an obvious and glaring character trait which then impeded his relationship with wider community members and ability to resettle. Extract 42 resonates with Theme 2 of the professional participant findings (Section 4.3.2). For anybody who commits an offence, there are likely to be resettlement issues. However, the findings from both empirical chapters suggest that people with sexual offence convictions are hindered more so.

Participants also highlighted concerns in relation to returning to known communities.

Extract 43

It was my, my friend who the offence happened against, like urm, basically, her dad said that he was not going to allow me to get away with it that one day he will get me back, so. It's one of the reasons that I've moved to [new area]…I've always said from uhm, from when I went in like they were asking me about what I'd want to do once I'm out of prison where would I like to stay, and I like, at first I was saying I want to go down [new area], because it's the furthest possible place and I thought I want to start afresh. (P11, PIPE)

Participant 11 was concerned about the backlash from people known to him, particularly, his victim's father. This dictated resettlement decisions because of potential repercussions. Participant 11 wanted to move away from his old area for vigilante concerns, as well as wanting to "start afresh". Moving to a new area allowed the participant

to rebuild a new life, leaving behind his old connections to move on from his past. Kirk (2012) highlights the importance of this; documenting that people who return to new areas upon prison release are less likely to reoffend at a three year follow up. Choosing an area to live that is the "furthest possible place" from the area the participant offended in, demonstrated his desire to physically distance himself from undesired locations, as well as symbolizing his desire to distance himself from his old offending life (Rocque et al., 2016).

Of note, one participant felt positively about the community he returned to. Extending the insights from Extract 43, participant seven explained the positive aspects of living in a community where his offence was unknown.

> *Extract 44*
>
> In that area, nobody knew me. So uh, I'd just nip to the shop or things like that, uh, but then, my daughters would come, well one of my daughters would come and pick me up from there we'd go into the town, uh, again, nobody took no notice, we have just a family outing. Then we came into [town area] again, nobody was really taking that much notice of me, so, it was as though my uhm, offence never existed. That's probably not the right word to use, but that's how it felt, I just felt like a human being, being spoken too…That first step of coming - being released from prison and going into the community again, that was the element of fear, but, because I've not had, no bad uh, bad experiences, uh, it's, it's swept them all away, and I'm enjoying it. (P7, Private Rented Property)

Resettling within a non-stigmatising community alleviated participant seven's fear. Relocating to an unknown community where the public was unaware of his history enabled him to feel like a human being, respected, with a sense of normality. Such normative relationships and sense of belonging possibly underpin successful integration and could potentially be a precursor for desistance (Fox, 2015). Participant seven was able to undertake activities in his daily life free from vigilante concerns and with a sense of community belonging. In the absence of such stigma, participant seven appeared to shift away from his offending identity, stating that the welcoming community atmosphere made him feel as if his offence had never happened.

Attaining accommodation is not an isolated, discrete event within a person's life. Housing properties and accommodation facilities are placed within communities; communities in which people with sexual convictions are often heavily stigmatised and ostracised from (Williams, 2018). The need for an appropriate living environment for people with sexual convictions extends beyond the immediate facility and dwelling itself, but also to the wider community, whereby a sense of belonging is heavily sought after.

5.5 Chapter Discussion

This study explored the accommodation experiences of people with sexual offence convictions who were now living in the community. It added to the existing literature by considering individuals views about a broad range of accommodation issues, as opposed to limiting discussions to experiences within one individual facility (Kras et al., 2016; Mills & Grimshaw, 2012; Reeves, 2013). By considering the broader accommodation and re-entry experiences of people with sexual convictions, a greater understanding about individuals' accommodation needs, and how these relate to desistance concepts, were explored.

The importance of accommodation in relation to desistance from sexual offending is somewhat understudied within the desistance literature that is specific to people with sexual convictions (one known exception is a PhD thesis from Hulley, 2016). Although the importance of accommodation is often recognised (Göbbels et al., 2012; McAlinden et al., 2017), it is largely considered as an external situational circumstance. Throughout this chapter, more discussion has been afforded to the internal processes tied to accommodation, such as considering necessary feelings of home (Atkinson & Jacobs, 2016). The findings and analysis from the current investigation expanded upon these insights, noting how the environments that people live within relate to potential desistance processes, particularly in terms of feeling a sense of agency, hope, identity change, and belonging.

The findings within this current study first identified the powerlessness and lack of choice and control people feel in terms of impacting their accommodation outcomes. People with sexual offence convictions face challenges attaining accommodation (Rydberg, 2018). Irrespective of the pro-activity of the individual trying to attain accommodation, without the willing assistance from necessary housing and risk management practitioners, participant

efforts were futile. This lack of choice and control often led some to feel defeated and helpless in actioning their accommodation outcomes, problematic when considering such hopelessness and perceived lack of control are potential indicators of non-desisting individuals (Farmer et al., 2012). Participants described becoming accustomed to repeated rejections and failures, despite their best efforts to search for accommodation facilities.

Despite the challenges recounted, some participants did highlight positive accommodation experiences, particularly through their explanations of some of the typical post-prison release pathways that they experienced. These accounts drew upon the importance of gradually reinstating independence, as well as fostering respectful and supportive relationships with accommodation staff. Reeves (2013) previously noted how resident relationships within approved premises may reinforce a person's "sex offender" identity. The findings of the current study highlight the importance of staff relationships within accommodation environments, in terms of negating or reinforcing such identities. Although participants later went on to describe the need for a sense of stability and permanence, short term "stepping-stone" facilities offered stabilising foundations to gradually help participants readjust to post prison life.

Participants also explained what they felt they needed from their accommodation, incorporating discussion about the semantic meaning of *home (*Atkinson & Jacobs, 2016*)*. Participant narratives focussed on the importance of the psychosocial feelings instilled from their environment, as opposed to material or tangible needs. Safety was a key concern, potentially exacerbated by the threat of vigilante that people with sexual convictions may feel (Cubellis et al., 2019). Arguably, such safety needs that may be met within prison environments as a person with a sexual offence, are much less prominent when returning to a stigmatising community. Conversely, needs that are denied within the prison environment were also heavily desired by participants. Participants expressed their need for independence, autonomy, ownership, and stability. Participants wanted their environment to reflect a positive, non-offending identity, whereby social connections could be fostered . Again however, the stigmatised identity of "sex offender" may inhibit such social aspect of the home environment for people with sexual convictions. For one participant, the social aspect of having a home was not perceived as possible, due to their limited social connections stemming from their sexual offending status.

The findings further emphasised the need to consider accommodation issues within the broader remit of reintegration more widely. Accommodation is not a discrete, isolated event (McAlinden, 2009). It can influence attitudes and beliefs about desistance and future reoffending, provide a base to achieve further goals from, and is also a resettlement need that is situated within the wider context of community belonging and societal acceptance (Fox, 2015). Ultimately, these findings have highlighted that, whilst the physical aspect of attaining shelter is important, so too are the feelings and psychosocial aspects instilled from such environments - not least due to the potential overlap with wider reintegration needs and desistance efforts.

It is important to recognise that the subjectivity of these findings is potentially vast, both in terms of participant accounts and my own researcher interpretation of the findings. The concept of home itself is highly subjective (Coolen & Meesters, 2012; Rapoport, 2001). What one person perceives as home may be different for another individual. Similarly, what one person needs within accommodation may be different to another, reflected previously in Chapter 4 from professional participants who called for individualised needs to be taken into consideration when accommodating people with sexual offence convictions. Though in itself this is not a direct limitation of the findings, particularly as the investigation is situated more so within an interpretivist epistemological paradigm, this does limit the generalisability of the results.

5.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter has considered the accommodation experiences of people with sexual offence convictions, living within any type of community facility. In doing so, it has corroborated many of the findings highlighted from Chapter 4, this time allowing the reader to understand these issues from the perspectives of people directly impacted. Challenges related to the attainment of accommodation were discussed. Beyond just the need for the attainment of accommodation buildings, the nature of the environments that people lived within were also crucial, offering the potential to instil certain psychosocial home needs. Many underpinning concepts aligned with the desistance literature. Participants expressed how their environments were intertwined with their identity, offered a space to express agency and autonomy, and provided a base to reach additional goals. These analytical thoughts prompted the development of Study 3.

Chapter 6. Study 3: Quantitatively Exploring Psychosocial Home Needs

Chapter Overview

This chapter outlines the third empirical study of this PhD, which expanded upon the qualitative findings of Study 2 in a quantitative manner.

The chapter begins by acknowledging the slight change in focus of this third empirical investigation, resulting from Covid-19 lockdown restrictions and recruitment challenges. This will be clearly outlined for the reader, to offer transparency and clarity regarding the original research plan. Of note, the original research plan set out to make statistical comparisons between people's psychosocial home needs across different living environments, with the intention to recruit from a variety of settings such as prisons, approved premises, supported facilities, and independent facilities. However, only prison-based data was obtained prior to the onset of Covid-19 lockdown measures. The limitations of this will be acknowledged from the outset and expanded upon further in the discussion section of this chapter.

The rationale, methods, and findings, that follow this caveat, will therefore focus on the original hypothesis that could still be tested, bringing this element to the forefront of this chapter. This was to examine whether psychosocial home needs predicted desistance-based outcomes, irrespective of the living facility participants resided within. The terms psychosocial home needs, and desistance-based outcomes, will be operationalised within the rationale. The methods section offers an overview of the procedure and psychometric tools used within the study, before discussing the statistical results. Indeed, the reader is reminded here that only prison-based data was able to be collected, thus the findings should be interpreted with caution in trying to extrapolate the findings to community settings. This chapter closes with a summary and discussion of the findings; interpreting the statistical analyses that were possible, as well as acknowledging the study limitations.

6.1 Changing Focus

Two hypotheses were initially developed as part of this study, one of which could not be achieved due to recruitment challenges and Covid-19. The initial direction of this chapter required refocussing. This section will briefly outline the initial intentions. This is because the methodological decisions made within this empirical chapter will then make more sense to the reader with an understanding of the original research aims. The reader is directed to the appendices for further clarification regarding the full data collection methods that were originally implemented (see Appendices 5.1 and 5.2). This explanation is offered here, so that the following sections within this chapter can focus on the rationale, methods, and findings, that are most relevant to the hypothesis that was testable.

Study 3 was developed in direct response to the findings obtained within Study 2, and by further considering the literature pertaining to home (Atkinson & Jacobs, 2016; Mallet, 2004) and desistance. From the analytical interpretations offered throughout Theme 3, participants discussed notions of home, by discussing the feelings associated with where they currently live and have previously lived (termed *psychosocial home needs*, see Section 5.3.3). Section 2.1.1 offers further definitional clarity, but succinctly, *home* represents a set of feelings, as opposed to *house/accommodation* which conveys the physical dwelling (Atkinson & Jacobs, 2016; Karjalainen, 1993). As evidenced within the analysis of Chapter 5, some psychosocial home needs overlapped theoretical constructs associated with desistance (expanded upon within Section 6.2.1), and the aim of this third study was to explore if any relationships existed between these concepts. Furthermore, people with convictions live within a variety of different settings (McAlinden, 2009; M. Willis, 2018). If psychosocial feelings are attached to the physical dwellings in which people reside, it is necessary to understand what types of environments are instilling or inhibiting such feelings. As Boccaggni and Kusenbach (2020) suggest, "accounting for comparative experiences of home … lies at the heart of a subfield of research that is still underdeveloped." (p. 602).

These analytical thoughts prompted the development of this third study, and two related hypotheses. The first hypothesis aimed to test the relationship between psychosocial home needs and desistance-based outcomes for people with sexual convictions. This first hypothesis aimed to separate the concept of house from home, focussing purely on the

feelings that people may or may not attach to their living environments, irrespective of the type of living facility itself.

The second hypothesis was then developed to test whether such feelings are more attainable within certain environments than others. That is, the second hypothesis aimed to reconnect the notion of house with home, to determine if certain living environments are more conducive to instilling certain psychosocial home needs than others. These hypotheses were therefore developed with the intention of recruiting people from a variety of different living settings, such as prisons, approved premises, supported facilities, and independent living environments. Comparisons could then be made between groups to ascertain whether feelings associated with home were more attainable in some environments than others (Boccagni & Kusenbach, 2020), and whether some environments were more conducive to desistance efforts than others (Hunter & Farrall, 2015). Previously, research has identified that people may attain certain feelings of home in environments that are perhaps antithetical to the notion of home, like parks (Coward, 2018), and high surveillance areas (Parsell, 2016), strengthening the justification to recruit people from settings that may not intuitively be viewed as homely (Parsell, 2016). The hypotheses that were initially developed for this investigation were:

- Hypothesis 1: There will be a significant relationship between psychosocial home needs and desistance-based outcomes for people with sexual convictions.
- Hypothesis 2: There will be significant differences in the psychosocial home needs attained between the various living environments in which people with sexual convictions reside within.

Unfortunately, the second hypothesis was unable to be tested, as only prison-based data was obtained before the onset of Covid-19 lockdown measures. Community data collection had to be ceased. However, testing Hypothesis 1 was still possible, although now on a prison only sample. This means that the application of these findings to wider community settings is restricted. In particular, the psychosocial home needs that are attained in prison, may differ to those attained in the community (the very justification underpinning that of Hypothesis 2). As a result of this, the findings are not necessarily representative of data which may be found within community environments. The reader is warned of this here from the outset, and the discussion element of this chapter also considers issues with the prison-only sample. However, Hypothesis 1 was developed

irrespective of the living facility in which people resided in, and was therefore still deemed necessary to investigate, despite the now limited sample.

The chapter from here on out therefore focusses on the relationship between psychosocial home needs and desistance-based outcomes (Hypothesis 1). It will explain the main underpinning rationale in relation to Hypothesis 1, the methods for the prison-based data collection, and the findings. The discussion section of this chapter then adds further clarity to the issues of testing Hypothesis 1 on a purely prison-based sample. The discussion notes the limits to the conclusions that can realistically be drawn from this data, both in terms of the relevance to wider living facilities (i.e. to people living in community settings), as well as the relevance of desistance processes in prisons.

6.2 Rationale

Research regarding accommodation for people with convictions has often considered the impact of (not) attaining a structural dwelling (O'Leary, 2013; SEU, 2002), and the outcomes associated with this. Comparisons of people who are housed, versus not housed have previously highlighted the importance of a house to reduce reoffending (Ellison et al., 2013). Less well documented however, are the needs instilled from living environments, the emotions and feelings attached to such structures, and the outcomes associated with such feelings.

Herein lies the necessary distinction between *house* and *home*. The former constitutes a physical dwelling environment, whereas a home captures feelings and emotions (Atkinson & Jacobs, 2016). Participants from Study 2 (see Section 5.3.3 of this thesis) emphasised emotional, psychological, and social connections to their living environment, making it clear that the accommodation environments they lived within, served importance beyond just the physical dwelling. They spoke of the importance of home, irrespective of the type of environment they currently resided in, and some participants even identified the relevance of these feelings in relation to previous living environments such as prisons. Study 3 builds upon these findings, by focussing on the feelings present within living environments, as opposed to the physical living environments themselves. Such feelings are referred to here as psychosocial home needs.

6.2.1 Conceptualising Home

Some of the dominating concepts that emerge when examining the home literature are that of identity, safety, security, privacy, control, personal meaning, autonomy, ownership, and belonging (Bate, 2018; Bowe, 2012; Mallet, 2004). Home offers a space of freedom whereby individuals can express themselves and act in a way that they wish (Parsell, 2016), as well as pursuing their goals (Tarpey & Friend, 2016). From a sociological perspective, feelings of home link to wider societal and relational ties (Boccagni & Kusenbach, 2020). Home instils certain feelings of comfort (Ellsworth-Krebs et al., 2019), as well as affording people a place in which to express their self-identity (Sigmon et al., 2002). Identity tied to place is commonly considered throughout the literature (Bowe, 2012), further evidenced by Sigmon and colleagues (2002) coining of the term *psychological home*. Psychological home represents the need to identify sense of self within a certain place, it is defined as "a sense of belonging in which self-identity is tied to a particular place/physical locale" (Sigmon et al., 2002, p.33). It captures the importance of individualised identities attained from having a home and has been associated with positive affect, wellbeing, and goal-directed behaviour (Sigmon et al., 2002).

Previous researchers have noted the complexity of defining the term home (Rapoport, 2001), though there is literature available to assist academics in applying a more coherent theoretical basis to the construct. Després' (1991) review is beneficial to consider here. Deprés (1991) broadly explores two main issues; firstly, the different theories that may underpin researchers' understanding of home, and secondly, the different semantic categorisations of the term home.

In terms of the theoretical underpinnings of home, Deprés (1991) outlines four main theoretical approaches to understanding home. The first of these, *the territorial interpretation,* focusses on security, control, and personalisation. The second theoretical approaches that are commonly applied to the investigation of home constitute *the psychological interpretations.* Deprés (1991) breaks these down further; psychological interpretations informed by psycho-analytic ideas regarding home as a space for maintenance of the self; psychological interpretations inspired by Maslow's (1956) humanistic principles where certain needs can be fulfilled; and psychological interpretations that theorise the importance of privacy and home as a refuge. The third theoretical approach captured by Deprés (1991) is the *socio-psychological* one. This

theoretical approach accounts for the importance of the individual and their own self-identity, at the same time recognising the interplay of social identities and the wider community. The final theoretical model outlined by Deprés (1991) are the *interpretative models* which suggests people's experiences of home are dynamic, with altering experiences across time and throughout different life events.

It is necessary to address here that each of these theoretical conceptualisations outlined by Deprés (1991) resonated with the data obtained within Study 2. Although socio-psychological theories from Deprés' (1991) definition seems to be the most holistic, participant narratives within Study 2 often transcended the boundaries of each of the theoretical approaches discussed by Deprés (1991). Indeed, as Atkinson and Jacobs (2016) state, the study of home:

> Operates across the boundaries of a number of disciplines. It involves sociologists, geographers, and political scientists who define themselves less by their discipline and more by their object of study. (p.23)

This affords the question of whether taking one, theoretically rigid stance towards the concept of accommodation and home is appropriate. I argue that: given the theoretical overlap; complexity of the term home; and the fact that academics themselves do not necessarily study the home within the bounds of their own discipline, then adopting one of the above theoretical lens' is premature. Applying one theoretical framework for the purposes of this investigation could have led to a reductionist interpretation of home for people with sexual convictions, particularly when each of the theoretical positions seemed applicable to the narratives of participants in Study 2. Instead, considering the semantic meaning of home was another way to add clarity to the term home for this chapter.

Regarding semantic definitions, Deprés (1991) identified ten main ways in which home may be defined. More recently, Gram-Hanssen and Darby (2018) adopted Deprés initial ten meanings, condensing them within four broader categories to offer "a more workable categorization" (p. 95). The four overarching categories of home posited by Gram-Hanssen and Darby (2018) were: i) home as security and control ii) home as a site of activity iii) home as a place for relationships and continuity, and iiii) home as identity and values. These semantic categorisations - based on Deprés' (1991) earlier ten categorisations - helped to inform the decisions within this third investigation.

It is necessary to outline how each of these semantic conceptualisations were evident within the narratives of participants in Study 2 (Section 5.3.3). For the participants interviewed, many of their needs and desires from their accommodation were comparable to any general member of the population (Dépres, 1991). When considering that such individuals within Study 2 were people convicted of sexual offences, the relevance of the term home requires unpacking further for this population of people.

Home as a space of security and control is important (Deprés, 1991; Gram-Hanssen & Darby, 2018), though should people with sexual convictions feel at threat of vigilante action or harm due to their offence (see Section 5.3.3.1), then such needs may be compromised. Interestingly, as Participant 10 identified (Section 5.3.3.1), feeling a sense of safety may be more attainable as a person with a sexual offence living within an all sexual-offending prison, compared to a possibly limited sense of safety when living within a stigmatising community environment (Williams, 2018).

Home as a site of activity (Deprés, 1991; Gram-Hanssen & Darby, 2018) may support a person's employment, hobbies, and leisure activities (Deprés, 1998); though as a person with a sexual conviction who may have various restrictions (Sexual Offences Act, 2003) and limits on their activities (see Section 4.3.2.3 and Section 5.3.4.2); again, such needs may be denied within the home environment.

Home as a place for relationships and continuity (Deprés, 1991; Gram-Hanssen & Darby, 2018) may also be experienced differently by a person with a sexual offence. In terms of continuity, people with sexual convictions may be required to live within a variety of different facilities, potentially inhibiting their ability to settle (see Section 2.3 for an overview of the differing environments, and Section 5.3.2.1). Regarding relationships, people with sexual convictions experience an abundance of challenges relating to social isolation (Bailey & Klein, 2018). Various challenges relating to stigma, loneliness, and ostracism could therefore mean that home as a person with a sexual conviction is experienced differently to home as a person without a sexual conviction. One participants account provided a poignant summary of the links between home, socialisation, and being a person with a sexual conviction:

> It's where everybody finds you. You know as in, where in the people you give a shit about find you and know, and they go this is [*name's*] house, we go round here to see [*name*]. And that's why I'll never particularly have one [*a home*], because

nobody will go to see [*name*], they will go to see that sex offender who lives there for any number of personal reasons, er professional reasons even. So, your home is the centre of your social life. (Participant 5, See section 5.3.3.3)

Considering home as a place of identity and values (Gramm- Hansen & Darby, 2018) requires considering how people with sexual offence convictions may view themselves. The account offered above by Participant 5 within Study 2 not only captures relational aspects, but also represents the way in which this participant perceived himself, i.e. internalising an identity as "that sex offender". People with sexual convictions often internalise the stigma they are subject to, feel shame for what they have done, and may subscribe to the "sex offender" label that is reinforced by society (Bailey & Klein, 2018; Hamilton, 2017; Reeves, 2013). The identity implications stemming from this may thus mean home is experienced differently for people with sexual convictions depending on how their sexual offence relates to their self-identity.

Ultimately, this section has sought to emphasise that home is about more than the physical dwelling. It is a psychosocial environment meaning that individual and interpersonal processes are impacted within such space (Clark & Kearns, 2012; Evans et al., 2000). Within any given living environment, people's affective experiences related to identity, safety, goals, and social needs, are also important to consider. When considering people with sexual convictions, such affective elements bear additional implications, as well as possible relevance to desistance constructs.

6.2.2 Desistance and Home: A Theoretical Intersection?

Many of the psychological and social conceptualisations of home as outlined above were witnessed throughout participant narratives within Study 2 (Section 5.3.3). Interestingly, many of these concepts also seemingly overlap theoretical underpinnings of desistance and strengths-based rehabilitation concepts. For example, home tied to identity could serve implications for identity shifts within desistance, whereby people disassociate from their offending past (Maruna et al., 2013; McNeill, 2004; King, 2013; Weaver, 2019), or alternatively continue to internalise their label as an ostracised "sex offender" (G. Willis, 2018). As Reeves (2013) has identified, people with sexual offences living within approved premises may construct their identity around their stigmatising experiences of being

othered within the approved premise. This highlights how the identity element attached to living spaces, may relate to the identity element of desistance considerations.

Other theoretical intersections beyond identity considerations could also be apparent. Home as a symbol of community, belonging, and relations (Boccaggni & Kusenbach, 2020), could contribute to the persons feelings of community integration and normality (Fox, 2015). If home affords people a sense of independence and autonomy, this could align with the strengths-based notion of the GLM (Heffernan & Ward, 2019; Ward, 2002) whereby people with sexual convictions seek to pursue important goals. Hope and agency are often tied to positive, strengths-based, desistance concepts (Göbbels et al., 2012; Heffernan & Ward, 2019). If the attainment of home fosters such hopeful and agentic feelings, home could also link to desistance-based outcomes for people with sexual convictions. These analytical thoughts underpinned the logic of Study 3.

Desistance and accommodation have been linked together previously (McNeill et al., 2012). When considering people with sexual offences specifically, accommodation is cited as important (Göbbels et al., 2012; Harris, 2014). However, herein lies the important and urged distinction between accommodation (*house*) versus *home* (Mallet, 2004). Researchers have considered the importance of accommodation, but these arguments mainly stress the importance of attaining housing as an event that is external to the individual (Göbbels et al., 2012). There is often a lack of definitional clarity regarding what it is about accommodation that is important for desistance. It is important to consider what physical structures and places mean to people to better understand desistance (Hunter & Farrall, 2015). More research into desistance from sexual offending is required (Hulley, 2016), and thus far, the nature, function, and features of accommodation spaces, in terms of the feelings that they may instil (i.e. home), has largely been overlooked.

There are some known exceptions that do appear to indicate some links between home and desistance for people with general convictions (Bowman & Ely, 2020; Hunter & Farrall, 2015; Pleggenkuhle et al., 2016). However, these tend not to draw explicit links between home and desistance, rather, it is more implicitly implied throughout the researchers' analytical discourses of qualitative extracts. For example, Bowman and Ely (2020) interviewed supported housing residents. Their findings highlight how participants displayed identity transformations and acted with a sense of agency. Participants expressed hope, independence, and self-worth, tied to their experiences within the

supported facility. These findings demonstrate the potential overlap between the structural accommodation facility, feelings of home, and concepts of desistance.

Pleggenkuhle et al. (2016) found that residents within another supported housing programme displayed *cognitive shifts* in their ability to exercise agency and change. They acknowledge that further research is required, suggesting that "the theoretical mechanisms that link housing to desistance are less understood" (Pleggenkuhle et al., 2016, p. 381). My argument partially aligns with that of Pleggenkuhle et al. (2016), but offering a more nuanced distinction, I suggest that the theoretical mechanisms that link *home* to desistance are less understood. Perhaps the mechanisms that Pleggenkuhle et al. (2016) are seeking, are the mechanisms more aligned with *home.*

More explicit associations between house, home, and desistance, are offered by Hunter and Farrall (2015). They explored the role of place and space in desistance from drug use. Again, the researchers outlined the importance of identity tied to place, the importance of structure, and the attainment of goals. They conclude that "places are not just the locations within which desistance takes place. Understanding what certain places mean, underpins efforts to desist" (p. 964). Hunter and Farrall (2015) seem to account for the fact that places have the potential to instil or inhibit certain feelings. Aligning with Hunter and Farrall's (2015) comment, the current investigation intended to explore whether it is these feelings and meanings, rather than place itself (house), that could influence desistance-based outcomes.

Of note, the three investigations documented above (Bowman & Ely, 2020; Hunter & Farrall, 2015; Pleggenkuhle et al., 2016) all considered the feelings attached to places that were not necessarily a person's own house. This reemphasises the need to not conflate house with home (Mallet, 2004). Coward (2018) noted that people who are by definition "homeless", might still seek to attain feelings of home in places like parks, despite the absence of a conventional house environment. Such psychosocial feelings may be instilled within various environments, including settings that could otherwise intuitively be perceived as non-conducive to feelings of home (Parsell, 2016). The third study aimed to expand upon this by focussing not on place itself, but feelings within places, i.e. psychosocial home needs.

6.2.3 The Current Investigation

Although there are some investigations that have considered the overlap between desistance and living environments, quantitative investigations to determine whether any relationships statistically exist in this area are limited. Aligning with Greene et al.'s (1989) purposes of mixed-methods research, this third study aimed to offer complementarity to Study 2 (Greene et al., 1989), by elaborating on the qualitative results using quantitative methods. Results from the qualitative data informed the use of the quantitative methods for the current study (*development*; Greene et al., 1989). The data could be understood from a different methodological perspective (*initiation*), offering *expansion,* and increasing the scope of this thesis (Greene et al., 1989).

Furthermore, explicit considerations regarding the interplay between home and desistance-based outcomes specifically for people with sexual offence convictions are (to the best of the writer's knowledge) lacking. I argue that there is more to be learnt from the cross-disciplinary conceptualisations of home (Bowe, 2012; Mallet, 2004), in relation to desistance and strengths-based outcomes for people with sexual convictions.

If psychosocial home needs are important predictors of desistance-based outcomes, considering these feelings for people, irrespective of their physical dwelling, is pivotal. The aim of this third study was to explore the relationship between psycho-social home needs and desistance-based outcomes for people with sexual convictions. To achieve this aim, it was necessary to operationalise the terms psycho-social home needs and desistance-based outcomes. Psychosocial home needs were measured using psychometric scales of safety, control, psychological ownership, psychological home, loneliness, and community belonging. Desistance-based outcomes were measured using scales of hope and agency. Each of these concepts were salient within the qualitative extracts of Study 2 and are commonly discussed within the literature pertaining to home (Ellsworth-Krebs et al., 2019; Mallet, 2004) and desistance for people with sexual convictions (Göbbels et al., 2012; Mcalinden et al., 2017). This third study hypothesised that there will be a significant relationship between psychosocial home needs and desistance-based outcomes for people with sexual convictions.

6.3 Methods

6.3.1 Design

This research was correlational and used psychometric survey techniques to establish the relationships between psychosocial home needs and desistance-based outcomes for people with sexual convictions. Demographic information was collected, and six predictor variables (types of psychosocial home needs) were examined to ascertain their relationship to two, desistance-based, outcome variables (hope and agency).

6.3.2 Participants

The original inclusion criteria stipulated that any male with a sexual offence conviction, living in any type of facility, could take part. As noted however, only prison-based responses were able to be obtained before the onset of Covid-19 lockdown restrictions, and as such, the following sections centre around this data. The full recruitment procedure is attached within the appendices for the readers benefit and understanding (see Appendix 5). For the purposes of reporting participant information here, only those obtained from the prison data are reported.

The participants recruited for this investigation were males with sexual offence convictions, living within one of two prison facilities. Both prison facilities were Category C, all male prisons, that exclusively housed people with sexual offence convictions. All residents in both prisons were invited to participate in the research, by distributing research invitations under all cell doors. People self-selected to take part in the survey and were recruited using non-random, purposive, and volunteer sampling techniques.

Ninety-two responses were obtained from prison site A, and 63 responses were obtained from prison site B. A total of 155 imprisoned males with sexual offence convictions responded to the study. This represented an approximate 9% response rate from the combined total population of both prisons. One participant's response was omitted from the analyses based on unusual responses and annotations on the questionnaire.

The age of participants ranged from 22 to 87 ($M = 46$, $SD = 15.15$). This age demographic appears comparable to the main population of the prisons recruited from (Winder, 2020).

There were no significant differences in the mean age between the two prison sites. Two participants did not disclose their age. Most participants indicated that they were convicted for a contact child offence (n = 47), whilst 34 participants preferred not to say or did not indicate an offence category. Other offence types included contact adult (n = 26), non-contact adult (n = 5), non-contact child (n = 16), and indecent images (n = 13). Some participants were convicted of more than one offence type (n = 13). Twenty-three participants were IPP prisoners, and five identified that they had received a life sentence.

6.3.3 Pilot Stage

People within a service user group at prison site A, were shown a selection of possible measures that were being considered for inclusion within the questionnaire. Eight men, all serving prison sentences for a sexual offence conviction, were asked for their feedback on potential measures for inclusion. Service users commented on things such as the language, accessibility, and relevance of the scales. This feedback was considered when deciding on the final measures to include within the questionnaire. All the scales implemented were subject to tests of internal reliability. Cronbach's alpha is reported for each of the scales used within the current prison sample that was obtained.

6.3.4 Measures

The questionnaire administered to participants included demographic questions, and a range of psychometric measures (see Appendix 6 for the combined research pack distributed to participants). The psychometric measures used to assess the attainment of psychosocial home needs, and desistance-based outcomes, are detailed below.

Within each subsection below, an opening justification is also offered to the reader, to highlight the relevance of the psychosocial home need both in terms of its origins from Study 2, as well as prior theory. The psychosocial home needs chosen for measurement were ultimately driven by the participant narratives within Study 2. Before choosing the measures, transcripts of Study 2 were re-examined to explore some of the most salient psychosocial needs participants spoke of. These were extracted from the data and listed in a word document. Some examples of the main emerging concepts related to concepts of freedom, safety, independence, privacy, belonging, security, permanence, identity, control, ownership, socialising, and community. Such psychosocial home discussions also

overlapped concepts associated with feelings of hope, pursuing goals, and acting with a sense of agency, all factors relevant to desistance from offending.

Once key terms were extracted from the participants data within Study 2, these terms were then applied to literature searches for potentially relevant scales that may be suitable to explore the psychosocial home needs discussed. As the analysis within Study 2 was conducted inductively, theoretical insights were obtained at the later stages of the analysis. These theoretical insights and the broader literature pertaining to home were also consulted in search of appropriate measures. The reader is reminded here of Gram-Hanssen and Darby's (2018) four-way categorisation of the term home (based on the earlier 10 item categorisation proposed by Deprés 1998). Gram-Hanssen and Darby's (2018) conceptualisation of home captured the importance of i) security and control ii) a place for activity iii) a place for relationships and continuity, and iiii) a representation of identity and values. This four-way semantic definition overlapped the concepts extracted from the Study 2 data, thus scales in relation to each of these meanings were also consulted.

Scales were identified by searching for a range of key terms (for example, home, safety, control, ownership, identity) within various databases (for example, APA PsycTests, Scopus, and Google Scholar). Permission was sought from scale authors to implement the measures. When a potential scale was identified it was examined in terms of how suitable and appropriate it would be for the current study. For example, judgements were made about the length of scales, and the language employed within scales. Scales were also judged on how appropriate they would be to administer to people living within a variety of settings. At the time of designing Study 3, comparisons between facilities were initially intended, thus, scales that would be suitable across a wide variety of settings were deemed necessary. This investigation was largely exploratory, and concepts associated with psychosocial feelings of home are vast (Atkinson & Jacobs, 2016; Mallet, 2004). As such, scales were chosen based on their availability, accessibility, and suitability to the current investigation. The measures used do not represent a complete, comprehensive account of all potential psychosocial home needs that could have been explored, rather, they offer an initial starting point to explore the research aim. It Is also necessary to emphasise that the measures were chosen at a stage where one of the initial research aims was to recruit from various facilities. This meant scales needed to be quite generic to apply across a range of living environments. It was initially the intention therefore, to

use the same scales within the prison setting, to those administered within the community, to draw comparisons between the living environments. The potential limitations of using these scales in a prison setting are offered in the discussion section of this chapter.

6.3.4.1 Perceived Control Over the Institutional Environment Scale. The importance of control within a person's living environment was highlighted by participants within Study 2 (and alluded to by professional participants within Study 1). Participants wanted to feel free to act how they wished within their community living environment, at times contrasted to the lack of control they experienced in a prison environment. Loewy and Snaith (1967) outline the need to feel in control in a space free from surveillance, and Saunders and Williams (1998) further describes home as a place where people feel in control over their environment. Such discussions of control emerged from the qualitative phase of this research, as well as being consistently noted as important within the home literature (Deprés, 1991; Gram-Hanssen & Darby, 2018).

The Perceived Control Over the Institutional Environment Scale (Schutte et al., 1992) was implemented to ascertain peoples' feelings of control within their living environment. This scale was deemed appropriate to administer across a variety of settings, as the initial research design intended. This scale was developed and validated by Schutte et al. (1992) and was administered by the scale authors within various US settings. Schutte et al., (1992) validated their scale amongst people living within: a psychiatric hospital, halfway house, drug and alcohol rehabilitation centres, a medical hospital, retirement home, and college living environments.

This is a 14-item measure, and an example item includes "When it gets too noisy in my room I can quiet things down". Participants are instructed to indicate the extent to which they agree with each item from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Higher scores on this scale indicate high feelings of control over the environment. The Perceived Control Over the Institutional Environment Scale demonstrated good internal reliability when administered to people in a prison setting within the current study (α = .86). This is comparable to the Cronbach's obtained by the original authors (α = . 87).

6.3.4.2 Psychological Home Scale. Within Study 2, participants spoke of making their home how they personally like it, and many participant narratives captured the importance of identity considerations. People wanted their accommodation to be a place of "comfort" and "relaxation", as well as having things like their own belongings. From the narratives in Study 2, it also appeared that a home (or lack thereof) may relinquish (or reinforce) a person's "sex offender" identity. As Atkinson and Jacob (2016) summarise, a persons' home is "a major and intrinsic part of human identity" (pg. 32). As such, scales were sought that captured these identity and home considerations, which led to the discovery of Sigmon et al.'s (2002) concept of Psychological Home.

Psychological home represents the need to identify sense of self within a certain place, it is defined as "a sense of belonging in which self-identity is tied to a particular place/physical locale" (p. 33). It captures the importance of individualised identities attained from having a home and has been associated with positive affect, well-being, goal-directed behaviour (Sigmon et al., 2002), and satisfaction with life (Cicognani, 2011). The construct overlaps salient desistance concepts, particularly surrounding identity and belonging. As Göbbels et al., (2012) express within their ITDSO, identity in relation to desistance is about more than a persons' own self-narratives but extends to the need for positive and prosocial environments. The concept of psychological home seemingly then incorporated elements relevant to consider within a desistance-based framework, whilst simultaneously considering identity implications which is a core way in which home itself is conceptualised (Gram-Hanssen & Darby, 2018).

Sigmon et al. (2002) developed the Psychological Home Scale, to ascertain peoples' sense of identity in relation to place. This 8-item scale incorporates many of the qualitative aspects drawn out from the preceding interviews. For example, concepts surrounding a personable environment, relaxation, security, and pride. The scale has been validated on Italian samples and demonstrates links to other positive based outcomes (Cicognani, 2011).The scale has also been implemented amongst adults who experience issues with clutter (Crum & Ferrari, 2019; Roster et al., 2016).

To the best of the writers' knowledge, the Psychological Home Scale has not been used within a prison population, or on samples with people with convictions. As such, additional instructions were added for participants completing the scale. The original instructions asked participants to indicate the extent of their agreement with each item. A preceding

statement was added to this. Participants were told "Think of *home* or the *place where I live*, as the place where you live right now (e.g. your prison cell)." An example item includes "I add personal touches to the place where I live". Participants responded on a 7-point Likert scale from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. High scores on this scale indicate higher feelings of psychological home (as defined in Section 6.2). The scale, with adapted instructions, demonstrated good internal reliability within the current investigation (α = .89). This is comparable, and slightly higher than that obtained within other studies (Cicognani, 2011; Crum & Ferrari, 2019; Roster et al., 2016).

6.3.4.3 Safety-Security Needs Sub-scale. Safety was deemed another important psychosocial home need to explore. Safety and security are basic needs (Maslow, 1943). An environmental factor that could satisfy this need is for people to have a place where they feel free from harm, or a more abstract way of realising such sense of safety could be through achieving structure and stability in life (Taormina & Gao, 2013). The qualitative findings within Study 2 echoed both examples. Particularly, vigilante and community backlash concerns made safety needs paramount to people with sexual offences, evident from narratives within both Study 1 and Study 2.

Home serves as an environment for people to be at ease in, within an otherwise threatening external world (Atkinson & Jacobs, 2016). Indeed, Gram-Hanssen and Darby (2018) account for the importance of safety within their semantic categories of the meaning of home; stating a feeling of safety is pivotal "even though, or maybe precisely because, the home might be surrounded by a hostile society" (p. 95). This notion resonates heavily for people with sexual convictions, who often feel threatened by community members because of their stigmatised offence type (Cubellis et al., 2019). When considering this psychosocial home need in relation to the prison environment, it is possible that such feelings of safety are more attainable within a prison setting where everyone is convicted of a sexual offence, as opposed to within an unforgiving and hostile community, as alluded to by some participants within the preceding interview phases (See Section 5.3.3.1).

Taormina and Gao's (2013) Hierarchy of Needs Scales each measure the attainment of Maslow's (1943; 1987) five hierarchies of needs. Taormina and Gao's (2013) Safety-Security Needs Sub-scale was used in the current study to measure the attainment of safety needs. Their measure was validated on a large sample of people living in China.

The original Safety-Security Needs Sub-scale included 15 items. Only the first 5 items of the scale were administered to participants within the current investigation, as these items focused exclusively on participants living environments. The omitted 10 items were deemed irrelevant for the current study. An example of an omitted item includes "I am completely satisfied with how safe I am from acts of war". Again, participants were instructed to complete the scale in relation to the place they currently live, indicating their agreement with each statement from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Participants were notified to "Think of your house/apartment as the place you live in right now (e.g. your prison cell if you are in prison)". An example item includes "I am completely satisfied with how secure I am in my house/apartment". Higher scores on this scale indicate higher feelings of safety.

The author was contacted regarding the omission of items. The author permitted the use only of certain items yet warned of the reliability and validity implications. Cronbach's alpha was calculated within the current study in relation to the reduced item scale. The 5-item Safety-Security measure demonstrated good internal reliability when administered to people in a prison setting (α = .85). The Cronbach's alpha reliability score attained by the original authors for the full safety-security subscale was .87, similar to that attained here.

6.3.4.4 Psychological Ownership Scale Ownership was another psychosocial home need that was extracted from the qualitative data within Study 2. Concepts associated with ownership featured readily throughout qualitative interviews (e.g. "it's mine", "my own place"), thus inspiring a literature search surrounding this salient concept. Of note, participants spoke of this ownership despite none of the participants being homeowners in the legal sense. Irrespective of whether people own the place in which they live, they may still seek to establish a sense of ownership regardless of their tenure type and legal homeownership status (Bate, 2018).

Van Dyne and Pierce's (2004) notion of psychological ownership was consulted. Psychological ownership is defined as the extent to which people feel a sense of possession towards a given target (Pierce et al., 2003, see Section 5.3.3.2). It captures feelings of possessiveness and sensing psychological ties to something, which then becomes an extension of the self (Brown et al., 2014). Within Deprés' (1998) 10-way categorisation that seeks to offer a conceptual framework for the notion of home; "home

as a place to own" (p. 99) is one way in which home may be conceptualised. Deprés (1998) notes how such ownership can represent a sense of freedom, control, and permanence, hence capturing many of the overlapping concepts extracted from the transcripts of the data from Study 2 (Section 5.3.3)

For the current investigation, a commonly used measure of psychological ownership applied within the workplace (Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004) was adapted to measure feelings of psychological ownership towards place. Psychological ownership is defined as the extent to which people feel a sense of possession towards a given target (Pierce et al., 2003, see Section 5.3.3.2). Irrespective of whether people own the place in which they live, they may still seek to establish a sense of ownership regardless of their tenure type and legal homeownership status (Bate, 2018).

The authors of the Psychological Ownership Scale were contacted to obtain permission to adapt their scale. They responded that it was their intention for the scale to be adapted towards other targets of ownership. The original, single factor, 7-item scale, was reduced to a 6-item scale. Responses were provided on a Likert scale from one (*strongly disagree*) to seven (*strongly agree*). The original items and their adaptations are shown below. Permission to reproduce this was granted by the original scale author.

1. This is MY organisation - This is MY place.
2. I sense that this organisation is OUR company - I sense that this place belongs to me
3. I feel a very high degree of personal ownership for this organisation - I feel a very high degree of personal ownership for this place
4. I sense that this is MY company - I sense that this is MY place
5. This is OUR company - This is MY place.
6. Most of the people that work for this organisation feel as though they own the company - (Omitted – inapplicable to place and home)
7. It is hard for me to think about this organisation as MINE (reverse scored) - It is hard for me to think about this place as MINE.

Higher scores on this measure indicate higher feelings of psychological ownership. The adapted Psychological Ownership Scale demonstrated excellent internal reliability within the current study (α = .93), the same as that obtained by the scale authors for the original scale (Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004).

6.3.4.5 Social Identification Scale. Socialising and feeling a part of the community were also discussed by the participants within Study 2. Including community-based considerations within the current research therefore allowed for a more comprehensive approach to the investigation of psychosocial home needs. From the qualitative data obtained, it was clear that having accommodation is not an isolated, discrete issue. Rather, it forms part of a person's wider societal re-entry.

Accounting for social factors also corroborated the interdisciplinary literature on home, whereby a persons' house and home is situated within wider societal frameworks, communities, and neighbourhoods (Atkinson & Jacobs, 2016). People desire to belong to groups and communities, at the same time as having a private place of retreat (Sigmon et al., 2002). Additionally, reintegration and desistance concepts emphasise the importance of these factors (Göbbels et al., 2012), with some suggesting that a sense of belonging may be an important pre-cursor to desistance efforts (Fox, 2015). With regards to prison settings, social factors and group ties are associated with increased well-being for people living in prison (Kyprianides & Easterbrook, 2020).

The Social Identification Scale (Doosje et al., 1995) was implemented to ascertain participants' feelings of community belonging. Haslam et al. (2018) argue this is an appropriate tool to adapt by substituting the name of a relevant group. An example item reads "I see myself as a [member of group X]" where the group is substituted for a group relevant to the research aims. In this situation, the item read "I see myself as a member of the community I live in". Participants were told to think of "community" as the area that they live in and the other people within that area. This measure has previously been applied within a range of contexts, for example; to measure family identification (Sani et al., 2012); social identification within Italian university samples (Sani et al., 2007); and, it has been widely applied within organisational settings (Steffens et al., 2016).

Participants responded to the 4-item scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Higher scores on this scale indicated higher feelings of community identification. The scale demonstrated good internal reliability within the current prison context on the sample of males imprisoned for a sexual conviction (α = .86).

6.3.4.6 Three Item Loneliness Scale. Gram-Hanssen and Darby's (2018) four-way categorisation of home accounts for the importance of home in relation to relationships. Deprés' (1998) earlier account also notes how a home is a space of "intense emotional experience…providing an atmosphere of social understanding where one's actions, opinions, and moods are accepted" (p. 98). When exploring this literature, the salience of this conceptualisation of home to the narratives of participants within Study 2 was clear; particularly when a persons' stigmatised offence of being a "sex offender" is an action that is vehemently not accepted - be that by the wider community or personal relations.

Within Study 2, participants spoke of their socialisation needs whilst recounting either the successes or difficulties with this, in relation to their living space (see Section 5.3.3.3). For some, their home would be a place where they could reconnect with families. For others, the lack of socialisation and the difficulties with this were expressed, such as the need to conceal their offence type, and restrictions regarding friendships. When an individual experiences such inability to form relationships and satisfying needs of belonging, they may experience this relational deficit as loneliness (Heinrich & Gullone, 2006). Loneliness is defined as a negative emotional state experienced when an individual perceives a discrepancy between the interpersonal relationships one currently has, and the interpersonal relations one wishes to have (Asher & Paquette, 2003; Heinrich & Gullone, 2006). Isolation and loneliness are also commonly documented as risk factors for people with sexual offence convictions (Marshall, 2010), making this aspect of social relations ever more pertinent to the current investigation.

The Three Item Loneliness Scale (Hughes et al., 2004) was administered to measure feelings of loneliness. This was deemed an important psychosocial home need to measure, due to the overlapping social considerations drawn upon within Study 2 (see Section 5.3.3.3). The scale was validated by the original authors on a large general population sample in the US (Hughes et al., 2004). It has previously been validated on various samples, including: homeless adults within the US (Patanwala et al. 2018); African American men taking part in a HIV risk reduction programme (Operario et al., 2010); people with spinal cord injury (Robinson-Whelen et al., 2016); and amongst LGBTQ+ adults (Perone et al., 2019). Recently it has been included within the Copenhagen Corona-Related Mental Health questionnaire (Clotworthy et al., 2020) in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

An example item includes "How often do you feel isolated from others?". Participants responded on a 3-point Likert scale from 1 (*hardly eve*r) to 3 (*often*). Higher scores on this scale indicated high feelings of loneliness. The scale demonstrated good internal reliability (α = .85) within the current study.

6.3.4.7 Perceived Sense of Positive Agency and Perceived Sense of Negative Agency Scales. Agency was explored as a desistance-based outcome measure. Hitlin and Elder (2006) describe agency as "the sense of having the capacity for meaningful and successful action." (Hitlin & Elder, 2006, p. 40). A language of agency is often utilised by people desisting from crime (King, 2013), whereby desisters perceive themselves as capable to affect their actions. Within the prior qualitative phase, concepts associated with agency were evident throughout the interview data. For example, participants spoke of their ability or inability to achieve certain actions in relation to their accommodation; for example, having the capacity to obtain accommodation themselves, or seek wider resettlement needs from their living facility. Farmer et al. (2012) demonstrated that a higher sense of agency was associated with desistance from sexual crime, making this an appropriate outcome variable to measure.

The Sense of Agency Scale (Tapal et al., 2017) was used to measure the desistance-based outcome variable of agency. This 13-item scale consists of two factors (Perceived Sense of Positive Agency and Perceived Sense of Negative Agency) and it measures a person's general sense of agency. Participants rate the extent to which they agree or disagree with the statements on a Likert scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). This is a context-free measure, assessing people's general agency beliefs, thus was deemed appropriate to administer to people within a range of environmental settings, as per the original research plan.

When the Sense of Agency Scale was considered as one full scale, internal reliability amongst the prison sample was poor (α = .54). The authors of this scale debate the potential to split this scale into its two individual factors: a measure of sense of positive agency and a measure of a sense of negative agency. When the scale was treated as two separate variables, internal reliability improved (Sense of Positive Agency Scale α = .70, Sense of Negative Agency Scale α = .78). As such, the variables were treated as two

separate constructs for all following analyses and are therefore reported separately throughout this thesis.

Higher scores on the Sense of Positive Agency Scale indicate higher feelings of agency. An example item from this factor reads "I am in full control of what I do".

Higher scores on the Sense of Negative Agency Scale indicates lower feelings of agency. An example item from this factor reads "My actions just happen without my intention".

6.3.4.8 State Hope Scale. Hope was explored as the second desistance-based outcome. The importance of hope is rooted within positive psychology frameworks. Snyder et al.'s (2002) definition states that "hopeful thought reflects the belief that one can find pathways to desired goals and become motivated to use those pathways" (p. 257). This definition resonates strongly with the qualitative phase. Not only did participants speak of accommodation as a base to achieve other goals from, at times, participants displayed a lack of hope in relation to repeated accommodation refusals that they felt unable to impact.

Amongst general populations, hope is associated with pro-social life outcomes (Snyder et al., 2003). For people with sexual convictions, hope is noted as important for desistance processes (Farmer et al., 2012; Farmer et al., 2016; Harris, 2014). Should a person with a sexual offence conviction have the belief that they can pursue goals and lead a positive, offence-free life, then their commitment to remain offence free is likely enhanced (Göbbels et al., 2012; Ward, 2002). Participant narratives within Study 2 often captured how such feelings of hope were intertwined with living experiences. Measuring levels of hope was thus intended to provide insight into both desistance related issues, whilst expanding upon the qualitative findings in a quantitative manner.

Snyder et al.'s (1991) Hope Scale has previously been used in relation to offending concepts (Martin & Stermac, 2010). For the purposes of this investigation, Snyder et al.'s (1996) State Hope Scale was chosen instead of the earlier, general Hope Scale. It was deemed more applicable than the original due to its dispositional nature. As Snyder et al. (1996) outline, "the scale is responsive to events in the lives of people" (pg. 321). As such, at the time of choosing the scales, it was deemed more suited to using in relation to accommodation, a dynamic event for people with sexual convictions. The State Hope

Scale has previously been administered to people with sexual offence convictions who were taking part in a Canadian prison programme (Marshall et al., 2008). Lloyd and Serin (2012) also implemented this scale within their sample of 142 imprisoned males, when they were validating their own desistance based psychometric measure.

Participants rated how true they believe a statement is for them on an 8-point Likert scale, where 1 represents *definitely false* and 8 is *definitely true*. One example from the 6-item scale reads "I can think of many ways to reach my current goals". Higher scores on this scale indicated higher feelings of hope. This scale demonstrated excellent internal reliability when administered within the current prison population (α = .90), higher than that obtained in similar samples (e.g. 0.82 as in Lloyd & Serin, 2012)

6.3.5 Procedure

Before proceeding with prison-based data collection Governor approval was sought, as per HMPPS Ethics stipulations. Emails were sent to Governors outlining the aims of the research, and to gain permission to conduct the research within their facility. The data collection methods were summarised for the Governors, and they were assured that any other means of data collection that worked best for their facility could be considered. The two Governors from each facility agreed to support the research. All necessary vetting and security procedures were followed according to each facilities' requirements.

Questionnaires were distributed within the prisons throughout August and September 2019. Prison research packs (Appendix 6) were delivered to all wing offices in both prisons. Research packs were packaged within an unsealed envelope that had pre-printed return details on. These research packs were distributed under all prison cell doors. Participants could either self-complete the research questionnaire or follow included instructions to arrange a face to face meeting.

The research packs included all the necessary materials to take part independently, including a research invitation, option to arrange a meeting, information sheet, consent form, questionnaire, and debrief sheet with return instructions. Participants were instructed to return their completed questionnaire in the envelope provided and return this to the wing office or via internal prison post. Wing offices were provided with a collection box to regain completed questionnaires.

Within the prison research pack, people were also offered the opportunity to arrange a face to face meeting if they needed help completing the research. The research pack contained a sheet for the person to complete, to enable the facilitation of the meeting. They were asked to provide their availability, prisoner ID, name, and wing. All of this information was shredded once the meeting was arranged.

Within face to face meetings, the participant was guided vocally through each section of the research. The research was explained using the information sheet, informed consent was obtained, and the participant was guided through the questionnaire items. At the end of the meeting, they were given the opportunity to ask further questions and debriefed. Meetings were conducted in secure, private meeting rooms within the prison.

6.4 Preliminary Analysis

6.4.1 Data Cleaning

All raw data were inputted into a password protected Excel spreadsheet. During this input stage, one participant was removed from the data due to unusual responses. This led to a total of 154 analysable results. Necessary items within individual scales were appropriately reverse scored, and each scales' summed total was calculated for all participants. The Excel data was then exported into SPSS in order to undertake the analyses.

6.4.2 Missing Data

There was minimal missing data. This was most noticeable when asking for the demographic information about the participants offence type. For example, 34 participants circled *prefer not to say* when asked about their offence. Other missing demographic data were witnessed in response to the questions relating to: age ($n = 2$); time spent living within any prison facility ($n = 4$); time spent living within the current prison facility $(n = 3)$; and health ratings ($n = 1$).

Some participants also had missing data points within some of the scales. Within SPSS, when scales have missing data points for items, list-wise exclusion omits the full scale. As

such, new values were computed to maximise the utility of the data obtained. This was done by using the mean function to compute new variables (Kent State University, 2020). Any scale with more than three missing values were omitted from analyses. As an example, this meant that the valid responses for the Psychological Home Scale increased from 150 to 154.

6.4.3 Assumption Testing

Three stepwise multiple regressions were conducted to identify which predictor variables, if any, had a significant relationship with the outcome variables of hope, positive agency, and negative agency. The assumptions for conducting these multiple regressions were first tested. The assumptions were tested for each of the three outcome variables.

Scatterplots were examined to ensure that the data was linear. This assumption was met. There were no issues of multicollinearity, as indicated by Pearson's *r* correlations (no two variables had a correlation greater than .55), VIF scores (all less than 1.66), and tolerance values (all above .6). Examining the Durbin-Watson statistics tested the assumption that residuals were independent. For the model with the outcome variable of hope, this statistic was very close to 2 (1.924), and above 1.7 for the sense of positive and negative agency scale. This satisfied the assumption of independent residuals. Plots of standardised residuals vs standardised predicted values showed that the variance of residuals was constant, and the assumption of homoscedasticity was satisfied. P-Plots were examined to test that the data was normally distributed, and again this assumption was met. Finally, Cooks distance values were saved in the SPSS data file to identify any potential outliers. None of the Cooks values were above 1 indicating that there were no influential cases biasing the model.

It is commonly cited that regressions should be conducted on interval data. That is, data that has equal distances between each numerical point. Some researchers therefore dispute the use of regression analyses for interpreting Likert scale responses (Kuzon et al., 1996), as the distance between response points (e.g. from 1 *strongly agree*, to 2 *agree*, 3 *neutral* etc.), are technically arbitrary and the distance between each of these response points cannot be assumed equal. However, others have argued that when considering psychometric measures in their entirety, instead of as their individual items, the sum of scale scores across many items does then equate to interval data (Carifio & Perla, 2008).

Norman (2010) concludes that regression analyses are often robust when used with Likert scale data. As all the other assumptions for regression were met and based on the arguments of Norman (2010), parametric statistical analyses were deemed suitable to implement.

6.5 Results

6.5.1 Sample Characteristics

Descriptive statistics were obtained to better understand the participating sample. The average sentence length of participants was 96.21 months (n = 122, SD = 55.69), the minimum sentence length was 14 months and the maximum was 240 months. IPP and life sentenced prisoners were not included in this mean calculation; 23 participants were IPP prisoners, and 5 identified that they received a life sentence. Four participants did not identify their sentence length. The mean time spent living in any prison facility was 58.33 months (n = 150, SD = 58.95); 65 participants indicated they were currently sharing their cell; 89 participants were in a single cell; and one participant did not identify their cell sharing status.

Participants were asked to identify if they had undertaken any offending behaviour programme and identify what these were. Ninety people indicated participation on at least one form of programme. The maximum number of OBP completions listed was 6 (n = 1), though most participants only indicated one (n = 40). Some of the most commonly identified programmes that participants had completed included Sex Offender Treatment Programme (n = 38), Sex Offender Treatment Programme Extended (n = 11), Horizon (n = 19), Kaizen (n = 6), Healthy Sex Programme (n = 22), Becoming New Me (n = 16), Thinking Skills Programme (n = 33), Enhanced Thinking Skills (n = 8), and Better Lives (n = 7). Participants were also asked to indicate their self-reported health. Most participants responded that their health was *good* (n = 46), followed by *fair* (n = 41), *very good* (n = 34), *poor* (n = 22), and *excellent* (n = 10). One participant did not offer a health rating.

6.5.2 Hypothesis Testing

The means and standard deviations for each scale are reported in Table 6. Any scale with more than three missing values were omitted from analyses. N values of valid responses are reported.

Table 6 also indicates the means obtained within each prison site. Independent samples t-tests were conducted to test for any differences in scores between the two prison sites. T-tests indicated that there were significant differences in control scores and ownership scores, between the two prison sites. Participants in prison site A indicated significantly higher feelings of control than participants in prison site B (t(151) = 2.62, p = .01) and significantly higher feelings of psychological ownership (t(152) = 2.03, p = .04). However, due to the sample size obtained, it was deemed most appropriate to retain the combined data set for further analysis.

Pearson's r correlations are shown in Table 7. Three stepwise multiple regressions were conducted to identify which predictor variables, if any, had a significant relationship with the outcome variables of hope, positive agency, and negative agency. The assumptions for conducting a multiple regression were first tested, and there were no violations of these assumptions.

Table 6.

Means and Standard Deviations Obtained for the Psychometric Scales.

	Total Sample					Prison Site A		Prison Site B	
	N	*M*	*SD*	Minimum	Maximum	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Psychological Home	154	43.24	10.61	8.00	56.00	44.06	9.46	42.05	12.05
Control Over the Environment	153	45.26	11.03	20.00	70.00	47.15*	10.38	42.48*	11.44
Psychological Ownership	154	18.11	11.48	6.00	42.00	19.66*	12.08	15.87*	10.23
Safety	153	14.88	5.23	5.00	25.00	14.94	5.66	14.78	4.61
Community Identification	154	15.69	6.64	4.00	28.00	15.36	6.55	16.17	6.78
Loneliness	154	6.10	2.03	3.00	9.00	6.07	2.15	6.16	1.86
Sense of Positive Agency	152	30.63	7.35	9.00	42.00	30.34	6.87	31.03	8.03
Sense of Negative Agency	152	21.49	9.15	7.00	45.00	21.00	9.29	22.21	8.97
Hope	152	34.07	10.43	6.00	48.00	34.48	10.41	33.47	10.51

*The difference in prison site means is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed

Table 7.

Pearsons Correlations Highlighting the Relationships Between the Measures Implemented.

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.
1.Psychological Home	1								
2. Control Over the Environment	.371**	1							
3. Psychological Ownership	.372**	.542**	1						
4. Safety	.342**	.456**	.389**	1					
5. Community Identification	.402**	.441**	.388**	.442**	1				
6. Loneliness	-.118	-.220**	-.171*	-.350**	-.303**	1			
7. Hope	.400**	.382**	.377**	.386**	.423**	-.349**	1		
8. Sense of Positive Agency	.194*	.294**	0.139	.288**	.264**	-.206*	.457**	1	
9. Sense of Negative Agency	-0.088	0.070	-0.017	-0.134	-0.036	.321**	-.304**	-.227**	1

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The first multiple regression analysis tested the relationship between the six psychosocial home needs against the outcome variable of hope. The stepwise regression inserted four significant predictor variables. This regression model identified that high community identification, high psychological home, low loneliness, and high ownership scores significantly predicted the outcome variable of hope ($F(4,145) = 17.09$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .32$). This demonstrated a large effect size ($f^2 = .47$).

Model one identified that community identification scores accounted for 17.6% of the variance in hope scores ($F(1, 148) = 31.72$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .18$). Model two added the predictor variable of psychological home. Community identification and psychological home accounted for 24.6% of the variance in hope scores ($F(2, 147) = 23.96$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .25$). Model three added the predictor variable of loneliness. Low loneliness scores predicted higher hope scores. Community identification, psychological home, and loneliness accounted for 29.7% of the variance in hope scores ($F(3, 146) = 20.60$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .30$). Scores on the community identification scale ($b = .19$, $p = .02$), psychological home scale ($b = .238$, $p = .003$), loneliness scale ($b = -.23$, $p = .002$), and ownership scale ($b = .17$, $p = .03$) accounted for 32% of the variance in hope scores.

The second regression analysis tested the relationship between the psychosocial home needs against the outcome variable of positive agency. The reader is reminded here that the Sense of Agency Scale performed more reliably when separated into two individual scales: Sense of Positive Agency Scale and Sense of Negative Agency Scale. The regression analyses in relation to the outcome variable of agency were therefore separated according to these two factors.

The stepwise regression inserted two significant predictor variables at the level of $p < 0.05$. This regression model highlighted that control over the environment and safety significantly predicted the outcome variable of positive agency ($F(2, 147) = 9.66$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .12$). This demonstrated a small effect size ($f^2 = .13$)

Model one identified that control scores accounted for 8.6% of the variance in sense of positive agency scores ($F(1, 148) = 13.91$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .09$). An additional 3% of variance was explained when adding the predictor variable of safety. Scores on the perceived control over the environment ($b = .14$, $p = .02$), combined with scores on the safety scale

(b = .27, p = .03), accounted for only 11.6% of the variance in perceived sense of positive agency scores.

The third regression analysis tested the relationship between the accommodation needs against the outcome variable of sense of negative agency. The stepwise regression only inserted one significant predictor variable. Loneliness scores accounted for 10.4% of the variance in sense of negative agency scores (F (1, 148) = 17.18, p <.001, R^2 = .10) The effect size was small (f^2 = .12). Loneliness was the only significant predictor within this model (b = 1.44, p < .001). Higher loneliness indicated higher sense of negative agency.

6.6 Chapter Discussion

This chapter aimed to explore the relationship between the attainment of psychosocial home needs and desistance-based outcomes for people with sexual convictions. It attempted to address a gap in the literature, by considering the relationship between constructs associated with home, and constructs associated with desistance. By drawing on the qualitative insights discussed in Chapter 5, this research aimed to further explore the relevance of certain psychosocial needs, in terms of understanding whether they relate to feelings of hope and agency for people with sexual convictions.

The research identified some support for the importance of considering certain psychosocial feelings in relation to desistance-based outcomes, particularly that of hope. Significant correlations were found between all of the psychosocial home needs and hope. When exploring which variables predicted hope, a high sense of community identification, high feelings of psychological home, low feelings of loneliness, and a higher sense of psychological ownership, all predicted higher feelings of hope for people with sexual offence convictions living within a prison setting. Feelings of control, and feelings of safety, did not significantly predict feelings of hope in the current investigation.

In terms of considering the impact of psychosocial home needs on feelings of agency, results demonstrated that feelings of safety, control, and once again loneliness, might relate to feelings of agency. Higher feelings of control and safety predicted higher scores for participants positive sense of agency. Higher feelings of loneliness were related to a higher sense of negative agency. However, the amount of variance explained when using

sense of positive agency and sense of negative agency as outcome variables was only low. Furthermore, there were some reliability and validity concerns with this scale, posing a limitation to this investigation. Anecdotally, when administering this scale to participants, it became apparent that the scale may have been somewhat complex for people to interpret. Upon reflection, another scale might have been considered to measure this outcome variable. Nonetheless, the findings outlined in relation to hope alone, offer interesting initial insights to initiate further exploration regarding psychosocial home needs and their relationship with desistance-based outcomes.

The argument posed at the outset of this chapter is supported. Considering the psychosocial aspects of home appears important to consider in terms of instilling hope within people with sexual convictions. The significant predictor variables here that demonstrated a relationship with outcomes of hope, are seemingly those that relate well to the already established desistance literature. Measuring community identification may align well with a sense of belonging (Fox, 2015), measuring loneliness overlaps issues of isolation (van Den Berg et al., 2018), and the novel consideration of psychological home (Sigmon et al., 2002) and psychological ownership (Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004), both incorporate identity constructs that are also found to be important within desistance frameworks. When taken together with the qualitative insights within Chapter 5, it is apparent that certain psychosocial feelings related to home, demonstrate potential links with desistance-based outcomes. Thinking about ways in which to enhance these potentially desistance promoting factors - such as feeling a sense of social connection and identity - within a persons' living environment could prove valuable insights for policy and practice.

It is necessary to recognise that the solely prison-based sample is a key limitation of this investigation, posing issues of generalisability to those living in community settings. In particular, the scales implemented may be interpreted vastly differently for those in a prison setting compared to when living in the community. For example, many of the psychosocial needs measured (e.g. psychological home, psychological ownership, community identification) overlapped identity constructs. The way in which a person's identity is construed within an all-sexual offending prison likely differs to the way in which a person's identity is construed within a community environment.

That is not to say however, that a prison environment necessarily equates to negative identities. A study by Blagden and Wilson (2020) demonstrates this. From a longitudinal qualitative study within an all-sexual offending UK prison, their paper notes:

> It may seem ironic that while surrounded by prisoners with sexual convictions, one can construct a self that can disassociate from the dispreferred identity. However, it appears that the very nature of being surrounded by other individuals with sexual convictions facilitates this process. There is a recognition that everyone is the "same" (Blagden & Wilson, 2020, p. 736).

Another element to consider relating to this then is whether such results would apply within mixed-offence prisons, where people with sexual offence convictions are consistently at the bottom of the offence hierarchy (Nicholls & Webster, 2018). The scales used within this study may thus be interpreted differently depending on the location in which people reside. This was the very justification of the originally developed research plan; to compare between living facilities to ascertain whether differences in psychosocial home needs were present between different environments. As this hypothesis was unable to be tested however, it is important to now recognise that the findings in relation to Hypothesis 1, do not necessarily generalise to individuals with sexual convictions living within the community.

A further issue resulting from the prison only sample is that making inferences about desistance for those who live within a prison setting is challenging and arguably complex. Most research insights regarding desistance outcomes focus on community resettlement issues (Maguire & Raynor, 2006). More recently however, research has explored the early desistance narratives of individuals still living within prison (Martin et al., 2019), demonstrating how some key desistance concepts do relate to people within these environments. Further academic discussions have considered the overlap between desistance and prison education (Szifris et al., 2018), and also how prisoner-peer support roles could enable people to "to make some movements towards desistance" (Perrin & Blagden, 2016, p. 1). Considering processes of desistance within the prison environment represents a growing body of research. Nonetheless, realising the intended second aim of this investigation and administering questionnaires to people living in the community would have enhanced the validity and generalisability of the findings obtained.

It is also necessary to acknowledge that, although the prison sites were of a similar size, location, and population, people within prison site A reported significantly higher feelings

of control and psychological ownership than participants within prison site B. As this investigation intended to offer an exploratory, overarching picture of the relationship between psychosocial home needs and desistance-based outcomes, hypothesis testing on the full sample was conducted. Future studies with greater sample sizes might seek to explore these differences in more depth.

Although the solely prison-based sample limits these findings, a strength is that it allowed for the psychometric scales to be implemented within a unique population of sexual-offending specific prison sites. Of note, the adapted psychological ownership scale demonstrated excellent internal reliability. The adapted scale may serve useful for future studies interested in investigating feelings of psychological ownership towards home and place. It is worth mentioning that when Item 6 (reverse worded) of the adapted psychological ownership scale was removed, Cronbach's alpha increased ($\alpha = .96$). This possibly highlights the occurrence of some acquiescence bias present for this scale, as it was the last placed item and the only reverse worded one. Alternatively, it may be a result of the participant sample age demographics. Carlson, Wilcox, & Clark (2011) highlighted the potential challenges of reverse worded items amongst elderly populations, noting the cognitive demands these types of questions require.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to achieve the second aim of this investigation. This was to explore any differences in the attainment of psychosocial home needs, dependent upon the living facility the person was residing within. If comparisons were drawn between groups, then inferences could be made about the attainment of certain needs within different types of environments. Although the second hypothesis could not be tested, it was interesting to note that increased feelings of community identification, and lower feelings of loneliness were significant predictors of hope within the prison-based sample. From the qualitative interviews, community participants sometimes looked back favourably at their friendships and connections made within the prison setting. Making any empirical or causal claims here is not possible based on the absence of comparison groups. However, this could be an interesting avenue to explore further, in terms of whether the differences in feelings of loneliness and community belonging are more positive within the prison setting as opposed to certain community settings, whereby people with sexual convictions are regularly ostracised (Williams, 2018) and demonised (Reeves, 2018).

Indeed, the conclusions that can realistically be drawn from this chapter are somewhat limited because of the purely prison-based sample. The reader is reminded here that the main overarching aim stated at the outset of this thesis was to address the accommodation needs and experiences of people with sexual offence convictions; questioning then whether this investigation has contributed to such aim. When considering the term accommodation in its broadest sense - as the bricks and mortar where people live (Atkinson & Jacobs, 2016) - I argue that prison environments do constitute such a place. It is important to iterate though, that community accommodation environments versus prison accommodation environments differ greatly, and so too will peoples experiences within these facilities; more research is necessary to explore these differences.

Similarly, when considering home as the feelings surrounding environments (rather than the environment itself), then prison environments are of further relevance in this domain too, particularly as people often try to achieve feelings of home in locations that may be deemed antithetical to home (Parsell, 2018). Prison may deny some psychosocial feelings of home (e.g. feeling a sense of ownership, and control), but there may be other needs it actively enhances. Although people in prison do not choose this environment as their home, this is not to say that people do not strive to attain such feelings, irrespective of the prison fences that surround them.

6.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter expanded upon the qualitative findings of Chapter 5, by quantitatively exploring the relationship between psychosocial home needs and desistance-based outcomes for people with sexual offence convictions. Ultimately, this investigation has highlighted the importance of considering the nature of living environments and the feelings obtained within living spaces. This chapter offers a starting point for further desistance-based research by considering the importance of home for people with sexual convictions.

Chapter 7: Discussion Chapter

Chapter Overview

This thesis has explored the accommodation experiences and needs of people with sexual offence convictions. It has investigated this issue from multiple perspectives, as well as drawing theoretical links to desistance. Adopting an initial exploratory approach using qualitative techniques, the first two research investigations offered context to this previously under-researched topic. Interviewing both professionals (Study 1) and people with sexual convictions (Study 2) allowed for a holistic understanding of the most pertinent issues regarding living environments for people with sexual convictions. Study 3 was developed in response to some of the most salient findings within Study 2. It focused more explicitly on the discussions surrounding psychosocial home needs, to determine the relationship between home, hope, and agency. This chapter synthesises the findings from each of these empirical investigations. It will discuss the original contributions to knowledge gained from the studies whilst also recognising the research limitations. Research implications will be discussed in terms of policy recommendations and future research directions. This chapter will conclude with personal reflections about the PhD process.

7.1 Synthesising the Research Findings

The main aim of this thesis was to:

- Explore the accommodation needs and experiences of people with sexual offence convictions.

In addressing this main aim, the thesis also sought to:

- Examine theoretical links between living environments and desistance for people with sexual offence convictions.

To realise these broad aims, narrower research questions were devised. Each of these research questions constituted one empirical chapter:

- Q1: What are the views and experiences of relevant practitioners, in relation to accommodation for people with sexual convictions?

- Q2: What are the views and re-entry experiences of people with sexual offence convictions, now living within a community setting?
- Q3: Is there a relationship between psychosocial home needs, and positive, desistance-based outcomes, for people with sexual convictions?

A secondary aim of the research conducted within this PhD was to help inform the development of a charitable accommodation project for people with sexual offence convictions. Although this influenced some methodological decisions, it was not the focus of this thesis. Broader policy and practice recommendations from the data are offered within this chapter. Specific recommendations offered to the charity are included within Appendix 7 for the reader's reference.

The research process began by exploring the views of practitioners with experience related to accommodation for people with sexual convictions. The data from professionals largely emphasised political, organisational, and systematic considerations. Gathering this "practice-based wisdom " (Day et al., 2014, p. 171) allowed for a greater understanding of the macro-level issues impacting accommodation outcomes for people with sexual convictions. It also offered tangible ideas surrounding best practice that were fed back to the SLF charity (see Appendix 7).

The findings from Study 1 reiterated previous findings that are general to people with all conviction types. Cooper (2016) notes that accommodation issues for people with convictions need to be considered within the context of wider challenges, such as austerity measures and a lack of housing availability. This was reiterated within Study 1, yet the need for research specifically targeted towards people with sexual offences was also emphasised, as such people were likened to "a nettle that nobody wants to grasp" (see Section 4.3.2). Previous research has highlighted the potential added challenges that people with sexual convictions may face in relation to accommodation (Clark, 2007), but such inferences have often been drawn from considering wider populations of people with all conviction types as opposed to an exclusive focus on people with sexual convictions. Where research has explored the accommodation experiences for people with sexual convictions specifically, these are often in relation to individual, specific facilities (Kras et al., 2016; Mills & Grimshaw, 2013; Reeves, 2013) and largely consider US based challenges (Rydberg, 2018). The studies within this PhD addressed these gaps, seeking

to offer a more holistic understanding of the accommodation experiences and needs for people with sexual convictions living within the UK.

This thesis ultimately aimed to focus on the needs of people with sexual convictions themselves, but Study 1 revealed the importance of considering practitioner needs. Practitioners emphasised their frustrations and exasperation at the problems that they encountered. These frustrations and tensions were impeding their practice, making it important to consider how accommodation issues are construed by those people at the forefront of making accommodation decisions for people with sexual convictions.

Previous research has identified some of these challenges from a practitioner perspective regarding people with general convictions, for example, problems associated with a lack of resources and funding (Clinks & Homeless Link, 2017; Cooper, 2016; Mills & Meek, 2020). Unique obstacles were identified within this thesis, that were deemed specific to people with sexual convictions. These related to the manifestation of stigma and stereotypes held by providers. This stigma was discussed from the perspective of practitioners who were advocating for accommodation for their service users. Tensions between practitioners and accommodation decision makers often impeded participants from effectively undertaking their job role, leading some to call for changes in the system, but others recognising the need for wider societal attitude change.

Study 1 (interviewing professionals) and Study 2 (interviewing people with sexual convictions) both offered qualitative depth. The intention of gaining multiple perspectives initially was to achieve a balanced discussion (Mills & Grimshaw, 2012), as well as acknowledging the invaluable first-hand experiences that practitioners can offer (Day et al., 2014). The importance of gaining such multiple perspectives was clear when considering both the findings of Study 1 and Study 2 in tandem. In particular, the ability to exercise choice in terms of accommodation outcomes for people with sexual convictions, thoroughly is emphasised throughout both studies. Within Study 2, participants with sexual convictions noted the lack of control they experienced over their own accommodation scenarios. Professionals who were interviewed within Study 1, were in such a position of perceived control; yet, from professional participants' narratives, they were also battling against issues that were beyond their control, such as a lack of resources, wider policy barriers, and individual prejudices (Preece & Bimpson, 2019). Had just the views of residents been obtained, then it would not have been possible to appreciate the lack of

choice that practitioners also feel in terms of their ability to enact positive outcomes for their service users. Understanding this from the viewpoint of both professionals, as well as people with sexual convictions, enabled a holistic understanding of the challenges present. To develop this further, future research could explore the views of housing providers themselves.

Understanding the needs and experiences from the perspectives of individuals with sexual convictions themselves was also necessary. As one practitioner participant within Study 1 summarised: "What's happened in the past, is we've talked to other agencies and we've decided what's best for this person, but we've not asked them, urm, and I think that's important as well" (see Section 4.3.6.1). The second research study allowed the voices of the individuals themselves to be heard. Having obtained a contextual backdrop in which to situate this thesis and simultaneously exploring the challenges faced by practitioners in their daily roles, Study 2 and 3 then focussed directly on the experiences of people with sexual convictions.

Interviewing people with sexual offence convictions allowed for a greater understanding about their personal experiences. People's experiences were varied. Many did corroborate the problems previously identified in Study 1, as well as those identified within prior research, especially regarding the challenges of stigmatising housing responses (Evans & Porter, 2015) and navigating restrictions (Levenson, 2016). Some participants had positive experiences, characterised by helpful and supportive professional input. Other participants had more negative experiences, perceiving a lack of support, emphasising feelings of rejection, and noting hostile and stigmatising responses from others in relation to their sexual conviction.

Beyond just recounting the challenges, the emotional impact of these issues was also recognisable within the data. The psychosocial needs that people had (or indeed wanted) from their accommodation aligned with concepts of home and the feelings attached to living environments (Atkinson & Jacobs, 2016). Seemingly, such discussions overlapped desistance concepts (Section 5.3.3). The qualitative findings support interactionist theories of desistance, as social context seemed interrelated with individual change processes (Weaver, 2019). More specifically, it also offers support to the newly emerging situational desistance theories (Weaver, 2019). These theories emphasise the importance of considering the role and nature of environments to further understand processes of

desistance (Bottoms, 2014; Hunter & Farrall, 2015). For example, Hunter and Farrall (2015) highlight the importance of considering the meaning of places for individuals, particularly as places can be tied to identity, structure, and goal attainment. Until now, this desistance theory has largely been absent in terms of its application to people with sexual offences. Göbbels and colleagues (2012) ITDSO does try to account for environmental processes, in terms of considering life circumstances and availability of opportunities. McAlinden et al. (2017) also support the overlap between social, structural, and internal changes in terms of a person's ability to desist from sexual offending. Largely however, the role and function of these feelings i.e. home, that may or may not be attached to certain structural environments i.e. house (Atkinson & Jacobs, 2016; Coward, 2018; Mallet, 2004), is less well accounted for within the literature regarding desistance from sexual offending.

It was not the intention of this thesis to differentiate between desisters and non-desisters in the sample, as previous research has done (Hulley, 2016). Rather, some of the findings documented within this thesis highlight how a person's accommodation situation and feelings of home may potentially influence or overlap desistance constructs. For example, feeling a sense of agency and personal identity could be instilled from attaining their own independent living space. Feeling settled in accommodation would allow people to "move on" from their offending past, initiating a desire for identity change (Paternoster & Bushway, 2009). It would allow people to exercise a level of agency (Maruna, 2001) that had thus far been restricted in their previous living environments of prisons and approved premises. People would be able to obtain additional goals, such as gaining meaningful employment (Ward & Laws, 2002) and developing social connections with the wider community (Fox, 2015; LeBel et al., 2006). These findings are strengths-based and humanistic. They reiterate the argument of McAlinden (2016) who suggests the need to "invert the risk paradigm" (p. 5) by focussing not on why people with sexual offences reoffend, but asking why they do not? A suitable living environment (that fulfils desired psychosocial home needs) could potentially account for why people do not reoffend. It was these analytical thoughts of the overlap between desistance concepts and living environments that prompted development of the third and final study.

Study 3 built upon the qualitative findings of Study 2 using quantitative techniques (Greene et al., 1989) whilst simultaneously offering validation considerations about psychometric scales administered to people living within sexual offending prisons. Mainly, Study 3

aimed to expand upon the analytical thoughts of Study 2. Are the psychosocial feelings instilled from a persons' living environment important to consider in terms of desistance-based outcomes? Hinted at by others in the past (Bowman & Ely, 2020; Hunter & Farrall, 2015; Pleggenkuhle et al., 2016), though remaining largely underexplored in people with sexual convictions, the third study explored the relationship between the feelings obtained within a persons' living space (psychosocial home needs), and desistance-based outcomes. As an additional aim, this investigation intended to explore differences between living environments, comparing between more restrictive facilities (e.g. prisons and approved premises), and those that allow for more freedom (e.g. independent living). This would have been particularly interesting to consider, given the range of different environments that people with sexual convictions may live within. Unfortunately, due to a combination of both recruitment challenges and a global pandemic (reflected upon further in Section 7.5.1) this secondary aim was not realised.

Although the limitations of a purely prison-based sample are recognised, it was still possible to examine relationships between the psychosocial home needs and positive desistance-based outcomes for people with sexual convictions. The findings indicated a relationship between some of these concepts, particularly when considering their impact on feelings of hope. This acts as a foundation and initiator for further explorations of this issue. It highlights the relevance and importance of examining the nature, meanings, and feelings instilled from environments, due to the potential impact this could have on desistance.

7.2 The Key Message: House, Home, and Hope

The topic of accommodation for people with sexual offence convictions is challenging, multi-faceted and complex. Although access to accommodation is an immediate key reintegration need for people with sexual convictions (Boer, 2013; O'Leary, 2013; SEU, 2002), this thesis has highlighted how accommodation considerations need to extend beyond merely the attainment or non-attainment of shelter. Largely, three key messages are conveyed within this thesis. Although each message has finer complexities and nuances to consider within it, these key points relate to (i) house - the importance of, and challenges surrounding, the attainment of a physical dwelling for people with sexual convictions (ii) home - the necessity to consider the feelings, emotions, and identity implications attached and instilled within places and dwellings (iii) and hope - so as to

better understand the interplay between psychosocial needs and desistance-based outcomes for people with sexual offences.

7.2.1 House

Accessing an accommodation dwelling presents challenges for people with sexual convictions. People with sexual offence convictions face all the discriminatory barriers that people with general convictions face (Cooper, 2016; Preece & Bimpson, 2019), yet with added barriers surrounding risk management procedures and societal stigma (Rydberg, 2018). This thesis has demonstrated that people with sexual convictions experience a sense of limited control in exerting influence over where they live, and they are reliant upon the help and assistances of willing professionals. However, such professionals are up against resistance themselves, required to overcome various barriers imposed that inhibit their ability to aid people with sexual convictions attain accommodation.

7.2.2 Home

The importance of home for people with sexual convictions is largely absent from the literature. Considering the feelings, emotions, social ties, and identity implications attached to the various dwellings in which people with sexual convictions may live is largely understudied. The types of living environments which people with sexual convictions reside within vary greatly, and the feelings instilled and attached to such places are often neglected. That is, research often overlooks the necessary need for a *home* (Atkinson & Jacobs, 2016) ending the debate at the level of the *house* (Ellison et al., 2013; O'Leary, 2013; SEU, 2002). The emotions and feelings attached to such physical places form key psychosocial needs that are important upon re-entry and resettlement, and perhaps serve implications for desistance.

7.2.3 Hope

The importance of considering feelings of home in relation to feelings of hope was evidenced throughout this thesis. Literature regarding desistance for people with sexual convictions is slowly growing (Göbbels et al., 2012; Hulley, 2016; McAlinden et al., 2017), and feelings of hope are a key consideration. The research conducted here has added to this growing body of knowledge. It has contributed a greater understanding about the

interplay between living environments, psychosocial feelings instilled from such environments, and their relationship to potential desistance promoting factors. Considerations about accommodation for people with sexual convictions need to extend merely beyond the discussions regarding the house, to better account for the influence of home, particularly in relation to developing feelings of hope.

7.3 Limitations

7.3.1 Sample Limitations

It is necessary to recognise the limitations of the samples obtained, and the implications these issues have. Firstly, the sampling strategies implemented within each of these studies were non-random (Etikan et al., 2016). The purposive sampling technique allowed for the most relevant individuals to be selected (Tongco, 2007), but could have introduced certain biases. Particularly, self-selection bias could have occurred. The individuals who opted to take part could have had more negative, or positive experiences to discuss about accommodation issues. Based on the nature of the topic and the challenges that both practitioners (Study 1) and people with sexual convictions (Study 2) recounted, it is possible that the samples were biased to attaining more negative views. In an attempt to minimise this problem, the interview schedule was developed in a way to attain both positive and negative experiences regarding accommodation, yet the issue that the sample could have been biased in this way is important to recognise.

When considering the sampling strategy to recruit people with convictions, an added issue was present. To obtain samples of people with sexual convictions, participants had to be recruited via a professional intermediary (Stewart, 2020). The recruitment of people with sexual convictions in the community relied on the assistance of professionals (e.g. offender managers and housing organisations). Issues with this are twofold. Firstly, the professional will have inevitably approached people they felt suitable for the study. Their perceptions of suitability may have impacted who they approached and therefore skewed the data.

Secondly, an ethical concern of coercion warrants discussion (BPS, 2014). Although it was emphasised to participants that their involvement was entirely voluntary, being asked by a professional who is involved in their management could have inadvertently created

feelings of the need to comply. This sampling approach not only means that the sample was susceptible to bias, it also questions whether the sample was even truly voluntary (Ward & Bailey, 2012). This does raise ethical implications, but the risk considerations and sensitive nature of recruitment for people with sexual offence convictions, meant that such intermediary method of recruitment was most appropriate. In an attempt to guard against this issue of coercion, all participant information sheets reiterated the voluntary nature of the research and clearly outlined that participants (non)involvement would not have any implications on criminal justice proceedings.

A second limitation of the samples within this research concerns the demographic locations from which participants were obtained. Most of the participants for the qualitative studies were from the North East and Midlands area. For the prison data in Study 3, participants were recruited from two Midlands prisons. As such, the participants who volunteered to take part may not be representative of the UK. Particularly when considering how disparate accommodation practices seem (HMIP, 2020; this issue of variability was also a finding in Study 1), the applicability of certain findings to other areas could be disputed.

It is important to stress here that generalisability was not a main intention of this thesis. Instead, this thesis aimed to offer an understanding about some of the key issues salient to people's individual experiences. The exploratory nature of the research conducted was intended to initiate discourse in the area of accommodation for people with sexual convictions. Conducting research that can better produce more generalisable claims is a potential area for future research, although not the priority here.

Finally, the purely prison-based sample of Study 3 warrants further discussion. This issue inhibited the realisation of the secondary research aim within this study. It was not possible to test for differences in psychometric scores between peoples living environments. Although it was still viable to examine the relationship between psychosocial home needs and desistance-based outcomes, the applicability of these findings within community contexts is limited. Completing this analysis with participants from various community environments will enhance understanding about the suitability of different accommodation facilities for people with sexual convictions.

7.3.2 Subjectivity and Psychosocial Home Needs

A strength of adopting a mixed methods approach is that the initial qualitative depth gained, could then be built upon in a quantitative manner in Study 3 (Greene et al., 1989). Building on the qualitative findings using psychometric measures was intended to enhance discourse surrounding potential links between home and desistance, and to make statistical inferences about the relationship between these constructs. However, it is important to note that the psychosocial home needs that were measured, were possibly subjective to individuals and unlikely to offer an exhaustive account of important needs to consider.

As Atkinson and Jacobs (2016) acknowledge, the concept of home and the feelings attached to certain places are inherently subjective. Indeed, when attempting to define the term home, researchers often consider this from their own "disciplinary orbit" (Mallet, 2004, p. 64) meaning that the potential ways in which to measure this construct are vast. The extent to which subjective feelings can be quantified then could be challenged. It is important to recognise this potential subjectivity, as what one person may desire from their living facility is not necessarily applicable to all people. Attempting to operationalise concepts associated with home (i.e. the psychosocial home needs measured in Study 3) thus presents some challenges. Although there are challenges with operationalisation and subjectivity, researchers have recently called for more comparative investigations regarding home (Boccagni & Kusenbach, 2020). Using psychometric tools to draw statistical comparisons is one possibility, but other methods could be explored. This thesis has ultimately established a starting point for further exploration into the nature of accommodation environments, and the impact of these environments on desistance related outcomes.

7.4 Applications and Implications

7.4.1 Implications for Policy

The policy implications resulting from this research represent a complex interplay between considering both HMPPS policy, as well as housing policy. Broadly, the implications are two-fold. First, there are implications with regards to accessing accommodation for people with sexual convictions. Many considerations are echoed from other reports (Clinks & Homeless Link, 2017; HMIP, 2020, Mills et al., 2012) that stress the importance of access to accommodation for all offence types. Some of these are reiterated here, whilst also considering issues more pertinent to those with sexual convictions specifically. Second, implications with regards to the suitability of living environments and psychosocial needs are also important to consider. This latter point has received less policy attention than the first. Each will be discussed in turn.

The most recent HMIP report called for a "a national cross-government strategy that addresses the housing needs of offenders" (HMIP, 2020, p. 12). Mills and colleagues also urged for this in their 2012 publication surrounding third sector housing provision, stating that better integration between housing systems and criminal justice systems is necessary for "a more joined-up approach" (Mills et al., 2012, p. 21). HMPPS recognise the need for this within their own business plan, calling for a "cross-government, partnership approach" (HMPPS, 2018, p. 6). This is reemphasised throughout this thesis and was particularly prevalent from the findings from practitioners who voiced their frustrations at macro-level systems and disjointed procedures. A cross-government strategy would involve developing stronger links between both HMPPS organisations and housing providers, to overcome the challenges faced by people with convictions who are trying to attain accommodation, as well as aiding relevant practitioners to fulfil their roles. Adding to these already documented implications, this thesis has demonstrated the added considerations surrounding those with sexual offence convictions specifically. These include considerations surrounding societal stigmatising responses and risk management.

In terms of the added stigma that people with sexual offence convictions are subject to, it is important that provider hostility and personal responses do not influence provider judgements when people with sexual convictions are trying to access accommodation. As

Preece and Bimpson (2019) conclude, it may be hard to foster housing reform, when other societal issues are present:

> Whilst a progressive housing policy can counter exclusion and inequalities, without a systemic reimagining of housing systems, it may be limited in the transformation that can be achieved. There also remains a gap in research to demonstrate how individual agency is involved in contributing to, or mitigating against, housing exclusion as part of these broader structural and institutional processes. (p. 35)

A total transformation of the housing sector is arguably needed to action any change with regards to the discrimination faced by people with convictions, making it extremely difficult. This, combined with the need to tackle societal stigma surrounding offences (in particular the extreme responses in relation to people with sexual convictions witnessed here) is challenging.

In terms of the added risk management procedures that people with sexual convictions are subject to, inter-governmental links are again encouraged, so that risk can be managed appropriately and communicated between criminal justice professionals and housing professionals. MAPPA procedures currently in place go some way to address this (McCartan et al., 2018), but there is still additional work to be done. For example, considering those people who are released at their sentence end date with no statutory input from the MoJ, as well as considering the complexities regarding private rented sector landlords who are under no duty to comply with MAPPA procedures (National MAPPA Team, 2019). Furthermore, it is important to recognise the individualised needs of people with sexual convictions, and dispel stereotypes and myths resulting from the scope of the term "sexual offence" (Sexual Offences Act, 2002). Housing decisions should be proportionate and related to the individual needs of the person with the conviction, both in terms of considering how risk is managed, as well as when considering what is most suitable for the persons housing needs.

The implications discussed above, and indeed from previous reports, are largely at the level of accessing housing and accommodation. Less is known about the suitability of the environments in which people reside once they have successfully attained an accommodation environment. I argue that this requires greater consideration within policy. HMPPS business priorities stress the need for "getting the basic rights" (HMPPS, 2018, p.3). Accessing accommodation is one such basic need and is key to reducing reoffending (SEU, 2002). However, I argue that it is necessary to go beyond these basics, to consider

more complex nuances surrounding the psychosocial needs instilled from living environments. This could enhance understanding about factors that are key to desistance (Hunter & Farrall, 2015). Considering the nature and role of environments, in terms of people's ability to reintegrate into society as hopeful, and active members of society, could explain why people with sexual convictions refrain from reoffending. This aligns with McAlinden's (2016) calls to "invert the risk paradigm" (p. 16), focussing further efforts on understanding why people do not reoffend, as opposed to why they do. Positive psychosocial feelings instilled from living environments, could contribute to more pro-social outcomes for people with sexual convictions and foster safer, more inclusive societies for everyone.

7.4.2 Future Research Implications

This thesis has established foundations for additional investigations into accommodation for people with sexual convictions. It has highlighted the need for this, as well as offered initial exploratory insights into some of the main issues and needs for people with sexual convictions specifically. One avenue of further research would be to obtain more views on the topic. For example, the qualitative findings from practitioners and people with convictions revealed negative perceptions towards some general accommodation providers and representatives. It would be interesting, fair, and balanced, to further understand the issues from their perspectives. This would enable a better understanding of how these challenges are construed and dealt with by housing organisations themselves.

A second area for further investigation is to enhance the research regarding space, place, and home, in processes of desistance. Although the research regarding desistance for people with sexual convictions is developing (Göbbels et al., 2012; Hulley, 2016; McAlinden et al., 2017), understanding the relationship between psychosocial home needs and desistance, has largely been neglected. The quantitative element of this thesis offered initial support to the importance of this. Exploring further potential psychosocial needs, as well as comparing between different living facilities, will enable a deeper understanding about desistance promoting (or inhibiting) environments for people. This is not only important for people with sexual offence convictions but understudied in people with non-sexual convictions too.

A further consideration is to examine the nature of this relationship, and accommodation issues for further subgroups of people with sexual offence convictions. The definition adopted within this thesis was vast (Sexual Offences Act, 2003). As Laws and Ward (2011) suggest, people with sexual offence convictions have different offending trajectories, potentially indicating different desistance processes. Future research could narrow the scope of the sexual offences investigated.

7.5 Reflections

Undertaking this PhD has afforded me many opportunities, beyond that of just developing my research skills. Having remained in full time education from school right up until completion of this PhD, I often questioned whether I had the necessary skills to complete this research. Apart from volunteering within Circles of Support and as an Honorary Assistant Psychologist in a medium secure unit, my practical experiences within forensic contexts were limited. My understanding of housing policy and procedure even more so. I have learnt so much over the past four years and I feel privileged to have been able to hear from people with such diverse backgrounds and expertise in this thesis topic. Taking time to reflect on some of the key experiences throughout the four years will enable me to make sense of my learning further (Paterson & Chapman, 2013).

7.5.1 Recruitment Difficulties

Undoubtedly the main challenge that I have experienced throughout undertaking this research is recruiting people from the community who have convictions for a sexual offence. This challenge was a multi-faceted one, whereby a combination of factors underpinned this difficulty that I experienced. People with sexual offence convictions may be classed as a hard to reach sample (Abrams, 2010). Their stigmatised offence type makes them distrustful of others, including researchers (Klein et al., 2018) . As such, low response rates are often attained (Maxfield, 2015). Here I outline the challenges specific to my experiences and reflect on what I learnt from this.

The first element of this challenge was gaining permission to conduct research within different NPS divisions. There are seven NPS divisions (NPS, 2019), and each division considers research requests differently. As one member of probation staff described, the NPS is a "nebulous" organisation, often making it challenging to know who best to

approach and how to advertise the research. This need to "negotiate with numerous gatekeepers" (Stewart, 2020, p. 6) has also proved challenging for others in the field. I first needed to gain the trust and respect of professionals, so that they would permit me access to a sensitive client group, yet, knowing the best way to approach this was often challenging.

Throughout the recruitment stages, I was extremely grateful to the staff members that were so helpful in facilitating my research. I was very aware of the demands that NPS and accommodation staff were under, and wary of coming across as an added burden. I believe that part of this sensitivity was born from the challenges that I had heard participants speak of in Study 1. In honesty, I do feel that this hyper-awareness of current staff demands made me conscious and cautious of asking for further help. This experience has taught me to be more confident in the value of my work, and not to feel intimidated by a lack of response.

Within Study 3, it is acknowledged that a combination of recruitment challenges and Covid-19 lockdown measures meant that the secondary aim of this study was not achieved. Although research packs were distributed to community settings to probation divisions that agreed to take part, the community recruitment process then felt largely out of my hands. This was quite unsettling for me. The level of control that I had over participant recruitment within the prison, compared to the level of control that I had over recruitment in the community was in stark contrast. Within the prison setting, again, I was fortunate and grateful to be aided by extremely helpful staff. In this instance however, I was in control of distributing questionnaires to wings, offering to place them under cell doors, and recollecting completed questionnaires. Within the community, this process was out of my hands, and relied on the willingness of more professionals to distribute questionnaires. This process of filtering through professionals inevitably meant that there is one more person for the process to pass through, increasing the challenges in accessing the person with the sexual offence conviction themselves.

Assuming that each of the previous barriers were surmounted, the final challenge then lies in the potential participant accepting to take part in the research themselves. It is pivotal that the potential participants trust the research and researcher. People with sexual offence convictions are often distrustful of others (Klein et al., 2018), fearful of offence exposure and vigilantism (Woodall et al., 2013). Potential feelings of scepticism, distrust,

and exposure concerns were all likely exacerbated by the fact that there was limited opportunity for rapport building within the data recruitment method of Study 3.

One main thing that I took from this experience that I would now do differently would be to approach all seven probation divisions from the outset to maximise recruitment possibilities irrespective of location. Initially, I began by seeking approval from services geographically close. As participants could request face to face meetings, I implemented opportunity sampling in terms of my time availability and resources. Upon reflection, I would seek divisional approval from all areas, to offset the influence of each of these stages of the recruitment challenges.

Later in the process, this is what I did, and I received some positive responses from the London and South East probation divisions. This made my regret in not approaching them in the first instance even stronger. Unfortunately, these attempts were overridden by Covid-19, and the lack of community responses meant that the secondary aim of Study 3 was not realised. Again, cautious of the demands that people were under, I made sure to thank people for their time and efforts in considering the research, but that data collection for this investigation would be ending as a result of Covid-19.

7.5.2 Exposure to Emotionally Charged Accounts

A second aspect of the research process that is important for me to reflect upon is the nature of the participant accounts that I was exposed to. Some of these were emotionally challenging, for both participants and myself. I began the research process thinking that the topic of accommodation was relatively non-emotive. Unlike other peers, I did not intend to collect any in-depth data about offending history, treatment, or seemingly more sensitive issues. Asking people to recount their accommodation experiences seemed like a somewhat neutral topic to me. Initially, I perhaps naively underestimated the possible emotional impact of the data collection. It soon became apparent that there was much more emotion attached to this topic than I had anticipated.

Some accounts from people with sexual convictions were upsetting to hear about. For example, one participant got visibly upset at the home they once had and seemingly experienced a sense of loss and grief for their previous life. Another participant described his perceived inability to ever attain a home due to his status as a stigmatised "sex

offender". After emotionally difficult interviews, I made sure to debrief within my supervision team.

This experience taught me about the importance of not constructing pre-conceived assumptions on a topic. For me personally, having stable shelter and a roof is something I have always been fortunate to have. Perhaps taking this for granted, I possibly assumed that the conversations I would have with people would be matter of fact. For most participants it was, but for some people it elicited emotional responses. On reflection, entering the research process in this way did not prepare me for the emotional accounts that I heard. Learning from this experience, I will approach all future research investigations in an open-minded manner, irrespective of the topic.

Hearing these emotional accounts prompts additional reflective comments. I was experiencing some level of sympathy for participants, whist simultaneously mindful of their offence and the pain they had caused to the people they had offended against. I felt uncomfortable at this discrepancy. It was reassuring to learn that others in this position have experienced similar feelings, including Forensic Psychologist Stephen Diamond (2003), who notes that such work and research is a "deeply humanizing experience" (Diamond, 2003, p. 26). Conversely, there were times when speaking to participants strongly contrasted my own views, often making me frustrated. I was careful not to corroborate these views, or act as an outlet to the participant. I remained impartial throughout interview processes and did not indicate my own personal values, despite some participants apparent efforts to attain this. Debrief sessions and phone calls with the supervision team enabled me to disclose my personal feelings and concerns, without them interfering with the research process itself.

Another frustration I felt was towards the accommodation systems and political structures more generally. Hearing from the challenges that practitioners faced in their daily role really emphasised the stressful and uncertain nature of their role. The challenges were then corroborated by people with convictions, instilling a passion within me to help change these issues. I felt like I had an abundance of data that allowed people to vent their anger at a broken system, and that I was in some way responsible for changing the ineffective practices that may be apparent. I was passionate that something needed to change but felt unsure how to action this as one individual. I recall a supervision meeting where I expressed this, and queried ways in which to influence policy and systems. I was

reassured by the premise that this thesis would underpin the SLF accommodation project and go some way to bettering the accommodation outcomes for people with convictions, ultimately to aid reintegration and create safer societies for all individuals.

7.5 Conclusion

By implementing a mixed methods approach, this thesis has explored the topic of accommodation for people with sexual offence convictions. It has examined the accommodation related experiences of both professionals and people with sexual convictions, to better understand pertinent issues in this area. This thesis has emphasised the interplay between house, home, and hope. People with sexual offence convictions require a structural dwelling, though there are often challenges in attaining this (house). The feelings attached to such dwellings are important, as essential psychosocial needs may or may not be fulfilled within certain living environments (home). Finally, this research has highlighted that it is important to consider the attainment of these psychosocial needs and feelings, particularly in terms of developing a greater understanding of the relationship between places and desistance processes (hope).

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Risk Assessment

Task or Activity Description	Location:	
Jessica is undertaking a PhD at Nottingham Trent University. As part of her research, data collection from people with sexual offences is required. Previous phases of this PhD saw Jessica interview people with sex offence convictions, and professionals in the community, about accommodation. The next phase of this PhD research involves administering questionnaires to a large sample of people with sexual offences. These questionnaires will be administered to people in prisons, and from a variety of community facilities. Jessica will be travelling to national probation divisions, as well as accommodation facilities that house people with sexual offences. Most of the questionnaires will be self-completed by participants, however, Jessica will offer meetings to those who require it. Ultimately, the research should help to inform a new SLF housing project to accommodate those released from prison who were previously convicted of a sexual offence.	**Persons at Risk - Affected Groups:**	
	A – Researcher	B – People in prison
	C – People with sex offences in the community	D – Prison Staff
	E – Accommodation Staff	F – Supervisors

Potential Hazard	Existing Controls	Risk level with controls	Additional Controls or Required Action & Date
Risks posed when working, and data collecting in prisons	Jessica is prison vetted, key trained, and has undertaken personal protection training within the prison service. She is familiar with the noticeboard alerting staff to prisoners who are a cause for concern. Should any potential participants pose a risk to lone females during data collection, Jessica will ask that another colleague sits in on data collection meetings. Jessica will conduct data collection meetings within secure, private interview rooms that she has internally pre-booked. Jessica will familiarise herself with location of alarm points of each meeting room. Whilst working within prison settings, Jessica will try to minimise any unnecessary contact with people in prison. She will do so by avoiding walking around the grounds during movement time. Furthermore, when working from any office she will alert people to where she is going. Jessica has previous training in breakaway techniques should an assault occur. She has participated with HMPPS personal protection training in order to meet the standards of training required by them.	medium	Jessica has been issued with an alarm to wear whilst she is in the prison.

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Potential Hazard	Existing Controls	Risk level with controls	Additional Controls or Required Action & Date
Risks posed when data collecting in the community	Risk may be encountered when visiting new locations in the community. These may include accommodation facilities, and national probation service offices. Jessica will always contact the organisation before visiting their establishment, and ensure she is up to date with any policies or procedures required of her during the visit. Jessica will check the day before data collection meetings that it is still suitable for her to attend. Jessica will only conduct face to face meetings within staffed facilities (e.g. where staff are onsite in an accommodation facility office, or within probation offices). Jessica will liaise with responsible professionals about the most suitable location to hold data collection meetings. Jessica will not meet with individuals in their own private living space. She will inform her supervision team of her whereabouts that day, and text them upon entering/leaving meetings.	medium	Contacting new organisations before visiting
Being exposed to confidential material.	Jessica may be exposed to confidential information about people in the prison and in the community, in her research capacity. She is well aware of the BPS code of conduct in terms of keeping information confidential, and has experience of handling confidential records during previous positions. Should an individual disclose anything that suggests they are a risk to themselves or others, or that they disclose a previously undisclosed offence, this	medium	

Potential Hazard	Existing Controls	Risk level with controls	Additional Controls or Required Action & Date
	information will be passed on accordingly. The disclosing individual will be made aware of the requirement to override confidentiality restraints		
Being exposed to potentially disturbing information	Jessica might face discussions about sensitive topics. It is important that she maintains her own well-being when being exposed to any distressing information. She will discuss any concerns or worries with her supervision team and have a debrief regarding the situation. She is aware of a prison counselling service that she can make use of if the need arises, and also the counselling service provided at NTU.	medium	
Qualitative data - Maintaining anonymity of participants	Where qualitative result reporting will be necessary (and thus direct quotations) the need to maintain anonymity of the individual becomes paramount. Full real names that may compromise the anonymity of a person will not be reported anywhere throughout the research reports. Participant consent forms that might require a name and signature will be kept in secure locations, and destroyed when no longer needed. The information provided on the participant consent form will not ask for any other identifiable details of the participant. When discussing people via email, only the initials will be used. Where uncertainty regarding this arises, face to face conversations or telephone calls will take	medium	

Potential Hazard	Existing Controls	Risk level with controls	Additional Controls or Required Action & Date
	place if the need to disclose an participants name occurs.		
Safer Living Foundation multi-purpose office use	When working from the SLF office in NTU, Jessica will bear in mind that the location of this office is to maintain private in all situations. This should avoid any negative implications for those visiting the facility. She will not tell anyone the location of the office, or about the meetings held here.	medium	

This risk level has been reduced as low as is reasonably practicable			
Assessor's Signature:	J.LOMAS	**Date**	21/4/2019
Manager's Signature	B.WINDER	**Date:**	21/4/2019

	1st Review	2nd Review	3rd Review	4th Review	5Th Review
Assessors Name:	Jessica Lomas	Jessica Lomas	Jessica Lomas		
Managers Name:	Belinda Winder	Belinda Winder	Belinda Winder		
Date of Review:	October 2016	January 2018	April 2019		

Appendix 2. Interview Schedules

2.1 Interview Schedule for Study 1

This interview schedule is divided into broad, main sections, that the interview should aim to cover. Start by asking the participant the broad questions within each section. Additional prompts are bullet pointed should the participant require further guidance to answer the question.

Introductions
Explain who I am, where I am from, give brief overview of topics to be discussed, and set out time it should take. Ask for demographic information. Age.

Experiences related to housing gained from current profession
Can you confirm your current position of work?

How long have you worked in this position for?

Can you talk me through a typical day/week of your job role?
What are your main duties?
What is your specific experience in terms of accommodation for released individuals convicted of a sexual offence?

Can you describe any specific experiences assisting people with sex offence convictions to find accommodation?
What did you do?
Do you have any experience dealing with accommodation services directly? Can you describe specific experiences
Risk management experiences?
Challenges?
Things that works well?

Feelings towards the previously offending individual
What are your feelings about individuals previously convicted of a sexual offence moving on to live in the community?

What are some challenges you think people with sex offence convictions face upon release?
Emotional difficulties?
Practical and physical difficulties?
Have you any specific experiences relating to dealing with someone experiencing such difficulties? How could you assist? What help was available for them?

Feelings about current accommodation services and provision
Can you tell me about any specific experiences of dealing directly with accommodation facilities housing individuals previously convicted of a sexual offence?
Approved premises?
Charitable initiatives?
Any specific positive experiences?
Any specific negative experiences?

Staff/resident relationships
Views regarding risk management protocols?

What do you think works well in current service delivery models, that accommodate for individuals previously convicted of a sexual offence?

What do you think could be improved about current service delivery models providing for individuals previously convicted of a sexual offence?

Information relevant from previous positions
Have you had any other similar professions in the past?
Where?
How long for?
Did it differ in any way from your position now? (with specific regards to dealing with housing individuals previously convicted of a sexual offence).

Closing the interview
Ask if anything they would like to add on topic of accommodation, thank for time, provide opportunity for questions and debrief

2.2 Interview Schedule for Study 2

This interview schedule is divided into broad, main sections, that the interview should aim to cover. Start by asking the participant the broad questions within each section. Additional prompts are bullet pointed should the participant require further guidance to answer the question.

Introductions
Explain who I am, where I am from, give brief overview of topics to be discussed, and set out time it should take.

Demographics
Can you start by telling me a bit about yourself?
Age
How long out of prison
Time in prison
Where they're currently living
How long they've lived in current facility

Experiences upon prison release
So when you first found out you were leaving prison, how did that feel?
Concerns/worries? (Why?)
(If mentioning something sexual offending specific) Do you think other offence types would have same concerns? Why/why not? How does this make you feel?
Looking forward to anything? (Why?)

Can you tell me more about your preparation for release?
Anything sorted in relation to housing?
Knew where you would be living?
Didn't know where you would be living? Impact this had? Feelings around this?

Can you talk around your accommodation experiences when you were released?
Any challenges?
(if mentioning something SO specific) Do you think other offence types would have same challenges? Why/why not? How does this make you feel?
Anything positive?

Accommodation requirements
What do you feel you need from accommodation generally?
Physical provisions? E.g. bed, space, food, facilities
Things you would want
Things you would not want
Draw upon the needs discussed and ask why these are important

Based on the things you mentioned then, can you tell me more about whether you feel these needs are met where you currently live?
Additional prompts:
Why/ why not? Impact this has on you.

Can you talk to me about whether you think your housing needs have changed at all?
Why/Why not?
How have they changed?

Can you tell me about your thoughts on accommodations and reoffending?

Can you tell me more about where you are currently living and if this relates to you not reoffending?
Why/why not?

Experiences of current accommodation facility
Talked on prison release and what you feel you need from accommodation, so moving on, can you tell me what you expected from your new accommodation?
What were your expectations about accommodation before you were released?
Did these change?
Does where you are now meet your expectations?
How/how not?

What is your life like now where you are living?
A typical day?
How do you fill your time?
positive experiences? (how did this make you feel)
negative experiences? (how did this make you feel, how did you cope)
Is life enjoyable/not enjoyable?
What do you like? (why?)
What don't you like? (why?) Improvements?

House/Home? *(if word home is mentioned naturally – draw on this and ask these prompts then)*
What does the word home mean to you?
Draw on topics raised, why does this mean home?
Differences between having the physical house/flat as opposed to a home?
Discuss these differences? Why do you think these are what constitutes a home?

Experiences from other facilities *(if not already drawn comparisons previously)*
Can you tell me about other facilities you've lived in the past if there are any?
Where?
How long for?
Are there any differences, if so can you explain these? Better or worse and in what ways?

Closing the interview
Ask if there is anything they would like to add on topic of accommodation, thank for time, provide opportunity for questions and debrief.

Appendix 3. Interview Information Sheets and Consent Forms

3.1.1 Study 1 Information Sheet for Professionals

Thank you for thinking about taking part in this research. Please read the following information carefully. For the safety of residents who may have taken part in a similar interview, please do not talk about this research in public areas where other non-participating residents might hear you. This is to keep resident participant's previous offence histories concealed. Take as much time as you need to decide whether to take part.

What is the purpose of the study?
This study aims to gain your views regarding accommodation for people with sexual offence convictions. Having conducted interviews to gain views relevant to the residents themselves, a balanced view when considering housing is pivotal. It is hoped that the interview data gathered will be able to develop current accommodation service provision. A Nottinghamshire based charity, The Safer Living Foundation, are hoping to use the data to develop their own housing facility suitable for people with sexual offence convictions.

Who is running this study?
The project is run by myself. It will be supervised by Professor Belinda Winder, Dr Nicholas Blagden, and Rebecca Lievesley, and Governor Lynn Saunders. The team has both practical and research experience in this area.

Who is funding this study?
The Safer Living Foundation and Nottingham Trent University fund the study.

Why have I been chosen to take part?
I am inviting you to be interviewed, on the basis that you fit the inclusion criteria for this research. You have experience related to community living/housing of individuals who have sex offence convictions.

Do I have to take part?
Your participation is entirely voluntary. If you don't want to participate this will not have any negative consequences for you. If you do decide to take part, you will be asked to sign a consent form. You will still be free to stop the interview at any time, and you can refuse to answer questions. Once interviewed, you can withdraw your data for up to one month after your interview date.

What do you want me to do?
I would like you to take part in an interview lasting approximately one hour. It will take place at a time and location suitable for you. With your permission, the interview will be recorded.

What will happen to the information I give in my interview?
Your interview will be recorded and then typed up. I will then analyse all participant's interviews for my results. Your interviews will be made anonymous and confidential so that no-one will be able to know you were a participant.

How will you protect my confidentiality and anonymity?
The interview will only be handled by members of the research team. Notes will be kept in lockers, and computer files will be password protected. Tape recordings are stored on a password protected recorder, and kept in a locked briefcase. You will not be named in any

publication about this project. I will make sure that you cannot be identified by the way I write up my findings.

PLEASE NOTE: there are some circumstances where confidentiality may need to be broken – should you disclose anything to me that has the potential to cause harm to yourself or others, I am legally obliged to pass this information on to the relevant person. I am also required to pass on information about any previously unreported offences.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks in taking part?
The main cost to you will be the time needed to be interviewed. Another risk is that you might offer
information that is detrimental to you or your organisation. Staying on topic of the interview questions asked should avoid such a risk. It is also important to reiterate that all of your responses will be entirely anonymous and confidential throughout all stages of the research, thus any views you may hold counter to the views of your profession will not be identifiable to you. I am confident that these arrangements minimise any possible risks.

What are the possible benefits?
I hope that you will find the interview interesting, and will take satisfaction from sharing your views about current accommodation provision for individuals previously convicted of a sexual offence.

You will be helping to develop knowledge of this topic that could have real-life implications. The development of a new housing project (delivered by the Safer Living Foundation) arising as a result of this research is a possibility. Hearing your views can help to expand the provision of appropriate housing for individuals. In turn it is hoped that the accommodation facility will be delivered in a way to promote rehabilitation efforts, thus minimising the risk of reoffending, and benefitting society. The interview data you provide has the potential to enhance current service provision within already established accommodation facilities.

What will happen to the results?
I will write up the results in a report and publish this in research journals. I will talk about my findings to other researchers. I will also pass the results on to HMPPS so they know how services might be developed.

How can I find out more about this project and its results?
Once I have analysed all the information provided by participants, I will arrange for time to discuss my main analysis results to you should you wish. I will email a copy of the summary and any published material to all participants, so you will be able to read about my findings.

Has anyone reviewed the study?
This research has been reviewed by Nottingham Trent University and NOMS Research Ethics Committees. The project is safe and ethical to undertake.

Who is responsible if anything goes wrong?
Nottingham Trent University.

Contacts for further information
If this research has caused you any distress or anxiety and you wish to discuss this with someone outside of the research team, Samaritans offer 24/7 free and confidential support on 116 123.

If you have any more questions, or want to withdraw your interview data (up to 4 weeks after completion) please email me at jess.lomas2016@my.ntu.ac.uk

3.1.2 Study 1 Consent Form for Professionals

Current position and place of employment…………………………….............

Please read and confirm your consent to being interviewed for this project by initialling the appropriate boxes and signing and dating this form

1.	The purpose of the project has been explained to me, I have been given information about it in writing, and I have had opportunity to ask questions

☐

2.	I understand that my participation is voluntary, and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason	☐

3	I give permission for the interview to be tape-recorded, on the understanding that the tape is password protected and will be destroyed when no longer needed	☐

4.	I am aware that confidentiality must be broken if I disclose information that may be a risk to myself or others, or I disclose information about unreported offences

☐

5.	I agree to take part in this project	☐

_____   _____   _____

Name of participant   Date   Signature

_____   _____   _____

Name of researcher   Date   Signature

3.2.1 Study 2 Information Sheet for People With Sexual Convictions

Thank you for thinking about taking part in this research. Please read the following information carefully. For your own safety, do not talk about this research with other residents living at the same place as you. This is to keep your previous offences private from others who you might not want to know. Take as much time as you need to decide whether to take part.

What is the purpose of the study?

This study will ask about your current community living experiences. It will look at your experiences coming out of prison, resettlement challenges, and what you like and dislike about where you are currently living. It also aims to understand more about your own experiences of living in the community. It is hoped that the interviews will be able to help develop accommodation services. A Nottinghamshire based charity, The Safer Living Foundation, are hoping to use the data collected to develop housing for individuals previously convicted of a sexual offence. By hearing your views, it is possible for the charity to consider your thoughts.

Who is running this study?

I run the project. It will be supervised by Professor Belinda Winder, Dr Nicholas Blagden, Rebecca Lievesley, and Lynn Saunders. The team has lots of experience in this area.

Who is funding this study?

The Safer Living Foundation and Nottingham Trent University fund the study.

Why have I been chosen to take part?

I am inviting you to be interviewed because you fit the studies aims. You have a previous conviction for a sexual offence and now live in the community.

Do I have to take part?

This study is voluntary. If you don't want to participate this will not have any negative costs for you. If you do decide to take part, you will need to sign a consent form. You will still be free to stop the interview at any time and you can refuse to answer any questions. You can also withdraw your interview for up to one month after your participation.

What do you want me to do?

I would like you to take part in an interview lasting approximately 1 hour. I will ask you questions about living in the community after prison. If you let me, the interview will be recorded. If you want to stop the interview but carry on with it at another time I can arrange a follow-up interview for you. You will be asked to consent to this follow-up interview again should you wish for one.

What will happen to the information I give in my interview?

Your interview will be recorded and then typed up. I will then analyse all participant's interviews for my results. Your interviews will be made anonymous and confidential so that no-one will be able to know you were a participant. The recording will be deleted as soon as reasonably possible.

How will you protect my confidentiality and anonymity?

The interview will only be handled by members of the research team. Notes will be kept in lockers, and computer files will be password protected. Tape recordings are stored on a password protected recorder, and kept in a locked briefcase. You will not be named in any publication about this project. I will make sure that you cannot be identified by the way I write up my findings.

PLEASE NOTE: sometimes confidentiality might need to be broken – if you tell me anything that could cause harm to yourself or others, I need to pass this information on to the relevant person. If you tell me about a previously unreported offence, this will also need to be passed on. Staying on topic, and giving answers relevant to the question should make sure you do not do this.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks in taking part?
The interview will take up some of your time but hopefully you will find it enjoyable. Also, you might risk telling me something that needs to be passed on to your probation officer or the police, but staying on topic of the questions asked should stop this from happening.

For your own safety, you should only discuss this research with the research team or trusted professionals who know about your offences (probation officers or accommodation staff). You should not take this information sheet outside of this research room.

What are the possible benefits?
I hope that you will find the interview interesting, and will enjoy sharing your views about your accommodation. The research could have real-life benefits for people like yourself, such as a new housing project being made, and existing community facilities being developed.

What will happen to the results?
I will write up the results in a report and publish this in research journals. I will talk about my findings to other researchers. I will also pass the results on to HMPPS.

How can I find out more about this project and its results?
Once I have looked at all the interviews, I can arrange a time to tell you about my main results. I will send a copy of the main results to your accommodation staff, so you will be able to read about my findings.

Has anyone reviewed the study?
This research has been reviewed by Nottingham Trent University and HMPPS National Research Committee. The project is safe to undertake.

Contacts for further information
If you have any more questions or want to withdraw your interview data (up to 4 weeks after completion) please discuss this with the staff member who helped to arrange this interview. They will contact me, and I will then be in touch.

If this research has caused you any distress or anxiety and you wish to discuss this with someone outside of the research team, Samaritans offer 24/7 free and confidential telephone support on 116 123.

3.2.2 Study 2 Consent Form for People With Sexual Convictions

Type of accommodation ……………………………….............

Please read and confirm your consent to being interviewed for this project by initialling the boxes and signing and dating this form

1.   The project has been explained to me, I have been given information about it in writing, and I have had chance to ask questions

☐

2.   I understand that taking part is voluntary, and that I can withdraw without giving any reason ☐

3   I give permission for the interview to be tape-recorded ☐

4.   I know that confidentiality must be broken if I disclose information that may be a risk to myself or others, or I disclose a previously unreported offence ☐

5.   I agree to take part in this project ☐

_____   _____   _____

Name of participant   Date   Signature

_____   _____   _____

Name of researcher   Date   Signature

Appendix 4. Interview Debrief Sheets

4.1 Interview Debrief for Study 1 With Professionals

Thankyou once again for taking part in this research. Please feel free to ask any more final questions. If you need to get in touch with me about the research once you leave, or have any concerns, you   can email me at jess.lomas2016@my.ntu.ac.uk. Remember that you can withdraw your data up to one month after your interview date.

I will make the findings of my research available to you once all the data is analysed. Once again, I assure you that all the interview responses you provided today will remain confidential and anonymous.

Please feel free to discuss this research with other professionals. Can I please ask that you do not discuss this research in public, for the safety of residents from your facility who may have taken part in this research as well, and in order to keep their previous offence history confidential.

If this research has caused you any distress or anxiety and you wish to discuss this with someone outside of the research team, Samaritans offer 24/7 free and confidential telephone support on 116 123.

4.2 Interview Debrief for Study 2 With People With Convictions

Thankyou once again for taking part in this research. Please feel free to ask any more final questions, or if you need to get in touch with me about the research once you leave, please discuss this with the member of staff who informed you about my research. They will then ask that I get in touch. Remember that you can still withdraw your data up to one month after your interview date. I will make the findings of my research available to you once all the data is analysed. Once again, I assure you that all the interview responses you provided today will remain confidential and anonymous.

If you have any concerns about this research, please discuss these either with myself, or trusted professionals who already know about your offence history (for example accommodation staff or your probation officer). Try not to talk about this research with other residents. This is to keep your offending history private from people who you might not wish to know.

If you need any practical advice about any resettlement issues, Nacro offer support Monday-Friday 9am-5pm on 0300 123 1999.

If this research has caused you any distress or anxiety and you wish to discuss this with someone outside of the research team, Samaritans offer 24/7 free and confidential telephone support on 116 123.

Appendix 5. Study 3: Original Intentions.

5.1 Community Data Collection Information.

The original hypothesis developed for Study 3 initially intended to obtain data from a wide variety of settings in which people with sexual convictions live. Due to a combination of recruitment challenges and Covid-19 Lockdown measures, this was not possible. Community data collection methods are highlighted here for the reader.

Before proceeding with community data collection, permission from the appropriate professional was sought to involve their service users. This involved approaching probation service division leads, probation service cluster leads, third-sector organisation managers, and housing managers. Having already established some links with organisations from the prior interview phase, professionals from this stage were re-contacted. Organisations who consented to the involvement of their service users were then given three options of data collection methods. Ultimately, the data collection strategies remained flexible to best suit the needs of the organisation.

Community research packs were delivered to the participating organisation. Written instructions were also delivered with the research packs, to give the staff members distributing the questionnaires clear guidance. Staff were instructed to distribute the research pack to people with sexual offence convictions, and to do so on a 1:1 basis.

There were three options for community-based data completion:

(i) Community self-administered

Community research packs included all the necessary materials to take part, including a research invitation, option to arrange a meeting, information sheet, consent form, questionnaire, and debrief sheet with return instructions. Participants were instructed to return their completed questionnaire in the free-post return envelope provided. Approximately 400 research packs were distributed to community settings. Three people returned their questionnaire using this method.

(ii) Community assisted

Face to face meetings were also offered to people in the community who needed help completing the questionnaire. One organisation stipulated this would be the most appropriate method for their organisation, and as such was the sole data collection method used for one third sector organisation. Community meetings were facilitated by liaising with a member of staff from within the participating organisation. They were arranged to take place in a secure, private, meeting room. Using the same research pack as the one delivered, the participant was guided through each section. The research was explained using the information sheet, informed consent was obtained, and the participant was guided through the questionnaire items. At the end of the meeting, they were given the opportunity to ask further questions and debriefed. Four people were recruited from one organisation using this method.

(iii) Community online

A Qualtrics survey questionnaire was also developed, to increase community participation. It was noted that this method of data collection would only be suitable for certain individuals who did not have licence restrictions against internet use. When liaising with professionals about the most appropriate method of data collection however, there was minimal uptake on this method. It would have required careful identification of individual needs, whereas paper-based completion would be appropriate for all. As such, no participants utilised the online survey platform.

5.2 Research Packs Administered to People Living in The Community.

Research Invitation

Hello,

My name is Jess. I am a researcher at Nottingham Trent University. I am contacting you about accommodation research. The research aims to understand about helpful living places for people with offences. The information sheet on the back of this page gives more detail. The research will involve completing this questionnaire. I will not ask for your name. If you have any questions about this research, please contact the professional who provided you with this research pack. They will then be in touch to pass on your queries.

Thank you!

Do you need help with this study?

If you need help completing this questionnaire, or there is anything you do not understand, I can arrange a meeting. Please contact the professional who approached you about this research. They will then talk to me to arrange a time to meet.

<u>Information Sheet:</u> Exploring the relationship between accommodation needs and positive outcomes.

Thank you for thinking about taking part in this study. Please read this information carefully. Take as much time as you need to decide whether to take part.

What is the purpose of the study?
The purpose of this study is to see whether housing needs impact positive outcomes, for people with offences. The results will help to develop a new housing project.

Who is running this study?
I am the lead researcher of this study (Jessica Lomas). Professor Belinda Winder, Dr Nicholas Blagden, and Rebecca Lievesley supervise this research. The Safer Living Foundation charity and Nottingham Trent University fund the study.

Do I have to take part?
This study is voluntary. There will not be any negative costs if you do not take part. It will not impact any criminal justice decisions. You can stop the research at any time. You can withdraw your data for up to one month. ***Please remember your participant code for this.***

What do you want me to do?
I would like you to fill in a questionnaire. The questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes to fill in. ***For your own safety, please try to complete this questionnaire in a private location away from people you do not know. Return the questionnaire as soon as possible once complete.***

What will happen to the information I give?
Your answers will be inputted to a computer. I will analyse the data, and write-up my findings. I will write up the results in reports, journals, and presentations.

How will you protect my confidentiality and anonymity?
Questionnaires will be kept secure. Computer files will be password protected. I will not ask for your name. Nobody will be able to tell you took part. ***If you disclose something that puts yourself or others at risk, or you disclose an unreported offence, I need to report this to other staff (e.g. the police/your offender manager).*** Staying on topic of the questions asked will avoid this.

What are the positives and negatives of taking part?
The questionnaire will take up some of your time, but I hope you find it enjoyable. The research could have real life benefits, such as a new housing project being made by the Safer Living Foundation. If any of the questions upset you, please read the last page for support.

How can I find out more about this project and its results?
I will provide the professional who told you about this study, with information about the results.

Has anyone reviewed the study?
This research has been reviewed by Nottingham Trent University and HMPPS National Research Committee. The project is safe to undertake.

Contacts for further information
If you have any questions, please contact the professional who told you about this research. They will pass your questions on to me. If you want to withdraw your data at a later point, please post the withdrawal form to the address provided on the last page.

<u>Consent Form</u>

Please make sure you fill in this sheet and return it with your questionnaire

Please make up a participant code. Please include at least two words and two numbers.

Participant Code: _____

Please remember your participant code in case you want to withdraw your data. You can withdraw for up to 4 weeks after you take part.

Please confirm your consent by **ticking** the boxes and **initialling** and **dating** this form.

1.   The project has been explained; I have been given information about it in writing.

☐   *Please tick this box*

2.   I understand that all of my answers will remain anonymous and confidential. I know that confidentiality must be broken if I disclose something that is a risk to myself or others, or I disclose an unreported offence. Staying on topic should avoid this.

☐   *Please tick this box*

3.   I understand that taking part is voluntary. I understand I can withdraw my data up to four weeks after completion. I know that I need to remember my participant code if I decide to withdraw my data. I know that I do not need to give a reason if I want to withdraw.

☐   *Please tick this box*

4.   I agree to take part in this project. ☐ *Please tick this box*

Please write your initials to show you agree to take part in this research: _____

Date: _____

<u>Questionnaire:</u> **About you**

This page asks some questions about you. This is just to know more about my sample. All this information will remain anonymous and confidential. You do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to. You can leave any spaces blank.

1.   Please write your age in years:
_____

2.   For your current offence, how long did you live in prison for?

_____

3.   How long have you lived in the community for, since coming out of prison?

_____

4.   For your current offence, what is your total sentence length?

_____

5.   Are you currently on license? Please circle:

YES   NO

6.   What type of place do you currently live in? Please circle the option that best applies:

Approved premises where people all have different offences
Approved premises where people all have a sex offence conviction
Supported accommodation (e.g. there are staff there to help)
Emergency accommodation (e.g. a homeless hostel or short stay B&B)
Living at my friends
Living at a family members place
Privately renting a room in a shared property (e.g. some spaces are shared)
Privately renting a property
Living in a social housing property (council)
Living in my own property
Other: _____ *(please do NOT write your address)*

7. How long have you lived where you are currently living?

_____

8.   How would you rate your overall physical health on a scale of one to five:

1 - Poor   2 - Fair 3 - Good   4 - Very Good 5 - Excellent

9.   Please circle the offence type that best describes your conviction:

CONTACT ADULT	CONTACT CHILD	NON-CONTACT ADULT	NON-CONTACT CHILD	INDECENT IMAGES	PREFER NOT TO SAY

10.   Please name any offending behaviour programmes you have completed:

_____

Thank you for answering these questions. The next questions will ask you to rate certain statements. Please read the instructions for each scale carefully.

Psychometric Scale Measures

The measures are not reproduced here due to copyright purposes.

1) The Psychological Home Scale was inserted here

2) The Perceived Control Over the Institutional Environment Scale was inserted here

3) The adapted Psychological Ownership Scale was inserted here

5) The Social Identification Scale was inserted here

6) The Three Item Loneliness Scale was inserted here

7) The Sense of Agency Scale was inserted here

8) The State Hope Scale was inserted here

That is the end of the questionnaire. Thank you very much for taking part! The final sheet is de-brief information.

This box provides a space for optional comments. The Safer Living Foundation charity are setting up a new housing project for people with sex offence convictions. Is there anything you would recommend, or like to see in this accommodation?

<u>Debrief</u>

Thank you for taking part in this research!

Please complete the following steps to return your responses:

1. Place your completed consent form and completed questionnaire in the pre-addressed, pre-paid envelope that this research pack came in.

2. Keep your withdrawal form in case you decide to remove your data at a later point.

3. Please seal the envelope with your completed consent form and questionnaire inside.

4. Return this through the post OR give your sealed envelope back to the professional who told you about this research.

Withdrawal:

Remember that you can still withdraw your data up to one month after completion. If you decide to withdraw, please complete the withdrawal form on the back of this sheet. You need to remember the unique identifier that you created for this. You do not need to give a reason for withdrawing.

Extra support:

If you feel that any of the questions have upset you, you can contact Samaritans free of charge on 116 123.

Nacro offer resettlement support and advice to people with offences. You can call them on 0300 123 1999 or email them at helpline@nacro.org.uk.

Withdrawal Form

Please keep this form in case you decide at a later stage that you want to remove your data. If you decide that you would like to withdraw your data, you have four weeks after you completed the questionnaire to do so. You will need to provide your unique identifier that you created. You do not need to give your name. If you decide you want to withdraw, please send this completed form back to me at:

Jessica Lomas
Psychology Department
Nottingham Trent University
Burton Street
Nottingham
NG1 1BR

"I recently participated in your research about accommodation. I have decided I would like to remove my data from your study. I understand I do not have to give a reason why. My unique identifier that I created is _____. Please remove these responses from your data. Thank you."

Appendix 6. Research packs administered to people living in prison.

Research Invite

Hello,

My name is Jess. I am a researcher at Nottingham Trent University. I am contacting you about accommodation research. The research aims to understand about helpful living places for people with convictions. The information sheet gives more detail. The research will involve completing this questionnaire. I will not ask for your name. If you have any questions, please mail these to me through internal post.

If you would like to take part, please read the information sheet, sign the consent form, complete the questions, and return these through internal mail:

Psychology
Jessica Lomas (Nottingham Trent University)

The envelope is already addressed. Please note some pages are double sided.

Thank you!

THIS PAGE IS DOUBLE SIDED. PLEASE CHECK THE BACK.

Do you need help?

If you need help completing this, or there is something you do not understand, I can arrange a meeting. Please fill in the details below so I can contact you. Tick the boxes of the times you are free. Please return this to me through internal post. Use the pre-addressed envelope this research invitation came in. This will be shredded once a meeting is arranged.

Name: _____ Prisoner ID:_____

Wing:_____

Day	Morning	Afternoon
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		

Any other information you would like me to know:

<u>Information Sheet:</u> Exploring the relationship between accommodation needs and positive outcomes.

Thank you for thinking about taking part in this study. Please read this information carefully. Take as much time as you need to decide whether to take part.

What is the purpose of the study?
The purpose of this study is to see whether accommodation needs impact positive outcomes, for people with offences. The results will help to develop a new housing project.

Who is running this study?
I am the lead researcher of this study (Jessica Lomas). Professor Belinda Winder, Dr Nicholas Blagden, and Rebecca Lievesley supervise this research. Safer Living Foundation and Nottingham Trent University fund the study.

Do I have to take part?
This study is voluntary. There will not be any negative costs if you do not take part. It will not impact any criminal justice decisions. You can stop the research at any time. You can withdraw your data up to one month after your participation. ***Please remember your participant code for this.***

What do you want me to do?
I would like you to fill in a questionnaire. The questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes to fill in.

What will happen to the information I give?
Your answers will be inputted to a computer. I will analyse the data, and write-up my findings. I will write up the results in reports, journals, and presentations.

How will you protect my confidentiality and anonymity?
Questionnaires will be kept secure. Computer files will be password protected. I will not ask for your name. Nobody will be able to tell you were a participant. ***If you disclose something that puts yourself or others at risk, or you disclose an unreported offence, I will need to report this to other staff.*** Staying on topic of the questions asked will avoid this.

What are the positives and negatives of taking part?
The questionnaire will take up some of your time, but I hope you find it enjoyable. The research could have real life benefits, such as a new housing project being made by the Safer Living Foundation charity. If any of the questions upset you, please read the last page for information about support.

How can I find out more about this project and its results?
I will write a summary of my findings for the prison magazine.

Ethics
This research has been approved by Nottingham Trent University and HMPPS National Research Committee. The project is safe to undertake.

Contacts for further information
If you have any questions, or want to withdraw your data, please write to me by internal post. Address this to Jessica Lomas (Nottingham Trent University), Psychology.

Consent Form

If you want to take part, please make sure you fill in this sheet and return it to me. These pages are double sided.

Please make up a participant code. Please include at least two words and two numbers.

Participant Code: _____

Please remember your participant code in case you want to withdraw your data. You can withdraw for up to 4 weeks after you take part.

Please confirm your consent by **ticking** the boxes and **initialling** and **dating** this form.

1.   The project has been explained; I have been given information about it in writing.

☐   *Please tick this box*

2.   I understand that my answers will remain anonymous and confidential. I know that confidentiality must be broken if I disclose something that is a risk to myself or others, or I disclose an unreported offence. Staying on topic should avoid this.

☐   *Please tick this box*

3.   I understand that taking part is voluntary. I can withdraw my data up to four weeks after completion. I know that I need to remember my participant code if I decide to withdraw my data. I know that I do not need to give a reason if I want to withdraw.

☐   *Please tick this box*

4.   I agree to take part in this project ☐

Please tick this box

Please write your initials to show you agree to take part in this research: _____

Date: _____

Questionnaire: About you

This page asks some questions about you. This is to know more about my sample. All this information will remain anonymous. You do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to. You can leave any spaces blank.

1.   Please write your age in years:
_____

2.   For your current offence, how long were you sentenced to prison for?

_____

3.   For your current offence, how long have you lived in prison for <u>overall</u>?

_____

4.   For your current offence, how long have you lived <u>in this prison</u> for?

_____

5.   What wing do you live on in this prison?

_____

6.   How would you rate your overall physical health on a scale of one to five? Please circle:

   1 - POOR   2 - FAIR   3 - GOOD   4 - VERY GOOD   5 - EXCELLENT

7.   Do you share your prison cell? Please circle:

   YES   NO

8.   Please circle the offence type that best describes your conviction:

| CONTACT ADULT | CONTACT CHILD | NON-CONTACT ADULT | NON-CONTACT CHILD | INDECENT IMAGES | PREFER NOT TO SAY |

9.   Please list any offending behaviour programmes you have completed:

_____

Thank you for answering these questions. The next questions will ask you to rate statements. Please read instructions for each scale carefully.

Psychometric Scale Measures

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1) The Psychological Home Scale was inserted here

2) The Perceived Control Over the Institutional Environment Scale was inserted here

3) The adapted Psychological Ownership Scale was inserted here

5) The Social Identification Scale was inserted here

6) The Three Item Loneliness Scale was inserted here

7) The Sense of Agency Scale was inserted here

8) The State Hope Scale was inserted here

That is the end of the questions. Thank you very much for taking part! The final sheet is de-brief information.

This box provides a space for optional comments. The Safer Living Foundation charity are setting up a new housing project for people with sex offence convictions. Is there anything you would recommend, or like to see in this accommodation?

Debrief

Thank you for taking part in this research! Please complete the following steps to return your responses:

1. Place your completed consent form and completed questionnaire in the pre-addressed envelope that this research pack came in.

2. Keep this sheet. This has a withdrawal form on the back in case you decide to remove your data at a later point.

3. Please seal the envelope with your completed consent form and questionnaire inside.

4. Return this through internal post. The envelope is addressed for you.

Extra support:

If any of the questions have upset you, the prison listener scheme offers support. Posters in the prison tell you how to access this. The prison also provides access to Samaritans help line for free.

Withdrawal:

Remember that you can still withdraw your data up to one month after completion. If you decide to withdraw, please contact me through internal post. Post the enclosed withdrawal form to Jessica Lomas (Nottingham Trent University), Psychology. You need to remember the unique identifier that you created for this. You do not need to give a reason for withdrawing.

Withdrawal Form

Please keep this form in case you decide later that you want to remove your data. If you decide that you would like to withdraw your data, you have four weeks after you completed the questionnaire to do so. If you decide you want to withdraw, please send this form back to me through internal post. Address this to Psychology, Jessica Lomas (Nottingham Trent University).

"I recently participated in your research about accommodation. I have decided I would like to remove my data from your study. I understand I do not have to give a reason why. My unique identifier that I created is

_____ Please remove these responses from your data. Thank you."

Appendix 7. SLF Charity Recommendations

Suggestions from practitioners are highlighted in Table 8. During the analysis phase of Study 1, practical considerations were drawn out from the data. These practitioner suggestions allowed for a deeper understanding of process needs and organisational considerations.

Table 8.

SLF Charity Recommendations Based on Practitioner Accounts

Referrals	A simple referral process, with a quick decision, and a clear indication of waiting length is desirable. Conducting assessments for suitability whilst the person is in custody was one recommendation. This allows the potential tenant to gain clarity, as well as easing pressures on other organisations.
Self-contained, dispersed units	Participants were concerned about clustering people with sexual offence convictions. They highlighted risk concerns, as well as suggesting that segregation may reinforce isolation of people with sexual offence convictions. There were doubts as to whether the police would approve addresses housing multiple people with sexual offence convictions. The SLF could take measures to ensure the appropriateness of placements, as well as working to ease concerns from other professionals.
Multi-agency working	Multi-agency communication, liaison and partnerships were addressed as pivotal. Working with the police, probation and move on options for after the SLF facility was deemed necessary.
A. Protocols	Some participants described move on protocols they devised with Local Authorities. This may allow for easier move-on from the SLF. Others noted the importance of information sharing protocols, to have written guidance to refer to when multi-agency information sharing is required.
B. Support services	Links to external support services, such as mental health organisations, drug and alcohol services, and SLF projects will be useful. These should be well advertised. Floating support services were also deemed valuable.
Individualised Approach	It is important to acknowledge the differing risks and needs of each individual. Individualised risk and needs analyses could be undertaken with the potential resident, to inform the suitability of them living there, and to inform any support needs.

Considerations from people with convictions are highlighted in Table 9. These considerations were drawn out of the qualitative interview data of study two, and an open-comment text box that was included within the questionnaires of Study 3.

Table 9.

SLF Charity Recommendations Based on Resident Accounts

Managing Expectations	Providing in-custody information about the SLF accommodation project, to potential prospective tenants could be beneficial. Participants identified that much of their accommodation knowledge was based on misinformation and prison rumours. The SLF could manage this by providing accurate information early on.
Additional Resettlement Needs	It was noted that accommodation can act as a base to achieve other goals from. The project could consider ways in which enable wider reintegration goals of people with sexual convictions.
A. Employment	Some participants identified that it was counter-intuitive for them to get a job whilst living in certain facilities. Housing benefit would end, and people could financially be worst off as a result of high accommodation costs. The SLF could consider further ways to encourage employment that will not affect rent affordability, such as volunteering. Basic provisions within the facility could ease financial pressures for those struggling to attain employment.
B. Social Support	Social isolation was often a challenge, particularly as people are often unable to associate with other tenants with similar offences. The project could consider ways to address loneliness, whilst adhering to relevant licence restrictions. This could include signposting to social activities or offering social activities within the facility. The importance of non-judgemental staff support was also recognised.
Instilling psychosocial home needs	The SLF could identify ways to instil psychological needs of safety, ownership, identity, and freedom. The accommodation project could look at the feasibility of making the living environment more personable for individuals. Allowing people to have their own things and own organisation of the room could be beneficial.
Individualised Approaches	The importance of treating people as individuals was again recognised. People viewed blanket bans negatively. They wished for rules to be individualised, based on peoples own individual licence conditions and needs. However, this would need to be managed appropriately to ensure fairness and avoid conflicts.
Move-on preparation	Move-on preparation appeared pivotal. The accommodation project staff could educate people about their move-on options, by offering realistic, practical advice. For example, offering information about social housing bidding, privately renting, bond schemes, and signposting to other organisations that can help.