Sheffield Hallam University | Hallam Centre for Community Justice

"The Good Days are Amazing"

- An Evaluation of the Writers in Prison

Network

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Section 1:   History and Background of WIPN

The Writers in Residence in Prison Scheme was set up in 1992 by the Arts Council of England and the Home Office. The Scheme places writers and creative artists into prisons across the UK to deliver creative writing, drama, video, music, oral storytelling, journalism, creative reading and publishing programmes. The Scheme employs writers who are experienced or established in particular literary fields; many have been creative writing tutors, or have worked in publishing, the theatre, television, radio or journalism.

In 1996, a Writer in Residence (who is now the WIPN Co-Director) set up an informal communication and support network for those writers delivering residencies.   Initially operating as a 'kitchen table' enterprise, a fund of £600 per year was secured from the Arts Council to fund the hire of a venue twice a year for all the Writers in Residence to meet and share good practice. As the value of this became increasingly apparent, the Arts Council put the administration of the scheme out to tender and the current Co-Director (along with another writer) were successful applicants. Thus, the Writers in Prison *Network* (WIPN) was established and appointed by the Arts Council in April 1998 to administer the Writers in Residence in Prison Scheme.   The aim of WIPN is to:

> *"provide a comprehensive administrative and support agency which addresses the on-going needs of prisons, writers and offenders involved in residencies, before, during and after the event and represent the interest of the Arts Council England, Regional Arts Councils, National Offender Management Service (NOMS) and the public in general whose money supports the Scheme, so that the maximum beneficial potential is achieved for all the interested client groups."* [1]

In administering the Scheme, WIPN supports up to 20 Writers in Residence (WiRs) at any one time (with an average of 15-16 residencies per year and a maximum of 22 residencies per year undertaken during the lifetime of WIPN).   WIPN staff have been keen to maintain a manageable number of residencies to ensure that the appropriate intensity of support can be offered to WiRs. WiRs have an annual contract which runs from 1st October to the 30th September and residencies usually run for 2-3 years in total, longer in some cases.   In

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[1] *'Writing the Future'* - WIPN Publication, February 2009.

addition WIPN supports the delivery of a number of 'special projects' which have been developed by WiRs as additional activities to the core WIPN programme[2].

Additional objectives of WIPN are as follows:

- to develop communication channels with relevant stakeholders both inside and outside the prison estate
- to increase awareness of the scheme both inside and outside the prison estate, highlighting its long term value to society[3].

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[2] More details can be found in *'Special Arts Projects from Writers in Prison Network: Award-winning specialist professional artists with in-depth prison experience'* - WIPN Publication (revised annually)
[3] *'Writing the Future'* - WIPN Publication, February 2009.

Section 2: Evaluation Methodology

In 2010 the Hallam Centre for Community Justice (HCCJ) at Sheffield Hallam University (SHU) was commissioned to undertake an evaluation of the Writers in Prison *Network*. The evaluation was primarily qualitative in approach and, building on an evaluation of the *Network* conducted in 1999[4], aimed to inform and support the future development of WIPN. Specifically, the evaluation was designed to:

- map the activities of the Writers in Prisons *Network*

- identify the barriers and facilitators to effective delivery of the programme

- identify effective practice

- assess the impact of the programme on prisoners, writers and prison staff

- assess the effectiveness of the engagement of WIPN with key stakeholder groups: writers, prison staff, funders

- make recommendations to inform the future operation and strategic direction of WIPN.

Between October 2010 and September 2011, the following data have been collected:

- A documentary review and analysis of WIPN management data including: examination of Management Board minutes, Residency Steering Committee minutes, Residency update reports, WIPN Co-Director Journal, annual submissions to the Arts Council, annual monitoring data

- A brief literature review examining the role and value of creative and artistic endeavours in prisons in recent years

- Four focus groups with new WiRs at different time points, over the course of their first 12 month of their residency[5]

- Observations of four WIPN conferences

- Four interviews with WIPN core staff

- Completion of monthly diaries from new and established Writers in Residence (n=9)

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[4] Squirrell, G. (1999) Second Evaluation of the Writers in Residency Scheme Centre for Learning in Alternative and Community Settings.
[5] Conducted at WIPN conferences.

- Questionnaire for prison staff (n=13)

- 'Post residency' outputs questionnaires for WiRs to ascertain their outputs over the evaluation year (n=14)

- Offender progress observation diaries completed by WiRs to reflect on the impact of their work on offenders (n=6)[6]

- As part of the overall evaluation, three of WIPN's Special Projects were evaluated at HMP Wormwood Scrubs, HMP Full Sutton and HMP Frankland. This involved interviews with 20 prisoners, seven project delivery staff (including the Writers in Residence) and nine Prison staff. This report is available separately; however some of the data collected via offender interviews is included in this report.

It should be borne in mind that WIPN supports a large number of residencies nationwide and within the timeframe and financial constraints of this evaluation it has not been possible to capture the range and depth of experiences across *all* residencies. However, by drawing on a number of different data sources and triangulating the findings, the evaluation team aims to provide a robust assessment of the work undertaken by WIPN and the key characteristics of a residency as well as reflect the successes and challenges encountered by WiRs, host prisons, WIPN staff and participating prisoners. The evaluation team is very grateful for the co-operation and hard work of WIPN staff and WiRs in enabling the collection of evaluation data.

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[6] Writers recorded brief details regarding the progress and behaviour of offenders accessing their programme, during the course of approximately 20 sessions with the WiR.

Section 3:   Setting the Scene - Creative and Artistic Endeavours in Prisons

3.1   The Benefits and Challenges of Arts-based Projects for Offenders

There is a long established programme of arts-based projects working with offenders in prison and in the community.   These include projects in the areas of: drama, dance, music, film, radio, and writing[7]. A wide range of individuals have been the beneficiaries of this work including: young people at risk of offending; women offenders in both the community and prison; personality disordered offenders; sex offenders and young offenders as well as adult male offenders.   Some projects have had the objective of assisting with the resettlement process (see for example Harkins et al, 2011[8]) and specifically assisting with the transition into education, training and employment (see for example, Nugent and Loucks 2011[9]), others have had a looser brief, aiming to enable prisoners to express themselves and make a change in their life (e.g. Wilson et al. 2009[10]) or to promote self-improvement (e.g. Van Maaen, 2010[11]) The approach to delivering arts projects is varied but a key feature, contrary to more traditional education within prisons, is their often collaborative nature and the blurring of power distinctions between those who teach and those who are learning (Wilkinson and Davidson, 2008[12]; Wilkinson and Nandi, 2009[13], O'Neill, 2010[14]).   In addition, arts projects frequently work with individuals who are

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[7] See McLewin, A (2011) Arts Alliance Evidence Library for a detailed and comprehensive summary of recent arts programmes working with offenders (including WIPN).
http://www.clinks.org/assets/files/PDFs/Arts%20Alliance/Arts_Evidence_Library.pdf
[8] Harkins, L, Pritchard, C, Haskayne, D, Watson, A, Beech, A, R (2011). Evaluation of Geese Theatre's Re-connect Programme: addressing resettlement issue in prison. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology,* 55(4), 546–566.
[9] Nugent, B and Loucks, N (2011). The Arts and Prisoners: Experiences of Creative Rehabilitation. *The Howard Journal*, 50(4), 356-370.
[10] Wilson, D, Caulfield, L, S, and Atherton, S (2009). Good Vibrations: The Long-Term Impact of a Prison-Based Music Project*. Prison Service Journal*, 182: 27-32.
[11] Van Maanen, K (2010). Miss spent: A drama project for young women at the Josephine Butler Unit, HMP Downview: Evaluation Report: http://www.clinks.org/assets/files/Miss%20Spent%20report%20final.pdf
[12] Wilkinson, K and Davidson, J (2008). An Evaluation of the Prison Radio Association's Activity: The West Midlands Prison Radio Taster Project, unpublished internal evaluation report.
[13] Wilkinson, K and Nandi, M (2009). Inside Job at HMP Downview: Media and Employment, Training & Education Opportunities in Prison. *Prison Service Journal,* No. 182; 48- 52.
[14] O'Neill, D (2010). Prison, Education and Film. *Prison Service Journal*, 192: 15- 20.

alienated from formal learning. In this sense, arts projects are often vehicles for inclusive practice and empowerment (see Bird and Albertson, 2011[15] for further discussion).

A wide range of benefits of engaging in arts based projects has been reported for offenders and those at risk of offending.   Some of the reported impacts relate to hard outcomes such as rates of transfer into education, training and employment (Miles and Strauss 2011[16]). More often, soft outcomes such as increased self-esteem/self-confidence, a sense of achievement, increasing the likelihood of hard-to-reach offenders engaging with further educational opportunities, and provision of opportunities to strengthen family ties are reported.   Hughes (2005[17]) has usefully identified four types of impacts related to the delivery of arts based programmes in the criminal justice system:

- changing individuals' personal, internal responses to drivers or triggers that lead to offending
- changing the social circumstances of individuals' lives by equipping them with personal and social skills that can help them build different relationships and access opportunities in work and education
- changing and enriching institutional culture and working practices
- changing wider communities' views of offenders and the criminal justice system (Hughes, 2005: 11[18]).

It is further suggested that arts interventions in criminal justice contexts are successful because *"they offer a non-traditional, non-institutional, social and emotional environment; a non-judgemental and un-authoritarian model of engagement; and an opportunity to participate in a creative process that involves both structure and freedom. At the same time*

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[15] Bird, H and Albertson (nee Wilkinson) K. E (2011). Prisoners as citizens, Big Society and the Rehabilitation Revolution: Truly Revolutionary?. *British Journal of Community Justice,* Vol. 9 (1/2): 93-109.

[16] Miles, A and Strauss, P (2011). Dance United, The Academy: A Summary of Outcomes for participants: http://www.dance-united.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/Academy-Summary-.pdf

[17] Hughes, J (2005). Doing the Arts Justice: *A* Review of Research Literature, Theory and Practice, DCMS, the Department for Education and Skills, and Arts Council England, UK. http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.culture.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/D4B445EE-4BCC-4F6C-A87A-C55A0D45D205/0/Doingartsjusticefinal.pdf

[18] Ibid.

engagement in the participatory arts requires respect, responsibility, co-operation and collaboration" *(Hughes, 2005[19]).*

In addition, the unique value of the arts based learning for offenders, as identified by the Arts Alliance (2010[20]) can be summarised as follows:

- successful engagement of offenders who are alienated and disengaged with traditional learning
- offer ways to learn new skills (including social and life skills)
- encourage offenders to take responsibility for themselves and others and address offending behaviour
- encourage positive relationships and enhanced communication with families
- open up new and unexpected horizons
- offer a good investment and good value for money, for example an NPC report analysing the most cost effective youth offending programmes estimates that *"the work of Dance United, by stopping even one person reoffending, saves the public purse around £82,000."* *(Arts Alliance, 2010[21]).*

Alongside the reported benefits of arts based programmes with offenders, a number of challenges have also been identified, particularly with regards to delivery in the prison setting. Some of these are helpfully summarized by Nugent and Loucks (2011[22]) as being:

- lack of suitable physical space to accommodate project work
- lack of emotional capacity for supporting the artist by overstretched prison officers
- perception that 'arts' is too much fun and sits at odds with prison objectives
- prison bureaucracy and processes can hinder progress
- the transient nature of the prison population resulting in inconsistent group size/attendance

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[19] Ibid.
[20] Arts Alliance (2010). What really works? Arts with Offenders, Arts in the criminal justice sector report.
http://www.clinks.org/assets/files/PDFs/ArtsAlliance_brochure_FINAL.pdf
[21] Ibid
[22] Op.cit.

- lack of access to resources, particularly IT
- working with prisoners who may have complex emotional needs, and/or be uncooperative, disruptive and disrespectful.

Barriers to effective delivery of arts projects to offenders can be practical but also ideological. Often, the criminal justice system itself can be apathetic and suspicious when it comes to the contribution the arts can make. As a result, arts activities in prisons are sometimes marginalised (for example, see Miles and Clarke, 2006[23]). They are often poorly and inconsistently funded[24], often resulting in them being small-scale, opportunistic and short-lived.

In addition, public and victim sensitivity issues abound. The idea of offenders taking part in creative arts projects involving music, writing or contemporary dance, being paid for by hard working, law abiding tax payers' money sits uncomfortably for many and can negatively influence practice. For example, in 2008, as a reaction to unfavourable media reporting of the Comedy School operating at HMP Whitemoor, the Government introduced the Prison Service Instruction (PSI) 50, resulting in all arts-based projects having to pass a public acceptability test[25]. There was a lack of definition of 'acceptability' and concerns were raised by the Arts Alliance that this led to the cancellation of many arts project in prisons[26]. PSI 50 was rescinded in 2010 and replaced by PSI 38 which states its recognition of the valuable contribution that creative activities can make, however it is still felt that the legacy of PSI 50 continues to have a negative effect on arts services that support offenders (see for example Parkes and Bilby, 2010[27]).

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[23] Miles, A and Clarke, R (2006). The Arts in Criminal Justice: A study of research feasibility, Centre for Research on Socio-Cultural Change: University of Manchester.
http://manchester.academia.edu/AndrewMiles/Papers/426327/THE_ARTS_IN_CRIMINAL_JUSTICE_A_STUDY_OF_RESEARCH_FEASIBILITY

[24] Op. cit.

[25] This required all programmes to ask themselves the question 'How will the activity be perceived if open to media scrutiny?'

[26] http://artsalliance.ning.com/profiles/blogs/justice-minister-says-psi-50

[27] Parkes, R and Bilby, C (2010). The Courage to Create: The Role of Artistic and Spiritual Activities in Prisons. *The Howard Journal,* Vol. 49 (2): 97- 110.

3.2 Drivers for Measuring the Effectiveness of Arts-based Interventions

Arts activities have long been used to help rehabilitate offenders or improve the life chances of those at risk of offending. There has always been anecdotal evidence to support the transformative power of the arts, particularly in prison and yet providers have traditionally struggled to provide 'hard evidence' of their effectiveness (Miles, 2006[28]; Hughes, 2005[29]). The rise in the prison population, high reconviction rates and the sharp increase in costs within the criminal justice sector in recent years have focussed public and governmental policy towards evidence-based reducing reoffending strategies. There have been significant shifts in the criminal justice sector terrain, in terms of management, accountability and effectiveness. These have been driven by: the rehabilitation revolution[30], the 'prisons that work' initiative[31], and the social inclusion agenda[32] [33]. Ultimately, these drivers have influenced the Government's policy framework for an evidence-based approach to assess reducing re-offending performance, which adopts a largely positivist standpoint and prioritises quantitative measures[34].

Within this policy context, the emergence of a 'new' art in prison agenda can be identified during recent years which has several strands of activity. Key work areas have been around:

- systemising the knowledge base of arts projects working with offenders (Hughes, 2004[35]; Miles, 2004[36] McLewin, 2011[37])

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[28] Op. cit.

[29] Op. cit.

[30] Rehabilitation Revolution Green Paper, said to 'create a system introducing greater involvement of the private and voluntary sectors in the rehabilitation of offenders, including use of payment by results, to cut reoffending' http://transparency.number10.gov.uk/transparency/srp/view-srp/38

[31] Prisons with a Purpose: our sentencing and rehabilitation revolution to break the cycle of crime: Security Agenda, Policy Green Paper, Number 4.

[32] The social inclusion agenda takes existing problems like homelessness, entrenched joblessness and locational disadvantage higher up the policy agenda. Social inclusion policies tend to focus on tangible things like jobs and housing, focussing on specific and pragmatic achievable objectives rather than treating symptoms, like low income.

[33] The Social Exclusion Unit's (2002) report 'Reducing Re-offending by Ex-Prisoners' highlighted the lack of rehabilitation and has worked with government departments to overcome the problem of fragmented service delivery they highlighted in the report.

[34] Home Office (2010). Breaking the Cycle: A report of the review of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. London, Home Office.

[35] Op. cit.

[36] Miles, A. (2004). 'What Works in Offender Rehabilitation: Revealing the Contribution of the Arts', in Cowling, J (ed.) *For Art's Sake: Society and the Arts in the 21st Century*. London, Institute of Public Policy Research.

[37] Op. cit.

- enhancing the ability of arts project to effectively measure performance and demonstrate impact (Ellis and Gregory, 2011[38]; Charities Evaluation Services[39])

- Assessing the feasibility of building an economic case for the arts in criminal justice (Johnson, et al., 2011[40]; Reeves, 2002[41]).

3.3 The Challenges of Demonstrating Impact and Tentative Steps Forward

The strands of activity outlined above represent a concerted effort on the part of arts in criminal justice agencies to assess the assortment of performance indicators that could be used to assess the value of creative arts based activities. This position is underlined in the Arts Alliance Evidence Library document that highlights the significant rise in the number of arts activities commissioned and increasing involvement of academic institutions in evaluating projects (Arts Alliance, 2011[42]). Alongside this activity however, arts practitioners and academics are challenging the usefulness of those measures of success favoured by the Home Office and the MoJ, for arts based programmes:

> *"While the Home Office continues to prioritise an approach to demonstrating impact, based on large numbers and unsophisticated measurements, it is posited that the arts sector will struggle to make a case for itself. Ministerial demands for a more robust evidence base from the arts in criminal justice ignore the weaknesses of the Government's own research model. The current rules of evidence need rethinking if we are to enable the arts in criminal justice to reveal their true worth" (Miles and Clarke, 2006[43]).*

Within this context, it has been argued that 'soft' or intermediate outcomes[44] which create conditions that are favourable for desistance are more appropriate indicators of

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[38] Ellis, J and Gregory, T (2011). Demonstrating the value of arts in criminal justice. Arts Alliance, Clinks.
http://www.clinks.org/assets/files/PDFs/Arts%20Alliance/clinks_aa_demonstrating-value_FINAL_SECURE.pdf
[39] Charities Evaluation services resources various: http://www.ces-vol.org.uk/
[40] Johnson, H, Keen, S and Pritchard, D (2011). Unlocking value: the economic benefit of the arts in criminal justice. New Philanthropy Capital, Arts Alliance and Arts Council England.
http://www.onlyconnectuk.org/resources/documents/Unlocking-Value.pdf
[41] Reeves, M (2002). Measuring the economic and social impact of the arts: a review. Arts Council England.
http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/documents/publications/340.pdf
[42] Op. cit.
[43] Op. cit.
[44] That is those necessary preconditions, or the facilitators, for successful attainment of the desired ultimate outcome e.g. reduction in re-offending, in this instance

performance for arts based interventions. Findings from desistance from crime research (Maruna, 2001[45]; LeBel et al, 2008[46]; Farrall and Calverley, 2005[47]; Farrall et al, 2011[48]), assert psychological processes as well as external structural issues are critical in the personal change process.   In recent years a body of work has emerged which seeks through qualitative research to gain an understanding of the individual subjectivity or 'lived experience' of desistance.   Exploratory qualitative studies which have sought to examine and understand the process of desistance include those by Adler (1993[49]), Baskin and Somers (1998[50]), Burnett, (1994[51]), Graham and Bowling (1995[52]), Liebrich, (1993[53]) and Maruna (1997[54]).   These authors have suggested a range of subjective factors that may be associated with desistance. For example, Liebrich (1993[55]) in a qualitative study of ex-offenders in New Zealand, attributed desistance to 'major cognitive changes' experienced by desisters; that the differences between those who were 'going straight' and those that were not lay not in the circumstances of their lives, but rather in the way people interpreted their lives. Giordano et al (2002[56]) analysed respondents' life history narratives and distinguished four types of 'intimately related cognitive transformations' which they argue are related to the desistance process in the sense that they 'inspire and direct' behaviour. The first, and what they suggest is the most fundamental of these cognitive transformations, is what they refer to as a 'shift in the actor's basic openness to change'. The second and related cognitive shift they highlight is 'related more directly to one's exposure to a particular hook or set of hooks for change'. The third type of cognitive transformation occurs when 'actors are able to envision and begin to fashion an appealing and conventional "replacement self" that can

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[45] Maruna, S. (2001) *Making Good: How Ex-Convicts Reform and Rebuild Their Lives*. Washington DC, APA Books .

[46] LeBel, T, P, Burnett, R, Maruna, S and Bushway, S (2008). The 'chicken and egg' of subjective and social factors in desistance from crime. *European Journal of Criminology*, Vol. 5 (2): 131- 159.

[47] Farrall, S. and Calverley, A (2005). *Understanding Desistance From Crime*. London, Open University Press.

[48] Farrall, S, Sharpe, G, Hunter, B and Calverly, A (2011). Theorizing structural and individual-level processes in desistance and persistence: outlining an integrated perspective. *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Criminology*, 44: 218-234.

[49] Adler, P, A. (1993). *Wheeling and Dealing: An Ethnography of an Upper-Level Drug Dealing and Smuggling Community*. New York, Columbia University Press.

[50] Baskin, D. R. and Sommers, I. B. (1998). *Casualties of community disorder: Women's careers in violent crime*. Boulder, CO, Westview.

[51] Burnett, R. (1994). Recidivism and imprisonment. Home Office Research Bulletin, 36, 19–22.

[52] Graham, J. and Bowling, B. (1995). *Young People and Crime.* London, Home Office

[53] Leibrich, J. (1993). *Straight to the Point: Angles on Giving Up Crime.* Otago University Press, Dunedin.

[54] Maruna, S. (1997). Going Straight: Desistance from Crime and Self-Narratives of Reform. *Narrative Study of Lives,* Vol. 5, 59-93.

[55] Op cit.

[56] Giordano, P, C., S. A. Cernkovich and J. L. Rudolph (2002). Gender, crime and desistance: toward a theory of cognitive transformation. *American Journal of Sociology* , 107(4):990-1064.

supplant the marginal one that must be left behind'. The fourth and final type of cognitive change is one they refer to as the 'capstone' which they argue involves a transformation in the way the actor views the deviant behaviour or lifestyle itself.

The Desistance model of change and rehabilitation which has current credibility with the MoJ (see Maruna, 2010[57]) acknowledges the development of both personal and social capital as important in the desistance journey and identifies a range of elements including:

- role of family and relationships

- hope and motivation

- having something to give

- having a place within a social group

- not having a criminal identity

- being believed in (Arts Alliance, 2011[58])

Thus it is increasingly apparent that measuring the effectiveness of arts projects in the criminal justice system should focus on how contact with the arts may help to foster favourable conditions for change processes which can lead towards desistance from crime, in particular an acknowledgement that:

> *"Arts-based interventions offer more than 'just' the development of the skills of offenders; they may enable them to at least begin to think differently about themselves, their families, their relationships with their peers, and their relationships to the prison regime and the opportunities it offers. More generally, they may help prisoners to 'imagine' different possible futures, different social networks, different identities and different lifestyles. In and of themselves, arts-based interventions are unlikely to deliver the concrete, realisable sentence and resettlement plans which many prisoners will need to tackle the full range of needs, issues and challenges that they face; but they may help to foster and to*

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[57] Maruna. S. (2010). Understanding Desistance from Crime. Rehabilitation Services Group, NOMS, MoJ.
http://www.clinks.org/assets/files/PDFs/Desistance.pdf
[58] Op. cit.

reinforce motivation for and commitment to the change processes that these formal interventions and processes exist to support. They may also play a part in bringing positive social contacts and networks into the prison-based process" (McNeill et al, 2011[59]).

With its long, illustrious history and highly skilled personnel, WIPN is clearly a key player in the arts in prison agenda. The evaluation has aimed to assess the role and performance of WIPN within the context of this body of literature and to provide recommendations which fit with the policy agenda described. The remainder of this report contains key findings of the HCCJ evaluation. The function of this report is not only to present findings but to identify key learning points and offer recommendations (where appropriate) for how WIPN may be able to improve upon its already high level of service.   The report begins with an exploration of the *mechanics* of WIPN (e.g. staffing, governance, activity undertaken) in order to map the form and function of the organisation. This part of the report is largely descriptive and derived from the documentary review conducted during the early stages of the evaluation. The report then offers an exploration of the *lived experience* of the delivery of residencies from the perspective of Writers, host prisons, WIPN staff and offenders. The report finishes with an assessment of the future potential and sustainability of WIPN including how the benefits and impact of the organisation may be demonstrated and promoted to stakeholders and potential investors.

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[59] McNeill, F., Anderson, K., Colvin, S., Overy, K., Sparks, R. and Tett, L. (2011) 'Kunstprojecten en What Works; een stimulans voor desistance?' ('Inspiring Desistance? Arts projects and 'what works?') *Justitiele verkenningen* 37(5): 80-101: http://blogs.iriss.org.uk/discoveringdesistance/files/2011/09/McNeill-et-al.-2011-Inspiring-Desistance.pdf

Section 4:   The WIPN Model

4.1 Staffing

At its inception, WIPN staff consisted of a sole part-time Director. WIPN responded to recommendations of the 1999 evaluation by appointing an additional part-time Co-director (in 2002) and a part-time Office Manager (in 2005) as and when funding allowed. The WIPN Co-directors have very extensive experience of and expertise in delivering arts projects in the prison environment. Indeed, the evaluation has revealed that Co-directors each have a unique and diverse skills set which has been developed in response to the multiplicity of roles required for the post, at any given time. These are exemplified in Figure 1 below:
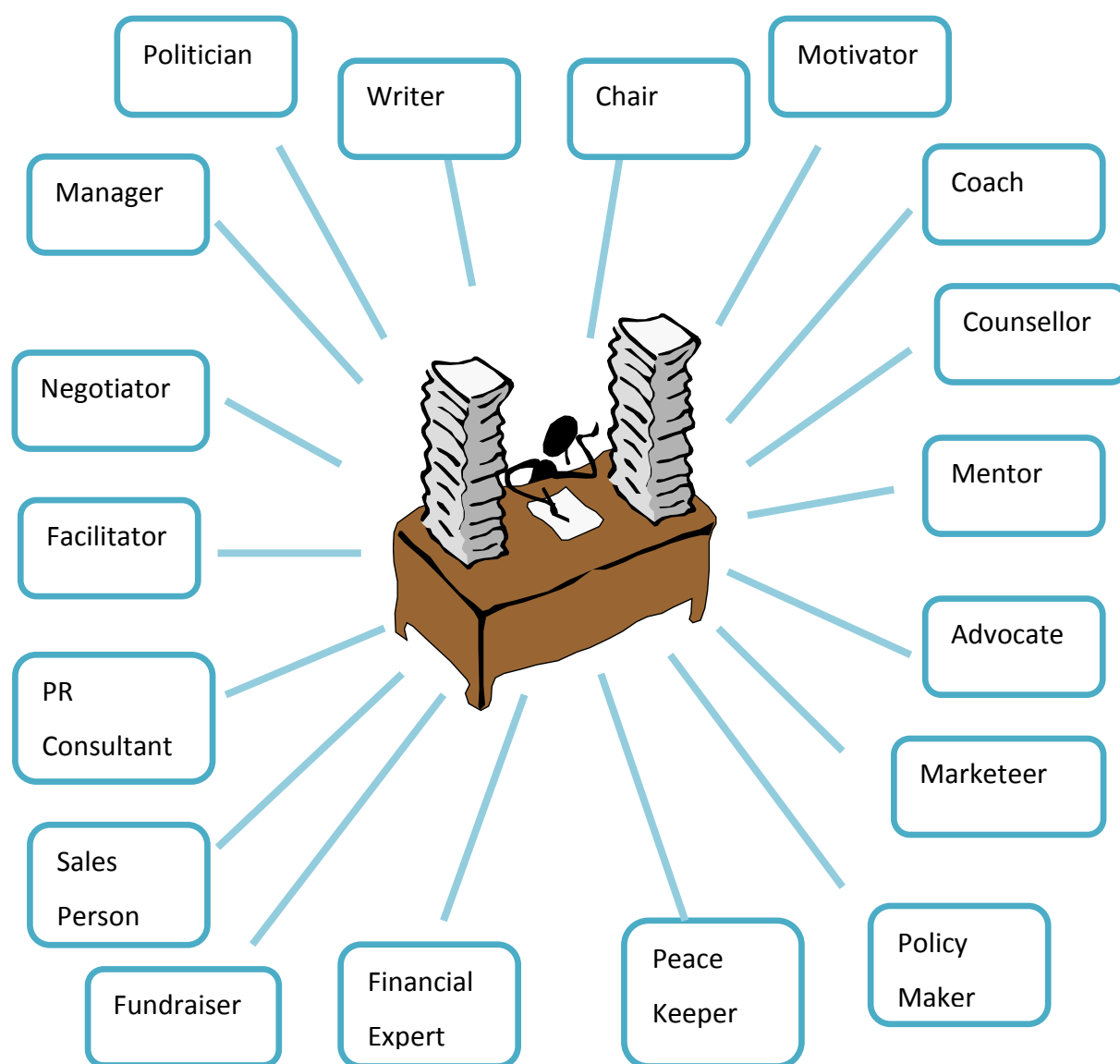

Figure 1

Undertaking the wide variety of roles outlined above necessitates a very broad skills and knowledge base which has been developed by the Co-directors during their long history with WIPN. Whilst this range of expertise is hugely beneficial to WIPN currently, it will prove difficult to replicate this skills set should they leave in the future. The implications of this and suggestions for succession planning are discussed later in Section 10.

Since the autumn of 2011, WIPN have employed the services of a researcher, a fundraiser, two website designers. In addition, a computer consultant has been employed since 2009 and a marketing person will also be joining the team in the near future. Further details of the staffing structure can be found on the WIPN website (www.writersinprisonnetwork.org). These recent staffing developments have served to reduce the vulnerability of the organisation and to increase its attractiveness to potential funders though the organisation is exposed to some continuing risk in respect of its reliance on core WIPN staff in many work areas. In addition, the increased staffing brings fresh challenges, for example in ensuring effective work planning and support and supervision processes. This creates additional work for the core staff and careful consideration needs to be given to how this will be managed. Also effective mechanisms will need to be established to ensure that the extensive knowledge of key staff is shared more widely across the new staff group.

4.2   Roles and Responsibilities

WIPN is a complex, multi-functional organisation. Managing a large number of residencies across the prison estate is a huge undertaking for the core staff group and involves a variety of tasks relating to initiating the residencies and supporting them as they progress whilst simultaneously engaging with the wider arts industry and promoting the work of WIPN to external stakeholders and funders. Prior to the contracting out of the Writers in Residence in Prisons Scheme in 1998, the Writer in Residence Scheme was the responsibility of each regional Arts Council on a separate, residency-by-residency basis. The scheme operated on a somewhat ad hoc basis and no formal monitoring, administration or support for the residencies existed. Since WIPN took over the administration and management of the scheme a robust and effective model of governance, administration and support has been established. This includes: formalised procedures for payment and monitoring of residency

activity, standardised processes for recruiting and inducting new writers, a standardised WiR contract; a website resource, and an effective on-going support package for WiRs and host prisons, discussed later in the report.

In addition, WIPN staff are engaged in an on-going programme of promotional work to raise the profile of the work of the organisation. WIPN are heavily involved in the wider arts industry with a particular focus on teaching and learning. Since September 2010, WIPN have been involved with: validation of a new foundation degree at Ruskin College, Oxford (and also writing the module *Facilitating Creativity in Others*); delivering an annual training session *'Working with Prison Libraries and Librarians' at the* University of Sheffield; delivering a 'Creative Arts in Prison' module as part of De Montfort University's Creative Arts degree course; running the session *'Delivering the arts in a prison setting'* to applied theatre students at the Central School of Speech and Drama. In addition to these activities WIPN:

- are members of the Arts Alliance Steering Group which has involved informing Government on the value of arts for the criminal justice system
- are a key partner with *English Pen* (a project designed to deliver a programme of visiting guest writers into prisons)
- have close links with other prison based arts projects (e.g. Prison Radio Association)
- regularly attend and present at Arts and Business development events
- have funded Koestler awards in oral storytelling and life stories, when funding has allowed
- Have strong links with the wider publishing sector and have their own publishing outlet 'Bar None *Books*', established in 1995. This publishes selected work by offender-writers as well as non-fiction titles by WiRs, usually related to WIPN special projects
- Have developed and maintained the WIPN website resource
- Support a national prison magazine *'Not Shut Up'* by providing material from residencies, and making small financial contributions to aid their applications to other funding bodies.

Such engagement with the wider 'arts agenda' ensures that WIPN is an externally focussed organisation (which brings the ability to shape and influence this agenda) and also enables awareness raising of WIPN across the sector.

4.3 Recruitment and Selection of Writers in Residence

WIPN have developed a particularly rigorous recruitment process to ensure that they are selecting the most suitable candidates to undertake residencies. This is especially important for work of this type which may be challenging and thus demand a high degree of motivation and resilience on the part of the WiR.   Several evaluation participants have highlighted the importance of finding the right 'match' between writer and host prison. Assessing the suitability of candidates and interviewing them is a collaborative process with the prison. WIPN Co-directors and prison staff read all applications independently and when there are disagreements about potential candidates, a compromise has to be reached. Decision making regarding recruitment is based upon knowledge of the institution and of past residencies but also involves a degree of intuition and instinct about the commitment of the candidate:

> *"Another evening of difficult choices. Our selection seems at first underwhelmed*
> *by the offer (a reaction I double-check the following day: we don't want someone*
> *who's less than 100%, it doesn't work)" (WIPN Co-director's Journal, May 2011).*

WIPN have been pro-active in making improvements to the recruitment processes when necessary. For example, following problems with a newly recruited writer a couple of years ago, WIPN responded by changing the way in which unconditional offers were made. This involved making explicit the requirement for three criteria to be met before a contract would be offered (satisfactory security clearance, references and attendance at the induction).

Residencies are popular positions (they offer a rare form of paid income for writers) which can attract over 50 applications per job[60] (higher for London residencies). This *'annual recruitment deluge'* places huge demands on the time of the Co-directors who are involved

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[60] In 2011 WIPN received over 1200 enquiries for just 5 vacancies. One of the London prisons attracted over 100 applications, the other just under 100.

in every stage, working in collaboration with the prison on shortlisting, interviewing and providing constructive criticism for unsuccessful interviewees. There may again be some risk/vulnerability associated with the extent to which the Co-directors are largely responsible for recruitment.

Recommendations

In order to maximise the effectiveness of the recruitment process:

- It may prove useful to involve Management Board members as much as is feasible in the recruitment process in the future to relieve some of the workload from the Co-directors. Whilst Board members do currently have involvement and form part of the recruitment 'de-briefing panel', they could *routinely* be involved in short listing and interview panels

- Considering the importance of selecting *'the right people to do the job'* for these challenging posts, the recruitment process may also benefit from a more systematic approach to identifying the skills and attributes associated with successful (and unsuccessful) residencies, in order to provide a benchmark for assessing potential candidates[61]

- Whilst this could be undertaken as a formal exercise using HR consultants the WIPN Co-directors, in consultation with a sample of WiRs and representatives from the host prisons are well placed to undertake this. It will require the creation of a "competencies map or framework" which identifies the tasks and core skills, qualities and attributes required to deliver a successful residency.   Developing this map or framework would involve: identifying what constitutes high performance for a WiR; identifying the tasks associated with undertaking a residency; selecting a sample of WiRs, including the best performing writers and working with them, together with staff from the host prisons, to identify the skills, knowledge and attributes that are required. This map will provide a framework for: ensuring the recruitment of people with the right skills, attitudes and attributes; assessing and

[61] This activity could also be utilised to enhance current *'Introduction for Writers'*, person specifications and recruitment materials.

appraising staff and identifying training and development needs. The evaluation findings contained within Section 7 may be a useful starting point for this exercise.

Sample Competencies Map/Framework

Task	Skills	Knowledge	Personal attributes
What are the tasks involved in conducting a residency?	What skills does the task require?	What knowledge does the task require?	What personal attributes does the task require?

- Again, in order to increase the likelihood of finding the most suitable candidate, WIPN could adopt more 'behavioural questioning' during the interview process. This involves asking questions which require concrete examples of what people have done in the past rather than hypothetical questions (which will only provide hypothetical answers). For example asking: *"Can you tell me about the last time you had to deal with aggression in the workplace?"* rather than *"What would you do if you encountered aggression from a prisoner you were working with?".*

4.4 Governance

WIPN has a two tier Governance structure. At the macro level, and in response to a specific recommendation from the 1999 evaluation, a WIPN Management Board has been convened comprising the two WIPN Co-directors and five external board members.   Board members have a wealth of relevant expertise to support WIPN including skills in project management, legal process and business planning as well as extensive experience of delivering arts interventions in prisons. Indeed two Board members used to be WiRs themselves and one is an ex-prison officer. The Board meet quarterly and it appears to function effectively. However, considering this is a time of great change and upheaval in WIPN with significant changes in funding arrangements and staffing in particular, it may be an opportune time to review (and possibly expand) the function and membership of the Management Board to ensure it can function to maximum effectiveness.

At a micro level, each individual residency has its own quarterly Steering Group meetings to reflect on progress made and to address any problems which have arisen. Residency Steering Group meetings are generally attended by: the WiR; the Writer's prison-based line manager (usually a Governor); a representative from the wider prison staff group (e.g. education department); the 'buddy' allocated to the WiR (usually a member of 'on the ground' prison staff) and by a member of the prison's Senior Management Team. A representative from WIPN also attends, this can be either a WIPN Co-director or potentially an (ex) WiR who is geographically closer. Prior to each Steering Group meeting, the WiR writes a short report, detailing their activity since the last meeting. A small number of prison staff felt that the Residency Steering Groups could be improved in order to increase their benefits for host prisons. In particular they felt the main function of Steering Groups was a 'talking shop' where the WiR reflected on their work and raised any problems encountered. Whilst this was useful, there was sometimes a lack of structure in meetings with limited opportunity for a *systematic review of residency objectives* which would ensure that the needs of the prison (as well as the WiR) were being met. WIPN have recently undertaken work to further enhance the function of Residency Steering Groups and formalise their structure and reporting. Guidelines have been published as a reference point for the conduct of all future Steering Groups.

Recommendations

- WIPN could consider increasing membership of the Management Board by the inclusion of, for example: representatives from funding organisations to increase WIPN's understanding of (and influence with) these groups; and offenders and ex-offenders to ensure a service user perspective remains at the heart of their work. Given the importance of the prison as a key stakeholder, a representative from prison senior management also seems a significant omission. A representative with direct knowledge and understanding of measuring impact and performance would also add a useful dimension in the light of the increased importance of this in funders' agendas

- In addition, given the current uncertainties around funding and the shifting opportunities within WIPN, the Management Board should produce a scoping

document to redefine WIPNs objectives, highlight major barriers and risks and identify areas of insufficient knowledge for the future progression of the organisation

- WIPN need to ensure that Residency Steering Groups provide an effective support mechanism for *all stakeholders* to review progress and raise concerns. It would be helpful for prison staff to have input into the report which is produced prior to the meeting to provide an indication of the extent to which the needs of the prison are being met by the WiR

- WIPN could consider a Residency Steering Group 'pre-meeting' attended by WIPN staff and prison representatives. This would enable the prison to raise any specific concerns to be raised without the WiR being present. Whilst currently, prison staff have ample opportunity to liaise by phone or face to face with WIPN staff when problems arise, having a more systemised process would provide: a regular 'prompt' to encourage prisons to express their views; an audit trail of feedback and actions taken in response to the feedback and also provide a clear focus for discussion within the meeting

- Residency objectives (which are developed collaboratively between host prisons and WIPN prior to recruitment) should *routinely* be reviewed and agreed by all parties at the first Steering Group of the residency. These objectives should *continue to be flexible* in order to take into account the freedom of thought required for a successful creative process to occur[62]. A *systematic review* of progress against objectives should be undertaken at each subsequent Residency Steering Group. Where objectives are not being met, the steering group should be used as a forum to develop and implement strategies to improve the situation, or indeed to re-evaluate the original objective

- WIPN should ensure that the Residency Steering Group meetings routinely provide the opportunity to identify key learning and development points from the period under review and to capture any good practice which can be shared with other WiRs

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[62] The flexible approach to developing residency objectives which is adopted by WIPN is essential as new ideas develop organically as the residencies progress and also the prison or prison population may radically change over a period of time requiring a rewrite of the brief.

- Detailed minutes should be consistently recorded for all meetings. These should subsequently be shared with all relevant parties and stored in a central WIPN repository.

4.5 Funding

Prior to 2002 all residencies were funded individually through grants from their specific Regional Arts Board. This necessitated writing numerous grant applications and was very time consuming for the WIPN Director. WIPN became an Arts Council Regularly Funded organisation in 2002 meaning the organisation received a rolling three year grant. This alleviated the pressure of constantly having to seek new funds. However, in March 2011, WIPN were given the devastating news that their £150,000 per annum grant from the Arts Council England National Portfolio Programme was to be withdrawn from April 2012. WIPN responded to this by making the decision to *"grow our way out of the crisis by expanding into new areas of work".* This has resulted in the following actions:

- Full charitable status was applied for and obtained. As a result WIPN became Writers in Prison Foundation from July 2012 and this has increased options for seeking future funding

- WIPN (with the support of their Arts Council Relationship Manager) applied for and received 'Grants for the Arts' funding from Arts Council England (£65k). A proportion of this was used to fund the five new residencies starting in October 2011. The remainder has been used to employ the services of the researcher, fundraiser and website designer

- Branding, design and marketing work has been undertaken with regards to parts of the Special Projects programme. For example, WIPN (in partnership with the NUJ) have revised the course workbooks for their NUJ Pathways to Journalism programme and are conducting a major marketing exercise (e.g. producing a DVD and brochure) of this course to encourage more prisons to participate. This project has been recently renamed the Magazines in Prisons Project. Whilst this project is currently heavily subsidised by WIPN, it is hoped that the project will become self-sufficient in the long run

- WIPN are currently in the process of redesigning and expanding the WIPN website in order to reflect the recent change in status and continue to assist with the promotion of WIPN to an external audience.

WIPN staff have responded to this most difficult funding situation with tenacity and verve, and this is reflective of the commitment and passion of the staff and their desire for WIPNs continued success. The resilience shown by the organisation in dealing with this crisis, represents a key strength which bodes well for future sustainability. Clearly, the current economic climate and cuts to funding of public services pose particular risks for VCS organisations and these attributes are particularly important at this time. Similarly, the on-going changes in prisons and cuts to funding of public services are putting increasing pressure on the organisation to justify the contribution they make and also to recruit host prisons:

> *"[WIPN Co-directors and Office Manager] intent on tracking more prisons into taking a Writer in Residence this year, a tricky operation in the current economic climate. We don't normally have to chase prisons but the combination of Mad Jack Straw's PSO when he was Minister of Justice that no one in prison is allowed to have fun and the swingeing cuts by the Coalition government have compounded the problem" (WIPN Co-director's Journal, March 2011).*

Within this context, it is increasingly important to be able to demonstrate the value and impact of Residencies to the Prison Service and to other potential funders. Further discussion on how this may be achieved can be found in Section 10.

The funding cuts in public spending have also significantly increased the workload of the Co-directors as they attempt to manage *"business as usual"* while also seeking additional funding and increasing the numbers of WiRs in prisons:

> *"The cuts have meant that our workload has doubled and then some as we also attempt to carry on business as usual" (WIPN Co-director's Journal, April 2011).*

The Management Board have had a particularly important and valuable role to play in managing this situation.

Recommendations

- Seeking funding has become an increasingly important work area for WIPN staff which requires a significant time investment. WIPN need to be alert to the risk which this poses for the organisation as a whole, as it is likely to place pressure on other work areas (e.g. support provision). Careful staff time management will be needed to reduce the impact of this

- WIPN core staff have a wealth of experience to offer and should seek maximum gain from this. They could consider further expanding the services they currently offer as Consultants/Trainers for organisations and individuals working creatively with offenders and or for prisons

- A key task for the marketing person, when on board, will be to assess the feasibility of diversifying into new sectors (e.g. community settings, young people at risk of offending).

Section 5:   Writer in Residency Activity

This section aims to provide an overview of the work undertaken with prisoners by WiRs across a range of residencies. This includes a narrative of specific examples of WiR activity to give a more detailed flavour of the range and innovation of the work conducted[63]. There then follows a quantitative 'snapshot' of the range of outputs achieved by WIPN staff and WiRs during a specific time period[64] and a brief analysis of WiR hours over a 12 month residency period[65].

5.1 Scope and Diversity of Residencies

The WIRs have facilitated an impressive and diverse array of creative projects. The scope of these activities ranges from writing, rehearsing and staging Christmas pantomimes to developing written materials with the prison's Suicide Prevention officers, as part of the

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[63] This information has been collated from WiR update reports produced for Residency Steering Groups, the WiR 'Post Residency' Outputs Questionnaire and also from conference observation data.
[64] Taken from WIPN Arts Council Regularly Funded Organisations Annual Submission Document - reporting on time period April 2010 - March 2011.
[65] Taken from management data provided by WIPN for time period October 2010 - September 2011.

Listeners scheme 20th anniversary celebrations. This breadth and diversity is further illustrated in one of the WIR's involvement in a joint project with Live Theatre in Newcastle, where prison writers contributed their thoughts around a season of work looking at the Big Society concept and prisoners wrote "My Manifesto", where they laid out plans of how they would run the country if they were Prime Minister. Writers have worked on a variety of film, radio and theatre productions, including the performance of scenes from *Macbeth* to an audience of over forty people in the prison chapel; a radio play written by prisoners to explore the challenges they face on release to a hostel; and the production of a DVD collection of documentary films by prisoners focusing on their lives, their experiences of prison and their hopes and dreams for their futures.

One of the significant areas of impact, given its centrality, to the desistance agenda, is the WiRs involvement in creative projects to assist in maintaining family relationships whilst in prison. WIRs regularly take part in Family Days at their host prisons, providing storytelling sessions for children, creative writing clinics for families and card-making sessions. The Story Book Dads/Mums concept[66] has been expanded and adapted, with WIRs assisting parents to record their stories so children can hear their voices at bed time. This has been developed further by one WiR who has collaborated with Vocal Force in Newcastle to implement their 'Sing Up Dads' project, where CDs are issued to children with songs created and sung by prisoners for their children.

WIRs have been very inventive in ensuring that their activities respond effectively to the diversity of the prison population. For example, in one women's prison, the WiR has developed a "Dear Daisy" column in the prison magazine, with a variety of useful information including beauty tips, information about regimes, a breakdown of the education courses available at the prison and the role of the Listener service in the prison. Engaging those offenders who are traditionally hard to reach has also been an important feature of the work of WiRs and innovative approaches include arranging a number of successful hip hop workshops. In order to respond to older prisoners' needs, an over '60s group for poetry reading and discussion has been established.

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[66] Where Dads and Mums in prison record their own story onto CD to be played to their children at bedtime. Some participants also write and publish these stories.

WIRs have facilitated prisoner contributions into annual events such as Holocaust Memorial Day and Black History Month Celebration of Freedom. They have also undertaken extensive work with the Equality Team within the prison, including assisting in the development of a picture quiz and poetry slam for Black History month and working to ensure the inclusion of people who were non-white in the prison's frieze of 100 greatest Britons. WIRs have also been involved in helping to write leaflets to raise awareness of the Muslim faith.

5.2 Summary of Outputs

The table overleaf indicates the number of outputs achieved by WIPN as a result of WiR activity between April 2010 and March 2011 and also the audience reached by the this activity.

Output	Reach
Performances, productions and presentations • **33** productions of new work and **20** productions by visiting organisations • **57** performances	Attended by an estimated **4,000** people
Exhibitions and film screenings • **1** exhibition held over **14** days • **2** film screenings held over **90** days	Attended by an estimated **450** people Attended by an estimated **1,200** people
Publications and digital • **10** new book titles published	**315** book sales; distributed to **1,000** people/ organisations
• **35** backlisted titles were published,	**83** book sales; distributed to **25** people/ organisations
• **9** further publications[67], with a total of 32 issues produced	Distributed to **5,600** people/organisations
• **1** DVD	Distributed to **450** people /organisation
• WIPN website	**4,000** unique visitors who spent on average 10 minutes exploring WIPN resources
Learning, engagement and participation • Employed **122** artists to deliver learning and participatory work	
• **5,350** informal and participatory activities outside of formal education	Attended by a total of **18,750** individuals
• **14** professional training 'in and through the arts' sessions	Attended by **92** individuals

5.3 WiR Hours

Between October 2010 and September 2011, WIPN managed 16 WiRs and two Mentors[68].

WIPN has also worked with 5 prisons to develop briefs for new writers' residencies 2011-12,

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[67] Defined as: directories, newsletters, magazines, journals, catalogues or exhibition publications, educational resource packs and DVDs or CDs.

all of which made successful applications. There is a total of 17 residencies in the year Oct 2011 to Sept 2012 . These WiRs completed a total of 10,606.60 hours during the period and the chart below shows how this was divided across the different activities:
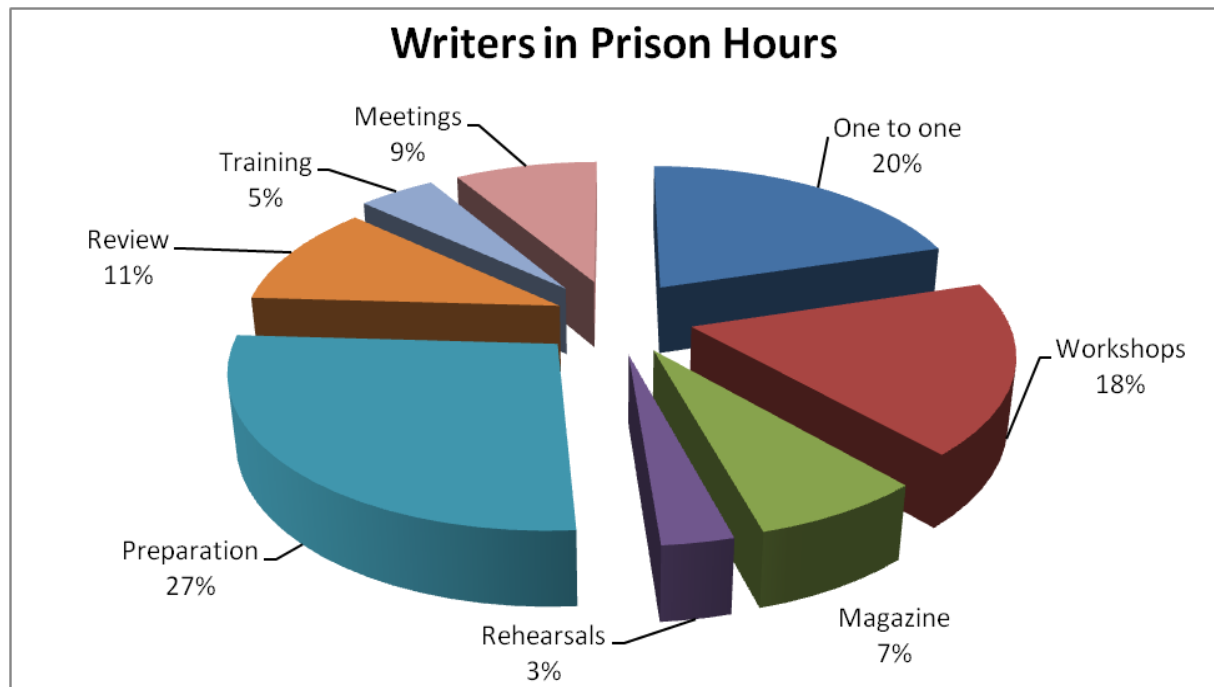

Figure 3: Writers in Prison Hours

It is clear from this chart that the majority of WiRs hours are spent in direct one to one contact with prisoners, in delivering the range of activities described above, or in preparation for these activities.

The residencies provided a total of 25,690.55 hours of purposeful activity for their host prisons over the period October 2011 to September 2012. Purposeful activity targets are very important and form one of the four healthy prison tests[69] set by HM Inspectorate of Prisons[70]. They contributed on average 2140 hours per month and worked with an average of 864 prisoners per month. This data does however mask some significant variations: in terms of the numbers of hours these range from 1,261 hours (in November) to 5,674 hours

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[68] Mentors have a more flexible contract than Writers in Residence. In terms of hours, two mentors are the equivalent of up to one residency.

[69] The other three tests are Safety; Respect and Resettlement
[70] Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons Criteria for assessing the treatment of prisoners and conditions in prisons, Version 4, 2012. Accessed at http://www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/about/hmipris/adult-expectations-2012.pdf 28th June 2012

in March. For prisoner headcount the range is between 485 (February) and 1368 in September. This considerable fluctuation is likely to be a result of increased activity at certain times of the year due to Koestler Awards submissions. The two charts below show the mean numbers of hours per month, the mean number of prisoners per month and the mean number of hours per prisoner this equates to. The second chart shows the minimum, maximum and mean by Activity and by Headcount.
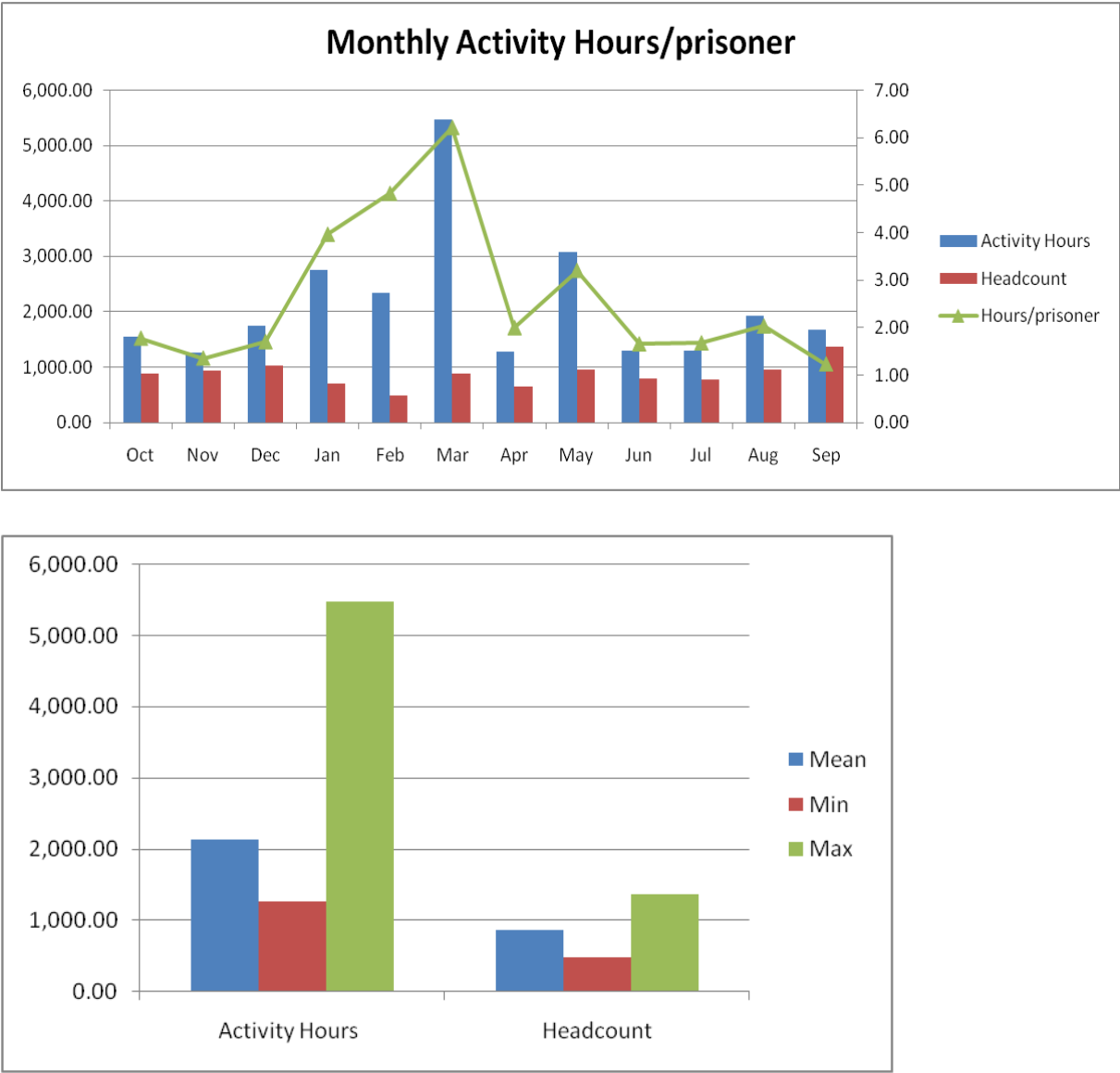

Figure 4.

Section 6:   WIPN Support for Writers

A key role of WIPN is to provide support for WiRs as they deliver the activity outlined above and progress through their residency. The evaluation has revealed a comprehensive wraparound support package for WiRs which is described below.

6.1 Before the Residency

Clear guidance for writers wishing to apply for a residency is provided. The *Introduction for Writers* document (2010 edition) is a helpful resource which provides extensive information on: the background of the WiR in prison scheme and WIPN; how to submit an application; testimonies from WiRs, prison staff and offenders. A particular strength of this document is its transparency and realism in highlighting the huge undertaking of delivering a residency and the complex skills mix required:

> *"It requires not only a writer who can pass on skills, inspire, guide, facilitate and encourage but also a highly developed ability to work with people across an enormously wide spectrum of ability….a residency demands a very high standard of organisational skills.…the work involves a steep learning curve in a unique environment. This is a job for writers who like a challenge and are full of enthusiasm to learn" (Introduction for Writers, 2010 edition).*

Once in post WiR are offered a 'buddy' to provide a first line of support in prison and a prison based line manager who is responsible for the residency[71].

6.2 Induction

On successful recruitment, WIPN provide a six day induction training for writers designed to prepare them for their residencies, which begin in October. The induction process has developed organically and in response to the stated needs of WiRs over time:

> *"We've slowly developed the course over the years, fine-tuning it, responding to feedback from the WIRs that have gone through it. We expanded up to 6 days (Sat–Fri), then reduced it to 5 days (12 sessions) plus the conference (Sat–Thurs)*

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[71] Further details are contained in *'A Guide to the Writer's in Residence in Prison*' document produced by WIPN

and a debrief on the Friday morning for new WIRs as well as lunch with Board

members" (WIPN Co-director's Journal, September 2011).

A particularly valuable element of the induction training is the input of established and more experienced WiRs in facilitating some of the training sessions. The sessions focus on two distinct areas: working in the prison sector and also strategies for working creatively with offenders. New writers are provided with a 'walk through' of how a prison works, security issues and prison processes. They are also given an insight into prisoner and prison officer's perspectives on hosting a WiR and a session on literacy issues in prisons. Further sessions focus on specific strategies which may be usefully employed in working creatively with offenders in the prison setting and exploration of a range of media which WiR may wish to consider including: oral storytelling, video production, poetry and performance, drama production and script writing, radio and audio production and starting a magazine. WiRs are also shown relevant drama documentaries which aim to give a realistic view of what prisons look like and how they work in order to facilitate useful discussion.

The content of the induction provided for new writers is both comprehensive and appropriate in that it reflects the twofold challenge posed by the role of WiRs. Not only do WiRs have to develop interesting teaching which will engage a very challenging client group but they also have to do this within the confines of a prison environment, being sensitive to the needs of the regime and adhering to strict protocols.   High levels of satisfaction with the WIPN induction process have been reported. WIPN ask all newly recruited writers to score their overall satisfaction levels with each of the sessions provided at the induction week and from this WIPN produce an overall satisfaction score. For induction week 2010, 5 new writers were canvassed and the overall satisfaction level was recorded as 85.3%, for induction week 2011, 6 new writers completed the forms and the overall satisfaction level was recorded as 80.4%.   The induction is not only beneficial for WiRs but also for host prisons:

"It's an intensive week but all our WIRs tell us how invaluable it's been in

preparing them for the job ahead. There's no question that it's tiring but an

essential element in ensuring that all our WIRs understand the ethos and work

practices and standards of working for WIPN. It means that by and large we can

offer prisons a guaranteed standard without stifling the individual WIRs' personal qualities and skills" (WIPN Co-director's Journal, September 2011).

WIPN invest a great deal of effort to ensure WiRs are well briefed on the potential emotional impact of working in such a challenging environment. However some WiRs have reflected that even the most comprehensive induction cannot fully prepare a writer for the distinct culture and environment which exists within prison. Prisons are unpredictable environments and cultures, and some processes and routines are specific and distinct to each prison regime which makes induction provision particularly challenging. Some WiRs felt they had limited understanding of different types of prisons across the estate.

6.3   WIPN Conference

In addition to the training outlined above, new WiRs are also invited to a WIPN day conference (attended by WIPN staff, existing writers and sometimes, ex-writers) which is held during induction week[72]. WIPN conferences form part of the induction process for new writers but are also an effective mechanism for on-going support for established writers. Specific conference activities may vary according to priorities of WIPN at any given time but may include:

- 'Round the Residencies' - this is a round table activity where each writer provides a brief summary of the achievements and challenges in their residencies
- Networking lunch - offers an opportunity to follow up issues raised in the morning session and gain information or advice from specific individuals
- Guest speaker slots which include structured input from either:
  - an invited external agency (e.g. Open College of the Arts) on what their agency can offer to offenders and how WIRs can access their services
  - an internal staff member (e.g. a WiR) on a particular area of work they have been involved with which may provide useful learning for others
- A fun and interactive exercise, usually in the form of a game, to facilitate learning (e.g. in 2011 attendees participated in a role play exercise to enable them to

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[72] In addition to the induction conference, a further two conferences are held on selected dates during the year and are held in different parts of the country so that as many WiRs as possible can attend.

experience learning as a special needs learner. This was followed by a discussion of the issues and practical solutions which can be applied in the prison setting)

- Practical workshops may also be undertaken where appropriate, to engage WIRs with particular ways of working
- Mentoring sessions where established writers engage with new WiRs to offer practical advice and provide solutions to issues brought up during the day.

When attending conferences the evaluation team observed a vibrant and dynamic atmosphere, where the sharing of ideas and problems provided a motivating and inspiring experience for WiRs, new and old. Conferences were particularly valued by WiRs as an opportunity to get together with WIPN staff and writers to share experiences and to experience peer support. In particular they facilitated a sense of belonging for those Writers who may feel isolated within their prison:

> *"Enjoyable though tiring WIPN conference with lots of great discussion and the feeling of being part of something valuable – countered by the shared frustration that we are not being properly valued by the system" (New Writer, final quarter of Residency)* [73].

The input of very long standing WiRs was particularly beneficial for new writers here. Not only did new writers report being able to learn from their experiences but also felt reassured that even the most experienced and successful WiRs had made similar mistakes and faced similar problems to them. Conversely, new writers frequently take on a 'naive enquirer' role in conference discussions, which can facilitate new ways of thinking and problem solving for the more established WiRs. In this sense, new and old writers have something to offer and can learn from each other.

The comments below are illustrative of the value placed upon the community of practice which conferences offer:

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[73] Where New Writers are referred to as being in the final quarter of their residency, this relates to the final quarter of *Year One* in all cases

"It was good to catch up with everyone and hear about what they're doing. They are all doing some really impressive work" (New Writer, 2nd quarter of Residency)

"A real pleasure to attend the conference and feel part of a valuable project and network"(New Writer, 2nd quarter of Residency)

"Attending the WIPN Annual Conference and recognising just how far I have come in a year of professional and personal development through my work as a Writer in Residence. A great feeling of solidarity with other writers" (New Writer, final quarter of Residency).

These conferences are an important mechanism for sharing knowledge and demonstrate a high level of maturity within the organisation in its understanding of the importance of knowledge management activities such as these, particularly the importance of providing opportunities for the sharing of learning and 'tacit' knowledge, that is, knowledge which is embedded in individual experience and involves intangible factors such as personal belief, perspective and the value system (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995[74]).

However, a small number of new writers felt that new and old writers may have different support needs and would like to have specific 'newbie' sessions where they could spend time discussing problems and concerns pertinent to the start of a residency.   This may point to the need for a review of the mix of activities within the conference to allow some specific time for these issues to be raised.

6.4 Additional On-going Support

The WIPN conference is just one element of a suite of activities designed to provide on-going support for WiRs throughout the year (and indeed at any point in their residency, as and when required). This on-going support takes a variety of forms including: monthly e mail information (e.g. jobs listings, details of events being put on by other writers, dates for steering group meetings and WIPN conferences); a quarterly magazine-style publication,

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[74] Nonaka, I. & Takeuchi, H. (1995). *The knowledge-creating company.* New York, Oxford University Press.

'*Network Notes*', focussing on experiences of being a Writer in Prison is posted on the WIPN web site; provision of contact details for geographically local (ex) WiR for networking and support. In addition WIPN make monthly contact with WiRs to request timesheets to ensure that prompt payments can be made and purposeful activity hours can be logged.

In addition to the above, a high level of pastoral care is undertaken by the WIPN Co-directors. This element of the support system is extremely varied and wide ranging (depending on any given need, at any given time, in any given residency). The evaluation has identified sharing the wisdom of accrued experience and also a flexible and pro-active response to troubleshooting as key features here and as key enablers for WiRs. The Journal of the WIPN Co-director reveals an engaged presence in all residencies. Whilst residency steering committees provide the formal mechanism for offering support, it is clear that an abundance of ad hoc, informal and round the clock support is provided outside of meetings in the form of lunch meetings, phone calls and email contact. The relationships between WIPN Co-directors and WiRs is clearly mutually respectful and beneficial:

> "*It always does me good to experience the WiRs at work: how talented, how committed and how inspirational. It makes me intensely proud to be part of it all*" (WIPN Co-director's Journal, April 2011).

The evaluation has identified a number of risks when working in the prison setting which can impact on the experience of the WiR and necessitate a particularly high level of support. These may include changes in prison structures (re-roling) and sudden changes in staffing; as well as unsupportive attitudes of prison staff. Also, as outlined in Section 5 the workload of WiRs may fluctuate considerably over the year and there may be 'pinch points' of activity where WiRs are under particularly intense pressure. WiRs have also highlighted the negative impact which their residency work can have on their own creative output. At induction week a number of new writers said they hoped their residency would improve their own writing. However, expectations around their own professional development proved unrealistic:

> "*I've written nothing of my own—just working all hours to finish what I have to do already*" (New Writer, 3rd quarter of Residency)

This is also a problem for established writers:

"Nothing written again this month—no energy" (Established Writer)

This poses the question of whether you can be a writer *and* a Writer in Residence at the same time. There is perhaps a trade-off here. Past WiRs have suggested that they gain so much satisfaction from the work which prisoners are producing, they are happy to forgo their own writing endeavours for a while[75]. However, it is clear that WiRs would benefit from additional support with their own writing.

Evaluation data show that WIPN staff are often attuned to such problems within individual residencies. However, one of the challenges for WIPN in support provision is the considerable variation between residencies, regimes and prison support for residencies across the estate. Thus it may be appropriate to have a more formal strategy for assessing and managing risks and a clear set of actions which are required to mitigate them.

In addition to the support offered by WIPN, it is clear that the peer support element of the Network is crucial. Some ad hoc communication between WiRs does occur between conferences (especially once residencies become more established) and new writers are also provided with a 'regional contact' to encourage peer support. However, some WiRs reported that they would welcome a more formalised mechanism for communication and networking to enhance the sense of community and belonging within the Network. This is particularly important during the early stages of a residency, though the need continues throughout to some degree. As the Residency progressed, many Writers gradually built up links with other members of the network and corresponded with other WiRs regarding requests for sharing resources, feedback and ideas.

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[75] See '*Writing the Future*' - WIPN publication, February 2009.

6.5 Exiting a Residency

Delivering a residency in the prison context is likely to be a challenging experience and therefore the closure of a Residency requires considered management. This is recognised by WIPN who work hard to provide effective closure for WiRs and also to capture learning from their experience. A weekend retreat is provided by WIPN to help support Writers through the closure of their residency. The purpose of this is explained by the WIPN Co-director:

> *"Principally a thank you to them and a chance for WIPN to pamper them with fine food, good company, hot tub and hot stone foot massage. They spend a good part of the weekend sharing experiences with each other both from their residencies and own professional practice" (WIPN Co-director, Interview).*

Writers who participate in the retreat are asked to provide feedback on what they valued in the residencies, what WIPN did well or could do better and whether their professional lives as writers have benefitted from being a WIR. Usually views are recorded on to a DVD, which is then used with new Writers during the induction training. This is another excellent example of the capture and sharing of tacit knowledge.

Support for ex-writers in residence (from WIPN and from other writers in residence) does not stop once a residency is complete. Many WiRs continue writing projects with offenders beyond the lifetime of the residency and WIPN often play a key role in helping raise funds through writing grant applications and provide critical feedback on work, as well as general support. WIPN also often attend events such as book launches and opening nights of plays to demonstrate support for writers beyond their residency.

On leaving their WiR post, the vast majority of writers (12) continue to work in their creative field. Five writers continue to work with ex-offenders or prisoners. All of the (ex) WiRs are still writing in various forms, the most common genre being novels or books. Three writers have engaged with further study to develop their writing skills. Significantly while more than half of the (ex) WiRs still attend WIPN events when they can[76].

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[76] Information taken from an electronic questionnaire sent to approximately 30 (ex) Writers in Residence. The evaluation team were provided with 14 replies for analysis.

It is clear that there are a range of formal and informal activities to provide effective and extensive support from the beginning to the end of the residency. WIPN staff clearly care about their WiRs and place great value on ensuring that they have sufficient support and are properly inducted into the organisation and the prison environment.

Recommendations

- Supporting a large number of residencies across a range of prisons is a huge undertaking and is likely to place a considerable burden on the Co-directors (especially considering the 24/7 and unboundaried nature of support offered). Therefore it is essential that the Co-directors themselves receive appropriate support in providing this function. In considering future staffing requirements (and should the funding become available) WIPN should consider recruiting a specific 'Writer in Residence Support Officer' post

- To reduce the impact of staff support and development on the Co-directors, some of this work could be offered virtually - Skype or web based information sharing platforms such as Basecamp. Though this should not replace face to face support due to the potential vulnerability of WiRs

- WIPN could engage in discussion with host prisons regarding the possibility of introducing 'shadowing' of other Writers in Residence prior to embarking a residency. This may pose difficulties (regarding gaining security clearance and the time investment required). However, the initial investment may pay off as is it is recognized that observation is an effective method for sharing tacit knowledge in organisations and enables the situation to be viewed holistically (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995[77]).

- At those conferences where new writers are being inducted, *more t*ime could be allocated to discussing issues and concerns pertinent to starting a residency. Whilst some time is indeed dedicated to 'newbies', some writers felt they would benefit from additional attention

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[77] Op. cit

- There need to be clear mechanisms and processes to enable writers to alert and escalate risks to WIPN between the quarterly Residency Steering Group meetings. There is currently a high level of reliance on the extensive skills and experience of the WIPN Co-directors in managing any such risks and a more formal risk management process such as a risks and issues log or a risk register based on a traffic light system would reduce the vulnerability of the organisation to absence (either temporary or permanent) of these key members of staff.   Whilst WiRs are able to contact the WIPN Co-directors when problems arise, having a more formal mechanism in place would ensure continuity in the event of absence and is a requirement for effective governance for the organisation. (see Appendix Two for an example of a risks and issues log)

- It is clear that Residency Steering Group meetings provide an effective support mechanism for WiRs. However it is unclear to what extent this forum offers a staff development and/or appraisal function.   In order to ensure effective staff development and appraisal, the organisation would benefit using the "skills and competency mapping" tool outlined in Section 4 on an on-going basis. As part of their staff development, WiRs could be asked to rate themselves against the identified criteria at the start and at specific points in their residency. This would:
    o identify potential development needs for staff which could be discussed at steering group meetings
    o identify particular skills which individual writers have which could then be shared among Network members
    o identify WiRs with high level expertise in particular areas who could support those who were struggling.

- In order to facilitate greater communication, sharing of knowledge and peer support between WiRs and also enhance the sense of a 'network', WIPN could consider developing a web based platform to create a virtual 'one stop shop' for WiRs to access key materials, including good practice guidance, teaching and learning materials and to enhance feelings of membership and ownership of the Network. Suggestions for inclusion are:

- contact details for all other WiRs (past and present) and additional details, such as current and past roles, publications and past Creative Arts experience, areas of specialism, what particular expertise they have to offer
- a repository of WIPN documentation (e.g. Guidance for Writers)
- a repository of resources used successfully by Writers during their residencies; it could also include information on what has not been successful as this can also be a useful source of knowledge.
- access to a shared calendar to alert WiRs to all relevant dates and events (e.g. awards submission dates, religious and cultural events around which to base activities e.g. Black History Month, religious festivals, WIPN conference dates)
- discussion forum function.

- Web based platforms which could deliver this functionality are readily available "off the shelf" so there would be no development costs for WIPN, though there would be a monthly cost for using the platform. One example of such a platform is Base camp which provides document storage, discussion forum and calendar functionality
- While the DVD developed from residency closure feedback is an excellent way of bringing to life the experiences of WiRs it may be that there are opportunities for more structured capture of these important lessons and good practices. They could, for example, be extracted and used to provide a series of good practice guidance or toolkits to further enhance the support for WiRs.

Section 7: From Isolation to Integration - the Writer's Journey through a Residency

7.1 Impact of Prison Environment and Culture

There is a notable lack of evidence within the literature around the lived experience of those delivering arts projects to offenders[78]. This section aims to illuminate the experiences of WiRs as they progress through their residency. In particular, the *facilitators of* and

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[78] One of the very few good examples of such work is the publication 'Free with Words' which is an anthology of essays by WiRs compiled by the WIPN Co-Director in 1999.

barriers to progress will be explored, along with the particular characteristics of writers, host prisons, prisoners, and WIPN which combine to create a successful residency. Each residency is unique and each writer has their own journey. However, some general trends and commonalities have been identified through examination of multiple data sources, in terms of the WiR experience and the role of both the host prison and WIPN in facilitating the residency.

Introducing 'arts' projects into the prison environment is a notoriously difficult proposition. WIPN provide residencies in a range of institutions across the prison estate including: training prisons, high security prisons, YOIs (both open and closed) and female prisons. Different types of prisons pose different problems for both WIPN staff, in managing residencies, and WIRs in delivering them. Prisons which are very remotely located (e.g. Dartmoor) can pose the elementary problem of access and may prove difficult to recruit to. For WiRs, such residencies necessitate extensive travel time on top of an already very demanding workload. Prisons which have a very high throughput of prisoners and transient populations are particularly vulnerable to inconsistent class sizes and attendance, thus necessitate 'regular reinvention' and pro-active on going recruitment. Those prisons which house particular offenders (e.g. sexual offenders) have posed particular challenges for some WiRs who have found it difficult to see beyond the crime.

It is important to state here that host prisons invest a great deal of time and resources to support residencies. It is likely that the negative experiences for WiRs, some of which are reported in this section, arise from their contact with those prison officers who have not been directly involved in the setting up of the residency and have not yet witnessed its benefits.

Soon after embarking upon a residency, WiRs are confronted with life at the mercy of the prison regime. Clearly in prisons, security is the primary concern and ensuring the security of the prison necessitates a vast array of bureaucratic procedures which are difficult to negotiate. Whilst supportive of the endeavours of WIPN, the priority for many prison staff, understandably, is the running of core programmes and maintaining security. WIPN, like the majority of arts projects in prisons, is an 'add-on' and not underpinned by strategic policy. WiRs speak of *'battling through'* prison bureaucracy and processes and *'jumping*

through hoops' to get anything done. This can be a frustrating and exhausting process, particularly for new writers who sometimes (but not always) have limited understanding of both prison regime and culture. Whilst training and induction processes provided by WIPN go to great lengths to prepare WiRs for this, knowing this *in theory* is very different from experiencing it *in practice.* Not only do WiRs find themselves unable to *literally* find their way around the physical space of the prison, they find themselves *figuratively* lost within the maze of protocols and unwritten rules which characterise the prison environment:

> *"I was really confused, still am. Don't know or understand the rules"* (New Writer, 3rd quarter of Residency)

> *"I'm getting into trouble all the time – I'm not sure of the parameters"* (New Writer, 3rd quarter of Residency)

> *"I felt a little isolated and abandoned – a sense of 'just get on with it' and I really haven't got into the swing of the place yet. I am so frustrated by how long it takes to do just the simplest things"* (New Writer, 1st quarter of Residency).

WiRs have reported specific problems with:

- gaining access to the most basic resources (e.g. memory sticks)
- gaining approval for materials to bring into prisons to use in classes
- gaining approval for writing produced by prisoners to be approved for circulation
- disruption of sessions and non-attendance due to unexpected lockdown, prisoner movement and lack of co-operation from escorting officers
- Lack of physical space (office, storage, performing)
- Lack of technical support
- lack of co-operation from the prison in timetabling WiRs' sessions.

Such battles have resulted in a sense of powerlessness for WiRs which are compounded by feelings of isolation and disorientation during the first part of their residency. Writers in Residence initially feel largely unconnected to the wider prison and almost invisible to the staff:

> *"He [Writer's Line Manager] moved house and couldn't come in for two weeks, no one even noticed" (New Writer, WIPN conference)*

> *"I went into the Mess every day for two weeks and no one spoke to me" (New Writer, final quarter of Residency).*

The way in which WiR activity is perceived by some prison staff has been a challenge for WiRs. They feel that some staff view their work as a luxury, providing too much 'fun' for prisoners. The 'open brief' of WiRs in delivering their work was felt to cause resentment among some prison education staff who felt restrained in delivering a strict curriculum with little room for creativity.

WiRs sometimes witnessed a derisory attitude towards prisoners from some prison staff, which diverged wildly from their own value systems. One WiR reported their distress at witnessing a member of education staff being aggressive towards one of their students. Another WiR reported a contemptible attitude towards a prisoner's work, asking the WiR: *"Do you think anyone's gonna be interested in that shit he's writing"* (New Writer, WIPN conference). A small number of WiRs also reported that prison staff did not escort prisons to their pre-arranged sessions:

> *"Lack of response from timetabling team meant that I prepared for two workshops that didn't happen despite requesting sessions with prisoners keen to work with me but finding their timetables filled with other activities, all of which are given priority over my work" (New Writer, 2nd 3 months of Residency).*

Whilst there may be a host of understandable reasons for this, it may be indicative of resentment and also lack of value placed upon their work.

There was an issue for some WiRs around the language used in the prison (reported by both new and old WiRs). For example, one writer said when he used 'street' terminology in sessions with his group, prison staff viewed this as him trying to *'be in their gang'* and reacted negatively. It was felt that staff did not see the necessity for writers to have different role relationships with prisoners than those of the wing staff. Whereas WiRs were frequently horrified by the prison staff attitudes and behaviour towards prisoners and sought to have an entirely different type of relationship with them! It has been suggested

that prison officers (especially those in public sector prisons) seek to distance themselves morally from prisoners and are often highly censorious of their ethics and behaviour (Liebling, 2007[79]). In direct contrast to this, WiRs reflected that it was sometimes difficult (and indeed undesirable) to maintain distance in working creatively with offenders. Thus WiRs felt that some prison officers viewed them as being 'on the side of prisoners' and were sceptical of anyone believing they can make a difference. It was reported that some prison staff were threatened by a 'liberal ideology' and were distrustful of WiRs as a result. Within this 'us and them' environment, WiRs reported being part of the 'out group' and frequently alone. Indeed, one group of new writers referred to the prison officers' Mess as a 'hazard area'!

Some new writers struggled greatly with the hostility shown towards them:

> *"I have never in my life not been trusted. I'm finding that hard to live with" (New Writer, final quarter of Residency)*

> *"Everything is fine except for the people who work there" (New Writer, final quarter of Residency).*

However, WiRs felt a certain amount of pressure to get the prison staff 'on side' as they had a key role to play in the success of the residency (both in terms of it creating a bearable work environment and also for practical reasons like them having responsibility for escorting prisoners to their sessions. This resulted in WiRs feeling unsure of how to 'position' themselves and they frequently questioned whether they were there to serve the needs of the prison or the prisoners. Several writers felt they needed to play the role of *'chameleon'*, making continual judgement calls about which face to present or which role to play. They were required to use different strategies in managing their displays of emotion when dealing with both prison staff and prisoners:

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[79] Liebling, A (2007). Why prison staff culture matters. In Byrne J, Taxman F and Hummer D (eds.) (2007). *The Culture of Prison Violence*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 105–122.

"Sometimes I feel disgusted by the actions of the prisoners I work with and the only saving grace is that evidently none of them want me to think badly of them" (Established Writer).

This suggests there is a high degree of emotional labour[80] involved in delivering a residency. Emotional labour refers to the display of socially desired emotions during work and can have three components:

- the faking of emotion that is not felt (e.g. sympathetic to prison staff views on prisoners)

- the hiding of emotion that is felt (e.g. contempt for a crime committed by a prisoner)

- the performance of emotion management in order to meet expectations within a work environment (e.g. concealment of frustration and anger with prison systems) (Mann, 2004[81]).

Dependent upon the strategies used to manage such emotional labour in the workplace, the impact can be considerable, ranging from feelings of alienation and ultimately to stress, exhaustion and 'burn out' (Nylander et al 2011[82]). It has also been suggested that the greater the dissonance between a worker's own values and those of various reference groups in the workplace, the greater will be their levels of burnout (Schaible and Gecas, 2010[83]). This is particularly pertinent considering the reported relationships between some WiRs and some prison staff. Indeed there is a plethora of evidence to suggest that the emotional impact of delivering a residency on the WiR is considerable:

"I feel like I've been in a boxing ring today" (Established Writer)

"Exhausted, feeling rather overwhelmed and suffering from my high expectations" (New Writer, 1st quarter of Residency)

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[80] Hochschild, A. R (1979). Emotion Work, Feeling Rules and Social Structure. *American Journal of Sociology,* Vol 85 (3): 551-575 .

[81] Mann, S. (2004). 'People-work': emotion, management, stress and coping. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, 32(2): 205-221.

[82] Nylander, P, Lindberg, O and Bruhn, A (2011). Emotional labour and emotional strain among Swedish prison officers. *European Journal of Criminology,* 8: 469.

[83] Schaible, L.M and Gecas, V (2010). The impact of emotional labor and value dissonance on burnout among police officers. *Police Quarterly*, 13(3) 316– 341.

It is suggested that a high degree of emotional intelligence[84] is required in the successful management of emotional labour (Walsh, 2009[85]).   Emotional intelligence is characterised by accuracy in managing, understanding, using, perceiving emotions. The implications of this are twofold: WIPN need to develop recruitment strategies which can successfully identify and assess the emotional intelligence of candidates; WiR need support structures and strategies which enable them to foster and enhance the emotional intelligence of WiRs.

7.2 Questioning Role and Function

Some WiRs reported conflicting feelings about the role and function of the work they undertook with prisoners.   Whilst WiRs may begin their residencies feeling their work is about providing escapism for prisoners, this often changes as they progress through and the content of sessions becomes deeper and more challenging. There is evidence to suggest that prisoners have sometimes made contact with complex feelings and emotions, linked to their offending, in sessions with the WiR:

> *"We did a Life Stories in 50 words workshop and it was amazing….all kinds of things surfaced, the obvious drink drugs crime, but witchcraft, the loss of a baby, temptation and a real desire to turn things around were also in there" (New Writer, 3rd quarter of Residency)*

> *"Had great session, telling them the story of Jack and the Beanstalk. There was tremendous involvement, both in terms of the story and the discussion issues afterwards – Who was guilty of what?" (New Writer, 2nd quarter of Residency)*

This has led some WiRs to question whether it is sufficient to provide participants with a creative outlet or whether they have a responsibility to encourage men to reflect on their criminal activity in a way that discourages re-offending (that is, be more directive in their work).   The WIPN Co-director also raises the question of role function from a slightly different perspective:

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[84] Mayer, J. D., Salovey, P., Caruso, D. R., & Sitarenios, G. (2001). Emotional intelligence as a standard intelligence. *Emotion,* 1, 232–242.
[85] Walsh, E (2009). The emotional labor of nurses working in her Majesty's (HM) prison service. *Journal of Forensic Nursing*, 143 (5): 143–152.

> *"In the Education Manager's office talking about the benefits of a residency….inevitably we touch upon how the writer might contribute to KPTs, accreditation, whilst I stress that the writer is not a teacher" (WIPN Co-director's Journal, June, 2011).*

The above reflections raise important questions with regard to the future 'positioning' of WIPN in an increasingly competitive marketplace. As already highlighted, funding for work with offenders is becoming more and more closely linked with reducing re-offending. Within this context it will become ever more important for WIPN to provide clarity on the function which they provide for prisons and the specific impacts which they have on prisoners (i.e. whether the work of a WiR contributes towards reducing re-offending). This poses the complex question of whether artistic integrity can be preserved within the context of the requirements of funders to produce 'results'. These issues are further explored in Section 10.

7.3 Moving Towards Integration - the 'Arc of Change'

Evaluation data have offered a rich insight into the 'arc of change' which occurs over the course of a residency (over one year or multiple years in most cases). It is evident that the progress of a residency is by no means a linear process but events and corresponding emotions ebb and flow over time:

> *"I hit an all time low this month and really questioned whether I wanted to carry on as a writer in a prison but actually, through being open about this with staff and with prisoners I feel like I've finally turned a corner and am getting back into enjoying what I do" (Established Writer).*

There is evidence to suggest that despite initial difficulties and challenges in the early stages of residences (especially the first three months), towards the end of the first year a subtle shift begins to happen both in the prison view of the WiR and also within the mind-set of WiRs themselves. This process is aided by the high degree of flexibility offered by WIPN with regards to working hours which helps to prevent 'burnout'. Over the course of a year-long residency WiRs become increasingly integrated into prison life, slowly but surely beginning to develop a creative culture in their host prison. A unique feature of WIPN residencies, when compared with many other 'arts' projects in prison is their long term

nature, which offers the opportunity to become truly embedded within the setting and to build up trusting and positive relationships with both prison staff and offenders.

There is a plethora of evidence of increased integration between WiRs and the wider prison as residencies progress which includes:

- WiRs being asked to contribute to sentence planning meetings and behaviour reports on prisoners they interact with
- Public Protection departments have asked for WIR input into relevant pre-release meetings
- WiRs conducting sessions within existing resettlement course structures (e.g. Skills for Life)
- Learning and Skills departments have asked WiRs to assist with Performance and Achievement Events
- Sharing the co-ordination of creative events with other prison departments (e.g. planning Black History Month with the prison's Equality Team, working collaboratively on a library exhibition project)
- Library and Security departments have requested WiR support in the management of outside agency writing competitions and various events (e.g. English PEN, PET and Reading Agency events, World book night, Koestler Trust events)
- WiRs have been asked to contribute to the HMP Inspection report
- WiR being asked to participate in prison events (e.g. Family Visits day, where the Writer has the opportunity to promote the *Write Me a Story Dad!* project and recruit new prisoners in the process)
- WiRs being asked by prison Healthcare department to work with prisoners to produce a leaflet on self-harming
- Dedicated prison support being provided for a visiting exhibition (Ann Frank)
- Collaborative working with prison Arts Tutors, Chaplaincy and Librarians.

The above collaborations are very significant. They reflect *acceptance* of the work undertaken by the WiR, the *value* which they place on that work and also the *trust* they have in the WiR as a worker within their prison. WiRs reported that relationship building

required patience and perseverance and often it took time to discover those staff who are likely to be supportive and co-operative. However, once an ally was discovered among prison staff, this could have a huge impact on both the progress and enjoyment of their residency. WiRs report that Chaplaincy, Education staff (especially Arts Tutors) along with Heads of Learning and Skills were often particularly supportive and therefore key enablers for the residency. This may be because these staff members are likely to have attitudes to offenders which are aligned with their own value/belief systems. The support of Security Departments was also highlighted as important as they dictate the materials which can/cannot be used by WiRs and also the materials which can/cannot be circulated beyond the prison walls. Whilst information on prison staffing structures is given at induction training, some WiRs reported they had limited information on the roles of key staff in their individual prison and this hindered progress at times.

As increasingly trusting and open relationships developed during the course of the residency, prison staff were willing to facilitate exciting ventures such as visits from a variety of artists, musicians and poets. The fact that prisons have worked so hard to support the work of WiRs is reflective of the value that it places upon them:

> *"Management could have easily vetoed my request for a large group to attend [an invited speaker event] but instead worked with me to facilitate the event rather than block it. The Governor has also offered their full support, which is really uplifting" (New Writer, final quarter of Residency).*

Prison staff witnessed how engagement with WiRs had increased prisoners' appetite for engaging with traditional prison education and this encouraged positive relationships between host prisons and writers:

> *"The writer led short writing events which inspired my GCSE classes and raised their work to a much higher standard. The writer has also given me lots of ideas for stimulating writing and has drummed up support for my courses on the wings" (GCSE English and Functional Skills tutor, Prison Staff).*

In addition the facilitation of creative writing sessions for prison staff in some prisons, appeared to have a positive impact on relationships between the two parties. This is discussed in more detail in Section 8.

Undoubtedly the relationships developed between WiRs and prison staff were instrumental in the successful progression of a residency. However, the personal qualities and attributes of individual writers was vital. In the words of one WiR, close to the end of the first year – *"your personality dictates your residency".* Resilience and adaptability are probably the most valued characteristics in a WiR. In particular, the extent to which WiRs are able to develop acceptance of their role in the prison hierarchy, with all its frustrations and difficulties, seems to be important for both the wellbeing of the WiR and the overall success of the residency. Coming to accept certain aspects of working in prison as being 'part of the job' and also realising that it is not always possible to please both prisoners and the host prison, was sometimes a key turning point for WiRs.

Problems persisted regardless of the stage of the residency (e.g. those relating to timetabling and low numbers, hostility from staff, lack of access to IT, time-consuming security clearance processes, motivating prisoners, working with prisoners with challenging behaviours). However those WiRs who were able to adapt positively and innovatively to these stumbling blocks were likely to succeed. The following extract from the WIPN Co-director's Journal provides a good example of this:

> *"This one's been a testing residency....[WiR] has taken it all in his stride. He was busy today filming with a cameraman he's brought in and a couple of enthusiastic offenders. The schedule and who could take part all appear to have changed at the last minute but [WiR] has calmly adapted to all this and is successfully improvising his way out of the problems"* *(WIPN Co-director's Journal, 2011)*

As residencies progressed, WiRs appeared to become more proficient in developing coping strategies to maintain their psychological well-being. They also developed an improved understanding of their unofficial role and rank within the prison setting and a realisation that their ability to change things was very limited due to their position in the prison

hierarchy[86]. The support of WIPN staff played a constant and significant role in negotiating a path through these challenges.

7.4 Working with Challenging Groups - from indifference to inspiration

The institutional challenges and constraints of the prison environment are, of course, just one side of the story for the WiR. Prisons are complex systems, home to people with highly complex emotional needs all living out their own dramas and anguish. WiRs have reported the men with whom they work have been uncooperative and difficult. During the early part of residencies, maintaining prisoner engagement and motivation was a key challenge:

> *"Finding the demoralising attitude from some lads makes me question what I'm achieving" (New Writer, 1st 3 months of Residency)*

> *"No idea quite where to start…introducing myself to men who were largely indifferent to my presence…" (New Writer, 1st quarter of Residency)*

> *"I found I lack simple workshop ideas to adapt to prisoner interest" (New Writer, 3rd quarter of Residency).*

Some WiRs lacked confidence in their ability to judge appropriate boundaries in their work with prisoners. For example, they felt unsure about how much personal information they should reveal about themselves during sessions and also found it difficult to judge the appropriateness of certain materials for study (for example, one WiR decided to use the gay, cowboy film "Brokeback Mountain" in a session which initially caused some consternation among prison staff[87]). Another WiR was in receipt of a Security Incident Report (SIR) for corresponding with an ex-prisoner once he was released. They also found it difficult at times to achieve a comfortable balance between being assertive with prisoners (particularly those who may be difficult and domineering in group settings) and forging positive and productive relationships with them. WiRs reported that WIPN staff provided invaluable support in advising on such matters.

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[86] This process has similarly been identified with nurses working in prisons (see Walsh 2009, op.cit)
[87] WIPN staff had alerted the WiR to the potential problems of this material.

WiRs have identified the interaction with prisoners themselves as both the worst and best thing about residencies, being characterised by extreme highs and lows and provoking intense emotions. One new writer described the first three months as *"a steep learning curve"* but as providing an *"exciting buzz".* Another simply stated *"There can be bad days, but the good days are amazing".*

Interestingly, relationships with prisoners are reported as less problematic than those with staff by WiRs. Often from a starting point of indifference on the part of prisoners, the progress made and the relationships forged were reported as gratifying and inspiring in equal measure. The very high quality of the work produced and the unearthing of incredible talent were sustaining factors in the residency for both new and established writers:

> *"Received a written piece of work from a prisoner who was resistant at first—turns out to be brilliant. Frank, honest and entertaining—a real page turner" (New Writer, 1st quarter of Residency)*

> *"The quality of writing from a 16-year-old novelist, which is top-rate for someone so young….watching his face….he's just been shortlisted for the Prison Reform Trust national short story award out of dozens of (adult) entries" (New Writer, 3rd quarter of Residency)*

> *"Some exquisite poetry from one of the detainees – absolutely staggering – I feel he should be critiquing my poetry, not this way around" (Established Writer).*

WIRs reported that whilst it was thrilling to behold the direct outputs of their work with offenders, it was equally exciting to bear witness to the journey they had experienced in producing those outputs. In particular, the invigorating and challenging discussions within workshops, building trusting relationships with offenders and seeing improved self-esteem and behaviour:

"He is a difficult lad with whom others in education refuse to work, but his behaviour has improved in recent months. I hope that I may be contributing something towards this change" (New Writer, 3rd quarter of Residency).

Towards the end of the first year, it appeared that a turning point was reached. WiRs begin to feel more positive about their residency, their achievements and their hopes for the future:

"Very full hours but really enjoyable and feeling like good progress being made. My numbers of prisoners are still low but the quality of engagement is fantastic" (New Writer, 3rd quarter of Residency).

"Really looking forward to the next 12 months and feeling much more confident of the territory" (New Writer, WIPN Conference)

Recommendations

- WIPN should explore the most effective strategies for managing the impact of emotional labour on WiRs. This would assist WIPN in better addressing the support needs of their Writers in Residence. In particular WIPN need to offer support and supervision which enables WiRs to be reflexive about their practice in order to develop new ways of thinking, developing coping strategies and therefore becoming more positive about working in prison

- WiRs should be encouraged to foster their emotional intelligence and skills of self-governance. In particular to focus on the internal self and one's own reaction to situations rather than looking externally (that is to the establishment in which they work) for solutions. This is likely to be an effective mechanism by which emotional labour can be safely addressed in order to support mental wellbeing (See Walsh, 2009[88]).

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[88] Op cit.

- As much knowledge and information as possible from previous residencies should be captured. This may include sharing learning about key personnel and geographical knowledge of the prison and also specific challenges and problems which WiRs have encountered. There need to be effective mechanisms in place for this knowledge to be stored and then shared between old and new writers. Whilst learning from failure as well as success can be particularly challenging for organisations, WIPN exhibits the right culture to support such learning in that it clearly encourages open and honest discussion between writers.

- Relationships with 'key enablers' (e.g. Head of Learning and Skills, Education Departments, Chaplaincy, Security Department) need to continue to be brokered and maintained by both WiRs and WIPN Co-directors

- It is also particularly important for WIPN to identify relevant Key Performance Targets for each prison and assess how the objectives of residencies can feed into them. This is likely to enhance the value of the residency in the eyes of prison staff thus facilitate more positive relationships

- Strategies which have successfully been adopted by WiRs to engage with the wider prison should be collated by WIPN and fed into the *Writers Guide*, induction training and Residency Steering Group meetings

- WIPN need to ensure that WiRs are aware of the protocols around divulging personal information to prisoners and also sending and receiving correspondence to/from prisoners once they are released. Whilst such information is contained within the *Writers Guide* this perhaps needs emphasising more during induction and on-going support activity.

Section 8:   Host Prison – Experience and Impact

8.1 Supporting Host Prisons

WIPN provide a comprehensive support package to prisons wishing to host a WiR. Various documentation has been developed which provides useful background information on the scheme as well as guidance on recruitment, implementing and managing a residency. The literature includes specific advice around: processes for short listing and interviewing

potential candidates; developing a work plan for the WiR; details of training and information available for prison staff; a standard specimen contract; the prison's role in providing support and resources for the WiR[89]. This guidance has been welcomed by senior prison staff:

> *"The materials were clear and helpful with regard to making a final decision to proceed with the residency" (Senior Management Team Member, Prison Staff).*

WIPN offer an optional and free half day training course for prison staff to help the prison gain maximum benefit from their WiR. A 24 hour telephone and email support package is also available for prison staff. As part of the contract between WIPN and the host prison, the WiR provides the prison with the number of hours they have worked with the prisoners per week. These hours are then used by the prison to meet their nationally set performance targets for purposeful activity. WIPN also assist prisons in developing closure strategies for ensuring positive exits from the scheme for both offenders and WiRs. They also provide advice on potential funding bodies for further developing the work[90]. This activity aims to ensure that the residency has a legacy beyond its lifetime in terms of keeping the arts on the prison agenda. Prisons have on-going contact with WIPN via email and telephone and via the quarterly Residency Steering Group. Suggestions for how the steering group process may be improved in order to further benefit the host prison have already been discussed.

8.2 The Role of the Prison

Successful residencies do not occur without the support and input of prisons themselves. Prisons make a large financial contribution to residencies and resources to provide line management to WiRs. Prison input also includes 'standard' provision as specified in the *Guidelines for Prisons* document (e.g. security briefings, line management and steering group attendance) to ensure that the WiR can work safely in the setting. However, where the WiR has never previously worked in a prison environment, the necessary support may be more intensive. Prison staff reported having sometimes to assist WiRs with basic

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[89] For example *'Guidelines for Prisons'* (2010 edition), *'A Guide to the Writer's Residency in Prison'* (Prison Edition), *'Writer Behind Bars: A day in the life of a Writer in residence in Prison'* and *'Information for Interview Panels'* document which includes break down of the day and potential interview questions.
[90] Contained in the document *'Artful futures: sustaining arts activity in your prison beyond the life of a residency'*

organisational and time management tasks which are probably outside their remit. Staff also need to ensure that WiRs follow appropriate procedures (e.g. keeping accurate records of their work with prisoners to ensure it can be counted as purposeful activity within the prison's monitoring data) and this can also be time-consuming.

The creative work produced by prisoners engaging with the WiR needs to be security cleared before it can be approved for publication. In particular, Security Officers are required to ensure the material does not contain coded messages regarding illegal activities to other individuals either inside or outside the host prison. This process can be difficult:

> *"Security here understandably do not want any work going out of the establishment or published internally without it being checked by me or an appropriate manager. This can be extremely time consuming and difficult to judge. What I would approve may not be approved by a different person" (Head of Learning, Skills and Regimes, Prison Staff)*

WIPN have a key role to play in 'relationship management' between the WiR and prison staff and are frequently engaged with negotiating and pro-active troubleshooting when problems occur, as demonstrated by the following extract, written following the unexpected withdrawal of a WiR from their residency:

> *"Meeting with [HoLS, and Governors of prisons] we look at the options available and decide on the priorities for [prison name]. Within a couple of days I've emailed a plan which involves a series of one day a week covering sessions for their creative writing group over July and August, using other WIRs. In the meantime we'd look to recruit a new WIR. We always aim to ensure that prisons get a good deal from our residency and achieve what they set out to do. Whatever downturns occur we pride ourselves on being able to find solutions" (WIPN Co-director's Journal, June 2011).*

The need to attract high calibre Writers in Residence and ensure the continued interest of host prisons is heightened given the current context of funding cuts, as previously highlighted. Given the likelihood of further reductions in the prison service funding for residencies, the need to adopt an effective future funding strategy is vital.

8.3 Benefits of a WiR for the Host Prison

WiRs provide the host prison with a unique and innovative product. Evaluation data have revealed the numerous benefits of hosting a WiR for the prison establishment. A key benefit identified by prison staff has been the way in which WiRs have increased the appeal of reading and writing for even those hard to reach prisoners with minimal previous engagement:

> *"The way that [WiR] has sought to work with different areas of the prison, including the gym, and has made reading and writing appear more relevant, exciting and interesting in every setting" (GCSE English and Functional Skills tutor, Prison Staff).*

This also appears to have increased prisoners' appetite for engaging with more traditional prison education, which in turn has had a positive impact on prison teaching staff:

> *"The Writer led short writing events which inspired my GCSE classes and raised their work to a much higher standard. The Writer has also given me lots of ideas for stimulating writing and has drummed up support for my courses on the wings" (GCSE English and Functional Skills tutor, Prison Staff)*

> *"[WiR] input and enthusiasm which rubs off on the prisoners, and hence makes our role as teachers easier" (Senior Curriculum Team Leader, Prison Staff).*

A number of prison staff expressed surprise at the way in which prisoners have willingly and enthusiastically engaged in work with the WiR and also by the quality of the work which has been produced.   In particular they have identified the WiR as an effective mechanism for re-engaging a diverse mix of prisoners with learning:

> *"I was informed that a prisoner with severe dyslexia who is unable to read and write, and therefore did not engage with education has since joined the Writers group" (Head of Learning, Skills and Regimes, Prison Staff)*

> *"The WiR helped a recluse come out of his cell and begin to participate in community life. He went on to win an award from Koestler for his writing. At first he was introverted and found a release in his writing. The Writer was able*

to encourage and coax him throughout and this added to his self-esteem" (Literacy Tutor, Prison Staff).

Prison staff have also reported improvements in the behaviour of prisoners, particularly the most disruptive and challenging individuals and those involved in gang cultures. The work undertaken by the WiR was seen as an effective use of time, with prisoners able to engage with activities which will improve both the skills set and their self-esteem. In addition to reading and writing activity the communication skills developed through debating were seen as particularly valuable. For prison staff, ensuring that prisoners are usefully occupied for long stretches of time is vital to the smooth running of the prison, so the contribution of the WiR is especially crucial here, especially their contribution to purposeful activity.

Both WiRs and prison staff felt that residencies were particularly successful where the WiR had engaged staff as well as prisoners, in writing endeavours. Some WiRs facilitated lunch time sessions for workers and in some prisons staff became involved in work with prisoners in a group setting, joining in with activities and quizzes. Prisons are difficult environments in which to work, especially against the current backdrop of funding/staffing cuts and overcrowding. In this context, the WiR was felt to bring a 'feel good factor' to the staff , encouraging them with their own aspirations:

"There was no way I would have written and published my first novel without the help and support of the Writer" (Unidentified, Prison Staff).

Significantly, this was viewed as highly beneficial by an Occupational Health professional:

"I think that any vehicle by which staff can express themselves, or take a break from work, or try something new at work is invaluable in the constant battle against the effects of "stress"" (Occupational Health Advisor, Prison Staff).

It also enabled staff to think beyond their "*usual confined box*" and they reported enjoying the intellectual stimulation which the WiR could offer.

These sessions enabled the WiR to have more contact time with officers, and may be seen as particularly beneficial bearing in mind the feelings of isolation and problematic

relationships experienced by WiRs, cited earlier in the report. Prison officers were likely to be positive about residencies when they felt that they were directly benefiting from them, as well as the prisoners. In the words of one writer - "*Everyone loves a perk!".* They were also more likely to offer support for prisoners writing.   Indeed, there is evidence to suggest that having a WiR in a prison can enhance relationships between prisoners and staff, uniting them in an unforeseen way and enabling common ground between the two groups.   In some prisons staff and prisoners have worked together in promoting the work of WiRs to senior staff in order to ensure continued funding and this development of a united front has created a feel good factor.   In addition engaging with prisoners via the WiR has enabled prison staff an opportunity to speak with them in meaningful way, to find out more about what makes them 'tick':

> *"It also allowed me to have another common ground from which to start up conversations with prisoner whom I had no relationship with. It has been helpful and I exchanged stories and ideas with both other members of staff and prisoners alike" (Prison officer, Prison Staff).*

It appears that the presence of a WiR opens up the possibility of a more open, and real communication between the two groups, thus making a positive contribution to the Prison Service Decency Agenda. This is a particularly valuable function of the WiR bearing in mind the relationship between prisoners and officers is crucial to both prison management and the rehabilitation of the offender.   The presence of a WiR represents a move away from the traditional 'them and us' culture evident in many prisons, this is especially significant considering that prisoners' feelings of fairness and being cared for, and their levels of distress are negatively affected by the proportion of prison staff who adhered to a traditional 'them and us' attitude set (Liebling, 2007a[91]).

WiRs were also sometimes able to have a positive impact upon the external view of the prison (for example in one prison, a reading group with vulnerable readers was included in their Ofsted report, in another the WiR was asked to contribute to the HMP Inspection report).   Again, this adheres to the Decency Agenda.

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[91] Op. cit.

The extent to which WIPN services offer value for money from prisons is clearly vital, in terms of ensuring their future willingness to host residencies. This has become increasingly important in the context of public sector funding cuts.   The evaluation has revealed anecdotal evidence from prison staff regarding the value of a WiR:

"The WIR's work has simply made me more convinced that having a writer in residence is a huge asset to any establishment" (GCSE English and Functional Skills tutor, Prison Staff).

In addition, we know that:

"It costs on average £47,000 to keep someone in prison for a year. It costs only £20,000 to employ a writer in residence in prison. So if one of our writers helps someone to not reoffend for a year that's £27,000 saved for the taxpayer. With 20 writers in residence at any one time, our writers work with almost 2,000 offenders every year" (WIPN cited in The Arts Alliance, 2010[92]).

Starting to build evidence of value for money, through basic cost benefit calculations would be an important step for WIPN in demonstrating their value to both prisons and wider society.

Recommendations

- The engagement and support of prison officers is vitally important to the success of a residency. Time and effort should be invested in involving prison staff in creative endeavours (e.g. lunchtime creative writing sessions). WiRs may benefit from further support from WIPN on how best to do this
- There are currently limited funds available with the Prison Service to enable the hosting of residencies. In order to ensure the continued interest and support of prisons, it is increasingly important to ensure that prisons firstly, understand the benefits of hosting a residency and secondly, receive a first class service from WIPN.

[92] Op. cit.

The service which prisons receive from WIPN needs to be evaluated systematically on an annual basis to ensure that all support needs are being met.

Section 9:   Prisoner Experience and Impact

Prisoners are not a homogenous group, the ability levels and attitudes of those engaging with WiRs varied considerably across the prison estate, from illiterate to graduate, from indifferent to highly motivated.   Thus prisoner experience and impact will vary widely between individuals and across different residencies.   In addition, (and similar to findings regarding WiR experiences) the progress of participants is not a linear process but ebbs and flows over time dependent on a range of factors (e.g. fluctuating motivation levels, anxieties around their sentence and resettlement, relationship problems as a result of their incarceration).   However, numerous benefits for prisoners of engaging with a WiR have been identified over the course of the evaluation.   At the most fundamental level, WiRs were able to successfully engage prisoners with learning.   They provided prisoners with sufficiently stimulating subject matter to attract and maintain their attention, in a way that traditional classes do not:

> *"I regularly see occasions when the Writer in Residence has the power to captivate and involve the prisoners in subject matter that they may scoff at if delivered by somebody with less skill" (Unidentified, Prison Staff).*

As a result of this, prisoners developed newly positive feelings about learning and increased understanding of its value:

> *"He [a prisoner] told me he'd never really understood WHY it's important to do well in school until he met me – now he says he wished he'd tried harder so he could get an interesting job. I mentioned his progress to the Education Governor and he said he'd noticed too!" (Established Writer).*

WiRs have the necessary skills and personal attributes to engage and excite *'hard-to-reach'* *offenders,*(even those unable to read/write, those with learning difficulties such as dyslexia and those with serious behavioural issues):

"Everyone was engaged and participated, including several prisoners who are often hostile to group work or generally uncooperative" (Unidentified, Prison Staff)

"There was a particular group of very unruly gangsters who became involved in writing a screenplay. The enthusiasm that the Writer instilled in the group was remarkable" (Unidentified, Prison Staff)

"The Writer has worked with virtual non-readers, helping them to write their own stories and be motivated to start to read as well. I have seen several of these prisoners transformed in terms of increased confidence and eagerness to attend literacy classes as a result" (GCSE English and Functional Skills tutor, Prison Staff).

The evaluation has identified a number of ways in which the work of WIPN assists offenders in the generation of both human and social capital[93], both of which have been identified as key factors in desistance from crime (Farrall, 2002[94]; Liebling and Maruna, 2005[95]; NcNeill and Whyte 2007[96]; Maruna, 2010[97]). Through engagement in WIPN activity, prisoners are building their human capital by gaining concrete reading, writing and computer skills:

"[WiR] has worked with virtual non-readers, helping them to write their own stories and be motivated to start to read as well" (GCSE English and Functional Skills tutor, Prison Staff)

"One Irish traveller was thrilled to discover that he had a natural flair for poetry. His work with Pat led him to learn to read and write in his fifties" (GCSE English and Functional Skills tutor, Prison Staff).

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[93] Human capital may be seen as the acquisition of skills and knowledge, social capital may be seen as access to those social networks which are necessary for the acquisition of human capital

[94] Farrall, S. (2002). *Rethinking What Works with Offenders: Probation, Social Context and Desistance from Crime.* Collumpton, Willan Publishing.

[95] Liebling, A. and Maruna, S. (eds.) (2005). *The Effects of Imprisonment.* Cullompton, Willan.

[96] McNeill, F. and Whyte, B. (2007) *Reducing Reoffending: Social Work and Community Justice in Scotland.* Cullompton, Willan.

[97] Op. cit.

In addition to this 'concrete' skills development participants have developed vital 'soft' skills, particularly in listening, communication, team working, giving and accepting constructive criticism. Of great significance was the emergence of empathetic feelings for fellow prisoners. People who feel and show concern and empathy for others are more likely to desist from crime (Bottoms and Shapland, 2010[98]). Some participants began to experience a greater emotional connection with fellow students and also within the texts that are explored:

> *"He really helps the group along with his humour" (from Offender Progress Tracking Journal)*

> *"He was supportive of other members of the group" (from Offender Progress Tracking Journal)*

> *"The group just worked….our interpretations were different but that's ok. We discussed things openly, we all had to get to a place where we could be vulnerable to each other and to be honest" (Special Project participant)*

> *"With everything I read, I feel connected with someone in the text" (Special Project participant)*

> *"I know more about myself and about my fellow man too after this" (Special Project participant).*

This suggests enhancement of social capital for participants (Williams, 1997[99]) a process which establishes networks, mutual trust and co-operation within communities for the benefit of all (Kay, 2000[100]; Kay and Watt, 2000[101]). Additional examples of increased social

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[98] Bottoms, A. and Shapland, J (2010). Steps towards desistance among male young adult recidivists. In S. Farrall, R. Sparks, S. Maruna & M. Hough, (eds.) (2010). *Escape Routes: Contemporary perspectives on life after punishment.* London, Routledge.

[99] Williams, D. (1997). How the arts measure up - Australian research into the social impact of the arts. Social Impact of the Arts Working Paper 8*,* Stroud, Comedia.

[100] Kay, A. (2000). Art and community development: the role the arts have in regenerating communities. *Community Development Journal,* 35 (4), 414-424.

[101] Kay, A. and Watt, G. (2000). The role of the arts in regeneration, Research Findings 96, Edinburgh, Scottish Executive Central Research.

capital include where prisoners have become motivated to engage more fully with learning opportunities in the wider prison:

"I have seen several of these prisoners transformed in terms of increased confidence and eagerness to attend literacy classes as a result" (GCSE English and Functional Skills tutor, Prison Staff).

And crucially being motivated to re-engage with family members, through writing:

"It helped me explain what I wanted to say to my family. Before I just never knew what to say" (Special Project participant)

"I sent the essay to my family and it has improved my relationship with them no end" (Special Project participant).

Family breakdown as a result of a prison sentence is a major stumbling block to successful resettlement and developing positive relationships is vital to making progress (Arts Alliance, 2011[102]). The work of WIPN is providing opportunities for prisoners to communicate with their families through creative writing and poetry and performances.   Again this is an important contributor to the potential for desistance (Laub et al 1998[103]).   As well as enhancing intimate relationships, working with the WiR has enabled participants to be engaged with the world beyond the prison walls. For example, discussions of current affairs took place in WiR sessions, offering a sense of connection with wider society. This points to enhancement of social capital and also bodes well for the resettlement process:

"Lads writing about their experiences of contact with the government and on the principles of the big society. 'Deep stuff!'. Stories of benefit cheats, wrongful arrest, MP's expenses and phone hacking. It goes someway to proving that lads here have an eye on the outside world beyond family, football scores and orders from Argos!" (New Writer, 3ʳᵈ quarter of Residency).

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[102] Op. cit.

[103] Laube, J. H., Nagin, D.S., & Sampson, R.J. (1998). Trajectories of change in criminal offending: good marriages and the desistance process. *American Sociological Review*, 63, 225-238.

Crucially, WiRs have engaged prisoners in meaningful and constructive thinking about issues closely related to their offending behaviour. For example, using sessions to reflect upon issues relating to remorse; the ethics of retaliation; destiny and free will. There is a body of criminological research which asserts that desistance from crime can be attributed to major cognitive changes in the way that people think about and interpret their lives (Liebrich, 1992[104]; Maruna, 2001[105]). There is much evidence to suggest that the work of WIPN is facilitating a positive shift in the way that prisoners think about their offending and their criminal identity. This is an important step in moving away from crime (Maruna, 2010[106]). Indeed some prisoners felt that working with the WiR had enabled them to rediscover their 'moral compass'. Thus WiRs can provide an innovative outlet for thinking about and challenging offending behaviour:

> *"Good discussion about ethics of retaliation and whether use of violence is ever justified which evolved out of the creative workshop" (New Writer, final quarter of Residency)*

Encounters with the creative arts are sometimes described as being closer to an epiphany than to a simple learning experience (Newman et al 2001). This claim chimes with the evaluation findings which suggested a type of 'spiritual capital' generated by engagement with WiRs, enabling prisoners to discover a connectedness with themselves and the meanings and values by which they live. For some prisoners, their experience of working with the WiR was simply life-changing:

> *"I went to say goodbye and good luck to a prisoner who has accessed several projects of mine and was getting out on a tag this week. We talked about his hopes for a future on the out and he thanked me for helping to change his life and for believing in him. Hearing such gratitude was a great boost and very humbling somehow" (New Writer at WIPN Conference)*

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[104] Op cit.
[105] Op cit.
[106] Op. cit.

Indeed as has already been highlighted, the unique relationship developed between some WiRs and their learners was key to the impact which engagement had. The capacity of the arts to break down barriers has been highlighted previously (e.g. Weitz, 1996[107]; Lowe, 2000[108]). Not only were WiRs able to identify and build the personal strengths of participants, by believing in their potential they provided participants with a humanising presence in a potentially dehumanising environment:

> *"One prisoner told me "It doesn't even matter what you do. Just your being here is good for us, because you treat us like human beings" (New Writer, 1st quarter of Residency).*

"I felt free and equal" (Special Project participant)

"With the Facilitators it often feels like they just listen" (Special Project participant).

Again this is highly significant as many desisters from crime talk about the powerful effect of having someone believe in and encourage them (e.g. Rex 1999[109]). It appears that WiRs are effective 'change agents', providing a catalyst for change through meaningful and empowering relationships.

WIPN clearly recognise the importance of building on progress and these carefully fostered relationships with prisoners. They provide on-going support to offenders through their Offender-Writers mentor scheme: if an offender is transferred or released, WIPN access a mentor from a pool of (ex) writers to support continued engagement in writing post custody. WIPN also provide an opportunity for (ex) offender-writers to access a residential creative writing course in association with the Arvon Association[110]. Two professional tutors run practical hands-on creative writing workshops and provide access to 1-2-1 tutorials and guest professional writers.

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[107] Weitz, J. (1996). Coming up taller: arts and humanities programs for children and youth at risk. Washington, DC: President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities.
[108] Lowe, S. (2000). Creating community: art for community development. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography,* 29 (3), 357-86.
[109] Rex, S (1999). Desistance from offending: experiences from probation, *The Howard Journal,* 38 (4): 366-383.
[110] The Arvon Foundation runs residential creative writing courses which aim to challenge, inspire and transform your writing. http://www.arvonfoundation.org/p1.html

As outlined earlier in this report, in recent times the desistance model of change and rehabilitation has gained credibility within the Ministry of Justice and in Governmental approaches to reducing reoffending. As outlined above, the work of WIPN is making a significant contribution to the desistance agenda which emphasises the importance of: hope and motivation; a feeling of having something to give; having a place within a social group; not having a criminal identity; and being believed in. WiRs have a crucial role in 'assisted desistance' by focussing on offenders' strengths rather than the risks and challenges which they pose (Arts Alliance, 2011[111]). In particular they may benefit from someone 'outside the regime' delivering programmes as they are viewed as on their side rather than against them. The impact which WIPNs work has on desistance and in particular the development of human and social capital, needs to be captured. WIPN are well placed to frame their impact within this context.

Recommendations

- Specific forums for encouraging the use of peer support should be developed as offenders who are given the opportunity to mentor, assist or enhance the life of other people appear to be more successful at giving up crime. If these achievements are formally recognised, the effect may be even stronger (Burnett and Maruna, 2006[112])

- Work by WiRs which enhances family relationships for prisoners may be particularly beneficial for desistance and should continue to be encouraged and expanded where possible

- Service user (prisoner) feedback should be routinely collected to ensure a high level of service which meets the needs of prisoners.

Section 10: Future Potential and Sustainability of WIPN

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[111] Op. cit.

[112] Burnett, R. and Maruna, S. (2006). The Kindness of Prisoners: strength-based resettlement in theory and in action. *Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 6, 83-106.

WIPN has matured over the past decade into a business-focussed, professional organisation with a clear agenda and identity. The fact that this progress has been made by a very small staff team and against a backdrop of recent devastating funding cuts is testament to the commitment and drive of both WIPN staff and individual WiRs. WIPN has a number of key strengths including a highly skilled and experienced core staff team and a long and illustrious history of delivering arts services to offenders. Looking to the future, the evaluation has identified two key work areas which need developing in order to build upon the high quality work already conducted by WIPN and to enhance the future potential and sustainability of the organisation:

- Develop staffing succession planning in preparation for the time that the current Co-directors decide to leave the organisation
- Enhance the capacity and capability of WIPN to demonstrate their value to funders.

10.1 Staffing Succession Planning

For many years, all aspects of WIPN's work has been successfully driven forward by the current Co-directors. To a large extent the organisation has been 'personality led' and, given the skills, knowledge and experience of the directors, this has been a great strength. The Co-directors have had the necessary creative vision, accrued wisdom and commitment to implement and maintain an effective programme of creative residencies across the prison estate, whilst simultaneously promoting WIPN to the external world. However, when a very small number of staff have responsibility for and ownership of an organisation, this can create risks for sustainability. This has been recognised over recent months and steps have been taken to address the situation, crucially by developing a larger pool of staff.

However the fact remains that the majority of knowledge assets of WIPN reside with the Co-directors and these can only become valuable if the organisation knows what they are, and has strategies to ensure that they can be shared, transferred and used. (Meadows and Senior, 2006[113]). The WIPN Co-directors have a wealth of 'tacit knowledge' and a key task at this time is to attempt to formally and systematically capture some of this. Some progress has already been made here, for example the 'how to be a director guide' which is

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[113] Meadows, L. and Senior, P. (2006). Knowledge Management Briefing for Clinks. Internal SHU report.

currently being developed by the Co-directors.   The evaluators suggest further ways in which this may be done, recognising that *"tacit knowledge, being harder to formalise and communicate, lends itself more readily to personalisation strategies where the focus is on bringing people together to externalise and share their knowledge in person"* (Abell and Oxbrow, 2001[114]) .   As we indicated previously, the organisation already has excellent examples of strategies and processes to achieve tacit knowledge transfer between writers in the form of "story-telling" by experienced writers, the conference and networking events etc. With regard to the Co-directors' knowledge, this is more difficult. The Co-directors' knowledge of the strategic and operational aspects of WIPN represent some of the most valuable of the organisation's knowledge assets.   The organisation therefore needs a knowledge management strategy to ensure that the knowledge held by these key individuals is, where possible, systematically captured and transferred more widely across the WIPN staff group.

The goal of this task is not to 're-create' the skills and knowledge of the current Co-directors but to create a 'knowledge legacy' which can be built upon by their successors who will bring their own expertise, experience and personality to bear. A knowledge legacy is built incrementally with each exiting staff member leaving a contribution behind which in turn, further enhances the intellectual capital of the organisation.

Recommendations

- Similar to the competency mapping process for WiRs outlined in Section 4, the current Co-directors need to undertake a similar audit to understand and make explicit the particular skills and attributes that are required to be a successful Director of the organisation.   This will be an important task to ensure effective succession planning. It will also help to identify where activities/responsibilities may be able to be transferred to other members of staff under the guidance of the directors. A skills audit is a simple task which can be done quickly and without cost

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[114] Abell, A., & Oxbrow, N. (2001). *Competing with knowledge: The information professionals in the knowledge management age.* London, Library Association Publishing.

but can be of great benefit in terms of *systemising* and *making explicit* the requirements of these senior level posts

- The evaluators do not wish to be prescriptive about how the skills audit should be conducted but, in a similar way to that described in section 4, we suggest Co-directors ask them themselves 'What tasks do you regularly perform that are critical to carrying out your job effectively? (high level tasks should be broken down into smaller tasks e.g. attend steering group meetings can then be broken down into negotiating with prisons, chairing the meeting). For each identified task the Co-directors should then identify the skills and attributes required to carry out each one. It may be helpful here for the Co-directors to imagine they are complete novices and, importantly, to engage colleagues and stakeholders (such as writers, other core WIPN staff and steering group members, staff in host prisons) to help them to identify and articulate their skills, knowledge and attributes

- It may then be helpful for the Co-directors to rank the skills in terms of importance for the role of WIPN Director

- Following this initial exercise, the skills list should be reviewed by relevant stakeholders (e.g. members of the steering committee, writers in residence and prison staff, other members of the WIPN staff team) and any feedback should be incorporated

- The results of the skills audit should then be used in the recruitment and induction process for the Co-director's successor(s)

- Using a similar framework, a knowledge "audit" should also be conducted to identify the key knowledge held by the current Co-directors and required for the successful running of the organisation. Once this is established, the most effective way of transferring this knowledge can be determined – for example by making it explicit in guidance or other documentation or by passing it on to other WIPN staff in the form of shadowing, master classes or training and learning events.

10.2 Demonstrating Value

As already highlighted in previous sections, the current political climate with regards to the funding of VCS agencies working in the Criminal Justice System poses a number of challenges for WIPN. Some of these are exemplified in the quotes below:

> *"Value in third sector organisations is increasingly being defined by an organisation's ability to demonstrate it, and often in ways imposed by external priorities and targets. In an environment of increasing competition, and smarter funding application and tendering procedures, many small organisations with insufficient resources, or those unable to frame their benefits in the language of quantifiable outcomes and impacts, have become increasingly vulnerable" (Ellis and Gregory, 2008[115]).*

> *"To be able to tell a story that doesn't just rely on anecdotes or bringing a few people into the office to tell their personal story – I'm afraid the future is going to demand more than that" (Nick Hurd, Minister for Civil Society quoted in ibid)*

Furthermore, the UK Government is committed to *"introducing payment by results across public services"*[116] as a principal component of its public sector reform programme.   Within the criminal justice system, the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) Green paper, *Breaking the Cycle: Effective Punishment, Rehabilitation and Sentencing of Offenders* (2010a: 10[117]) stated that:

> *"Significant amounts of public money have been spent on rehabilitating criminals without properly holding services to account for the results they achieve. We will move to a new approach where providers are increasingly paid by their results at reducing reoffending"*

The MoJ has committed itself to rolling out Payment by Results (PbR) to all providers by 2015 and envisaged that, in this new approach to commissioning, there will be a greater

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[115] Ellis and Gregory (2008). Assessment and learning: developing monitoring and evaluation in the third sector. Charities evaluation service research report.   http://www.ces-vol.org.uk/index.cfm?format=328
[116] Cabinet Office (2011). Modernising Commissioning: increasing the role of charities, social enterprises, mutuals and cooperatives in public service delivery. London, Cabinet Office.
[117] Ministry of Justice (2010a). Breaking the Cycle: Effective Punishment, Rehabilitation and Sentencing of Offenders. London, The Stationary Office Ltd.

diversity of providers from the public, private and voluntary sectors. In light of recent funding cuts (by the Arts Council but also within the prison sector generally) it would be advisable for WIPN to maximise their potential funding sources and this may necessitate engagement with the PbR agenda. This might include seeking funding directly via PbR schemes in receipt of statutory sector funding[118] but also from VCS agencies who are subcontracted to deliver services as part of these schemes[119]. Thus WIPN would benefit from preparing themselves for an outcomes-based commissioning process in order to ensure the survival of their organisation and to achieve more effective positioning with the provider marketplace[120].

In order to achieve this, WIPN will need to demonstrate the ways in which they reduce re-offending. Evaluation data indicate that WIPN staff recognise the importance of the 'breaking the cycle' manifesto and their extensive knowledge of the sector along with the expertise of Management Board members makes them very well placed to respond to it. However, the key question is 'how does WIPN respond to this political agenda whilst retaining the core essence of what has made the organisation so successful?'. The evaluators feel there will need to be a significant cultural shift within the organisation in order to motivate and enable WIPN staff to work towards successful outcome measurement and possibly even cost effectiveness assessment. Staff will require incentives and support during this process.

These challenges are not unique to WIPN but exist for many VCS agencies. As stated previously there is widespread concern about the MoJ approach to outcome measurement and a desire for the 'stepping stones' towards re-offending frequently provided by arts services, to be recognised by the Government. This is neatly summarised in the Arts Alliance response to the 'Breaking the Cycle' Green paper:

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[118] Such as those schemes currently underway and being evaluated by HCCJ – the Local Justice Reinvestement Pilot and the Youth Justice Pathfinder

[119] For example in the MoJ funded Local Justice Reinvestment Pilot, a VCS agency, Penrose Housing have been commissioned on a PbR basis and will there receive payment if targets are met.

[120] Wong, K., O'Keeffe, C., Meadows, L., Davidson, J., Bird, H., Wilkinson, K., and Senior, P. (2012). Increasing the voluntary and community sector's involvement in Integrated Offender Management, Home Office Research Report no. 59.

"There is a desire amongst members that the methods of measuring the steps towards the ultimate aim of "reducing reoffending" need to be sophisticated enough to understand how arts services assist offenders to desist from crime. The outcomes they achieve are broadly focussed on increasing motivation, self-confidence, coping strategies, self-awareness, team working, commitment and reflection can be included in a PBR model. These are exactly the sort of skills that people need to achieve what others call contributing to improved mental health, gaining employment, restoring family ties, or supporting a restorative approach to justice. A system that allows for an offender's progression, or distance travelled to be monitored and evaluated would better suit the type of outcomes that arts providers strive to achieve. In this way an organisation's contribution towards the wider aim of reducing re-offending can be better assessed and payments can be made for appropriate progression displayed by service users" (Arts Alliance, 2011[121]).

Attempting to quantify the impact of the arts presents considerable difficulties and also raises the question of the extent to which creative processes can (or should) be managed or controlled (Newman et al). It has also been shown that the expectation of external evaluation can impact negatively on the creative process itself (Amabile, 1979[122]). Experimental models of research, which compare individuals or groups who have received an intervention with those who have not, are often impractical, partly because of the level of complexity and partly because of the extreme dissonance that often exists between demands for numerical accuracy and artistic temperaments (Newman et al, 2001[123]). Currently the limitations imposed by structure, culture and context mean that it is simply not possible to do the kind of research into the impacts of arts interventions in criminal

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[121] Arts Alliance (2011). Response to the Ministry of Justice Green Paper, Breaking the Cycle: Effective Punishment, Rehabilitation and Sentencing of
Offenders.(http://www.clinks.org/assets/files/PDFs/Arts%20Alliance%20Response%20to%20Green%20Paper%20FINAL.pdf

[122] Amabile, T.M. (1979). Effects of external evaluation on artistic creativity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol 37(2), 221-233.

[123] Newman, T, Kurtis, K and Stephens, J. (2001). Do Community Based Arts Projects Result in Social Gains? Barnardos publication. http://www.barnardos.org.uk/commarts.pdf.

justice settings that would meet the types and standards of proof favoured by the Home Office (Miles and Clarke, 2006: 9[124]).

One of the core strengths of WIPN and the work of WiRs, as evidenced by evaluation data, is its fluid and unboundaried nature which offers limitless possibilities for the personal growth of prisoners. Some arts-based interventions have been designed specifically to address offending behaviour (e.g. The Geese Theatre Company's Re-connect Programme). This is not the case with WIPN and thus it is unrealistic to expect WIPN to want or to be able to prove direct impact on reducing reoffending. Attempts at certain types of evaluation may also have a detrimental impact on the unique relationship between WiRs and prisoner and thus on the quality of work undertaken. However, in order to attract a more diverse range of funding, it is important they position themselves as an organisation *capable of effecting change.* This evaluation has revealed tentative evidence of the impact of WiR intervention for the prison service and participating prisoners. We know intuitively that WIPN provides value for money for both the prison service and wider society by: enhancing routes to further learning and education, enhancing family relationships, enabling prisoners to engage with their offending behaviour and also the impact of their crimes. The challenge now for WIPN is to build on this in order to provide more robust evidence of impact. The evaluation team consider it important that WIPN develops an approach to outcome measurement which ensures that *"the criteria against which success will be judged are clearly established and derived directly from the expressed needs and aims of those participating" (Department of Culture, Media and the Arts, 1999* [125]*)*. It will also be important to capture innovative practice and those unpredicted outcomes which are often a feature of the work of WiRs. WIPN need to be supported in developing performance indicators which are aligned with stakeholder priorities (e.g. prison service and potential funders) whilst remaining true to the core values of WIPN, ensuring that the individual prisoner *(rather than the individual's offending)* is at the heart of their work.

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[124] Op. cit.
[125] Department for Culture, Media and Sport (1999). Arts and Sport, Policy Action Team - a report to the Social Exclusion Unit. London, DCMS. http://www.culture.gov.uk

Recommendations

- A priority for the WIPN researcher should be to develop a strategy for demonstrating the impact and value of WiR activity. The following work areas could usefully be explored:

- When developing objectives for residencies, consideration should be given to how the residency can contribute to the desistance agenda (e.g. improving self-esteem, family relationships, developing a non-criminal identity)

- For each Residency, a set of performance indicators should be developed, against which the objectives can be measured at different time points[126]. These performance indicators should be:

  - able to be measured against a baseline (where appropriate)

  - realistic and achievable

  - reflective of the lived experience of delivering this type of intervention within a prison setting

  - developed in collaboration with WiRs and also offenders to ensure authenticity

  - developed in consultation with prison staff, to access intelligence on positive impacts which they observe (e.g. a reduction in an individual's self-harming, reports of disturbances, increases in offenders accessing education, more positive relationships between prisoners and staff). Such consultation will also ensure that performance indicators capture those specific ways in which a residency can contribute to the prison's Key Performance Targets

- Following on from this a clear data collection strategy needs to be developed to provide solid evidence of impact. A range of different data could be collected, depending upon the objectives which have been set and also the setting. For example, in those prisons which have a reasonably stable population and throughput, tools which enable quantifiable measures of change (i.e. at the start and

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[126] Whilst there may be a degree of overlap, different performance indicators may be developed for different residencies. It would not be possible or desirable to have standardised performance indicators as there is such a high degree of variety in WiR activity (as shown in Section 5)

the end of engagement with the WiR) could be employed. Where appropriate and dependent upon what is being measured, this may draw upon existing tools which have proven reliability and validity (e.g. the General Perceived Self-Efficacy Scale[127], University of Rhode Island Change Assessment[128], also see Harrington and Young, 2010[129]) for a useful summary of resources to support the recording of outcomes). A scoping exercise could also be undertaken to identify the range of potential tools which could be adapted for WIPNs purposes

- As already discussed, the tools employed would not need to provide direct evidence of reduced reoffending, but evidence of those soft outcomes which may be an important part of the desistance journey. If it was deemed appropriate, however, changes in attitudes towards offending could be explored, using a tool such as Crime Pics II[130]

- In addition to the existing data collection tools suggested above, new creative and innovative methods of performance measurement could be developed, tested and employed where possible. These should be developed in collaboration with both WiRs and prisoners

- This work need be neither costly nor time consuming for WIPN. Whilst having external facilitation would perhaps enhance the process, it could equally be conducted 'in house' if the funds for this are not available. A format for undertaking this exercise in a systemised way is demonstrated below[131]. The first steering group

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[127] Jerusalem, M., & Schwarzer, R. (1992). Self-efficacy as a resource factor in stress appraisal processes. In R. Schwarzer (eds.) (1992). *Self efficacy: thought control of action* (pp. 195-213). Washington DC, Hemisphere.
[128] DiClemente, C.C., & Hughes, S.O. (1990). Stages of change profiles in alcoholism treatment. *Journal of Substance Abuse.* Vol 2 (2): 217.
[129] Harrington and Young (2010). Making an Impact: Measuring and encouraging the progress of individuals in voluntary sector youth projects. A Northern Rock Foundation Publication.
[130] http://www.crime-pics.co.uk/cpicsmanual.pdf Essentially, Crime Pics II is a 35 item, structured, questionnaire designed to measure an individual's attitude to offending on a number of distinct scales. It has been employed within a number of criminal justice agencies and has been extensively used for the evaluation of a range of probation/prison intervention programmes. In addition, the tool is one of eight measures currently employed by the National Probation Directorate (NPD) to evaluate the impact of nationally accredited general offending behaviour programmes.

[131] This format has been previously used by HCCJ in their evaluation of the ESF funded Women into Work Programme

committee could be an appropriate forum for a guided discussion to complete the table above for each individual residency. This exercise will enable a performance measurement plan to begin to take shape:

Objective	Baseline	Performance Indicator	Data Collection Method
To improve levels of self-esteem and confidence in target group	Levels of self-esteem and confidence on entry to project	Demonstrable increase in levels of self-esteem and confidence between start and end of engagement with WiR	Service User Feedback forms which capture self reported self-esteem levels

- Furthermore, WIPN need to engage in open and honest discussion with criminal justice agencies (i.e. NOMs, MoJ) regarding the complex issue of measuring impact and acceptable 'standards of proof' for arts-based interventions. Other agencies which may be usefully consulted include: Arts Alliance, Arts and Criminal Justice Think Tank (REACTT) and potential third sector funding agencies such as the Northern Rock Foundation, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, National Lottery. WIPN have a long and impressive history in this arena thus are well placed to position themselves as innovators and campaigners in ensuring an approach to outcome measurement which is commensurate with the goals and values of arts-based services for offenders

- Once performance measurement strategies have been agreed and data collection systems are in place, WIPN will need to act as a data collection 'hub' where monitoring and performance measurement data from all residences can be 'pooled' centrally and easily accessed when required

- At some point in the future, consider seeking funding for a longitudinal research study which incorporates the long-term follow up and tracking of representative samples of prisoners who have engaged with WiRs (whether they remain in custody

or are released). This would enable a robust analysis of extent to which WiRs represent value for money for the prison service

- In order to facilitate the changes suggested here, with regards to demonstrating the value and effectiveness of Writers in Residence, WIPN could consider commissioning a piece of consultancy work to:
  - Assess the feasibility of implementing different performance measures in different settings
  - Assess and refine WIPN's current data capture and monitoring processes.

The evaluation team acknowledge that assessing the value and impact of the varied and complex work undertaken by WIPN is by no means a simple task. However it hoped that implementing some of the above recommendations will help to make explict the inherent value of WIPN for both prisons and prisoners, which has been revealed during the course of this evaluation.

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Appendix Two: Sample Issues and Risks Log

No.	Risk	Owner	Details	Controls and Contingencies	Priority	Status Red, Amber, Green	Deadline
1	*Unforeseen Staffing Changes in Host Prison*	*WIPN Management*	*Writer's line manager has left suddenly*	*Meet host prison to discuss revised arrangements*	*High - requires immediate attention; high impact on organisation/individual if not addressed* *Medium - requires attention in the short/medium term; medium impact on the organisation/individual if not addressed* *Low - requires attention only in the longer term; minimal impact on organisation/individual if not addressed*	*Red - progress to address risk is not progressing to plan/schedule* *Amber -progress to address risk is not progressing to plan/schedule but contingencies are in place to bring it back on track* *Green - progress to address risk is progressing to plan and on schedule*	*dd/mm/yy*

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