

Technical Appendices CFO Endeavour HMP Holme House

Peer mentor & peer involvement roles in prison study series 2024

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Section 1: Introduction and background to the study

This technical report contains the background to, the methods used, and sample details associated with one of the four 'Peer mentor & peer involvement roles in prison' study findings report series, specifically:

- Albertson, K. (2024d) CFO Endeavours Peer mentor initiative at HMP Holme House.

Aims of HMPPS's Creating Future Opportunities programme

Creating Future Opportunities (CFO) is part of His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS). It is part funded by the European Social Fund. CFO have piloted a Community Activity Hub model for people who have been released from prison and/or are engaging with Probation to facilitate building a healthier, more stable and fulfilling life. A developmental aim of the overall CFO programme was to pilot the creation of similarly dedicated spaces on prison wings, with a welcoming atmosphere and a rehabilitative community culture. CFO's wing model is designed to both complement and advance core HMPPS provision, better preparing people in custody to make positive contributions to their wing community. With specialist professional staff, and meaningful activities with to engage, alongside peer involvement role opportunities, the CFO wing model aims to provide a sense of collectiveness which will encourage those in custody to focus efforts towards realising crime free pro-social futures.

CFO wing model objectives

The key objectives of the CFO Wing model are to:

- **Facilitate a 'community' environment** where participants are given the tools to help reflect on their own personal situation and contribute both to the wing and wider prison community.
- **Foster supportive relations** between residents with external agency staff, HMPPS CFO Specialist prison officers, and each other to enhance transitional opportunities to contribute to reducing reoffending trajectories.
- **Enable opportunities for residents to give back** to their wing community via peer involvement role pathways, enhancing engagement with the CFO wing model and contributing to forging positive relational connections across the wing by providing support to wider non-engaging wing residents.
- **Create a safe, comfortable, and supportive living environment**, enhancing a sense of belonging, hope, and positive impact on the social climate of the wing.

Monitoring and informing information gaps

Existing HMPPS CFO monitoring which focusses on largely quantitative short, medium, and longer-term data capture provides evidence of the overall effectiveness of the CFO wing model programme. CFO identified a requirement for a more data informed understanding of the potential of the peer mentor role. In particular they wish to inform future commissioning good practice guidance. An expression of interest was issued for an independent qualitative evaluation designed to improve understanding of the operational delivery of the range of peer involvement role delivery models utilised across CFO's four wing pilot sites at HMPs Risley, High Down, Drake Hall, and Holme House.

Situating our approach

A research team led by Sheffield Hallam University secured the commissioned qualitative study. The issued study-brief emphasised both mapping and action research-linked developmental activities to be conducted with stakeholders at each of the four CFO wing pilot sites. The ultimate aim of the study was to provide data informed and theoretically underpinned recommendations to inform:

- further embedding of the peer involvement element of delivery at each pilot site;
- future CFO wing model commissioning good practice guidance, with specific reference to the peer involvement role element of delivery.

Peer involvement initiatives have been identified as valuable resources supporting individual change trajectories, and resettlement planning in the criminal justice sector (HMPPS, 2016; 2019; Fletcher and Batty 2012; Hucklesby and Wincup, 2014; South et al., 2017; Buck, 2020). Peer support roles in the criminal justice system have, however, proved difficult to evaluate as these are non-standardised interventions which are “human relationship operating within a formal setting” (Lenkens, et al., 2023, p 3). Previous studies have predominantly focussed on establishing the impact of performing peer support roles on recidivism outcomes (cf. Nixon, 2022), and generally focussing on the micro-dynamics of (ex) offenders acting in peer mentor roles to those just released from custody (cf. Buck, 2020). Reflecting this reality, our study was designed to be a pragmatic, more integrated and participative piece of work to be conducted with all the stakeholders making up the custodial community. Under-pinned by this critical realist approach to the four CFO wing model pilot sites, our study was essentially designed to illuminate “what works, how, in which conditions and for whom” (Lenkens, et al., 2023, p 4). This findings report is one of the five ‘Peer mentor & peer involvement roles in prison’ reporting outputs generated as a result of this study (Albertson, 2024a-e).

Our integrated research questions

Informed by the most recent academic studies in the field, this study was designed to address specific questions to illuminate more integrated connections across the custodial setting, specifically:

Table: Integrated research questions

Strategic and operational	Does the phased model of delivery contribute to achieving overarching CFO Wing model aims and specifically, how do Peer involvement roles fit into these phases?
	How does the delivery of the Peer involvement element relate or contribute to the wider CFO Wing model programme?
Impact and environment	Do the pilot sites provide a suitable environment to deliver relational strength-based Peer involvement role pathways in prison?
	How do Peer involvement role holders operate on a day-to-day basis?
	What, if any is the impact of these roles on stakeholders?
Interpersonal and relational	What is the Peer involvement training, supervision, and progression journey?
	What is the experience of those supported?
	Are there any key attributes that indicate any particular suitability for Peer involvement roles in prison?

Structural, policy and regime level	What strategies, policies, organisational infrastructures, prison regimes, training, and/or environmental factors can be identified as working most effectively with (or impeding) the effective delivery of peer involvement initiatives in prison?
	What are the critical success factors and areas of good practice lessons can be learned from those having experience of delivering peer involvement pilots in prison?

Section 2: Methods

Underpinned by the principle of co-production (McCulloch, 2021) our approach to the study design aimed at involving a wider range of stakeholders from across the custodial community setting. This was underlined by our integrated approach to three distinct levels at which the CFO's wing model objectives seek to effect positive transformation, at:

1. Individual wing residents' relational and interaction level.
2. Collective wing community social climate and horizontal social capital building opportunity level.
3. Vertical social capital building opportunity levels affecting positive changes in prison culture, social climate, practice and policy.

1:1 and collective focus group interviews

Semi-structured 1:1 interview schedules were designed to ascertain the nature of respondents' interaction with the CFO wing model and establish their perspectives on the selected Peer involvement role initiative. The schedules were designed to prompt informed assessments and recommendations to inform the delivery of future peer involvement initiatives. Focus groups as a research method are a group interview technique used in applied research designs (Morgan, 1997; Krueger and Casey, 2000). Three distinct focus group schedules were designed to generate co-produced data findings to meet the peer involvement role initiative development aspirations of our study:

1. **A Participative Evaluation** focus group (Reason and Bradbury, 2001) schedule was designed to identify what wing community residents felt they needed to live a more fulfilling life in prison. This included capturing facilitators and barriers to ascertain to what extent participants felt the selected peer involvement element of the CFO wing model assisted in realising their aspirations.
2. **A "Wing Community & Relational climate mapping"** focus group schedule was designed (Wasserman et al., 1994), to map the relationships available on a prison wing. Going on to facilitate a collectively generated adaptation of Kelly's (1995; 1991 'Role Construct Repertory test', to generate a sense of the value of these relationships to the wing community.
3. **A "Peer Support role mapping & Infrastructure"** focus group schedule was devised for the host prisons' Prisoner Council. This was designed to map, characterise, and distinguish between peer involvement roles available across the prison. The aim was to establish the extent of establishment infrastructure available to facilitate and embed further peer involvement role developments at each site.

Collective workshops

Two interactive workshop schedules were designed informed by our action-research and theory-informed approach to study design (Jackson and Mazzel, 2018). Workshops are distinguished from focus group methods in that they are a collective space to co-produce questions and ideas, develop solutions and support collective groups decision making in a group setting (Faulk et al., 2006). Reflecting the distinctly collective, participatory, and developmental aims and underscoring our co-production approach to our study aims (Kemmis et al., 2014):

1. **An Appreciative Inquiry** workshop (Coghlan et al., 2003) schedule was developed to conduct with the CFO staff team to establish the specific peer involvement delivery model and expand good practice lessons learnt by the delivery team.
2. **Findings Validation & Recommendations Feasibility** workshop (McKeganey and Bloor, 1981) schedule was designed for delivery to both delivery staff and wing resident groups. This activity was designed to sense-check our emerging findings and formative recommendations. After these workshops we made appropriate adjustments based on these interactions.

Ethnographic observation

Ethnographic observation of the CFO wing model's core activities programme and engagement with evaluation workshops captured participant behaviours in real time (Drake et al., 2015). A flexible ethnographic observation template was designed for this study, containing simple descriptive observation prompts, for example: "Journey to delivery location from wing"; "Numbers in attendance"; "Spatial notes: Noise; Smells; Light; Equipment; Room set-up", etc. At an interactional observational level, this method allowed us to collect social context data and access meanings generated at the collective level.

Mapping social capital building potential

A qualitative "Social capital building 'potential' data capture tool" was used (see, Albertson and Albertson, 2022; Albertson et al., 2022; Albertson, 2021). This applied templated tool established the current pathways and identified future ones.

Ethical approval, data management and visit protocol

Ethical clearance for this study was provided by the HMPPS National Research Committee (NRC Ref. 2023-012+2023-238) and Sheffield Hallam University Ethics Committee (No. ER49795291). Data Management plans, Data Sharing agreements and "On-site visit Protocol" documentation were agreed with CFO and shared with wing model pilot site teams. All respondents in this study were provided with a Project Information Sheet to retain and a Consent Form to sign for each of the separate data collection activities. Post-transcription, only the respondents original 'position indicator' (e.g., Peer mentor/Staff role title) remained attached to the raw primary data, and all data were pseudonymised¹.

¹ Pseudonymisation is a data management and de-identification procedure by which personally identifiable information fields within a data record are replaced by artificial identifiers, or pseudonyms.

Section 3: Data collection and final sample profile

HMP Holme House data collection

Two three-day-long data collection visits to HMP Holme House by two research staff team members were conducted between September and December 2023.

HMP Holme House sample profile

The final data sample generated from the research activities conducted at HMP Holme House resulted in 30 interviews, 8 workshops and 10 ethnographic observations. The vast majority of professional staff interviews were conducted on-line via Teams but also included wider HMPS Prison Wing Officer staff on an ad-hoc availability basis during site data collection visits. These interviews were most often undertaken on a walk-and-talk basis, meaning these interviews were noted in-situ and typed up later.

Resident engagement in the study: HMP Holme House (n=109).

Our study engaged with a total of 109 currently serving residents at HMP Holme House. Residents were recruited into the study and volunteered to engage in core fieldwork activities (1:1 or focus group interview, Ethnographic observation, Workshop). The Prisoner Council participants volunteered to attend a “Peer Support & Infrastructure Mapping” workshop via the HMPS Governor with responsibility for the Prisoner Council. The nature of resident participation in our study are indicated in the table below. Multiple fieldwork activity engagement is not distinguished.

Table: Resident engagement

Prisoner Council workshop attendees	Ethnographic Observation engagement	Workshop engagement	1:1 Interviews	Total
6	58	32	13	109

1:1 Interviews (n=30)

A total of 30 interviews were undertaken at HMP Holme House.

Table 2.4.2: Interview sample

Residents	Staff	Total
13	17	30

Resident 1:1 interviews (n=13)

A total of 13 resident interviews were conducted at the Endeavour wing. Three were coded as peer mentor trained. Of these 2 were just completing the Ingeus Mentor training, and 1 had achieved an externally accredited L2 mentor qualification at a previous prison.

Table: Resident interview sample

Selected Peer Support role holders	Residents participating in CFO activities	Wider wing residents: Not participating	Sub-totals
3	5	5	13

Peer involvement role experience profile

It was further established that many in the interview sample (5/13) currently had or had previously acted in a variety of peer involvement roles and had a wealth of previous experience of acting in peer involvement roles in this and other institutions.

Table: Resident interview sample profile

Peer involvement role holders	Residents participating	Wider wing residents not participating	Peer involvement role experience (multiples).
3	5	5 ²	7

Staff 1:1 interviews (n=17)

A total of 17 staff interviews were conducted at HMP Holme House.

Table: Staff interview sample

CFO Delivery staff team	HMPS Wing officers	Strategic HMPS, CFO+ Prime contractor staff	Total
11	2	4	17

Collective focus groups & workshops (n=8)

A total of 8 data collective activities with three different stakeholder groups were conducted at Holme House.

Table: Focus group & workshop profile

Wing resident focus groups	Staff workshops	Prisoner Council focus group	Total
5	2	1	8

Resident collective activities undertaken (n=5)

A total of 5 workshops and focus groups were conducted with Endeavour wing residents.

² Including 2 PCoSO sentenced veterans at HMP Holme House, who had engaged in one iteration of the CFO course hosted on the PCoSO wing.

Table: Resident workshops

Participative Evaluation focus groups	Community & relational mapping focus groups	Findings & recommendations validation workshop	Total
2	2	1	5

Mapping data generated (n= 15)

A total of 15 maps were generated with residents at HMP Holme House.

Table: Prison-wide, wing Community, and Individual relational maps generated

Prison-wide peer involvement role & Infrastructure mapping	Wing Community & relational priority ³ mapping	Individual relational maps	Total
1 generated by Holme House’s Prisoner Council.	2 wing community & priority maps	12 individually generated maps.	15

Ethnographic observations (n= 10)

Ethnographic observation of 10 Endeavour wing resident sessions were conducted. Observation notes were written in-situ and typed up later.

Table: Ethnographic observations

CFO Course sessions	Wing Community activities	Evaluation workshop & focus group activities	Total
4	1	5	10

Social capital building potential

The extended data collection site visits conducted at HMP Holme House meant that we were able to observe, collate and extract social capital building examples alongside identifying future potential developmental opportunities. This data was captured utilising an existing qualitative social capital building-template (see, Albertson, 2021; Albertson and Albertson, 2022; Albertson et al., 2022). Both the template and findings are presented in the main reports findings section.

Data analysis

Interview transcripts and observational data were subjected to a thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2019). We adopted a pragmatic deductive approach (Braun and Clarke, 2006), and analysed the data according to the themes embedded in the core evaluation questions. Each interview transcript was read and re-read, and relevant data systematically inserted into a CFO wing model site-specific Excel Workbook. The Excel workbook was pre-populated with

³ Generated with an adaption of Kelly’s grid & successive dichotomies approach to capturing numerical prioritisation data, based on identifying “Most to least” relations from: Knowledgeable; Trusted; Supportive; Honest; and Power to change things.

appropriate anonymised sample profile details. Data extracts were inserted into 10 separate tabs/sheets, labelled as: “Day-to-day; Peer involvement; Peer Support; and Peer Mentor attributes; Impact; Most benefit; Suitability prison; Peer role-over phased activities; Peer Supporter training; Strength & weaknesses; and Improvements/ Recommendations”. In this way, peer involvement role holders, those they support, wider wing residents and staff generated data remained distinguished to allow for clarity of any distinctions made depending on the ‘original structural position’ of the data source. The same systematic approach was adopted towards the analysis of the ethnographic observation researcher note data. The analysis of the mapping workshop generated data involved extracting successive dichotomies numerical data. On completion, this approach to data analysis enabled us to move into compare, contrast, and typology formation phases of analysis for reporting purposes. The analysis of Peer involvement attributes involved each cited attribute per interview transcript being inserted into a further Excel Workbook sheet. These attributes were subsequently assigned to an inductively generated typology of ten key prison-context-based generic peer involvement, peer support and peer mentor role-specific attributes. A “simple content analysis” (Neuendorf, 2017, p 5) was conducted in order to identify the order of attribute typology prioritisation at each site.

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