

Meaningful Mentoring

Jonathan Aitken

A policy paper for the Centre for Social Justice

April 2014



THE CENTRE FOR
SOCIAL
JUSTICE

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About the Centre for Social Justice

The Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) is an independent think-tank, established to put social justice at the heart of British politics.

Moved by shocking levels of disadvantage across the nation, it studies the root causes of Britain's acute social problems in partnership with its Alliance of over 350 grassroots charities and people affected by poverty. This enables the CSJ to find and promote evidence-based, experience-led solutions to change lives and transform communities.

The CSJ believes that the surest way to reverse social breakdown – and the poverty it creates – is to build resilience within individuals, families and the innovative organisations able to help them.

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Over its ten-year history many exceptional people have contributed their expertise, experience and time to the CSJ.

In March 2014, the CSJ set up its Fellows Programme to recognise their contribution and to provide a platform for them and other friends of the organisation to discuss fresh ways of tackling the root causes of poverty.

For more information on the Fellows Programme please contact Dr Samantha Callan at samantha.callan@centreforsocialjustice.org.uk

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About the author



Jonathan Aitken

Jonathan Aitken is an author, former MP, former Cabinet Minister and former prisoner. He is a well known campaigner for prison reform and a CSJ Fellow. In 2009 he chaired a CSJ study: *Locked Up Potential: a strategy for reforming prisons and rehabilitating prisoners*. This acclaimed report broke new ground with its rehabilitation proposals and had a major impact on the politics of the coalition government.

Jonathan Aitken says he has had *'the unusual but perhaps useful qualification for writing Meaningful Mentoring of having had both a bird's eye view and a worm's eye view of the criminal justice system'*. He is a trustee, director or patron of eleven charities working in the field of offender rehabilitation and mentoring. He has personally mentored 14 ex-prisoners since his own release from prison in 2000.

Acknowledgements

I am profoundly grateful to the many people and organisations who have helped with the publication of Meaningful Mentoring.

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During the research I was greatly helped by Caitlin Fawkes and by Mick May, the founder of Blue Sky. They accompanied me to most meetings and provided invaluable insights, information and ideas which are pivotal to the report.

The burden of the typing was efficiently borne by Lettie Maclean, Rosemary Gooding and Caitlin Fawkes.

During the six months of work on this report I saw over 25 mentoring organisations and at least a hundred offenders, criminal justice professionals, company executives, charity workers, government officials and volunteers – all involved in one way or another with mentoring. It is from their first hand experiences and expertise that Meaningful Mentoring has taken shape. I thank them all most warmly, although the final responsibility for the report's findings and recommendations is of course my own.

Jonathan Aitken

Foreword

The revolving door, conveyor belt to crime, depressing merry-go-round... Whatever colourful moniker we put on it, the reality of reoffending in England and Wales is both stark and troubling. Whilst crime is falling under this Government, we are now left with a hardcore group of offenders shuffling round the criminal justice system.

Reoffending rates have barely changed in a decade, and with the rate of reoffending at almost 60 per cent for those prisoners sentenced to less than 12 months, that depressing merry-go-round is all too real. These are the people that leave prison with £46 and very little else.

I do not believe that we can continue to just do more of the same, somehow hoping that miraculously this stubborn problem that has dogged successive governments for decades will resolve itself. Prison will continue to be the right punishment for people that the courts decide to sent there. But it is in absolutely no one's interest if they just keep coming back.

Our 'Transforming Rehabilitation' programme will restructure our current approach, driving efficiency and innovation into the rehabilitation system. We are doing this by bringing in the skills of the private and voluntary sectors, so they can work hand in hand with a refocused public sector:

Introducing new organisations free from bureaucratic constraints will mean they can start new ways of work. As this report correctly identifies, mentoring can, and I indeed hope will, be, an absolutely vital part of this.

Jonathan talks in his report of the bewildering range of emotions ex-offenders experience as they leave the prison gates. I too have heard first hand from prisoners how terrified they feel at the prospect of leaving, and how daunting the challenge is of staying clean, staying sober and staying away from a bad crowd; challenges that were all so much part of the reasons why they got into trouble in the first place.

Many people in prison come from what are termed 'chaotic backgrounds'. What this really means is fractured childhoods, addictions, a lack of discipline, poor educational achievements, exposure to violence – and, at its very heart, an absence of affection or caring that loving parents and concerned role models provide for the vast majority of us.

Mentors have an important role in unpicking this. A mentor at the prison gate can take the edge off that very first, frightening day when the ex-offender leaves and takes their first steps away from a life of crime. They can give an ex-offender a fair chance of staying on the straight and narrow by being that wise friend, supporting them in finding somewhere to stay, getting a job and reconnecting with their children.

For this reason, I believe mentoring is crucial to turning around the lives of ex-offenders and preventing them from reoffending.

Right Honourable Chris Grayling MP

Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice

Overview

The mentoring of offenders is one of the most promising pathways to rehabilitation in today's criminal justice system. It is about to move from the margins of rehabilitation practice to the mainstream of national policy, thanks to recent developments in the Government's strategy for Transforming Rehabilitation (TR).

Until recently mentoring has been left on the periphery of the criminal justice system. Over the course of our research we found that a large proportion of the work is being conducted by approximately 40–50 charities and Voluntary Sector Organisations (VSOs), mostly funded by non-government sources. They train and deploy around 3,000 mentors in England and Wales of whom roughly 90 per cent are part-time volunteers.¹

The Probation Service, despite its historic mission to *'advise, assist and befriend'*,² is no longer seen by offenders as a mentoring organisation because it increasingly plays a compulsory and box ticking role in their lives. Mentoring and probation are two very different concepts.

Mentoring is certain to play an important role in the implementation of TR. The Government's most recent TR publication, Invitation to Negotiate (ITN), makes this clear to all potential bidders for the new Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) which will deliver offender rehabilitation services in 21 Contract Package Areas (CPAs).

The CRCs will be responsible for providing rehabilitative services to all offenders who are deemed not to be high risk. This includes around 45,000 low and medium risk offenders who are estimated to leave prison annually having served sentences of less than 12 months.³ This large group has never before been given any supervision or mentoring by the Probation Service, even though they are the most prolific re-offenders.

The Government has been careful not to prescribe the specific methodologies which may be used by CRCs to rehabilitate offenders. This caution is wise given the lack of statistical evidence as to what forms of mentoring work. Nevertheless it is clear from the beginning of the Target Operating Model document, which emphasises the need for CRCs to deliver

¹ Based on an estimate by the National Offender Management Service given in evidence to the Centre for Social Justice on 11/11/2013

² Probation of Offenders Act 1907, *Duties of Probation Officers*, Chapter 17

³ Ministry of Justice, *Transforming Rehabilitation: A Strategy for Reform*, May 2013, p. 47

'innovative rehabilitative support and mentoring to offenders', that mentoring will play a pivotal part in the new arrangements.⁴

Although mentoring is an idea whose time has come, it has so far been poorly defined and erratically implemented. Mentoring is a fuzzy concept which is in fashion but short of facts. Even the most basic questions reveal a dearth of authentic knowledge and accurate information. For example:

What is the definition of mentoring? When and where should mentoring begin? How should its results be measured? What makes a good mentor? How frequently should the mentor and offender engage with each other? How long should the mentoring period last? How should they be trained, organised and made accountable? What is the right balance between volunteer mentors, professional mentors, ex-offender mentors, case workers and managerial supervisors? What are the distinctions between mentoring, befriending, coaching, monitoring, peer-advising and supervising? What are the objectives of a mentoring relationship? What does mentoring cost? What needs to be done in order to bring a better sense of common standards, best practice and shared purpose to the present diffuse world of offender mentoring?

The multiplicity of responses to these and other related questions is paradoxically both encouraging and concerning. The encouragement stems from the fact that mentoring has gained acceptance because it is a caring human relationship with a huge potential to change lives and reduce reoffending. It is a personal rather than an official activity. It has proved its value through numerous successes in individual mentoring relationships. The anecdotal evidence for such cases is impressive. Nevertheless up-scaling and measuring these mentoring successes to a level where they become an established part of national rehabilitation policy will be a challenging task.

It cannot be too strongly emphasised that a mentoring relationship is intensely personal. One size is never going to fit all. Flexibility is an essential ingredient in the process. We have heard during the course of this research that the mentors who get the best out of their mentees are often warm characterful individuals who follow unorthodox paths in helping offenders on their journey to a rehabilitated life.

These human instincts are important. It is an instinctive judgement to volunteer to become a mentor or to enrol as a professional one. Empathising with an offender enough to change the pattern of his or her life needs feelings from the heart as well as rules from a handbook. Mentoring is not a box-ticking exercise. It is a human engagement of trust, encouragement, guidance and hope.

Yet for all the humanity and unorthodoxy that can help to build a good mentoring relationship, the process also requires dedication and discipline. High standards are important. It is a matter of concern that there is too little agreement as to what those standards should be. Up until now, mentoring organisations have tended to be cottage industries doing their own thing in

⁴ Ministry of Justice, *Target Operating Model: Version 2, Rehabilitation Programme*, February 2014, p. 5

their own way. This needs to change. Without imposing the tyranny of unanimity, mentoring can only become meaningful when there are agreed guidelines and established signposts toward best practice.

This report attempts to portray various types and forms of mentoring now being used within the criminal justice system. We have tried to learn lessons and draw conclusions from what is happening across the spectrum of mentoring activity. Out of this spectrum we believe it is possible to identify examples and themes which constitute best practice. Once these are understood and implemented in the new TR strategy, we believe that the present free-for-all could be replaced by a coherent plan for more effective mentoring in all the geographical areas administrated by the new CRCs.

The scale of this endeavour will be considerable. Around 71,000 low and medium risk people leave prison every year and will receive rehabilitation services from the CRCs. A number of these will be the same people leaving prison multiple times in one year; therefore the caseload of individuals that CRCs will need to manage will be smaller. The Ministry of Justice estimate that CRCs will be managing a caseload of around 53,000 ex-prisoners.⁵

As the present number of mentors is only around 3,000 there is a large gap that needs to be filled if every released offender is to be mentored.⁶

Our recommendation is that each CRC should recruit and train new mentors each year for the next five years to fill this gap. Following interviews with a number mentoring organisations and providers, we believe it would be realistic for CRCs to recruit 15,000 new mentors by 2020.

For a variety of reasons spelt out in this report, meeting this aspiration over a five-year period will be difficult but should not be daunting. An encouraging pointer is that the potential supply of mentors exceeds the present – and probably the future – demand for them. Our findings suggest that recruiting 15,000 mentors over the next five years would be a realistic target for the 21 CRCs. If CRCs follow the guidelines set out in our national prototype mentoring model (see Recommendation 11) this recruitment drive would ensure we have enough people to meet the mentoring need.

This report has been researched and written in the spirit of idealism without illusions. We know that the mentoring of offenders is challenging. We know it works in an impressive swathe of individual cases, small though the present numbers are. The fact that these cases have never properly been counted, measured or expanded on a wider scale is a fault line in the present criminal justice system. The TR strategy is a courageous attempt to correct such past faults.

Implementing the TR strategy, specifically in the area of mentoring, will have its difficulties. Initially this may be negatively reported, for the world of Criminal Justice commentators is overcrowded with pessimists prophesying doom for every fresh effort to reduce reoffending.

⁵ Ministry of Justice, *Transforming Rehabilitation: A Strategy for Reform*, May 2013, p. 47

⁶ Based on an estimate by the National Offender Management Service given in evidence to the Centre for Social Justice, 11/11/2013

Yet TR is a bold and original strategy. Its emphasis on the wide-scale mentoring of offenders creates a new game changer that can massively increase the chances of making the strategy succeed.

We hope that our report will make a contribution to the debate on how to make the new concept of mentoring work most effectively in all 21 CRC areas. We believe that if the recommendations in this report are implemented, meaningful mentoring will make an important breakthrough in the battle to reduce reoffending.

Executive summary

This paper makes 12 principal recommendations. They are summarised briefly below.

1. Establish a clearer definition of mentoring

Criminal Justice Mentoring, referred to throughout this report as 'mentoring' needs a broad definition and a statement of principles which can be accepted by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), the National Probation Service (NPS), Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs), and by their mentoring partners. The present lack of clarity is in danger of leading to a state of well meaning confusion where every mentoring fashion is applauded but none are properly measured or made fit for purpose.

Here is how we would define the mentoring of ex-offenders:

'Mentoring is a voluntary relationship of engagement, encouragement and trust. Its immediate priority is to offer support, guidance and practical assistance to offenders in the vulnerable period around their release. Its longer term purpose is to help them find a stable lifestyle in which accommodation, employment, ties with family and friends, and a growing two-way relationship with the mentor all play their part in preventing a return to re-offending.'

This CSJ definition will hopefully be met with general acceptance in the way that the CSJ definition of 'gang' in our report, *Dying to Belong*, has come to be used on a worldwide basis.⁷ Or it may need to be refined by other experts and sources of authority. A definition by the Secretary of State for Justice in a Parliamentary statement would be particularly helpful.

What is certain is that some form of clear mission statement is needed before the CRCs start to implement their mentoring commitments as part of the TR strategy. This is important for many reasons, including the need to make clear what mentoring should not be.

Mentoring is not a compulsory relationship; it is not official supervision; it is not probation; it is not an isolated relationship because the mentor needs to work in cooperation with other sources of holistic help for offenders, such as housing authorities, Jobcentre Plus officials, employers and the NHS.

⁷ Centre for Social Justice, *Dying to Belong: An in-depth review of Street Gangs in Britain*, London: Centre for Social Justice, February 2009

All these points of guidance need to be covered in a mentor mission statement. No such statement or definition exists on a widespread basis. This is why our first recommendation is that mentoring organisations need to have their purposes better defined and their mission clarified.

2. Start mentoring in prison, not at the gate

Mentoring should begin at the earliest possible moment in the journey of an offender. For best practice this should mean starting the mentoring relationship when the offender is still in prison and not 'at the gate', which can be a disorientating time for meeting a stranger. The mentoring should continue for a mutually agreed period (probably between six and 12 months) after the offender's release into the community.

Almost everyone we spoke to agreed that a mentoring relationship will have the best chance of success if the mentor can understand the needs and mindset of the offender before his or her release.

3. Reform attitudes to in-prison mentoring

NOMS and Her Majesty's Prison Service (HMPS) will need to create a sea change in their own attitudes and culture if mentoring relationships are going to be allowed to start in prison. Mentors approved by CRCs, including ex-offenders who have become trained mentors, will have to be permitted reasonable access to prisoners who have volunteered to enter a mentoring relationship. The often capricious vetos to such access by 'Oscar Ones' (Head of Security in each prison) will have to be reduced.

We recommend that in cooperation with CRCs all Resettlement Prisons should appoint Throughcare Support Officers (TSOs) along the lines of the scheme pioneered by the Scottish Prison Service (see page 37). These TSOs will be responsible for encouraging mentoring on both sides of the prison wall – either in their own mentoring schemes or by encouraging the work of CRC approved mentors.

4. Recruit 15,000 mentors by 2020

The first priority is to recruit and train good quality mentors on a scale far greater than has yet been envisaged. At present NOMS estimates that there are 3,000 mentors in England and Wales.⁸

An estimated 71,000 low and medium risk prisoners are released every year, and the Ministry of Justice estimate that CRCs will have a caseload of around 53,000 ex-prisoners. There is a huge gap between the reality of present mentoring activity on the ground and the declared

⁸ Interview with the Centre for Social Justice, 11/11/2013

aspiration of the Secretary of State for Justice for released prisoners to be *'met at the prison gate'* by a mentor who will *'be a wise friend to prevent them from reoffending'*.⁹

To bridge this gap we recommend that every CRC should have a target of recruiting and training new mentors each year for the next five years. These target figures will depend on the offender totals in each CRC area. Spread across all 21 CRCs we believe it would be realistic for them to recruit a total of 15,000 new members by 2020.

The figure of 15,000 new mentors by 2020 is achievable because the majority of mentoring organisations agree that the potential supply of voluntary mentors is already far greater than the limited demand for mentors presently coming from referrals by the prison and probation services. Moreover, if CRCs follow the guidelines set out in our national prototype mentoring model (see Recommendation 11) this recruitment drive would ensure we have enough people to meet the mentoring need.

5. Set up a new HM Inspectorate of Rehabilitation

The recruitment and training of mentors should be left to the voluntary and professional mentoring organisations in each of the CRC's contract areas. But every CRC should exercise quality control by insisting on good practice standards, such as a minimum of four days training for a new mentor and a commitment to do a certain number of hours or days mentoring each month.

In addition to the quality control exercised by each CRC, further assessments of mentoring schemes should be carried out by a new Inspectorate of Rehabilitation which would function along the lines of the long established work carried out by HM Inspectorate of Prisons and HM Inspectorate of Probation. One of the priority tests of the new Inspectorate of Rehabilitation should be to inspect and report on the quality of mentoring schemes in CRC areas; to publish the reports; and to advise the Secretary of State on the progress of mentoring.

6. Measure the results of mentoring

The measurement of the success of mentoring is important. As a start we recommend that every CRC should be required to make each of its mentoring organisations file an annual report to the MoJ's Justice Data Lab and to comply with its requirements.

In return, the Justice Data Lab should become more flexible in accepting smaller samples of mentoring. It must also be ready to measure the results of organisations that start mentoring from 2015 onwards.

⁹ Speech by the Secretary of State for Justice and Lord Chancellor at the Centre for Social Justice, November 2012 [accessed via www.gov.uk/government/speeches/rehabilitation-revolution-the-next-steps (12/03/14)]

Measuring the results of mentoring is sometimes a complex process. It needs to be recognised that good mentoring often succeeds in ways that do not quickly conform to the simple yes or no statistics on whether or not an individual re-offence has occurred. So we recommend that a second non-statistical yardstick of measurement should be applied to CRCs and their mentoring organisations by the new HM Inspectorate of Rehabilitation.

This could take the form of what might be called 'A Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval Certificate', granted to a mentoring organisation which the Inspector of Rehabilitation has graded as effective in terms of its engagement with offenders, even if this progress has not yet resulted in a statistical reduction in reoffending.

A third way of evaluating mentoring is to invite an academic institution to assess the results of a particular scheme. At present the work of St Giles Trust is assessed by Frontier Economics; Catch 22 is evaluated by Manchester University; and the Scottish Prison Service Throughcare Support Officer scheme at HMP Greenock is being monitored by Edinburgh University.

All these methodologies for measuring the mentoring of offenders need to be encouraged and developed.

7. Provide adequate funding for mentoring

The issue of cost in mentoring needs to be addressed with some urgency. The 21 CRCs will have tight budgets so we recommend that all providers bidding for a contract area should be required to state what percentage of their spending will be devoted to mentoring.

Mentoring is a process which does not come cheap. Taking the mentoring organisations we spoke to as a guide, each voluntary mentor is likely to cost around £30 per week or £1,500 a year just to cover their travel expenses, subsistence costs, telephone calls and other personal items. Professional mentors cost around £20,000 a year each and senior case workers or mentoring supervisors around £25,000 per year.

Whatever the eventual costings, each CRC will work out its own budget for mentoring. We recommend that mentoring budgets should be published at the time of the contract area awards to preferred bidders.

Although the funding for mentoring will come primarily from the NOMS budgets allocated to each CRC area, this public funding may be enhanced by additional spending on mentoring by charitable trusts, National Lottery Grants and private funding of one sort or another, as is happening at present on an encouraging scale.

Although the mentoring costs may look expensive at first glance, the cost effectiveness of a substantial mentoring drive could be remarkable.

For example if a 10 per cent reduction in the national reoffending rate was achieved and attributed to mentoring, the consequent saving to the taxpayer would be around £1 billion a year.¹⁰ In comparison to imprisonment costs or probation costs, mentoring has the potential to provide excellent value for money.

8. Match mentors to offenders

Matching the right mentors to an appropriate offender is a special skill. It must be developed by each CRC and its partners in their own way. The first priority we recommend is the recruitment of a pool of trained mentors in each area. It should contain a balanced mixture of age groups, backgrounds, volunteers, professionals, ex-offenders and experienced criminal justice workers such as former probation and prison staff.

All the evidence suggests that the supply of potential mentors is much larger than the anticipated demand. There are certain target groups such as trainee lawyers, retired teachers, graduate students, trade unions, ex-offenders of good behaviour and those who attend churches or mosques who are only rarely approached to see if they might be willing to serve as mentors.

We recommend that CRCs start a recruitment and advertising campaign amongst these and other suitable target groups in their areas to ask for mentor applications.

To give one example of these recruitment possibilities: if every church congregation or worshipping community found one volunteer mentor willing to mentor an offender, this report's suggested target of recruiting 15,000 mentors would be met many times over.¹¹

So we recommend that each CRC gives a high priority to recruiting a pool of mentors who can then be matched with the right offender.

9. Establish mentoring centres

We recommend that every CRC sets up at least one or two mentoring centres in its area. They should be user friendly meeting places where mentors and mentees can connect and talk on neutral ground.

The term 'mentoring centre' is too grand a label for what is meant to be an informal low cost room with the relaxed atmosphere of a club, a sanctuary or a coffee bar with Wi-Fi links.

In the course of our research for this report we have been impressed by the number of mentoring organisations who champion this concept. *'You cannot offer mentoring without the*

¹⁰ This is calculated using the mid-point of the National Audit Office's estimate that reoffending by all recent ex-prisoners cost the economy between £9.5 and £13 billion in 2007/8 (see National Audit Office, *Managing offenders on short custodial sentences*, February 2010, p. 4)

¹¹ There are over 50,000 churches (Brierley Consultancy, *UK Church Statistics 2005–2015*, Tonbridge: ADBC Publishers, 2011) and 1,500 mosques (www.mosques.muslimsinbritain.org) in the UK

*support of a readily available centre' says Camila Batmanghelidjh, the founder of Kids Company. 'We have six such centres which do not consist of people sitting behind their desks. They are places which restore dignity, show warmth, and do heart-to-heart mentoring.'*¹²

Another mentoring pioneer who agrees with this view is Danny Kruger of Only Connect (OC). He has opened a mentoring centre in a West London Community Centre at White City called OC West.

*'The traditional method of one-on-one support in a wide variety of places can be ineffective,' he says, 'our model – which we call Entourage – is to encourage a community to take root in an easily accessible centre. We think that having such a centre or club is fundamental to the success of mentoring.'*¹³

Some of the most effective mentoring organisations share this view. St Giles Trust runs a drop-in Job Club in Camberwell which helps offenders to find employment. Pecan Moving On uses a room in Peckham for its women offenders to conduct group activities. There are many other similar examples.

After taking our evidence we are convinced that the creation of mentoring centres in each CRC area would be a valuable resource in the drive to promote meaningful mentoring and reduce reoffending. The centres should be as informal and inexpensive as possible, often using a room in an existing community centre and equipping it with sofas, chairs, coffee making equipment and Wi-Fi links. Good mentoring can take place anywhere, but we recommend that CRCs should follow the example of Only Connect, Kids Company and other leading charities in this field in establishing mentoring centres which mentors and their clients can use as a meeting place.

10. Professionally mentor women offenders

We attach particular importance to the mentoring of women offenders who leave prison at the rate of around 7,000 a year.¹⁴ These women offenders are rarely violent but their rehabilitation needs are often complex. They need bespoke mentoring.

We have been impressed by some of the ground-breaking work done by professional mentoring organisations with women offenders, especially the Pecan Moving On Programme in South London and Coaching Inside and Out in Styal Prison in Cheshire.

Because the number of women offenders in each area is likely to be relatively low, we recommend that every CRC sets up a professionally staffed women's mentoring unit which uses programmes based on models mentioned above.

¹² In evidence to the Centre for Social Justice, 21/12/2013

¹³ In evidence to the Centre for Social Justice, 18/11/2013

¹⁴ Ministry of Justice, *Offender management statistics quarterly – July – September 2013*, Table 3.1, January 2014

11. Develop a national mentoring model

There are many good models for the mentoring of offenders. This variety in mentoring should continue, and services should always be tailored to local needs.

While upholding this principle, we believe it would still be helpful for there to be a recommended national prototype model for mentoring which CRCs would be able to adjust or change in accordance with local requirements. After listening to the views of many mentoring organisations, and mentors and mentees themselves we think that a national prototype model should look something like this:

- a. The mentoring team in a CRC area should be made up of 70 per cent voluntary mentors, 20 per cent professional mentors and 10 per cent senior case workers, supervisors and managers;
- b. Team mentoring is usually more effective than one-on-one mentoring. We support a model which would give each offender a lead mentor and two supporting mentors with a caseworker keeping an overview on the progress of the team's relationship with the offenders;
- c. We believe that the ideal mentoring period is six to 12 months. For the first 30 days after the offender's release the mentoring process is hands on and highly intensive, including accompanying the offender to important meetings with agencies such as Jobcentre Plus, the local housing agency and the NHS;
- d. Mentoring can take place in many locations. Ideally the relationship should begin in prison (see Recommendation Two) and then be prepared to move to wherever the offender feels comfortable such as: their home; a local coffee shop; or a mentoring centre;
- e. On mentoring frequency we believe that a mentor (or member of the mentoring team) should meet once a week with the offender, perhaps twice a week in the immediate post-release period. In addition there should be other forms of contact each week by text messages, phone calls and emails.

These suggestions of a prototype model for mentoring are based on what we have identified as 'best practice'. But we accept that CRCs may, with their VSO partners, be able to find as good, if not better, models to suit the individual needs of offenders in their local area.

12. Tackle the obstacles to meaningful mentoring

The main reasons why mentoring has been such an underutilised approach to rehabilitation within the criminal justice system are lack of clarity; lack of management; a lack of accountability and poor measurement; and a lack of resources. We recommend a determined campaign to overcome these obstacles which would be entirely in line with the Transforming Rehabilitation strategy and the priority it gives to mentoring.

The first obstacle – lack of clarity – can be solved by Ministers nationally and CRCs locally setting out a clear definition and mission statement for mentoring. We hope that the definition offered in this report will be helpful.

The second obstacle – lack of management – should be solved by the new Transforming Rehabilitation architecture which brings in experienced management companies from the private sector to run CRC areas.

The third obstacle – lack of accountability and poor measurement – remains an area of weakness. Expecting NOMS to deliver these elements of mentoring would be the triumph of hope over experience. But a combination of the work of the Justice Data Lab, the work of a new HM Inspectorate of Rehabilitation and independent assessments by academic institutions should fill this gap.

Resources for mentoring cannot fail to improve in the TR environment. At present approximately £4 billion of tax-payers money is spent annually by NOMS to '*commission and provide offender management services in the community and in custody*.'¹⁵ Virtually none of this money is spent on mentoring.

Under the Government's spending plans for TR an annual £450 million package of rehabilitation contracts will be distributed to the 21 CRCs.¹⁶ They will have to decide how to spend their budgets. Our recommendation is that no bidder for a CRC area should be awarded a contract unless they produce, as part of their bid, a carefully costed plan for mentoring services in their area. This requirement alone will ensure that mentoring helps reduce reoffending.

¹⁵ National Offender Management Service, *Annual Report and Accounts 2011–2012*, London: The Stationery Office, p. 25

¹⁶ Ministry of Justice, *Press Release: Search begins to find best organisations to tackle high reoffending rates*, September 2013

chapter one

The reasons and evidence for the principal recommendations

Mentoring is moving to the centre of rehabilitation practice under TR. To ensure this journey is a successful one that leads to reductions in reoffending this report proposes 12 recommendations. They were formed off the back of a number of interviews with mentoring organisations, as well as many mentors and mentees themselves. They are:

1. Establish a clearer definition of mentoring
2. Start mentoring in prison, not at the gate
3. Reform attitudes to in-prison mentoring
4. Recruit 15,000 mentors by 2020
5. Set up a new HM Inspectorate of Rehabilitation
6. Measure the results of mentoring
7. Provide adequate funding for mentoring
8. Match mentors to offenders
9. Establish Mentoring Centres
10. Professionally mentor women offenders
11. Develop a national mentoring model
12. Tackle the obstacles to meaningful mentoring

We describe the recommendations in detail below.

1.1 Establish a clearer definition of mentoring

What is meaningful mentoring? The answer to this question has so far failed to find a consensus from the mentoring organisations presently working within the criminal justice system. There is not even much agreement as to what mentoring should be called. 'Befriending', 'coaching', 'peer advising', 'monitoring' and 'caring' are just some of the labels used as alternative

descriptions for rather similar activities. Although we respect the arguments for these terminological differences they are not as important as their protagonists claim. Mentoring may be flexibly interpreted but its meaning is clear. It is the word that best describes the process designed to help offenders engage in a voluntary relationship that will assist them to find their feet after coming out of prison and to rebuild their lives without reoffending.

Having established mentoring as the right word, the next step is to find a right definition. There will not be much coherence in mentoring until it is recognised as a definable concept with a common purpose. In each CRC area the mentoring organisations need a clear mission statement arising from a clear definition. Before attempting such a definition it is useful to say what mentoring is not and why it is not. Mentoring is not compulsory. The relationship will only succeed if the offender voluntarily enters into engagement with his or her mentor. Without such willingness mentoring will be a pointless exercise equivalent to trying to clap hands with one hand.

Mentoring is not supervision. If the relationship takes the form of mandatory reporting to a supervisory figure who might 'grass' the offender for non-compliance or boss the offender around, then it is based on a wrong premise and will not work.

Mentoring is not one-dimensional and cannot succeed if the relationship seeks to operate in isolation. This is because almost all offenders coming out of prison have multi-dimensional problems in areas such as emotional difficulties, family relationships, accommodation needs, access to benefits, employment opportunities, fear of failure, substance misuse and low self esteem. To help an offender navigate through such difficulties the mentor needs to create a relationship of continuity and trust. Building on that relationship the mentor can not only listen and advise, he or she can also connect the offender with practical and psychological sources of assistance such as the housing authority, Jobcentre Plus, addiction support groups, drug counsellors, relatives and friends.

Mentoring is not a box-ticking exercise, a formula or a one-size fits all concept. It is different from probation. It will not work if the mentor might be able to exercise the power to have an offender recalled to prison. The mentor is on the side of the offender who gradually becomes a client, a partner, a companion and a friend.

These 'don'ts' in establishing a mentoring relationship are firm, while the 'do's' are flexible. Operating within legal and behavioural boundaries good mentors are imaginative, patient and sensitive. Each CRC will develop its own code of practice on matters such as the number of meetings and phone calls that a mentor should try to have with the client each week or each month. Much of the rest is personal chemistry.

Yet however personal and flexible the process may be it needs clarity of purpose and committed discipline on the part of the mentoring organisation. A good starting point is to begin with a clear definition of mentoring.

We at CSJ offer this one:

'Mentoring is a voluntary relationship of engagement, encouragement and trust. Its immediate priority is to offer support, guidance and practical assistance to offenders in the vulnerable period around their release. Its longer term purpose is to help them find a stable lifestyle in which accommodation, employment, ties with family and friends, and a growing two-way relationship with the mentor all play their part in preventing a return to re-offending'.

Others may be able to improve on this definition which incidentally covers other forms of mentoring such as coaching, befriending and peer-advising. It would be helpful if the Secretary of State for Justice or the Chief Executive of NOMS would either endorse the CSJ definition or produce one of their own. It needs to be honed and shaped into a clear definition which can be used by all mentoring organisation in the 21 CRCs.

1.2 Start mentoring in prison, not at the gate

Most experienced mentoring organisations around the world agree that criminal justice mentoring should begin as early as possible in an offender's journey. In ideal circumstances the best starting point is for the mentor and the offender to meet in prison.

Leaving aside until the next section the unhappy reality that NOMS and HMPS often place obstacles in the way of in-prison mentoring, the common sense of allowing a mentoring relationship to begin in custody is obvious.

Psychologically offenders are at their most receptive to mentors who come to visit them in prison. Indeed it can be said from experience that there is sometimes a bonding between a worried prisoner in custody and a helpful mentor offering to assist with the familiar problems of life after release. Some of those problems (for example, accommodation, and access to benefits) can be sorted out in the last weeks of a sentence. In any event, the foundations of trust in a mentoring relationship can get well laid by listening and talking one-on-one in a prison visiting hall. Prisoners are often disproportionately grateful to those who take the trouble to come and visit them while they are still inside.

Some mentoring organisations have managed to obtain limited access to offenders in prison. They all report that this gives mentoring the best possible start. For example, Trailblazers – which delivered 5,614 one-to-one mentoring sessions using 180 mentors in 2012 – works on the model that between three and six months of mentoring is provided in prison, followed by up to 12 months of mentoring in the community upon release.¹⁷

SOVA, which is currently arranging volunteer mentors for over 100 prisoners at HMP Peterborough, has been able to ensure that the mentoring relationships begin while the offender is still in custody.

¹⁷ See www.trailblazersmentoring.org.uk/our+charity/what+we+do

Nacro's Volunteer Mentor Coordinator, Richard Hearn, makes the point *'an in-prison start is best because if you can gain the trust of your mentee inside, you are much better placed to help that person than when they arrive on the outside and are faced with a bewildering array of needs and services.'*¹⁸

In bridging the inside-outside gap there is much to be learned from a recent initiative by The Scottish Prison Service (SPS). SPS has launched an apparently successful experiment in mentoring on both sides of the prison wall at HMP Greenock (see page 37 for details). The big innovation is that the mentoring is done by prison officers known as Throughcare Support Officers (TSOs). The fact that the TSOs know and mentor their clients in prison as well as in the community is of great importance in making the mentoring relationship work.

Although there has been a great deal of talk about mentoring relationships starting by 'meeting at the gate', this is at best a second class option. On the day of release an offender is likely to be in a confusing turmoil of emotions, ranging from euphoria to fear. Such a volatile moment is not an opportunity for a complete stranger to introduce himself or herself saying 'I'm your mentor'.

Of course if the mentor and the offender already know each other through previous in-prison meetings then being met at the gate by the familiar face of the mentor can be a tremendous bonus on the day of release. But being met at the gate by a stranger is unlikely to start the mentoring relationship well.

Although mentoring relationships can be made to work if they begin outside the prison walls, the rule of best practice should be: mentoring should begin in prison.

1.3 Reform attitudes to in-prison mentoring

A huge obstacle impeding the mentoring process from starting in the prison is the unsatisfactory attitude of the National Offender Manager Service (NOMS) and Her Majesty's Prison Service (HMPS).

NOMS pays lip service to the principle of in-prison mentoring but has been feeble in making it work in practice, as evidenced by the fact that this is so little of it today. Its *de facto* subsidiary HMPS is often unhelpful in granting access to mentors trying to see their clients in prison, particularly if these mentors are ex-offenders. However, these attitudes are beginning to change and will have to change on a far wider scale for mentoring to have real impact.

A bridge of trust needs to be built between the senior managers of the CRCs and the senior managers of the Resettlement Prisons in each CRC area. This bridge building would

¹⁸ In evidence to the Centre for Social Justice, 14/11/2013

be made easier if NOMS issued a clear directive in the form of a Prison Service Instruction (PSI) which required full cooperation between the Resettlement Prisons and the CRCs over in-prison mentoring. Such a directive would end the present confusion in which a few prison establishments welcome ex-offenders as mentors to inmates while others bar them completely.

The problem in granting ex-offenders the necessary Visiting Orders to come in and do mentoring lies not so much with prison governors as it does with the 'Oscar Ones' who are the officers responsible for security. They are understandably but often excessively risk averse. Either by persuasion from the CRCs or by instruction from senior NOMS officials these 'Oscar Ones' will



have to become flexible towards allowing mentors of all backgrounds to visit their clients in prison. The process of Security Clearances, which should not present great difficulties in Resettlement Prisons, must not become a logjam to mentoring.

Taking a more positive stance, prison officers may see that the new environment of mentoring can offer interesting new career opportunities. We recommend that NOMS and HMPS should study the changing attitudes of the Scottish Prison Service towards mentoring. In particular we recommend that NOMS emulates the successful mentoring experiment in HMP Greenock by which selected prison officers become ThroughCare Support Officers (TSOs) who mentor on both sides of the prison walls. We recommend that within the next two years every Resettlement Prison in England and Wales should appoint at least two TSOs to facilitate mentoring both in prison and in the community.

More generally a meaningful mentoring strategy should encourage a substantial number of criminal justice professionals to become involved in mentoring. Probation officers, retired as well as currently serving, have considerable experience which could be useful to CRCs in the drive to develop mentoring. The same goes for civilian prison staff. Even though the work of mentoring is markedly different from probation or front-line prison officer duties, some of the skills are transferable. Many serving or retired criminal justice professionals could be a valuable resource to CRCs as they build a meaningful mentoring strategy in their areas.

There are recent signs that the MoJ is starting to encourage NOMS and HMPS to permit in-prison mentoring in more establishments. The work of SOVA, St Giles Trust, and the One Service at HMP Peterborough may be pioneering a new trend in this direction. The trend should become universal good practice as soon as possible.

I.4 Recruit 15,000 mentors by 2020

There is no shortage of potential mentors. Virtually every mentoring organisation interviewed for this CSJ publication reported that they would find it easy to recruit good quality mentors both voluntary and professional. For example, Andy Keen-Downs, Chief Executive of PACT, said, *'we are inundated with applications to become volunteer mentors. Our problem is the low number of prisoner referrals coming from probation. As a result we have a waiting list of volunteers keen to be trained as mentors.'*¹⁹

In November 2013 the Clink Prison restaurant charity advertised in The Guardian for one professional mentor to work at HMP Brixton. *'We received 160 applications for this one job,'* said The Clink Chief Executive Chris Moore, *'almost all of them appeared to be of a high quality.'*²⁰

Methods of recruitment for mentoring include word of mouth, websites, social media and advertising. Sources of recruitment include a wide range of ages and backgrounds, among them graduate students, retired people, ex-offenders, professional people willing to volunteer, unemployed people seeking a job or voluntary work and people with an interest in gaining experience in the criminal justice system. We heard that there is a shortage of younger male volunteers from ethnic minority groups, but across the board there is a surplus of potential mentors. We believe that this pent-up demand to become mentors has something to do with the growing willingness to volunteer for worthwhile tasks across society but more to do with the fact that the mentoring of offenders is seen as a worthwhile and interesting cause.

NOMS estimate that there are at present 3,000 mentors in England and Wales, both voluntary and professional. According to the Secretary of State for Justice, Chris Grayling, there is need for released prisoners to be *'met at the prison gate'* by a mentor who will *'be a wise friend to prevent them from reoffending.'*²¹

We will need considerably more mentors in order to ensure all ex-prisoners that need mentoring receive it. An estimated 71,000 low and medium risk people leave prison every year and will receive rehabilitation services from the CRCs. A number of these will be the same people leaving prison multiple times in one year; therefore the caseload of individuals that CRCs will need to manage each year will be smaller. The Ministry of Justice estimate that CRCs will be managing a caseload of around 53,000 ex-prisoners.²² Whilst this is the best estimate of the number that will need mentoring, there are two factors that will mean the number may be lower: some may not need any mentoring because the role is being fulfilled aptly by friends or family; others may refuse to engage with the support. This will be offset to some extent if mentoring starts in prison, rather than at the prison gate.

¹⁹ In evidence to the Centre for Social Justice, 4/11/2013

²⁰ In evidence to the Centre for Social Justice, 18/10/2013

²¹ Speech by the Secretary of State for Justice and Lord Chancellor at the Centre for Social Justice, November 2012

²² Ministry of Justice, *Transforming Rehabilitation: A Strategy for Reform*, May 2013, p. 47

What is clear though is that there is currently a significant gap between the 3,000 mentors now available and the number of mentors that are needed. It would be unrealistic to try and fill this gap too quickly. The whole TR strategy, including mentoring, will take time to bed down and work effectively. Mentors also take time to recruit and train.

Our recommendation is that each CRC should recruit and train new mentors each year for the next five years. Following interviews with a number mentoring organisations and potential providers, we believe it would be realistic for CRCs to recruit 15,000 new mentors by 2020. The recruitment levels would, of course, be higher in the heavily populated areas such as London, Birmingham, Manchester, and Liverpool and lower in rural areas such as Cumbria and Devon and Cornwall. If CRCs follow the guidelines set out in our national prototype mentoring model (see Recommendation 11) this recruitment drive would ensure we have enough people to meet the mentoring need.

It would clearly be a substantial achievement to increase the present total of 3,000 mentors by five-fold to 15,000 mentors over the next five years.

1.5 Set up a new HM Inspectorate of Rehabilitation

Mentoring in the new TR environment will need quality control. Much of this will be supplied by the management of each of the 21 CRCs. The main providers will have primary responsibility for ensuring that the mentoring organisations in their areas deliver a good quality programme of reliable and meaningful mentoring.

Uniformity in mentoring across the country is unnecessary because such an approach would stifle the flexibility, originality and unorthodoxy which can be the hallmark of successful community based mentoring. However, there do need to be certain common standards and clear signposts to best practice which should act as guidelines in all CRC areas.

To establish, promote and monitor these mentoring guidelines we recommend the setting up of a new HM Inspectorate of Rehabilitation that covers all aspects of rehabilitative support for offenders. One of its most important functions would be to carry out inspections of mentoring organisations in CRC areas; to publish reports; and to make policy recommendations on mentoring to the Secretary of State. An additional function of this new Inspectorate would be to assist in the measurement of mentoring results in CRC areas, which we explore in Recommendation Six.

The work of the proposed HM Inspectorate of Rehabilitation would be in keeping with the established traditions of the criminal justice system which has long accepted the usefulness of the work done by HM Inspectorate of Prisons and HM Inspectorate of Probation.

It has been suggested that the existing HM Inspectorate of Probation could be asked to take on the functions of inspecting the work of all offender rehabilitation services including mentoring in the CRC areas. This is a bad idea for three reasons. First, the HM Inspector of Probation and his staff will already have their hands full with their statutory duty of inspecting

the on-going probation service. This work load will also be increasing with offenders on short sentences receiving support for the first time under TR. Second, it cannot be said too often that probation and mentoring are two quite different roles. Probation is a compulsory supervision and enforcement service with the power to recall offenders to prison. Mentoring is a voluntary befriending and relationship building partnership which seeks to encourage and help its clients to rebuild their lives. In the eyes of most offenders probation is the stick, mentoring is the carrot. If one Inspectorate is in charge of both functions, the distinction between them will become blurred to the likely detriment of mentoring.

Third, mentoring is a new initiative that will grow quickly. The present cottage industry of small mentoring organisations doing their own thing with around 3,000 mentors is going to be replaced with a nationwide drive to recruit at least 15,000 mentors in 21 areas. Quality control of this expanded mentoring activity is essential. A new HM Inspectorate of Rehabilitation will play a vital role in helping CRCs to ensure best practice and good quality in mentoring.

1.6 Measure the results of mentoring

No serious effort has ever been made to measure the results of mentoring in England and Wales. There is some evidence that mentoring can be effective at reducing reoffending, especially when the relationship begins in prisons, carries on longer than just one or two sessions and when it is delivered alongside other interventions.²³ Yet not nearly enough has been done to understand the effect different mentoring schemes can have. The Ministry of Justice believe that *'because mentoring can take so many forms, it is hard to aggregate the evidence and there are insufficient studies to inform us about what forms of mentoring are most effective.'*²⁴ This must change.

Although there is a lot more to mentoring than statistical outcomes nevertheless there has been a shared failure in addressing this problem by both the Government and the criminal justice charities who do mentoring work. However, the Government has now made some good moves to tackle this problem.

In December 2012 the charity New Philanthropy Capital (NPC) published a valuable report: *Unlocking offending data: how access to offending data could help charities improve outcomes for offenders.*²⁵ This report surveyed 236 criminal justice charities and was sympathetic to their complaints about their difficulties in accessing offending data. As a result of the NPC report, the Ministry of Justice created the Justice Data Lab (JDL) to provide a national system for accessing offending data. Mentoring organisations can now

23 For example see Maguire et al, *Evaluation of the Transitional Support Scheme (TSS): Final report to the Welsh Assembly Government*, Cardiff: Welsh Assembly Government, 2010; Jolliffe, D and Farrington, D, *A Rapid Evidence Assessment of the Impact of Mentoring on Re-offending: A summary*, London: Home Office, 2007; and *Transforming Rehabilitation: a summary of evidence on reducing reoffending*, Ministry of Justice, 2013

24 *Transforming Rehabilitation: a summary of evidence on reducing reoffending*, Ministry of Justice, 2013, p. 27

25 Rickey, B. Pritchard, D., *Unlocking Offender Data: How access to offending data could help charities improve outcomes for offenders*, London: New Philanthropy Capital, December 2012

supply details of those they have mentored to the JDL and analysts will then access the reoffending rate of that group.

In our research for this report we interviewed the JDL's specialists and thought their work was admirable. However, this is not a widely shared opinion among the small number of charitable organisations in this field. There was a concern that the JDL *'doesn't understand what we are doing'* that it *'makes utterly unreasonable demands'* and *'can't understand that we do rehabilitation well'*.²⁶

Although the JDL is still a work in progress and may well need to improve its evaluation methods, nevertheless we believe that it is a valuable tool that helps mentoring organisations understand more about their effectiveness. There are no good reasons why a charity committed to the goal of reducing reoffending should refuse to cooperate with the authoritative government source, the JDL, in measuring the extent to which a particular mentoring scheme has succeeded in reducing the reoffending of its clients.

Inevitably there will be statistical arguments on such matters as comparing control groups, size of samples and points of detail on methodology. But these arguments are no excuse for mentoring organisations to refuse to engage with the JDL. So we recommend that any mentoring organisation which seeks to receive public money from its CRC parent or partner under the TR strategy, should be required to file an annual return to the JDL as well as to its CRC summarising the organisation's mentoring results.

It is accepted that not all results of mentoring can be statistically measured in terms of a simple yes or no answer to the question 'Has this individual reoffended?'. For there are milestones and interim outcomes on the journey to preventing reoffending such as confidence, willingness to engage, and progress towards abstention from bad habits. These can be good mentoring results too, even if they are beyond the horizons of the JDL.

To accommodate the difficult to measure results of mentoring, we recommend that the new HM Inspectorate of Rehabilitation should issue annual mentoring certificates equivalent to a 'Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval.' The approval certificate, issued after an annual inspection, could give professional credibility to a mentoring organisation even if its statistical results were not yet conclusively positive.

Another form of evaluation is to invite an academic institution to access the results of mentoring. St. Giles Trust is now assessed by Frontier Economics; Catch22 is evaluated by Manchester University; and the SPS Throughcare Support Officer scheme at HMP Greenock is being monitored by Edinburgh University.

Whatever methodology is used, much more professional scrutiny is needed in the world of mentoring.

26 Mentoring charities in evidence to the Centre for Social Justice

I.7 Provide adequate funding for mentoring

When interviewing mentoring organisations for this report, only one of them could produce a coherent evidence-based answer to the question 'How much does your mentoring cost?'. This vagueness will have to change in the new TR environment.

We recommend that before preferred bidder status is awarded to selected main providers for the 21 Contract Package Areas, each bidder should be required to state what percentage of their budget will be devoted to mentoring. Mentoring is a process which does not come cheap. Leaving aside management and administration costs, the average cost for each voluntary mentor will be around £30 a week just to cover their travel expenses, subsistence costs, telephone calls and other out-of-pocket expenses. So by way of illustration, if a CRC decides that the offender population in its area needs the services of 100 voluntary mentors, they are likely to cost approximately £150,000 a year.

The mixture of mentors should include both volunteers and professionals. There should also be a small number of senior case workers and management supervisors. Our research suggests that professional mentors are likely to cost approximately £20,000 per year each while senior case workers and management supervision might cost around £25,000 per year in salary and expense costs. Clearly there will be considerable variables in costing a CRC's mentoring budget, depending on what models are used. One model that was suggested to us is that 70 per cent could be volunteers, 20 per cent full-time professionals and 10 per cent senior case workers and supervisors. On the basis of this illustrative model, a CRC who employed 100 such people would require a mentoring budget of around £750,000 a year.

In addition to public spending we recommend that these mentoring budgets in each area should be published so that the CRCs can be held accountable to the local community and the local authorities. This transparency will also enable NOMS, HM Treasury and Parliamentary Select Committees to scrutinise spending on mentoring.

In addition to public spending we believe that there will be significant spending on mentoring projects by charitable trusts, National Lottery grants and private philanthropy. This has already been happening on an encouraging scale. We hope that CRCs may seize the opportunity to arrange matching funding with charitable sources for imaginative mentoring projects. We suggest that the mentoring of particular groups such as ex-servicemen or women might be suitable for such matched funding agreements.

Whatever the methodology, there is no escape from the conclusion that mentoring cannot be done on the cheap. Yet the results could prove remarkably cost effective. The annual cost of re-offending by all recent ex-prisoners was estimated by the National Audit Office to cost the economy between £9.5 and £13 billion.²⁷ So if a sustained and well managed drive on mentoring reduced reoffending by 10 per cent (a target which most mentoring organisations think is achievable) then the savings to the taxpayer would be around £1 billion per year. There is a great financial as well as a human prize to be won by meaningful mentoring.

²⁷ National Audit Office, *Managing offenders on short custodial sentences*, February 2010

1.8 Match mentors to offenders

It is a special skill to find and match the right mentors to mentees. This is a human and professional judgment which will have to be made on an individual basis by case workers, supervisors and managers within each CRC. There are, however, certain disciplines which a CRC can put in place to increase the chances of good matches.

First each CRC needs to create a pool or database of good mentors from all age groups and backgrounds. We already know that the potential supply of mentors exceeds the likely demand for them. But we do not know how many of those who offer to become mentors will turn out to be good mentors.

The sifting of mentors is best done in the training sessions for those who volunteer. Training models vary a great deal. Some mentoring organisations train candidates for as little as two evenings, which in our view is inadequate.

The main standard in mentoring practice and training is set by the Mentoring and Befriending Foundation's (MBF) Approved Provider Standard.

Among the mentoring organisations which have an excellent record in this field are: PACT, whose Basic Care in the Community model requires five training sessions spread over five weeks; SOVA, which trains mentors using an Open College Network accredited training programme which has been tried and tested over many years to produce many excellent mentors; and St Giles Trust, which has the longest training programme taking place mainly in prison. It lasts six weeks, costs £3,500 per mentor and ends with a NVQ qualification. But St Giles Trust has the philosophy that *'we have no room for non-offenders as mentors'* whereas some other mentoring organisations are reluctant to engage ex-offenders at all.

Whatever their philosophy all mentoring organisations agree that training is important and that the training sessions enable unsuitable mentors to be weeded out.

We have formed no set-in-stone view on what makes a good mentor. The qualities that come to mind are commitment, reliability, resilience; good listening; practical problem solving; an ability to be non-judgemental yet capable of challenging wrong behaviour; an awareness of boundaries; a lifestyle free from drugs and crime; and a willingness to go the extra mile to help the offender change direction.

We know that some reformed ex-offenders can make excellent mentors. The zeal of the convert can be an inspirational force. But we think that a CRC should cast its net widely when building up its pool of mentors, drawing from a wide range of occupations, age groups, and backgrounds. There is no such thing as an identikit or stereotype mentor.

When it comes to casting the net widely for mentors, we believe that CRCs should be pro-active and not just rely on word of mouth or website recruitment. There are some potentially useful target groups which are rarely asked to provide mentors. These include

trainee lawyers, retired teachers, trades union branches, local community associations and worshipping groups such as temples, mosques or churches. All should be approached by CRCs and advertisements for mentors should be placed in a CRC area.

On the last group, it would appear that worshipping communities, despite professing a commitment to the underdogs of society, have been disappointingly reluctant to reach out to offenders as mentors. The leading church charity in mentoring is Caring for Ex-Offenders (CFEO) – see page 49 for more details. It has been in existence for over ten years, does excellent work, yet has so far persuaded less than one per cent of Britain's churches to support its mentoring efforts. Last year CFEO arranged for 84 newly released offenders to be mentored by members of church congregations across the country. This is a good effort by a single church charity but it reveals a feeble response by the churches in national terms

(there are over 50,000 churches in the UK).²⁸ If every church, mosque, or other centre of worship was to find just one member of its community willing to volunteer to its CRC area to be a mentor, this report's target of enrolling 15,000 mentors would be reached immediately.



Once they have recruited a broad base of potential mentors in their areas,

CRCs can then encourage their local partners to make the best possible matches with offenders coming out of prison. This is not a matter of exact science, it is a human process of personal engagement in which the needs and personalities of the offender are of paramount importance.

In broad terms there are two predominant groups of offenders in relation to mentoring needs. The first group consists of those who have had a significant attachment figure (such as a parent) in their lives. The second group have had no such attachment figure. The former are much easier to mentor. The latter will often resist being mentored and find it difficult to comprehend that anyone may want to help them. They often try to sabotage the mentoring relationship in order to prove their negative view of themselves.

This illustration highlights the importance of good matching and raises the question of whether mentoring should be a one-on-one relationship or whether it is best done as a team.

Our view is that the most difficult cases, perhaps the majority of cases, are best handled by more than one mentor. One-on-one mentoring has its place, but however well it works it will sooner or later need back up and support. So when it comes to the art of matching mentors and mentees, teamwork or partnership at the mentor's end has much to recommend it.

28 Brierley Consultancy, *UK Church Statistics 2005–2015*, Tonbridge: ADBC Publishers, 2011

1.9 Establish mentoring centres

There are no hard and fast rules about where mentoring should take place in the community. Most mentors meet their clients at home, in coffee bars, at a friend's house, in a youth club or at a location which work for both parties.

But there are weaknesses as well as strengths in variable meeting places. One weakness is the high percentage of 'no shows' at mentoring appointments, unconvincingly explained later by the 'sorry I couldn't find it' excuse. Regular fixed meeting places have the advantage of continuity and certainty. This has been the experience of several charities working in the area of mentoring.

Some mentoring organisations combine variable visiting arrangements with fixed activity and meeting centres. For example the Pecan Moving On project (see page 39 for more details) sends its mentors into the field for their sessions with their clients at the most convenient locations for each individual but brings the clients to a central room in Peckham for activities and communal discussions.

The iconic Kids Company, in the words of its founder Camila Batmanghelidjh, insists that 'you cannot offer mentoring without the support of a readily available centre open 24/7'. Kids Company now has six such centres in London and Bristol.

Another leading mentoring organisation Only Connect (OC) has pioneered a model which it calls Entourage. The first Entourage, based at Only Connect's Centre in White City (London W12), treats young offenders as 'stars' who are mentored by one lead mentor and three other supporters. This quartet, all volunteers, work out the best ways of encouraging the 'star', guiding him/her into sustainable work. The volunteers are backed up by two professional 'brokers', responsible for matching supporters to the 'stars', and ensuring the smooth running of their relationship. OC runs Entourage on £93,101 per year.

The founder of OC, Danny Kruger, who has been pioneering the mentoring of young offenders for over ten years, says:

'The traditional model of one-on-one support in a wide variety of places can be ineffective. Our Entourages are designed to encourage a community to take root in an easily accessible centre. We think that having this centre or a sanctuary is fundamental to the success of mentoring.'

We believe that CRCs should take heed of the ground breaking work of Kids Company, Only Connect and other charities which run mentoring centres. It makes sense for there to be a safe space in which mentors and their clients can meet, talk, and share confidences. If this space has the atmosphere of an informal club with non-judgemental members all seeking the common goal of a better life, the mentoring process in a particular area will gather momentum.

The cost of setting up mentoring centres in each CRC area need not be expensive. Rooms in existing community centres can be cheaply rented and equipped with minimal furnishings and equipment such as coffee making and Wi-Fi facilities. Besides acting as a friendly meeting place and information exchange, mentoring centres could take on various self-help functions such as learning how to write a CV, practising job interview techniques and understanding the benefit system.

We therefore recommend that every CRC should consider establishing at least one or two mentoring centres in its contract area to act as a user-friendly meeting place for mentors, mentees and those trying to help them.

1.10 Professionally mentor women offenders

The mentoring needs of women offenders are markedly different from those of their male counterparts.²⁹ This is recognised by most practitioners in this field. The mentoring organisations we spoke to further argued that because of the complexity of their problems, women offenders are best cared for by mentors who work with their clients as a professional rather than voluntary assignment.

Because the number of women in England and Wales leaving prison each year is relatively small (7,000) it would be possible to have all of them who want to be mentored assigned to professional mentors without exorbitant cost to public or charitable funds.³⁰

In the course of our research we were impressed by a small number of outstanding coaching and mentoring organisations run by professional teams. One was Coaching Inside and Out which operates in and around HMP Styal and another was Spark Inside which uses a Canadian life-coaching model to support at-risk youth.

The most impressive women's mentoring organisation we identified was Pecan Moving On which mentors women referred by several London prisons. Its model is described on page 39. Over the last 18 months Pecan Moving On has worked with 85 female offenders and just 10 out of 62 released from prison have gone on to reoffend.

For those with a close interest in this subject we also suggest studying *The Corston Report* (2007), a report by Baroness Corston reviewing women with particular vulnerabilities in the criminal justice system; and the Shine Project for women offenders run by the Scottish Prison Service.³¹

On the funding of mentoring schemes for women offenders, we believe that grants from charities and the National Lottery might, on the basis of past generosity, be a useful source to

29 Ministry of Justice, *Statistics on Women and the Criminal Justice System 2011: A Ministry of Justice publication under Section 95 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991*, November 2012.

30 Ministry of Justice, *Offender management statistics quarterly – July–September 2013*, Table 3.1, January 2014

31 See *The Corston Report: A report by Baroness Jean Corston of a review of women with particular vulnerabilities in the criminal justice system*, Home Office, March 2007 and www.shinementoring.org

be tapped. CRCs should consider this an area of activity where mentoring funding proposals could meet with success.

We recommend that the NOMS officials in charge of the bidding process for CPAs should require from main providers a submission on what provision they will be making for the mentoring of women offenders.

1.11 Develop a national mentoring model

There are many models for the mentoring of offenders. The key issues revolve around questions such as: professional or volunteer mentors? One-on-one or team mentoring? How long should the mentoring period last? Where and how should mentoring take place? How frequent should mentoring meetings take place? These are matters which should be decided by the management of the 21 CRCs in partnership with their local mentoring organisations.

The best rehabilitation and the best mentoring are local. This obvious principle has now been strengthened in practice by what we understand to be one of the new ground rules of TR. Prisoners will now spend the last part of their sentences in Resettlement Prisons close to their home neighbourhood. They will be released into, and not allowed to move quickly away from, that same neighbourhood or CRC area. This will make the continuity of mentoring far easier than it was under the old regime of offenders being released from prisons hundreds of miles from their home neighbourhoods and them having no restrictions on their movement to other parts of the country.

Localism is important in mentoring and will play a big part in deciding the right model for a CRC area. Yet there is no reason why there should not be a recommended national prototype model for mentoring which CRCs are able to adjust or change in accordance with local requirements. After listening to the views of many mentoring organisations, and mentors and mentees themselves we think that a national prototype model should look something like this:

- a. The mentoring team in a CRC area should be made up of 70 per cent voluntary mentors, 20 per cent professional mentors and 10 per cent senior case workers, supervisors and managers;
- b. Team mentoring is usually more effective than one-on-one mentoring. We support a model which would give each offender a lead mentor and two supporting mentors with a caseworker keeping an overview on the progress of the team's relationship with the offenders;
- c. We believe that the ideal mentoring period is six to 12 months. For the first 30 days after the offender's release the mentoring process is hands on and highly intensive, including accompanying the offender to meetings with Jobcentre Plus, the local housing agency and the NHS. For the last few months of the mentoring period the activity can, in many cases,

move to a slower pace, but all offenders have their own and different mentoring needs in which personal and local factors are crucial;

- d. Mentoring can take place in many locations. The relationship should begin in prison and then be prepared to move to wherever the offender feels comfortable such as: their home; a local coffee shop; or a community centre. We are also convinced of the need for each CRC to establish one or two mentoring centres which would provide a neutral and friendly space for mentors and mentees to meet;
- e. On mentoring frequency we believe that a mentor (or member of the mentoring team) should meet once a week with the offender, perhaps twice a week in the immediate post-release period. In addition there should be other forms of contact each week by text messages, phone calls and emails. Mentors should also encourage their clients to participate in group activities such as CV writing classes or job interview practice sessions. Mentors must be more than just a 'listening ear'. They should help their clients in tangible ways with their practical and emotional difficulties. They should build up the self worth, confidence and achievements of their clients.

These suggestions of a prototype model for mentoring are based on what we have identified as 'best practice'. But we accept that CRCs may, with their VSO partners, be able to find as good, if not better, models to suit the local needs of offenders in their area.

1.12 Tackle the obstacles to meaningful mentoring

As should already be clear from this study, mentoring has never before been given any serious attention, let alone priority, in the rehabilitation of offenders. But as Bob Dylan put it 'the times they are a-changin''. Thanks to the Government's TR strategy, a completely new environment is being created in the post-release treatment of offenders. Mentoring will have a prominent role in this environment. A new cast of professional managers partnered by community groups and criminal justice charities will be tasked with delivering mentoring programmes that reduce reoffending. Will this strategy succeed? It will not unless the government, the CRCs and the mentoring organisations begin their task by making a determined effort to clear away the past obstacles to meaningful mentoring.

They include:

- Lack of clarity and definition;
- Lack of management;
- Lack of accountability;
- Inadequate methods of measurement;
- Over reliance on the prison and probation services;
- Lack of resources.

As these items have been extensively commented upon in other parts of this study there is little need for further repetition. But perhaps the resources issue should again be tackled head on.

At present £4 billion of taxpayers' money is spent by NOMS to 'commission and provide offender management services in the community and in custody.'³² Virtually none of this money has been spent on mentoring. Under the Government's spending plans for TR an annual £450 million package of rehabilitation contracts will be distributed to the 21 CRCs.³³ They will have to decide how to spend their budgets.

We recommend that no bidder for a CRC area should be awarded a contract unless they produce, as part of their bid, a carefully costed plan for mentoring services. This requirement alone will establish mentoring as a new and serious force supporting the TR strategy to reduce reoffending.

Finally it should be noted that well organised mentoring will bring in other resources that support the TR strategy. If mentors do their job well they will unlock, far more effectively and speedily than at present, offenders' access to housing benefit, job seeker's allowance and a whole range of local and national funding options.

So one way or another, the resources for the prevention of reoffending through mentoring are quite generous even though the process of mentoring itself is not cheap. What is most needed to make the mentoring element of TR meaningful is political leadership and a change of culture.

In one sense the political leadership has already been shown because the launching and the legislative backing for the TR strategy has been a substantial achievement. But attention to detail from the top will be vital in the coming months. If the obstacles to it are swept away, meaningful mentoring can become a serious and successful force for each CRC in the battle to reduce reoffending.

³² National Offender Management Service, *Annual Report and Accounts 2011–2012*, London: The Stationery Office, p. 25

³³ Ministry of Justice, *Press Release: Search begins to find best organisations to tackle high reoffending rates*, September 2013

chapter two

Unusual examples for mentoring

In this section we outline six examples of mentoring we came across whilst conducting this study. We hope their example inspires CRCs in their development of mentoring programmes. They are:

- Throughcare Support Officers at HMP Greenock
- Mentoring Women Offenders – Moving On Model
- Mentoring drug dependent and alcoholic offenders
- Private mentoring
- Spiritual mentoring
- Mentoring in work

We outline each of them below.

2.1 Throughcare Support Officers at HMP Greenock

A revolutionary and apparently successful initiative in the world of offender mentoring has got off to a good start in HMP Greenock at Inverclyde near Glasgow. It was the brainchild of the then prison governor Jim Kerr, a 30 year veteran of the Scottish Prison Service, who has since been promoted to become governor of HMP Shotts. Governor Kerr's idea, so simple yet so original in the myopic culture of prison officialdom, was that the most effective mentors to offenders – on both sides of the walls – were prison officers.

The background to the Greenock initiative is interesting. Those who have spent time in any capacity within a prison soon notice a curious fact of life. It is that a significant number of offenders build good human relationships with individual officers. The caricature image of 'the cons' hating 'the screws' or vice versa does have validity in occasional cases. But the overwhelming majority of sensible inmates and decent officers know that a prison community only works when there is continuous dialogue of cooperation between the two sides. Often

this dialogue ripens into understanding relationships, built slowly over months and years of close proximity.

Perceptive officers get to know offenders with realistic insights into their strengths and weaknesses blended with a surprising personal rapport in which humour and humanity can be key ingredients.

Governor Jim Kerr, aware that HMP Greenock like so many similar institutions worked well as a community because of the levels of rapport between officers and inmates, called this reality of prison life 'Relationship Capital'. It is an ungainly phrase but it more or less fits as a description for the degree of trust and understanding that grows on a prison wing between individuals in authority and individuals serving their sentences.

At a time when the Scottish Prison Service was giving a new priority to post-custody rehabilitation schemes, Jim Kerr began asking these questions: *'Isn't it frustrating that we only use Relationship Capital (RC) to cope with life in prison? Why should RC end on the day an inmate is released? Surely we could find a way of using our officers and their RC to mentor our inmates before and after release?'*

This vision needed some careful selling. But within a matter of weeks Jim Kerr had won supporters in his new idea from officers and staff of HMP Greenock; from the leadership of the Scottish Prison Service; from the Scottish Prison Officers Association and other trades unions and from a variety of outside parties including the local authorities; the NHS; the Community Justice Authority; and the local community.

The starting point of the Greenock initiative was that two experienced prison officers were appointed to new roles as Throughcare Support Officers (TSOs). Their job was to spend approximately half their working week mentoring soon to be released inmates within prison and then to spend the other half of their working week mentoring recently released ex-offenders in the community. The two TSOs (soon augmented by a third) wore civilian clothes, had a caseload of between 15–20 clients and liaised closely with both statutory bodies and VSOs in the Inverclyde and Glasgow areas.

The TSOs were welcomed by their clients for a variety of reasons. First, the mentoring relationship started inside the prison using the existing RC between officers and inmates to build trust. Second, the TSOs were a source of practical mentoring help and advice in the key areas of concern to any released prisoners such as finding accommodation, accessing welfare benefits, seeking employment, and obtaining proper healthcare – the latter a vital necessity particularly vital for those with addiction problems.

Third, the clients seemed to find it easy to relate to the TSOs with whom they had already built a relationship in prison. So meeting them in the community for cups of coffee, introductions to employers, help with welfare paperwork and regular phone calls all worked reasonably well for both sides. There was no discernible resentment from the offenders that figures in authority (i.e. prison officers) should become their mentors.

HMP Greenock's TSO initiative was launched as a pilot scheme in Spring 2013. One year on, over 100 offenders have been supported for the first six weeks after their release by TSOs. Anecdotally the pilot is regarded as a considerable success. It has gained widespread acceptance among both prison staff and prison inmates. The various authorities, agencies and voluntary groups which partner the TSOs in the community all praise the mentoring work and model that has been pioneered and early signs suggest it reduces reoffending. The factual and statistical evidence emerging from the pilot is currently being evaluated by a team for Edinburgh University whose results will be published this summer.

The cost of the Greenock TSO initiative has not been prohibitive. The Scottish Prison Service funded it with a grant of £90,000 which was largely spent on the salary costs of the three TSOs.³⁴ Governor Jim Kerr believes that further extensions of the TSO scheme could be funded far less expensively, particularly by using relief officers for part of the work in the community. The administrative costs of the scheme have been minimal using existing office facilities.

The importance of the Greenock initiative is that it is the first occasion anywhere in the UK when the valuable resource of prison officer experience has been used to mentor offenders on both sides of the prison wall. The concept of TSOs working in civilian dress within the community to support inmates with whom they have built relationships during their sentences is a ground breaking change. It appears to be a success story. It deserves to be evaluated and imitated by CRCs in England and Wales.

2.2 Mentoring women offenders: Moving On Model

Moving On, a subsidiary of the Pecan Charity, mentors women offenders in London referred by HMP Holloway, HMP Bronzefield, HMP East Sutton Park and the London Probation Trust. Moving On employs eight professional mentors who in the past 18 months have supported 85 young women in the 18–25 age group. This is a notoriously difficult category of offender to engage with. The mentoring begins in prison. The women who volunteer for the scheme are supported practically and emotionally by their mentors before being released, through-the-gate and for a post-release period of at least one year.

Of the 85 women prisoners Moving On have mentored, 62 have been released from prison, of which 10 have since returned to prison (four for breach of licence and six for re-offending).

Moving On's success is based on a number of elements. They establish the mentor relationship while women are in custody, which enables the best prognosis for engagement after release. The initial post-release mentoring concentrates on responding to a woman's immediate

34 BBC News, *Through-Care Support Project HM Prison Greenock member's debate*, 15 January 2014 [accessed via: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/democracylive/scotland-25752361> (09/04/14)]

practical needs, such as housing, food, and accessing benefits. The mentors are trained to stay alongside the woman during the frustrating and uncertain period just after their release, even if this requires several visits to housing and benefit offices with them. Sorting out these urgent problems is crucial. The mentors then strive to see their clients for a face-to-face meeting once a week. Other forms of engagement such as phone calls and text messages are also used.

The professional mentors work three or four days a week and support around 10 women each. The mentors are on salaries of £23,000 a year for a five-day week or pro-rata. The total cost of the Moving On project is approximately £280,000 a year, which is funded for three years by the National Lottery.

The women mentored by Moving On are often prolific offenders with histories of mental health issues, drug and alcohol problems, domestic violence and homelessness. They are a challenging group. But the Moving On philosophy is to believe in people and to go the extra mile to help them. They offer an outreach service which means that mentors travel to their clients for meetings at their home or nearby – rather than the other way round.

The mentors are a dedicated group of committed professionals. They work in partnership with other organisations and statutory agencies such as probation, social services, the job centre and the local housing authorities. The Moving On mentors are relaxed about whether their task is regarded as 'befriending', 'coaching', 'mentoring', or any other similar label. But they are carrying out a professional role which is much more complex than simply being 'a listening ear'. They have to work successfully and unobtrusively in this prison system. They need to navigate the systems and demands of other agencies and organisations on behalf of their clients. They have to make professional judgements about risk and reporting. They need to be well trained and well managed.

The recruitment, training and management of the mentors are handled by the project manager, Andrea Farley-Moore. She has considerable experience in this field and her appointment has been pivotal to the success of the project. She knows all her mentors well and most of their clients. Moving On is a small, well run, highly personal, bespoke outreach mentoring service. If it were to expand Andrea Farley-Moore believes that the following criteria would need to be maintained to ensure success:

- The mentoring has to have the core value of personalised outreach to the women, where going the extra mile to help them is a given;
- The service benefits from a local centre where meetings and activities can be held;
- The service has to use resources from local statutory and voluntary organisations and to liaise closely with them;
- The mentoring work is bespoke and personal giving the clients a sense of self-worth, confidence, and individual achievement as they are slowly guided into independent lives.

The Moving On programme is one of the most impressive models we came across. It is intensive and relatively expensive but is an effective deliverer of the right outcomes for a particularly challenging group of women offenders. I recommend that the Moving On model is studied and replicated by all CRCs.

2.3 Mentoring drug dependent and alcoholic offenders

The mentoring of alcohol and drug dependent offenders is highly challenging. Two-thirds of women and 38 per cent of men in prison report committing offences in order 'to get money to buy drugs.'³⁵ Alcohol too is a big problem, and more than a fifth (22 per cent) of adult males arrive in prison with a drinking problem.³⁶

These drug addicts and alcoholics need special help from their mentors. One immediate priority is to ensure that these categories of offenders are met at the gate by their mentors and not by local drug dealers. The mentors must then guide their mentees to mutual aid groups, NHS treatment centres, and charities specialising in addiction.

One national charity acclaimed for its work in this field is the Rehabilitation for Addicted Prisoners Trust (RAPt). RAPt provide a variety of support including advice, counselling, group work and intensive treatment.

RAPt is used by over 20,000 offenders every year in and around 27 prisons.³⁷ The majority of RAPt's work takes place in facilitated peer groups steered by both professional and voluntary leaders. RAPt believes that its work is highly cost effective, claiming that for every 100 offenders who complete its 12-Step intensive programme an estimated £6.3 million is saved on re-sentencing/re-incarcerating.³⁸



The role of a mentor in helping addicted prisoners would be to work alongside these therapeutic programmes, helping the individual to recognise their addiction; motivating the mentees towards identifying the support available; aiding the clients in realising their ability to cope with their problem and providing overall support to those who undertake an addiction course and attempt to sustain their abstinence post-release back in the community.

Because of the huge impact on re-offending of drugs and alcohol, the training of all mentors must include guiding their addicted mentees to the most effective sources of help.

³⁵ Light, M. et al, *Gender differences in substance misuse and mental health amongst prisoners*, Ministry of Justice, 2013

³⁶ HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for England and Wales, *Annual Report 2010-11*, London: The Stationery Office, 2011, p. 44

³⁷ See www.rapt.org.uk/pageffb3.html?section=75§ionTitle=Who+we+help

³⁸ The Rehabilitation for Addicted Prisoners Trust, *Annual review 2013/14*, 2014

2.4 Private mentoring

Outside the formal structure of CRCs and mentoring organisations, private mentoring of offenders will often take place. It is a more informal relationship which can arise within families, at a workplace, or between a mentor and a mentee who decide that a private arrangement between them can create a mentoring relationship.

Since my release from prison in 2000, I have engaged in several such relationships, acting as a mentor to younger offenders.

My motivation for this activity was that I learned during my seven months in HMP Belmarsh, Stanford Hill, Elmley that there were a significant number of my fellow prisoners who were full of energy, drive and intelligence. They seemed capable of leading successful lives in law abiding society. But instead they had gone astray and committed crimes. Their criminal behaviour could not be excused but for some of them perhaps it might be explained in the following way.

Many of the younger criminals I met came from chaotic backgrounds in which virtually no-one such as a parent, teacher, relative, father figure, role model or other adviser had ever cared for them, loved them, taught them, encouraged them, showed them life's disciplines and obligations, or tried to guide them through youth's difficult patches. An astonishing proportion of the young men for whom I wrote letters and with whom I had long conversations with had disastrous gaps in their upbringings. Many had no idea who their father was. Or they had spent their childhood and adolescence in care. Or they had played truant so often from their schools that they could barely read and write. Or they had never been taught by any peer-figure what decent standards of behaviour were. So inevitably they went off the rails until they crashed into the buffers of the law and ended up in custody.

Prison makes young inmates think. Many of them want to get off the carousel of crime, reoffending, and more jail sentences. But who helps them to do this? I realised from my conversations in prison that this is where mentoring could come and make a difference.

Many offenders like the idea of having a mentor who would be a friendly source of advice, encouragement and practical assistance when they come out of jail. Few of them believe that probation fills this role. A mentor will be mistrusted if he or she is also the authority who can compel the recall of an offender to prison. But a mentor who is on the side of the offender can become well trusted.

Through connections, word of mouth approaches and coincidences I have entered into some fourteen mentoring relationships in the fourteen years since my release from prison. A few have ended in disappointment, most have resulted in progress, and over two-thirds have been successful in the sense that the mentees stopped reoffending.

One of the most fulfilling of these relationships was with Leroy Skeete (named with his consent) who I mentored between 2009 and 2011. It is perhaps worth describing how our relationship worked since it helped Leroy to settle down into a stable life free from crime.

Leroy and I first met in HMP Belmarsh in 1999 when we were both fellow prisoners in House Block Three. We got on well in that environment but I would not have been optimistic about his prospects for ceasing to reoffend. He came from a broken home, and was poorly educated. He was serving an 11-year sentence for Aggravated Bodily Harm and his general attitude was that of a serial offender. On the positive side he had a quick street-smart intelligence and an abundance of energy. In 2007 Leroy contacted me soon after his release from prison on licence. We agreed to start a mentoring relationship. The factors which, in my view made the relationship succeed was that we had met in prison; that we both understood the difficulties of starting life again as an ex-prisoner; and that Leroy was a quick learner, ambitious to succeed in law abiding society. He did not drink or use drugs.

We met about once a week. A lot of our early time together was spent listening to Leroy's problems. I taught him how to write a CV and we rehearsed job interviews. I found him some temporary work as a driver and as a wine waiter. These ad hoc jobs increased his confidence but he could not find a permanent job because of his criminal record. Then I introduced him to Blue Sky, a charity which specialises in providing employment to ex-offenders.

Leroy did well at Blue Sky, working hard at low-cost local authority contracts on landscaping and waste management. He was promoted to supervisor. After some 15 months with Blue Sky they helped him to contact a company employing night maintenance workers on the London Underground. Leroy had to save up to pay the costs of a four-week health and safety course in Portsmouth before he could apply for this work. He persevered and eventually succeeded in obtaining permanent employment doing shift work for five or six nights a week at £88 per shift.

After two years in this job Leroy met and married a Yorkshire girl. He now lives and works in Essex. He has not reoffended for six years.

Leroy was always a self-starter, a hard worker, and a quick learner. Our mentoring relationship worked because we built up a mutual rapport and because I could give him practical assistance in terms of acquiring skills and introductions to employers. There were bumps in the road in our relationship and I sometimes had to calm him down in episodes of tension, but perseverance won the day. I now believe that Leroy will never go back to crime and that he had a good future ahead of him.

2.5 Spiritual mentoring

A significant number of people who volunteer to work with offenders and ex-offenders say privately that they are motivated to do so because of their religious faith.

A NOMS paper, *Believing We Can* (2007), estimated that over 6,000 faith based volunteers contributed over 16,300 hours of work in prisons each month.³⁹ The number of such volunteers working outside prisons on rehabilitation and mentoring work is much larger;

³⁹ National Offender Management Service, *Believing We Can: Promoting the contribution faith-based organisations can make to reducing adult and youth re-offending*, November 2007, p. 12.

although very little effort has been made to count them or evaluate their contribution. Their tasks are secular but their commitment to them is often motivated simply by a spiritual feeling that they are serving God's will and teachings by reaching out to prisoners as mentors.

There are a handful of Christian and other faith charities doing good work in the mentoring field. The most prominent of these is Caring for Ex-Offenders (CFEO) – an off-shoot of Holy Trinity Brompton's William Wilberforce Trust – which has a network of around 620 churches willing to offer mentoring services to ex-offenders. Last year CFEO's support reached 439 individuals, although less than half of them were specifically mentored.

Other faith based charities who offer mentoring services include the St Vincent de Paul Society; the Muslim Youth Helpline; and Prison Fellowship. No reliable mentoring statistics are available from them.

With respect to the exceptions cited above, the general response to mentoring in Christian, Muslim and other faith communities has been disappointingly weak. This is surprising since the Bible and the Koran contain many exhortations to reach out to and care for prisoners.

Despite the apparent failure of the Christian churches, and other worshipping communities, to take mentoring seriously, there is great potential here for the future. There are more than 50,000 churches plus around 1,500 mosques in the UK.⁴⁰ If every one of them was to be approached by CRC in its area and successfully identified one potential mentor from the congregation, this report's target of recruiting 15,000 new mentors would be achieved swiftly. Of course, this will not happen easily. Nevertheless the opportunities for greater participation in mentoring by churches, mosques and other worshipping communities should be encouraged by each CRC.

2.6 Mentoring at work

Employment is a key factor in preventing reoffending. But even when an offender has found a job he or she may well need continuing advice on how to cope with the many problems that can face released prisoners in their first few months after coming out of jail. This is a specialist niche of mentoring which some organisations have developed with considerable success. Two such success stories are The Clink Restaurant and Blue Sky. The Clink Restaurant, founded by Lady Edwina Grosvenor, opened its first in-prison restaurant in 2009 at HMP High Down, followed by two further restaurants on the same model at HMP Cardiff and HMP Brixton. Under the day-to-day management of Chief Executive Chris Moore and Chef Albert Crisci, Clink Restaurants have now trained over 500 prisoners. Of the 106 that have been released, 100 have found jobs in the catering industry. To date only six of them have reoffended.⁴¹ This six per cent reoffending rate has been described by Chris Moore, as 'staggering'.

40 See Brierley Consultancy, *UK Church Statistics 2005–2015*, Tonbridge: ADBC Publishers, 2011 and www.mosques.muslimsinbritain.org/

41 The Clink, *The Story So Far*, [Accessed via: <http://thelinkrestaurant.com/the-charity/our-work/> (09/04/2014)]

The Clink Restaurant has built its success on a five-step model which it describes as *Recruit, Train, Audit, Employ and Mentor*.

All recruiting is done in prison. Inmates selected to work in their prison's Clink Restaurant have between six to 18 months of their sentences left to serve. They are trained in the restaurant to the point where they gain their City and Guilds NVQ qualifications in food service, food preparation, cooking and kitchen hygiene. They are audited during the training process and their training programme is adjusted if they need additional support.

Besides gaining the NVQ academic qualifications, the inmates also learn to work as part of a team under pressure, gaining confidence, motivation and pride.

Once an inmate has gained his NVQ qualifications, prior to his release the Clink management team finds him employment. The Clink graduates often find jobs through the management team's network of over 200 suitable employers including restaurant chains, hotel groups and contract caterers. This industry has a skill shortage problem which the Clink Restaurant's output of well trained graduates helps to answer.

The Clink Restaurant also provides a mentoring service for its graduates. The mentor comes to the prison and meets the inmates weekly in the last 12 weeks of their sentences. In these sessions the prisoners are taught how to write a CV and put in contact with potential employers.

On the day of release the mentor meets the prisoner at the gate and takes them to their accommodation or work place. Then for the next six to 12 months they will meet the ex-offender with the employer weekly in the work place to ensure that they are integrating into society and do not reoffend.

Given this track record it is no surprise that the Clink Restaurant is regarded as a showpiece organisation in the drive to establish new rehabilitation initiatives and to reduce reoffending. The Clink Restaurant's future plans include setting up seven more prison restaurants by 2017 and to turn out 500 trained graduates a year into an industry which continues to have a major skills shortage.

Another successful charity in the field of providing jobs and training for offenders is Blue Sky. Since it was founded in late 2005 by former investment banker Mick May, Blue Sky has employed 800 released prisoners whose repeat offending rate is 15 per cent.⁴²

The charity employs only ex-prisoners who they identify and select through the network of 'Distinguished Old Lags' who run Blue Sky's day-to-day operations. The work force (usually about 50 to 70 offenders at any one time) are employed on low cost supply-chain contracts placed with Blue Sky by local authorities, their contractors and an increasing number of private sector companies, including some in the City of London.

42 Blue Sky, *What makes Blue Sky Special?*, [Accessed via: <http://www.blueskydevelopment.co.uk/facts-and-figures/> (09/04/2014)]

Typically a Blue Sky employee gets a job with the charity soon after coming out of prison. The normal duration of employment is for six months (although extensions are quite frequent). The work is on projects such as landscaping, painting, grave-digging, site clearance and waste management with recent expansion into catering, logistics and laundry. The rates of pay may reflect the low skilled content but they are real five day a week jobs which get ex-prisoners into the habit and discipline of work.

In formal terms there is no system of mentoring, but as Blue Sky's former resettlement officer Frank Hough (an ex-armed robber) told us, *'We mentor our guys eight hours a day five days a week. Call it on-the-job mentoring but we give our employees a non-stop earful of advice on how to face up to life in the real world without going back to crime.'*⁴³

Blue Sky wins contracts in outer London and the Home Counties with some smaller activity in Manchester. Its style on the ground is that of rough diamonds leading rough customers (peer mentoring in more rarefied circles!) but Blue Sky delivers.

As one of the charity's four patrons (the others are the Speaker of the House of Commons, the Rt Hon John Bercow MP, Fiona Mactaggart MP and former lifer Erwin James), I have seen first-hand the boost to morale, self-worth, and personal responsibility that a Blue Sky job can inject into the life of a recently released prisoner whose risks of becoming a re-offender would otherwise have been extremely high.

Even though Blue Sky does not fit into a classical pattern of mentoring, it is a success story. The charity's 15 per cent reoffending rate sends out a clear message about how well the personal chemistry can work between ex-offenders who have learned how to go straight and ex-offenders who would like to go straight.

⁴³ In evidence to the Centre for Social Justice, 20/03/14

Conclusion

Mentoring stands at a crossroads of opportunity. It is paradoxically the most hopeful and the most neglected weapon in the arsenal of rehabilitation.

The neglect is history. It is uncomfortable to have to remember that rehabilitation has only recently started to edge up the agenda of criminal justice policy (although it was a high priority in Victorian times), and that mentoring has been an unfunded and almost invisible item within rehabilitation.

Two pessimistic mantras have far too long clouded the landscape of mentoring. The first was 'leave it to the Probation Service'. The second was 'there's no such thing as a magic bullet'.

The Probation Service has many virtues and many fine officers. But mentoring has not been their priority for at least two decades. Indeed you have to go back half a century to find a time when probation officers routinely empowered volunteers to make regular visits to offenders and their families. In those days 'mentoring' was not in the vocabulary of criminal justice, but 'befriending' and 'caring' were words which had a resonance that meant something human to offenders. Probation volunteers were an important part of that humanity. But, alas they were pushed aside by jobsworths whose bureaucratic expansionism made them determined to suppress the work done with offenders by anyone not on the official payroll.

Despite hostility from 'the system', charities and volunteers crept back into the thin front line of rehabilitation. In the final years of 20th century, when probation officers were being dragooned by Whitehall away from befriending and towards box ticking, a door began opening to voluntarism. One politician who understood this was the former Prisons and Probation Minister, Sir Peter Lloyd. He realised that the first stirrings of the moves towards mentoring were coming from offenders. As he put it:

*'Prisoners respond most readily to unpaid volunteers who they can see are giving their time because they really want to help their prisoners individually to find themselves and sort out their lives, not because they are agents of the State to fight recidivism in general.'*⁴⁴

After leaving government, Sir Peter Lloyd implemented the philosophy of mentoring summarised in the above quote as chairman of the New Bridge Foundation (NBF) – the UK's

44 In evidence to the Centre for Social Justice, 25/03/14

oldest mentoring charity. Founded by the late Lord Longford in 1956, NBF has a long track record of organising voluntary mentors for prisoners. As early as 2001 NBF received funding from the Youth Justice Board to run mentoring projects for young offenders and in 2007 it won a three-year grant from the National Lottery for its London Through the Gate (LTTG) scheme to deliver resettlement services for some 360 short-term prisoners released from HMPs Brixton, Holloway, Wormwood Scrubs, Pentonville and Wandsworth.

Although LTTG was evaluated by ARCS (UK) Limited and judged to have been successful, the statistical outcomes were characteristically confusing, not least because they relied on erratic 'self-reporting data' from clients disinclined to report on themselves even when their progress was good. So the system pigeon-holed this and several other examples of impressive mentoring by charities, often deploying the cliché used to justify so much inadequate action on rehabilitation. 'There's no such thing as a magic bullet.'

Leaving aside the fact that the imagery of firing bullets is inconsistent with the gentle spirit of mentoring, it is undoubtedly true that there is no single route to rehabilitation. Mentoring in particular is a bespoke and highly personalised process. It needs the consensual engagement of the offender just as much as the thoughtful support, advice, and care of the mentor. We know it works in many individual cases. But will it work when rolled-out nationally in 21 CRC areas?

Never before has there been any political will to encourage mentoring as an operational arm of criminal justice policy. Transforming Rehabilitation changes that historic negativity. From 2015 onwards all CRCs will have to demonstrate a positive willingness to provide mentoring services to their areas. This is an exciting opportunity.

Whether the opportunity flourishes or falters depends on many of the key ingredients described in this report. But the most vital ingredient of all is people.

We take great hope from the fact that so many people – in fact a surplus number of people – are potentially willing to volunteer to be mentors or to become professional mentors. We believe that a sizeable number of people coming out of prison actually want to go straight and will appreciate the help that mentors can give them. We think that the main providers of CRCs will be infinitely more capable and more motivated managers of mentoring than 'the system' has ever been. And we think the Transforming Rehabilitation agenda, led by any positive government, will change the landscape, the culture, and the practice of how our society responds to released prisoners with the objective of changing their lives.

The present reoffending statistics can hardly get any worse. For instance, 58 per cent of those serving sentences of less than 12 months go on to reoffend within a year of release.⁴⁵ If mentoring is allowed to play a meaningful part in the implementation of the TR strategy these depressing reoffending figures might become encouragingly better with great human benefits to the individuals concerned and to society as a whole.

⁴⁵ Ministry of Justice Press Release, *12 months supervision for all prisoners on release*, May 2013 [accessed via www.gov.uk/government/news/12-months-supervision-for-all-prisoners-on-release (12/04/14)]

Appendix

This is an appendix of some of the leading mentoring organisations we interviewed during the course of our research. We hope that this will help everyone from CRCs to those hoping to volunteer as mentors to better understanding the options open to them across England and Wales.

Caring for Ex-offenders

www.caringforexoffenders.org

Caring for Ex-offenders (CFEO) works to reduce reoffending by reintegrating ex-offenders into society through local churches. They train a CFEO team in a church near to where an ex-offender is relocating, in order to mentor and support them. The CFEO mentor establishes a relationship with the individual while they are still in prison; visiting them if possible, meeting them at the gate on release and helping them attend initial appointments and obtain basic needs.

The CFEO team signposts ex-offenders to resources to help them resettle into the community. Local churches also offer a variety of resources, and willing congregation members are available to assist and direct ex-offenders through these areas, including writing CVs, filling in forms and going to interviews.

Through these opportunities and steps, each CFEO team is able to offer friendship and help individuals recently released from prison achieve their goals for resettlement, be less likely to offend, and more likely to live a stable, crime-free life.

Catch 22

www.catch-22.org.uk

Catch22 is a social business with more than 200 years experience in providing public services that help people in tough situations to turn their lives around. The social business employs 1,000 staff and works with 800 volunteers, helping 96,000 young people, families and offenders a year out of tough situations. In alliance with Serco and Turning Point, Catch22 are delivering rehabilitation services in custody and community. They provide support from entry into prison right through to transition to community life.

Catch22 has won contracts for a number of London mentoring services that have the common aim of securing compliance with community sentences and reducing reoffending through practical and emotional support that aids community re-integration.

Catch22's Mentoring Service Hounslow project provides mentoring and support to men and women aged 18 years-old and over who are engaged with the probation service on community sentences or who are being transferred from Youth Offending Teams into Probation. Volunteer mentors are recruited from the local areas of Hounslow and support offenders to move forward in life by encouraging service users to set their own action plan specific to their personal needs and goals.

The male and female mentoring services support offenders by mentoring them at least once a week for up to six months or longer, depending on their individual needs. Offenders eligible for the service have at least three months left on their order/licence, have been assessed as likely to benefit from additional practical and emotional support, and will be serving in the Catch22 boroughs.

Paid and volunteer peer mentors, including ex-offenders, are recruited to work with the service user on an individual basis to support specific needs. A mentoring action plan will be established in conjunction with the service user's personal needs and goals. Mentors accompany their mentee to appointments and meetings and help them to look towards a positive future, while encouraging them to complete their Probation requirement. All service users are also supported by their Offender Manager throughout.

Changing Tunes

www.changingtunes.org.uk

Changing Tunes is a registered charity that uses music to aid the rehabilitation of prisoners and ex-prisoners. They have been working for over 25 years creating an environment for prisoners in which they can improve self-esteem, build healthy relationships and engage in an activity where hard work and perseverance brings rewards. Each week Changing Tunes lead music sessions in prisons, enabling prisoners to learn, practice and perform music that inspires them. They see on average four or five prisoners at a time, often working towards performances or recordings. Pieces are performed in the prison and recordings are sent to family members. The best work is selected for entry into the Koestler awards – a national prison arts competition.

Each music session is facilitated by a thoroughly trained Musician in Residence who usually works in the prison chapel and is linked with the Chaplaincy team and/or Education, given the pastoral and educational elements of the Changing Tunes work. Following release, Changing Tunes continues their work with those who want to, through concerts in the community, music sessions and pastoral support. In the last four years they have held over 1,100 post-release sessions with ex-prisoners, and 29 concerts/events. It is this 'through-the-gate' work, engaging both pre- and post-release, that Changing Tunes believes is the key element to creating lasting behavioural change.

Nacro

www.nacro.org.uk

Nacro, the crime reduction charity, is dedicated to reducing crime and reoffending, working with thousands of people in over 200 communities across England and Wales. Nacro designs and delivers programmes that equip people with the skills, advice, attitude and support they need to move their lives on and move away from crime. Its services include housing; education and training; substance misuse; employment support; and a national helpline to support offenders' resettlement.

Nacro uses mentoring alongside other services and interventions within its programmes. Their local mentoring projects include the SEEN Project; Mentoring and Support Group; and the Lincolnshire Substance Misuse Independent Governance Service.

All mentors at Nacro are volunteers. Mentors undergo a training package which depends upon the service to which the mentoring project is attached; for instance, the Lincolnshire Service requires mentors to train for ten weeks. Nacro's mentoring projects work with adults and young people in prison and in the community. Nacro provides individuals with mentors who encourage them to build positive relationships, explore new opportunities, and address their needs as a basis to improve rehabilitation and resettlement outcomes. Mentors provide support and guidance on a range of issues, often depending on the type of mentoring project. The Mentoring and Support Group helps young people who have become disengaged with school to reengage with education or training and to stay there; and the SEEN Project offers disadvantaged young people the chance to volunteer as peer mentors to develop employability skills.

Nehemiah Project

www.tnp.org.uk

The Nehemiah Project has been helping male ex-offenders to rebuild their lives for over 20 years. The majority of those they work with have a long history of crime and addiction which has severely affected them, their families and the wider community. They see the transfer from custody to community as a critical time when positive changes can either be cemented or lost. In Nehemiah's supported houses, residents are provided with practical and emotional support to give them a greatly increased chance of staying free from drugs and crime.

Men initially complete a new 12-week programme, 'A New Future', which focuses on recovery and resettlement through process groups and educational sessions. The participating cohort is encouraged to work through issues together, share experiences, challenge one another and resolve conflict. This helps build resilience and increase their ability to cope with the day-to-day social, emotional and practical pressures.

Once ex-offenders have completed the programme and reached the necessary level of independence, they move to 'Move-On' houses in Clapham where they can stay for up to a year. This gives them the opportunity to develop sufficient independence to integrate safely back into the community.

New Bridge Foundation

www.newbridgefoundation.org.uk

New Bridge Foundation works with individual offenders responding to their own needs, talents and potential. Through befriending and mentoring they help them to realise their full potential as members of society.

Founded in 1956 to create links between the offender and the community, New Bridge Foundation offer a wide range of services to help prisoners keep in touch with the outside world and prepare themselves to re-join it. Through their Befriending and Mentoring Service New Bridge Foundation work with longer-term prisoners and those returning to the community, especially those no longer in contact with family and friends.

These projects are delivered by a national network of dedicated volunteers. The volunteers know their prisoners as individuals with their own personality, problems and potential.

New Bridge Foundation believe that the only way to work effectively with those that are marginalised and have experienced a lifetime of exclusion is to stay with them for as long as it takes. There are no artificial cut-off points in their work; some prisoners and ex-offenders need a week to get their lives sorted; some may take years. New Bridge Foundation support them for as long as they need it.

New Bridge Foundation started a through-the-gate project in London in 2008 designed specifically to help short-term prisoners with the transition back to life in the community. New Bridge Foundation aims to motivate the offenders to make the most of any opportunities they can – both in prison and following their release. They are encouraged and supported in accessing education, finding accommodation, making contact with health services and addressing their substance/alcohol misuse.

New Bridge Foundation feel that by having a befriending circle rather than one-to-one support, enables volunteers to work more effectively. The circle of friends is a group of people who meet together to help the offender reach their full potential. Ideally two to three volunteers work with each prisoner and the circle acts as a community around the individual.

Contact between volunteer and client ranges from meeting at the gate, a brief telephone call, a shopping trip, accompanying them to an interview, coffee or lunch. Levels of contact decrease over time as the offender becomes stronger and more independent. The aim is for the circle to empower the individual involved and not reinforce dependency. Volunteers meet six-weekly to feedback on their prisoner. These meetings provide a forum for the sharing of information which is helpful to all volunteers.

ONE Service

www.onesib.org

Social Finance launched a £5 million Social Impact Bond in September 2010 to finance the One Service intervention that is focused on reducing the re-offending of 3,000 short

sentence male prisoners leaving Peterborough prison. The intervention model is based on pre- and post-release mentoring and holistic support, provided by a range of organisations.

The One Service partners include: Social Finance, Ormiston Children and Families Trust, Sova, St. Giles Trust, Mind, HMP Peterborough, John Laing Training, YMCA, Aspire Drug Services, Safer Peterborough Partnership, local statutory partners and other voluntary sector organisations in the community.

The One Service has a pledge to prisoners: the ONE service is by your side to help you plan for release, provide you with dedicated support through and beyond the gate and link you with services in the community.

The initial focus is on the immediate needs of an offender and their family before and after release from prison. This is followed by additional support over the subsequent months to work on longer-term objectives. A key part of the value the One Service delivers is derived from the data it collects. A case management system allows all the partners to input information so that the One Service can offer the best course of action for the client involved. Driven by this data, the service has evolved over the years to address additional client needs.

Only Connect

www.onlyconnectuk.org

Only Connect (OC) is a crime prevention charity which has worked across London for seven years. OC provides training, support and creative opportunities to help prisoners, ex-offenders and at-risk young people to realise their own value. They run six programmes across London working in schools, prisons and communities. OC Central is OC's centre in King's Cross where its members engage with pro-social activities and receive accredited training, practical support and therapy.

OC believes in the 'group' model of mentoring. They believe the traditional one-on-one relationship is a weak technique which can prove problematic both for the mentee, who senses the weakness of the relationship, and the mentor, who must provide all the support alone. Instead, OC uses networks of mentors and provides a daily centre so both the mentee and mentor feel fully supported. OC has set up a project called 'Entourage' in White City. The mentoring model behind this involves one young person – the 'star' – supported by a network of four people. The main aim of this model is to encourage and support the 'star' into sustainable work within 12 months.

Pact

www.prisonadvice.org.uk

Pact was established in 2001 as a result of a merger between the Bourne Trust and the Prisoners' Wives and Families Society. Pact offers two models of mentoring. JustPeople offers one-to-one support for the offender; three times a week. This is delivered by a Pact employee, supported by two students on placement. The training consists of a two day initial foundation course. The other model is the Basic Caring Communities scheme. This model is based

around four volunteers working together to mentor a prisoner. The group structure allows for daily contact with the offender: one volunteer meeting each day and a group meeting at the end of the week. The training for this role consists of five sessions.

Pact strongly believe that the best type of mentoring happens in a group. They believe that all mentoring should start with the relationships people already have and that work should be focused on strengthening these relationships before assuming everyone needs a mentor. Family bonds are the most powerful tool in stopping people return to crime and Pact think time should be invested in preparing those families to positively receive back the prisoner.

Pecan

www.pecan.org.uk

Pecan is an organisation started by local churches. Pecan run several different projects which help address a range of needs and disadvantages. They focus on employment support, resettlement and community projects. Over the last 25 years they have worked with 40,000 clients.

Moving On is one of Pecan's projects and focuses on mentoring women aged 18–25 leaving custody. They recruit women from prisons in the South of England who will be returning to London. The women's needs are diverse; some have mental health problems, some have drug and alcohol issues, some are homeless and jobless, some have children, some have recently left care. Moving On works in a goal focused way that enables women to take small steps forward. They are half-way through a three year grant from the Big Lottery.

The Rehabilitation for Addicted Prisoners Trust

www.rapt.org.uk

The Rehabilitation for Addicted Prisoners Trust (RAPt) works to help people with drug and alcohol problems, both in prison and in the community, move towards, achieve and maintain positive and fulfilling drug-free and crime-free lives.

In 1991 RAPt founded the first drug treatment facility in a UK prison and now providers of a number of psychosocial interventions for substance users, working with around 20,000 people every year. RAPt also provides an intensive, abstinence-based drug and alcohol rehabilitation programme for dependent users in UK prisons that have verified reducing re-offending outcomes.

RAPt's Recovery Support Team offers a range of services including various mentoring programmes depending on the client's particular needs and preferences. It offers a peer supporter service, meet and greet mentors, and is currently piloting the transitional volunteer model. Peer supporters are successful RAPt graduates who work in the prison, alongside staff, supporting others. If resources are available in the prison, peer supporters achieve a Level Three NVQ in advice and guidance during and after training for their position. The meet and greet service is offered to any RAPt client who requests to be met at the gate upon release. The transitional volunteer is someone who works with the client both before and after

release. In addition and as part of the Recovery Support Team, RAPt has an aftercare function available to all RAPt graduates at any time after completing the programme. All clients are encouraged by staff to forge alliances with self-help fellowships. RAPt is both knowledgeable and passionate about supporting people to fulfill their potential, and cheering them on as they become more and more independent and autonomous in their own lives.

Sova

www.sova.org.uk

Sova is a charity that has been working to transform lives and improve communities for more than 35 years. It was started by a group of volunteers working within the Inner London Probation Service with the aim of providing volunteering opportunities to people who were willing to support and mentor offenders to help them stay out of trouble.

Sova works nationally and offers many different programmes to help support, challenge and inspire people to make changes in their lives. Some of their programmes include the Sova Support Link, the Sova Camden Young People's Mentoring Project and the Sova Hertfordshire Through-The-Gate Project.

Sova Support Link supports adults with lifelong psychological needs and a history of offending behaviour. They help improve their quality of life and enable them to live successfully as part of their local community. This is done by recruiting, training and supervising volunteer mentors, who work together in groups (known as hubs), to support an ex-offender, both practically and emotionally. By helping ex-offenders to steer clear of crime, the volunteers not only support an individual to change their own life for the better, but also help to build safer, stronger communities for everyone. Each volunteer is asked to commit to meeting the ex-offender they are matched with for no more than five hours per week for at least 12 months. Volunteers receive specialist training, regular support and supervision to support them in their role. As well as working with a team of fellow mentors, volunteers also work closely with other professionals involved in the ex-offender's life.

At the Sova Camden Young People's Mentoring Project they find, train and support volunteer mentors to work with young offenders, and young people who are at risk of offending, to help them to stay out of trouble. Sometimes the mentors offer support and encourage with schoolwork or finding work experience or training courses. These mentors meet with their young person once a week, for between one and four hours, for at least six months.

At Sova Hertfordshire Through-The-Gate Project the mentors work with offenders across Hertfordshire who have a Class A drug problem. The mentors support people as they get the help they need to stay away from drugs, to steer clear of crime and change their lives for the better. Each mentor offers a range of practical advice and emotional support to their offender, both in prison and when they are living in the community. From meeting people at the prison gate on release day, to dropping them off at rehabilitation appointments to offering advice on getting and keeping a job or finding a place to live, the

mentors are there to offer reassurance, encouragement and above all a trusted friendly person to talk to.

All these volunteers receive specialist training, regular support and supervision to support them in their role. As well as working with a team of fellow mentors, volunteers also work closely with other professionals involved in the ex-offender's life.

St Giles Trust

www.stgilestrust.org.uk

St Giles Trust aims to help break the cycle of prison, crime and disadvantage and create safer communities by supporting people to change their lives. They operate in 18 prisons, have 138 full time staff and 62 volunteers.

St Giles Trust puts reformed ex-offenders at the heart of the solution, training them to use their skills and first-hand experience to help others through peer-led support. Around 44 per cent of their staff are ex-offenders who now support others. St Giles use a selection committee to select and train their peer-advisors in prison. This community includes a peer-advisor (who they believe is best qualified to identify the motivation of potential candidates) and members of the full time staff. They look for emotional intelligence, empathy and credibility in their peer-advisors. The training takes six months as they work towards a level three NVQ.

St Giles Trust strongly believes in paying their peer-advisors. Each peer-advisor supports 50–60 offenders over the course of a year and can be working with 25 clients at any one time. They work intensely with the client for about three months, focusing firstly on sorting accommodation.

Trailblazers

www.trailblazersmentoring.org.uk

Trailblazers is a national charity that reduces re-offending among young people by offering volunteer mentors. Established in 1998, Trailblazers is currently working in seven prisons.

At Trailblazers they believe that each young person has the potential to lead a life free from crime and be a positive member of society. With over 200 volunteer mentors, Trailblazers works in close partnership with Young Offenders Institutes, prison staff and other stakeholders to prevent re-offending.⁴⁶ Trailblazers recruit, train and match suitable volunteer mentors with young offenders who have asked to be mentored. Before being matched, each young offender will have been interviewed and risk assessed. Volunteer mentors are fully supported by their Project Manager and are thoroughly trained to ensure structure in the mentoring relationship.

The mentor meets the young offender weekly between three and six months before their release date. They endeavour to build up a relationship of trust which will ultimately lead to

⁴⁶ What We Do, Trailblazers [Accessed via: <http://www.trailblazersmentoring.org.uk/our+charity/what+we+do> (09/04/14)]

increased self-awareness, self-esteem and confidence in the young offender and thus reduce the risk of re-offending. Upon release the mentor endeavours to keep in weekly contact with the young person, to lend a listening ear and a helping hand; to assist with finding accommodation, study/training opportunities, jobs and to be a source of support, guidance, advice and encouragement for a period of up to 12 months.

Turning Point

www.turning-point.co.uk

Turning Point is a social enterprise, focused on improving lives and communities. It was founded in 1964 by Barry Richards as the 'Camberwell Alcohol Project' and now offers over 200 services across England and Wales, providing health and social care. Turning Point provides tailored personalised care that helps achieve positive outcomes for the people they support focusing on substance misuse, learning disability, mental health and employment.

Turning Point has over 160 mentors across the UK. They run a training programme inside the prison for offenders to qualify as peer-mentors. This training programme lasts for eight weeks as mentors work towards a Level Two Open Access Qualification. All applicants must be free from drugs and alcohol dependence for at least three months before the training begins and they must all undertake a thorough risk-screening process which looks at substance misuse, wellbeing, offending history, support networks and boundaries.

This training scheme is adaptable to different sectors: mental health, substance misuse and offending. Most services employ a paid peer-mentor coordinator and all mentors have fortnightly supervision for the first two months and then monthly supervision thereafter. Turning Point's model helps both the mentee and mentor; the peer-mentor gains the skills needed to help them into employment after the programme has finished.

Coaching Inside and Out

www.coachinginsideandout.org.uk

Coaching Inside and Out (CIAO) is a charity which provides coaching to offenders. It began in HMPO Styal prison three years ago working with female offenders. They now have contracts with an increasing number of organisations working with clients, male and female, inside and outside prison.

CIAO distinguishes coaching from mentoring in the following way: mentoring is about advice and practical support, whereas coaching is about helping the client find their own answers. In the coaching sessions, CIAO begins with the 'Outcomes Star'. This Star gives a clear structure for exploring all aspects of the client's current situation using various headings such as motivation, money, relationships, and health. The Star also helps the client score those areas to see where to focus and what to change. A well-defined scale means the scoring is not guesswork and it gives an objective measure of progress too, as the Star is re-visited once the coaching is over. CIAO offers up to six hours of coaching: delivered flexibly over four or six sessions to suit client and coach. The small number of sessions ensures that the client does not become reliant on the coach and instead encourages self-reliance and self-solving problems.

Spark Inside

www.sparkinside.org

Spark Inside is a charity supporting young people aged 15 to 25 who are involved in the criminal justice system in Greater London and Kent to proactively create more fulfilling and productive futures. They offer one-to-one life coaching to young people on probation or 'through-the-gates' of prison, as well as multi-part coaching workshops. Spark Inside is the only provider of life coaching to young offenders in the UK.

Spark Inside enables young offenders to desist from crime by helping them identify their strengths and aspirations, and then engage in fulfilling employment, education or training – not by 'fixing' their problems. Through coaching, clients devise their own solutions to problems without advice, guidance, mentoring or therapy. The client is the expert and considered to have the answers, therefore allowing coaching across a myriad of topics. Spark Inside's coaches have coaching qualifications and significant professional coaching experience.

An interim evaluation of Spark Inside's one-to-one 'through the gates' pilot by the University of Cambridge found that six months post-release from prison, none of Spark Inside's clients had been convicted of a new crime and 50 per cent had moved into education, employment or training (with the other half actively looking).

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