

**Reducing Reoffending:  
The Role Education plays in the Netherlands and Norway**



**Richard Wakelin – Churchill Fellow 2017**

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**“We cannot impose these serious penalties upon individuals unless we make a great effort and a new effort to rehabilitate men who have been in prison and secure their having a chance to resume their places in the ranks of honourable industry. The present system is unsatisfactory.”**

Winston Churchill – July 1910, House of Commons, UK



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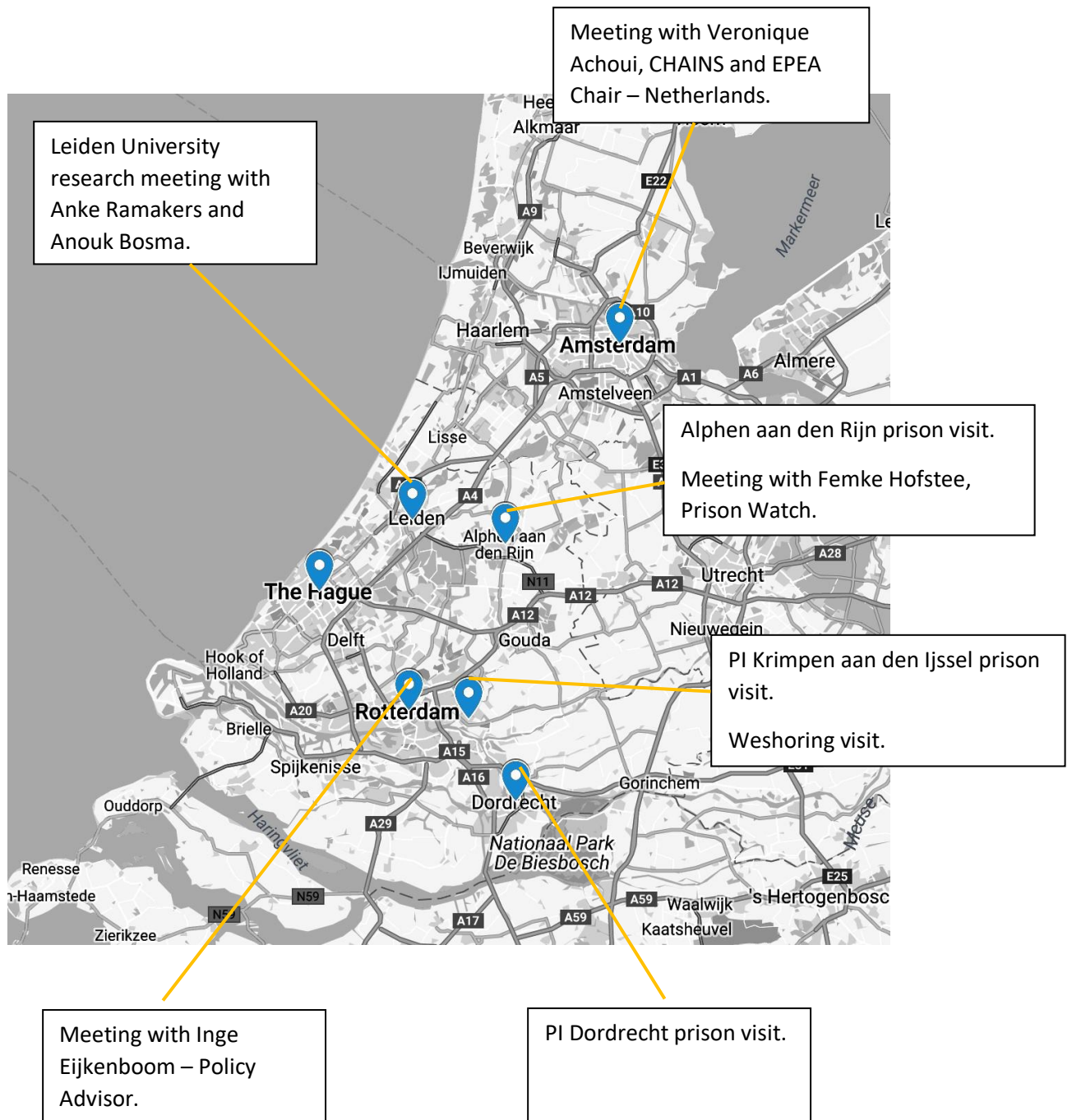
**Novus, Foundations for Change** (part of the LTE Group) have been delivering education, training and employment opportunities to adults and young people in UK prisons for more than two decades. It has built a reputation as an innovator in the fight to reduce re-offending rates by transforming people's lives through learning and skills in locations across the UK.

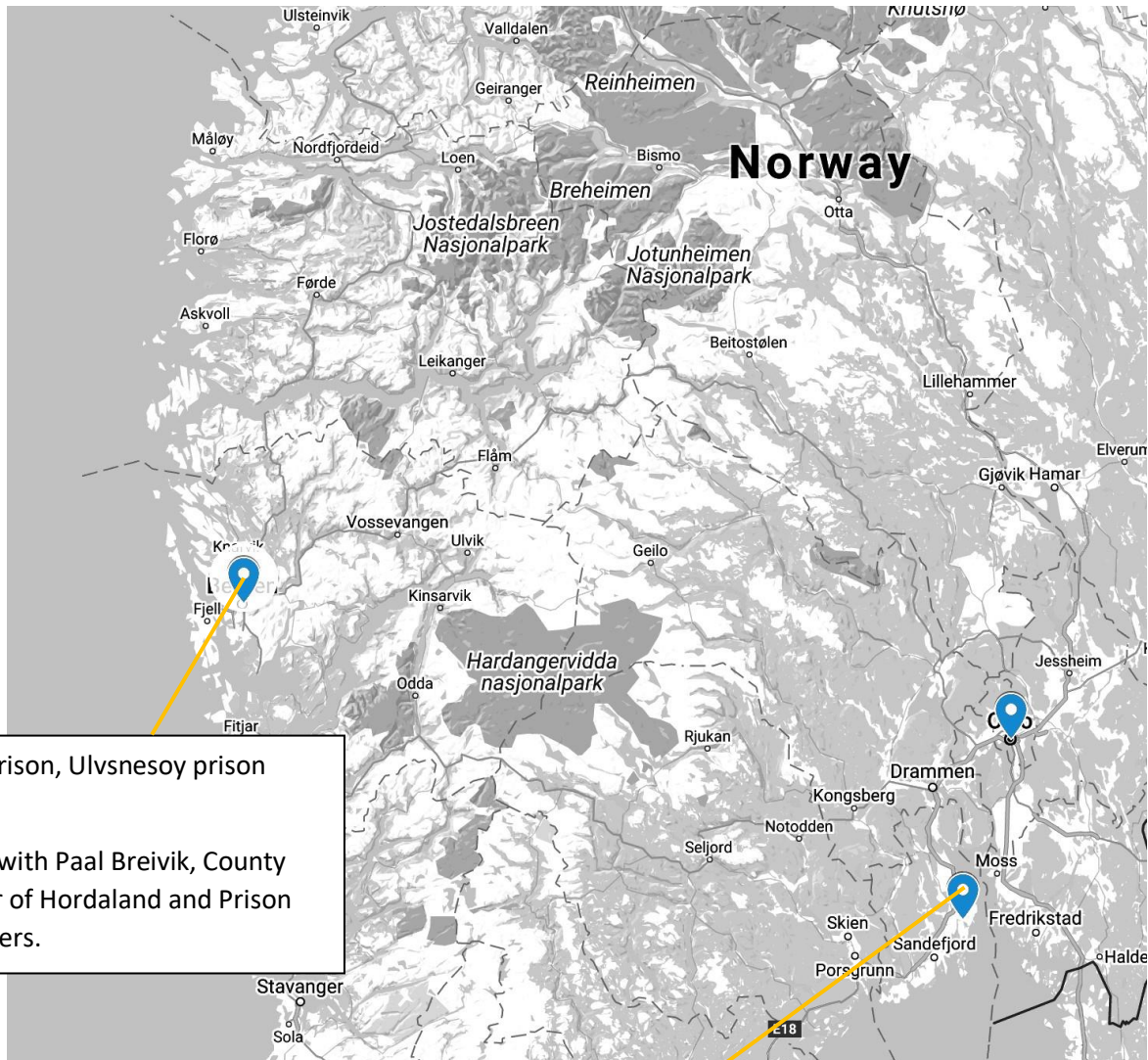


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Bergen prison, Ulvsnesoy prison visits.

Meeting with Paal Breivik, County Governor of Hordaland and Prison Researchers.

Larvik prison, Berg Prison, Sem Prison, Utsikten school and Halden prison visits.

## 1.0 The story so far

Reducing re-offending has become something close to my heart since taking the leap from mainstream education to the world of prison education in 2014. I think I need to be clear from the outset that I would be foolish to suggest that there is a 'magic, one size fits all' approach out there that can solve the issue of re-offending. People aren't that straight forward. In my day job, as a Head of Education, I am constantly fascinated by the causes of criminal behaviour, the effect this has on communities, families, the offender and the aspirations of those individuals once they leave custody. The reality of this is challenging and it is imperative that everyone working with offenders knows how to support them to achieve a crime free future. This is critical and as I sat there on a train heading across the Netherlands at the beginning of my Fellowship, I reviewed the current position in the UK, the Netherlands and Norway.

The UK, it is fair to say, is in the middle of a period of flux in the role Education plays in reducing re-offending. The current OLASS contracts are currently coming to an end, with the Prison Education Framework on the horizon. With the prison reform bill currently sat at the door of the House of Commons we are likely to see many of the recommendations that came out from the Coates Review<sup>1</sup> and Charlie Taylor Review<sup>2</sup> shape the provision we offer in custody, much of which is for the better. As an Educationalist, it is exciting to think of a world where Education is at the core of the prison regime. The former Minister for Justice, Michael Gove's 'Making prisons work' speech outlined this vision:

*"Prison is a place where people are sent as a punishment, not for further punishments. And if we ensure that prisons are calm, orderly, purposeful places where offenders can learn the self-discipline, the skills and the habits which will prepare them for outside life then we can all benefit"* 17<sup>th</sup> July 2015, RT Hon Michael Gove MP<sup>3</sup>.

At the moment this vision is there within the prisons of the UK, with a large amount of praise due to organisations who work in what is a difficult environment. Widely acknowledged issues around staffing levels, a rise in violent incidents and the issues drug use in prisons present, all lead to this vision being difficult to achieve. Around 29% of prisoners who are released are reconvicted within twelve months of being released (Proven Reoffending Statistics Quarterly Bulletin, January 2016 to March 2016) Prison regimes are struggling to run consistently and, on many occasions, failing to establish the rehabilitative culture required to achieve the vision many of us are working towards. Contrast this with Norway, where only one in five re-offend within two years and you can see why Norway and the Netherlands were top of my list when I applied for my Travelling Fellowship. They must be doing something right!

Embarking on my research in the Netherlands and Norway, I was excited to learn more about how we could make an impact on reducing re-offending rates and improving the resettlement experience of offenders. Re-offending has a huge impact on the communities in which it occurs. From the

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<sup>1</sup> Coates, S. (2016) Unlocking potential - A review of education in prison.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/524013/education-review-report.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/524013/education-review-report.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Taylor, C. (2016) Review of the Youth Justice system.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/524013/education-review-report.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/524013/education-review-report.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Gove, M. (2015) The treasure in the heart of a man – making prisons work. Prisoners Learning Alliance, London. <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-treasure-in-the-heart-of-man-making-prisons-work>



physical and emotional effects, the impact on relationships and family life, to the inevitable financial cost of imprisonment, it really does affect us all.

## 2.0 The Netherlands

I arrived in Amsterdam in July 2017. This section of the Travelling Fellowship involved visiting several prisons, through the gate charities, Universities associated with research in this area and ex offender support agencies. After spending a day adjusting to Dutch life, establishing I was more likely to be run over by a cyclist than a car and mastering my borrowed 'wheels', I got down to business. I think it is important to note that Education is only one method in the process of reducing re-offending. Following Lord Carter's 2003 review of correctional services<sup>4</sup>, 7 pathways to reducing reoffending were identified:

- Accommodation
- Finance, benefit and debt
- Children and families
- Health
- Substance misuse
- Education, training and employment
- Attitudes, thinking and behaviour



Picture 1 My trusty steed!

There have since been some adaptations to the pathways and whilst they can not exist in isolation my focus for this report was in the Education, training and employment of offenders. Whilst the priorities given to each pathway will depend upon the needs of the offender, education, training and employment is often identified as a key priority to support recidivism.

## 2.1 Alphen aan den Rijn

My visit to PI Alphen aan den Rijn was kindly arranged by Femke Hofstee, Deputy Governor. Luc Zandstra, Head of BOS (Library, Education and Sports) was my guide for the day, along with Bettien Meuris (a Teacher). It was clear from the start that Alphen had the air of somewhere very different to most UK prisons. Anyone who has spent any length of time in a UK prison will know the range of noises you hear across a prison day. Gates clanging, alarms sounding, Officers shouting instructions, radio's emitting the prison communications network – they all roll into one. The quiet order to Alphen struck me. It had the hustle of a workplace which emitted sense of 'normality'. It is difficult to consider a prison to be 'normal' or even a reflection of the outside world, but if there was one, this is it.

I discussed the acoustic of prisons with Luc. It was clear from his reaction that this was the norm. The conversation progressed to include the prison environment as a whole. Luc smiled and put the question to me:

*"Do you still have lines on the floors in Britain for prisoners to walk along? We, as you can see, have paths"*

It was at this point I asked if he considered the prison a therapeutic environment. To which Luc replied:

*"No, but a normal one".*

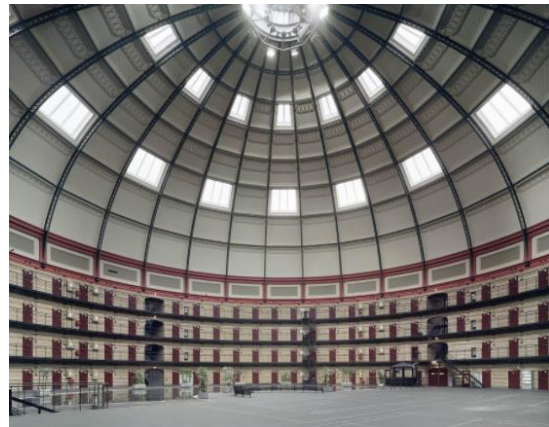
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<sup>4</sup> Carter, P. (2003) Correctional Services Review.

As we stood in Luc's office having a coffee, he talked me through two pictures on his desk. One was of his previous prison in Haarlem and the other of Alphen. Holland has been at the forefront of prison design for a long time and the conversation went back to consider this with Haarlem.



*Picture 3 Haarlem prison from above.*



*Picture 2 Inside Haarlem prison, A view of prisoners' cells*

Built in 1901, with the concept that officers could observe all prisons from within. It closed in 2016, having ended as a centre for asylum seekers. Whilst the prison design allowed for a more efficient staffing model and as a consequence reduced cost, it wasn't great for giving prisoners purposeful activity and education opportunities because the design created a cold, impersonal environment and wasted space.

As I moved through Alphen prison I noticed that Luc's keys were not on a key chain as they would be in the UK and many of the gates were controlled by intercom and CCTV. The design of the prison uses technology to make the environment safer. As a consequence of this it makes any service, such as Education, more effective in the secure environment.

Alphen has two prisons on the one site, one is a high security prison and the other has taken on several roles in recent years. Alphen housed asylum seekers prior to holding prisoners. It was clear as we approached the Education block that although smaller in comparison to that seen in the UK, it was still a key aspect of the regime. Bettien, Luc and I spent the next hour discussing how Education sits within the provision at Alphen and made comparisons to the provision in the UK. Education was focused mainly around Dutch, English and Maths.

Bettien described how their need to focus on the skills they lack, such as Dutch, English and Maths, rather than vocational training which they felt the prisoners excelled in. Bettien's message was clear:

*"As they need this to access study upon release, we work on the hard stuff, the easy 'hands on' they can do when they get out...as we can challenge their perceptions and fears around writing, for example, whilst they are here".*

Each prison focuses on different vocational work areas, with Alphen having an impressive and productive woodwork production area. The theory is that prisoners can opt for whichever prison offers the career route they would like to progress into upon release. I picked this one up with Luc over lunch. He felt that this was a process that was a 'work in progress' and although sound on paper, had presented some challenges. Prisoners would prefer to be closer to their family so sometimes this takes priority and they choose to be located closer to home, rather than moving to a prison that would offer them the training opportunities required for their resettlement.



Bettien took us to a computer room, similar to many seen in prisons across the UK. Four were standalone computers, without network connections and containing Education software, six were networked and when logged into were on a web-based platform. This was some whitelisting operation. Everything I saw within Education was digitally based, with only learners 'homework' being on paper. Here, learners were able to access the digital platform during lessons and also make appointments.



Picture 4 Alphen aan den Rijn prison

The whitelisted internet appeared to be very much like the internet they could access in the community and was wide ranging in its uses. It was clearly being utilised across the prison. All prisons have access to the same digital platform, so learners can continue their learning journey when they move. I was treated to a session learning English. It was evident that this platform would allow for self-directed learning and had the potential to extend into a prison wide platform for a range of regime partners.

The conversation moved onto the process of reviewing each prisoner every 6 weeks. This process is in place within the Youth Custody Service in the UK, but it was interesting to see the same principles applied across the adult estate in the Netherlands. All the disciplines across the prison, including an important contribution from Education, are expected to contribute to the report, with the Head of the Floor (Residential), Detention and Resettlement team and other significant staff meeting to review and set actions on the back of that report. Allowing the offender to be a part of this process would further develop this practice.

As Bettien described:

*“Education reviews the behaviours and attitude displayed by the learner, whether that be towards learning, others such as the teacher or peers. Educational levels, recent achievements and special needs/issues are also considered”*

Each prisoner also has a reintegration plan. This includes a 'prison plan' which outlines the education, work and prisons that they attend during their sentence. The plan also considers, in the latter months of the sentence, planning towards achieving any missing documentation (e.g. identification, bank accounts), gaining employment upon release and finding suitable accommodation. Part of the reintegration planning stage is for the prisoner to complete a 'reflector' which feeds into the 'choice for change' programme. This is a programme which prisoners work in groups to consider 3 important aspects of reflection:

- The past - Where I came from
- Now - How are you, where am I at currently
- Future - The plan

During this discussion, it was clear that both Luc and Bettien felt that this was an important programme. They did express that since the programme had moved from one which prisoners volunteered to complete, to one which saw behaviour policies effectively putting pressure on them to complete, that it was more difficult to establish the true motives of the prisoner in completing it. As Luc put it:

*"It may be wishful thinking, not real behaviour now. We want them to learn and make decisions. Change has to be in there (pointing to his head) we aren't all the same"*

It was clear that when this was completed successfully, alongside the reintegration plan and regular reviews, that the approach was person centred and individualised. We reflected on the current report in the UK, by Beyond Youth Custody, called "Now all I care about is my future"<sup>5</sup>. This framework recognised that the young person is the central agent to their own rehabilitation and how the services should guide them personally to a positive new identity. Staff were keen to stress that the programme in Holland is for those who want another direction in life, to make that change:

*"The man in charge is the prisoner. Who is in front are they real or camouflaged? We need to know. How can we use their time in prison to reduce the damage prison is doing to them...prison time is not doing anything well for the person"*

The discussion turned to how we judge progress in education, considering the measures in place across the Netherlands and the UK. Bettien posed an interesting reminder to us all:

*"What do you want to count? Certificates? What you should be counting isn't countable! Gaining the ability to study, allowing himself to learn, growing in confidence and motivation, changing viewpoints, making choices, reflecting...all so much more important"*

Luc added:

*"How should we count how good a library is? How many books are stolen?! How useful is that to know?"*

All joking aside, it is an important point. It appeared that in the Netherlands, as in the UK, both sides are still striving to find ways to quantify the unquantifiable.

As Lewis Carroll put it:

*"If you want to inspire confidence, give plenty of statistics – it does not matter that they should be accurate, or even intelligible, so long as there is enough of them"*

It was clear from this conversation that both sides would prefer that judgements on education performance were based around things which had an impact on the learner and were learner centred...things which mattered.

The built environment, although at times clinical as many prisons are, was pleasing on the eye. Sympathetic planting, bright and fresh accommodation (with a lot of natural light), modern classroom spaces and environments which were clearly designed to be as similar to mainstream learning environments as possible, albeit in a secure environment. Entering the gym area, a prisoner was supporting another with a gym programme, using the mirrored walls to model exercises to the group, whilst prison instructors supported other learners. Luc and Bettien were keen to stress that prison staff acknowledge the skills that offenders can offer in supporting the training within the prison. The staff have to be in control for obvious reasons, but the prisoner community needs the staff and vice versa. Positive relationships are actively sought.

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<sup>5</sup> Hazel, N., Goodfellow, P., Liddle, M., Bateman, T., and Pitts, J. (2017) "Now all I care about is my future" supporting the shift. Framework for the effective resettlement of young people leaving custody. Beyond Youth Custody. <http://www.beyondyouthcustody.net/wp-content/uploads/Now-all-I-care-about-is-my-future-Supporting-the-shift-full-research-report.pdf>

Luc reminds us of the offenders' worth as individuals as we move into a cleverly designed exercise yard on the roof.

*"These are people at the end of the day"*

The prison is designed with recreation and exercise at the heart of the regime. Each block has a sports hall and gym, some on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors. Luc talks about how they would like to do more to enhance the 'life climate' of the prison. Plants in corridors, on wings and garden areas. Having secured exercise areas on the roof gave a feeling of space and made the most of the outdoors.

As we move through the prison it is clear there is a community spirit, between both prisoners and staff alike. During this time, Luc looks to be pondering over a thought, then expresses it:

*"Why the violence in your prisons back home?"*

It was a question which I have thought a lot about and until now I thought I had a pretty good handle on the reasons why. Is it possible the built environments, the opportunities we afford them in custody and how staff interact with those offenders' in those environments could impact on the levels of violence?



Picture 5 Roof exercise area at Alphen aan den Rijn

As we moved through the prison we visited the production workshop for woodwork. An impressive room, filled with state of the art machinery. I met a prisoner who was working in a corner at the back of the room who had previously spent time in English prisons. He talked about the differences he felt between both systems, with the clear message:

*"Here you can simply get on with the job"*

Regimes in England appeared 'stop, start' he described. Here you had a programme and it was, in the main, stuck to. As he continued to intricately put together a product which was to be sold as a cheeseboard in Amsterdam. Branded and with curved handles, it was a really nice product. This was a labour of love. Having the time, space and right environment to focus on a programme of study and the fact they can work on high quality items which can be sold at a profit, the prisoners really put their time and effort into it. Giving a feeling of self-worth.

Later in the visit we met with Jeroen Rempt, Deputy Governor. Jeroen has been at Alphen since he started as an Officer and was keen to take me through how prisons and prisoners have changed over the years. What was clear from our conversation is the focus is currently on the living environment, how the directive to make prisons a reflection of society and having prisoners develop as people was key to the work being done. We talked through local schemes, such as how each wing cooks for themselves each week – being given the budget and taking roles within the group to achieve this, consequently this draws out a range of skills and roles amongst the men. The conversation went back around to the comments earlier about prison being the punishment in itself. Jeroen reached over and got his guide to sanctions he could give out for different negative behaviours. He wasn't surprised by my reaction to one offence he highlighted: Possessing a mobile phone – 7 days in cell

without rewards. I asked what the staffs' reaction was to this sanction, because in the UK this could carry additional sentence time. All agreed that staff were not happy but Jeroen added:

*"These people are punished so many times that punishment alone has no effect, we have to think differently...Isolation only does bad to them, we built bad on bad with it"*

#### Key learning points:

- The reintegration plan I saw was broadly in line with the sentencing planning present in the UK, but the 'choice for change' programme built on this. Allowing for a programme of reflection appears to give the offenders the chance to reflect and then build a plan for their future. Education plays a more central role to the review process for the reintegration plan, which appeared to drive the learner's behaviour to complete the programmes of study they needed to do.
- The role ICT plays in rehabilitating offenders and giving them choice along with independence appeared to be different to the UK. There was clear scope for development, with the potential for virtual learning platforms to extend across the regime and out of the classroom, but the internet and access levels were superior to that currently achievable in the UK.
- The UK could learn from prisons specialising in specific employment pathways. If prisons were smaller custodial units in the UK, we would inevitably have a more limited curriculum provision compared to prisons with larger populations. Prisons within regional cluster groups could specialise on specific employment routes, based on the LMI data for the resettlement area for the offenders serving their sentences within them.
- Thought needs to be given to the ways we measure the impact of education within the custodial setting. What can education in prison offer that impacts upon an individual's ability to resettle and lead a crime free life? How can we measure this?
- The 'lived environment' is a key aspect of prison design. The building's design, acoustics, flexible delivery environments and ability to move easily around a site are key. Increasing the access to the outside and exercise, through clever design was evident throughout my visits. The environment is also critical to mental health. Access to exercise and activity, whilst being able to remain in contact with loved ones and feeling close to the outside community were important features throughout my visits.

## 2.2 Prison Watch – Femke Hofstee

Femke kindly found an hour to meet me at Alphen prison. Femke is currently Deputy Governor at Alphen but also founded Prison Watch, which is an independent organisation that carries out research and provides training on prison related topics. The mission of Prison Watch is to promote the respect and humane treatment of prisoners.



Picture 6 Femke Hofstee speaking at TedX 2012

Prison Watch specialises in foreign national prisoners and independent monitoring. Interestingly across Europe this group makes up around 20% of all prisoners (in the UK it is around 13%). Femke worked as a personal assistant to one of the Vice Presidents of the European Parliament. Femke has also worked in the UK, as personal assistant to Baroness Stern in the House of Lords and during that time was a member of the Independent Monitoring Board (IMB). Her Ph.D. was on Dutch Nationals in foreign prisons, which she completed in 2015. Femke was an inspector of prisons in Holland from 2009 to 2016.

'Picture it' was created by Femke as a tool to support foreign nationals in prison and highlights the role that digital development can play in supporting offenders in custody. The app supports prisoners to overcome language barriers and in doing so supports prison officers and teachers in their work. Femke is currently developing this to be used on tablets.

There is currently a drive in the Netherlands towards providing prisoners with tablets which will enable them to read books without the need of visiting a library. Many I spoke to are sceptical about this, as many libraries provide further interactions and services aside from providing books, but all those interviewed saw the clear benefits of the new technology. Femke has also been working with the Red Cross, giving the pictures from 'picture it' to them so they are now included in the 'Refugee Buddy' App.



*Picture 7 'Picture it' a pictorial resource to help foreign nationals in prison*

'Picture it' plays a part in supporting the reducing isolation agenda. If 13% of prisoners in our prisons are foreign nationals, unable to communicate effectively within that environment, it is important we work to make the prison environment inclusive.

#### **Key learning points:**

- **The role education can play to support the integration of foreign nationals is key and supports all prisoners who struggle to interact with the prison regime. Education can help by providing the resources, such as communication aids like 'picture it' or equivalent resources through virtual learning environments. Digital platforms can further expand this and help reduce isolation by taking these aids 'in cell' and beyond the traditional classroom. This would complement the work already done in ESOL classes (English for Speakers of Other Languages).**
- **Digital platforms improve the effectiveness of the support networks in the prison and are more efficient than the paper driven systems we currently rely upon.**
- **Technology offers the potential for a 'delivery platform' which covers the work of the different prison services for example education, health, offending behaviour, and such innovations could support prisoners both in and out of the cell.**



### 2.3 Veronique Aicha Achoui - Founder and project-coordinator of CHAINS and Chair of the European Prison Education Association (EPEA) Netherlands



Veronique talked me through how CHAINS was working to support the work done in Dutch prisons. A project using a blended learning platform is currently under construction where learners can play games which are aimed at strengthening the reintegration process and create a detailed plan for the first year after detention. The aim is to allow learners to 'play out' scenarios they might face upon release. This would allow them to experience the outcomes that their decisions may have in a safe environment. Chains, in partnership with Microsoft, is in the early stages of development with the blended learning platform but this software has the potential to enhance the resettlement experience of offenders and it is an innovative use of technology in the work to reduce re-offending<sup>6</sup>. We discussed the work undertaken by the EPEA, with me leaving Holland to reflect on the vast amounts of ideas and innovation I had seen.

#### Key learning points:

- The role reintegration centres play in supporting learners within the prison and then upon release could be replicated in major cities in the UK. This would bridge the gap that many ex-offenders fall into upon release.
- The UK could learn from the Dutch ethos around the importance of 'contact' and positive interactions through the removal of physical barriers. We should not underestimate the importance of interacting with the person inside the prisoner.
- More emphasis should be placed on the role restorative justice plays in the rehabilitative process and we should look to implement them where possible.

### 2.4 PI Krimpen aan den IJssel

Epco Boerema, Staff Officer for External Cooperations was my tour guide for the next two prison visits. Epco kindly picked me up from Rotterdam and we took the 20-minute journey to Krimpen. As we travelled towards the prison we began discussing what I had seen so far in Holland. We talked about the concept of 'doing time'. Epco gave me his thoughts on this:

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<sup>6</sup> <http://reallifeproject.eu>.

*“The ‘doing time’ idea needs to be developed into ‘restorative justice’. There are conflicting aspects of prison – you want, need in fact, prisoners to live their life, develop themselves...but it’s in a prison”*

We chatted about how public opinion can sometimes have an effect on the policy decisions we take. Epco interjects:

*“Public opinion we can’t ignore, we should maybe invest more in public relations. Show the challenges we face, what we are doing about them and our reasons for that approach...take care of the victim in it all. Hence the restorative justice”*



Picture 8 Krimpen aan den IJssel prison

Our discussion turns to the theories around the development of the brain, maturity and its link to high risk and criminogenic behaviours.

Epco gives his thoughts around this:

*“Juveniles are more mature than people their own age, they’ve experienced and lived. We don’t tap into this enough”*

We consider how that is an interesting concept. Through the teaching of philosophy and critical thinking; opening up to questions and empathy could support them to develop. Could we teach them to harness the life skills they have developed and to use them in a positive way?

As we arrive at the main gate of the prison, Epco reads out a sign which is by the entrance:

*“Where violence ends and respect begins”*

As we walk through the 1990’s built prison into Education, another sign appears:

*“Responsibility begins”.*



Picture 9 Krimpen aan den IJssel prison

Throughout my visit, staff were keen to ensure prisoners took responsibility to plan for their resettlement and make the most of their time in prison. We go to meet Monique Duquesnoy, Case Manager at Krimpen. Monique refers to the work they are doing with the clients (as she calls the prisoners), everything they do is aimed at filling their ‘back pack’ to build them towards successful reintegration into society. She emphasised the importance of prison officers and how key they are to the learning process. Officers are there for not only safety, but modelling behaviour, guiding, mentoring and being involved in the multi-agency process. The challenge is clear, there is a lack of resource meaning that quality time cannot be spent with the prisoners. This is also an issue in the UK system with the personal officer role. Despite this the importance of the personal officer role is still evident; alongside the teachers, case workers and other key roles, the officers are just as important in the process of person development. As Monique puts it:

*“Everyone is a teacher”*

Throughout my time in Holland it was clear that there was a heavy focus on prison culture and relationships. The views of Epco and Monique were clear when I raised some of the measures we have seen introduced in the UK over the last couple of years. Body worn cameras have been suggested as something which Education staff should wear as part of a package to improve staff safety in the UK. Epco sat back.

*“Formal, detached contact is contrary to our thinking around safety. We are very aware of safety and we need some distance, but not much. Levelling with each other we can understand and respect problems. The more formal the approach, the more secure and the greater amount of material we need in the way. It drives us apart. You end with prisoners in their culture and staff in theirs...It seems an illusion of safety”*

Monique then shows me a pilot project that has been in place since 2016 to support prisoners into work. Work Wise Direct is funded through social impact bonds. The scheme employs job coaches that have been employed through the scheme to support learners whilst in prison. They work to progress them into employment upon release, then support them through mentoring for 12 months. The scheme is based on payment by results, with payments based on the prisoner being successful at interview and in sustained employment.



Picture 10 Work-wise Direct website

Currently the scheme has around 150 ex-prisoners who have volunteered for the programme. Employers are engaged in the process which creates a support network around the individual. This network of support may include healthcare workers, case workers, a job coach and probation officers. The work begins in custody, with a variety of interventions and the support network continues into the community.

The conversation turned to how all areas of ‘work’ within the prison should be learning places. Epco talked about how prison industries are moving towards learning companies, with qualifications in the workplace. In the Netherlands, as in England, there is a wealth of learning taking place within the prison workplace. However, in many cases it isn’t being captured either through formal qualifications and neither are they capturing the development of those softer employability skills necessary for the workplace. This move will take some time but is the next step on the journey. Lunch with the Governors provided a chance to talk about the similarities, differences and challenges between the Netherlands and the UK. An interesting hour, coupled with some great food which was created by prisoners! Like many prisons in the UK, the prisoner run catering facilities which are on a par with restaurants in the community, give valuable work-related experiences to prepare the prisoners for release.

In the afternoon, we left Monique and went to visit the education provision at Krimpen. As we walked into the library/reintegration unit I was instantly aware of the sound of music, birds tweeting and people working at computers. The prisoners look after the birds in the department, with them all saying it added to the relaxed learning environment. Walls were covered in paintings and photographs, many created by the prisoners.

Epco highlighted that the Library/reintegration model had replica facilities in the community. Run by volunteers, these centres are there to support ex-prisoners with their needs through the gate.

*“Many ex-prisoners have the feeling they can’t make it outside. The procedures, forms, not understanding the education courses, people pushing them to work and change, it makes them angry...so they withdraw from the risk of conflict. This is why we created external reintegration centres”*

As we left the department we went past the chapel. I was due to meet with the chaplaincy team, but as a mindfulness and yoga session was happening we decided to leave them to it!

**Key learning points:**

- **The role reintegration centres play in supporting learners within the prison and then upon release could be replicated in major cities in the UK. This would bridge the gap that many ex-offenders fall into upon release.**
- **The UK could learn from the Dutch ethos around the importance of ‘contact’ and positive interactions through the removal of physical barriers. We should not underestimate the importance of interacting with the person inside the prisoner.**
- **More emphasis should be placed on the role restorative justice plays in the rehabilitative process and we should look to implement them where possible.**
- **It is important that we aim to capture the work-related skills being developed in prison industries. This does not have to be done exclusively through the delivery of accredited courses, as it is just as important to acknowledge the softer, transferable skills required for the workplace.**

My final section of the visit to Krimpen saw me visiting their enhanced wing. These are wings where prisoners reside who are consistently adhering to the prison regime and demonstrating a positive attitude to change. As we walked through the standard wings, they reminded me of many I see in the UK. They were modern, but in many cases still clinical. As we walked through to the enhanced wing, a gentleman in front of us scanned his card at several doors and held them for us. I thought this was normal, until he shook my hand and introduced himself as an enhanced prisoner. They have key card access to move freely across the majority of the prison. This is something I have never seen before and for a brief time thought he was a member of staff! This was a wing with a difference.

As we walked in we met with Eline van der Schee who leads the Prison Fellowship. An organisation working on the pilot of this wing. Many enhanced wings exist in the UK but the level of independence and free movement was a key difference. Several prisoners talked me through how it all worked. Following an introduction, one said:

*“I hope you don’t mind, we will start the talk, but then I have skype call with my little boy in 5 minutes, he wants to read his book with me before he goes on holiday, I will come back!”*

In the UK there are several prisons using Skype but it is heavily controlled. The use of skype on this wing was wide spread and used to maintain personal ties. This use was normal on the enhanced wings I visited.

We sat in the living room, overlooking the garden area. The wing was for people with time left to serve but were actively engaging in the regime and working towards their resettlement targets. The prison recognised their need to develop their independence. They cooked their own food in groups, dining together in the kitchen/diner. They were self-sufficient. They cleaned, cooked and ordered everything they needed, such as domestic items and food. Unlocked at 07:30, they went to their choice of work and education and return to their cells for night time lock up at 21:30. I asked about their reasons for applying to be on the wing.

*"The main reason is jobs; the project supports us into work. Also, the family time. We can skype home regularly; our families can visit us on the wing...His kids were playing in our cell the other day! We were talking and his boy told us to 'quiet down daddy' as he was playing! Everyone is the same, no alarms happen. If there is a problem we talk, talk as a group. The other wings are like a zoo, alarms and issues all the time. We are a group on here (the island), people on the other wings behave like individuals. Yes, there is too much to lose from not being on this wing. Can you imagine me having to tell my boy I can't see him tonight as I am not here on this wing...?!"*

The positive impact that family relationships have on the experience of the prisoner is evident. If this prisoner was to lose contact with his child it would clearly have had a detrimental effect on his rehabilitation. He came back beaming after his skype call with his son, he had just finished reading a book with him. One prisoner then laughs and tells me about the kitchen:

*"On the other wing, the same staff as on here, would have a fit if you asked for a knife to cut your bread...here they just hand it over...I mean how else can you cut bread!? When there is an issue, we close the kitchen door and talk like adults to sort it. Ok so it isn't like being out, but it is normal"*

The wing was also supported by volunteers who came in once or twice per week to meet with the prisoners to talk, discuss the news (or Brexit as was popular during my visit), play sport and be a different face. The picture board told a story: 6 staff pictures alongside at least 20 volunteers, from all walks of life.

*"One prisoner who left, got a job and is doing well...he came back the other day to play pool! It was good to see he was doing well, maybe not great he feels better here, but he was doing well"*

The prisoners were keen to show me around. As we walked along the corridor which was full of pictures and almost 'homely', one prisoner came out of his cell with a Hoover. He had a bird on his shoulder.

*"He is my friend! My family brought him in for me. It is nice; I am not alone at night now. There is no way he is staying here when I leave, my kids want him home!"*

Everyone laughed as the bird went shy and hid behind his head. Relationships are key. That feeling of not being alone, being together (normal), shone through.

I was under no illusion as I left this wing, each man was keen to thank me for coming, talked about why they felt this was an important step in the prison system and that the set up and ethos of the wing was working. The project did not need Eline or Epco to sell it to me, the product was there for all to see. Epco explained this is not a central government policy and that the Governor here had supported the policy at a local level. I left thinking and hoping, that we could see this in the UK soon.



It would take someone brave to do it initially but thinking about it more I think it would take a brave prison service to NOT do anything, as we know the current system isn't working. It is not for every wing or prisoner, as the prisoners put it to me themselves, as most people are not ready for this. Those that are, those willing to develop themselves through this system, stand to gain the most. Families are also rewarded through the relationships it nurtures and in turn the positive impacts this has on local communities as the prisoner progresses in to employment. I left thoroughly impressed with Krimpen. Krimpen did not view education in the formal sense. They viewed education as every opportunity to rehabilitate a prisoner. There was so much Education going on in Krimpen, the thing was you could not accredit and at times even quantify a lot of it!

**Key learning points:**

- **The role education can play, coupled with technology on enhanced wings is something we should develop in the UK. The use of Skype and other communication aids maintains important family ties. The impact that a custodial sentence has on those left behind at home was expressed to me by several prisoners during my visits. Technology like skype can lessen the impact and can form part of the educational offer in prisons.**
- **Education is sometimes more than what we can accredit or quantify. The value of supporting a learner to write a card to his child at Christmas, read a book over Skype at night or manage their money, all have important parts to play within the reducing reoffending agenda. It is encouraging that under the new funding arrangements within England, that Education providers can now enable and support learners with unaccredited, yet worthwhile programmes.**

## 2.5 PI Dordrecht

When I arrived at Dordrecht I met with the Deputy Director Michael Van Rijckevorsel, who welcomed me to PI Dordrecht. Built in the 1990's the design of Dordrecht was very similar to Krimpen but reminded me more of prisons in the UK than my previous prison visits in Holland. I was taken on a tour and met the team who work in the reintegration centre. Judith Van der Boon is the Manager of the centre. What struck me when we walked in was that three officers were sitting behind the greeting desk in the centre. These officers were not there purely to guard the unit, they had multiple roles in supporting the needs of the prisoners. We discussed what role the officers played in the reintegration centre. Judith explained that they were key members of the team.

*"A few years ago, they would have been guarding and reading a book! Now they work as part of the team. We have the same people every day. They understand our work, support it and are key to it. If someone needs support with Dutch they support the teacher, make appointments and deal with issues. It is all about support"*



Picture 11 PI Dordrecht

I chatted with the officer and it quickly became clear they preferred their roles now compared to before as they felt that they were now using their skills to make a difference. As one officer put it:

*“My mouth is my weapon!”*

Judith talked me through the progress that had been made with the reintegration model and how important it was that all areas, for example education, health and career guidance worked together. The range of agencies that were working together had led to increased collaboration and information sharing. This had reduced duplication and meant they could work more efficiently in their approach to supporting learners. There was an emphasis placed on the preparation for employment and we discussed what employers are looking for when prisoners are released from custody:

*“Qualifications of course, but when we speak to employers they are more concerned by attitudes, work behaviours, motivation, dress and being on time. Outside they need these, so we teach that in here”*

This is the same feedback we receive as a provider in the UK when employers visit our provision.

The discussion turned to how the reintegration model is now being developed. All prisons are moving to this approach of joined up working across all reintegration and resettlement services. The reintegration centres in the community have not been established for as long so they are less developed but Judith highlighted the key to a successful model. The key she felt, is getting professional staff in centres. The role of the volunteer is important, but they can come and go, they need a stable base at the core.

As I left, I asked Epco how they manage things when they don't go to plan. He talks me through how you could have 20,000 success stories and 10-15 incidents and the media will look for answers. This though is surely inevitable, after all we are working with a very different type of employee and person. Things in their lives aren't stable, everything can be fine one minute then something happens and people make mistakes. We have to work together to reduce these. As my time with Epco as my tour guide came to an end I couldn't thank him enough for his time and valuable insights. Every prison service needs an Epco!

**Key learning points:**

- **It is necessary to develop public confidence in the justice system. This could be achieved through promoting positive outcomes and the benefits of those outcomes to communities.**
- **Where ever possible we should engage with employers to ensure our curriculum gives learners the best grounding to enter the workplace. In additional to technical skills, the emphasis needs to be placed on developing positive work behaviours, attitudes and motivation.**
- **The reintegration model where key services operate in a hub, would benefit the prisoner and the service providers. This allows those providers to operate more efficiently and encourage information sharing.**
- **Replication of the reintegration model in the community provides a familiar and supportive environment for prisoners to seek support upon release.**

## 2.6 WeShoring

I met Bert Heeren, Director of WeShoring, a Social Enterprise which was linked with Krimpen prison and Casper Langendoen, the Manager of an enhanced wing at Krimpen. As Bert and Casper began to talk about the partnership working between the prison and WeShoring it was clear they were fully invested in the project.

WeShoring employed prisoners who are on day release from the prison, ex-prisoners who have transitioned back into the community, refugees and people on social benefits. The goal of the company was to get people a job. It operated as a normal company, helping them develop the work behaviours required to be successful in the workplace. The statistics showed that 20% of those on social benefits and 40% of the prisoners were in sustained employment for at least 6 months after completing their supported employment with Weshoring. I ask Bert and Casper why there is a marked difference in the success of the two groups:

*“Simple...the prisoners are more employable! They have the right mind-set and are motivated to succeed.*

*We act as a reference, give them experience and identify talents”*

Prisoners released to work at WeShoring reside on a special wing at Krimpen, Casper showed me around. It was a conventional wing within the prison, but the prisoners in this area enter the prison by different entrances with no access to prisoners on other wings. Prisoners could apply to go the unit when they have 6 months left on their sentence. There was a high level of trust between officers and prisoners. They had their own cooking facilities, could come and go to work outside when required and they were even allowed to have their mobile phone.

I asked Casper how he felt about managing the risk surrounding this model. He smiled:

*“I didn’t sleep for two days when they suggested it. When you have seen what it is like in the olden times, it makes sense, but yes it was a big change!...the first thing you have to do is throw away the keys in an area like this!”*

I am laughing now thinking about what my face must have been like when a prisoner walked past me with a mobile phone and I didn’t know the rule. This level of trust and environment isn’t suitable for every prisoner, but for those who are motivated and are ready to change and concentrate on their resettlement, the increased freedom, the environment and access to employment is part of the process.

WeShoring provided a flexible working environment where employees selected their areas of business. People could be employed in one section of the existing business such as coffee roasting, assembly or waste management or come with a business plan which WeShoring then supported them to establish on site. Bert explained:

*“One prisoner wanted to set up a business which collected sofas and sold them to the Dominican Republic. We supported him by getting a van, the logistics of a container. The first container gets*



Picture 12 WeShoring Logo



Picture 2 WeShoring HQ

*there soon! The deal is he has to employ from us. We ask them, what do you want to do? Assembly?  
Great we can do that. Woodwork? Sure"*

One ex-prisoner is currently staying on in the business after his release to become a job coach. As Casper described:

*"He understands them, knows where they are coming from. He can support them"*

I ask Bert about the hurdles he had to overcome to get to this point.

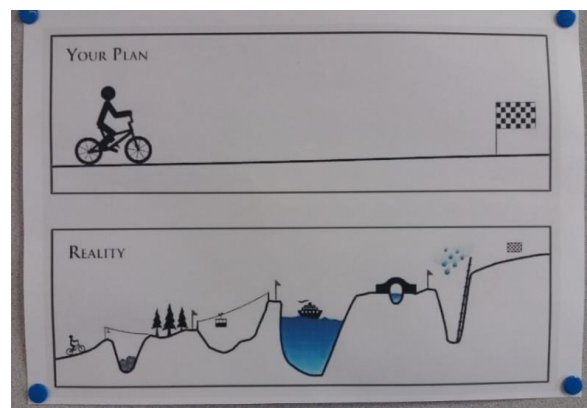
*"The neighbours to the business showed some reservations at first, that they might have dangerous people nearby, but they understand now they are OK. Nobody is allowed to talk about their past or their personal problems. We link them back to the services and here (pointing to Casper). Now we have two of our business cars permanently parked on the prison car park! To get to work of course! There is never any conflict"*

Casper summed it up nicely:

*"Find the skills, give them trust, listen to their ideas, support them...Golden!"*

I was kindly invited by Bert to see how it all worked at WeShoring. There I met the other Directors, Hans and Anneke.

As we went up the stairs of the large, multi functional building which they rent for WeShoring, we passed by the learning area and staff rest room. The picture (right) was prominent on the jobs board. It highlighted that the road to achieving their goals could be challenging and not without set backs.



Picture 13 Poster on the wall at Weshoring

We discussed how WeShoring came about. Hans explains that the name meant that they offer to re-shore currently outsourced work back to the Netherlands. The company aims to support those out of work through giving them opportunities, support and experience across a range of areas. Private investors who bought into the concept financed the start up, with the business growing from strength to strength since forming 18 months ago.

We took a tour of the work areas; what strikes me is the relaxed and diverse areas they have created. They cater for a range of interests with the space to 'break out' if someone presents a business idea to them, so that they can facilitate its development.

There was a focus on being inventive and upcycling things. They received shipments of clothes and old bedding which they cut up into small squares and these were then used in garages as oil rags. Before WeShoring was established such items would have gone to Russia to be recycled. In another area they had taken on some of the prison contract work, in this case making fence panels. With the left-over wood, another team were creating garden climbers. A recent development was the coffee bean roasting



Picture 14 Coffee roasting at Weshoring

business, roasting their own brand or a blend for local companies keen to support the social benefits of the business.

As Bert describes:

*“We haven’t gone looking for the hole in the market here, we have instead found the hole in society”*

The next area we moved into was an area where a prisoner had created his own product. He has been given the choice of either working for the company and being paid a wage based on productivity or agreeing to rent a space and selling the product himself. Bert talked me through that conversation and how the prisoner wasn’t keen on having a ‘boss’ but now understood that a customer was also a ‘boss’. In this instance the prisoner chose to reduce the risks associated with being self-employed and was employed by WeShoring.



Picture 15 Ex-prisoners furniture enterprise

As I finished my day there I asked if they thought what they had created was successful is supporting offenders and the other groups into employment. Hans and Bert both smile. They show me a picture of an ex-colleague who they supported in to employment who had just been given an award by his employer. Bert then waved a wedding invite from an ex-prisoner. I left thoroughly inspired by the work they were doing at WeShoring and hoped we could work together in the future.

#### Key learning points:

- **The ‘WeShoring’ social enterprise model could be applied in the UK. This could meet the workplace gap for those ex-offenders who need work experience, support and further skill development before they enter the workplace.**
- **The role social enterprise plays in supporting offenders within and then through the prison gate should be recognised. Social enterprise can uniquely reinvest in the communities they are part of.**

## 2.7 Inge Eijkenboom – Policy Advisor

The next day I meet Inge Eijkenboom. Inge is the Policy Advisor for Adult and Juvenile Education, Library, Sports and Reintegration in Holland. We discussed what I had seen so far and what my thoughts were on the systems and direction of travel in the UK and Holland. Inge talks me through how the provision for Juveniles works in the Netherlands. Schools came in to deliver Education in Juvenile establishments, much like the secure children home model in the UK. They get a similar amount of delivery, 26 hours per week. The curriculum aims to mimic the school curriculum, but must adapt due to the complex needs of the learner, lower prior attainment levels and length of stay in the establishments.



## 2.8 Leiden University

I arrived at Leiden University to meet Anke Ramakers and Anouk Bosma, Assistant Professors of Criminology, focusing on research into prison interventions and examining the pre-and post-labour market experiences of prisoners. We discussed the differences between the UK and the Netherlands. A discussion was held around how simply looking at recidivism rates was too simplistic a viewpoint, particularly when you consider that the longer the sentence the more likely a person is to reoffend, the journey of an offender is a complex one. As Anouk put it:

*“Relapse is normal”*

Anouk talks us through her research, specifically looking at the interventions, such as Education, which take place within prisons. A small number of prisoners access these in Holland. Around 80% of prisoners have 6 months or less to serve when sentenced, with a large number held on pre-trial detention. Furthermore, poor behaviour and the difficulties in getting people to that provision further reduces the numbers accessing the interventions. Anouk's research suggests that the interventions within prison are severely impacted by a number of issues such as regime participation and workplace allocation. Much of the research shows that shorter sentences, being released early or released on probation could have a greater impact.

Anke's research examines employment, pre-and post-prison sentence. Her findings indicated that around 40% of prisoners have employment before they go into custody, with a third of those maintaining that employment with their employer upon release. Those that had sentences of longer than 6 months found it more difficult to find employment upon release and to maintain the link with the previous employer. The research showed that if the prisoner was known to the company they were more likely to support them, relationships are key<sup>7</sup>.

One interesting finding was that prisoners were often advised by various services not to tell the employer that they were in custody. Through our conversation it was felt that having a level of engagement and maintaining that relationship throughout the sentence was more likely to result in a positive result and sustained employment upon sentence completion.

### Key learning points:

- **My trip to the Netherlands highlighted the complexity of trying to deliver a mainstream curriculum within a custodial establishment. The varied and complex needs of the prisoners required a flexible curriculum to meet their needs.**
- **Academic research has a place in informing policy and practice within education in the UK prison system.**
- **Further research is needed to develop a consistent set of measures and standards to measure success post release. Recidivism should not be the only measure due to the complexities of offending behaviour.**
- **It is critical to retain engagement with employers from the point of sentence. This could be part of the work done by the Education provider, ensuring that the prisoners are equipped with the skills required to meet labour market needs.**
- **Sector champions could advise education providers on curriculum and skills shortages and they could advise employers on supporting ex-offenders into their businesses.**

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<sup>7</sup> Ramakers, A. A. T., Van Wilsem, J., Nieuwbeerta, P., & Dirkzwager, A. (2015). Returning to a former employer: A potentially successful pathway to ex-prisoner re-employment. *British Journal of Criminology*. Advance online publication. doi:10.1093/bjc/azv063.

### 3.0 Norway

I arrived in Norway with a range of prison, Ministry of Justice and charity visits planned. The first prison I visited was Larvik prison. Larvik was a young offenders unit for young adults between the age of 18-25. It is worth noting that men of this age in the UK would be integrated within the adult estate. From the outset I could see how from one perspective this approach could be seen as expensive, with a maximum of 16 spaces. I can honestly say in a visit lasting four hours, moving throughout the prison, I saw only 2 officers. The environment was one of mutual respect, person centred and perfect for the effective support and rehabilitation. This recognition of brain maturity in treating those aged 18-25 differently is in line with a recent House of Commons Justice Committee report, 'The treatment of young adults in the criminal justice system', October 2016<sup>8</sup>. They stated:

*"In respect of their policies and guidance, it is our view that the MoJ and NOMS do not give sufficient weight to the implications of brain maturation for young adult men and women aged 21 to 25" pp.20*

#### 3.1 Larvik Prison



Picture 16 Larvik Prison

Hilde Borgir (Head of the School Department) and Stig Alsaker (Teacher) were my tour guides for the day and their kindness in answering what must have felt like never ending questions was much appreciated. I saw another good example of controlled internet access during my visit to Norway. It was easy to access, packed with content and a useful learning aid in lessons. Education is delivered through a local school, which I also visited in the afternoon to understand how that link supported the delivery within the prison. The approach of using teachers who also teach in other education settings, such as schools, was something I had also experienced in Holland. Whilst there is no doubt that the curriculum has to be adapted to meet the needs of those incarcerated, the teachers ability to teach in both settings provided opportunities to develop pedagogy and the learner experience.

Two days a week the learners took it in turns to do either domestic tasks or prepare lunch for the prison. Staff and learners then ate together. I was invited to join them on the day and very much enjoyed a lovely meal and the opportunity to field a range of questions about English prisons. It was nice to see the prisoners also exploring their use of English to talk through the responses to some of

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<sup>8</sup> House of Commons Justice Committee report, 'The treatment of young adults in the criminal justice system', October 2016

my questions about their experiences. Not one could find fault with the prison and their experience of the system. Neither could they relate to the violence we are currently experiencing in UK prisons. As one put it:

*“No, there isn’t fighting here. People have too much to lose, you would be moved the next day. You are treated good here, it’s a community”*

We also talked about how they dealt with conflict and how conflict was resolved in the UK. The prisoners all talked about how their conflicts needed to be worked through by the people they knew and trusted in a timely manner. It led me to wonder if that was possible in some of our larger prisons in the UK.

We discussed the way education is delivered in Norway – it appears broadly in line with the proposals currently being formulated in the UK, with technical qualifications that run alongside the more traditional academic route. School was central to the regime in the prison, with a real community feel. Education had no cameras or officer presence, although staff carried a personal alarm, but these hadn’t been activated in education for several years. Education was relaxed and it was clear that staff had built strong working relationships with the prisoners.

Although relaxed, it was made clear by Stig that prisoners felt removed from society, their freedom was taken and then given back in a controlled way in order to support reintegration. It wasn’t unknown for a prisoner serving a long sentence to be allowed an escorted home visit for the night or a visit in order to give him ‘air’. The term ‘air’ was used widely by prison staff during my visits. Staff were keen for prisoners to not become too detached from the outside world. Stig talked me through examples of this, such as cross prison sports tournaments.

Each prisoner had a dedicated personal officer. It was clear the staff cared and understood the psychological effects of being locked up. Whilst nobody condoned the crimes, they understood and worked to best reintegrate the prisoners into society before and on release. Having an understanding of the young adults they worked with was further reinforced by the learners, who showed me their MP3 players and talked about why they liked having the players, something that young adults in UK prisons can’t have. It was interesting to note the impact such a small item had on their well-being and behaviour, with one telling me:

*“It is good sometimes to not be present, you know”*

The use of release on temporary licence was discussed and it was clear that this is being used more broadly than in the UK. Stig described taking 4 female prisoners and an officer for a jog during a PE session in the local park, prisoners attending the local school to sit exams and studying in the vocational workshops at the school. These are all possible in the UK but opportunities like these are rarely seized.

I left the prison thoroughly impressed and then travelled over to the link school, Thor Heyerdahl. There I saw the state of the art technical workshops, toured the 4,000-seater arena which was home to the Handball team. It was pleasing to see prisoners preparing the arena and taking an active role before home games.

**Key learning points:**

- **UK prison reforms need to take into account the need for small units. This allows for the development of a positive rapport between staff and prisoners, imperative to the rehabilitative process. The importance of resolving conflict was also a key aspect of the work I witnessed. This is a more manageable process on a smaller scale.**
- **Not only do we need to reform the buildings but also our policies and practices. For example, a more flexible use of ROTL to enable a smoother reintegration into the community. It is possible to reform our practices whilst rebuilding prisons to create a modern estate as was demonstrated in Norway.**
- **Teachers benefited from teaching across other educational establishments such as local colleges and schools. This approach maintained their pedagogy and it meant the curriculum was the same as that in local schools, making the transition back in community more seamless.**

### **3.2 Berg and Sem Prisons**

On arrival at Berg prison I was immediately struck by its beautiful location. In woodland on the outskirts of Tonsberg the prison is idyllic. It took me several minutes to find the entrance, it had to be the most relaxed open prison environment I have been in. Yet when you scratch the surface of this apparently sleepy place I witnessed a wide range of purposeful activity focused on supporting prisoners with their resettlement aims.

Prisoners have to apply to come to Berg. After an initial vetting process, which looks at whether the learner will benefit from attending the prison, the prisoner is then interviewed by a panel who consider several things. This includes their perceptions of their offences and their motivations to change and lead a crime free life upon release. Hilde gives her context on this:

*“There are no innocent people here. You can’t do therapy if you haven’t done anything wrong”*

We toured the education department. There was a mix of directed and self-directed activity. The 48 prisoners living at Berg had the option of attending education or work activities, planning their own time to meet their sentence plan objectives. This was worked through with their personal officer, teacher and work place instructor. The prisoners were keen to stress this collaboration really did happen and it was clear to see from the conversations we had.

We visited the workshops where prisoners were able to develop their skills in carpentry and car mechanics. All state of the art and working through the gate. The bug hotels, called Bee-n-Bee’s, sold as flat packed kits for children to build themselves at home were a delight and the car garage was a hive of activity, repairing customer’s cars from the local community.

It struck me during the day that trust and care was high across the prison. As Hilde described:

*“We have to give trust, to see if we can get some back”*

This was supported by a prisoner who interviewed me after lunch:

*“The prison is built on trust. They give it to you, you don’t even have to earn it...it is up to you what you do with it...it is a short way back to high security from here”*

Prisoners were keen to stress they felt the staff cared at Berg. Staff knew them personally and knew what support they needed. They compared the prison to the high security prisons they had attended before. As one put it:

*“In the high security prison, you are told info, in the low security prison you ask for info...it is empowering”*

After lunch the Governor joined our meeting and talked about how staff genuinely wanted good outcomes for the prisoners.

*“I say to everybody here – all of the time we need to care for everybody and meet them with respect. New or old to here we respect each other”*

Berg is a special place and different to the rest of the prison estate in Norway. Prisoners are made aware during their application that if upon their earliest date of release, they haven't got an appropriate home to go to afterwards, a job or school place and financial stability they won't be released until the end of their sentence. This was reinforced by the Governor during my meeting with him.

Prisoners ready themselves for release by working out in the community when they can, setting up their homes to slowly reintegrate themselves into their communities. As one described:

*“It is a gradual release, not just a kick in the butt...every other time I have left prison, from high security I have had a plastic bag, 200 NOR and my bus ticket. I ended up staying in a hostel with other junkies and was back in prison in no time”*

### **3.3 Utsikten School**

Hilde walked me over to the community school through the woods, a short walk from the prison. This was set in idyllic woodland, a former house which had been converted into a school for ex-prisoners who have left custody or those serving community sentences. I could see why they didn't want to leave. Two teachers worked there with a mix of learners attending throughout the week. The atmosphere was relaxed and productive. I joined a maths class in the dining room, with another 2 learners preparing lunch in the kitchen in the background. In Norway those serving community sentences can choose to attend school as part of their sentence. This is a purposeful use of that time and as one of the teachers put it:

*“Bettering themselves betters society”*

Sem prison was very much like many English prisons in terms of age and facilities. I attended the prison regime meeting at Sem in the afternoon. It was interesting to hear many of the regime issues we have in the UK are happening in Norway. For example, the difficulties in moving prisoners to activities to make the most of their time in custody. As with UK prisons there is a drive to update old, decaying prisons, to develop a prison estate that is more efficient and fit for purpose, but Norway acknowledge that this transformation takes time. Whilst Norway develops their prison estates they are also concentrating on the need to develop the right workforce, with the skills, attitudes and practices to support effective rehabilitation.



**Key learning points:**

- It is important to empower prisoners in their journey of personal development. This should involve them being included in target setting.
- Many prisoners are not ready to transition directly into mainstream education and training. The community schools in Norway provide facilities which act as a bridge between prison education and mainstream. This appears to be an effective model because it supports engagement.
- The wide use of ROTL in providing prisoners with a gradual reintegration into the community, supports resettlement and may have a positive impact on reducing reoffending.

**3.4 Next stop...**



*Picture 17 On the road to Halden*

For those who have watched the Michael Moore footage of Dutch prisons or for those who have heard anything about prisons in Norway, you would have come across Halden. Halden is a high security prison, which has 250 prisoners with an average sentence of 5 years including those on remand. I was kindly invited to visit by Ingrid, who was Head of Education there. Halden prison is set in the beautiful backdrop of the countryside near to Halden. On arrival it felt remote and like many traditional high security prisons it has imposing concrete walls encasing it with one solitary door. I think it is safe to say that is where the comparison to UK prisons ends. Commissioners of high security prisons in the future should be visiting Halden before putting pen to paper!



*Picture 18 Inside Halden Prison*

*When you walk through Halden it is designed with 'air' and functionality in mind. The accommodation is set behind woodland which can be used for exercise and which split the Education and Industries blocks. Close by are the sports facilities which include football pitches, gyms and a sports hall. The latter doubles as the 'Theatre' for show productions which are performed at the prison. A circular path runs between all of the areas allowing easy access for prisoners. Below ground the path is replicated in the form of an underground*

*passage way. I found this design feature interesting as it allowed for controlled movements and other prison business to happen so that the prison regime could continue. It reminded me of a*

*University campus. Gone was the barbed wired walls, barred windows and other traditional features which were still present elsewhere in Norway and across the UK. Halden is high security, yet prisoners have access to a lone working room for self-study. Technology enables this through the use of CCTV. Halden is a prime example of how the high security estate has met the challenges of giving responsibility in a controlled way.*



*Picture 19 Accommodation at Halden*

At lunchtime the prisoners bring their own food from the accommodation block and spend their lunch break in the Education/Work rest rooms. The rooms are comfortable and when I arrived some are playing chess, others watching the ice hockey on the TV, whilst another prisoner is cooking lunch. This approach gave the most time out of cell and reduced the movement required to get the prisoners back to the wings for dinner. The trust given to the prisoners is rarely abused.

The workplaces throughout the prison are high tech with prisoners encouraged to be creative. Halden prison has a state of the art recording studio which I walked into during a session where they are editing the video of the latest musical production which was recently performed for families, prisoners and guests. This took place in the multi-use sports hall and involved a cast of prisoners, education and prison staff.



*Picture 20 Recording Studio at Halden*

*Picture 21 Record label at Halden*



In the UK, prisoners are able to buy products on a 'canteen' list each week which are then delivered to their cells. Halden have taken that to a different level with an on-site shop where prisoners can use their ID cards to purchase products. It was another example of people taking responsibility for their own lives whilst in custody and supported their resettlement because it provided an opportunity to do a task they would need to do on a daily basis in the community. All of the prisoners I spoke to during my time in Norway talked about how they knew their freedom had been taken for the crimes they had committed, but that those working with them were encouraging them to take responsibility and treated them as human beings.



*Picture 22 Prisoner shop at Halden*

**Key learning points:**

- The design of the prison and the lived environment can impact on the efficiency of the regime and the experience of the prisoners' whilst in custody. A prison like Halden, with a good design, can make the most of the space whilst creating an environment which is both secure and calm.
- Enabling learners to have their lunch break within the education or work setting, as they would in a college or workplace, normalises the behaviour and maximises the time out of cell. This also reduces the need for time to be spent moving prisoners around the estate.
- The role technology can play in a modern prison regime is wide ranging. In cell technology and how this can aid learning whilst maintaining family ties, through to the swipe card system for purchases at the prison shop. All of these empower the learner to make choices and support their reintegration back into the community.
- The shop in Halden provides prisoners with the opportunity to continue the daily behaviours they would experience in the community. When those behaviours (e.g. shopping for groceries) are removed, the prisoners are more likely to lose everyday life skills and become institutionalised. Creating a prison environment whereby prisoners have the opportunity to continue to use life skills where possible supports them in their resettlement.

### 3.5 Ulvsnesoy Prison



*Picture 23 View looking over to the island prison*

I took an 8-hour train ride across the country to Bergen. Ulvsnesoy prison was something I have never seen before. I arrived at the ferry port with Yngve Sandven to board the ferry across to the island prison. Formerly an island for “boys who were naughty” as Yngve put it, the island was turned into a prison in the 1980’s. It is home to up to 31 people, a mix of men and women. We discussed the challenges of this mix, with the feeling in Norway being that this isn’t a model they want to take into the future due to the complexities it causes.

We crossed on the ferry to the island with several education staff members, it was the best commute ever!

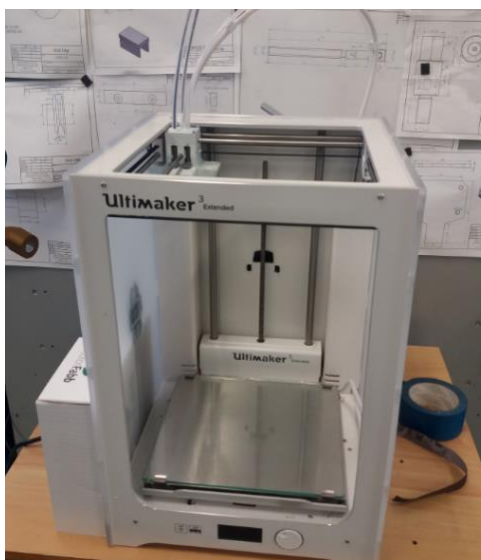
Never has a classification of a prison been more appropriate, with the island prison being a ‘low security, open prison’. The space and beauty of the place takes your breath away. The island in the main sustains itself; with the prisoners and staff maintaining the buildings, growing food and butchering their own hand reared meat.



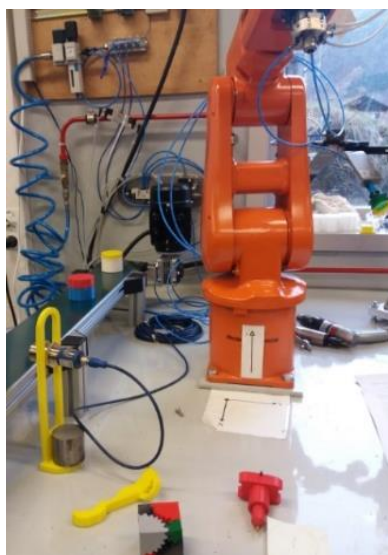
*Picture 24 View from the island*

The first place the prisoners took me to was the mechanics workshop. Based on that title I wasn’t expecting such an array of computerised technology; including CNC machines, pressurised pumping systems, welding, 3D printers and robotics. As the staff explained to me this was a pretty good place to learn the skills required for the industries around the region. Off shore oil being one such industry that learners have progressed into upon release. The tutor takes groups of prisoners twice per year on ROTL to experience this industry to give them a taste of the work available to them.





Picture 25 3D printer in the workshop



Picture 26 Robot in the workshop

As we walked around the grounds I saw prisoners working independently in a variety of sectors, including animal husbandry, building maintenance, woodwork, gardening and tree surgery.

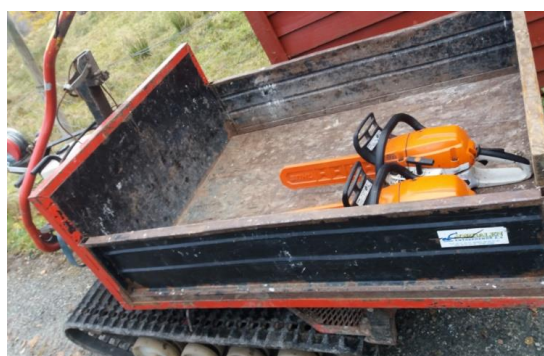


Prisoners were encouraged to take on projects in their own time in the evening. I was shown products such as benches, clocks, animal shelters and greenhouses which had been made in the prisoners' own time.

Picture 27 a clock created by a prisoner. A project undertaken in his own time.

As we walked around we passed a vehicle loaded with chainsaws, left unattended. The prisoner spotted that I had noticed this and said: *"Don't worry, we are told to never use them unless there are two of us...for safety"* Not exactly what I was thinking with my UK prison security head on, but it made me chuckle all the same!

I joined the staff and prisoners in the dining room for lunch. Then the staff had to attend meetings so I was left to wander with a prisoner, who was able to be my tour guide until he was due at work, butchering 10 sheep that were recently slaughtered from the island's own flock. Just before we parted he was keen to ask and then stress to me:



Picture 28 Chainsaws used by the prisoners.

*"Do you feel this is a prison? We are still not free. I have a sentence. I am using it to do good, to change. We are a group/community here...but we can't go and have a beer together as if we were free men"*

Reflecting on my time on the island I can see how serving a prison sentence in such an environment gave the prisoners the freedom to develop their skills and behaviours in readiness for their release. The openness and space on the island encouraged physical and mental well-being and being part of the self-sustaining community allowed learners to feel part of a real community again.

**Key learning points:**

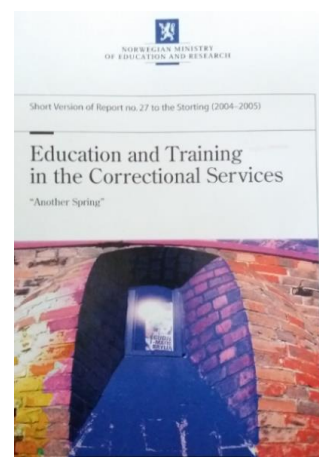
- **It is essential for prisoners to learn skills that meet current and future labour market demands. Prison industries should reflect the sectors with employment opportunities open to the prisoners in their resettlement areas.**
- **A prison environment, such as the island prison where the model depends on cooperation within a self-sustaining community, nurtures positive behaviours and supports the development of life skills essential for resettlement.**
- **The ability to spend time outdoors in a rural setting has clear benefits for prisoners, creating a sense of calm and mental well-being.**
- **Smaller prisoner to staff ratios allow for positive interactions, supportive work and ultimately supports rehabilitation.**

### 3.6 Paal Breivik – County Governor of Hordaland, Norway and Prison Researchers Meeting

I was kindly invited by Paal to discuss prison education and the latest research with the those who have been closely involved with the partnership between the County and Bergen prison over the past 15 years. I left several hours later with a month's worth of reading, copious notes and a head full of ideas!

I was taken on a journey of how the research had developed since 2004 and the impact this has had on policy. It was interesting to hear about the screening of all prisoners in Norway, which has taken place every 3 years since 2004. This screening looks at their aspirations, levels of achievement and educational background to name just a few. Terje Manger, Professor of Educational Psychology and the research lead since 2004, talked through the findings of these screenings. The results were no surprise and confirmed most of the current thinking, but it provided a systematic approach and sound evidence base to inform future research and policy. This initiated the publication of The White Paper 'Education and Training in the Correctional Services' (2004) <sup>9</sup>

Many of the recommendations have been developed over the years, with ICT being a key feature throughout. The development of the DFS system (Desktop for Schools) although not without its challenges, has moved ICT use beyond that currently capable in the UK. For example, I witnessed prisoners using computers in restricted office areas and using the internet for resettlement purposes whilst being supervised. This is not something you would see in the UK due to security restrictions. Developing ICT use was a key part of the 'normalisation' agenda, with it being acknowledged that if education in



Picture 29 Front cover of the report into prison education

<sup>9</sup> Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research. (2004-2005) *Education and training in the correctional services "Another Spring"*. Short version of report No.27 to the Storting. [http://www.epea.org/wp-content/uploads/AnotherSpring\\_Norway\\_.pdf](http://www.epea.org/wp-content/uploads/AnotherSpring_Norway_.pdf) retrieved on 31st October 2017.



prison is to be the same as mainstream provision, ICT must be at the same standard as accessible in the community.

In order to participate in education learners expect up to date and easily accessible ICT systems. The most recent learner survey showed that despite the progress made in Norway, learners highlighted 'inadequate access to IT and the internet' as the biggest barrier to participation. Paal then said:

*"Ah, they want more still!"*

We then talked about how the 'on demand' generation in prison now feel that things still move too slow, when in society everything is at a click of a button. We have a further discussion about how prisoners' progress is measured. When I talked about the proposal of testing prisoners on arrival and when they leave prison (something currently being discussed in the UK) Paal laughs and adds:

*"Toffin found paperwork in his research that Oslo prison was doing that in 1874! Test in, Test out!"*

The Norwegians viewed this method of initial and exit assessments as antiquated. Their view was that the learner comes with enough academic information to avoid initial assessments and that upon exit any academic progress would have been captured.

**Key learning points:**

- **Academic research plays a critical role in informing prison policy and practices.**
- **The impact ICT plays in engaging in education should not be underestimated. Wherever possible ICT should replicate that availability in the community, with access to the latest technologies.**
- **Thought needs to be given to the types of education assessment undertaken in custody and the timing of these assessments.**

### **3.7 Bergen Prison – The Progression Model**

Arriving at the high security Bergen prison with Yngve it became clear the journey prison design has taken since the 1990's in Norway. Bergen prison reminded me of many UK prisons in terms of its design. Bergen prison was designed with a 'progression model' in mind, whereby a prisoner's behaviour determines their number of privileges. This way of thinking is routed in many aspects of the UK prison system through the 'incentives and earned privileges' policy.

I met the school leader Rune Haukedal in the education department and we spent some time discussing the positives and challenges of delivering education in Bergen. The conversation moves onto a discussion around that day's newspaper headline. A serving prisoner was found to have manipulated a prison laptop to continue his crimes inside. As you would expect this had made front page news and had led to further restrictions on the internet and ICT security. The feeling from the conversation was one of frustration. Frustration that this meant that everyone would suffer due to this but that it was inevitable after such a case.

We toured through the prison and saw a range of education provision that was well equipped and covered a range of delivery.



Picture 30 Newspaper headline the day of my visit to Bergen prison

We visited an art class, where the teacher and learners were keen to showcase some excellent work, much of which was being done for their family alongside the course. This opened a debate as we left the class about the value of creative arts in prisons. The debate around whether education should be solely focused on working towards employment or also include enrichment is happening in Norway. The feeling was that we must strike a balance between providing prisoners with the skills necessary for employment and opportunity to explore other creative interests. The art course clearly had a strong place in the culture and learning at Bergen. We talked about a concert which 12 prisoners had recently organised and performed in the prison. The prisoners were responsible for arranging all aspects of the concert, including security! It just highlighted to me what was possible, even in a high security environment such as this.

In the afternoon we drove the short distance to the community school, Asane Vidergaende Skole. One of 10 in Norway where ex-prisoners or those on licence can attend, this one being in a rented building on a business park. These schools are designed to bridge the gap between mainstream education and support the transition back into the community. I met with one of the school councillors, Magnus, who kindly talked me through the role he played and the structure of the provision in Bergen. There is a clear drive to have a personalised plan for each learner. As Magnus put it:

*"You need control of your life to do school"*

Education was the driver for the plan but if the prisoner had other resettlement needs, these were sequenced in the plan to allow for a more successful reintegration.

Not only are community schools in place to bridge the gap for prison leavers, there is a drive to provide learning and enrichment opportunities for ex-prisoners. Kjersti, the music teacher at some of the Bergen prisons, kindly invited me to a music band 'jamming' session. This was a class run for ex-prisoners to attend, run at a creative arts centre in Bergen. They were brilliant! I listened and laughed with them for a couple of hours, before receiving some copies of a CD they had recorded and chatted about their stories and love of music. We walked back across the city with the ex-prisoners and parted with a song they had played 'None of us are free' ringing in my head along with the thought Kjersti posed for me:

*"If you can open your mind to this, all of this, it works"*

All the prisons are within walking distance of the main school and as we drive back into Bergen, Yngve takes me on a detour to see the 'Youth Prison' nearby. The youth prison is for those prisoners under the age of 18 and holds a maximum of 4 prisoners. We talk about how it is probably the most expensive prison in Europe! It was interesting to hear how in the running of the prison, aside from having teachers, the prison staff is made up of half prison officers and half social workers, an interesting approach. Everyone is keen to stress to me it isn't a 'prison'. As we part, Yngve is keen to stress the aim of the system in Norway:

*"We strive for normality; People connected to normal, normal activity, normal people"*

As we drive away from the 'Youth prison', I ask about the large speedboat parked in the car park. It is for the staff to take the under 18 prisoners out to sea in, during the summer. We laugh when Yngve says *"I told you, normal!"*

#### Key learning points:

- Whilst education can drive a sentence plan it must take into account other resettlement needs and the sequencing of these interventions.
- Prison education must strike a balance between giving learners the skills required for employment whilst providing them with enrichment opportunities. Use of the arts can be therapeutic in addition to encouraging engagement in other activities.
- We should look to be more fluid with prison education through the gate. This could be achieved by providing learning hubs where ex-prisoners can continue their learning and bridge the gap into mainstream.

#### 4.0 Conclusions

The aims of the Fellowship were to understand the role education plays in reducing reoffending in Holland and Norway. Throughout the Fellowship I have been taken on a journey, in both countries, from the roots of the philosophies and practices in each country, to how that is applied in practice. Reducing reoffending is complex, there is no set path or process as we are working with individuals. Many have complex needs. I believe the UK is currently at the cross roads of establishing what we want our prisons to be, how we want to work with those in custody and crucially, how we can support them to lead positive lives upon release.

#### 5.0 Recommendations

##### 5.1 Prison Reforms

1. Create space and time for reform. If we are to truly achieve the aims outlined by successive Justice Secretaries, multiple reports which set out a range of recommendations, or the implementation of the findings from this Fellowship, we need to create the space to reform so staff have time to embrace it.



2. In order to truly have an impact on the resettlement and recidivism rates it is imperative that prisoners are placed in environments conducive to their rehabilitation. Older prisons, in a poor state of repair, that by design lead to inefficiencies in moving prisoners to activities or programmes, are not suited to this purpose. Where possible new prisons should be designed to take in to account the impact of the acoustics, and the outside environment in addition to their internal surroundings. Units must be smaller, the design must allow for flexible working spaces that can be used for various purposes and movement around the site should be efficient and calm.

3. Normalising the routine of prisoners to reflect the lives of people living in communities beyond the prison walls is important for their rehabilitation. Prisoners should continue to undertake routine tasks such as shopping for provisions or taking their lunch to 'work'. This would also maximise their time out of their cells.
4. Prisons which are self-sustaining and make the most of the need for cooperation between prisoners and staff support resettlement in ensuring that positive behaviours are encouraged and prisoners continue to develop independent living skills for their release.
5. Time outside undertaking activities such as sports or horticulture provides prisoners with exercise and improved physical and mental well-being. This should be encouraged and time should be given to supporting all prisoners to interact with the outdoors.
6. Although costly, smaller units and smaller prisoner to staff ratios lead to more time being spent with individuals to support their resettlement planning and rehabilitation. This would also support the prison service in managing behaviour. The increased use of social workers and where necessary, youth workers would aid this process.
7. Whilst it is important to look to prison reforms in terms of the built environment, it is essential that work takes place alongside this to reform policies and practice. Everyone within the prison has the ability to impact on the rehabilitation of offenders. Academic research should be used to inform this process.
8. Thought must be given to measures and standards used to measure success. Recidivism alone is not a sufficient measure and can be misleading. There should be a consistent set of measures that can be used for *all* agencies working with offenders at all stages of the offender journey. These measures should be outcome focused.
9. Transition in to the community and accessing community agencies upon release can be daunting for offenders and can lead to disengagement and consequently reoffending. Support should be fluid, though the gate, with the same organisations and individuals supporting offenders in prison and in the community. Rehabilitation Hubs could be developed that mirror similar hubs within the prison. These hubs should be multi-agency, encouraging greater information sharing and should include education and training facilities to bridge the gap between prison education and mainstream provision.

## **5.2 Preparation for Resettlement**

10. Release on Temporary licence (ROTL) should be used wherever possible to support the resettlement of offenders. This could include time with family and supporting community events local to the prison, in addition to the usual interviews and employment opportunities.
11. It is everyone's responsibility to support the rehabilitation of offenders and interactions with prisoners should be positive and keep the outcome of resettlement and rehabilitation in mind. This could be supported by the use of restorative justice training for all staff.
12. The sentence/resettlement plan should form the backbone of the offender journey. Education and offending behaviour programmes should not be viewed in isolation but should be sequenced to ensure that the plan meets the individual needs of every prisoner. Prisoners should be empowered to inform their plan and be included in their own target setting and reviews.
13. All too often negative media coverage, fear and negative perceptions of offenders' impacts on opportunities for offenders that could support their rehabilitation, e.g. ROTL. It is essential that Justice Services work to develop public confidence within the system by promoting positive outcomes and developing stronger community links.

### **5.3 Use of Technology**

14. Efficiencies within the prisons could be improved with updated ICT and the removal of many paper based systems. One system would avoid duplication and save time.
15. The technology used in prisons should be of the same standards available in the community and use of it should be more wide ranging. Examples used in prisons in Norway and the Netherlands that could be adopted in the UK include:
  - a. In cell technology to support family links and access to all services within the prison;
  - b. The ability to book appointments such as health care, register on an offending behaviour programme, book an education review, or schedule a one to one with a personal officer or case manager;
  - c. Use of skype for interviews or family links;
  - d. Virtual learning platforms to support both education and offending behaviour programmes;
  - e. Development of apps to support foreign nationals or those with learning difficulties e.g., the 'picture it' app used in the Netherlands;
  - f. Swipe cards to access privileged areas or to shop in a prison convenience store.
16. Use of the internet, whilst controlled, should be more flexible and wide ranging to support access to resettlement services and opportunities upon release.

### **5.4 Developing Education and Training**

17. Prison teachers and trainers should experience both prison and mainstream education to ensure that prisoners have access to the latest teaching, delivery methods and resources.
18. The methods, resources, materials and technology used in education and training in prisoners should mirror that used in mainstream. This is particularly relevant to the use of ICT.
19. The curriculum needs to be flexible to meet the needs of individuals. This may mean that some learning is not accredited but this would not distract from the ability of the prisoner to engage effectively and develop transferable skills essential to their resettlement.
20. Education and training in prisons must strike a balance between academic skills/activities and enrichment. Enrichment activities can support the prisoner in interacting more effectively with resettlement services, including education, and activities such as sports and the arts can further inspire learning whilst having a positive impact of the therapeutic needs of the prisoners and their physical and mental well-being.
21. The timing and methods of assessments used must be reviewed. Repetition of assessments across agencies disengages the prisoner, particularly within the first few days and weeks of their sentence. Thought needs to be given to the timing and sequencing of assessments and the ways in which we can measure the impact of education on recidivism rates.
22. Prisons could operate as regional clusters with specialisms in providing prisoners with sector skills that may be unique to that region, or possess a skills shortage. Resettlement prisons could specialise in providing training opportunities to meet local labour market needs. Prison industries should reflect the sectors with employment opportunities that are available to prisoners upon release.
23. It is essential that employers are included in the rehabilitation of offenders from the point of sentence. There are a number of ways that employers could support this journey:
  - a. Advise and support the education provider on the current and future needs of the sectors to ensure that prisoners are gaining up-to-date skills essential for employment;

- b. Endorse the curriculum by verifying that the programme meets the needs of the industry, that the tools and equipment are of the right standards to meet the current labour market needs and that additional 'tickets' are obtained where necessary to increase the chances of employment upon release;
  - c. Provide materials and equipment to help to subsidise training and to ensure that prisoners are being trained with the latest technologies and materials;
  - d. Set up training academies and work based learning environments within the prisons;
  - e. Offer apprenticeship and employment opportunities to prisoners upon release;
  - f. Provide sessions on employability skills, mock interview or actual interviews for employment prior to release;
  - g. Offer industry specialists to attend the prison as guest speakers to encourage prisoners in to various sectors, or to talk to them about what it is like to work in certain roles;
  - h. Offer work experience, taster days or employment on ROTL.
  - i. Act as employment mentors, offering motivational advice and support or supporting access to opportunities and developing positive work place behaviours;
24. The role of employers in prison education also enables employers to work alongside justice services and gain a greater understanding of the system. Employers should be supported by justice specialists to navigate the constraints placed on individuals as a result of the system and to break down those barriers between prisoners and employment.
25. Many offenders have a wealth of enterprising skills and ideas and this should be nurtured wherever possible. The WeShoring model that supports social enterprises should be piloted in the UK to support new ideas, support self-employment (particularly for offenders who would struggle to find employment), and supports reinvestment back in to local communities.

*I never 'worry' about action, but only about inaction.*

Churchill, 1940s (cited in Langworth, *Churchill: In His Own Words*)



## 6.0 Acknowledgements

I would firstly like to thank the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust for enabling me to take on this journey of learning and travel. I will be forever grateful for the opportunity. Novus have supported me tremendously throughout the process and given me a platform to express and develop the findings from the Fellowship.

Throughout the visits I have met a large number of teachers and leaders. I can't name them all, some have only been fleeting conversations in corridors or during a coffee break, but all have contributed to the experience I have had. Thankyou.

A special mention of thanks goes to the following for their support and guidance pre-travel:

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A final big thankyou to those with first-hand experience of the system, the prisoners and ex-prisoners, who took their time to speak to me and share their experiences.

One last reflection must go to the films about Norwegian prisons, which were produced by Michael Moore. Well worth a watch.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=01mTKDaKa6Q> - Michael Moore on Norwegian prisons. Well worth a watch to engage a debate about what prisons are for and what we expect from our prisons. The end has Michael's view!

So shocked and unable to include it in his film (as he thought nobody would believe it!) he went back. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jDjISR5OH4> I strongly urge all of us in the UK to reflect on what we want our prisons to be...and then policy makers and those professionals in them strive to that aim. I know where I would rather be working.